

the bitterness of the pangs of mal-de-mer, but full tables have been the rule on the Moana since she cast off at Sydney, and the gentle breezes and generally placid waters have saved from and staved off the illness from many overstrung travellers like me who never learns to look placidly from a steamer's deck on 'old ocean's grey and melancholy waste.'

Somebody has remarked that when a number of people embark for a voyage of three or four weeks a process of

Natural Selection

sets up in the matter of acquaintance-making. National or colonial groups come together most spontaneously, but leave room for the further play of occupation and social rank. It took the camera fiends, for instance, only about 24 hours to find each other out. Colonialists thaw rapidly and fall readily into friendly and helpful intercourse with each other and the world at large and form a strongly-marked and pleasant contrast with the cold aloofness of the average Briton on tour. Acquaintanceships spread sporadically—a number of little groups that have 'found' each other being day by day brought into contact with others through some bond of common membership, and games and the daily sweep on the run, and exchange of books and magazines, and other kindly courtesies and the thousand and one little interests of the voyage knit all together at last into a happy family.

The old song hath it that 'the sailor sighs as sinks his native shore.' The landsman feels a sense of loneliness when the shore—be it native or foreign—has dipped beneath the waters and all that is visible from the upper deck is a great flat, sharply defined disc of heaving blue, covered in—as with a great dish-cover—with the fainter-colored azure of the sky and in the midst the ship, leaving a foamy track astern, but never seeming to reach any nearer to the further edge of the ocean's circling rim. To right and left from our ocean track occasional flying fish flutter up above the waters, scurry off on their long, briny, wing-like fins, and, after a flight of three to thirty yards, drop with a splash into the ocean. The Pacific is not teeming with these interesting creatures, as the Indian ocean is, but we 'flushed' a few of them almost every day of our long journey from Brisbane to Honolulu. To one acquainted with the New Zealand coasts, and with the southern shores of Australia, the almost complete lack of bird-life adds a strange feeling of loneliness to the Pacific. From Brisbane to Honolulu less than a dozen sea-birds met my gaze—all or almost all of them dark, solitary rangers hunting over the fields of ocean hundreds of miles from the nearest shore, and on motionless pinion skimming

'Up and down! Up and down!

From the base of the wave to the billow's crown.'

For this dark wanderer

'Lives on the wide, wide sea,

On the craggy ice, in the frozen air,

And only seeketh her rocky lair

To warm her young and to teach them spring

At once o'er the waves on their stormy wing.'

On March 29 we 'picked up' the

Isle of Pines.

It is the Norfolk Island or 'hell' of the adjoining French penal settlement of New Caledonia—the island-prison of the most troublesome and refractory of the criminal population of the group. But it was land, for all that and for hours it attracted the eager attention of every binocular on board, although it never showed more than two dim conjoined grey hills twenty-five miles away on the rim of the sea. Two days later (Easter Monday) the Fiji group appeared—dim grey peaks and islet-hills and steep detached rocks that cut the horizon line like the teeth of a steel-trap. The sea, as we approached the Fijis, was, so to speak, planed and sand-papered, without a pulse or ripple to break its level surface. While the afternoon was still bright we passed within eight or ten miles of the fertile island of Mbenga, the land where, on a great annual festival day, natives walk through a pit of fire-heated stones. It appears that none but the initiated are permitted to witness the ceremonies with which the copper-skinned old wizards of Mbenga prepare their men for this new form of ordeal by fire, but I should not be surprised if they submit the leathery soles of the chosen islanders to some preparation akin to that which enabled the white schoolboy to do curious feats with lighted candles and hot irons after his hands and mouth have been well anointed with liquid storax. Viti Levu, the largest island of the Fiji group, 'tails' from Mbenga—its jagged outline of sharp, close-crowded peaks being closely suggestive, in the fading light, of the knobby spinal column of a great alligator.

Suva,

the capital, stands on Viti Levu. Its fine harbor is surrounded by a natural breakwater built after ages of trial by that wonderful submarine engineer the coral insect, and circles round about like a great set of lower teeth that come almost flush with the surface at low water. The entrance is through a break, as though the mensors had been pulled out of the circling dental row. As we were being piloted through it the pilot's oarsmen in their boat alongside sang (with a keen eye for falling coins) quaint native ditties in a mellow, vowels tongue strangely suggestive of that of the Siamese sailors, beating time with their hands swaying their bare bronze shoulders to and fro, and displaying an aptitude for harmony such as one hears in a Lombard vineyard or a German camp. As we proceeded to our anchorage showers of rockets were sent up in welcome, and the colored lights and the lamps of the town set long reflecting beams upon the smooth and unwrinkled face of the harbor. The sun had set behind Mbenga. Behind the rugged peaks the sky was for a brief space like a sheet of copper that had been passed through the fire. The blazing colors faded fast and darkness fell like the silent rolling down of a curtain. In the tropics there is none of the poetry of the slowly receding *crepuscule* or dusk of Origo or the British Isles, when

'The lengthening shadows wait
The first pale stars of twilight.'

