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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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SMY
AUSTRIA
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TAHITI

THE GARDEN OF THE PACIFIC

BY

DORA HORT

AUTHOR OF "VIA NICARAGUA," ETC

WITH FRONTISPIECE

London

T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1891
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

TO MY

MUCH ESTEEMED NEPHEW,

W. H. LEVIN,

OF WELLINGTON,

NEW ZEALAND.

Carpenter
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CHAPTER I.

FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO TAHITI.

HAD always been under the impression that the Polynesian Islands attracted to their shores none but religious denominations, that Otahiti and missionaries were synonymous, until undeceived by A—, who described to me the South Pacific in such marvellously glowing colours that it induced me to accompany him to Tahiti, the beauty of which he had in no way exaggerated.

We sailed from San Francisco on board a small clipper brigantine of 160 tons, called the Emily, which might have passed for a yacht had it not been for the absence of a flush deck and the cargo she carried. A half-deck house occupied most of the space aft, leaving merely a vacant corner near the wheel, where I had my sea-chair placed, and there I sat in close proximity to the silent helmsman. A few steps led down to the main cabin, which was divided into a small saloon with dinner-table,
stationary benches, and four open berths, besides the captain and officers' state-rooms. At meals the captain sat in an imposing arm-chair at the head of the table.

The second compartment was much smaller, and when necessary could be added to the tiny saloon by throwing back the folding-doors. It contained only two state-rooms, one of which was allotted to Margaret my maid, A—and I occupied the other—an arrangement that suited us in every respect, as it secured our privacy, though there was only one other passenger besides ourselves, a Frenchman, who revolted me daily by floating down his throat two pills in his first spoonful of soup!

The captain was a thorough John Bull, short, stout, and florid—a striking contrast to his chief mate, who was tall, thin, and angular. The cook was an Italian and a chef par excellence; it was really inconceivable how he contrived to concoct so many tempting dishes out of canned provisions, of which our fare principally consisted.

Beppo was our trump card, who evidently annoyed Captain Sutton by persistently coming to me for orders. I could not make him comprehend that, though the owner's wife, I was simply a passenger, without authority in the internal management of the vessel.

Our steward proved a snare and delusion. A little niece of mine in San Francisco had unearthed him from a dilapidated hut outside her mother's fence. Her attention had been drawn to the spot by either the harmonious or inharmonious notes of an accordian
—an instrument I never could endure—played within a clump of stunted oak trees which curiosity led the child to examine, where she discovered a huge negro whose pitiable tale of want excited her sympathy. His name, he said, was Isaac, and he declared that he was absolutely starving, that he would be willing to work for his food if he could find employment. Hearing this the little girl ran off and told her mother, who hastened to satisfy the man's hunger; she subsequently employed him in odd jobs, and finally he got promoted to indoor work. Amongst ourselves we had decided that Isaac was in all probability a runaway slave, an impression that was confirmed when he implored me almost with tears in his eyes to let him accompany us to Tahiti. He had heard that the captain of the Emily was looking out for a steward and begged for the position, asserting that he understood the duties, and was not a sufferer from sea-sickness, which was an essential point. Out of commiseration for his distress, which I construed into fear of being caught by his owner, I used my influence with A——, who engaged him as our private steward. During the first two or three days of our voyage the weather was intensely disagreeable, so boisterous that the Emily was like a mere cockle-shell in the trough of the sea; she rolled, pitched, and trembled, to my utter discomfort. As to my maid, she was so frightfully sea-sick, that when I heard Isaac was in the same deplorable condition and unable to do his work, I commiserated his sorry plight, though I had to admit that he had grossly deceived us on that very point. But when the sea subsided and the vessel
glided on her course with no perceptible motion, and our steward still continued to shirk his duties, I concluded that the wretch had taken us completely in and was making no effort whatever to disguise the fact. He had gained the end he had in view—his escape from San Francisco, where his master was very likely hunting for him—and as idleness was more congenial to him than work, lies and deceit more natural to him than truth and honour, he had made up his mind not to fulfil any part of his contract if he could possibly avoid doing so. Depend upon it there were many more Isaacs than Uncle Toms among the Southern negroes!

Beppo, in consequence of the steward's non-appearance, had, for the time being, to perform double duty, an imposition to which he submitted most cheerfully. A sudden squall sprang up one morning when Beppo was crossing the slippery deck with an armful of plates. Captain Sutton shouted to him to close the skylight. Naturally he had to enter the cabin first, so as to deposit his burden in safety; he had barely effected his object before the captain rushed after him, looking like an infuriated bulldog, and, notwithstanding that I stood by, he grasped the man's neck and struck him repeatedly in the face. I was horrified at witnessing such brutality, and hurried away as fast as I could in search of A——, whom I implored to come and put a stop to the disgraceful scene. I pronounced the captain's conduct to be perfectly scandalous; A—— was of the same opinion, but explained that he could not possibly interfere between the captain and one of his crew.
From this I judged that Captain Sutton had availed himself of the earliest opportunity to let poor Beppo know who was his real master. For my part, I considered such brutality an abuse of power, and I retraced my steps to find the ill-used man laying the breakfast-table with anything but a placid countenance. His face was bruised and swollen, his shirt torn to shreds and stained with blood, as were his trousers; his scowling face indicated a capacity for some murderous deed which impressed me uncomfortably, and I tried to propitiate him by expressing my indignation at his being subjected to such treatment. I blamed the captain unstintingly, which I fear was an unwise proceeding, but I was overflowing with compassion for the poor fellow's sorry plight. A—— gave me a shirt and trousers for Beppo, which I begged him to wear in place of those he had on. He took the clothes, but, to my intense disgust, continued to appear in his very objectionable garments; if with the object of annoying the captain, he no doubt succeeded, for it must have been extremely aggravating to him to have constantly before his eyes the evidence of his outrageous conduct.

Beppo imparted to me in confidence that out of consideration for the signora he had abstained from mortally injuring the man who had dared to strike him, but that as soon as we reached Tahiti he would have his revenge; but I imagine that long before then he had reconsidered his threat. The poor fellow had experienced very hard lines. He had accumulated a small capital during the Crimean campaign, when he had held a lucrative position as chef on board
an English frigate. After the war Beppo made his way to California, where he established himself as a Restaurateur in a large mining district, and did a thriving business until his premises caught fire, when he lost everything he possessed save the clothes he stood in. Unable to resume the same line of business for want of means, Beppo resolved to try his luck in Australia, where he had friends, and was working his way thither, which explained how a chef of his ability came to be cook on a craft such as ours.

A little Scotch terrier that I had brought with me became an especial pet of the captain’s, and was allowed the run of the vessel. She slept in the cabin, and was always on hand at meal-times. Her regularity was so noticeable in this respect that the first time she failed to be in her usual position—begging—we all exclaimed, “Why, where is Rosy?” In vain we called her name; the captain’s familiar whistle also remained unanswered, and Rosy never reappeared.

No one was more active in searching for the missing dog than Isaac, who finally suggested that she must have fallen into the hold and got jammed among the cargo. As it was impossible to make a thorough examination of the hold, her fate remained a mystery. One morning, when I occupied my sea-chair, the man at the helm suddenly addressed me: “We hope, lady, that you don’t suspect any of us sailors of having made away with your little dog?” As the man’s tone implied even more than his words, I did not hesitate to question him further, and had no difficulty in eliciting the truth—that the black
monster had thrown Rosy overboard. A sailor on watch saw him do it, and heard him mutter, "You damn filthy beast, I'll take good care that you don't make your bed on my trousers again." Then came a whine and a splash. The cowardly deed had occurred before daylight, and was therefore supposed by Isaac to have been unperceived.

Completely outraged I carried my complaint to Captain Sutton, hoping in my heart that he would rope's-end the wicked wretch to within an inch of his life. What, then, was my amazement to hear him call Isaac forward, and tell him to return to the forecastle, and never show his ugly black face aft while we were afloat. I was utterly confounded and indignant at his displaying such leniency, and exclaimed, "Good gracious, Captain, can you not punish a heartless brute like that with more severity?" He coolly replied, "He is your servant, not mine"; and in this way the inhuman rascal failed to get his deserts, as A—— also declined to meddle with him—I trust not on account of the man's colossal stature!

The weather was delightful and most enjoyable, a smooth, rippling sea, balmy breeze, and exquisite phosphorescent lights. I then saw and tasted for the first time flying-fish, and very delicious I found them. Everything was agreeable save the pumping which took place at the change of each watch, a precaution which induced me to believe that a leak existed somewhere or another, but I could obtain no satisfactory answer to my numerous questions on the subject. The novelty of a fresh fish on my breakfast plate made me ask how I came to be so especially
favoured. "We pumped it up last night," promptly replied the captain, an avowal that staggered me. I looked askance at the fish, debated whether it could have floated through bilge water without taint; fancying myself unperceived I stooped and smelt it. "Oh, it's none the worse," said Captain Sutton. "If you are doubtful, pass it over to me," came from A——. I certainly was doubtful, but yet it looked so tempting, so crisp and yellow, and I had had such a surfeit of canned salmon, sardines in oil, and anchovies, that I ventured on tasting a morsel, which was repeated until the entire fish was consumed—it weighed considerably less than twenty pounds. After breakfast I took A—— aside for a little private confabulation. "Mustn't there be an immense hole in the bottom of the vessel to admit of a fish passing through?" I asked. We were crossing the line at this time, and Margaret expressed a desire to see it. The telescope was handed to her, which she applied to her eye, and presently exclaimed, "Yes, indeed, there it is as plain as plain can be." A hair had been previously drawn over the focus.

As we sailed farther south the heat increased, and the cockroaches in proportion; and such cockroaches! Never before had my eyes lighted on anything in the form of insect life that was half so disgusting—monstrous things, with wings as transparent as were those of the flying-fish, but, unlike them, they smelt horribly, and tended to render me nervous and uncomfortable, for I was constantly changing my position to avoid coming in contact with them, so repugnant were they to me.
One night I was on the point of getting into bed, when, to my horror, I saw a huge cockroach on my pillow. I rushed out and screamed to A——, who hurried down the companion steps, expecting to see me or the cabin in flames. He pooh-poohed my consternation, but I insisted on having the repulsive thing killed, though it was nowhere to be seen, the trunks and bags scattered about, to say nothing of a multiplicity of crevices, afforded ample means of escape, but when A—— made the haphazard statement that it was gone I declared that it was not, and, moreover, vowed that unless the lifeless body of that cockroach was produced I would sit up all night. He at first treated this as an idle threat, but when he perceived that I was serious—a mild term for obstinate—he called it making a ridiculous fuss about nothing! An offensive reptile with wings like a bat, nothing, was too much for my injured feelings, it caused me to indulge in tears and to have recourse to any alternative rather than share my pillow with this nothing, which I felt convinced was still in the berth, so I sat up in an arm-chair. A—— attempted to dissuade me and then tumbled into bed himself, leaving me to a nuit blanche, which I passed, nursing my resentment at his utter want of sympathy. The next morning he offered the olive-branch by sending for the ship’s carpenter, whom he instructed to line the entire state-room with canvas, which effectually excluded these unwelcome visitors.

The temperature of the cabins and state-rooms became so intolerably hot that it induced extremely early rising; we were usually on deck before sunrise,
where we partook of delicious coffee or chocolate served with rusks.

How charming were all these novelties to me, and how delightful to sit in a loose, thin wrapper, thrown over an equally thin night-dress, one's bare feet encased in slippers, inhaling the pure air—what little there was of it—watching with rapt attention the sun, resembling a globe of fire, emerge, as it seemed, from the ocean itself, tinging the grey firmament with glowing hues, and the fleecy clouds rolling upwards shaded off to the palest pink; it was indeed a resplendent sight, but the sunset even surpassed it, producing still more gorgeous tints and more effective transitions—the heavens were then ablaze with prismatic colouring, and an ever-changing scene of brilliant lights and shades conjuring up a succession of panoramic views, wherein distant mountains were gradually transformed into fiery forests with the forms of a variety of animals clearly traced among the flaming trees, imperceptibly metamorphosed into a barren coast with vessels displaying blood-red sails, à la Flying Dutchman: a pageant which my pen fails to portray as it merits; to be thoroughly understood and appreciated such scenes require to be witnessed.

As the sun, still resplendent with its halo of dazzling rays, sinks lower and lower on the horizon the transition of colouring is marvellous, paling in the waning light to grey the sky becomes illumined with myriads of twinkling stars, celestial gems and blessed harbingers to the watchful mariner.

The rainbows in these latitudes are likewise wonderfully effective; the reflection on the water gives them
FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO TAHITI.

a complete oval shape rather than an arch, and also produces the impression of there being two bows instead of one. I loved to study the variety of vivid hues employed in their beautiful irises.

"Triumphant arch that fills the sky
When storms prepare to part,
I ask not proud philosophy
To tell me what thou art;
My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky. So was
It when my life began; so is it now
I am a [wo]man; so be it when
I shall grow old, or let me die."

As we approached nearer to the Tahitian coast we espied some distant low-lying islands, our first glimpse of land, nor up to that time had we sighted a single craft. It was twenty-three days since we had left San Francisco, and we were then about ending what had been to me a most delightful voyage. The sun had set, but there was land ahead, as we could discern the faint lights on shore, and still more distinctly flaming torches on the reefs,—which separated us from our haven,—used by natives to attract fish to the surface of the water; a balmy breeze wafted the perfume of many an exotic from terra firma so tantalizingly near, yet out of our power to reach in consequence of the intervening barrier of corals, a boundary that necessitated the process of continual tacking. The constant flinging down of huge coils of ropes over my head, the flapping of sails, and vociferous shouts from captain and mate precluded sleep, so I went on deck and sat inhaling the fragrant air, while
admiring the effect of the moon's rays on the cocoa-nut palms, the long trunk surmounted by crests of large, gracefully drooping leaves. Groves of these palms fringed the shore; I needed no telescope to distinguish them—happily so for me, as it was an article I never could use advantageously, though I followed instructions, closed one eye and opened the other to see nothing.

The Tropics had a peculiar charm for me, and I was looking eagerly forward to seeing Tahiti by daylight; the grey tinge which precedes it, and imparts such a mystic effect was already perceptible. I was so absorbed watching the gradual changes of light and shade that I had not remarked how close we were to the land until aroused by the sound of the captain's stentorian voice; sails were wildly flapping under a general slackening of ropes, sailors hurrying to and fro: what did it mean, if not some fearful catastrophe? I hastened to our state room where I found A—shaving, apparently totally indifferent to the excitement and noise over his head, neither did my rather incoherent explanation stop his operation, though I told him we were high and dry on the reefs and going to pieces. My report produced an incredulous smile—he could not speak because his lips were covered with soapsuds—when crash went the falling anchor, and, regardless of his lathered face, he rushed on deck and I after him, as the unusual noise made me fear the worst.

The sea-breeze had sprung up so suddenly and unexpectedly that the captain found himself actually between the reefs before he could manage to shorten.
FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO TAHITI.

sail, and not being sufficiently experienced to pilot the vessel through the passage, he judiciously dropped the anchor at Taunoa. It was a risky position notwithstanding this precaution, and A— looked anxious.

Our approach to the coast had been announced from the semaphore at Papeeti the previous evening, and as the arrival of any vessel creates lively interest, many eyes were watching our movements with dismay; they saw with consternation the error of pointing our course for the Taunoa passage instead of that of Papeeti, which is more usually resorted to, at that early hour, and our vicinity to the reefs created genuine fear of the consequences. We had hugged the land much too closely, and our having anchored where we had done, gave the impression that we were on the reefs, instead of between them as was our more fortunate position, but viewed from Papeeti the grave supposition spread that a complete wreck was not only imminent but unavoidable. Boats were forthwith manned and sent to our rescue, but our situation was found to be far less perilous than had been anticipated.

The Emily however, was obliged to remain at her anchorage until the tide served, which was not till late in the afternoon, but A—'s private boat was on its way to fetch us, and while we awaited its arrival I availed myself of the opportunity to admire, à volonté, the beautiful island that was henceforth to be my home.

"Tahiti, the Garden of the Pacific," a title well bestowed, was the impression I formed from that
short distance. With what silent rapture did I gaze on those mountains of varied and peculiar formation, seeming to comprise the exterior of the island, whereas there were lower lying hills and a wide belt of table-land clothed with tropical growth, as indeed were, more or less, the higher eminences. Prolific in every acceptation of the term is the vegetation on these islands, where many of the trees are equally fragrant, ornamental, and productive.

Under fine umbrageous trees nestle native huts either near a river or within view of the sea. From the Emily's deck Tahiti was seen to the best advantage, or, more properly speaking, the environs of Papeeti—its principal town and seat of government—which were at first shrouded in sombre hues and then brightened by the sunbeams which cast fitful shadows on the mountain peaks and crevices, while heightening the beauty of the bread-fruit palms and banana leaves, which give a tropical aspect wherever met.

As soon as A——'s boat came alongside we lost no time in stepping into it, and the row down to Papeeti between the coral reefs was a treat that quite repaid me for our delay; it was an indescribable scene of prismatic tints. The excrescences resembling branches of trees, distended fans, or rosettes of varied dimensions, were seen through the pellucid water, while still deeper down was a nether continent where fish of all sizes, shape, and colour, disported among aquatic plants in a region of their own—marvels of nature hitherto unknown to me, which excited my curiosity and enthusiasm as we calmly glided towards Papeeti.
FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO TAHITI.

It is hard to reconcile oneself to the idea that such impregnable reefs can be the work of an insect, a microscopic labourer of the lowest order of life—and to a novice like myself wonders never ceased. Clinging to the coral were shellfish resembling small porcupines: one of the rowers dipped his hand into the water and detached one for my inspection; it was covered with sharp spikes. As I was informed that the natives ate them I concluded to taste one myself, and found it very similar to an oyster in flavour but the flesh was softer and more watery.

On landing at Papeeti I was surprised at the seeming sparseness of inhabitants: scarcely a native was to be seen on the beach, much less a European. I afterwards learnt that the population repose during the heat of the day—pretty much as they do in other tropical climes—transact business in the early morning, and reserve the evenings for amusement.
CHAPTER II.

FIRST IMPRESSION OF PAPEETI.

I am about to quote some statistics derived from old archives for the benefit of those whom they may interest.

The island of Tahiti rests on a volcanic shell, the summit of which is as nearly as possible a mile and a quarter above the level of the sea. The highest mountain is called Orohena, 7,250 feet above the sea-level. The Oarai, 6,576 feet, so nearly resembles a crown in shape that the French have rechristened it La Diademe. It is the first distinctive feature that strikes the eye on sighting Tahiti. The peninsula of Tairabu, 7,150 feet in width, is united by the isthmus to the island of Tahiti. On the highest elevation is situated the fort of Taravao, which is 4,600 feet above the level of the sea.

The river Punavia courses through an extensive valley; it was there that the French, in 1845, encountered the Tahitian forces, resulting in the most
sanguinary battle ever fought on the island. The brave natives defended themselves gallantly, but they were outnumbered, and inexperienced in the art of modern warfare; their defeat obliged them, malgré eux, to accept the French Protectorate. The Tahitiens, had the choice been theirs, would have much preferred the English flag floating over their beloved island—a flag that would have ensured a degree of prosperity which could never be acquired under the existing laws, by-laws, and counter-laws, which form a most unsatisfactory triple system in all its bearings. The French are undoubtedly bad colonists. Too much administration is, and ever will be, their bane. A preponderance of useless officials who pass their time in framing every description of arêtes, many of them being detrimental to both commerce and agriculture, besides causing much annoyance to all classes and conditions of society, annoyances that I am fain to admit were not borne unmurmuringly, as I used to hear most uncomplimentary remarks about the authors of their subjugation.

I myself could not deny that the term Protectorate was a palpable misnomer, for even at that period the island, inclusive of its dependencies, were to all intent and purpose a French possession, ruled, as it seemed to me, with unnecessary severity. The natives had to either work without pay for the government, or be imprisoned. The class of officials who made it their business to meddle in what did not concern them were principally young ensigns and middies, in whom was vested an amount of authority which they rarely failed to abuse. Whether this course was approved
by the governor or vice-governor must remain an open question.

The French who migrate to Tahiti are of those who possess neither the adequate means nor the ambition to become planters of anything beyond vegetables. Whereas the Administration was very desirous to organize cultivation on an extensive scale, to insure this they held out very favourable promises to foreigners as an inducement to undertake what their own compatriots were unable to attempt. In one instance these offers were accepted in good faith, but no sooner had the property been acquired and labourers employed, than the Government had recourse to such measures as to preclude the possibility of ultimate success. But I anticipate.

Why such adverse measures should have been so invariably adopted I am unable to explain, but during my long residence on the island I never knew the Administration to pursue any other, nor could I help remarking that straightforward, hearty encouragement was a thing unknown. In fact nothing succeeded at Tahiti unless through such questionable agencies as bribery and corruption.

Tahiti possesses an unexceptionable climate, a delightful land-breeze prevails throughout the night, and a sea-breeze during the day; a more equable temperature could not be found in any part of the globe, while the scenery, for variety and sublimity, could not be surpassed. The fertile valleys, intersected by charmingly picturesque rivers, flowing between luxuriant banks, meandering rivulets rippling beneath verdant arcades formed by the interlacing
of low-lying branches, from which pend clusters of parasitic blossoms, this lovely combination overshadowed by the lofty mountains baffles description.

Papeeti is also charmingly situated; it faces the lovely bay and forms a crescent by the land at each side, curving outward and terminating in a grove of cocoanut-palms. That of Fairiute is the most important, as a patent slip exists there, and likewise the arsenal, near which is the residence of M. le Capitaine du Port.

The small town consists of several streets shaded by fine trees, the branches of which almost meet overhead. There is also a wide avenue called the broom road, that extends to a considerable distance round the island. The houses are mostly detached and surrounded by umbrageous trees, and bright heavily-scented tropical shrubs, such as the tree flora ponda, the gardenias—called there tiari—and Castilian roses, &c.

A—'s bachelor abode was then being renovated and refurnished in my honour. Glancing at the discoloured walls and odds and ends of old-fashioned hair-cloth furniture scattered in all directions, I thought it about time to renew them, and touch things up generally. A—— had expected to find the house in readiness for our reception; the disappointment was due to the workmen who, apparently, are as dilatory at Tahiti as elsewhere, for the roof of the house had been removed and it still remained in that unfinished condition.

In the meanwhile we took possession of a villa situated in a large garden, then in a neglected state
in consequence of the place having been for a long time untenanted; the weeds were of such proportions that they screened the rose-bushes, gardenias, and a variety of other fragrant shrubs. The veranda was trellised and covered with the jessamine and passion vine in full flower, which charmed me to the extent of overlooking other imperfections. Margaret (my maid) and I, unmindful of the intense heat, strolled about the grounds; perceiving a tree laden with what we supposed to be fruit, we pulled down a branch, and after considerable difficulty succeeded in detaching one, and had nothing but the trouble for our pains, as our teeth could make no impression on the green rind. We subsequently found out that it was a vegetable called the bread-fruit, which required to be cooked before being eaten.

Our unsatisfactory ramble brought on one of my fearful headaches, which was aggravated by the venomous sting of the mosquitoes; the air was thick with them, yet they bestowed none of their attentions on Margaret, though they clung to me like leeches. She said it was because my skin was more delicate than hers; if so, I would have willingly exchanged membranes to suit the occasion. The only refuge against such persistent tormentors was bed, to which I betook myself as soon as a mosquito-net could be adjusted to the queerest-looking wooden bedstead I had ever seen, and a receptacle for a certain insect that shall be nameless; what consoled me was the knowledge that we had brought with us a pretty bedroom set. Thus ended my first day at Papeeti.

Margaret had been engaged to act in the double
capacity of lady's-maid and companion, a provision against my being left alone during A——’s absence, who had occasionally to visit the several islands where he had shelling and oil stations. I could never accompany him on these trips, as there was no accommodation for ladies on the schooners he went in.

I heard with delight that there were two saddle-horses at my disposal, which I immediately turned to account. Margaret was the daughter of a well-to-do farmer in the Atlantic States, where she had been in the habit of riding; I therefore got her to accompany me, as A—— declined on the plea of the exercise being hurtful to him.
CHAPTER III.

TAHITIAN CUSTOMS.

The French Government House completely outvalled the Queen's palace, which might have been mistaken for a dépendance. (Was it not so in more senses than one?) The Elysée of Papeeti was a two-story square building entirely surrounded by a covered veranda enclosed with Venetian blinds, and occupied a prominent position in the midst of a park shaded by magnificent trees and beautified with rare tropical shrubs of unusual height.

The flower and vegetable gardens were at the rear, and there was also a fine fruit orchard wherein were cultivated only the best specimens of tropical fruits.

M. le Viscomte du Bouzet then held the position of Governor, but being absent at New Caledonia he was replaced, ad interim, by the Vice-Governor, M. le Comte P——, whose residence was a much less pretentious building, being merely a villa of one story, situated in a pretty garden, divided by a rippling
stream fringed with large-leaved palms and ferns, where he received his own particular friends. The first time I attended one of these select dinners, my reception by two immense white geese—not swans—was more noisy than agreeable. The moment I entered the gate they flew at me, flapping their distended wings and screeching in a terrific manner. Our host the while stood on his veranda enjoying the scene:—my fright. He met me with the assurance that Clairon and Trompet were perfectly harmless and privileged pets. No accounting for taste! M. le Comte P—— was not at all prepossessing in appearance, but extremely partial to native ladies. It was regrettable to see a man of his rank and age amusing himself without regard to appearances—an example his entourage was not slow to follow.

One could not shut one's eyes to the fact that morality at Tahiti was at a very low ebb, notwithstanding the efforts of clericals to raise the standard by inculcating purer principles.

Queen Pomare resided in what looked like an old-fashioned one-story missionary house, with the usual back and front verandas, situated so near the Government grounds that it afforded the soldiers on guard a good opportunity to watch her Majesty's movements and report the same to the Governor.

The interior of Pomare's establishment was as simple as the exterior. The principal adornments consisted of two immense mirrors and a full-length portrait of her olive-coloured Majesty; and a remarkably good likeness it was, though taken years before in a smaller form by a French officer for King Louis
Phillipe, who had it copied by a better artist for Pomare, to whom it was subsequently forwarded with a royal gift of a complete dinner and coffee service of exquisite Sevres porcelain—off which I never dined without experiencing an envious feeling. A beautiful silver filigree basket under a glass shade, occupied a conspicuous place on the centre table. Admiral Bonard had brought it from Peru, where the nuns make that sort of work a speciality.

Queen Pomare was a tall, dignified-looking woman, without being handsome. No doubt she was conversant with the French and English languages, but she could never be induced to express herself in either, preferring to do so in her own vernacular:—the Tahitian.

Pomare, when little more than a child, had been wedded to the King of Bora-Bora, an island of the Leeward Group. As there was no prospect of their having a family she was obliged to divorce him, and married for the second time a handsome young chief, by whom she had several children. Her firstborn and only daughter was immediately presented to the Queen's former husband, the King of Bora-Bora, who adopted the infant princess, and at his death she inherited the throne of Bora-Bora.

This is the strangest among the many strange native customs. Giving away their own children and adopting those of friends is a common practice on these islands. Assuredly blood in their case cannot be thicker than water, as the adopted child is as fondly loved and cared for, as if it really were flesh of their flesh!
Yet many of their primitive habits are fast dying out; they no longer, as of yore, regard their queen as a holy being, or revere her as a personage not of earth or ordinary blood, fearing to touch an article of her wearing apparel lest they became maimed. Even Europeans were imbued with this superstition, for a carpenter who worked at our house had a stiff neck from exposure to a draught, whereas he insisted that it had been produced by wearing a cravat which had belonged to Pomare's husband, Ariifaiti. Though born on the island, he was the son of an English missionary; nevertheless, he firmly believed in such ridiculous nonsense, even at a time when the pure native was getting bravely over it.

In former days the humbler class used to precede their chiefs and sweep the road before their exalted feet passed over it. A curious sight it must have been, as the natives do this work hopping like frogs. I have frequently been amused watching my servant with her loose Tapa tucked round her legs, armed with a short-handled broom, sweeping our rooms in a similar fashion; but such abject subserviency to their superiors no longer exists—rather the other way, I should say. Extremes meet, we are told, and the principle of "hail fellow well met" extends to the parent and child; the latter display no respect whatever towards the author of their being, whom they abuse and call the most odious names on the slightest provocation: unnatural conduct which may be laid to the common tenor of their lives. It is a well-known fact that too much familiarity breeds contempt, and what else could be expected from the style of native
TAHITI: THE GARDEN OF THE PACIFIC.

habitation, composed of but one room: oval bamboo huts, without a partition, in which the entire family sleep and eat—unless the weather be propitious, when they invariably take their meals in the open air under a friendly tree. Their language among themselves is likewise of a most indelicate kind, and vulgar expressions are employed in the presence of children, who adopt the same style. How, then, can veneration, or even filial respect, exist in such an atmosphere? The natives are devoted to the young of anything, be it biped or quadruped; a tiny sucking-pig or kitten receives the same attention and fondling as a little child, and when they increase in size they are also treated alike: equally neglected and left to their own resources. Young folks can go, come, or do as they please without questioning, as a child is never reproved, no matter what may be the nature of the offence.

Another peculiarity is the source from which they derive their names, and, I may add, change them. That of Pomare arose from a former king, who was seized with a violent fit of coughing after dark: po signifies night, mare cough, and the name has descended from generation to generation of crowned heads. When the eyes of a dying person rest on any particular article of clothing or furniture, members of the family adopt it for a name, dropping the one they had formerly held—a privilege freely indulged in as they have no tax to pay.

A native clings with more affection to his patrimony, than to any other thing he may possess, be it wife or child. He disputes every inch of ground
when his rights are invaded by other claimants for the same piece of land—a contest that often occurs—when, to settle the question, an "au feu fetu" is summoned. This consists of a jury, seated in a circle round the spokesman, who stands and explains the case, by tracing on the sand the position of the property in litigation. These trials are usually decided in favour of the claimant whose memory serves him best as to the exact date when the said land came into his, or her family's possession. For this purpose children are taught at an early age their genealogy, so as to be prepared, in the event of any land question arising.

The Polynesians are passionately fond of music, and some of their compositions are extremely melodious. They call everything "hymnees," a word introduced to them by the missionaries, though the true significance is unknown, as I was assured their verses were far from holy, chanted in chorus in a monotonous, though not unmusical, tone.

Most of the Government buildings had been sent out from France to be put together at Papeeti. The Fari Opera is the native house of assembly. It is built of white coral, in the form of the Pantheon at Rome, apart from the roof, which is entirely out of keeping with the rest of the building, and mars its architectural effect. The original plan, I was told, had been very different; but as each governor in succession made a point of undoing, as far as lay in his power, the acts of his predecessor, the artistically designed roof of the Fari Opera had been removed, and replaced by a flat, unsightly object.
The governor of a French colony is an autocrat, whose commands may not be questioned *ab uno disce omnes*.

The royal princes were handsome youths, but a badly-brought-up, dissipated brood. Their father, *Ariiifaaite* could drink to excess without becoming more than pleasantly jocose—in public, whatever he may have been in private—whereas his sons had no *mauvais honte* about exposing their weakness. It was no uncommon occurrence to see them reeling down the beach, in a state of intoxication as early as nine o'clock a.m., dressed in a *pareu*—a piece of printed calico fastened round the waist, which reaches to the ankles and replaces trousers—a shirt hanging loosely over the *pareu*, wearing neither shoes nor stockings, which are reserved for state occasions. I have frequently seen Queen Pomare's sons shouldering a new broom, with a bar of yellow soap and other domestic commodities pending from one end.
CHAPTER IV.

THE ENVIRONS OF PAP EE T I.

Tahiti is divided into numerous districts. The larger ones possess a church and school-house, constructed of white coral; the villages are picturesquely situated, invariably midst abundant foliage, and within view of water of some kind, either the sea shore, a river, or running brook. I had speedily instituted early morning rides, and visited in turn the many points of interest in the environs of Papeeti. Margaret and I usually started at five a.m., which is the most enjoyable hour in the tropics, when the dew still sparkles on the prolific foliage, and the sun's rays have less power than later in the day.

Is it a dream, and not a reality, that far-off time, when I wandered with Margaret through shady avenues, between groves of fragrant trees, by limpid streams, and flowing rivers in the sunny island of Tahiti? It all occurred so long ago, and yet how vividly I recall every circumstance attending those delightful
rides, which ever had an aim in view—perhaps a particular point to be reached before we could be induced to turn our horses' heads homeward. My mare's name was Dolly, and Margaret rode a colt of hers; called Openohu, in consequence of his being raised on that property. I had one or two favourite routes which we frequented more than others; one was to Tara, a charming spot on the seashore. Unlike the beach of other latitudes, this one was fringed with tropical foliage of trees, and shrubs, hitherto unknown to me. How beautiful they were. I can see them now as I saw them then: the leaves glistening with a silver sheen, and among them great clusters of heavily-scented white blossoms, hanging so tantalizingly high as to be quite beyond our reach, but we never failed to rein in, and revel in the delightful perfume. This splendid specimen of the tropics was the candle-tree, from which, in former days, the natives obtained their artificial lights. The process was a very simple one: they baked the nuts till the hard shell became brittle and the kernels easily extracted; these were strung on to the fibre of the palm, which formed the wick, and emitted a very feeble flicker I have no doubt; nevertheless sufficient for native requirements, who employ lights, not to illumine their huts, but for the purpose of igniting their cigarettes. After dark, they as a rule, lie on their backs or stomachs relating stories. This is a source of unfailing amusement, as they are both capital narrators and good listeners. What uneventful lives were theirs; ignorant of any other, they could not repine, and were a happy race until civili-
zation meddled with them. How favoured by prolific nature are the South Sea Islands, where perpetual summer reigns, where Providence has been so lavish of its gifts: a delightful climate, fruit and vegetable-bearing trees, indigenous to the soil and sea and rivers plentifully supplied with fish. Why, we ask ourselves, should they be so prodigally favoured, while others are forced to endure frost and famine?—a superabundance in one part of the world, scarcity in another: here luxurious idleness, there a hard-working, poverty-stricken crowd.

Until the European came to the island and imbued the population at large with other ideas, and other tastes, they even clothed themselves with a material made out of the bark of trees—and very effective were the specimens I saw, now only employed to decorate boats or tents on festive occasions.

After this, I hope pardonable, digression, I resume my subject. The district of Faaa lies seaward, but, unlike Tara, the ocean flows on one side of the route, and a Pacific jungle on the other, a mingling of trees, shrubs, and vines entwined with parasites and flowers; out of decayed bark, sprout orchids in a variety of form and colour. I may say that no matter what path we took, it was always through luxuriant foliage, and tangled undergrowth, redolent with oleanders, gardenias, starry lilies, and a profusion of other scented shrubs and trees common to the island. In a bend of this road stood a dilapidated hut shrouded in foliage, which had such a picturesque effect, that I never failed to rein in and admire it from a short distance, and when the
opportunity offered I had it photographed. The Tahitians in some respects resemble water-nymphs; if not bathing, swimming, or diving, they lie on the grass near enough for their feet to dangle in the cool, rippling stream. When mere infants their mothers throw them into a river, where they float; and in time learn to swim. We used to meet lovely children in our rides, especially the half-castes, whose features are more delicate than those of the pure native, their hair, of softer texture, falling over their shoulders in a mass of silken curls: poor little nude waifs, who are in most instances the abandoned children of French officers, left to be supported by charity, beholden to the poor native for their food, and ragged chemise, and more often than not, an absence of even that garment. Who could help admiring their dark, languid eyes, dimpled cheeks, and slender, rounded limbs, as they stood and stared at us from a shelter of bush, or when we caught sight of a sweet, pensive little face, peeping out from long, rank grass—miniature Hebes who in a few years hence were to follow their mother's example and share her fate, and, like her, bring children into the world to be disowned by unnatural fathers! Civilization has little to boast of in this respect, least of all among the South Sea Islands, whose population they have degraded rather than elevated. The Tahitians are slowly but surely dying out from diseases introduced into the country by Europeans, a preponderance of whom entertain extremely vague ideas on the subject of morality. Occasionally one met with remarkably handsome native women of
unmixed blood. I returned home from a matutinal ride to find a tall, beautiful creature waiting to see me; her every gesture was the personification of grace, and I was immediately struck by her striking resemblance to a coloured engraving of "Rebecca at the Well," which hung on the wall above her head; it really could not have been a better likeness had she herself sat for the portrait. She was a native of the opposite island, Morea, and her name was Teina. Curiosity, I expect, to see what I looked like, led to her visit, which was rather a tame affair, as she could not converse in my language nor I in hers, and the time was passed by an interchange of smiles and bows, which a third party would have been authorized to call idiotic. I make no doubt that Madame Teina understood more of English than I did of Tahitian, for when I ventured on a diversion from our simpering silence, and made some remark in my own vernacular, she raised her chin in assent; such a pretty rounded chin as it was, indeed all her features were quite perfect, of the pure Grecian type, and when she smiled (I never saw a native laugh) her cheeks dimpled, the lips parted slightly, and displayed the most exquisite rows of even, small, white teeth. In reputation, however, she was not so unblemished; she had had several indiscretions, which she carried off with a high hand. Teina, I could imagine, was not a woman to be easily humbled, neither was she without ambitious aims, as the sequel proved. She had a little daughter who bid fair to outrival her mother in beauty, whom she was carefully rearing with the
object of uniting her in due time to one of the royal princes, and by this means obtain for herself a footing in the Queen’s household, which the natives esteem as one of the greatest honours that could fall to their lot. And Teina persevered in her efforts, until they were crowned with success.
CHAPTER V.

RIDE TO THE CASCADE OF FANTAUAU.

The Cascade of Fantauau, in the neighbourhood of Papeeti, is considered to be one of the great sights of Tahiti, one I was most curious to see, as I erroneously supposed it to be easy of access; an impression A— strenuously disputed. He said that the road was all but impassable, and begged me not to attempt it, until he could ascertain whether it had been repaired; this he kept on postponing to do, which induced me to discredit his statement, and to imagine that it had been employed as an excuse; he was not disposed to accompany me himself, and objected to my going without him: a dog-in-the-manger spirit I pronounced it, whereas in reality it was more a case of discretion being the better part of valour.

A—— owned an extensive farm on the island of Morea called Openohu. A man from Devonshire worked it, and regaled us with a weekly supply of
butter and little pots of clotted cream, which represented in my eyes any number of large-eyed gentle cows, a fine dairy filled with crocks of milk and delicious cream, the result of excellent pasturage for the cattle. I wanted to see the property—a wish that still remained to be gratified, though A—— crossed over occasionally to visit it himself. And I took advantage of one of these temporary absences to undertake the ride to Fantanaue.

Puhia, who was our house servant, accompanied Margaret and me on foot, carrying over his shoulder a small basket of provisions for our breakfast. The morning on which we started was bright and cloudless, and the first part of the route promised well. The surrounding country presented a state of cultivation unseen elsewhere. We passed a good deal of sugar-cane, and the sough of the wind among the long leaves had a pleasant rhythmical sound; cool I could not conscientiously term it, as we were just then finding it insufferably hot. Puhia helped himself to cane, from which he removed the thick, glossy rind, and cut the succulent part into strips which we chewed and extracted the refreshing juice. He occasionally varied our entertainment by scaling a tall cocoanut-tree to gather the young fruit, or picked ripe guavas, until I felt that if no limit was to be put to these tempting offerings, we would be breakfasting en route, and our chicken and rolls go begging. White folk do not possess the native capacity for either an endless supply of food, or a long fast. Overtaxed digestion is an ailment unknown to these fortunate people.
The path we followed was on the border of the Fantauau river, which derives its name and source from the cascade, which we were then wending our way to visit. It is so shallow in some parts, that the beds of huge stones were clearly seen; many of them rose above the water, but elsewhere it resumed its nature, and at times even merged into a wild torrent, sweeping over the rocks with such force that from a short distance it resembled the report of a cannon fired off at intervals, which startled the horses and intimidated one of the riders, if not both. Margaret assumed a courage if she felt it not; in that respect she always possessed a marked advantage over her mistress, who never could disguise the loss of it, or abject fears when in danger—facts that were patent to all beholders, so I have no hesitation in referring to them, or in frankly admitting that I already regretted not having followed A——'s advice, and waited.

Though I had every confidence in my mare Dolly, I misdoubted that colt of hers from Morea. Openohu was an obstinate brute, with a mouth of cast-iron; tug as one might it left no impression, and he was therefore hard to control. Aware of his weak points I preferred to ride behind, rather than before him, and left Margaret to take the lead when we began to ascend the mountain. Up a narrow path traced on its side, and suspended, as it were, over a frightful precipice, did not tend to allay my trepidation, especially so as there was neither barrier or protection of any description in case we made a false step. This was no doubt the danger to which A——
had alluded, as we encountered no other. The rocky acclivities, rising one above the other till they reached a high altitude, were clothed with tropical vegetation, yet so exceedingly slippery that it precluded any but the slowest pace. We were gradually losing sight of the river; the noise had ceased, but its mournful murmur continued to follow us, and saddened one, when the road became more and more sombre, more and more solitary, for neither bird, beast, or native, did we meet throughout our ride; though the latter frequent the forests in search of the wild plantain, called in Tahitian Feeis, which forms a large proportion of their daily food, and can be prepared in a variety of ways. The fruit, like that of the banana, is in branches, but grows on the top of the tree above the leaves, and points upwards, whereas bananas form under the leaves and hang down. Both trees share the same fate, viz., as soon as the fruit is mature, they die and are replaced by their respective off-shoots. Feeis have a thick, mottled-red skin, and have to be cooked before they can be eaten; they are very delicious baked and mashed into a pulp. The men returning from these mountain raids carry as many as three and four heavy branches, suspended from both ends of a long pole balanced over their bare shoulders. Clothing in no way impedes their movements, as it consists wholly and solely of a remarkably short pareu twisted round their loins, and a wreath of leaves round their heads, as a protection from the sun. Their bodies reek with perspiration—a repulsive sight at ordinary times, but one I would have hailed with pleasure
that memorable morning. In the absence of traffic the road was so choked up with parasitic foliage interlaced among the branches, as to render it all but impregnable. Puhia had to make frequent use of his clasp-knife, to enable us to pass through the compact mass of vegetation. This prolific growth formed natural bowers; these were isolated Arcadian retreats, but I had seen them elsewhere, for they exist all over the island. In the neighbourhood of Papeeti they are favourite spots for love-making, friendly meetings, or story recitals. What romantically sheltered nooks they are, hidden from prying eyes by the—in these cases—useful parasite vine and fragrant blossoms that scent the air with a subtle fragrance, which tends to create a dreamy langour!

Many a time, when riding, have I glanced in at the aperture of these charmed circles, when I have seen mats spread on the ground and wreaths of faded flowers scattered about, denoting recent occupation—unlike those we discovered in the mountain recesses, which had not yet been desecrated by amorous pleadings.

Through the screen of foliage we occasionally caught glimpses of picturesque scenery as we continued to ascend and ascend, until I began to wonder whether we should ever reach our destination. These mountains sloped down hundreds of feet, to an exquisite valley, though it appeared of microscopic dimensions when seen from such an elevation, the native huts were just discernible and the rivulets glistened like silver threads in the sunlight. How cool and moist the earth was down there I well
knew from past experience, as we often rode in that direction. The valley was near the sea, where we more frequently than not halted, to watch the canoes being paddled about in search of fish, to be eaten raw with the bread-fruit then baking for their morning meal. The pungent aroma issuing from the native ovens, was not the least agreeable feature to me in the component parts, for I was very partial to the smell of the burning twigs and leaves.

After three hours' slow riding, an unusually steep ascent that cast in the shade all the others, led us into the Fort, where a few soldiers were stationed. What for, was impossible to define. They neither kept the road in order, nor the interior of the Fort decently clean. We were escorted to a small pavilion, which contained two rooms and a few articles of moth-eaten, dusty furniture. The aspect was so uninviting, that we declined to make use of it; indeed, the dirt had accumulated to such an extent, that we hurriedly backed out on to the veranda, which, being in an equally filthy condition, we receded still further to a pretty terraced garden, filled with rose-bushes, where we partook of our frugal breakfast, to which the soldiers contributed some lettuce, and a few of the very tiniest strawberries —the Alpine strawberries are giants to them—that I had ever seen, or care to see again. If they were intended as a specimen of these soldiers' culture there was plenty of room for improvement. When we had satisfied our appetite, and taken a good rest, we proceeded to look about us; the air was decidedly chilly —so cool, indeed, that I firmly believe European fruit
could be successfully cultivated at Fantauau. The test had never been made, nor was it likely to be, judging by the state of things generally at the Fort. The road to the cascade and flagstaff, led through a dense forest of Feeiis. To my astonishment and delight, I saw, adhering to the leaves, the most exquisitely-tinted land-shells. Need I say, that I lost no time in filling my pocket, as well as Margaret's? We then visited the cascade, with which I was much disappointed. I had expected to see Falls resembling those of North America—not Niagara, nor the Schwinegan, nor yet the Grand Mer, but similar to the Chandiere or Montmorency Falls near Quebec, whereas the Falls of Fantauau is a remarkably narrow stream of water which would not be worth seeing, were it not so picturesquely situated. Two natural basins project from the rock, and receive their supply of water from the cascade. Some venturesome people have even undertaken to bathe in them. I was told of a soldier who was carried by the rush of water, from the top basin, to the lower one, and escaped uninjured; of yet another who attempted to jump from basin to basin, and was dashed to pieces: a verdict of "serve him right" would not have been unmerited.

The flagstaff is at an elevation of 4,500 feet above the level of the sea, and commands an extended view.

Our curiosity gratified, we prepared to retrace our steps, when the descent struck me as infinitely steeper than the ascent, which I might have expected had I given it a thought; but that was precisely what
I had failed to do, and the glance I took downward absolutely appalled me.

Margaret, as before, was to have taken the lead, but her horse became fractious, and stubbornly declined to go ahead; whipping and coaxing were alike ineffectual; urge as she might Openohu would not budge. I scarcely knew what to do, or how to decide, as I had a horrible presentiment that some mishap was about to befall me, and dreaded beyond measure to precede an animal on which I had so little reliance. If I started first, he was as likely as not to dash past me, or endeavour to pace beside Dolly,—as he was in the habit of doing in our daily morning rides. If I thought it prudent for Margaret to go in advance in the ascent it was still more advisable in the descent, so I persevered in my intention, and held back until she suggested that perhaps her vile brute would be more willing to follow the mare.

I myself felt that we had no more time to waste unless we intended to pass the night at the Fort, which I certainly had no desire to do, so with a quaking heart I gave Dolly the rein. The perpendicular declivity was on my left, a yawning gulf, that to my morbid ideas invited destruction, from which I steadily turned my eyes. Openohu came so close on my track that I had to warn Margaret to keep further off. The caution was no sooner uttered than her animal sprang forward,—keeping to the right side, and dashed past me. I felt Dolly's fore and back hoof slip over the edge of this awful gap. The worst had come I thought, and I closed my eyes not to witness our fall, our headlong course downward;
no such thing occurred, or I should not now be describing the heavenly relief I experienced at finding myself safe and sound. All unconsciously I must have tugged at the right-hand rein, which caused my Dolly to quickly recover her footing; nevertheless I felt that I had narrowly escaped a fatal accident, and the dread I had experienced was written on my face. Margaret perceived it, and feared that I might be unable to ride back to Papeeti; but I managed to keep my seat, though how I contrived to accomplish the undertaking was a marvel to myself; my head ached to distraction and every step Dolly took, produced acute agony. Altogether I felt myself to be an injured individual, and refused to reply to any of Margaret's anxious questions, as I blamed her—I fear unjustly—for being the cause of my wretched plight. On reaching home I went straight to bed, where I slept off my aches and anger.

The morning was far advanced when I awoke to feel that I had brought all the previous day's trouble on myself by disregarding A—'s wishes; but I could never bear the sight of Openohu after the incident of that day, though he had to be tolerated for the want of a better steed.
CHAPTER VI.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

The society at Papeeti was composed of a medley of natives, half-castes, and foreigners; the cream of the latter consisted of the wife of the English Consul and those of the missionaries and French officials. The natives and half-castes had decidedly the better time, notwithstanding that some writers assert that they are treated "in an unchristian spirit." It is difficult in a passing visit to decide such questions in an unbiased manner. The opinion I formed during the first six months, I had occasion to materially modify during a long residence on the island.

