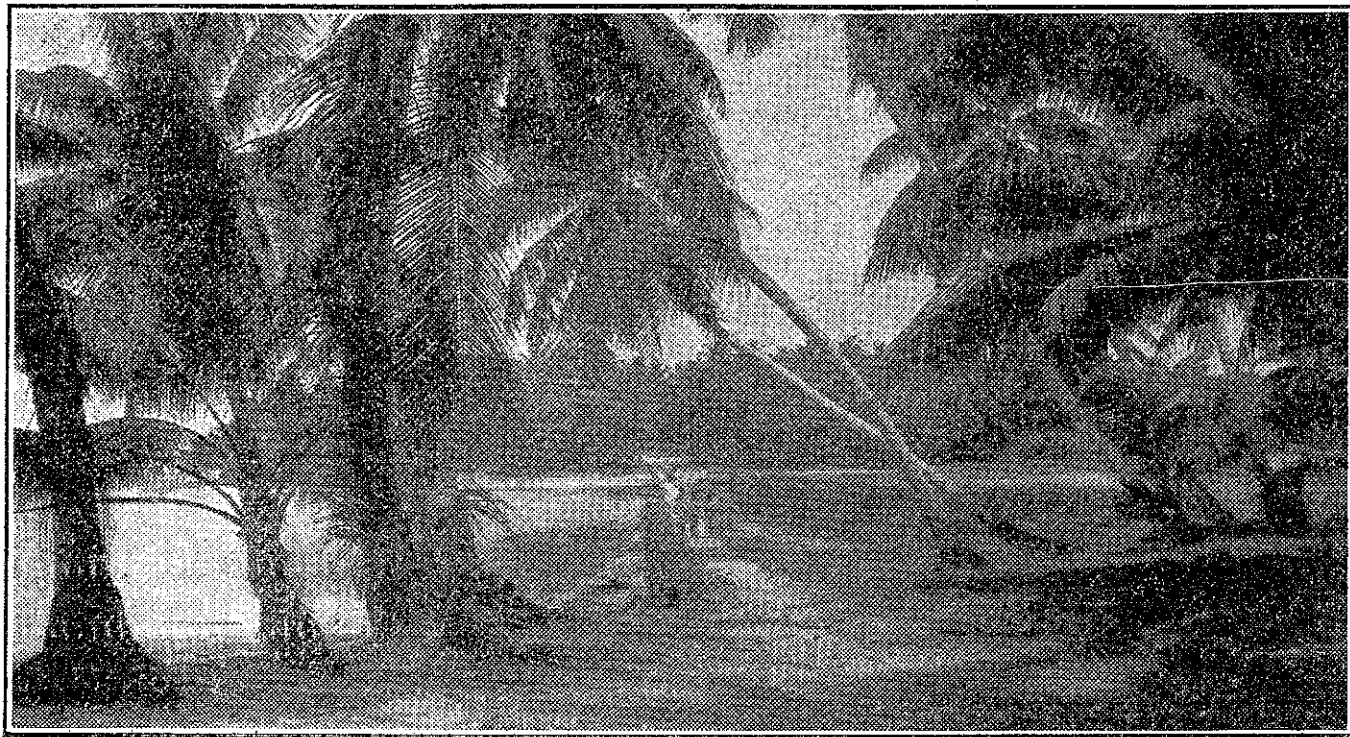


CIVILISATION IN



Where Coconut Palms Stand By The Quiet Lagoon

THERE is a pleasant parlour game these days in which people have to decide what books they would take with them if they were to be marooned on a solitary Pacific Island.

It is an amusing occupation for an idle half-hour, quite good fun. For two young people, now of Wellington, a few years ago it became suddenly intensely serious.

They were going to a solitary coral island in the Pacific, cut off from civilisation for eight months.

There would be one white trader there and the rest Polynesian natives. No white woman had ever been on the island before.

They Decide

HELPED by their friends, they made up their minds. They took a complete Shakespeare, the Bible and a dictionary. For the rest they took books with the most reading for volume weight.

Two volumes of the Encyclopedia Britannica, a number of small library editions of the classics, a small volume on tropical medicine, and just a few recent novels. And they took as well a copy of "Alice in Wonderland."

THEY brought back with them one other book. Some of it was in their heads, some of it in 1800 manuscript pages of ethnological data. It runs to four or five fat volumes and is being published by Bishop Museum at Honolulu, which is under the directorship of the noted New Zealander and Polynesian scholar, Dr. Buck.

The first volume has just reached New Zealand.

The completed work will be the most complete study of every aspect of life of a people on a Polynesian island that has ever been written. It is called "The Ethnology of Pukapuka."

THE two young people were Dr. Ernest Beaglehole and his wife, Pearl Beaglehole. The two of them

IN a new NBS series of talks, "Manners Maketh Man," to begin from 2YA on June 6, Dr. Ernest Beaglehole will speak on "The Primitive Idea of a Gentleman." It was in the Island of Pukapuka in the Cook Group that Dr. Beaglehole and his wife, Pearl Beaglehole, studied the manners of a primitive people . . . a people who can find almost the whole needs of their civilisation in a coconut shell, and yet find, too, contentment.

had worked together at Yale University, U.S.A., where Dr. Beaglehole, a New Zealander, was specialising in Polynesian research.

Both he and his American wife were anthropologists. When Dr. Beaglehole was given a fellowship by the Bishop Museum for field work in a Pacific Island, they chose for their field the island of Pukapuka, in the northern Cook Group, administered by the Cook Islands Department of the New Zealand Government.

The other habited islands of the Pacific had been studied, but Pukapuka was still at that time in 1934 an unknown scientific quantity.

Necessities

WHEN they left, they took with them besides their books and equipment and gifts for the natives, a first-aid kit, a primus stove, a folding table big enough to hold a typewriter, some chairs, and some supplies of European food—powdered milk, butter, flour, sugar, tea, coffee, and cigarettes.

They took, so to speak, the merest skeleton necessities of our Western civilisation.

They found at Pukapuka a people, happy and contented, who needed scarcely anything to live on except coconuts.

The natives fished, of course, and they grew the Polynesian potato, the taro. But apart from that they had found almost all the needs of their civilisation inside a coconut.

They could, in short, live on coconut.

"They made their clothing from the leaf of the coconut," Mrs. Beaglehole told me; "the thatch of their houses, their food-platters, and even the walls or rather the venetian blinds that they