



III

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES"

Samoa, April 9, 1892.

SIR,—A sketch of our latest difficulty in Samoa will be interesting, at least to lawyers.

In the Berlin General Act there is one point on which, from the earliest moment, volunteer interpreters have been divided. The revenue arising from the customs was held by one party to belong to the Samoan Government, by another to the municipality; and the dispute was at last decided in favour of the municipality by Mr. Cedarcrantz, Chief Justice. The decision was not given in writing; but it was reported by at least one of the Consuls to his Government, it was of public notoriety, it is not denied, and it was at once implicitly acted on by the parties. Before that decision, the revenue from customs was suffered to accumulate; ever since, to the knowledge of the Chief Justice, and with the daily countenance of the President, it has been preceived, administered, and spent by the municipality. It is the function of the Chief Justice to interpret the Berlin Act; its sense was thus supposed to be established beyond cavil; those who were dissatisfied with the result conceived their only recourse lay in a prayer to the Powers to have the treaty altered; and such a prayer was, but the other day, proposed, supported, and finally negatived, in a public meeting.

About a year has gone by since the decision, and the state of the Samoan Government has been daily growing more precarious. Taxes have not been paid, and the Government has not ventured to enforce them. Fresh taxes have fallen due, and the Government has not ventured to call for them. Salaries were running on,



and that of the Chief Justice alone amounts to a considerable figure for these islands; the coffers had fallen low, at last it was believed they were quite empty, no resource seemed left, and bystanders waited with a smiling curiosity for the wheels to stop. I should add, to explain the epithet "smiling," that the Government has proved a still-born child; and except for some spasmodic movements which I have already made the subject of remark in your columns, it may be said to have done nothing but pay salaries.

In this state of matters, on March 28, the President of the Council, Baron Senfft von Pilsach, was suddenly and privately supplied by Mr. Cedarcrantz with a written judgment, reversing the verbal and public decision of a year before. By what powers of law was this result attained? And how was the point brought again before his Honour? I feel I shall here strain the credulity of your readers, but our authority is the President in person. The suit was brought by himself in his capacity (perhaps an imaginary one) of King's adviser; it was defended by himself in his capacity of President of the Council; no notice had been given, the parties were not summoned, they were advised neither of the trial nor the judgment; so far as can be learned, two persons only met and parted—the first was the plaintiff and defendant rolled in one, the other was a judge who had decided black a year ago, and had now intimated a modest willingness to decide white.

But it is possible to follow more closely these original proceedings. Baron von Pilsach sat down (he told us) in his capacity of adviser to the King, and wrote to himself, in his capacity of President of the Council, an eloquent letter of reprimand three pages long; an unknown English artist clothed it for him in good language; and nothing remained but to have it signed by King Malietoa, to whom it was attributed.



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"So long as he knows how to sign!"—a white official is said thus to have summed up, with a shrug, the qualifications necessary in a Samoan king. It was signed accordingly, though whether the King knew what he was signing is matter of debate; and thus regularised, it was forwarded to the Chief Justice enclosed in a letter of adhesion from the President. Such as they were, these letters appear to have been the pleadings on which the Chief Justice proceeded; such as they were, they seem to have been the documents in this unusual cause.

Suppose an unfortunate error to have been made, suppose a reversal of the Court's finding and the year's policy to have become immediately needful, wisdom would indicate an extreme frankness of demeanour. And our two officials preferred a policy of irritating dissimulation. While the revolution was being prepared behind the curtain, the President was holding night sessions of the municipal council. What was the business? No other than to prepare an ordinance regulating those very customs which he was secretly conspiring to withdraw from their control. And it was a piece of duplicity of a similar nature which first awoke the echoes of Apia by its miscarriage. The council had sent up for the approval of the Consular Board a project of several bridges, one of which, that of the Vaisingano, was of chief importance to the town. To sanction so much fresh expense, at the very moment when, to his secret knowledge, the municipality was to be left bare of funds, appeared to one of the Consuls an unworthy act; and the proposal was accordingly disallowed. The people of Apia are extremely swift to guess. No sooner was the Vaisingano bridge denied them than they leaped within a measurable distance of the truth. It was remembered that the Chief Justice had but recently (this time by a decision regularly obtained) placed the

*The "Times," Etc.*

municipal funds at the President's mercy; talk ran high of collusion between the two officials; it was rumoured the safe had been already secretly drawn upon; the newspaper being at this juncture suddenly and rather mysteriously sold, it was rumoured it had been bought for the officials with municipal money, and the Apians crowded in consequence to the municipal meeting on April 1, with minds already heated.

The President came on his side armed with the secret judgment; and the hour now being come, he unveiled his work of art to the municipal councillors. On the strength of the Chief Justice's decision, to his knowledge, and with the daily countenance of the President, they had for twelve months received and expended the revenue from customs. They learned now that this was wrong; they learned not only that they were to receive no more, but that they must refund what they had already spent; and the total sum amounting to about \$25,000, and there being less than \$20,000 in the treasury, they learned that they were bankrupt. And with the next breath the President reassured them; time was to be given to these miserable debtors, and the King in his clemency would even advance them from their own safe—now theirs no longer—a loan of \$3,000 against current expenses. If the municipal council of Apia be far from an ideal body, at least it makes roads and builds bridges, at least it does something to justify its existence and reconcile the ratepayer to the rates. This was to cease: all the funds husbanded for this end were to be transferred to the Government at Mulinuu, which has never done anything to mention but pay salaries, and of which men have long ceased to expect anything else but that it shall continue to pay salaries till it die of inanition. Let us suppose this raid on the municipal treasury to have been just and needful. It is plain,



even if introduced in the most conciliatory manner, it could never have been welcome. And, as it was, the sting was in the manner—in the secrecy and the surprise, in the dissimulation, the dissonant decisions, the appearance of collusion between the officials, and the offer of a loan too small to help. Bitter words were spoken at the council-table; the public joined with shouts; it was openly proposed to overpower the President and seize the treasury key. Baron von Pilsach possesses the redeeming rudimentary virtue of courage. It required courage to come at all on such an errand to those he had deceived; and amidst violent voices and menacing hands he displayed a constancy worthy of a better cause. The council broke tumultuously up; the inhabitants crowded to a public meeting; the Consuls, acquainted with the alarming effervescency of feeling, communicated their willingness to meet the municipal councillors and arrange a compromise; and the inhabitants renewed by acclamation the mandate of their representatives. The same night these sat in council with the Consular Board, and a *modus vivendi* was agreed upon, which was rejected the next morning by the President.

The representations of the Consuls had, however, their effect; and when the council met again on April 6, Baron von Pilsach was found to have entirely modified his attitude. The bridge over the Vaisingano was conceded; the sum of \$3,000 offered to the council was increased to \$9,000, about one-half of the existing funds; the Samoan Government, which was to profit by the customs, now agreed to bear the expenses of collection; the President, while refusing to be limited to a specific figure, promised an anxious parsimony in the Government expenditure, admitted his recent conduct had been of a nature to irritate the councillors, and frankly proposed it should be brought under the



The "Times," Etc.

notice of the Powers. I should not be a fair reporter if I did not praise his bearing. In the midst of men whom he had grossly deceived, and who had recently insulted him in return, he behaved himself with tact and temper. And largely in consequence his *modus vivendi* was accepted under protest, and the matter in dispute referred without discussion to the Powers.

I would like to refer for one moment to my former letter. The Manono prisoners were solemnly sentenced to six months' imprisonment; and, by some unexplained and secret process, the sentence was increased to one of banishment. The fact seems to have rather amused the Governments at home. It did not at all amuse us here on the spot. But we sought consolation by remembering that the President was a layman, and the Chief Justice had left the islands but the day before. Let Mr. Cedarcrantz return, we thought, and Arthur would be come again. Well, Arthur is come. And now we begin to think he was perhaps an approving, if an absent, party to the scandal. For do we not find, in the case of the municipal treasury, the same disquieting features? A decision is publicly delivered, it is acted on for a year, and by some secret and inexplicable process we find it suddenly reversed. We are supposed to be governed by English law. Is this English law? Is it law at all? Does it permit a state of society in which a citizen can live and act with confidence? And when we are asked by natives to explain these peculiarities of white man's government and white man's justice, in what form of words are we to answer?

April 12.

Fresh news reaches me; I have once again to admire the accuracy of rumour in Apia, and that which I had passed over with a reference becomes the head and



front of our contention. The *Samoa Times* was nominally purchased by a gentleman who, whatever be his other recommendations, was notoriously ill off. There was paid down for it £600 in gold, a huge sum of ready money for Apia, above all in gold, and all men wondered where it came from. It is this which has been discovered: The wrapper of each rouleau was found to be signed by Mr. Martin, collector for the municipality as well as for the Samoan Government, and countersigned by Mr. Savile, his assistant. In other words, the money had left either the municipal or the Government safe.

The position of the President is thus extremely exposed. His accounts up to January 1 are in the hands of auditors. The next term of March 31 is already past, and although the natural course has been repeatedly suggested to him, he has never yet permitted the verification of the balance in his safe. The case would appear less strong against the Chief Justice. Yet a month has not elapsed since he placed the funds at the disposal of the President, on the avowed ground that the population of Apia was unfit to be entrusted with its own affairs. And the very week of the purchase he reversed his own previous decision and liberated his colleague from the last remaining vestige of control. Beyond the extent of these judgments, I doubt if this astute personage will be found to have committed himself in black and white; and the more foolhardy President may thus be left in the top of the breach alone.

Let it be explained or apportioned as it may, this additional scandal is felt to have overfilled the measure. It may be argued that the President has great tact and the Chief Justice a fund of philosophy. Give us instead a judge who shall proceed according to the forms of justice, and a treasurer who shall permit the verification of his balances. Surely there can be found

*The "Times," Etc.*

among the millions of Europe two frank and honest men, one of whom shall be acquainted with English law, and the other possess the ordinary virtues of a clerk, over whose heads, in the exercise of their duties, six months may occasionally pass without painful disclosures and dangerous scandals; who shall not weary us with their surprises and intrigues; who shall not amaze us with their lack of penetration; who shall not, in the hour of their destitution, seem to have diverted £600 of public money for the purchase of an inconsiderable sheet, or at a time when eight provinces of discontented natives threaten at any moment to sweep their ineffective Government into the sea to have sought safety and strength in gagging the local press of Apia. If it be otherwise—if we cannot be relieved, if the Powers are satisfied with the conduct of Mr. Cedarcrantz and Baron Senfft von Pilsach; if these were sent here with the understanding that they should secretly purchase, perhaps privately edit, a little sheet of two pages, issued from a crazy wooden building at the mission gate; if it were, indeed, intended that, for this important end, they should divert (as it seems they have done) public funds and affront all the forms of law—we whites can only bow the head. We are here quite helpless. If we would complain of Baron Pilsach, it can only be to Mr. Cedarcrantz; if we would complain of Mr. Cedarcrantz, and the Powers will not hear us, the circle is complete. A nightly guard surrounds and protects their place of residence, while the house of the King is cynically left without the pickets. Secure from interference, one utters the voice of the law, the other moves the hands of authority; and now they seem to have sequestered in the course of a single week the only available funds and the only existing paper in the islands.

But there is one thing they forget. It is not the



whites who menace the duration of their Government, and it is only the whites who read the newspaper. Mataafa sits hard by in his armed camp and sees. He sees the weakness, he counts the scandals of their Government. He sees his rival and "brother" sitting disconsidered at their doors, like Lazarus before the house of Dives, and, if he is not very fond of his "brother," he is very scrupulous of native dignities. He has seen his friends menaced with midnight destruction in the Government gaol, and deported without form of law. He is not himself a talker, and his thoughts are hid from us; but what is said by his more hasty partisans we know. On March 29, the day after the Chief Justice signed the secret judgment, three days before it was made public, and while the purchase of the newspaper was yet in treaty, a native orator stood up in an assembly. "Who asked the Great Powers to make laws for us; to bring strangers here to rule us?" he cried. "We want no white officials to bind us in the bondage of taxation." Here is the changed spirit which these gentlemen have produced by a misgovernment of fifteen months. Here is their peril, which no purchase of newspapers and no subsequent editorial suppressions can avert.

It may be asked if it be still time to do anything. It is, indeed, already late; and these gentlemen, arriving in a golden moment, have fatally squandered opportunity and perhaps fatally damaged white prestige. Even the whites themselves they have not only embittered, but corrupted. We were pained the other day when our municipal councillors refused, by a majority, to make the production of invoices obligatory at the Custom-house. Yet who shall blame them, when the Chief Justice, with a smallness of capacity at which all men wondered, refused to pay, and, I believe, still withholds, the duties on his imports? He was



The "Times," Etc.

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above the law, being the head of it; and this was how he preached by example. He refused to pay his customs; the white councillors, following in his wake, refuse to take measures to enforce them against others; and the natives, following in his wake, refuse to pay their taxes. These taxes it may, perhaps, be never possible to raise again directly. Taxes have never been popular in Samoa; yet in the golden moment when this Government began its course, a majority of Samoans paid them. Every province should have seen some part of that money expended in its bounds; every nerve should have been strained to interest and gratify the natives in the manner of its expenditure. It has been spent instead on Mulinuu, to pay four white officials, two of whom came in the suite of the Chief Justice, and to build a so-called Government House, in which the President resides, and the very name of taxes is become abhorrent. What can still be done, and what must be done immediately, is to give us a new Chief Justice—a lawyer, a man of honour, a man who will not commit himself to one side, whether in politics or in private causes, and who shall not have the appearance of trying to coin money at every joint of our affairs. So much the better if he be a man of talent, but we do not ask so much. With an ordinary appreciation of law, an ordinary discretion, and ordinary generosity, he may still, in the course of time, and with good fortune, restore confidence and repair the breaches in the prestige of the whites. As for the President, there is much discussion. Some think the office is superfluous, still more the salary to be excessive; some regard the present man, who is young and personally pleasing, as a tool and scapegoat for another, and these are tempted to suppose that, with a new and firm Chief Justice, he might yet redeem his character. He would require at least to clear himself of the affair of the



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rouleaux, or all would be against him.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

IV

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES"

Samoa, June 22, 1892.

SIR,—I read in a New Zealand paper that you published my last with misgiving. The writer then goes on to remind me that I am a novelist, and to bid me return to my romances and leave the affairs of Samoa to sub-editors and distant quarters of the world. "We, in common with other journals, have correspondents in Samoa," he complains, "and yet we have no news from them of the curious conspiracy which Mr. Stevenson appears to have unearthed, and which, if it had any real existence, would be known to everybody on the island." As this is the only voice which has yet reached me from beyond the seas, I am constrained to make some answer. But it must not be supposed that, though you may perhaps have been alone to publish, I have been alone to write. The same story is now in the hands of the three Governments from their respective Consuls. Not only so, but the complaint to the municipal council, drawn by two able solicitors, has been likewise laid before them.

This at least is public, and I may say notorious: The solicitors were authorised to proceed with their task at a public meeting. The President (for I was there and heard him) approved the step, though he refrained from voting. But he seemed to have entertained a hope of burking, or, at least, indefinitely postponing, the whole business, and, when the meeting

*The "Times," Etc.*

was over and its proceedings had been approved (as is necessary) by the Consular Board, he neglected to notify the two gentlemen appointed of that approval. In a large city the trick might have succeeded for a time; in a village like Apia, where all news leaks out and the King meets the cobbler daily, it did no more than to advertise his own artfulness. And the next he learned, the case for the municipal council had been prepared, approved by the Consuls, and despatched to the Great Powers. I am accustomed to have my word doubted in this matter, and must here look to have it doubted once again. But the fact is certain. The two solicitors (Messrs. Carruthers and Cooper) were actually cited to appear before the Chief Justice in the Supreme Court. I have seen the summons, and the summons was the first and last of this State trial. The proceeding, instituted in an hour of temper, was, in a moment of reaction, allowed to drop.

