

*The Woman's Home Companion*  
November, 1908

***“The High Seat of Abundance”***

***JACK LONDON AND CHARMIAN, HIS WIFE, HAVE ANOTHER WONDERFUL  
EXPERIENCE IN THE SOUTH SEAST, AND LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT TROPICAL  
HOSPITALITY***

*On the arrival of strangers, every man endeavored to obtain one as a friend and carry him off to his own habitation, where he is treated with the greatest kindness by the inhabitants of the district; they place him on a high seat and feed him with abundance of the finest food.—  
“Polynesian Researches.”*

THE *Snark* was lying at anchor at Raiatea, just off the village of Uturoa. She had arrived the night before, after dark, and we were preparing to pay our first visit ashore. Early in the morning I had noticed a tiny outrigger canoe, with an impossible spritsail, skimming the surface of the lagoon. The canoe itself was coffin shaped, a mere dugout, fourteen feet long, a scant twelve inches wide, and maybe twenty-four inches deep. It had no lines, except in so far that it was sharp at both ends. Its sides were perpendicular. Shorn of the outrigger it would have capsized of itself inside a tenth of a second. It was the outrigger that kept it right side up.

I have said that the sail was impossible. It was. It was one of those things not that you have to see to believe, but that you cannot believe after you have seen it. The hoist of it and the length of its boom were sufficiently appalling; but not content with that, its artificer had given it a tremendous head. So large was the head that no common sprit could carry the strain of it in an ordinary breeze. So a spar had been lashed to the canoe, projecting aft over the water. To this had been made fast a sprit guy; thus, the foot of the sail was held by the mainsheet, and the peak by the guy to the sprit.

It was not a mere boat, not a mere canoe, but a sailing machine. And the man in it sailed it by his weight and his nerve—principally the latter. I watched the canoe beat up from leeward and run in toward the village, its sole occupant far out on the outrigger and luffing up and spilling the wind in the puffs.

“Well, I know one thing,” I announced; “I don’t leave Raiatea until I have a ride in that canoe.”

A few minutes later Captain Warren called down the companionway, “Here’s that canoe you were talking about.”

Promptly I dashed on deck and gave greeting to its owner, a tall, slender Polynesian, ingenuous of face and with clear, sparkling, intelligent eyes. He was clad in a scarlet loin cloth and a straw hat. In his hands were presents—a fish, a bunch of greens and several enormous

yams. All of which acknowledge by smiles (which are coinage still in isolated spots of Polynesia) and by frequent repetitions of *mauruuru* (which is the Tahitian “thank you”), I proceeded to make signs that I desired to go for a sail in his canoe.

His face lighted with pleasure, and he uttered the single word “Tahaa,” turning at the same time and pointing to the lofty, cloud-draped peaks of an island three miles away—the island of Tahaa. It was fair wind over, but a head beat back. Now I did not want to go to Tahaa. I had letters to deliver in Raiatea, and officials to see, and there was Charmian down below getting ready to go ashore. By insistent signs I indicated that I desired no more than a short sail on the lagoon. Quick was the disappointment in his face, yet smiling was the acquiescence.

“Come on for a sail,” I called below to Charmian. “But put on your swimming suit. It’s going to be wet.”

It wasn’t real. It was a dream. That canoe slid over the water like a streak of silver. I climbed out on the outrigger and supplied the weight to hold her down, while Tehei (pronounced Tayhayee) supplied the nerve. He, too, in the puffs, climbed part way out on the outrigger, at the same time steering with both hands on a large paddle and holding the mainsheet with his foot.

“Ready about!” he called.

I carefully shifted my weight inboard in order to maintain the equilibrium as the sail emptied.

“Hard a-lee!” he called, shooting her into the wind.

I slid out on the opposite side over the water on a spar lashed across the canoe, and we were full and away on the other track.

“All right,” said Tehei.

