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1913.

# THE FIJI OF TO-DAY

BY

JOHN WEAR BURTON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE

REV. A. J. SMALL

(*Chairman of the Methodist Mission in Fiji*)

'There is only one way of making great evils small—by looking them straight in the face.'—DEMOCRITUS.

*WITH SEVENTY-FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS*

London

CHARLES H. KELLY

25-35 CITY ROAD, AND 26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1910.

First Edition . . . . . . 1910

TO MY WIFE

M605103

# NOTE

The Author desires to express his appreciation of the assistance rendered by various gentlemen in Fiji in connexion with the preparation of this volume.

Especially are his thanks due to his friend, the Rev. C. O. Lelean, for many important suggestions and much valuable criticism.

To the gentlemen who have courteously allowed the reproduction of photographs—the Revs. J. C. Jennison, W. O. North, and W. R. Poole, and Messrs. J. W. Waters, O. J. le Faivre and L. V. Waterhouse—the Author's acknowledgements are hereby tendered.

# PREFACE

The late Sir John B. Thurston, K.C.M.G., during his term as governor of the Colony of Fiji, made the following sagacious remark: 'The *dangers* of the Christian missions in these islands are now past: their *difficulties* are yet to come.' Time has proved that those words were a prophecy.

This volume makes no pretence of recounting, save in the most hasty and casual manner, the dangers of the past. Abler pens have already written that graphic story. Its avowed object is to set forth some of the difficulties of the present, and thus prepare the way in some measure for their solution.

The Fiji of Yesterday is rapidly becoming history. Its dark deeds are gradually being forgotten. That horrible stain of human blood is gone from the earth, and the grass is green again—nay, greener. In the Fiji of To-day new conditions of life have arisen, and these have given birth to new problems and difficulties. Their immediacy and seriousness are the chief reasons for the appearance of this book.

Around two great facts the main problems of the book gather. The first is that *the Fijian is dying.* No juggling with figures can deceive us in this particular, for at the rate of fifteen hundred per annum does this mortal decrease continue. When a serious epidemic touches the islands, old Charon's barque is laden to the very brim. In 1875 the measles carried off a quarter of the population! Fifty years ago there were 200,000 inhabitants: to-day, there are 86,000! The naked truth, therefore, faces us that, unless we find some method of arresting this decrease, in a few score years the Fijian Church, of which Christendom has been so proud, will be blotted out.

The second fact is that *Fiji may be heathen again within the century.* To-day there are over 40,000 Indians settled in these islands. Cargoes of the frankest 'heathenism' come every year, and thus the numbers grow by leaps and bounds. What does this mean to the Christian Church here? It means that, unless tremendous and sustained effort is put forth, the sign of the Cross will be displaced by the Hindu Trident and Muhammadan Crescent.

There is still need for the prayer of the dying saint, John Hunt: 'O let me pray once more for Fiji! Lord! for Christ's sake bless Fiji! Save Fiji! Save Thy servants! Save Thy people! *Save the heathen in Fiji!*'

Because of the faith once delivered unto her, the Christian Church has no doubt that even the subtle, intellectual Hindu and the haughty, aggressive Muhammadan will yield, at length, to the compulsion of the Cross, and that the Christian standard will float triumphantly—more triumphantly—in the Trade Winds of the Pacific. But before that time comes, many men must scorn delights and live laborious days, far from the applause of their fellows, and then rest in solitary and unvisited graves.

# INTRODUCTORY NOTE

A FORMER governor of Fiji, now deceased, when discussing with the writer a radical and startling change of policy advocated by a retired missionary and supported by others who, like himself, had been absent from the colony for a number of years, remarked, 'The mistake these gentlemen make is in supposing that the Fiji that *they* knew at the time of their own residence here is the Fiji of to-day. Only on this supposition can I account for the suicidal policy now being proposed by them.' His Excellency proceeded to say that 'Fiji is in the process of remarkable and rapid development, as every thoughtful and observant man sees. Why, the Fiji of even five years ago was widely different from the Fiji of the present time!' The shrewdness of that judgement is only equalled by its accuracy, to which the writer, after having lived and laboured in these islands for the last thirty years, bears witness.

In view, then, of the fact that Fiji is so different from what it was, say, a quarter of a century ago,

a description of its present condition has become a desideratum. Hence Mr. Burton's book is sure to find a wide circle of readers. Moreover, there are several classes of people who will welcome its publication, for Fiji has grown in complexity of interest. It will be cordially received by those who, having known the country in former years, desire to inform themselves of the nature and extent of the changes that have passed over it in subvening years. It will be of service to those to whom imperial interests make the Pacific an object of strategical importance. It will be warmly greeted by those who wish to study the social and moral evolution of a primitive race such as the Fijian; while missionary enthusiasts will also eagerly search its pages for information respecting the present and future prospects of the kingdom of God in this famous and remarkable mission field. It may be predicted that those among this latter class who at present are under the impression that mission work in these islands no longer needs the presence and supervision of so numerous a staff of European missionaries will, after a perusal of the book, revise their opinion on that point.

The author of *The Fiji of To-day* has aimed throughout at giving what appears to him a faithful representation of 'things as they are.' Facts, whatever their nature, are fearlessly stated; problems

are bravely faced and grappled with; and logical conclusions are sought no matter whither they may lead. This is not only the scientific method, but it is one which will be commended by every right-thinking man. At some of the disclosures timid souls may take alarm; but there is no need for fear, for, in the end, good and good only can come from a frank and sympathetic statement of facts. Ever let us remember that 'we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.'

But what about the Fiji of To-morrow? Has this watchman aught to say of it? He has. He heralds the dawning of the coming day. Because of the hope that he sees, he encourages all who would have some part in the moulding of Fiji's future to earnest, wise, united, and unfaltering effort.

And at this point it should be noted that he himself has sought to render practical help in the end desired, so none can justly accuse him of being a mere theorist or visionary. The founding of our new Industrial Institute at Davuilevu on the Rewa River is largely due to his efforts, while much of his time is taken up with the supervision of its manifold operations. Here carpentry in its most useful branches is taught to native lads, and encouragement to a more purposeful life is given.

If asked to give the main conclusions reached by

Mr. Burton I would say they are two: first, the prime need of industrial education to enable the *custom-swathed* native to arrive at length at complete social emancipation; and secondly, the necessity of a more thorough intellectual cultivation, that spiritual truths may strike their roots more deeply in his character. With these conclusions the majority of missionaries the world over are necessarily in perfect agreement. More and more the truth emphasized by St. Paul, 'If any work not, neither should he eat,' is becoming apparent, and is being pressed home by the preacher of the gospel of work.

Believing that *The Fiji of To-day* has a real message to men, and that God will use it for the advancement of His kingdom both in Fiji and elsewhere, I sincerely commend it to Christian readers everywhere.

ARTHUR J. SMALL.

SUVA, FIJI.

(The Rev. A. J. Small is the Chairman of the Fiji District of the Australasian Methodist Missionary Society.)

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# THE FIJI OF TO-DAY

## CHAPTER I

### THE ISLANDS OF FIJI

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise,

Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

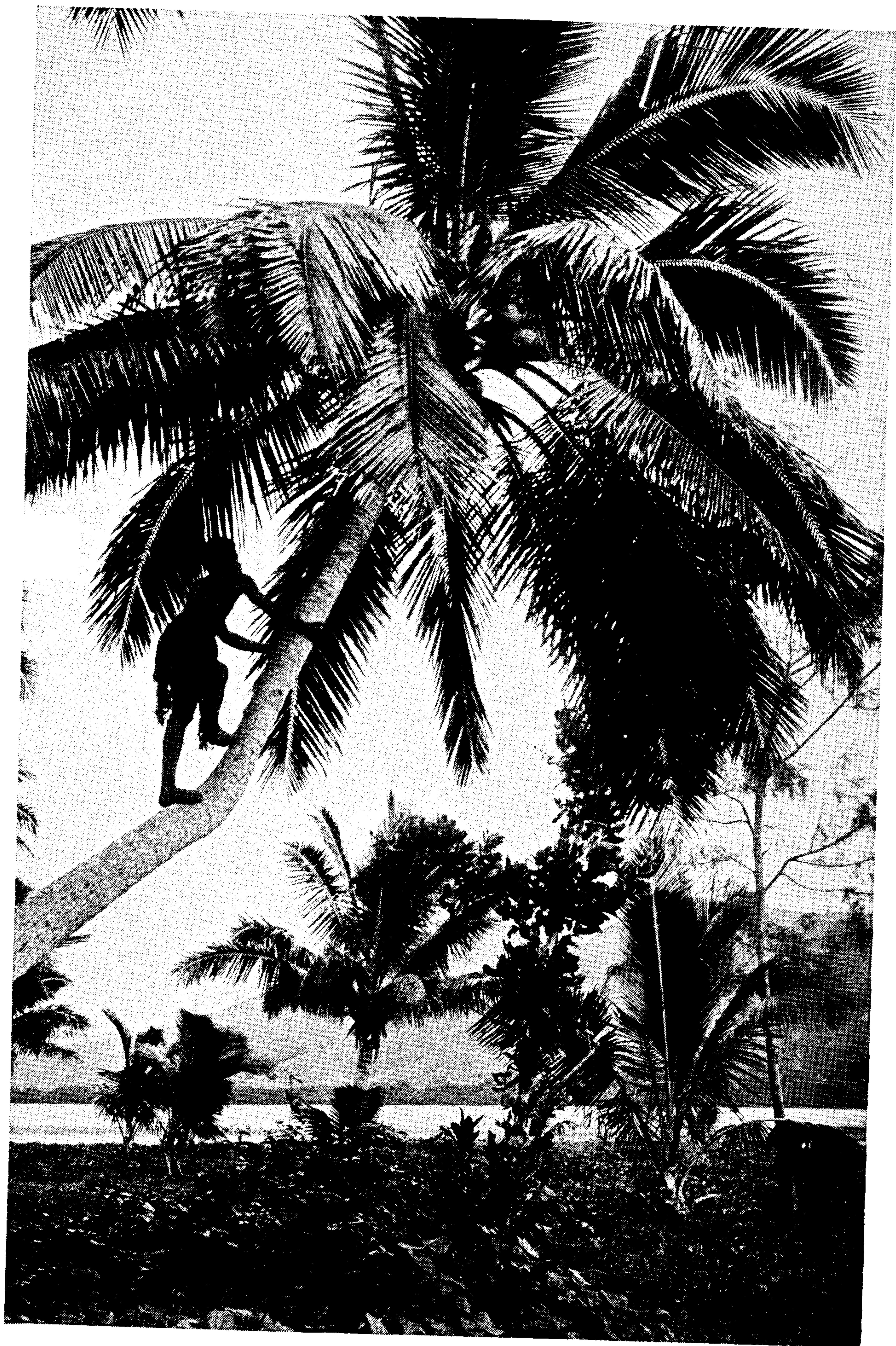
TENNYSON, *Locksley Hall.*

FIJI came into European history in the middle of the seventeenth century by the publication of the log of that celebrated Dutch navigator, Abel Jansen Tasman. On the sixth of February, 1643, in the ship *Heemshirk*, accompanied by the fly-boat *Seehane*, Tasman sighted unknown lands, to which he loyally gave the name of Prince William's Islands. These are undoubtedly some of the islands in the Fijian Archipelago, and the name of the Dutch sailor is still charted upon the straits through which he passed at the north of the island of Taveuni. An

exquisite facsimile reproduction of the journal and log of that intrepid explorer, together with an English translation and notes, has been donated by the governor of the colony, Sir Everard im Thurn, to the Carnegie Library at Suva, and will remain an interesting birth certificate of Fiji so far as European knowledge is concerned. Tasman, however, merely sailed through these seas, and for over a century they were left in their pristine quiet and tropic solitude.

Nor did the dauntless Captain Cook add much to the geography of this part of the world. In the year 1773 he lay-to off the island of Vatoa—a little dot of land lying to the southward of the main Fijian Group—which he fancifully named Turtle Island. It is certain that the Yorkshire commander did not sight any of the more important lands; nor did he come into contact with any of the 'Indians' in these parts. In Tonga he obtained some knowledge of the Fijian people, and has left a record of that in his narratives. Commerce with the Friendly Islands was fairly well established, and the Fijians had the reputation among the Tongans of being capital canoe-builders, whilst the superiority of Fijian woods for this purpose was recognized as far afield as Tahiti.

'Bread-fruit Bligh,' after being put off his own ship, the *Bounty*, by his mutinous crew, on that



A COCO-NUT TREE

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memorable 3,618 miles' sail without chart or compass in a twenty-three foot boat with scanty provisions and eighteen men, passed through the Fijian Group in 1789. Near the Yasawas—a crescent of islands to the west—he was chased by two large Fijian canoes manned by naked cannibals. Again, in 1792, as commander of the *Providence*, he sailed through the group on his way to Tahiti and left his mark on the map in the Bligh Islands.

In 1796 Captain Wilson in the *Duff* narrowly escaped shipwreck on the reef near the island of Taveuni; but he brought back only the scantiest information concerning these islands.

In 1804 a number of convicts escaped from Botany Bay, in New South Wales, and made their way to Fiji. They settled in various parts of the group, and lived lives that out-rivalled, in filthiness and wickedness, the cannibal Fijian. These attained some considerable power and influence, and it was thus that the native came to know the white man. The first impressions could not have been, therefore, of a very exalted kind, and this fact probably accounts for much in the later history of Fiji.

It was not until 1827 that any really accurate knowledge of Fiji came to the European world. The French ship *Astrolabe* spent seventeen days in exploring these waters; and then, in 1838, the

United States exploring expedition under Commodore Wilkes commenced the charting of the group. This was done with such accuracy that subsequent surveys have had very little to add to the knowledge of these waters. Three years before that expedition arrived in Fiji, the Wesleyan missionaries had commenced their wonderful work, and already their reports were being heard—hence Fiji ceased to be a *terra incognita.* Little by little, the prying white man and ubiquitous European gleaned information concerning the people, their land and customs, and at length ran up his flag and made these islands his own.

Fiji has suffered much orthographical insult at the hands of writers about the group. Thomas Williams, in his *Fiji and the Fijians*, gives the following list of variant spellings: Beetee, Fegee, Fejee, Feejee, Feeje, Fidjee, Fidge, Fidgee, Fidschi, Fiji, Feigee, Vihi and Viti. The Fijians themselves call their Islands *Viti*, and the inhabitants *Kai Viti.* The commonly accepted spelling and pronunciation of *Fiji* is due to the fact that the Lauan, or eastern, dialect—with which the Tongans had most intercourse—sounds its V like an F and makes its T almost a J. This forms an interesting fact for philologists to explain. The two forms, therefore, of Fiji and Viti are correct. The former is now practically a foreign way of spelling the name of the

moreover, the natural centre of Polynesia. The British Government has already recognized this, and has made it the governing-point of the Western Pacific. The ecclesiastical authorities also have noted the fact, and the Anglican Church has stationed its new bishop of Polynesia at Suva. The islands are, roughly speaking, 1,100 miles from Auckland, New Zealand; 1,700 miles from Sydney in the Commonwealth of Australia; and a similar distance from Brisbane. They fall across the track of steamers between the two continents of Australia and America; and, when the Panama Canal opens, their geographical position will be even more advantageous.

Nor are the islands themselves of negligible size. The area in square miles is 7,435—about the same size as Wales. Together they are large enough to contain the following British Colonies:—Mauritius, Jamaica, Barbadoes, Trinidad, Seychelles, Bermuda, Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Helena. There are some 230 islands in the group—varying in size from the tiny, rocky eyot where only the screeching sea-birds find homes, to large stretches of country where the acreage can be counted in millions. There are two main islands: Viti Levu (Great Fiji) and Vanua Levu (Great Land). The former is the larger, being 90 miles long and 50 wide; the latter is 100 miles in length and about 25 in breadth. Then follow

A QUIET-RETREAT [*Facing page* 26

the islands of Taveuni, often called 'The Garden of the Pacific'; and Kadavu, a beautiful and picturesque island to the south. The total acreage is about five millions, and a large proportion of this can be brought into cultivation.

Fiji is a group of magnificent water distances. These 230 islands spread themselves over some 120,000 square miles of sea. Innumerable and treacherous reefs fill up many of these wide interspaces, and make navigation a gamble as well as a science. The ocean, for some inconceivable reason, has been named the Pacific; but the seaman gives it an altogether different character. In certain parts of the group the currents are extremely dangerous to navigation, and gaunt skeletons of once brave ships, now piled up on the reef, tell their own tale.

The physical features of the islands are striking in the extreme. The two mainlands are broken in appearance and indented by numerous bays. Inland, high gloomy mountains fret the sky, and form deep shadowy valleys haunted with mystery. Here and there are wide fringes of level land between the base of these dread mountains and the bright sparkling sea; but more often they seem shouldering each other into the restless waters. 'A great variety of landscape is found in navigating the shores of Great Fiji. To the south-east

there is tolerably level ground for 36 miles inland, edged, in places, by cliffs of sandstone 500 feet high. The luxuriant and cheerful beauty of the lowland then gives place to the gloomy grandeur and unbroken solitude of the mountains. To the south-west are low shores with patches of brown, barren land, then succeed narrow vales, beyond which rise hills whose wooded tops are in fine contrast with the bold bare front at their base. Behind these are the highest mountains in the group, bleak and sterile, with an altitude of 4,000 or 5,000 feet. Westward and to the east, high land is close to the shore, with only strips of level ground separating it from the sea. Proceeding northward, some of the finest scenery in Fiji is opened out. The lower level, skirted by a velvety border of mangrove bushes, and enriched with tropical shrubs, is backed, to a depth of 4 or 5 miles, by hilly ground gradually reaching an elevation of from 400 to 700 feet, with the lofty blue mountains, seen through deep ravines, in the distance.'

Some of the smaller islands are comparatively recent—as geologists measure time—and give incontrovertible evidence of volcanic and coral origin; but the main islands are much older. There is much to be said for the theory of a great 'Pacific continent' stretching from New Guinea to the southern islands; but concerning this doctors

differ. This much is certain, that the islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu are not younger than the Tertiary Period—and may be much older—and that they are of a composite formation. Several eminent geologists have visited Fiji, but they have not stayed any great length of time, and thus their inquiries and researches have been limited. There is a rich and comparatively unexplored field for the scientist in these lands.

Fiji is a land of wondrous rivers. It is always a matter of surprise to the visitor to see the magnificent water-ways of the country. In Vanua Levu there are no less than forty distinct streams—some of them navigable for a considerable distance. The Dreketi, for example, is over fifty miles in length. On Viti Levu are to be found some huge rivers. The Rewa is over 100 miles in length, and navigable for some 60 miles from its many-mouthed delta. It is a noble expanse of water, and arterial to some of the best land in Fiji. Other rivers such as the Navua, Sigatoka, Ba, and Nadi, though not so long nor so wide as the Rewa, are valuable assets to the island.

The soil is, for the most part, excellent. Much of the land is hilly, but such is nearly all suited for cattle and sheep grazing. There are also broad stretches of arable country which offer temptations to the Western agriculturist.

The climate of Fiji is, of course, tropical; but, considering its proximity to the Equator, remarkably mild and comparatively cool. Sanatoria are now being erected on the mountains which will make life enjoyable even in the hot season. The thermometer rarely sinks below 60° Fahr., and seldom rises above 90°. The mean temperature is in the neighbourhood of 80°. For the major portion of the year, the Trade Winds from the south-east and east keep the atmosphere fresh; but when these cease the air becomes stifling, and the climate peculiarly enervating. During nine months of the year there is little inconvenience caused by the heat; but December, January, and February are, as a rule, exceedingly hot and muggy. On the whole the country may be said to be healthy for the European, though, unless frequent changes are taken to the cooler colonies, the effects of enervation become pronounced. There is no malaria in the group, and the most serious dangers to the white man are 'liver' and dysentery. It would seem that the ability to withstand the climate is largely a matter of temperament. There are some who have lived a lifetime in Fiji, and have enjoyed the most excellent health. In fact, they are now unable to live, with any degree of comfort, in the colder climates. Others seem to be in perpetual feud with the conditions of life, and moderate health

can be maintained only by frequent trips away and the most rigid attention to diet and exercise. Probably two of the things most necessary to good health in a climate of this order are a bath and a tennis-court. Exercise must be taken, and, to the man of sedentary habits, tennis is probably the best form. The cold bath is not merely a daily, but often a tri-daily necessity.

The hot and trying months are also the hurricane season. Then the white resident watches the barometer with a feverish solicitude. He develops a sort of hurricophobia. Some of the 'blows' have been very destructive; and property and produce vanish before the onslaught of the wind in a manner that must be seen to be realized. More than once the old capital, Levuka, has been practically destroyed, and incalculable damage done throughout the group to the plantations of the European and the gardens of the native. Of course, in estimating the havoc wrought, it must be remembered that the flimsy character of English buildings here—mostly unlined wooden structures—and the soft nature of tropical vegetation offer very little resistance to the force of the wind. Thus, what is only a gale in colder climates, becomes a hurricane in Fiji, and is productive of an alarming amount of damage. But man grows philosophical in the tropics. He calmly collects the scattered fragments of his home, and

proceeds, without much ado, to build another. He has learnt the secret from Nature herself, who repairs her losses with a speed of which the colder climate has no experience.

The rainfall—especially on the windward side of the islands—is very heavy. It varies from 100 to 150 inches per annum. On August 6, 1906, *thirty inches fell in one night*—almost, if not quite, a world record.

Originally Fiji was very poor in animal life. To-day, of course, most European domestic animals are to be found. Probably the only animals indigenous to these islands were a small black rat (now extinct owing to the introduction of the common brown rat) and a flying-fox. Commerce with Tonga accounts for the early naturalization of the pig, dog, fowl, and duck. Birds, however, were fairly numerous and various. Taveuni had a wide reputation for a certain paroquet, the feathers of which were held to be very valuable. Frequently Tongan women were lent to the Fijians for a handful of these feathers. Wild ducks of several varieties, pigeons, cockatoos, herons, hawks, owls, and sea-fowl there were in great quantity. Since the advent of the European many others have been introduced. Fish swarm in the rivers and amongst the reefs, and the Fijians have become expert fishermen. Turtles especially are plentiful in many parts of the islands.

The country has always been free from venomous reptiles and noxious insects. The snakes principally inhabit the water, and are of a harmless variety. The centipede and scorpion, though they give a painful bite, are not numerous nor poisonous enough to constitute any danger. Insects abound everywhere. Scarcely a foot of country can be found that is not swarming with this life. Butterflies of brilliant colours flit from shrub to shrub; ants rival the sea-sand for multitude; cockroaches ply their trade of scavenger with industry, and grow to astonishing size; beetles of iridescent colours hurry about their business; while innumerable flies and energetic mosquitoes all tend to deliver life from monotony.

The flora of the country is extremely interesting. Flowers are, on the whole, few; but any lack in this respect is amply made up by the inimitable shades of foliage. Fiji possesses many excellent woods of great utility, and some of considerable commercial value. Its palms and wonderful creeping plants luxuriate everywhere. The soil is rich in roots. Food is given by kindly Nature without stint. It must have been upon some such sun-blessed isles as these that Enoch Arden was cast, for his description fits Fiji exactly.

> No want was there of human sustenance,
> Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing roots.

Fiji has ever been, by reason of its climate and soil, an 'Eden of all plenteousness.'

A separate volume—not a mere paragraph in a short chapter—deserves to be written of the beauty of Fijian scenery. At present, Fiji is but little known to the tourist world; and when visitors do come, it is difficult and expensive to get beyond the European towns. Each year, however, is taking away these reproaches. The colony is gradually becoming known by reason of the 'All Red' route, whose boats call at the capital, and the Government is now making some efforts to advertise the islands. The lover of nature who has lived only in Wordsworth's country, and seen only the tamer beauties of colder climes, is almost intoxicated by the strong wine of tropical beauty. There is a tang of freshness and also a wealth of colour which, though full of contrast, is never garish. The interest is not likely soon to weary of—

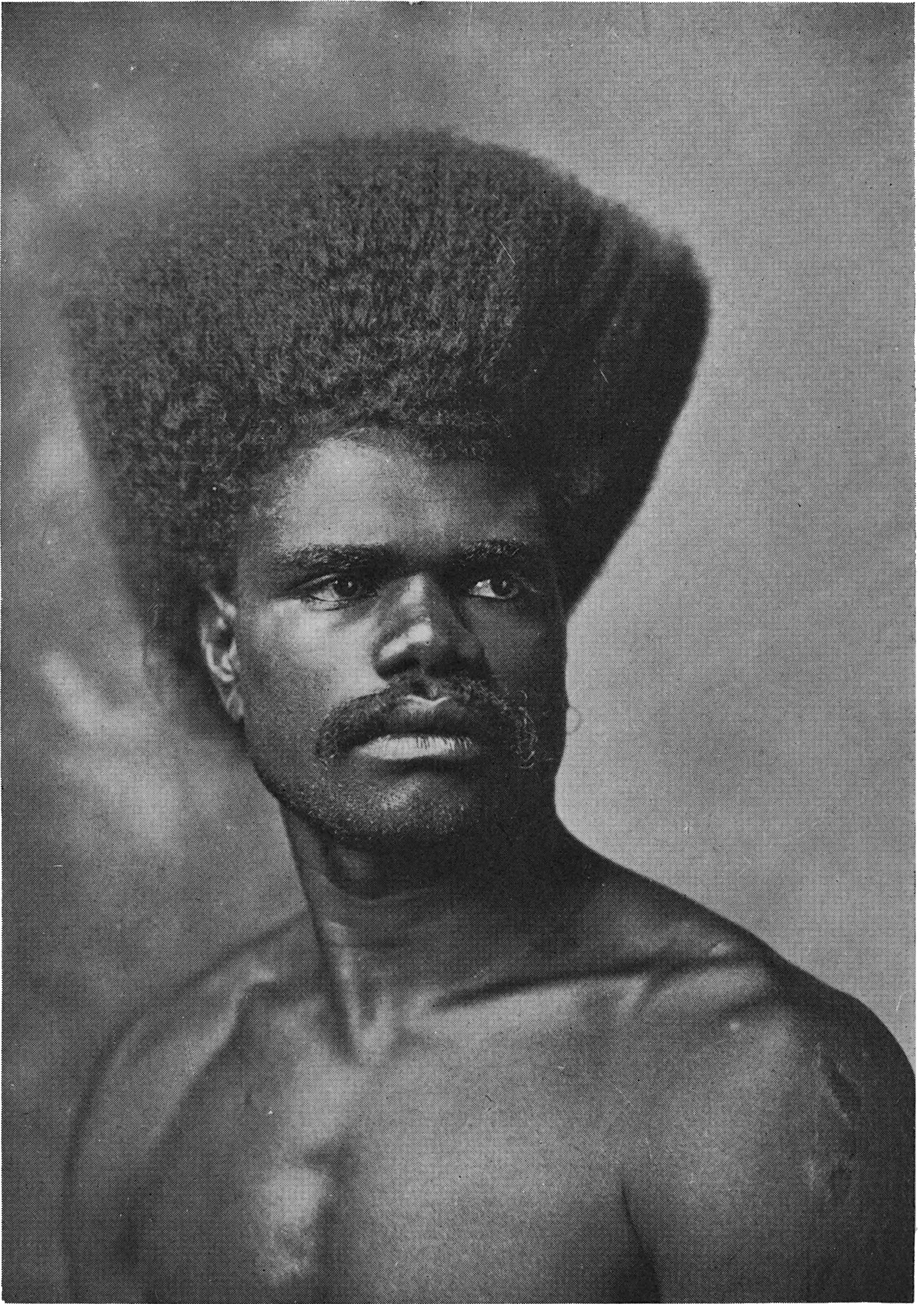
> The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,
> The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
> The lustre of the long convolvuluses
> That coil around the stately stems,
> The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
> The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
> The moving whisper of huge trees.

In the interior of Viti Levu, there is mountain scenery probably unsurpassed in any tropical country, and the quaint russet-brown villages peeping out

from among the greenest of vegetation add a human interest to the picture. Beautiful limestone caves with crystal-tipped stalactites and stalagmites are there in which to wander. Hot springs, with waters of healing charm, bubble merrily beneath huge palms. Placid rivers 'steeled by breezeless air to smoothest polish,' reflect the brown faces and comely shoulders of the women who paddle the canoe. Cascading waterfalls, shell-strewn beaches, and shady groves each adapt themselves to the mood of the traveller. Then there is the reef! Perhaps the most beautiful thing in the whole world is a coral reef. No description can make its charm felt. To the man of scientific taste, it is suggestive of a thousand facts and theories; to the artist, it is a study in colour; and to the most *blasé* sight-seer, it offers an experience of novelty—for the reef is like nothing else in the two hemispheres. The traveller as he drifts idly in a boat over the waters approaching the reef, looks down upon a garden of living coral, blossoming with a range of colour that seems infinite. Numerous tiny fishes of rainbow tints—blue, yellow, green, crimson, and gold—dart nervously amongst the slender stems of coral. Now and again, a vivid splash of light is caused by the flash of a large fish which, at the approach of the boat's shadow, seeks refuge in some more secure retreat. If the eyes be lifted from the beauty beneath, there

are awaiting them on the surface colours only less subtle. The deepest ultramarine blue shades to the most delicate green, in response to the varying depths of the water acted upon by the turquoise sky. When the higher portion of the reef is reached, the visitor must wade in the shallow water with the fragile coral crunching beneath his feet. Thick black *bêche-de-mer* lie on the patches of white sand only just covered by the rippling water. Here and there spotted glistening sea-snakes glide stealthily into shadowy crevices. Ugly shapeless octopi wave angry arms and scurry under broken pieces of coral rock, upon which lazy blue star-fish sprawl. Gentle anemones flower in huge beds, and amongst them prickly sea-urchins move. Sometimes a jelly-fish with a horribly human face stares up at the invader. Living shells covered with slimy film delight the heart of the conchologist and draw forth superlative exclamations from the seeker. Beautiful cowries—white, spotted, and orange—cling to hard rocks or nestle in soft sponges. Delicate spirals, that a touch will crush, lie under the shelter of huge clams in which a child may bathe. Where the reef is dry, busy hermit crabs, conscious of theft, scamper sidelong across the sand, which is stippled over with little mounds wherein exquisite shells lie buried. Forward, at the very edge of the reef, the dark-blue ocean thunders in. The waves curl, and in their

because of many singular advantages, is likely to extend still more in the near future. The days of prosperity have only commenced. Vast areas of land lie under a genial sun and abundant rainfall, awaiting the coming of enterprise. Mineral wealth is locked up in the earth, and needs the magic key of industry to give it release. Manufactures will grow and add their quota to the prosperity of the country; and the islands of Fiji will be recognized by the world as one of the contributors to its material advance.



A COMMON TYPE OF FIJIAN

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# CHAPTER II

## THE PEOPLE OF FIJI

Every human heart is human.

LONGFELLOW, *Hiawatha.*

THE origin of the Fijian race is still shrouded in mystery—a mystery which patient research may do much to pierce. Recently, a 'Fijian Society' has been inaugurated in Suva, and it is to be hoped that the various data collected by it will be the means of shedding some light upon the early history of this interesting people.

They, in common with other Polynesian tribes, possess no literature, and even in their oldest legends there is no hint of any immigration to Fiji. In this latter respect they differ from the Maori, whose tales of large canoes and stormy seas on the long, long voyage are so full of romance. The Fijians themselves believe that they have always inhabited these islands, and account for the differences in colour between themselves and other races in the following way: 'All are said to have been born of one pair of first parents. The Feejeean was born first, but acted wickedly, and was black;

he therefore received but little clothing. The Tongan was next born; he acted less wickedly, was whiter, and had more clothes given him. White men, or *papalangis*, came last; they acted well, were white, and had plenty of clothes.'[1] We may reject this as a scientific explanation of the origin of the race, even though we have no better to put in its place.

The Fijian is a strange link between two distinct types of peoples—the Eastern and the Western Polynesian. In many ways he combines characteristics which, though not distinctive, are to be found in each; and this fact may point to a common source from which the Fijian is a less mixed descendant. The Eastern peoples of the Pacific have a decided strain of Mongolian blood, which accounts for the lighter colour and flatter faces; whereas the Western natives—including the Papuan and the negroid races of the Solomons and New Britain—are much darker in hue and sharper in feature. But while the Fijians, in physical features, resemble the Western races, in language and custom they approximate rather to the Eastern tribes of Polynesia. It would seem almost certain that the original stock of these peoples contained both African and Asiatic blood. Those who emigrated west were more influenced by the African, and those who

[1] Lawry's *Visit to the Friendly Islands and to the Feejee*, p. 270.

moved east by the Asiatic element. Some traces of Asiatic descent are found amongst the Fijians in the worship of certain upright stones of phallic significance, and corresponding to the *linga* worship of Hinduism. The sacredness of the snake and its religious value as a symbol of eternity find parallel in the ophiolatry of both India and Africa. The Fijian language bears marks of Aryan formation, and, strangest of all, quite a respectable list of words can be drawn up in which may be traced, by the ordinary rules of mutation, relationship to the Sanscrit tongue. The Fijian custom of allowing special prerogatives to the *vasu* or nephew is also found among the Tamil and Telugu people. The physical characteristics of the Fijian—frizzy hair, thick lips, rough skin, and lustreless colour—proclaim him a blood relation of the African, and one cannot fail to observe the similarity in his manners and temperament with those of the Baganda. Yet, on the whole, the Fijian is superior to the negro. He is above middle height, and possesses a muscular development far above the average. The chiefs especially are finely-made men, and, so far as physical perfection is concerned, much superior to the average European. Captain Erskine thus describes Cakobau: 'It was impossible not to admire the appearance of the chief: of large, almost gigantic, size, his limbs were beautifully formed and

proportioned; his countenance, with far less of the negro cast than among the lower orders, agreeable and intelligent; while his immense head of hair, covered and concealed with gauze, smoke-dried and slightly tinged with brown, gave him altogether the appearance of an Eastern sultan. No garment confined his magnificent chest and neck or concealed the natural colour of his skin, a clear but decided black; in spite of this paucity of attire—the evidence which surrounded him showing that it was a matter of choice and not of necessity—he looked "every inch a king."' This description could be used of most of the great hereditary chiefs of Fiji; and though the men of to-day have lost much of the old-time dignity and kingly mien, they remain splendid specimens of well-developed humanity. The women, as a whole, are much inferior both in development and good looks. The better-looking and superior females of the race are mostly of foreign strain. Thus in the Cakobau family, the good looks are accounted for by the infusion of Tongan blood. Adi Cakobau, the grand-daughter of the old king, is usually considered the highest type of Fijian beauty; but she is half-caste Tongan and Fijian.

The Fijian's physical senses are well cultivated. His keenness of sight, sensitiveness to touch and smell, and power of hearing are all remarkable.

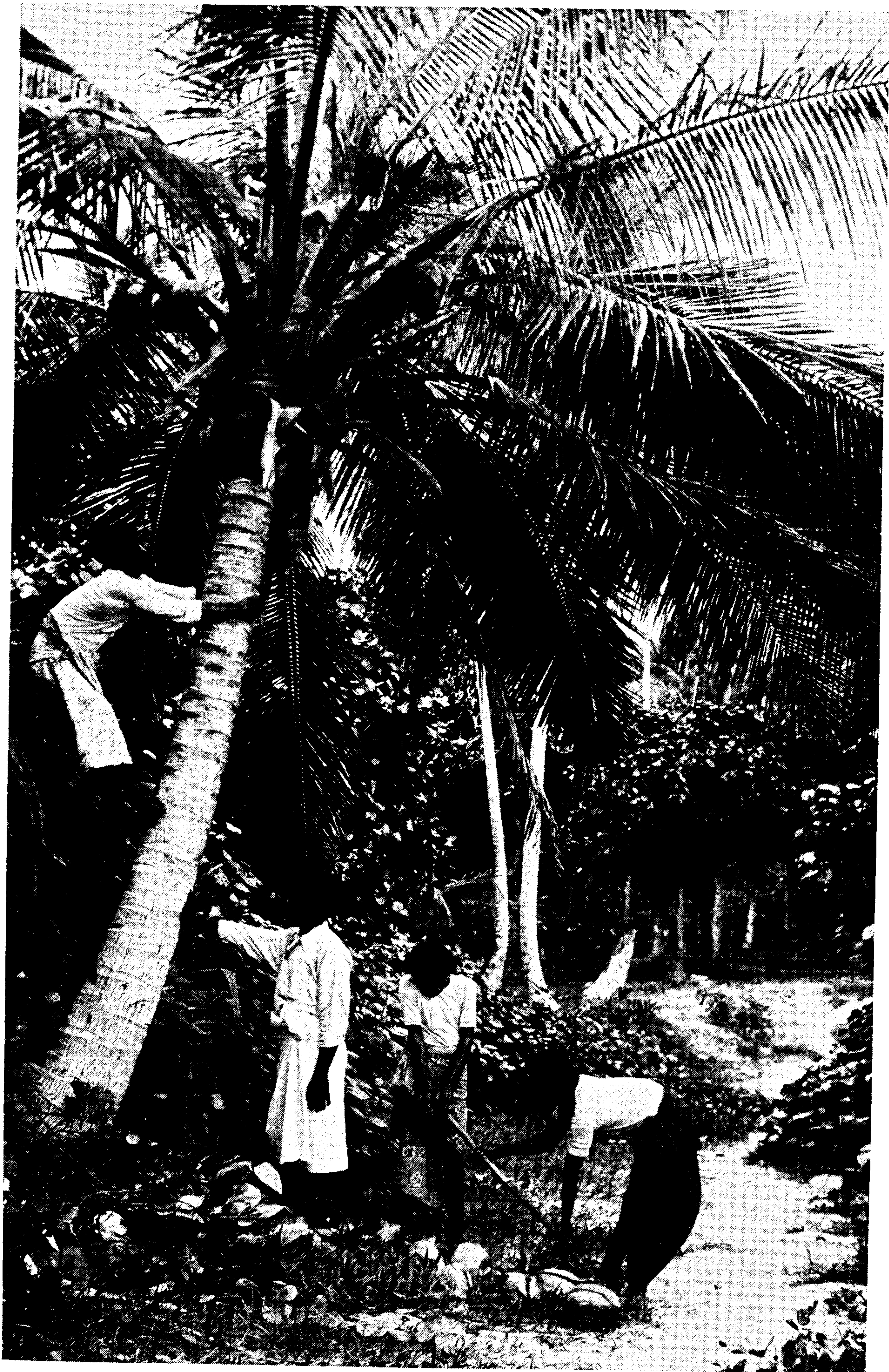
His powers of endurance are only of moderate measure. He is a wonderful worker in spasmodic efforts or as one of a huge company, the members of which can help each other by excitement; but as an individual he lacks the capacity and stamina to undertake continuous and unrelaxed tasks. This is due, in large measure, to his diet and to his past training.

Probably where the Fijian appears to the best advantage is in his remarkable genius for improvisation. This is a sign of latent power. As a travelling companion in his own land he has no peer. He seems always master of the situation—if he chooses to exert himself. Is cordage wanted for the baggage? He goes unerringly to the vine that a team of wild horses could not break. Is a knife required? He has a sharp shell, or a strip of bamboo with a razor edge, at hand. Is the creek too wide to cross? He has felled a sapling or a fern-tree with that wonderful fourteen-inch knife of his, and has made a bridge while the white man is wiping a perspiring brow. Does a shower threaten to wet the luggage? He has taken the inner leaves of the banana and has transformed them, by the aid of a fire made with a few dried twigs, into a covering as flexible as oiled silk and as waterproof as mackintosh. Is the white man thirsty? The native has climbed a tree with the agility of a

monkey and is husking coco-nuts at its base, upon a pointed stick thrust in the ground, in as little time as it takes to tell; and in a few minutes a delicious, sparkling beverage is at the traveller's lips. He is an agreeable, cheerful companion, never at his wits' end, and always going to Nature to help him in his difficulties. He has learnt the secret, though in a somewhat different sense, that 'Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.'

He possesses a good command of himself, and is a past-master in the art of concealing his real feelings. Language, he imagines, was given to conceal thought, and he employs it frequently for that purpose. He has a naïve and sometimes even a terse way of putting things, and, as a rule, is very clear and definite in his statements—when he intends to be so. He has also a keen sense of humour—which is not frequently the case among savage races. Perhaps the humour from a European standard is slightly coarse; but often in jest and badinage the Fijian shows a surprising subtlety.

He is proud and exceedingly vain. He is proud of his birth, and no insult can be greater than that which takes the blueness out of his blood—even though he be the lowest commoner. He is vain of his personal appearance; and one is often surprised to see an otherwise sensible Fijian spending an unconscionable amount of time before a sixpenny



REFRESHMENT BY THE WAYSIDE [*Facing page* 44

mirror, combing his hair and admiring his person. To-day European clothing furnishes him with much opportunity for foppishness, especially in the English centres.

The native is not naturally truthful. Of course, there are some men who more or less habitually speak the truth, but they are the exception. A man must be cautioned not to speak *vakaviti*—after the manner of Fiji—else he may not even attempt to put accuracy into his statements. He is, as a rule, a many-faced man—one for almost every type of mind with which he comes into contact. Much of this characteristic arises out of his natural disposition to oblige and to say the thing that he knows he is wanted to say.

The Fijian has very little sense of natural beauty. The race is never likely to produce any Turners or Wordsworths. The sunset, the earth with its subtle tints, and the sky with its delicate baldachino of white clouds, make no appeal to him. Garish colours are his delight; and a certain bizarre taste in ornamentation is all his pretension in the realms of art. Yet he has a distinct and well-developed musical sense, and some of the original songs of the natives have been pronounced by musical critics to be of a high order as compositions.

The native is naturally polite—to superiors. His language is full of flattering expressions and almost

Oriental in its wealth of compliment. He is hospitable in the extreme, and always ready to share his last yam. But he expects reciprocity.

He is a great lover of ceremony. His life has been steeped in it. Many of these older forms are passing away, and the reader who wishes to inquire concerning them must refer to that classic upon Fijian life and custom, Williams' *Fiji and the Fijians.* A great deal of ceremony is still observed in connexion with the drinking of the old national beverage —the *yaqona*—the *kava* of the South Seas and the *Piper methysticum* of botany. This is prepared from the root of the plant and has a peculiar narcotic effect. In moderation it is harmless, and perhaps slightly beneficial as a thirst quencher, but in excess it produces severe inflammation of the eyes, deadness in the lower limbs, and a fishy scaliness upon the skin. The root is pounded (in the old days it was *chewed* by youths and maidens), cast into a special wooden bowl, and macerated with water. The solid matter is then extracted by means of a wisp of hybiscus fibre, and a muddy-looking liquid is left behind. The beverage is drunk from coco-nut bowls, and to spin back this shell to its proper place is a polite accomplishment much admired by the Fijian. *Yaqona*, in addition to being a beverage, is the champagne of Fijian society and the necessary accompaniment of all official functions.

The natives love feasting—beyond even the English. They are prolific in invention of occasions for a feast. Marriages, funerals, baptisms, tribal conferences, missionary meetings, quarterly meetings, synods, launching boats, opening churches, and entering new houses—all are opportunities it would be folly to let slip. Usually there is a great deal of waste at these feasts, and, to a cultivated European, much that is disgusting. Pigs, cattle, fowls, turtle, fish, yams, taro, sweet potatoes, bread-fruit, native puddings, &c., more or less cooked, are presented by one tribe to another and then devoured by both parties in a very un-Lord-Mayor-banquet style. Their prandial arrangements are simple in the extreme. Hot stones are the ovens, earthen pots are the saucepans, and banana leaves the meat-dishes. The table appointments are as primitive as they can well be. Mussel shells are the soup spoons, fingers and thumbs are knives and forks, and coco-nut shells do duty for cut-glass. Their tastes are scarcely those of the epicure, and quantity rather than quality is the chief consideration.