About the same date a final blow befell the Government of Mulinuu. Let me remind you, Sir, of the situation. The funds of the municipality had been suddenly seized, on what appears a collusive judgment, by the bankrupt Government of Mulinuu. The paper, the organ of opposition, was bought by a man of straw; and it was found the purchase-money had been paid in rouleaux from the Government safes. The Government consisted of two men. One, the President and treasurer, had a ready means to clear himself and dispose for ever of the scandal—that means, apart from any scandal, was his mere, immediate duty,—viz., to have his balance verified. And he has refused to do so, and he still refuses. But the other, though he sits abstruse, must not think to escape his share of blame. He holds a high situation; he is our chief magistrate, he has heard this miserable tale of the rouleaux, at which the Consuls looked so black, and



why has he done nothing? When he found that the case against himself and his colleague had gone to the three Powers a little of the suddenest, he could launch summonses (which it seems he was afterwards glad to disavow) against Messrs. Cooper and Carruthers. But then, when the whole island murmured—then, when a large sum which could be traced to the Government treasuries was found figuring in the hands of a man of straw—where were his thunderbolts then? For more than a month the scandal has hung black about his colleague; for more than a month he has sat inert and silent; for more than a month, in consequence, the last spark of trust in him has quite died out.

It was in these circumstances that the Government of Mulinnu approached the municipal council with a proposal to levy fresh taxes from the whites. It was in these circumstances that the municipal council answered, No. Public works have ceased, the destination of public moneys is kept secret, and the municipal council resolved to stop supplies.

At this, it seems, the Government awoke to a sense of their position. The natives had long ceased to pay them; now the whites had followed suit. Destitution had succeeded to embarrassment. And they made haste to join with themselves another who did not share in their unpopularity. This gentleman, Mr. Thomas Maben, Government surveyor, is himself deservedly popular, and the office created for him, that of Secretary of State, is one in which, under happier auspices, he might accomplish much. He is promised a free hand; he has succeeded to, and is to exercise entirely, those vague functions claimed by the President under his style of adviser to the King. It will be well if it is found to be so in the field of practice. It will be well if Mr. Maben find any funds left for his not exorbitant salary. It would doubtless

*The "Times," Etc.*

have been better, in this day of their destitution, and in the midst of growing Samoan murmurs against the high salaries of whites, if the Government could have fallen on some expedient which did not imply another. And there is a question one would fain have answered. The President claims to hold two offices—that of adviser to the King, that of President of the Municipal Council. A year ago, in the time of the dynamite affair, he proposed to resign the second and retain his whole emoluments as adviser to the King. He has now practically resigned the first; and we wish to know if he now proposes to retain his entire salary as President of the Council.—I am, etc.,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

V

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES"

Apia, July 19, 1892.

SIR,—I am at last in receipt of your article upon my letter. It was as I supposed; you had a difficulty in believing the events recorded; and, to my great satisfaction, you suggest an inquiry. You observe the marks of passion in my letter, or so it seems to you. But your summary shows me that I have not failed to communicate with a sufficient clearness the facts alleged. Passion may have seemed to burn in my words; it has not, at least, impaired my ability to record with precision a plain tale. The "cold language" of Consular reports (which you say you would prefer) is doubtless to be had upon inquiry in the proper quarter; I make bold to say it will be found to bear me out. Of the law case for the municipality I can speak with more assur-

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ance; for, since it was sent, I have been shown a copy. Its language is admirably cold, yet it tells (it is possible in a much better dialect) the same remarkable story. But all these corroborations sleep in official keeping; and, thanks to the generosity with which you have admitted me to your columns, I stand alone before the public. It is my prayer that this may cease as soon as possible. There is other evidence gone home; let that be produced. Or let us have (as you propose) an inquiry; give to the Chief Justice and the President an opportunity to clear their characters, and to myself that liberty (which I am so often requested to take) of returning to my private business.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

VI

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES"

Apia, September 14, 1892.

SIR,—The peninsula of Mulinuu was claimed by the German firm; and in case their claim should be found good, they had granted to the Samoan Government an option to buy at a certain figure. Hereon stand the houses of our officials, in particular that of the Chief Justice. It has long been a problem here whether this gentleman paid any rent, and the problem is now solved; the Chief Justice of Samoa was a squatter. On the ground that the Government was about to purchase the peninsula, he occupied a house; on the ground that the Germans were about to sell it, he refused to pay them any rent. The firm seemed to have no remedy but to summon the squatter before himself, and hear over again from the official what

*The "Times," Etc.*

they had heard already from the disastrous tenant. But even in Samoa an ingenious man, inspired by annoyance, may find means of self-protection. The house was no part of the land, nor included in the option; the firm put it up for sale; and the Government, under pain of seeing the Chief Justice houseless, was obliged to buy it.

In the meanwhile the German claim to Mulinuu was passed by the Land Commission and sent on to the Chief Justice on the 17th of May. He ended by confirming the report; but though his judgment bears date the 9th of August, it was not made public till the 15th. So far as we are aware, and certainly so far as Samoa has profited by his labours, his Honour may be said to have had nothing else to do but attend to this one piece of business; he was being paid to do so at the rate of £100 a month; and it took him ninety days, or about as long as it took Napoleon to recapture and to lose again his empire. But better late than never; and the Germans, rejoicing in the decision, summoned the Government to complete the purchase or to waive their option. There was again a delay in answering, for the policy of all parts of this extraordinary Government is on one model; and when the answer came it was only to announce a fresh deception. The German claim had passed the Land Commission and the Supreme Court, it was good against objections, but it appeared it was not yet good for registration, and must still be resurveyed by a "Government surveyor." The option thus continues to brood over the land of Mulinuu, the Government to squat there without payment, and the German firm to stand helpless and dispossessed. What can they do? Their adversary is their only judge. I hear it calculated that the present state of matters may be yet spun out for months, at the end of which period there must come at last a day



of reckoning; and the purchase-money will have to be found or the option to be waived and the Government to flit elsewhere. As for the question of arrears of rent, it will be in judicious hands and his Honour may be trusted to deal with it in a manner suitable to the previous history of the case.

But why (it will be asked) spin out by these excessive methods a thread of such tenuity? Why go to such lengths for four months longer of fallacious solvency? I expect not to be believed, but I think the Government still hopes. A war-ship, under a hot-headed captain, might be decoyed into hostilities; the taxes might begin to come in again; the three Powers might become otherwise engaged and the little stage of Samoa escape observation—indeed, I know not what they hope, but they hope something. There lives on in their breasts a remainder coal of ambition still unquenched. Or it is only so that I can explain a late astonishing sally of his Honour's. In a long and elaborate judgment he has pared the nails, and indeed removed the fingers, of his only rival, the municipal magistrate. For eighteen months he has seen the lower Court crowded with affairs, the while his own stood unfrequented like an obsolete churchyard. He may have remarked with envy many hundred cases passing through his rival's hands, cases of assault, cases of larceny, ranging in the last four months from 2s. up to £1, 12s.; or he may have viewed with displeasure that despatch of business which was characteristic of the Magistrate, Mr. Cooper. An end, at least, has been made of these abuses; Mr. Cooper is henceforth to draw his salary for the *minimum* of public service; and all larcenies and assaults, however trivial, must go, according to the nationality of those concerned, before the Consular or the Supreme Courts.

To this portentous judgment there are two sides—



The "Times," Etc.

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a practical and a legal. And first as to the practical. For every blow struck or shilling stolen the parties must now march out to Mulinnu and place themselves at the mercy of a Court, which if Hamlet had known, he would have referred with more emotion to the law's delays. It is feared they will not do so, and that crime will go on in consequence unpunished, and increased by indulgence. But this is nothing. The Court of the municipal magistrate was a convenient common-ground and clearing-house for our manifold nationalities. It has now been, for all purpose of serious utility, abolished, and the result is distraction. There was a recent trumpery case, heard by Mr. Cooper amid shouts of mirth. It resolved itself (if I remember rightly) into three charges of assault with counter-charges, and three of abusive language with the same; and the parties represented only two nationalities—a small allowance for Apia. Yet in our new world, since the Chief Justice's decision, this vulgar shindy would have split up into six several suits before three different Courts; the charges must have been heard by one judge, the counter-charges by another; the whole nauseous evidence six times repeated, and the lawyers six times fee'd.

Remains the legal argument. His Honour admits the municipality to be invested "with such legislative powers as generally constitute a police jurisdiction"; he does not deny the municipality is empowered to take steps for the protection of the person, and it was argued this implied a jurisdiction in cases of assault. But this argument (observes his Honour) "proves too much, and consequently nothing. For like reasons the municipal council should have power to provide for the punishment of all felonies against the person, and I suppose the property as well." And, filled with a just sense that a merely police jurisdiction should be limited, he limits



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it with a vengeance by the exclusion of all assaults and all larcenies. A pity he had not looked into the Berlin Act! He would have found it already limited there by the same power which called it into being—limited to fines not exceeding \$200 and imprisonment not extending beyond 180 days. Nay, and I think he might have even reasoned from this discovery that he was himself somewhat in error. For, assaults and larcenies being excluded, what kind of enormity is that which is to be visited with a fine of £40 or an imprisonment of half a year? It is perhaps childish to pursue further this childish controversialist. But there is one passage, if he had dipped into the Berlin Act, that well might have arrested his attention: that in which he is himself empowered to deal with “crimes and offences, . . . subject, however, to the provisions defining the jurisdiction of the municipal magistrate of Apia.”

I trust, Sir, this is the last time I shall have to trouble you with these twopenny concerns. But until some step is taken by the three Powers, or until I have quite exhausted your indulgence, I shall continue to report our scandals as they arise. Once more, one thing or other: Either what I write is false, and I should be chastised as a calumniator; or else it is true, and these officials are unfit for their position.—I am, etc.,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—The mail is already closed when I receive at last decisive confirmation of the purchase of the *Samoa Times* by the Samoan Government. It has never been denied; it is now admitted. The paper which they bought so recently, they are already trying to sell; and have received and refused an offer of £150 for what they bought for upwards of £600. Surely we may now demand the attention of the three Powers.



The "Times," Etc.

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VII

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "PALL
MALL GAZETTE"

I

September 4, 1893.

In June it became clear that the King's Government was weary of waiting upon Europe, as it had been clear long before that Europe would do nothing. The last commentary on the Berlin Act was read. Malietoa Laupepa had been in *ex auctoritate* by the Powers; the Powers would not support him even by a show of strength, and there was nothing left but to fall back on an "Election according to the Laws and Customs of Samoa"—by arbitrament of rifle-bullets and blackened faces. Instantly heaven was darkened by a brood of rumours, random calumnies, and idle tales. As we rode, late at night, through the hamlet near my house, we saw fires lighted in the houses, and eager talkers discussing the last report. The King was sick; he was dying; he was perfectly well; he was seen riding furiously by night in the back parts of Apia, and covering his face as he rode. Mataafa was in favour with the Germans; he was to be made a German king; he was secure of the support of all Samoa; he had no following whatsoever. The name of every chief and village (with many that were new to the hearer) came up in turn, to be dubbed Laupepa, or Mataafa, or both at the same time, or neither. Dr. George Brown, the missionary, had just completed a tour of the islands. There are few men in the world with a more mature knowledge of native character, and I applied to him eagerly for an estimate of the relative forces. "When the first shot is fired, and not before," said he, "you



will know who is who." The event has shown that he might have gone yet further; for even after shots were fired and men slain, an important province was still hesitating and trimming.

Mataafa lay in Malie. He had an armed picket at a ford some two miles from Apia, where they sat in a prodigious state of vigilance and glee; and his whole troop, although not above five hundred strong, appeared animated with the most warlike spirit. For himself, he waited, as he had waited for two years; wrote eloquent letters, the time to answer which was quite gone by; and looked on while his enemies painfully collected their forces. Doubtless to the last he was assured and deceived by vain promises of help.

The process of gathering a royal army in Samoa is cumbrous and dilatory in the extreme. There is here none of the expedition of the fiery cross and the bale-fire; but every step is diplomatic. Each village, with a great expense of eloquence, has to be wiled with promises and spurred with threats, and the greater chieftains make stipulations ere they will march. Tamasese, son to the late German puppet, and heir of his ambitions, demanded the vice-kingship as the price of his accession, though I am assured that he demanded it in vain. The various provinces returned various and unsatisfactory answers. Atua was off and on; Tuamasaga was divided; Tutuila recalcitrant; and for long the King sat almost solitary under the windy palms of Mulinuu. It seemed indeed as if the war was off, and the whole archipelago unanimous (in the native phrase) to sit still and plant taro.

But at last, in the first days of July, Atua began to come in. Boats arrived, thirty and fifty strong, a drum and a very ill-played bugle giving time to the oarsmen, the whole crew uttering at intervals a savage howl; and on the decked fore-sheets of the boat the village



Champion, frantically capering and dancing. Parties were to be seen encamped in palm-groves with their rifles stacked. The shops were emptied of red handkerchiefs, the rallying-sign, or (as a man might say) the uniform of the Royal army. There was spirit shown; troops of handsome lads marched in a right manly fashion, with their guns on their shoulders, to the music of the drum and the bugle or the tin whistle. From a hamlet close to my own doors a contingent of six men marched out. Their leader's kit contained one stick of tobacco, four boxes of matches, and the inevitable red handkerchief; in his case it was of silk, for he had come late to the purchasing, and the commoner materials were exhausted. This childish band of braves marched one afternoon to a neighbouring hill, and the same night returned to their houses on the ground that it was "uncomfortable" in the bush. An excellent old fellow, who had had enough of war in many campaigns, took refuge in my service from the conscription, but in vain. The village had decided no warrior might hang back. One summoner arrived; and then followed some negotiations—I have no authority to say what; enough that the messenger departed and our friend remained. But, alas! a second envoy followed and proved to be of sterner composition; and with a basket full of food, kava, and tobacco, the reluctant hero proceeded to the wars. I am sure they had few handsomer soldiers, if, perhaps, some that were more willing. And he would have been better to be armed. His gun—but in Mr. Kipling's pleasant catchword, that is another story.

War, to the Samoan of mature years, is often an unpleasant necessity. To the young boy, it is a heaven of immediate pleasures, as well as an opportunity of ultimate glory. Women march with the troops—even the Taupo-sa, or sacred maid of the village, accompanies



her father in the field to carry cartridges, and bring him water to drink,—and their bright eyes are ready to “rain influence” and reward valour. To what grim deeds this practice may conduct I shall have to say later on. In the rally of their arms, it is at least wholly pretty; and I have one pleasant picture of a war-party marching out; the men armed and boastful, their heads bound with the red handkerchief, their faces blacked—and two girls marching in their midst under European parasols.

On Saturday, July 8, by the early morning, the troops began to file westward from Apia, and about noon found themselves face to face with the lines of Mataafa in the German plantation of Vaitele. The armies immediately fraternised: kava was made by the ladies, as who should say tea, at home, and partaken of by the braves with many truculent expressions. One chief on the King's side, revolted by the extent of these familiarities, began to beat his followers with a staff. But both parties were still intermingled between the lines, and the chiefs on either side were conversing, and even embracing, at the moment when an accidental, or perhaps a treacherous, shot precipitated the engagement. I cannot find there was any decisive difference in the numbers actually under fire; but the Mataafas appear to have been ill posted and ill led. Twice their flank was turned, their line enfiladed, and themselves driven, with the loss of about thirty, from two successive cattle walls. A third wall afforded them a more effectual shelter, and night closed on the field of battle without further advantage. All night the Royal troops hailed volleys of bullets at this obstacle. With the earliest light, a charge proved it to be quite deserted, and from farther down the coast smoke was seen rising from the houses of Malie. Mataafa had precipitately fled, destroying behind him the village,



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which, for two years, he had been raising and beautifying.

So much was accomplished: what was to follow? Mataafa took refuge in Manono, and cast up forts. His enemies, far from following up this advantage, held *fonos* and made speeches and found fault. I believe the majority of the King's army had marched in a state of continuous indecision, and maintaining an attitude of impartiality more to be admired in the cabinet of the philosopher than in the field of war. It is certain at least that only one province has as yet fired a shot for Malietoa Laupepa. The valour of the Tuamasaga was sufficient and prevailed. But Atua was in the rear, and has as yet done nothing. As for the men of Crana, so far from carrying out the plan agreed upon, and blocking the men of Malie, on the morning of the 8th, they were entertaining an embassy from Mataafa, and they suffered his fleet of boats to escape without a shot through certain dangerous narrows of the lagoon, and the chief himself to pass on foot and unmolested along the whole foreshore of their province. No adequate excuse has been made for this half-heartedness—or treachery. It was a piece of the whole which was a specimen. There are too many strings in a Samoan intrigue for the merely European mind to follow, and the desire to serve upon both sides, and keep a door open for reconciliation, was manifest almost throughout. A week passed in these divided counsels. Savaii had refused to receive Mataafa—it is said they now hesitated to rise for the King, and demanded instead a *fono* (or council) of both sides. And it seemed at least possible that the Royal army might proceed no farther, and the unstable alliance be dissolved.

