

A Tahitian Village.

Here was to be seen a little world unto itself, ruled over with gentle authority political and Spiritual.

The head of the village, whose word was law, was the Chief of the surrounding District. His was generally an hereditary appointment, in many cases dating back through the corridors of time long before the existence of a white man was known.

The Chief was a member of a Consultative Assembly, which periodically made submissions to the Government. There was no doctor and no policeman. The former being unnecessary because it was considered that herbal medicine, for most ailments, was far superior to that provided by a white doctor. The latter being superfluous because of the absence of drunkenness, theft, or obscenity of any kind.

The Spiritual Head of the village was the Marist priest and to a minor degree the "Bone Rattler". Here was tolerance indeed. The priest ordained that all, except protestants if any, must come to mass on Sunday morning. In the afternoon those who wished to were at liberty to listen to the "Bone Rattler" up in the valley. He would not do them any good neither would he do them any harm. The "Bone Rattler, in his turn, shared the opposite view with emphasis on the visit to him on Sunday afternoon.

The protestants, if any, met in a private house attended by a Tahitian Lay Preacher. What they were protesting, they had no idea, but they were proud to be carrying on the teaching of the C.M.S. of long ago. There was not the slightest social discrimination between Catholic and protestant.

All adults in the village had their allotted tasks. The men to do the fishing and copra making. The women to tend to the household chores of cooking and family laundry, as well as looking after the always

During the evening meal, the conversation turned on what Full Moon night meant to the Tahitians, and I intimated that I should be going out alone onto the lagoon in my double seated canoe, as was often my wont.

The husband:- "I have to go into town tonight, and I should be most grateful if you would take my wife with you. She would love the experience and I am sure would not be a nuisance."

Much against my will, I agreed and eventually we set off, I paddling in front and she behind.

After a while she stopped paddling, but I took no notice, later on, tired of doing all the work, I asked if she were ^{in her seat} (tired). No, she was not tired, but would I please not turn round. Naturally I turned, and found her sitting without a stitch^t on. "Oh well, if that is how you feel, you had better come in front so that I can keep an eye on you. There is no knowing what you will do next." We ^{sits} changed, and she stretched herself out at full length at my feet.

The silence was broken by her relating that the previous night she had had a glorious dream of being chased in the moonlight among the coconut trees by a naked man. Would I make the dream come true? Knowing that I was in full control of myself, I agreed.

Putting her ashore at one place, I went on for another hundred yards or so and then di^sembarked. Taking off my singlet and shorts, I started out to hunt. No sign ^{of her} for quite a time, but at last there she was peeping from behind a tree. When she knew that I seen her, off she went at top speed, and I quite willing to prolong this unique adventure for as long as possible, did not exert myself

to bring it to an end.

At last, completely exhausted, she stopped, and I e
caught^h up in my arms. "Well, you naughty girl. What shall^s do to
you now"? "No, please don't. I want only to remember that I was on
Tahiti at the time of the Full Moon."