Their dress is exceedingly sensible, and the early missionaries deserve all praise for inventing one so well suited to their needs and to the climate. The men wear a singlet, shirt or coat, with a loin-cloth, of calico or other material, reaching to the knees. The women wear a longer loin-cloth or a skirt, with

a loosely-fitting pinafore. Among the better class of natives quite good taste is displayed in the choice of colour and material. Gradually English clothing is coming into more general use, chiefly for purposes of ornamentation; but this is a matter to be deplored rather than otherwise. The simple dress suffices all needs, and has the additional merit of being picturesque. In the old days loin-cloths of *masi*—the beaten fibre of the paper mulberry—were much worn, and this material is still considered befitting for a chief and 'correct form' for official functions and ceremonies.

The Fijians are fond of games, and the race possesses a number of ancient and skilful amusements. These are, however, mostly passing into desuetude, and cricket and football are taking their place. Recently a team of Fijian cricketers visited Australia, and, although they were not able to engage in 'first-class cricket,' they were able to show a considerable amount of skill in this acknowledgedly difficult game.

The people delight to amuse themselves by means of *mekes*—a rhythmic dance or action-song. These are, as a rule, somewhat tame affairs; but their charm is to be found in the perfect time kept and the gracefulness of some of the movements. Even the club and spear *mekes* lack abandon, and are not to be compared with the wild frenzy of the Maori

THE *MEKE*—A NATIVE DANCE

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*haka*. One could scarcely imagine their nerving a man for battle; but then the Fijian in the old days did not require nerve. He found low cunning and foul stratagem his most effective allies. The *meke* is usually accompanied by a native band squatting on the ground hard by, and making strange tom-tom noises with hollow bamboos, wooden drums, and strips of wood.

The marriage customs of the present day approximate to those of Christendom. Marriages are, as a rule, arranged by the older members of the tribe; and considerations of land and local prejudices give a tendency towards inbreeding—especially in the alliances of cousins. 'Love matches' are gradually obtaining recognition, and occasionally quite romantic elopements take place. A most popular form of 'popping the question' is by letter, and the most remarkable feature about these tender missives is the total absence of sentiment. A love-sick swain will declare that he is drawn to his lady-love, not by her sympathetic eyes and sweet smile, but because she makes mats and native puddings well, or is not likely to be wanted by any one else! There seems outwardly to be very little of what we understand by domestic affection; but the Fijian counts it a weakness to show any signs of attachment for his wife, and so there may be more regard beneath the surface than we know. The native finds it very difficult

to understand our social customs of offering an arm to a lady or of showing marked attention to the other sex. There is not the freedom between men and women to which we are accustomed, and probably it is in the best interests of the people, at present, that such should not be the case. Even yet it is not usual for the Fijian wife to presume to eat with her lord and master.

Usually the native eats twice a day. One meal at about ten in the morning corresponds to our breakfast, and is generally fairly substantial. He eats again at three or four in the afternoon. Between meals he may have little 'snacks'; but these are not considered necessary. The menu is, on the whole, varied. Gradually, through the introduction of European foods, the Fijian is forsaking his primal simplicity and developing a taste for luxuries. Vegetables of various kinds he has in abundance. Nuts and fruits are obtained from the bush. Fish is plentiful on the coasts, and shell-fish strew the beds of the rivers. He has a variety of puddings made with *lolo* (the milk of the coco-nut). The native bread deserves a word. It is made from taro and other vegetables, then buried in the ground for several months until it ferments and putrefies. It is then dug up and eaten with relish! The stench from it is clinging and acute beyond all imaginable stenches, and it takes hours before European nostrils

get rid of it. To-day, near the centres of civilization, English bread is very popular. Hard ship-biscuits are also much eaten, and all kinds of tinned meat and fish (specially put up as 'trade' articles) find ready purchasers among the people. Cereals, unfortunately, are not appreciated by the Fijians as they deserve to be. Such an addition to the food staples of the race would be of great value. Rice is gradually becoming more popular; but maize, a most excellent food, is practically untouched.

Though the Fijian must be classed among the uncivilized races of the world, yet he is not without skill in manufacture and agriculture. He is a true son of Adam, and has learned how to make the earth minister to his needs. Yams were often grown to a length of 6 or 8 feet, and weighed as much as 100 pounds. The *kumala* (sweet potato) was made to grow exceedingly well, and the cultivation of the taro was almost an art. In some places quite extensive irrigation was provided for the root crops. Bananas, plantains, *yaqona*, and tapioca were, and still are, most carefully cultivated. The agricultural implements in the old days were simply sticks, pointed and hardened with fire. Now, however, while the digging-stick is still in general use, there are, in addition, spades and long grass-knives in most native gardens. To the use of the plough the Fijian is yet a stranger.

The people did not rise to the invention of weaving, but discovered in its stead that the paper mulberry had a fibre which could be beaten out, pasted together with starch made from *dalo*, or tapioca, and made into a fairly serviceable cloth, called *masi*. It is still manufactured. Bizarre and crude designs are cut out in a banana leaf, which is then used as a stencil-plate, and the *masi* thus marked with dyes obtained from various roots and shrubs. In basket-making and mat-plaiting they do not equal many of the Pacific peoples; but, nevertheless, they make some strong and useful articles. Nets for fishing are made from certain vines, and the husk of the coco-nut is heckled out and plaited into a singularly strong cord called sinnet. This was used in the construction of canoes and houses, and is still considered a valuable product. The art of pottery did not rise to any great height; but Fiji obtained a Pacific reputation for the excellence of its vessels. These are made out of a coarse, red clay, slightly baked, and left as fragile as an ordinary earthenware flower-pot. Remarkable to say, they discovered the art of glazing—not with salt, which would have made a stable surface, but—with a resin from the bush which easily chipped off. Salt was procured by evaporation, and the salt thus prepared is still preferred by natives to the imported article on account of its more pungent qualities.

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THE FIJIANS ARE PROBABLY THE BEST HOUSE-BUILDERS IN THE PACIFIC

In house-building they have few, if any, equals in the Pacific. The structures are strong, durable, cool and comfortable, and quite picturesque. The timbers are cut and shaped in the bush, dressed with adzes and tied into place with cords of sinnet. The thatch is made of rushes or of sugar-cane leaves, cunningly fastened to scraped reeds tied to the rafters.

In canoe-building the Fijians excelled. In the first place, their excellent timbers gave them a great advantage. Huge double canoes, 100 feet in length and 50 in breadth, were fashioned by them with only the rudest implements. In these they were able to sail from island to island and crossed to Tonga — 200 miles over the open ocean. It has always seemed a strange thing that the Maori, with his superior intellect, invented neither the double canoe nor the single one with an out-rigger. The addition of the out-rigger makes the canoe safe and also allows of sailing. The Fijian made his sails of woven grasses, and these were exceedingly strong. To-day canoe-building is rapidly becoming a forgotten art. The English boat is taking the place of these interesting crafts. The natives possess an astonishing number of boats, cutters, and punts. Just lately they have commenced to purchase motor launches—proving their preference for the most advanced civilization.

Manufacture, in the days gone by, was true to the derivation of its name. Things were literally made by hand. The clubs, spears, bowls, wooden pillars, &c., were carved out of rough timbers with the most laborious effort, the only instruments being stone axes and sharp shells. Combs and cannibal forks were ornamented with much pains, though with but little art. These old manufactures are now becoming valuable because of their scarcity; and to supply the demand some of these articles are being made in China and Japan and shipped to Fiji —for the tourist.

The social conditions of the people require a word here—though they will be more fully noticed at a later stage in the book. The Fijians through long generations have combined a primitive socialism with a most relentless despotism. This paradoxical state of life accounts for many of the strange customs of the people. Under the truculent hegemony of a powerful chief each little community made itself into a kingdom which was self-contained. Within that kingdom all things were common—especially to the chief. Different dialects tended to wall off one tribe from another; and war was of frequent occurrence. Congeries of towns would sometimes unite and place themselves under the aegis of some powerful chief, who, in return for the protection given, would exact stern dues from them. Thus arose a state similar to the old Saxon heptarchy. In those

The language of the people is related to nearly all the Polynesian dialects. It is simple, and on the whole effective. Its pronominal system, with the exclusive and inclusive form running through, has an advantage over English. With us the pronoun 'we' may either mean the speakers alone or also include the hearers. Such ambiguity is not possible in Fijian.

The vocabulary is very limited. It is rich in names of natural objects, of physical movements, and of domestic relationships; but exceedingly poor in words to express abstract ideas and mental distinctions. The early missionaries adapted the pronunciation of the English letters to suit Fijian speech with a view to making a phonetic language. This was, in itself, an excellent idea; but now that the Fijian is learning English, it is proving a stumbling-block. Before every *d* an *n* is sounded; before *b* there is a sound of *m*; *c* has the power of *th* as in *th*ink; *q* does duty for *nng*; while *g* always stands for *ng*. This means that when English names are translated into Fiji they must be changed in form. David would be pronounced by a native as Ndavinda. Cakobau is thus pronounced Thako-mbau. The vowels follow the 'Continental Latin' pronunciation, and no consonant in Fijian can be pronounced without the addition of a vowel.

RATU KADAVU LEVU, THE HIGHEST HEREDITARY CHIEF IN FIJI

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Already a literature is springing up in these islands. First and foremost must be placed the Fijian Bible, which was translated by John Hunt and others. It has recently been revised, and in its present form is a testimony to the painstaking labour of the late Dr. Frederick Langham. The earlier editions were printed in Fiji at the Mission Press; but latterly the British and Foreign Bible Society has undertaken the publishing. Already over 100,000 copies of the Old and New Testaments have been purchased, at full prices, by the Fijian people. Some theological manuals, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, school-books of various kinds, and a history of England constitute the chief reading of the natives. There are also published two excellent papers in the vernacular—*Na Mata* (The Herald), a Government publication, and the *Tukutuku Vakalotu* (Religious News), which is printed at the Methodist Mission Press and edited by the Rev. A. J. Small, chairman of the Fiji District.

The natives have taken enthusiastically to reading and writing, and, owing entirely to the Mission Schools, there must be very few under thirty years of age who cannot do both. The Fijian is frequently an excellent penman, and takes great pride in his handwriting—wherein he is an example to his teachers.

The following is a specimen of native style, and is a transcript of the Lord's Prayer in the Fijian tongue :—

Na Masumasu ni Turaga.

Tamai keimami mai lomalagi,
Me vakarokorokotaki na yacamuni.
Me yaco na nomuni lewa.
Me caka na lomamuni e vuravura
me vaka sa caka mai lomalagi.
Solia mai vei keimami e na siga oqo
na kakana e yaga vei keimami.
Ia kakua ni cudruvi keimami
e na vuku ni neimami valavala ca,
me vaka keimami sa sega ni cudruvi ira
era sai valavala ca vei keimami.
Ia kakua ni kauti keimami ki na vere,
ka mo ni vakabulai keimami mai na ca:
Ni sa nomuni na lewa, kei na kaukauwa,
kei na vakarokoroko, ka sega ni mudu.
Emeni.

# CHAPTER III

## HOW FIJI ENTERED THE EMPIRE

God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle-line—
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
  Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

KIPLING, *The Recessional.*

HISTORY is full of romances, and Fiji has a not uninteresting chapter to add to the volume. Though these islands are so small—mere specks on the world's map—yet they furnished an arena for intrigue, plot and counterplot, which it would be difficult to match even in civilized lands. Like most history, the record of Fijian affairs is composed of the deeds of a few outstanding personalities. Of these, though there were many others nearly his equal, the world knows Cakobau as the chief; and the story of how he came to his power has been told most vividly in Waterhouse's *King and People of Fiji.*

We are safe in concluding that there was never a

time when the islands of Fiji were bound into one kingdom. The race had no conception of Empire in our sense of the word. Patriotism, such as it was, rarely went beyond the borders of their own villages, and sometimes scarcely beyond their own individual gardens. Each village, or cluster of villages, was a separate unit and a law unto itself. It was under the sway of some hereditary chief whose ancestors, by stronger arm or more cunning brain, had won authority. For political purposes and for mutual defence against some common enemy or marauding tribe, 'treaties' and 'triple alliances,' after the fashion of Europe, were made. Thus one chief sometimes found himself at the head of a powerful combination, and too frequently proceeded to use his privileges for his own personal ends. When the ruling monarch became too overbearing he was sometimes reminded that he held his power by the will of the people and that he might be crushed by popular revolt. As time went on this authority, which had in the first place been won by prowess in war or cunning in affairs, was held to have been bestowed by deities; and hence arose in Fiji also 'the divine right of kings.'

Tradition among the people does not go back any great distance; but in the middle of the eighteenth century, it is known, Tongan influence was strongly felt in Fiji. Commerce between the

'Fourth Party' in the wrangle of Fijian politics; and, after the manner of that other famous combination, succeeded in making it troublesome for the rest of the body politic. Alliances by marriage were formed with Rewa, and hence Bau definitely shifted its weight of influence to that kingdom. It was, therefore, opposed to Verata. The Verata tribe was strong and, to some extent, courageous; and under level conditions was a match for both Rewa and Bau. Had those conditions remained equal the whole history of Fiji might have been changed. But 'the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.' In 1809, Charles Savage, a wild, shipwrecked sailor, came to Bau, and brought with him a good supply of muskets and ammunition. He gathered about him some other European desperadoes and formed them into a fighting unit. That unit was purchased by Bau. The price received is too shameful to state. Bau, with the aid of foreign weapons and brains, became invincible; and King Naulivou was soon able to bring Verata into subjection. The bravest bodies could not stay the deadly enfilade of the new missiles. It was really the accident of foreign help which raised Bau to the position of first power in Fiji. In 1829—just before the arrival of the missionaries—Bau was at the zenith of its influence. Supported by Rewa, war was waged against Eastern Fiji; and the two

chiefs of Bau and Rewa had obtained such authority and inspired such dread that they were named the Two Hot Stones—meaning thereby that they could cook whom they would.

Upon the death of Naulivou in 1829, Tanoa, the brother of the late king and the father of Cakobau, came to the throne. Cakobau was then a lad of twelve years. He had been brought up at Rewa, to which town he was *vasu* (nephew—and thus holding, according to Fijian custom, a unique relationship and special prerogatives). When he came back to Bau as a youth, he found a gay city, full of the most beautiful women in Fiji, and proud in the glory it had newly won. He also found it sodden with human blood—for the great war canoes were constantly going forth on man-hunting expeditions and returning with captives either bound or slain. The name of Seru (the Comb) was given to him, and he spent his youth amid the most callous bloodshed and blackest intrigue. After his father had reigned three years, the people became dissatisfied with his harsh and cruel rule, and formed a plot to expel him from Bau. This was partially, and would have been wholly, successful but for the counterplot of the lad Seru. Tanoa was indeed exiled; but 'the boy,' who had been counted a negligible quantity, beat the drum of counter-revolt; and so well laid were his plans that he had the pleasure of wel-

coming back to the dominions of Bau the king, his father. He had also the gloating satisfaction of sending his proud enemies to the cannibal ovens to come forth as food for his fellow conspirators. Because of his cunning and stealth, and also in reference to his power to inflict sudden and painful injury, he was called *Cikinovu*—the Centipede. The Bau chiefs bestowed upon the young man the complimentary title of the *Bi*—the Turtle Fence—hinting thereby that he was able to enclose men and leave them to wait the pleasure of his appetite as though they were turtle. His enemies commonly called him *Cakobau*—literally, Bad is Bau; and, on the principle that a bad name sticks better than a good one, by that he is most generally known.

Tanoa being infirm, the power gradually came into the hands of Cakobau. Crafty he was beyond even the Tongan, cruel beyond even the fiercest savage, and truculent in his every disposition. Hostilities broke out between Bau and Rewa. It must be said, to Cakobau's credit, that he was not responsible for them; but when he found that he had been the object of treacherous designs, he was not slow to seize the opportunity that presented itself for revenge. His fury knew no bounds, and the blows that he struck were savage and merciless. He found himself, upon the death of Tanoa in 1852, the most powerful chief in Fiji. European consuls

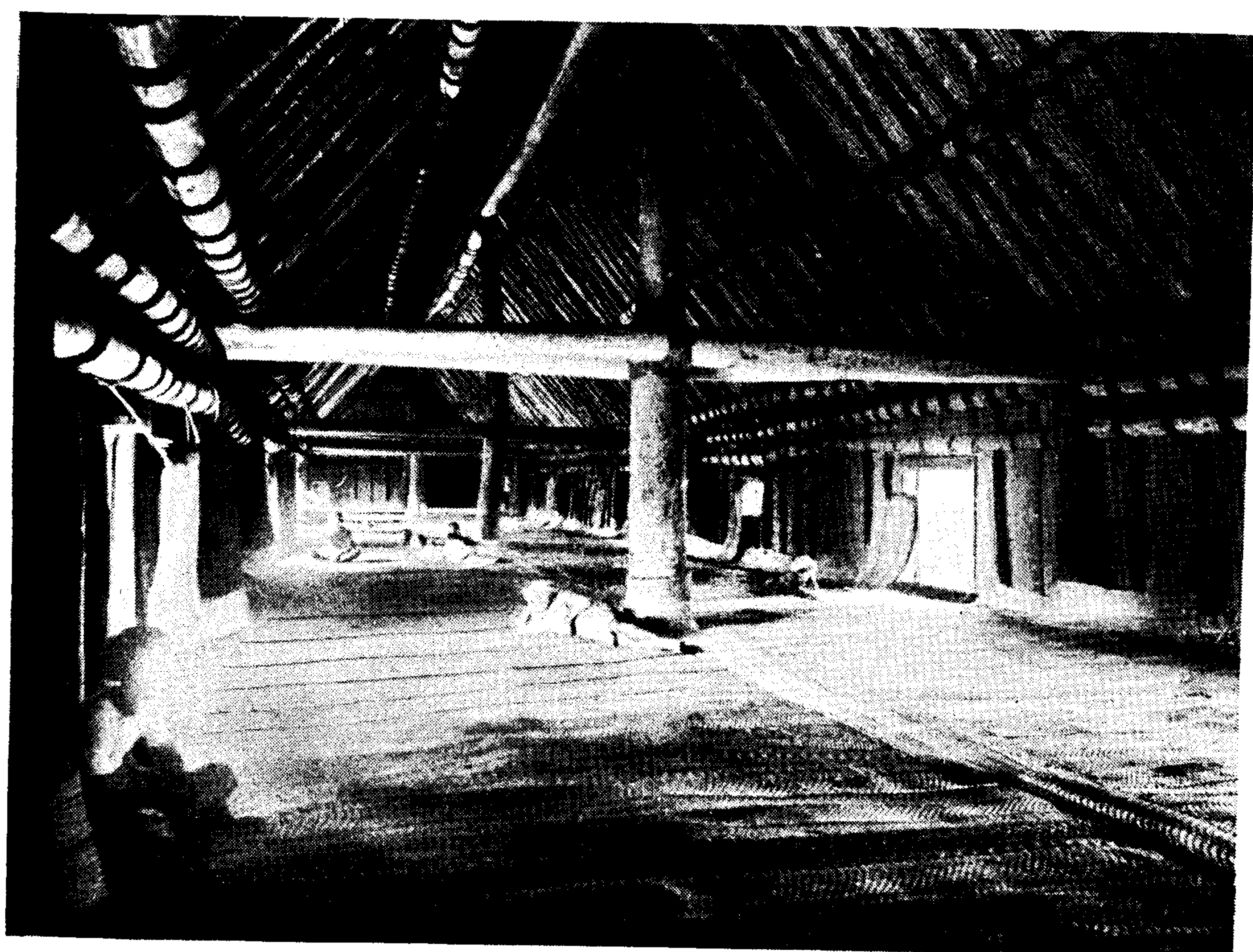
recognized him as the 'king' of Fiji, and when he came to the throne he adopted this title. But, in reality, he had not the slightest right to it. His influence was restricted; and there were other principalities in the group which had never paid tribute to Bau, and which not even his force could subjugate. He also received the distinction of being called *Vunivalu*—the Root of War. To this he had more right, and the title had much the significance that our English word Admiral or Commander-in-chief has. Then Cakobau's troubles commenced. He found, as many another monarch has done, that 'uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'

By this time European settlement had commenced, and vessels frequently visited Fiji for purposes of trade. Cakobau now found that he was being toasted on his own spit, and that other tribes could buy European brains and weapons. The Tongans also, who had been his allies, gave him much trouble. Maafu, a Tongan chief residing at Lau, was constantly putting the Bauan king into check. Maafu was a bold and adventurous spirit, and possessed a genius for political complication. He was, also, a much more enlightened man than Cakobau; and many of the whites, especially in Eastern and Middle Fiji, sided with him and opposed the Bauan. At length the position became so critical that

Cakobau was obliged to call in the help of King George of Tonga, and by means of that assistance he was enabled to gain, temporarily, some of his lost influence. He loaded the Tongan king with presents, after the fashion of those times, and thought that his difficulties were likely to be at an end. They had only well commenced; for George of Tonga had other fish to fry, and he put in a claim, which was recognized by European consuls, for £12,000 as payment for services rendered, and for good Tongan blood spilt in Cakobau's interests.

Then followed the trouble with America, which was the catalytic agent in bringing about the dissolution of his kingdom and its consequent annexation by Great Britain. This incident, if documents tell the truth, is not very creditable to the United States. The house of the American consul took fire—how, it is not known; and during the conflagration his goods were pillaged by the Fijians. Cakobau was in no sense responsible for this; but he received a bill for damages to the extent of 3,006 dollars 12½ cents! By degrees, the amount swelled to 30,000 dollars; and Cakobau, under force and threats of violence, was made to acknowledge it. He was unable to pay; and so Cousin Jonathan had a 'corner' in Fijian affairs, and proceeded to engineer this 'trust' in a manner that is strangely modern.

CAKOBAU'S FUNERAL AT BAU



INTERIOR OF THE STRANGERS' HOUSE AT BAU

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States ; but the anxious monarch waited in vain for any definite reply.

Just at this stage, the company-promoter came on the scene. A syndicate was formed in Melbourne, under the name of the Polynesian Company, to take over Cakobau's liabilities and to relieve him of the burden of state affairs. In return for these services, the company was to have the right to levy customs-duties, and to hold the fee simple of some 200,000 acres of land. A charter was drawn up and signed by 'Ebenezer Cakobau, Na Vunivalu, King of Fiji (his **X** mark).' This is a remarkable document, and evidently the promoters of the company had in mind the success of a similar arrangement in India two centuries earlier. A vigorous protest was made by the British consul, Mr. (afterwards, Sir) John B. Thurston, to the commanding officer of the Australian Squadron, who declared, in reply, that Cakobau had no such power, and that the company could not be allowed to exercise jurisdiction over British subjects. Troubles fell thick and fast upon the Polynesian Company. The land promised by Cakobau, it was discovered, was not his to sell ; and even his influence was not strong enough to make the owners give it up. The most that could be obtained was some 90,000 acres of inferior land. The company refused to pay the Fijian king the 1,000 dollars they had promised ; nor did Cakobau

ever sail in that 'topsail schooner of from 70 tons to 80 tons register, with five small guns on either side' as, by terms of the charter, he had every right to expect.

Various futile attempts had been made to establish a constitutional government, with Cakobau as king. Much of the history of those days reads like pantomime. 'At a meeting of whites held at Bau in May, 1869, an old settler, of a facetious turn of mind, drew a fanciful picture of an empty treasury, and the harrowing troubles the members of the government would have to face. He reminded them how, after proclaiming Cakobau king, in 1867, they employed a carpenter in Levuka to make him a handsome crown, richly jewelled with precious stones bought at a Levuka store; how the crown and gems had cost eighteen shillings, and had not been paid for up to that day; and he wound up his evil-predicting speech by warning his fellow settlers that, in event of their forming a government, this was a liability they were in honour bound to take over. However, undeterred by the responsibility, the meeting resolved to form a government, with Cakobau as the figure-head as king of Fiji; and his health was enthusiastically toasted in bumpers of the vile "gooseberry" which passed in the islands for champagne.' These attempts at government were not only humorous but abortive. Debts

piled up. The ministers of the crown could not obtain even paper upon which to reply to official communications! The Cakobau government was proclaimed bankrupt, and British subjects warned against giving credit. His Majesty's ministers, therefore, wisely advised the king to make another proposal for annexation to the British Government. The debts at the time stood at a sum of £85,000, and the treasury was empty.

A long lawyer-made deed of cession was drawn up, consisting of some nineteen articles. Cakobau was to have a pension of £2,000 annually and a gift of £1,000 to enable him to buy a vessel; his children were to be provided for after the manner of royal families; the hereditary chiefs of Fiji were to have princely salaries; and the lands were, with certain minor exceptions, to be vested in the Fijian people! It is difficult to see, from this deed of cession, what Great Britain would gain by annexation. Considering the parlous state of the Fijian government at the time, the deed has a distinctly humorous flavour.

The British Government this time had fuller information before it; and in 1874 Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor of New South Wales, was commissioned to proceed to Fiji to undertake negotiations. He told the king and chiefs plainly that if they really desired Great Britain to take

INSIGNIA OF EMPIRE

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over the islands of Fiji the offer must be made *unconditionally*, and that the Queen of England must be trusted to deal generously with the people. To this Cakobau agreed, and recognized it as a more chief-like way of arriving at an understanding.

The deed of cession upon which the annexation of these islands took place was remarkably short and simple, in striking contrast with the high-sounding document prepared previously. It ran as follows :—

> We, King of Fiji, together with other high chiefs of Fiji, hereby give our country, Fiji, unreservedly to her Britannic Majesty, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. And we trust and fully repose in her that she will rule Fiji justly and affectionately, that we may continue to live in peace and prosperity.

| | |
|---|---|
| CAKOBAU R. (Tui Viti and Vunivalu). | YAKA WALETABUA Tui Bua. |
| MAFU. | SAVENACA. |
| TUI CAKAU. | ISEKELI. |
| RATU EPELI. | ROKO TUI DREKETI. |
| NACAGILEVU. | RATU KINI. |
| RITOVA. | KATUMERE. |
| MATANITABUA. | |

This deed was formally signed on the tenth of October, 1874, and for the first time the British

flag floated over these islands of the Southern Seas.

Cakobau then handed his old war-club to Sir Hercules for presentation to Queen Victoria, and with it 'club law' passed for ever from these lands, and Fiji entered the Empire.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE NEW FIJI

> Man, once descried, imprints for ever
> His presence on all lifeless things; the winds
> Are henceforth voices, in a wail or shout,
> A querulous mutter, or a quick gay laugh—
> Never a senseless gust now man is born!
>
> BROWNING, *Paracelsus.*

WITH the hoisting of the British flag and the establishing of a settled Government, Fiji took her place among the countries of the civilized world and proceeded at once to justify her election. To-day she assumes all the importance and showy epaulettes of a crown colony. It is difficult to realize that, only a few decades ago, this was a land of cannibalism and savagery.

The average tourist seems to imagine that anything in the shape of clothing is good enough for the 'Islands,' and that a dress suit must, of necessity, be useless. Too often he thinks in a similar fashion concerning his manners. Be it therefore known unto all men (and especially women) that Fiji, in matters of etiquette and taste in dress, is not one

whit behind her more imposing neighbours in the Australasian States. Nor is her sense of social distinction any less keen. Her grades of society are numerous in the extreme—shading from the deep brown of the low caste coolie up to the sallowy white of the member of the aristocratic 'old family at home.' So let the visitor be on his guard.

Steamer communication with Fiji is exceedingly good. Lines from America, India, England, Australia, and New Zealand call regularly and frequently. The traveller will be surprised at the comfortable and up-to-date vessels he is invited to board at Sydney or Auckland. Should he embark at Vancouver or Brisbane, in Queensland, he will find a huge mail steamer with her turbine engines burring impatiently beneath her decks. She is bound for another continent, but cannot afford to miss so important a place as the New Fiji *en route*.

The stranger approaching these islands cannot fail to be charmed with the beauty of the scenery—especially if it be his first visit to the tropics. The ruthless hand of Commerce has not yet touched the wild grandeur of the mountains, nor has its breath dulled the vivid greens of the vegetation. Here colour seems a thing vital, and almost throbs beneath the blue sky vaulting these 'summer isles of Eden lying in dark purple spheres of sea.' The beholder is now able to invest Shakespeare's phrase, 'Framed

along its sides, comes as a surprise to the visitor. He had visions of a surf-boat and well-oiled natives carrying him ashore! Whilst waiting for the doctor to grant pratique and for the brass-buttoned customs-officer to seal up the ship, the sightseer leans over the rail and revels in the beauty of the town of Suva. It is built on the water front and stretches back over the uneven hills. The red-oxide roofs of the bungalows blend artistically with the multitudinous greens of the foliage in which they are partly hidden. Colours that, if laid upon canvas in more sober lands and beneath greyer skies, would seem profanity, lie side by side in perfect amity, in these 'breadths of tropic shade.' Yet he cannot help admitting that he is somewhat disappointed that the town is so English and civilized in appearance.

The steamer berths at the wharf, and the jetties are thronged with crowds of strange peoples. These furnish the romance the stranger is seeking and which he found missing in the town. Soon these delightful people, in language unintelligible, are quarrelling with one another for the privilege (and reward) of carrying his luggage. At the end of the wharf he hails a cab and drives to the Pacific Cable Office to let his friends know that he is arrived safely in 'Cannibal Fiji.'

He puts up at a first-class hotel, from the spacious balcony of which he leisurely surveys the scene

'WHERE HIS ISLANDS LIFT THEIR FRONDED PALMS IN AIR'

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harem. But there are other faces also. Features old, wizened, and ugly, betray bitter hate, unfathomable wickedness, and black intrigue. Now a Hindu *Sadhu* (ascetic) in yellow robes, with occult sect marks painted in white and vermilion upon his high brow, passes. Disciples salute him reverentially and prostrate themselves at his feet in the dusty street. A haughty Muhammadan *faqir*, with an inflated goat-skin slung over his shoulder, tries—with a proud attempt at unconcern—to get out of the way of a fast-driven carriage.

There is a movement in the leisurely crowd! The visitor sees something which he will never forget. A number of men are hustling along regardless of the careless gait of their fellows. They have broad arrows stamped in black upon their tunics and loin-cloths. They are *prisoners*, hurrying lest the jail gates be locked in front and they be late for the evening meal! He learns that the jail has only *three* walls—a front and two sides—the back being open to the wide, wide world. He is told that the prisoners are frequently employed in Government offices, and that 'lifers,' such as murderers, are allowed a great deal of freedom and not a few privileges. He sees that Fiji is not barren of humour.

Fiji, commercially and industrially, has long lain fallow. The land has been practically locked up in

native ownership, and the facilities for obtaining it have been, until recently, few and devious. The Fijians themselves cultivate only a negligible fraction of the ground they own, and the tendency on their part is to utilize it still less. The amount held by Europeans is not large, and hence the colony has been seriously handicapped. According to the Blue Book of 1905, only 72,000 acres of land were under cultivation, leaving a total acreage untouched of some 4,880,000. Under such conditions it is surprising that Fiji has registered any progress at all.

The present governor, Sir Everard im Thurn, has sanctioned a policy whereby, under proper restrictions, the natives of the colony are allowed to sell or lease their waste or unused lands. In 1906 nearly 12,000 acres were leased for terms varying from five to fifty years; while over 60,000 acres, not yet surveyed, were taken up either by the Crown for settlement purposes or by private individuals. Some 11,000 acres were sold outright at an average price of nearly £1 per acre. The Crown has already sub-leased, for a term of ninety-nine years, 30,000 acres in blocks suitable for cattle-runs, at a rate of 3*d.* per acre per annum for the first five years, 6*d.* for the second five years, 9*d.* for the third, and thereafter, 1*s.* per acre per annum.

This step taken by the Government has not been

without criticism on the part of certain classes, and, in some instances, injustices and shady dealings have warranted the strictures. Nevertheless the movement is in the right direction, and the interests of the natives have been sufficiently safeguarded to satisfy *even the people who know nothing about them.* This new policy has given fresh hope and impetus to industry, and Fiji is commencing to realize that she has a not unimportant future in the great empire of which she is a part.

The trade of the colony already amounts to the respectable sum of a million and a half. Eighty-six per cent. of this is with Australia and New Zealand; but new markets are being opened year by year. Canada is one of these; and recently a huge ocean tramp took away to Vancouver the largest load of sugar ever exported from these islands. The average value of sugar exported is well over half a million pounds, and development in this industry is being pushed on very rapidly. The fruit trade is a most important and steadily growing one. In 1906 604,000 bunches and 191,000 cases of bananas were exported, valued at £100,000. Last year (1909) the quantity was considerably more. Copra (which is the dried kernel of the coco-nut, and is much in demand for making oils, soap, &c.) added £150,000 to the wealth of the colony.

Some idea of the shipping may be obtained from

the fact that 150 foreign-going vessels dropped anchor in the harbours of the colony, while an equal number of smaller craft traded within the limits of the group. The total tonnage registered over a quarter of a million.

Leaving on one side the amount of food grown by the Fijians for their own consumption, the local needs of the colony account for 15,000 bushels of maize, 2,000 tons of rice, 1,500 lbs. of tobacco, and 40,000 lbs. of tea. The climate is well suited for growing all these products, as well as many others.

Many parts of the islands are especially suitable for cattle. This development is but in its infancy, yet already there are some 5,000 horses, 5,000 sheep, 20,000 goats, and 30,000 cattle grazing on the fields of Fiji.

'Sugar' has been responsible to a large extent, both directly and indirectly, for the industrial awakening of the Fiji of To-day. Six large mills, representing a capital outlay of £3,000,000, are at work. They have an annual output of over 60,000 tons of raw sugar which is refined in other countries. To serve the needs of this industry a coolie population of some 40,000 is at present in Fiji. It is often complained that 'sugar' rules Fiji; but this is only partially true. Had not this enterprise come, the islands would have been still lying in stagnation. Certainly very great concessions have

been made to this industry; but the country has made the best of the bargain; though, if dividends are any criterion, the companies ought to be abundantly satisfied. The principal interest in Fiji is held by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, with head offices in Sydney. At the end of 1906 it had in operation 169 miles of permanent and 74 miles of portable tram-line. Nineteen locomotives were in use, together with 3,500 trucks. Fifty-four miles of additional permanent way are now under construction. Four tugs, 8 steam launches, 14 huge lighters, and 67 cane punts, of 100 tons each, carry freight on the rivers. To supply its power the company burns 25,000 tons of coal in addition to the megas (pith of the cane) which is utilized as fuel. There are 26,000 acres of land under cultivation, while 4,500 are now being brought into subjection. About 5,000 acres of mangrove swamp are being reclaimed from the sea, and therein are approximately 600 miles of drains to facilitate the leaching of the salt from the soil. In addition to the above, 11,500 acres are planted by private owners, who sell their cane to the mills. The other chief interest is held by the Vancouver-Fiji Sugar Company, which has an excellent mill at Navua.

If any illustration were needed of the things possible to capital and enterprise, scarcely a better

one could be found than 'sugar' in Fiji. Ten years ago the country round Lautoka, for example, was mere scrub, swamp, and tangled brake. To-day thousands of acres of healthy cane ripen in the warm sun. The district then was a wilderness, save for a few unimportant native villages surrounded by higgledy-piggledy gardens. Now it is a busy thriving settlement with 10,000 new inhabitants upon it. The land was worth only a few shillings per acre, and even at that price speculation was hazardous. Its value to-day is as many pounds. A decade ago only a few native tracks connected village with village; a coco-nut tree was felled across the deep creek; and the river had to be swum or forded. Now 70 miles of railway line, upon which feverish locomotives puff and screech, run side by side with a formed road. The harbour that formerly bore only rude catamarans, paddled by half-clad natives, now admits large hungry cargo steamers.

The town of Lautoka itself sprawls languidly over the slopes of the low-lying hills. It looks hot, bare, and insolently new. An excellent wharf, built by the company, is able to berth the largest vessels which trade in the Pacific, and behind it is the huge sugar-mill. The machinery is all up to date, and constitutes one of the finest crushing plants in the world. A tall, red chimney stack, with a railed

parapet round its giddy top, belches out the inkiest of smoke, which contrasts with the snow-white steam from the out-of-breath exhausts. Beyond this pile of glaring corrugated iron buildings is a perfect network of railway lines, more suggestive of a busy European junction than of cannibal Fiji. The gauge is only narrow, and the locomotives toy-like in appearance; but it is really a railway. Behind the hissing, spluttering, gurgling engine, a passenger car is filling with leisurely English folks in tropical dress. This is the 'First Class.' One hundred sugar-trucks separate it from the 'Third Class'—which consists of a couple of wagons crowded chock-a-block with Indians and natives. There is no 'Second Class,' and no matter, for the price is just the same for all. Colour and caste alone demand the interposition of the hundred trucks. By an arrangement with the Fiji Government, in return for not inconsiderable concessions, the company is obliged to carry passengers, white or brown, free of charge. This fact helps the traveller to enjoy the journey—it is something for nothing. The whistle goes! The train is off! The speed is not excessive; but then—the price! The car is comfortably filled. On the front seat two half-caste Samoan girls jabber incessantly, and occasionally make eyes at two perky, high-collared young Englishmen who work in a store. But an insur-

upturned portmanteau, for drinks at the end of the journey. A solitary Chinaman sits on the back seat with his eyes seeming fixed on nothing at an infinite distance from him, and moves his lips as though counting. Perhaps he is trying to add up a column of figures without his bead frame. Any seats vacant of human passengers are occupied with flies. There are hundreds to every square foot. They have a particular partiality for the eyes, ears, and nostrils of the passengers, and continue their explorations with a persistence unsuspected in so small a body. Swish! swish! go the whisks of the travellers; but the flies are philosophical, and make the best of their opportunities between the swishes.

For miles the train runs on two glistening threads of steel between stifling brown walls of sugar-cane. Estate after estate is passed, and on each is the inevitable row of ugly black 'coolie lines' frizzling in the heat; and there stands, not far away, the overseer's bungalow, with its iron roof fairly dancing in the maddening rays of the sun. The train clatters over a truss bridge, then skirts a mangrove swamp, and frisks flippantly round a sullen cliff, just beyond the reach of the splashing waves. A mile distant, the reef growls and grumbles away as it has done for ages uncountable; but the rumble and racket of its twentieth-century rival, for the first time, drowns its

CATTLE-RAISING—A COMPARATIVELY NEW INDUSTRY

BORN IN FIJI

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his gods, a smoking-room in which to enjoy his evenings, and a forum in which to discuss transmigration or—patent manure. Close to the line a big patch is being cultivated for maize. A scantily clad Indian, with legs of the broomstick variety, is pouring out a mixture of English oaths and Hindu curses upon a bony grey horse and a ridiculously fat bullock yoked together to an American plough. His woman is assisting by poking the bullock with a pointed reed. The bullock is chewing his cud.

Half-way, the train stops to take in water. A moody coolie, with a twist of dirty calico as his clothing, spends six days out of his week filling a tank by means of a rickety force-pump. He looks moodier than ever as the careless fireman spills some of the precious fluid from the wide-mouthed tap. He mutters something between his teeth and then turns to the pump-handle again. The engine-driver, oil-can in hand, stoops down to the cranks and bearings of his charge. His last run was between Melbourne and Sydney, and his engine a gigantic freight-puller; but better wages have tempted him to Fiji. Does he like it?

'Like it? Oh! it's hot enough for hell upon this bloomin' wheel-barrer with a pack of niggers building Towers of Babel and worrying a plain-spoken white man with their infernal jargon. Like it?—

THE SUGAR-MILL AT LAUTOKA

(This is said to be the largest and most up-to-date plant in the Southern Hemisphere)

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steady, in consequence. Nevertheless the business is precarious. The damage by hurricanes to this product is greater than with the majority of crops, and the market fluctuations make almost a gamble of the enterprise.

Every month three or four steamers are loaded to the very decks with this fruit for the Australian and especially for the New Zealand markets. In 1909 over a million cases were shipped. Clumsy-looking punts—a cross between a barge and a Chinese junk—crowd the rivers and jostle one another in the harbours. It is a sight—and not less a *sound*—to be present when these punts unload into the big steamer. All nations under heaven seem to be there, and each individual is seized with the one idea that his language ought to be heard above all others. Round the steamer, three or four deep, the punts are gathered, and each owner is watching the chance to get his fruit into a more favourable position than some other shipper. Rhh! . . . Rhh! . . . Rhh! . . . Rhh! go the winches, and, by tens at a time, the cases come up the sides of the vessel and drop into the capacious holds, accompanied by the shouts, pantomimic gestures, curses, and wranglings, of Fijians, Indians, Kanakas, Chinese, and English.

An inspector, in dapper clothes, with note-book in hand, stands keen-eyed and calm in the midst of

this Bedlam. Now and again he orders a case to be opened, and, if the contents are not up to the standard, they are peremptorily condemned. On the deck of the steamers, owners of punts or their representatives are standing and giving orders to their 'labour' below. A big burly planter speaks pidgin Hindustani with a broad Scotch accent, which certainly gives it a most peculiar flavour. A fussy French shipper is dropping English oaths upon the heads of the stolid natives who toil for him in the punt beneath. A fat, good-natured Chinaman is coaxing his Indians to be quick, in language which needs positive genius to understand. A dainty little Japanese planter is complaining in shrill tenor that some of his fruit is 'reject.' A lean Indian *babu*, with gold-rimmed spectacles placed uncomfortably upon his nose, and clothed in dirty linen and important air, clomps up and down the deck in heavy blucher boots waiting for his punts to arrive.

Day and night the Rhh! . . . Rhh! . . . Rhh! goes on. At length the last punt is emptied. There is a wild whoop from the Fijians in the hold below, a loud blast from the steamer whistle, and a cry of 'All ashore!' and twenty-five thousand cases of bananas are on their way to hungry school-boys, sober business men, and fastidious ladies in colonies where this fruit is no longer a luxury but a food.

There can be no doubt that Fiji has a great future before it commercially. It is in the line of trade, and can thus readily find a market for its exports. It is in the current of some significant race-movements, and is not likely, therefore, to escape the competition necessary to healthy development. Geographically, the group is destined to become one of the chief distributing and governing centres of the Pacific.

Fiji has a genial climate, of the tropical order—but *without the scourge of malaria*. Hence the European has much less strain upon his health than in most lands of similar temperature. The life insurance companies take risks at ordinary rates, which is a testimony to the salubrity of the climate. The soil is capable of growing any tropical or sub-tropical product. There is an abundant rainfall—usually measurable in *yards*. With the exception of an occasional hurricane there are no serious draw-backs to enterprise.

Unfortunately, in the past, white settlement has not been encouraged, but latterly inducements have been offered to Europeans to develop the country. Land is now available at a fair price; and labour is easily obtainable, in the shape of the Indian coolie, at the rate of one shilling and sixpence per day. The Government has opened experimental stations where agricultural methods and products suitable to

the islands are tested, and the results placed at the disposal of planters.

Fiji is not by any means a 'working man's country,' nor is it likely ever to become a '*White*' Fiji; but with a saner revenue system—which must come in time, and more liberal and modern methods of government—which are even now at the doors, it may be made a very desirable place for the small capitalist and the thrifty settler.