On Sunday, the 16th, Her British Majesty's ship *Katoomba*, Captain Bickford, C.M.G., arrived in Apia



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with fresh orders. Had she but come ten days earlier the whole of this miserable business would have been prevented, for the three Powers were determined to maintain Malietoa Laupepa by arms, and had declared finally against Mataafa. Right or wrong, it was at least a decision, and therefore welcome. It may not be best—it was something. No honest friend to Samoa can pretend anything but relief that the three Powers should at last break their vacillating silence. It is of a piece with their whole policy in the islands that they should have hung in stays for upwards of two years—of a piece with their almost uniform ill-fortune that, eight days before their purpose was declared, war should have marked the country with burned houses and severed heads.

II

There is another side to the medal of Samoan warfare. So soon as an advantage is obtained, a new and (to us) horrible animal appears upon the scene—the Head-hunter. Again and again we have reasoned with our boys against this bestial practice ; but reason and (upon this one point) even ridicule are vain. They admit it to be indefensible; they allege its imperative necessity. One young man, who had seen his father take a head in the late war, spoke of the scene with shuddering revolt, and yet said he must go and do likewise himself in the war which was to come. How else could a man prove he was brave? and had not every country its own customs?

Accordingly, as occasion offered, these same pleasing children, who had just been drinking kava with their opponents, fell incontinently on the dead and dying, and secured their grisly trophies. It should be said, in fairness, that the Mataafas had no opportunity to take



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heads, but that their chief, taught by the lesson of Pangalii, had forbidden the practice. It is doubtful if he would have been obeyed, and yet his power over his people was so great that the German plantation, where they lay some time, and were at last defeated, had not to complain of the theft of a single cocoanut. Hateful as it must always be to mutilate and murder the disabled, there were in this day's affray in Vaitele circumstances yet more detestable. Fifteen heads were brought in all to Mulinuu. They were carried with parade in front of the fine house which our late President built for himself before he was removed. Here, on the verandah, the King sat to receive them, and utter words of course and compliment to each successful warrior. They were *spoila opima* in the number. Leaupepe, Mataafa's nephew—or, as Samoans say, his son—had fallen by the first wall, and whether from those sentiments of kindred and friendship that so often unite the combatants in civil strife, or to mark by an unusual formality the importance of the conquest, not only his head but his mutilated body also was brought in. From the mat in which the corpse was enveloped a bloody hand protruded, and struck a chill in white eye-witnesses. It were to attribute to [Malietoa] Laupepa sentiments entirely foreign to his race and training, if we were to suppose him otherwise than gratified.

But it was not so throughout. Every country has its customs, say native apologists, and one of the most decisive customs of Samoa ensures the immunity of women. They go to the front, as our women of yore went to a tournament. Bullets are blind; and they must take their risk of bullets, but of nothing else. They serve out cartridges and water; they jeer the faltering and defend the wounded. Even in this skirmish of Vaitele they distinguished themselves on either side. One dragged her skulking husband from



a hole, and drove him to the front. Another, seeing her lover fall, snatched up his gun, kept the head-hunters at bay, and drew him un mutilated from the field. Such services they have been accustomed to pay for centuries; and often, in the course of centuries, a bullet or a spear must have despatched one of these warlike angels. Often enough, too, the head-hunter, springing ghoul-like on fallen bodies, must have decapitated a woman for a man. But, the case arising, there was an established etiquette. So soon as the error was discovered the head was buried, and the exploit forgotten. There had never yet, in the history of Samoa, occurred an instance in which a man had taken a woman's head and kept it and laid it at his monarch's feet.

Such was the strange and horrid spectacle, which must have immediately shaken the heart of Laupepa, and has since covered the faces of his party with confusion. It is not quite certain if there were three, or only two; a recent attempt to reduce the number to one must be received with caution as an afterthought; the admissions in the beginning were too explicit, the panic of shame and fear had been too sweeping. There is scarce a woman of our native friends in Apia who can speak upon the subject without terror; scarce any man without humiliation. And the shock was increased out of measure by the fact that the head—or one of the heads—was recognised; recognised for the niece of one of the greatest of court ladies; recognised for a Tauposa, or sacred maid of a village from Savaii. It seemed incredible that she—who had been chosen for virtue and beauty, who went everywhere attended by the fairest maidens, and watched over by vigilant duennas, whose part it was, in holiday costume, to receive guests, to make kava, and to be the leader of the revels—should become the victim of a brutal rally



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in a cow-park, and have her face exposed for a trophy to the victorious king.

In all this muttering of aversion and alarm, no word has been openly said. No punishment, no disgrace, has been inflicted on the perpetrators of the outrage. King, Consuls, and mission appear to have held their peace alike. I can understand a certain apathy in whites. Head-hunting, they say, is a horrid practice: and will not stop to investigate its finer shades. But the Samoan himself does not hesitate; for him the act is portentous; and if it go unpunished, and set a fashion, its consequences must be damnable. This is not a breach of a Christian virtue, of something half-learned by rote, and from foreigners, in the last thirty years. It is a flying in the face of their own native, instinctive, and traditional standard: tenfold more ominous and degrading. And, taking the matter for all in all, it seems to me that head-hunting itself should be firmly and immediately suppressed. "How else can a man prove himself to be brave?" my friend asked. But often enough these are but fraudulent trophies. On the morrow of the fight at Vaitele, an Atua man discovered a body lying in the bush; he took the head. A day or two ago a party was allowed to visit Manono. The King's troops on shore, observing them put off from the rebel island, leaped to the conclusion that this must be the wounded going to Apia, launched off at once two armed boats and overhauled the others—after heads. The glory of such exploits is not apparent; their power for degradation strikes the eyes. Lieutenant Ulfsparre, our late Swedish Chief of Police and Commander of the forces, told his men that if any of them took a head his own hand should avenge it. That was talking; I should like to see all in the same story—King, Consuls, and missionaries—included.



III

The three Powers have at last taken hold here in Apia. But they came the day after the fair; and the immediate business on hand is very delicate. This morning, 18th, Captain Bickford, followed by two Germans, sailed for Manono. If he shall succeed in persuading Mataafa to surrender, all may be well. If he cannot, this long train of blunders may end in—what is so often the result of blundering in the field of politics—a horrible massacre. Those of us who remember the services of Mataafa, his unfailing generosity and moderation in the past, and his bereavement in the present—as well as those who are only interested in a mass of men and women, many of them our familiar friends, now pent up on an island, and beleaguered by three war-ships and a Samoan army—await the issue with dreadful expectation.

VIII

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES"

Vailima, Apia, April 23, 1894.

SIR,—I last addressed you on the misconduct of certain officials here, and I was so far happy as to have had my facts confirmed in every particular with but one exception. That exception, the affair of the dynamite, has been secretly smuggled away; you shall look in vain in either Blue Book or White Book for any mention even of the charge; it is gone like the conjurer's orange. I might have been tempted to inquire into the reason of this conspiracy of silence,



whether the idea was conceived in the bosoms of the three Powers themselves, or whether in the breasts of the three Consuls, because one of their number was directly implicated. And I might have gone on to consider the moral effect of such suppressions, and to show you how very idle they were, and how very undignified, in the face of a small and compact population, where everybody sees and hears, where everybody knows, and talks, and laughs. But only a personal question remained, which I judged of no interest to the public. The essential was accomplished. Baron Senfft was gone already. Mr. Cedarcrantz still lingered among us in the character (I may say) of a private citizen, his Court at last closed, only his pocket open for the receipt of his salary, representing the dignity of the Berlin Act by sitting in the wind on Mulinuu Point for several consecutive months—a curious phantom or survival of a past age. The new officials were not as yet, because they had not been created. And we fell into our old estate of government by the three Consuls, as it was in the beginning before the Berlin Act existed; as it seems it will be to the end, after the Berlin Act has been swept away.

It was during the time of this triumvirate, and wholly at their instigation and under their conduct, that Mataafa was defeated, driven to Manono, and (three war-ships coming opportunely to hand) forced to surrender. I have been called a partisan of this chief's, and I accept the term. I thought him, on the whole, the most honest man in Samoa, not excepting white officials. I ventured to think he had been hardly used by the Treaty Powers; I venture to think so still. It was my opinion that he should have been conjoined with Malietoa as Vice-King; and I have seen no reason to change that opinion, except that the time for it is past. Mataafa has played and lost: an exile, and



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stripped of his titles, he walks the exiguous beach of Jaluit, sees the German flag over his head, and yearns for the land-wind of Upolu. In the politics of Samoa he is no longer a factor; and it only remains to speak of the manner in which his rebellion was suppressed and punished. Deportation is, to the Samoan mind, the punishment next to death, and thirteen of the chiefs engaged were deported with their leader. Twenty-seven others were cast into the gaol. There they lie still; the Government makes almost no attempt to feed them, and they must depend on the activity of their families and the charity of pitying whites. In the meantime, these very families are overloaded with fines, the exorbitant sum of more than £6,600 having been laid on the chiefs and villages that took part with Mataafa.

So far we can only complain that the punishments have been severe and the prison commissariat absent. But we have, besides, to regret the repeated scandals in connection with the conduct of the war, and we look in vain for any sign of punishment. The Consuls had to employ barbarous hands; we might expect outrages; we did expect them to be punished, or at least disowned. Thus, certain Mataafa chiefs were landed, and landed from a British man-of-war, to be shamefully abused, beaten, and struck with whips along the main street of Mulinuu. There was no punishment, there was even no injury; the three Consuls winked. Only one man was found honest and bold enough to open his mouth, and that was my old enemy, Mr. Cedarcrantz. Walking in Mulinuu, in his character of disinterested spectator, gracefully desipient, he came across the throng of these rabblers and their victims. He had forgotten that he was an official, he remembered that he was a man. It was his last public appearance in Samoa to interfere; it was certainly his best. Again,



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the Government troops in the field took the heads of girls, a detestable felony even in Samoan eyes. They carried them in procession to Mulinuu, and made of them an oblation to that melancholy effigy the King, who (sore against his will) sat on the verandah of the Government building, publicly to receive this affront, publicly to utter the words of compliment and thanks which constitute the highest reward known to Samoan bravery, and crowned as heroes those who should have been hanged like dogs. And again the three Consuls unanimously winked. There was no punishment, there was even no inquiry.

Lastly, there is the story of Manono. Three hours were given to Mataafa to accept the terms of the ultimatum, and the time had almost elapsed when his boats put forth, and more than elapsed before he came alongside the *Katoomba* and surrendered formally to Captain Bickford. In the dusk of the evening, when all the ships had sailed, flames were observed to rise from the island. Mataafa flung himself on his knees before Captain Bickford, and implored protection for his women and children left behind, and the captain put back the ship and despatched one of the Consuls to inquire. The *Katoomba* had been about seventy hours in the islands. Captain Bickford was a stranger; he had to rely on the Consuls implicitly. At the same time, he knew that the Government troops had been suffered to land for the purpose of restoring order, and with the understanding that no reprisals should be committed on the adherents of Mataafa; and he charged the emissary with his emphatic disapproval, threats of punishment on the offenders, and reminders that the war had now passed under the responsibility of the three Powers. I cannot condescend on what this Consul saw during his visit; I can only say what he reported on his return. He reported all well, and



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the chiefs on the Government side fraternising and making *ava* with those on Mataafa's. It may have been; at least it is strange. The burning of the island proceeded, fruit-trees were cut down, women stripped naked; a scene of brutal disorder reigned all night, and left behind it, over a quarter of the island, ruin. If they fraternised with Mataafa's chieftains they must have been singularly inconsistent, for, the next we learn of the two parties, they were beating, spitting upon, and insulting them along the highway. The next morning in Apia I asked the same Consul if there had not been some houses burned. He told me no. I repeated the question, alleging the evidence of officers on board the *Katoomba* who had seen the flames increase and multiply as they steamed away; whereupon he had this remarkable reply—"O! huts, huts, huts! There isn't a house, a frame house, on the island." The case to plain men stands thus: The people of Manono were insulted, their food-trees cut down, themselves left houseless; not more than ten houses—I beg the Consul's pardon, huts—escaped the rancour of their enemies; and to this day they may be seen to dwell in shanties on the site of their former residences, the pride of the Samoan heart. The ejaculation of the Consul was thus at least prophetic; and the traveller who revisits to-day the shores of the "Garden Island" may well exclaim in his turn, "Huts, huts, huts!"

The same measure was served out, in the mere wantonness of clan hatred, to Apolima, a nearly inaccessible islet in the straits of the same name; almost the only property saved there (it is amusing to remember) being a framed portrait of Lady Jersey, which its custodian escaped with into the bush, as it were the palladium and chief treasure of the inhabitants. The solemn promise passed by Consuls and captains in the name of the three Powers was thus broken; the troops employed



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were allowed their bellyful of barbarous outrage. And again there was no punishment, there was no inquiry; there was no protest, there was not a word said to disown the act or disengage the honour of the three Powers. I do not say the Consuls desired to be disobeyed, though the case looks black against one gentleman, and even he is only to be accused of levity and divided interest; it was doubtless important for him to be early in Apia, where he combines with his diplomatic functions the management of a thriving business as commission agent and auctioneer. I do say of all of them that they took a very nonchalant view of their duty.

I told myself that this was the government of the Consular Triumvirate. When the new officials came it would cease; it would pass away like a dream in the night; and the solid *Pax Romana* of the Berlin General Act would succeed. After all, what was there to complain of? The Consuls had shown themselves no slovens and no sentimentalists. They had shown themselves not very particular, but in one sense very thorough. Rebellion was to be put down swiftly and rigorously, if need were with the hand of Cromwell; at least it was to be put down. And in these unruly islands I was prepared almost to welcome the face of Rhadamanthine severity.

And now it appears it was all a mistake. The government by the Berlin General Act is no more than a mask, and a very expensive one, for government by the Consular Triumvirate. Samoa pays (or tries to pay) £2,200 a year to a couple of helpers; and they dare not call their souls their own. They take their walks abroad with an anxious eye on the three Consuls, like two well-behaved children with three nurses; and the Consuls, smiling superior, allow them to amuse themselves with the routine of business. But let trouble come, and the



farce is suspended. At the whistle of a squall these heaven-born mariners seize the tiller, and the £2,200 amateurs are knocked sprawling on the bilge. At the first beat of the drum, the treaty officials are sent below, gently protesting, like a pair of old ladies, and behold! the indomitable Consuls ready to clear the wreck and make the deadly cutlass shine. And their method, studied under the light of a new example, wears another air. They are not so Rhadamanthine as we thought. Something that we can only call a dignified panic presides over their deliberations. They have one idea to lighten the ship. "Overboard with the ballast, the mainmast, and the chronometer!" is the cry. In the last war they got rid (first) of the honour of their respective countries, and (second) of all idea that Samoa was to be governed in a manner consistent with civilisation, or Government troops punished for any conceivable misconduct. In the present war they have sacrificed (first) the prestige of the new Chief Justice, and (second) the very principle for which they had contended so vigorously and so successfully in the war before—that rebellion was a thing to be punished.

About the end of last year, that war, a war of the Tupuas under Tamesese the younger, which was a necessary pendant to the crushing of Mataafa, began to make itself heard of in obscure grumblings. It was but a timid business. One half of the Tupua party, the whole province of Atua, never joined the rebellion, but sulked in their villages, and spent the time in indecisive eloquence and barren embassies. Tamesese, by a trick eminently Samoan, "went in the high bush and the mountains," carrying a gun like a private soldier—served, in fact, with his own troops *incognito*—and thus, to Samoan eyes, waived his dynastic pretensions. And the war, which was announced in the beginning with a long catalogue of complaints against



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the King and a distinct and ugly threat to the white population of Apia, degenerated into a war of defence by the province of Aána against the eminently brutal troops of Savaii, in which sympathy was generally and justly with the rebels. Savaii, raging with private clan hatred and the lust of destruction, was put at free quarters in the disaffected province, repeated on a wider scale the outrages of Manono and Apolima, cut down the food-trees, stripped and insulted the women, robbed the children of their little possessions, burned the houses, killed the horses, the pigs, the dogs, the cats, along one-half the seaboard of Aána, and in the prosecution of these manly exploits managed (to the joy of all) to lose some sixty men killed, wounded, and drowned.