When I arrived at Papeeti, I found that etiquette required me to call on the ladies. I suppose I ought to have done so, but I didn't. The fact of the matter was, A—— had lived there for many years, and had entertained these people time and again;
I therefore considered it a fitting occasion for them to make him an *inexpensive* return for all his hospitality. But even this easy method of paying off old indebtedness was declined; they stood on their dignity and kept aloof; I upheld mine and did the same. I also condemned their action as most ungrateful, and they no doubt retaliated by abusing mine. My experience of the "mean whites"—as some clever writers term them—is, that they could be ungracious to each other, but never to the "dirty browns." Conviction forces me to differ from those who express an opposite opinion on this and other points. I therefore think it advisable to give readers the benefit of both sides of the question.

Among the residents to whom I have alluded there were two exceptions—Madame Perraud, whose husband commanded the artillery corps; she and I were on terms of the sincerest friendship, a friendship which even the lapse of years has failed to weaken. The other lady was Mrs. Miller, a Peruvian by birth, and wife of the English Consul.

A—— invited two chiefs to dinner. I can safely say that I never before sat at table with men dressed as they were, in gaudy pareus and shirts worn in a fashion that looked as if they had forgotten to tuck the tails in, or to put on their shoes and stockings! What they did not fail to do, was to eat and drink to their hearts' content. When we adjourned to the drawing-room, coffee was served, and with it came a liqueur-case, containing four different kinds; they partook of each one, and then turning to me, said, "All the same as nectar of the gods; very good
indeed, but too little glass"—they contained about a thimbleful.

Our house was enlivened by a very clever green parrot, which sang and spoke whole sentences quite distinctly; she also imitated the native cries to a distracting extent. When in trouble, women and children yell at the pitch of their shrill voices, Awaie! Awaie! Awaie! and from a little distance it was impossible to distinguish whether it was the bird or a native hallooing. Lauritta enjoyed perfect freedom, and passed most of her time on the trees. She had a wing clipped to prevent her flying too far, as on one occasion she had alighted on the sea and was nearly drowned; but even with one wing she managed to go to a considerable distance. Margaret and I were surprised one evening on returning from bathing, to hear Lauritta call lustily to us; looking upwards we discovered her in a tree, coming down from the top twigs as fast as she could. She had no doubt taken her position at that elevation so as to watch for our return and accompany us home, which she did on my finger, chattering excitedly at the success of her undertaking. Was this instinct or reasoning? Lauritta had come from Australia in a vessel bound for California; the passenger to whom she belonged needed money and sold her to A—for twenty-five dollars. The last time A—was in San Francisco he entered a shop with the object of making some purchases, when one of the young clerks rushed up to him and asked after Lauritta. Poor boy! the parrot had been his particular pet, which necessity had forced him to give up. But the
bird had never forgotten her young master; she continually called Edward—the boy's name. Besides Lauritta, I got possession of a tiny white spaniel, one that I heard was being cruelly used by his master. I discredited some of the statements until I saw the mite of a dog fastened to the veranda by an iron chain, weighty enough to have secured an ox. From that day forth A— experienced neither peace nor quietness till by dint of urging he obtained the little animal for me. My first act was to administer a warm bath, which I fear was not as much appreciated as I should have liked it to be; he kicked against it, and finding that feat useless—Margaret having seized his legs—he snapped at my fingers. Poor little wretch! it required a deal of scrubbing before his coat resumed its natural tint—white and silky with a gold sheen; it was so matted that we had to cut a quantity off, and by that means discovered the cuts of the whip on his body, which was a mass of wounds. He had lovely hazel eyes and light-brown ears. My new acquisition was named Floristo, but I called him Flody for shortness. His former master, M. B——, was what he looked, a wicked brute. He had married a beautiful girl, the daughter of an English missionary, who owned a little dog that invariably slunk away under her skirts at sight of M. B——; this enraged him to such an extent, that after she became his wife he took the earliest opportunity to assert his power, and strangled the dog before her very eyes for refusing to answer his call. He ill-used a splendid collie of his own, and finally chased him into an
outhouse; after having secured the door, he poured boiling water on the wretched animal through a hole in the roof, and by this means succeeded in scalding him to death.

Like all such characters, he was a poltroon, and was afraid of the poor cowed beast which he had so cruelly tortured. Quadrupeds were not his only victims; he neglected his children and ill-treated his wife, facts that would have redounded to his discredit in any community but that of Papeeti, where the generality of people gave him a hearty welcome. For my part, I could not endure the sight of his handsome, sinister face.
SHIP came into port commanded by a captain whose accent was decidedly Scotch. He had on board a splendid milch goat with two little kids, one of which he presented to me. Chancing to hear A— call me Doady, he said, "Now, don't you let him call you dowdy, for indeed an indeed you are not at bit like one." Droll as the captain was, his goat and kids were yet more so; mine followed me about everywhere, and when I happened to be out, she generally jumped through the window, and settled herself either on my bed, or promenaded the dinner-table in search of something toothsome.

Among several French sloops of war en rade was the steam corvette Milan, commanded by M. de Paralo, who traced in me a resemblance to his absent wife, whom he termed une chère petite femme. Now I am not little by any means, though perhaps dear at any price. To this circumstance, however—
fancied or otherwise—I was indebted for many kind acts. Like myself, M. de Paralo was fond of animals, and had a variety of dogs. I chanced to admire a splendid Newfoundland of his named Léone, without any desire on my part to own one of his kind in a climate like that of Tahiti, and I therefore felt more regret than satisfaction when a sailor brought me Léone with the commander's card, on which was simply written "Pour Madame." I did my utmost to decline his present, but he refused to see it in any other light than a disinclination to deprive him of his favourite dog!

The little kid took a great liking to Léone; she may have reminded her of her mother. One evening I returned home late, to find my bed already occupied. Léone was coiled up in the middle, and the kid reposed on my pillow. My entrance in no way disconcerted them; they were seemingly perfectly content, whatever I was. Flody had not been idle either; he had dragged down my nightdress and was sleeping on it. A—and I were always accompanied in our night strolls down the beach by the dogs and kid. The latter took such audacious liberties, that we had finally to banish her to the farm at Morea.

When the time arrived for us to move into our own house on the beach, I began to regret leaving the villa and pretty garden, where I had passed some very happy hours. Our new residence faced the sea with a view of the opposite island, Morea; the back commanded the Mountains and Semaphore. The verandas at Tahiti are constructed on the same
principle as in all warm climates, very wide with green Venetians, and form a most important feature in one's establishment, being the recognized rendezvous, unless in the reception of very ceremonious visitors. We absolutely lived on ours, changing from one to the other, according to the position of the sun.

Undaunted by our Fautauau experience, Margaret and I ventured on another excursion to the Vallée de la Reîné. We pointed our horses' heads in what we supposed to be the right direction, for by this time we knew most of the ordinary rides in the neighbourhood of Papeeti, and on this occasion took quite a new path; and a very lovely one it was, through groves of orange and ito trees. Imperceptibly to us we were all the time ascending, and were suddenly faced by a steep rise which we surmounted to encounter another, and still another. I began to question whether we were, after all, pursuing the right course, but was induced to persevere by Margaret, who believed that at a certain elevation we should reach the desired point from which to descend to the valley. This sounded plausible enough, and I accordingly urged Dolly forward, though at the same time it seemed to me far more probable that we should reach the top of a mountain instead of a descent, as we had entered a forest of tomâno and ito trees, through which the sky was invisible. Anything more dense and gloomy I had never beheld, and, to add to our uncertainty, we had lost all trace of a path; in and out, zigzag fashion we wandered, I becoming querulous, and Margaret screaming with laughter every time she caught sight of my anxious face at finding
myself in such an isolated position, where I felt sure no other human being had penetrated. The trees grew so close together, and the foliage was so thick and sombre, that it terrified me. To my infinite relief—my fears having reached a climax—the welcome sound of wood-cutting fell on our ears, and we issued from the forest on to a circular clearance, where a native stood with uplifted axe, glaring at us in blank amazement. He no doubt took us for revenants (Taupapahous), as the natives call ghosts. Mounted ones, must have struck even him, as out of the common, but his axe remained elevated and his expression of face unrelaxed until we cantered towards him and spoke in a mixture of French, English, and Tahitian. Our question must have indeed surprised him: "Where was the Vallée de la Reine?" He gravely pointed downward. How we got to be where we were evidently puzzled the man, and to a certain extent made him still dubious of our being after all only white women and not the genuine Taupapahous! It required a deal of persuasion to induce him to show us the way back, when we extracted from him the information that there had never been a road up this mountain, which natives scaled in search of Feeiis or to fell trees, that none but natives had ever penetrated to the plateau we had reached, and how a horse had accomplished the feat was to him a marvel; so it was to me. Under his protection I enjoyed the return ride amazingly. Previously I had only been impressed by its intense sombreness. Actual danger there was none, for there were no precipices, as in the case of
La Vallée de la Reiné.

Fautauau. The plateau itself was a grand sight, situated at the base of frowning mountains, and brightened by the rays of the sun, which penetrated the canopy of leaves and produced fitful shadows on the smooth green turf, a scene of varied splendour from beginning to end; and, when my fears were at rest, I rejoiced to think that we, Margaret and I, had been where no other European was likely to go. The pleasure of our snail’s-pace descent, was very materially enhanced, by the knowledge that we were under trustworthy guidance.

When A—— heard of our exploit, he called us over-venturesome, and prophesied that we should get into serious trouble if we were not more careful. Captain and Madame Perraud were highly entertained at the description I gave them of our search for “La Vallée de la Reiné,” and the native’s expression of horror when we suddenly appeared before his startled gaze.

I subsequently visited the Vallée de la Reiné in company with A—— and the Perrauds, and candidly confess that it was about as uninteresting a ride as I had ever taken on the island, along a level road constructed by the artillery soldiers to enable them to reach the stone quarries which were situated in the valley and utilized by the French Government, whose desire for easy access had robbed the route of its rural character by converting a shady path into a dusty highway. And dusty it was in all conscience, and, oh, so hot, so purgatorially hot! The Vallée was in possession of artillerymen busily employed at stone-cutting. Tents were scattered about, but the glare of
light on the huge blocks of stone, added to the din of
anvil and hammer, were intolerable, and I gladly left
the noisy spot to return home, over-heated of course,
but where we found an appetising déjeuner à la
fourchette quite ready for us in our shady, cool
dining-room. I wish this pleasant degree of tem-
perature had lasted, but by dinner-time the room
was equally hot and uncomfortable.

No ride, drive, or walk can be totally devoid of
interest in a country where such prolific vegetation
exists as to cause the whole island to resemble a
series of flower-gardens and fruit-orchards, inter-
spersed with forests of magnificent trees. No matter
what path one traversed, it led through groves of
fragrant trees and shrubs, or green labyrinths with
tempered light, a combination of natural charms that
render Tahiti the Garden of the Pacific, a terrestrial
paradise; nevertheless, that one can become satiated
by the beautiful was an experience I eventually
made.
CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONVENT OF THE ORDER OF PIC-PUS.

PICNICS, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, are organized anywhere and everywhere; but at Tahiti such entertainments present very different features; for example, as a rule, guests contribute nothing in the shape of food, which is cooked in native ovens, near the spot where the collation is to take place, generally in the vicinity of a river, or some kind of watercourse. Every variety of vehicle is brought into requisition on these occasions, to convey the company composed of whites, half-castes, full natives, and French officers. The cavalcade makes a duty of starting before the sun is too high, as near six A.M. as possible. As a rule the gentlemen ride, the ladies drive, and merriment is the order of the day, in which respect it rarely fails, as the gathering is bound to be a gay one. No skeleton has a seat at these feasts, the participants following the principle of enjoy the present, and letting the future take care of itself. The
collation consists of fowls, pork, fish, pawns, lobster, with bread-fruit, taro, feeiis, and poi-poi. This is made of feeiis, baked and beaten to a pulp; poi-taro is a mixture of the two vegetables, moistened with the juice of the matured cocoa-nuts. The native mode of cooking interested me very much; it was all done so daintily, though in deep holes dug in the ground; these are encircled with stones, and filled with loose twigs, branches, and leaves, which are set on fire and covered with sods. When the stones are sufficiently hot to receive the food, every article is carefully wrapped in leaves before being placed on them, and then recovered with twigs, branches, layers of leaves, and sods. The cooking is rather a slow process, but equally sure, for I never saw anything under or over done unless with intention, as the natives and half-castes even, prefer their pork saignante in its literal sense. Many eat fish raw, and say that it is far more delicate than when cooked. I could never be persuaded to test it. When the fare is prepared, it is laid on a thick layer of leaves spread on the grass under a canopy of foliage or in a grove of shady trees. Portions of vegetables on leaves —instead of dishes—are placed before each guest, and small calabashes containing sea-water are distributed about in place of salt. The usual beverage is the milk of green cocoa-nuts, which is as clear as water, and nothing can be nicer or more refreshing. I must admit that I enjoyed these national repasts amazingly, though I found eating without knife or fork, rather an awkward process. I never could make use of my fingers, as the habitues did, conveying each morsel to
their mouths without soiling any part of the hand beyond the mere tips of their fingers. When I operated, the grease trickled down to my very elbows. At Tahitian picnics there are many amusing incidents: wreaths of natural flowers adorn every guest, which, as may be imagined, are more becoming to the ladies than to the gentlemen, an opinion shared by the young girls who were in a constant state of titter at the outré effect it had on some of the masculine heads.

Bathing constitutes a part of the day's programme and more often than not the jolliest part. I say nothing about flirtation, as I take it for granted cela va sans dire. I was much amused at the assumed modest shyness of the pretty half-castes in the presence of white ladies, but out of it, couldn't they employ their seductive arts on the opposite sex. They possess the faculty in a remarkable degree, of imparting their wishes and intentions, by the mere raising and drooping of their fringed lids.

I used to enjoy watching these children of nature, who were so true to their instincts. Inborn coquettes they never missed a chance of airing it, too often to their cost: for many of these attractive girls who deserved to be loved and cherished for their trust and simplicity, were misled and induced to become native wives, in plain language, mistresses and mothers of children, who in time were bound, like themselves, to be abandoned by the gay deceivers who leave the colony, to revisit it no more.

According to French law, children not born in wedlock possess but one parent; the father, in legal
parlance, escapes the scandal by being termed père inconnu, though he acknowledges his child. Civilization in some respects has retrograded; the patriarchs set a very different example. The Bible teaches us that the children of wives and concubines were on an equality, a humane ordinance which civilization has condemned by obliging the innocent babe and forlorn mother to suffer, while cloaking the sin of the greatest criminal, the seducer and father, who is received in society be he never so guilty. The ways of the world are indeed inconsistent.

Madame Perraud accompanied the Superior of the Order of Pic-Pus, when, in the interest of the propagation de la foi, she called upon me. I found Mère Marie de la Croix an exceedingly agreeable person, but so excessively stout, that I could not refrain from thinking, that Tahiti must have been a mild purgatory to her, until I heard that she had been for some years at Cayenne. After such an experience as that, any climate would have been bearable, even Tophet itself.

When I returned the Superior’s visit, I was lost in admiration of the Convent grounds, as I had no idea such a pretty place existed within the limits of Papeeti. This property was charmingly undulating, divided by a stream of water, the banks on each side sloping down, and dotted with tropical plants and umbrageous trees, were in such perfect order that a stray leaf was not to be seen. The fruit trees comprised the most approved descriptions indigenous and cultivated on the island, and no less taste was shown in the selection of the flowers. Besides native productions, there were roses, fuchsias, heliotrope gera-
niums, mignonette, and sweet peas, in addition to a variety of unscented perennials. Mère Marie de la Croix occupied a small pavilion consisting of two rooms. The school-rooms and nuns’ quarters were separate, though within view. From the veranda of the pavilion where we usually sat, I could see several cows browsing in the distant paddocks, and was taken to visit their dairy, and such a dairy! spotlessly clean with shelves supplied with pans of milk, basins of cream, and cream cheeses in the course of making, in the composition of which the nuns excel.

As I gained experience I was fairly puzzled to explain how they contrived to obtain such a quantity of milk and cream, when the pasturage is so spare, that cows produce very little, and that little of an inferior quality.

Before leaving I looked into the school-rooms, where there were children of every shade of colour, some very fair and pretty, others—and they were in the majority—were dark and ugly. Their education was of the simplest kind, the mysteries of the Roman Catholic faith took precedence of other studies, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. The afternoons were devoted to plain sewing, and fancy work, and thanks to the missionaries of all denominations, the native women plied the needle deftly, and by this means can earn an honest livelihood if they choose. The children all rose when we appeared. One among them attracted my attention; she was a perfect beauty, and wonderfully fair for a half caste; her eyes were large and velouté; she had a straight little nose, and a mouth like a rose-
bud. The sisters shared my admiration for the dark-eyed young houri, but they shook their heads gravely, and whispered that she was too attractive to escape a sad fate. Virtue is absolutely unknown to the native, but not fidelity; as I had repeated evidence of this steadfast trait in their natures. Marriage as we understand it, was introduced among the islanders by the first missionaries; prior to that, the natives acted according to the precepts laid down in the Bible; they imitated to all intents and purpose the Patriarchs, "who took the woman to his tent and she became his wife;" such a simple process was capable of repetition, and like our forefathers, acknowledge their offspring, be the mother who she may. *Illegitimacy* finds no place in the native vocabulary, and as its sting is unknown it is unfelt, otherwise a large proportion of the population would come under its bane. Humanely speaking, is the condemnation of the children of such connection not unjust? The native mother sees no sin in the life she leads, while the white father knows that they are doing wrong; yet he who neglects his duty and outrages the moral code, is not ostracized by society, nor repulsed by his personal friends. This is a delicate subject to dilate upon, but I have been unable to refrain, as it was one which interested me very deeply during my residence on the island, and each time I met these pretty neglected waifs, I experienced a burning sense of indignation at the conduct of their more enlightened parent. Unnatural conduct, which can never find favour in the eyes of a compassionate Creator—"Who alone is good, for His mercies never
fail; who alone is merciful, for His kindness never ceases.” The fears of the gentle nuns with regard to their little pupil, whose name was Etia, were all too soon verified, for she fell an easy victim to the fine appearance of a recent arrival. M. D—— was a tall slight man, and remarkably good-looking. Etia’s scruples were probably overcome through the influence of her Feti (confidant), who encouraged rather than discouraged their dangerous tête-à-têtes by the riverside, reclining under a fragrant tree, or in one of those secluded bowers formed by pendant parasites, where love-making seems to come naturally.

Etia eventually became the native wife of M. D——; but previous to that she had ceased to attend the convent school. Before the end of the year she gave birth to a girl, and was in extasies over her new acquisition; not so her lover, who looked upon it as an encumbrance, and suggested the wisdom of transferring his daughter to some female friend of the mother’s (Tahitian fashion was an easy way of getting rid of a nuisance). His proposition, however, did not meet with favour: Etia’s face flushed, and her eyes flashed indignantly, as she hugged her treasure closer to her bosom.

At the expiration of D——’s term of Colonial service, he gladly seized the first opportunity to return to his beloved France, but he kept back this piece of information from Etia until the day previous to his departure, so as to curtail as much as possible the period for reproaches; hers were confined to mute ones, tears and quivering lips, her grief was too deep for expression, as she
had received her death-blow from the man she adored.

D——'s furniture was sold to pay his private debts. He had made no provision whatever for Etia or his child, who, with her baby in her arms and a small bundle of clothes in her hand, walked out of the cottage at St. Emilie, wherein she had experienced a happiness that was never more to fall to her lot.

Etia wandered about without any fixed intention, only anxious to keep aloof from those who would, without doubt, strive to persuade her to accept another protector. She probably revisited the old rendezvous, endeared to her heart by sweet memories, which confirmed her determination to leave Papeeti with her little Noee, as she felt far too miserable to stop and listen to her friends' ridicule when they found that she still loved the man who had forsaken her.

The poor mother continued her weary way, taking shelter in any dilapidated shed or hut at night. In her desire to escape from former scenes and familiar faces, Etia overtaxed her strength, and did not long survive her lover's desertion. A rapid decline terminated her short, troubled life. Her Feti, Twine, became my sempstress, and to her I was indebted for this pitiful history. She insisted that Etia had died of a broken heart. Altogether a halo of romance surrounded the poor thing's fate, which would have made an excellent foundation for a novel.
CHAPTER IX.

A NATIVE REGATTA.

The Emperor's fête-day on August 15th was a festive season at Tahiti. The population from every district and adjacent islands congregates at Papeeti to participate in the grand feast. The natives are like overgrown children who delight in a show, and are as satisfied and happy eating the food they contribute as if it had been provided for them. The French administration have an unique mode of regulating such matters. They announce a feast to come off at such a date, and then orders are issued to the chief of every district on the island to collect the food for the entertainment; all that the Government ever provides on such occasions is the vin ordinaire, and ordinary enough one may be very sure—so much so, that there was no stint, it flowed literally like water.

M. le Viscomte de Bouzet had arrived from New Caledonia, so as to honour by his presence his royal master, Louis Napoleon's fête-day. He was a tall,
aristocratic-looking man, known to be invariably courteous to every one, whilst favouring none.

We were among those invited on board the steam corvette Milan to witness the boat and canoe races. The regattas at Tahiti, like the picnics and feasts, are peculiar to the island. If the boat race failed to interest me, the canoe race did not. The canoes are long and narrow. Each canoe contain from thirty to forty rowers, who were nude to the waist, and wore pareus of uniform colours, such as orange, red, or blue. Each district sends a double canoe, at the stern of which the chief stands erect, but not motionless. He vociferates, flourishes his paddle over his head, and gesticulates in the most grotesque manner, so as to excite his men to greater speed, while he himself every now and then dips his own paddle as an additional incentive to gain on the others. The strokes are measured to a nicety, as neck and neck they raced with all their might and main. Never before had I witnessed such a scene, and like most first impressions (though I subsequently witnessed many others at Papeeti of even more elaborate decoration), none equalled in my mind this regatta. The gay awnings of the boats, the half-naked rowers in the canoes, their heads encircled by wreaths of leaves, straining every nerve to reach the winning-post, was a sight I can never forget.

The Governor awarded the prizes to the fortunate winners, and judging by his countenance, it was an honour he would have gratefully dispensed with.

The grounds adjacent to the Government House were gaily decorated, a greasy pole was erected, with
shirts and *pareus* flying from the top, which naturally were won by the last climbers, knowing hands, who looked on while the pole was being cleansed for their benefit! Other games were provided for the public, such as jumping in sacks, foot races, &c.

The native repast was spread under awnings composed of plaited cocoa-nut leaves supported on bamboo rods. The food was, as usual, daintily laid out on a thick layer of glossy leaves, each individual having his supply apportioned. What they could not eat, they took away in small baskets brought expressly for this purpose, which is an invariable custom of the islanders, whose education had evidently been sadly neglected. "Eat all you want, but take nothing" was a rudimentary precept they had yet to learn!

There was an official dinner at Government House, followed by a ball, when Queen Pomare appeared dressed in a flowing black velvet *Tapa* (dress), in which she must have been half melted. She wore a wreath,—not of roses, but of artificial flowers, made from arrowroot straw, that shines like satin. Attached to one side was a flowing plume of fleecy *reva reva*, which is made out of the cabbage of the cocoa-nut tree, and is the life thereof, as its removal kills the tree; and how many must have been sacrificed for that entertainment! The *reva reva* floated from the head of every native woman, as well as the half-castes, and some of the chiefs wore ponchas entirely trimmed with it.

Her Majesty soon wearied of looking on, and betook herself to the veranda, when, after enjoying a
few prolonged puffs at a cigarette, she retired to the card-room, and there passed the remainder of the night playing her favourite game, écarté.

On this occasion I saw the most beautiful girl it was my good fortune to meet during the time I resided at Tahiti. Her features were delicately moulded, and her complexion that of a clear brunette, fairer than most half-castes, yet she was a pure native of high birth; a production of the island of Eimeo. Such a type as hers would have been admired in any country throughout the world, and evidently so thought the French officers. M. de Paralo said it was far more amusing outside than in the salon, and asked me to accompany him in a tour about the grounds, which were illuminated by coloured lamps—at wide intervals—an exhibition only equalled by the display of fireworks which either could not, or would not, go off; each failure was greeted with roars of jeering laughter, as the rockets began and ended in a fizz!

The population at large were congregated to participate in whatever was going forward: they strolled about in pairs, lounged on mats or squatted on the ground like frogs. A twinkling light on the grass and the sound of the tum tum indicated where the Upa Upa dance was being performed, permitted by the authorities on special occasions, otherwise it is tabooed. I had never witnessed it, and was curious to do so. What I saw disgusted me far more than it did my companion, whose eyes were riveted on the series of vulgar wriggles and contortions, which I thought revolting. M. de Paralo's delight reached a
climax when the exhibition concluded with a man advancing in a grotesque manner with bent knees towards a woman, who in a similar way came backward towards him. When sufficiently near, he gave her a resounding smack!

"Je parie que Madame ne pourrait pas danser l'Upa Upa," remarked M. de Paralo as we walked away, to which I vouchsafed no reply, though I thought he might have said ne voudrait pas!

I must however do M. de Paralo the justice to say that he never consorted with native women or half-castes; the beautiful wife of a French colon occupied his attention, as it did that of one of his own officers, which was the source of many unrepeatable quips.
AND I often went out for a moonlight row on the bay; he steered and our servant Puhia plied the oars; while I revelled in the dolce far niente. When sufficiently near the reefs we stopped and watched the natives catching fish, which they do in this wise. They grasp in one hand a lighted torch, and a long spear in the other. The instant the fish rises to the surface they strike unerringly; women sit motionless in the stern of their pirogues, and keep it steady: by dipping the paddle first on one side, then on the other. The reefs are extremely sharp, and how the natives managed to stand on them, as they do by the hour together, with bare feet surprised me, until I came to understand that the soles of their feet, were tougher than any shoe-leather.

Fish is plentiful at Tahiti, and also shell-fish, such as prawns, crabs, craw-fish—equal to a good-sized lobster, which they replace—and yet another sort called
either Varo or Warralis; in shape it resembles a centipede, whatever it may do in taste. The way to catch them is as peculiar as the fish itself; it is accomplished by introducing, at low water, into the holes wherein they burrow on the sand, a piece of wood attached to a string, which is left over-night and hauled up in the early morning, generally with the fish dangling from it. They are caught in pairs—male and female—their claws being so firmly affixed to the wood that they cannot extricate them. The natives are so partial to the Varo that unless pressed for money they prefer to eat them, which did not astonish me—in their place I would have done the same; indeed our chef had a standing order to purchase the Varo when they were for sale.

In the process of boiling, the shell which is transparent becomes pale pink, never red like other shell fish, and the flesh is more tender and succulent than that of the lobster.

The reefs abound with zoophytes. Star-fish, sea-urchins, and anemones cling to the coral, iridescent scales of tiny fish adding to, if not heightening the kaleidoscopic effect. It was, I believe, my admiration for these submarine productions that induced me to study conchology, which resulted in my acquiring a collection of rare shells. Unfortunately I had subsequently to dispose of them, and I am fain to admit that they did not realize a third of their cost. Experience has taught me that buying and selling are extremes of an unsatisfactory nature. A London conchologist profited by my loss.

Very soon after having removed to our house on
the beach we had the sorrow to lose our intelligent parrot. We found that she bestowed more of her attention on our new drawing-room furniture than we thought desirable, and to prevent her easy access into that apartment, we had the branches of the trees that touched the veranda cut away. Lauritta resented this act of despotism by screaming terrifically and bobbing her head in genuine rage. I endeavoured to propitiate her by offers of confection, which she snapped at, and threw away. I then held out my finger and she perched on it, for a purpose of her own, as I usually in that position asked her to kiss me. I did so on this occasion, when she bit my lip and made it bleed. A— said it was my own fault, that I aggravated the bird, and he undertook to calm down her ruffled feathers and temper, and got his nose sharply bitten for his pains. With a strong exclamation he dropped Lauritta on to the veranda, when with a chuckle of triumph, she marched boldly into the drawing-room!

Soldiers attend to the trimming of trees on the road-side. One morning they clipped ours as close as their own cropped heads, which left the bird so exposed to the sun that she dropped to the ground in a fit; produced by sunstroke I maintained, though a post-mortem suggested fatty degeneration of the heart. The absence of birds at Tahiti was to me a great drawback to its other charms; beautiful trees and flowers needed the adjuncts of their plumage and sweet warble—as nature had intended, which makes all things perfect. Tropical birds had existed in vast quantities on the island, until ruthlessly shot as gibier
by the French officials, who had no regard for the preservation of the breed!

Beyond the wild boar, pigs, and a superabundance of rats, there are no animals indigenous to Tahiti.
CHAPTER XI.

A TRIP TO MOREA.

A small island, called Montu-Utu, looked so picturesquely green and inviting from our veranda that I expressed a wish to visit this seeming oasis. A— assured me that it wasn't worth the trouble, an opinion I declined to take on trust; we therefore rowed over to it, and if I required another instance where distance lends enchantment, I got it on our nearer approach. This gem in the bay, that appeared so alluringly attractive from our house, proved a very different spot on our effecting a landing; I discovered the truth of A—'s assertion—it didn't pay. The ground was riddled by land crabs—which, by the way, infest the entire island—and, cumbered by an accumulation of dead shells, broken bottles, and empty tins, precluded the possibility of an exploring expedition. A—enjoyed my discomfiture, but I was determined to do something to compensate for the pull there, and proposed a bathe, concluding
that the water could be no delusion if everything else was. We walked through the scorching sand and entered, well, if it wasn't boiling water, it came so near it, that we walked out more rapidly than we walked in. I never revisited the Moutu-Utu.

It was quite decided that we were to pay a visit to A—-'s farm at Morea as soon as the Margaret—a small schooner—had discharged her cargo of pearl-shell. The long-desired day dawned, and we started with a favourable breeze; unfortunately, it veered round when we got outside the reefs, and detained us at sea throughout the night. Mr. Cape, an elderly gentleman, accompanied us in the expectation of a pleasure trip, and was as jovial as possible, till the vessel began to lurch, when down he dropped to the deck, like an inert mass, where he remained till the next morning. Our guest was dressed in a white linen suit, as he had expected to reach Morea in a couple of hours. So had we, and there was therefore no provision of either food, or warmer clothing. The captain, who was a good-natured little Frenchman, took off his pea jacket and threw it over the prostrate man, explaining that he was going to take his turn at the helm and didn't need it. After that exercise, however, he began to feel the want of his coat, and sent below for a red blanket which he fastened round his neck, but the wind kept it puffed out like a sail. I longed to tell him to put his coat on, and give Mr. Cape the blanket, but I was too far away: having crept for warmth under a heap of loose sails in a distant corner, from whence I amused myself peeping out, wishful to see and hear what was going on, and
I soon had enough of the latter. Margaret was in possession of the stuffy little cabin of her namesake, and was frightfully sea-sick.

I found myself very snug among the sails, and when A— passed me in some refreshment I ate it with as much relish as if it had been a favourite reflection instead of dry bread and cold meat, which, as a rule, I detest. Only when we were close into Emeo did Mr. Cape rise from his lowly position. He, no doubt, felt as seedy as he looked; glancing round, he exclaimed in a doleful voice, "I wish I hadn't to go back!"

The scenery of Morea is on a far grander scale than that of Tahiti. The mountains appeared to me considerably higher and more densely foliated. We saw the sun rise like a red ball in a frame of dazzling light; the flaming fork-like beams casting fitful rays of brilliant light and shade over the undulating hills and valleys. The approach to the island from the sea was indeed a lovely sight. We passed innumerable bays that would afford safe anchorage to ships of any tonnage. Cook's Bay forms a crescent of lofty irregular peaks, the base fringed with the cocoa-nut, orange, vi, and other trees. It seemed all but impossible to meet anywhere more majestic scenery; but when we entered the bay of Openohu I stood positively transfixed with admiration, not unmixed with awe, at what so far surpassed in sombre grandeur, anything I had previously beheld, or was likely to behold again.

The fissures in the darkly-frowning mountains resembled cathedral aisles, and the facade-fluted
columns, turrets, and gable ends where these imposing creations were bare of vegetation; elsewhere they were tapestried with flowering trees and shrubs; the vi tree, then in full bloom, threw a rosy hue over the foliage, and assisted to tone down the otherwise stern character of these abrupt rocks massed one over the other; declivities that rise straight up from the bed of the sea clothed with the wealth of tropical vegetation, were reflected in the pelucid water, reproducing in shadow the glorious panorama that faced us. We dropped anchor exactly fronting A—-'s property—the farm—about which I had thought so much and was so anxious to see. The butter sent over to Papeeti was somewhat rank by the time it reached there, and I rejoiced at the prospect of indulging in some freshly made. I also intended to impart to Hill the way to make cream cheese out of his surplus cream, as explained to me by the nuns.

The farmer boarded our schooner in a boat, into which we stepped. No one did so with more alacrity than Mr. Cape, who nearly shook Hill's hand off, in his delight at getting out of the Margaret. After the usual exchange of civilities I overheard Mr. Cape whisper, "See here, Hill, I wish to God I hadn't to go back." Poor old fellow! he would have to do so, or end his days at Morea; probably at that moment he would have chosen the latter alternative.

The moment we landed, my kid, from which I had been separated for several months, recognized my voice, and came bounding toward us, her frantic leaps of affectionate greeting nearly knocking me down.
She had outgrown my recollection in the process of becoming a full-sized goat, but she had not forgotten me: another evidence of memory versus instinct.

Openohu was most beautifully situated. The property had changed owners, but Hill, like a certain class of grimalkin, clung to the home rather than to the master, and transferred his services to A——, who immediately stocked the place with the best breed of cattle from the English colonies. Where were they? I saw none, no enclosed paddocks, no large-eyed docile cows, with bells round their throats, such as one sees in the pictures advertising Nestle's Swiss milk.

I was told that A——'s cattle roamed at large among the mountains, hills, and vales, where their calves were branded by the astute natives, who eventually claimed a larger stock than the real owner; but I was partially comforted by the assurance that a few cows were kept in an enclosure at the back. We were lodged, in a small picturesquely situated pavilion on the lawn facing the ocean, and close under the brow of a hill thickly studded with trees. Everything looked fresh and dewy in the early morning of our visit.

I heard that Hill was going to milk the cows, so I accompanied him to the enclosure where there were two cows. At sight of us they began to swish their tails furiously, and held their horns in a position that indicated "come a step nearer, if you dare"; I didn't dare, in fact, I much preferred watching the process from the other side of the fence. A half-dozen natives assisted Hill to fasten the hind legs of each
cow to strong posts and their horns to another; even then their udders were approached in a gingerly manner. I wondered why their tails were not likewise secured, so as to complete the effect. In the cow’s place I wouldn’t have condescended to give down a drop of milk, whereas the pail—considerably the worse for wear—was nearly full. Hill explained that they had only calved the previous night, which also accounted for the animal’s generosity, as their poor little calves had been purposely withheld from them. In reality, there was little milk obtained and still less cream on the farm. The latter was immediately converted into butter for our benefit—a poor one at the best—as Hill was going to make some for our second breakfast, and clotted cream as well. I followed him into a bamboo kitchen; the ground was not covered with mats, but cooking utensils, earthenware dishes, and plates, sadly in need of a thorough cleansing. I looked about for the churn, and discovered a huge concern, capable of containing several gallons of cream, but its outward appearance indicated that it was used for other purposes, as the lid was covered with empty bottles; goodness only knows what was inside, possibly Hill’s clothing. He produced a breakfast cupful of cream which he poured into a bottle and handed it to a native boy who set to work shaking it, and never ceased doing so, till the butter formed. Next came the turning of the milk into clotted cream. Hill poured a portion of what was in the pail into a flat copper pan and left it on the fire to simmer. Presently the cream rose to the surface,
which he skimmed off in clots, and served to us with strawberry jam as an entremet at breakfast. Is it necessary to add, that we found it delicious?

My illusion concerning the farm and the pretty picture I had imagined was dispelled; nevertheless the existence of the Openohu cows was blissful compared to those in Switzerland, which are always stabled and debarred browsing in the open fields. In a shady hollow of a rippling stream we had a delightful bathe, overhead the branches of the trees interlaced and formed a perfect arcade, through which we rowed later in the day to a shimmering pond, where there were a number of children catching shrimps for our dinner; and very large sized they were, looked more like pawns, though not in flavour, as these were tender and delicate. A small oyster adheres to the rocks which bestrew the river—such an ideal river, flowing under a canopy of foliage; we went to the extreme end of it, where there is a mineral spring, reputed to cure dyspepsia. A—urged me to drink a tumblerful of the water, not because I was afflicted with the malady, therefore it must have been intended as a preventative which is admitted to be better than a cure. Nevertheless, I most emphatically declined to even taste it; the smell had rendered me obdurate.

We visited the property which appeared to be completely enclosed in an amphitheatre of stupendous mountains. I was in ecstasies over its weird grandeur, from the moment we passed the gate, that divided the estate from the part Hill and his belongings occupied till we had made the
tour and returned with sharpened appetites to our dinner, which we discussed *al fresco* under the extended branches of a gigantic tamarind tree. The second day terminated our visit to the farm, which had proved to be no farm at all, but an embryo cotton plantation, as I had not failed to see several patches of it growing finely, with others in the course of preparation.

In one of the highest peaks at Morea there exists a perfectly round orifice, a freak of nature, of course; but a legend is attached to it. A deity was chased by a rival, and to escape from him he jumped through the peak. I was told by a gentleman that he had undertaken to scale that mountain by means of ropes, and had been inside the opening which was much larger than one might imagine. He said it was capable of holding a dozen or more people.
CHAPTER XII.

A STATELY CEREMONY.

THE arrival of the market canoes towards sunset at Papeeti was a novel and pretty sight. One after the other paddle up to the shore laden down with a variety of fruit and vegetables, each kind packed in dainty green baskets made for the occasion by plaiting the cocoa-nut leaves and forming them into different-sized receptacles. Large ones were required for oranges, lemons, vies, sweet potatoes, taro, feeiis, bread-fruit, yams, &c.; small ones for mangoes, aligator pears, and custard apples, &c.; bananas are brought in branches, and pine apples are tied up by the half dozen. How tempting they all looked! Not so, however, the pigs and fowls, fastened so tightly by the legs as to be unable to move, but not unable to grunt, squeak, and cackle in every possible and impossible tone.

As soon as the canoes are stranded on the beach, the men, women, and children squat down and smoke
before carrying their produce to the market-place, which they usually do after sunset; previous to which the sky is aflame with glowing tints that gradually lessen till every fantastic peak of the surrounding mountains is steeped in a rosy haze, while the dazzling orb gradually disappears behind the island of Eimeo, bearing in his resplendent train the rays that produce life, warmth, and beauty in nature. The gorgeous scene has ceased, an ashen grey sky replaces the brilliant hues, and a canopy of darkness soon enshrouds the land, a signal for the natives to bestir themselves. Quickly are the baskets suspended from the ends of long poles, and the procession of weighted shoulders trudges to the square, where they pass the night on mats covered with a pare. By daybreak they are wide awake, and prepared to dispose of their stock-in-trade to as early risers as themselves.

The natives pass their time chatting or singing himnes. So interminable are these that ninety-nine verses of a song would be a trifle compared to them. A few minor notes sung in chorus, followed by a little conversation I could appreciate, but their long-winded himnes nearly drove me wild. At night, when stillness reigned, and the air was redolent from exotics, to hear the young folks as they passed down the beach homeward bound, singing a few bars at a time, their voices blending harmoniously, was to me delightful, and I listened till the last faint echo wafted to my strained ear. This I truly enjoyed, but nothing beyond it.

Rue de Pologne was the favourite evening promenade, where everybody congregated, officers, soldiers,
sailors, and natives—all of whom patronized the cabarets, with which the street was amply provided.

The return of M. le Viscomte de Bouzet to Papeeti was the keynote to a renewal of his weekly receptions at Government House. Every Thursday evening Queen Pomare and suite appeared among the rest of the guests. Her Majesty, however, never lingered long in the salle de danse; the salle de jeu had much more attraction for her, and there she passed the entire soirée playing écarté.

Precisely at midnight the Governor sought the Queen, to whom he offered his arm, and escorted her to the refreshment room, where weak tea, wine, syrup and water, and a variety of confectionary were served. The Governor was partial to early hours, and intended this ceremony to indicate the termination of the evening's festivities. Nevertheless, dancing and cards were invariably resumed with the same en train, while the sleepy host sat in a corner ineffectually endeavouring to stifle his spasmodic fits of yawning.

M. de Bouzet was indiscriminately courteous to his guests, making it a devoir to address a few words to each one. As regards his administrative policy, the least said about that the better. He was non-committal. Loving his tranquility he preferred to keep petitioners in a perpetual state of expectancy rather than give a decided negative. And he pursued this system till he started for New Caledonia, and thence to France, where he soon after died. One of M. de Bouzet's last public acts at Papeeti must have been a trying ordeal to one of his retiring temperament. In consort with Queen Pomare he opened the native
assembly held at the Fari Opera (Parliament House), a ceremony he would have delegated to his successor had it been practicable.

The road by which the cortège passed was lined by soldiers, a few trumpeters blowing lustily, if not musically, acted as an advance guard. The Queen came first; walking beside her was Ariifaite, the royal princes and attendants following. Next came the Governor and his staff, en grand tenu. A pause was made at the entrance of the building to enable the Queen to take his Excellency's arm. At that moment there boomed forth a salute of twenty-one guns.

Pomare was dressed in black velvet, lace shawl, and a bonnet. How can I ever hope to describe that bonnet, composed as it was of a pyramid of artificial flowers, from the top of which drooped a cluster of variegated feathers, a conception which was neither artistic nor becoming. If the truth must be told, the natives never do look well in any dress but the simple toilet of the country, composed of a loose tapa and round straw hat. As to Ariifaite, the Queen's husband, he presented such a comical appearance that it produced a general titter among the spectators. He wore a richly-embroidered light-blue velvet coat, which was so absurdly tight, that he had been unable to get it more than partially on, and considering that it had come into his possession during the reign of Louis Philippe, it was not surprising that he had outgrown the coat, though evidently not his predilection for the gew-gaw. Happily his trousers were a better fit, made of white
cashmere with a wide gold band down the sides; his cocked hat was ornamented with gold cord and tassels and scarlet feathers; a long sword completed his costume and impeded his movements, as it tripped him up at every step, which helped to increase the titter. Nothing disconcerted Ariifaite; he marched on perfectly self-satisfied and convinced that the spectators could not help being impressed by his appearance.

When everybody was seated, a hymn, sung by a trained chorus of men and women, opened the ceremony. The Governor then rose and read a speech to the Senate, composed of chiefs, in which he enjoined them to continue faithful subjects to their Queen and loyal to his master the Emperor Louis Napoleon. He then bowed to the Queen and resumed his seat on the right of her Majesty. Ariifaite, who sat on her left, rose and delivered in a forcible fluent manner the Royal Speech, to which a chief replied in an equally fluent manner. This facility of speech is possessed by most natives. The native missionary offered up a prayer, and another hymn terminated the ceremony.
CHAPTER XIII.

A WEDDING BREAKFAST.

MARGARET and I were riding in the direction of Faaa one morning when we were amazed to see quite a pretty young girl seated on a mat outside a hut with her breasts exposed; on each one there was a fearful gash, to all appearance recently made; there were a lot of women about her, and I drew up to ask the meaning of such a spectacle. The girl, I was told, came from a distant island where these ceremonies were observed on the death of a parent. I had heard of rending garments on these occasions, but never the flesh; the sight of the girl’s wounds made mine creep, and I gladly escaped from the gruesome sight.

We accompanied some friends by boat to Point Venus, and an exciting time we had, as the man who steered kept on bringing us in contact with the reefs, which elicited all sorts of droll exclamations from our French friends. “Mais cet imbécile là, il va
donc nous écraser sur les récifs,” they shouted; it looked very much like it, and I couldn’t swim. We were so close to the coral at times as to be able to discern the brilliantly-tinted fish floating in and out of their submarine chambers, and nibbling at the aquatic flowers and plants suspended or adhering to the branches of coral of prismatic tint, and to excrescences of fantastic form. We were late in reaching our destination, and to our dismay had to submit to be carried ashore by the natives, as the tide was receding and the whale-boat could not proceed further without stranding on the sands. The chef-lieu had been placed at our disposal; it was a long, low, wooden building, situated in the centre of a square piece of ground shaded by fine trees; we ladies proposed eating our breakfast under them, but were overruled by the gentlemen, who preferred the orthodox table and chairs, pronouncing it to be far more rational and comfortable than squatting on mats, which impeded digestion and so forth—materialistic creatures who were nicely sold. The table in question was so ridiculously high and the chairs so absurdly low, that when we sat down we found ourselves looking under the table instead of over it, which produced roars of laughter; finally, we had to convert our laps into tables for the reception of the plates which were handed down to us. Even this contretemps, such as it was, added to our amusement, and to those who were watching us from a respectful distance, envying the poor half-famished dogs which had ventured nearer and were being well fed, as I for one could not resist their pleading eyes
and watering muzzles. After the completion of our merry meal, we walked to the village, where we visited the church and school-house, built of white coral, thence to the celebrated tamarind tree, planted by Captain Cook. A new lighthouse was in course of erection, and the gentlemen proposed going to see that, which they did without the ladies, who had decided on taking a bathe in the river; and a charming one it was. I loved the picturesque, and I certainly revelled in it at Tahiti.

When the time arrived for us to return to Papeeti, the rowers were all the worse for too frequent libation of orange rum, and the only man who knew how to pilot us at all—though he was incompetent enough, goodness knows—was regularly tipsy. I called it stupidly risking our lives, and was jeered at for my opinion. Off we started, to get jammed in between narrow passages and jammed out again. If the keel of that boat was not damaged it was certainly not the steersman's fault.

We attended a wedding breakfast, given by Priata,—the Regent—to celebrate the marriage of his grandson with the ugliest little girl on the island. The Resident lived in a large oval bamboo construction, partitioned into several compartments by the aid of calico or muslin—not a very effectual screen in the latter case. Priata was the very fattest man, without exception, that I had ever seen; a regular Daniel Lambert; Reubens Silenus is slender in comparison. His paunch was so large that it forced him to waddle like an unwieldy drake, while his pendulous cheeks hung over a triple chin that reposed on his capacious chest; and I was seated at
table next to this lump of humanity. To my great disappointment the entertainment was in the approved French style; and it was laughable to see Priata’s ineffectual attempts to get sufficiently near the dishes so as to be able to assist himself to his favourite mets. I could imagine him to be a great epicure, and as to his capacity, it was prodigious.

Intercepting my amused glances at his unsuccessful efforts, Priata tapped his stomach and elevated his chins to indicate that there lay the obstacle to freedom of action. The menu was unexceptionable, but I noticed that the youthful bride and bridegroom—respectively twelve and fourteen—were ill at their ease. The European dress was probably as uncomfortable to them as it was unbecoming, and they refused every dish in succession, confining themselves to shrimps, which happened to be on the table within their reach. Their real meal of raw fish, raw pork, and a variety of vegetables and fruits spread on the ground was, no doubt, in reserve.

Etiquette has found its way even to Tahiti when one is placed according to rank or worldly position. Much confusion had arisen at Priata’s déjeuner in consequence of the unexpected absence of Queen Pomare. She had suddenly left Papeeti so as to avoid meeting the Governor, who was annoyed with her Majesty, or her Majesty with him. Those complications were entirely beyond my comprehension. Totally different arrangements in the plans had therefore to be made, which accounted for my being seated at the left-hand of the host. I am afraid I did not appreciate the honour in the light it was intended.
CHAPTER XIV.

A TAHITIAN WELCOME.

The frigate Andromede conveyed M. de Bouzet’s successor, M. Cessets, to Tahiti. Admiral Bonard being an old friend of A—’s, came to see him on landing. He was a tall, fine-looking man, somewhat brusque in manner, but extremely kind-hearted. He had years before played his part, as Governor of Tahiti, and an excellent one he was said to have been. He had made it his duty to study the people, but in pleasing them, he had displeased the Home Government, and was in consequence recalled to France, be it said, to the deep regret of every soul on the island. The populace was now anticipating much pleasure from their favourite Governor’s visit, nor were they disappointed. The Admiral was much pleased to return to a spot that was endeared to him in so many ways, where he knew himself to be especially liked, and his gratification must have been
great at the reception given him by the population at large.