Those three phrases, “Ready about,” “Hard a-lee” and “All right” comprised Tehei’s English vocabulary and led me to suspect that at some time he had been one of a Kanaka crew under an American captain. Between the puffs I made signs to him repeatedly and interrogatively uttered the word sailor. Then I tried it in atrocious French. *Marin* conveyed no meaning to him; nor did *matelot*. Either my French was bad or else he was not up to it. I have since concluded that both hypotheses were correct. Finally I began naming over the adjacent islands. He nodded that he had been to them. By the time my quest reached Tahiti, he caught my drift. His thought processes were almost visible, and it was a joy to watch him think. He nodded his head vigorously. Yes, he had been to Tahiti, and he added himself names of islands, such as Tiki hau, Raniaora and Fakarava, thus proving that he had sailed as far as the Paumotu—undoubtedly as one of the crew of a trading schooner.

After our short sail, when we had returned on board, he by signs inquired the destination of the *Snark*, and when I had mentioned Samoa, Fiji, New Guinea, France, England, and California in their geographical sequence, he said “Samoa,” and by gestures intimated that he wanted to go along. Whereupon I was hard put to explain that there was no room for him. “Petit bateau” finally solved it, and again the disappointment in his face was accompanied by smiling acquiescence, and promptly came the renewed invitation to accompany him to Tahaa.

Charmian and I looked at each other. The exhilaration of the ride we had taken was still upon us. Forgotten were the letters to Raiatea, the officials we had to visit. Shoes, a shirt, a pair of trousers, cigarettes, matches, and a book to read, were hastily crammed into a biscuit tin and wrapped in a rubber blanket, and we were over the side and into the canoe.

“When shall I look for you?” Captain Warren called, as the wind filled the sail and sent Tehei and me scurrying out on the outrigger.

“I don’t know,” I answered. “When we get back, as near as I can figure it.”

And away we went. The wind had increased, and with slacked sheets we ran off before it. The freeboard of the canoe was no more than two and a half inches, and the little waves continually lapped over the side. This required bailing. Now bailing is one of the principal functions of the *vahine*. *Vahine* is the Tahitian word for woman, and Charmian being the only *vahine* aboard, the bailing fell appropriately to her. Tehei and I could not very well do it, the both of us being perched part way out on the outrigger and busied with keeping the canoe bottom side down. So Charmian bailed with a wooden scoop of primitive design, and so well did she do it that there were occasions when she could rest off almost half the time.

Raiatea and Tahaa are unique, in that they lie inside the same encircling reef. Both are volcanic islands, ragged of sky line, with heaven-aspiring peaks and minarets. Since Raiatea is thirty miles in circumference, and Tahaa fifteen miles, some idea may be gained of the magnitude of the reef that encloses them. Between them and the reef stretches from one to two miles of water, forming a beautiful lagoon. The huge Pacific seas, extending in unbroken lines sometimes a mile or half as much again in length, hurl themselves upon the reef, overtopping and falling upon it with tremendous crashes, and yet the fragile coral structure withstands the shock and protects the land. Outside lies destruction to the mightiest ship afloat. Inside reigns the calm of untroubled water, whereon a canoe like ours can sail with no more than a couple of inches of freeboard.

We flew over the water. And such water!—clear as the clearest spring water, and crystalline in its clearness, all intershot with a maddening pageant of colors and rainbow ribbons more magnificently gorgeous than any rainbow. Jade green alternated with turquoise, peacock blue with emerald, while now the canoe skimmed over reddish-purple pools, and again over pools of dazzling, shimmering white, where pounded coral sand lay beneath and upon which oozed monstrous sea slugs. One moment we were above wonder gardens of coral, wherein colored fishes disported, fluttering like marine butterflies; the next moment we were dashing across the dark surface of deep channels, out of which schools of flying fish lifted their silvery flight; and a third moment we were above other gardens of living coral, each more wonderful than the last. And above all was the tropic, trade-wind sky, with its fluffy clouds racing across the zenith and heaping the horizon with their soft masses.