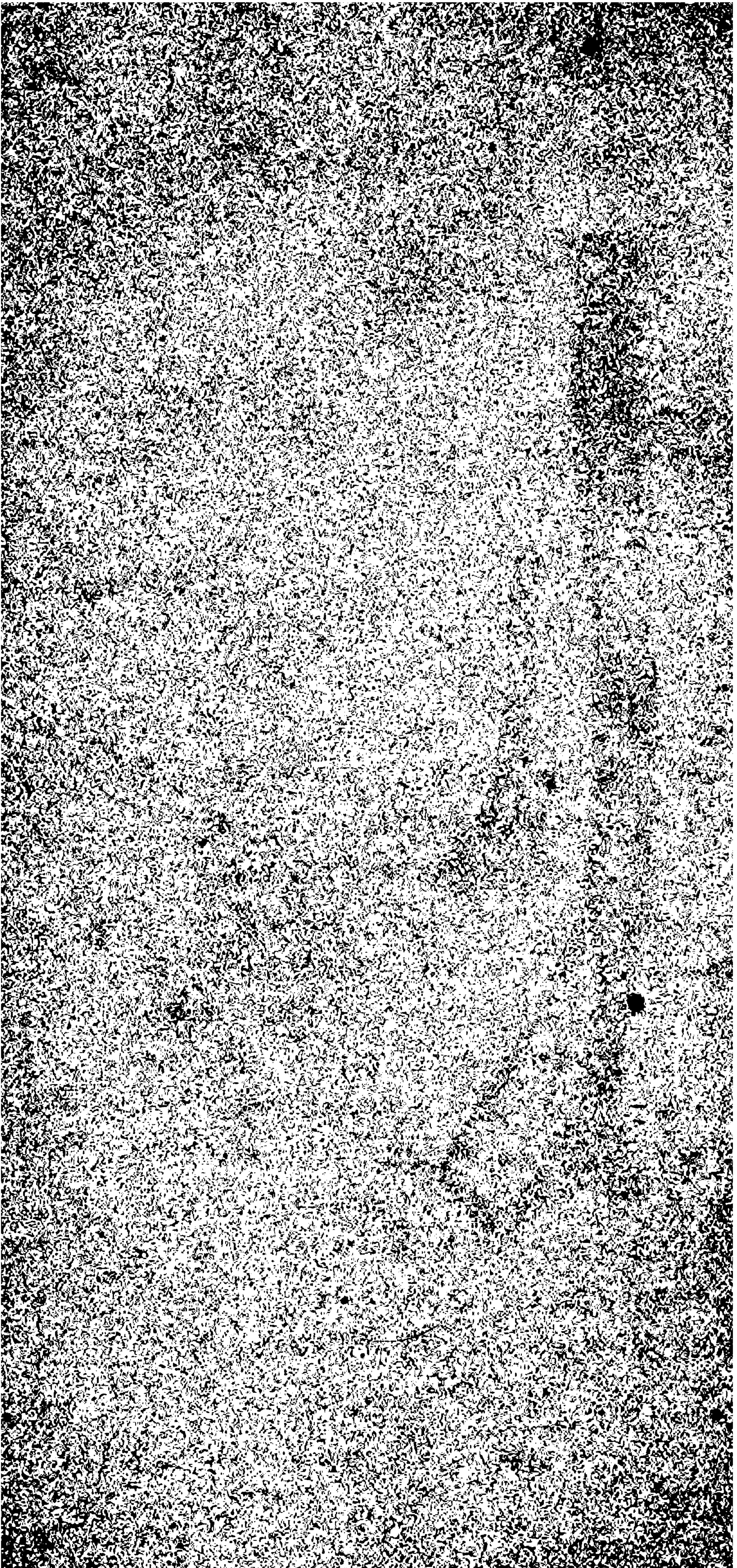
New Fiji has been definitely launched on the wide waters of the commercial world, and we all join in wishing her the best of luck.

# CHAPTER V

## OLD FIJI

> The record of disgraces best forgotten,
> A sullen page in human chronicles
> Fit to erase.
>
> BROWNING, *Paracelsus.*

FIFTEEN or twenty merry Fijian lads are romping wildly and shouting lustily upon the sandy beach of the island of Muala. Among them is a chiefly-looking boy of eight years of age, called Seru. To him all, even in play, pay the greatest deference. He is a prince of royal blood—the son of old King Tanoa of Bau, who just now is on a visit to this part of the group. The play has ceased, and the shouting has died away, for Seru has grown tired of the sport. He throws himself carelessly upon the sand, and his young playmates range themselves at a respectful distance from him. News comes in that the fathers of these lads, through a diabolical act of treachery, have been murdered by their professed friends. Some of the mothers and sisters who were deemed good-looking enough have alone escaped. Soon a number of men rush forward and seize the



newly-orphaned boys. In spite of shrieking entreaties, they are being cruelly put to death. One little screaming victim is selected and dragged to where the boy-chief, Seru, sits. A club is put into the young prince's hand. The defenceless little lad is then held down by strong brutal hands, and Seru is told to strike. The club comes down with all the weight his small arms can put into it, and, after several awkward blows and repeated thuds, at last the little victim is dispatched. The boy-prince puts aside his weapon, stained with the blood of his playmate of a few minutes before. He is now a man. He has taken his first life. He lived to take hundreds more; nor needed that any should hold his victims while he struck. The boy Seru became the man Cakobau—the Bloody King of Old Fiji.[1]

As we pass in safety and comparative comfort through the semi-civilized Fiji of to-day, it is difficult to realize that we are so near Old Fiji—the Fiji that made the world shudder at the mention of its atrocities. Yet, like the half-rubbed-out characters of the ancient palimpsests, there are still the deeply scored and only partially erased marks of the past. Though another story is now written upon the parchment—and written much too hurriedly, perhaps—beneath is the tragedy in all its terrible realism.

[1] See Waterhouse's *King and People of Fiji.*

New Fiji is, for the most part, thoroughly ashamed of its past, and speaks of it only under compulsion. But it is only when we place behind the Fiji of To-day the dark background of the Fiji of Yesterday, that we obtain any adequate conception of the change that has taken place. Only thus can we understand, even dimly, the character of the Fijian, and, with larger eyes of remembrance, make allowance for his present failings.

The rivers no longer flow tinged with human blood; the cannibal ovens are not only cold but utterly destroyed; and the strangling cord is no more twisted from the dull-red coco-nut fibre. But this change has taken place only just lately. It is less than twenty years since the last cannibal feast took place, and though this was only a sporadic out-break, nevertheless it goes to show how very thin is the crust formed over that hellish past. There are in Fiji to-day hundreds who have known the taste of human flesh, and have greedily sipped human blood. Even at the risk of producing horror, we must look for a moment over the edge of the pit whence the native has been digged; and though we shrink back with loathing and disgust, we shall have a fuller sympathy with him. We shall be more inclined to pity than to despise, if there is still some mire from the pit adhering to his person.

The real difficulty is to give any adequate picture

presence of the sufferers by the Kaba people. Seru then had their arms and legs cut off, cooked, and eaten, some of which were presented to them. Seru then ordered a fish-hook to be put in their tongues, which were drawn out as far as possible, and then cut off; these were roasted and eaten, while they tauntingly said, "We are eating your tongues." As life was not extinct, an incision was made in the side, and the bowels taken out, which soon terminated their sufferings in this world.'[1]

The frightful *waste of human life* seemed to be scarcely noticed. Life had little value and no sacredness. If a new canoe was to be launched, ten or twenty men were forced to lie down and act as living 'rollers.' Then, amid shouts and screaming laughter, the heavy vessel was pushed over the shrieking, writhing victims, who were gashed, crushed, and torn by the rough, jagged surface. The canoe once launched, a few blows from a club soon dispatched the 'rollers,' who were sent to the ovens as food for the feast.

When the canoe was ready to sail, in order to make propitious its journey, the decks must be washed with blood—human blood. If it bore a chief of high rank, on arriving at his destination the hosts must kill a man for the ceremony of 'taking down the mast.'

[1] *King and People of Fiji*, pp. 84–85.

TWO RELICS OF OLD FIJI—BOTH OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

[*Facing page* 98

nothing. Of hand-to-hand conflicts, under level conditions, there is scarcely a tradition.

'One evening six large Lasakau canoes started from Bau on a man-hunting expedition. They got down some distance to the leeward of Rewa, and the next morning got in close to the shore, pulled down their sails, and poled their canoes quietly along, to avoid all suspicion of being strangers. They saw a party out at the reef catching fish, belonging to a town which had not taken any part in the war. When they had them within their power, they hoisted sail, and took the unsuspecting people prisoners without any skirmish, for they were without defence, and exposed to their foes. They took twenty-eight persons, men and women, alive, with two children; the latter of whom they hung to the masthead: the remainder they killed at Bau. Some of the poor creatures were flung on the red-hot stones which were to roast them while yet alive. One poor fellow thus served sat up, told the people his name, also the name of his town, and begged them to save him; but they so disregarded his earnest and feeling appeal, as to take up a club and dispatch him by dashing out his brains.'[1]

They found Satanic pleasure in taking helpless little children by the legs and smashing their heads against stones, then greedily gorging upon what they considered to be dainty morsels.

[1] *King and People of Fiji*, p. 122.

If a canoe was shipwrecked and the survivors swam to shore, they were then the Fijians' lawful prey, according to the ethics of that time. They had 'salt-water in their eyes'—so they might be clubbed and eaten without compunction or fear of punishment.

A captive in war was the special object of their cowardly brutality. He could be tortured in the lewdest and most obscene manner, and thus afford the most exquisite delight to his conquerors. His limbs could be cut off one by one, cooked and eaten in his presence, or an eye might be gouged out and swallowed raw, as a crowning insult to his state. To all the shrieks and appeals of the sufferer, the Fijian would be cheerfully and jocularly callous.

They seemed not only to be indifferent to the agonies of others, but even the closest ties of relationship made no diminution of their dastardly and despicable conduct. When a chief died, his widows must be strangled. They were seized and dragged to the open *rara* (village common) and their own sons did not hesitate to pull the fatal cords. A mother would murder her babe because she had quarrelled with its father, or was going on a journey and did not desire to be bothered with it. A husband would murder his wife for no other reason than that he wanted meat.

'When I first knew Loti, he was living at Na Ruwai. A few years before, he killed his only wife

and ate her. She accompanied him to plant *taro*, and when the work was done, he sent her to fetch wood, with which he made a fire, while she, at his bidding, collected leaves and grass to line the oven, and procured a bamboo to cut up what was to be cooked. When she had cheerfully obeyed his commands, the monster seized his wife, deliberately dismembered her, and cooked and ate her, calling some to help him in consuming the unnatural feast. The woman was his equal, one with whom he lived comfortably; he had no quarrel with her or cause of complaint. . . . His only motive could have been a fondness for human flesh and a hope that he should be spoken of and pointed out as a terrible fellow.'[1]

The Fijian's cold-blooded treatment of the aged and sick is one of the foulest blots upon his past character. 'Exposure, burying-alive, and the rope, are the means generally used for dispatching these unfortunates.' Aged parents were usually strangled, it being considered great kindness not to club them! The sick were often taken outside the town and left in a cave or yam-hut to die. They might also be buried alive, as they were not fit to be eaten.

'Ratu Varani spoke of one among many whom he had caused to be buried alive. She had been weakly for a long time, and the chief, thinking her likely to remain so, had a grave dug. The curiosity

[1] *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 175

of the girl was excited by loud exclamations, as though something extraordinary had happened, and, on stepping out of the house, she was seized and thrown into her grave. In vain she shrieked with horror, and cried out, 'Do not bury me! I am quite well now!' Two men kept her down by standing on her, while others threw the soil in upon her until she was heard no more.'[1]

The base *ingratitude* of the Fijian of Yesterday is a thing at which to marvel. Instance after instance might be given in which this sad trait shows itself. He simply did not understand the meaning of the word gratitude. Knowing no generosity himself, he could not comprehend it in others. To help him once meant that he considered he had a *right* to such help again in the future.

Of his disgusting *filthiness of the flesh* and abominable sensuality, none dare write. It was not without reason that the Cities of the Plain, in Lot's time, were said to have been destroyed by fire. A good shower of brimstone would have had a salutary effect upon Old Fiji. We leave that part of the native past as being too vile for thought to dwell upon, even for a moment.

But it is chiefly by his reputation as a *cannibal* that the Fijian is known to the great world. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate his intense love of

[1] *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 159.

human flesh. He looked upon it as his normal food, and gloated over its tastiness. Anthropologists account for the origin of cannibalism in several ways, but the perpetuation of the custom in Fiji, at any rate, was due, not to religious or revengeful feelings, but simply to animal appetite.

'And now the drums beat *pat, pat, pat, pat.* What is the signal? It means that a man is about to be cut up, and prepared for food as a bullock is in our own country. See the commotion! The majority of the population, old and young, run to gaze upon the intended victim. He is stripped naked, struck down with a club, his body ignominiously dashed against a stone in front of the temple, then cut up and divided amongst a chosen few, ere the vital spark is extinct. Sometimes he is dashed into an oven whilst yet alive, and half-cooked. The little children run off with the head and play with it as with a ball. Some fond mother, anxious for the preservation of her child's health, begs for a morsel of flesh to rub the lips of the little one.'[1]

Here is a picture painted on the spot some sixty years ago: 'The following case occurred not long ago. Seven persons were clubbed in a most brutal manner, near the spot where I now write. Their heads were crushed by heavy blows, and their bodies mangled with axes. When the men had

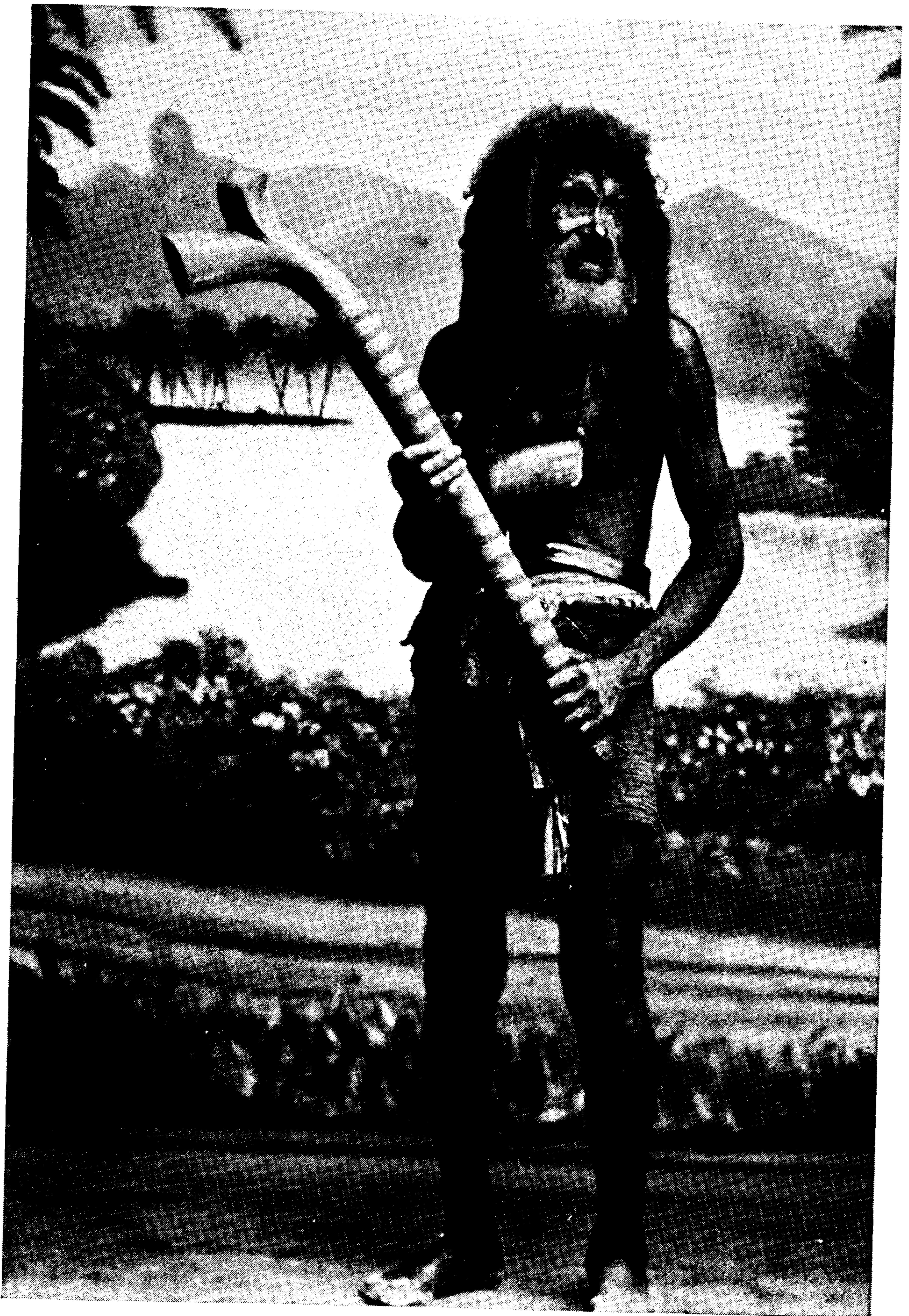
[1] *King and People of Fiji*, p. 44.

in case a man can succeed in pouncing upon a female from his place of concealment, and strike the death-blow so suddenly that no one, friend or foe, shall hear or know anything of the matter, and then open her body and cover himself with the contents, that covering shields him from the claim of any one to have a share; he eats as much as he can and buries the remainder to be exhumed for his own future use.

'There are some circumstances in connexion with these facts which I am not able to set down; they are before me, but a veil must cover them! The whole of these things and many more are related to me by many witnesses, persons who cannot be deceived and who would not deceive. I set them down on the spot where no one doubts, or attempts to deny, their truth. They are far enough from being an inventory, but they are merely given as specimens.

'There is one thing remarkable in the revolting accounts which these people give of their man-eating career; that is, that the flesh of human beings is really very good and they like it. The flesh of women is rather better than the flesh of men; and when the chief wants something very delicate, or in the case where many bodies are before him, a child is roasted for his repast.'[1]

[1] *Missionary Visit of the Rev. Walter Lawry*, 1847, p. 88 *et passim*.



PAGAN STILL—OLD 'CANNIBAL TOM' [*Facing page* 106

in time of war, from revenge. . . . They have seeming good qualities, but no one will depend on them who knows their real nature. They can lay aside honesty, kindness, &c., as easily as their dress, if necessary, and be one moment as gentle as a lamb, and the next as ferocious as a tiger. The extremes of their character are very striking. You would not think that the fine generous man you are conversing with would go home and enjoy a piece of human flesh or imbrue his hands with pleasure in the blood of defenceless women and children, yet such is the fact.'[1]

Volumes could be written describing over again the terrible deeds of the past; but sufficient has been said to convey some idea of the hellishness of the days of Old Fiji. It is from a state such as that indicated that the Fijian has sprung, and, in estimating his present character and moulding his future development, we must not ignore the past.

Thank God! Old Fiji is for ever and ever gone.

[1] Rev. Robert Young, *The Southern World*, p. 317 *et seq.*

# CHAPTER VI

## HOW THE LIGHT CAME TO FIJI

Who saw the Darkness overflowed
And drowned by tides of everlasting Day.
WHITTIER, *The Shadow and the Light.*

IN the annals of the human race there are few nobler records than those containing the doings and sufferings of the pioneer missionaries to the cannibal Fijians. At this distance, in a smiling country, surrounded by peaceful tribes, it is almost impossible to picture the privations, persecutions, and dangers of those early messengers of the Cross. Not only were they in almost daily jeopardy of their lives, but they were surrounded by petty annoyances of the most irritating character. It is often much harder for men and women to bear such than to endure the more perilous trials of life. Thieving, filthy abuse, constant treachery and double-dealing were some of the difficulties. Just imagine, also, the feelings of cultivated men and women, such as some of those early missionaries were, and from good homes in England, living among the

dirt, vermin, and loathsome diseases of this people! Think of gently-nurtured women, who had been shielded from all the coarseness of life, being forced to witness the open licentiousness, the horrors of the human shambles, and the barbaric cruelty of the people of Old Fiji. Little wonder that sometimes they were ill with very fear. Yet throughout the many letters of that period there is not one solitary note of complaint, and very little trace that they themselves were even conscious of heroism or self-sacrifice. A volume has yet to be written telling the story of that early suffering and subsequent triumph; and when it appears it will prove a revelation of the capacity of the human race for vicarious sacrifice, and show how death can be met cheerfully under the inspiration of high motives.

As has been already pointed out, from the earliest times there had been considerable intercourse with Tonga. It often happened that canoes were driven by the prevailing wind to the islands of Lakeba in the east of the Fijian Archipelago. There quite a number of Tongans had settled, and they speedily won influence and land. Because of some superior civilization they were held in much esteem by the Fijians, and a considerable amount of inter-marriage took place. A few Fijians had also, in one way and another, found their way to Tonga, and were there much prized as canoe-builders. When Christianity

eventually joined the Wesleyan Church, and served in it as local preachers.

In the year 1834 there was a wonderful outburst of religious fervour among the newly-won converts in Tonga; and, with the characteristic impulse of such revivals, the claims of 'Heathen Fiji' were burned into their thought. At the annual synod of that year, the Rev. William Cross, who had been a missionary in Tonga for six years, and the Rev. David Cargill, M.A., who had resided two years in that group, were appointed to the dangerous and arduous task of commencing a mission to the Fijians. For some time they were unable to obtain the services of a vessel and captain to take them to their new enterprise. They waited several months at Vavau, where they devoted their time and energy to acquiring the Fijian language. They also prepared and printed a 'First Book' to instruct the natives in the art of reading and writing. They expected converts, for they also translated into the language a short catechism, and placed it in the printer's hands, to be sent on later.

In 1835 this brave little band, composed of the missionaries and their wives and families, together with some Tongan helpers, landed at Lakeba. The way had been, in some degree, prepared for them. King George of Tonga, a convert to Christianity, sent presents to Tui Nayau, the highest Lakeban

THE CANNIBAL DRUM [*Facing page* 112

exhausted, and the two families were left without bread, having to subsist as well as they could on yams and salt, with cakes made of arrowroot and yam. In March of the following year the colonial brig *Minerva* had been chartered to take the mission supplies to the Friendly Islands district, of which Fiji then formed a part. The captain, however, fearing the navigation and the people of Fiji, refused to go farther than the Friendly Islands; and presently a Tongan canoe reached Lakeba, bearing letters and the provoking information that the stores were lying to spoil within four hundred miles. . . . To increase the distress of the mission families, it was now a time of great scarcity on the island. Even fish and crabs became rare. The articles of barter were all gone. Prints and calicoes, sorely wanted for family use, were parted with to obtain food, or for the payment of wages. Trunks, wearing apparel, and everything else available were thus disposed of. Mere conveniences, such as cooking utensils or crockery-ware, had disappeared, so that Mr. Cargill had only one teacup left, and that had lost its handle. Thus surrounded with difficulties, and suffering many things, the missionaries toiled on, often prostrated by overworking, while their families were rarely free from sickness. Mr. Cross became so ill as to make his removal to Australia seem necessary; but before

arrangements to that effect could be completed he got much better, and resolved to continue in Fiji.'[1]

Little headway was made during the first and second years. Thirty-one adults were baptized, but they were principally Tongans who had settled in Fiji. The Lakeban chief did not wish to be the first important man to accept the *lotu*, and cunningly he placed many obstacles in the way of the missionaries. The missionaries decided that it would be better for one of them to attempt work among some of the other peoples of Fiji; and Cross resolved to go to Bau. Eventually, in 1837, he settled at Rewa, which was judged to be a convenient and central place and one of great political importance. Sickness there, however, lay in wait for him. The house in which he and his family lived was small, low, and damp. 'For six weeks he lay ill, first with intermittent fever, then with typhus fever, until his strength was all gone, and his poor wife saw closely threatening her the hard lot of being left alone with her little ones among cannibals. At this distressing time, Mr. David Whippy, an American settler at Ovalau, went to Rewa, and gave invaluable help to the sufferer and his family. By God's mercy, Mr. Cross recovered to a great extent from his sickness, and the king forthwith set about building a house for him in good earnest; so that

[1] *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 240.

he soon had a large and comfortable dwelling upon a raised foundation.'[1] Cross really ought to have returned to the colonies at this time, in the interests of his health; but nothing could induce him to leave his work. He struggled on for a year or two longer, fighting sickness and death, until at last he was obliged to lay down his arms; and now the Memorial Church at Somosomo, built recently, covers his last resting-place.

The publication of Watkin's *Pity Poor Fiji!* aroused British Methodism to a sense of its responsibility; and, in 1838, as the result, the Revs. John Hunt, T. J. Jagger, and James Calvert came to the assistance of these two indomitable pioneers. A few years later, Mr. Lyth arrived. He had been a missionary in Tonga, and had also the advantage of a medical education. He served the mission by his skill and devotion in a manner that deserves the highest praise.

It would require many pages to give an account of the sorrows of those early days. Mrs. Cargill's grave at Rewa marks the grief of a husband left alone with four little ones. Throughout Fiji there are scattered those little mounds—almost forgotten—the marks of a sorrow that only a mother's heart can understand. Many of these lives, in more favoured lands and under happier conditions might

[1] *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 244.

have been saved; but they are part of the price of the redemption of Fiji.

Not only by the Protestant missionaries was the heavy cross borne in these early times; the Roman Catholics showed a spirit no less Christ-like. The diary of one of those Marist priests tells of extreme poverty and utter destitution of everything approaching ordinary comfort. 'They had no medicine nor means to procure any. With the barest of resources at their disposal, they could afford nothing European; and being left alone for several years with nothing to barter, they had to dispense with the necessary garments. Their treatment at the hands of the natives, supposed to be converted, was even worse than the annoyances and indignities occasionally heaped upon them by irate heathens. One day a chief who had *lotu'd* forbids his subjects to give them food, though they are suffering the pangs of hunger; another day a tempting present of meat is brought to them, which turns out to be human flesh, and with the discovery the prospects of a substantial meal vanish. Whilst they were away on mission work, their garden, planted and tended by their own hands, is robbed and destroyed; their house broken into, and such few working articles as they possess are taken away.'

The biography of Fiji's most noted missionary and saint—John Hunt—has been written more than

once. A strong, intellectual man, endowed with ceaseless activity, linked to a spirituality which lifted him even above the devoted men of that time, it could not be but that his name should be one to reverence. He has had an influence upon the mission in Fiji which can never be estimated. He did much while he lived, as preacher, organizer, and translator; but it is probable that his example has been even more fruitful since his death. It has been an inspiration to many a succeeding missionary, and has set a standard of Christ-like living which can never be wholly forgotten. Men of another generation still make pilgrimage to that grave at Viwa, where he sleeps with John Polglase, and come back with a light upon their faces that is reflected from nothing earthly. In the old church there is still the pulpit from which he preached, and which ought to be preserved by the Methodist Church, in memory of one of the rarest and choicest spirits she has had upon her mission-fields. But his most enduring monument is in the literature he gave to the Fijian people. His sermons are still the theological pabulum of the students for the Christian ministry, while his translation of the Scriptures has been the basis of all subsequent revisions. He was cut down in the midst of youth, and the plain coffin which native students carried to the grave bore the pathetic words—'aged 36 years.'

you, but did not name it because I knew you could not endure the thought of my going away for so long a time. But I have only decided this evening to go. And I do so, first, because I want to do the people good. Second, because I believe there is no great obstacle in my way. And third, because, if I do not go now, I shall never go. . . . You must cheer up and pray for me. I am in my Master's work, and He will take care of me and mine. We are all in good spirits, and our feet are sound. . . . People are becoming Christians all round, and there is only here and there a town that is not *lotu*. We start early in the morning for Navosa. I anticipate no difficulty except in this place. If they do not *lotu* I believe they will not venture to kill me. I think much about you and our little ones—especially Alice. . . . Good-night, my dear wife, and God bless you all.

'Your devoted husband.'

On Sunday morning, the 21st of July, he left the village in which he had stayed the night, and, together with nine native Christians, set off to preach at another village. Treachery, however, had been busy during the night, and had laid well its plans. The little company was walking single-file along the mountain track. A given sign was made, and the guide who was accompanying Mr. Baker rushed

A CATHOLIC MISSION STATION

(The thread of white sea-ward is 'the league-long roller thundering on the reef')

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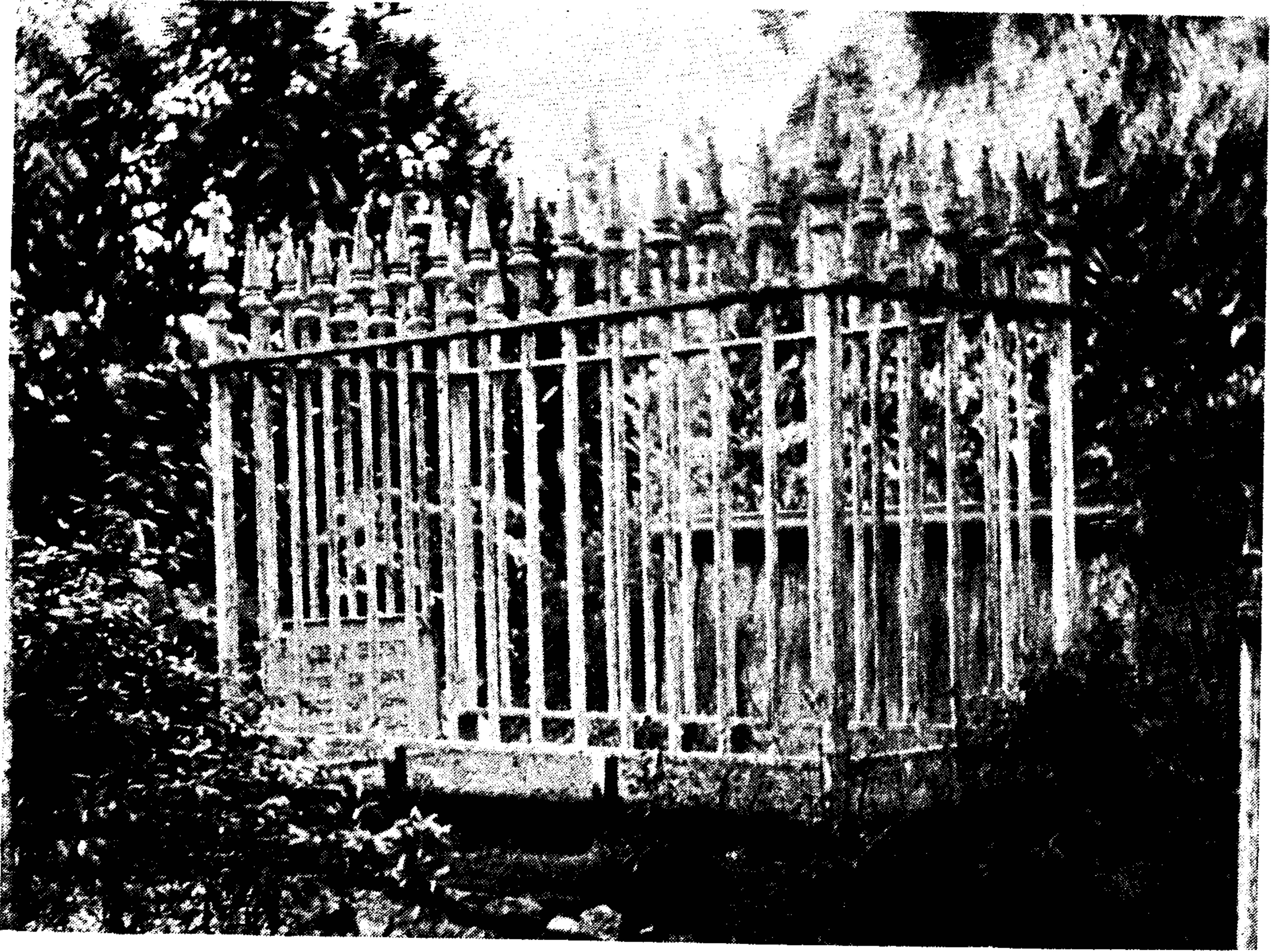
you the last act in this revolting tragedy. My late brother missionary has fallen by the hands of the vilest of cannibals, and you know what cannibals always do with the bodies they have slain.' Recently, a Memorial for this fallen man of God has been subscribed for by the natives throughout Fiji; and the land where he fell has been handed over by the tribe to the Church. Upon it a suitable monument is to be erected; while the new Theological College about to be established at Davui Levu, Baker's old station, is to be called 'The Baker Memorial Hall.' Thus the blood of the martyrs becomes the seed of the Church.

Deeds of bravery and Christian courage were not confined to the missionaries. The wives have been scarcely less conspicuous, and their suffering has been none the less real because it has been silent and unknown to the world. All we get of their sacrifice is an occasional glimpse. Here is an instance: Mr. Calvert had to take a long and perilous voyage across the open sea in a frail canoe. His wife and little one must be left alone among heathens while he was away—a position the painfulness of which cannot be realized by those who know not what it is to have lived among such people as the Fijians. In sight of all the difficulties, and of this last most of all, the missionary wavered. Mrs. Calvert said, 'Do you intend to go?' 'How



'LONELY VIWA, WHERE JOHN HUNT SLEEPS'

THE MEMORIAL CHURCH AT SOMOSOMO, BUILT OVER THE REMAINS OF THE REV. WILLIAM CROSS, ONE OF THE FIRST MISSIONARIES TO THE FIJIANS

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wild din of the cannibals grow louder as they approached. The death-drum sounded terrible, and muskets were fired in triumph. Then, as they drew nearer, shriek after shriek pierced through every other noise, and told that the murder was begun. Fear gave way to impatience at that wild warning, and the Englishwomen's voice urged the labouring boatmen to make better speed. They reached the beach, and were met by a *lotu* chief who dared to join them, saying, "Make haste! Some are dead; but some are alive!" Surrounded by an unseen guard which none might break through, the women of God passed among the blood-maddened cannibals unhurt. They pressed forward to the house of the old king, Tanoa, the entrance to which was strictly forbidden to all women. It was no time for ceremony now. With a whale's-tooth in each hand, and still accompanied by the Christian chief, they thrust themselves into the grim presence of the king, and prayed their prayer of mercy. The old man was startled at the audacity of the intruders. His hearing was dull, and they raised their voices higher to plead for their dark sisters' lives. The king said, "Those who are dead are dead; but those who are still alive shall live only." At that word a man ran to Ngavindi, to stop his butchery, and returned to say that five still lived; the rest of the fourteen were

AKESA BULU, WIDOW OF JOELI BULU, TONGAN MISSIONARY OF FIJI

[*Facing page* 125

in the annals of mankind. 'And the heathen came up to where we were sitting. Those who had guns pointed them at us; those who had clubs raised them to strike; the spearmen poised their spears, making them quiver before our eyes; and the bowmen bent their bows: but no shot was fired, no blow was struck, no spear was thrown, and no arrow flew in our midst. What held them back I cannot say; this only I know, that for a long time they stood there threatening us with their weapons of war, while we sat in silence, speaking never a word; but our hearts were crying to the Lord for help, and He heard our cry.'

The conversion of a man like Verani—a powerful chief and a friend of Cakobau—is remarkable in its intensity and permanence. Though subjected to the gravest personal and political dangers and the object of villany and intrigue, he remained loyal to the gospel which had changed his life. In the old days, he had been revengeful and implacable; but when he became a Christian, under insult which would have formerly provoked him to the most terrible deeds he showed a spirit of forgiveness which had its birth when the Crucified One prayed for His murderers. Little wonder that with the splendid devotion of the white missionaries and the earnestness of the native preachers, the work spread with such speed.

Fiji, to-day, is nominally Christian. In over a thousand villages the gospel is regularly proclaimed by Methodist preachers; and practically every Fijian is an adherent either of that Church or of the Roman Catholic. A native ministry of over eighty members has been raised up; and these, considering their equipment, do excellent work. Nearly 35,000 people meet regularly in 'class,' and over 80,000 attend the services of the Methodist Church. How is this success to be accounted for? Whatever dangers may threaten the Fijian Church to-day—and they are many and exceedingly menacing—we cannot be blind to the great work that has been accomplished. What was its secret? The Baron de Hubner, a German scientist who visited Fiji, was impressed with the change which had taken place, and asked a missionary as to its cause. The missionary replied, 'I cannot account for it except in one way—I believe in God, and I account for it by *the influence of the Holy Ghost.*' The scientist, a Roman Catholic and a foreigner, bowed his head reverently and said, '*So do I.*' Which reply was alike a credit to his scientific spirit and to his religious instinct.

# CHAPTER VII

## TRANSFORMATION

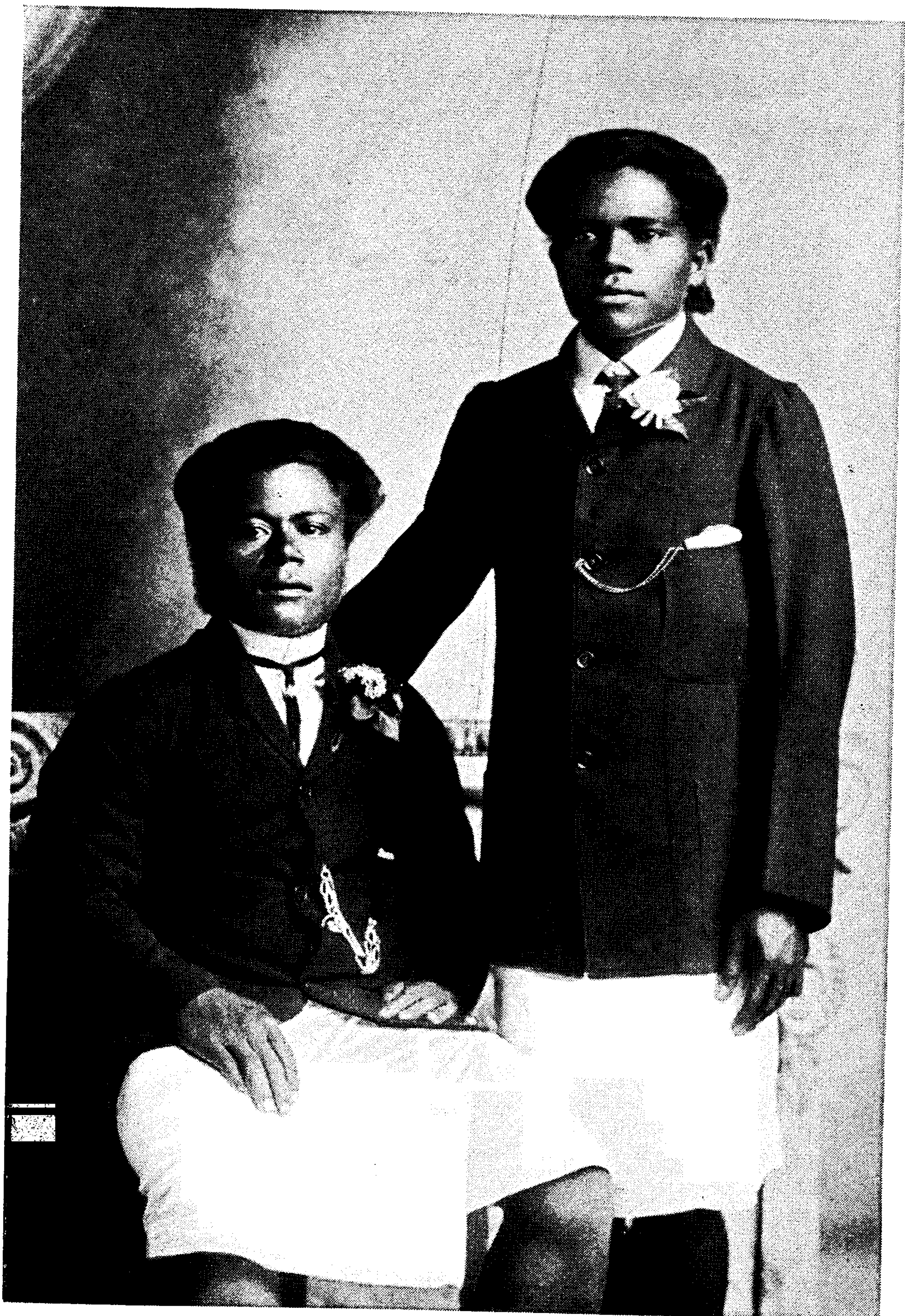
And I exult,  
That God, by God's own ways occult,  
May—doth, I will believe—bring back  
All wanderers to a single track!  
BROWNING, *Christmas Eve and Easter Day.*

IT has become a habit of mind, with men of a certain order, to sneer at missionary results as insignificant and superficial. The net apparent results, in the case of peoples with a highly organized religious belief, may be seemingly insignificant, and there may be very little that even the missionary himself can register as progress. But when the race is a simpler one, and its beliefs are crude and totemistic, very real and dramatic results can be shown. No one can seriously maintain that the change among the Fijian people is not both significant and striking. Whether or not the charge of superficiality may be brought against it, depends upon the point of view of the observer and that which he expects to find after only half a century of effort in the midst of a rude and primitive folk.

is also in error. When a balance has been struck and the results of missionary effort tabulated, though some may appear disappointing, nevertheless there are very real and substantial remainders. The purely external evidences of change are striking in the extreme. Life and property have been made safer here than they are in London or New York; inter-tribal wars have been ended; bloodshed has been stanched; and law and order receive a respect scarcely equalled in any other part of the world. The inner and ethical changes are somewhat more difficult to estimate; but it must be admitted by even the most unfriendly critic that newer and more ethical impulses are nascent in the people. These results are, of course, the expression of various forces; but, while the fullest credit is given to the Government and to that indefinable something we call civilization, it cannot be denied that primarily, both in point of time and of magnitude, they must be accounted for by Christian missionary influence.

Charles Darwin, who is far removed from any bias toward missions, came into contact with their work in the Pacific, and has left on record his appreciation of their effect. His estimate is certainly a just one, and, though applied to Tahiti, is no less applicable to Fiji.

'On the whole, it appears to me that the morality



YOUNG FIJI

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and hear much to excite his wonder at the altered condition of these islands. Every tourist who gets beyond Suva or Levuka, and sees something of actual mission influence, is impressed in spite of himself. The capital itself may be somewhat disappointing to the Christian man who is anxious to see things which will tally with those he has heard on the missionary platform. In Suva both the cream and the scum of Fijian life collect. Unfortunately the scum is more in evidence than the cream. Those who find the restraints of village life too irksome—and they have great excuse—flee to the town, where there is just that sort of freedom which is most dangerous to the weak-backed native. In contact with the looseness and open immorality of a town like Suva, he has but little chance of keeping his soul alive.

In Suva may be met also the better class of natives. Those who, by the exhibition of some higher intelligence or by the accidents of better birth and education, are qualified for clerkships in government offices, may be found between the hours of nine and four, sitting on cane-bottomed chairs, pen behind ear, swelling with importance and a salary of six pounds per annum and rations. There are others whose industrial ambition has been awakened, and these find ready employment in workshops, stores, or private dwellings. It is

from this class mainly that the dudes of the community are drawn, and they may be seen, on Sundays especially, lolling through the streets in English clothing of such sort and comicality that it is difficult for the more cultivated beholder to disguise his mirth.

But we are anxious to see things from the missionary point of view, and to see them at their very best. We will, therefore, accompany Mr. Arthur Thomas, barrister and solicitor of Melbourne, on a run through Fiji. Mr. Thomas is specially anxious to see as much as possible of the *lotu* of which he has heard so much. He has been interested in foreign missions all his life, and has been a liberal supporter of them. He is an earnest Christian gentleman of a somewhat critical turn of mind, and wishes to see things 'just as they are.' His partner in Melbourne, Mr. Holdsworth, is frankly sceptical concerning missions and their results; but Mr. Thomas is determined to see and hear for himself and form his own opinion. He has promised to report to Mr. Holdsworth on his return. Fiji has been held up to him since childhood as an unparalleled example of the power of the gospel; and the Fijian Church has been proclaimed in his ears as a signal illustration of a 'sudden conversion' from heathenism to a high state of Christian experience. He will judge for himself. He has

letters of introduction to several missionaries as well as to prominent government officials; hence, he imagines, he has a splendid chance to obtain first-hand information. We could scarcely get ourselves into better company than that of this fair-minded Christian lawyer, if we wish to see something of the missionary enterprise in Fiji.

The captain of the steamer by which Mr. Thomas travels to the islands gives him a very unfavourable account of missions in Fiji.

'Missions! Mr. Thomas, missions are a gigantic fraud. Talk about the South Sea Bubble! Why, the whole mission business is just that bubble. It only wants a man to prick it and expose the whole thing to show the people in the colonies how they are being duped. I've been coming to the islands off and on for the last thirty years now, and I know what I'm talking about. I used to run a steamer trading between the different parts of Fiji, and I have seen all there is to be seen. Before the missionaries came, with their long faces, trade was good and the people were easy to get on with; but now!—why, it's a white shirt on their backs and a Bible under their arms! They always keep one hand free though, I notice—to do a little thieving with! I know them.'

'But surely they are better than they were in the old cannibal days?'

of the native woman, and, under threat of exposure, compelled the captain to make some provision for his offspring. Hence Mr. Thomas concluded that there was some justification for his venom, and was not surprised that he was so dogmatic on the subject of missions.