As soon as it was known that Admiral Bonard was on board the frigate, canoe after canoe started from shore and surrounded it. His welcome was chanted in a succession of himues, a style of greeting that the Tahitians knew he would appreciate. I was subsequently told by one of the officers on board the Andromede that the enthusiasm was mutual, for the Admiral was equally delighted and as enthusiastic about the natives as they were about him.

During the period that the Andromede was in port, Papeeti presented a festive scene. M. Bonard's known partiality to the dark-eyed women caused them to appear in all their cherished finery and most fragrant flowers. Nor had the Admiral forgotten his many old friends—to each one he presented a suitable gift, gifts he had brought all the way from France for them, which enhanced the value in their eyes. "He had borne them in mind from all that distance, tata miti" (good man).

The first entertainment on board the Admiral's ship was in honour of Queen Pomare. A salute was fired as her Majesty pushed from shore, and three hearty cheers were given her by the sailors who manned the yards as she stepped on board the Andromede. The déjeûner was an elaborate one, but lost on Pomare, who always ate sparingly, and as soon as she could with decency rise from the table did so, for a game of écarté, which absorbed all her attention till near sunset, when the Admiral notified her that after sunset he would be unable to salute her with twenty-one
guns. M. Bonard was aware of Pomare's weakness for such honours, which she would not forego on any account; and as he was, as inveterate a player of loo, as her Majesty was of écarté, he adopted this ruse to hurry her departure, as he had an engagement on shore that evening, which he was determined to keep, and did keep, as I only too well know. The card-party was at our house, and never broke up till morning, when I was awakened by hearing a crash. The candles had burnt down to the sockets, and the glass shades had fallen on the floor and were smashed to pieces, which precipitated the departure of A——'s guests, for I heard them scurrying off in all haste.

The enervating influence of the climate began to affect my health, and A—— was advised to take me a sea-voyage. When Admiral Bonard heard this, and that we had decided on visiting the English Colonies as soon as one of A——'s small vessel put in an appearance to enable us to do so, he said: "Ecoutez, j'ai justement votre affaire," and went on to explain that the steam corvette Milan was going to Sydney via New Caledonia; and that M. de Paralo would be only too pleased, from what he had heard him say of Madame—bowing in my direction—to have us as passengers. I never doubted this, but I knew perfectly well that it was against the rules to receive lady passengers on board men-of-war, and I doubted the Governor's consent to any such arrangement, which I represented to the Admiral, who replied: "Laissez moi faire cela s'arrangera," and he did manage with such good results that we actually sailed in the Milan. I knew every officer on board save the first
lieutenant, who had it in his power to render my position agreeable or otherwise. M. de Poincelle had never visited at our house, and as he subsequently explained to me, that he had called on no one. What deterred him from participating in the hospitality offered to his brother officers was best known to himself; one thing was positive, he was charming to me throughout the voyage.

The commander's apartment was shared by us; it consisted of quite a good-sized saloon, handsomely furnished in dark crimson velvet; lounges lined the walls, before which were draped curtains of the same material trimmed with heavy fringe. The commander was to occupy one of these, and A—the other, while the state-room containing a wide bed and wash-stand was allotted to me. In all innocence I entered it the first night, to find my enemies, the cockroaches, scampering about in every direction. I rushed out and called A—. "I am not going to sleep there," I said. "It literally swarms with cockroaches." An animated dialogue then ensued. A— either would not, or could not, understand my intense repugnance to these hideous insects; neither did he take into consideration that, if I had made a fuss about a solitary one on board the Emily, I would naturally feel a hundred times worse when there existed a hundred times as many on board the Milan. I therefore appealed to M. de Paralo, flattering myself that he would settle the difficulty to my entire satisfaction. Of course I did not tell him that the state-room was a filthy hole infested with vermin. I suppressed all that, and explained that I could not
endure to deprive him of his own berth, and would therefore resign it in his favour and occupy the lounge in the saloon. I endeavoured to make it appear as nearly as possible a perfectly unselfish act on my part, and he accepted it in that spirit. "Ma chère dame," he replied, "Ne vous inquiétez pas je ne me suis jamais servi de ce lit là, car je dors toujours dans le salon et j'ai bien conservé le même côté pour moi, ainsi vous ne me derangez nullement."

This reassurance amused A——, if not me! and the gentleman returned to the deck, leaving me to my deliberations. When too late for application I decided that honesty would have been the best policy. Had I been straightforward, and spoken to M. de Paralo frankly, he would have responded differently; the fault was mine, and I accepted it as such, but not the consequences; I never for a moment wavered about not sleeping in that inner room. Strict propriety might feel outraged at what I determined on doing, but I did not take it into consideration when I retired to the opposite lounge to the one occupied by our commander, defying any human eyes to penetrate two thick velvet curtains, though I would have gladly dispensed with even them in search of more air, had that not been a point beyond even my dare all!

When A—— drew aside the curtain preparatory to turning in I was apparently asleep. His exclamation of annoyance was answered by M. de Paralo, who said, sotto voce, "Ne la dérangez pas, elle est souffrante, il faut le ménager." I nearly exploded with laughter.

My dogs accompanied us. Flody slept at the foot
of my couch, or was supposed to do so, but I invariabley found her at the head when I awoke. Leoné coiled herself on a large armchair in the saloon, a liberty she took as my dog which she had never dared to do with her former master, as she had never been permitted to show even the tip of her nose in the saloon, where she now boldly followed me as guest on board. I have no doubt Leoné, when she belonged to M. de Paralo, received many a sly kick on deck from the officers; being the commander’s dog was no safeguard against ill-usage, for whenever his back was turned his dogs were kicked without mercy. When I mildly remonstrated, they retorted, “Why does he always have a dog at his heels?”

What makes officers as a rule so ungrateful to their commanders? I remarked it before, and the impression was confirmed on board the Milan. M. de Paralo did not escape the ridicule of his staff, even from those who were more than the recipients of his extreme kindness. He refrained from interfering with subordinates, and they taxed him with neglecting to do his duty. Had he done otherwise, they would most probably have accused him of meddling with what did not concern him.

The fare on board the Milan was altogether perfect. Michel, M. de Paralo’s chef, was an excellent cook and confectioner. On Sundays and Thursdays a stated number of officers dined with us; on these occasions shore etiquette was observed, full dress and light kids were de rigueur. After dinner we played Boston, and at ten precisely tea was served; the commander never failed on its appearance to turn to me and say,
"Madame, aime le thé?" I did indeed, but I never got it on board the Milan. It really required a certain degree of courage to swallow such a homœopathic decoction as a teaspoonful to a quart of tepid water! And this, notwithstanding my having explained to Michel the process of infusing a certain quantity of tea in boiling water; I might as well have talked to the masthead.

I got A—— to admit that his state-room was as hot as the infernal regions, and that the cockroaches nightly nibbled at his finger and toe-nails! for no sooner did he kick the beastly things off than they returned to the charge. I congratulated myself anew on my lucky escape.

The Isles of Pine fully bore out the name bestowed on them, as they are long, low, densely-wooded islands. Sandal-wood at one time was found there in abundance, and purchased by American traders for the China markets, a commerce now extinct, as the Isles of Pine have been acquired by the Roman Catholic Mission.

The coast of New Caledonia is bold and barren. Alas, we had left the tropical vegetation behind us. As we steamed past the Isles of Pine the aroma was deliciously pungent. The next day we took the pilot on board, and entered the bay of Noumea, which is completely land-locked by sombre mountains—in dismal contrast with those of Tahiti. I had heard the Porte de France so eulogized by French officials, that I could barely credit the evidence of my eyes at its being the very opposite to what they had represented. A red clay soil, with not a particle of vegetation to
soften the glare; the few houses and shops were of the roughest description, both small and unsightly; even the Government House looked more like an overgrown pigeon-house than what it actually was. In addition to other drawbacks was the dearth of fresh water. The wants of the residents had to be supplied from dirty, stagnant ditches. Why such an arid spot had ever been selected for the capital was a marvel, unless the inducement was the safety of the harbour and its picturesque position. The pilot assured us that there were several equally protected and more desirable harbours on the island, where water was to be found in abundance, which made the selection of the present site still more inexplicable!

I believe the interior of New Caledonia is very beautiful. I was told that it abounds in gigantic trees, birds of brilliant plumage—doomed for gibier—and the rarest sort of land-shells, both as to variety, colour, and size. But of what avail are these inland charms and treasures, which can only be seen at the risk of being scalped and eaten, as the natives are cannibals? A party of soldiers, or colons, had been surprised by them in the vicinity of even Port de France only a few days before our arrival, and their bones were left to tell their fate!

The New Caledonians are a most repulsive looking people. Their hair is of a dingy red, a colour produced by the free use of lime water, and stands out in the form of a mop, not a clean one, yet there are Europeans who forget home and friends, I might add themselves, for the sake of these hideous women, who are without exception the most degraded
A TAHITIAN WELCOME.

specimens of humanity; the digger Indians are many degrees cleaner and more attractive.  

Le Jardin de la Marine was cultivated by the sailors, wherein we saw a few sickly vegetables and flowers; they had aimed at an artesian well, but after digging to a great depth, the water was discovered to be brackish, and unfit for use. Poor fellows, I could appreciate their disappointment.  

The French Government had acquired New Caledonia with the object of replacing Cayenne as a penal settlement, which was a hot-bed of pernicious fever, a pestilence that rarely proves otherwise than fatal to those whom it attacks. Had it confined itself to the convicts, curtailing existence in their case ought to have been regarded by them in the light of a blessing compared to a condemnation for life, which strikes me as being a far severer sentence to that of death. Murderers as a rule escape punishment when hanged or guillotined. They should live and suffer, not die and be at rest. Had I the power I would do away with capital punishment.  

As to New Caledonia, I do not believe that it can ever become of any importance, notwithstanding its reputed mineral resources. As I have previously stated, the French system of colonization is very faulty, and it is to be regretted that an island in such proximity to Australia and New Zealand did not become a British possession, instead of drifting into that of a foreign power.
CHAPTER XV.

ENTERTAINMENTS AT SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

We bade adieu to New Caledonia without regret. The only pleasure I had derived there was in re-meeting M. de Bouzet, who was far more chatty and genial at Nournea than at Papeeti. Perhaps the prospect of returning to France cheered him, as it does most of his compatriots.

The sloop of war La Bayonnaise commanded by Captain le Brice aîné, preceded the Milan out of port, pointing her course towards Chili, whilst ours was directed towards Sydney.

Before leaving the Milan, the commander and ourselves received a formal invitation to dinner from M. de Paincelle and the officers of the ward-room. It was a compliment, and the more appreciated as it bore the impress of my not having been considered de trop. And thus terminated one of the pleasantest voyages I had ever made, or had anticipated making.

A— had placed on board several cases of deli-
cacies, which had never been opened, and were returned to him. When he remonstrated, the commander said, "You will probably find use for them on your return voyage; for my own part I am glad they were not needed on the Milan."

The harbour of Port Jackson is too well known by personal experience, or through the medium of books, to need any remark from me. As soon as we anchored, A went on shore to secure rooms, leaving me to endure the din and commotion of saluting the British flag with twenty-one guns, and, what I did not bargain for, the sight of a mutilated arm. An unfortunate sailor in ramming the powder into one of the guns had it shattered to splinters. Had it been my own arm, I could not have felt worse, or uttered more terrific screams; in fact, I believe I was the only one who did scream, the real sufferer being at the time unconscious.

We went to the Royal Hotel at Sydney, where A had procured two immense rooms—there was no choice—the charge for which, was equally immense.

I cannot say that I was at all impressed with the appearance of Sydney, which might have been reasonably termed a city of churches. The inhabitants in this respect were especially favoured, as they loomed in every direction.

The gardens of the Domain are beautifully situated, facing the charming bay. Their rocky base is ornamented with aquatic plants and creepers. The grounds are not extensive, but plentifully supplied with palms, Australian pines, and eucalyptus trees,
and brightened by brilliant flower plats. I used to make a daily pilgrimage to these public gardens, and each time with renewed pleasure. We also drove to several pretty spots in the near neighbourhood of Sydney, where there were forests of eucalyptus, and a variety of pines and ferns, which I admired immensely, as they grow there to perfection.

We visited one of the best theatres, where A—— slept throughout the performance. The popping of ginger-beer corks prevented me from following his example, as it tended to counteract the somniferous character of the play, being in constant demand by the occupants of the pit and gallery; nor would I have objected to a glass of it, as I am particularly partial to ginger-beer.

Captain de Paralo and the officers of the Milan gave a delightful afternoon entertainment besides a ball on board the corvette. The commander's favourite officer, M. de Soie, undertook the decorations, and acquitted himself to the satisfaction of everybody. I never saw more effective arrangements of flowers and evergreens intermixed with flags and musketry. The chandeliers, composed of bayonets, produced a brilliant illumination on deck. But at the ball I fear Captain de Paralo gave great offence by taking me down to supper. I frankly warned him that there were others present who had more right to that attention than I. He smiled, shrugged his shoulders, and said, "Qu'est-ce que cela m'effait, je donne le bras a celui que je préfère."

There was an Austrian man-of-war in port at the same time as the Milan, the officers of which were
reputed to be splendid dancers: if rapidity constituted that, they certainly merited the compliment, as two slides carried them across the deck.

A public ball was given by the residents of Sydney in honour of some distinguished visitor, which afforded me the opportunity of seeing the crème de la crème of Australian fashion and beauty, and there certainly was some remarkably lovely faces present—ideal heads that reminded me of Greuse’s charming conceptions, many even surpassed them.

We were delighted to find that a line of steamers plied between Sydney and New Zealand, and as we were intending to visit Wellington, A—— secured our passage on the Lord Ashley, commanded by Captain Stewart. Before we sailed my Newfoundland looked so very ill that we found it advisable to leave her with a veterinary during our visit to New Zealand. When A—— had made all the necessary arrangements, Leoné was not forthcoming; we searched our rooms in vain, so I concluded that she had strayed into some other apartment, and as the windows of several opened on to a long veranda, I walked down to reconnoitre, and to my dismay discovered the dog coiled up as snug as possible on a bed, which she was very reluctant to vacate; neither did my poor Leoné wish to leave me, for when they were leading her away she whined pitifully, and kept looking back with such a sad expression in her eyes that it made me feel miserable. Was it a presentiment? as it proved a final parting. She died a few days after our departure of Australian distemper.
CHAPTER XVI.

OUR FELLOW PASSENGERS.

The Lord Ashley looked very small compared to the Milan, but we had a large cabin with two berths allotted to us that looked clean, and, above all, free from cockroaches. I hurriedly put our small parcels and bags in their proper places, and returned on deck to see the last, for the time being, of Sydney. A—and I stood together watching the preparations for our speedy departure, when we were accosted by an elderly lady and gentleman who introduced themselves, and explained that they had a young friend on board who was going to visit a brother at Nelson, whom, with our consent, they wished to place under our charge; "only too pleased," and all the rest of it, was of course said; and the young lady came forward to be in her turn introduced, and a more perfect face and figure it would have been hard to find. She was above the medium height, had large, expressive, grey eyes, small mouth, exquisite
teeth, and a straight nose. I thought her bewitchingly lovely. Miss Hayes realized my conception of female beauty, of which I am an ardent admirer, and I fell in love with this Hebe, whatever A—— did. Had I been jealously inclined, it would have been expedient to keep my weather-eye open during that voyage.

Our other passengers were far less attractive. These were two gentlemen, one of whom was painfully ugly. I never saw redder hair, eyebrows, and lashes than Mr. R—— possessed; his complexion was very much freckled, and he had his face framed in whiskers of the same vivid hue as his hair, a fringe of which surrounded a bald pate, and was carefully drawn up over it, though it did not always succeed in its object. His shirt-collars and stocks were the highest and loosest that could be procured, and invariably moved in the opposite direction to his head when the two starched ends of his collar took up a position anywhere but in the proper place. Altogether Mr. R—— was a comical figure to look at, in an ill-fitting check suit, and scarcely less so to listen to; his broad dialect became broader as he warmed to his subjects—usually the rich resources of his adopted country. He was a lawyer, and unmarried, a staid bachelor he called himself—and, thought I, likely to remain one. Mr. MacL—— was the other passenger, a younger and decidedly better-looking man, and also unmarried; but a cripple. How he came to be so may interest my readers. I will, therefore, repeat the sad history he favoured me with.
Mr. MacL—— owned a large sheep-run in the interior of Australia, where he was visiting an outlying post, when his horse took fright and he was thrown heavily to the ground. As this had happened before, he thought little of it, until he attempted to stand, when he found that one leg was useless. The accident having occurred in an out-of-the-way part of his estate, some time necessarily elapsed before he received assistance.

The local medical practitioner pronounced it a severe sprain, and prescribed outward applications; but as several months passed without their producing any good result, Mr. MacL—— made up his mind to go to Sydney for further advice, where he learnt, to his horror and sorrow, that his lameness was not occasioned by a sprain, but from dislocation of the hip, which ought to have been set at the time of the accident, since which the socket had filled, and it was impossible to remedy the evil by any surgical operation. What must the poor man's feelings have been on hearing an opinion that doomed him to go through life on crutches! — through an ignorant mistake deprived of the exercise he most enjoyed. Mr. MacL—— was making a voyage in the Lord Ashley previous to returning home from his hopeless mission to Sydney. I did not envy the local medical man his first interview with his victim; if he did not get fits I am much mistaken. Mr. MacL——'s tongue was not disabled if his legs were.

As I have described our passengers, I must not overlook our captain, who also realized my idea of manly beauty. He was tall, finely built, with dark
OUR FELLOW PASSENGERS.

hair and beard, and magnificent eyes. He looked what he was, a superb type of Scotchman, and a contrast in every way to the two other gentlemen.

I knew nothing about the position of the steam screw until I retired for the night, when to my consternation I heard it working right under our state-room. The idea of sleeping to the accompaniment of such discordant sounds was out of the question as far as I was concerned, and I resigned my share of the excruciating music to A—, expressing the hope that the vibration might act as a lullaby in his case, while I hastened to the ladies' cabin, where there were eight open berths, and Miss Hayes the only occupant; she was enjoying the luxury of having her hair brushed by the stewardess. It was superb hair; so long, thick, and glossy, that I stood looking admiringly at it, when the stewardess remarked, "I call this 'air; no need of shinons on this 'ead, is there, ma'am?"—"I may have to resort to them yet, stewardess," replied the young girl, with an amused smile.—"Not you. I never in all my days see such a 'ead of 'air, and I am sure the lady there can say no different."

I agreed with the stewardess, who graciously told me to take any berth I liked. On examination I found every one more or less littered with odds and ends belonging to our interesting charge, and had to remove several articles of toilet before taking possession of an under one; where I nightly watched the same process and listened to the stewardess's Cockney expressions. She had come from England in the Lord Ashley, and gave us an amusing description of
the voyage, *vid* the Cape of Good 'Ope! There was a piano in the saloon, and as Miss Hayes and the captain were good musicians it drew them together; they sang duets and carried on whispered conversations during the day, and the best part of the evening. I was quite satisfied that Captain Stewart admired Miss Hayes; indeed, who could have helped doing so? I never met a more attractive and highly accomplished girl; she had a charmingly sympathetic voice, and sang divinely enough to bewitch even Mr. R—.

Close to the entrance of the saloon was a trap-door in the flooring that led to the provision store, which the careless waiters were constantly leaving open. One afternoon we saw my dog, Flody, disappear through it. I ran forward, followed by Mr. R— and others, and discovered my pet sitting bolt upright on a sack of flour begging to be taken out. His position on his hind legs created a laugh; but no one was so jocular over the tumble as Mr. R—; “an unexpected somersault,” he called it, “and that the wise little animal had actually alighted in the approved style, on his hind legs; the next time he hoped to see him on his head,” &c. The next time fell to his own lot, for the following morning my gentleman disappeared as Flody had done. His heavy thud shook the saloon, and we rushed to the open trap-door, where, unlike Flody, his position was not upright, neither could it be termed graceful, for he lay sprawling among the sacks of provisions, groaning frightfully; either unable or unwilling to assist himself; he had to be literally hoisted up, as
there were no steps—the stewards always sprang up and down—and led to a seat, where he sat puffing and blowing like a porpoise and looked on the verge of apoplexy. He was furious, and pitched into the stewards: "Grinning, are you? Wait till I get you back in Sydney, and you'll grin on the other side of your faces!" he exclaimed angrily; "and if I have sustained any internal injury, which is more than likely, you'll pay for it, you careless scoundrels, negligent brutes." His harangue was cut short by hearing the notes of the piano, which stood in a distant recess; near it the captain lounged, too much absorbed in his fair companion to pay any attention to the commotion at the other end of the saloon, an indifference that outraged Mr. R. He glared in the direction and muttered, "Captain Stewart had better end that sickening flummery, and attend to the duties of his ship."

Just like an old bachelor, to call the most approved style of love-making flummery. I was indignant; it afforded me my greatest amusement on board, watching what I supposed to be the course of true love.

Mr. R—had calmed down sufficiently to remark Flody in my arms; perhaps he remembered and regretted having expressed the desire to see him fall on his head the next time, and hoped to propitiate me by saying,

"Your wee doggie, ma'am, must have felt that fall of his keenly, for it has given me a powerful shaking."

Captain Stewart continued to devote more and
more of his time to Miss Hayes, and my mind was exercised as to whether he was going to propose before we reached Nelson, a port we were fast approaching. His attentions had been so very marked, that I felt he meant them to be considered in a serious light; and the girl herself did not discourage them.

Miss Hayes never could have reached the age of twenty without having had other serious admirers. She had a history, no doubt, and at times I noted a sad expression in her eyes. She interested me exceedingly, and we resigned her to her brother with regret.

We had reached Nelson, where we were told the steamer would probably be detained three or four days. To escape the hubbub incidental to discharging and taking in cargo, and the dirty work of coaling, A—— and I, decided to take up temporary quarters on shore. The only hotel was in reality a tavern, where we found two of the tiniest rooms imaginable; they were clean, however, and the cooking good if plain, so we contrived to make ourselves very comfortable during our short sojourn at Nelson, which even at that date was a pretty place, especially so the rural lanes; on each side of the road were fine villas and beautiful gardens shaded by the rata, eucalyptus, and pine trees—all seemed to be tenantless. On inquiring, we were told that the owners were in Europe, and that we might walk through the grounds if we liked; a privilege we did not neglect, and were well repaid for our pains. The climate I found delightful, and enjoyed our strolls
OUR FELLOW PASSENGERS.

over the rolling downs facing the ocean, overarched by a cloudless cerulean sky.

Previous to leaving Nelson we called to bid Miss Hayes adieu. I thought her sister-in-law a very pretty young woman, but Mr. Hayes seemed unsettled in his mind; he was evidently disappointed with Nelson, or in the object that had brought him there, and thought it probable that they would soon return to South America, from whence they had come. I subsequently learnt that he had carried out this intention, and that the vessel in which the family had sailed must have sunk in mid-ocean, as neither ship nor passengers were ever heard of after. Poor Miss Hayes, she merited a very different fate!
CHAPTER XVII.

A SURPRISE.

Hearing that the Lord Ashley was getting up steam, we hurried on board to find the saloon, which was rather narrow, encumbered with trunks; some of them were open, and articles of ladies' clothing were lying about in every direction. I was surprised; and, perceiving the stewardess, inquired who they belonged to. "The captain's wife," she replied! Could Mr. R—— have known that he was a married man?

I was undoubtedly curious to see Mrs. Stewart. The captain came into the saloon, and in a raised tone ordered the trunks to be removed and all the litter cleared away. He looked unlike himself, and acted accordingly. I never saw any one more changed; the smiling expression with which we had hitherto been favoured had disappeared, and in its place was a set, stern look. His voice had brought his wife from her state-room. She was a
slight, delicate-looking girl, over-dressed in a black velvet costume with hat to match. "Do you hear?" he continued in the same hard tone. "This is the saloon, and not the place for you to unpack your trunks." I disappeared, went on deck, where I soon after saw the wrathful captain promenading the bridge. Mrs. Stewart came up also with fishing-tackle, and leant over the side of the vessel. She had only joined the steamer that morning, having been detained at some point through illness. Her husband never noticed her, and I was debating within myself whether I should approach and enter into conversation, as I felt sorry for the pale young wife. She looked to me startlingly colourless and distressed when she came on deck, and I was not mistaken, for she suddenly straightened herself, and then fell heavily to the deck. In another moment the captain was by her side and had her in his arms, bearing her away to their room. I followed to see if I could be of any assistance. He laid her on the bed, and contritely asked the poor inanimate creature to forgive his harshness, when I prudently retired, and sent the stewardess to them, who said, "She gets them fits frequent."

Towards the cool of the evening a bed was made on the deck, and Captain Stewart carried his wife up and placed her on it as gently and tenderly as if she were an infant. She assuredly had little more strength than one at that moment—deadly pale, but happy, because her husband was no longer displeased with her. She had beautiful dark blue eyes, the one redeeming feature in her face.
Mrs. Stewart was rather a gentle, sensitive girl than a serious woman. She described herself as having always been delicate, and that her uncle, who was her guardian, had opposed her marriage with Captain Stewart on that account. They had been in love with each other from childhood, and she took innocent delight in referring to the period when they had carried on a clandestine correspondence through the medium of her St. Bernard dog which conveyed their notes to and fro hidden in his shaggy coat. As I listened I compared this afflicted girl with Miss Hayes. Had the husband done the same, and regretted when too late not having followed wiser counsel, as his present position with a delicate wife to be his constant care,—one who required unceasing watchfulness,—was a far from enviable prospect?

When we entered Cook’s Straits it was blowing a gale, and continued to do so until we anchored in Wellington Harbour; indeed, I may say even after that, for the violent gusts of wind and boisterous sea were merely a modified degree of what we had experienced in the straits. In the absence of wharf or jetty passengers had to be landed in boats.

I was somewhat disappointed in the appearance of Wellington, as I had expected to find it a place of greater importance; otherwise it was not unpicturesque. We had come to visit A—'s parents, who resided in a substantial brick house situated in a nice garden on Tiara Flat; but it did not compare with his sister's, Mrs. Levin's place on Thornton Flat, where both fruit and flowers were abundant and of the
finest description. The house was quaint and non-descript from frequent additions of rooms, passages, and wings, but capable of a most successful ball, where I met some of the military men who had been stationed in Canada and knew a number of my friends, which proved a very agreeable rencontre for me. The Levins were most hospitable, and evidently great favourites in society. Our pleasantest evenings were those passed at their house.

A drawback to the pleasure of locomotion at Wellington was the wind, which almost carried one off one's feet struggling against it, while traversing the space between the two flats, which were separated by a long straggling beach.

Our friends secured the only conveyance to be had to drive us to the Hut, an unwieldy concern that came to grief long before we reached our destination. We had to alight while it was being patched up before we could pursue our route, which was through a picturesquely winding road, skirted with fine umbrageous trees which excited my admiration. The Hut at that period was composed of pretty gardens and orchards. The flowers in New Zealand reminded me of those in California, so much larger than the growth in North America. Whether the perfume was as powerful I could not decide, though I thought not.

I was very wishful to visit the interior of New Zealand, but it was not practicable, and we therefore availed ourselves of one of the monthly steamers plying to Melbourne. We had what I called a fair-weather passage, yet nearly every one on board was
more or less sea-sick, and, as the state-rooms opened on to the dining-saloon, this did not tend to fortify one's appetite, or encourage one to linger at table a moment longer than was absolutely necessary. On one occasion I reached the deck in time to overhear a dialogue between two gentlemen. Said one, "Hang me if that girl of R—'s doesn't make a point of being sick the moment we take our seats at table. I begin to think she does it on purpose." The recollection caused him to rush to the side of the vessel, whereupon the other addressed me, "I am not surprised; the disgusting row they make down there, is quite enough to upset the strongest stomach," with a significant gesture in the direction of the sick man, who turned towards us a pallid face and swimming eyes, but recovered speech. "Gone, sir; couldn't retain the mouthful I ate. Why, such a disgusting noise would revolt me on shore, let alone on board ship. It's not the sea, man; it's the infernal racket they kick up that brings the whole scene before one's very eyes." It was perfectly true; nevertheless I was convulsed with laughter at the comical tone in which this extremely graphic description was given.

We passed the heads at Port Philip during the day, and entered Hobson's Bay at night-fall, when landing was out of the question. Many of the passengers grumbled at being detained on board till the following morning. I resigned myself to the inevitable, and sat on deck enjoying the coup d'œil of twinkling lights from mast-heads, vessels riding at anchor, brilliantly illuminated—at least so they appeared to me—and a succession of fine rockets sent
up from the Botanical Gardens, in honour, not of our arrival, but of some fête.

Melbourne eclipsed Sydney in imposing buildings and width of streets; granite replaced brick, and imparted an old-world appearance to the city, which I found very attractive. The public gardens were especially so, as they abound in superb trees and artistically conceived flower plats. The grounds are terraced down to the Yarra Yarra river, in wide shaded avenues, provided with rustic seats, where we sat and watched the very tiniest steamboats imaginable, ply to and fro from Melbourne, to some tea gardens beyond the Botanical. We made a trip to them, but they were not worth the trouble; the decorations could not bear the glare of daylight! It struck me as being inconceivably tawdry, dusty, and hot; nevertheless a favourite resort with the masses and classes, who congregate largely on the occasion of the weekly fêtes, when the band plays between the display of fireworks, and the gardens are brilliantly illuminated, and, what was more to the purpose, refreshments to be had at reasonable rates.

I had remarked how gentlemen wore long green and blue barage scarves twisted round their hats, and concluded it was to prevent the heat penetrating to their heads! I subsequently saw them put to a different use. A—and I went out walking when we were overtaken by one of the notorious Australian hot winds, accompanied by clouds of blinding sand; in a moment these scarves were untwisted to cover the faces and protect the eyes; everybody seemed to be running at the top of their speed towards
shelter of some kind, and we followed their example. The waves of sand were increasing, and the atmosphere becoming so dense, that I was rejoiced to find myself back at our hotel, which I reached out of breath, and with a disagreeable stinging sensation in my eyes and ears. A—- complained of the same thing; unfortunately we had been unprepared for the emergency, having no scarves to fall back upon.

The environs of Melbourne are charming, and it was with a feeling of regret, that I found myself on the mail steamer en route to Sydney. Though merely a passage of three days, it was found necessary to paint the deck seats and railings, regardless of the inconvenience it caused to passengers, who were in consequence forced to remain below in the saloon, a situation they did not accept without protesting; and it did my heart good to hear their thorough abuse of both captain and officers for permitting the work to proceed notwithstanding their combined objection.

To pass the time some of the passengers proposed sweepstakes on the hour of our arrival. A——, who was of a speculative turn of mind, took several chances, and won the purse, but, like many of his other ventures, it did not prove a profitable investment. The captain blandly informed him that he made it a rule that such gains should be invested in champagne, for the benefit of the passengers generally. I can vouch for it that, on that occasion, the captain and his particular friends obtained the lion's share, totally regardless of the claims of the duped winner.
The first news we received on reaching Sydney was the death of my poor Leoné of Australian distemper, and I came very near losing Flody of the same disease. We had administered all kind of remedies without benefit to the little animal, and I was in despair, when A—came into my room followed by a strange lady, who professed to have a knowledge of dogs' complaints. She had remarked Flody in the street, attracted by his beauty and uncommon breed—he was a Chilian spaniel—and having missed him for several days, she stopped A—to make inquiries as she concluded he was ill. On being told that such was the case, she humanely volunteered her services. After hearing that the various remedies administered had proved ineffectual, and that I was grief-stricken, she examined the dog and pronounced him to be suffering from Australian distemper, which was very prevalent at that season of the year—midsummer.
She then prescribed for my pet, and left us with the assurance that, if I carried out her instructions, he would get over the attack; which he did, thanks to this good Samaritan, who had an extensive kennel of dogs of her own, on a station situated at a considerable distance from Sydney, which she only visited for business purposes. She said that she loved country life, and avoided cities and towns as much as possible.

How differently constituted people are; for my own part I very much prefer cities to the country, where my young days had been passed. We lived at an exceedingly pretty place, which I so little appreciated that I was desirous to leave it. An incident occurred one day which I never forgot. I was sitting in the veranda, inhaling the perfume of flowers with which the garden was so liberally stocked, that the summer air was impregnated with their fragrance. The placid, lovely scene, enlivened by the warble of birds, was most enjoyable, yet I repined! A party of tourists paused at our gate and looked in through the railings, when one of them exclaimed, "What a charming spot. Is that young girl on the veranda not to be envied, privileged as she is, to admire that beautiful mountain to her heart's content? How I should love to live here myself!" &c. These remarks set me thinking; why did I feel differently? I who delighted in the works of nature, in the song of birds, the sight of flowers, in that mountain, which had elicited such warm praise from the strangers' lips. In recalling this incident, my thoughts wander back to the home of my childhood in North America. No
place could have been more picturesquely situated than ours, at the foot of "The Mountain," as it was then called, better known now as Mount Royal.

When a mere child, I had the habit of rising at daybreak on warm summer mornings to seat myself on the wide window-sill so as to assist at the awakening of nature. I loved to watch the lighting up of the dense foliage heavy with dew, to hear the first flutter of the birds pruning their plumage, twittering and chirping before bursting forth in their matutinal song of praise. I was familiar with every glade and path in the mountain, and had often pictured to myself the charms of such a sylvan retreat, where I could do as I liked, stoop as much as I pleased, and turn in my toes without being constantly taken to task for so doing, and above all, should escape studying my lessons, which I detested a degree more than I did standing straight and in the first position.

A widow woman, named Williams, owned a small property near ours, wherein she cultivated vegetables for the market, which were conveyed thither in a large covered cart by herself and her son. They started regularly at peep of day, and I was ever on the look-out for this canvas-covered vehicle that had an especial attraction for me; it was an employment after my own fancy, as my ambition then was, to own as soon as I became old enough, a vegetable garden and similar conveyance to carry my produce to market. I quite envied Bill Williams his seat next to his mother, and though he was an ill-favoured youth, I would have willingly sat between them and assisted in handing in and out the
neatly-tied bundles of carrots, turnips, onions, &c., &c. Happy, uneventful days that flitted all too soon. Then came a change "o'er the spirit of my dream," when a beloved face was no longer with us, and Beaulieu, our country residence, lost its attraction for father and me, so we left it to wander elsewhere. We visited large cities, which produced partial forgetfulness, and the old home, with its cherished associations, passed into the hands of strangers.

Revisiting early scenes is not, as a rule, satisfactory. A—— accompanied me to have a look at mine with this result—the rural lane had sprung into a street, lined with villas or rows of semi-detached houses, and our pretty garden had entirely disappeared. What a disappointment it was to me, as I wanted A—— to see the majestic maple tree encircled by a rustic bench, and the sturdy branch from which had been suspended our swing; what he saw was very different to what I had described.
E sailed from Sydney in the *Stag Hound*, a brigantine, commanded by Captain Sustenance. When A— engaged our passage to Tahiti he agreed to pay an additional sum on the understanding that Captain Sustenance was to take no other passengers save ourselves—apart from his wife, child, and nurse, who lived on board the vessel—as the saloon was remarkably small, containing only two state-rooms and two open berths. What, then, was our amazement the day we set sail to see a pale, emaciated young man lying on the little lounge facing the companion steps. A lady was seated on a trunk beside him—it was our trunk; in fact, there were no other seats save trunks in the cabin, beyond the apology for a sofa then occupied, and continued to be so by the same invalid to nearly the end of our voyage. He was in the last stage of consumption, as his hollow cough and hectic flush indicated, and a
most undesirable passenger to have on a long monotonous voyage.

Captain Sustenance had been at one time employed navigating for A——, who now reproached him for his want of faith, and said that if he could see his way out of it, he would leave the vessel at once, return on shore, do anything in fact, rather than submit to such an outrage, and subject me to such an ordeal as the constant presence of a dying man.

The captain assured us that no one was more taken in than himself. The uncle of the young man, Mr. Isit, senior, was his banker, and had asked him as a personal favour, to give his nephew, who was not strong, the benefit of a sea voyage; and it had been understood between them, that he was merely to occupy one of the berths and take his meals in the cabin; the rest of the day was to be spent on deck in the open air.

While we were discussing the painful affair Mr. Isit’s aunt came on deck and requested the captain and A—— to go below to witness the signature of her nephew’s will. They complied, when Mr. Isit suggested that perhaps they might wish to read the will, to which the lady objected, on the plea that there was no time to do so, as she had to hurry on shore, to procure some narcotic pills that her nephew was in the habit of taking, which had been forgotten at the last moment.

After the desired signatures had been affixed the aunt bore away the document, returning only in time to hand up a small parcel, as we were getting under way.
Mr. Isit grew worse and worse; he never either entered his berth or sat on deck to inhale the fresh air. Night and day he lay on the sofa, and we were obliged to take all our meals before him, though he never ceased coughing and expectorating. How I contrived to eat anything whatever in such an atmosphere was a marvel.

The weather was too delightful, as there was not breeze enough to fill a sail. With so much in the invalid's favour, we were at a loss to account for the rapid progress his disease was making from day to day. The captain, who professed to know something of pharmacy, questioned Mr. Isit about the nature of his symptoms. He told him that the narcotic pills affected him differently on board to what they had done on shore. Captain Sustenance took one away to analyse, when he discovered it to be composed of irritants not sedatives, aloes and rhubarb, in place of morphia or chloral. The change of drugs had unfortunately been detected too late to counteract the mischief arising from nightly aperients, which had completely exhausted the sufferer's small modicum of strength, and it had now resolved itself into a mere matter of time. Naturally, the mistake in the pills was a revelation that distressed us all, but from the outset I had an impression that Mr. Isit was doomed to die on board the Stag Hound; the whys and wherefores I could not explain to myself, but the belief was there and could not be discarded; indeed it was rather confirmed by the succession of calms. What a contrast in every way was this wretched voyage to our delightful experience on board the
French corvette. Mrs. Sustenance did all in her power for me, but she could not combat the force of circumstances, and they were more disheartening than I can depict.

The nurse of the little Sustenance girl, a Roratongian, named Luppa, was devoted to her charge—a sweet child of two—for whose especial benefit a goat had been provided. She gave very little milk, nevertheless a few drops were always reserved for my cup of tea. I invariably protested against depriving the dear little girl of that small quantity. I acted on the principle that politeness costs nothing, and was glad to find that it was accepted in a like spirit.

One night A—— very nearly set the vessel on fire. He slept in the under berth, and complained of being devoured by bugs. "I can't make out where they come from," he said, while lighting a candle to examine his bed. Perceiving a locker at the side of the bunk, he forced open the door, and held the light inside to reconnoitre, when he called out that the d——d hole was alive with them. A sudden blaze appalled me, as I had the conviction that something must have caught fire. A—— held his tongue, but he had the presence of mind to thrust in his blankets, while I made a desperate spring from the upper berth to lend my assistance; between us we managed to extinguish the flames, but I did not recover from the fright that night. The next day we got Luppa to cleanse the locker and rub into it a quantity of kerosene oil; the smell was horrible, and so thought the bugs, for they scuddled away to the next
AN UNPLEASANT PASSENGER.

cabin, where the Sustenances had a benefit of them, though they maintained silence on the fact of having undesirable visitors, that belonged by rights elsewhere.

Though Mr. Isit caused me hourly discomfort, I pitied his sad plight, dying, as I felt certain he was, among strangers, separated for all time from kith and kin, among whom his last days should have been passed, instead of at sea, in a close cabin where he could scarcely breathe. And I did all we could to ease his sufferings, which were painful to witness. Thanks to M. de Paralo, who had foreseen our needs in the return voyage, we had many delicacies on board, and these we shared with our fellow passenger, for whom nothing whatever had been provided by his relatives. The aunt, whom we could not help inferring was to inherit whatever property her nephew possessed, had wasted no thought on what might have conduced to his comfort, or tempt his appetite, which was very capricious, though he relished our fruit as long as it lasted.

We lay becalmed off Tubui for five days, and what interminable days they were; the heat was intense and Mr. Isit suffered in proportion. At such times the captain launched forth in bitter invectives against the widow with—corkscrew curls, as he described the invalid’s aunt. He maintained that it had been no mistake about the pills; it had been done with intention. She did not want her nephew back in Sydney, where he might be induced to make a will in some one else’s favour; she was a deep old hag, that’s what she was, &c.

The captain may have eased his own heart and
brain by favouring us with his opinion, but it was a
vain endeavour to shift the blame from his own
shoulders, as he alone was answerable for the painful
situation in which we were placed, though not for the
absence of wind. I used to amuse myself watching
his actions to create a breeze, which he courted in
every possible way, but, as I felt, uselessly; and used
to aggravate him beyond measure when he was thus
employed, by remarking that whistling for it could do
no good; he might as well spare his breath, as he
ought to be aware by now, that no breeze was likely
to spring up while Mr. Isit lived, who was doomed to
die on board the *Stag Hound*. Captain Sustenance
disliked me to say this, as his vessel was a recent
purchase, and the voyage had lasted already much
longer than was usual, and had been a most un-
pleasant one throughout.

Coming from my state-room, Mr. Isit asked me
what day did I think we should probably reach Tahiti.
"I long to arrive," he said; "I feel as if I could devour
every orange on the island." He looked so hot and
exhausted, that I went back for the eau de Cologne,
with which I sponged his face, neck, and hands,
leaving the same to evaporate so as to refresh him
the more—a process I frequently resorted to on my
own account.

That same night Mr. Isit ruptured a blood vessel
while coughing; delirium ensued, when we had to
listen to the wildest freaks of fancy. He imaginary
himself at Glasgow, and ordered the captain to land
him at once. Go on shore he would, and he strove
ineffectually to rise and dress. When he found that
no one lent him any assistance, he became violent, and ended by cursing every soul on board. Happily such scenes are of rare occurrence, for they are appalling to witness; and strange to relate, though the dying man must have been raving, his curses were applicable to each individual. He hoped the Stag Hound might get wrecked, with Captain Sustenance on board. When addressing A——, he hoped that his premises would be burnt, and no insurance recoverable; the mate was never to rise in his profession; and he wished me every ill for washing his face and hands with Cologne water, and neglecting to wipe them.

Mrs. Sustenance and I endeavoured to avoid hearing what the dying man said, but it was impossible to sit anywhere without doing so, or seeing all that was taking place in the cabin. A—— was rubbing the wretched man's feet, which in the midst of his ravings, he said were cold, and asked some one to apply friction to them. As the end approached, Captain Sustenance began to read the prayers for the dying, and to our surprise Mr. Isit made the proper responses. He then besought the captain to promise that he would erect a tombstone over his grave; in other words, a piteous appeal against being consigned to the ocean.

No sooner had Mr. Isit ceased to breathe than a favourable breeze did spring up, and my prophecy thus proved correct.

This was my first experience of a death and burial service at sea, that is to say, on any vessel in which I was a passenger.
TAHITI: THE GARDEN OF THE PACIFIC.

The Stag Hound hove to, and the bell began to toll. Mrs. Sustenance directed my eyes to the shrouded figure on a sliding plank. Captain Sustenance read the prayers, and then I heard a splash; the body had been consigned to the deep. As I looked over the bulwarks, it made two evolutions before sinking.

The mournful ceremony ended, the vessel resumed her course. Mrs. Sustenance had wept all the time, and must have thought me extremely callous, as I did not shed a tear, or feel the least bit affected; why should I for a man who had received all our kind acts in an ungracious spirit, and had expended his latest breath in heaping curses on us? Two days after we sighted the Tahitian coast. It was a lovely evening, and the beautiful island, after all I had experienced, looked more than ever like a Garden of Eden. Mrs. Sustenance and I sat on deck, inhaling the scented air wafted from shore. The wind was not favourable, and we anticipated spending another night on board; with so charming a scene facing us, I did not mind the delay. The contrast with the horrible past made one almost doubt that it had been other than a hideous dream.

The stillness of the night was broken by the distant splash of oars, nearer and nearer came the measured strokes; it proved to be a boat coming from Taunoa, which was but a short distance from where we had dropped anchor. We availed ourselves of it, to return to Papeeti, and hurriedly bade adieu to those with whom we had passed forty-three of the most distressing days that had ever befallen us.
CHAPTER XX.

CANNIBALS.

URING our five months' absence from Papeeti, innumerable changes had taken place. We learnt with regret that our good friends, Captain and Madame Perraud, had returned to France, and that the new Chef d'Artillerie was an unmarried man. Comte P— had also been recalled to make room for M. de la Richerie, who was accompanied by his wife and their little son Henri.

M. Cesset's governorship was as shortlived as it was stormy. He wanted to have everything his own way, and M. de la Richerie was of the same disposition. They consequently disagreed to such an extent that M. Cesset lost patience, and started for New Caledonia, leaving his bête noir master of the situation. A curious instance of M. Cesset's excitability was related to us. Hearing that Queen Pomare had left Papeeti at a late hour for some distant district—where she had gone to visit a friend—he took it into
his wise head that she was hatching some grave plot against his master, the Emperor. Acting on this absurd supposition, he headed a company of soldiers, and went in quest of her Majesty, who was roused out of her sleep in the dead of the night, and brought back to Papeeti under military escort.

M. de la Richerie bore a striking likeness to the Bonaparte family, and must have enjoyed a certain degree of favour and interest in France, for in a short time he was nominated Commissaire Impériale Chef de l'Administration. Yet he never became popular. It was truly ridiculous to see him extend one finger to shake hands; he presented it to everybody, and nobody had the moral courage to imitate him, not even I, though I made frequent attempts to avoid accepting it, which honesty compels me to admit, I never succeeded in doing. No, our new governor was decidedly not agreeable, and he wore a stereotyped smile peculiar to himself, his face was never seen without it.

Before coming to Tahiti M. de la Richerie had been Superintendent of Prisons at Cayenne. Some unpleasant stories were in circulation respecting his severe treatment there of political offenders, and the Tahitians were not long in finding out by experience that his Cayenne reputation was in no way exaggerated. His first administrative act was an arbitrary one. It was an edict compelling the natives to quit their houses, situated under umbrageous trees, and to build others in an exposed position. A wide, treeless avenue was selected for their future habitations, on which they were forced malgre eux to erect oval
bamboo houses raised a foot from the ground. A vacant space was allotted to each one to be converted into a flower garden. Surely Madame de la Richerie advised the latter, as the Commissaire Impériale was the last man in the world to trouble his mind about such useless things as flowers. Sugar-cane or cotton was more in his line, for he had a policy which had never suggested itself to his predecessors—to reap some advantage from the soil; and he carried out this policy with a certain amount of success, whilst he reigned at Tahiti. A despot at heart, he ruled the natives in that character; taxations and fines were the main objects he had in view. In this, if in nothing else, M. de la Richerie was consistent; as he began, so he ended, by extracting from the Tahitians everything they possessed.

Madame de la Richerie was a very pretty woman, with beautiful dark eyes, and hair the shade of ripe corn. She soon became popular, as she assumed no nonsensical airs, as many others would have done in her position, instead of which she was invariably smiling and pleasant. She married the Governor at Cayenne, where her father also held a position in the prisons. She had, therefore, mixed but little in society, and her taste in dress was deplorable, but her charming eyes and hair compensated for defects in that respect. If Madame de la Richerie’s toilet failed to be Parisian, she was totally innocent of the fact, as she was of repeating ill-natured on dits, for few could give utterance to wounding remarks with her aplomb.

We heard with dismay that a vessel bound to Tahiti from the Gambia Islands had been wrecked
on Bligh's Island, and that all on board had been eaten by the natives, who were cannibals. In addition to the captain and crew, there was the wife of the former, and two sons of a Mrs. Stevens, who kept a shop at Papeeti. They were being educated at the Roman Catholic College at the Gambias, and were then en route to spend their vacation with their mother at Papeeti. Appeals were made to the administration to despatch forthwith a vessel to punish the murderers, and recover the bones of the victims. The Government sent a schooner for such purpose, which, after being absent some weeks, returned without having accomplished its mission. The captain's excuse was that Bligh's Island did not exist as laid down on the chart.

Mrs. Stevens then determined to take the matter in hand, and see what could be done to the wretches who had killed and devoured her little boys. With this praiseworthy object in view, she chartered a brigantine belonging to A——, called the Julia. It was commanded by Captain Dunham, a man who was thoroughly conversant with the bearings of every island of the Pomuto Group.

As Mrs. Stevens wished to satisfy herself that her agreement was properly carried out, she decided on taking passage by the vessel in question, in order to see with her own eyes that the proper search was made on landing for her boys' bones, and that the natives who had killed them were made prisoners, and brought to Tahiti for trial.