The plague in Sydney prevented us going ashore in Suva. The more knowing New Zealanders sailed thither by the Taviuni from Auckland—a course which I cordially commend, for it shortens the sea-journey to Vancouver by about a week, and enables the traveller to see this Pacific paradise in a leisured way. As for us, while the ship loaded fruit and water, we swept town and country with glasses, and feasted our eyes on the rampant tropical vegetation that swarmed over everything, crowned the tall peaks and framed the bungalow of the white man, and the thatched huts of the coolies. Convicts and policemen were the only natives who were permitted to come along the wharf near which we were moored. They were splendid specimens of manhood, of the type of their kinsmen the Maori, the police in blue jacket and scalloped loin-cloth, the convicts in white loin-cloth only (stamped with the broad arrow), all their skins the color of new copper; thick, matted, erect hair, dyed a golden color with the aid of lime (according to native custom); and, but for their Polynesian head-pieces, looking as if they had just stepped out from those studies of anatomy, the cartoons of Raphael. A merry crew of convicts, too—for they sang their native melodies to the ship-folk, and dived for coins and performed *mikas* (or dances) and posed for amateur photographs the live-long day, and gained much cash thereby, and were more like over-grown schoolboys out for a holiday than criminals serving out a term of hard labor.

We were naturally greatly interested in the

New Catholic Cathedral

of Suva, which is fast approaching completion. It is the most massive structure in the place and stands within a stone's throw of the wharves, in full view of where the Moana was moored. It is a large edifice, built (I think) of stone imported from Sydney, and its facade crowned with a great statue. A flanking tower is in course of erection. The building is roofed, and during our stay there a bazaar in aid of the building fund was being held within its walls. The sacred edifice is to be solemnly opened in August by his Grace Archbishop Redwood, and a large number of other members of the hierarchy of Australasia are expected to be present on what will be for the Church in Fiji a historic occasion.

There are some 12,000 Catholics among the ten score or thereabouts of inhabited islands of the Fiji group. The remainder of the population are for the most part adherents of some form or other of Wesleyanism. As in the Hawaiian Islands, the native population is rapidly melting away. The current issue of the *Fiji Times* during our brief stay at Suva (that of March 29) published official statistics which tell

A Melancholy Tale.

In 1891 the population was 105,794. Last year's census returns (now complete) show a population of only 94,397—a decrease of 11,397, or about 121 per thousand. The census of 1891 showed a drop of 77 per thousand on that of 1881, and the tale of a vanishing race that is told in the recently-published figures is well described by the Commissioner as 'appalling.' Even the Maori is vanishing too, though, happily, not at such a raging pace. The last Tasmanian aboriginal died in 1872. In Victoria the black man is almost extinct, and in the other states of the Commonwealth he is just as surely doomed. The North American Indian is going, too, in the wake of the vanished races that have melted on contact with English-speaking civilisation. Spain and Portugal alone of colonising peoples seem to be about the only ones that were capable of elevating and preserving the aboriginal tribes with whom they came in contact. In his recent work, *The Spanish Pioneers*, Mr F. Lummis (an American non-Catholic writer) says, for instance, that 'the legislation of Spain in behalf of the Indians everywhere was incomparably more extensive, more comprehensive, more systematic, more humane, than that of Great Britain, the colonies, and the present United States all combined. Those first teachers gave the Spanish language and Christian faith to a thousand aborigines where we gave a new language and religion to one. There have been Spanish schools for Indians in America since 1524. By 1575—nearly a century before there was a printing press in English America—many books in twelve different Indian languages had been printed in the city of Mexico, where in our history John Fint's Indian Bible stands alone; and three Spanish universities in America were nearly rounding out their century when Harvard was founded. A surprisingly large proportion of the pioneers of America were college men; and intelligence went hand in hand with heroism in the early settlement of the New World.' And the result of the Spanish method of colonisation is this: that the pure-blood Indians of Mexico are 38 per cent. of the total population, and people of mixed races 43 per cent., while in Peru 57 per cent. of the population are aboriginals, and 23 per cent. of mixed race; and the Philippines, with their 6,000,000 native Catholics, are a monument more lasting than bronze to Spanish enterprise and piety and valor.

We left Suva on Easter Tuesday, April 1, amidst a pelting downpour of cooling tropical rain that smote the awning and sides of the ship like hail-shot. That night, while the moonbeams tipped the ripples with a path of dancing light, we crossed the 180th meridian east from Greenwich, and the captain gave us

Another Day.

We went to bed on that Tuesday night, April 1, and arose on Tuesday morning, April 1. 'Time and its tenses,' says Froide in his *Ocean*, 'are strange things, and at their strangest when one is travelling round the globe. The question is not only what season it is but what day it is, and what o'clock it is. The captain makes it twelve o'clock when he tells us that it is noon; and it seemed as if a supply of time was among the ship's stores, for when we reached 180 E. long. he presented us with an extra day, and we had two Tuesdays, two eights of April in one week. As our course