It was early on Sunday morning when the boat touched the wharf at Suva, and our visitor was a little surprised, and, to tell the truth, not less gratified, to find that the ship could not commence discharging her cargo until midnight, *as no Fijian labour could be obtained on that day.*

He inquires his way to the Methodist church—a plain, wooden structure. As he approaches it he hears the subdued murmur of voices coming from the building. The worshippers are evidently reciting some prayer or creed. The words are in an unknown tongue; but they sound soft and musical, and he feels that the guide-book was right in the statement that 'Fijian is the Italian of the Pacific.' He walks up the steps to the doorway, wiping the profuse perspiration from his face; for, although it is the depth of winter, the morning seems very sultry. He is met, first of all, by a rush of hot air laden with the heavy odours of coco-nut oil and sandal-wood. There is also a peculiarly pungent smell—never to be forgotten—which hereafter he distinguishes as characteristically Fijian. Then a Fijian deacon or

THE NATIVE STAFF OF A MISSION CIRCUIT

The old man in

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gradually die away, and the old minister rises to give out the opening hymn. He is most curiously dressed. A long clerical coat, green and ragged, vainly tries to cover his too ample proportions. It is evidently the cast-off of some missionary—of much slighter build. In place of a collar, a white handkerchief is fastened round his neck. A white *sulu*, spotless of stain and carefully ironed, shows as a fringe beneath the coat. It does not reach low enough, however, to hide the fact that one leg and foot are fully twice the size of the others. Good old Samuela is a victim of the dread elephantiasis. The whole get-up of the man irresistibly reminds Mr. Thomas of the popular comic-paper caricatures of the negro parson—*all but the face.* Ah! a grand face is this! It seems a sort of composite, in which the features of the old patriarchs blend with the rapture-lit countenance of the martyr Stephen. It is a face that a painter would be proud to transfer to canvas. But there is a glow on it which no artist can copy—a strange mystic light plays over those dark features and makes them radiant. The eyes, though soft, have in them the kindling flame of devotion and spirituality. The visitor is fascinated, and all the grotesqueness of attire is unnoticed.

'Let Holdsworth, my hypercritical friend, say what he likes about missions, that man is no fraud. I know goodness when I see it shining in a face like

that. If human expression is any index to character, that old man is a saint.'

An American organ gives the chord of the hymn, the congregation catches it up, and four or five hundred lungs all in full power and efficiency swell the note into a musical version of 'Crown Him, Lord of all.' Here and there is a variation from the English tune. Sometimes it seems an improvement, but often otherwise; whether or not, it is always in perfect harmony. The fine baritone voices of the men awake response from the rich contralto of the women, and then join in a magnificent chorus. Now and then a youthful tenor voice,

> Sweet and musical
> As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair,

causes the stranger to look up and say to himself, 'If that lad had only training he might captivate the world.' The Fijians can sing, and revel in their power. The old minister leads in prayer. Although it is all in a foreign tongue, yet there are a fervour and an intensity which do not need words to interpret them. The pungent smell and stifling atmosphere are forgotten. Eyes and ears are focused upon that figure as it pleads with God, accompanied by the loud *Emeni! Emeni!* (Amen) and *Turaga! Turaga!* (Lord) of the congregation. Not a word that he has heard on the missionary

platform has been an exaggeration. All has been too feeble a representation of the truth he now sees and feels. The old man has ceased. There are a few moments' reverent silence, then the shrill treble of an old, wrinkled woman leads the first few notes of a chant. It is the Lord's Prayer.

'*Ta . . . . ma . . . . i . . . . ke . . . . i . . . . ma . . . . mi*' (Our Father). Then a few more female voices add themselves to that of the leader.

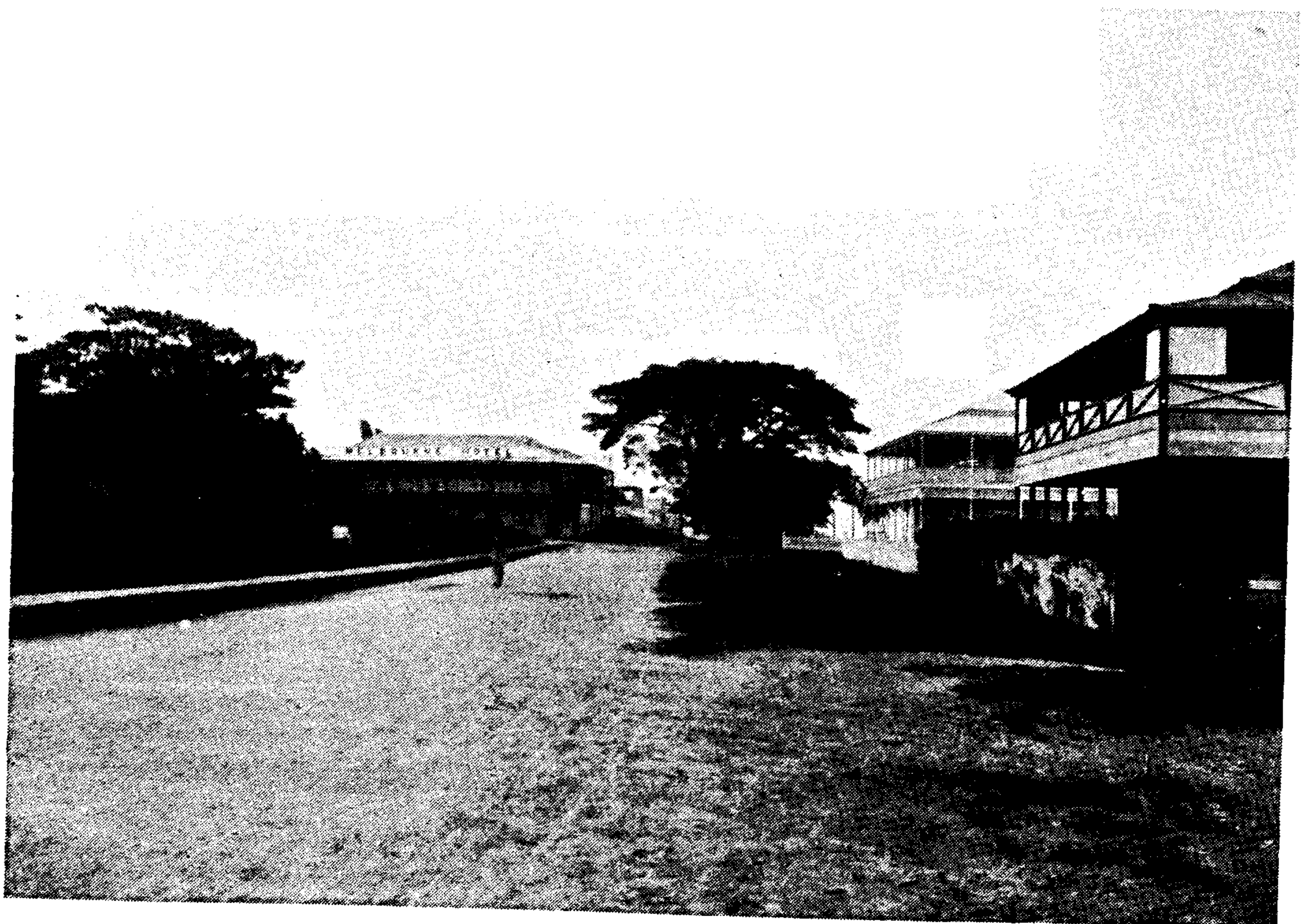
'*Ma . . . . i . . . . lo . . . . ma . . . . la . . . . gi*' (which art in heaven). Gradually, and with fine skill and taste, other voices join in this weird yet sonorous chant until, at length, like a deep thunder from the distant hills of God, the men's voices roll in upon the ear in strong entreaty.

'*So . . . . li . . . . a . . . . ma . . . . i . . . . ve . . . . i . . . . ke . . . . i . . . . ma . . . . mi*' (Give us, &c.). To the end the round, full, resonant sound surges and swells, filling the church and the heart of the visitor. He looks at the bowed black and tawny heads before him (for no face is visible, all being turned to the ground) and remembers that the fathers of this congregation were bloodthirsty cannibals and demons of cruelty! He shudders as he thinks that some of the men whose white and grey heads are bowed on his left have greedily picked a human bone! Surely the days of miracles are not past when such changes take place! A

Only thirty or forty years ago these people were eating one another, and now—that congregation so reverent, that Lord's Prayer, that grand old man's face!' Little wonder that, being a good man, he kneels quietly at the side of his bed and thanks God for the things he has seen and heard in the Fiji of To-day! When the smart cynic at the table braggartly asserts that the Fijians' religion is only skin-deep and that they are a race of hypocrites, he refuses to listen. The scene he has just witnessed has fortified him against all such assault.

The next day he arranges to pay a visit to one or two of the mission stations. He takes the public launch and crosses the broad-mouthed Laucala Bay. The steamer then enters one of the narrow openings of the great Rewa delta, where the gnarled and tangled mangrove niggardly grant passage, and then before his eyes stretches the broad-bosomed river. Right ahead is the great Roman Catholic Cathedral built out of burnt coral. Here, he is told, the infamous 'Bible-burning' took place—though he has much difficulty in getting any very definite facts of the case. The structure is imposing and a credit to the tireless energy of the French Marist priests. An hour later he is before the Methodist station, which spreads itself out in a most picturesque fashion over several small hills. He arrives at the mission house, which is built upon the site occupied by

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AT NAILILILI



A GLIMPSE ALONG THE PARADE, SUVA [*Facing page* 142

boat with a stalwart crew from the Training Institution is waiting for him. The 'boys' carefully arrange the cushions in the stern and spread an awning to keep off the sun. Then they commence to pull—and don't they pull! Strong muscular arms make the oars bend almost to the breaking-point, and happy, smiling faces look up at him. Some, in addition to the grace of cheerfulness, shine with intelligence. Surely Fiji has no need to look far for successors to good old Samuela if such men as these have devoted themselves to mission work. Jokes are exchanged by one and another, and good-natured smiles ripple over their faces as if touched by the gentle breeze which is causing the water ahead to laugh. Good temper shows itself in every stroke of the even oars, and pleasantry and playful banter beguile the journey.

'*Mailiu! Mailiu! Voce!*' (In front there! In front! Row!) shout those at the back.

'*Maimuri! Maimuri! Voce!*' (Behind there! Behind! Row!) is the response. The boat yields to the spurt and shoots through the water.

'*Vinaka! Vinaka! Ragone!*' (Good! good! my boys!) laughs the captain at the tiller. The visitor attempts to pronounce the words he hears, and, ever and anon, a burst of generous laughter greets his effort.

The scenery, too, is full of interest. Tall, graceful

palms stand sharply reflected in the calm fringe of water, protected from the breeze by the green banks of waving grass, and only the disturbing sweep of the oars breaks the mirrored detail. Picturesque native villages, with the quaintest of houses all brown thatched and leafy, nestle comfortably and drowsily in the lap of crooning nature. Here and there a gorgeous, flamboyant tree makes a splash of vivid scarlet upon the canvas, framed by the blue, cloudless sky and the glistening water. Little brown children sport on the banks, and, in elfish glee and unclothed innocence, wave and shout to the boat. Then they dive into the water beside it, shrieking with the very joy of life as they come up again and shake the water out of their matted heads. Beauty, interest, novelty, all intrigue to hypnotize Mr. Thomas. And they succeed.

The mission station, situated at the mouth of the river, is reached at length. The house is old and out of repair; but the best is made of it, and all around is in perfect order. The well-trimmed lawns and carefully-tended gardens speak of industry linked with taste. The evening comes on, and the traveller has pressed upon him the hospitality that is rarely absent from mission houses.

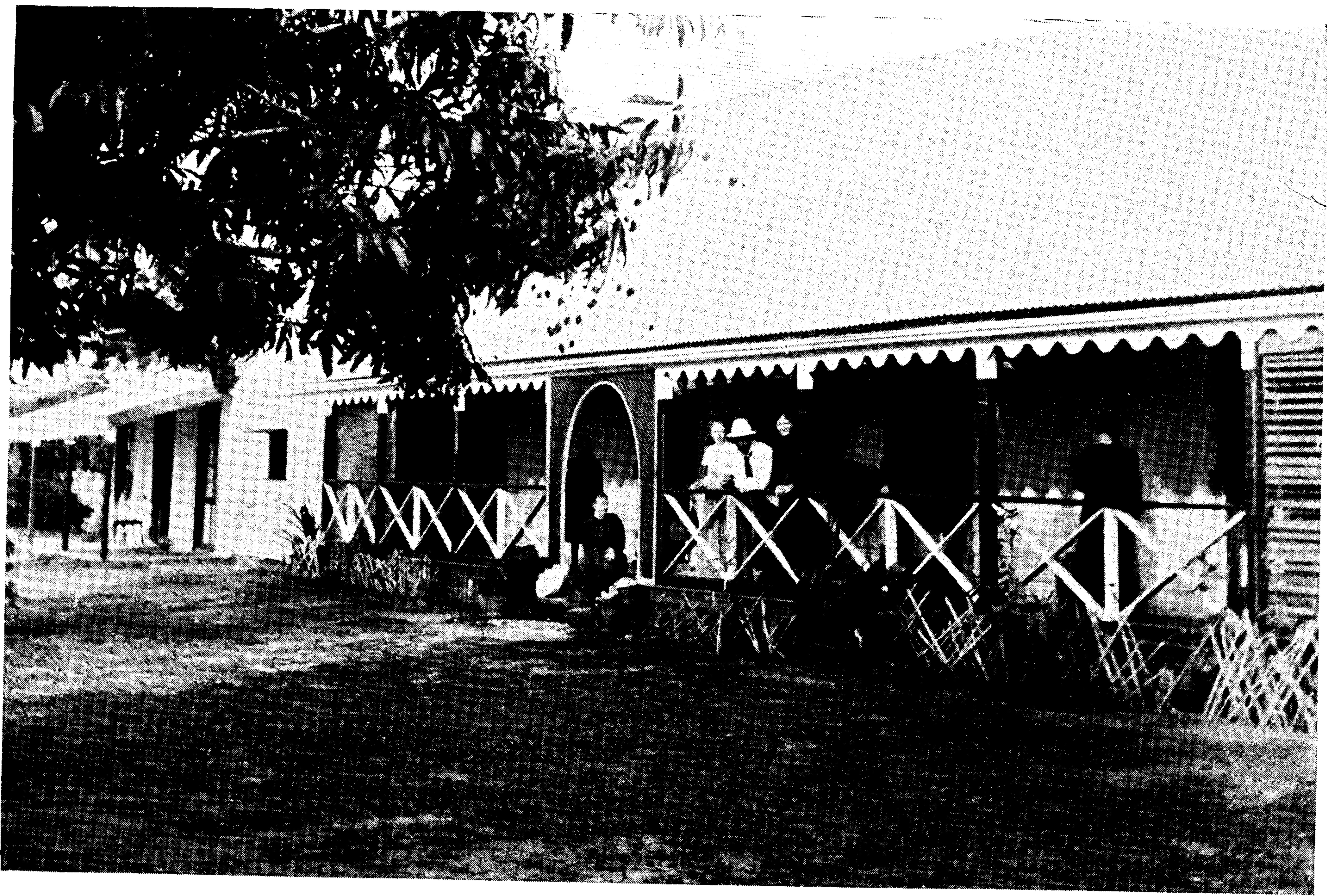
Next morning the Institution is visited. The town is well kept; the students' houses and gardens are neat; and many an indication is met of an

attempt to rise into higher life. The school itself is a miserable building, built of *lasi* and very old—a relic of Old Fiji. The missionary apologizes for it, and announces that a scheme is afoot to remove the station to a more convenient site and to erect up-to-date buildings. Inside, however, there is no disappointment. One hundred and twenty earnest-looking men smilingly and respectfully rise to greet the visitor who is introduced as a great chief from over the seas. These men are all students for 'the Work'—which in Fiji always means, the Work of God. After three years' training these men will be sent out as teachers into the various villages. The copy-books and exercises are shown. Some of the students write like copper-plate. The stranger is told that the curriculum includes exegesis, homiletics, theology, physiology, arithmetic, and geography. It is well for his first impressions that he does not realize how very elementary these subjects are. Still, as Herbert Spencer reminds us, 'During each stage of progress men must think in such terms of thought as they possess,'[1] and these men have scarcely reached the first stage yet. Ten students are called to the front. These men are volunteers for work in New Guinea, New Britain, and the Solomon Islands. They have had everything fully explained to them; they know that hard-

[1] *First Principles*, p. 86.

lost its past glory, and its prestige is kept alive mostly by tradition. It is the city of chiefs, whose high-roofed houses are built to the very water's edge.

The missionary is standing on the jetty to welcome the arrival. A grand missionary is this! as all who know him will testify. He is not much to look at—thin, wiry, almost cadaverous—but yet enthusiasm leaps in those grey-blue eyes, in whose quiet depths there is hidden a soul brave and fearless and yet tender and sympathetic. This is the type of man that uplifts a race: capable, indefatigable, without a shadow of self-seeking casting itself over his work. His bony, tense hand grasps that of the visitor and assures him of a welcome. From a miniature lawn on the hilltop the sights of Bau are pointed out. There on the right are the monument and grave of King Cakobau. The iron fence is broken down and the cement work cracked, testifying to the carelessness of native regard. Before them is a tall, imposing building, erected upon the foundation of the old heathen temple. Near that spot thousands of victims were ceremoniously offered to the god and cruelly butchered on the *rara* in front. The missionary tells ugly stories, looking round at times lest his wife or children should be within ear-shot, of the bestiality, cruelty, and rapine of the old, dark days.



A MISSION HOUSE

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The lawyer stands enthralled as gradually the significance of it all comes over him. Could there, he asks, be any greater evidence of the power of the gospel of Christ than this island of Bau?

While he is standing there, a native minister walks slowly up—a rough, uncouth-looking old man, with a loose mouth, ragged beard, and mottled skin. At first glance, he is almost repulsive in appearance. The visitor wonders whether this old chap has ever been a cannibal. He asks the missionary.

'I'll ask him for you, Mr. Thomas, if you wish it.'

Turning to the old man he puts the question—

'Isaia, have you yourself ever tasted human flesh?'

The eyes seek the ground, and the mottled foot for a minute or two toys with the grass. Without raising his head, he touches his lips with his finger. It is enough. He has eaten and is ashamed. No interpreter is required to explain the significance of that action. Mr. Thomas feels mortified that he has asked such a brutal question. At last, the old uncomely face is raised again, and on it there is an expression of sadness tempered with nascent joy. It is far more beautiful, that face, than the traveller had judged at first.

'It is true, sir, I have eaten. I am full of shame. But, sir, it was in the days of darkness, before the light of the *lotu* came to Fiji. God is good-hearted

and I am forgiven. I am trying now to make a *soro*—a recompense.'

'What is your *soro*, Isaia?' asked the missionary.

'Sir, you know that only last year I sent my only boy to the land of New Guinea, where the light is only very weak, that he might take the place of Aleki, who died of fever. He is the only one left to me, and, sir, I loved him greatly. It is only a small *soro*, sir, but it is the most I can give; and God is good-hearted.'

The missionary interprets, and then the visitor seizes the old man's hand, while a suspicious moisture gathers in his eyes.

'Ah! that old chap knows something of the love of God. He, too, has given his only son. Let critics say that missions are a failure! Never, while they can produce men like this!'

But remembering that he has heard that the natives are fairly decent near the mission stations, but are simply savages away from its influence, Mr. Thomas inquires whether it is possible to see native life rarely touched by the missionary.

'Well,' says the missionary, 'I think I can fix you up. Next week I intended going down the coast, some fifty or sixty miles, to some towns I visit only once in six months. I am due to examine the schools and generally to inquire into the work. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll take you down there

to-morrow. It won't matter much to the people that the examination is a few days earlier, and you can just catch them on the hop, and see with your own eyes how things are.'

The next afternoon they are cutting through the blue waters in a capital little oil-launch, which speeds along at about seven miles an hour. With marvellous precision it is steered among the devious reefs. They have been late in starting, and night is falling rapidly while they are still a mile from the town. The anchor is dropped at length at the mouth of a small creek, and they jump out on to the shell-strewn beach. The missionary has to see about the baggage and the safe anchorage of the launch for the night, so he says to his guest—

'Mr. Thomas, the town is just beyond the rise yonder. This native lad will take you along, and I'll follow in a quarter of an hour or so.'

There is no sign of any village, but the lad, carrying a lantern, soon strikes into a well-formed track.

'*Boom! Boom! oo-d'l! oo-d'l! oo-d'l! oo-d'l!*'

'What is that noise?'

'*Lali*, sir, all same big bell, make 'im *lotu*,' replies the boy, proud of his knowledge of English.

'Oh, the evening prayers.'

'*Io, Saka*' (Yes, sir).

Soon the sound of voices is heard coming from the nearing village. The lights gleam out from

The traveller stays that night in a native house with unlocked doors. The novelty of it all drives sleep from his eyes for many hours. He can scarcely believe that he is fifty miles from any white settlement, amongst a people who, only forty years ago, would have probably eaten him. He is surprised that he feels no fear. At last weariness overtakes him and he follows the example of the missionary, who is breathing heavily and regularly under the other mosquito curtain at his side. Beneath the tall peak of Tovo, with the dull roar of the distant reef and the faint rustling of the *uto*-trees as a lullaby, he too sleeps soundly.

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE OLD LEAVEN

Take up the white man's burden—
  Send forth the best ye breed—
Go, bind your sons to exile
  To serve your captives' need;
To wait, in heavy harness,
  On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples—
  Half devil and half child.
KIPLING, *The White Man's Burden.*

THE previous chapter is all true. It represents the story told on many a missionary platform. It is a plain and unvarnished tale, without exaggeration and without deception. It is a fair specimen of the 'first impressions' of many a visitor to these islands. Yet, by itself, it is only half a truth. If our traveller were to stay in Fiji for three or four years, and mix daily with the natives in normal life, he would be painfully conscious that the story he would have told after a week's acquaintance with the people would require considerable revision in the light of wider experience.

Many shadows need to be put into the picture,

if it is to depict truthfully the Fiji of to-day. Many deep and knotty lines must disfigure the portrait, if it is to be a likeness of the average Fijian as he really is. The old leaven of licentiousness, cruelty, and lying is still in his character.

Milton, with a poet's insight into human nature, said: 'Long is the way, and hard, that out of hell leads up to light.' The Fijian, through Christian effort, has been lifted out of the hell of his past life, but he is still far off from 'light,' and the way is long and hard. The fact needs impressing upon the missionary consciousness of the Church that the work among these lately savage people of the Pacific is only well begun. For it is not enough to lift the native 'out of a horrible pit and out of the miry clay,' nor even to set his 'feet upon a rock.' We must follow the Psalmist's order, and 'establish' his 'goings.' He must be taught to walk, for the hills of virility and of stability of character are still wrapped in the blue haze of distance. To 'establish his goings' is a much longer and more tedious task than 'to lift him out of the pit.'

The 'secondary stage' of missions is ever the more difficult and important. Virgin forests are much more attractive and romantic than half-stumped clearings. There is in the former case the sharp, clear ring of the axe and the thundering crash of the huge tree as it falls, bringing down

with it half a dozen smaller ones. Though it has its dangers, and very great ones, there is no lack of volunteers. But to work in the uninteresting clearing, grub out half-buried roots, and make the ground ready for the plough—this is drudgery. Nevertheless, the more prosaic task is not the less important; for if it be not done then insidious scrub and tangled growth spring up which make the work of higher cultivation wellnigh impossible.

The Church has to guard itself against expecting rapid and dramatic results. God, it would appear from the study of that expression of His character which we call Nature, works slowly. His method is not that of hot-headed, impulsive Boanerges, who would call down fire from heaven. Christ reproved them, and us, by the parable of the leaven hidden in three measures of meal. The coral reef, the limestone rock, the sparkling crystal, what are they but so many texts from which, to use George Herbert's phrase, He 'preaches patience' to this fitful, feverish human race? The slate-bed is solid because the glacier is slow. The avalanche makes noise enough, but forms no rock. Every flower, by the very beauty of its colour and the fragrance of its blossom, proclaims the gradualness of the divine method. Every bird carolling towards summer skies in 'profuse strains of unpremeditated art,' has the same theme as its *motif.* Even the savage creatures

seeking their loves in wood and plain are but the results of the infinite patience of God. Human-kind, if we have read the secret of our mystic frame aright, is but another illustration of the same quiet purpose. Shall then the soul be formed in haste? In the Temple of Spirit there is to be heard neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, does the building of God, which we call Humanity, rise.

The student of anthropology realizes that races change only very gradually, and that only by the most subtle modification is permanency assured. He has learnt that mushroom growth means mushroom decay, and that, even under new and exalted impulses such as those inherent in Christianity, the deepening of character requires time. History is filled with illustrations of the fact that unless impulse, however noble and strong, be supported by careful and systematic education, reaction and reversion inevitably occur. In witness of these things the New Testament and the most recent psychology speak with one voice.

It is not that the slightest doubt is to be cast upon that mysterious but ever essential experience which theology terms 'conversion.' That is often sudden, especially in the case of those who have had years of training in the most susceptible period of life, and have had generations of religious influ-

—sometimes whole provinces—at the command of a powerful chief 'put on the loin-cloth'—that is, accepted the *lotu*. Here is an extract from a missionary's letter, in 1857: 'I spent nearly four days among these people (Nadroga). I had several interviews with the chiefs, who gave me to understand that they intended to *lotu* and to *lotu*, in a body; and that they wished it to be *vakaturaga*, that is, chief-like.' In fact even the sword was used to bring the heathen into subjection! In the Ba province, needless to say without the consent of the missionary, newly-won tribes waged a *jihad*, or holy war, upon their more benighted brethren. Necessarily there was an absence of conviction in the great proportion of these 'converts.' Thousands were added to the outward and visible Church in a day; but they were men and women in whom no moral and spiritual change had taken place. It was much that they gave up cannibalism and the more debasing forms of heathenism.

Such mass movements, however, gave the Christian missionary the opportunity of instruction which he had long coveted. He was then face to face with a new difficulty. He had only a few native helpers, and the European staff was extremely small. The Rev. J. S. H. Royce, in 1856, writes: 'In the Rewa circuit we have 21,000 professing Christians; and every week brings its additional

members. Some thousands have *lotued* since our last district meeting . . . . Whether this will be a permanent change remains to be proved. It is impossible in this circuit, with the present staff of men, to visit more than once in six months some important towns which have lately embraced Christianity. The same may be said of most of the circuits in Fiji at the present time.'

The training of the majority of the native helpers was necessarily very imperfect and their character immature. The instinct of the savage was still in their blood. The marvel is that with such rude instruments the missionaries were able to accomplish so much. The progress was far too rapid for their limited resources, and hence—without attaching the slightest blame to those who deserve only the highest praise—the work was very superficial. Under such conditions it would be insanity to expect anything else. These brave men, nevertheless, placed a great emphasis upon training and education, and it is humiliating to the Church to remember that she did not support their policy by the practical help necessary.

Even to-day the time has been far too brief to correct, to any great extent, the weaknesses of the past. There are thousands in Fiji, especially among the tribes more remote from the coast and from the mission stations, who are still very dark, and whose

religion, as yet, is only paganism tinctured with Christianity. Over and over again the missionaries in their annual Reports deplore the superstitious practices and relics of heathenism which still exist among the people. 'Other dismissals have been occasioned by lapses into devil worship, or the revival of indecent customs, or by the carelessness which often comes as the reaction from the exultation of the awakened soul in its new-found Saviour. It must not be forgotten, too, that in the mountain districts of Na Viti Levu there linger superstitions as dark as its own valleys, and human hearts almost as hard as its own sun-scorched crags, and that there are old people who profess to sigh for bygone days and keep alive attachment to the unclean customs of the past. Hence it sometimes happens that we are called upon to discipline nearly the whole of the church members in a village, or even in a number of villages, for the perpetration of some act inconsistent with Christian practice. While, therefore, we report progress, it must not be thought that there is less room for missionary effort. The need for such effort grows, not diminishes; and the work becomes more arduous and fraught with anxiety from year to year. The dangers which threaten our Church are so numerous and active, and their attitude so menacing, that at the commencement of the day we often wonder what ill news will meet us at its close;

and the joy of our most glorious success is too frequently clouded by the memory of humiliating failure.'[1]

Only four years ago a missionary baptized scores of these mountaineers, who had not *lotued* previously. There still remain odd men and women who are pagan, and who are somewhat proud of the distinction and uncanny influence it gives them over their fellows. Sentences like the following are only too common in reports: 'We have again had to dismiss several of our local preachers, class-leaders, and members for devil worship and superstitious practices, which, one would have thought, had died out long ago. The native ministers are unanimous in their opinion that these things are still practised to a greater extent than we know by our monthly reports. There is still much to be done for these people before we have any right to be satisfied with the state of our Church here.'[2]

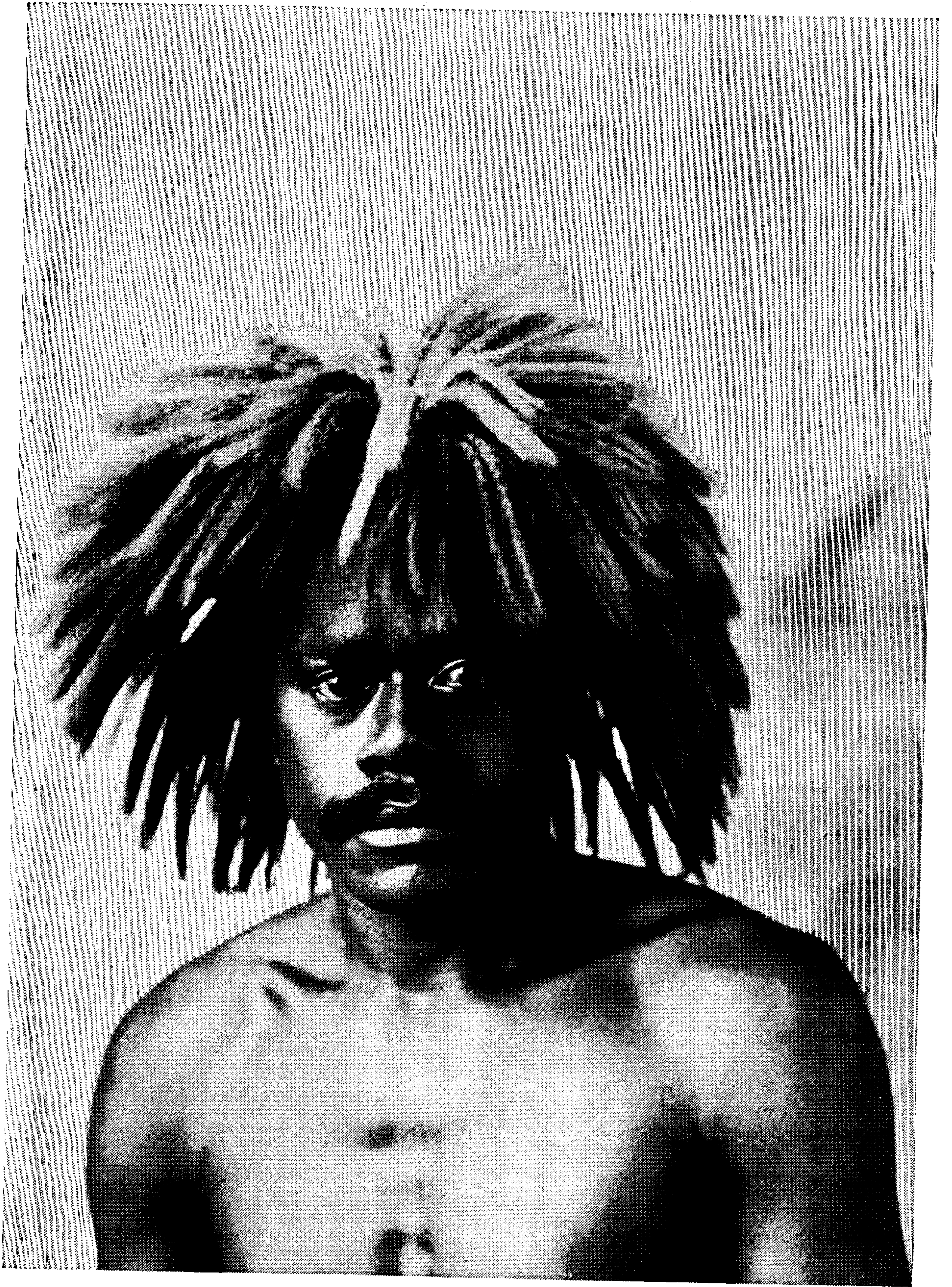
Judged by outward observances of the forms of religion, the Fijian is an exceedingly religious man. He attends church regularly; he has family prayers daily; he observes with a puritanical strictness the Sabbath day; and, until lately, he was practically an abstainer from spirituous liquors. These things,

[1] A missionary's Report in 1898. The Reports referred to in this volume are those of the Australasian Methodist Missionary Society. [2] 1906 Report.

however, are rather symptomatic of obedience to established custom than the expression of a deeply regenerate nature. True there are some men, like old Samuela and Isaia, who have attained a higher level of Christian experience; but these cannot be regarded as typical of the development of the people as a whole.

There can be no doubt that the influence of Christianity is gradually raising the planes of conduct and deepening the motives of the race; but, in the meantime, much shallowness of character furnishes the missionary with cause for disappointment. Stevenson has told us that 'Man is a creature who lives not upon bread alone, but principally upon catch-words.' This is pre-eminently true of the native in his transition state. He, with the precociousness of a child, picks up words and phrases which, though he does not fully understand their meaning, he uses. Often a native in prayer or preaching will give utterance to sentences full of spiritual depth and meaning; but, if one has heard his missionary preach, it is not difficult to trace them to their source. Nor is this a practice to be condemned. A moment's reflection will convince us that this is the only possible way of growth. It is the way a child learns—the natural way. The critic who blatterates against the native or counts him a hypocrite because he uses phrases the meaning of which he has not yet fathomed, is either ignoring

In this transition state it is extremely difficult to deal with the Fijian, either as a pagan or as a Christian. He is something of both; and it is hard to distinguish where the one ends and the other begins. The moral sense of the community is as yet uneducated to any satisfactory extent. Not even with them can it be said, ''Tis only daylight that makes sin,' for any sense of wrongdoing is not yet made acute by the social conscience of the people. 'There are in such work as ours several features that must be taken into account. One of these is the low intellectual development of the natives. . . . There stand out here and there a few men of ability, but, taking the rank and file, their intelligence is low. It affects their conscience, which is yet a very embryonic affair, and can scarcely be called a factor in their lives. The fear of punishment and the hope of reward play a much more important part in the regulation of a native's action than an acute sense of right and wrong. On such elementary, though fundamental, virtues as truthfulness, honesty, morality, faithfulness to his word, payment of debts, constancy to friends, &c., the Fijian native is not so much influenced by the sanctions of conscience as by personal convenience and gain. Connected with this feebleness of conscience we find another very serious feature of native life in the lowness of the standard of public opinion. . . . Nothing that can



'HALF DEVIL AND HALF CHILD'

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class attendance, have sprung up; and to these the Fijian gives the reverence he gave to the old ones. Thus his life has a natural bent towards the mechanical.

Moreover, a new generation is fast coming that remembers not the horrors and filthiness of the 'old, dark days.' The flush of first enthusiasm is past; and now that diabolical deeds and personal dangers are at an end, slackness and *insouciance* have succeeded intensity and fear. The Methodist Church occupies, in the mind of the Fijian, much the place that the Anglican Church does in the eyes of the average Englishman. It represents official and respectable Christianity. In a proportion of cases it means a great deal more; but this is a fair average view. Respectability is one of the Fijian's dangers in matters of religion. Report after report speaks of 'deadly formalism,' 'a form of godliness,' 'careless indifference,' &c.

Another fact to be taken count of is the natural unreliability of the native. In the old days, as we have seen, he was treacherous and full of intrigue. The old leaven is still in him. The quality of straightforwardness is rarely present in either his speech or action. Circumlocution is a thing his soul loves. Diplomacy rather than sincerity marks his dealings with his fellows. His ideas of honour are very crude; and to place reliance upon his promise,

as a general thing, is impossible. There are some exceptions to these generalizations, but they are few. This unreliability seriously hampers mission work. When a village cannot get just what it wants, the missionary will not infrequently receive from it a threatening letter stating that if the desired thing is not given, the people will turn Roman Catholics! Sometimes a whole tribe will turn to another denomination for no cogent reason—showing how very elementary are their convictions. As an instance: a missionary had just returned from visiting the people in the Namosi district. They had given liberally in the missionary meetings and attended well the services. He had scarcely reached home when there came a letter from the highest chief of the tribe demanding that a certain native minister should be removed for some political offence. The missionary wrote replying that the matter would be inquired into; but this did not satisfy the old chief. He went off in his canoe and asked the head of the Seventh Day Adventist Church to receive him and his tribe. The Adventist did not want converts who left in pique, and told the old man so. In high dudgeon he made his way to the Roman Catholic priest, and made the same offer. This time it was accepted; and he went back to his people and commanded them to change their religion. There was no other motive

save that of annoying the missionary and spiting the native minister. A few days later the missionary went down again, and found that two thousand people—church members, Sunday-school teachers, class-leaders, stewards, local preachers—had all become Roman Catholics. The priests were there busy, from daylight to dark, giving out rosaries and baptizing 'converts.' A week before these were all Methodists! They had experienced no theological change of belief: they simply bowed to the will of their chief. Had he ordered them to become Mormons they would have yielded an equal obedience. Here and there an odd man or woman stood firm; but such cases were very few. They say that they will come back again when the old chief dies! That is seven years ago, the old man still lives, and the bulk of the people are still Roman Catholic. Similar secessions for even more trivial reasons have occurred several times in the history of the Fijian mission.

By far the most appalling source of anxiety to the missionary is the growing 'immorality' of the people. To this is largely attributable the decline in population. There can be little room for doubt that this sin, though a child of the licentious past, has grown and developed since the abandonment of heathenism. There are some who, with great unfairness, would lay this increase of immorality

'Out of 508 members removed from the roll in this circuit during the year, fully 400 were for *immorality.*'

'. . . the prevailing vice of *immorality.*'

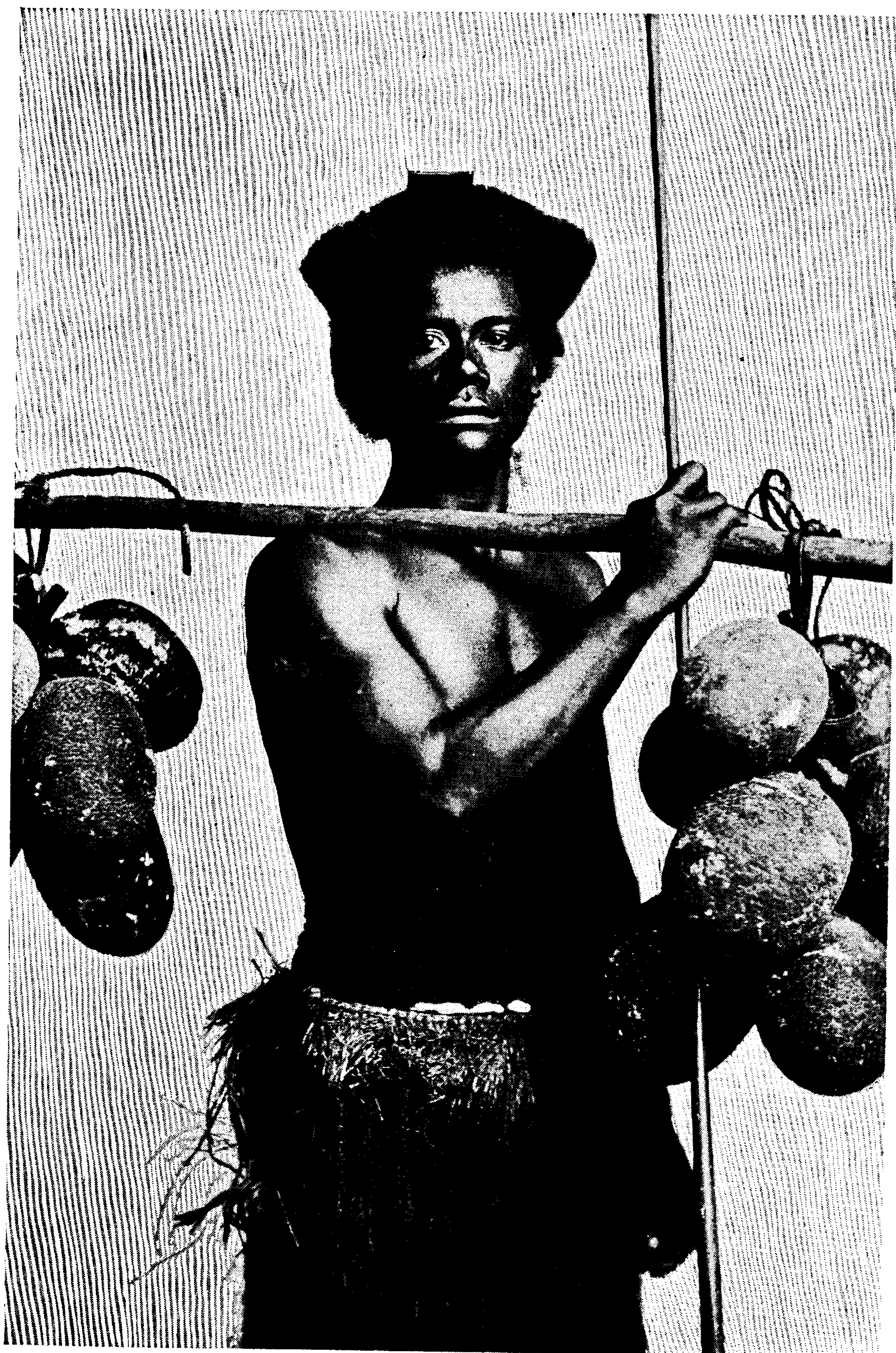
'It seems to us that in the transition stage through which the colony is passing, there is an increase of *immorality.* An increasingly large number of names has had to be removed from our church rolls for *immorality.*'

'It is this evil which is eating the life out of the nation.'

'During the year fully 400 of them were struck off the roll for *immorality.*'

All this makes sorry reading; but it goes to prove how much still remains of the Christian task in Fiji. The Christian Church must not merely glory in past success; but bend itself to the great—we should say greater—work that is yet to be done. In the Fijian character there is good soil. The native is not devoid of personality. He is well worth saving. Some splendid specimens of humanity have already sprung from this soil; but good soil *uncultivated* gives the most prolific crop of weeds. There are old seeds still in the earth and vital yet. Only patient tilling can eradicate them.

It is ours to help who have stronger heredity and nobler ancestry behind us. They without us cannot be made perfect. We dare not allow them to please



A SELLER OF BREAD-FRUIT

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# CHAPTER IX

## NEW DANGERS

*Enter* STEPHANO, *singing: a bottle in hand.*

*Caliban* (aside): That's a brave god and bears celestial liquor; I will kneel to him.

*The Tempest*, Act ii. sc. 2.

ONE of the greatest blots upon our English life is our influence upon lower races. It is all very well, in moments of patriotic fervour, to praise ourselves for our colonizing power and our superior ethics. It cannot be gainsaid that we have done much for the native peoples under our rule, and it is probable we have been more generous and kindly in our relation to them than other nations have been; but this is beside the mark. Are we satisfied that our influence has been of the highest? that we have really raised the moral tone of a people by our civilization? Is it not rather the influence of Stephano and Trinculo than that of Prospero, which affects the races under our protection?

Our virtues are, for the most part, beyond the immediate horizon of the savage. His eyes have

not been trained to see goodness. The higher motives of life, like the more delicate touches in art, are discernible only by the educated eye. Our sense of honour, of truth, of chivalry, is the modified fruit of long centuries of culture. Fifteen hundred years stand between us and the primitive man, and our ideals are, as yet, beyond his range of consciousness. Hence the highest in our British life does not appeal to him.

But the lowest does. Our vices are much more primitive; and the coarser ones are distinctively animal. These the native has no difficulty in comprehending, and they are readily acquired by a people of gross animality. Therefore, though it may sound heresy to say it, it is much more wicked to sin in Fiji than in Boston or Edinburgh. The example in the former case is much more baneful, because it is without any antidote of virtue recognizable by the native.