Bligh's Island was reached without difficulty, and proved a wretched low lagoon, surrounded by a coral
reef. Captain Dunham, with the greater part of the crew, fully armed, landed and made the circuit of the island without meeting a human being, which induced the belief that it was uninhabited. When on the point of returning to their boats, the captain turned to take a last survey, he fancied he perceived a movement on the ground, not far from where he stood. Further examination discovered what he had seen to be a human finger. All hands were then set to work to remove the earth, and very soon they hauled out of the deep hole a native. Twenty or more were recovered in a similar manner, inclusive of women and children, and marched off to the brigantine. They were emaciated to a fearful degree, and made no attempt at resistance or escape. They subsequently explained that they were afraid when they saw the Julia's approach, and hoped to evade detection by hiding under ground, and so they would, but for that exposed finger; and, I may aptly add, Captain Dunham's vigilant eye.

As soon as the natives were got on board the Julia, Mrs. Stevens went on shore to seek for the remains of her children. She collected what she flattered herself were their bones, also a tress of long fair hair, probably that of the captain's young wife.

There was great excitement at Papeeti when it became known that the Julia had returned with the entire population of Bligh's Island. A more sickening, loathsome spectacle than the landing of those miserable beings could not be possible. If all cannibals looked like the Bligh Islanders, they might be pardoned their deeds, for starvation alone induced
them, as beyond a few cocoa-nuts they had literally nothing to eat, and several died en route from overfeeding. Their sole punishment consisted in their removal to Tahiti, for which they should have been grateful; but few of the men or women lived long enough to appreciate the blessing conferred on them. One or two young girls were taken by private families. When washed and dressed they were not very ugly, and they soon acquired the Tahitian language. In describing their wretched life of want on Bligh Island with barely enough to sustain life, they said that the men alone were privileged to eat human flesh, neither the women nor the children were allowed to touch it. Surely this must have been a prohibition from gluttony, not delicacy. My curiosity concerning cannibalism was gratified by Captain Dunham, who had visited many islands addicted to anthropophagy without having come to grief. He said that he was too thin to excite their greed, as cannibals prefer fat subjects. They told him that native flesh was more delicate than the white man's, and less salty.

If Captain Dunham escaped being devoured by cannibals, he fell a prey to fish. During one of his voyages he indulged too freely in the bottle, and under the delusion that he had arrived at his destination and was going on shore, he walked overboard and was drowned.

One could not offer the Tahitians a greater insult than to accuse them of having been in days past cannibals. During the period of human sacrifices the eyes alone were eaten by the reigning sovereign, and were gouged out for this purpose, but the bodies were
untouched. These sacrifices were conducted in as merciful a manner as could be consistent with so barbarous a custom. The victims being kept in profound ignorance of their pending fate till the supreme moment, the priest having approached noiselessly from behind to deal the never-failing death blow. This was the mode of proceeding at Tahiti, whatever might have been the custom practised elsewhere—"The death stone slipped into the hand of the intended sacrifice," related by travellers, never took place at the Society Group.

Maraes—high altars in groves of Ito, which replaces the cypress as an emblem of mourning—may still be seen. The idols that were made from perishable material have long since disappeared, but the huge blocks of stone on which they reposed, defy the ravage of time.

The society of Papeeti was augmented by the arrival of a M. Faucompre and a M. Lavigerie. M. Faucompre was appointed Chef du Bureau de l'Enregistrement. He was of medium height, good-looking, and had a fine baritone voice, which rendered him a most agreeable acquisition and ever-welcome visitor.

M. Lavigerie was Pharmacien de la Marine and brother of the then Archbishop, now Cardinal, Lavigerie. He was younger, handsomer, and taller than M. Faucompre, and an equally good musician. The two young men became intimate friends, and spent a portion of every evening at our house until native wiles lured away the bachelor. M. Lavigerie was a married man, whose wife, being an only child, was
prevented by her parents from accompanying her husband of a few months to a country so distant from France. Had they been aware of the dangerous experiment they were making, their decision would have probably been reversed. Happily for them, the young husband adored his wife, and was not to be seduced from his allegiance; whereas his friend Fau-compre had no such incentive, to resist the smiles and seductive manners of the Tahitians sirens, and it was not long before he purchased a piece of ground on the road to Faaa, where he resided in a tiny house with his native wife, as so many had done before him, and will continue to do while Tahiti remains Tahiti.
CHAPTER XXI.

A CRUEL DEED.

The Chirugeon-en-Chef at Papeeti was a very peculiar man in appearances as well as in acts. With respect to the former, his body was too long, and his legs too short, his tout ensemble was consequently not exactly symmetrical. En suite his inconsistencies were glaring, and in time such was the general opinion formed of him, so that no one was surprised at the barefaced manner in which he curried favour with the heads of the administration.

I don't think that I ever met with a more contemptible man than Dr. Guillasse, who was both narrow-minded and vindictive, as the sequel will prove. As to his medical capacity—experience induced us to bestow on him the sobriquet of Dr. Jackass.

I found housekeeping at Papeeti a sinecure, as our man-cook catered for us without troubling either his master or mistress, and I must admit that it is
far more enjoyable to sit down to meals ordered
by some one else, than to know beforehand of what
the daily menu is to consist. Renvoyer, our chef,
had accompanied the first French Governor to Tahiti
in the same capacity, and when Admiral Lavaud left
the island A—- engaged his services. He was an
excellent pastrycook and confectioner, and as no
such shops existed in the place, he supplied all the
cakes and tarts eaten at Papeeti. I don't know
whether this privilege was accorded him by his
master—it certainly was not by me—nevertheless he
did it, and earned a good deal by so doing, in
addition to his high rate of wages. I found that
most of A—-’s employés made far more out of him
than he did out of them.

I was somewhat scandalized on my arrival at
Papeeti to see our chef invariably accompanied by a
native woman—I had been told that he was unmarried
—who walked behind him, but as close to his elbow
as it was possible to get. She always dressed in
bright-coloured flowing tapas with a red Aute-flower
over one ear. When I questioned the relationship
I was informed that it was the custom of the country.
I was considerably staggered. A—- was an old
resident.

Mitua, Renvoyer's native wife, had an agreeable
looking face. One day I remarked that it was swollen
and discoloured. I asked her how it had occurred.
She promptly replied “By the Russians”—it was
during the Crimean War. Renvoyer was of course
the culprit, and I reproached him for striking a
woman; I called it unmanly. He said that native
women liked to be thrashed by their lovers or husbands, which proved that they were jealous of them. If they were neglected in this respect they took it as the dawning of indifference on the man's part.

"A woman, a whelp, and a walnut tree,
The more you thrash 'em the better they be"—

was exemplified at Tahiti, for the next day Mitua was seated on a bench outside the kitchen—which was situated at the side of a large courtyard—as close to her tane—husband—as decency permitted, dressed in a new bright tapa, with the usual red Aute-flower over her ear, looking so pleased and happy, that but for some slight disfiguring traces on her cheeks, I might have doubted her recent castigation. Renvoyer glanced at me with a knowing smile and twinkle in his eye, which said as plainly as possible, "Did I not tell you so?"

The sea view from our front veranda was delightful; day after day, and evening after evening, I occupied the same seat—a comfortable rocking-chair—admiring its unvarying charm. Morea looming in the distance, the waves splashing up in soft cadence against the coral reefs; the bay dotted with vessels, among which were always some men-of-war, either stationed in port, or merely birds of passage visiting Tahiti with the object of affording their sailors a run on shore:—with less risk of desertion than on the the coast of South America. On such occasions we saw a good deal of the navy men, who found our veranda an agreeable lounge.
I was very stupid about acquiring the language of the island and during my long residence I blush to say that I never got beyond a few ordinary words which I mingled with French and English in a ridiculous fashion, and at times made the most absurd mistakes with the limited number I did know, or thought I knew. The boy in charge of my mare Dolly told me she was suffering with lampers and could not be mounted. I was in this way deprived of my daily ride, though it was just as likely that he had made this an excuse for some object of his own. Several days passed when Dolly's familiar neigh hurried me to the back veranda overlooking the courtyard to see her. I then fed her with bananas which she ate so remarkably well, that I concluded the lampers—if she had ever had them, which I more than ever doubted—had disappeared, so I ordered the boy to saddle my piifaaru—lI meant to say puafenua horse—whereas I said cat, which I only found out on returning to the front veranda where A—, who was, as usual, stretched on a lounge smoking, asked what cat I was going to ride. I joined in the laugh at my expense, though the native to whom I had said it never changed countenance, did not even smile at that, which might have elicited a hearty burst of laughter from any one. Our sense of fun and humour must vary from that of the natives. If they possess any it is bottled up for private use and only uncorked when by themselves, as no indication of it ever reached my ears.

Mr. Manning was the acting American Consul at Tahiti in the absence of the real representative,
Captain Kelly, who with his wife was on a visit to the United States, a visit that proved a ruinous one to them. Captain Kelly was a Bostonian, and during the entire term of his official duties no income had been affixed to the position; consequently he had been left for several years in undisturbed possession of the office. A change, however, in the Cabinet at Washington produced different arrangements in all the consular departments, and as soon as it became known that the one at Tahiti commanded $1,000 per annum, there appeared any number of competitors, and Captain Kelly ceased to represent his Government, though this was unknown to him until he landed at Tahiti, his voyage from Boston round Cape Horn having occupied some months. Nor was this the only piece of ill news that greeted him on his arrival. His absence from the island had been seized upon by a neighbour and commercial rival as a favourable moment to injure his interests abroad. This he effected through the assistance of Mr. Manning, the gentleman who represented, or rather misrepresented, Captain Kelly, whose Boston correspondents took the alarm and sent out an agent to protect their interests. Fortunately for Captain Kelly he proved to be a gentleman. Mr. Bowman’s sympathies were immediately enlisted in the American Consul’s favour, and he lent him invaluable assistance in closing up his business relations with the United States.

Mr. Bowman mentioned to us that Mr. B——, who had compassed Captain Kelly’s ruin, had offered to purchase from him the Consul’s Boston liabilities, which he of course rejected. As may be imagined the
Kellys were greatly embittered against the Mannings who were detained at Tahiti in consequence of Mrs. M—'s delicate condition. When Mrs. Kelly was told that the lady had given birth to twin sons, she exclaimed, with a grimace of disgust, "Breeding like that, the shameless hussy!"

Mrs. Kelly had many peculiarities. In the absence of a family, she devoted herself to animals and poultry; she collected her own eggs, and marked each one with the date and parentage; for example, "Laid on Monday the 8th, by Sky-high!" This is no exaggeration. I have seen basketsful marked in a similar manner, and wondered what on earth became of them, as her hens were especially good layers! Mrs. Kelly had two dogs and two cats; the former were called Juliette and Jacky, the latter Chouchou and Tabby. Juliette was a white fluffy poodle, which would keep time by shaking her two front paws to a little song her mistress hummed to display her pet's sagacious performance. The tune was worthy the words, "Juliette and Jacky, Chouchou and Tabby." Trifles such as these, helped to brighten the last years of the good lady's life, and as such we must respect them.

The new American Consul and his wife were perfect contrasts in every way to their predecessors. Colonel Vandor was a German-American, and, like all naturalized people, he paraded his patriotism to a laughable extent. When the welcome news reached Tahiti of the great victory won by the Federals, he evinced his loyalty to the cause by becoming extremely friendly with the two or three negroes at
Papeeti. The American corvette *Kirsage* came into port at this period; she was commanded by a staunch Southerner, who was not the best pleased at hearing through the pilot of the Consul's behaviour with respect to the negroes. Captain Scott was told that Colonel Vandor had been seen walking arm-in-arm down the beach with one, in consequence of which he refrained from calling at the Consulate, a breach of etiquette which in no way offended the Colonel. Too much of a republican to stand on ceremony, the first time he came face to face with Captain Scott he ostentatiously introduced him to the negro friend with whom he was walking. The fastidious Virginian's indignation may be imagined. He came to us with his grievance. "Insolent and presuming scoundrel!" he exclaimed, wrathfully. "It is a disgrace to our Government nominating such an ill-bred, vulgar representative." So enraged was Captain Scott with Colonel Vandor that his visit to Tahiti was brought to a sudden termination, much to the regret of his officers, who did not share their captain's animosity or objection to come in contact with that man—Consul he declined to call him. For reasons best known at Washington Colonel Vandor was soon after replaced. When the news reached him of his successor being *en route* for Tahiti, he decided that he had been shabbily treated, and would leave by the first vessel that sailed for San Francisco, and thus avoid meeting him.

Colonel Vandor was heard to complain very bitterly that no one had ever presented his "wife mit golden chains and silken dresses," in a place
where bribery and corruption was practised so extensively, to the extent indeed of making it worth his while to hasten his departure, and transfer his duties to Mr. B—-’s father-in-law, Mr. S—-, who was an Englishman. There were several Americans at Papeeti whom Colonel Vandor overlooked for good reasons of his own! The Consul pro tem. was anti-American in feelings, and about the last man likely to protect the interests of American subjects.

The Golden State, a brig commanded by her owner, Captain Miller, arrived at Papeeti, and was reported to have two passengers on board—these insignificant incidents helped to make up the sum total of life at Tahiti. Who were they? where did they belong? were questions soon asked. They proved to be the wife and child of a Captain Dunn, who had hitherto passed himself off as an unmarried man. No one had ever heard him mention the existence of such responsibilities, and for a time people doubted Mrs. Dunn’s statement. Her husband, she found, was then absent from the island in a vessel belonging to Mr. B—-; but she was requested to come on shore and stay with some of his friends till his return. She gladly accepted the invitation for herself and Ada, whose resemblance to her father could not be denied; and it was this resemblance that had induced his wife to make the long regrettable journey, was the explanation she gave Captain Miller, and he repeated it to me. He was a tall, gentlemanly-looking man, between forty and fifty, who, in consequence of his vessel being chartered by A—-, dined with us several times.
Ada Dunn was three years old, and as yet her father had never seen her. He was an Irishman of a jealous, violent temper, who had accused his wife after each absence of infidelity. Their other children had been born, and died during his voyages, and he had accordingly denied their paternity, though as the poor bereaved mother asserted they had been the portrait of himself. Mrs. Dunn bore a spotless reputation in her native town, St. Catherine's, North America, and it was in opposition to the advice of her friends that she made up her mind to join her husband at Tahiti, so as to show him his child, who bore the same striking resemblance to him as his other children had done. Mrs. Dunn's small means had been exhausted in making her way to San Francisco, where she took passage on the *Golden State*; having previously notified Captain Miller of her penniless position, who consented to receive his payment at Tahiti. When Mrs. Dunn accepted the invitation extended to her by Captain Dunn's friends, she did so in good faith, little aware that she was entering a hornets' nest, where her ears were to be stung by revolting stories of her husband's depraved conduct among the islands: to be informed that his *real* wife—a native woman—was then with him on board the vessel he commanded, that he had been properly married to her at Riatea, and much more to the same effect. The law at Tahiti takes no note of bigamy, but in Mrs. Dunn's eyes it was a criminal offence, and she immediately made up her mind to return to America; for this purpose she sought an interview with Captain Miller, in the hopes that he would assist her to get away from Papeeti.
After listening to her pitiful tale he promised to give her a free passage when his vessel sailed.

Captain Dunn must have been astounded to hear that his American wife and child were actually awaiting him at Papeeti. Their meeting was, I believe, a very stormy one, though he made no opposition to his wife and child's return to the United States. He showed only too plainly what a relief it was to his mind to hear of Mrs. Dunn's intention, as he confessed to being deeply in debt, and totally unable to support her and Ada. As a mere spark can be fanned into a flame, so may a trifling circumstance produce grave results.

Mr. B—had some shell on hand, and was waiting for the arrival of a vessel of his own, to ship it to Valparaiso. He was, therefore, annoyed to hear that A—had chartered the brig *Golden State* to proceed to the Gambia Islands, to take in a similar cargo of produce for the same destination. Mr. B—was so anxious for his pearl shell to reach the English market before his neighbour's that he encouraged rather than discouraged Dunn's friends, to urge him to oppose his wife and child sailing with Captain Miller, in the hope that by such means the *Golden State* might be detained a few days longer at Tahiti.

Mrs. Dunn had been removed by her husband from his friends' ill-natured tongues, to lodgings on the outskirts of Papeeti, where he consented to her receiving Captain Miller for the purpose of arranging for her departure by his vessel, as at that period it was almost as easy to return to the States *via* Chili, as *via* California. Everything went on satisfactorily
till the day prior to sailing. Mrs. Dunn and her child had gone on board the *Golden State*, as had the other passengers who were bound to Valparaiso, some of whom had called at Mr. B——’s office to bid him adieu, when he remarked that they were not going to get away from Tahiti as soon as they imagined, as there was not the slightest probability of the *Golden State* sailing the next morning. Amazed at what they heard, they came to A—— for further information. He said that he knew of nothing to prevent the brig leaving port at the specified hour, as the ship’s papers were in readiness for the captain, who was to call for them in the afternoon. He was not aware at the time that the same individuals who had poisoned Mrs. Dunn’s ears with evil reports of her husband, were now pursuing the same course by traducing his wife’s reputation. Captain Dunn thereupon determined at the eleventh hour to oppose his wife’s departure in the *Golden State*. He ordered her to come on shore which she refused to do; she said that she had gone on board with his free consent, and she would remain there. Worked up to a pitch of frenzy by his slanderous friends, he made up his mind to murder Captain Miller rather than allow his wife to sail with him. For this purpose he stationed himself in a corner where he was favoured by the weather, as it was a dark, rainy night, aware that his victim would have to pass the spot in returning to his vessel. When he came in sight, Dunn was prepared to receive him, and as he approached near enough, shot him; not dead however: the unfortunate captain fell to the ground, where Dunn despatched him with blows on
the head from the butt end of his revolver, while stamping on the prostrate body of the dying man.

Whilst this fearful tragedy was being enacted, we were seated on our veranda. A gentleman joined us, and exclaimed excitedly that Captain Miller was dead, had just been brutally murdered by Dunn.

We were astounded, could scarcely believe it, as only a few hours previously Captain Miller had shaken hands with us in farewell, and apologized to me for appearing in his "sea rig." His watch, chain, studs, and signet ring he said were always laid aside before going to sea. Captain Miller was the son of a half-pay English navy officer residing at St. Edwards.

A—, on hearing the harrowing news, hastened down to the beach, where his steps were arrested by the sad cortège which was then passing our house, en route to the American consulate. The murderer, between too gendarmes, brought up the rear; he was talking and glorying over his deed, lifting his feet to show his heavy boots besmeared with blood. A—'s indignation found vent in such severe denunciations that the inhuman monster was silenced.

As soon as Captain Miller's body was deposited at the American Consulate, the gendarmes went on board the Golden State, and ordered Mrs. Dunn and her child to leave the vessel, which they did at once. The moment they were on shore, a crowd of the most unsympathetic people surrounded them, as exaggerated stories concerning Mrs. Dunn and Captain Miller were already in circulation. It was pouring with rain while she and her little girl Ada stood there, not knowing where to turn for shelter, when
the man, at whose house she had been previously lodging, took pity on their forlorn plight, and motioned to Mrs. Dunn to follow him home. He was a German named Binks, and by trade a carpenter, a man who never neglected his own interests; he therefore sought —— the next morning, to get him to guarantee a certain weekly sum to defray the board and lodging of the mother and child, which —— agreed to do. Binks appeared quite unnerved at what had taken place. In his opinion, Dunn was a thoroughly bad man; he and Mrs. Binks had overheard him dictate a letter from his wife to Captain Miller, offering to resign all rights over her and the child on payment of 2,000 dollars. Though he failed to get the compensation he demanded, he gladly consented to their leaving Tahiti in the Golden State, as, according to Binks, he was anxious to get rid of their expense—statements which I regret to say Binks refrained from repeating in the witness box during the murderer's trial.

Dunn's employer raised a subscription to defray the cost of his defence. The list was headed by Mr. S——, Acting American Consul, to obtain the acquittal of an Irishman who had in cold blood killed an American subject!

The culprit was a Freemason, and it was rumoured that through the influence of that society a verdict of not guilty was returned. Dunn must have been as much astonished as many others at his escape from punishment, after having consummated the heinous crime with which he was charged. One evening after dark we were startled at hearing someone crying out,
“They have stolen my child.” Hurried feet ascended our steps, and a woman stood before us who repeated in a sobbing voice, “They have stolen my child.” I made a shrewd guess that it was no less a redoubtable person than Mrs. Dunn who faced us, it was the first time I had seen her, and in answer to my question she replied, “Yes, lady, I am that wretched woman, and now they have taken my child, my Ada. For God’s sake tell me what to do, for if I don’t get her back, I shall go mad.”

I felt deep sympathy for the unhappy mother who had endured such severe trials of late. She described how her child had disappeared. The little girl had fallen asleep on her mother’s lap while she sat talking to Mrs. Binks on the veranda, so she took the child inside and laid her on the bed. No sooner had she rejoined Mrs. Binks than she thought she heard a movement of some kind at the back part of the house where her room was situated, and feeling uneasy about it she stepped round to have another look at Ada, when she found the bed empty, the child was gone! Without a moment’s loss of time she rushed down the street, screaming as we had heard her, in the hopes of overtaking the marauder, which she unhappily failed to do. Mrs. Dunn was a decidedly handsome woman, a fact one could not lose sight of even in her distress; perhaps it enhanced the charm of her appearance, as her hair had become unfastened and hung in wavy masses below her knees; it was the colour of gold, and corresponded with her pure, fair complexion, and deep blue eyes. Her features were all good, and as I looked and admired her I
felt that poor Captain Miller must have done the same, how any husband could have preferred a native woman!—well, it was no time for such speculations. Her sobs and moans were distressing to hear; she had lost her slippers, and her stockings were tinged with blood where her feet had come in contact with the sharp stones. We had great difficulty in making Mrs. Dunn believe as we did, that her wretched husband, and he alone, had taken the child. She rejected the supposition in consequence of having had an interview with him since his acquittal, when he wept and expressed the deepest contrition for his dark deed, at the same time advised her to leave the island with Ada as soon as she could.

The mystery of Ada Dunn's disappearance was the next morning explained; her father had taken her off the bed and conveyed her to one of Mr. B—- 's vessels lying at anchor some distance from shore, and out of her mother's reach. Why he had done this no one could say, unless some native wanted to adopt Ada, who was a lovely child, probably the very woman he kept, whom he wished to gratify at the expense of the mother's sufferings. He must have been a cruelly disposed man whichever way one regarded him.

Every one shunned Mrs. Dunn, which I thought unjustifiable, as I considered her an innocent woman who had been cruelly persecuted from the hour she had landed at Papeeti. At her husband's trial she had been subpoenaed, and every effort had been made to browbeat her into incriminating herself, so as to prove that her unborn babe was not her husband's.
Her indignant denial was disbelieved by those who were incapable of leading moral lives themselves. They ridiculed the idea of a man and woman making a long voyage together without committing an indiscretion. It so happened that this infant of doubtful paternity was born fully ten months after Mrs. Dunn’s arrival at Tahiti. But I must not anticipate.

Mrs. Dunn appealed to her husband, who promised to restore her child if she left Tahiti, but not otherwise. When this decision was repeated to us, A—headed a subscription and raised 200 dollars in readiness to pay her passage by the first vessel leaving for San Francisco. A still better opportunity presented itself in an American whaler homeward bound, which had put into port for fresh provisions. The captain consigned the vessel to A—, who at once represented to him his countrywoman’s sad position and desire to leave Papeeti. It however needed considerable persuasion to induce him to accept 150 dollars for the passage of mother and child to the United States, as it was necessary to keep in reserve 50 dollars to defray their expenses to St. Catherine’s after reaching the seaport frequented by whalers.

When the arrangements were finally completed, it was impossible to say what Dunn would, or would not do, as he had changed his mind at least a dozen times since first agreeing to give the child up on certain conditions, and now, when they were about to be carried out, his indecision and shuffling were truly exasperating. The ship was quite ready to sail, but Mrs. Dunn naturally declined to go on board until she saw her husband start in a boat with her child.
It was quite an exciting scene, and I was worked up to fever pitch. So I imagine was the whaling captain beside me, whom I had undertaken to amuse until events took the desired form. He had partaken of an ample lunch, as I had urged him to eat of everything on the table so as to lengthen it out as much as possible. When he finally and gruffly refused to taste another dainty, I persuaded him to return to the veranda to await his ship's papers, which were being purposely withheld to the very last moment. I scanned the bay with the deepest anxiety, fully aware that such a bad man as Dunn was capable of playing his wife some underhanded trick at the very last moment. When the wretch found that Mrs. Dunn would not start from shore until Ada did, he shoved off with the child beside him, Mrs. Dunn's boat following at a respectful distance, as the native rowers were thoroughly alive to the situation, and held back till the child was actually on board the whaler, where she was speedily joined by her mother. I could picture to myself their fond meeting, and rejoiced to think that they had gone from the island. It was a perfect relief to feel that we had seen and heard the last of mother and child, a flattering unction which we had applied prematurely. Some few months elapsed when we received a voluminous document from St. Catherine's, signed and sealed in true legal form, wherein the clergyman and residents testified to Mrs. Dunn's being a highly respectable industrious woman, against whom no one had ever breathed a disparaging word save her husband, who was represented by them to be, a cruel, disreputable man, and
that his wife had joined him contrary to the advice of her friends. We at the same time received a letter from Mrs. Dunn's old father, thanking us for our kindness to his unfortunate daughter at a time when she was being utterly forsaken and outraged by members of her own faith. He also announced the birth of Mrs. Dunn's second little girl, who had been named after me, an honour I would have gladly dispensed with.

I made it my business to transmit both letter and documents to the resident English clergyman who I was told disapproved of Mrs. Dunn, and had lent a more willing ear to Dunn's mis-statements than to the wife's version of her husband's treatment and general behaviour. The missives I regretted to find were returned to me without comment, though I knew them to be undeniable refutations of the slanders circulated. I had never been numbered among Mrs. Dunn's traducers, as I had always considered her in the light of a scapegoat. She told me that when she was ordered to stand up to be gazed at and questioned by men who were eager for her disgrace, she felt as if she had descended into Hell, and was being tortured by a parcel of demons!
CHAPTER XXII.

OVERTAKEN BY A STORM.

FRENCH Protestant Pasteur, accompanied by a young daughter, came from France to Tahiti, for the purpose of establishing French Mission Schools. Mdlle. Hélène was a charming girl, both lovely, graceful, and innocent. She used to entertain me with enthusiastic descriptions of Swiss scenery. Before coming to Tahiti, they had resided in Switzerland, where she hoped to return at a future date. Nowhere else were such abendglüens and nachtglüens to be witnessed: nowhere else was honey produced to equal Swiss honey. She quite laughed at the idea of my preferring the Tahitian production: to her taste there could be no comparison between the two; yet one was a manufactured article, and the other a pure extract from flowers.

The A.'s were returning to Europe, and Mdlle. Hélène was rejoicing at the prospect. I had taken a great fancy to the girl, and though I should miss her sweet society, I was pleased at the idea of her
leaving Tahiti, which was totally unsuitable to young folks of either sex. M. A—succeeded in his mission, for after his return to France, two other Pasteurs replaced him. I subsequently made a voyage with one, and found him not only very agreeable, but holding most liberal religious views.

I frequently saw Taina, the beautiful native woman who bore such a striking resemblance to the picture of Rebekah; she called on me each time she crossed from Morea, and introduced her feti. Forna was a very plain person in my estimation, though she had proved most attractive to a young Englishman, and on the principle that the unattainable increases in value, he became dangerously ill in consequence of her disdaining his overtures. When Forna heard that her admirer was suffering with brain fever, his perilous condition caused her to relent, and she went to see him. Her presence effected a timely recovery, and she eventually became his native wife, persuading herself that a man who loved her so intensely as to fall ill on her account, could not fail to prove more faithful than the usual run of white men.

Forna presented her adorer with several children, all of whom were fondly loved by their father. The mother's cup of happiness was overflowing; the possession of a devoted husband, lovely children, and an unusually comfortable house, made her more than ever recognize the wisdom of her friends in advising her to act as she had done towards F—. Too soon did the day approach when this paragon of a husband and father left Tahiti and never re-appeared in the bosom of his native family, for whom he had made no pro-
vision whatever. Unknown to Forna, he had fallen in love with an English girl, whom he eventually married. She consoled herself with another husband, and this time selected one of her own colour. Examples like Etia are rare at Tahiti, few of the betrayed native wives wear the willow for long. And is it to be wondered at?

I never heard but of one instance of a legal marriage taking place between a Frenchman and a native, and that was done to legitimize the children with the intention of taking them to France. M. Lea made the voyage with his family, but finding that the climate was injurious to his wife, he returned to Tahiti.

The French West Indian islands supplied Tahiti with ordonnateurs. M. de Rougement was a Creole, and so were his successors, but M. Nestie proved to be a much more agreeable man than his predecessor. Madame Nestie accompanied her husband with their children and nurse; she was not at all pretty, and expended what little intelligence she possessed on the art of dressing well, she was devoted to toilette, and in its cause underwent the weariness of having her ball dresses served on to her by the black maid, who assisted in making up wonderful combinations of tulle, ribbon, and flowers! When I asked if standing during the sewing process did not tire her to death? she frankly replied “That the absence of creases compensated for the trouble and fatigue.”

M. Nestie was most anxious to acquire the English language, and frequently gave me instances of the progress he was making under an excellent master.
"I study most strongly, and can speak a leetle leetle but I not understand much, wone word," was the information he constantly imparted to me. A—and I indulged in many a hearty laugh during M. Nestie's vain attempts to express himself in English, and I really can't resist the inclination to give an example of his proficiency.

He told us that an American captain had called at his bureau, whom he had addressed in English as follows: "Haar doo saar, one fair travel have you." As a translation may be necessary, he intended to say, "How do you do, sir? I trust you have had a pleasant voyage." M. Nestie felt that he had acquitted himself most satisfactorily, and was amazed to hear his visitor reply, "I am sorry to say, sir, that I neither understand, nor speak a word of French!" A—and I laughed outright, and I nearly expired when M. Nestie continued to explain that he had been so particular in the choice of his words, which he had pronounced most distinctly, and as for the man not comprehending his simple salutation, it was ridiculous! "Risible de la part de ce Monsieur!"

M. Nestie and his execrable English, served to vary the monotony of Tahitian evenings, when darkness shrouded the tropical beauty that never failed to gratify the eye. During the day I was always very well entertained, therefore less sensible of my isolation from the civilized world; but when night closed in, and I sat on our veranda facing the Southern Cross, my thoughts wandered off to distant lands, and I longed—for the moon.

Doctor Guillasse had become a landed proprietor.
He had purchased a property at Paea, on which he had built himself a house: when completed he invited his friends to a déjeûner.

A—and I were included in his invitation. We drove out in a char-a-banc, but many went on horseback, which I would have preferred had A—not decided otherwise.

Instead of the entertainment being al fresco, we were regaled in a small room, which rendered the whole thing tedious and uncomfortable, and its termination was hailed by the recipients with pleasure. We then strolled in the direction of the river, whereon floated a shaky old canoe. M. Lavigerie jumped into it, and invited me to take a row. I hesitated, as the bark looked far more dirty and leaky than gay, but when my cavalier held out his hand encouragingly, with the assurance that supposing we did upset, nothing more serious than a bath could result, as the water was quite shallow, I allowed myself to be persuaded, though I sat in momentary dread of a disagreeable capsize, while we paddled up and down in the broiling sun until I proposed allowing others to enjoy a similar treat.

A charming shady nook was discovered in the river, where we decided to bathe while the gentlemen undertook to walk to the next district, in the course of which they were overtaken by a violent storm, peals of terrific thunder and flashes of vivid lightning followed in rapid succession, and sent the pedestrians running back as fast as their legs could carry them, yet drenched to the skin, which necessitated an immediate change of apparel.
Dr. Guillasse placed his limited wardrobe at his guests' disposal, but as with the exception of A—— they were as tall as their host was short, his unmentionables were found to be out of the question. Fortunately there were plenty of pareus to be had, and it struck me that the gentlemen felt uncommonly at home in them. We remained housed as long as we dared, hoping that the storm would abate, but were finally obliged to brave its fury, so as to get over the worst part of the road before it became pitch dark. The soil was red clay, and so slippery in wet weather that on this occasion the horses had a difficulty to maintain their footing. In descending a steep hill they became so restive that a lady was terrified into jumping from the high char-a-banc. Fortunately she escaped without injury, but she frightened us half to death; it was, indeed, a dreary drive home. The rain never ceased, and as it was impossible to hold up our umbrellas, we reached Papeeti like so many drowned rats.

Margaret had captivated a Frenchman by the name of Redet, who had been for some years confidential clerk to Mr. B——, to whom he had rendered invaluable services, as it was through his agency that his employer had obtained a large proportion of the Government business, on the understanding that they were to share the profits, but as no agreement to this effect had been signed, Mr. B—— evaded his obligation by dismissing M. Redet. Sad to relate, Margaret had married him just prior to this event, with the view of bettering herself, though she must have known that her admirer was a deep imbiber of
absinthe; the blow to Redet's *amour propre* called for such increased libations of the poison—to which the French are so partial—that it shortened his life. Margaret was left a widow almost before she could have thoroughly realized being a wife; she was, therefore, the less inconsolable.

When Margaret left me to become Madame Redet I replaced her by Luppa, the native nurse of the little girl on board the *Stag Hound*, who had resigned her charge to remain at Papeeti. If she was not quite up to the position of lady's maid she suited me in other respects, and Margaret continued to perform a certain number of duties even after her marriage, as she disliked to withdraw entirely from our house—perhaps from me.

I made a trip to San Francisco with my little dog Flody and Luppa, who created quite a sensation at my sister's. Though it was midsummer Luppa suffered from the cold, and piled on her back nearly all the clothes she possessed, which did not improve her ungainly figure. She had adopted for the first time in her life shoes and stockings, which kept tumbling down about her heels. My sister and nieces used to be greatly scandalized to see Luppa deliberately stop in the streets and, regardless of appearances, haul up her stockings considerably above her knees, a position they could not maintain, as she objected to wear garters. While we were in San Francisco a sweet, gentle little girl became very fond of Flody, which led to an amusing incident.

After we had taken our departure she came to spend the day at my sister's, when, among other
amusements, she entertained herself by examining an album of photographs. Coming to a vignette of mine she exclaimed, "Why, this is Mrs. Flody and her little dog." I had been obliged to advance our return to Tahiti, in consequence of Luppa's grotesque style of dress and stocking trick, which annoyed others. I suppose I must have become hardened to such sights; nevertheless, I decided to dispense with Luppa's services when next I visited San Francisco.
CHAPTER XXIII.

A GREAT ROBBERY OF JEWELS.

Soon after our return to Papeeti a vessel belonging to A—arrived from Valparaiso. Among the passengers on board was a family named Shaw. They had in years past resided on the island, which they left in consequence of Señora Shaw’s dislike of the French, who, after her husband’s death, had made unpleasant overtures to her. She was from Guayaquil, and had married the captain of an American whaler, who left her a widow with several children, and in poor circumstances. When A—first came to Tahiti he occupied a part of Señora Shaw’s house at Papeeti, where he became seriously ill, and was nursed by his landlady, who thereby earned his deep gratitude, since when he had never ceased to take an interest in her and hers, or to befriend them when the opportunity offered. Señora Shaw had two daughters, named Dolorés and Lucrecia, and A—suggested that I should take one to reside with us, so as to bear me company in his
absence, as Margaret no longer formed one of the family. I would have preferred the younger sister, as she was prettier and looked more amiable, but her mother raised objections to such an arrangement. She said that Dolorés, being the eldest, ought to enjoy the advantage of an improved position, &c., and, malheureusement, A— thought the same; in this way I had a very undesirable companion palmed on me. Happily she could not ride, and I was thus spared the infliction of her society at such times; otherwise, she accompanied me everywhere. The rest of her family had gone to Huaine, where they settled in preference to remaining at Papeeti; for what reason I knew not, unless it were to get as far away as possible from Dolorés: I often wished that I could have done the same. A— had a German bookkeeper, whom Dolorés pretended to dislike; she knew that he had come to us in a poverty-stricken condition, and was beholden to A— for the very clothes he wore, as he had not the means to procure them before entering on his duties. She chose to account for this by unflattering insinuations of his past career. I thought it unjust and cruel at the time; since then I have had reason to think it more than probable. She frequently assured us that W— would take care to make hay while the sun shone, and feather his nest at A—'s expense. When Dolorés convinced herself that he was in reality doing this she treated him more graciously, and eventually became Madame W—. She then set up a house of her own—a very pretty one it was—and urged her husband to aim at a higher position in his employer's firm, which he did, unsuccessfully. He represented that he
had received much more advantageous offers from Chili. A—— advised him by all means to accept them; but as no such overtures had been made, W—— remained at Papeeti, where he went into business on his own account, and flourished, notwithstanding his deception and ingratitude.

I was obliged to look out for another maid, as Luppa had left me to live with a man young enough to be her son. I engaged a woman named Papuorii, who bore the reputation of being thoroughly good, and an excellent sick nurse. I never made a greater mistake than when I took her into my service. She used to come early in the morning to her work; after that was accomplished she disposed of the afternoon to suit her own convenience, as native women never sleep at their employers'. I possessed some valuable jewellery in a large jewel case, which occupied the centre of a table that was placed between the windows of my bedroom. The insecurity of its position—though under lock and key—never occurred to me, as A—— had represented the natives to be so far honest that they were incapable of stealing anything of intrinsic value, though they might be tempted to pilfer trifles.

One evening we had some intimate friends taking dinner with us; while at table my little dog began to bark furiously, which we all remarked, as he was not in the habit of treating us to such discordant sounds. It was made the subject of a joke, as it was supposed to be the rays of the moon which excited him in this way. The sagacious little animal's warning was consequently disregarded. At the conclusion of dinner I
went to my bedroom to fetch something, when I was immediately struck by the empty appearance of the table between the windows; the jewel case was gone. I hurriedly communicated the fact to A—— and our guests, who were lost in vain speculations. The servants were called and questioned, but they all denied having seen any one either enter or leave the house while we were in the dining-room. The premises were thoroughly searched, but in vain; the inlaid box had been undoubtedly stolen, but by whom long remained a mystery. My servant Papuorii came the next morning bewailing my loss with a string of *ewais*—lamentations. The robbery was a considerable one, consisting of ornaments in brilliants and other valuable gems, besides a magnificent *parure* of choice pearls, with pear-shaped pendants, a couple of watches and chains, encrusted with brilliants, a variety of rings, and several boxes of large and valuable pearls, the property of A——, which he had placed in my charge for safe keeping. In addition to what I have enumerated, there were many other articles that I prized, such as old family heirlooms which I could never hope to replace, and these I described to Papuorii as having belonged to relatives who were dead, especially a ring composed of a cluster of brilliants, which I deplored more than aught else, as it had been removed from my beloved mother's finger after death and given to me.

Being very friendly with Madame de la Richerie, I went immediately to see her about this personal matter, and she took me to the Governor's private office to make my report. He promised me that
nothing should be left undone to recover the jewellery, which, he said, could not possibly leave the island without the knowledge of the police.

I explained that in consequence of what had occurred it was decided that I was to accompany A—— in his contemplated voyage to Chili, and I left Government House with Madame de la Richerie's assurance that during our absence she would take care that the Governor did not neglect our interest. A large reward was also offered for the recovery of the stolen property.

When the Kellys heard that A—— proposed sailing for Valparaiso in a brigantine of his own, called the Samoa, Captain Kelly applied to him for a passage for himself and wife, which he readily conceded. Owing to a succession of contrary winds and dead calms, we bade fair to make an unconscionably long passage, and considerably before its termination we ran short of provisions, through the reckless extravagance of the cook. Such a liberal supply had been put on board that Captain Kelly remarked its super-abundance, and questioned what we were going to do with it all. A goat and kid had been shipped for my benefit, so as to insure a little milk for the coffee and tea, if for nothing else. The fates were against me, so it seemed, as the cook took the earliest opportunity to kill the kid, and from that time forth Nanny's plaintive cry replaced the milk as an accompaniment to my tea. She refused to give down another drop after the slaughter of her little one. I owed an undying grudge for the deprivation of my milk to that abominable cook, who had been cruel enough to
kill the kid before its mother's eyes. He was certainly a most inhuman wretch, as I had reason to know.

We were awakened one morning at daybreak by the most terrific squeaks on deck. I begged A—— to get up and see what wicked act the cook was perpetrating, as the unearthly yells came from the direction of the caboose; when, to his horror and amazement, he found the brute holding a live pig in a huge cauldron of boiling water. In reply to A——'s energetic remonstrance, he said it facilitated the removal of bristles. He was, of course, made to remove the poor animal and kill it then and there. Neither the captain nor mate ever interfered to prevent such atrocious conduct. It was no unfrequent occurrence to see fowls and ducks staggering about the deck with their heads half off. The man seemed to take a devilish pleasure in killing by slow degrees; the process of happy despatch was apparently unknown to him. Nanny, after her bereavement, attached herself to me; she had become frightfully emaciated, and displayed a decidedly morbid appetite, preferring to nibble away the fringe of my shawl to eating her natural food. Captain Kelly used to say that Nanny had saved her own life by becoming so thin, as it would be now useless to kill her; but that my Flody would make such a plump roast that I had better keep a sharp eye on him, lest he should be nabbed by the cook. I pretended to be awfully afraid.

Our fellow-passenger was somewhat of a wag, and having been a seafaring man himself he soon
A GREAT ROBBERY OF JEWELS.

discovered that our sailors were an ignorant set of men, who didn't know one rope from another. He, therefore, recommended the captain of the Samoa to adopt a plan he had tried most successfully under similar circumstances. He had labelled every belaying-pin with a court card, feeling pretty sure that if the men were unacquainted with nautical terms they were all alive to "high, low, Jack, and the game." And so it proved, for when he cried out, "Tighten knave of diamonds!" or "Slacken Queen of clubs!" they grasped the right rope.

The coast of Chili is very uninteresting, I wanted to catch a glimpse of the fertile island of Juan Fernandez, but the view we obtained showed no indication of fertility, and I concluded that this was confined to the interior of the island, whereas Captain Kelly assured me that nothing but goats thrrove there. How about Robinson Crusoe?

After a voyage of fifty-three days, I naturally expected to land the moment we dropped anchor at Valparaiso, and my disappointment may be imagined, when I was told that such a thing was not practicable, that I would have to remain on board till the next day, as we were much further off from the mole than I supposed. Vessels anchor in an open roadstead, where at times the sea is so rough and the wind so violent, that two and three anchors are necessary to insure the safety of shipping, and notwithstanding these precautions, they frequently drag and come in contact with other vessels, causing considerable damage; as all of them ride at anchor, there being no docks, merely a mole, where a fleet of strong boats are in
constant demand, bearing passengers to and fro, in answer to a code of signals.

Happily for me the Andromede was in port, and our old friend Admiral Bonard had recognized A—-'s house flag. Thinking it probable I was on board, he considerately despatched his private gig to convey us to terra firma; dear man, his thoughtfulness was not wasted on me, and I blessed him in my heart of hearts, as the spray dashed fiercely over the boat without wetting us, as we were protected by his large india-rubber covering.

We found the Hotel Nagli very comfortable, where we occupied a bedroom and sitting-room. There were three French windows in the latter; the middle one opened on to a small veranda, where I was standing the next morning, not the best pleased to find our hotel on a narrow street devoted to warehouses, which gave it a most gloomy appearance. Facing our balcony was a stall of edibles, extensively patronized by peons; it was kept by a gipsy-looking woman, in whose actions and table I became interested, as both reminded me of Virgin Bay. I distinguished the same tempting rolls and light cakes; in the place of chocolate she made coffee, and busied herself over a large earthenware dish of corn and rice, which she seemed unable to withstand; for I remarked that each time she served it out to a customer, she would eat a spoonful herself, and then smooth over with the same spoon what remained in the dish. While watching this amusing operation, I heard a familiar sound, and, to my surprise, saw our shipmate Nanny being led down the street. She had recognized me, and
refused to budge from the spot as long as I was in sight, I therefore prudently retired from the veranda, but could see her continually pausing to look back at our hotel. They were taking her to the country, where she was to remain until we sailed, when she returned with us to Tahiti, and was set at liberty on the Openohu property, where she in time became possessed of another kid.
CHAPTER XXIV.

A CHARMING VISIT TO CHILI.

VALPARAISO is a delightful city, divided as it were into two distinct localities, for the Chilians reside in the lower part, and foreigners on the higher portion, whence an extensive view is obtained from a terrace provided with seats, where I found a rest absolutely necessary, after climbing such a precipitous hill. We were told that at that elevation the air was more bracing; if high wind could render it so there was no doubt of it, for it carried off my hat and a good deal of my breath as well, but the ocean studded with shipping was a glorious sight.

It was at that elevation where all the merchant princes resided, in fine houses, midst beautifully laid-out grounds; the flowers were superb.

I was agreeably surprised to find that our hotel was a short distance from the principal streets where the shops were especially attractive to the Chilians, and a favourite promenade of theirs. One was
A CHARMING VISIT TO CHILI.

always certain to meet a large proportion of ladies, not star-gazing, but shop-window gazing.

When young, the South Americans are extremely pretty and graceful, they have small hands and feet, and magnificent hair, which they wear in two long plaits en negligé; but in the afternoons it is dressed in the most elaborate fashion for the admiration of the public, as they walk out with their heads uncovered.

There is a peculiar custom in Chili of giving what they term a Yappa on the occasion of any purchase. I used to frequent the fruit market, which was well stocked; the fresh figs were the largest and sweetest that I had ever seen or tasted, and I made a point of daily bringing some home for breakfast. The first time I selected the number I wanted, the girl placed them between leaves in my basket, and then laid another half dozen on the top. I imagined that she wished me to buy an extra quantity, and I shook my head in the negative, when she smilingly explained that it was for a Yappa. As I had nothing more to pay, I was agreeably impressed by the custom. The Chilians exact this Yappa as their due. We were in a confectionary shop one day, when a small child came in and held up a centavo—half-penny—for some sweets; the man handed them to her, when she held up her other hand and lisped out, "mi Yappa," and got it!

Mate, a native herb, is a national beverage, and substitute for our tea, and a very poor one in my opinion. Few houses among those inhabited by the Chilians are provided with fire-places, though their winters are raw and chilly. They heat the room they
occupy by using a *brasero*, a round portable stove filled with burning charcoal. The sides and cover are perforated, so as to admit the hot air to circulate. The poisonous fumes having been left to escape before it is introduced into the apartment, the family sit on the floor as close as possible to the *brasero*, beguiling time by sipping *mate* boiling hot, and eating buttered toast.

I did not find the churches at Valparaiso at all equal to my anticipation; they contain neither pews nor seats of any description; the congregation kneel and sit on small rugs or squares of carpet, which they bring with them for that purpose. As these ladies always dress in black, and wear a black mantilla, the general effect is somewhat sombre and funereal.

*Le Jardin Aberdee* was a most agreeable resort. The grounds, though not extensive, were laid out attractively, with abundance of shade, flowers, and rustic seats; when the band played visitors were provided with chairs. Admiral Bonard came to our hotel regularly every evening after dinner, to accompany us to these gardens, which he pronounced to be the pleasantest spot about Valparaiso; that it was a fashionable rendezvous, was very evident, and the toilettes one met there were marvels of taste. The admiral owned a beautiful spotted spaniel, called Fox, which followed him everywhere. He and Flody were friendly enough until their owners petted the wrong dog; then the snarling began, when Flody erected his tail and showed his teeth as viciously as Fox. I was having a most enjoyable visit to Valparaiso, which in a great measure was due to our French friends belonging to
A CHARMING VISIT TO CHILI.

the several men-of-war in port. We met the French Consul and his lovely wife at a déjeûner given by Admiral Bonard. Madame Cazot was a Limanian lady, of great beauty, and an especial favourite with our host. The commander of the Andromêde, Capitaine Cimon, was a contrast to the generality of his compatriots, as he had formed unprejudiced opinions about other nationalities. He had been all over the world, and was as near an approach to a cosmopolitan as a Frenchman could be. He was the first of his countrymen from whom I had ever heard a flattering word expressed about America or the Americans. They seem to accept as facts French literature on American manners and customs, which, judging by a book that I was urged to read, deal in the most exaggerated statements, on the principle, I suppose, that when you tell a story, let it be a good one. Madame de Grandfort was the authoress, and she personated her name, for she was the greatest—I won't say what—that ever breathed. Among other absurdities she informs her readers that in the United States all classes of society had adopted the Bloomer costume; that young ladies accompany gentlemen on a first introduction to places of public entertainment; that in horse cars and omnibuses where there are no vacant seats to be had, they unceremoniously placed themselves on gentlemen's laps. I returned the book with the assurance that it was a tissue of gross falsehoods, which produced an incredulous shrug of the shoulder. I admit that tired sewing or shop girls prefer accepting a seat on a gentleman's knee to standing during a long drive. They may be pretty—I doubt the offer being made to
an ugly one—and well-dressed, yet not ladies. It is the same with regard to invitations to theatres, concerts, &c. No lady accepts such offers from any one but a friend of the family.