Before we were aware we were close in to Tahaa (pronounced Tah-hah-ah, with equal accents), and Tehei was grinning approval of the *vahine*'s proficiency at bailing. The canoe grounded on a shallow shore, twenty feet from land, and we waded out on a soft bottom where big slugs curled and writhed under our feet and where small octopuses advertised their existence by their superlative softness when stepped upon. Close to the beach, amid cocoanut palms | banana trees, erected on stilts, built of bamboo, with a grass-thatched roof, was Tehei's house. And out of the house came Tehei's *vahine*, a slender mite of a woman, kindly eyed and Mongolian of feature—when she was not North American Indian. "Bihaura" Tehei called her, but he did not pronounce it according to English notions of spelling. Spelled "Bihaura," it sounded like Bea-ah-oo-rah, with every syllable sharply emphasized.

She took Charmian by the hand and led her into the house, leaving Tehei and me to follow. Here, by sign language unmistakable, we were informed that all they possessed was ours. No hidalgo was ever more generous in the expression of giving, while I am sure that few hidalgos were ever as generous in the actual practice. We discovered that we dared not admire their possessions, for whenever we did admire a particular object it was immediately presented to us. The two *vahines*, according to the way of *vahines*, got together in a discussion and examination of feminine fripperies, while Tehei and I, man like, went over fishing tackle and

wild-pig hunting, to say nothing of the device whereby bonitos are caught on forty-foot poles from double canoes. Charmian admired a sewing basket—the best example she had seen of Polynesian basketry; it was hers. I admired a bonito hook, carved in one piece from a pearl shell; it was mine. Charmian was attracted by a fancy braid of straw sennit, thirty feet of it in a roll, sufficient to make a hat of any design one wished; the roll of sennit was hers. My gaze lingered upon a poi pounder that dated back to the old stone days; it was mine. Charmian dwelt a moment too long on a wooden poi bowl, canoe shaped, with four legs, all carved in one piece of wood; it was hers. I glanced a second time at a gigantic cocoanut calabash; it was mine. Then Charmian and I held a conference, in which we resolved to admire no more—not because it did not pay well enough, but because it paid too well. Also, we were already racking our brains over the contents of the *Snark* for suitable return presents. Christmas is an easy problem compared with a Polynesian giving feast.

We sat on the cool porch, on Bihaura's best mats, while dinner was preparing, and at the same time met the villages. In twos and threes and groups they strayed along, shaking hands and uttering the Tahitian word of greeting—*Iaorana*, pronounced yo-rah-nah. The men, bug, strapping fellows, were in loin cloths, with here and there no shirt, while the women wore the universal *ahu*, a sort of adult pinafore that flows in graceful lines from the shoulders to the ground. Sad to see was the elephantiasis that afflicted some of them. Here would be a comely woman of magnificent proportions, with the port of a queen, yet marred by one arm four times—or a dozen times—the size of the other. Beside her might stand a six-foot man, erect, mighty muscled, bronzed, with the body of a god, yet with feet and calves so swollen that they ran together, forming legs, shapeless, monstrous, that were for all the world like elephant legs.

No one seems really to know the cause of the South Sea elephantiasis. One theory is that it is caused by the drinking of polluted water. Another theory attributes it to inoculation through mosquito bites. A third theory charges it to predisposition plus the process of acclimatization. On the other hand, no one that stands in finicky dread of it and similar diseases can afford to travel in the South Seas. There will be occasions when such a one must drink water. There may also be occasions when the mosquitoes let up biting. But every precaution of the finicky one will be useless. If he runs barefoot across the beach to take a swim he will tread where an elephantiasis case trod a few minutes before. If he closets himself in his own house, yet every bit of fresh food on his table will have been subjected to the contamination, be it flesh, fish, fowl, or vegetable. In the public market at Papeiti two known lepers run stalls, and heaven alone knows through what channels arrive at the market the daily supplies of fish, fruit, meat and vegetables. The only happy way to go through the South Seas is with a careless poise, without apprehension, and with a placid, child-like faith in the resplendent fortune of your own particular star. When you see a woman afflicted with elephantiasis wringing out cream from cocoanut meat with her naked hands, drink and reflect how good is the cream, forgetting the hands that pressed it out. Also, remember that diseases such as elephantiasis and leprosy do not seem to be caught by contact.