Government by the Treaty of Berlin was still erect when, one fine morning, in walked the three Consuls, totally uninvited, with a proclamation prepared and signed by themselves, without any mention of anybody else. They had awoke to a sense of the danger of the situation and their own indispensable merits. The two children knew their day was over; the nurses had come for them. Who can blame them for their timidity? The Consuls have the ears of the Governments; they are the authors of those despatches of which, in the ripeness of time, Blue-books and White-books are made up; they had dismissed (with some little assistance from yourself) MM. Cedarcrantz and Senfft von Pilsach, and they had strangled, like an illegitimate child, the scandal of the dynamite. The Chief Justice and the President made haste to disappear between decks, and left the ship of the State to the three volunteers. There was no lack of activity. The Consuls went up to Atua, they went down to Aána; the oarsmen toiled, the talking men pleaded; they are said to have met with threats in Atua, and to have yielded to them



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—at least, in but a few days' time they came home to us with a new treaty of pacification. Of course, and as before, the Government troops were whitewashed; the Savaii ruffians had been stripping women and killing cats in the interests of the Berlin Treaty; there was to be no punishment and no inquiry; let them retire to Savaii with their booty, and their dead. Offensive as this cannot fail to be, there is still some slight excuse for it. The King is no more than one out of several chiefs of clans. His strength resides in the willing obedience of the Tuamasaga, and a portion—I have to hope a bad portion—of the island of Savaii. To punish any of these supporters must always be to accept a risk; and the golden opportunity had been allowed to slip at the moment of the Mataafa war.

What was more original was the treatment of the rebels. They were under arms that moment against the Government; they had fought and sometimes vanquished; they had taken heads and carried them to Tamasese. And the terms granted were to surrender fifty rifles, to make some twenty miles of road, to pay some old fines—and to be forgiven! The loss of fifty rifles to people destitute of any shadow of a gunsmith to repair them when they are broken, and already notoriously short of ammunition, is a trifle; the number is easy to be made up of those that are out of commission; for there is not the least stipulation as to their value; any synthesis of old iron and smashed wood that can be called a gun is to be taken from its force. The road, as likely as not, will never be made. The fines have nothing to say to this war; in any reasonably governed country they should never have figured in the treaty; they had been inflicted before, and were due before. Before the rebellion began, the beach had rung with I know not what indiscreet bluster: the natives were to be read a lesson; Tamasese (by name)



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was to be hanged; and after what had been done to Mataafa, I was so innocent as to listen with awe. And now the rebellion has come, and this was the punishment! There might well have been a doubt in the mind of any chief who should have been tempted to follow the example of Mataafa; but who is it that would not dare to follow Tamasese?

For some reason—I know not what, unless it be fear—there is a strong prejudice amongst whites against any interference with the bestial practice of head-hunting. They say it would be impossible to identify the criminals—a thing notoriously contrary to fact. A man does not take a head, as he steals an apple, for secret degustation; the essence of the thing is its publicity. After the girls' heads were brought into Mulinuu I pressed Mr. Cusack-Smith to take some action. He proposed a paper of protest, to be signed by the English residents. We made rival drafts; his was preferred, and I have heard no more of it. It has not been offered me to sign; it has not been published; under a paper-weight in the British Consulate I suppose it may yet be found! Meanwhile, his Honour, Mr. Ide, the new Chief Justice, came to Samoa and took spirited action. He engineered an ordinance through the House of Faipule, inflicting serious penalties on any who took heads, and the papers at the time applauded his success. The rebellion followed, the troops were passing to the front, and with excellent resolution Mr. Ide harangued the chiefs, reiterated the terms of the new law, and promised unfailing vengeance on offenders. It was boldly done, and he stood committed beyond possibility of retreat to enforce this his first important edict. Great was the commotion, great the division, in the Samoan mind. "O! we have had Chief Justices before," said a visitor to my house; "we know what they are; I will



take a head if I can get one." Others were more doubtful, but thought none could be so bold as lay a hand on the peculiar institution of these islands. Yet others were convinced. Savaii took heads; but when they sent one to Mulinuu a messenger met them by the convent gates from the King; he would none of it, and the trophy must be ingloriously buried. Savaii took heads also, and Tamasese accepted the presentation. Tuamasaga, on the other hand, obeyed the Chief Justice, and (the occasion being thrust upon them) contented themselves with taking the dead man's ears. On the whole, about one-third of the troops engaged, and our not very firm Monarch himself, kept the letter of the ordinance. And it was upon this scene of partial, but really cheering, success that the Consuls returned with their general pardon! The Chief Justice was not six months old in the islands. He had succeeded to a position complicated by the failure of his predecessor. Personally, speaking face to face with the chiefs, he had put his authority in pledge that the ordinance should be enforced. And he found himself either forgotten or betrayed by the three Consuls. These volunteers had made a liar of him; they had administered to him, before all Samoa, a triple buffet. I must not wonder, though I may still deplore, that Mr. Ide accepted the position thus made for him. There was a deal of alarm in Apia. To refuse the treaty thus hastily and shamefully cobbled up would have increased it tenfold. Already, since the declaration of war and the imminence of the results, one of the papers had ratted, and the white population were girding at the new ordinance. It was feared besides that the native Government, though they had voted, were secretly opposed to it. It was almost certain they would try to prevent its application to the loyalist offenders of Savaii. The three Consuls in the negotiations of the



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treaty had fully illustrated both their want of sympathy with the ordinance and their want of regard for the position of the Chief Justice. "In short, I am to look for no support, whether physical or moral?" asked Mr. Ide; and I could make but the one answer—"Neither physical nor moral." It was a hard choice; and he elected to accept the terms of the treaty without protest. And the next war (if we are to continue to enjoy the benefits of the Berlin Act) will probably show us the result in an enlarged assortment of heads, and the next difficulty perhaps prove to us the diminished prestige of the Chief Justice. Mr. Ide announces his intention of applying the law in the case of another war; but I very much fear the golden opportunity has again been lost. About one-third of the troops believed him this time; how many will believe him the next?

It will doubtless be answered that the Consuls were affected by the alarm in Apia and actuated by the desire to save white lives. I am far from denying that there may be danger; and I believe that the way we are going is the best way to bring it on. In the progressive decivilisation of these islands—evidenced by the female heads taken in the last war and the treatment of white missionaries in this—our methods of pull devil, pull baker, general indecision, and frequent (though always dignified) panic are the best calculated in the world to bring on a massacre of whites. A consistent dignity, a consistent and independent figure of a Chief Justice, the enforcement of the laws, and, above all, of the laws against barbarity, a Consular Board the same in the presence as in the absence of war-ships, will be found our best defence.

Much as I have already occupied of your space, I would yet ask leave to draw two conclusions.

And first, Mataafa and Tamasese both made war.



Both wars were presumably dynastic in character, though the Tupua not rallying to Tamasese as he had expected led him to cover his design. That he carried a gun himself, and himself fired, will not seem to European ears a very important alleviation. Tamasese received heads, sitting as a king, under whatever name; Mataafa had forbidden the taking of heads—of his own accord, and before Mr. Ide had taken office. Tamasese began with threats against the white population; Mataafa never ceased to reassure them and to extend an effectual protection to their property. What is the difference between their cases? That Mataafa was an old man, already famous, who had served his country well, had been appointed King of Samoa, had served in the office, and had been set aside—not, indeed, in the text, but in the protocols of the Berlin Act, by name? I do not grudge his good fortune to Tamasese, who is an amiable, spirited, and handsome young man; and who made a barbarous war, indeed, since heads were taken after the old Samoan practice, but who made it without any of the savagery which we have had reason to comment upon in the camp of his adversaries. I do not grudge the invidious fate that has befallen my old friend and his followers. At first I believed these judgments to be the expression of a severe but equal justice. I find them, on further experience, to be mere measures of the degree of panic in the Consuls, varying directly as the distance of the nearest war-ship. The judgments under which they fell have now no sanctity; they form no longer a precedent; they may perfectly well be followed by a pardon, or a partial pardon, as the authorities shall please. The crime of Mataafa is to have read strictly the first article of the Berlin Act, and not to have read at all (as how should he when it has never been translated?) the insidious protocol which contains its significance;



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the crime of his followers is to have practised clan fidelity, and to have in consequence raised an *imperium in imperio*, and fought against the Government. Their punishment is to be sent to a coral atoll and detained there prisoners. It does not sound much; it is a great deal. Taken from a mountain island, they must inhabit a narrow strip of reef sunk to the gunwale in the ocean. Sand, stone, and cocoanuts, stone, sand, and pandanus, make the scenery. There is no grass. Here these men, used to the cool, bright mountain rivers of Samoa, must drink with loathing the brackish water of the coral. The food upon such islands is distressing even to the omnivorous white. To the Samoan, who has that shivering delicacy and ready disgust of the child or the rustic mountaineer, it is intolerable. I remember what our present King looked like, what a phantom he was, when he returned from captivity in the same place. Lastly, these fourteen have been divorced from their families. The daughter of Mataafa somehow broke the *consigne* and accompanied her father; but she only. To this day one of them, Palepa, the wife of Faamoina, is dunning the authorities in vain to be allowed to join her husband—she a young and handsome woman, he an old man and infirm. I cannot speak with certainty, but I believe they are allowed no communication with the prisoners, nor the prisoners with them. My own open experience is brief and conclusive—I have not been suffered to send my friends one stick of tobacco or one pound of *ava*. So much to show the hardships are genuine. I have to ask a pardon for these unhappy victims of untranslated protocols and inconsistent justice. After the case of Tamasese, I ask it almost as of right. As for the other twenty-seven in gaol, let the doors be opened at once. They have shown their patience, they have proved their loyalty long enough. On two occasions,



when the guards deserted in a body, and again when the Aána prisoners fled, they remained—one may truly say—voluntary prisoners. And at least let them be fed! I have paid taxes to the Samoan Government for some four years, and the most sensible benefit I have received in return has been to be allowed to feed their prisoners.

Second, if the farce of the Berlin Act is to be gone on with, it will be really necessary to moderate among our five Sovereigns—six if we are to count poor Malietoa, who represents to the life the character of the Hare and Many Friends. It is to be presumed that Mr. Ide and Herr Schmidt were chosen for their qualities; it is little good we are likely to get by them, if, at every wind of rumour, the three Consuls are to intervene. The three Consuls are paid far smaller salaries, they have no right under the treaty to interfere with the government of autonomous Samoa, and they have contrived to make themselves all in all. The King and a majority of the Faipule fear them and look to them alone, while the legitimate adviser occupies a second place, if that. The misconduct of MM. Cedarcrantz and Senfft von Pilsach was so extreme that the Consuls were obliged to encroach; and now when these are gone the authority acquired in the contest remains with the encroachers. On their side they have no rights, but a tradition of victory, the ear of the Governments at home, and the *vis viva* of the war-ships. For the poor treaty officials, what have they but rights very obscurely expressed and very weakly defended by their predecessors? Thus it comes about that people who are scarcely mentioned in the text of the treaty, are, to all intents and purposes, our only rulers.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.



IX

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES"

Vailima, Samoa, May 22, 1894.

SIR,—I told you in my last that the Consuls had tinkered up a treaty of peace with the rebels of Aána. A month has gone by, and I would not weary your readers with a story so intricate and purposeless. The Consuls seem to have gone backward and forward, to and fro. To periods of agitated activity, comparable to that of three ants about a broken nest, there succeeded seasons in which they rested from their labours and ruefully considered the result. I believe I am not overstating the case when I say that this treaty was at least twice rehandled, and the date of submission changed, in the interval. And yesterday at length we beheld the first-fruits of the Consular diplomacy. A boat came in from Aána bearing the promised fifty stand of arms—in other words, a talking man, a young chief, and some boatmen in charge of a boat-load of broken ironmongery. The Government (well advised for once) had placed the Embassy under an escort of German blue-jackets, or I think it must have gone ill with the Ambassadors.

So much for Aána and the treaty. With Atua, the other disaffected province, we have been and are on the brink of war. The woods have been patrolled, the army sent to the front, blood has been shed. It consists with my knowledge that the loyalist troops marched against the enemy under a hallucination. One and all believed, a majority of them still believe, that the war-ships were to follow and assist them. Who told them so? If I am to credit the rumours of the natives, as well as the gossip of official circles, a promise



had been given to this effect by the Consuls, or at least by one of the Consuls. And when I say that a promise had been given, I mean that it had been sold. I mean that the natives had to buy it by submissions.

Let me take an example of these submissions. The native Government increased the salary of Mr. Gurr, the natives' advocate. It was not a largesse; it was rather an act of tardy justice, by which Mr. Gurr received at last the same emoluments as his predecessor in the office. At the same time, with a bankrupt treasury, all fresh expenses are and must be regarded askance. The President, acting under a so-called Treasury regulation, refused to honour the King's order. And a friendly suit was brought, which turned on the validity of this Treasury regulation. This was more than doubtful. The President was a treaty official; hence bound by the treaty. The three Consuls had been acting for him in his absence, using his powers and no other powers whatever under the treaty; and the three Consuls so acting had framed a regulation by which the powers of the President were greatly extended. This was a vicious circle with a vengeance. But the Consuls, with the ordinary partiality of parents for reformed offspring, regarded the regulation as the apple of their eye. They made themselves busy in its defence, they held interviews, it is reported they drew pleas; and it seemed to all that the Chief Justice hesitated. It is certain at least that he long delayed sentence. And during this delay the Consuls showed their power. The native government was repeatedly called together, and at last forced to rescind the order in favour of Mr. Gurr. It was not done voluntarily, for the Government resisted. It was not done by conviction, for the Government has taken the first opportunity to restore it. If the Consuls did not appear personally in the affair—and I do not know that they



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did not—they made use of the President as a mouth-piece; and the President delayed the deliberations of the Government until he should receive further instructions from the Consuls. Ten pounds is doubtless a considerable affair to a bankrupt Government. But what were the Consuls doing in this matter of inland administration? What was their right to interfere? What were the arguments with which they overcame the resistance of the Government? I am either very much misinformed, or these gentlemen were trafficking in a merchandise which they did not possess, and selling at a high price the assistance of the war-ships over which (as now appears) they have no control.

Remark the irony of fate. This affair had no sooner been settled, Mr. Gurr's claim cut at the very root, and the Treasury regulation apparently set beyond cavil, than the Chief Justice pulled himself together, and, taking his life in his right hand, delivered sentence in the case. Great was the surprise. Because the Chief Justice had balked so long, it was supposed he would never have taken the leap. And here, upon a sudden, he came down with a decision flat against the Consuls and their Treasury regulation. The Government have, I understand, restored Mr. Gurr's salary in consequence. The Chief Justice, after giving us all a very severe fright, has reinstated himself in public opinion by his tardy boldness; and the Consuls find their conduct judicially condemned.

It was on a personal affront that the Consuls turned on Mr. Cedarcrantz. Here is another affront, far more galling and public! I suppose it is but a coincidence that I should find at the same time the clouds beginning to gather about Mr. Ide's head. In a telegram, dated from Auckland, March 30, and copyrighted by the Associated Press, I find the whole blame of the late troubles set down to his account. It is the work of a



person worthy of no trust. In one of his charges, and in one only, he is right. The Chief Justice fined and imprisoned certain chiefs of Aána under circumstances far from clear; the act was, to say the least of it, susceptible of misconstruction, and by natives will always be thought of as an act of treachery. But, even for this, it is not possible for me to split the blame justly between Mr. Ide and the three Consuls. In these early days, as now, the three Consuls were always too eager to interfere where they had no business, and the Chief Justice was always too patient or too timid to set them in their place. For the rest of the telegram no qualification is needed. "The Chief Justice was compelled to take steps to disarm the natives." He took no such steps; he never spoke of disarmament except publicly and officially to disown the idea; it was during the days of the Consular Triumvirate that the cry began. "The Chief Justice called upon Malietoa to send a strong force," etc., the Chief Justice "disregarded the menacing attitude assumed by the Samoans," etc.—these are but the delusions of a fever. The Chief Justice has played no such part; he never called for forces; he never disregarded menacing attitudes, not even those of the Consuls. What we have to complain of in Mr. Ide and Mr. Schmidt is strangely different. We complain that they have been here since November, and the three Consuls are still allowed, when they are not invited, to interfere in the least and the greatest; that they have been here for upwards of six months, and government under the Berlin Treaty is still overridden—and I may say overlaid—by the government of the Consular Triumvirate.