Capitaine de Miniac, the commander of the frigate Sérièreuse, was lame. He had lost a leg in the Crimean War, which rendered him the more interesting, and I thoroughly enjoyed hearing him speak of that period. Whatever A— as an Englishman did, for he unhesitatingly condemned the English commissariat and ordnance departments. He assured us that the soldiers and sailors were unprovided with the commonest necessaries, and that both were led to battle by inefficient officers. As to the sick and wounded, their needs were deplorable, and few would have survived but for the assistance of their Allies, who supplied them with much that they lacked. Poor creatures! to be without absolute essentials. Was there ever a greater instance of culpable negligence? For my part, I placed implicit faith in every word M. de Miniac uttered, as he was not the style of man to exaggerate such painful statements, besides which, he was an old friend of A—'s, and not likely to say anything to needlessly wound his feelings.

M. de Miniac and his officers gave a theatrical performance on board the Sérièreuse, followed by a ball. The former was capital, as both sailors and marines were good actors, but the latter proved a sad failure, in consequence of an increased swell, which rendered the ladies so uncomfortable that they insisted on being sent back to terra firma. It was really very provoking, as there was a sumptuous supper provided, and very few to eat
it; we returned the next morning to breakfast off the réchauffe's.

A— and I frequently took our second meal on board the Andromede or Sérieuse. The gentlemen then settled down to cards, while I amused myself with a book. Happy bygones, that are not likely to be renewed.

Admiral Bonard indulged in the expectation of sooner or later being re-nominated Governor of Tahiti. Aware that since his recent visit to the island the natives had petitioned the Minister of Colonies for his re-instatement, he never doubted that their request would receive a favourable consideration, and his disappointment was terrible when despatches arrived obliging him to leave his frigate and return forthwith to France, via Panama. Every one who knew the admiral was concerned on his account. The order was so unexpected, and resented by his friends, who were at a loss to explain the urgency of his immediate presence in France, as the Andromede was also returning there; and the admiral was so proud of his ship that it seemed an unnecessarily harsh proceeding to deprive him of the pleasure of taking the frigate home. Governments are not above committing petty acts, as instanced in this case. Admiral Bonard, in gaining the hearts of the Tahitians, had earned for himself the ill-will of the Minister of Colonies, who vented his displeasure by recalling him from his official duties.

It was a hard trial for the admiral to separate from his dog Fox, as he had decided to leave him on board the frigate, under the charge of Commander
Cimon, who imparted to me the information that he did not intend the admiral to leave without his companion; the dog, he said, would help to lessen the sadness of parting from all his old friends. I thought it very considerate of M. Cimon, and hoped his plan would succeed, but I was curious on the subject, as the admiral had given him instructions about Fox's diet, and treatment in case of illness, which M. Cimon received with the utmost gravity. Previous to bidding farewell to his officers and men, the admiral fastened Fox securely with his own hands. He had taken his seat in his gig, and was waving a last adieu to those watching his departure to the mail steamer, when suddenly down rushed Fox with a broken strap dangling to his collar, and sprang to his accustomed place beside his master, who was quite affected at this additional mark of affection on the dog's part. Tears were in his eyes as he caressed his favourite's head, exclaiming, "La bonne bête, comme il m'aime." The commander and officers then shouted in chorus, "Mon Dieu prenez le, il ne faut pas vous briser le cœur en quittant tous vos amis à la fois, bien sur Fox va mourir de chagrin si vous l'abandonnez." Fox accompanied Admiral Bonard to France via Panama.

We visited in turn Lamarche and Quillota. Both places are within an easy distance of Valparaiso, and the produce from the fruit orchards are intended for that market. We walked through one where the trees were laden down with all kinds of fruit, and the ground laid out in beds of luscious strawberries, not one of which were we offered. We were asked
if we wished to purchase any, and when I declined on the plea of having no basket, the obstacle to their making a few pence out of us was overcome by their producing an old, dirty, broken thing, and when we paid for the fruit an extra charge was made for the basket. Two pretty young girls, either the daughters or nieces of the proprietor, never left our side, and praised every article I wore. Their extravagant admiration elicited nothing but simpering smiles from me, as I had the conviction that if I conformed to the usage of the country, and replied, "A la disposition de Ustedes," they would have seized the opportunity to denude me of my lace collar, cuffs, handkerchief, bracelets, parasol, or any other removable article I had on. It is customary in South America to place at one's disposal anything one admires, from a simple flower to a costly painting, without the remotest intention of having this generous offer taken au sérieux. It is understood and accepted as a mere complimentary phrase, but in the case of the Lamarche sisters, I firmly believe they would have taken advantage of a stranger in this respect, as they had done in the matter of the strawberries, which were picked over-ripe, and leaked through the basket to such an extent that I hastened to bestow them on the driver of our trap. For honesty sake I trust the Chilian fruit merchant with whom we made acquaintance was not a fair specimen of his class.

"La Samaquaca" is the Chilian national dance, and an exquisitely graceful one it is. We attended a public fancy dress ball, where I had an oppor-
tunity of seeing it danced by Chilians. Several couples stood up at the same time. The partners faced each other; one hand rested on the hip, the other waved a handkerchief as they advanced, receded, or changed places according to the fluttering of the handkerchief. The music is staccato, and, like all Spanish airs, charmingly original; I disliked the sound of a guitar until I visited South America, where it invariably accompanies the voice, and where the twang twang actually sounded melodious to me. Even now when I hear the guitar touched, I feel inspired, expecting it to be followed by the wild plaintive words of love breathed forth, as I had listened to them in Chili, and which are recalled to me each time I hear the opera of "Carmen," as it realizes to the life, a South American bodego, and the class of men and women who frequent these rendezvous.

Friends of A—-'s invited us to visit them at Santiago de Chili before leaving the country. The beautiful capital, with a population of 180,000, eclipses Valparaiso in point of position, magnificence, and extravagance. The best of everything finds its way to this inland seat of wealth, where the élite live en prince. Santiago, were it not for the surrounding snow-capped Andes, would be unbearably hot; the cool breeze from those stupendous chains of encircling mountains tempers the atmosphere, and renders the climate delightful in summer, whatever effect it may have in winter.

The private residences are palatial, both as to architecture and decorations; all the public buildings, gardens, parks, and Alameda, are on a grand scale
in this *ville de luxe*. Churches, monasteries, and convents abound in Santiago, as they do in all South American cities. The former vie with each other in the richness of their gold and silver altar decorations. There are also many valuable paintings by the old Spanish masters in these sacred edifices. From the hill of Santa Lucia a view of superb mountain scenery is obtained.

The labour of unloading and loading vessels at Valparaiso is performed by *Peons*. It was astonishing to see what weighty packages they carried to and fro from lighters anchored near the mole. I questioned whether their pay was adequate to such arduous work. Peons are a race of strong muscular men, inured to such toil, so I was told, and they looked it.
CHAPTER XXV.

EVIL EFFECTS; OR INFLUENCE OF THE MOON IN THE TROPICS.

CAPTAIN and Mrs. Kelly did not return with us in the Samoa, but we had other passengers, a lady and three children; two of whom were orphan nieces and partial wards of A.'s, and great pets of ours. Blanche and Mary Lucette were, respectively, twelve and ten; both were pretty and full of life and spirits. So that our return voyage bid fair to be of a lively description. Mrs. Collie was a lady-like sweet looking woman, and her little girl Nellie, a well-behaved child, notwithstanding her being an only one, so rare a circumstance as to be worthy of note. When we first started from Valparaiso everything progressed favourably. The Samoa had shipped a new cook and steward, and the children danced the Samaquaca, sang Spanish peasant songs, and played a variety of games, in which we older ones had to take part. This lasted till we reached the tropics, when I had the misfortune to contract acute inflammatory fever,
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through imprudently dropping off to sleep one moon-light night on deck. I was not aware at the time, that the rays of the moon in the tropics have a poisonous effect on the blood, and that if you expose fish or meat to it, it is quickly reduced to a putrified state. I don't think I could have taken the usual forty winks, when A—— made me get up and go to bed, which I did reluctantly enough, as I was so comfortably settled with my head bolstered against the half-deck house. No one had cautioned me about the baneful influence of the moon in such latitudes, otherwise I would have avoided taking even one wink, much less a number of them, and the enlightenment came too late. The very next morning my eyes were inflamed to such an extent that I could scarcely open them, and my limbs ached to such a degree that I could not move even a finger without an exclamation of agony; in this deplorable condition I remained for weeks. The result of that wretched little nap was dinned into my ears till the words seemed branded on my brain! It certainly was a most untoward circumstance for all concerned; our voyage had to be considerably lengthened, as the vessel had to be put off her proper course, so as to avoid the motion, which I could not bear. What I looked like goodness only knows. The heat was intense, not a breath of air penetrated to our state-room, yet A. insisted on my wearing his flannels, and got poor Mrs. Collie, much against her better judgment, to cut up an under-vest of lambswool, and convert it into nightcaps for poor me. I could no longer see out of my eyes, or move a limb; yet I could lie and
picture to myself the guy I must appear in those hideous caps.

When I was first taken ill, A—— neglected for a night or two to remove his stockings, and when he attempted to do so, his feet were so swollen that he could not get them off. He complained to me that he could neither get his shoes on, nor his stockings off. His feet certainly did look out of all proportion, as he stood at our state-room door for me to see them, and I must have appeared to him very unsympathetic, for the expression of horror I saw depicted on his face, struck me in such a comical light, that I could not refrain from laughing; and when he added that he was going on deck to get the sailors, every man jack of them, to dash buckets of sea water over his feet, I nearly went into convulsions. Mrs. Collie told him to go away, but each time I thought of his process to lessen the swelling, I laughed anew.

A——'s experiment proved successful, and henceforth he dispensed with socks, asserting that he was not going to risk a recurrence of the kind. My sufferings rendered me indifferent to death, but not to the mode of burial. I recalled Mr. Isit's on the Stag Hound, which kept me very much depressed. It was with great reluctance that I broached the subject to A——, as I expected to see him dissolve in tears at the mere reference to my death. I could barely restrain my own when I besought him to make for some island and to bury me there, as I could not endure the idea of being consigned to the ocean. My emotional request was cut short by his reply. "What
nonsense," he exclaimed; "You are not dying, so put that notion out of your head." His tone and manner staggered me; they were so opposite to what I had anticipated, that I had not another word to say, and my thoughts I prefer keeping to myself.

I was no sooner convalescent than I reproached A— for his want of sympathy when I supposed myself to be in a dying condition, and expected him to be grief-stricken instead of being as cool as a cucumber, and no less so when he informed me that he had never considered my malady dangerous; nevertheless it had been, and for the preservation of my sight I have to thank Mrs. Collie, whose unremitting care and excellent nursing earned my deepest gratitude. She proved that "a friend in need was a friend in deed," and never in my life had I been more in need of such a friend. I subsequently met a young man who had become hopelessly blind from a similar occurrence on board a whaler, where there was no good Samaritan to bathe his eyes constantly with a strong solution of alum as Mrs. Collie had done to mine.

Oh, the indescribable happiness to learn that after six weeks at sea we were at length in sight of Papeeti. As I was unable to move, a hospital litter was sent on board to convey me to shore, which caused a report to be circulated that I was in a dying condition.

Naturally, our first question was about my jewellery, and our disappointment was great on hearing that nothing whatever had come to light during our absence; but strange to say the morning after our return the empty jewel case and all the hair from my ornaments were found inside
the fence of the Roman Catholic Bishop's grounds. Had I not mentioned that these ornaments were relics of the dead to others beside my servant Papuorii, I should have suspected her of the theft, as the natives are extremely superstitious with respect to such things. She, however, continued in my service till I was nearly well. One morning A—— had gone out and I was sitting watching Papuorii sweep my room. She had come unusually late, and excused herself on the plea of having had to pass the night at Taunoa so as to attend on a sick son of hers. She had evidently bathed before coming to me, as her hair hung loosely down her back to dry instead of being as usual braided. When her work was done and she had left the room, I remarked something lying on the floor, which I was convinced she must have dropped. Walking to the spot, I discovered a piece of a brooch which had been among my stolen jewellery. I felt terribly agitated, yet helpless to move in the matter, until A—— returned and decided what had best be done, but he was likely to be absent for some hours, as he had left the house with the intention of taking Mrs. Collie and the children a drive. How interminable the time appeared till he did return, when I lost no moment in telling him what had occurred. He was astonished, but, like myself, never for a second doubted that Papuorii was, after all said and done, the culprit; how else could she have got possession of that identical piece of hair brooch? The Chief of Police was sent for, and he in turn expressed the same opinion. He ridiculed the idea of a sick son
taking her to Taunoa. He thought it much more probable that she had gone there to overhaul the stolen property which had led to her detection. He said that she should be arrested at once and consigned to prison, and so she was, but a few hours later he came to tell us that Papuorii had been set at liberty by order of the Governor, who did not consider our proof sufficient to warrant her detention. Thus without trial or examination of any sort she was released, when Madame de la Richerie immediately engaged her as monthly nurse for her approaching accouchement.

There were other women quite as capable as Papuorii to act in the same capacity, and I felt thoroughly indignant when I heard that the Governor's wife was patronizing the very individual whom we felt confident had committed the robbery.
CHAPTER XXVI.

SEIZURE OF PERUVIAN VESSELS.

A GENTLEMAN, named William Stewart, arrived at Papeeti, with the object of obtaining a large tract of land to form a cotton plantation. His personal appearance was much in his favour, and his assurance still more so.

Here was a chance for M. de la Richerie to distinguish himself, which he was not likely to neglect. He would be the first Governor who had encouraged the cultivation of the soil on an extensive scale, and with this view accorded a most gracious reception to Mr. Stewart, who, as it happened, had no fortune of his own, and came to Tahiti in search of one.

Mr. Stewart was authorized to make his own selection of land, which he did in the district of Atimano. The Chefessé was young and pretty, a fact that had not escaped his critical eye, and lessened the probability of her opposing his demands, no matter of what nature.
Mr. Stewart returned to England with a document guaranteeing him 10,000 acres, where he formed a company and sold the property for £30,000; the fortunate speculator then came back to Tahiti and laid claim to this extensive tract of land.

It was the general impression that even with the assistance of the Administration Mr. Stewart would not succeed in acquiring the area of land promised to him, as every rood on the island was owned by Queen Pomare and her subjects, and as a rule the natives shrink from parting with an inch of their patrimonies much less acres, which represent their income, as it provides their daily wants, such as fruit and vegetables from the trees, abundance of fish from the river, besides food for their pigs, which are as prolific as other natural productions. So situated, who could cavil at their disinclination to make better use of their land? But the fiat had been proclaimed that they were henceforth to cultivate, otherwise sell; no alternative was left to them. Tahiti was to be a series of flourishing plantations, so said the oracle, and hard pressed the natives had to part with what was dearer to them than aught else on earth—the inheritance which had descended from generation to generation.

The new plantation was named "Terre Eugénie," and the pretty chefessé remained to cheer Mr. Stewart's lonely hours, who metamorphosed her residence into a luxurious Indian bungalow, which the poor thing did not long enjoy, as she died soon after its completion.

A startling act of inconsistency was committed by
the administration in Mr. Stewart's cause. A short time previous to his advent the authorities had strenuously opposed labour traffic among the islands. They stigmatized Peruvian vessels on this quest as slavers, and when tracked and caught by French Government cruisers they were treated as such, being seized and brought to Papeeti to be sold. Some of the ships reached Peru with cargoes of natives, who had not only voluntarily signed an agreement, but had been perfectly satisfied with their treatment during the voyage. Nevertheless, the poor creatures on arrival were, through the demands of the French Protectorate, sent back to their respective islands, on vessels so badly provisioned that very many died of starvation en route. This was the cruel result of over-officiousness, which even went the length of exacting an indemnity from the Peruvian Government for illegal acts among islands which were actually not under French jurisdiction; and after this display of virtuous indignation, M. de la Richerie brazenly undertook to procure native labour for Mr. Stewart. The Government vessels were sent among the various groups to collect labourers for "Terre Eugénie," with instructions that were carried out to the utmost extent, as one after the other returned laden with half-naked and wholly starved men, women, and children, who were to experience the difference between working on the Atimano estate to the dolce far niente existence on their own sea-girt isles.

I had been obliged to abandon my early morning rides on account of my health, and to content myself with a drive in a covered buggy, reserving however
the rides for the cool of the evening. I found the hood of our little trap a great protection from the sun, which used to make my head ache when it was exposed to its burning rays, and for that reason, I in time, got to like my morning drives a degree more than I had done the rides. How charming were these drives by babbling streams, where the washerwomen were busy lathering and vigorously pounding the clothes with a thick flat stick, to the utter destruction of buttons, and in a lesser degree material! While some were thus engaged, others were ironing in a dilapidated bamboo hut, on a plank raised a few inches from the ground. Girls in the act of spreading articles to dry on the grass or thorny bushes—regardless of consequences—would pause to observe us, and were apparently much amused at the interest we took in their occupations. They had no idea what a picturesque effect it had. Further on we would meet a party of bathers, their tapas and pareus suspended from trees while they performed a variety of aquatic feats for their combined diversion, each one eliciting shouts of merriment from these half-grown children, with glorious eyes and a profusion of glossy ringlets floating on the water, which was sent up in showers of spray by their round, shapely limbs. Still further on, past young maidens reclining on mats in a shady spot, some plaicing straw for hats, others tearing up the large palm leaves into strips to weave into fruit baskets; while many more were doing nothing, merely waiting to be fed from the native ovens, then in full progress, judging by the pleasant fumes arising from the leaves and branches they burn, in which I delighted. To me it was yet another
description of exotic. Presently bread-fruit, cooked to a turn, taro, and feiis, would be removed from the little heap of smouldering branches, and placed on a layer of fresh leaves. The native breakfast is served in this style, and don't they relish it? frugal yet so tempting, each thing peeping from its nest of green leaves. Not to disturb them we would branch off to the sea beach, and there listen to the sonorous sound of the rolling breakers dashing over the reefs, and coiling up in waves of foam on the sand, to recede and re-form. The ocean before us, tropical trees and fragrant exotics in the rear, through which we retraced our way to Papeeti.

Margaret still rode Openohu, and accompanied me in my evening rides, and as a rule M. Lavigerie joined us. His mount was a grey horse, by far too attentive to my mare, and what was still more provoking, Dolly encouraged these attentions. She would neigh, shake the reins nearly out of my hands, and positively refuse to be separated from her admirer, when at my request M. Lavigerie would attempt to ride at the other side of Margaret.

A—— owned a prettily situated sugar plantation—on a small scale—in the Fataauau valley, to which we frequently rode, and there regaled ourselves with sugar fresh from the vats. I can fancy I hear M. Lavigerie say, "Pas mal, très bon même."

The land crabs are a great nuisance and drawback to the pleasure of driving or riding at Tahiti. The roads and by-paths were literally riddled by them, and I always felt nervous lest the horses' hoofs might disappear down one of their formidable holes. The main
road was the safest, and we kept pretty much to it unless we deviated to Fatauau, otherwise we alternated between the beach of Tara, or to Faaa, which we always found deserted at that hour of the evening, as the young folks of both sexes betake themselves to Papeeti, where they generally promenaded Rue de Pologne till ten o'clock. At that time I was sure to be seated on our veranda, gazing on the Southern Cross, and listening to the tuneful chorus sung at intervals by the couples encircling each other's waist and shoulders, returning to their homes at Faaa and its neighbourhood. After sunset the elderly people stay in their huts, absorbed in silent reveries. Whenever I saw them thus engaged I recalled a remark I had heard, "That fellow doesn't say much, but he keeps up a devil of a thinking."

The only newspaper published on the island of Tahiti was a very small sheet called Le Messager, one side of which was reserved for "Arrêtés"—a term for making and rescinding laws—the other gave a complimentary description of the entertainments at Government House, and lauded his Excellency's public dinners, which must have been very gratifying to the Commissaire Impériale, who knew that such praise would meet the eyes of his officers, if of no one else. It is superfluous to add that Le Messager was a Government production.

The native mutoi (police) was a fair specimen of "set a thief to catch a thief." Mean, cruel rascals, who at one time received a percentage on each arrest for drunkenness, which resulted in their pouncing on a man whether he was in that deplorable condition or not. What did it matter, so long as they received
their fee and robbed their victim of the few coins he possessed? I, myself, have witnessed these outrageous proceedings from my veranda. I have seen a perfectly sober man brutally knocked down in broad daylight, and his shirt torn to shreds, to give him the appearance of being intoxicated, while his pockets were rifled of all they contained.

To prevent drinking to excess, a fine of ten francs was imposed on each case of drunkenness; in default of payment, the culprit had to work it out: by this means the public roads were kept in repair.

This arrêté was resented by the French débitants; who made a row, and threatened to close their taverns unless it was rescinded. And as their patents formed a considerable item in the local budget, their protest was taken into consideration, and the prohibition to drink ceased to exist. Naturally enough the natives considered this tantamount to a permission to return to their old ways; which it certainly was with a reservation, one they could not understand, but which the moutois did, and made a harvest by hovering round the tavern doors to waylay the reeling men, who were sure to leave in that lamentable condition—poor besotted creatures, who could not refrain from imbibing too freely when the opportunity offered. But apart from that, it was next to impossible for the natives to know what they might, or might not, do, so variable were all the regulations relating to them.

One morning none of our house servants put in an appearance. I was informed that they had been arrested the previous night in default of poll tax, which
obliged them to work periodically for the Government on non-payment of a certain number of francs—a franc a day I believe it was. My servants had neglected to do this, and were consequently in prison; but were released when A—— advanced the amount of their indebtedness. I, however, took the earliest opportunity to represent the annoyance to M. de la Richerie, expressing to him my opinion that it was unjustifiable on the part of the authorities to interfere with domestic servants in private families. To which he coolly retorted, "Il faut payer ou travailler sur les routes, madame." So my complaint was useless. I had anticipated as much; but it was nevertheless some sort of satisfaction to speak one's mind on the subject.

Madame de la Richerie and her son Henri spent an afternoon in every week at our house. She was very pleasant, but I could not endure her husband, whose hateful smile and one-finger salutation always impressed me disagreeably.
CHAPTER XXVII.

A FÊTE AT MOREA.

It was a well-known fact, that whenever the Governor gave a fête out of Papeeti, the expenses were defrayed by the chief or chiefess of the district which he proposed to honour.

I had repeatedly refused such invitations, but M. and Madame de la Richerie came in person to request us to join them in a trip to Apiti, situated on the island of Morea, where the Governor professed to be giving a fête. They left no loop-hole of escape for me. A—— was excused from joining their party on the plea of pressing business engagements. Any hesitation on my part was over-ruled by the Governor's assuring me that the Chefessé d'Apiti—whose hospitality I did not wish to accept—had nothing whatever to do with the fête in question.

The morning we steamed for Morea, the deck of the corvette La Touchtreville was crowded by officials. Therewere few ladies to be distinguished among them;
indeed Madame de la Richerie, some half-castes, and myself were the only ones. The sea was calm when we started for Apiti, but outside the reefs it became rougher, and the gentlemen soon disappeared. The Governor himself set the example, though a Capitaine de Frégate he always suffered more or less from mal de mer. M. Lavigerie came on board in exuberant spirits, and told me in confidence that he had smuggled his piano on board, so as to have a dance on the other side. He called my attention to the ghastly appearance of our fellow passengers, and amused himself at their expense. I did not think the hue of his own face quite reassuring, though he strove to brave it out, but had finally to make a bolt of it.

Dr. Guillasse sat with knitted brows, his eyes and lips firmly closed, and his hat tilted to the back of his head, I could well imagine the nature of his reflections to be a strong desire to throttle the tyrant who had forced on him so unenviable a position—an invitation to an officer being equivalent to a command.

I had not failed to remark the servants of the Chefessé d'Apiti in charge of baskets of provisions, and was more indignant than surprised, when M. de la Richerie informed me with a smirk, "Madame la Chefessé d'Apiti nous a offert un déjeûner, il faut bien répondre à cette politesse, par notre présence." The hypocrite: I felt more savagely inclined than even Dr. Guillasse, and that was saying a great deal.

Apiti was situated on the east side of Morea, and as it was my first visit to that part of the island, I felt rather curious to see which side I would prefer. I found the scenery of both to be very grand, but to
my taste, Openohu carried off the palm. Indeed, I felt that no comparison between the two districts was possible.

La Touchtreville anchored in the bay, and the Governor's guests had to be landed in small boats. M. de la Richerie officiously volunteered to steer ours, and ran us on to the reefs. The sailors had to get out, and after some difficulty shoved the boat into deeper water. We had been the first party to leave the steamer, and were the last to reach the shore; and thankful I was to get there in safety.

Facing the ocean was the chef-lieu, a novel bamboo construction, resembling a hut on a large scale, rather than a regular house, the several rooms were merely separated with white calico, which formed the partitions; the same lined the outer wall, which alone prevented curious eyes from peeping through the space between the bamboos. The principal and largest room was prepared for breakfast; tables to contain about twenty guests were supplied with what was absolutely necessary, which proved altogether insufficient for double that number. Undoubtedly the Governor had misled his hosts as to the list of those he had invited, which resulted as might be expected—what had been provided for twenty mouths could not satisfy forty, and the majority were left unsatisfied. The meal did not last long, as the dishes were rapidly emptied, removed, but not renewed.

One disappointment over, another replaced it, nothing less than a scorching walk down the sandy beach to Tia-nura, Tairappas Point, where the actual feast was to be held; but as M. de la Richerie did not
approve of the native *cuisine*, he had decided on diverging from the direct course, so as to regale himself with a European repast *en route*.

No one relished the prospect of a three-mile promenade in the broiling sun; and each face looked a degree more frowning than its neighbour. The officers, unmindful of the presence of their chief, divested themselves of coats and neckties. These they carried suspended from a stick across the shoulder, which appeared to me as great a burden to bear as if they had been left where they properly belonged. Nevertheless it was a comical procession, and I laughed when I recalled it to mind; but not at the time, tears were then too near the surface, for my head ached from fatigué and hunger, as I had eaten nothing at Apiti. The Commissaire Impériale walked by my side, and M. Lavigerie accompanied Madame de la Richerie, who was the only pleased individual of the party.

Each time I asked the Governor how much further we had to go, he replied, "*Allons on arrivera bientôt.*"

It was truly exasperating to think that we had been victimized to satisfy the Commissaire Impériale's contemptible selfishness in ordering the steamer to go to *Apiti* instead of to *Tia-nura*, where we had been expected for hours. We finally sighted Tairappas Point, which resembled a perfect oasis after the dreary beach we had traversed. It was a valley at the base of fertile mountains, watered by a fine river. We heard of a picturesque lake which we failed to see, but I hoped to have the opportunity of doing so on another occasion.
The main road was lined with groves of trees and flowering shrubs, and the reception of the Governor and his guests by the natives of the district was a ceremony which almost paid one for the previous contretemps. The women were dressed in white muslin flowing tapas, and wore wreaths of the pia straw, that shone like satin, with plumes of the graceful fleecy reva reva. They formed a double row, and sang hymns complimentary to their visitors, who passed down between the double file to the tents where the feast was spread. The decorations were very elaborate, composed of stems of plaited palm leaves intermixed with natural flowers, crowns of red berries, pampas grass, and Chili pepper bush. The tent intended for the Governor and his party was provided with a table and chairs, and an abundance of good things to please even a European palate, such as M. de la Richerie's, and considering the ample meal he had had at Apiti, he did not do amiss at the repetition. In fact, we all did justice to Tairappa's liberal provision. He was a tall, dignified, intelligent-looking man, who unfortunately had lost the use of one leg; though he stood upright enough, he could not walk without the aid of a crutch.

Tairappa was the last of a race of most hospitable chiefs, who treated strangers with the utmost consideration, invariably placing the chef-lieu and all it contained at their disposal. His wife, though long past the prime of life, retained some trace of the beauty for which she had been celebrated. Her eyes were magnificent, and her features small and refined. Strange to say, none of their children inherited the
good looks or stately deportment of either parent. At the termination of the feast the natives of the district were collected, with the object of presenting their wreaths and fleecy plumes to the Commissaire Impériale and Madame de la Richerie, which were graciously accepted; but what they were going to do with such a pile of them passed my comprehension.

One thing was positive; they bestowed none on any of their guests, though some had expected a share in the spoil. "I give thee all I can no more," was apparently not the disposition of either the Governor or his wife. The Commissaire Impériale addressed a few complimentary words to the chiefs, and afterwards presented them with bronze medals. I concluded that they were as a reward for the numerous fines that had been extracted from the natives throughout the districts, in accordance with the principle I had heard expounded, "travailler ou payer."

Released from his official duties, M de la Richerie turned to his wife and me, "A présent nous allons trouver la maison préparée pour ces dames." A guide led the way through a lovely wild description of country, but fearfully rough, and at times very slippery, rendered so by the number of watercourses, rivulets, brooks, and cascades, insignificant enough, yet such as they were dripping down the fissures and overflowing the paths to an uncomfortable extent. There had been considerable wood cutting in that particular part of the island, as huge trunks of trees and logs of wood lay in all directions, over which we had to scramble. M. Lavigerie, who was with us, seemed to have had his surfeit of such exercise, as he suggested turning back,
and his companion, Madame de la Richerie, was quite agreeable, whereas to me retracing our steps meant passing the night at Apiti, and any amount of fatigue was preferable to that alternative. Had I been aware at the time that a stupid farce was being acted out for my especial benefit, so that I might see for myself the effort that had been made by the Governor to spare me from accepting the hospitality of the Chefesse d'Apiti, I would have assuredly seconded M. Lavigerie's proposal, instead of continuing our exploration of the dimmest of forests, where not a ray of sunlight penetrated the canopy of foliage through which only an occasional glimpse of sky could be caught; the profound stillness and gloom was such that it impressed one with the desire to flee from it. Heavens! what would I not have then given to be seated on my own veranda, to be back at Papeeti in place of wandering through those mountain glades, where even the buzz of an insect did not disturb the silence, and where no habitation was yet visible, or likely to be I began to think; but I was mistaken. We finally reached, not a maison, but a building consisting of one room, which had been so recently painted that the smell of turpentine was stifling. It contained two articles of furniture, namely, small iron bedsteads, without bed linen or even mattresses; though it would have made no difference, even had they been provided. M. de la Richerie might have personated a spider on the occasion, but I was no unwary fly. He had the assurance to turn to me and say if I did not feel that I could be made comfortable there, I had the option of returning to Apiti.
Assuredly had M. de la Richerie received his deserts he would have come to grief during our depressing walk back to Tairappas Point, where we found his boat waiting to convey us to Apiti. My feelings on reaching the chef-lieu I refrain from describing. A more untidy appearance than the Governor's convives presented the next morning could scarcely be imagined. No accommodation had been provided for the gentlemen, who resented the neglect by making no attempt whatever at toilette. The ruffled state of their hair equalled that of their temper; as to Dr. Guillasse, he looked murderous, and kept muttering, "Cet Ostrogot!" alluding to the Chef de l'Administration. I thought the expression too mild, considering the provocation, for at that time Dr. Guillasse was as loth as myself to accept any favour from the B——s, and Madame B—— was the Chefessé of Apiti, though he subsequently became their sworn friend. Our departure from Apiti was postponed until late in the day, at the request of the hostess, who wanted the Upa Upa danced for the entertainment of the company. Madame de la Richerie was so scandalized at the exhibition, that she placed her fan before her eyes, and termed it an indecent sight. The louder she expressed this opinion the more vociferously did the French officers applaud the performance.

M. de la Richerie again undertook to steer our boat, and this time ran against a cutter lying at anchor, which bumped some hats into the water, as also my umbrella. Madame de la Richerie shared our fright, and cried out, "Mais, Eugène, prenez garde." Nothing more exciting occurred on the return trip save the
abuse of the Governor by his guests generally, who indeed looked an unprepossessing crowd; — a couple of days' growth of beard doesn't improve a man's appearance.

We dropped anchor a short distance from our wharf, and I saw A— push off in a boat to take me home. I did not keep him waiting. Thus ended what the French officers termed, "un coup de Grosse Caisse."

Whatever was the nature of the De la Richerries manque de convenance, they edified us with one of the most effective entertainments everwitnessed at Papeeti on the occasion of the Emperor's fête. For several weeks previous to that date, every district was busy over a variety of preparations for the great event; their time and money were ungrudgingly spent in furtherance of what the native loves—amusement; and a cloudless sky heralded in the longed-for gala day. The tastefully decorated double canoes differed in some respects from former occasions, at the head of each was a figure-head, intended to represent some animal. The natives don't quite equal the Chinese in the correctness of their imitations, as it was impossible to distinguish the nature of the beast. A lame chief solved our doubts in one instance by sitting astride the figure-head of his canoe, which produced roars of laughter and cheers, as the animal in question bore a stronger resemblance to either a dog or a pig than to what it was intended to personate.

The boats carried most effective awnings, made out of native cloth trimmed with fringe from the fibre of the hybiscus tree, which from a distance
might have been mistaken for a much richer material, as it was the colour of gold. Before the regatta began a Te Deum was celebrated by the Bishop d' Axieri in a temporary chapel erected in the Government grounds. After the religious ceremony it was dismantled and appropriated to other uses.

On the conclusion of the regatta, beautifully fine mats were spread from the beach straight up the road to Government House. A procession of natives then formed, carrying the awnings which could well bear close inspection. Some were composed of the finest kind of matting with tiny red tufts worked in at intervals. They marched along the matting until they stood before the Commissaire Impériale, at whose feet they deposited their offerings, which included the long strips of matting, which were rolled up as soon as they stepped over it, to prevent its being soiled by other feet.

The most interesting part of the day’s programme was yet to take place. The upper veranda of Government House had been placed by Madame de la Richerie at the disposal of the ladies and their children to witness the marching past of each district headed by the chief and his flag-bearers. At a certain point they separated, when the latter strode up to where Queen Pomare, the Governor, and consuls sat in state for the ceremony of presenting the chiefs with new flags, on receiving which they renewed their oath of allegiance. It was really an extremely impressive function, and one I would not have missed on any account. The chiefs were strikingly apparelled in rich satin ponchas trimmed
with a profusion of *reva reva* fringe; the supply of this fleecy adornment was greater than ever, and the sacrifice of cocoa-nut trees in proportion. There were some very funny looking costumes donned for the fête by high-class natives. One *chefessé* appeared in the costume of a previous century. Her dress was a grotesque arrangement, and a gigantic pyramid of natural flowers rested on her head. I who suffered so continually from headaches wondered how she could support such a weight, as it actually made mine ache to see it.

We saw an amusing representation of the subserviency of the district to their chief in bygone times. Holding short-handled brooms, and squatted in a lowly position, they hopped before the chief sweeping the road ere his feet touched it!

The natives had as usual provided their own food and enjoyed it. I cannot say that we did the same with what was provided for us by the Governor. He had invited the principal residents and chiefs to a banquet on a colossal scale, for which bullocks, sheep, and pigs were to be roasted entire; as I had never before seen anything cooked in that way beyond suckling pigs, I was on the alert for what was being prepared for our delectation.

The guests arrived at the Government grounds at the hour appointed, to find nothing in readiness; apart from a tent in which were long tables with piles of common delf and glass, but no comestibles. As our hosts did not appear, we strolled about and witnessed the preparations for the forthcoming collation. From immense holes men in the ground
dragged out partially cooked animals, and these they hacked to pieces with saws and axes. It was really a revolting sight, and I could scarcely believe that it was intended for our table, but when we were seated at the festive board my horror was indescribable at seeing right before me dishes of this disgusting meat saignante! and I could scarcely credit my eyes when I perceived Madame de la Richerie eating it. She was the only white lady at table who did so, but she appeared to be unconscious of the fact. I sat near enough to the Governor to overhear him give instructions to the head waiters not to open more than a dozen bottles of champagne for his guests, though they must have numbered quite a hundred. In the absence of other wine they had to content themselves with the vin ordinaire, and the chiefs tossed off tumbler after tumblerful, with seeming gusto, though it was scarcely less acid than vinegar. The toasts were very amusing, or I should say the manner in which they were received by the natives. The Governor proposed the Emperor, Empress, and Prince Imperial, which was drunk in ominous silence by the chiefs; Queen Pomare's produced a slight murmur; but Queen Victoria was received with such enthusiasm that the native interpreter ordered them to manu—hold their tongues.

While we were being bored to death in a hot tent, the population outside were thoroughly enjoying themselves, singing and dancing the Upa Upa to their heart's content. The grounds were then illuminated by coloured lamps, while the feu d'artifice consisted of rockets at depressing intervals, but the display, poor
as it was, pleased the native element. We returned home as soon as possible, and did ample justice to a substantial supper. Doctor Guillasse called on me the next day to talk over the incidents of the previous one. He did not spare our late hosts, whose meanness he apostrophised in no measured terms!
A BALL AT POMARE'S PALACE.

O the surprise of his old friends and acquaintances Comte P—reappeared at Tahiti in command of a large transport. He had come direct from New Caledonia, where he had discharged a cargo of marriageable women, the refuse of France, which had been collected from prisons and houses of correction for the benefit of that penal settlement. These vicious creatures were only released from durance vile on the condition that they were to marry convicts on their arrival at Noumea.

An amusing incident occurred with one of M. P—'s interesting passengers, who was a remarkably pretty girl, in appearance if not in behaviour. As soon as she landed at Noumea she was married off according to rule and regulation. At the conclusion of the ceremony she turned round and with a speaking grimace at the newly-made husband asked him if he supposed she would ever consent to live
with such an ugly *galérien* as he, and with her arms akimbo she dared him to molest her, asserting that she would have married *le premier venu* to obtain her liberty, and having fulfilled her part of the contract, there was an end of that *farce!* Her language and gestures were so emphatic as she snapped her fingers in the man's face that he then and there abandoned his legal claim to the audacious virago!

We heard enough to convince us that the future population of New Caledonia would prove most undesirable neighbours to the English colonies. Assuredly such a community ought never to have been selected for the purpose of colonization.

Comte P—— did not form a very favourable impression of Port de France; indeed, he left it as soon as he consistently could, aware that amusement of a very different order awaited him at Tahiti. He called at our house on landing, said it was *une visée d'amitié, pas d'étiquette.* He really seemed pleased to renew the acquaintance, and expressed the intention to see us frequently; but Papeeti had other attractions for the gay old gentleman, who quickly resumed former habits, much to the indignation of the De la Richeries, who never spoke of him excepting in contemptuous terms.

The Government had for many years promised Queen Pomare a new palace. A site had been selected and the foundation laid, when dearth of means stopped further progress. The Queen was so desirous to see it completed that she was continually agitating the question. In this way the walls, by a slow process, reached the stage of roofing
in. To do honour to this meritorious achievement, her Majesty gave a ball in the unfinished palace, disguising as far as possible the very imperfect condition of the interior by extensive decorations of native cloth, matting, flags, evergreens, ferns, bunches of feathery bamboo, scarlet and white blossoms, and huge branches of the Chili pepper tree. Dancing was at its height when the performers were attacked with violent fits of sneezing, in which those who were not dancing took part. Pomare sat in state at the head of the room, dressed in her black velvet, with wreath of pia and plume of reva-reva, a silent and unamused spectator of the scene. She gazed with apathy at the condition of her guests, for besides the sneezing incident, the gentlemen's coats were covered with wax, that kept falling from the primitively arranged chandeliers, which had a ridiculous effect, scarcely less absurd than the effect of the over-ripe peppers, which had to be removed and the floor swept of those trodden down. The clouds of dust raised during this process elicited peals of laughter, regardless of the presence of royalty.

On this occasion I had the opportunity of witnessing the ceremony of retiring backward from the presence of the sovereign. Lord Guildford, on taking leave of Pomare, performed a succession of the most profound salaams between each backward step. It occurred to me that such court etiquette was utterly out of place at Tahiti, and I doubt that the Queen either understood or appreciated such a degree of deferential homage. It afforded, however, intense
amusement for the remainder of the evening, as a variety of exaggerated imitations were in constant progress throughout the ball-room, notwithstanding that many of the officers from the Tribune were present, in anticipation of a jollier time after their commander had taken his departure, who must have been an immense stickler for etiquette.

Lord Guildford gave an evening party on board the Tribune. The entertainment began with the Highland fling and Scotch reel, danced by some sailors to the music of the bagpipe. Queen Pomare and the natives were delighted with the performance, which had to be repeated for their benefit. The guests, with few exceptions, remained on board till daylight. In A—-'s absence I had been induced to accompany the English Consul and his wife, who left early, and I had to do the same.

A yacht from Chili, with the owner and his wife on board, arrived at Papeeti. Señor Urminitta brought an introduction to A——, who gave them a dinner. Dr. Guillasse had at one period of his life visited Portugal, where he had acquired a smattering of the language, and was glad of an opportunity to air it, concluding from its similarity to Spanish that the Urminittas could not fail to understand his remarks, in which he was mistaken. They found themselves very much in the position of the American captain who mistook M. Nestie's English for French. Previous to leaving Papeeti the Urminittas issued invitations for a dinner on an extensive scale. To the utter amazement and indignation of Dr. Guillasse he was omitted. Such trifles vexed him terribly, and he fumed and
questioned the reason for offering him such a marked slight. I suggested that possibly Madame Urminitta was annoyed at his addressing her as Señora instead of Señoritta, a distinction in age never adopted in Chili. On hearing this, the doctor with knitted brows, called the lady in polite French, une vieille bécasse.

The Urminittas visited our property at Morea, and took such a fancy to my goat, of former fawn-like proportions, that Hill consented to her being transferred to their yacht.

A—— had sent a vessel of his round the island to take in a cargo of oranges, the quality of which had been reported to him as inferior to what he had bargained for. This required a personal investigation, as a great deal of jealousy existed among the fruit agents, who systematically decried each other. He proposed that I should accompany him to Hitiaa by water, and sleep on board, so as to avail ourselves of the early land breeze. That same evening M. Lavigerie dined with us, and hearing of our plan, seemed disposed to accompany us as far as the vessel. He was always ready for what he called a lark, and when once on board he made up his mind to remain there, and return with the pilot the following morning.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, and we sat till a late hour on deck admiring Papeeti embedded in charming foliage, over which shimmered a silvery gleam, its effect on the large graceful tropical leaves deepened the sombre grandeur of the mountains, then shrouded in gloom. Very silent and peaceful was this bewitching midnight landscape,
enhanced if possible by the perfumed air wafted from shore. When drowsiness overcame sentiments, we retired to the saloon, where we had a choice of state-rooms, as there were several of them; but one and all smelt so detestably of bilge water that I decided to make my bed on the sofa in the saloon, where I was persecuted by mosquitoes. To protect my hands and face from their venomous sting I converted an under-skirt into a partial mosquito curtain by means of a nail in the low ceiling, unfortunately the skirt was not made of a sufficiently thin material, and the heat under it could not be tolerated; of the two evils, I preferred being bitten to being suffocated. However, as neither were to my taste, I abandoned the sofa, and returned on deck, where I was soon after joined by M. Lavigerie and A—— who like myself, had been unable to sleep, or make themselves comfortable below. We there sat watching the dawn of a new day, as we had done the close of the previous one; the gradual awakening of nature after a refreshing repose, when what seemed a mass of sombre foliage assumed a bolder outline, the shades dispersed, and tree by tree became detached, the leaves drooping from the weight of dew, and the low growth glistening with moisture. We had had no rest, nevertheless it revived us to look at the developing scene. Suddenly we were roused from our pleasant contemplation by the sailors, who began to slacken ropes preparatory to a start. A vessel near us was similarly employed, and followed so closely in our wake that it resulted in a partial collision, which elicited such a volley of abuse from both captains as to appall one. It was difficult
to decide which of them excelled in vituperation, but the combined force was stunning, and I have no doubt M. Lavigerie was glad enough when he got back to terra firma. So should I have been, and I made up my mind there and then to return from Hitiaa by land.

The appearance of Hitiaa from our deck delighted me. Groves of beautiful trees and flowering shrubs, among which nestled the native huts, the thatched roofs just peeping above the green foliage, struck me as being particularly picturesque, and I had a great desire to go on shore and live exactly as the natives did while we remained in that district; such an arrangement I argued would be in every way preferable to remaining on board the schooner. So that when the Chief came on board, and invited us to stay at his bamboo establishment we gladly accepted, at least I did, A—— was evidently dubious of the result.

We were ushered into a large oval house, the bare ground was hidden to a certain extent by mats, and the partitions were formed of bright patterned muslin, airy and pretty no doubt, but useless to screen us from the curious gaze of the family and their friends, who were squatted about in all directions. As I was dressed like a native I enjoyed the prospect of participating in their customs, and the afternoon passed off very agreeably. A little after sunset I determined to go to bed, and strive to make up for the loss of my rest the previous night. Where I was to undress was a puzzle, and to escape prying eyes I had to retire under the sheets for that laudable purpose. To my dismay the bedstead and bedding swarmed with ants.
A explained that natives rarely occupied them, that they slept on the ground on mats. I therefore made up my mind that it would be desirable to do the same. But I was already beginning to feel somewhat disenchanted with my ideal life, as a mat on the bare earth did not realize my conception of a suitable bed; however I had to conform to circumstances and laid down to sleep, when I felt a movement right under me. Sitting up, I saw the same movement in other spots. I again appealed to A, who coolly replied that they were doubtless land crabs; and crabs they were, scampering in and out of their holes; to my utter consternation something crawled down my back, which I shook off on to the mat. It was a lizard, and I then discovered any number on the bamboo piles, their eyes glistening like sparks of fire in the comparative darkness. To get out of that receptacle of all kinds of noxious reptiles was now my aim. Twelve hours of Arcadian existence more than sufficed me. A had remained in bed heedless of musty smells and ants—not the stinging kind. I lingered about with aching head and limbs, until it was sufficiently light to go outside. I had hoped to take a walk and see something of Hitiaa, but we had not gone beyond a few steps, when a wide stream stretched before us, which in the absence of a plank, we were unable to cross; others waded through it bare-footed, as no one was guilty of shoes and stockings at Hitiaa; and to go without them was a feat I had never been able to accomplish. When I learnt that the entire district was intersected by watercourses, our walk was abandoned for a seat on the sandy
beach, where I amused myself watching the canoes arrive laden with fruit. Oranges packed in crates of plaited leaves, or lying loose in the canoe; all of which are carried to a bamboo building, and there counted and sorted; none are accepted save those that are full sized yet green, when tinged, ever so slightly, they are rejected, as they would become over-ripe, and decay long before the termination of the voyage: the green fruit usually reaches the destined market in prime order and of the orthodox colour.

Hitiaa, like many other things, could not bear too close an inspection; from a distance it looked most inviting. The graceful shrubs that fringed the banks of the river had a charming effect from our deck, but in reality they were a mass of green burs that clung to one's stockings and skirts in an exasperating manner. The river glistening in the sunlight, and looking so cool and limped, proved a cruel obstacle to one's locomotion. As to the bamboo houses so picturesquely situated midst leafy nooks; I would have to be hard pressed for shelter, to seek it in one of them, and with this rankling disillusion I bade farewell to Hitiaa.
CHAPTER XXIX.

CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION.

secured a couple of safe mounts on which we proceeded to Tautira, a district renowned for its Upa Upa dancers—a proficiency that I could not appreciate; to me it was at the best an ungraceful exhibition. We passed by Taravou, where the French had erected a fort; and halted at Papeuriri, where we passed the night at a friend's house. The natives collected on the lawn and favoured us with a chorus. The women were dressed in white muslin tapas, and wore wreaths of pia; they sat on mats in a circle, and the men took up their positions behind them, when the singing began—and I was going to say never ended, but I suppose it must have done so after we were asleep.

Lake Valherai is situated in a mountain valley of the same name. It is 1,400 feet above the level of the sea, and 1,600 in breadth. The effect of this vast basin of deep water, as clear as crystal, in an amphi-
theatre of lofty mountains, imparts to one the depressing sense of incapacity to fathom the mysteries of nature, as its source is unknown; but a legend is attached to the lake, which is said to be inhabited by an immortal eel.