Our vices, moreover, are more deadly to a primitive people than to ourselves. We have developed self-control to a remarkable degree; prudence and discretion are fairly fully evolved in us as a people; and the restraint of social custom is a hedge which prevents many a wandering desire from straying. Thus when we give way to vice, it is scarcely with total *abandon* or unbridled lust. The native has but little of this. He has the casual

instincts of a savage. We, also, have knowledge of the ultimate effects of over-indulgence in animal gratification; and this, perhaps more often than ethical imperatives, gives pause to vicious inclination. The native is without that acquired experience; and for him, especially in regard to 'imported vice,' *facilis descensus Averno.*

The growing *liquor habit* of the race is a very strong witness to these statements. Theoretically, the Fijian is a protected and prohibited person. By Government ordinance, it is illegal to sell or supply alcoholic liquor to a native unless he have a 'permit.' There are only about thirty of these 'permits' among 80,000 people, so their relation to the consumption of liquor is a negligible one. Practically, the prohibition is a dead letter. An almost unrestricted sly-grog trade obtains throughout the group. The only exception which can be taken to that statement is touching the adjective 'sly.' Now and again spasmodic attempts are made to suppress the traffic, or to keep it within such bounds that the scandal may not be too apparent. The import of liquor, however, rises steadily year by year, while there is no increase in the white population and no apparent increase in their drinking habits. The supply to the native is limited only by his purse and his desires. Both these have swelled lately. Much of the illicit trade is done by

the numerous Indian storekeepers, although behind them are unprincipled white merchants, and behind them again a lax administration.

According to the latest custom-returns, there is about £30,000 worth of liquor imported into the colony every year. The retail price of this commodity cannot be less than, say, £45,000. The white population is, in round numbers, 2,500. With the exception of a few 'permitted' Fijians and Indians, these are the only persons for whom this liquor can be legally required. This makes the drink bill of the colony, presuming that the brown man does not consume intoxicants, £18 per head—man, woman, and child! Thus Fiji writes itself down as the most bibulous country on the face of the earth.

Look at it from another angle. The amount of duty collected upon spirits alone is £11,472, which, at the rate of fourteen shillings per gallon, gives 16,388 gallons consumed by 2,500 men, women, and children. This figures out at something like 6·5 gallons per individual. The consumption in New Zealand, for example, is ·5 per head. This means that, supposing there is no illicit traffic, the white residents of Fiji are thirteen times more drunken than the people of New Zealand. But this is a libel, for the average white man in Fiji is much on a par, in this respect, with the average

colonial. What, then, is the conclusion? It is that for every gallon consumed by the European, twelve gallons are consumed by the native!

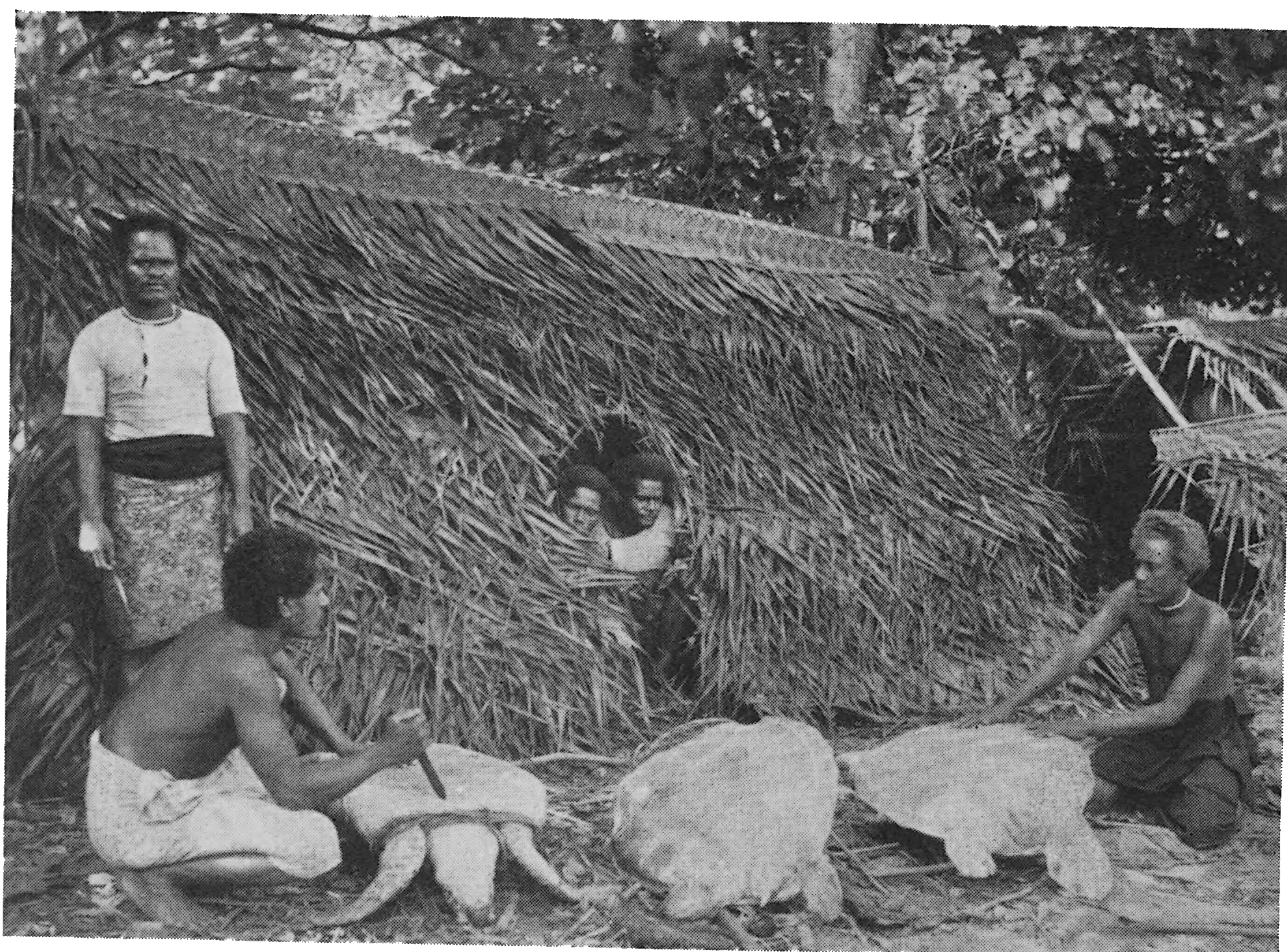
Now it cannot be supposed that the Government which handles this huge revenue is not aware of the illicit trade. It has had all these facts pointed out to it several times, and that in a proper and respectful manner. But what has it done? It has allowed the imports of spirits to rise year by year, and so far as the enforcement of the law is concerned only the most culpable and dismal failure is the result. The police force of the colony, composed mostly of Indians and Fijians, is ineffective without a doubt, and its efforts to suppress the traffic are farce and comedy.

Such a state of affairs is a standing disgrace, and a most serious reproach to our empire. Some of the best minds of our race have stated in unqualified terms that it spells ruin to a native people to allow them free commerce in spirituous liquors, and that, for them, the only safe course is absolute prohibition. This was the conclusion arrived at by the recent commission appointed in South Africa to inquire into native problems. New Zealand has had a bitter experience, in this respect, with regard to the Maoris. Spirituous liquors have, to a large extent, decimated the race. Mr. A. T. Ngata, M.A., LL.B., M.P., in the course of a recent lecture upon the

be roused in other parts of the empire, and the Colonial Office given to understand by it that this odious and illicit trade must be for ever stopped.

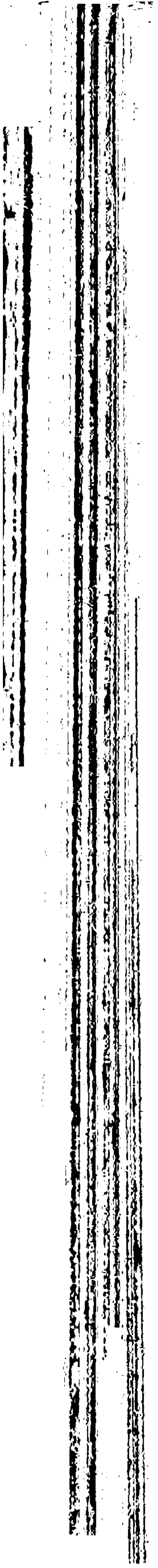
Unless this curse is dealt with promptly and drastically, it means not only the degradation but the extinction of the Fijian people. The race will have trouble enough to hold its own even under the most favourable conditions ; but the debauchery and resultant sensuality brought about through indulgence in intoxicants cannot but have a most disastrous effect upon the already impaired vitality of the people. The following is an evidence of this:

At a town on the Rewa River, a number of visitors had arrived with their wives and children. The chief of the town, a man of some means, determined to entertain his guests royally. After the great *magiti* (feast) in the early evening, the *mekes* (action-songs) commenced. The large house was crowded to the doors. The gin-bottle was introduced, and those taking part in the *meke* were treated to its contents. The *meke* became more excited and vigorous as the result. The bottle was finished, then another, and another. At midnight, nearly all the men of the town and their guests were more or less inflamed with drink. Then commenced quarrelling and indescribable lewdness. The women became afraid, and retired to other houses. Some of the men rushed out into the night in a state of



PREPARING FOR THE *MAGITI* (FEAST)
(The three objects in the foreground are turtle)

ROUND THE YAQONA BOWL [*Facing page* 180
(*Yaqona* is the champagne of native official life)



Fijian youths have been drinking until they have become inflamed—and, as is usually the case with a native in that state, insolent. They walk unsteadily upon the verandah of the cottage and call out wildly, *Marama! Marama!* (Lady). The lady comes out, and is not a little nervous at their loud, thick voices. One of the drunken brutes seizes her and drags her off the verandah, shouting that a white woman is just the same to him as a brown one. She struggles and screams, until, fortunately, some sober Fijians and Indians come to her rescue. For some time afterwards she is seriously ill from shock.

Surely the demand of that Englishman for protection for his wife is not an unreasonable one!

The fact forces itself upon us that unless this liquor evil can be stamped out among the Fijians, the prospects of higher life and morals are very dark. It may be argued that methods of moral suasion should be tried. They have been tried. The missionaries and others have done the best in this way; but the truth is, that the Fijian's moral instincts are yet too weak to make a course of this character of great practical utility. He is still the undisciplined Caliban, ashamed, thank God! of his dam, Sycorax; but a prey to loose, immoral Stephanos and Trinculos. He needs the wise control and kindly protection of the more enlightened

Prospero. That is his only hope. *And Prospero, in the providence of God, is the British race.*

Another growing evil which confronts the ethical development of the people is that of *gambling*. This also is an imported vice. It has been introduced mainly by the Indian element in the community and by disreputable 'beach-comers,' as the dregs of the white inhabitants are called. This temptation has come with the advent of more ready money. Though money has little intrinsic value to a Fijian, and he usually squanders it recklessly, yet he is naturally a covetous man and keen to make an advantageous bargain. He thus becomes a ready prey to the card-sharper and dice-thrower. In sharp practices and sleight-of-hand what chance has the simple-minded, clumsy-fingered Fijian against such a cunning and expert prestidigitator as the Indian? Most observers are of the opinion that this habit is growing very rapidly, and if a love of gambling be added to the naturally shiftless and improvident nature of the Fijian, his future becomes darker still.

*Impurity* of a foreign sort is becoming a menace to the race. With shame it must be admitted, this has been introduced by the European. There are some splendid types of the Anglo-Saxon in Fiji—men, well-born, intellectual, of clean life, and of high motive; but there are some also who are the very scum of the earth. Unfortunately, it is with this

latter class that the Fijian comes into the most intimate association. The more refined Englishman, save in a few rare cases, scarcely finds much congenial companionship in the Fijian. His habits of thought, manner of life, and aesthetic tastes almost preclude anything more than mere acquaintance. But the 'beach-comer' is not so particular in his friendships, and, too often, is more than willing to become familiar with the native for his own vile ends. Virtue has never been an invulnerable point with the Fijian woman; but, even in the darkest days, such a thing as 'paid vice' was never known. In native towns adjacent to English settlements, the state of affairs can only be suggested.

*Sabbath desecration* is certainly on the increase. This may not be, in itself, so venial a sin as the old Puritans would have us believe; but in the case of a primitive people the breaking down of these more or less conventional hedges is indicative of a carelessness in other things far more serious. Under the régime of the older missionaries, the utmost strictness obtained in the observance of the Sabbath; but the authority of the missionary has weakened in this respect to-day. The Fijian sees Englishmen—professing Christians—picnicking, yachting, boating, playing at tennis, cricket, and football, on the day of rest; and he naturally asks, 'Why should I not be allowed to enjoy myself in similar fashion?' He

sees punts laden with bananas or sugar towed down to the harbour; or watches the Indian agriculturist at work on his garden patch. He is surprised, at first, to see that the punts do not sink nor the gardens show any signs of blight. He then commences to take cautious liberties himself. He may then be put out of church membership; and soon he drifts into carelessness, frivolity, sin. It would seem as if, in the present stage of his development, some of these conventional rules are necessary to his faith. He always suffers when they are broken down.

A new religious danger has lately appeared in Muhammadan activity. The Indian has been in Fiji for over thirty years, but the direct religious influence upon the native has been nil. Conceit and prejudice, on both sides, have effectually walled off the two races from one another. The Fijian, for his part, has looked upon the new-comer as a dark-minded man. He has only two categories— the *lotu* and pagan darkness. As the Indian did not profess the one, he must be counted in the other. The Indian, on the other hand, so utterly despised the Fijian as an omnivorous glutton, eating all kinds of cooked and uncooked animal flesh, that he thought him devoid of any religious instincts. He still calls him a *jangali*—a bushman—and treats him as such. What could a *jangali* understand of the subtle and intricate doctrine of metempsychosis, or the philo-

sophy summed up in the word *maya?* Hinduism is not a missionary religion; and, even though it were, Hindu contempt would have saved the Fijian from being its object. Muhammadanism, however, encouraged doubtless by its marvellous success in North Africa among a similar people, is turning its eyes towards the conquest of Fiji. A Mussulman *moulvi* has already translated parts of the Koran into Fijian, and it may be that soon an active propaganda will be instituted. The boast is made that even now some have been won to the faith of the Prophet, and a few Fijians are living in the 'mosque.' History tells us that Muhammadanism is not a force to be treated lightly where a native race is concerned. Deserted mission stations and empty churches in Africa to-day warn us that we must watch narrowly the preacher who carries a book wrapped up in a green cloth.

The Indian influence, apart from this aspect, is a very baneful one. The Indian is argumentative and constantly tilting at the faith of the Fijian, who rarely has the skill to parry his strokes. The Indian becomes wealthy and grows arrogant in his attitude. This is not without effect upon the native mind. It must seem strange to the Fijian, with his simple ideas of providence and retribution, to see a race which despises the *lotu* and breaks almost every law of God and man, thriving and making progress;

'No; but it makes our hearts warm and gives us great comfort. When we fall we shall go to heaven and live for ever.'

'Yes. And so is my religion full of comfort and will take me to heaven when I die; but it also does something for me here. The Muhammadans are the greatest people on the earth; and it is all by the blessing of Allah. We grow strong, and our race increases like the roots of the coco-nut tree for number. We grow rich and make you Fijians our cane-cutters. We buy land, and by the blessing of the Most Merciful, it grows more than you could ever make it give. Allah is good to his people.'

The old native minister shuffles uneasily, and is evidently relieved when the *moulvi* turns to his hookah again. There is a cunning smile upon the face of the Mussulman which is not good to see.

So far there has been very little intercourse between the two races in Fiji. Now, however, the barriers are being broken down, and a friendliness, especially in wrongdoing, is being established. The Fijian is commencing to look upon the Indian as part of the natural order of things in this new world that is growing before his eyes; and the Indian is not slow to recognize that there are many and material advantages to be gained by being more or less amiable to the *jangali.* Inter-marriage is but rare. It is gradually spreading. Physiologically,

‘INSTEAD OF THE FATHERS’

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indulgence becomes more keen and unscrupulous. This has had the effect of awaking new thieving propensities in the race. Being a native, he will not discipline himself and do without the things he cannot afford to buy, especially when he has got into the habit of using them or when they tickle his palate. He, therefore, exercises his ingenuity to obtain them by wrong means, and in some districts there has been a phenomenal increase of petty thieving.

New conditions of life are bringing about the disintegration of authority. The Fijian has been one of the most law-abiding subjects in the empire. This was due to the fact that British law was grafted on to native custom, and the people were ruled, to a great extent, through their own hereditary chiefs. This is now passing away. The chiefs, unfortunately, do not represent the best elements of the community, and there is, as one result, a growing disregard for authority. The effect of this upon the character of the people is bad. They cannot be kept for ever as children, and they are, as yet, unable to exercise any sort of self-government. Hence the problems connected with the ruling of the people are full of difficulty. It is not improbable that, until the moral weight of a new social order is felt, there will be considerable unrest among the native population of these islands.

Civilization, through its Shogun, the British

Government, has created some of the problems of the Fijian people. It is for that power to solve them by those principles of equity and humanity for which the Anglo-Saxon race is noted, and by which alone it has come to greatness.

# CHAPTER X

## THE PASSING OF THE FIJIAN

> 'Tis an old tale: Jove strikes the Titans down
> Not when they set about their mountain piling,
> But when another rock would crown their task!
>
> BROWNING, *Paracelsus.*

THERE is something very disappointing and almost sardonic in the rapid disappearance of the Fijians just as their evangelization is complete. The foot of the native is just on the threshold of a new and nobler life, and there is permitted only a brief glance down the long-corridored vestibule of opportunity when death with its remorseless grip draws him back. From the Fijian point of view it is tragedy, though he himself smiles as if it were comedy; from the missionary point of view it is irony, though he will not allow himself to breathe the word.

After so many high-souled men and higher-souled women have lived and died for the Fijian, and so many thousands of pounds have been spent by the Church in the effort to uplift him, it is, on the face of it, difficult to justify the ways of God to men. Why

function in the great evolution of humanity. He said of the mission carried on there, 'It belongs to the order of the Good Samaritan. It is a mission of pure benevolence.' There is room still for such a spirit in our somewhat utilitarian world. In this way even the decaying race may fulfil a function in the evolution of humanity, and in the shadow it casts, rare ferns and tender mosses may grow.

The Fijian people *are* dying. No one would think so to see them laughing and smiling, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; but it is a fact nevertheless. In the year 1850 it was estimated upon a careful computation, which all subsequent investigation has shown to err rather on the side of under-statement, that there were 200,000 natives in these islands. To-day there are only 86,000. In 1901 the census was taken with some degree of accuracy, and the population registered 94,397. The estimate on December 31, 1905 (four and three-quarter years later) was 86,816—a decrease of 7,581. That means, roughly speaking, a loss of over 1,500 per annum. This rate, alarming as it is, is independent of epidemics; for in the period instanced, no serious sickness has visited the islands. In 1875 over a quarter of the total population fell by measles.

There are some who delight in this fact, and say with brutal emphasis, 'Let the Fijian die. Other

A TYPICAL FIJIAN WOMAN

[*Facing page* 194

This Report is a piece of fine scientific work, and deserves a far more permanent form and a wider audience than that secured by an ugly official Blue Book. Thoroughness, fairness, earnestness, and scientific spirit mark every page of the Report. To those who wish fuller information on this subject, a study of this volume is heartily recommended.

Circulars were sent by the commission to the chief residents of the colony, inviting their opinions upon the causes of decrease; native witnesses of the more intelligent sort were examined; statistics of typical towns were carefully obtained; and the best procurable medical skill was requisitioned to probe the problems within its own particular sphere. Though the findings of the commission may appear, to the casual reader, somewhat vague, yet the more studious will readily discover that most of the causes of the falling away of the population are so complex as to almost defy analysis and challenge proof. Many of the facts and deductions in this present chapter are taken from that Report.

Many of the causes which the commission emphasized, and which every careful observer must realize are bound up with any adequate theories of decrease, are of such a nature as to render them unsuitable, on various grounds, for publication in a book intended for general readers. Some of the problems stated are of purely ethnological interest; some of

the conditions are merely local; while many of the details of the sexual relations of the people (by far the most important causes of all) are of such a character as to preclude discussion save in a strictly scientific work.

It was clearly proved then, and all observation confirms the conclusion, that no *one* cause by itself is sufficient to account, to any appreciable extent, for the passing of the race. There are perhaps half a dozen causes which seem more important factors than the rest; but even these fail to account for the tremendous mortality. Hence the whole subject is exceedingly complex, and, in many respects, obscure; and we must beware of any theorist who has one idea to solve the mystery.

The commission cited *thirty-six* distinct causes. It is true that some of these overlapped, and a large proportion of them impinged one upon the other; but they were all felt to have a more or less important place in the deplorable result. In the present chapter an attempt is made to outline some of the principal and *printable* reasons given for the downfall of the people.

There can be no doubt that the decrease commenced prior to annexation in 1874, and there is much evidence to confirm the opinion that the decay of the race had begun long before the white man came to Fiji. Careless writers and rhetorical

speakers often assert that the natives vanish because of the appearance of the European—meaning thereby, that the lower cannot exist in the presence of the higher. This is a generalization made on very narrow evidence, and many instances in modern history are overlooked when such statements are made. In the case of the Fijian we are safe in saying that the wasting away of the inhabitants set in apart from the influence of Western civilization. The Fijian was a doomed man before he saw the face of the *Papalagi*. Still, it must be admitted that civilization—and by that we mean premature, ready-made civilization—has done much to accelerate the result.

Several writers to the commission dwell upon the *abolition of polygamy* as one of the chief reasons of decline. This is a subject upon which it is, necessarily, difficult to obtain exact data. Some maintain, and with these the writer is forced to agree, that the change from this practice to that of monogamy is basal to a considerable amount of the decrease of the population. It must be said, in fairness, however, that there is an array of names, of those who have the right to speak with authority, against this contention. It is not contended, for a moment, that the polygamous state in itself had advantages over that of the monogamous. Had the change been reversed and a forced polygamy

the new system, this is not so. The mother is no longer one of a number of women in the household. The chief care, and often the hardest tasks, of the family fall upon her. She must dive for shell-fish, go to the bush for firewood, or to the garden for food, at a time when she needs help and support. Instead of there being born strong, robust children at intervals sufficiently distant to provide the opportunity of nurture necessary among a primitive people without artificial foods, the offspring is weak and puny, and arriving too frequently, often suffers from neglect. Thus it is that nearly 50 per cent. of the children die before they are a year old. The main cause of this mortality is gastric trouble, and this is induced principally by premature weaning and improper food. For this state of things the sudden change in marriage custom is, to a large extent, responsible.

But there can be no doubt that the commission was right in its conclusion, with which we are in cordial agreement: 'We are of the opinion that polygamy has, perhaps, left a legacy of customs which grew naturally out of that practice, and which assort badly with our modern form of civilization; and we believe that the food staples of the people and their habits as regards the work of the women were more suited to the polygamous state of the race than to that now existing; but we think that

the time has come when these habits should be remodelled to suit the altered condition of native life, and that the abolition of polygamy is not a matter for regret' (Report, p. 10).

*Inbreeding, or consanguineous marriage*, was cited as a serious cause of decadence; but, contrary to generally accepted opinions, it was conclusively shown, from statistical results taken from a large number of such marriages, that these unions were favourable rather than otherwise. The Fijians look upon the marriage of cousins (as do certain royal families in European lands) as the most natural of all marriages. Not only are the lands held together by such a contract, but the blood of the tribe is kept pure. But in the marriage of cousins they make an important distinction, and it would be interesting to know, physiologically, how far it is a true one. Cousins are counted the children of brother and sister. The children of brother and brother, or sister and sister, are never called cousins, but are termed brother or sister. In the former case, marriage is not only allowable but extremely desirable; in the latter case, it is incest. For illustration: here is a family of four—John, James, Mary and Elizabeth. The children of James and John may not intermarry; they are brothers and sisters. So also are the children of Mary and Elizabeth. Nevertheless any of the boys and girls

belonging to the families of James and John may marry those of the families of Mary and Elizabeth. They are cousins, and such unions are hailed with satisfaction. This principle of marriage underlies many important customs of the Fijian people, and explains many of their curious relationships.

Not only was it discovered that the marriages of *veidavolani* (orthogamous cousins) were slightly more productive than mixed marriages (i. e. marriages outside such relationship), but it was found that the death-rate of children born of these parents was lower and the offspring much more prized and cared for.

'The mother feels instinctively that her child, being the progeny of a man of her own blood and her husband from birth, is related to her in a sense which the wife of a mixed marriage never comprehends. When the child is born, the relatives of both husband and wife, in their satisfaction that their line has flowed in the proper channel, do not spare themselves in bestowing either pains or substance upon the care of the child and its mother. The foregoing figures seem to indicate that, if the whole of the marriages in the colony were between *veidavolani* there would probably be no decrease to complain of' (Report, p. 29).

*Epidemic diseases* were declared to be an important factor in the decline of the people. In 1875

40,000 people perished from measles. Whole towns were blotted out of existence, and scarcely a village escaped some loss. 'I was only a small boy at the time,' said a native pastor recently, 'and I was the only one left out of my town. All the others died, and I had to help friends from other places to bury the dead.'

The native is peculiarly sensitive to foreign diseases, and seems to lack the virility and spirit to combat them. He is stubborn also in the matter of proper treatment. The fever patient with a temperature of 103° will plunge into the river 'to take the fire out of his body.' European medicines of known efficacy will be thrown away, and useless and superstitious native remedies tried in their place. Every doctor knows that dietary prohibitions are almost impossible; and the typhoid patient will greedily eat decaying fruit, or hard, half-boiled *dalo*; and will solemnly lie to the doctor, and his friends will assist him in the falsehood, when inquiry is made as to the cause of the more serious symptoms. Little wonder that 40 per cent. of the deaths are due to intestinal diseases. Even comparatively slight epidemics such as dengue, influenza, and common cold make alarming inroads upon the population. Consumption and pulmonary affections are obtaining a serious hold upon the people, and are unchecked by ordinary care and attention. Underlying this

proneness to collapse under mild epidemics are, of course, a lack of virility and a want of physical stamina. These, in turn, are due to more radical causes.

*The condition of the women* is a subject which calls for serious consideration in relation to the decrease of the race. Necessarily it can only be lightly touched upon, and its true bearing upon the problem only vaguely hinted at. In some senses, owing to the freedom woman now enjoys, her life is less disciplined, and therefore more open to licence than formerly. In the old days the club was above her head, and if she became unchaste, in ways the social order did not sanction, that club descended instantly and fatally. Now the club is removed, and she takes advantage of her privileges. This carelessness and this unchastity have had a very marked effect upon the race, and the freedom given by Christianity has *temporarily* acted for the worse. But only temporarily.

'We do not intend to infer that the Fijian woman of heathen times was possessed of more solid and sober moral qualities than her descendant of to-day—she was probably quite as frivolous and irresponsible; but she was restrained by the iron walls of custom, which allowed her less opportunity for gratifying her low appetites and neglecting her duties. The ancient custom of heathen times seems

sense, for there is an arm of the system called *kerekere* (of which more later) that is outstretched to seize any property he may wish to possess. There is no incentive to him to make progress beyond any other member of the community, for the material results of that progress would be immediately appropriated by his fellows. Charles Lamb divided mankind into two classes: those who borrow and those who lend. There is no division in Fiji; the two classes are one. If any individual were to kick against the established order of things his life would be at once made unbearable.

'In the few cases in which Fijians have shown sufficient independence to defy the importunities of their friends, they have been made victims of a kind of organized boycott, well calculated to deter others from following their example. We may quote the case of Tauyasa of Naselai, who had a banana plantation and paid coolies and natives to work for him. He so prospered by his industry that he was able to buy a cutter and a horse, and furniture for his house. To the chiefs who flattered him, and to the hosts of idle relatives who wanted to live upon him, he turned a deaf ear and obstinately refused to part with his property. They retaliated by circulating infamous stories about him, and by ridiculing him with the taunt that he was aspiring beyond his station and was trying to ape his superiors—a

reproach that is of all imputations the hardest for a Fijian to bear. The worry of this petty persecution preyed on his mind and brought on an illness to which he succumbed' (Report, p. 162).

But the cause which calls for the greatest concern on the part of the Christian Church—for it is the cause with which it alone can deal—is that of *sexual depravity*. The writer received some fifty replies to a circular in which one of the questions asked of respectable white residents was: 'What are the three chief vices of the Fijians?' In only one instance was this sin omitted, and in nearly every case it was placed *first*. It is one of the things to expect in a rebound from a sudden conversion from heathenism, with its mechanical restrictions, to a free, ethical obligation such as that enjoined by Christianity.

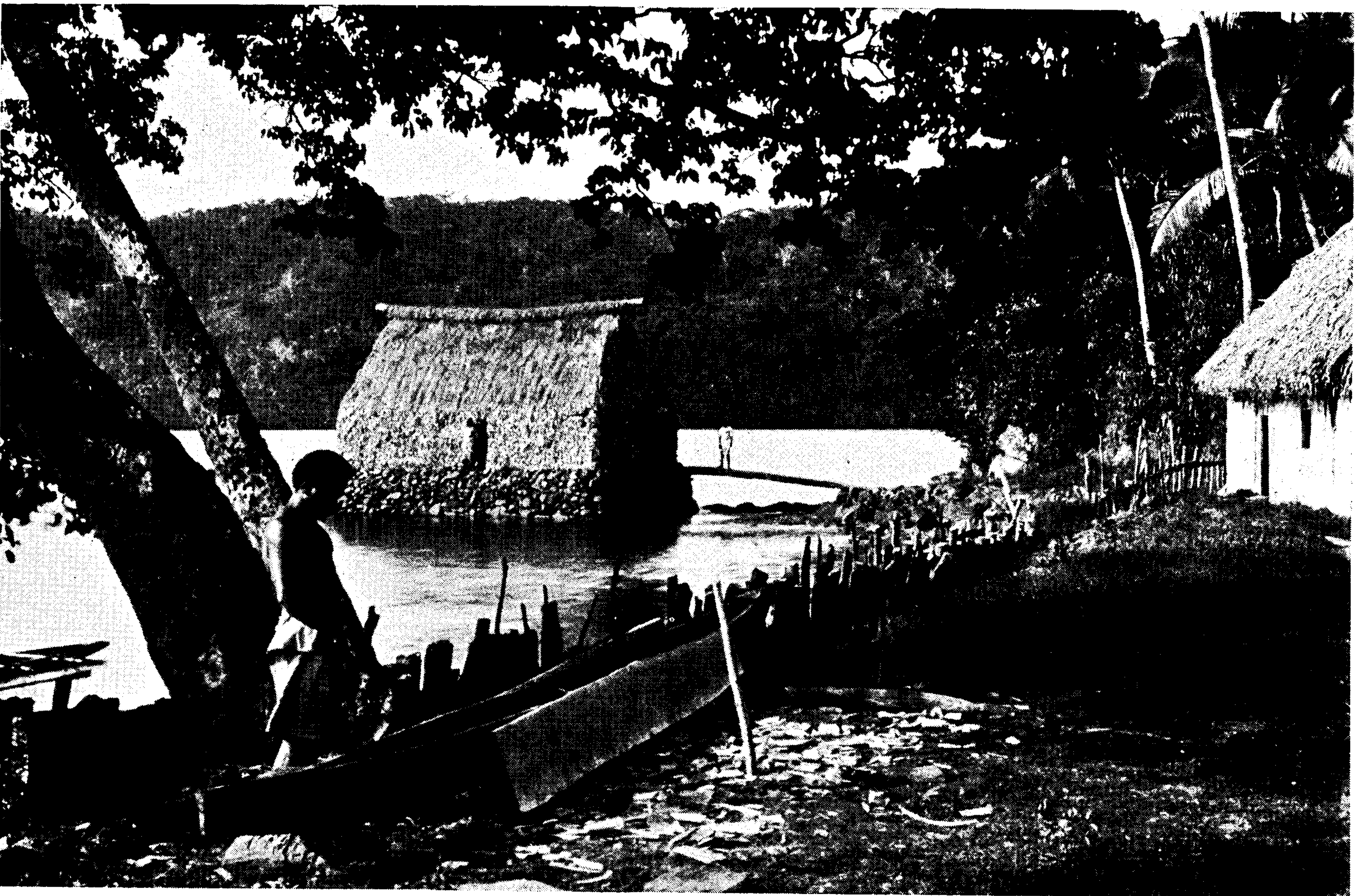
The most deplorable side of this question, and the one which affects the decrease of the people so nearly, is the growing juvenile immorality. In heathen days the boys and girls were kept apart and carefully guarded. There were separate sleeping-houses for men and for women, and the boys were under the eyes of their fathers and elders, while the girls were never beyond reach of their mothers. Now there is one house, consisting of one room only, for the whole family, and the 'children have their ears exposed from early childhood to all the coarse

conversation of their elders. Scandal forms the chief theme of conversation among natives, and the humour most appreciated by them is of a prurient nature.'

'With the introduction of Christianity came a change in the habits of the people. Sexual licence, formerly prevented, was now only forbidden. The *bure ni sa* (young men's sleeping-house) was gradually deserted, and the youths slept in the houses of the village in close proximity to the women. This seems to have been the outcome of the endeavour of the missionaries to inculcate 'family life'—the unexpected result being the decay of social morality. The association of the young men and women developed the sexual instinct. Violence being abolished, the youths began to throw off parental control, and follow their inclinations with impunity' (Report, *passim*).

This sin is far more responsible for the decrease of population than can be indicated. Its ramifications affect the whole of native life and stamina. Until a more thorough moral education of the females and a severer discipline of the males of the race take place, little improvement can be expected. To leave the Fijians at this stage and to slacken efforts for their uplifting would be, in some measure, to leave them in a state only less worse than heathenism. Christianity has interfered with their customs, and

Fijian, and he has been unable, thus far, to modify his social life to suit the new environment. Incongruity, patchwork reform, and confusion, are the result. The blessings of civilization are doubtless of inestimable value to us, but to the savage of yesterday they are of small utility. The old primitive instincts are still the controlling ones in his life; but he tries to ape, more or less ridiculously, the habits and customs of a people with more evolved instincts. This is seen, for example, in his clothing. In the old days he wore very little more than the canons of decency prescribed. A wisp of leaves or a few threads of fibrous bark met his actual requirements. It is a climate in which, for warmth, clothes are not necessary. It is never cold and only rarely cool. If he wore more, it was only for purposes of ornamentation. He liberally oiled his body, and thus found protection against the rain, heat, and the sudden, though not severe, changes of temperature. If he had cause to work in a tropical downpour of rain, there was no clothing to retain the moisture and to give him chill during evaporation. It was a simple thing for him to bathe—a plunge into the river, wisp and all, was easy enough. Now, however, he wears English stuffs which absorb moisture and keep him damp. If he were to dress after the manner of the white man and to follow his customs entirely in this matter, the



AN IDEAL WORKSHOP—A CANOE-BUILDER AT WORK

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knives 'to let out the pain.' Children are frequently afflicted with a distressing and repulsive disease called *coko* or yaws. Government regulations provide that these shall be segregated, but Superstition says the child who has not contracted it will have an early death. Superstition wins; and the healthy child is placed with the afflicted one as a bed-fellow! Medical men in Fiji often lose heart in their efforts to help the natives; and it is another testimony (if any were wanted) to the devotion and patience of the profession that they keep on so assiduously with their thankless task.

It is scarcely to be expected that the people should understand our septic theories, and so dirt has a not unimportant part in the spread of disease. Of personal cleanliness, in our sense of the term, they have but little notion. Only a few who have been in close touch with missionary or other English families make even a pretence of it. Not infrequently dirty mats upon which natives have expectorated and upon which pigs and dogs have lain, are the beds upon which they sleep. Cooking utensils are rarely cleaned with thoroughness, and harbour germs of disease. Loin-cloths and other clothing are passed from person to person, or worn indiscriminately by any member of the family, sick or well—without even the precaution of washing. It is not hard to see how skin diseases spread.

Such facts as these—and they might be multiplied *ad nauseam*—plainly indicate the need there is for a more general education in the principles of hygiene, and especially the necessity for rigorous discipline in connexion with it—for the opinion of a native woman herself is that it is not so much ignorance as downright sloth which is at the root of such carelessness.

If the average white resident of Fiji is questioned as to the prime cause of the decrease of the population, in four cases out of five the reply will be, '*Laziness*—pure unadulterated laziness.'

The Fijian has the reputation of being incurably lazy, and labouring only when compelled by unescapable necessity. This is far from being true in all cases; but there is sufficient in the indictment to make it worthy of serious consideration. There is much in the changed condition of his life which excuses, in a measure, his slothfulness. He has not the need to work that most people have—nor the incentive. Nature, in his land, is not fierce and threatening but kind and smiling. The *Pax Britannica* has rid him of the thing that kept him busy in the days gone by—tribal war—and he is now free to live in indolence.

The Fijian in heathen days was a worker. He could not live else. Huge war-trenches had to be dug; hills were thrown into valleys, and rivers

turned in their courses. He had for this only the rudest instruments, and the labour was immense. His food had to be planted with implements so primitive as a burnt stick. He had then to grow *all* his food. There were no canned salmon and cabin biscuits to supply his lunch. He cut down trees with stone axes lashed to a piece of wood; he hollowed out slowly and painfully his canoes with blunt stones, sharp shells, and slow fire; he fitted the parts of his canoe together with infinite patience; he bored the holes for the sinnet lashings with the sword-fish's weapon; and made his sails out of the leaves of a coarse, grass-like shrub. Think of the protracted and tedious labour involved in all this! Now he buys a cheaply made flat-bottomed boat and lolls on his mats. His ornamental loin-cloth is no longer the result of industry and ingenuity: it is two shillingsworth of Manchester calico. He does not fight now, and has sold most of his old clubs and spears to the tourist. To-day he drowses his life away in a house not half so good as that his fathers built—and—dies. Luxury and ease are killing him, for he is now placed beyond the margin of struggle. Rents from his lands provide him with loose cash with which to purchase the things his fancy dictates; and he smiles indulgently upon the little, lean, sinewy Indian who toils from daylight to dark in

the warm, generous soil of religious faith. There is before Fiji a task which no secular Government, no matter how kindly or parental, can hope to accomplish. This task involves long, patient education on moral lines, linked with the most kindly yet rigorous discipline. It can be carried out only at the cost of unmeasured sacrifice on the part of the superior race. It requires nothing less than the full content of Christianity. It was Christ that led the Fijian from cannibalism ; we know of no other force which can lead him to the higher levels of ethical life.

# CHAPTER XI

## YET SO AS BY FIRE

Life is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom
To shape and use.

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*.

CAN nothing be done, then, to save the Fijian from extinction? Must we stand by and see him pass away without an effort to save him? Has his past life been so bad, and are the germs of evil within him so vital, as to exclude all hope of salvation? Is his present state so parlous and utterly desperate as to fill us with despair?

The condition of the Fijian to-day is certainly a serious one. Nor can it easily be altered. Nevertheless, there is a wide margin of hope left, even yet. The hope is that we may be able, in some way or other, to teach the native to help himself. He must be made to put forth some effort by which alone he can 'break his birth's invidious bar' and

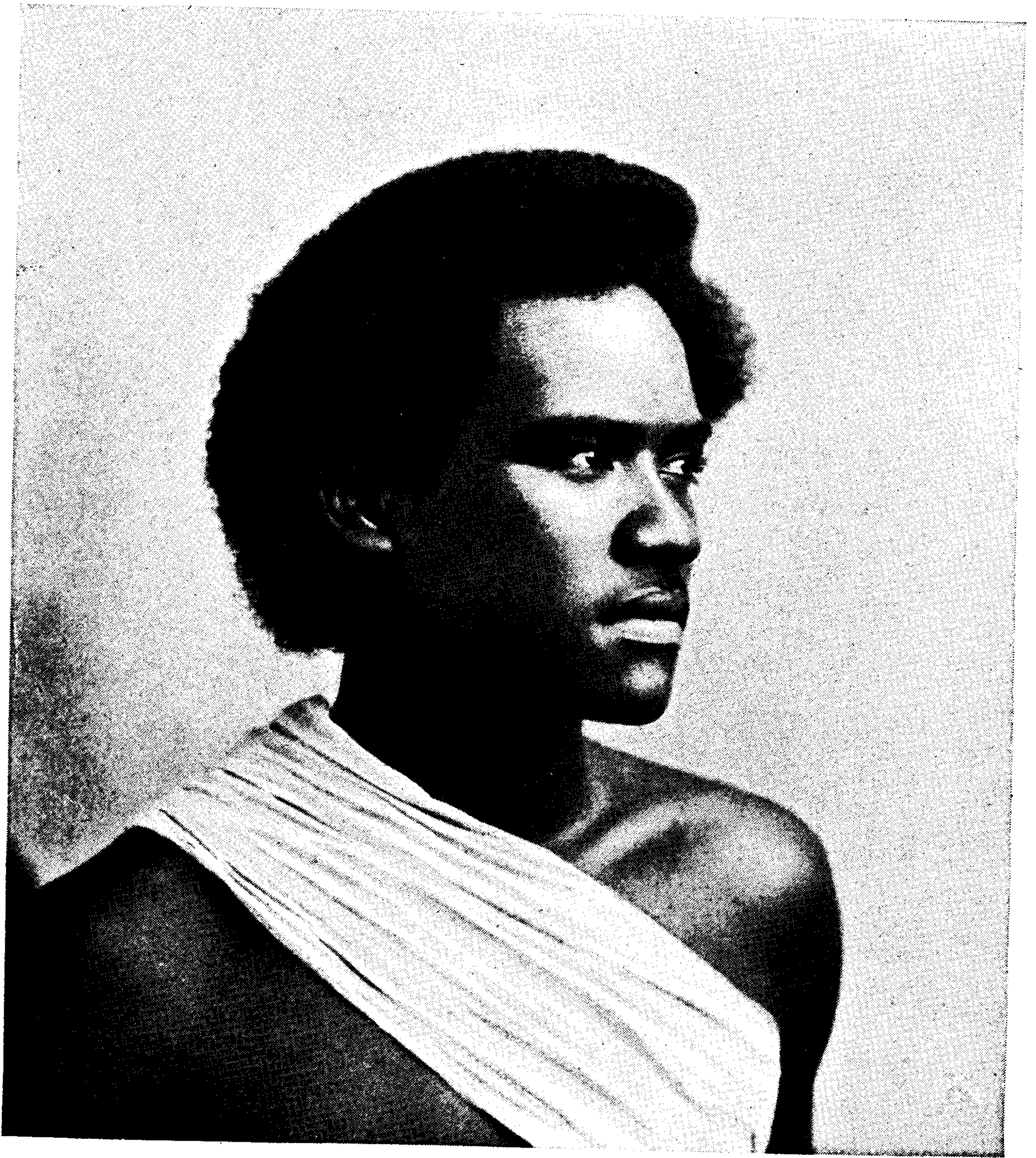
'grapple with his evil star.' He has many hard and painful lessons to learn in the school of life. The most that we can do is to place the text-book in his hands, explaining, as he comes to them, the more difficult problems. The only chance for him lies in the direction of rigorous discipline and painful, continued effort. Life has been far too easy for him of late, and he has lost the joyous tang of existence. But it is never too late to mend, and human nature has strange recuperative powers.

Those who know the Fijian best are unanimous in the opinion that he possesses *capacity*. Many will go so far as to say that that capacity is great. He is not without brains, and has a cleverness of hand and a genius for improvisation which certainly indicate latent powers. In the past he built, with the most primitive tools, houses which compare favourably with any built in the Pacific. He fashioned canoes in which he was able to sail from island to island in the open sea—a sea that is far from agreeing with its name. His social system shows not merely an intense conservatism of past gains, but also a certain power of assimilation. His speech, though exceedingly simple, marks distinctions of thought which are surprisingly subtle in a savage people. His powers of observation, as seen in his knowledge of the habits of the flora and fauna of his islands, are well developed.

little patch. It is a sort of instinct and sometimes a passion with the Fijian. He has, however, been handicapped by conservative and conventional methods, and has used clumsy and old-fashioned tools; but the point at present is that he has capacity.