We watched a Raratongan woman, with swollen, distorted limbs, prepare our cocoanut cream, and then went out to the cook shed where Tehei and Bihaura were cooking dinner. And then it was served to us on a dry-goods box in the house. Our hosts waited until we were done, and then spread their table on the floor. But our table! We were certainly in the high seat of abundance. First, there was glorious raw fish, caught several hours before from the sea, and steeped the intervening time in lime juice diluted with water. Then came roast chicken. Two cocoanuts, sharply sweet, served for drink. There were bananas that tasted like strawberries and that melted in the mouth, and there was banana poi that made one regret that his Yankee

forebears ever attempted puddings. Then there was boiled yam, boiled taro and roasted *fei*, which last are nothing more than large, mealy, juicy, red-colored cooking bananas. We marveled at the abundance, and even as we marveled, a pig was brought on, a whole pig, a sucking pig, swathed in green leaves and roasted upon the hot stones of a native oven, the most honorable and triumphant dish in the Polynesian cuisine. And after that came coffee, native coffee grown on the hillsides of Tahaa.

Tehei's fishing tackle fascinated me, and after we arranged to go fishing, Charmian and I decided to remain all night. Again Tehei broached Samoa, and again my "*petit bateau*" brought the disappointment and the smile of acquiescence to his face. Bora Bora was my next port. It was not so far away but that cutters made the passage back and forth between it and Raiatea. So I invited Tehei to go that far with us on the *Snark*. Then I learned that his wife had been born on Bora Bora and still owned a house there. She likewise was invited, and immediately came the counter invitation to stay with them in their house in Bora Bora. It was Monday. Tuesday we would go fishing and return to Raiatea. Wednesday we would sail by Tahaa and off a certain point, a mile away, pick up Tehei and Bihaura and go on to Bora Bora. All this we arranged in detail, and talked over scores of other things as well, and yet Tehei knew three phrases in English, Charmian and I knew possibly a dozen Tahitian words, and among the four of us there were a dozen or so French words that all understood. Of course, such a polyglot conversation was slow, but eked out on a pad, a lead pencil, the face of a clock Charmian drew on the back of a pad, and with ten thousand and one gestures, we managed to get on very nicely.

At the first moment we evidenced an inclination for bed the visiting natives, with soft *Iaoranas*, faded away, and Tehei and Bihaura likewise faded away. The house consisted of one large room, and it was given over to us, our hosts going elsewhere to sleep. In truth, their castle was ours. And right here I want to say that of all the entertainment I have received in this world at the hands of all sorts of races in all sorts of places, I have never received entertainment that equaled this at the hands of this brown-skinned people of Tahaa. I do not refer to the presents, the free-handed generousness, the high abundance, but to the fineness of courtesy and consideration and tact, and to the sympathy that was real sympathy, in that it was understanding. They did nothing they thought ought to be done for us, according to their standards, but they did what they divined we wanted to be done for us, while their divination was most successful. It would be impossible to enumerate the hundreds of little acts of consideration they performed during the few days of our intercourse. Let it suffice for me to say that of all hospitality and entertainment I have known, in no case was theirs not only not excelled, but in no case was it quite equaled. Perhaps the most delightful feature of it was that it was due to no training, to no complex social ideals, but that it was the untutored and spontaneous outpouring from their hearts.

