



LEFT: Lagoon fishing in Samoa

return to their old isolation. I don't see how they could, or what use it could be to them."

Mr. Danielsson was interested in the Maoris because they had emigrated from the old Polynesian home in Tahiti at about the same time in the 14th Century that the Tuamotuans had. Yet Maori culture today was much more alive than Tuamotuan. He thought that this was due to the Maoris being in a minority here and asserting their old culture as a form of nationalistic compensation.

Yet perhaps, despite this assertion, the cultural changes which he forecasts for Polynesians to the north will also take place here. This is how he puts it in *The Happy Island*: "The simple, idyllic condi-

tions of life will gradually disappear. Tahitians and advanced Tuamotuans will teach the new generation contempt for the old values, and with every old person who dies more and more of the Polynesian friendliness and magnanimity will be replaced by more modern and profitable virtues."

Lively Lunch-hour Music

THE National Orchestra's audiences are not generally given to eating during performances. They may be expected to abandon this constraint shortly, however, for the new season's lunch-hour concerts.

The concerts will start at 12.15 p.m., and end at 1.45 p.m., thus providing three-quarters of an hour of music in each of the two most common lunch hours. Programmes will consist of lighter and less demanding music, rather similar in character to that heard at the Promenade Concerts. The first of this year's lunch-hour concerts will be at Wellington on May 4.

Speaking of the programmes, the National Orchestra's guest conductor Warwick Braithwaite told *The Listener* that most of the items he had included were short—so that patrons might come and go at convenient times—and that there were no hard musical nuts to crack. "Where there is a symphony," he said, "it will be a lighter one. In the first programme I have included the delightful little Mozart Symphony, No. 29 in A, which takes only 17 minutes, and is a work well worth bringing to light."

Mr. Braithwaite said also he was looking forward to hearing the leader of the orchestra, Vincent Aspy, in his solo performance of Saint-Saens's *Havanaise*. "He is a very fine leader, and, I believe, an equally fine soloist."

"Of course," continued Mr. Braithwaite, "no programme of this type would be complete without a Massenet suite. In this case it will be the *Scènes Pittoresques*, a charming suite which I

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TURNING POINT IN POLYNESIA

We publish this interview with Bengt Danielsson in the knowledge that the Pacific Islanders are presenting their own views of the situation in Polynesia, at the second South Pacific Congress, which ends at Noumea this week.

BENGT DANIELSSON, the bearded Swedish voyager who recently arrived in New Zealand on what might be called the wake of the tidal wave created by the Kon-Tiki expedition (of which he was a member), has been living in various parts of the Pacific since 1947. Some of his thoughts on what life has to offer in the paradise to the north of us are expressed in his book *The Happy Island*, which describes his stay on Raroia in the Tuamotus. After some months in the Marquesas

he wrote another book, whose Swedish title means *The Forgotten Islands*.

But Mr. Danielsson is also something of an anthropologist—he calls himself "a social anthropologist"—and when *The Listener* interviewed him it was with the thought that a man with such a scientific interest in islands might be able to tell us something of value about our Polynesian neighbours. Last year he was a member of the Pacific Science Board expedition to the Tuamotu Group, sponsored by the Bishop Museum in Honolulu as one of a series of field trips aimed at studying present-day life in the coral atolls, which have hitherto been rather neglected in Polynesian research.

"We have reached a turning point in Polynesian anthropology," he said. "Previously most scientists studying Polynesia have been interested in its past. But because Polynesian culture has disappeared so rapidly, we can't do much more historical reconstruction. The proper thing now is to study present conditions and discover the general laws operating, so that we can plan for the future."

Mr. Danielsson said that he was a graduate of the University of Upsala and had started his anthropological field work in 1946 with a visit to the Jibaro tribe of head hunters in the Amazon basin.

In the course of this study, which was the subject of his first book, he came to know a good deal about the balsa

wood rafts on which the Jibaros travel up and down the Amazon. After his work had taken him over the border of Ecuador into Peru, he told us, he met by chance the five Norwegians of the Kon-Tiki expedition. He became the sixth member partly because he was a Scandinavian and partly because of his special knowledge of the balsa raft. Six were needed so that the days and nights could be divided evenly into two-hour watches. Since the Kon-Tiki episode he had fallen in love with Polynesia. He had spent 18 months in the Tuamotus, six months in the Marquesas, and periods in the Societies, the Cook Islands, and on Hawaii. The Pacific Science Board expedition to the Tuamotus was the fourth of a series planned by Sir Peter Buck. The previous three had been to Kapinga Marenga, the Marshalls, and the Gilberts respectively. Sir Peter had gone only on the first trip before his death in 1951, but his work was being carried on. The Bishop Museum had recently received a grant from the Carnegie Institute to help it carry out "a vast research programme in the whole Polynesian area," a five years' study of the "actual situation" in Polynesia.

"At Raroia in the Tuamotus our task was to make a comparative study of the daily life of the islanders, related to what we know of life on the more fertile mountainous groups such as the Societies," he said. "The Tuamotus are in reality nothing but coral reefs rising from five to ten feet above sea level. They haven't been invaded by Europeans in the same way as Samoa or Tahiti, yet the inhabitants wear European dress, build their houses of planks, and live from the sale to traders of copra and mother-of-pearl. The islands are becoming over-populated, have already lost practically everything of their old culture, and are on the road to complete Europeanisation."

"I don't regret it," he said. "We can't return to old times. From an economic viewpoint these islands are now integrated into the world economy, and with the improved communications of today it is unlikely that they will ever



BENGT DANIELSSON with his wife and their year-old daughter Maruia