FIJI—
Its Problems and Resources

MAJOR W. A. CHAPPLE
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by

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The Photographs in this work are reproduced by the kind permission of Mr. F. Caine and Mr. F. W. Hennings of Suva.
FIJI is a group of Pacific Islands covered with high mountains and low hills and intersecting valleys. The low hills prevail, but the climatic conditions are determined by the mountains.

The latitude of Suva, the capital, situated in the largest island, is 18° South, and the whole group lies between latitudes 15° and 22°.

This is the latitude North or South, of Townsville in Queensland, of the Northern Territory Australia, of Madagascar, of Southern Rhodesia, of Batavia, of Mexico City, of Vera Cruz, of Jamaica, of Bombay, of Rangoon. Manila in the Philippines is 14°, Ceylon, Penang, and British New Guinea are each about 10°, while Singapore and British East Africa are on the Equator.

But Fiji is more equable and tolerable than most of these. Like a fairy godmother, the glorious forest-clad mountains bestow innumerable blessings
that make the climate one of the most tolerable, enjoyable and healthy in the world. The mountains rise to over 4,000 feet in height. Every view of Fiji is mountainous. Look in any direction, and crag on crag, a very forest of pyramids, of all heights and dimensions, with gullies and saddles and terraces and leading spurs, fills up the field of vision.

If these mountains are the glory, they are also the salvation of Fiji. They cool the air and keep it in constant motion. They bring down the rain from the passing clouds and moisture-laden air, and cause the cloudy sky that shades the country from the blazing sun. They send down into the valleys and the coastal towns and settlements the cooled and heavier air that makes the land breezes. They cool with their rain and fan with their breezes, limiting the temperature to a degree that can be borne by suffering humanity.

The air temperature at Suva has never been known to reach 100° F. The average summer temperature is 82°. When the temperature rises, and a voice whispers, "It is hot," a rustle in the reeds, or a ripple on the sea, or a patter on the roof, is the echo of that voice.
When it is hot, it is hot only for a brief space, and the invariable corrective comes automatically. The heat brings the coolness. The dryness brings the rain. The stillness brings the breeze. The human temperature is kept at 98.4 by a special plexus of nerves, whose sole function is to regulate the body heat. If the temperature of the blood goes down by even a fraction of a degree, or tends in that direction, the head of the department sends messages in all directions, the skin contracts and prevents radiation of surface heat, the blood current contracts and lessens speed, the blood is withdrawn from the cool surface of the body, and, in alarm at the danger, it hides in the warm and sheltered centres.

If, on the other hand, the temperature tends to rise, the skin relaxes, the blood vessels dilate, the pores open, the perspiration flows, and evaporation cools. The mountains are the nerve plexus of Fiji controlling the temperature and determining the climate. They are aided by the sea. Latitude for latitude, continents are very much hotter than islands. Quite apart from elevation, an island climate is moderated by the encircling sea. And Fiji is blessed especially in this. The largest island, Viti Levu, is
100 miles by 60 miles, and rises out of a framework of coral reefs. Its shores are protected from erosion, and even from the anger of the waves, by an almost complete circle of coral rocks, about one mile or more from the shore.

Only for about one-sixth of its circumference is this beautiful island unprotected from the rolling waves. But all the islands share this advantage of the sea influence on their climate.

The mountains and the sea, therefore, determine the climate of Fiji, and limit the heat, cause the breezes, bring the rain, make the rivers and streams and springs, and confer on the inhabitants one of the healthiest and most equable and tolerable climates in the world.

The testimony of those who have lived in Fiji for twenty or thirty years bears out this expression of opinion. Those who have lived in Australia declare emphatically that the heat of the Fijian summer is never so great as that constantly felt in the hot months in Sydney and Brisbane; while the inland districts of New South Wales and Queensland are distinctly hotter.

The heat of January and February (the summer months) is moist and muggy and uncomfort-
able, but it is seldom oppressive, and never unhealthy.

Fiji is almost unique amongst tropical countries in its immunity from tropical diseases. Malaria, yellow fever, and sleeping sickness are unknown. One can live and travel anywhere in Fiji, in the forest, among the mangrove swamps, on the hilltops and in the valleys, and remain immune from all tropical diseases. Mosquitoes are a pest near the rivers and swamps, but they convey none of the diseases to which whites are liable. The Fijian natives get elephantiasis, and it is not unknown amongst whites, though very rare. It is due to an organism which invades the lymphatic vessels of the leg or arm, and leads to an enormous enlargement of the affected part.

The Fijians, like all native races, have not cultivated by long contact with European diseases, that immunity which the whites enjoy. They therefore fall victims to diseases new to them, and the death rate from these diseases is high. The Fijians lost 40,000 in a measles epidemic in 1875, while in 1918 over 5,000 died in the influenza epidemic. Apart from this susceptibility to European diseases the Fijians are a stalwart, healthy, well-developed race, of magnificent physique.
The settled white residents show no sign of lack of health nor of any disability arising from the climate. On the contrary, all show a physiological acceptance of the climatic and telluric conditions of the country. The youths of Suva manifest on the football field that furious and tireless energy that characterises the Britisher at his games.