The next morning we went fishing—that is, Tehei, Charmian and I did—in the coffin-shaped canoe; but this time the enormous sail was left behind. There was no room for sailing and fishing at the same time in that tiny craft. Several miles away, inside the reef, in a channel twenty fathoms deep, Tehei dropped his baited hooks and rock sinkers. The bait was chunks of octopus flesh, which he bit out of a live octopus that writhed in the bottom of the canoe. Nine of these lines he set, each line attached to one end of a short length of bamboo floating on the surface. When a fish was hooked, the end of the bamboo was drawn under the water. Naturally, the other end rose up in the air, bobbing and waving frantically for us to make haste. And make haste we did, with whoops and yells and driving paddles, from one signaling bamboo to another, hauling up from the depths great glistening beautifies from two to three feet in length.

Steadily, to the eastward, an ominous squall had been rising and blotting out the bright trade-wind sky. And we were three miles leeward of home. We started as the first wind gusts whitened the water. Then came the rain, such rains as only the tropics afford, when every tap and main in the sky is open wide, and when, to top it all, the very reservoir itself spills over in blinding deluge. Well, Charmian was in a swimming suit, I was in pajamas, and Tehei wore only a loin cloth. Bihaura was on the beach waiting for us and she led Charmian into the house in much the same fashion that the mother leads in the naughty little girl who has been playing in mud puddles.

It was a change of clothes and a dry and quiet smoke while *kai-kai* was preparing. *Kai-kai*, by the way, is the Polynesian for “food” or “to eat,” or, rather, it is one form of the original root, whatever it may have been, that has been distributed far and wide over the vast area of the Pacific. It is *kai* in the Marquesas, Raratonga, Manahiki, Niuē, Fakaafo, Tonga, New Zealand, and Vaté. In Tahiti “to eat” changes to *amu*, in Hawaii and Samoa to *ai*, in Bau to *kana*, in Niua to *kaina*, in Nengone to *kaka*, and in New Caledonia to *ki*. But by whatsoever sound or symbol, it was welcome to our ears after that long paddle in the rain. Once more we sat in the high seat of abundance until we regretted that we had been made unlike the image of the giraffe and the camel.

Again, when we were preparing to return to the *Snark*, the sky to windward turned lack and another squall swooped down. But this time it was little rain and all wind. It blew hour after hour, moaning and screeching through the palms, tearing and wrenching and shaking the frail bamboo dwelling, while the outer reef set up a might thundering as it broke the force of the swinging seas. Inside the reef, the lagoon, sheltered though it was, was white with fury, and not even Tehei’s seamanship could have enabled his slender canoe to live in such a welter.

By sunset the back of the squall had broken, though it was still too rough for the canoe. So I had Tehei find a native who was willing to venture his cutter across the Raiatea for the outrageous sum of two dollars Chili, which is equivalent in our money to ninety cents. Half the village was told off to carry the presents with which Tehei and Bihaura speeded their parting guests—captive chickens, fishes dressed and swathed in wrappings of green leaves, great golden bunches of bananas, leafy baskets spilling over with oranges and limes, alligator pears (the butter fruit, also called the *avoca*), huge baskets of yams, bunches of taro and cocoanuts, and last of all, large branches and trunks of trees—firewood for the *Snark*.

While on the way to the cutter we met the only white man on Tahaa, and of all me, George Lufkin, a native of New England! eighty-six years of age he was, sixty-odd of which, he said, he had spent in the Society Islands, with occasionally absences, such as the gold rush to Eldorado in forty-nine and a short period of ranching in California near Tulare. Given no more than three months by the doctors to live, he had returned to his South Seas and lived to eighty-six and to chuckle over the doctors aforesaid who were all in their graves. *Fee-fee* he had, which is the native for elephantiasis and which is pronounce fay-fay. A quarter of a century before the disease had fastened upon him, and it would remain with him until he died. We asked him about kith and kin. Beside him sat a sprightly damsel of sixty, his daughter. “She is all I have,” he murmured plaintively, “and she has no children living.”