The mountains are clothed from base to summit with tropical growth. Lianas trail and droop from stouter branches; hardy creepers entwine the gnarled trunks, spinning their way from stem to stem, as spiders do their web; until an all but impenetrable labyrinth is formed by these ropes of green vines, that assist so much in creating the wild grandeur of the tropical forest.

The river and valley of Papenoo are equally striking landscapes. I only regret my inability to describe them, according to my appreciation, for any description from my feeble pen would fail to do them justice. This river is the largest and least safe of any in Tahiti, a fact attributed to the absence of coral reefs, and the explanation of their absence is due to the high winds, which deter the insect from making their deposits. The consequent annual overflow of the river causes little or no damage, so I should judge from its solitude, as I saw but one lonely hut; that and a canoe stranded on the beach, relieved the scene from an impression of utter desolation. Not a murmur was distinguishable as we skirted that dark river, fringed with what seemed to me, foliage of an unusually sombre hue. Leaving the river, we entered a mountain path, suspended as it were over a green chasm. Our nags were familiar with the route, which was one consoling reflection midst many that were not, as I had begun
to think I had had enough of the weird for the time being, and that it would be advisable to reserve a little for a future occasion.

A cavern exists between Panavia and Paea which extends to a great distance under the mountain; the natives who accompanied us said that no one had ever explored it, the darkness frightened them. Yet, though the water was deep, there could be no danger in at least venturing as far as it was navigable. If the natives had been prevented through timidity I was surprised to hear that no Frenchmen had been led to test its profundity. It was called the "Grotto of Mara," and was seemingly a refuge for a breed of tiny sparrows; as we looked in they flew wildly about and uttered a plaintive note that sounded most unnatural in a bird. I fancy they must have been driven thither in the first instance, out of reach of ruthless shots, as I could account in no other way for their presence in such a gloomy place.

M. de la Richerie had paddled his own canoe with such success that he maintained his position on the island longer than any of his predecessors, notwithstanding that he was far less popular. Had he been consulted his term of office would have been prolonged ad infinitum, as apparently neither he nor his wife had any desire to return to France, where they would necessarily hold a very different position to what they did at Tahiti.

Madame de la Richerie showed me a large dark pearl which some one had given to her, and asked what I thought of it. I said that its size was its only merit, as it was very imperfect in shape, but that she
had no doubt obtained better specimens during her residence on the island. She replied, "Comment, est il possible que je ne vous ai jamais montre mes perles? des vrais beautes que j'ai eu de Papuorii." I exclaimed, "De Papuorii? la femme que j'ai accusee d'avoir volé les miennes." "O! je me rapelle à present," said Madame, "Mais j'aurais du dire les amis de Papuorii qui sont venus des iles Pomuto."

M. le Comte de la Ronciere replaced M. de la Richerie as Commissaire Impériale at Tahiti. He was accompanied by his wife, and her daughter by a previous marriage. Their ungracious behaviour to the retiring Governor and his family gave rise to unflattering comments which did not tend to exalt them in public estimation.

As soon as the frigate with the new Governor on board came to an anchor, M. de la Richerie sent to invite him and his family to take up their residence at Government House; whereupon the nouveau arrivé intimated that he would do so when M. de la Richerie vacated it, until then he intended to remain on board the frigate.

The De la Richeries now found themselves in a painful dilemma, news of which reached Queen Pomare, who, notwithstanding the ill-feeling that had existed between her and M. de la Richerie during his administration, invited him and his family to take up their abode at the palace for the period they were likely to be detained at Papeeti, an invitation that was gladly accepted for a twofold reason—there was no hotel to which they could adjourn, and M. de la Richerie rejoiced at being the guest of the Queen,
TAHITI: THE GARDEN OF THE PACIFIC.

which would sound well in the despatches, as it would be presumed that they must have been on excellent terms for such an invitation to have been extended and accepted.

The Comte de la Ronciere was a tall and remarkably handsome man. Madame de la Ronciere was equally fine looking, and though no longer young, retained some trace of former beauty. She was a highly accomplished musician and an intriguing unprincipled woman, par-dessus le marché. Eventually there were no two opinions on that score. Her daughter, by a former marriage, went by the name of Mdlle. Nina; she was a plain, uninteresting girl of sixteen, whose duty it was to superintend the cooking, and woebetide her if the meals were badly prepared and served; while she worked like a slave, the lady's maid, a lame, elderly woman named Louise, led an easy life, sewing for her mistress. Everybody commiserated the poor Cinderella in drudgery, if not in beauty and fate. Dressed in the shabbiest and dirtiest of frocks Mdlle. Nina made no secret of flitting back and forth to the kitchen, preparing the déjeuner and dîner, no enviable task in a climate like that of Tahiti, where even a native woman is never employed over a fire, that duty devolving on men.

M. et Mme. de la Ronciere called and notified to us—and I suppose others—of their intention to be sociable and accept dinner invitations. We acted on the hint and named an early day, when to my astonishment Madame came to inquire who we had asked to meet them. I ought to have felt highly honoured and gratified at this mark of friendliness
on the part of the Governor's wife, and a countess to boot, but I am fain to confess that I was neither one nor the other. I, however, named over the list, when she exclaimed, "Comment, vous avez omis ce beau Monsieur d'Atimano?" The fact was Mr. Stewart never had been invited to our house, for the simple reason that A—— and I did not fancy "ce beau Monsieur d'Atimano," nevertheless we were cajoled into including him to please Madame la Gouvernante. I was in hopes that he would resent former slights and refuse the tardy compliment, instead of which he accepted.

On the evening of the dinner M. et Mme. de la Ronciere were the first of the guests to arrive. The latter was dressed in the extreme of Parisian fashion, so décolleté that the body consisted of a wide waist-band without sleeves, while the shoulder straps were imperceptible. Mr. Stewart, however, did not appear to object to the small quantity of material, a fact not lost on the lady, who made herself very agreeable, talked freely, and sang and played delightfully. M. Faucompre was one of our party, and he also sang charmingly. M. Lavigerie had then returned to France; his society I missed in very many ways. He had been a daily visitor, accompanied me in my rides; we played duets together, and I heard so much about his wife and her little girl that was born after he had left France, that I seemed to know them quite well, and was always interested in what he had to relate about his treasures. He was a fine young fellow, who did not long survive his Tahitian experience. On returning to France he left the service
and practised as an M.D. at Vichy, where he was deservedly popular and successful. Unhappily he was not prudent about his own health, and succumbed to a violent cold contracted whilst out hunting. The full particulars of his untimely death we heard from his brother, Cardinal Lavigerie, whom we met at Algiers.

My dear little companion Flody sickened and died, and for a time I was really inconsolable; he was so handsome and intelligent, walked on his hind legs, danced the polka, and did all but speak. I never before owned such a clever, affectionate animal, and fear that I never shall again.

Circumstances compelled us to part with our chef, whose engagements towards the community at large increased to such an extent that our own cuisine suffered, as no entertainment could be given at Papeeti without Renvoyer’s assistance.

When the kitchen was being cleared out for Renvoyer’s—a very applicable name on this occasion—successor, several loads of egg-shells were removed from the corners and back of the range. Judging by the quantity they must have been accumulating for years, and produced the effect of an unusual kind of rockery. We could gain no information respecting the culinary abilities of our new cook, as he was a recent arrival at Papeeti, and before we could test them, A——, manlike, invited some friends to dinner. I impressed on our new chef, whose name was Antoine, that we liked things done liberally, and to take care and have good soup.

The dinner he provided did not compare with those Renvoyer had served us on similar occasions. If this
did not seal his fate, the bills he presented the next morning did. Two of the items are too startling to be suppressed—20 lbs. of meat and two dozen fowls. When I expostulated as to the impossibility of his having consumed so great a quantity for our remarkable indifferent dinner, he coolly replied, "Madame a commandé un bon dinér ainsi j'ai fait mon mieux." Antoine was requested to leave at the end of his week.

The supercargo of one of the Peruvian vessels, which had been seized in port and sold at auction by the French authorities as a slaver, recommended his cook to A——. Señor Saguo was the son of the owner of the brig, which A—— had unfortunately purchased, and christened Le Papeeti. He had been frequently at our house, and explained that he had brought Luis Balbi from Lima, and if he would consent to remain at Papeeti, we should do well to secure his services. The consequence was that we entered into negotiations with the most comical looking little man I had ever laid eyes on: if not a dwarf, he was next-door neighbour to one—but a giant at cooking. He made the most delicious entrées out of—nothing—in comparison to Antoine's mode of catering. If Luis' frame was small his heart was large; for he fell desperately in love with a remarkably pretty native girl, who graciously accepted his gifts, and contrived to render her admirer happy and miserable by turns. Finally he became furiously jealous of a rival, who was too big for him to fight. I fear Luis, to drown his sorrow, at times indulged rather too freely in something stronger than coffee. A certain indication of which was his singing in a
cracked voice, to the accompaniment of his guitar, when he should have been otherwise occupied.

One evening Puhia came to me, and said with a broad grin, "No dinner to-day; Luis sing, no cook." Puhia spoke very bad English, but my Tahitian was infinitely worse. I did not mind Luis diverting his thoughts in any way he liked, but I certainly did object to his doing it at the expense of our regular meals. So I followed Puhia to his room, where I found our diminutive chef seated on the bed, looking altogether unlike himself: his eyes were bloodshot, and his hair wildly dishevelled. He still held the guitar, but ceased singing on my entrance. "Why, Luis," I said, "how can you be so foolish as to fret about a heartless girl like Titua; you ought to have known that she could not love you."

"No amor por me!" (no love for me), Luis frantically exclaimed, striking his chest. "No amor por me, hombre hermoso como yo" (a handsome man like me). I could scarcely keep my countenance. "Tengo cuerpo perfecto, y manos, y pies" (My form is perfect, so are my hands and feet). Each expression was accompanied by such violent gestures, that I backed from his presence as hurriedly as I could. No doubt our little manikin cook was brimful of conceit; nevertheless he was well made as he protested, and might have satisfied a less pretentious girl than Titua, who only smiled on him while his money lasted—every penny of which she contrived to get, and when it was spent, she returned to obtain more. Would Luis ever become wiser? I fancy not. Puhia had to cook our dinner, which he did good-naturedly enough. I was
much amused at the grimaces he made over Luis' dereliction. "He sing plenty when he drink much brandy," remarked Puhia, motioning in the direction from whence came the sound of what Luis called Can- cions Paisanos.—"Yes, Luis is certainly quite tipsy," I replied; "but he bought and paid for the brandy he drank; whereas you steal your master's out of the bottle, and fill it up with water."—"Not too much water you know; sometimes me drink, but no very often." I am sorry to say, he did do it often, once too often indeed.

Young Saguo was very good company. He had a fund of racy anecdotes, one or two of them are still fresh in my memory. He said that the Limanians were desperate gamblers, and that when they staked and lost their fortunes, if there was nothing else available, they produced their pretty daughters, and gambled them away. Señor Saguo also related to us the following story. A Limanian shipowner was devoted to the game of Poker, and so was his son whom he sent as supercargo of one of his vessels to Valparaiso. On the young man's return to Lima he asked his father "what he would have staked had he held four aces?"—"Four aces," cried the excited man, "why, I would have risked everything I possessed. Who held such a hand?"—"I did, father, so I bet the vessel and cargo, and another fellow held sequence flush."—"How did you dare to do such a thing, you infamous scoundrel?" screamed the enraged old man. "Out of my sight; I disown you!"

It is necessary to have some knowledge of the game of Poker to appreciate the pith of this anecdote.
CHAPTER XXX.

SAD NARRATIVES.

If the presence of religious orders could elevate the tone of society, that of Papeeti should have reached a high standard, as it was especially favoured in that respect.

The Roman Catholic Missions went in heart and soul for the propagation of their faith. The London and Wesleyan missionaries, established among the Polynesian Group, diffused spiritual enlightenment and collected produce. The cargoes transmitted in Mission vessels were the result of some contributions, but the larger proportion arose from fines for petty offences; these had to be paid in oil, arrowroot, pearl shell, and pearls. A—— had a shelling lagoon at the Penryn Island, where a native showed him a black pearl of unusual size and purity, for which he offered $100 (£20), when he was told that it was not for sale, as the man to whom it belonged owed a fine for having smoked contrary to rule, and had promised the pearl in payment.
I maintained extremely pleasant relations with the various members of the missionary societies established either at Papeeti or elsewhere among the islands.

Mr. Howe for many years represented the London Mission at Tahiti, where he was highly esteemed. Everybody liked both Mr. and Mrs. Howe and their niece Miss Stonier, and severe regret was felt when Mr. Howe's health declined, which necessitated a change of climate. A voyage was made to Sydney, and we subsequently heard that our old friend had succumbed to overtaxed strength, soon after reaching his destination.

Mr. Morris replaced Mr. Howe. He was quite a young man, who had married on the eve of his departure from England, and was accompanied by his wife. Mrs. Morris was an exceeding pretty woman with charming manners, and she had the whitest and most perfectly formed hands with slender tapering fingers, which presented the appearance of having been little used, for she was an only child, whose devoted parents had undoubtedly exacted no menial offices from hands they must have been intensely proud of.

When I returned Mrs. Morris's visit, I had my attention called to a canary that was singing exquisitely, which she had brought from England. She expressed herself warmly about this pet, and explained, that in her fear lest he should be troubled by the mosquitoes as she had been—her face and hands were disfigured by bites—she made a point of hanging the cage at night-time under the mosquito
net of her own bed. She continued to do this up to the night of her accouchement, when the cage had to be removed; but the next evening she asked her husband to bring it back, as she liked to see it suspended over head. He complied at once; but where was the bird? lying dead at the bottom of the cage. The servant had neglected to fasten the seed and water troughs, and it had starved to death in sight of the food it could not reach. When Mrs. Morris related to me this cruel omission, I felt almost as grieved about it as she could be. Great tears stood in her eyes when she spoke of it in a pitifully tremulous voice. I did what I could to console her, by reminding her of the greater treasure she then owned—her beautiful boy. She shook her head sadly and said, "The bird was my pet before I married, and I loved him so dearly, he was such sweet company, and knew me perfectly well." Poor thing, she had lost the connecting link between her present life and the home of her girlhood. Nothing was now left her of the happy past. After little George's birth, Mrs. Morris looked very frail. A complete change in her personal appearance was noticeable; her face had lost its bloom, and dark circles surrounded her eyes. She was indeed in wretched health, and had to submit to a terrible operation—martyrdom at any time, but intensified by the absence of anaesthetics, and in a climate such as that of Tahiti. How little we know what the future has in store for us, and how true it is that troubles and trials rarely come singly!

Mr. Morris had the misfortune to earn the ill-feeling of some members of his society, who accused
him of desecrating the sabbath. I believe the most heinous charge they could rake up against him was the following circumstance. He had purchased a small tract of land, and a couple of cows to supply his family with milk; the native in charge was authorized to dispose of the surplus quantity, and his customers naturally required milk on Sunday as on week-days, yet this was deemed a sufficient offence to warrant a citation before a number of missionaries who came to Tahiti from neighbouring islands for that purpose. They met at the English Consulate, when Mr. Miller acted as he invariably did, a manly, straightforward part, by using his best influence to propitiate the parties, but his noble conduct was not imitated. The ears he addressed were deaf to any suggestion that did not coincide with their own views of the case, as they were equally indifferent to their victim's domestic affliction, and the well-known fact that Mrs. Morris' symptoms were greatly aggravated by the sad knowledge of her husband's most unenviable position, at a moment too, when all anxiety should have been spared her, for this cruel persecution and the manifestation of so much animosity could end but in one way:—namely, Mr. Morris's condemnation. His wife's precarious condition excited no pity, no commiseration from those whose vocation should have taught them—"Peace on earth, and good will towards men." The missionaries found Mr. Morris guilty, and expelled him from the society with injunctions to immediately vacate the Mission House.

The white natives, as I used to call them, were children of the old missionaries who were born at
Tahiti. Mrs. Hunter was a daughter and widow of one, and the prettiest old lady I had ever seen. She was both agreeable and communicative, while not in the least disposed to screen the faults of her friends, though the delinquent were even a missionary, and, from her accounts, one or two of the early ones had failed to follow the example of the virtuous Joseph with regard to Potiphar's wife.

Mrs. Hunter related to me a harrowing history that left an indelible impression on my mind, which had taken place during her residence on the Island of Riatea. A friend of hers was the daughter and wife of a missionary who had charge of a flock of black sheep—natives—at Tahaa, a small island in the neighbourhood of Riatea. He was by birth a German, and an exceedingly harsh, parsimonious man, who absolutely begrudged the wife he systematically ill-used, the very food she ate. Hard work and unkindness killed Mrs. K——. When Mrs. Hunter heard that she was seriously ill, she crossed to Tahaa, and was shocked to see the great change in her old friend, to find the once robust girl reduced to mere skin and bone. Mr. K—— came in to the bedroom and asked Mrs. Hunter if she would have a cup of tea, which she declined. When Mr. K—— retired, his wife cried in a reproachful tone, "Oh, why did you refuse? I so long for a cup of tea, and he would have been obliged to give me some had you accepted his offer."

This speech only too truly corroborated the stories in circulation of his meanness and cruel treatment of his miserable young wife, and Mrs. Hunter hastened
after Mr. K——, and said that she had changed her mind as she was feeling very tired, and a good cup of tea might refresh her! During its preparation Mrs. K—— told Mrs. Hunter that her husband allowed her scarcely sufficient food to sustain life, and that he was so anxious for her death that a day or two previously he had come to her bedside and taken the measure for her coffin, which, in anticipation of her death, he had made with his own hands, and placed it in the next room to hers. Mrs. Hunter doubted the statement, and attributed it to the morbid state of the dying woman's mind, who insisted that it was there, for her husband had told her that it was inside ready to receive her body.

Still unconvinced, Mrs. Hunter determined to look into the room indicated before she left the house, which she succeeded in doing, and to her amazement and indignation, saw the lugubrious receptacle. That such inhuman monsters should not only be permitted to cumber the earth, but meet with success, is beyond explanation; for do we not day by day see the efforts of the wicked flourish while those of better men fail? Take, for example, Mr. K——'s case, and compare it with that of poor Mr. Morris. After Mrs. K——'s death her husband went to Germany, where he took unto himself another wife, and not wishing to return to Tahaa, he obtained the same position at Mangea,—I think,—where he built himself a fine house, begat children, and domineered over the natives, which he may be still doing, for aught I know to the contrary.

When Mère Marie de la Croix came to see me,
she was always accompanied by a nun, who was a marked contrast to her Superior. Sœur Appolanaïs was as tall and thin as her companion was short and stout. The excessive heat must have been a terrible affliction to the Superior, yet I could never prevail on her, or indeed on either of them, to accept of refreshment, not even a glass of cool water—cold I could not conscientiously call it. They said that it was against the rules of their order to eat or drink between their regular meals, to which I retorted, "Then there are rules for the nuns, and rules for the priests; the latter never refuse a glass of syrup and water." My assertion produced a smile and a "Que voulez vous c'est ainsi." The Superior had contracted the germs of a pernicious fever before coming to Tahiti, which developed into a last and fatal attack. Hearing that she was ill, I called at the convent to make personal inquiries, when I found the community in a most helpless condition; bereft of their guide they resembled a parcel of frightened children, who are unable to decide what should or should not be done. I was rather taken aback when a young sister—an especial pet of Mère Marie de la Croix's—came to me, and said, "Ma mère désire vous faire ses adieux." Sœur Appolanaïs met me at the door looking woefully agitated and colourless; the poor Superior lay on a narrow cot in a room that was no larger than a cell. She immediately held out her hand to me, which I stooped and kissed. It felt as if my lips had touched a burning coal. Oh! how she must have suffered in that stifling place. "Ma chère le fin est arrivé, adieu donc," was all she
said, and then turned her face towards the wall. I slipped away, followed by Sœur Appolanais, whose face and hands twitched painfully from sheer fright and nervousness. "Un moment," she murmured. "Ma mère vous a toujours aimée ainsi elle tenait vous voir pour la dernière fois." I was naturally much gratified to hear this, as I had always entertained a sincere affection for Mère Marie de la Croix, and I was glad to find that the difference in our religious views had not operated against me. True, she once told me that the best friend of her family had been one of my creed. She expired the same night, and I was glad to hear that her sufferings and trials in life had ceased.

In the tropics but few hours intervene between death and burial. The funeral took place the next afternoon from the small Roman Catholic Church, and Père Clair officiated in the absence of the Bishop, who was in France. The service was very impressive, rendered especially so by the visible emotion of Père Clair when he referred to the Superior's saintly life of self-sacrifice. As I sat and listened I recalled what she had imparted to me about herself. When young she had been betrothed by her parents to the son of a neighbour, but her conventual education gave her a distaste for marriage, and a desire to become a novice—a proposal which met with angry opposition from her parents. "What?" they demanded; "you, our only child, would leave us to enter a convent! Are you not ashamed to harbour such an idea?" She said she prayed unceasingly for their hearts to be softened, and one night she rose from her knees with
the feeling that the moment had arrived to make a final and successful appeal. And with this object at heart, she went into their bedroom in the middle of the night, and implored their consent to her devoting her life to the service of her Saviour; that marriage was repugnant to her, and a religious vocation could alone satisfy her soul. Such mystic enthusiasm must have been all-powerful, as it obtained for the young girl the permission she besought, and her parents were thus deprived of the prop of their declining years.

During her novitiate, the daughter had only been permitted to visit her old home once, when she met the father of the young man to whom she had been engaged, who exclaimed, "Ah, la voila ma belle fille manquée!"

How well I remember Mère Marie de la Croix's smile as she recalled and repeated this speech. Her earthly pilgrimage was then at an end; it had been spent in hot unhealthy countries, and her final resting-place was among strangers, separated in death, as in life, from those she had at one time held so dear, and loved so truly.

I had hoped to hear that Sœur Appolanaïs would have been nominated Superior in the room of Mère Marie de la Croix, but she only held the position for a few months until another Superior could be sent from France, one who had also served her apprenticeship in unhealthy colonies, and whose health had suffered like that of her predecessor. Mère Camille was an extremely lady-like, refined person, very superior to the class one usually met with in Tahiti, and a most congenial companion, which led to the renewal of my
visits to the convent, where I was truly pleased to find that Sœur Appolanaïs had resumed the same position of confidence towards Mère Camille as she had held near the late superior.
CHAPTER XXXI.

DISCOVERY OF STOLEN JEWELLERY.

Mr. STEWART had frequently invited us to visit his plantation, of which he was very proud; but we did not share Madame de la Ronciere's admiration for "ce beau Monsieur d'Atimano," and had no wish to pass an opinion on his plantation, or accept in any way of his hospitality. Unfortunately the De la Roncieres took it into their heads to invite us to accompany them on a visit to "Terre Eugenie," and as the day was left to our option, it precluded further objection.

Mr. Stewart led the way with Madame de la Ronciere. He drove a low phaeton and pair of dark bays; the Governor and I followed in a light trap; and A——, with another friend, brought up the rear in a buggy. The route was nothing new to me, though it never failed to charm; one must have been very unimpressionable indeed, not to have been agreeably influenced by such picturesque scenery,
even though one were driving with an uncongenial companion. How deliciously scented was the air with exotic blossoms from tree and shrub, and how thoroughly I admired every rood of ground we bowled over, which I had traversed scores of times myself, either with A—or Margaret, and how very much more I should have preferred to have had one or the other beside me instead of the cavalier whose conversation I found uninteresting.

The shades of evening had overtaken us when we approached the imposing gates of "Terre Eugénie," which flew open to admit our dusty, weary cavalcade; down a stately avenue lined with bananas we drove till we reached the low bungalow with veranda. We entered a large room or hall where the table was laid for dinner. Other rooms opened from this apartment, which appeared to me to be the principal one in the house. Madame de la Ronciere took me into her room to wash the dust off, explaining that we should be escorted to ours after dinner. I thought this odd at the time, but asked no questions, as I was extremely hungry—as we all were—and did ample justice to the good things provided. A delicious menu it was when eaten in moderation—an essential that Madame de la Ronciere transgressed, for she indulged so freely in turtle cooked in a variety of ways, that she had a violent attack of indigestion during the night, and made every one about her uncomfortable. Mr. Stewart conducted A—and me to the room prepared for us. It was built over the sea in accordance with one of Madame de la Ronciere's absurd freaks of fancy. After its completion
she had slept in it but one night, and probably found it once too often, as I assuredly did. It was as bad as being at sea in a heavy swell, if not worse. The waves surged and dashed up under the flooring, and made the room rock in an intensely disagreeable manner to those who had so recently partaken of an unusually oleaginous menu! A—— opened the door to reconnoitre our bearings. It was a dark night, and he distinguished nothing beyond the depressing sound of the waves. He who was seldom profane exclaimed, "I wish I knew the way out of this d——d concern," failing which, we had to make the best of a bad business. Each time I closed my eyes I felt as if the room were floating away to the ocean. Turtle soup might have been partially to blame for the sensation, but not altogether. Our lodging was abominable, and I passed a wakeful night abusing Mr. Stewart like a pickpocket, not forgetting the De la Roncières in my string of invectives. The next morning I astonished our host by expressing my opinion of his "pavilion by the sea" in any but flattering terms, and my determination to leave Atimano rather than pass another night in it. It appeared that the De la Roncières occupied the only spare bedrooms the bungalow contained, but a small sitting-room was hastily arranged for my reception. My head ached intensely, but it did not prevent me from rejoicing over Madame de la Roncière's attack; she deserved to suffer, I said snappishly to A——, for being so greedy and selfish. She knew well enough the night we were likely to pass, having experienced the motion in that room herself. I felt awfully bitter
and indignant until I had had a long, refreshing sleep, when I felt decidedly better disposed, and could laugh with A—— over our previous night's sensations, though I took very good care to make light of them to no one else!

"Terre Eugénie" had been in no way exaggerated. No expense had been spared to render it attractive, if not lucrative. The property was in perfect order and the fields of cotton looked in a flourishing condition. The village of labourers' huts showed what a number of people were employed on the estate, where there was a preponderance of Chinese, two cargoes having been recently imported by Mr. Stewart. Everything about the plantation bespoke success, and the cause of failure could be due to nothing else save reckless expenditure, as Mr. Stewart was especially favoured by the administration, had he known how to husband his resources, the result would have been of a very different nature.

To my surprise I found the dinner-table prepared outside the house; Madame de la Ronciere, who had been too indisposed throughout the day to leave her room, objected to the clatter of knives and forks which she pronounced to be agaçant. I fancy the knowledge that we were going to enjoy a menu from which she was debarred was still more agaçant!

As elsewhere, al fresco at Tahiti is very pleasant in the daytime, when the air is warm and balmy but after sunset it is less appreciable. The gentlemen's coats were buttoned up to the throat, and they wore their hats, while I was enveloped in a burnouse, with the capucin drawn over my head;
droll enough we must have appeared discussing our dinner under an accumulation of difficulties, which the flickering light helped to increase. At moments the lamps smoked and emitted a sooty smell that was not appetizing. Mr. Stewart pronounced the whole thing a confounded nuisance. The situation was certainly very ludicrous, and we made merry over it, somewhat at the absent governor's and his pauvre Diane's expense, whose exigence was freely commented upon. We were told she had every one dancing attendance on her all night and all day, yet complained of neglect. Madame had ordered the most unheard-of remedies to be concocted, and had now commanded a cognac bath; the whims which she indulged in at the expense of others were costly. Mr. Stewart drove me over his plantation and made himself very agreeable; but I was startled at some of his communications which proved the power he wielded over his people, especially the Chinese, who were great gamblers and thieves. He informed me that he was so determined to suppress these evils, that he had decided to make an example of an incorrigible wretch, who was then under sentence of death. I could scarcely believe him to be serious. Nevertheless it was a fact, he had imported, or had had constructed, a guillotine—I can't remember exactly which—and he said it worked beautifully—that such an expression should get to be so misapplied. He stated that they had tried it on a pig, and the head was severed from the body without the slightest hitch. I was thoroughly disgusted, and detested ce beau Monsieur a'Atimano more than ever,
a sentiment which increased on hearing that the execution had actually taken place a few days after the termination of my first and last visit to Atimano.

The bath house at "Terre Eugénie" was formed under a rock, and looked far more like a gloomy cavern; it was an extensive excavation and not unpicturesque, but there were certain descriptions of picturesqueness which I only appreciated from a distance, and this was one of them. While I stood hesitating, undecided as to whether I should or should not disturb the stillness of that fresh basin of water, a something from the stone roof flapped in, and I scuttled out.

A—— was summoned back to Papeeti, and though Mr. Stewart urged me to remain and return with the De la Roncieres, I declined, as I was only too thankful to escape the escort of his Excellency, who, like his wife, entertained extraordinary ideas. In fact, the De la Roncieres were an incongruous couple. Despotic as the previous administration had been, it was likely to be rivalled. A case of out-heroding Herod! The Commissaire Impériale disapproved of all that his predecessor had done, save in one instance, the encouragement and favour extended to Mr. Stewart, and in this respect he was also likely to rival him. In other matters he differed, and condemned every one of M. de la Richerie's improvements. He went systematically to work, to rescind all the rules and regulations promulgated by the late Governor. Among other things he pronounced the new bamboo houses as décidément bizarre; and so they were, exposed to the sun, and such a wretched
apology for gardens, as if natives could be expected to interest themselves in the cultivation of European flowers when their entire island is an interminable bed of exotics. The result of the ordinance was what one had always anticipated; after all the enforced outlay, the houses were abandoned, and left go to rack and ruin; the natives only too gladly availed themselves of the privilege to return to their former sheltered abodes.

Dolores's pretty sister Lucrecia had married Captain Blackett, a widower residing on the island of Bora-Bora. The first Mrs. Blackett and three children had been lost at sea; her husband commanded a small vessel which he owned, and was conveying his family from one island to another, when she sprang a leak, filled, and sank before the captain, who was on deck, could rescue his wife and little ones from the cabin, he and his sailors were subsequently picked up at sea by another schooner.

Captain Blackett was an exceedingly plain man, tall and angular, and a contrast in every way to his young, graceful, sweet-looking wife. After her marriage, she frequently stayed with me at Papeeti, availing herself of her husband's absence among the islands, where he was engaged collecting produce. Little Walter was a fine, healthy fellow, but a brother born when Mrs. Blackett was on a visit to us, and named after A——, was extremely delicate and died young.

Some necessary repairs had to be done to our house at Papeeti, so A—— hired a villa in the country, where Mrs. Blackett and her children accompanied us. Our new abode was in a neglected
DISCOVERY OF STOLEN JEWELLERY.

condition, especially the grounds; it faced the ocean, and as the beach was free of broken shells and coral, we could, when we felt disposed, enjoy a sea bath. All the provision canoes for the Papeeti market passed Taunai, where we then resided. As a rule we seized the occasion to replenish our larder by signalling to them with our handkerchiefs, which brought the fleet to within bargaining distance. I enjoyed this style of marketing, as I made it a point to overhaul every article before purchasing; after which the natives resumed their paddles, and the canoes shoved off well pleased with their sales, having no doubt obtained a higher price for their provisions from us than they were likely to do at market, while we gained by the transaction, as it afforded us amusement. I have already remarked that land crabs infested the island, but the road between Taunai and Papeeti was so completely riddled by them, that I dreaded to traverse it either riding or driving. Hitherto my mare Dolly had been left in charge of a native man, who resided in the country where she could be kept in the open air, which in a climate like that of Tahiti, was preferable to stabling. But as soon as I found that there was sufficient space and pasturage for her at Taunai, she was brought over and set at liberty in a large field facing the house, which she reconnoitred to good effect, for regularly every evening she cantered up to the veranda to be fed with bananas, and when I pretended not to see her she would stamp on the step to call my attention. I used to be amused watching Dolly play a game of "catch me if you can" with the boy when he wanted
her. She would remain stock still, while he stealthily approached, but the moment he stretched out his hand, she galloped off to the other side of the field. I had regularly to go and stop her play, for at my call she cantered back and allowed me to hold her by the mane whilst the bit was being adjusted.

I was so fond of Dolly, and treated her with such uniform gentleness, that I could not endure to think of her being ill-used after we left Tahiti—which we were sure to do some time or other—I therefore made up my mind that rather than there should be a risk of my favourite falling into unkind hands, she should be humanely shot. I was spared the alternative.

If I did not go to Papeeti I rode and drove in other directions, and our sojourn at Taunai was a perfect success. Mrs. Blackett spoke the native language fluently, and her companionship added to my enjoyment. Together we used to wander through dense foliage in search of footpaths, which were sure to lead us to water, in the form of rivulets or running streams, shady and picturesquely situated, where we could bathe without fear of being disturbed. Daily we sallied forth to see what we could discover beyond native huts in a deplorably dilapidated condition, yet not void of a certain charm which the better class had ceased to possess for me since our visit to Hitia.

Soon after the departure of the De la Richeries, Papuorii died, and her property at Taunoa was sold. It fell into the hands of some Penrhyn islanders, who utilized a tract of marshy ground for the cultivation of taro. While at work they dug up a spadeful of
earth mixed with which they discovered odds and ends of broken gold, a circumstance soon made known to us. Mrs. Blackett and I were returning towards evening from our bathe when we were accosted by a party of excited natives, who exclaimed that my stolen jewellery was found in the ground where it had been buried by Papuorii, near her own hut! Nothing loses by repetition, and had I lingered I might have heard that the entire contents of the jewel case were there intact, whereas, in reality, nothing had come to light save pieces of gold from which the pearls and other gems had been removed. I hurried home, where I found the Commissaire of Police in conversation with A——, and we arranged to meet him the next morning at the spot indicated. Taunai, where we at that time resided, was a short distance from Taunoa, where the discovery had been made. I was so excited about the whole thing that I could not sleep, and as soon as daylight appeared I hastened off to the place. Early as it was the Commissaire of Police had reached it before me; I found him with a long pole digging up the moist earth and bringing to the surface many trifles, and an article that I valued beyond its intrinsic worth. I stayed his hand, and thrusting my own into the mud drew forth the ring, composed of a cluster of brilliants, that had been removed after death from my mother's finger and placed on mine.

I by degrees recovered every trinket that I had described to Papuorii as having belonged to those who were then dead, which, through superstitious fears, she had refrained from selling, and therefore had to hide them.
When the woman's guilt had been thus clearly proved I communicated the facts by letter to Madame de la Richerie, and said that they had done us a cruel injustice, for we had never dreamed of accusing Papuorii until the evidence of her culpability lay before our very eyes. To which communication no reply was vouchsafed.

Assuredly governors of French colonies exercise greater power than the generality of crowned heads.

I received a present of a lovely little Peruvian poodle named Finessa, a brother of Mrs. Blackett brought her from South America for a native friend, but was induced to alter its destination. Finessa merited her name; she was like a ball of spun silk, and a feather's weight to carry. One day she went too near a litter of kittens to please the mother; with a savage spring she clutched poor trembling Finnie and tore open the pupil of one eye. My screams collected a crowd of natives, who shrugged their lazy, unsympathetic shoulders at so much fuss being made over a dog's eye. Mrs. Blackett inquired whether there was an herb woman in the neighbourhood. We were told that there was, and a young girl volunteered to lead us to the jungle where she lived. It was some distance off, and the way to it was through a maze of green vines that impeded progress, which proved the more aggravating as poor little Finnie whined pitifully the whole time. I carried her rolled in a shawl, and was in terror lest the woman might be absent. Fortunately, she was not. Mrs. Blackett explained the motive for our visit. While listening she examined the eye, and
then left the hut in search of the remedy to be applied; as she soon returned with some herbs, tying the leaves in a piece of muslin, she pounded them till they became a moist pulp; a few drops from which she squeezed into the eye, I was to repeat this treatment every hour or two, and cautioned to keep the eye covered so as to exclude the light, and that it would soon heal, which it did. I carried out the woman's instructions, and fearing that Finnic might wriggle out of the bandage I held her in my arms throughout the day, and had the satisfaction of seeing the wound nearly closed by the next morning. Long before nightfall there was not a vestige of the laceration perceptible. I had frequently heard that the natives were remarkably clever in their treatment with herbs, but I had never before witnessed the process, and was astonished at its rapid efficacy. The natives heal the worst description of wounds by outward applications, but it needs their constitutions to stand the internal remedies, which are composed of a decoction from a variety of freshly gathered plants—or dried and pulverized—their action being accelerated by copious draughts of cocoa-nut water. There are also some native shrubs that contain marvellous properties. The leaf of the Tii, for instance, possesses the mysterious power of quelling the heat usually emitted from flames of fire. At an early period of Tahitian history this property was only known to the idolatrous priests, who made use of their knowledge to assist in the performance of miracles which would not bear too close scrutiny. Standing by the
marais they held branches of the Tii plants, which rendered them imperviable to the fiery tongues of flame by which they were surrounded.

Captain Blackett related to me a ceremony he had witnessed some years previously at one of the Leeward Islands. A procession of natives bearing branches of the plant in question, waved them from side to side as they walked with bare feet and legs over red-hot stones, and through fiery flames without injury whatever to their naked limbs. Captain Blackett, after having watched their mode of proceeding, was convinced that waving the branches they carried counteracted in some way the effect of the heat, which he undertook to test in his own person. Divesting himself of shoes and stockings he tucked up his trousers, and imitating the others with regard to the Tii plant he passed in a similar manner through the fire without experiencing the slightest inconvenience from the flames, which he said played about his bare legs.

If the leaves of this plant possess a wonderful potency, the root was as appreciable in a contrary sense, not being impervious to fire, as the natives bake and eat it, and extremely delicious I found the tender sweet substance, which contains a large quantity of saccharine matter; indeed, I preferred it to sugar-cane, from the fact that the juice was sweeter and extracted without demanding the same tiring process of mastication.

The natives have an original method of resuscitating their drowned. They turn the face to the ground and draw the legs over a man's shoulders, who races
up and down without stopping. When he becomes exhausted another steps into his place, and this exercise is persevered in until every drop of water is discharged from the patient's mouth and nostrils soon after which the blood begins to circulate afresh, and the lungs resume their functions.
CHAPTER XXXII.

A PLEASANT SURPRISE.

E attended a delightful fête champêtre at the charmingly situated country seat of the Robins', who resided in the neighbourhood of Taunoa.

The festivities were confined to a spot that seemed to have been formed by nature for such a purpose. It was an extensive circular plateau encircled by trees and shrubs intermixed with vines in full bloom, which formed a natural enclosure of Arcadian loveliness. Glimpses of the ocean glistening in the sunlight were caught through the foliage, and heightened the charm of the fairy-like bower where we were fed on something more substantial than ambrosia. As each guest arrived they received pretty wreaths of natural flowers to replace their hats. Tahitian fêtes are replete with these vagaries, and realized my conception of what a native feast should be—Arcadian in every sense.

Before we left Taunai A—— gave the natives of
the district a feast, which quite eclipsed anything of the sort that had fallen to their lot, for as a rule on similar occasions, they had to contribute towards the entertainment, whereas on this occasion everything was provided—a circumstance they so thoroughly appreciated that they naively asked for a repetition, and as an additional incentive offered to supply the pigs.

I was driving with A—-, when he proposed showing me a pretty place in the district of Peri. It was in truth a lovely property. The grounds were charmingly undulating, skirted by a wide stream of water, in the middle of which was an eyot resembling a bouquet of exotics. A rustic bridge led to this gem of conceptions. Round a large floraponda tree in bloom, clustered masses of highly-perfumed tropical plants and Castilian roses. Another attractive feature on the river was the bathing-house made of bamboo, which was entirely hidden by the passion-flowers and jessamine then in full bloom. Picturesque as was the exterior, the interior surpassed it, as the tendrils hung from the interstices and dipped in the water. Sprays of the passion-flowers were either suspended from the roof and sides, or floated on the surface exactly as water-lilies do in other countries.

We sat down to rest in a large arbour that was also composed of the passion-flower and jessamine. On a stationary table was a plentiful supply of fruit, which rather surprised me, and I asked who was the owner of the beautiful place? "You are," said A—-. I could scarcely believe my ears, but it was a fact he had purchased it for me in consequence of my having
enjoyed Taunai so much. After this piece of delightful information I felt sufficiently rested to walk over the same ground and discover fresh objects for enthusiasm and suggestions.

A dressing-room with a short flight of steps leading down to the basin of water was subsequently added for my especial benefit, as I had never been able to learn to swim. Each time I ventured on making a stroke my feet replaced my head, which was not an agreeable sensation, and I floundered out with my respirative organs rather the worse for the plunge. Under these untoward circumstances I adopted the safer course of walking down and taking a secure seat on the lower step, which admitted of the water reaching to my throat, leaving others to spring over my head, while I listened complacently to their comments on my cowardice, but urge as they might, I could never be induced to risk sinking to rise no more; and I felt convinced such would have been my fate if I had persevered in my awkward attempts at natation.

Delpiere was the name of our head gardener; he was a funny little man, who agreed to all one suggested, but invariably carried out his own views. He, however, took every care of the property, and improved it in many ways. A wide avenue with beds of choice flowers bordered with pine-apple plants led up from the entrance gate. At the back of these beds were groves of fruit-trees, and such fruit!—custard apples, mangoes, alligator pears, bananas, oranges, &c., &c.

We enjoyed occasional breakfasts in our airy shel-
tered arbour, sheltered from everything save rain, as, for instance, when we were treated to one of those sudden thunderstorms so prevalent at certain seasons in Tahiti. Before we could possibly raise an umbrella to protect the dishes, the downpour would overtake us, leaving a perceptible increase in the gravies. But for these little contretemps, how monotonous one's life would have been in Tahiti! Even a disagreeable change was preferable to no change whatever!

The natives and Europeans induced A—— to give a fête champêtre at Peri. It seemed to me a mistake to mar so much natural beauty by other decorations which I only saw when completed. My taste must have been at fault, as every one else admired the arrangement of poles festooned with leaves, flowers, and native fringes. The native guests all came provided with baskets to take away the portion of food they were unable to consume. A—— was known to be a generous caterer, and their receptacles were as large as their expectations.

There were two tents erected, one for the Europeans, where dinner was served on a table; the other was destined for the natives, with food enough to feed double the number. The verdant table-cloth, composed of leaves, was literally covered with fish, flesh, vegetables, and fruit. I ventured to look in after the participators had left, and found a complete clearance.

A portion of the grounds was reserved for a variety of sports, and a horse-race took place on the beach, which terminated the day's amusement, to the entire satisfaction of all the guests. The natives were so
thoroughly gratified that they insisted on shaking hands with A—and me before leaving. Probably their not having been called upon to provide part of the provisions rendered them doubly appreciative.

A portion of our Perí property was left uncultivated, and displayed the usual wild vegetation—a tropical growth that always pleased my eye, as it was always picturesque; the river intersected some portions in its meandering course, and there the soil was extremely marshy. An unfortunate cow wandered in that direction and stuck there. The news spread like wild-fire, and the whole district congregated to assist in extricating her. If yells and exclamations could have effected any good they should have succeeded, but their vociferations and efforts were alike ineffectual. I stood on the banks of the river to see if anything could be done, but was glad to make my escape, though it was many a day before I could get the sad, questioning eyes of the doomed animal out of my head, or the hopeless attempts to raise her with ropes. In the end she had to be killed and divided amongst the natives, who went on their way rejoicing.
CHAPTER XXXIII.

AN UNNATURAL MOTHER.

Called on Mère Camille, and saw Sœur Appolanaïs, who told me of the death of a girl in whom she had taken a deep interest in consequence of her conversion to Roman Catholicism. Unknown to her spiritual director, Raru had consented to live with a French débitant, and, contrary to her confessor's advice, continued in what she considered a sinful course of life. Raru was told to urge the man to marry her, and this she never ceased to do till he promised that if she bore him a child he would make her his wife. In time she became the mother of a fine boy. Nevertheless, no marriage took place, and Raru fell ill, seriously ill, yet the ceremony was postponed, though she besought the father of her child not to let her die unwedded. Her pleadings failed to touch the man's callous heart, and she carried to the grave the conviction that her soul was irretrievably lost in consequence of her lover's broken promise.
Previous to the arrival of the De la Roncieres, we received every Tuesday evening. To my dismay Madame de la Ronciere made a point of coming also on Saturdays, and it thus became an established thing. In this manner she contrived to dispose of three evenings in the week, receiving, herself, at Government House on Thursdays. For a woman who had led the gayest sort of life in Europe, her existence at Tahiti must have been intolerably monotonous, notwithstanding the succession of admirers she encouraged. Madame de la Ronciere's marked preference for *ce beau Monsieur d'Atimano* (Mr. Stewart) created much scandal and no little jealousy among her cavaliers. We were present at an amusing scene at Government House where we had dined. In the course of the evening there was some little disturbance among the aspirants for Madame's favour, who, to be impartial, threw herself down on the floor in a fainting fit. What ensued was comical in the extreme. The Governor wrung his hands, exclaiming, "*Oh, ma Diane, ma pauvre Diane! à qui la cause?*" His aide-de-camp rushed like a distracted maniac to the assistance of the prostrate Diane, and, aided by others, contrived to lift her on to the billiard-table, on to which he himself scrambled, and began to chafe her hands. Dr. Guillasse was there, and ordered a liberal sprinkling of cold water. Madame overheard him, and reckless of her supposed faint, called out, "*Non, non; je ne veux pas!*" but the doctor was not going to be cheated out of his fun. Seizing a tumbler of water, he dashed its contents over her face. "*Assez, monsieur!*" she exclaimed,
with an angry gesture. Her comedy had been more of one than she had intended, and she was forced to beat a hasty retreat. "C'est une vraie comédienne," said the Doctor, *sotto voce*. He had heard that the De la Roncières ridiculed his medical capacity, asserting publicly that they would not entrust their cat to his care unless they wanted it poisoned. Of course these injurious remarks made him furious, but he would have been still more so had he been aware that even we had nicknamed him Dr. Jackass.

As an outlet to his spleen, he sent to France for the published trial of M. le Comte de la Ronciere, for culpable conduct towards the daughter of his general. The then young lieutenant was defended by the celebrated pleader Berrier, whose ability did not prevent his client from being found guilty and condemned to ten years' imprisonment. Doctor Guillasse made a point of circulating the volume; among others, he lent it to me. When I returned the book he asked, "Que pensez vous de cela? et c'est ce vieux galérien qu'on a osé envoyer ici comme gouverneur. Mais c'est honteux, c'est ignoble." He never by any chance spoke of Madame de la Ronciere otherwise than as "Cette coquine là," or referred to the De la Roncières menage in other than disparaging terms. "Ce sont de pures canailles va" was his constant remark. Doctor Guillasse indulged in this stage of antagonism for over two years, and then veered round to the other extreme, and became their most staunch partisan! An inconsistency that will not surprise any one with a knowledge of such characters. Dr. Guillasse never disguised the fact that his greatest ambition in life
was to be decorated, to obtain *La Croix de la légion d'honneur*, in the furtherance of which he was prepared to accept any dubious commission assigned to him, and he did undertake some very questionable acts.

With regard to M. de la Ronciere's trial, I considered his condemnation most unjust. It struck me as being far more like a false accusation conceived by a vindictive girl, to injure the man who had slighted her, than an offence any man in his position was likely to perpetrate. Had I not heard of a similar case which confirmed this view, I might not have adopted it; but notwithstanding Doctor Guillasse's arguments, I firmly believed in the innocence of the young officer, though I was sorry to perceive that the injustice meted out to him, he meted out to others.

The De la Roncieres had brought with them from France a pretty basket carriage, in which they drove a pair of bay ponies, and on moonlight nights passed by our house, and as a rule called to ask us to join them. I allowed myself to be overpersuaded on one occasion, but failed to find it enjoyable; my companions were not sympathetic, and I never repeated the experiment.

Madame de la Ronciere was a *connaissesse* of old lace, and usually admired pieces I wore. At one of our receptions I had the misfortune to lose a valuable point lace handkerchief, and the same thing occurred on another occasion, when I lamented the loss to Madame de la Ronciere, she exclaimed, "*Ce n'est pas moi qui a le votre, car voila le mien.*" The Governor, who overheard her, replied, "*Mais, Diane, tu m'a
and he drew forth my handkerchief. Madame de la Ronciere laughed heartily over the untoward incident.