Most of the whites are lightly clad, but it is a matter of remark that so many men continue to wear their dark tweed suits and their felt hats, unconscious of any oppression induced by the sun or air. The hottest months are January and February, but these are also rainy months, especially in the dry zones. The dry zone in Viti Levu, the largest island, consists of a horseshoe-shaped strip, 10 to 20 miles wide, encircling the island for about three-fourths of its circumference, and including the south-west, west, north, and north-east coasts.

The rainfall in this dry belt is about 60-80 in. per annum. The wet zone in Viti Levu consists of the area enclosed by this horseshoe belt, and includes Suva and the centre of the island. These zones are well defined, and are determined by the warm trade winds impinging on the cold mountain ranges. The moisture then descends in rain, and
the winds thus robbed, pass on over the “dry” areas.

The dry zone, however, is as a rule wet enough, and there is ample rain for all domestic, pastoral, agricultural, and climatic needs. In fact, these dry zones are by far the most enjoyable from a residential point of view.

The rains of Suva, for instance, are annoying, and necessitate constant provision against unannounced showers. They are always pleasing in a way, but often a nuisance. A wetting, however, is never a tragedy to one’s body, though often it may be to one’s clothes. No one minds getting wet, for the rain is never cold, as in temperate climates, and the Fijian, having only a sulu or loin-cloth as his total clothing, is quite regardless of it.

Even whites seldom dread it as they do in other countries, and no colds or other sequelæ seem to supervene. In the wet zone the rainfall is about 100 to 150 inches, and there the growth is luxuriant and often embarrassing. The mountains are covered with forest and jungle. They cannot be cleared by felling and burning, as they are in New Zealand and Australia. If they are felled, the growth around the trees and through their branches
pretty well covers them up before they can dry and become inflammable. Even if this growth did not interfere, the rain would not be absent sufficiently long to allow of a "burn."

Moreover, in the wet zone the moisture in the air, as well as the actual rainfall, rots wood and rusts iron, and the upkeep of buildings is expensive and a never-ending toil. Concrete is the great stand-by. It is eternal if reinforced, and even if not is serviceable, and may be cheap.

In the dry zone things last better. The air is drier, the sunshine is brighter, the soil is less moist, the foliage less abundant and overpowering, and the whole countryside more like the hills of New Zealand and Australia in the best pastoral districts.

The hurricanes are a feature. The imagination, unchecked by experience, pictures them as devastating and awesome. A visitor to Rotorua, arriving at night, was once seen to be picking his way through the streets, tapping the ground in front of him with his stick as he ventured each step. He had read of the boiling pools, and was anxious to escape a cooking. People in Britain, who have only seen New Zealand on the map, think that on landing there, one has to step off the boat well into
the centre of the island, for fear it will tip up. Their most anxious enquiry of a visitor from the Dominion is how best to get away from the earthquakes.

The fact is, that hurricanes are no worse and no more frequent than they are in Canada, the United States, or Britain. They may sweep over the Islands in January, February or March, but the most damaging ones come at intervals of from two to nine years. They occurred in a severe form in the years 1895, 1904, 1908, 1910, 1912.

The "blows" give from eight to twenty-four hours warning of their presence somewhere near, though they may not come. In most cases, therefore, precautions can be taken by closing doors and securing boats. They last for a few hours, passing with cyclonic movement like a great whirlwind over some island or part of an island, at the rate of 10 to 12 miles an hour, the wind in the whirl blowing at the rate of 80 to 90 miles an hour. The highest recorded in Fiji was in 1910, and reached the rate of 88 miles, when the anemometer broke.

Their destructive effect is more apparent than real. Bananas suffer most, as they have weak trunks, broad leaves which catch the wind, and heavy
bunches of fruit, which reach maturity in the hurricane season. Coco-nuts suffer also. They have long slender trunks, with broad and numerous fronds at their apex, and weak wire-like roots which grow and spread near the surface of the soil. If hurricanes were as destructive as people outside Fiji think they are, the coco-nut palm would be as extinct as the moa. And yet the coco-nut is everywhere.

"Blows," as they are somewhat affectionately called in Fiji, are not an unmixed evil in any case. They stir things up. They prune the trees of fruit and leaves, and give their fecundity a rest, so that they bear better afterwards. They loosen the soil around the roots and aerate it. They dig about them as it were.

Nature has had to fend for herself in Fiji. No one lends a helping hand. The Kaiviti is easily tired. In any case, he has never heard, or never correctly interpreted, the cry of Nature for his assistance. At least, he has never given it. And, as necessity is the mother of invention, Nature had in her necessity to invent the hurricane to till the soil. Then the hurricanes blow pests away. The moth and other insect pests might be much worse
if the wind did not rid the Islands of much that is amiss in insect life.