The cutter was a small sloop-rigged affair, but large it seemed alongside Tehei’s canoe. On the other hand, when we got out on the lagoon, and were struck by another heavy wind squall, the cutter became Lilliputian, while the *Snark*, in our imagination, seemed to promise all the stability and permanence of a continent. They were good boatmen. Tehei and Bihaura had come along to see us home, and the latter proved a good boatwoman herself. The cutter was well

ballasted, and we met the squall under full sail. It was getting dark, the lagoon was full of coral patches, and we were carrying on. In the height of the squall we had to go about, in order to make a short leg to windward to pass around a patch of coral no more than a foot under the surface. As the cutter filled on the other tack, and while she was in that "dead" condition that precedes gathering way, she was knocked flat. Jib sheet and main sheet were let go, and she righted into the wind. Three times she was knocked down, and three times the sheets were flung loose, before she could get away on that tack.

By the time we went about again, darkness had fallen. We were now to windward of the *Snark*, and the squall was howling. In came the jib, and down came the mainsail, all but a patch of it the size of a pillow slip. By an accident we missed the *Snark*, which was riding it out to two anchors, and drove aground upon the inshore coral. Running the longest line on the *Snark* by means of the launch, and after an hour's hard work, we heaved the cutter off and had her flying safely astern.

The day we sailed for Bora Bora the wind was light, and we crossed the lagoon under power to the point where Tehei and Bihaura were to meet us. As we made in to the land between the coral banks we vainly scanned the shore for our friends. There was no sign of them.

"We can't wait," I said. "This breeze won't fetch us to Bora Bora by dark, and I don't want to use any more gasoline than I have to."

You see, gasoline in the South Seas is a problem. One never knows when he will be able to replenish his supply of the precious commodity.

But just then Tehei appeared through the trees, as he came down to the water. He had peeled off his shirt and was wildly waving it. Bihaura apparently was not yet ready. Once aboard, Tehei informed us by signs that we must proceed along the land until we got opposite to his house. He took the wheel and coned the *Snark* through the coral, around point after point until we cleared the last point of all. Cries of welcome went up from the beach, and Bihaura, assisted by several of the villagers, brought off two canoe loads of abundance. There were yams, taro, *feis*, breadfruit, cocoanuts, oranges, limes, pineapples, watermelons, alligator pears, pomegranates, fish, chickens galore crowing and cackling and laying eggs on our decks, and a live pig that squealed infernally and all the time in perpetual apprehension of imminent slaughter.

Under the rising moon we came in under the perilous passage of the reef of Bora Bora and dropped anchor off Vaitapé village. Bihaura, with housewifely anxiety, could not get ashore too quickly to her house to prepare more abundance for us. While the launch was taking here and Tehei to the little jetty, the sound of music and of singing drifted across the quiet lagoon. Throughout the Society Islands we had been continually informed that we would find the Bora Borans very jolly. Charmian and I went ashore to see, and on the village green, by forgotten graves on the beach, found the youths and maidens dancing, flower garlanded and flower bedecked, with strange phosphorescent flowers in their hair that pulsed and dimmed and glowed in the moonlight. Farther along the beach we came upon a huge grass house, oval shaped, seventy feet in length, where the elders of the village were singing *himines*. They, too, were flower garlanded and jolly, and they welcomed us into the fold as little lost sheep straying along from outer darkness.

Early next morning Tehei was on board, with a string of fresh-caught fish and an invitation to dinner for that evening. On the way to dinner we dropped in at the *himine* house. The same elders were singing, with here and there a youth or maiden that we had not seen the previous night. From all the signs, a feast was in preparation. Towering up from the floor was a

mountain of fruits and vegetables, flanked on either side by numerous chickens tethered by cocoanut strips. After several *himines* were sung, one of the men arose and made oration. The oration was made to us, and though it was Greek to us, we knew that in some way it connected us with that mountain of provender.