The fact is that, while we blame the native for being lazy, we have not given him a proper chance. Beyond the 'three Rs' the Fijian has had little opportunity of learning. Too frequently, when attempt has been made to give him some higher education, it has been of an almost useless character. He has learnt some '*fisioloji*,' and can tell the names of certain bones of his foot or skull in pidgin English; but of what use is that to him? He knows all the rivers of Europe, and can tell the boundaries of some South American Republics (of which some of us who do not happen to be school teachers have only a haunting suspicion that we have heard the names somewhere). This more advanced youth can give the ages of the Old Testament saints and sinners, and their ancestry and descendants, with a glibness which is humiliating to most of us. But what is the practical use of it all? These things may be interesting in their way, but they are certainly not the prime needs of the Fijian people.

The only value such teaching can have is the mental discipline it brings; and that is by no means



IS HE NOT WORTH SAVING?

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But will 'English education' do for him what is desired? It may do something from the Government point of view in preparing a few men for positions in departmental offices—and the Government has every right to train its men in this way—but can that be a policy for the *average* Fijian? It is his case that we must study in the light of the present difficulties. So far the experiments in this direction have not supported His Excellency's dictum; nor, on theoretical grounds, is there much likelihood that they will do so in the future. In the first place, the task is an almost impossible one—certainly an impracticable one. The only way in which our language could be *thoroughly* taught to the children of to-day—and it may be presumed that it is not intended to teach mere pidgin English—would be to take them at an early age and separate them entirely from all Fijian influences and speech for a number of years. The cost would be enormous. At present the Government has a school on these lines at Nasinu, and the expenditure last year on thirty or forty boys was well over a thousand pounds, exclusive of new buildings and other expenses! This amount would require to be multiplied by several hundred to cover the needs of the whole of Fiji. Financially, then, the education of the race on such lines is impossible. But there are other reasons to be urged against such a policy. Is

this the *first* and most clamorous need of the Fijian boys and girls? Will such an education, if it were possible to give it, fit the average Fijian of to-morrow for that struggle for existence which neither he nor we can escape? For, after all, the first consideration must be the power to hold one's own in the conflict. If this cannot be provided for, then the most splendid education is simply thrown away. We may well ask the question, 'What is the Fijian going to do with this English education when he acquires it?' We will suppose that we have, say, five hundred natives trained after the fashion of an English lad. They have reached the standard of some of the secondary schools, and know a little Latin, have a smattering of French, have struggled through two or three books of Euclid, and are able to write and speak fairly decent English. Now where are we going to place these young men so that they can earn their own living and be of some benefit to their race? Perhaps twenty-five obtain positions in the Government as clerks and petty officials, another twenty-five distribute themselves over the islands and find employment remunerative enough to enable them to live in comfort. But what of the remaining four hundred and fifty? *There are not, and are not likely to be during the next few decades, openings for men of this type.* They would be obliged to go back to the towns they left as children, unused to

native ways of life, dependent upon others, or else obliged to re-learn the more primitive ways of the race. Thus such education would defeat its own ends. It is significant that the men who are in close touch with native life not merely condemn such a policy as being impracticable, but assert that the effect upon native character would be baneful rather than otherwise.

It must be laid down as an axiom in the consideration of this subject, *that the curriculum and methods of education must be formulated with reference to the past condition and present and future needs of the people.* We are not interested in the science of pedagogy just now, save in so far as it is applicable to the Fijian. We must consider his past history, that we may know where to begin and how; we must inquire closely into his present development and opportunity, that we may decide upon the matter to be given him; and we must strive to take a horoscope of his future, that we may place before him practical and serviceable ideals. The course of instruction which may suit an English lad at Harrow, or a subtle Brahman student in Madras, or a Confucian scholar in Peking, may be not only of no value to a Fijian native, but a positive hindrance to him. We, as a nation, are not too sure yet whether we have been wise in turning out by the thousand, students educated after English methods in India.

to-day, and the remembrance of this should make us patient and tender in our attitude towards them. The past history of the race must teach us to be content to go slowly and place thoroughness over spectacular result.

We must inquire, too, a little more narrowly into the present needs and conditions of this generation. There are certain failings that are radical, and these must influence us in the preparation of a standard of education.

If there is one outstanding feature of native life to-day which strikes despair into the hearts of those interested in the welfare of this people, it is that trait of character so variously described under the terms indolence, sloth, laziness, apathy, shiftlessness, improvidence, unreliability, and general *insouciance.* This failing is really only one; but it requires all those terms—and many others—to outline it. Though it is the child of other causes, and especially the progeny of new conditions of life, yet it is itself the parent of innumerable evils. From it spring mainly the licentious thoughts and evil desires of the people. Satan finds mischief for idle hands, we are told; but when the brain is idle also, the devil may be well dispensed with as unnecessary. The race is being demoralized by lack of useful occupation. 'They are,' it is declared by more than one writer of long and intimate experience, 'indifferent

to their own welfare, improvident and culpably negligent of the health of their children. This improvidence and indifference, it is said, is the growth of the two decades in which they have been free from war. It is said to manifest itself in the lethargy of the chiefs, who take no interest in measures initiated by the Government for the welfare of the people; in a tendency to purchase the new European commodities they require by bartering food instead of doing work; in the waste of food at a single feast; in a disposition to leave everything to the native officials instead of acting for themselves; and in a kind of fashionable callousness, or care-nothing-spirit of the age, which is used as a justification for every neglect of duty and for every wrong-doing.' It is fifteen years since that criticism appeared in the Commission Report, and things have certainly not mended since then. This 'care-nothing-spirit' has grown rather than withered, and the native of to-day is sinking into supineness and leaden insensibility.

In the old days, as we saw in the preceding chapter, he was a comparatively busy man. The most strenuous exertion was required to ensure existence itself. Willy-nilly he had to work—or die. Luxury in food or clothing was possible to the very few—the great mass had to eat bread by the sweat of its brow. Ornamental clothing was

made at immense cost of labour, and the task was so tedious that few could find time to carry it out for themselves. War taxed the utmost resources of the race and kept them in constant preparedness for struggle. To grow slack in this respect was to commit tribal suicide.

Now all is changed. Modern implements lessen the strain of agriculture, and the store, situated in nearly every village, offers its temptations, well-nigh irresistible, in the shape of tinned meats and fish. For a while, abundant funds are forthcoming from the sale of lands, and the people squander carelessly, gorge gluttonously, drink insanely—and die miserably. It would seem as if the ploughshare and pruning-hook of peace have been more deadly engines of destruction than the sword and spear of war; for when danger and difficulty encompassed the Fijian on every side he thrived, and now that ease and security have become his lot he has fallen before them.

A good illustration of this fact is to be found in the communal system. In the days of struggle it was necessary to preserve life. Only by combination could the individual towns and congeries of towns obtain some immunity from despoliation. No man then could live to himself. But this system has outlived its usefulness and remains in Fiji as a social anachronism. The very air, sun,

and moisture which are the ministers of life to the growing plant, when vitality has gone become the servants of death; and so this communal system which helped to preserve life in the days of struggle, now, in the days of peace, destroys it. For centuries the Fijian has not known the meaning of individualism; personality has been narrowed in consequence. He has been trained to move in mobs; only thus can he, as a rule, be induced to work at all. Individual enterprise was not only useless to him, but dangerous. This fact has dwarfed his power of initiative—a power he grievously lacks. This is one of the considerations which must guide us in drawing up an educational policy for the Fijian people.

Further, he has no private property in our sense of the term. Such a state may seem almost ideal to the average socialist; but a short residence among these natives would cure such a one of that delusion more effectively than all the arguments of the political economist. This really means that the results of the native's labour are not secured to him by the social order in which he lives. Every article he makes, earns, begs or buys, is liable to be taken from him by the custom of *kerekere*. This is a mutual appropriation of property. It is 'the holding of all things common' which sprang up in the early Church and ended so disastrously. He

dare not refuse to comply with the demands made upon him; and he can console himself only by the thought that he has the right to beg in turn. Thus there is no incentive to possession, and as a result no spur to labour. The man who has any natural inclination to industry has no advantage over his fellows.

A youth of nineteen, for instance, desires to leave his town. He has grown tired of the dull routine of his life. There is only a deadly *ennui* about him, and he has felt some stirrings of ambition. With great difficulty, perhaps, he obtains permission from his *Buli* (a petty Government official who is responsible for certain work being carried out in the towns) to leave. Were he to go without this permission he could be dragged back and sentenced to imprisonment! He finds employment upon a coco-nut or banana plantation, and for a year toils at his tasks. His leave has expired and he must return. He has managed to save ten or twelve pounds, and he looks very proudly at the bright golden sovereigns which lie in his palm—the first gold he has ever earned in his life. As he passes through Suva on his way home, he expends part of his savings. He buys a good box (of which a native is very fond), a couple of white shirts, a few collars, an English tweed coat, a cheap watch and chain, and, perhaps, a pocket-knife. He still has three or four pounds

Little by little nearly all is begged; and when the industrious young fellow goes to sleep on the hard floor, he has only a pocket-knife, which he has managed to secrete for a while, and a few old *sulus*, as the outward and visible tokens of his year's toil! What stimulus to industry is there under such conditions of life? We can scarcely wonder that next year he decides to stay in his town, and spends his time in unproductive spasms of labour. Houses must be built; roads for the Government must be cut; food for the official feasts and functions must be got ready; and money must be earned to pay the poll-tax which a paternal Government, in addition to Customs' duties, levies upon the head of every adult male Fijian. Soon he sinks into the lethargy and stupidity of the average villager—so much the worse off that he has had a taste of a truer life. He settles down and marries a cousin that he doesn't like. She is cross-eyed and scurvy, and not at all like the bright, merry girl he saw at the town near the plantation on which he worked for a year. But his people have decided the matter for him, and he must obey. By-and-by he takes sick. He has had a leaky house, and his bedding grass has been continually damp. He has asked the *Buli* to have it repaired; but since that little money-lending transaction, the fat tyrant has been very disagreeable to him. He coughs distressingly; but he won't

have the doctor nor will he go to the hospital. He is not anxious to live. His friends see him failing, and calculate the date of his death. They kindly inform him of the results of their arithmetic, and when the day draws near the funeral feast is prepared. He is not allowed even to decide for himself when he shall die! The community does that and—obedient fellow that he is—he falls in with their arrangements.

It may be that in European countries we have suffered from ultra-Individualism ; the Fijian suffers from ultra-Socialism. There can be no doubt that his state is the worse. It is death to all the highest and noblest in man. We thus see the 'falsehood of extremes' ; both are paralytic in influence and arrest the normal development of human character.

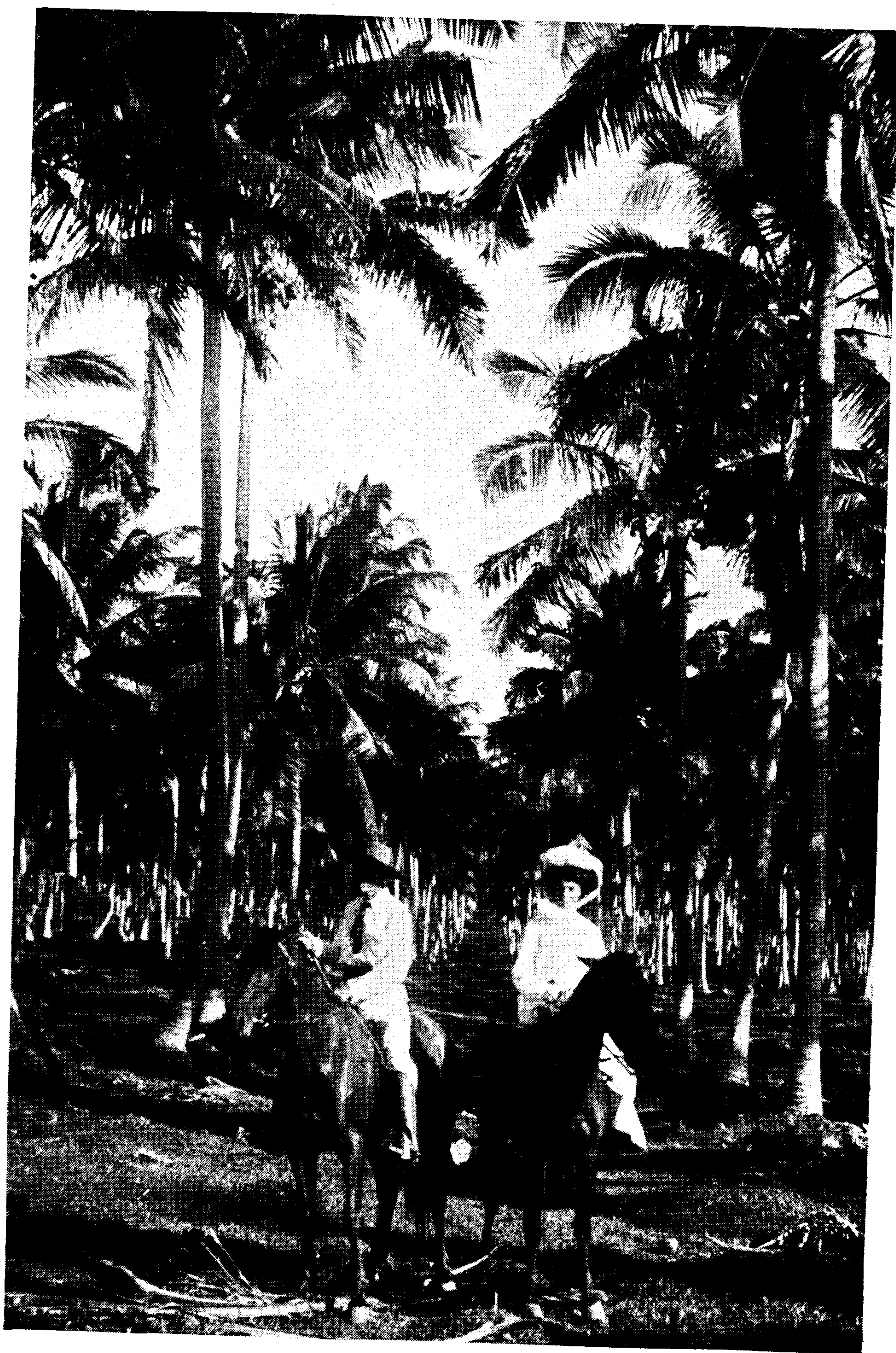
This, then, is another fact to be borne in mind when we discuss the education suited to the Fijian's needs.

The Fijian lacks ambition. He has suffered from nearly all the ills that have fallen out of Pandora's famous box. Chiefest among these is what has been called 'Polynesian Fatalism.' But the old fable tells us that *Hope* lay unnoticed at the bottom of the box. This the Fijian has yet to extract. He has no hope in his life—at least in *this* life. The careless of the race are frankly indifferent : the more thoughtful are gloomily fatalistic. He has very few

ambitions in his life, and such as he has are inadequate to inspire him to sustained effort. He may covet, for example, the position of scribe (the official writer in a native town) and have his food planted for him in return for his services. If he has a strain of chief-blood in him, he may aspire to a *Buli*-ship and be rewarded with a salary of three pounds per annum! Or it may be, if he can secure sufficient influence, that he may be nominated for a position in some Government office at six pounds per annum and rations. But these positions are open to the very few. Or he may turn his face to the *lotu*, and hope to be made a student and then a teacher and then a catechist. He may even cherish thoughts of becoming a native minister. The path, however, is long and just a trifle dreary, and the chances are but one in several hundred that he will reach the top. It is a very serious thing for the race that there are no *immediate* incentives to industry and self-discipline. It is true that 'A man's reach should exceed his grasp, Or what's a heaven for?' but the desired thing should not be beyond the *reach*, or hopelessness takes control of the man and prevents his stretching his arm. This has happened in the case of the Fijian. We have not given him the chance of immediate advantages, nor placed within his reach the things he is capable of appreciating. We have placed before him certain ideals; but we have scarcely provided the practical

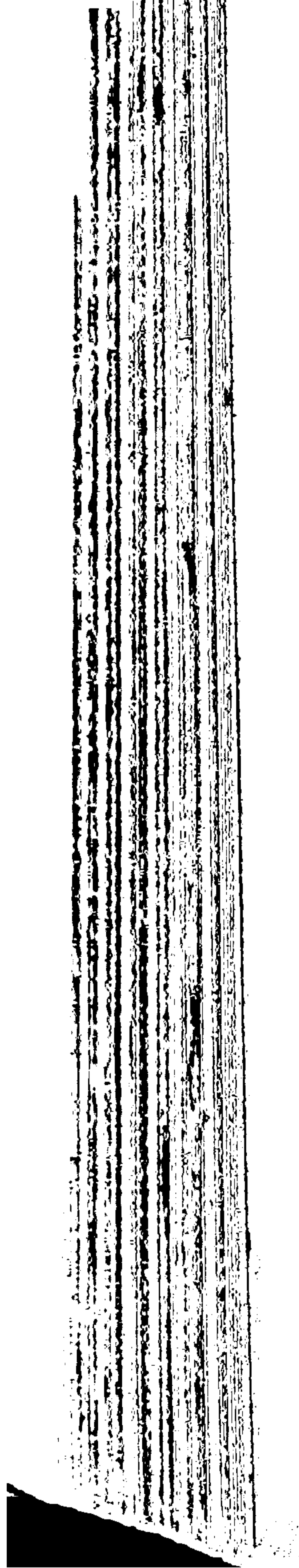
and how weak his conscience. The education given must be of the disciplinary sort to help him in this direction and quicken his moral sensibilities. Ideas of rectitude must be inculcated, and this can be done by no class-room method. We must find him something to occupy his time fully and continually quicken his interest by some immediate and beneficial result. The moral training of the race is the most important of all; but there is a curious law of indirectness in life which prevents our gaining the thing we aim at. This explains in some sense, perhaps, the apparent failure in much of the missionary work amongst peoples such as these. The soul will not grow while men are looking on. It grows when they have their eyes turned in some other direction. The system of education must take count of this mysterious and subtle law.

Especially will the moral education of the race have to be undertaken on behalf of the coming generation of women. There are some senses in which failure there means the more speedy blotting out of the people than from any other cause. It is perhaps far harder to touch the Fijian woman than the man. She clings to old custom more tenaciously, and is more nearly affected by it. The diminution of the birth-rate is due to a large extent to some of her malpractices at which we cannot more than hint. The mortality of the young is due to her



A COCO-NUT PLANTATION [*Facing page* 236

(This industry in Fiji yields over £150,000 annually)



growing and developing requirements. His discipline must be of such a nature as to awaken potent ambitions and especially to develop the individual. We cannot at one fell blow strike to the ground his social system, which has been painfully raised through long ages; but we can make his training of a kind which will cause him *gradually* to establish a new social system in which he will be given room and stimulus to expand. We must strive to secure to him, through this new social order, the rewards of his industry.

The training that can do this for the Fijian people will be the means of their salvation and raise them from their present morbid and unsatisfactory state. It will also, by that law of indirectness of which we have spoken, do much to arrest the decrease of population; and we may yet see the Fijians taking their place among the virile Anglo-Saxons and *proving their right to it.*

# CHAPTER XII

## SALVATION BY WORK

Be no longer a chaos, but a world, or even a worldkin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a product, produce it in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it then. Up! Up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called to-day; for the night cometh wherein no man can work.

CARLYLE, *Sartor Resartus.*

SALVATION by work! But why should the Fijian work? He has a genial climate, and his food supply is easily obtained from the 'soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing roots' of his fertile land. If he be content to live 'the simple life,' which so many over-civilized Europeans are striving after, why worry him with ideals of labour and excite his wants?

*Then he must die.* The laws of life are inexorable, and whether we like them or not matters little. We must obey them or perish. By this changeless law of struggle does the soul of man make progress; and necessity—ever-growing necessity—forces him forward. 'For if left to himself,

this high-born creature, whose progress we seem to take for granted, has not the slightest innate tendency to make any progress whatever. It may appear strange, but it is strictly true, that if each of us were allowed to follow his own inclinations, the average of one generation would have no tendency whatever to rise beyond the average of the preceding one, but distinctly the reverse.'[1]

There is no hope, then, if history and science can teach us anything, for the Fijian save in so far as we are able to make him fit to compete in the struggle, *and to make him desire to compete.* Some will say that he is so inherently lazy and indolent that there is no hope of changing his attitude towards life. The same was said regarding the Maoris of New Zealand; but, thanks to the tireless and undespairing efforts of the 'Young New Zealand Party,' not only has the decrease in population been arrested, but an actual increase is registering itself. The Maori is proving his powers, and they are of no mean order. It is true that the cases are not quite parallel, and that the Maori has been strengthened by the infusion of much European blood; but there was a time when it was held to be hopeless to expect him to rise, and the efforts of those who loved him were considered almost imbecile. The negro has suffered the same criticism, but surely

[1] Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution*, Chap. II.

physique—he ought to be initiated into the mystery of making of these one flesh. Only from such a marriage can a virile and fit race spring.

It is not secondary education but ultra-primary which the Fijian needs. The race at this juncture wants a man who cannot merely parse a verb, but who can guide unerringly a plough; not a student who can solve pure mathematical problems, but a man who can treat the problems of practical banana growing and sugar-cane planting. The salvation of the race demands the type of a man who can push truly a plane and strike squarely an anvil. Better far to master the prose of land manuring and swamp draining than the poetry of Milton. Better for him, for a generation or two, to sit at the feet of Vulcan than of Euclid.

Honest, disciplined work will cure him of many of the failings which at present so sadly mar his character. Such training will put tenseness and nerve into his grip of life, and so help to arrest the decline. Thus he will rise in the scale of existence, win his own respect, and so make sure of the respect of others. By that law of indirectness he will be helped incalculably in moral and spiritual gains. An education on these lines will ensure him abundant scope for his powers and provide an unfailing means of earning his livelihood. The market in Fiji for skilled manual and agricultural labour is never likely to be glutted.

A similar problem to that presented by the Fijian race has arisen in Africa. No one who has read Speke's interesting account of his journey to the source of the Nile, and who is familiar with the Fijian type, can fail to be struck with the strong resemblance there naturally is between the Baganda and the native of these islands. Whether certain ethnologists are right in the statement that they are blood relations, matters little; the fact remains that in characteristic they are brethren. The more surprising thing is that though the conditions of life are not the same, the problem to-day is practically one. In writing concerning it, a Roman Catholic bishop said: 'For labour ennobles a man by elevating him in his own eyes and the eyes of his countrymen; and as idleness engenders misery and vice, so persevering labour produces well-being and contentment in families, and re-peoples a country whose population, like that of Uganda, is diminishing.'[1]

It is a mistake to imagine that the native is incurably lazy. The difficulty has been that no adequate goal has been set before him as a stimulus to industry. The fact is being recognized more and more by missionary societies, that in the case of partially developed peoples industrial training is a necessary part of the gospel of Christ. The Church

[1] Quoted in 'Special Reports on the Training of Native Races,' vol. iv.

Missionary Society, for example, in Africa, has taken up this branch of work with a commendable zeal and much success. Concerning this effort in Uganda, now separately carried on by a Christian company, the managing director writes:

'The natives have shown their eagerness for training, and proved their capacity as skilled labourers when trained; and it is our privilege to provide them with a training which will enable them to develop the resources of their own country, and also to compete successfully with, if not altogether forestall, the influx of foreign skilled labour into the country. It is impossible that Uganda can remain long as it is now. With the advent of the railway, industrial development is inevitable, and if the Baganda are not trained to perform the part which they might take in that development, their places will be supplied by Hindus, who are found even now in the country doing artisan work which the Baganda ought to perform, and could quite well perform, if properly instructed.'[1]

The Roman Catholics, too, have large projects on hand, and have made of industrial missions in Africa a great success. We as Protestants have very much to learn from the older Church in the matter of missionary methods. The African races are being experimented upon in this direction, and

[1] Quoted in an article in the London *Times*, Sept. 9, 1905.

though the quotation is a long one, every sentence deserves to be pondered. With a few changes of proper names it might have been specially written on behalf of the Fijian people.

'"Give the natives their rights!" is a cry that comes from Exeter Hall, and among these supposed rights that of a secondary education occupies a very prominent place. But the real question is—Do you give the native his rights by educating him as you would a boy of European extraction? Is he fit to be taught Latin and Greek, the natural sciences, philosophy, and what not? Does not such a curriculum inflate and produce most pernicious effects upon those who pass through it? Is not to cram the Kaffir with such knowledge in his present half-civilized state, and with his marked tendency to slothfulness and an inordinate idea of his own importance, to wrong, and deeply wrong, rather than to right him? It appears to us, and we believe that those who understand the native character, and have naught but his highest interests at heart, share our conviction, that generations must pass before any thought can be entertained of treating the African as intellectually on a par with the white man. Granted that he is quick to pick up facts and scraps of knowledge; in character and intellectual development he is as yet but a little child, a savage of yesterday, whose training must begin from

'THE ARYAN BROWN'

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to instruct him in the duties of his state, to point out to him the advantages of enjoying some of the simpler comforts which make the white man's life and dwelling tolerable, in order that he may have a laudable incentive to good hard work—to act thus is to show true love for the people of Africa and their best interests. But to cram their heads with book-learning, and to turn them out upon the country swelling with conceit and the notion of their superiority to their fellows; ready to ape the white man's manner and to assimilate any and all of his failings and vices, absolutely disdainful of manual labour and full of dreams of the time when the coloured man is going to sit in council ruling the destinies of the land—to bring up the native in this manner is surely to display a lamentably erroneous notion of what is for his real good. . . .

'We would assuredly have them educated, *but the training which we are convinced* they are ready to receive and profit by *is that of the hands rather than that of the mind.* Let the missionary teach them trades and the art of agriculture; let him instil into them love of work and teach them to take real interest and pride in what they do, and *they will bless him hereafter as a true and wise friend.*'[1]

[1] Quoted in 'Special Reports on the Training of Native Races,' vol. iv. p. 268.

The belief in industrial training is spreading to the Pacific, and is being conducted upon a new scale. Here and there individual missionaries have done something, but it has not, up to the present, been looked upon as the settled policy of any society. The Rev. J. A. Crump, a Methodist missionary in New Britain, initiated a 'Plantation Scheme,' in which the natives have been trained in the principles of agriculture. Heathen tribes have come to the plantation to work, and have gone back to their homes with new ideas of industry and a story to tell about the new *lotu*. The enterprise, in spite of the ever-recurring difficulty of shortage of funds, has been a thorough success. The London Missionary Society in New Guinea released one of its missionaries to form a company having for its object the industrial development of the natives. The company has been floated, but it is too early to say what the results will be. The important point is that a fresh element has entered into mission work in these seas.

That such education is necessary to the Fijian few who know anything of the conditions of native life to-day would deny. The old methods of evangelization have worked well in the past, but they need to be supplemented by some practical training. Unfortunately that has not been done to any great extent, and Fiji to-day is suffering in

consequence of that neglect. The Christian missions, both Protestant and Catholic, deserve every praise for what they have accomplished in the matter of education. *Without a penny of support from the Government* they have undertaken, up to this present, the entire burden of the primary instruction of the people. In every village supported by mission funds a teacher is stationed, and though the instruction given is very elementary, yet by this method nearly every man and woman, boy and girl, can read and write in the Fijian language. The native has been given some knowledge of the simple rules of arithmetic, and a little geographical tuition has widened his outlook upon the world. This is much to have accomplished; but it stops short of the point of real and necessary help. The training must go farther if it is to develop the race in the desired direction.

Let us apply this theory of education which we are now considering to the actual conditions and needs of the Fijian people and see how it is likely to work.

Industrial education, especially of an agricultural character, would be in line with the traditions and experience of the race. It would commence where their old civilization left off, and form a connecting link between it and the new ideas which must eventually come. It would be helpful in keeping down the immoral tendencies of the people. Such

which could be within the reach of all and in no danger of being out-crowded. That deadly dullness of the native town, which suffocates all true aspiration, would be dispersed by impulses and ideals such as these. This would put new hope into his life and dissipate that fearful fatalism to which his nature is so prone. He would be proud of an accomplishment in which he could so succeed, and which still left vistas of possibilities unexplored. There is, perhaps, no joy so great as the joy of creation, and this would be open to him. Such employments would give the race a new grip of life, and, reflexively, act upon the vital statistics. A purpose in living is a strong claim upon life itself.

Such a type of education would certainly tend to break down the social customs which to-day prevent the progress of the people. The emphasis would more and more come to be placed upon the individual instead of upon the community. The system of *kerekere* would weaken in the presence of so strong and independent a spirit; and personality would have more chance of evolution. Such training would make the man self-dependent; and *he would be able to do without the social system at present in vogue.* This would be the natural and effective method of changing the custom of a people.

We have seen that the Fijian is not distinctively

intellectual. Such education as is now advocated does not call for these qualities. It certainly tends to develop mind power; but it can commence operation on a somewhat slender stock. In a close touch such as he would have with his English, and we trust sympathetic, instructor, there would be more opportunity to exercise personal influence (by far the most important of all influences in dealing with a native people) than would be possible in the class-room.

We have noticed a decided moral and ethical weakness in the Fijian character. Practical training would help in this direction. To keep both hands and mind usefully employed is surely more than half the battle. Interests other than those which are merely animal would commence to make themselves felt. Lewd thought and evil desire would have less opportunity to rise in a busier and more resolute life. Habits of providence and thrift would tend to displace the carelessness and indifference of the average native.

Practical education of this character could be devised to meet the special needs of the girls of Fiji. In relation to the decline in population this is the most important part of the education required to save the race. We have seen that the new customs of life press heavily upon the women; and they are ill-fitted by training to bear them. The

great need is to remodel the habits of the race to suit the altered conditions of domestic life. *This is the women's work, and they alone can do it.* The maidens of the Fiji of to-day must change the social habits of the Fiji of to-morrow. There can be no hope of elevating the males unless, at the same time and in like proportion, the females are uplifted also.

To-day the average Fijian woman is described as 'an idle, frivolous, uncleanly creature, without maternal instincts and with a blunted sensibility.' Her virtue is challenged as being of the frailest sort. Should not something be done for her? Yes. Much will have to be done if the people are to be saved. While the mothers of the race are degraded there can be little hope for the next generation. The Fijian needs, as does every people—

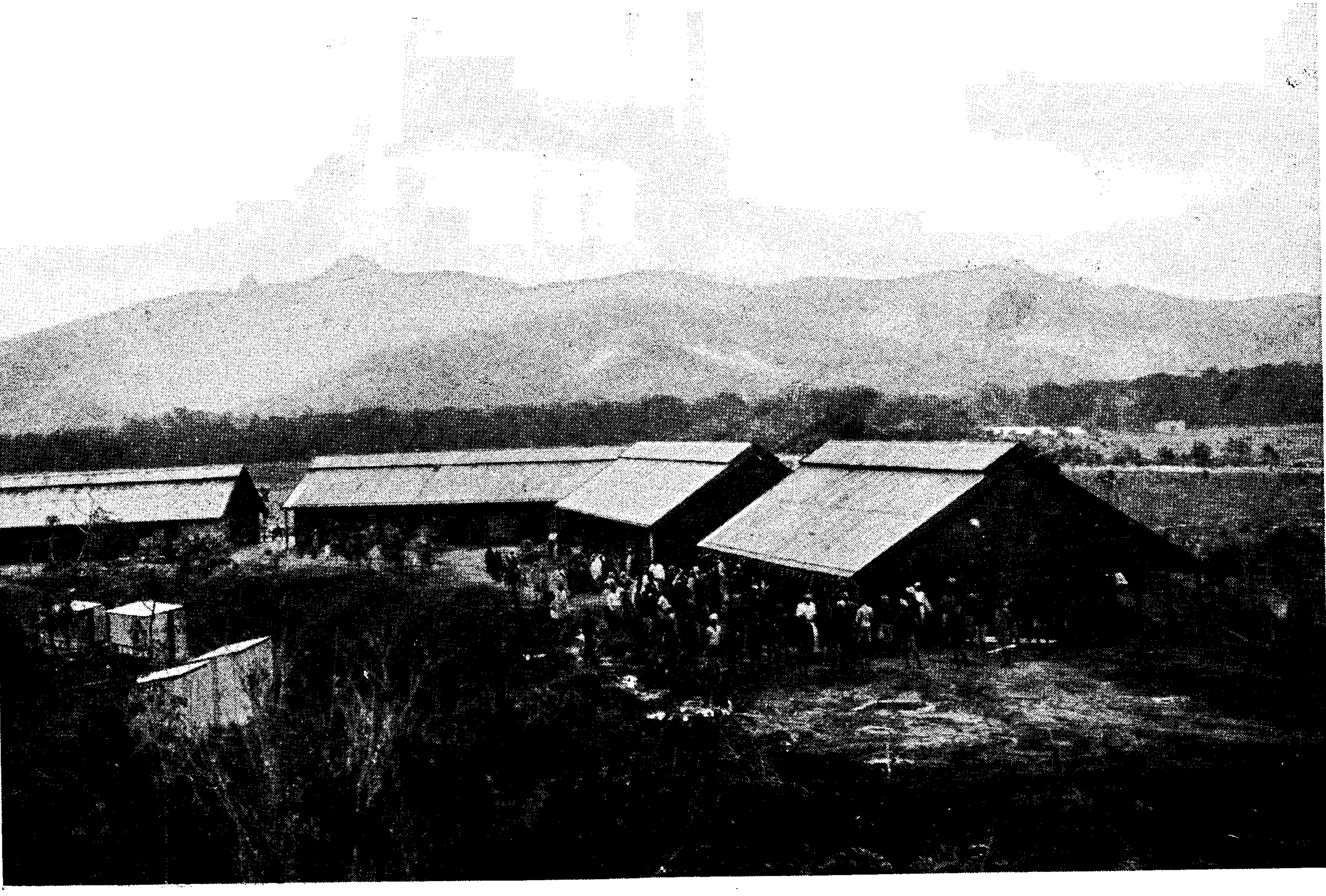
> A perfect woman, nobly planned,
> To warn, to comfort, and command.

There is a sphere in life which she alone can fill, and responsibilities none can share with her. They are the greatest in life. For these, then, she must be trained and fitted. This will be scarcely accomplished by 'English education.'

The leakage in the population is more *directly* attributable to her ignorance, filth, and looseness than to any other set of causes. She must be born again with new ideals of personal purity and

heredity means anything at all, and environment does affect life—a more virile and capable people.

But these projects require a great expenditure of wealth, and if the Christian Church is to play her part—a part which none other can so successfully play—she must be prepared to pay the price both in men and in money. It remains to be seen how long it will be before she awakes to the great opportunity that now greets her in the Fiji of To-day.



COOLIE LINES

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it represents, on the contrary, an alteration in the world's affairs which needs no prophet to descry as significant and portentous.

Hitherto, these islands have been inhabited by native tribes of no political weight; and their government has been, for the most part, decided by others. Tonga has tried to govern itself; but surely in the history of the world there has never been so ridiculous and pantomimic an attempt. The Pacific Islanders have been counted mere pawns upon the world's chessboard; and the game has been played without much reference to them. Now and again, one has been captured or moved; but the real play has been with the bigger pieces. The Pacific has never been taken seriously. It has been looked upon as an interesting playground wherein brown, merry children have romped and sported in irresponsible fun. The Powers that be have, at their own whim and convenience, appointed governors, masters, and monitors for these kindergartens of the South Seas.

Imagine, however, these groups peopled with Asiatic peoples of political importance (and all indications, at present, point in that direction); what then will be the world's attitude? The pawns in the game will then acquire new values, and hold more important pieces in check. For it must be remembered that the Pacific has a geographical and

strategical importance out of all proportion to the size of the islands it contains. Kipling, in singing of Singapore, makes bold to state—

> The second doorway of the wide world's trade
> Is mine to loose or bar.

Whoever holds the key of the Pacific will have the power to loose or bar the third door—a door that may yet be more important than the second. Power is manifestly moving towards the East, and the Western nations cannot afford to let slip from their grasp the mastery of the Pacific.

It will be exceedingly mortifying to the next generation of Britons to find that by colossal mismanagement and criminal apathy the British influence won in the Pacific by brave missionaries and daring traders has been frittered away. A writer in an Australian paper recently summed up the position in these words:

'In the Pacific Ocean, the coming centre of the world's life, the highway between the Empire's two greatest colonies, we have lost foothold after foothold. Manila in the Philippines was ours once. Our Government gave it back to Spain, the United States now hold it, and Japan will hold. Hawaii was offered to us time and again; now no British vessel may carry freight or passengers between it and the States; and Honolulu is to be the United States' naval base. New Caledonia was ours, and France

has it. Tahiti was flying into our lap; France has it. Germany snatched away half of New Guinea fresh from our grasp, and did her best to take Tonga. Half the groups of Oceania, first evangelized by British missionaries, are now in foreign hands, and no British missionary is now let live there. And from first to last this mischief has been wrought, not by the folly or idleness or temerity of Britons on the spot, but by the timidity or the apathy, or, in many cases, the deliberate neglect of the departments in England which . . . pretend to administer a world-wide empire.'

In another fifty years, or even less, England will commence to realize how fateful these losses have been.

To the missionary societies labouring in these seas, the problems caused by Asiatic immigration are becoming more and more serious. It is increasingly evident that, while there must be no neglect of the present and decaying peoples, the major effort of the Church will have, at no distant date, to be concentrated upon the new and coming races. New conditions of competitive and commercial life are rapidly and permanently arising in these islands. Because the lower races are unable to fulfil the requirements of that new life, and must necessarily be so for many years, other types of men ready to the hand of industry must inevitably come.

Capital, followed by his busy servant Commerce, has paid a visit here and left pledges that he will fulfil the contracts he has entered into. These are nothing less than the complete revolution of the Pacific. In these days the golden sceptre of Wealth in the hand of Enterprise does more to decide the destinies of peoples than the flats of kings. Capital sits upon the throne of the gods, and the other deities nod to his decrees. At his sordid behest nations are born—or more often destroyed—in a day. No race, however interesting or attractive, will be allowed to live which does not pay tribute to this merciless Caesar. No considerations of sentiment have a place in this kingdom of Mammon. Peoples, traditions, virtues, and tastes, must all be expressed in terms of pounds, shillings, and pence. If the present occupants of these islands do not furnish the labour that capital requires, a fleet will soon be on the waters bearing the type demanded. We may object as much as we will to the exploitation of these countries, but it will go on in spite of our caveat, and congested wealth and congested population will together seek relief in these fruitful islands.

This part of the Pacific has been allowed to rest from the stress of life for many, many centuries. In fact, human history has no notes of a time of struggle in these seas. There are dug up no fossil remains belonging to some past and forgotten

civilization. What may have been in the long, long ago, only imagination can conjecture.

But already changes have come. The heavy tramp of armies has been heard on coral beaches; the sharp *pit* of the rifle has been followed by the cry of the slain; and the hellish rattle of the machine-gun has broken in upon the ancient quiet. Among the twisted reefs, built by long aeons of tireless patience before rude man had even begun to crawl, huge warships have threaded their way, bearing gold-braided officers; and they have made the long-silent mountains reverberate with the boom of cannon; while upon dark, wooded hills and sleeping rivers the prying searchlight has flashed. Civilization has come! The Fates, with their unwonted impartiality, seem about to give the Pacific her long-denied chance and rouse her from her torpor.

There can be no '*White*' Pacific. There may be a remote possibility of a 'White Australia' or a 'White South Africa,' for these countries lie in latitudes favourable to the European. The South Seas can offer no such hope. One of the secrets of the success of the Anglo-Saxon people in colonization has been the ability to accommodate themselves to changes of environment, and to live either astride the Equator or at the base of the Poles. But such life is possible only under *modified* conditions.

Once the Anglo-Saxon is unable to modify the conditions to suit his special needs, he must go. He may live well enough in the Tropics provided he is not called upon to undergo great physical strain nor forced to live upon a narrow wage. Increase his tasks and lower his standard of living—and down he goes. But there are millions of people to whom his hardest tasks are light, and who would account his bare necessities the highest luxury. To these people, life under a vertical sun is not merely bearable but favourable. They can toil from sunrise to sunset and ask as their rations only a few ounces of rice. Up to this time the white man, because he has happened to command the position, has been able to utilize the fitness of these people for these tropical conditions, and has been able to make the major portion of the resultant profits from their labours his own. But these circumstances are arbitrary and accidental, and not in any sense fundamental and real. By some twist of politics, by some mistake in international diplomacy, by some unforeseen contingency, his advantage may be gone. Then what will happen? We cannot say; but it does not seem likely that in the new shuffle the best cards of the pack will fall to the white hand.

The European's chief source of strength in the Pacific has not been the neutral-tinted gunboat nor

the fluttering national flag. The springs from which his authority comes are deeper than we often think. His unequalled, and almost unquestioned, power has its roots in his moral and intellectual superiority to the peoples who are under him. Were he always true to the best traditions of his past, he would have no difficulty, for many years to come, in holding his supremacy in the Pacific. But he sometimes forgets himself and lowers the prestige of his race; and then the little brown or yellow man has a chance. It is a great game of cricket, and the white man bats with quick-eyed, fleet-footed fieldsmen waiting open-palmed to catch him out. He is still 'in,' but he runs fearful risks.

In Fiji, Asiatic labour has already come in the person of the Indian. He is of our Empire—if that is any sort of comfort to us. He salutes the same flag—and spits venomously on the ground the moment our back is turned. Because he is a fellow subject in this 'Greatest of all Empires,' we can scarcely deny him admittance. We may call to mind the fable of the camel who wanted only his nose in the open doorway; but, as we need this particular camel very much, we cannot say him nay at this time. We, after the fashion of our race, will see about it by-and-by. The Indian is wanted in Fiji. He has come at our solicitation, and we are under some sort of compliment to him for coming to

us in our extremity—though we would rather die than admit it to him. He is here because capital must have labour to carry out its plans and the native labour is out of the question. Even though the Fijian does, as the result of a proper training, cast off his sloth and become a worker, he would not be the type required. He is a landowner in a country where land is valuable, and is more likely to become the small farmer or planter of independent means than the serf of commerce. Though he rises as an artisan, he will seek the higher rather than the lower tasks. He will not be likely to spend his life cutting sugar-cane or weeding ditches. Thus the Pharaohs of capital cannot hope to press him into bondage. He will not make their bricks. Experiments have been tried with native races from other parts of the Pacific, but they have proved themselves either too expensive for the economical spirit of commerce, or else have been too shiftless and unreliable for the methodical needs of industry. The Indian coolie was given a trial. Though he has no body to speak of, and seemingly still less soul, he has shown himself to be so satisfactory that for thirty years now he has supplied the labour for the principal projects in Fiji. At the present time over three thousand Indians per annum are needed to carry on the business of the colony. Over forty thousand are now in the group, and the number

are strictly quarantined to guard against the introduction of infectious diseases into the colony, and a still more careful medical examination takes place. Those who are deemed too far below the standard are rejected and sent back by the same steamer, and any who are only partially or temporarily inefficient are put upon 'reduced tasks'—that is, they are allowed to earn less than the normal wage for the time such disqualification is in force. For these services, and including the cost of transit, the Immigration Department charges the individual planter or company applying for this labour a sum of about sixteen pounds per statute adult. That is the net cost of these human agricultural implements. For five years the coolie is 'indentured' to his employer, and during that time he is legally bound to serve according to very definite and somewhat stringent conditions. The employer is obliged to provide sleeping accommodation of a scheduled amount of space, and medical attention in times of sickness.

At the end of five years, if the coolies have satisfactorily fulfilled their obligations, and have not 'suffered jail,' they become 'free' Indians. They are then released from the bondage of indenture, and for five years longer are expected to settle in the colony. At the end of that period—making a term of ten years in all—they are given a free

passage back to India, or, if they so elect, they can remain in Fiji as permanent residents. It is this latter option of which the great majority avail themselves.