This is the main foundation of our present discontents. This it is that we pray to be relieved from. Out of six Sovereigns, exercising incongruous rights or usurpations on this unhappy island, we pray to be



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relieved of three. The Berlin Treaty was not our choice; but if we are to have it at all, let us have it plain. Let us have the text, and nothing but the text. Let the three Consuls who have no position under the treaty cease from troubling, cease from raising war and making peace, from passing illegal regulations in the face of day, and from secretly blackmailing the Samoan Government into renunciations of its independence. Afterwards, when we have once seen it in operation, we shall be able to judge whether government under the Berlin Treaty suits or does not suit our case.—I am, Sir, etc.,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

X

FROM THE "DAILY CHRONICLE,"
MARCH 18, 1895

(Subjoined is the full text of the late Robert Louis Stevenson's last letter to Mr. J. F. Hogan, M.P. Apart from its pathetic interest as one of the final compositions of the distinguished novelist, its eloquent terms of pleading for his exiled friend Mataafa, and the light it sheds on Samoan affairs, make it a very noteworthy and instructive document.—Ed. D. C.)

Vailima, October 7, 1894.

J. F. HOGAN, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—My attention was attracted the other day by the thoroughly pertinent questions which you put in the House of Commons, and which the Govern-



ment failed to answer. It put an idea in my head that you were perhaps the man who might take up a task which I am almost ready to give up. Mataafa is now known to be my hobby. People laugh when they see any mention of his name over my signature and the *Times*, while it still grants me hospitality, begins to lead the chorus. I know that nothing can be more fatal to Mataafa's cause than that he should be made ridiculous, and I cannot help feeling that a man who makes his bread by writing fiction labours under the disadvantage of suspicion when he touches on matters of fact. If I were even backed up before the world by one other voice, people might continue to listen, and in the end something might be done. But so long as I stand quite alone, telling the same story, which becomes, apparently, not only more tedious, but less credible by repetition, I feel that I am doing nothing good, possibly even some evil.

Now, Sir; you have shown by your questions in the House, not only that you remember Mataafa, but that you are instructed in his case, and this exposes you to the trouble of reading this letter.

Mataafa was made the prisoner of the three Powers. He had been guilty of rebellion; but surely rather formally than really. He was the appointed King of Samoa. The treaty set him aside, and he obeyed the three Powers. His successor—or I should rather say his successor's advisers and surroundings—fell out with him. He was disgusted by the spectacle of their misgovernment. In this humour he fell to the study of the Berlin Act, and was misled by the famous passage, "His successor shall be duly elected according to the laws and customs of Samoa." It is to be noted that what I will venture to call the infamous protocol—a measure equally of German vanity, English cowardice, and American *incuria*—had not been and *has never*



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yet been translated into the Samoan language. They feared light because their works were darkness. For what he did during what I can only call his candidature, I must refer you to the last chapter of my book. It was rebellion to the three Powers; to him it was not rebellion. The troops of the King attacked him first. The sudden arrival and sudden action of Captain Bickford concluded the affair in the very beginning. Mataafa surrendered. He surrendered to Captain Bickford. He was brought back to Apia on Captain Bickford's ship. I shall never forget the captain pointing to the British ensign and saying, "Tell them they are safe under that." And the next thing we learned, Mataafa and his chiefs were transferred to a German war-ship and carried to the Marshalls.

Who was responsible for this? Who is responsible now for the care and good treatment of these political prisoners? I am far from hinting that the Germans actually maltreat him. I know even that many of the Germans regard him with respect. But I can only speak of what I know here. It is impossible to send him or any of his chiefs either a present or a letter. I believe the mission (Catholic) has been allowed some form of communication. On the same occasion I sent down letters and presents. They were refused; and the officer of the deck on the German war-ship had so little reticence as to pass the remark, "O, you see, you like Mataafa; we don't." In short, communication is so completely sundered that for anything we can hear in Samoa, they may all have been hanged at the yard-arm two days out.

To take another instance. The high chief Faamoina was recently married to a young and pleasing wife. She desired to follow her husband, an old man, in bad health, and so deservedly popular that he had been given the by-name of "*Papalagi Mativa*," or "Poor



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White Man," on account of his charities to our countrymen. She was refused. Again and again she has renewed her applications to be allowed to rejoin him, and without the least success.

It has been decreed by some one, I know not whom, that Faamoina must have no one to nurse him, and that his wife must be left in the anomalous and dangerous position which the Treaty Powers have made for her. I have wearied myself, and I fear others, by my attempts to get a passage for her or to have her letters sent. Every one sympathises. The German ships now in port are loud in expressions of disapproval and professions of readiness to help her. But to whom can we address ourselves? Who is responsible? Who is the unknown power that sent Mataafa in a German ship to the Marshalls, instead of in an English ship to Fiji? that has decreed since that he shall receive not even inconsiderable gifts and open letters? and that keeps separated Faamoina and his wife?

Now, dear Sir, these are the facts, and I think that I may be excused for being angry. At the same time, I am well aware that an angry man is a bore. I am a man with a grievance, and my grievance has the misfortune to be very small and very far away. It is very small, for it is only the case of under a score of brown-skinned men who have been dealt with in the dark by I know not whom. And I want to know. I want to know by whose authority Mataafa was given over into German hands. I want to know by whose authority, and for how long a term of years, he is condemned to the miserable exile of a low island. And I want to know how it happens that what is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander in Samoa?—that the German enemy Mataafa has been indefinitely exiled for what is after all scarce more than constructive rebellion, and the German friend Tamasese, for a rebellion which



has lasted long enough to threaten us with famine, and was disgraced in its beginning by ominous threats against the whites, has been punished by a fine of fifty rifles?

True, I could sympathise with the German officers in their embarrassment. Here was the son of the old King whom they had raised, and whom they had deserted. What an unenviable office was theirs when they must make war upon, suppress, and make a feint of punishing, this man to whom they stood bound by a hereditary alliance, and to whose father they had already failed so egregiously. They were loyal all round. They were loyal to their Tamasese, and got him off with his fine. And shall I not be a little loyal to Mataafa? And will you not help me? He is now an old man, very piously inclined, and I believe he would enter at least the lesser orders of the Church if he were suffered to come back. But I do not even ask so much as this, though I hope it. It would be enough if he were brought back to Fiji, back to the food and fresh water of his childhood, back into the daylight from the darkness of the Marshalls, where some of us could see him, where we could write to him and receive answers, where he might pass a tolerable old age. If you can help me to get this done, I am sure that you will never regret it. In its small way, this is another case of Toussaint L'Ouverture, not so monstrous if you like, not on so large a scale, but with circumstances of small perfidy that make it almost odious.

I may tell you in conclusion that, circumstances co-operating with my tedious insistence, the last of the Mataafa chiefs here in Apia has been liberated from jail. All this time they stayed of their own free-will, thinking it might injure Mataafa if they escaped when others did. And you will see by the enclosed paper how these poor fellows spent the first hours of their



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liberty.* You will see also that I am not the firebrand that I am sometimes painted, and that in helping me, if you shall decide to do so, you will be doing nothing against the peace and prosperity of Samoa.

With many excuses for having occupied so much of your valuable time, I remain, yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—On revisal, I observe some points: in the first place, I do not believe Captain Bickford was to blame; I suspect him to have been a victim. I have been told, but it seems incredible, that he underwent an examination about Mataafa's daughter having been allowed to accompany him. Certainly he liked his job little, and some of his colleagues less.

R. L. S.

October 9.

Latest intelligence. We have received at last a letter from Mataafa. He is well treated and has good food; only complains of not hearing from Samoa. This has very much relieved our minds. But why were they previously left in the dark?

R. L. S.

* *i.e.*, in building a section of a new road to Mr. Stevenson's house. The paper referred to is a copy of the *Samoa Times*, containing a report of the dinner given by Mr. Stevenson at Vailima to inaugurate this new road. (See Appendix to *Vailima Letters*.)



LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH SEAS

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LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH SEAS

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I

A PEARL ISLAND: PENRHYN

Upolu, Samoan Islands, December, 1890.

IN the Lagoon of Fakarava there was little pearl shell and there were many sharks. I know not if the *rahui*, or closure, was applied; at least there was no fishing, and it seemed unfit to leave the archipelago of pearls and have no sight of that romantic industry. On all other sides were isles, if only I could reach them, where divers were at work: but Captain Otis properly enough refused to approach them with the *Casco*, and my attempts to hire another vessel failed. The last was upon François's cutter, where she lay drawn up from her late shipwreck. She might be compared for safety to a New York catboat fortified with a bowsprit and a jib, and as I studied her lines and spars, desire to sail in her upon the high seas departed from my mind. "*Je le pensais bien*," said François, which may be idiomatically rendered, "I told you so."

Nearly two years had passed before I found myself in the trading steamer *Janet Nicoll* heading for the entrance of Penrhyn or Tongarewa. In front the line of the atoll showed like a narrow sea-wall of bare coral, where the surges broke: on either hand the tree-tops of a *motu* showed some way off—one, the site of the chief village, the other, then empty, but now inhabited and known by the ill-omened name of Molokai. We steamed through the pass and were instantly involved amid a multiplicity of coral lumps, or *horses' heads* as they are called by sailors. Through these our way meandered; we would have horses' heads athwart the bows, one astern, one upon either board; and the



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tortuous fairway was at times not more than twice the vessel's beam. The *Janet* was besides an iron ship; half the width of the Pacific severed us from the next yard of reparation; one rough contact, and our voyage might be ended, and ourselves consigned to half a year of Penrhyn. On the topgallant foremast stood a native pilot, used to conning smaller ships and unprepared for the resources of a steamer; his cries rang now with agony, now with wrath. The best man was at the bridge wheel; and Capt. Henry, with one hand on the engine signal, one trembling toward the steersman, juggled his long ship among these dangers, with the patient art of one fitting up a watch, with the swift decision of a general in the field. I stood by, thrilling at once with the excitement of a personal adventure and the admiration due to perfect skill.

We were presently at anchor in a singular berth, boxed all about, our late entrance, our future exit, not to be discovered; in front the lagoon, where I counted the next day upward of thirty horses' heads in easy view; behind, the groves of the isle and the crowded houses of the village. Many boats lay there at moorings; in the verandah folk were congregated, gazing at the ship; children were swimming from the shore to board us; and from the lagoon, before a gallant breeze, other boats came skimming homeward. The boats were gay with white sails and bright paint; the men were clad in red and blue, they were garlanded with green leaves or gay with kerchiefs; and the busy, many-coloured scene was framed in the verdure of the palms and the opal of the shallow sea.

It was a pretty picture, and its prettiest element the coming of the children. Every here and there we saw a covey of black heads upon the water. Boys and girls, they had stripped off their gaily coloured kilts. Some held the kilt aloft in one hand as they swam; others had



A Pearl Island: Penrhyn

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embarked it on a piece of wreck, such as then abounded on the island, and thrust in front of them that little ship and its bright cargo. I studied with inexpressible entertainment the carnival of one company of girls. A boat lay alongside, on board of which a young lady (aged about eight) laboriously clambered, her raiment in her hand, ready for instant application. It was a delicate task, adroitly achieved, and island decency was perfectly observed. The rest was easier. As each of her companions clambered up, the first adventurer stood with a kilt extended, like a prudent mother, and the emergent naiad was enrobed. Soon they trooped up the side ladder, a healthy, comely company of kilted children, and had soon taken post upon the after hatch, where they sat in a double row singing with solemn energy. Part of the hatch was open; boxes and bales and broken shell were all about them; boxes and bales swung on a tackle past their faces and above their heads; no man regarded them; but the conscientious artists paused not in their performance, and the sound of their young voices and their clapping hands now rose above, and was now drowned by the clatter of working cargo.

This inimitable seriousness at first attracted me, and I became their slave. A girl of eleven or twelve was my especial commandant. I could not say she was pretty, but she was highly attractive, alive with energy and sense, sang her songs as if life depended on them, and, with the note of a young scold, marshalled and corrected her companions. My fidelity was precious in their eyes; even by the artists of Penrhyn some shadow of a public is desired. My young mistress, if I sought to withdraw, hoarsely forbade and imperiously signed me to my place; and so soon as I had sat down the sirens would launch on a new song, apparently regardless of my presence. Their repertory and their



diligence amazed me ; all one afternoon and most of the next day the shrill but pleasing concert was prolonged. To sing appeared not so much a pleasure as the acknowledged end of man's existence. They were glad enough, for a passing moment, to observe the curiosities of the ship; they were glad enough to accept and stow under their kilts my offerings of goodies, tobacco, and ships' bread; but the curio regarded, the gift shared, down they sat again with a fresh appetite to minstrelsy, the leader roused with a glance her little band, the hands clapped together, and the song was raised. They were excellently well behaved. If I had passed a girl over, my mistress pounced on me at once; just-minded little scold, she would accept no favour for herself (except once or twice a goody) that was not equally shared with all her comrades. Although she thus ordered me about, and even shook and punched me, it was no real presumption, only the pretty freedom of a girl that knows herself in favour, and when I had anything to forbid, a shade of intonation secured obedience.

My minstrels were the best thing on Penrhyn, which, indeed, attracted us but little. The boys who came on board were rowdy fellows; they pillaged the swill tub; they pursued and robbed each other of the fruits of robbery; the deck was filled, and sometimes our concert almost overwhelmed, by their alarms and excursions. The grown folk were diffident and jeering; we thought they had a savage air; and their reputation fitted with their looks. As for the isle, it was an atoll; we had seen too many atolls; hackney cabs have more variety than they. The village had a rough, unkempt appearance of prosperity; possibly we saw it to its disadvantage, for it extends from the lagoon to the seaside and a part of it was levelled recently by the sea. Perhaps, too, the ill-tended church and the unweeded



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green were marks of a more sad calamity, for although then we knew it not, the place was plague-struck.

All that was here and that could be called wealth came from the sea. Pearl shell and wreck wood were everywhere. On one side of the trader's house they were weighing shell; on the other was a yard of stacked timber that had never grown upon that island; between, on the verandah, the figurehead of the lost ship stood sentinel; a very white and haughty lady, Roman nosed and dressed in the costume of the Directory, contumeliously, with head thrown back, she gazed on the house and the crowding natives. There was a piano in the sitting-room, but the poor instrument had suffered in the shipwreck, and when the notes were struck, replied at random. Yet another waif from that disaster was a lad of my own land and city, and I thought it strange to stand by the figurehead, in the tropic sun, beset by a throng of Penrhyn islanders, and be talking of the Glasgow Road, the Haymarket Station, and the huge distillery.

It is the worst of a pearl island, that when a ship arrives the diving ceases; unless the traveller be come to stay, the return of the boats and the piles of shell are all that he will see of pearling. But the boats themselves are eloquent. The flotilla of Penrhyn must have cost a pretty penny; the same may be said of Manihiki; and, indeed, it is hard to overestimate the wealth of the inhabitants. A good diver at Penrhyn can make one, two, or even three pounds a day; the least of them seems equivalent to opulence at home. Yet, I am told, the houses of good divers are notoriously poor, and they and their families often meanly dressed. When the man touches his pay, he goes direct into the store, with a following of the incompetent and idle, come to sponge. This is his reward, for this he labours, to be the centre of some minutes' admiration and gratitude



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before the trader's counter; and he will sometimes return to his home and family empty-handed, all having gone in largess. We may smile at his ideal, but this, too, is popularity; and what is the reward of Mr. Gladstone? Applause at a Scottish railway station is not to be essentially distinguished from acclamation in a Penrhyn island store.