M. Faucompre was a great favourite of ours, and we regretted to hear that he was being inveigled into a marriage with the daughter of Madame de la Ronciere. Overtures had been made by both the Governor and his wife to bestow on him the hand of Ma lemoiselle Nina. He knew absolutely nothing of the girl, and cared, if possible, less; but the position of son-in-law to the Governor was not to be despised,—what might it not do for him in the future? How apt we are to desire a peep into the future! if with the idea of deviating from a wrong path, would it be our future?

The bait looked so extremely tempting, that the young man was inclined to float towards it. He was assured that Nina was a sweet creature, for whom the Governor entertained such a paternal affection, that he had bequeathed to her by will all he possessed,—which amounted to zero. We could scarcely contain ourselves when M. Faucompre repeated to us an endless number of brilliant promises, verbal ones, which we broadly hinted might never be fulfilled; but the poor fellow was blind to everything save that alluring pinnacle he was fated never to reach.

Finding that M. Faucompre was not as eager to meet her wishes as she had presupposed, Madame de la Ronciere assumed an illness with the object of bringing matters to a favourable issue. A messenger was sent to M. Faucompre requesting his immediate
presence at Government House. When he reached it he was informed that the Countess had been taken suddenly and seriously ill, and desired to see him at once. He was ushered into a darkened room where Madame lay in bed, apparently suffering tortures. In a scarcely audible voice she asked him to approach nearer as she was too feeble to speak above a whisper. She then told M. Faucompre in confidence that she was dying from an internal malady with which she had been afflicted for many years; that her present symptoms were in such an aggravated form, that she felt that her life hung on a mere thread, and she could not die in peace, knowing her dear girl would be left without a natural protector. As Nina was not the Governor's child, she could not as a single girl reside with him, but were she married, it would be different; she could then replace her mother at Government House, where she and her husband would be permanently settled, and De la Ronciere would then be able to retain his chère Nina near himself.

Madame de la Ronciere assured M. Faucompre that under any circumstance she would be obliged to return to France, as the climate of Tahiti was injurious to her, though she never expected to recover from her present crise, &c. Suffice it to say, she was not too feeble to cajole M. Faucompre into accepting her daughter's hand, which she contrived to make him do in the presence of witnesses. Having accomplished thus much, Madame de la Ronciere's symptoms took a favourable turn; it seemed like a miraculous resuscitation to M. Faucompre when
he returned in a few hours to find the Countess reclining on a couch in another apartment, dressed in a most becoming peignoir. She received him with the smiling assurance that the relief to her mind had worked wonders, though she still suffered acutely; yet had had herself removed to another room so as to show him what she intended giving to her Nina for present use, as it would necessarily be some months before her actual trousseau could be sent out from Paris, for which purpose she had set aside ten thousand francs. En attendant she wished him to see for himself the handsome dress material and lace which she had brought from France, as it was her intention to have them made up into pretty costumes for Nina; the girl was summoned, and her fiancé received permission to kiss her hand. What he thought of that hand, disfigured as it must have been by hard work, he never divulged, though he spoke freely enough about all else, and described—as well as he knew how—the beautiful things Madame de la Ronciere produced for his inspection, all of which were to be bestowed on the future Madame Faucompre. The invalid had several slight relapses until the marriage contract was signed. This essential deed executed, she stood up and walked downstairs. In M. Faucompre’s own words, “Elle s’est comportée comme si elle n’avait jamais été malade, qu’en pensez vous?” What did I think? Why, the same as Dr. Guillasse, that she was a comédienne of the first water: a comedy it might be for her, but what a tragedy it proved for her dupe. When the wedding day was named, Madame de
la Ronciere inquired what arrangements her future son-in-law had made for his *lune de miel*, and was scandalized to hear that he had made none. She explained how absolutely incumbent it was for a newly married couple to disappear from all eyes for at least a month. They would have to leave Papeeti, then why not retire with his bride to his own *joli campagne*? Madame de la Ronciere proposed this, though she was perfectly *au courant* as to what sort of place it was—a rough wooden cottage occupied by her future son-in-law's *native wife*, on whom he had intended to bestow it, when he removed to Government House. In forming these plans he had failed to take into consideration his mother-in-law elect. Madame de la Ronciere insisted that his cot at Faaa was the place of all places to suit the emergency, which compelled M. Faucompre to state facts, so as to convince her of the impropriety of taking his bride to such a place, which he said would be as degrading to her daughter as it would be to himself. Madame ridiculed such absurd sentiments, she termed it false delicacy, and retorted that his woman would have to go elsewhere and make room for her successor. As to furniture, she would send out what was necessary from Government House, and also provide for their table while they remained at Faaa. Madame de la Ronciere visited the cot in question, which contained two rooms, that had never seen paint nor paper. She saw no necessity to replace the bedstead or bedding, remarking that they answered every purpose; an old hair-cloth sofa, four chairs, and an unwieldy table were all that she deemed requisite for her daughter's
future home, and, as Dr. Guillasse phrased it, Fau-
compre s'est laisser faire.

The marriage of the Faucompres took place at
midnight. A company of Zouaves, bearing torches,
escorted the bridal cortège to the Roman Catholic
Church, which was crowded with spectators. The
bride wore an old flimsy muslin dress and soiled
satin sash. To the surprise of every one she wept
throughout the ceremony. I imagined them to be
tears of joy at her release from thraldom, but sub-
sequent events tended to the belief that they were
produced through fear; as she was only too well
aware of the deceit and trickery practised by her
mother on the man by her side, so as to entrap him
into marrying her. When fair means had failed, she
had resorted to a feigned illness, so as to rid herself
of a child for whom she had never entertained the
least affection.

As the bridal pair drove off, Madame de la
Ronciere exclaimed, in a loud tone, "Enfin je me suis
debarrassé de cette laideron là!"

I think my readers are sufficiently interested in the
fate of this young couple to feel some curiosity re-
specting the sequel.

About a week after his marriage, M. Faucompre
came to me in great distress of mind. The
reason was soon apparent: not one of the many
promises made to him by the Governor and
Madame de la Ronciere was being fulfilled. Yet
I refrained from exclaiming, "Didn’t I tell you so.”
The poor fellow looked so supremely wretched that
I had not the heart to add to his misery—and
regrets. He assured me that not only had his wife received no trousseau, but that she had not even been provided with common necessaries, as he had been already obliged to purchase undergarments for her, and that Madame de la Ronciere had kept all the fine things she had so ostentatiously displayed to him, for her own use. Neither had they received any provision whatever from Government House. All too late Madame de la Ronciere's perfidy was beginning to be discovered by M. Faucompre. Yes; she had not only fastened on him a wife without *dot* or the most ordinary clothes, but was even, at that early date, intriguing to get both him and his wife away from Tahiti. She had no idea of returning to France herself, neither had she the remotest idea of again receiving either of them at Government House. In that miserable cottage at Faaa, the Faucompres remained during their stay on the island; but even there they were not to be left unmolested. Madame de la Ronciere indited letters to her son-in-law, in which she traduced the character of his wife—her own child—who, in emptying her husband's coat-pockets before sending it to the laundress, became possessed of one of these cruelly unnatural communications; a sad scene ensued, and their rare visits to Government House ceased; but not the persecution. M. Faucompre was deprived of one emolument after the other, which so reduced his income that he was driven to do what had been anticipated, *viz.*, borrow a small amount from the *caisse* under his control. Surrounded by spies, the fact was at once reported to M. de la Ronciere, and the Governor ordered a veri-
fication of accounts, which consummated the unfortu-
nate man's ruin.

M. Faucompre was threatened with prosecution
unless he consented to leave the country, and until
his escape could be effected he was cautioned to
remain in hiding; for as soon as his culpability
became known he would, undoubtedly, be arrested.
Madame Faucompre was so impressed with the fear
of her husband's perilous position, that she had his
favourite dog killed lest he should discover his
master's retreat while the gendarmes were on the
watch. The natives cruelly strangled the faithful
animal, and of all the sad incidents in this sad
history I thought that the saddest. Acting under
Madame de la Ronceire's directions, Mr. Stewart had
M. Faucompre smuggled in an empty cask on board
a vessel of his that was bound to San Francisco.
To complete the farce, his wife was not permitted to
accompany her husband, a precaution they said to
allay suspicion—though every one on the island knew
what was transpiring. Without a servant, or other-
wise protected, Madame Faucompre, with her baby,
made the long sea voyage. On arrival at San Fran-
cisco she was met by her husband, who immediately
remarked the absence of his dog. When he heard the
reason in all its hideousness, the poor man wept bit-
terly, not only for the cruel fate of his old companion,
but for the accumulation of ignominy that had been
heaped on him in the past few months.

I heard these details from the Faucompres them-
selves when I visited San Francisco at a later date,
where I found them miserably situated. M. Fau-
compre held a subordinate position in a wine merchant's establishment. Madame Faucompre kept no servant, and, in addition to her domestic duties, she earned a trifle at clear starching. I strove to interest some French friends of mine residing in San Francisco on their behalf, but I am unable to say whether they ever displayed any sympathy. Ambition's path, in poor M. Faucompre's case, had been more disastrous than any of us could have believed possible; but then none of us had ever before come in contact with human beings of the De la Ronciere type—a mother who was devoid of even a sense of decency towards her own daughter. Madame Faucompre lost a child shortly after its birth, and the day of the funeral Madame de la Ronciere drove past the mournful little procession, and asked, "A qui cet enfant?" When told, she merely said "vraiment," and continued her drive.

In fiction a story of this description would be denounced as an exaggeration, an improbability; yet it is no romance, no fiction, but a real life's drama.
A PLEASANT TRIP.

In consequence of M. de la Richeire having favoured the planting of cotton, M. de la Ronciere determined to encourage the cultivation of sugar-cane, respecting which he had frequent conversations with A——, urging him to plant it on an extensive scale. Induced by the Governor's generous promises, not only to protect his interests as much as M. de la Richiere had done Mr. Stewart's, but likewise to assist him in importing labourers from China, A—— went heart and soul into the speculation, and got Queen Pomare to sell him a large tract of land adjoining his Openohu property. M. de la Ronciere also introduced a gentleman to A——'s notice, who had arrived from the Mauritius, and represented himself as competent to undertake the management of a sugar plantation. His valuable services were secured on the understanding that the Government was to import from China labourers
to work the plantation, as it was next to impossible to collect a sufficiency of natives among the islands, Mr. Stewart having already had the pick of them. For my own part I looked with disfavour on the entire thing. After the Faucompre episode I disbelieved in the De la Roncieres; they had forfeited their word then, and what was to deter them from doing so again and again? They were cruel, unprincipled people, and how A—— could place such implicit confidence in the Governor's promises was beyond my comprehension.

I had not visited Openohu since our trip in the Margaret, when an agreeable opportunity offered for me to do so. There were two men-of-war in port, the Calypso, commanded by Captain Turner, and the Tuscarora, by Captain Stanley—respectively English and American. We made up a large party to go in the Tuscarora to Morea, and steamed across in a couple of hours to Openohu, which I found changed almost beyond recognition—not the scenery, that was as transcendentally magnificent as it was unalterable; but A——'s property was completely metamorphosed. The old pavilion had made room for an extensive bungalow, surrounded by a veranda. The former was removed to the side of the lawn that was sheltered by the mountains; it looked uncommonly attractive, shaded by trees, and I would have preferred taking up my quarters there. Unfortunately for my whim it was already occupied by M. F——, the Mauritius manager, who was not found equal to the Governor's representations; in fact, he was lavish in expenditure and incompetent as a planter. The-
cane ridges were so far apart that it left the plants unsupported and too much exposed to the elements. He had erected quite a village of houses for future use, that was to say, when the machinery was acquired and the mechanics engaged, which might not be for months to come, and in the meanwhile the buildings would be certain to deteriorate.

If the manager had no regard for his employer's pockets, neither had he any for appearances, as the veranda of his pavilion was occupied night and day by native girls, which I considered in very bad taste.

Taking it altogether, however, we had a very enjoyable visit to Openohu. Some amusing flirtations took place between the navy officers and young half-castes. Captain Stanley was very much smitten with a pretty girl, and so was a young English middy from the Calypso, who got himself into disgrace by speaking disrespectfully to his elderly rival and superior officer, of whom he was furiously jealous. He was a mere boy, and I made excuses for his want of tact; in this manner I contrived to get the punishment curtailed to merely a temporary separation from his charmer.
EMPLOYED Twine, the fetii of the unhappy Etia, to do my needlework; she was not at all pretty, but a nice-looking, well-behaved young woman, who entertained me with graphic descriptions of Tahitian life. She was married to a Roratongian named Taboo, a good-looking man, who aped the dress and manners of a European. He disdained the pareu unless in the privacy of his own tent—after dark. What he did not disdain was orange rum, which I fear rather marred Twine's conjugal bliss, for when under the influence of that cordial he was apt to wander forth and not reappear till morning.

According to a native girl's ideas, unfaithfulness is considered several degrees worse than drunkenness, and Twine was no exception to this distinction. She was taking her husband's conduct in this respect very much to heart; she was not a robust girl, she had
always been slight and pale lipped, and was now more so than ever.

One morning Taboo came instead of his wife for her work. I asked if she were ill? "Oh, yes, very bad; she no come, so I come." I said I was sorry to hear that he was causing Twine so much unhappiness, and if he were not more careful he would lose a good industrious wife. He looked very contrite, with bowed head. "You speak very true; Twine work always, she no bad girl Twine; but oh my, very jealous, you see. Then I beat her not too much, you know—only a little," he said, looking up with an idiotic leer and blood-shot eyes. He had not got over his previous night's debauch, and I was glad to get rid of the wretch who ill-used his poor sick wife. Later in the day I walked round to see how Twine was, and found her seated on a mat inside the hut sewing, and not looking any worse; but she must have been far more seriously ill than I had imagined, as the next time I called—after an interval of a few days—I was shocked at the alteration in her appearance; she was on the bed, and Taboo was outside boiling water in a gipsy kettle. I beckoned him to me, and asked if his wife was really in a dangerous condition. "She die very sure," he said. "I very sorry for my Twine," and he brushed away some tears with the back of his hand. I hope they arose from the effect of grief, not orange rum.

Twine had told me that Etia's sad fate had prevented her from forming a similar connection, to avoid which she had married a native, yet of the two, hers seemed to me to be the harder. Etia had
at least escaped cruel blows from the heavy hand of a lazy drunkard.

Queen Pomare expressed a great desire to see the improvements made on the piece of land which A—— had purchased from her. He therefore proposed a visit to the plantation, and we accompanied Her Majesty, Ariifaite and their son Tomatoa to Morea. We started in separate whale-boats at daybreak, when the sea was calm, almost too calm, indeed, for after sunrise the heat became intense, and as there was no awning to protect our heads and faces, which umbrellas failed to do, by the time we reached Tiahuru we were nearly baked, as it had taken us four hours to cross, and I for one was glad of the chance to stretch my limbs, which were fearfully cramped.

In consequence of our not having been expected, the Tiahuru larder was empty, and we were half famished. Fortunately it did not take long to be replenished. Natives were sent off, and soon returned laden with a variety of fruit and young cocoa-nuts, with which we regaled ourselves until a more substantial repast could be provided. Presently men came in with fowls, fish, shrimps, breadfruit, taro, and feeiis, and a delicious meal they made, as they were cooked to perfection in the usual native oven.

Lake Tenae at certain seasons abounds with a salt-water fish called Ava; in flavour it resembles the salmon, but the flesh is white, not red or pink. In stormy weather immense shoals seek shelter in the lake, where they are caught and brought to
Tahiti for sale. The revenue is a profitable one to the Queen and Tairappa, who are joint owners of the lake, and share in the sale of its produce.

We resumed our journey, and reached Openohu just in time to escape a violent thunderstorm. We had parted from Pomare at Cook's Bay, where she stopped to collect her tax on the cocoa-nut groves, and consequently came in for the full benefit of the downpour, which never ceased throughout the night, and was likely to cause great disappointment to the natives on the plantation, who had been promised a feast in honour of Queen Pomare's visit to Openohu. The weather continued unfavourable during the morning, but in the afternoon the clouds dispersed, and the sun condescended to shine and absorb much of the unusual moisture which permitted the fête to come off with great éclat, as a novelty was introduced which pleased the Queen and her party. This was a national dance performed by the natives of Atiu, and a very effective dance it was. I thought it far more decent than the Tahitian Upa-Upa; at any rate, there was a unanimous demand for it to be repeated; after which we all retired to our quarters feeling that we had given and received pleasure.

Queen Pomare was always accompanied by a bevy of young native attendants, who invariably catered for themselves. There was no difficulty about doing this at Openohu, where the trees produced all descriptions of fruit and bread-fruit, while the river was equally liberal in fish, oysters, and shrimps. The royal family took their meals with us, but
Pomare never touched any animal food, save pork, and that she ate nearly raw, neither did she partake of butter, milk, cheese, or eggs. The simple native food was preferred, and, apart from the pig, I shared her Majesty's taste.

Pomare, like myself, considered the term Protectorate a misnomer in every sense of the word. She described many native customs hitherto unknown to me, among others the ceremony of bestowing voluntary contributions on the sovereign, which was only done on special occasions: for example, when visiting a district after a lengthened absence. The population collected together and, headed by their chief, went to receive the Queen at the point where she was expected to arrive, when a mat was spread on the shore for her Majesty to step on. The chief then expressed a few words of welcome, at the termination of which the natives one by one placed at her feet their gifts, which Pomare explained varied according to their station and means, but were usually provisions and cloth, rarely money, as they possessed very little, and that little they needed for themselves.

The state of the weather at Openohu precluded any attempt at excursions, whereas I had been anxiously looking forward to a row under the verdant arcade before leaving the plantation, for I considered it the greatest charm about the property. If I could not venture on the river I made up my mind to walk on its border, as I heard that M. F—— had had a road made up to the mineral spring for his own convenience. The natives said that he patronized the water very freely—he looked
a bilious subject. The footpath was extremely picturesque, skirting the river, but winding through groves of trees, which prevented me from extending my inspection, as the heavy drops from the leaves warned me to hasten back to the bungalow, where I found Pomare and A—playing écarté on the veranda; two of her maidens were squatted on the ground making cigarettes from the native tobacco and pandanus leaf. A whiff or two sufficed the Queen; she then passed it on to her neighbour, who did the same or smoked it out.

We availed ourselves of the first glimpse of blue midst the low-lying clouds to make the best of our way back to Tiahuru, which we had hoped to reach between the heavy showers, but no such luck awaited us. A short time after we started the sky darkened suddenly and it began to thunder ominously, between each startling clap were terrific flashes of lightning that nearly blinded one. The rain soon overtook us, and such rain! the literal bucketsful were truly exemplified. In the South Pacific when nature undertakes to favour the parched ground, it deals in no half measures. Our umbrellas were useless in such a deluge, and we arrived at Tairappas Point in a state of complete saturation. The weight of my wet clothes would not admit of my taking a step without assistance. I had actually to be supported out of the boat and led to the chief's house where we caparisoned ourselves in native garments borrowed for the occasion.

A young half-caste protégée accompanied us to Morea, and with her help I was metamorphosed into
a perfect native, and A—— looked the same in a *pareu* and shirt.

The prospect was gloomy enough at our forced detention at *Tiahuru*. The bay resembled a stormy ocean, while the breakers dashing fiercely over the reefs produced such a roaring sound that it made one shudder, and the violent gusts of wind were scarcely less terrific. There was comfort in the knowledge that no lives were exposed to the fury of the storm, beyond those of the poor Ava that were pointing their course to the lake, there to meet with something more fearful than the raging elements they fled from; escaping a supposed danger to fall into a real one—covetousness; each fish represented from three to six francs.

No boat could plough through such a sea, so none ventured forth, and we were temporary fixtures at Tiarappas Point, where we were as comfortable as it was possible to be under such circumstances. The *chef-lieu* was a wooden building and free of reptiles—such as frequent bamboo structures—the beds were also supportable, though stuffed with an herb that smelt most unpleasantly to me.

The royal party were in their element and did not in the least share our anxiety to get over to Papeeti. As a matter of choice, Pomare resided in a large bamboo house, and I am inclined to think the chief's family did the same; the natives always prefer the airy open bamboo to close wooden planks, precisely as they do mats on the earthy ground to a wooden flooring.

Pomare wanted me to be *Tauriimi*—shampooed,
Customs like history repeat themselves. Here in the Polynesian Islands the art of massage was as skilfully practised as at Aix les Bains in Savoy. Every native understands how to do it; and the Queen had her limbs frictioned in the approved style every night, which she said induced sleep. I managed to obtain a good deal of that blessing without the manipulation.

A clear blue firmament graced the Sunday, which is observed with great reverence among all the islands. The natives as a rule are regular attendants at church, where the women carry huge bibles and psalm-books. We followed some of them down the avenue lined with splendid specimens of the tormano tree. The church, constructed out of reef coral, stood at the extremity of the avenue; we remained outside listening to the chanting and watching the congregation busy taking notes from the sermon that was being preached by a native missionary in a language I scarcely understood, yet judged that it was in a fluent style and extemporized, a gift possessed by most native men.

We strolled to the lake and were surprised to find that, notwithstanding it being Sunday, there were a number of natives employed by Tairappa—which he was at church—to look after his fish interest. "The better the day the better the deed," occurred to me as I looked at the men up to their waists in water forming an enclosure with bamboo piles, by which means the Ava were imprisoned, never more to disport in their native element—the wide ocean.

The Ava is a beautiful looking fish, with large scintillating eyes and brilliant armour which flashed
with a variety of dazzling tints under the surface of the transparent water. It cut me to the heart to think of their pending fate, all of them, not one spared. It might have been fancy, but I thought there was a pleading expression in their lustrous eyes as they gazed at the men engaged in crowding them into so small a space. I went away determined to witness nothing more; but curiosity, that human instinct—I deny its being a woman's instinct—impelled me to return the next morning to see what followed, though a cruel massacre was not what I had anticipated; yet such was the fate of those beautiful fish. The men walked into the lake and cut throat after throat, which converted the limpid basin of water into a revolting pool of blood. I turned away disgusted at the sickening sight.

A small fleet of fish-laden boats proposed to start for Papeeti at midnight, and A— decided on accompanying them, though he strove to dissuade me from crossing over till the sea moderated, as it was still very turbulent. If he was tired of waiting so was I, and I made up my mind to risk it; arguing that if it were safe for others why should it be less so for me? Ah, I did not then know what it was to be on a rough sea in an open boat.

Tairappa's son was considered a first-rate pilot, and he was to take the lead. We bade adieu to our native friends, and took our seats in the whale boat. Our young protégée, Caroline, and I were wrapped in red flannel blankets to exclude the damp air, and Tairappa's last exclamation was to keep close to his son's boat—easier said than done. It was a pitch
dark night, and we only succeeded in keeping within sight of any of the boats until we reached the reefs, over which the waves dashed and covered us with spray. It was an appalling sound, and how we ever got through the pass without being swamped was a marvel; but by the time we had done this the other boats had disappeared, separated from us by gigantic waves that were more like stupendous pinnacles. I began to wish myself back at Tiahuru, as my young companion no doubt did, for I never saw a more terrified expression on any one's face. Hers was an extremely pretty one, quite gipsy-like, peeping out of the red blanket; her small mouth so firmly closed that I could not elicit a responsive word. Should these lines reach her eyes in that distant home where she is now a happy wife and mother, it will recall to mind the events of that never-to-be-forgotten night at sea in a whale boat, an experience neither of us were likely to repeat—if we knew it.

Our crew was composed of a wild-looking set of men, which did not tend to lessen my trepidation. They wore no clothes, merely a piece of cloth twisted round their loins, and a wreath of leaves on their heads; what with their naked limbs and bodies, their gesticulations and squabblings, it was a scene on which I should have preferred to close my eyes and not re-open them till we were safe at Papeeti.

The man who steered went by the name of "Mano'-war," in consequence of his having been a sailor on board a man-of-war when a lad. He was now middle-aged, and had little of the sailor about him, for he was seemingly uncertain what course to take. To our con-
sternation he kept continually changing his tactics, which resulted in the oarsmen at length exclaiming that we were going to be dashed against the reefs, and they refused to pull another stroke. They insisted that "Man-o'-war" did not know his bearings, as there was no passage whatever in the direction he steered, nothing but an impassable barrier of reefs before us. It was impossible to say what might be before us on such a dark night; the reefs certainly were, as there was no occasion to strain our ears to hear the terrific roar of the ocean breakers as they boomed over them. And I begged A—— not to insist on our venturing farther. He also recognized it to be the safer plan, and told the crew to rest on their oars till daylight, an order they hailed with delight, as they concluded that they were to be regaled with rum, which A—— repeated at certain intervals, much to my horror, as I knew how dangerous such a crew might become if they got drunk, and I tried to convey my disapproval and fears to A—— by sundry energetic kicks, which he never noticed, or if he did, attributed them to other causes.

The darkest hour precedes daylight. When it dawned our dangerous nearness to the reefs was realized. Ah! the boat's crew knew what they were about when they laid up their oars. We had gone entirely out of our proper course, which should have been through the Papeeti Passage, whereas we had to enter by the one at Punavia. Though a regular detour the row down was charming. Our eyes were then gladdened by the sight of land, and people moving about. We had survived the vicissitudes of
the previous night, which verified—"All's well that ends well."

Our returning to Papeeti on such a boisterous night was unexpected, and the servant had not made up the bed, but we were so tired, that unmindful of the absence of sheets or pillow cases we threw ourselves on the bare mattress, where I felt like remaining during a whole month, so intensely weary did I feel—worn out expressed it exactly—but something occurred which brought me to my feet with wonderful energy.

We had a pet cat that was in the habit of mewing at our bedroom door every morning. The moment we opened it she purred and rubbed herself against us in the most touching manner; pussy would then retire to the veranda, where she remained coiled up on a rocking chair till I came out, when she removed herself to my lap. I had never been partial to cats, but this one was irresistibly attractive and affectionate, but equally destructive. I would not like to name the number of valuable ornaments that privileged animal smashed in her endeavour to catch those large moths that have such brilliant eyes and long trumpets. She was equally successful in nabbing rats and mice, of which we had a superabundance, and she consequently escaped punishment for her disastrous springs after insects, as I feared to interfere with her natural instincts lest she might decline to oblige me in other matters. Pussy rarely put in an appearance until about seven a.m., I was therefore rather surprised the morning of our return from Morea to find her in my room as early as five,
when she gave us the most affectionate welcome, purring and rubbing her head on our faces to her heart's content, she then sprang off the bed, and presently we heard a peculiar noise—such as is made by very young kittens—in my room too, which astonished and alarmed me. I got up at once and began to search under the various articles of furniture. The servant had carelessly left a bonnet box outside instead of inside the wardrobe, the cover of which I found off, and in the crown of my Parisian chef d'œuvre reposed a small heap of newly born kittens. Pussy had taken a mean advantage of our unoccupied room.
CHAPTER XXXVI.

A BRITISH SAILOR.

A vessel from China bound to Peru put into port short of provisions. I fancy there must have been great distress on board, as the day she arrived a couple of Chinamen jumped overboard and were drowned. The supercargo consigned to A——, and in this way I made his acquaintance. He had gone from Peru to China in search of labour hands for the Chincha Islands. Dr. M—— was an Italian by birth, and was possessed of peculiar ideas. He related to me circumstances attending his recent voyage which made me shudder. He said that he had had no difficulty in obtaining the number of Chinamen he wanted, but the speculation had proved disastrous in consequence of contrary winds and calms, which had so prolonged the voyage that their supply of provisions had fallen short. When he recognized the impossibility to satisfy so many mouths, he decided to decrease the number by administering what he facetiously termed
un boisson rafraîchissant. This proved so efficacious, that after a certain interval he prescribed a repetition of the poisoned cup. In answer to my exclamation of horror, he asked whether I did not think it more humane to do that, than allow them to die of starvation? I declined to discuss the problem then, but I now question whether it was not more humane to cause a speedy death by a 'boisson rafraîchissant' than a lingering one of agony for want of proper nourishment.

I judged by Dr. M—'-s conversation that political motives had induced him to leave his own sunny artistic country for the equally sunny one of South America. He used to speak in the most disrespectful terms of the late Pope, and delighted in naming the meanest of his possessions Pio nono.

For reasons best known to himself, Dr. M—- did not return in the vessel to Peru. He left the Captain to tell the ugly tale of bad management, and grievous loss to his employers. Most of the living freight that had not been tampered with, either died natural deaths, or committed suicide. Out of the hundreds that had been shipped at Hong-Kong, half-a-dozen or so were left, and these the doctor claimed as his special property. He retired with them to Morea, where he settled, and eventually acquired a good deal of property, as well as popularity.

In the absence of hotels, one was frequently called upon to receive at one's house people who came to visit the island. In this way an English gentleman was the recipient of our hospitality for a far longer period than we had at first anticipated. Mr. B—- was a pleasant,
and accomplished man, but had a peculiarly effeminate voice in speaking, though it became an agreeable falsetto when he sang. He was an excellent musician; and his music was such a treat to us that we did not object to his prolonged visit, though others resented it. Our French friends were particularly outspoken on the subject of Mr. B—'s imposing on our kindness, though it was no concern of theirs. A— and I used to be highly entertained at the opinions we heard expressed of our visitor, who remained nearly two years at Tahiti. When Mr. B— did make up his mind to tear himself away from the island, he consulted me about securing a passage on a French transport, which was to sail with troops for France. I advised him not to attempt such a thing, as his application was almost certain to be rejected; but if even accorded, his life on board would be rendered unbearable by those officers who had treated him discourteously on shore. He accordingly abandoned the intention, and eventually sailed for Australia.

There were no dentists established at Papeeti, which was a great deprivation for those who suffered from toothache. It fell to my lot to have an excruciating one; for two days and nights, I was incessantly cramming into the cavity every remedy I could think of—salt, lemon, cloves, eau de Cologne, creosote, &c., &c. A— said that I gave none of them fair play, that I was too impatient. All very fine for him to preach, when he had no nerve in his head afflicted with Saint Vitus's dance, on which to practice. Finally I had to send for Dr. Guillasse to extract my wretched
tooth, and if ever he merited the cognomen of "Jackass," it was on that occasion. Had I not been in such intense pain, I could not have resisted from laughing outright at his gestures and absurd antics, before he could make up his mind as to the most favourable position in which to operate.

I sat on a chair facing the light waiting in agony and fright, whilst the doctor took a leisurely survey of my head, from the front, then at the back, still unsatisfied, he came to my side, and ultimately concluded to place himself astride of me. I could well imagine the ridiculous figure he presented sitting as it were on my lap, which he was forced to do, in consequence of his legs being so short. His appearance and gestures struck me in a ludicrous light, until he began to shake the tooth—much as a cat would a mouse—and broke it when I uttered the most terrific scream, which so startled the bungler, that he nearly capsized. Quickly recovering his footing, he exclaimed, "Mon Dieu, pour si peu de chose." Whatever might have been his opinion, his awkwardness had caused the tooth to ache worse than ever, yet I had to submit to his resuming operations in the same absurd position. And to think that I had another defective tooth in my head; but I was determined to make no further calls on Dr. Guillasse in that line of surgery. Fortunately in my hour of need, Captain Blackett arrived at Papeeti, and I sent for him as he sometimes acted for others in the capacity of dentist; besides which, I knew him to be powerful enough to draw an elephant's tusk, and he consented to do his best for me.
I sat on the veranda with my feet on a low rail, while Captain Blackett balanced himself on the upper one, waiting for me to summon up the required courage. A—— was also on hand to support my head, looking as if he didn’t like it. I insisted on examining the instrument of torture which Captain Blackett was endeavouring to hide from me, and no wonder, such a formidable concern as it was. The old-fashioned key was soiled too. I asked if it had been washed, since he had used it last? At which he roared with laughter, assuring me that he was very particular about the cleanliness of his instruments. I thought he must have overlooked the one in question, and commenced a vigorous polishing—anything to gain time, as the tooth had suddenly ceased to ache. When I had almost made up my mind not to have it out, it began to throb worse than ever. Shutting my eyes, I heroically opened my mouth. Oh, what a wrench! I felt as if the top of my head was also being screwed off. When I opened my eyes and glanced round, the servant woman stood by me, but A—— and Captain Blackett had vanished. I though it very unfeeling on both their parts to go and leave me alone, at such a time, especially so in A——. I sat there nursing my wrath while the native woman swathed my cheek in cotton wool to prevent it from swelling she said. When I looked in the glass and saw my reflection, I came to the conclusion, that, if that didn’t make A—— thoroughly regret his conduct, nothing ever would. He came home late, and said, “Your ridiculous dilly-dallying gave Blackett and me such an infernal toothache, that
we had to get Robertson, the chemist, to draw them.”
I hadn’t a word to say, for such an exhibition of sympathy was, I thought, out of the common. When I next saw Captain Blackett, he shook his finger, exclaiming, “Don’t you ask me to extract another tooth for you.”
Thank heaven, I had no occasion, though I had much more confidence in Captain Blackett’s surgical and medical knowledge than I had in Dr. Guillasse’s, who had earned for the cemetery the sobriquet of \textit{Le Jardin du Père Guillasse}, in consequence of its containing so many of his patients. He overdosed everybody with laudanum; it was his favourite remedy for all ailments, both outwardly and inwardly. My eyes became inflamed, and he prescribed it internally, and as a lotion; instead of getting better they got worse. A—— was absent, and Captain Blackett called, when I made him examine my eyes, and told him what I was applying. “Pitch it away,” he said; “it is doing you more harm than good.” I thought the same; it had increased rather than allayed the inflammation. He made me another cooling lotion, composed of sulphate of zinc and water, which effected a perfect cure in the course of a few hours.

A most ridiculous incident occurred one evening while I was walking with my former maid, Margaret. We were strolling on the beach in the direction of Fairiuti, unaware that a lot of sailors from an English man-of-war were on shore; as we passed by a \textit{cabaret} one made a rush at me, exclaiming, “Eliza, my darling, give us a kiss, and then come and have a drink.” Frightened to death, I made a bolt, in my terror I scarcely knew where I was going, when I
felt myself in some one's encircling arms! Heaven be praised, not in Eliza's lover's, but in Madame Pivert's, the wife of the man who kept the cabaret. M. Pivert had collared the offending tar, and was abusing him in a manner he did not understand; but he took his treatment very good-naturedly, perhaps he was puzzled at the change in his Eliza, who most probably had not always been so coy, and wondered what the devil the Frenchman was talking about. In effecting my escape from the outstretched arms of my would-be lover, I had lost my hat. Margaret had picked it up, and stood there splitting her sides with laughter, in which I joined when M. Pivert said to me, "Ne vous effrayez pas Madame, ce n'est qu'un sot de matelot Anglais."

We were frequently invited to entertainments on board men-of-war lying in port, where there were invariably other ladies beside myself; but, when the corvette Bayonnaise, commanded by A—'s old friend, Captain le Brice, called at Papeeti en route to New Caledonia, and we dined with him, I found that I was the only lady among a lot of gentlemen. I was much pleased with Captain le Brice; he had charming manners, and acted the attentive host to perfection. Nothing remarkable occurred during dinner till the finger bowls were placed on the table, in which were small tumblers filled with tepid water, flavoured with peppermint. I had never before seen this addition, and wondered what it meant. It was not long before I saw to what use they were put, for the gentlemen—save A—helped themselves to the tumbler, and after rinsing their mouths with the perfumed con-
tents, ejected it into the finger bowls. M. le Brice went into fits of laughter at my look of astonished disgust, "C'est sans doute la première fois que Madame a vu cette opération?" he asked. "Et vous le trouvez shocking?" "Oui, vraiment shocking," I replied, amused at his English expression, which the French apply as the most emphatic and expressive in the language.

The morning on which the Bayonnaise sailed I received a large case with M. le Brice's compliments; it contained the set of finger bowls and tumblers. He had evidently not forgotten the amusing part they had played at his little dinner, and intended them as a souvenir. I made use of the bowls, but suppressed the tumblers.

The Mauritius gentleman, so highly recommended to A—— by M. de la Ronciere, abandoned his post as manager of our embryo sugar plantation, and left Openohu at a moment's notice. No doubt dearth of funds landed him at Tahiti, en route to his native island, where he had accepted a position which he was incompetent to fulfil, so as to enable him to obtain the means to proceed on his journey.

M. F——'s work had all to be done over again by Dr. M——, who consented to take charge of the plantation until a more experienced person could be found, which was a difficult matter at Tahiti; neither was there any reliance to be placed on foreign importations, as exemplified by M. F—— and M. W——. Dr. M—— knew enough to keep the canes free of weeds, and to replenish them when necessary, which was all that could be reasonably expected of
him. A— at length began to doubt the Governor's sincerity or good intentions, as he had failed to redeem a single promise, either with respect to providing labour hands for the plantation, or affording him assistance of any description; every vessel at his command was employed for the benefit of "Terre Eugénie." Mr. Stewart exercised so much influence over the De la Roncieres that they acceded to his every demand.

A— endured such an accumulation of unforeseen annoyances with regard to his plantation, that it was deemed advisable for him to leave Tahiti for the benefit of a sea voyage. It so happened that just then the Peruvian brig—rechristened the Papeeti—was lying idle, and A— decided to combine business with his contemplated trip to California, and freight her with a cargo of oranges. I rather enjoyed the prospect of that journey. I always did rejoice over the prospect of change, though I was equally rejoiced to get back to the island. How true is it that there is no place like home, be it a hovel or a palace, and I never appreciated the charms of mine more thoroughly than after a temporary absence, when Tahiti looked more lovely, the mountains grander, the foliage greener, and the flowers brighter than ever.

There is a pleasant sound about oranges and lemons that savours of the tropics; they bring to mind the trees on which they grow, with the small deep green leaves and the fragrant blossoms. The district of Papeuriri abounded in such fruit, and it was there that we were to take in our cargo. The captain of the Papeeti was a morose-looking German,
and the mates were of the same nationality, but the crew were Roratongians. Our servants, Luis and Puhia, accompanied us in the capacity of cook and steward. We had decided to do this as a precaution against being made uncomfortable during the voyage, and a wise precaution it proved.

The Papeeti was a vessel of 500 tons burden, with flush deck; the saloon and cabins were below, and sombre enough to depress the most exuberantly inclined. As to odours, bilge water predominated over every other ill smell. My survey tempted me to decline going in the delectable brig, but when I thought of A—— left to the companionship of such a sullen captain, I determined to risk even asphyxiation. We spent a few delightful days at Papeuriri. There, as elsewhere, verdant bowers were formed by trailing vines, sylvan retreats decorated by nature's hand, flowers peeped out from satiny leaves, and emitted a perfume that no Atkins's extract could equal. I delighted in those fragrant nooks near some flowing stream, lolling on the ground,—covered with mats, and refreshments of fruit within reach. If that was not luxuriating in idleness, I have still to learn what was. Then the bathe in a limpid brook, surrounded by scented exotics. What trees of mimosa, rhododendrons, and bushes of gardenias were there. And I seated on a smooth moss-covered stone under the water, which reached to my neck. If that was not the height of enjoyment, I wonder what is? While I remained stationery others leaped into the middle of the river, and performed all manner of odd feats. Happy girls, who were to remain amidst such
Arcadian scenes, revelling in its attractive features, whilst I—fortunately I did not foresee the events to follow.

The fruit crates were all on board, and we were merely waiting for Captain Binden's return from Papeeti with the ship's papers to sail away from the dolce far niente of Papeuriri.
CHAPTER XXXVII.

A COWARDLY CAPTAIN.

E left a sunny, calm harbour, to meet an extremely fresh breeze outside the reefs. The more the vessel rolled and pitched the more intolerable became the smell of the bilge water. I was already suffering from a headache, which was aggravated by A— remarking that he had never before travelled with such a surly brute of a captain; careless, too, for in chasing the live stock forward the finest went overboard through an open gangway, which should have been previously closed. This did not tend to improve A—'s frame of mind, but when the captain a few days afterwards told him that he had no intention of going to San Francisco in an unseaworthy vessel like the Papeeti, it nearly drove him beside himself, and I felt very much in the same condition. An unseaworthy vessel, good heaven! that was the very last thing I had dreamed of. A— would not admit that it was so; he said the Papeeti
A COWARDLY CAPTAIN.

was capable of going to any port, no stauncher vessel sailed from Tahiti—that was not saying much. I scarcely knew what to think; the beams creaked as if a screw were loose somewhere, and I suggested that we should return to Tahiti, but when A—— proposed it to the captain he declined to go back. He said he had a perishable cargo to consider, and that there were other places where fruit would fetch as good a price as in California. We concluded he had his own reasons for not going there, but the mischief was that the man could not make up his mind where to go; and A—— was in a fever of anxiety, knowing us to be sailing first in one direction and then in another, without any fixed destination in view. Could any position have been more lamentable, more uncomfortable? The incertitude and delay in a broiling latitude did not coincide with the captain's concern for his perishable cargo—as it was fast deteriorating; far more rapidly, indeed, than if we had returned to the island in the first instance, and shipped another captain.

To cap the history of misadventure, A—— became seriously ill, which impelled me to reason with Captain Binden on the ill-advised course he had pursued. I said that he ought to have expressed his doubts about the vessel before leaving Tahiti, not wait to do so till we had actually sailed; and that his present indecision had a most injurious effect, not only on A——, but the cargo which he professed to study. I flatter myself that I talked to the point and in the proper spirit, for my interference was not resented, as I had half expected it would be. The
The captain's vacillating mind was finally made up to sail for New Zealand. We had then been ten days at sea floundering about in smooth water, a very different state of affairs to when we tacked ship to steer for Auckland, and experienced a contrary wind and heavy swell, which set the beams creaking to such an extent that I was driven half distracted. Unlike ripe oranges and lemons, over-ripe ones exhale effluvia of a detestable nature, that, with other noxious odours, formed a compound extract impossible to be surpassed. I had never realized such a condition, being thick enough to cut with a knife, until I experienced it on board the Papeeti. A— was confined to his berth with fever, and when he heard of the captain's intention he absolutely groaned, and said, if the fellow knew anything about the coast of New Zealand he must be aware that it was far more dangerous than that of California. As it proved, he really knew nothing about it, for he had to call at the island of Roratonga, to procure if possible a chart, though he made as an excuse the necessity for a further supply of fresh provisions. The short visit we made to Roratonga, was the one pleasant break in our wearisome voyage. It is a remarkably high island, and the mountains, which slope straight down to the sea, are clothed from summit to base with tropical growth. We landed in a boat and the vessel laid off and on while we were on shore, where we were soon surrounded by natives anxious to traffic for the provisions we required; but when they learnt that we were Luppa's former master and mistress, they declined to accept payment for two boatloads of fruit,
vegetables, fowls, and little pigs sent on board as gifts from Luppa's friends, in return for which they received a suitable present from A——. I had heard that Luppa was of high birth, but I never realized the fact till we visited her native island.

Captain Binden succeeded in raking up an old torn chart from a white settler, who made him pay well for it, and the nature of the information he obtained about the coast of New Zealand could not have been satisfactory, as from that time forth he ceased to take his meals with me in the saloon. He excused himself on the plea of a severe rheumatic attack, but Puhia, who served him in his state-room, reported that he was not ill. When I questioned him he said, "Captain no sick, read the Bible plenty, very much fraid; funk, you know," and I never doubted Puhia's assertion. He was a courageous fellow, and such a comfort to me, indeed I can scarcely imagine what I should have done without his reassuring presence on board that detestable vessel; with her cowardly captain, wretched mates, and dismal saloon. No greater misfortune could have befallen us than having sailed with such a set of contemptible men. A timid captain is many degrees worse than an over-venturesome one, and I foresaw an accumulation of misery in store for us during that untoward voyage. How it was going to terminate exercised most of our minds, for the captain rarely left his state-room, and when he did, he hobbled on crutches that had been made for him by the ship's carpenter. His seeming infirmity only produced a smile from Puhia, who reiterated, "He no sick; he only very
much funk." I was feeling wretchedly down-hearted, and had the greatest difficulty to assume a confidence in the vessel, which I was very far from experiencing. No change could have been more prejudicial to A—- than the one we had embarked on. He was so depressed and prostrated by fever, that I was alarmed and helpless in rousing him, as I felt uncommonly low-spirited myself—could not have felt lower if I had tried—especially after venturing on deck one day to inhale the fresh air and get a little exercise, as the weather was mild and balmy, when my attention was immediately drawn to a large boat, on which the carpenter and mates were at work. Luis stood near at hand watching them with an interest that surprised me. I asked what they were doing, though I had made up my mind that they were repairing it in readiness for us to go on shore. My astonishment may be imagined when I received for answer that they were getting it in trim before the vessel sunk, so that we might have a chance to save our lives. "But why should you suppose, that she is likely to sink?" I asked.—"Because she leaks like a sieve, and hasn't a sound timber in her," replied the first mate. "I guess we know a thing or two more nor you about this here craft." He staggered me, and I turned to little Luis for confirmation, "Es es la verdad" (It is quite true); "Somos enteramente perdido" (We are going to be lost). I went below and repeated the conversation to A—- who ridiculed their fears, and insisted that we were safe enough if the captain kept clear of the coast. He had already cautioned him against approaching too near until after rounding the rocks known as the "Three Kings."
A COWARDLY CAPTAIN.

Captain Binden no doubt anticipated some dreadful catastrophe, and A—— feared that that might induce him to get as close as possible to land before it did occur, and this accounted for the timely preparation of the boat. I examined the horizon, morn, noon, and night, watching for the undesirable appearance of dark clouds rising in a certain direction, and whatever I saw or did not see, I faithfully reported to A—— who was unable to leave his berth, anxious as he was to reconnoitre for himself.

Puhia's was the only pleasant looking face on board, and the one whose opinion I most relied on. When he brought me my coffee early in the morning, I greeted him with, "Well, Puhia?" "No too much water in the ship," he assured me; "natives no afraid, only captain and mates, and Luis; he cry plenty now, no sing no more." This Puhia said with a grin of absolute pleasure. A brave man himself, he held a poltroon in contempt, and felt no sympathy for poor little trembling Luis. I did, for I was such an inveterate coward myself. About daybreak one morning I started up, fancying that the wind must have increased during the night. I hurried up the companion way to study the state of the weather, and discovered an ominous darkening in the direction of the "Three Kings," a piece of unwelcome information for A——, who told me to send the captain to him. I crossed the saloon and knocked at his door. He must have been asleep, as he did not answer my call; so I shook the handle and cried out that the wind was rising, and A—— wished to speak to him at once. He then whined forth that he was in great pain, and
unable to move. I insisted that he would have to do so sooner or later, as we were evidently in for a terrible storm. My earnest tone brought him to his senses and feet at the same time. A— had also scrambled out of bed, and when the captain appeared hobbling on his crutches, he accused him of having done the very thing he had cautioned him not to do; that his ignorance of the coast was clearly proved, otherwise we should never have been in our present position. To all of which Captain Binden listened in silence. The sails were being reefed, and the wind began to whistle in terrific gusts; torrents of rain drove A— below. He said it might only be a passing squall, but he feared that we were in for a gale, and a gale it was; one that compelled us to be hove-to, under close-reefed jib and topsail. The storm raged for several days and nights, during which time, either captain or mate were continually coming into the saloon with the sounding rod to show me, with what rapidity the water was increasing in the hold, and that the vessel could not stand out much longer, but that fortunately the lifeboat was in readiness. I told them both, that I had no intention of availing myself of it; if the vessel sunk, I would sink with her. I spoke bravely, but I did not feel brave; I shuddered at the idea of coming to grief in such a manner. The pitiless ocean was abhorrent to me, and I made A— swear solemnly that if the worse came to the worse, he would give me a good dose of laudanum beforehand. The poor fellow was again confined to his berth. and I was left alone to indulge in appalling reflections. Captain-
Binden, at the commencement of the storm, told me, "That all in the power of man had been done for the vessel, and her fate was as God willed."

Ill as A—— was he never lost his belief in the soundness of the Papeeti, neither did the natives. Puhia was as sanguine as ever, and at this juncture did double duty as cook and steward; for Luis was altogether too unnerved and miserable to think of anything but his own imminent danger. He wandered about muttering, "Ah le maldito buque" (Oh, the accursed ship). He was the most pitiable object imaginable, with his head confined in a red handkerchief, and wearing all the clothes he could pile on, so as to protect himself as far as possible from exposure in the lifeboat, for Luis shared all the fears of the captain and mates, and was prepared to quit the sinking Papeeti as soon as the others did, what he could not wear, he carried in a bundle. Luis was very neat and methodical, and forgot nothing that might be of use in the approaching disaster. He had never been in such a painful position before, and had to make his experience of an open boat in a stormy ocean. I had made mine already. The crossing from Tiahuru to Tahiti was too fresh in my memory to incline me to repeat the experiment, unless we had been in sight of land, whereas we were then fully three hundred miles distant.

