The Silver Tahitian Moon.

On Tahiti, full moon night was always a time of festival and happiness.

Families and their friends would sit under the trees in the moon light and talk, sing, or dance as the mood took them. Time for love making? Yes, of the holding hands variety, but not for lust. There was an atmosphere of the unearthly, when the great Spirits of the past walked abroad without interfering with those still earthbound.

One of the greatest joys was to be able to accept an invitation from a Chief, with a large war canoe, to go out on the lagoon and enjoy the stillness of the full moon night, enlivened only by the soft tones of guitar and ukulele in another boat sent out at a distance to give only an impression of music.

Hard to put into mere words, but an atmosphere of complete domination of the material world by that of the spiritual. The Moon, in all her silvery beauty, took on the attribute of an all embracing mother influence, stretching out her invisible arms to cover and shield the whole earth from everything that was not spiritual.

On such a night as this, a man and his wife and I were the guests of a Chief. The couple, of early middle age, were very agreeable, cultured people, on a visit to the island.

The husband spent most of his time during the day enjoying the beauties of the coral reef, while his wife,a lover of wild flowers, busied herself with collecting bunches of hibiscus and wild ginger.
numerous children.

Here, to the lover of young life, was a happy sight.

No hand was ever raised to chastise, no voice was ever raised in anger. Should the mother of a family die, a rush would be made to get the children. They were the human flowers of the village belonging in the first place to the parents, and in the second place to every family in the village. The affection for children was reciprocated, and the Biblical injunction to "Honour thy father and thy mother" was universal.

Unlike in modern western communities, grey heads were honoured and protected, as the shadows of life started to lengthen. I say grey heads, as white hair was a rarity. A Tahitian who lived to be seventy years of age was very very old. The reason for this lay in acid forming diet. Protean in the form of fish, with starch contained in breadfruit and taro was not conducive to the forming of alkali.

Happiness, perpetual happiness, must make itself apparent in good health, and good health makes itself manifest in the physical. Both men and women were in the most part handsome and beautiful. Rippling muscles and beauty of frame reached the height of the ideal.

Where in the world was to be found such cleanliness. Houses, whether inhabited by well to do or the just ordinary, were spotlessly clean. To eat off the floor, if necessary, would be just as appetizing as to be served with food from a white linen tablecloth.

The village folk would no more think of dispensing with a complete wash at the end of the day's work than they would of doing without the evening meal. Men above the bridge and women below, the order of every night of the year. If ever the smell of body uncleanness reached the nose of a visitor to Tahiti, it would surely come from a neighbouring whiteman or Popa as he was called.
When the evening meal was over, he who would enter the sanctum sanctorum of a Tahitian home must tread warily. Here the males did not engage in a corner and so often tell dirty stories and the females likewise with tales of “Don’t tell anybody” I said so, but do you know—-?

The visitor does not speak unless spoken to. However, in no time at all he is made to feel how welcome he is, and is engaged in conversation in all that is of mutual interest to the happy circle.

At a lull sometime during the evening, a beautiful lady, with her long wavy hair hanging to her waist and a flower behind her ear, may take her guitar and some music pervades this divine atmosphere. The old folk may start to speak with pride of the historical past before the white man came to adulterate this island home. Stories and then more stories of the ancient gods. Historic love stories. Ghost stories.

Here was one of the many beauties of a Tahitian home. A unit of many lives, where pride of race and dignity of thought and action act as a bulwark against the rush and tare of advancing materialism.

The Divine Creator can but look with pleasure on this part of his creation.