Here at least is a strange variety of Polynesian character. The Penrhyn islander is industrious as a Paumotuan, and more prodigal than a Samoan. But even his prodigality is energetic; he gives, scattering wealth publicly and with a certain rapture; the Samoan only suffers himself to be drained by trafficking connections, escaping when he can, lamenting when he can not. The tongue of Penrhyn is said to present affinities with old Paumotuan; and the rough and lawless manners of the race suggest a similar relation. Till recently the isle was counted dangerous; blood had been shed often; and when natives quarrel with a trader they will boast of his predecessors whom they slew. I could hear, within man's memory, of but one chief who had maintained authority, and he with stripes, binding offenders to a tree and lashing them with his own hand. With turbulent women he was very sharp; and perhaps one of these took a post-mortem vengeance. For this was the same chief who rose again and was reburied prone. At the main village law is to-day respected; the laws were brought on board as soon as we anchored, exhibiting a goodly list of fines, some wise, some fantastically funny; and our cook, having gone ashore late, found himself a prisoner at curfew and was not suffered to leave the house till morning. All the while, at the other side of the atoll, the people lived in mere misrule, and fighting, particularly combats of women, were frequent. The women of Penrhyn are still great belligerents. When



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my little minstrel is grown up, she should be a woman of her hands.

Poor little mistress! where is she now? Where are my minstrels? There was a cloud upon their island. They sang that day under its shadow; it has burst since then.

Some ten years ago, Mr. Ben Hird was trading in the atoll. Several whites had then recently been murdered; and the traders carried their lives in their hands. Once in particular Mr. Hird believes there was a plan to slay him. He had gone down from one settlement to another on affairs. A little girl came to him when he was alone and pressed him to return. "You had better come with me," was her word. He asked her why; he told her of his business; he pressed her for a reason. To all she had but one answer: "You had better come with me." He was growing impatient of her iteration; when of a sudden the fear of death fell cold upon his spirit, and he caught her by the hand, ran for his boat, and fled with her alone on the lagoon. I have seen her, now grown a stalwart woman, and never from that day to this, has she explained her conduct.

In 1890, when I was at Penrhyn, Mr. Hird was supercargo on the *Janet Nicoll*; and knowing I had visited the lazaretto on Molokai, he called me in consultation. "It is strange," said he. "When I was here there was no such thing as leprosy upon the island; and now there seems a great deal. Look at that man, and tell me what you think." The man was leprous as Naaman.

The story goes that a leper escaped from Molokai in an open boat, and landed, some say in Penrhyn, some say first in Manihiki. There are many authentic boat voyages difficult to credit; but this of thirty degrees due north and south, and from the one Trade to the other across the equatorial doldrums, ranks with



the most extraordinary. We may suppose the westerly current to have been entirely intermitted, the easterly strong, and the fugitive well supplied with food. Or we may explain the tale to be a legend, framed to conceal the complaisance of some ill-judging skipper. One thing at least is sure: a Hawaiian leper, in an advanced stage of the disease, and admitting that he had escaped from Molokai, appeared suddenly in these distant islands, and was seen by Mr. H. J. Moors of Apia walking at large in Penrhyn. Mr. Moors is not quite certain of the date, for he visited the atoll in '83 and again in '84; but another of my neighbours, Mr. Harper, was trading in Penrhyn all the first year. He saw nothing of the Hawaiian, and this pins us to the later date. I am tediously particular on this point, because the result is amazing. Seven years is supposed to be the period of leprous incubation; and the whole of my tale, from the first introduction of the taint to the outbreak of a panic in the island, passes (at the outside) in a little more than six. At the time when we should have scarce looked for the appearance of the earliest case, the population was already steeped in leprosy.

The Polynesians assuredly derive from Asia; and Asia, since the dawn of history, has been a camping-ground for this disease. Of two things, either the Polynesian left, ere the disease began, and is now for the first time exposed to the contagion, or he has been so long sequestered that Asiatic leprosy has had the time to vary, and finds in him a virgin soil. The facts are not clear; we are told, on one hand, that some indigenous form of the disease was known in Samoa within the memory of man; we are assured, on the other, that there is not a name for it in any island language. There is no doubt, at least, about the savage rapidity with which it spreads when introduced. And

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there is none that, when a leper is first seen, the islanders approach him without disaffection and are never backward to supply him with a wife. I find this singular; for few races are more sensitive to beauty, of which their own affords so high a standard; and I have observed that when the symptoms are described to him in words, the islander displays a high degree of horror and disgust. His stringent ideals of courtesy and hospitality and a certain debile kindness of disposition must explain his conduct. As for the marriage, the stranger once received, it follows as a thing of course. To refuse the male is still considered in most parts of Polynesia a rather unlovely rigour in the female; and if a man be disfigured, I believe it would be held a sort of charity to console his solitude. A kind island girl might thus go to a leper's bed in something of the same spirit as we visit the sick at home with tracts and pounds of tea.

The waif who landed on Penrhyn was much marred with the disease; his head deformed with growths; a thing for children to flee from screaming. Yet he was received with welcome, entertained in families, and a girl was found to be his wife. It is hard to be just to this Hawaiian. Doubtless he was a man of a wild strain of blood, a lover of liberty and life; doubtless he had harboured in the high woods and the rains, a spectral Robin Hood, armed to defend his wretched freedom; perhaps he was captured fighting; and of one thing we may be sure, that he had escaped early from the lazaretto, still untamed, still hot with resentment. His boat voyage was a discipline well fitted to inspire grave thoughts; in him it may have only sharpened the desire of pleasure; for to certain shallow natures the imminence of death is but a whet. In his own eyes he was an innocent prisoner escaped, the victim of a nameless and senseless tyranny. What did



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he ask? To taste the common lot of men, to sit with the house folk, to hear the even-song, to share in the day's gossip, to have a wife like others, and to see children round his knees. He landed in Penrhyn, enjoyed for a while simple pleasures, died, and bequeathed to his entertainers a legacy of doom.

They were early warned. Mr. Moors warned them in '84, and they made light of his predictions, the long incubation of the malady deceiving them. The leper lived among them; no harm was seen. He died, and still there was no harm. It would be interesting, it is probably impossible, to learn how soon the plague appeared. By the midst of 1890, at least, the island was dotted with lepers, and the *Janet Nicoll* had not long gone before the islanders awoke to an apprehension of their peril. I have mentioned already traits which they share with their Paumotuan kindred; their conduct in this hour of awakening is another. There were certain families—twenty, I was told; we may imply a corrective and guess ten—entirely contaminated, the clean waited on these sick and bade them leave the settlement. Some six years before they had opened their doors to a stranger; now they must close them on their next of kin.

It chanced that among the tainted families were some of chief importance, some that owned the *solum* of the village. It was their first impulse to resent the measure of expulsion.

"The land is ours," they argued. "If any are to leave, let it be you," and they were thought to have answered well; "let them stay" was the reconsidered verdict; and the clean people began instead to prepare their own secession. The coming of the missionary ship decided otherwise; the lepers were persuaded; a *motu* of some size, hard by the south entrance, was now named Molokai, after its sad original; and



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thither, leaving their lands and the familiar village, self-doomed, self-sacrificed, the infected families went forth into perpetual exile.

The palms of their lost village are easily in view from Molokai. The sequestered may behold the smoke rise from their old home, they can see the company of boats skim forth with daylight to the place of diving. And they have yet nearer sights. A pier has been built in the lagoon; a boat comes at intervals, leaves food upon its seaward end, and goes again, the lepers not entering on the pier until it be gone. Those on the beach, those in the boat, old friends and kinsfolk thus behold each other for a moment silently. The girl who bid Mr. Hird flee from the settlement opened her heart to him on his last visit. She would never again set eyes, she told him, on her loved ones, and when he reminded her that she might go with the boat and see them from a distance on the beach; Never! she cried. If she went, if she saw them, her heart would pluck her from the boat; she must leap on the pier, she must run to the beach, she must speak again with the lost; and with the act the doors of the prison isle would close upon herself. So sternly is the question of leprosy now viewed, under a native rule, in Penrhyn.

Long may it so continue! and I would I could infect with a like severity every isle of the Pacific. But self-indulgence and sentiment menace instead the mere existence of the island race; perhaps threaten our own with a new struggle against an enemy refreshed. Nothing is less proved than this peril to ourselves; yet it is possible. To our own syphilis we are inured, but the syphilis of eastern Asia slays us; and a new variety of leprosy, cultivated in the virgin soil of Polynesian races, might prove more fatal than we dream.

So that ourselves, it may be, are no strangers to the case; it may be it was for us the men of Penrhyn



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resigned their acres, and when the defaced chimera sailed from Molokai, bringing sorrow and death to isles of singing, we also, and our babes, may have been the target of his invisible arrows. But it needs not this. The thought of that hobgoblin boatman alone upon the sea, of the perils he escaped, of the evil he lavished on the world, may well strike terror in the minds even of the distant and the unconcerned. In mine, at the memory of my termagant minstrel, hatred glows.



THE LAZARETTO

Upolu, Samoan Islands, January, 1891.

The windward coast of Molokai is gloomy and abrupt. A wall of cliff of from two or three thousand feet in height extends the most part of the length (some forty miles), from east to west. Wood clusters on its front like ivy; and in the wet season streams descend in waterfalls and play below on the surface of the ocean. For in almost the whole of its length the cliff, without the formality of any beach, plunges in the Pacific. Bold water follows the coast; ships may almost everywhere approach within a trifling distance of the towering shore; and immediately in front of Molokai surveyors have found some of the deepest soundings of that ocean. This unusual depth of water, the continuity of the Trade, and the length of which *fetch* extends unbroken from the shores of California, magnify the sea. The swell is nursed by the steady wind, it grows in that long distance, it draws near through the deep soundings without combing, and spends itself undiminished on the cliffs of Molokai.

Toward the eastern end a river in a winding glen descends from the interior; the barrier is quite broken here, and a beach is formed and makes a place of call, Wailau. A few miles farther east, the cove of Pelekunu offers a doubtful chance of landing, and is also visited by steamers. The third and last place of approach is at the Lazaretto. A shelf of undercliff here borders the precipice, expanding toward its western end in a blunt promontory, a little more than a mile square. The lee of this precipice offers unusual facilities for landing, and in favourable states of wind and sea ships may anchor. But these facilities to seaward are more than counterbalanced by the uncompromising character



of the barrier behind. The *Pali* (as the precipice is called) in the extent of this strip of undercliff makes three recesses, Waihanau, Waialeia, and Waikolu—as their names imply, three gutters of the mountain. These are clothed in wood; from a distance they show like verdant niches and retreats for lovers; but the face of the rock is so precipitous that only in the first, Waihanau, is there a practicable path. The rains continually destroy it; it must be renewed continually; to ride there is impossible; to mount without frequent falls seems unexpected; and even the descent exhausts a powerful man. The existence of another path more to the westward was affirmed to me by some, denied by others. At the most, therefore, in two points, the cliff is scantily passable upward. Passage coastwise is beyond expectation to any creature without wings. To the west, the strip of undercliff simply discontinues. To the east, the wall itself thrusts forth a huge protrusion, and the way is barred except to fish and sea-birds. Here, then, is a prison fortified by nature, a place where thousands may be quartered and a pair of sentinels suffice to watch and hold the only issues.

The undercliff is in itself narrow; it is widened on one hand by the recesses of the cliff; and on the other by the expansion of the foreland; and the last contains (for a guess) two-thirds of the whole territory. It rises in the midst to a low hill enclosing a dead crater, like a quarry hole; the interior sides clothed with trees; at the foot a salt pool, unsoundable, at least unsounded. Hence the land slopes to the sea's edge and upward toward the *Pali* in grassy downs. A single sick pandanus breaks, or broke while I was there, that naked heath; except in man's enclosures, I can recall nowhere else one switch of timber. The foreland is grazed by some 1,500 head of stock, 700 of them horses, for the patients are continual and furious riders; the rest cows

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and asses. These all do excellently well. The horrid pest to which the place is sacred spares them, being man's prerogative. It was strange to see those droves of animals feeding and sporting in exuberant health by the sea margin, and to reflect upon their destiny, brought from so far, at so much cost and toil, only to be ridden to and fro upon and eaten by the defeatured and dying.

The shaven down, the scattered boulders, the cry of the wind in the grass, the frequent showers of rain, the bulk of the Pali, the beating of the near sea, all the features and conditions strike the mind as northern, and to the Northerner the scene is in consequence grateful, like one of his native minor tunes. It is stirring to look eastward and see the huge viridescent mountain front sunder the settlement from the next habitations of clean men at Pelekunu—at its foot, in the sea, two tilted islets. It is pleasant in the early morning to ride by the roots of the Pali, when the low sun and the cool breeze are in your face, and from above, in the cliffside forest, falls a perpetual chirruping of birds. It is pleasant, above all, to wander by the margin of the sea. The heath breaks down, like Helicon, in cliffs. A narrow fringe of emerald edges the precipitous shore; close beyond the blue show the bold soundings; the wanderer stands plainly on a mere buttress of the vast cathedral front of the island, and above and below him, in the air and in the water, the precipice continues. Along the brink, rock architecture and sea music please the senses, and in that tainted place the thought of the cleanness of the antiseptic ocean is welcome to the mind.

Yet this is but one side of the scenery of the Lazaretto: and I received an impression strongly contrasted when I entered the recess of Waialeia. The sides were niched and channelled with dry tracks of torrents, grass clung on the sheer precipice, forest clustered on



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the smallest vantage of a shelf. The floor of the amphitheatre was piled with shattered rock, detritus of the mountain, with which in the time of the rains, the torrents had maintained a cannonade. Vigorously black themselves, these were spotted with snow-white lichen and shaded and intermingled with plants and trees of a vivid green. The day was overcast; clouds ran low about the edges of the basin; and yet the colours glowed as though immersed in sunshine. On the downs the effect is of some bleak, noble coast of Scotland or Scandinavia; here in the recess I felt myself transported to the tropics.

There are two villages, Kalaupapa, on the western shore of the promontory, Kalawao, toward the east upon the strip of undercliff; and along the road which joins them, each reaches forth scattered habitations.

Kalaupapa, the most sheltered in prevailing winds, is the customary landing-place. When the run of the sea inclines the other way, ships pass far to the eastward near the two islets, and passengers are landed with extreme difficulty, and I was assured not without danger, on a spur of rock. Kalaupapa, being quite upon the downs, is the more bleak; a long, bare, irregular, ungardened village of unsightly houses. Here are two churches, Protestant and Catholic, and the Bishop Home for Girls. Kalawao is even beautiful; pleasant houses stand in gardens of flowers; the Pali rises behind; in front, across the sea, the eye commands the islets and the huge green face of cliff excluding Pelekunu. This is the view from the window of the lay brother, Mr. Dutton, and he assured me he found its beauty far more striking than the deformations of the sick. The passing visitor can scarce attain to such philosophy. Here is Damien's Home for Boys. Close behind is a double graveyard, where some of the dead retain courtesy titles, and figure in their epitaphs as



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Dr. or as "Mrs." The inevitable twin churches complete the village. A fifth church, the church of the Mormons, exists somewhere in the settlement; but I could never find it. On the westward end of Kalawao what we may call the official quarter stretches toward the promontory. The main feature is the enclosure of the hospital and prison, where bad cases and bad characters are kept in surveillance; a green in a stockade with a few papaias and one flowering oleander, surrounded on three sides by low white houses. A little way off, enclosed in walls and hedges, stands the Guest House of Kalawao, and, beyond that again, the quarters of the doctor.

The Guest House is kept ready for the visits of members of the Board. I arrived there early in the day, opened the gate, turned my horse loose, and entered in possession of the vacant house. I wandered through its chambers, visited the bathroom and the kitchen, and at last, throwing myself upon a bed, I fell asleep. Not before the hour of dinner, Dr. Swift, returning from his duties, wakened me and introduced himself. A similar arrival may be read of in the tale of the Three Bears; and that is well called a guest house where there is no host. Singular indeed is the isolation of the visitor in the Lazaretto. No patient is suffered to approach his place of residence. His room is tidied out by a clean helper during the day and while he is abroad. He returns at night to solitary walls. For a while a bell sounds at intervals from the hospital; silence succeeds, only pointed by the humming of the surf or the chirp of crickets. He steps to his door; perhaps a light still shines in the hospital; all else is dark. He returns and sits by his lamp and the crowding experiences besiege his memory; sights of pain in a land of disease and disfigurement, bright examples of fortitude and kindness, moral beauty, physical horror, intimately knit. He



must be a man very little impressionable if he recall not these hours with an especial poignancy; he must be a man either very virtuous or very dull, if they were not hours of self-review and vain aspirations after good.