I can return thanks as glibly as any one, but am completely tongue-tied when it comes to asking favours. In the appreciation of blessings bestowed on me, prayers rush spontaneously to my lips, but when in trouble I brood; strive as I may, I can
frame no petition, and such was the case during the terrible days and wakeful nights that the gale lasted. Captain Binden did all the praying, but I can never believe that our preservation was due to the lip service of such a mean, selfish, unmanly being.

Shall I ever forget the revulsion of feeling I experienced, when Puhia came to me with the cheerful greeting of "Matai miti" (fair wind)? The storm was over, and we had not been wrecked. I had been in perilous situations before at sea, but in passenger vessels, when there is a certain sort of solace in having company in distress.

Puhia had undertaken to make a thorough investigation of the leaks in the hold, and he found that the whole thing had been an exaggeration; the bottom of the vessel was peculiarly constructed, it sank in the middle, where the water collected, leaving the sides dry. He concluded by saying, "Pretty soon go on shore: Luis very glad. Me show him sides all right." "Caramba, toda eran mentiras" (Plague on them, it was all lies), said Luis, looking radiant, and as brave as a lion, when once satisfied that the vessel wasn't as rotten as he had been led to believe. He immediately resumed his work, killed fowls, and gave us a first-rate dinner; and during the evening he entertained the crew with Canciones paisanos (national songs) to the accompaniment of his long-neglected guitar.

No one can enter into the merits of the foregoing pages unless they have been similarly circumstanced, to feel as it were on the very brink of a watery grave and then to be unexpectedly rescued, saved; never
does life appear so sweet as then, when heart and brain overflow with gladness, and thrill with pæans of thanksgiving.

The next day we sighted innumerable low islands, and sailed under a fair breeze past the big and little barriers; suddenly turning a point we entered a land-locked bay, in view of Auckland. Our astonishment may be conceived when Captain Binden appeared dressed to go on shore, and walking without crutches. Either he had never been afflicted with rheumatism, or the sight of terra firma had effected a miraculous cure.

Newspaper reporters came on board the moment we dropped anchor to interview us with regard to the recent gale. They announced that a number of large ships had come into port either dismasted and leaking, or with their sails blown to pieces, whereas we arrived in much the same condition as when we left Tahiti; nevertheless nothing would have induced me to return to the islands in the Papeeti; the creaking beams had disenchanted even A——, who subsequently sold her at auction for a very fair price.
CHAPTER XXXVIII,

SENT ADRIFT.

My first experience of Auckland was rather amusing. A—— went on shore to secure rooms at the Wynward House and found that there were none vacant for the moment. He then called on the French Consul with the object of discharging his hypocritical captain,—the Papeeti sailed under the French Protectorate flag. While at the Consulate he alluded to our dreadfully long voyage and expressed regret at not having been able to find rooms on shore so as to get me off the vessel as soon as possible.

"Bring Madame here," said the Consul; "my wife will be charmed to have her company."

A—— was no less so at the invitation, which he accepted in my name, and hastened back to the vessel to fetch me. Dinner was nearly ready, but he would not wait for it; the sooner we were off the better, he said; besides which the Consul and his
wife would of course expect us to dine with them. Putting a few things into a hand-bag, and with Finessa tucked under my arm, I was bundled into the boat and we rowed to shore. The roads were fearfully muddy, and we had to walk to the Consulate. How A— in his wretched state of health could have undertaken to do it twice over astonished me; surely there must have been some wonderful healing property in the atmosphere of Auckland?

The Consulate was perched on a high hill—sky-high it appeared to me in the waning light—and by the time I reached it I was so tired that I could scarcely stand. The Consul received us and expressed the utmost gratification at making my acquaintance. I was equally grateful for the chair he handed me, into which I sank with a sigh of relief at being settled for that evening, whatever we might propose to do the next day, for there was a stiff, unhomelike air about the drawing-room that struck me unpleasantly. The Consul apologized for the absence of his wife, but assured me that she would be home very shortly. We must have been there quite an hour before the lady did return. A tall, severe-looking woman, who certainly was very much less overpowered at making my acquaintance than her husband had been. After a little conversation—very little on my part, as I was weary and hungry—she rang the bell and ordered refreshments to be brought in, which consisted of a diminutive plate of diminutive biscuits, and some orgeat and water. If anything could have convinced A— that we were neither expected to dine nor
spend the night there, the introduction of that tray did it. No doubt their own dinner was being delayed through our prolonged visit, and it was intended as a polite hint to curtail it; at any rate I accepted it as such. Poor A—looked woefully crestfallen; it was hard to say whether he had deceived himself or been deceived, though I was inclined to believe that Madam—disapproved of her husband's invitation and chose to ignore it.

The night was pitch dark and rainy, and we had the greatest difficulty to keep our footing through the slimy slippery mud. A—-informed me that he had no intention of returning to the vessel, that he would try the Wynward House again, and persuade them to do the best they could for us. We had, however, some difficulty in finding the Wynward House, not for the want of asking, as we inquired the way of every one we met: when A—-neglected to do so I exercised my tongue, but each individual sent us off in a different direction, until I began to fear that we were doomed to wander about the streets all night. A lad finally agreed to show us the way for a consideration. What a country and what a people, thought I.

A—- made no mistake in deciding to try the Wynward House again, as a room was just then being vacated, in fact, the gentleman's valise was still in the room when we entered, and it was well that I had made up my mind to make the best of a bad business, otherwise I might have objected to becoming the next occupant. I am a good judge of tobacco, and can vouch that a very inferior
quality had been smoked by the departing visitor in that ill-furnished den, which contained a wooden bedstead, ditto table, washstand, and two rickety chairs, no carpets; but even for such as these, I was truly thankful. Almost before the stranger's trunk had been removed I had slipped out of my wet muddy garments, leaving them in a little heap on the floor, and rushed into the bed; its narrowness was suggestive of one or the other of us having a spill during the night, so I concluded to resign all risk to the one better able to bear it, and unselfishly took the wall side.

A— borrowed a pair of slippers from the proprietor. It would have been impossible for his trousers to be in the same condition as my clothes, unless he had sat down in the mud, as he had taken the precaution to turn them up away above the knee—perhaps it will be safer to say as high as he could get them—and a droll figure he presented as we stood in the hall of the hotel. Fortunately, A— had been seen in the daytime under different circumstances, otherwise I do believe we would have been refused admittance, for a seedier looking pair would have been hard to find.

We were half famished, but had to content ourselves at that late hour with tea and bread and butter; they brought us a huge loaf, and we ate it all. After we had finished our frugal yet acceptable meal, A— produced his meerschaum, and I exploded with laughter at the recollection of our consulate fiasco. I decided that we had made a lucky escape, and took a mental note that if
Madame — called on me I would not return her visit. She did call, and I kept to my resolution. Our first contretemps did not prevent my liking Auckland, where we were the recipients of unexpected hospitality through the kindness of a lady who had known A—— in former years. Mrs. Sheppard was elderly, and her first visit to me did not encourage her to repeat it.

The dining and sitting-room were combined in the Wynward House, and on the occasion of Mrs. Sheppard’s visit it was undergoing a thorough cleansing, which it stood sadly in need of, though it necessitated my visitor being ushered into our ill-furnished, carpetless bedroom. In the case of self-preservation—which I rarely neglect—I made it a rule to sit on the bed, but feeling that I could not treat a stranger with such scant ceremony as to invite her to take a seat beside me, I drew forth one of the two rickety chairs, which gave way from under her and she descended to a more undignified position than the bed. I had great difficulty in raising the amazed lady from the floor, but none in expressing my consternation and regret for what had happened, which I did as humbly as if I had been the proprietress of the hotel and personally responsible for the dilapidated condition of the furniture.

After this unpleasant accident I was more than ever anxious to get possession of a sitting and bedroom on the ground floor, then occupied by a newly-married couple from Melbourne, whose honeymoon seemed to me an interminable affair, for the simple
reason that I had a deep interest in the matter of duration, as the apartment was promised to us when vacant, which kept me in a state of ferment, as the occupants appeared in no hurry to vacate it. I hailed with delight the day on which the interesting pair took their departure, when I forthwith moved downstairs. A—— had sent up some sailors from the Papeeti to carry down the trunks, and after they had left, I missed Finessa. She had been washed and combed, and sported a new ribbon, in honour of our change of apartment. Thinking she might have returned to the old room, I ran upstairs to see; but she was not there, and the conviction forced itself on me that my darling little pet had been stolen. Seizing my hat, I went out to hunt up A——, who had gone down to the docks. I stopped everybody I met en route to inquire whether they had noticed a stray dog, as I had lost mine, not forgetting to add a string of panegyrics in describing my beautiful Finny, but no one had remarked such a dog. A butcher boy came along swinging an empty basket to a tune he was whistling, and I did not omit to accost and question him. It so happened that he had seen what he termed a white pup, with shaved paws, following at the heels of some foreign men. He was a bright, intelligent-looking lad, and I promised him a sovereign if he could recover the dog and bring him to our hotel. He nodded in assent, and resumed his whistling. I found A—— on board the Papeeti, and he refused to believe that the sailors had enticed the dog away. Captain Binden was present, and he also ridiculed my fixed idea, and had the impertinence to
say, "What would the natives want with such a useless animal?" On our return to the hotel I asked A—— to write a paragraph to be inserted in the next morning's paper, offering a suitable reward for my Finessa, over the composition of which we had an argument as I objected to his applying the term "slut" to my pet, and he ridiculed my suggestion of female dog. All satisfaction in our pretty apartment was entirely marred by the loss of Finessa, which I unceasingly deplored. During the whole afternoon I sat hoping against hope, and when A—— ventured to inquire whether I was not going in to dinner, I nearly snapped his head off for alluding to anything so prosaic as eating when I was so miserable, with my face disfigured by tears, for I had shed oceans of them over the uncertain fate of my affectionate little companion. Some women contrive to weep becomingly, which I never could accomplish, as hideous grimaces and swollen features are the inevitable accompaniments to my lachrymation. My woebegone plight continued till about nine o'clock p.m., when my door was suddenly opened, and a half-dozen eager voices exclaimed, "Your dog is all right, come and see her." I did not wait for a second invitation, but hurried after them to the kitchen, where the butcher boy stood. "Here is your pup," he cried, opening his jacket to show me Finessa under his arm trembling with fright,—and smelling overpoweringly of gin.

The boy explained that after working hours he had gone to the tavern which sailors generally frequented, and found the proprietress's daughter standing outside,
who told him there was such a pretty pup in there for sale, and she hoped her mother would buy it; he coaxed the child to push the door a wee bit open, so that he might see the pup. She complied, and he saw poor Finny slinking away from the rough men; one more tipsy than the others, gave her a kick, which sent her rolling to the door, where the boy stood ready to catch her, and succeeded in doing so. He then took to his heels and ran as fast as his legs would carry him to the hotel. Besides his reward he went off rejoicing with a huge package of sweets. “That boy has done a good day's work,” was the general observation, in which I agreed.

There were some remarkably pleasant people at the Wynward House, and I thoroughly appreciated the sympathy they had shown me, even in the form of tea and muffins, which some of the gentlemen had thoughtfully provided, and had had served in the dining-room for my especial benefit. “Bring the dog with you,” they said, and so I did, for I couldn't bear her out of my sight. “But I can't partake of these things alone, you must join me.” I protested unavailingly. It was really delightful to see such kind beaming faces seated round the table watching me appease my hunger, as they were, of course, well aware that I had missed every meal since breakfast, and I did justice to the pile of hot, buttered muffins; if I left one in the dish, it was by mistake.

A— placed himself under the treatment of a very clever homœopathic doctor, who effected a complete cure, and converted me into such a firm believer in homœopathy that I invested in a medicine
case, and on our return to the islands prescribed for ourselves, with a certain amount of success.

The fashionable promenade at Auckland was on the Wynward Pier, facing our hotel, and presented a gay scene every fine afternoon. I occasionally accompanied a lady from the Wynward House to the rendezvous; she was the wife of a military man stationed in the interior, and a charming person. Her devotion to her young husband was very touching; she had come to Auckland for her accouchement, but expressed herself as utterly miserable without him—he was such a dear. I had always considered myself an infallible judge of character, yet I had been mistaken in this instance, as my charming lady proved to be one of the vilest of her sex, an unprincipled woman, who had abandoned her husband and children for the sake of another man. I can make excuses for an unhappy wife, who is anxious to escape from a domestic tyrant, but none for a mother who forsakes her babies. And this light-hearted inhuman creature had eloped with an officer in her husband's regiment, leaving three children behind her in India. Some one at the Wynward House forwarded to me to Tahiti the full particulars of the court-martial, which, as might be expected, resulted in the offender being cashiered; what became of the wretched woman I am unable to say.

We returned to Tahiti in the Riatea, a brigantine of A—-'s; the captain was a German, and a very timid navigator; it was truly ridiculous to see how hurriedly every sail was furled in anticipation of squalls which never reached us, but put us to the inconvenience of
a prolonged voyage. Every fleeting cloud alarmed Captain Goltz, otherwise he was not objectionable like Captain Binden. Nevertheless, I was delighted when we parted company, and could again revel in the charms of my Tahitian home, which struck me as especially bewitching after my tedious journeyings. Our property at Peri looked lovely beyond description. Delpiere was an industrious man, and kept the grounds in splendid order. Such a profusion of flowers greeted my eyes, while the miniature island resembled more than ever a huge bunch of exotics that had settled on the water; even the bathing-house had improved during our absence, as the increase of foliage now completely hid the bamboos inside as well as outside, and the perfume from the mass of jessamines and scented passion flowers, was simply heavenly. We drove to Peri regularly every morning, and resumed our Sunday déjeuners in the fragrant bower.

We found Captain Blackett established in business at Papeeti. He had removed his family from Bora-Bora, and had settled them at Taunai in the house we had occupied on a previous occasion, where I felt quite at home, and frequently visited them when I was out riding or driving. I liked the Blackets, which sentiment did not extend to Mrs. Blackett's sister Dolorés, nor her husband, for both of whom I entertained a thorough contempt. Unhappily it is not always the most worthy who are the most successful, for Captain Blackett was very much less so than his brother-in-law. His island trade had dwindled away, and he looked very down-hearted,
having contracted debts that were causing him anxiety, and being in pecuniary difficulties, he was induced to accept a contract, which under other circumstances I am sure he would have declined, as it was to collect native labourers at so much per head to work at "Terre Eugénie." I disapproved of the undertaking, and tried to dissuade him from it. I pointed out that entering into such a trade was not the way to retrieve his fallen fortunes, that it was more likely to bring him bad, instead of good luck. I little thought at the time that my prophecy would be verified. Captain Blackett was incapable of cruelty, unless entrapping unsuspecting natives be deemed such. When once the natives were on board they were sure to be treated kindly; but he needed money, and he told me frankly that he was not going to be too scrupulous about the mode of enticing the people on board.

Food and clothing do not always compensate for the loss of liberty, as Captain Blackett found to his cost. He obtained the number of men, women, and children he had set his heart on capturing, who resented the deception practised on them with such ferociousness, that in mid-ocean they revolted, and murdered the captain; they perpetrated the deed in the most barbarous manner, and then flung his poor mutilated body overboard. Ah, if one only studied consequences before attempting a rash act, how much sorrow and unavailing regret might be avoided; seeking self-interest at the expense of conscience can never have a truly happy result, and more often than not has a disastrous issue, as in the foregoing case.
CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE DE LA RONCIÈRES VISIT OPENOHU.

Mr. W— was another of A——'s unsatisfactory foreign importations. Soon after entering on his duties as bookkeeper, he became enamoured with Mrs. B——, a sentiment which increased to such an extent that more of his time was devoted to her than to his employer. A——, to put a stop to his wandering in a forbidden direction, sent him to Morea, having decided that he would be more serviceable on the plantation than at Papeeti, where his mind was unbalanced by the witchery of the lady. Mr. W— therefore replaced Dr. M—— in the position of manager at Openohu. He professed to know far more of the principles of cane planting than either of his predecessors; but as his word was unreliable A—— thought it advisable to take a run over and judge for himself of his capabilities, where he was unfortunately taken suddenly and seriously ill. The news reached me by boat, in which I was urged to
return,—I would have done so under any circumstances. Margaret, with her usual good nature came to my assistance, and we started together for Openohu. Not knowing whether Dr. M—— was equal to the occasion, I took advantage of the Topaz, an English frigate lying in port, to ask Captain Percival, with whom I was acquainted, to spare me one of the surgeons, as I thought his services might be required at Openohu. He readily consented, and in a few minutes the young doctor joined us. From his appearance he was not averse to making the trip, but as it happened he was not necessary. Mr. W—— stood on the shore, and from a distance shouted that A—— was better. He was in bed however in the pavilion, which had been given up to him by Mr. W—— where I introduced the young surgeon out of compliment, as A—— was quite satisfied with Dr. M——'s medical ability.

While we were at Openohu the frigate crossed over to pay a flying visit to Morea, en route to Chili. The Commodore and Captain Percival expressed such unbounded admiration of the scenery at Openohu, that Mr. W—— was authorized by A—— to give an entertainment of some kind to the officers, and he certainly managed to do this in approved style. It was evidently in his line—where expense was no object; however, he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of the guests who were profuse in their acknowledgments, and that was the main object.

The Commodore proposed to convey us in the Topaz to Tahiti—at least to the reefs, and thence in his gig to Papeeti, an offer we thankfully accepted,
as A—— was not sufficiently convalescent to venture back by whale-boat.

A few evenings after our return from Morea, I was as usual seated on the veranda, when I heard the splash of oars, and looking in the direction from whence it came, I saw a boat shoot up to our wharf. To my surprise Mr. W—— landed, and crossed to our house. Coming into the room, he flung himself on to a chair, threw off his hat, and clutched his hair like one half demented. I joined him, and asked what had brought him over so unexpectedly.

"I had to come," he cried, wildly; "I would have gone out of my mind had I remained at Morea another day."

I immediately concluded that he had lost either his wife or a child.

"Have you received bad news?" I inquired.

"Horrible; my mother is dead," he sobbed out; "I shall never see her dear face again, never receive her blessing; my God! it is appalling; the blow has crushed me—completely crushed me."

His grief seemed so genuine that I felt deep sympathy for his distress, and so I told him; though I had never before given Mr. W—— credit for such depth of feeling, as I had considered his conduct for a married man disgraceful in the extreme, and had sincerely pitied his absent wife.

I was rather startled when, in the midst of my consolatory remarks, Mr. W—— suddenly asked if it were true that Mrs. B—— was dangerously ill? Something in his manner made me question whether his grief and distress of mind was not more on
account of that lady's precarious condition than for his departed mother. And as the sequel proved, my surmises were not far wrong, for he went out to make personal inquiries, and returned with his mind, or heart, or both so relieved, that he looked quite cheerful. Several months subsequently I met a brother of Mr. W—-'s in New York, who spoke of his mother as being not only alive, but in excellent health. The history of her death had been fabricated to meet an exigency: the old lady's affectionate son wanted to come to Papeeti, so as to be near his sick inamorata, and killed his mother to effect his object, neither a filial nor a praiseworthy one. Live and learn, though such knowledge can profit no body. I had never liked Mr. W—-, but after this painful éclaircissement I entertained a still more unfavourable opinion of him.

Hitherto the De la Roncieres had not been to Morea, and as Madame contemplated returning to France, she expressed a wish to visit our plantation at Openohu before leaving the islands. A sloop-of-war was lying in the bay at her disposal, and we were invited to accompany the Governor and herself on the trip. The day was propitious, and we made a rapid passage from island to island; at sight of Openohu they were astonished at the magnificence of the scenery, evidently neither of them had expected to see anything so majestic, and they were as enthusiastic over its unrivalled beauty as one could have desired.

The extent of the Openohu valley is at first sight deceptive, as the mountains form an amphitheatrical and
cause it to appear like a mere strip of land at their base, until a nearer survey brought to view a winding course of extensive cane-fields, each one divided by borders of bananas, which formed a proportion of food for the natives. Many acres were under cultivation, which was a pretty sight, the leaves and graceful crests surmounting each cane swayed by the light breeze had a rhythmic sound, that fell pleasantly on the ear. I remarked that the De la Roncières examined everything with critical eyes.

A—— called the Commissaire Impériale's attention to a considerable vacant space waiting to be planted, when he redeemed his promise respecting the importation of Chinese labour. The Governor was well aware that the plantation had been undertaken at his persuasion, and that the amount of work accomplished without any assistance from the Government was marvellous, though A—— had been left to collect his own labour at a great expense and inconvenience, as his small fleet which was required elsewhere, had to be sent among the neighbouring islands to hire native hands, and a large number were needed, not only to plant, but to keep the cane when planted free from weeds; these actually sprout in a night, and if left choke up the cane and make it sickly. M. de la Ronciere had all this explained to him, and listened perfectly unconcerned and unabashed at having broken his word to A——, nor did he renew his promises.

Wishing our visitors to see all the attractive features about our property, we gave them a row down the river, canopied with foliage, to the mineral spring,
which elicited the remark, "Mais c'est un vrai paradis ce terrain ci"—one they soon converted into a purgatory.

Mr. Stewart had undertaken to cultivate sugar-cane in addition to cotton at Atimano, and the De la Roncieres were wedded to his interests—from personal motives—so that whatever or whoever interfered in the remotest degree with these, was doomed to ruin or disgrace.

An English company supplied the funds to work the plantation at Atimano, where the expenditure had been great without returns, nor from the appearance of things were there likely to be any in the future. On the other hand, though the sugar plantation at Openohu had received no outside assistance, it was doing well,—and if nothing unforeseen occurred its prosperity was assured; facts that were not pleasing to Mr. Stewart when reported by the De la Roncieres. Together they devised the obstacles that were to be employed to check the rapid planting at Openohu, and I am inclined to the belief that the De la Roncieres' visit had been made at Mr. Stewart's instigation. How could we think otherwise when their whole behaviour helped to confirm this impression—when the Governor, on his return to Papeeti, ordered the Commissaire de Police, with two gendarmes, to proceed forthwith to Openohu and remove every native over whom he had control from the plantation, with instructions that henceforth they were to work for the Government, not for A——? And this arbitrary measure was executed at a moment when not only the sugar-cane required increased
attention, but when a cargo of cuttings had arrived from the Leeward Islands, which needed immediate planting, and under existing unprecedented circumstances became a dead loss.

A— was incredulous; he could not believe that any such order had been transmitted to Openohu, and hurried up to Government House to elicit an explanation as to the presence of gendarmes on his plantation. He saw the Governor, who coolly told him that the administration was short of hands, and that he would have to dispense in the future with Tahitian labourers, as an order had been issued to withdraw them from Openohu.

A few days after Le Messager de Tahiti produced an article on the ambitious undertaking at Openohu, which was not likely to prove a success. A— felt outraged, and he assuredly had every reason to be, for it was quite evident that when the head of a colony had the power to act so outrageously, private enterprise could not do otherwise than end disastrously.

A—'s French friends advised him by all means to carry his grievances to Europe, as nothing was now left for him but to make a formal complaint to the Ministre des Colonies in Paris. To do this he was obliged to ask Dr. M— to resume the charge of the plantation, so as to enable Mr. W— to return to Papeeti, which was a very risky thing to do, for we had no confidence in Mr. W—, yet had no alternative, and time pressed.

As soon as A— reached Paris he obtained the desired interview at the Ministry, where he was received most courteously;—politeness costs nothing.
The Ministre des Colonies gave him a patient hearing, and promised that the whole affair should be thoroughly investigated. With this assurance A—had to be satisfied, though he placed little reliance on it.

When we got back to San Francisco the small-pox was an epidemic, and vaccination deemed a necessary precaution in our case; it certainly proved so in mine. My arm took beautifully according to medical parlance; according to mine, frightfully. I was in a pitiable condition when we were notified that the brig Timandra on which we had taken passage for Tahiti, was about to sail. The captain was so anxious to get away from the infected city, that he had advanced the date of his departure. He kindly resigned his state-room to us, which we found roomy and comfortable considering the size of the vessel. A vessel without a deck may seem an anomaly, but I gained this experience on that voyage. We carried a cargo of lumber, and every available space was filled with it; the planks were piled above the bulwarks fore and aft, and when my head appeared at the cabin door the captain and A—hastened towards me with outstretched hands, to assist me to scramble over the stacks of timber to where they were seated: on something very little better than a rail.

The one redeeming point in that wearisome voyage were the rainbows, "those gracious things made up of tears and light," and the sunsets, which were gorgeous; after-glows, that illumined the heavens with brilliant rays. Night after night A——, the captain, and I, sat and revelled in those sublime
luminous beams, arching as it were a sea of flame. Gradually the radiant lights grew fainter, and the lovely scene became veiled, when darkness enveloped the face of the deep. The pageant over, we vacated our narrow seat for the more comfortable sofa in the cabin, where A—— and I played cribbage to an endless scale of invectives against bad cards and worse luck.

The other end of the table to where we sat contained a capacious drawer, wherein the steward placed the captain's lunch (supper), who called it having a snack before turning in, at the termination of his watch on deck. This snack usually consisted of a pumpkin or apple pie, which the captain cut into four pieces. As A—— never indulged at that hour, I did duty for him; and strange to say was never troubled with nightmare, but it had somewhat of that effect on the captain, for he nearly frightened me to death on one occasion; I thought somebody was being murdered, till A—— re-assured me, and roused the disturbed sleeper, who attributed the row he made to lying on his back; more likely to the heavy pastry he had eaten, though he would never admit it.
CHAPTER XL.

PRINCE ALFRED'S VISIT.

As the time approached for our arrival at Tahiti, we were naturally much exercised as to how we should find things in general, and M. le Commissaire Impériale in particular, who had no doubt heard of the object of A——'s trip to France, which we might be sure he would not fail to resent.

The pilot imparted startling news. Madame de la Ronciere, after so many years of vacillation, had actually returned with her maid Louise to France. The Nesties had also left the island, but their successors did not please M. le Gouverneur, who had banished the Ordonnateur with his family to Morea. This information was indeed astounding, as it bespoke an increase of despotism on the part of the head of the administration that was really alarming,—if true. We were devoured with curiosity, and more than ever anxious to get on shore, which looked transcendentally lovely as we sailed through the pass and anchored in the bay.
We saw Mr. W—and Dr. Guillassee enter a boat and push off from our wharf; instead of boarding us, they shouted from a distance, that in consequence of the small-pox raging in San Francisco we were to be placed in quarantine for twenty-four hours. A most useless precaution as far as our vessel was concerned, as a month had elapsed since leaving that city, and there had been no ailment of any description on board during the voyage down.

I had left Finessa with my young protégé, and the dog was permitted to come on board, for which I was very grateful. She was in splendid condition, looked like a ball of floss silk, and recognized me at once. I thought she would have wriggled out of the native's arms into the sea when she caught sight of my face; and when on deck she frisked about yelping with joy. Such an affectionate greeting in a measure reconciled one to the cool reception, with which we had been favoured earlier in the day. I suppose we ought to have anticipated some such absurd regulation; still, I could not divest myself of the idea that a point might have been, and would have been stretched in our favour, but for a purpose. What that purpose was, we had yet to learn.

My mare Dolly had been consigned to the care of our gardener Delpiere, with positive instructions that she was to be ridden by no one in my absence. She was difficult to manage, though she looked so meek and gentle; I happened to mention this to a gentleman, whom I thought doubted my assertion. He looked so incredulous, that I gave him the opportunity to test it, which resulted in his
getting an ugly fall. Dolly never by any chance attempted to unseat me, which I construed into a mark of affection, an affection I fully reciprocated; and my feelings may be more readily imagined than described, when on landing at Papeeti I heard of her death;—but not the way it was compassed, I learnt that afterwards from Delpiere. Mr. W—— had overruled his opposition, and contrary to my orders had ridden the poor animal. She was brought back to Peri trembling violently, and Delpiere said, presented the appearance of having been harshly used; in what way, he was either unable or unwilling to say. It was not necessary, I knew better than he could tell me: she had been over-ridden, urged to her topmost speed by spur, and whip, and being unaccustomed to such treatment, it killed her, broke her heart, for she died that same night. She may have striven to throw her rider, or succeeded in her object, who could say? One fact was undeniable, Dolly had died from other causes than hard riding, and I grieved, as I grieved for every earthly thing that I had owned, caressed, and lost.

Madame de la Ronciere had made no friends during her residence at Tahiti. Everybody condemned her treatment of her only child, and from that time forth she had been looked upon as an unnatural, intriguing woman. Her departure for France therefore occasioned little regret, nor was any one surprised when she announced her intention to dispose of her entire wardrobe to the highest bidder. If report could be credited, Mr. Stewart undertook to remonstrate with Madame. He came up from Atimano for the pur-
pose of preventing such a scandal. He represented that a transaction of the kind was beneath the dignity of the wife of M. le Commissaire Impériale, and would lead to unpleasant comments, that were better avoided. His remonstrance was repaid by raillery. What did Countess de la Ronciere care for people's remarks? Five francs in her purse was of more importance than the opinion, good or bad, of any one on the island, not even excepting ce beau Monsieur d'Atimano. "Je me fiche joliment de ce monde là,"—was all the satisfaction Mr. Stewart obtained for presuming, according to Madame's ideas, to interfere in what did not concern him. Report also gave Madame de la Ronciere credit for having received from Mr. Stewart a considerable number of shares in the Atimano Cotton Company, which were to represent a neat little fortune in the future; but I fancy she realized more on the sale of her old clothes, than she did on her shares.

I had always enjoyed my visits to our place at Peri, where I found a small pavilion had been erected on the property during our absence, to afford Mr. W—a pleasant change from Papeeti, heightened by Mrs. B—'s vicinity, as it faced her country residence which was situated on the opposite side of the river,—the gentleman had been carrying on high jinks while the power rested in his hands. I would have willingly dispensed with my neighbour, but accepted the inevitable and decided to reside at Peri, where we removed as soon as some necessary additions had been made to the house.

Luis resumed his duties, but Puhia the servant I
had had so many years, was a prisoner. He had done that, against which I had warned him, taken his master's brandy, who did not treat his offence so leniently as we had done. He was accused of theft, and condemned to three years' hard labour. How sincerely I regretted having consented to that gentleman's overtures to engage poor Puhia during the period of our absence. I did it to oblige him, and this was the painful result. In so short a time how many were my illusions. When I accidentally met Puhia among a gang of prisoners working on the high road, it shocked me. He was ashamed poor fellow of his degraded position, and turned his face away, the face that had cheered me as no other face had been able to do on that horrible voyage to Auckland; that was always smiling, always pleasant until now, when I could imagine a knitted brow and a dejected mien. I felt as I glanced at the poor fellow's bowed head that we might have been partially responsible for his downfall. Had we taken him more severely to task when he had tampered with our property, the predisposition might have been effectually checked. At the same time I considered his punishment greatly in excess of his offence; why had he been condemned to three years' hard labour for stealing some brandy, while the woman who had stolen many thousand dollars' worth of my jewellery had been left unpunished?

I longed to say an encouraging word to Puhia, to make him understand that even in his degradation I remembered how faithfully he had served us for a number of years, and felt it no disgrace to recognize
even a prisoner working on the high-road. Wishing to attract his attention I called his name, to which he made no response; but when I had passed I looked round and found him doing the same, with tears in his eyes; mine were also misty, for I liked my unfortunate Puhia, and as to merits, there were greater rascals with whom I came in daily contact, than the simple-minded native who scarcely comprehended the extent of his delinquency; in consequence of our having forgiven him so many times for doing the same thing.

Whilst we were in Europe Mrs. Kelly had passed away, we had been intimate friends, and I missed her familiar face; when Captain Kelly came to see me he brought her pet Juliette; the little dog was endeared to him by a pathetic scene which had occurred the day of her mistress' funeral. She had been sent to a neighbour's to be out of the way during the religious ceremony that was to take place at the house, but Juliette contrived to make her escape, and in the midst of the prayers ran into the room, and with a pitiful whine, tried to jump on the coffin. It is to be hoped that the faithful little animal died before her master, who now reposes by the side of his wife in the Protestant cemetery at Papeeti. Born in Boston, buried at Tahiti—such is life.

Tahiti was honoured by a visit from H.R.H. Prince Alfred, who arrived in his flagship the Galatea; it took no one by surprise as the event had been long anticipated, and festivities in honour of the occasion had been already organized. Balls, picnics, and native feasts, followed in quick succession, but we partici-
pated in none of them, as we were at that period residing in the country.

The most absurd stories were in circulation concerning the English prince's partiality for jewellery in consequence of his wearing bracelets. A pretty young girl ventured to ask him why he wore them, when H.R.H. explained that they were a parting gift from his mother the Queen, who on bidding him good-bye had fastened them on to his wrists, with the injunction that whenever he was inclined to go astray he was to look at her last present, which would prevent him from being a naughty boy. I was highly amused at these naïve recitals, which lost nothing by repetition. The Prince, and his companion Lord Charles Beresford, I can well believe had a very good time during their brief visit to Tahiti. If H.R.H. failed in devoirs of etiquette—which exist even in such remote parts of the world as Tahiti—towards his own consul and the Roman Catholic bishop, he was to be excused on the plea that there were no seductive natives or half-castes at either the Bishop's Palace, or the Consulate, and naturally he preferred to frequent those houses where he could amuse himself with the sirens of the Pacific. A friend of mine happening to call on one of her neighbours, found the Prince there, entertaining young Nancie a half-caste, who was suffering from tooth-ache and swollen cheek, which rather detracted from an otherwise pretty face. H.R.H. was singing her a song about a faithless fellow who loved and rode away—nothing new at Tahiti—and the deserted fair one pined and died of a broken heart. Nancie
Prince Alfred's Visit.

gravely asked, "Did she really die?" Previous to his departure Prince Alfred bestowed on each of his favourites a pretty souvenir.

A photo group had been taken composed of the Governor, Prince Alfred, Lord Charles Beresford, and several half-castes and native women. It was not by any means a work of art, but in the light of a curious *melange* it was eagerly sought after as a momento of H.R.H.'s visit to Tahiti.
CHAPTER XLI.

A SHAM TRIAL.

HE Commissaire Impériale had been so accustomed to the various members of his administration blindly submitting to his dictation, that he was completely taken by surprise, mingled with resentment, when M. Nestie's successor, M. Boyer, ventured to differ from him, and positively refused to be biased in his opinions, which led to unpleasantness in this way. Mr. James Stewart arrived from Sydney to demand payment of a thousand pounds for goods supplied to his brother the manager of the Atimano estate. The demand was unexpected, and his claim disputed, whereupon he went to law and gained his suit in the first instance. Dissatisfied with the verdict, Mr. William Stewart instituted an appeal, which was postponed until the arrival of some new judges who were expected from France.

M. Boyer the new Ordonnateur presided in the appeal case, in consort with the recently arrived
Procureur Impériale and Juge d'Instruction, who confirmed the previous judgment.

The Commissaire Impériale was so enraged at the decision, that he immediately suspended M. Boyer from his official duties, and on his refusing to leave Tahiti unless recalled by the Home Government by whom he had been nominated, M. de la Ronciere ordered him and his family to Morea, there to remain pending the decision from France. One of M. Boyer's children became seriously ill owing to want of proper nourishment, which resulted in the cessation of the Ordonnateur's temporary banishment from Papeeti, and home comforts so essential to his numerous family. It had been an arbitrary act on the part of the Governor; none knew better than ourselves how capable M. de la Ronciere was of such despotic deeds.

As we had surmised when the irascible Governor heard of A—-'s motive for visiting Europe he was furious, and vowed vengeance while he retained the power to inflict it. An official was appointed Resident of the Pomotu Group, and despatched in all haste to the islands, where A— had cocoa-nut oil stations. His instructions were to ruin that branch of A—-'s trade as much as possible. The custom among these islands was to collect the oil and leave it in the canoes until near the time for shipment, when it was put in casks, which were liable to shrink if filled too long beforehand. Several of such canoes were freighted with A—-'s oil at the time the Resident pro tem arrived, posted up as to what he was to say and do on the occasion. He informed the natives
that for the future they were not to dispose of their produce for merchandize, that it was to be paid for in money. "Why do you keep your oil in those canoes?" he asked—a needless question, as he knew perfectly well to whom it belonged. Their explanation was received with an outburst of virtuous indignation. "What an infamous imposition," he exclaimed, "such a state of things can no longer be tolerated. Empty your canoes at once, now, before my eyes," and notwithstanding the expostulations and disinclination of the natives to carry out his orders, they were compelled to obey the residents commands under pain of punishment. The contents of the canoes were thrown into the sea, and by this means several tons of oil were ruthlessly sacrificed.

The Ordonnateur had brought letters of introduction to A——, which he presented in person. Like M. Nestie and his predecessors in that department, M. Boyer was a Creole of Martinique. He was evidently a man of high principles, too elevated by far to suit M. de la Ronciere, whose policy throughout had been of a most reprehensible description.

M. Boyer described himself as a hard-working, self-made man, who had been more or less unfortunate since his birth, when, through the maladroitness of the sage femme he had been deprived of one eye—a fact I should never have known had he not enlightened me, as he wore blue spectacles which disguised the defect. M. Boyer was nice-looking, and certainly a most agreeable companion. When a mere lad he had lost his parents, who left their children very badly off. He being the eldest,
assisted in educating his brother and sister, the former held a good appointment in France, and the latter accompanied her brother's family to Tahiti. Mademoiselle Boyer was not at all pretty, but Madame Boyer's young sister was a perfect beauty; their party numbered eleven, and M. Boyer remarked that M. de la Ronciere should have taken that circumstance into consideration before sending them to a district in Morea, where it was impossible to obtain any kind of European food, or a suitable house for so large a family. The expense incurred in bringing them to Tahiti had been no small item, and he explained to us that he never would have brought the entire family, had he not thought that he was likely to retain his position for several years. Poor man, he had been so elated at his nomination, a nomination that was to prove the culminating misfortune of his life.

Of what account is integrity when false charges can be concocted to asperse it? In a moment of pique, the Commissaire Impériale applied to France for a certain number of judges to be sent to Tahiti, as heretofore justice had been dispensed by a tribunal composed of officers and civilians, who had exasperated him by their decision in favour of Mr. Stewart's brother. In accordance with the Governor's request, the legal gentlemen arrived from France, and adopted the Ordonnateur's views, which did not suit the Commissaire Impériale either; so he promptly decided to get rid of them.

M. de la Ronciere accordingly drew up a protest, which was to be supposed emanated from Queen
Pomare, declining to recognize the new judges, as she desired *no change* in the judicial legislation at Tahiti. This document was copied into the native language for the Queen's signature. M. Boyer heard about this intrigue, and expressed a wish to see the *brochure* which was duly brought to him by his informant, who had rescued it from the waste-paper basket. The Ordonnateur was astounded, as, until in his possession he had disbelieved the statement, and now that he had obtained undeniable proof of its existence and the system of the *tripotage* carried on at Tahiti, he considered that the proper course to pursue, was to transmit the drafts to the Ministry! so as to convince them in black and white that it was his Excellency the Governor who objected to the judges, not as implied the Queen who had no opinion on the subject.

M. Boyer imparted the state of the case to his friends MM. Holozer and Jacolliot, who expressed equal indignation. The Juge d'Instruction, M. Jacolliot, asked permission to copy the *brochure* for the purpose of enclosing it to the *Ministre de Justice* at Paris. His request was readily granted, as he was supposed to be one of themselves, and opposed in every way to the Commissaire Impériale, whereas it was said he had been won over by promises of rapid advancement, and the copy he took was not for France, but for the Governor's inspection. In fact, M. Jacolliot turned out to be neither more or less than a spy on the actions of his compatriots and former friends, whose every remark was reported to M. de la Ronciere. When this became publicly
known, the sobriquet of "Judas Iscariot" was bestowed on the traitor.

The next move in this disgraceful drama was the arrest of the Ordonnateur, who was accused of stealing a government document of importance, and of M. Holozer, Procureur Impériale, for complicity. In the latter case it was a mere ruse adopted to keep him out of the way during the trial and condemnation of his friend M. Boyer.

Poor Madame Boyer was beside herself with grief and consternation at her husband's position; a more sorrowful household than theirs could not be pictured. They seemed to feel as if they had been cast among devils incarnate, and it really looked like it. Through his wife, M. Boyer requested all those who were interested in him to be present at his trial, and judge for themselves of the relentless enmity with which he was being pursued. The Court House was consequently crammed by the residents, among whom were the English Consul and Mrs. Miller. The most pitiful sight I ever beheld was when the Ordonnateur was brought into the police court by two gendarmes, and placed on a wooden bench between them. He was dressed in full uniform, and wore the decoration of the Legion of Honour, besides several others. As I glanced at his pale sad face, the remark he had made only a short time previously recurred to me, "I have been more or less unfortunate since my birth, when I was deprived of an eye." I had the greatest difficulty to restrain my tears and an outburst of indignation against that miserable turncoat, Dr. Guillasse, who, to ingrati ate himself with
the head of the colony, had accepted the contemptible rôle of Judge, in an iniquitous false charge, which he knew it to be. He looked what he was, diabolically wicked, and we feared the worst for the unhappy prisoner; nor were our suspicions incorrect, his conviction had been pre-arranged, otherwise the noble manner in which the Ordonnateur defended himself would have precluded the rendering of any adverse verdict, whereas he was found guilty and condemned to two years' imprisonment, to be deprived of all public functions for five years, and to pay a fine of two hundred francs.

M. Boyer appealed to a higher court, and now occurred one of the most audacious acts ever perpetrated in a civilized community. As the Commissaire Impériale failed to find any one subservient enough, to agree that the sentence—as dictated by himself in the first instance should be confirmed in the second trial, he fell back on one worthy of himself, his abject slave Dr. Guillasse, who again presided as judge in the appeal. The man had not the delicacy to appreciate the false position in which the Governor had placed him, nor the overt hostility it expressed to the Ordonnateur, whose objections to Dr. Guillasse presiding in the appeal against his former verdict were over-ruled; even the witnesses called by the persecuted man were denied him, and he was curtly cautioned to indulge in no personalities—a privilege freely accorded to the accusing parties, who hurled a succession of the most injurious invectives at the prisoner, whom they could not, however, browbeat; for though as on the former trial he sat between two
gendarmes, he defended his honour in the same spirited manner as he had done on the previous occasion, and retorted in kind; nor was he to be silenced when the Judge with a scowl ordered him to curtail his remarks. As might have been expected, his eloquence was of no avail, the former verdict was confirmed with a slight alteration in the term of imprisonment, which was curtailed to one year, instead of two.

The Ordonnateur walked with firm tread and erect head out of court; as he approached Mr. Miller, the English Consul with his never failing instinct of justice and manly independence, stepped forward, and grasped M. Boyer's hand with a warmth that was thoroughly appreciated, though the unfortunate man could only look his thanks; he was too overpowered to speak, for his lips quivered painfully, and his staunch friend the high-toned English Consul felt scarcely less moved.

It was remarkable that at this crisis in his life M. Boyer should have been abandoned by every member of the administration; it went to prove how subservient they all were to the Governor, and did not dare to express an opinion that might give offence to their ruler; and M. de la Ronciere was that, if nothing better.

M. Gardarin, commander of the transport Chevert, was the only navy officer who took his seat in court among the Ordonnateur's friends. He, however, very soon withdrew, disgusted as he told me, at the treatment to which M. Boyer was being subjected by those who were not only his inferiors in grade, but
in **probity**. M. de la Ronciere, instead of being ashamed to show his hypocritical face, went about exulting over the satisfactory conclusion of the Ordonnateur's trial, whose humiliation and downfall he flattered himself he had finally accomplished. To guard against the disapproval of the Ministry and possible order to release M. Boyer from durance vile, the Commissaire Impériale decided to ship his victim off to France. Many believed that he was even *then* in possession of despatches, approving of the Ordonnateur's actions, which he *suppressed* to gratify his animosity towards one who was merely wishful to perform his official duties conscientiously.

The families of the Ordonnateur and the Procureur Impériale had received an official order to prepare for their immediate departure on board the French transport *Chevert*, which was to sail for Chili on the termination of M. Boyer's appeal. On hearing this, their friends met and escorted the ladies and children to the boats awaiting them at the wharf, where they took a final leave and stood watching their arrival at what must have seemed a friendly haven after all they had undergone on shore; fair enough were those shores, but for the spirit of evil that reigned at Government House.

We lingered about the beach till near midnight, hoping to see the Ordonnateur embark; but in anticipation of an ovation it was postponed until his sympathizing friends and admirers had dispersed, when he in turn was taken on board the *Chevert* at some unearthly hour before daylight.

A gendarme was to have accompanied M. de la
Ronciere's prisoner to France. He had strict injunctions to travel third class with M. Boyer on the passenger steamers.

The gendarme had returned on shore to receive the Governor's private instructions respecting the treatment of the prisoner on board the Chevert. It had reached M. Gardarin's ears that M. Boyer was to hold no communication with his family, neither was he to be permitted to frequent the saloon, that his meals were to be taken apart, and much more to the same effect. M. Gardarin consequently undertook to act on his own responsibility, and availed himself of the early morning breeze to sail through the pass and wait at large for his official despatches. As soon as they were on board he set sail without his private instructions, and had the gratification of seeing the unfortunate gendarme employing vain efforts to overtake the transport. A derisive cheer from the sailors was all he got for his pains. The Governor was so enraged when he heard of the gendarme's misadventure that he threatened to send him after his prisoner in another Government vessel, but he thought better of it.

Le Messager de Tahiti produced the following paragraph on the termination of the Ordonnateur's trial and departure:

"The law has had the last word, and put an end to a contest which for the past year has disturbed the tranquility of a country which previously enjoyed perfect harmony."

High-flown nonsense; such a period of bliss had never been experienced at Tahiti, much less so since
the advent of the De la Roncieres, unless tyranny and persecution could be called "harmonious." Had I been privileged to insert an article in the local paper it would have been very differently worded, something to this effect:—

Paradise itself could scarcely boast of more transcendent charms than exist on the island of Tahiti; charms which are dimmed by the acts of a corrupt administration, an administration that fails to study the prosperity of the country, preferring to pursue an illegal course to its detriment. Every description of baneful influence at present exists on the island, and will continue to exist so long as Governors of the De la Ronciere stamp are sent to Tahiti.

I fail to comprehend what object the French Home Government have in increasing their colonies when they so culpably neglect those already in their possession. The French Protectorate of Tahiti dates from the same period that the British flag was hoisted at New Zealand, yet up to the present moment neither a bank nor even an exchange office exists in the colony, and *Le Messager de Tahiti* in its original form, continues to be the only newspaper in circulation. That no one has been enterprising enough to introduce a more improved order of things is explained by the fact, that at Tahiti foreign innovations do not meet with the proper kind of encouragement.

M. de Juslard succeeded M. de la Ronciere, but he was scarcely the man to cope with the situation, neither did he feel disposed to interfere in the past policy of the Government, or to weed the administra-
tion of its unworthy members, as he had merely accepted the position *pro tem*. That onerous duty was to devolve on his successor.

The frigate *Astrée*, commanded by Admiral Cloué, arrived at Tahiti for the purpose of investigating the conduct of the late Governor, which he entirely condemned; but what sort of redress was that to those who had sustained immense pecuniary losses, or had been subjected to harsh treatment and cruel injustice, as in the case of the Ordonnateur?

When we bade a final adieu to the Garden of the Pacific, there seemed a prospect of its resuming the normal state of comparative freedom from that detrimental *tracasserie* which is the acme of French colonial policy.

The following impromptu lines from the inspired pen of an English lad of 14 were sent to me from Tahiti, which I trust will not be deemed an inappropriate conclusion to my recollections:

"A willing exile from my native land,
On a far-distant island shore I stand;
Before me such a lovely vision lies,
It seems a dream—I scarce believe my eyes!

A grove of palms and bread-fruit trees enshrouds
The base of mountains, that are capp'd with clouds,
Robed to their highest peaks with verdure green;
Never before such grandeur have I seen!

On this blest shore perpetual summer reigns,
And numerous fruits abound on hills and plains;
This little island is the brightest gem
That glistens in Old Neptune's diadem."
TAHITI: THE GARDEN OF THE PACIFIC.

The seas around with fish are well supplied,
And in their depths both pearls and coral hide,
And shells of every hue may here be found,
Upon the reef which does the isle surround.

This island, which with every good does teem,
A very paradise on earth would seem;
But no! a man unhappy here may dwell,
He carries in himself his heaven or hell.

THE END.
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