The system of 'tasks' prevails on the estates. So many chains of sugar-cane weeding or planting are counted, for example, a 'task.' For the satisfactory performance of this amount of work the coolie receives one shilling. He is expected to accomplish it in one day, and the basis is that of an average man's ability. The women are placed on the same footing; but their tasks are lighter and the payment proportionately less. If a man fails to perform the task set him within the day, he is liable to be summoned to the court and may be fined or imprisoned for his slothfulness. There are some men—strong and accustomed to such work—who can manage seven tasks in a week, whereas others, through laziness, lack of skill, or physical inability, can accomplish only two or three. When the coolie judges that the task is too hard he has the right of appeal to the coolie inspector (a Government official); but as that gentleman is not seen oftener than once or twice a year, it is a somewhat limited privilege. Of course there is the magistrate to whom complaint can be made; but the court-house may be twenty or thirty miles away, and that is practically an impossible distance. It is not surprising, therefore, that

under such conditions it frequently happens that the coolie takes the law into his own hands and tries the edge of his cane-knife upon the skull of the English overseer. The Oriental has somewhat primitive and summary ideas of justice, and cannot understand our calmer and slower methods.

The plantations have considerable difficulty in keeping the coolies up to their work. It is only in aggravated cases that the overseer takes the extreme step of bringing the indentured man or woman before the court, for it means loss of time both to employer and employed. Yet notwithstanding this fact, in 1907, out of 11,689 adults under indenture, 1,461 were proceeded against for breaches of the labour laws. They either refused or were unable to complete the tasks given them, and consequently were fined or imprisoned according to their choice. This means that over thirteen per cent. of the labour was refractory. Probably an even greater proportion of dissatisfaction did not make its appearance before the bench.

The official return for 1907 gives the average earnings as 11·57 pence for males and 5·93 pence for females. These wages, translated into Indian annas, appear fairly high, but it must be remembered that the cost of living in Fiji is probably treble what it is in India. Rice here is from twopence halfpenny to threepence per pound, and other foods

must be stored, and room left for a fire-place and sleeping accommodation.[1] Sometimes space is found for a few fowls, a dog or two, and a couple of goats, and these—with the other animals which infest them—share the provision made by the kindly company. There can be no doubt, in spite of all the excuses offered and the reiterated statements that the coolie has worse accommodation in India, &c., &c., that the dwellings provided are too small and are inimical to health.

Here and there the 'Lines'—as these long rows of black buildings are called—are fairly well kept and good sanitary arrangements obtain. In Nausori, for instance, which is the head quarters of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in Fiji, the coolies are given a splendid water supply, and a huge modern septic tank deals with all the garbage and refuse of the place. If in such a place as this there is filth, it is of the personal sort with which no regulations can deal. Unfortunately, such cleanly conditions are not general. Back on the plantations the coolies are herded together like so many penned cattle, amid the most insanitary conditions and indescribable and disgusting filth. A man must hold his nose with a firm grip as he passes through some of these lines; but *to live in them*—! It is small wonder that sickness and disease hold carnival, and

[1] Since the above was written the Immigration Department obliges the employer to provide separate kitchens.

such places are a disgrace to civilization and a stain upon commerce.

No effort is made either by the Government or by the employers to provide the coolie with any elevating influences. There are individual employers who take a semi-paternal interest in these labourers, but there is nothing in the shape of legislation to force them to attend to any other than the merely animal wants of their employés. A company, of course, hasn't a soul. So long as its 'labour' is maintained in sufficient health to do its tasks—no more is required. The same may be said of its mules and bullocks.

The children are allowed to run wild. No educational privileges are given. As soon as they reach the age of twelve, they too must go to the fields. It was only after a stubborn fight that the Christian missionary was permitted to teach either adults or children. The Immigration Department, however, sided with the missionary, and the opposition broke down. The companies were afraid that if education were given—particularly in English—the coolies would be spoilt as 'labour,' and that when a coolie became a Christian he would then hold absurd ideas about all men being brothers! There was no need, however, for the companies to be fearful, for the coolie has not manifested any visible enthusiasm either for English or Christianity.

So it comes about that in the 'lines' the very worst

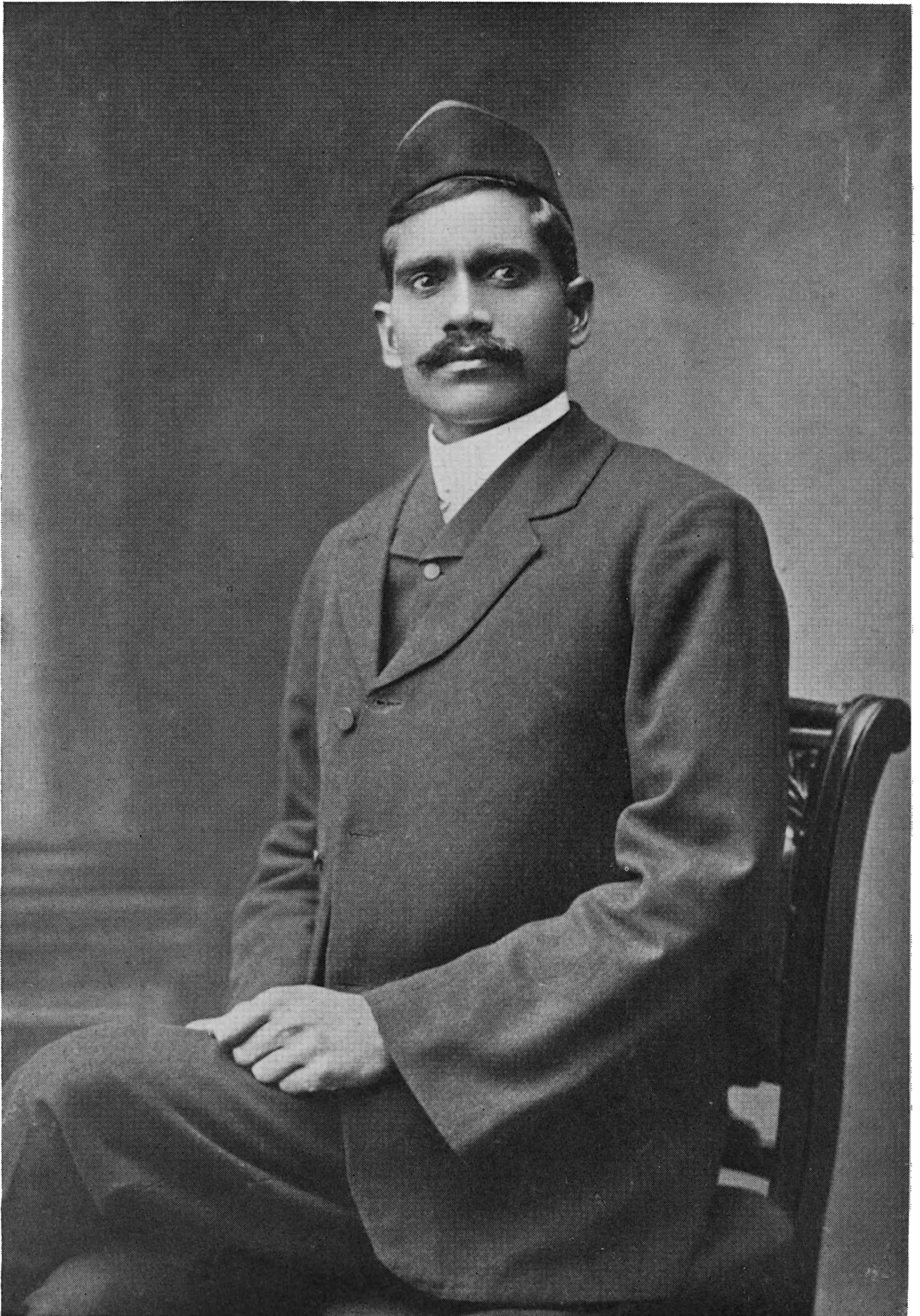
side of the Indian is developed. He is not a virtuous man by nature, and any inclination he may have is not helped by the life he is forced to live. One of the saddest and most depressing sights a man can behold, if he have any soul at all, is a 'coolie line' in Fiji. There is a look of abjectness and misery on almost every face that haunts him. Dirt, filth, and vile stenches abound. Wickedness flaunts itself unshamedly. Loose, evil-faced women throw their jibes at criminal-looking men, or else quarrel with each other in high, strident voices made emphatic by wild, angry gestures. The beholder turns away striving to discover whether pity or disgust is uppermost in his mind. There is much occasion for both.

Many of the coolies are of low caste or no caste at all. The sweepings of the streets of Calcutta, the riff-raff from the inland towns, the ne'er-do-wells from the villages, and the men who have become too well known to the police—all are to be found in Fiji. There is also a considerable sprinkling of the simple rural people, who are often the victims of the other class. These are in reality the most satisfactory labourers, and from their industry soon reap reward. Nevertheless, it is surprising how the discipline of regular work affects for the better all but the very worst. After a good deal of preliminary kicking and vain protestation, the lazy man finds that it is

'I'm blowed if I don't feel like shaking hands with the fellow—I believe I will.'

'Here, Baramool, let hands meet.'

They both look somewhat awkward during the brief ceremony; but Baramool goes off feeling that there is some reward in virtue, after all, and the sahib fancies that the tobacco in his pipe tastes better than it did.



A COOLIE—WITH A HISTORY [*Facing page* 277

(This man could manage to earn only fourpence a day digging drains)

'Sir, I have been victimized, and am here through deception. I was tired of India also, and have always been of a roving disposition. I had a desire to see a new country, and so I came to Fiji.'

'Yes. That is all right as a story, and is a fairly common one; but it does not explain your coming out as a coolie.'

'That's where the deception comes in, sir. I met a man in India, dressed in European clothes, who was employed as a recruiting-agent. He told me that there were now splendid openings for enterprising Indians in the Fijis. He said that it was a rapidly developing country, that people grew rich in a few years, and that men of education were at a premium. He introduced a man who had lived ten years in Fiji, and who gave a glowing account of the country. He told me there were plenty of positions for "Babus" at 150 per annum. I found out afterwards that he was a decoy for the recruiter, and I question whether the man had ever seen Fiji. Not a word was said then about indenture, and, foolishly, I inquired no further. I had pretty good reasons for wanting to leave India just then, and so I went to the Calcutta depôt. There I found out about indenture; but I made up my mind to go on. The life on the ship among the great unwashed was bad enough; but this is confoundedly worse.'

'But why did you leave India?'

The coolie looked questioningly at his interlocutor, and evidently reading a reply in the face before him, said—

'Sir, if you have a few minutes to spare, come into my house and I will tell you the truth. I cannot offer you much accommodation or entertainment. My salary does not allow of light wines and delicacies. Here is a box—will you please sit down. Will you take a banana? Horace would say that it was a modest meal served in a modest dish, wouldn't he?' The dish was modest enough—being an enamel plate; but the visitor declined to eat. The host turned to another Indian crouching over a few smoky sticks in the mud fire-place, and jerked out in Hindustani—

'Go out, you dog, and stay outside until I call you.'

'Sir, my name is Banerji—John Wilson Banerji.' (That is not the actual name he gave, but it will do.) 'My father is a minister in the Church Missionary Society and a graduate of Calcutta University. I was given a good education in the mission schools, and then I went to the university and took my Arts degree. Afterwards I studied law and visited England. I went to Cambridge for a while. I did very well in my course and won some medals which I left in India. I left home very hurriedly; but I brought some of my papers and a few books.

If you would like to look at my papers, here they are.'

He opened a box and drew out a roll of certificates and examination papers. The sahib glanced through them, and there could be no mistake that the story told was true.

'When I returned to India, I found employment with Barnett and Greaves, a firm of lawyers in Calcutta. I was sent up to Lucknow with some money, for I had come from those parts and spoke Urdu as my mother-tongue. A great temptation lay in wait for me there and—I embezzled some of the funds. I was told to do it by another. I was found out, or all would have been well. My father was broken-hearted, and got the bishop to intercede for me. My employers agreed to delay prosecution to give me a chance to get out of the country and to save my father's name. So I came here. It was tough luck, wasn't it?'

'What are you doing here?'

'I'm cutting grass for the mules at present, and now can manage to earn my shilling a day. At first, my hands were so soft that they blistered terribly, and if it had not been for that low-caste coolie you saw in here just now, I don't know how I would have lived. I could earn only fourpence a day; but he was used to this kind of work and could make his shilling easily. He always shared

life. Good afternoon, sir, if you will go. Thanks for talking to me—it has done me good. Perhaps, if you get a chance, when my indenture is finished you will put in a good word for me, to help me get a Government position. Good-bye, sir.'

'Salām, sahib.' The man saluted respectfully and showed a high brow beneath his little brown cap.

'Is your honour a padri (a minister)?'

'No; but I am a friend of the padri. Why?'

'Show great mercy, sahib, and give my many salāms to the padri sahib, and tell him that Karan Singh is a *kristan*. I have just come from India, sahib, and have no friend.'

The man spoke perfect Urdu, and was evidently of good birth and education.

'Why are you here?'

'I left India, sahib.'

'But *why?*'

'I just left.'

'But you must have had some special reason—out with it.'

'I will tell the padri sahib when I see him.'

The missionary inquired into his case, and found that he was educated at the Bareilly Theological Seminary. His principal gave him an excellent character. He had suffered much for his faith, and

BAZĀR IN THE COOLIE LINES

A CORNER IN THE BAZĀR

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'Sir, the overseer has got me "set," and he will not help me. The manager is too busy to listen to the cry of a coolie unless some one will stand sponsor.'

'But what can you do in the office?'

'I am a certificated accountant by profession. I can keep books—single or double entry—make up balance-sheets or anything in that line. I took first-class honours in mathematics, and am familiar with the use of graphs. I am also a fairly good draughtsman. Please do something for me, sir.'

'But why did you leave India?'

'Sir, I was foolish. All the men of my caste are bad tempered. My wife was always quarrelling with me, and I got angry and struck her. So I ran away.'

'But you needn't have run away because you struck your wife. That is not an uncommon thing among your people.'

'True, sir; *but the woman died!*'

This keen, clever coolie was a murderer!

'Sir, please don't forget me. Rat poison is very easy to take, they say.'

These are some of the men who are weeding sugar-cane or digging drains for one shilling per day! Here they are suffering bitter penance and wearing out their lives in the chains their own

wrong-doing has wrought for them. This class of coolie is always more or less unsatisfactory as 'labour,' and is frequently at the bottom of insurrection and strife.

Let it be said to the credit of the Immigration Department in Fiji that every care is taken, so far as possible, to prevent the oppression of the coolie. The system, however, is a barbarous one, and the best supervision cannot eliminate cruelty and injustice. Such a method of engaging labour may be necessary in order to carry out the enterprises of capital; but there is something dehumanizing and degrading about the whole system. It is bad for the coolie; it is not good for the Englishman.

We are not accusing the overseers, *as a class*, of brutality. That would be exceedingly unfair; for some of them—the majority of them—are decent, manly fellows who, under peculiarly trying conditions, strive to do the right thing. But when there is a man, coarse, sensual, and brutal—a Legree—the system plays into his hands. He can wreak his revenge or gratify his baser passions without great fear of discovery. With such a man the most powerful deterrent to wrong-doing is the coolie's cane-knife.

It is mid-day. A woman went to work in the morning, and left her infant, according to the rules

of the estate, at the plantation *crèche*. The little one had been ill during the night, and the mother had become anxious about it. She stole from her work to see it, and found that it still had fever. She determined to bring it back with her to the field—which is contrary to rules. She is doing this when her overseer, a big, burly *Britisher*, rides along on his chestnut horse. He sees her carrying the child on her hip, and immediately hurls off English and Hindustani oaths at her.

'Back you go! Take back your kid to the *crèche*, you ——'

The woman turns in fear, and puts her hands together in entreaty. The whip comes down upon her half-naked back and legs. The child is struck also. Both are crying and screaming, and the mounted brute almost puts his horse's hoofs upon her. A European happens to be passing.

'You coward! Call yourself an Englishman to strike a woman like that?'

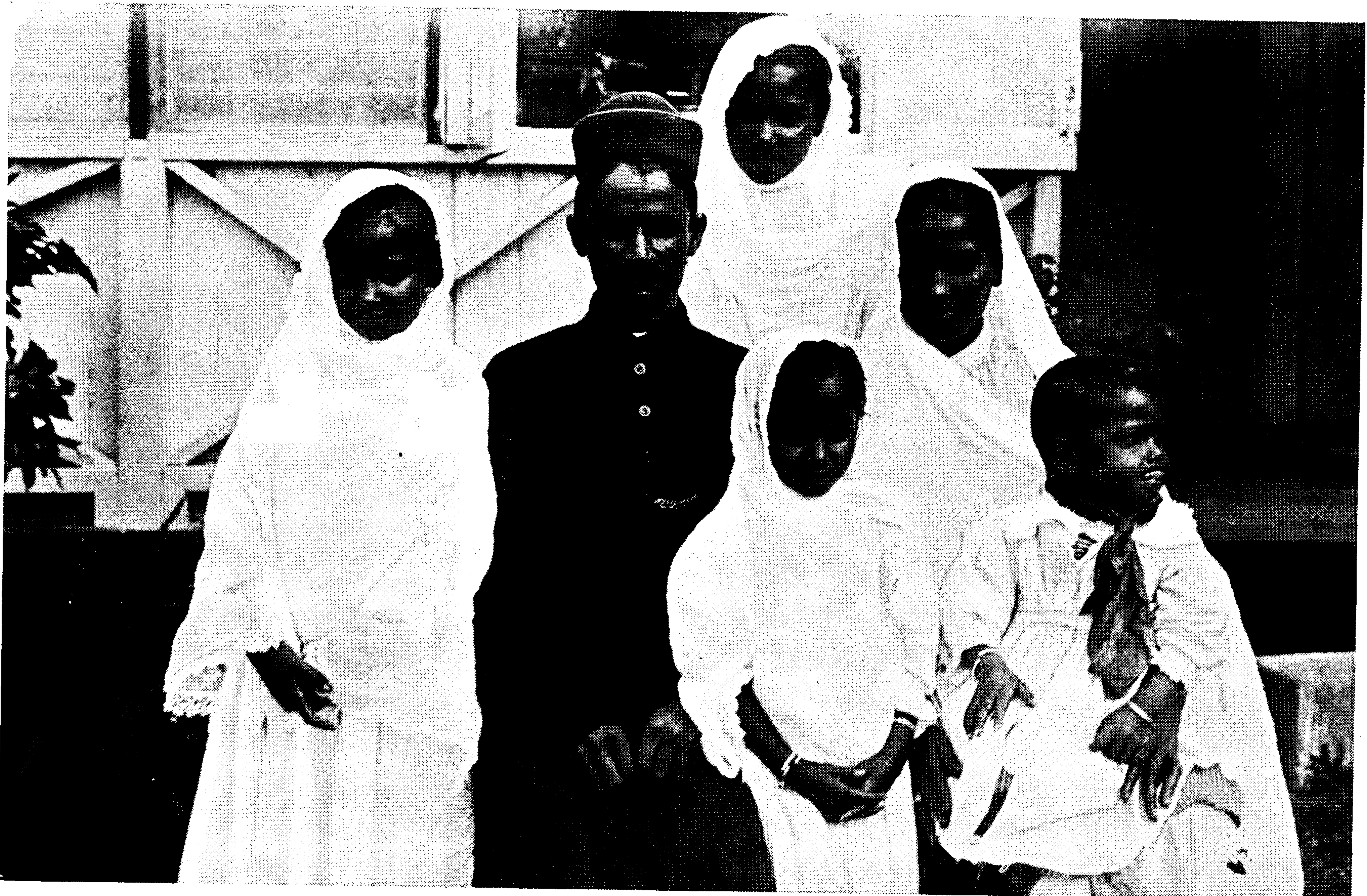
He laughs uneasily.

'These d——d coolies—especially the women—must taste the whip. There is no keeping them under else.'

A coolie comes out of the mill with his face cut and bleeding and some of his teeth knocked in. His blue dungaree clothes are heavily stained with

with difficulties, for he has to reckon with the coolie. The coolie is not easy to reckon with, as a rule. He has an innate genius for dodging work, and brings an almost infinite amount of cunning to bear upon that art. He is often as obstreperous as a mule, as sulky as a working bullock, and as slim and stealthy as a mongoose. The overseer is thus between the devil and the deep sea. The coolie is the deep sea. Considering the risks taken, the position is worth not less than a thousand a year. It usually carries about two hundred.

Assaults upon the overseers are somewhat frequent, and often diabolical in design and execution. The cause is sometimes obscure and never comes to light. It may be that in a large percentage of cases the victim himself is principally to blame. He has become either unduly callous or else morbidly sensitive. It is difficult to say which is the more dangerous attitude. At other times misadventures occur through ignorance of Indian character and custom. More often, however, they are brought about through misunderstanding. One of the most necessary precautions in Fiji to-day, to prevent assaults arising from this cause, is to make obligatory an examination in the language of the labourer on the part of the person directing him. This would cut out, at one stroke, a large percentage of 'labour' troubles. A dialect has sprung up in Fiji which the Indians humorously call 'Overseer's Speech.'



A CHRISTIAN CATECHIST AND HIS FAMILY IN FIJI

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to recount his grievances. Usually, it matters less to him that he obtains redress than that he receives a hearing from his sahib. After reciting his real—or, as it more often happens, his imaginary—wrongs, a sympathetic though non-committal reply sends him away fairly satisfied. But when his overseer does not understand what he says, and blazes a broadside of harsh imperatives and opprobrious epithets at him, well—he just sharpens his knife. Good for the sahib if the anger has died down before the knife gets a chance.

Sometimes—much too frequently—it is the white man's relations with Indian women which are the cause of assault. Some Englishmen seem to imagine that because a woman is brown she has, therefore, no rights of person; and there is a certain class, happily growing less in Fiji, to whom no woman is sacred, and who profess incredulity if either a woman or her husband are above selling virtue.

Din Muhammad was a man of good caste and education. He had a history in India, but it was more foolish than vicious. He was placed in charge of the women as sardar (head man) on a certain plantation under an English overseer. Din Muhammad was no saint; but he had spasms of ethics—and more than spasms of obstinacy. When his

sahib made improper proposals to him regarding some of the better-looking women under his care, he became suddenly virtuous, and virtue mounted itself upon a mule-like intractability. He even preached a little upon the subject, quoting from the *Quran*—of all books! The overseer was exasperated, and beat Din Muhammad so savagely that he had to be sent to the hospital. The coolie inspector heard of the case, and made some inquiries. The overseer sniffed trouble, and so laid a charge against the sardar of attacking him, paying four coolies two rupees each to swear that he himself had struck only in self-defence. The four coolies told a consistent story—for two rupees is good money to pay in a country where a witness for any purpose can be obtained for a single rupee. Din Muhammad was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the Suva jail. The coolie inspector, however, was not satisfied. He 'Sherlock-Holmesed' the case, and found out that Din Muhammad had been ill-used, and that he had really sought to protect the women under him. The facts were laid before the Governor: Din Muhammad was released; and the overseer had to leave the country.

Jagnandan Singh is a Christian—which makes him a special object of dislike to certain white men. He is a good worker, however, and holds a respon-

sible position in the mill. His wife has the misfortune, in addition to being a Christian, to be rather good-looking. He comes to his missionary one night excited and angry.

'Padri sahib, take my name off the church roll so that I may not bring disgrace upon the Christian religion. I am going to beat to the point of death my wife's overseer.'

'Why, what is the matter?'

'Matter? The pig has been insulting Motilal, my wife, and making wicked proposals to her. She would not listen to him, for she said she was "marrit." To-day, in the field, the incarnation of filth took hold of her and tried to harm her by force. She struggled and bit his hands; and when he could not master her he struck her over the head with his whip; and in his anger ripped off her clothes and left her standing almost naked, with the other women laughing at her.'

Here the man held up a few dirty ribbons which had evidently been a skirt, and a torn bodice much worn by Indian women. Perhaps he had ripped the things a little more for effect—which is very Indian.

'Sahib, I am going to nearly kill that man.'

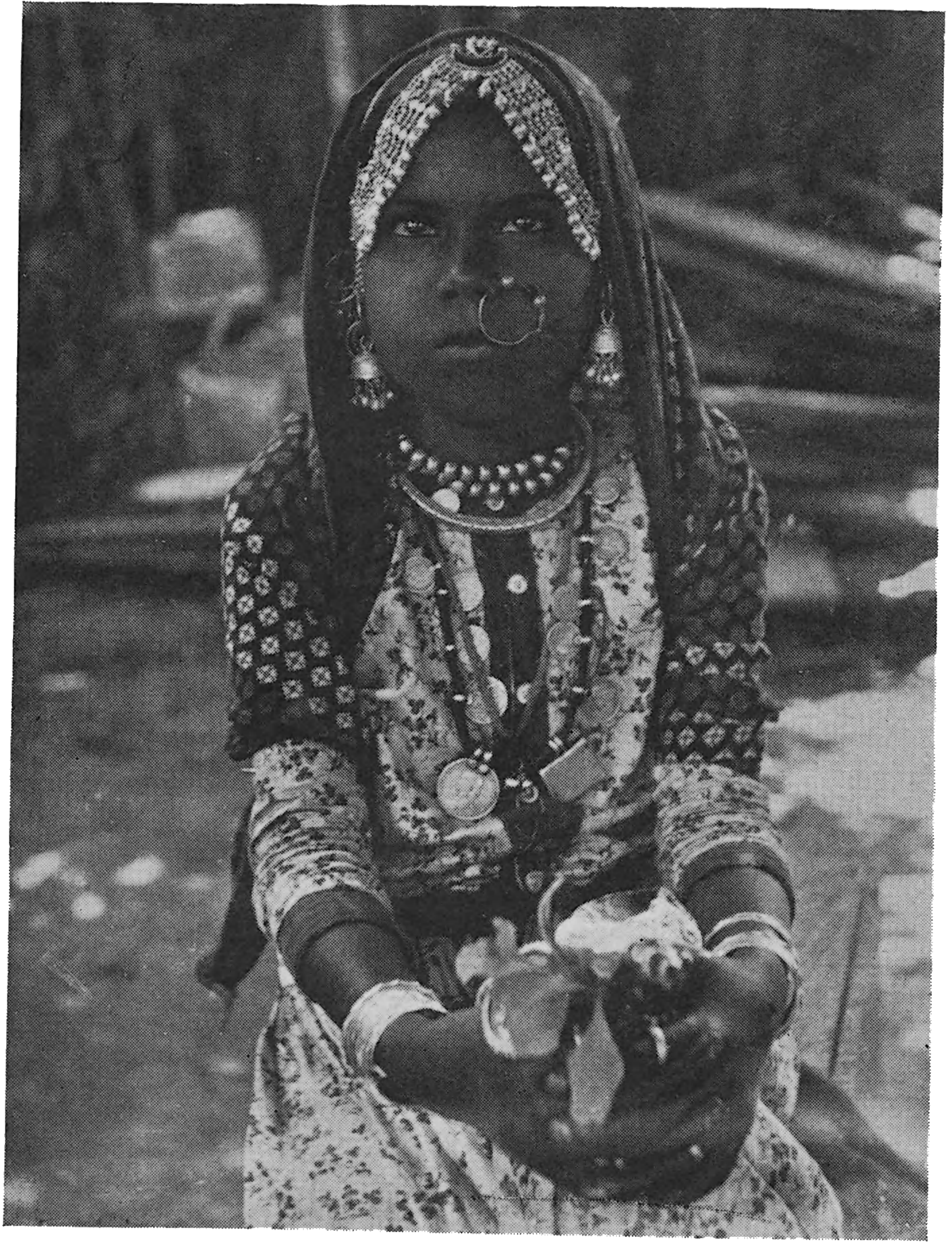
The missionary strives to calm him, and suggests laying an information at the court under the labour laws.

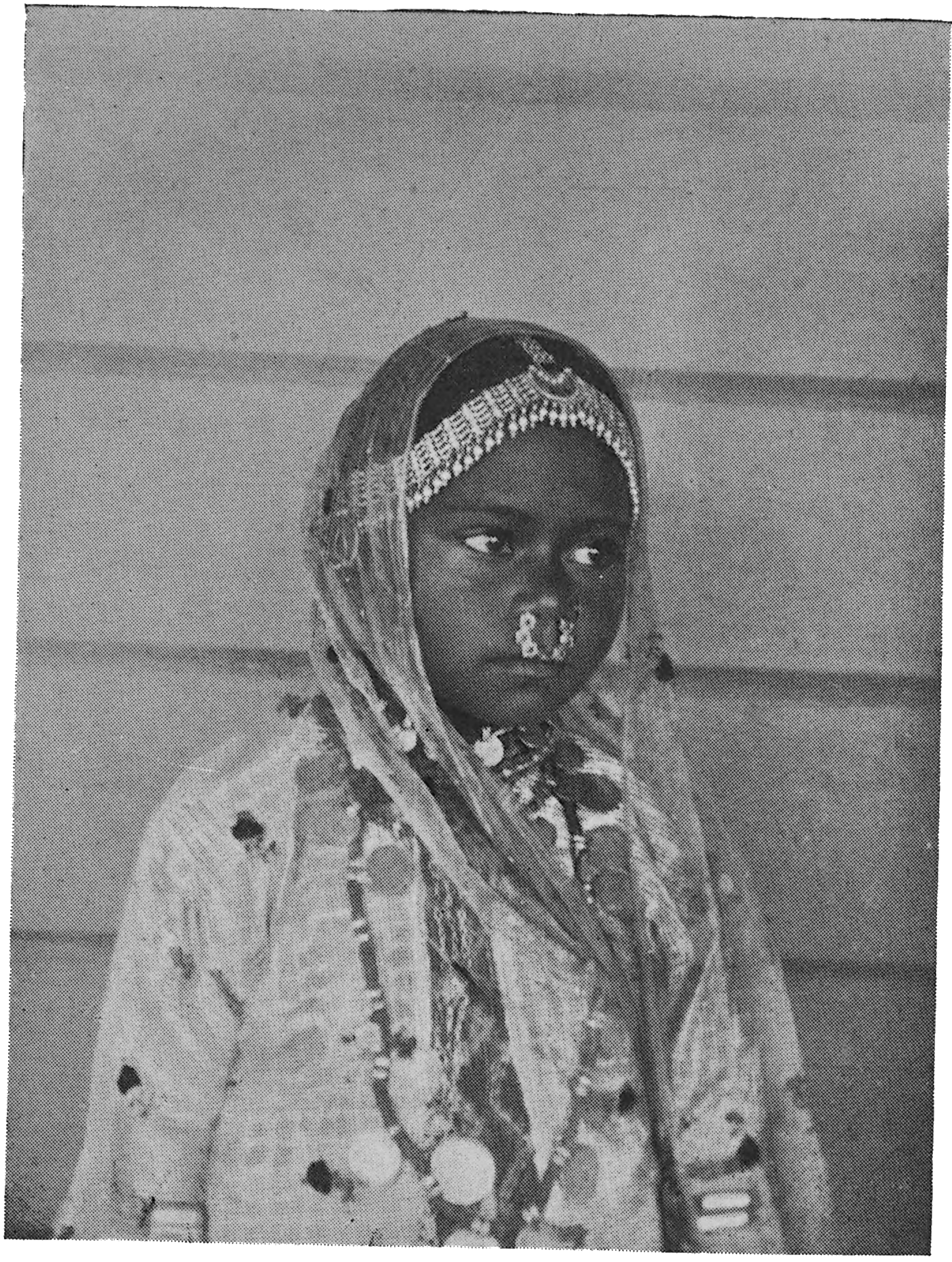
Jagnandan Singh laughs sarcastically.

be frightened. When his temper is fully roused, no power on earth can hold him back. A brutal overseer outraged an Indian woman some years ago. She was a Brahman, with plenty of friends. She was by no means a virtuous character; but she had caste, which meant much in the eyes of those friends. They determined to take satisfaction for her outraged dignity. They took it. That overseer was literally chopped into pieces. The things they did to him could not be written. They had their revenge, and went to the gallows in the most nonchalant manner.

These things are deplorable enough; but they are not written with a view of casting any reflection upon the overseers as a whole. For many of them the writer has a deep respect, and enjoys with some of them a warm friendship. They, as much as any one, though they know far more about the essential difficulties of their task, condemn such brutality on the part of the few. These facts are given to show the evils of the system under which the coolies work and the abuses open to it. Things are better than they were; but there is still room for a much more humane spirit in the treatment of indentured labour, and need for happier conditions.

Notwithstanding all the troubles that the employers are put to by the vagaries of both coolie and overseer, the Indian is counted, on the whole,





'FREE' HINDUSTANI GIRLS. THEY ARE BOTH MARRIED

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the colours of the rainbow spill themselves over the space in ever-changing confusion. Here and there little tents made of sacks opened and stretched on sticks, keep off the sun or rain from the goods spread out on the ground. At the entrance to the lines a seller of Fijian *yaqona* (the kava root) makes, in a none-too-clean bowl, the drink which has become so popular with the Indians. The coolie rubs affectionately his *doanne* (threepence) between his finger and thumb, looks round to see that his woman is not in sight, and then, yielding to temptation, gulps down the coco-nut bowl full of the muddy-looking liquid. Reluctantly he hands over his coin, and, now that his thirst is satisfied, reproaches himself for his weakness. He will do the same thing next Saturday.

There, huge milk-pans are piled up with Indian sweetmeats and strange condiments. Half a score of naked boys look hungrily at them and envy the innumerable flies which seize every opportunity to settle upon these delicacies. Farther on, open sacks of rice, *dhall*, maize, pollard and bright black beans stand; and as fast as one bag is emptied another takes its place. In the shade of one of the buildings a couple of Indians are selling rough Fijian-grown tobacco. A huge hank may be bought for a shilling, and a little prepared and moistened lime is thrown in as a 'bakshish' to make the weed

smoke sweetly. It needs the lime. In the midst of a crowd of men and women an Indian jeweller sits. He is showing his beautiful and finely wrought pieces of gold and silver. Perhaps there is three hundred pounds' worth, and many of the individual articles are very expensive. One wonders who will buy them—but they go quickly enough. The explanation is that the jewellery answers to our Post Office savings-bank. If a man has a few shillings saved he buys a bracelet or an amulet and puts it on his woman or child. 'Free' women have often fortunes upon their bodies. The very poorest wear something. The children always have a bangle—and very little else, save a thread round their waists. These gold- and silver-smiths are very skilful, and with the most primitive appliances fashion the most elaborate and chaste designs. Under a spreading mango-tree, an Indian tailor sits. His customers bring their coarse dungaree, fine linen, or sleazy silk, as the case may be, and garments are measured, cut, sewn, and pressed—while you wait! Oh, for such tailors in English lands! Right in the middle of the roadway a barber squats before his victim, who is being shaved —without soap. The razor is a table-knife, and it makes a noise that sets one's teeth on edge. The patient, however, does not seem to mind, and calmly looks into a little mirror to see that the tonsorial

artist is following the instructions given him. Another barber is shaving off the hair from under the armpits and from the chest of another Beau Brummel. When that portion of the body has received attention, the finger- and toe-nails will be dealt with, and the parings handed over to their rightful owner.

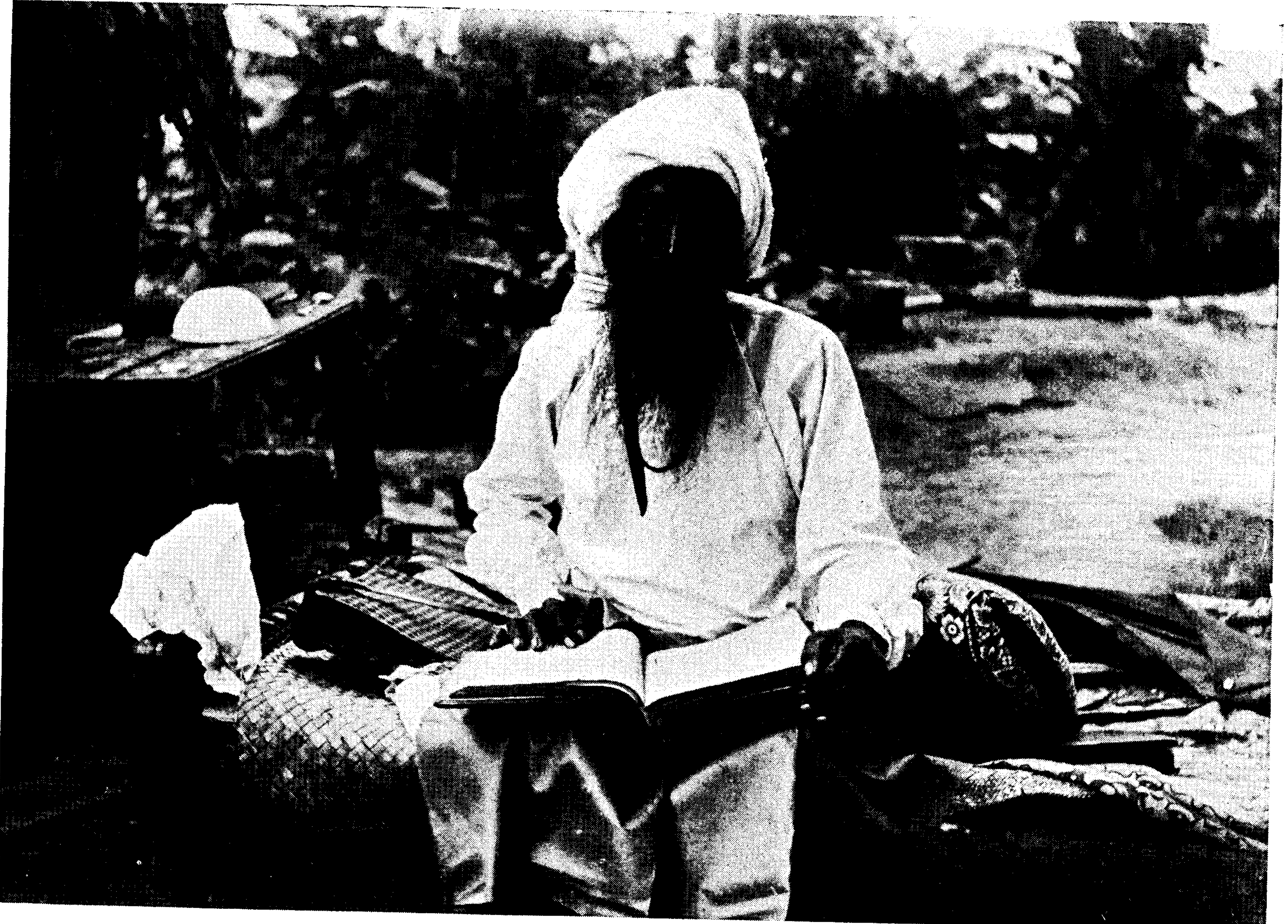
At right angles to the main line is the vegetable bāzār. The Indian loves to finger the produce and then select, with the air of a connoisseur, the article which he considers to be the best. Then come the fowls, with legs tied together and gaping thirstily in the hot sun. A little farther on are goats, which tear the air with their cries. Well they might, for only a few yards away are significant lumps of goat's-flesh which scanty-bearded Muhammadans turn over. When there are no hunks left which please the popular fancy, a ragged member of the Faithful, knife between teeth, will choose one from the bleating flock, and—there will be more goat's-flesh.

Religion is offered for sale in the bāzār also. Here is a Muhammadan *faqir* offering charms guaranteed, by the beard of the Prophet, to cure rheumatism, colic, and the itch, which are all very common diseases among the coolies. They are tiny bits of paper upon which is written a verse from the *Quran*. They cost only eight annas, and a bottle of the daktar's medicine means twelve annas;

faces upon the earth, reach out their hands to touch his feet. They usually leave a small coin on the ground, so possibly his disciples find that they are fairly well paid for exhibiting this specimen of Hindu piety.

A Christian teacher, near by, is trying to sell Bibles and Testaments, and, ever and anon, seeking to give a word in season. He does not seem to be doing much business, however. Perhaps the fact that he has clean clothes on tells against his holiness and the efficacy of his wares.

At the very end of the bāzār a Muhammadan *moulvi* is haranguing a crowd of unbelievers, and offering salvation, here and now, by the simple belief in the formula that 'God is one and Muhammad is His prophet.' He is trying to prove that Muhammadanism is an improved Christianity, and that it is in sympathy with all the best thought of the European world. In fact, the great Arabian was born too soon. He had already descried the pure Unitarianism of Martineau and the invulnerable philosophy of Haeckel. The preacher reads from a paper, printed in the vernacular, in which the statement is made that the English are giving up Christianity; and that 'Professor Campbell sahib, of the City of London Temple, is now earnestly studying the *Quran*. He reads all this with the authority we would give to a Reuter's cable. A



A MUHAMMADAN FAQIR. THE QUR'AN IS IN HIS LAP

frizzling goat's-flesh. It is the supper hour, and, for the first time in the week, the coolies are not too tired to enjoy it.

Sunday makes another break in the life. It is not an English Sunday, of peaceful lanes, chiming bells, and ivy-covered churches. The few early risers have gone to the bush for firewood, or else are washing out their clothes. Some have gone to cut cane for 'free' Indians, and thus earn an extra shilling. Others are husking rice, and waiting for the trade wind to spring up to winnow it. The majority, however, are in their stuffy little boxes, thanking all the gods whose names they can remember that there is no company's bell to call them to their tasks. The sun beats fiercely upon their black cabins—but what do they care? The tar blisters and cracks; but they doze on. At nine o'clock, perhaps, they come forth yawning and stretching. They then proceed leisurely to roll up some tobacco in a dried banana leaf, and soon are smoking contentedly. In the afternoon they dress up. The women put on their best yellow skirts, crimson jackets, and gorgeous *orhnis*, and follow the men to some other estate, or to a cock-fight, a wrestling match, or to a Brahman wedding. They are back before dark, and make the night hideous with attempts at music. The beat of tom-toms, the blare of conch-shells, the clanging of cymbals, and

the squeal of pipes, refuse to be drowned by the loud, frantic voices of those who mangle the Indian chants. At midnight even the strongest throats are hoarse; and, tired out, the revellers seek their kennels. Soon there is silence, save for the clink of a woman's jewellery as she turns in her sleep, or the smothered cry of a babe as it seeks the breast.

# CHAPTER XV

## THE FREE MAN

And, best beloved of best men, liberty.
SWINBURNE, *Atalanta in Calydon.*

IT is a red-letter day in the coolie's experience when, after five years' experience of the life in the 'lines,' he receives his 'free' paper. This is a certificate given by his employer stating that the years of service have been fulfilled. He can now be no longer branded as a 'coolie'—that hateful stigma is gone. He is a free man, with all the rights of liberty. He now sees stretching before him possibilities of wealth, comfort, and, maybe, a trip to the old land. He is offered the doubtful privilege of re-indenture at a higher wage; but he shakes his head decidedly. His soul loves not the bargain. It is significant that less than five per cent. of the coolies re-engage themselves to their old employers —unless it be as free men.

If, as a coolie, he has managed to save a few pounds, he has no difficulty in leasing a piece of land. Even though he be penniless, there are plenty

pilfering, pinching, saving, and working until his rice or bananas are ready to cut. With the money from that source he doubles the size of his land and buys another cow. He then ties his *dhoti* more tightly round his waist, and threatens his woman with expulsion or the sale of her jewellery if she and her spawn eat so much as they did last year! In a few years he is a rich man, and his wife wears the best *orhnis* and has the finest of ornaments. He does not change *his* dress, however—it is the same dirty *dhoti* and ragged singlet. When he left the lines he intended to go back to India as soon as his five years of free life were ended; but he now owns the land he once leased, and his crops and cattle are doing well, so why should he leave? He hears, too, that plague and famine are bad in the old land. He knows the deadliness of their breath: so he will stay in Fiji.

'How is it that you have made so much money, Gurdin?'

'Exertion, sahib, and the kindness of the gods.'

'Just tell me how you made a start.'