When the Hawaiian Government embraced the plan of segregation they were doubtless (as is the way of Governments) unprepared, and the constitution of the Lazaretto, as it now exists, was approached by blunder and reached by accident. There was no design to pauperise; the lepers were to work, and in the whole or part be self-supporting; and when a site fell to be chosen, some extent of cultivable soil was first required. In this, as in other conditions, Kalawao was wholly fitted for the purpose. In the old days, when Molokai swarmed with population, the foreland must have been a busy and perhaps a holy place; and thirty years ago it was covered with the ruins of heiaus, but still inhabited and still in active cultivation. Terms of sale were easily agreed upon. Unhappily, the Government coquetted; the farmers were held for months under suspense; for months, in consequence, their houses were left unrepaired; their fields untilled, and the property was already much deteriorated before the purchase was confirmed and the clean inhabitants ejected from the foreland. The history of misgovernment by Board followed the common course to the customary end; *too late* was coupled as usual with *too early*; the Government had procrastinated to its loss, yet even then it was unready, and for another period of months the deserted farms lay idle. At length the first shipment of lepers landed (1865) with a small kit of blankets, tin dishes, and the like, but neither food nor money, to find the roofs fallen from the houses and the taro rotting in the ground.

They were strangers to each other, collected by common calamity, disfigured, mortally sick, banished



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without sin from home and friends. Few would understand the principle on which they were thus forfeited in all that makes life dear; many must have conceived their ostracism to be grounded in malevolent caprice; all came with sorrow at heart, many with despair and rage. In the chronicle of man there is perhaps no more melancholy landing than this of the leper immigrants among the ruined houses and dead harvests of Molokai. But the spirit of our race is finely tempered and the business of life engrossing to the last. As the spider, when you have wrecked its web, begins immediately to spin fresh strands, so these exiles, widowed, orphaned, unchilded, legally dead and physically dying, struck root in their new place. By a culpable neglect in the authorities they were suffered to divide among themselves the whole territory of the settlement; fell to work with growing hope, repaired the houses, replanted the fields, and began to look about them with the pride of the proprietor. Upon this scene of reviving industry a second deportation arrived, and the first were called upon to share and subdivide their lots. They did so, not without complaint, which the authorities disregarded; a third shipment followed shortly after in the same conditions, and a further redistribution of the land was imposed upon the early settlers. Remuneration was demanded; Government demurred upon the price; the lepers were affronted, withdrew their offer, and stood upon their rights, and a new regimen arose of necessity. The two first companies continued to subsist upon their farms; but the third, and all subsequent shipments, must be fed by the Government. Pauperism had begun, and the original design miscarried. To-day all are paupers; the single occasion of healthy interest and exercise subducted, and the country at large saddled with the support of many useless mouths.



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The lepers, cast out from society and progressively deprived of employment, swiftly decivilised. "*Aole Kanawai ma Keia Wahi!*"—"There is no law in this place"—was their word of salutation to newcomers; cards, dancing, and debauch were the diversions; the women served as prostitutes, the children as drudges; the dying were callously uncared for; heathenism revived; *okolehau* was brewed and in their orgies the disfigured sick ran naked by the sea. This is Damien's picture; these traits were viewed through the tarnish of missionary spectacles; but they seem all true to the human character in that unnatural and gloomy situation, nor is there one that need surprise a student of his fellow men. What may, indeed, surprise him—and what Damien, true to the clerical prevention, neglected to commemorate—is the lack of crime. Since 1865, the year of the landing, blood has been shed but once in the precinct; and the chief difficulty felt by successive rulers has been one inevitable in a colony of paupers, that of administration.

There has been but one chief luna (or overseer) from the first—Mr. Meyer, a man of much sagacity and force of character. But Mr. Meyer dwells in his own house on the top of the Pali; comes to the settlement only at fixed intervals or upon some emergency, and even then approaches it with precautions, which I could not but admire, and to which, in all likelihood, he owes his long immunity from the disease. He may thus be rather regarded as a visiting inspector, and the sub-luna resident among the lepers and most frequently a leper himself as the proper ruler of Kalawao. No less than ten persons have held this post in little more than twenty years, a fact which gives a measure at once of the difficulty of the office and the brevity of leper life.

The first was a Frenchman of the name of Lepart, a capable, high-spirited man; he was calumniated to



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the Government, justified himself and resigned. A British officer of the name of Walsh succeeded, soon died, and on his death-bed prayed to have the office continued to his wife. As this lady suffered from some deficiency of sight, and spoke no Hawaiian, there was conjoined with her an old ship captain, "a rough, honest, bawling good fellow," as ignorant of Hawaiian as herself. This unpromising Ministry fell at last, not by its own weakness, but the fault of others. The Board of Health was already giving a ration of butcher's meat, so many pounds a week to every patient; and the Ministry of the Interior, alarmed at the growing expense, issued an order limiting the number of cattle to be slaughtered. The figures were inconsistent; Mrs. Walsh quite properly obeyed the last command; the ration was in consequence reduced, and the lepers, under the lead of an able half-white, took out more cattle and killed them for themselves. A ship with police was despatched from Honolulu to quell this horrid rising; the half-white was imprisoned, and Mrs. Walsh and the skipper removed. A full-blood Hawaiian, who had been Captain of the King's guard, was chosen to succeed. He was a good man, a very bad luna; stood in fear of every one; always supposed he should be "prayed to death" and did, in fact, whether from the result of enchantments or the fear of them, die within the year. The next appointment was equally daring and successful. The ablest man in the lazaretto, the half-white who had killed the cattle, was installed as ruler—from the prison to the throne. He was one of those who must either rule or rebel, and as soon as he held the chief place and till death removed him the settlement was quiet.

Another half-white followed, the famous Billy Ragsdale, who had left a broad mark on the traditions of the colony. They tell that he sat in his porch and



suitors approached him on their knees; that he sent his glove to the store or the butcher's for a token, and that Mrs. Ragsdale went to church on Sunday with two boys bearing her train and a third holding her umbrella. Mr. Meyer (I am aware) denies these scandals; he might have been the last to hear of them, had they existed, and man, though he delights in making myths, is usually inspired by some original in fact. That Ragsdale was arrogant is, besides, undoubted, for his arrogance came near plunging the settlement in war. Hawaiians readily obey a half-white, still more readily a man of chiefly caste. Now there lived in the settlement, in Ragsdale's day, a brother of Queen Emma, Prince Peter Kaiu. Of a sudden Mr. Meyer received (by a messenger coming breathless up the Pali) a curt, civil, menacing note from Prince Peter. If Ragsdale were going on in this way—the way not specified—Prince Peter would show him which had the most friends in the settlement. Some minutes later a second note came from Ragsdale, breathing wrath and consternation, but not more explicit than the first. Mr. Meyer put a bottle of claret in his pocket, hastened down the cliff, and came to the house of the Prince. A crowd of men surrounded it, the friends referred to, or their van; it seems not known if they were armed, but their looks were martial. Prince Peter himself, although incensed, proved malleable in debate, owned it was disgraceful for the two best-educated men in Kalawao to quarrel, and consented to leave his friends behind and go alone with Mr. Meyer to the luna's. Ragsdale lived in a grass house on the foreland; it was garrisoned by some score of men with guns, axes, shovels, and fish spears. Ragsdale himself was on the watch, but the sight of two men coming empty-handed made him ashamed of his preparations and he received them civilly. A con-



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ersation followed; some misunderstandings were explained away; an apology handsomely offered by Ragsdale was handsomely accepted by the Prince; the bottle of claret was drunk in company, and the friends on either side disbanded. Thus ended the alarm of war, and the opponents continued in a serviceable alliance until death divided them.

It was in the reign of Ragsdale that Father Damien arrived, May, '73. He draws no very favourable picture of the society that paid homage to King Billy; but the reign was efficient, and save for the episode of Prince Peter, quiet. So much could not be said for that of his critic and successor, Damien himself, whose term of office served only to publish the weakness of a noble man. He was rough in his ways and he had no control; authority was relaxed, the luna's life was threatened, and he was soon eager to resign. Two more conclude the list: Mr. Strahan, who was still alive at the time of my visit, and Mr. Ambrose Hutchinson, who still held the reins of office.

Mr. Strahan, born of Scottish parents in Philadelphia, ran away to sea in a whaler and deserted in Tahiti. He learned carpentering, coopering, and seamanship; sailed mate in ships, made copra in the Palmyras, worked on the guano islands, and led in all ways the career of the South Sea adventurer. For two years he lived in Easter Island, the isle of nameless gods and forgotten pieties. A mysterious sickness, brought from the mainland by labour slaves, struck and prostrated the population. Mr. Strahan was seen sometimes alone to go out fishing, and he made with his own hands a barrow to convey the corpses to the grave, and crutches on which the native clergyman might accompany the funerals. "That was my best time," said the old gentleman, regretfully. At last, when he was mate of a schooner, he chanced one day



to be shaving, as I have received the story, in the cabin. "Good God, Strahan!" cried the Captain, "you have cut off a piece of your ear." He had cut off a piece of his ear and did not know it; the plague, long latent in his blood, was now declared, and the wanderer found a home in Kalawao. As a luna he did well, reducing at once the previous discontents. He claims to have introduced coffee shops, sewing-machines, musical instruments—"I wanted to put some life in the thing," says he—and the system of medals by which the drawing of double rations was at length prevented. Some of his claims are called in question; it is said he must certainly be under illusion as to the sewing-machines and the musical instruments; but all agree as to the efficiency of his administration. His worst trouble arose by accident, and depicts well the jealous suspicion and the vain and passing agitations of a pauperised society. From a chance boat he purchased a load of native food which (as it had not been made expressly for the settlement) was packed in bundles larger than the regulation size. These he set his assistants to break up and weigh out afresh. Word of it got abroad; it was rumoured that Strahan was secretly diminishing the rations; and he was suddenly surrounded as he rode by some fifty or a hundred horsemen menacing his life. "I sat right in my saddle like this. Says I: 'You may kill me; I'll be the sooner through with this leprosy. Why don't you do it?' I says: 'Barking dogs don't bite.' I was a hard old coon," added the ex-luna. In the progress of the disease blindness at last unfitted him for further duty, and he now dwells in a cottage by the hospital, delighting to receive visitors, to recall his varied experiences, and to recite his poetry. "It's dogg'rel, that's what it is," he says. "I'm not an educated man, but the idea's there. You see," he adds, "I've got nothing to do but



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to sit here and think." The surroundings of his later life have lent a colour to these musings, and he awaits death in his clean cottage, sightless; after so many joyous and so many rude adventures, so much ploughing the sea, so much frequentation of fair islands, one subject inspires and occupies his verse; he will speak to you gladly of old comrades or old days of pleasure and peril; but when he takes his pen it is to treat, with womanly tenderness, of the child that is a leper.

One incident remains—that of the murder. The Kapiolani Home was founded in Oahu for clean children born within the precinct, and Mr. Meyer was instructed to obtain the consent of the parents. It was given (to their honour be it said) by all, and the condition made, that one of the parents should accompany each child upon a visit of inspection, was naturally granted. There was an old leper in the settlement, a widower, with a leper son and two clean daughters, children. He was himself too far advanced to be allowed beyond the precinct, and he asked and obtained leave for his son to accompany the children in his place. The steamer came late, about 6 at night, and the children and their friends were bundled on board with extreme, perhaps indecent, haste. The Harbour Master came breathing hurry, to a shed after the baggage, and found the old man sitting in despair upon his children's trunk. He bid him rise; was unanswered, possibly unheard; and roughly plucked the trunk from below the sitter. In a moment, and for the only time in the story of the lazaretto, savage instinct woke; a knife was drawn, the Harbour Master was slain, and before the pitiable homicide could be disarmed two more were wounded. Even justice feared to approach the settlement; the trial was held at a safe distance, on the island of Lanai, and the criminal sentenced to ten years in prison. Outside, the tale was

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used to infamous purpose, and, whether from political intrigue or in the wantonness of sentimentalism, magnified as a case of inhumanity to lepers.

The murder stands alone, as I have said, in the criminal annals of Kalawao. Brewing *okolehau* or potato spirit is the common offence, and occurs, or is discovered, about once in the two years; there have been besides a burglary or two, and occasional assaults, always about women. For even here, in the anteroom of the grave and among so marred a company, the ancient forces of humanity prevail. And from Ragsdale and Prince Peter, when the collision of their vanities embroiled the foreland, the partisans who gathered at their cry, filled with the ineradicable human readiness to shed blood upon a public difference; the horsemen who surrounded Strahan, calling for his life; Strahan himself, when he sat in the saddle and defied them; and the men who brawled, and the poor pair for whom they quarrelled—all were lepers, maimed, defeatured, seated by an open grave. Yet upon this sheaf of anecdotes the influence of pauperism is plainly to be traced, while they might all be told, all understood, and leprosy not mentioned. Our normal forces, our whole limbs, even that expectation of days which we collate from actuarial tables—it seems there is nothing of which we may not be deprived, and still retain the gusto of existence. But perhaps mankind have scarce yet learned how mechanical, how involuntary, how fatal, or (if the reader pleases) how divine, is their immixture in the interests and the affairs of life.

Such is the story, such the Newgate calendar, of this scarce paralleled society, where all are lepers, stripped of their lands and families, prisoners without offence, sick unto death, already dead in law, and denied that chief regulator and moderator of men's lives, a daily task; where so many have besides been caught like



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bandits, lurking armed in woods, resisting to the blood,
hauled in with violence; scarce sooner taken than tamed.
They claim to be outside the law; it seems they were
men that did not want it, and without judges and
police could do better than ourselves surrounded with
protection and restraint.



THE LAZARETTO OF TO-DAY

Upolu, Samoan Islands, January, 1891.

The ideas of deformity and living decay have been burdensome to my imagination since the nightmares of childhood; and when I at last beheld, lying athwart the sunrise, the leper promontory and the bare town of Kalaupapa, when the first boat set forth laden with patients; when it was my turn to follow in the second, seated by two Sisters on the way to their brave employment; when we drew near the landing-stairs and saw them thronged with the dishonoured images of God, horror and cowardice worked in the marrow of my bones.

The coming of the Sisters had perhaps attracted an unusual attendance. To many of those who "meddle with cold iron" in the form of pens, any design of writing appears excuse sufficient for the most gross intrusion—perhaps, less fortunate, I have never attained to this philosophy—shame seized upon me to be there, among the many suffering and few helpers, useless and a spy; and I made my escape out of the throng and set forth on foot for Kalawao. It was still quite early morning, as I went with my bundles up the road. The air was cool, the level sunbeams struck overhead from the Pali, the birds were piping in the cliffside woods. I met many lepers riding hard, as though belated, toward the landing-place; others sat in their doorways, and with those I exchanged salutations, with these I sometimes stopped and fell in talk. Some half-way over, Mr. Hutchinson met and mounted me; and I came at last to the Guest-House, and threw myself on the bed to sleep, tired indeed in mind and body, but at peace. It was not merely that the plunge was made, and I had steeled my heart against painful



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surroundings; but already in the course of that morning walk, some of the worst of the painfulness had disappeared.

To the porch of a house in the outskirts of Kalaupapa I was summoned by a woman. She knew English, she was comely in face and person, of engaging manners spoke with an affectionate gentleness, and regarded me with undissembled sympathy. In the course of our talk it leaked out she supposed me to be the new white leper, and when I had corrected the mistake a singular change appeared immediately in her face and manner. She had thought I was a leper, doomed, like herself, to spend my few last days in that seclusion, and when she found that I was clean and free, and might look forward to the average life of man, her feeling was regret. In view of my own horrified thoughts of that disease and of the place I was then visiting, in view of the mountain outlaws, and of that scene on the beach of Hookena so recently inscribed upon my memory, it was hard to understand her attitude. Yet I am persuaded such is (on the whole) the attitude of the lazaretto. Horror, sorrow, all idea of resistance, all bitterness of regret have passed from the spirits of these sufferers, and the sick colony smiles upon its bed of death.