“Can it be that they are presenting us with all that?” Charmian whispered.

“Impossible,” I muttered back. “Why should they be giving it to us? Besides, there is no room on the *Snark* for it. We could not eat a tithe of it. The rest would spoil. Maybe they are inviting us to the feast. At any rate, that they should give all that to us is impossible.”

Nevertheless we found ourselves once more in the high seat of abundance. The orator, by gestures unmistakable, in detail presented every item in the mountain to us, and next he presented it to us in toto. It was an embarrassing moment. What would you do if you lived in a hall bedroom and a friend gave you a white elephant? Our *Snark* was no more than a hall bedroom, and already she was loaded down with the abundance of Tahaa. This new supply was too much. We blushed, and stammered, and *mauruurued*. We *mauruurued* with repeated *nuis*, which conveyed the largeness and overwhelmingness of our thanks. At the same time, by signs, we committed the awful breach of etiquette of not accepting the present. The *himine* singers' disappointment was plainly betrayed, and that evening, aided by Tehei, we compromised by accepting one chicken, one bunch of bananas, one bunch of taro, and so on down the list.

But there was no escaping the abundance. I bought a dozen chickens from a native out in the country, and the following day he delivered thirteen chickens along with a canoe load of fruit. The French storekeeper presented us with pomegranates and lent us his finest horse. The gendarme did likewise, lending us a horse that was the very apple of his eye. And everybody sent us flowers. The *Snark* was a fruit stand and a greengrocer's shop masquerading under the guise of a conservatory. We went around flower garlanded all the time. When the *himine* singers came on board to sing, the maidens kissed us welcome, and the crew, from captain to cabin boy, lost its heart to the maidens of Bora Bora. Tehei got up a big fishing expedition in our honor, to which we went in a double canoe, paddled by a dozen strapping Amazons.

The days passed, but the abundance did not diminish. On the day of departure, canoe after canoe put off to us. Tehei brought cucumbers and a young *papaya* tree burdened with splendid fruit. Also, for me he brought a tiny double canoe with fishing apparatus complete. Further, he brought fruits and vegetables with the same lavishness as at Tahaa. Bihaura brought various special presents for Charmian, such as silk-cotton pillows, fans and fancy mats. The while population brought fruits, flowers, and chickens. And Bihara added a live sucking pig. Natives whom I did not remember ever having seen before, strayed over the rail and presented us with fish poles, fish lines and pear-shell fish hooks.

As the *Snark* sailed out through the reef she had a cutter in tow. This was the craft that was to take Bihaura back to Tahaa—but not Tehei. I had yielded at last, and he was one of the crew of the *Snark*. When the cutter cast off and headed east, and the *Snark's* bow turned toward the west, Tehei knelt down by the cockpit and breathed a silent prayer, the tears flowing down his cheeks. A week later, when Martin got around to developing and printing he showed Tehei some of the photographs. And that brown-skinned son of Polynesia, gazing on the pictured lineaments of his beloved Bihaura, broke down in tears.

But the abundance! There was so much of it. We could not work the *Snark* for the fruit that was in the way. She was festooned with fruit. The lifeboat and launch were packed with it. The awning guys groaned under their burdens. But once we struck the full trade-wind sea, the disburdening began. At every roll the *Snark* shook overboard a bunch or so of bananas and



cocoanuts or a basket of limes. A golden flood of limes washed about in the lee scuppers. The big baskets of yams burst, and pineapples and pomegranates rolled back and forth. The chickens had got loose and were everywhere, roosting on the awnings, fluttering and squawking out on the jib boom, and essaying the perilous feat of balancing on the spinnaker boom. They were wild chickens, accustomed to flight. When attempts were made to catch them, they flew out over the ocean, circled about, and came back. Sometimes they did not come back. And in the confusion the little pig got loose and slipped overboard.