'*Are*, sahib, the story has many words in it. I left India when I was nineteen. My father and mother died of the plague, and I ran through fear of the death that might catch me too, and of the worse grip of the mahājan who had a mortgage on our land. I served my indenture at Naitasiri at Gardan

sahib's. He was a good master and made the tasks equal to the pay, so I did not suffer jail and earned good money. I picked up a careful woman. She had another man; but he was lazy and she left him. She herself was often sick, but she wasted nothing, and was content with the ends of my cigarettes. The last year I was with Gardan sahib he gave me a calf. He was going to kill it because the mother was dead, so I begged it. I used to cut grass for it after my work was done, and it grew quickly. We kept it in our house with us. When I became a "prree-ma'an" I had fourteen pounds, a young heifer, eight fowls and two goats. I leased two acres of land on Tonga Island, and paid four pounds for the first year's rent. I bought ten rupees' worth of timber from the store and some old iron from an Indian who was leaving for India, and built a house. The next week, by the blessing of *Ram*, there was a flood in the river, and I got timber and bamboos enough to put up a second house. This I rented to an Indian who worked not far away. I had seven pounds left, and I spent six of them in buying a cow in full milk. Then my woman and I commenced to work. Sometimes I sold some milk and we had a few annas to spend on rice; sometimes I got a day's work and that helped us. Often we had no food at all—save the milk and the roots and wild yams my woman brought from the bush. All the

while I was planting sugar-cane and cutting grass for my cattle. So we went on for two years—sometimes full and sometimes hungry. Then my cane was cut, and I had twelve pounds profit; and both my cows had a calf. I bought another cow and commenced a milk run in Nausori. It paid well, and next year I bought four more cows and employed a man at a pound a month to work for me. So we went on, and so *Ram* blessed me.'

'You have a lot of land and cattle now, haven't you, Gurdin?'

'Yes. I have three hundred acres of freehold, and twelve hundred acres on lease. I have fourteen horses and four ploughs. I haven't counted the cattle for a year—they are away on the leasehold—but I must have about five hundred. There is some money, too, in the bank on deposit. Six men work for me now, and I hope to indenture ten coolies next year to work on my freehold. It is all exertion, sahib, and the kindness of the gods.'

Of course, all do not prosper so well as Gurdin—they are not all so energetic nor so favoured by the gods; but there are very few free Indians of any length of residence in the colony who are not, from their standpoint, fairly well off. Many of them are well-to-do, judged even by European standards.

There are over 25,000 'free' Indians in Fiji, and

they constitute industrially the most important element in the community. It is for them that the stores mainly cater ; and many shopkeepers frankly ignore the European trade and spread their nets (which require to be of a fine mesh) for the Indian customer. The demand for labour is fairly constant, and good wages can be commanded either in field work or in more important positions. The great majority, however, prefer to settle on the land and live a life that is after their own ideal of existence.

The retail storekeeping trade—especially in the rural districts—is almost entirely in the hands of the Indians. There is a little 'tin' store in almost every village in Fiji, and inside it a human spider sits waiting for the unwary fly. These storekeepers buy their goods wholesale from English vendors, and manifest great alertness in so doing. They also cheat, it is said, whenever they get the chance. A man needs to keep both eyes open when an Indian is trying to drive a bargain.

'The Inglees are bad, sahib—listen to my story. For seven years and eight months I have dealt with Jones sahib, and have always paid him cash every month. He gives me little profit on the goods and it has been hard for me to exist. He cheated me three months ago, and now he is going to sue me for getting goods under false pretences.'

'Oh! that's not after the manner of Jones sahib.'

'Yes. He cheated me, sahib, and when I tried to get my money back, he is going to sue me. I paid my bill one month, and he was what you Inglees call "boos-ey." His hand shook, and he could not write the receipt, so I said, "Never mind, sahib, I'll get my receipt next month." Next month I went to pay my bill and he said, "You didn't pay me last month's bill." I said, "Yes, I did—don't you remember that I gave you eight sovereigns, seven pounds in silver, and fourpence in coppers?" "No no!" he said, "you can't make me eat lies like rice. Then he got angry and said he would summon me. He did. I had no receipt, the magistrate sahib believed his word, and I had to pay the money over again. *Are!* The Inglees all speak the same language.'

'Well, Ramjan, I am surprised to hear this story. I know that Jones sahib does take a glass or two sometimes, but he is a straight man.'

Ramjan laughed, and his eyes twinkled.

'But, sahib, I got straight with him—yes,' he laughed, 'more than straight.'

'Oh! How?'

'Sahib, I just waited till Jones sahib was drunk again, and then I went in and bought a lot of things, and I muddled him so that he forgot to put half of them down in the book. That's how I got equal.

return, after intending to settle in their own land, is testimony to the comfort they find here.

The health of the free community is on the whole good. They are wretchedly dirty, and skin diseases especially manifest themselves. They also suffer from chest and bowel troubles to a considerable extent. The death-rate, however, is exceedingly low for this class of people, and, considering the scarcity of women, the birth-rate is very high. Between six and seven hundred more are born each year than those who pass away. In 1907 six thousand adult females gave birth to over a thousand children. Probably, as the Indians are careless about registration, this number ought to be higher. There is, however, great mortality among children—especially those of parents under indenture. Ignorance, filth, sexual immorality, and carelessness are the chief causes. The people live in uncleanly, insanitary hovels. Animals are often kept in the house, and give rise to a most offensive state of things. One pities the coolie in the lines, and is inclined to blame the Government and the companies for not giving him better accommodation; but when he has the chance to make himself a decent home, he rarely avails himself of it. Notwithstanding these unfavourable conditions, it is a remarkable fact that the children born in Fiji are heavier and plumper than those born to the same parents in India. In spite

of every obstacle, hygienic and moral, the Indian thrives.

One secret of the increase of the people is perhaps their tenacity of life. They have some purpose before them, and, unlike the Fijians, they have a deep interest in living. The Fijian is ready to lie down and die on the slightest provocation: the Indian simply *will* not die until the silver cord actually snaps. Men dying of consumption hold out with a persistence remarkable even for those smitten with that disease. People suffering from incurable maladies defy death until the last—much to their own suffering and the annoyance of their friends. They are an unkillable people.

'Sahib, be merciful, and come and see a woman who is ill.'

'What's the matter with her?'

'Oh, she's swollen out to a terrible size—her legs and arms and body.'

The sahib went, and found her a fearful object. Her body and limbs were swollen to more than double their normal proportions. The skin was tense and bright, and, in places, quite purple. Her face alone remained unaltered. She had been to the Suva hospital, and the doctors had diagnosed her case as one of acute appendicitis. They wanted to operate at once; but she refused to be 'cut.' The doctors

said she would die. She left the hospital in that state and walked over three miles. Since then the swelling had increased and had extended over the whole of her body. The sahib looked at her for a while, and pressed the shining, taut skin.

'Daughter, you will die. You were foolish to leave the hospital. I cannot do anything for you. You ought to have let the doctors operate.'

'Die?' she screamed, raising her fearful hands. 'Die? I *won't* die! Sahib, come closer. Look into my eyes—is death there?' The eyes were keen and singularly lustrous. 'Look at my face—is death there?' The face was particularly healthy-looking and the lips were full of resolve.

'Sahib, when the doctors said the woman will die, I thought of my boy Sewak here, and I said, "If I die, who will take care of him?" So I got the nurse to give me a little mirror and I looked into my eyes and I saw *life* laughing there. I saw my spirit—it was strong and fearless. They said that I couldn't walk, and tried to stop me as I rose; but I did, and now I am home and *I am going to get well.* My mind is stronger than my body, and the house will not fall while the timbers are strong.'

The sahib left her expecting each day to hear of her death. But a fortnight afterwards a woman came to his bungalow and salāmed.

'Do I look *dead*, sahib? *Bap re bap!* In some

things the wise Inglees are children! They understand the body; but they cannot see the soul.'

No wonder such people challenge death.

Morally, the Indian in Fiji is outside the decencies of description. The sins that brought down fire on the Cities of the Plain are rampant. Bestiality, which would shame even a Pasiphae, riots here. We dare not attempt to even hint at its vileness. No established marriage laws obtain. A woman will stay just as long with a man as it suits her. When a better husband appears who can give more jewellery—then she goes to him. A woman's 'family' sometimes represents as many husbands as there are children. The girls commence a life of dishonour at a very early age. They may be married, that is, purchased by some man from their parents, at the age of seven or eight. Then they are under the care of the husband's people—if he has any. The guardians will sometimes try to get back as much of the money spent in the purchase as is possible by selling the child's virtue. When the little girl is twelve or thirteen she commences to live with her husband, who may be twenty or thirty years older. In a year's time she is a mother! We have seen them mere children—with smaller children at their breast—*mothers at twelve and thirteen!*

The shortage of women and the consequent

immorality resulting therefrom, are a fruitful cause of quarrelling. Nearly all the violent assaults and murders are attributable to these troubles. The Indian is a quick-tempered man, and when roused becomes diabolical in his passion. He is also revengeful. When the spirit of *badali* (vengeance) is once uppermost, no consideration has the slightest weight, save the carrying out of his designs. Once that is accomplished and his victim is punished, he will tread the plank to the gallows with perfect equanimity.

A missionary was called by a murderer to the jail, as he desired a conversation before he died. This man had murdered his wife and almost done the same for her paramour. The missionary hoped that some feelings of penitence and a desire to make his peace with God were the occasion of the summons. He was a little scrap of a man, with a low brow and eyes close together. He sat on the floor in his cell behind the prison grating and rose as the missionary looked in.

'Are you the padri sahib?' he asked.

'Yes. Why do you wish to see me?'

'I have questions to ask, sahib. I want to know about things that will come after my passing. Can you tell me anything?'

'Yes. Our holy books tell us many things about the future.'

turn the conversation to the man's own state; but he would not be put off.

'Good! Good! I know that he will go to hell too, sahib. He will never repent. He was ensnared by the woman—Indians very rarely get out of that loop. Very good! He, too, will go to hell. That's all I wanted to know, sahib.'

In vain the missionary tried to interest the condemned man in the message that he had brought—but it was useless. He was satisfied. His *badali* would be brought about. The missionary sorrowfully retired, feeling that he had had a look into the mind of an Indian—and shuddered at the memory of that triumphant face lit up with its Satanic joy. The next morning, as the prison drums beat the hour of six, the murderer stepped nimbly on to the fatal platform.

The customs of the old land are reproduced here with many interesting modifications. Although caste theoretically has been broken by crossing the *kala pani* (black water—i.e. the sea), it nevertheless retains much of its influence. Brahmans and Thakurs seem to exist in just as great proportion as in India itself—probably even greater—for here a man's ancestry is not known. He may possess himself of some occult knowledge, or lead others to think that he possesses it—which comes to the same thing—and there will be found hundreds ready

to call him *maharaja* and acknowledge him as a religious guide. Or he may put *singh* on to the end of his name and pass as a man of the famous warrior caste. Hundreds of unwashed sadhus and *faqirs* (ascetics) walk from village to village trading on the superstitions and fears of the people. This class is becoming a menace to the community. They are lazy, diseased, filthy in person and in practice, very often the most vicious men in the country, and frequently at the bottom of half the troubles that occur. Very few of these self-constituted religious teachers are educated sufficiently even to read their holy books—much less explain them. But the average Indian in Fiji is not much better off in the matter of learning, and so is lenient in his demands and tolerant of the evil-smelling religious guide.

The religious festivals are kept up in a very happy-go-lucky fashion. Some few external ceremonies are remembered—and imagination and noise do the rest. They seem, as a rule, pitiful parodies of religion—more tawdry and less dignified than our corresponding 'processions,' 'consecration ceremonies,' &c. Thus the *holi* festival is little more than a squirting of red dye over the clothes of their fellows and insulting in obscene manner the female portion of the community. The *tazia*—the great Mussulman mourning for the sons of Muhammad—is

carried out with the most grotesque merriment. Very often, in smaller settlements, the two festivals are combined, and a Hindu-Muhammadan mixture is the result. The Hindu sacrifices *ghi* and rice; while the Muhammadan puts the knife into the throat of the votive goat! The adherents of both faiths practise a commendable tolerance, and together they have 'a real good time'—according to an Indian's measure of that sensation.

The dress worn is that of the village population in India, and the women wear an abundance of jewellery. It is no uncommon thing to see the woman of a well-to-do free Indian with two or three hundred pounds' worth of gold or silver about her person. The would-be Babu wears the inevitable ill-fitting English suit and the fancy waistcoat. The religious mendicants imitate the garb proper to their order, and the women dress in skirt, jacket, and *orhni*.

The food is principally rice and pulse with a great variety of vegetable curries. Gradually meat is coming to be more and more eaten by the people, and fowl especially is becoming fairly common. Religious scruples are somewhat easily pushed aside when the sacred Ganges is out of sight; and a holy Brahman will be seen enjoying a tin of corned beef!

To-day, Indians are covering the face of Fiji. In several districts they already outnumber the

Fijians. They are gradually pushing the native back by leasing or buying his best lands; and the river and road frontages are mostly theirs. They are changing the face of Fiji also. Everywhere their patches of cultivation appear. This month it is standing bush we see; the next month there are shoots of maize coming up between the stumps in the clearing. One may drive from Suva to Nausori, for example—twelve miles—and not see one solitary Fijian village till the very end of the journey. Indians, Indians, Indians, along every mile of the road!

There seems only one prospect for Fiji—it is that of becoming an Indian colony. Whether or not this is an end to be desired, opinions vary. It is, however, seemingly inevitable.

# CHAPTER XVI

## MUHAMMAD, KRISHNA, OR CHRIST?

> The East bowed down before the blast,
> In patient, deep disdain;
> She let the legions thunder past,
> Then plunged in thought again.
>
> MATTHEW ARNOLD.

MUHAMMAD, Krishna, or Christ? That is the question before the Fiji of To-day. Each religion, after its own fashion, is confident of success. Hinduism makes no fuss. Its sits down quietly, and 'in patient, deep disdain' watches with dreamy eyes the other religions quarrel and fight. Yet even Hinduism can rouse itself and marshal terrible forces when it suspects that any real danger is near. It has the advantage of a great majority in Fiji; and the natural conservatism of its people is a shield against which the fiery darts of all other religions are quenched.

'Padri sahib, why do you come here so often?' The speaker was a clever and well-educated Brah-

who *knows.* Why do you come here so often, padri sahib?'

Thus speaks Hinduism.

Muhammadanism is turbulently aggressive. 'There is one God, and Muhammad is His prophet' rings out defiantly in the Fiji of To-day. In every settlement are to be found its active missionaries who style themselves 'moulvis,' and along the highways the *faqirs* spread their faith. There are hundreds of others who do not forsake worldly tasks, but who will move heaven and earth to make a proselyte. A Muhammadan will quietly settle in a Hindu community and open a store. For six months there is no sign of any attempt to propagate his religion. He subscribes to Hindu feasts, and by his generosity wins confidence. Little by little, he commences his business—insinuating, rather than stating, that Hinduism requires some substantial improvements which he could suggest. At length a Hindu turns; and the Muhammadan takes him into his house and gives him a daughter to wife. *That Hindu never goes back.* When the Hindu relatives persecute him, the Mussulman encourages him to stand firm by telling the story of the Prophet and Abu Bekr in the cave when hunted by their enemies. 'Do not fear, brother Abu, though we are but two—God makes the third.'

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to us all; but I pity you because the Indians deceive you so much. If you make twenty converts —which I very much doubt—only one of them will be sincere.'

'Moulvi *bhala*, that one is sufficient. From one good seed a whole field of maize can spring. The power that changes one man can change ten thousand.'

'*Are!* There is no understanding you English! Your faith cannot be killed; and you will not employ falseness to gain your ends. Sometimes, when I think of these things, I say to myself, "Perhaps the Christians will win—in time." But, padri sahib, you will eat no fruit from the trees you plant.'

Thus Muhammadanism.

The Christian missionary is hopeful also. With the doggedness of the race from which he has sprung, he keeps on when all the odds are against him. He seems even more eager when results mock him. Baffled and disappointed, he takes breath and starts again. Like Michael with the snake beneath his feet, he 'stands calm *just because he feels it writhe*.' Yet he must have his hours of dejection, though he hides them well, as he looks upon the stupendousness of his task, and sees the feebleness of the forces to face it.

It is a hot, muggy evening in November. The coolie lines are a blaze of light and thronged with excited crowds of Indians moving from place to place. Gradually they gather in the central square, where a conch-shell blares hideously before a paper shrine which is being decorated by a score of busy, jabbering Indians. At last their work is finished, and scores of candles are lit behind the variously tinted tissue papers of the gaudy shrine. All is now ready for the festival. The crowd is growing larger—five—six—eight—nay, there must be fifteen hundred people packed into that little square. The wailing voices of the women break in upon the Babel; and gradually a hush falls upon the crowd. Wild, frantic, sobbing sounds come from the group of chanters. Then they stop, and there is stillness for a few seconds—like the silence between the lightning flash and the thunder peal. Three old priests in yellow robes and fantastic headgear step forth. Those in the inner circle of the throng fall down upon their faces and cry '*Sitaram! Sitaram!*' An awe casts its spell over the people—even the women and children seem to feel it and stand silent. The old men mumble some incantations and throw red-lead upon a black stone in front of the paper house. One of them then climbs up and puts a little image, some *ata*, a few chappatis, rice and *ghi*, within the tissue-paper shrine. A brass basin, half-

filled with methylated spirits and scent, is lit and handed from one to another. The worshippers put their hands into the blue flames, and then, dropping a coin into the blaze, put their palms to their brow. That part of the ceremony concluded, the minstrels commence. The crowd gets more excited as the music grows faster. Quickly and yet more quickly the drums are beaten; hoarser and yet hoarser become the voices of the chanters. The people are seized with religious frenzy, and, taking hold of each other, they dance frantically and madly round that illuminated paper house. On every face there is the maddest enthusiasm.

'*Ram! Ram!* Bless us!' The people shout.

'*Ram! Ram! Sitaram!* Hear us!' they cry.

See the face of that man there! Can that be the same clear-headed, cool debater we know as Totaram? Yes. It is he. But this is Hinduism in ecstasy — not in argument—which is very different.

On the edge of the crowd stands the Christian missionary. He is thinking deep thoughts. He looks at that mass of vivid colour and frenzied life, and asks himself, 'Will Christianity ever overcome this?' Then he remembers that these are only a few hundred people—they represent *three hundred millions* away there in India. What chance has the religion he loves?

'Now look here, we all like you, after our own way, although we don't come to church as often as we might; but I am only saying what everybody says about you. Don't you think that you are wasting your life here? If you went back to your own people you might do some good. They have some sort of soul; but these people—well—you might just as well have a mission to the mules. You'll never do any good, old man.'

'It is not my business to look at the results,' says the padri lamely; 'they are not within my power.' He wishes, though, he could think of something more conclusive to say just then.

'Oh, well, as long as you are satisfied, I suppose it's all right, but I'm hanged if I could stick on at a job such as you have. *Working* coolies is bad enough; but *converting* them!—well, I don't know how you manage to keep at the game. In the colonies now, it would be different.'

The padri is silent—thinking again. By-and-by the good-natured Englishman saunters off as coolly as he came, not knowing what barbs he has left in the missionary's heart.

'Why should Dixon have come just now—of all times?' the padri says to himself.

He goes home in a sort of stupor. The scene has paralysed for the time his faith and intellect. His wife talks brightly, for she sees that he is de-

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On, on, the old demonstrator goes, until at length the heavy iron ball is swinging slightly—*in rhythm with the blows of that little ball of cork.* Not the first blow did it; nor any one of the blows. It was the effect of *repeated* blows.

The missionary has his reply to the overseer and also to his own soul's questionings.

'Why didn't I think of that and tell Dixon? That's just what we are doing. One man comes down here, full of enthusiasm, and he hurls himself at the mass. Soon he is dead, and the Englishman in his cool evening suit says, "I told you so." Another and another comes, and there is no seeming result; and the calmly smoking overseer says, "These missionaries are awful fools!—they are just throwing their lives away. They will never affect the mass." But we shall keep on, and, thank God! there will never be lack of men to throw themselves at the mass, until even that Englishman will take his pipe out of his mouth in astonishment and say, "I believe there is some movement, after all—who would have thought it?" The Church will never stop until that great and seemingly immovable mass we call heathenism *swings*—and swings in harmony with the great rhythmic purposes of God.'

Then the missionary turns down the light in his study and his knees bend in prayer. Soon he retires to rest. His wife is asleep, and so is the little fair-

haired lad beside her. He raises the mosquito-net for a moment and kisses the little chap. 'Perhaps he'll take my place when my force is spent—God grant it!' he says to himself. Next day he is at the enemy again, and there is a ring of assurance in his voice and a confidence in his tone which surprises his hearers—and himself.

If Fiji is to be won back again to Jesus Christ, the task will be a very difficult one. There can be no escaping that fact. The Church in Australasia, without experience of missionary effort amongst peoples with an organized religious belief, has especially to realize how gigantic is the undertaking. The work amongst the Fijian people—bad and savage as they were—was mere child's play compared with this.

The Fijian was a simple-minded man with an intellect of a comparatively low order. His sages had not invented any philosophy to explain the mystery of being. Life was not mysterious—it was not even sacred. They had not tried to sound the 'abysmal deeps of personality.' It may be questioned whether they have yet realized personality in our sense of the term. They possessed no literature; not even rude signs were made to symbolize thought. No temples were built in which to worship the Unknown. Their rude efforts in this direction are

but parody. When the white man came with his wonders, which seemed infinite to that simple folk, the days of miracles commenced. The man who could make a thing no bigger than a mussel-shell which of itself told the coming of the dawn more surely than the crowing of the cocks—what was he but a god? *Thus the Fijian, because of limited intelligence, was predisposed to accept as truth whatever the missionary told him.*

This gave the Christian advocate a tremendous advantage in the *speedy* winning of his cause. The message was received with unquestioning faith. Even to-day, while there may be the utmost moral laxity, there is no religious scepticism. The Fijian has no constitutional difficulty in believing that the sun stood still, iron floated, walls fell down with a shout, dead were raised to life, or that water was made wine. There is needed no Papal Encyclical to warn him against 'Modernism'; nor do unscholarly men need to instruct him against the dangers of 'Higher Criticism.' These things have not touched him—*yet.* He lives in a quaint state of innocence and credulity. Theology is received in the original packages in which it is given—and the *wrappers are never taken off.*

But the Christian Church in these islands has a very different class to deal with in the Indian people. It is no simple-minded man with whom she is asked

severely handicapped, they have shown that their intellect was a thing at which to marvel. Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh and London have been forced to grant some of their degrees to men whose skin is brown and whose features are Oriental. Thus while the Fijian was predisposed to accept the teaching of the Englishman as that of a man intellectually his superior, *the Indian is predisposed to question everything the white man says.* That this Anglo-Saxon, who only yesterday was a savage, who eats dead cow or dead pig—or any vile flesh; this man with his coarse, heavy laugh, vulgar manners and froward women; this man who was suckled on a creed only a few days old,—that this being should come to him and presume to teach *him*—the heir of the past ages, the child of a thousand philosophies—*Religion!* It is the Indian sense of humour which saves him from being angry. He is merely amused, and smiles blandly.

In vain we show off our little arts—they do not appeal to him, or else he can out-distance them. What are our buildings compared with his incomparable Taj Mahal? The stones of Venice are rude rocks compared with the magnificent friezes and the divine scrolls of Halabīd. Our Dreadnoughts, our airships, our Edisons, our Marconis—they are all of the earth, earthy. In vain we speak of our science and philosophy, and tell of Spencer and Darwin,

Lord Kelvin and the Curies. He doesn't know them—and doesn't want to know them. He cannot believe that they have thoughts like unto his.

A missionary was explaining to an Indian the new psychological theories of the 'subliminal self,' and translated part of the chapter of 'conclusions' in James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Before he was nearly through the listener rose excitedly.

'Stop! Stop! Who wrote that book?—no Englishman, I am sure.'

'Yes. He did.'

'Then he *stole* the ideas—they didn't grow in his mind. They are *our* ideas. This is a new thing.'

Though assured by the missionary that Englishmen did think such thoughts, he was never happy again in the minister's presence, and seemed suspicious that the translation had not been true.

Yet it is this man, proud of his race, haughty in his intellectual attitude, and antagonistic in spirit to everything Western, who is to be won for Christ. There is a sense in which he needs Christ more than any savage ever did—and can profit more by Him. But he is perfectly satisfied without Christianity, and the gospel is to him an idle tale which he treats precisely as he would a Hindu myth.

Few people not in actual contact with the Indian —and only some of those—realize how hard it is to influence the race, especially in the realms of religion

and philosophy. Moreover, the Christian missionary is sorely handicapped because, in the nature of the case, he cannot acquire in a few years the knowledge of the language, the people, and their innate ideas, to enable him to present his message in the best possible light. He learns slowly—and from bitter experience.

Put the matter in the other way. Suppose a Hindu came to one of our English cities, and in broken English tried to preach about metempsychosis? Suppose he did not know there ever was such a man as Shakespeare, and that Milton and Thackeray were only hard names? This man has never read our Bible through; he does not know whether Christ was a mythical hero like Ramcharan or simply a man like Kabir. His whole intellectual equipment is other than ours, and in the things he counts important we can see no meaning. What chance would he have of winning converts from Christianity to Hinduism? Yet the difficulty must be even exaggerated if it is to represent that which confronts the missionary amongst these people.

The radical difficulty is, of course, to understand the Eastern mind. The necessities of thought are not the same. *The Hindu has a dreamy sort of intellect, which refuses to be pinned down to anything exact.* He is a mystic, with a mystic's love of vagueness. The subject of his inquiry has been so

wide. It has been *Life*—in its broadest sense. 'What am I?' 'Whence am I?' 'Whither go I?' These are the questions he has sought to answer. He has struggled with problems too great for the human intellect, and the results are pathetic. This struggle has become a passion which masters him. Like another he has wrestled in the darkness; but the break of day has come—and he is still wrestling. Whether all these centuries have produced any satisfying articles of belief is open to question, but they have begotten a habit of mind which is the unalienable birthright of every Indian. Doubt has often given to despair, and his *weltanschauung* is pessimistic on the whole. His music is all in a minor key and sadly plaintive. From the 'naked shingles' of this world the 'eternal note of sadness' comes borne on the night wind. He has grown to love sadness, and has learnt the art of 'drugging pain by patience.' 'We Indians think best when we are sad,' said one of them the other day.

Another difficulty is the scepticism of the race. They are sceptical concerning motives. The missionary, they believe, is well paid to do his work. It is one man's business to make sugar, or build houses, or bake bread. It is another's business to preach and make Christians. That is all the difference they see. They are quick to notice flaws in

character or discrepancy in speech. The most inconsistent of mortals, they demand consistency in others! Even the children are sceptical.

A mission sister is teaching a class in Sunday school. A picture roll is before her with a representation of Abraham offering up Isaac, and she is explaining the story.

'But, *Mis-sahibah*, doesn't the padri sahib say that God is good? It couldn't be good of God to tell Abraham to kill his son.'

'Yes. God is good, Cheddi; but you see He wanted to test Abraham's faith.'

'But didn't you say that God knows all things and can read the thoughts of our hearts? He could see what kind of faith Abraham had, couldn't He? I don't believe that story.'

The mendacity of the race makes it difficult to make any impression upon their life and character. The class of people in Fiji, especially, are steeped in falsehood. Often, it is true, they lie so artistically as almost to provoke admiration. Tears of innocence trickle down injured cheeks whenever any fault is complained of. Indian evidence in court is practically valueless if there is any other opposed to it. Often when the litigant has a really good case he spoils it by trying to strengthen it with lies

Of his immorality we have already spoken, and

'Sahib, I've gone to your church since many days and have listened to the words there. They have been good words—my heart told me so. Sometimes I carried them home and thought about them. Then I tried to believe them. But, sahib, *I can't.* I'm too old to change now. *My mind is bent.*' She sank back exhausted, and after a while broke out in a wail almost supernatural in its intensity—

'Oh! Sahib, sahib, why didn't you come *sooner*?'

The missionary had no chance to answer that question. She swooned, and in a few minutes was dead.

The saddest thing one can say is that for hundreds in Fiji to-day it is *too late.* The Christian Church, though she had the chance, did not come *soon* enough. Their minds are bent, and no power on earth can unbend them. They live and die as if Christ were a dream. Many have not even heard that there is a dream.

But there are thousands for whom it is not too late. Their minds are still flexible. They are the responsibility of the Church of God. What shall be the future of Fiji? Shall Muhammad, Krishna, or Christ reign? Let the Christian Church reply. God has given her the answer in her own breast.

FOUR NATIVE MINISTERS

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of the voluptuous Ottima, so 'magnificent in sin' stands in flaunting colours; but we must remember that within the house Conscience struggles, and without the youthful voice of the little silk-winder sings—

> God's in His heaven—
> All's right with the world!

The difficulties at which this book has hinted must not paralyse our effort, but nerve the Christian Church to a more liberal interpretation of its duty and a more lively exercise of its faith.

There are several features in the life of the Fiji of To-day which are full of hope. Some of the problems may be solved even in the immediate future—if the Christian Church will only do its duty. Others are more intricate, and will require the assistance of that kindly old school-master, Time.

The effect of the consideration of these more encouraging signs of the times should not be to make the Christian at home draw up his chair nearer to the fire, and sinking deeper into the depths of its cosiness, say, 'Well, things are not nearly so bad as we thought—they will right themselves by-and-by. There is no need for worry.' Rather ought the effect to be to cause men to rise from the hearth and cry, 'This is going to be a long and terrible battle. But there is still left a chance of victory. In God's name we will seize it and throw ourselves into

the fray.' Then Fiji will get its opportunity—*but not till then.*

For this chapter is not meant in any sense to tone down any of the preceding ones. The picture might have been made much darker than it has been. Many of the ugliest characters have not appeared upon the stage at all; but, because of their filthiness, have been hidden away behind the scenery. The storm roars loudly and drowns the feeble voices of men; but, for all who will listen, there comes that 'deeper voice' of which the poet sings; and, catching its note of assurance, we dare to hope.

Even that startling decrease in the native population ought not to paralyse our effort. Native races have lived through strange vicissitudes. The Maoris in New Zealand bid us despair not. Though there are no signs that the mortality of the present generation is lessening, there are certainly indications that some of the apparent causes of decline are being weakened. The Fijian is gradually recovering from the shock caused by the sudden introduction of Western civilization, and is adapting himself to the new environment. Life, after all, is but a matter of adaptation.

One of the most cheering features in the Fiji of To-day is the new interest taken by the Government in the matter of native education. Hitherto, as has been already pointed out, the whole education of the

Fijians has been undertaken by the Christian missions without a penny of assistance from the Government. This has meant a very heavy drain upon the resources of the Church. It is a work that most will agree is one for which the Government ought to be responsible ; and that, though somewhat tardily, is now being recognized. A special Commission is about to be set up by the authorities by which the whole question of the education of Young Fiji will be considered. For many reasons, it will be scarcely possible for the State, during the next decade or two, to establish schools of its own for the bulk of the population ; and the probable solution will be that grants, perhaps upon a capitation basis, will be made to mission schools. The Government by examination will assure itself that the country is getting value for the moeny expended. This is a step in the right direction and one fraught with rich possibilities of good.

Independently altogether of this movement, and in point of time before it, the missionaries have given a new impulse to education—especially on practical and progressive lines. It needs to be remembered that from the very commencement of missions in Fiji, the stations have always been centres of practical instruction and education. Individual missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, have instructed boys in the arts of carpentry, printing, and

The missionaries in the Fiji of To-day are realizing that the work of establishing a people in righteousness is a very different task from that of evangelization. It is more difficult—and less romantic. There is required almost a new type of men ; though there must remain the selfsame aim—to bring about the kingdom of God.

One of the results of this 'Forward Movement' in Fiji is the establishment of an institution for Fijian boys at Davui Levu. To-day there are over one hundred boys in residence, and these are being given a practical training in those subjects likely to be of use to the Fijian lad under the new conditions of life. The plough is being substituted for the digging-stick, and modern methods of agriculture are to be taught. A carpenter's shop has just been erected, and is now ready for work. The boys will be instructed in the simpler principles of construction and accustomed to the use of European tools. Those who wish to devote their lives to this trade will be given an opportunity of fuller tuition. But what is *one* such institution for the whole of Fiji ?

Even more important is the establishment of a girls' school at Matavelo. Matavelo seeks to give the Fijian girl a new atmosphere. It seeks to transform her into a higher type of womanhood. It teaches her to respect herself—surely the first lesson a girl needs to learn. She comes to Matavelo

rude, rough, and coarse. Her speech and manners are abominable. For six months it is torture to her, and she often attempts to run away. Gradually the spell of the sisters comes over her. Her clothing becomes perceptibly cleaner, and she commences to imitate the habits of the older girls. Her personal habits become more refined. Her speech becomes modest and soft, and lo! a 'Matavelo girl' is born! Then she has no desire to run away. She has the Matavelo tone. Tone, when it is of the right kind, means everything.

There she is instructed in the finest of all arts—the art of home-making. The Fijian, except in rare instances, does not possess a home. He has a one-roomed hut wherein he with his wife and family sleeps; but it is a far cry from that to a *home*. At Matavelo the scholar is taught first of all to be clean, which, for a Fijian, is a hard lesson to learn. She is made to wash and iron properly, so that her husband, when she comes to marry, may have the whitest and tidiest clothes in the whole village. She must learn to cook well and tastily, that appetizing and nutritious dishes may displace half-cooked pig, hard *dalo*, and death-dealing native bread. She is instructed to ply her needle, that her children's clothing and her own may be neat and modest; to make mats, that her home may be well furnished; to love education, that her children may have new

ideals before their eyes ; to combat sensibly sickness, that she may not need to resort to the superstitious 'wise woman' of the village; to love virtue, that her frailty in this direction may be converted into strength of character—in short, to be a good, healthy-minded woman instead of a morbid animal.

Go into a village and see a Matavelo home. It is on a new plan : it has a new atmosphere. A score of simple evidences of an attempt at refinement meet the eye. The older women laugh at the young wife with her new-fangled notions and her clean, superior ways. They try to drag her down to their own level. They eject their vile jokes and suggestive stories at her, and indulge in sarcasm (the hardest thing of all for native conceit to bear) at her departures from old and unclean customs. But there are not wanting instances where the teaching of the sisters has triumphed over even the conservatism of Old Fiji.

Such institutions as these are the hope of the Fiji of To-day, and could they be but multiplied sufficiently to influence the major portion of the group, then there would be some certainty that the population would be affected for the better.

Another cheering fact is the eagerness of the Fijian youth to learn. There is a movement among the people themselves—not yet general, but increasing in volume—towards an education of a higher

and worthier character. The young people show it in their keenness to obtain nomination to the educational institutions. The entrance to the school at Davui Levu, for instance, is by competitive examination, and as many as eighty boys will sit in the hope of obtaining one of the eight nominations allowed to the district. Many work hard and save up their money to pay the fee for the year—one pound. The fathers and mothers are realizing dimly the advantages of education, and there have been several cases in which real sacrifice has been made to give their children a better chance than they themselves have had. This is welcome evidence of awakening on their part.

There is gradually springing up what is really a new spirit in Fiji—it is the spirit of patriotism. Fiji is never looked upon by the native as a whole. He has no thoughts of empire. He cannot think in square miles, let alone in continents. His sympathies have been narrow and parochial—bounded by his family and tribe. Fiji is divided up in his mind into districts as separate and distinct as Germany is from Britain or France from Italy. To use one of Kipling's illustrations, the ship has not found herself. There are still individual creaks from rivet and bolt, and the 'Voice of the Whole Ship' is not heard yet. But it is being gradually trained to utter itself. The Government by its

policy, and more especially the Methodist mission by its connexional system, have been the agents in awakening this new spirit, and soon Fiji will 'find itself.'

'Have you no wish to go with the other men to the missions in New Guinea and New Britain, Epeli?' asks the missionary of one of his most promising and intelligent students.

'No, sir. I have prayed much about this thing, and God tells me that I must work in Fiji and try to do something to save my own people. I should like to go to those lands—but there is great work to be done for Fiji.'

This, to those who know the Fijian character, is a significant attitude. One family, that of a native minister, have become imbued with the conviction that their great work or mission is *to uplift Fiji.* There is a Joan-of-Arc sort of feeling in their hearts, and they are setting about their self-imposed task by educating and training themselves. This is Hope written large; for Fiji has sadly lacked this broad spirit, and much of the pettiness and feebleness of Fijian life is traceable to this cause.

There are not wanting signs that the communal system is slowly crumbling into decay. There is much evidence of a desire on the part of Young

between the candidate and the most responsible position in the Church. No special education was provided for those entering this ministry, and hence there has arisen a class that is composed of poorly equipped and comparatively uneducated men. These men have shown, on the whole, a sincere devotion to their duties, so far as they have been able to comprehend them ; and they have set an example of good living to their people that is, in many respects, surprising. Nevertheless, they are far below the standard of full efficiency, and need very much help in the matter of equipment.

An effort is now being made to raise up a more capable native ministry. Written examinations are now for the first time demanded, and the curriculum of study, though still very elementary, is made uniform. So far, the candidates have taken kindly to the new methods, and are striving to rise to their new privileges. A college for students is about to be built in memory of the one missionary martyr in these islands—the Rev. Thomas Baker, who was killed and eaten some forty years ago. Probably for a number of years the standard will be only low, and the education approximate rather to that of the Sunday-school classroom than to that of the English theological college; but it is a start in the right direction, and will mean a vastly superior influence upon the Fiji of To-morrow.

Some of the bravest and noblest actions of the missions in Fiji have been performed by the native ministers, and they have proved themselves singularly faithful. They are worthy of a better training, and will repay the Church for all the time and money spent upon them.

The spirit of self-sacrifice in the race has not only manifested itself in the generosity of the people in supporting their Church; but especially has it been seen in the manner in which volunteers have been forthcoming for the over-sea missions. Year by year Fijians have gone to New Guinea, New Britain, and the Solomon Islands, as missionaries to the heathen. They have time and again proved faithful—even unto death. Perhaps the most remarkable thing, to those who know the native, is not so much that the men and women go, but that their relatives allow them to leave. Last year, for example, a single girl went as a native missionary sister to New Britain. She is the first unmarried woman to venture, and even some of the English missionaries trembled at the risks she ran. Her parents had eight children, only two of whom had survived childhood, and of these two, they cheerfully gave one to the fever-stricken land of New Britain. They know that her chances of return are few and uncertain; but they have not murmured nor complained.

There are other cheering evidences of advance which might be mentioned in connexion with the work among the Fijian people. The recent development of the printing activities of the missions, the new impulse in the matter of church building, and the general improvement in missionary methods, are all things to be thankful for. But what is needed above everything else is the gradual building-up of a *spiritual Church*. At present there is a huge membership; but, alas! it is only nominal. The native ministers especially hold open the gate too widely; and were it not for the oversight of the English missionary, members would be admitted with a fatal carelessness. Hence the necessity for the white missionary. 'Ethiopianism' would be fatal to native religion just now. Spirituality would be made impossible by it. It is true that God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth; but it seems to have been no part of the divine plan to make them of one *brain*. The Church must never forget this fact, which is written in such indelible characters upon the face of mankind.

The Indian problem is a huge inky cloud in the Fijian sky; but even that is edged with silver. One important fact is the awakening of the missionary societies to the urgency of this question. The Church as a whole has not yet realized that there is a problem. Nine years ago there was not one

solitary missionary working among these people—though they had been in Fiji for thirty years. Surely that is a terrible indictment against the Christian Church! To-day there are six Protestant missionaries and five missionary sisters at work. The Roman Catholics, in connexion with their Fijian work, have attempted something also. The staff of Indian workers is the great weakness, and much must be done in this direction before there can be any hope of influencing the people to any great extent. Schools are being established by the missions, in which the children are instructed in their own language and in English. An orphanage for the flotsam and jetsam of Indian life is now open, and some excellent results have followed. Steadily the influence of the missions is growing, and the Indian is commencing to learn that the missionary seeks only his good. The work of evangelization has not had any wide success of which to boast, but nevertheless some good 'cases' have been won.

The life of the indentured Indian—though still deplorable enough—has improved somewhat of late, and the tendency is towards more humane treatment. The brutality of certain types of overseers is being lessened by a greater strictness in this particular on the part of the most important companies.

The Government deserves a word of praise for

the measures it has introduced for the prohibition of the sale of *charas*, opium, and kindred drugs. These had a very bad effect upon Indian life, and were a source of crime. But to-day this traffic is practically stopped—which is a powerful argument for a like drastic treatment of the illicit liquor trade.

Probably the greatest influence which the Christian missionary exerts at the present time is a reflex one. This may be despised by certain evangelical classes, but to those familiar with Indian life it will be a matter of cheer. The effect of the preaching of the gospel is to make the Hindu and Muhammadan each emphasize the ethical and spiritual side of his religion and place less importance upon the ceremonious and superstitious. This is a great gain, and one of the ways in which error is sapped. There are scores who make no profession of Christianity, and who scorn the very name, who are reading the Bible and striving to apply the teaching of Christ to their own lives. This is a matter for thankfulness. It would seem as if there were little hope of making the Indian a Christian after *European ideals and theology*; but, notwithstanding, he is likely to become a Christian in a fashion more in accordance with his own national and racial peculiarities. Christianity may be a much broader thing than even the most broad-minded Christian realizes.

In spite of all the falseness in his character and

fed on locusts and wild honey; and this experience may be *his* forerunner.

'Sahib, show great mercy and give me healing medicine,' prayed a man with a horrible sore upon his chest. The flesh had festered, and the wound had become serious.

'Good gracious! What a frightful mess you are in! How did that come about?'

'Sahib, show great kindness and do not laugh. We Indians are very foolish in the eyes of the English.'

'Yes, I know all about that,' said the missionary, 'but what about this sore?'

'Sahib, I'll tell the truth. I was troubled about my *mukti* (release from re-birth) and I went to my *guru* (religious guide) and asked him what I could do to acquire "merit" to obtain my freedom. He said, after looking at his holy books, "Take thirty-and-three twigs from the mango-tree and the same number of dry leaves. Place the twigs triangle-wise upon your chest, and put inside them the leaves and apply fire. Lying still, you must repeat the name of *Ram until the fire burns out.* Sahib, I did that. Hence this sore. The wound is painful, but my spirit is full of comfort. Give me healing medicine, sahib, and may the gods bless you.'

A foolish action—a fanatical thing to do? Yes. Granted. But see the *power* behind it. If under a low ideal a man can suffer thus, is there not room for hope that under the influence of a higher one, he will be prepared to suffer even more?

Christianity *does* appeal to the Indian. Churchism may not—it is too much like his own jumble of superstitions and creeds. India will not follow us. The best we can hope is that she may learn to follow Christ. The Indian will not take our theology. He will reserve to himself the right to interpret the Scriptures according to his own temperament. After all, this is only what the Western peoples have demanded. We may despise the system of theology which will thus evolve; we may smile at its mysticism bordering upon the verge of superstition; we may anathematize his whole creed; but that will matter very little to him. Christianity will satisfy *his* soul's needs, and he will not care for either our praise or blame. In this there may be a divine purpose. We may have something yet to learn from the East, and our humility will not suffer by being prepared to listen to other interpretations of Christ's message, nor is our spiritual life likely to be impoverished thereby. The Church in Australasia, which has not yet come into contact with the East, may feel the reflex influence of such a mission as this far more than she realizes.

One thing in favour of the evangelization of the Indian in Fiji is the fact that caste—that dragon with which Christianity in India is constantly contending—has its teeth drawn in these islands. A break has been made in the life of the people, and, psychologically, when one break is made, others more easily follow. The people are away from their old superstitious shrines, and the gods have lost their virtue in these distant lands. There is no sacred Ganges in which to wash away sin. They are in a new country with new conditions of existence, and are ready to imbibe new ideas. Thus there is a field for Christian experiment that is uniquely favourable; but the Church must hasten if she would avail herself of it. At present she is only toying with her chances.

The Fiji of To-day makes her appeal to the great Christian Church. That Church has already borne a worthy part in the redemption of Old Fiji. The land is hallowed by some of the holiest memories and highest traditions. Here some of the choicest sons and bravest daughters of the Church have made oblation of their lives. There have been saints who have spent themselves in an agony of prayer and a passion of toil. There have been martyrs to whom death for Fiji was more welcome than life for its own sweet sake. Nor did they

much thought, for much work, and, above all, for much prayer. Our real weapons are not carnal but spiritual. There must needs be the most practical effort, and much seemingly sordid toil; but these may be spiritualized by the mystery of God's presence. The common bread and wine of our humble endeavour thus become the very body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Thus, alone, shall we be made meet partakers of this holy sacrament of service in the Fiji of To-day.

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