Nothing in the story of Molokai appears more culpable than that series of neglects by which the exiles were progressively pauperised: and, perhaps, nothing was more fortunate. Rations and no work are the attractions of the lazaretto. Even he who has lain in the bush, and been long hunted, and perhaps taken at last in combat, savagely defending freedom, is soon emasculated in that pauper atmosphere; and the wildest settle down contented to their life of parasites. I heard two men discussing an escape. One was an official. "Ah," said he, referring to the fugitive, "he had not been long here!" And such I believe to be



the fact, at least with natives; if they seek to escape at all, it is while they are new caught. Yet more significant is the case of the clean Kokuas. These, usually connections of the sick allowed to accompany their wives, husbands, or children, are the working-bees of the sad hive, the labourers, butchers, storekeepers, nurses, and grave-diggers in that place of malady and folded hands. The surroundings, the few toilers looked upon by so many as delivered from all touch of need—the frequency of death, the brevity of prospect, the consequent estimation of the moment—might relax the fibre even of ardent and industrious races. In the Polynesian Kokuas the result appears to be unmingled envy of a better state. They are peris at the gates of a paradise of rations. Dr. Swift had once in his hand a lancet charged with the virus of leprosy. “Come here,” he cried, in a somewhat appalling pleasantry, to one of the Kokuas, “come here and I will make a leper of you.” The man advanced, rolling up his sleeve as he came. *Paris valait bien une messe*; and, in the thought of this gentleman, rations are worth leprosy.

Within the precinct, to be leprous is the rule. The disease no longer awakens pity, nor do its deformities move shame in the patient or disgust in the beholder. Late one afternoon, as I rode from Kalaupapa, I saw in front of me, on a downward slope that leads to Kalawao, a group of natives, returning from some junket. They wore their many-coloured Sunday's best, bright wreaths of flowers hung (in the Hawaiian fashion) from their necks; the trade-wind brought me strains of song and laughter; and I saw them gambol by the way, and the men and women chase and change places with each other as they came. They made from the distance an engaging picture; I had near forgotten in what distressful country my road lay, and I was amazed to see (as they approached) that out of that



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small company two were unhumanly defaced. The girl at Hookena, a leper at large among the clean, held down her head. I was glad to find she would soon walk with face erect among her fellows, and perhaps be attended as a beauty. Yet more, she may even appear adorned and with applause upon a public stage; for plays and historical tableaux are among the chief diversions of the lazaretto. And one thing is sure, the most disgraced of that unhappy crew may expect the consolations of love; love laughs at leprosy; and marriage is in use to the last stage of decay and the last gasp of life.

On the whole, the spectacle of life in this marred and moribund community, with its idleness, its furnished table, its horse-riding, music, and gallantries, under the shadow of death, confounds the expectations of the visitor. He can not observe with candour but he must see it is not only good for the world but best for the lepers themselves to be thus set apart. The place is a huge hospital, but a hospital under extraordinary conditions in which the disease, although both ugly and incurable, is of a slow advance; in which the patients are rarely in pain, often capable of violent exertion, all bent on pleasure, and all, within the limits of the precinct, free. From his abnormal state another norm arises, and not the patients only, but their doctors and helpers, half forgot the habits of a healthy world. I have been present while the lay brother, Mr. Dutton, dressed the sores of his boy charges; he introduced them as they came with jesting comments on each case; and his pleasantries, which might have scattered a dinner party at home, were given and received with kindly smiles. "The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense." Chance had so arranged my life that I have been often constrained to visit infirmaries; in my case, the experience has been in vain; I have never crossed the doors of one without a contraction



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of the heart; and while I viewed the hospital at Kalawao, with Dr. Swift, or stood by as Mr. Dutton dressed his patients, I took in my breath like a groom. None the less, and even as I winced, I felt that I was making, I must not say much of little, but more than needful of a great deal; admired and envied in vain the non-chalance of my guides; and recognised with gratitude that the lees of life, even in that place, were not without alleviation and resource.

The case of the children is by far the most sad; and yet, thanks to Damien and that great Hawaiian lady, the kind Mrs. Bishop, and to the kind Sisters, their hardship has been minimised. Even the boys in the still rude boys' home at Kalawao, appeared cheerful and youthful; they interchange diversions in the boys' way; are one week all for football, and the next the devotees of marbles or of kites; have fiddles, drums, guitars, and penny whistles; some can touch the organ, and all combine in concerts. As for the girls in the Bishop Home, of the many beautiful things I have been privileged to see in life, they, and what has been done for them, are not the least beautiful. When I came there first the Sisters and the majority of the boarders were gone up the hill upon a weekly treat, guava hunting, and only Mother Mary Anne and the specially sick were left at home. I was told things which I heard with tears, of which I sometimes think at night, and which I spare the reader, I was shown the sufferers then at home; one, I remember, white with pain, the tears standing in her eyes. But, thank God, pain is not the rule in this revolting malady; and the general impression of the home was one of cheerfulness, cleanliness, and comfort. The dormitories were airy, the beds neatly made; at every bedhead was a trophy of Christmas cards, pictures, and photographs, some framed with shells, and all arranged with care



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and taste. In many of the beds, besides, a doll lay pillowed. I was told that, in that artificial life, the oldest and the youngest were equally concerned with these infantile playthings, and the dressmaking in particular was found an inexhaustible resource. Plays of their own arrangement were a favourite evening pastime. They had a croquet set, and it was my single useful employment, during my stay in the lazaretto, to help them with that game.

I know not if the interest in croquet survived my departure, but it was lively while I stayed; and the last time I passed there, on my way to the steamer's boat and freedom, the children crowded to the fence and hailed and summoned me with cries of welcome. I wonder I found the heart to refuse the invitation.

I used to have an easy conscience when returning from these croquet parties. Should any reader desire to share the rare sensation, boys' toys, music, and musical instruments will be welcome at Kalawao, and such trifles as old Christmas cards and bright-coloured remnants will serve to make beautiful the rooms, the dolls, and the maimed actresses of the Bishop Home. So much we may all do at a long range, and without risk of suffering. Nearer help is yet conceivable upon the part of some. And if a man be musical, cheerful, conversable, nothing of a rigorist, not burdened with a family, and smit with some incurable, perhaps some disfiguring complaint, it might cost him a few deep breaths at the beginning, but I know not where and how else he were so well employed, as ministering to the brief gaiety of these afflicted.



THE FREE ISLAND

Upolu, Samoan Islands, January, 1891.

I wonder (I have just said) that I could refuse the invitation of these stricken children, but in truth, when the day came, my heart panted for deliverance. Before the "Molokai" was yet announced I was already in the saddle, and the first boat carried me on board. It was near conveying me back again as well. Some flaw was in the wording of my pass, which allowed me specifically enough to enter the settlement, but said nothing of my leaving it; the steamer had been fined once before, and I was at first refused a passage. I had not known till then the eagerness of my impatience to be gone; it gave me persuasion; the Captain relented, and it was not long before I was tossing at sea, eating untainted food, drinking clear sea air, and beholding the headland of the lazaretto slip behind upon the starboard quarter.

The name of the whole large island of Molokai is sullied in the public mind, but Kalaupapa, Kalawao, and Walkolu, which make up the leper territory, form an inconsiderable fraction of its surface, and the rest is a free country of clean folk. Even the promontory itself has not yet been thirty years dedicated to sickness; its sad associations are still young, and in the legends of the race these melancholy scenes are peopled with warriors and fair dames. Just beyond Walkolu stood the fort of Haupu, of whose siege and fall readers may find the hyperbolical story in a recent volume; it was in these profound waters, where no ship may anchor, that the elastic Kana waded unembarrassed, and the Lady Hina, from the battlements of her prison, looked across the sea of Kalawao.

Our first place of call on the free island was the cleft



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of Pelekunu. Dinner—which we ate upon the hatch, and which may have been good or bad, I know not, to me it was nectar and ambrosia—dinner was scarce over ere we were close under the cliffs, passed between them through a rent, and lay tossing in the jaws of a fiord full of spray and clamour. A few houses stood along the beach; the mountain soared behind, a mountain so impracticable that to cross the island takes a hard day's travel. The starboard surf-boat was lowered, it pulled for the shore; right overhead, lads were running and leaping already on the ledges of the hill; the boat drew in; a man stood rocking in the bows; on the nearest vantage there stood over against him one of the lads of the shore; and these two, letter by letter, and watching the chances of the surf, exchanged the mails of Pelekunu. The scene rolled with the rolling of the ship; it passed amid so huge a clamour of the seas that as regards its human actors it might be said to pass in silence; it took but a breath or two of time, and it left (when we were forth again upon blue waters) no more than a roaring in my ears, and in the eyes of my mind a medley of tossing mountains, dancing boats, and bursting surges.

Beyond Pelekunu a vast face of mountain—three thousand feet, they said—plunges in the sea, from summit to base one unanimous, unbroken barrier to defy a cat, yet all green with contiguous forest, thick as a beast's fur, and growing, like fur, in swaths of divergent ply. This perpendicular bush in the time of the rains is all shot through with the silver of cascades. Even in the dry season, when I passed, the slot of them was like downward comb marks, and an attenuated grey mare's tail hung here and there, and dissipated as it fell. Island fellow passengers sought to point out to me a path about half-way up, by which men scramble, seeking the eggs of sea-birds that nest



populously in that hanging forest. I had never seen before, nor have I seen since, scenery so formidable as the island front of Molokai from Pelekunu to Wailau.

For Wailau we had a passenger, two pigs, and three sheep, besides the mails. Here a green valley runs back deep and tortuous among the mountains, the bed of a small stream; and about its mouth a single row of houses lines the beach, their windows flanking westward down the coast. Impassable surf broke at the very door-steps; and far to seaward the sound of its dissolution hung already in our ears. Communication with the shore was beyond hope. We kept away again, bearing along with us the passenger, who had enjoyed the advantage to behold his destination from the deck, and had now before him a fair choice, either to land on the lee coast and laboriously pass the mountains, or to begin his voyage again in the coming week, to meet perhaps a second disappointment.

We came ashore about sundown at Pukoo; a capital horse, which (had it been mine) I would not have lent to an apostle, was placed at my service; and the Captain and I rode till it was black night along the leeward coast. It was cool, and threatened rain, and the twilight was soon obscured by overhanging clouds. We rode fast on a good highway, and saw indistinctly flitting by us a succession of cane-brakes and taro patches, frequent churches—always in pairs, the Protestant and Catholic—and rare inhabited houses, piercing the darkness with their lights. About 8 of the night, the sound of a mill advised us of our destination; we turned aside from the highway, and came to a house where a prodigious number of men with strong Irish speech sat in a dark verandah; within was a long table, where I was soon taking tea with a proportion of ladies; and in the middle region, in a pleasant parlour, grown girls and laughing children flourished as



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Plenty (I thought) as mice. They were all of that class of Irish whom I can not tell, save for a trifling variance of brogue, from my own folk of Scotland; persons of thoughtful, careful speech, observant, subhumorously, and with those fine, plain manners which turn the laugh on class distinctions.

About half-past 8 of the next day, the Captain being long since gone to his ship, I took my leave of the McUrstens in a fine rain which speedily cleared off. My guide was one Apaka, a stout, short-whiskered native, mounted on a white punch that seemed to be his near connection. Maui behind us towered into clouds and the shadow of clouds. The bare opposite island of Lanai—the reef far out, enclosing a dirty, shoal lagoon—a range of fish-ponds, large as docks, and the slope of the sandy beach on which we mostly rode, occupied the left hand. On the right the mountain rose in steeps of red clay and sprouts of disintegrated rock, sparsely dotted with the white-flowering cow-thistle. Here and there along the foreshore stood a lone pandanus, and once a trinity of dishevelled palms. In all the first part of that journey, I recall but three houses and a single church. Plenty of horses, kine, and sullen-looking bulls were there; but not a human countenance. "Where are the people?" I asked. "*Pau Kanaka make.*" "Done; people dead," replied Apaka, with the singular childish giggle which the traveller soon learns to be a mark of Polynesian sensibility. "No people? No houses?" I would cry, at the turn of every bay; and back would come the antiphon: "*Pau Kanaka make.*"

We rode all the time by the side of the great fish-ponds, the labour (you would say) of generations. The riches and the agriculture of Molokai awoke of yore the envy of neighbouring kings. Only last century a battle was fought upon this island in which it has been com-



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puted that thousands were engaged; and he who made the computation, though he lived long after, has seen and counted, when the wind blew aside the sands, the multitude of bones and skulls. There remains the evidence of the churches, not yet old and already standing in a desert, the monuments of vanished congregations. *Pau Kanaka make*. A sense of survival attended me upon my ride, and the nervous laughter of Apaka sounded in my ears not quite unpleasantly. The place of the dead is clean; there is a poetry in empty lands.

A greener track received us; smooth, shoreside grass was shaded with groves and islets of acacias; the hills behind, from the red colour of the soil and the singularity of the formation, had the air of a bare Scottish moorland in the bleak end of autumn; and the resemblance set a higher value on the warmth of the sun and the brightness of the sea. I wakened suddenly to remember Kalaupapa and my playmates of two days before. Could I have forgotten? was I happy again? had the shadow, the sorrow, and the obligation faded already?

The thought was still in my mind when the green track conducted us into Kaunakakai; a church among the acacias, a grove of cocoa palms, a pier in the lagoon, a few scattered houses, and a schoolhouse where we paused to gossip, the brown schoolboys observing us through the windows and exulting in the interruption. Thence we must mount into that iron desert of the foot-hills, which we had skirted all the morning. Clouds of dust accompanied our march; rock and red clay, rock and red clay, cow-thistles and cow-thistles, and no other growing thing, surrounded us; all the while the sea and Lanai, and the desert western end of Molokai, spread wider and paler below us as we went. The horses, in the course of the ascent, began to snort



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and labour; the coat of the white punch was strangely altered into one of many hues, and his rider began to flail him with the bridle end. Next, we must descend into a narrow vale of rocks, where were candlenut trees and prickly pears in flower; it was deadly hot and dry in the valley, and Apaka's horse complained aloud. One more abrupt ascent, and we found we had climbed at last into the zone of rains and the sea wind. Downs spread about us clothed with grass and diversified with trees and cattle. The roots of the glens which here (on the backbone of the isle) lie near together, were all thronged with candlenuts shining like beeches in the spring; their slopes dotted with lehua, a small tree growing something like the cork, and bearing a red flower. Here and there were houses widely scattered, and chief among these the house of Mr. Meyer presides in a paradise of flowers and Monterey cypress, the doors standing open on trellised verandahs, the sweet Trade making a vital stir in all the chambers. Here he begins to grow old among his sons and fair daughters; and some 2000 feet below—a leap of half a minute—the lepers ride by the sea margin, and the boys of Kalawao play on their instruments and the girls of the Bishop Home arrange their bedside trophies.

For the whole slope of the isle and the channelling of water-courses run to the south; and to the north, a little beyond Meyer's door, the world abruptly stops. At the edge of the Pali, the lehua trees are grown upon by a strong creeper, in whose embrace many stand dead; a yellowish moss like sheep's wool flutters from their boughs; they go over the edge, which is sheer and sudden like a battlement, in open order, leaning from the wind; and become immediately massed upon the face in thickets. The base can not be seen; not many hundred feet below the wood comes to a profile, and stands relieved against the sea and the singular flat



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perspective of the promontory, blacker and bleaker to look down upon from this high station; the black cliffs bounding it, the white breakers creaming beyond, and beyond again the green belt of soundings shading swiftly into the profoundest blue of ocean. A strong sun threw out the details; Kalaupapa, the home, the churches, the houses drawn up in line like bathing-machines, all distinct and bright like toys.

Here, where it began, only some 2000 feet higher, I bring to an end this visiting of Molokai. The whole length and breadth of the once busy isle I have either coasted by or ridden. And where are the people? where are the houses? where is the smoke of the fires? I see again Apaka riding by me on the leeward beach; I hear again the sound of his painful laughter and the words of his refrain: "*Pau Kanaka make.*"

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