Then take the evidence of the houses. The hurricanes have sadly neglected their duty as scavengers. Suva is studded with human habitations, I mean places where humans live, which no self-respecting hurricane would suffer to remain. The Fijian villages everywhere are a deliberate taunt, and, I am sure, a deep humiliation to Fijian hurricanes. But there are valuable and fruitful things in Fiji that defy the wildest hurricane. Root crops and rice crops, grass and cattle, and horses and goats, and wild pigs, and men.

No one dreads hurricanes in Fiji (unless he has a specially vulnerable house or crop) any more than New Zealanders do earthquakes, or Canadians cyclones, or Australians bushrangers. They are simply the fairy godmother in a fit of hystericis. It is soon over, and the air is clear.
Chapter II

PEOPLES—THE FIJIANS

The Islands are inhabited by 89,562 Fijians, 61,150 Indians, and 4,552 whites. The Indians have grown rapidly by immigration and natural increase from 25,955 in 1905 to 61,150 in 1917. The Fijians have decreased in numbers. The figures might have been different had it not been for the epidemics of measles and influenza, which carried off not less than 50,000.

Dysentery was a scourge in the time of Thakombau, but the kindly and wise dispensation of the British regime has given pure water and a sanitary environment to white and black alike.

The Fijians are the native race, the whites and the Indians are the colonists. Before the advent of the whites the natives were a race of savage, if cowardly, cannibals. Their favourite diet was human flesh, but it was not always the flesh of a hero slain in war. It was the flesh of a woman slyly
slain, perhaps by the hand that ostensibly protected her, or the flesh of a ward for the time being, or of a guest, or of a helpless victim. They were not only cannibals, these stalwart giants, they were cannibals without chivalry, or heroism, or courage.

There are some still living who have partaken of human flesh. A well-proportioned Britisher born in Fiji, and knowing the language well, ventured when in a village of their mountain fastnesses to cross-question an old native about his once gruesome diet. “Would you like it now, do you think?” the youth diffidently asked. The old rip grinned as he nipped his guest’s thigh between his fingers and thumb, and said, “You’d eat fine!”

No one would think, to meet and observe the fine Fijian of to-day, that so recently he was completely a savage. He is docile and kindly, as well as hospitable and courteous to a degree. He is unreliable and inconstant, and has no continuity of purpose. He will work hard intermittently, and has great powers of endurance. He will toil to finish a task, but having completed it he will not pine to undertake another. If it is a long task, he wearies before it is done. He works hardest when the end is in sight and not far off.
He does not work for money. He works for something that money will buy. He never saves, as he has no need to. If he does not work he can still live, and live quite as well. His wants, or rather his needs, are so few, and the provision for those needs is so abundant. He wears no boots, and needs no repairs—no clothes or hats—no collars or ties—no jewellery—no gloves or cane—no pockets, even.

His *sulu* is his only garment, and perhaps, but not necessarily, a singlet. And the *sulu* is just a rectangular piece of cotton cloth that he folds round his loins and tucks in upon itself to keep it in position.

Just think of the saving in clothes and in repairs, and in wardrobe space, and in packing when on a journey. Think of the time saved in dressing and undressing. Think of the whole army of tailors and dressmakers, of boot and shoemakers, of monthly bills, of feminine envy and uncharitableness, all wiped out by the *sulu* and the neck-to-ankle princess robe of cotton, of the Fijian maid.

A Fijian “living wage” takes no account of clothing for the worker and his wife and family, even the *sulu* being dispensed with in the case of the family in the country villages.
And his food—what of that? In a native hut, all spick and span, and neat and clean, with its floor raised by built-up earth to 2ft. or 3ft. above the village inter-habitation green, and covered with well-worked mats, squat half a dozen swarthy giants. They surround an enamel plate, 2ft. in diameter, heaped up with steaming taro, and yams, and tapioca, and boiled green bananas. Each puts some salt in the margin of the plate next his segment of the circumference, then with his fingers helps himself. The women have boiled, out on the village green, in a picnic-fire made up for the purpose and the occasion, the various vegetables already referred to, and have placed them before their lords. A cup of tea may end the meal. Now think of the saving in table linen, in knives and forks and spoons, in crockery and china, in table silver, in decorations, in losses and breakages, in labour of setting and clearing and washing up—no money cost, no labour lost.

Thus a "living wage" to the Fijian worker includes nothing for kitchen utensils and dining-room paraphernalia.

Then note his house. It is not built for living in at all. It is built for sleeping in. It consists of
one room surrounded by four walls and covered with a roof. There are no partitions, no windows, no floors (save the raised earth to escape the wet, and a mat), no furniture, no wall-paper or painted panels, no pictures or wall decorations—save a notice tacked up by the British official for the district, as to what the communal duties for the next twelve months of all the villagers are to be.

Think, again, of the capital saving in furniture, of the saving in recurring repairs—no broken windows, no repapering and repainting, no worn out carpets, no worried women, and no scolding men. No; and no beds, no bed linen, no oppressive and expensive blankets, no candles, no lamps, no gas. What need of these things? They go to bed with the darkness and rise with the light. No fires, no stoking, no coal bins, no smoke, no ashes, no tidying-up.

A living wage knows nothing of these things.

And these people are contented, if not happy. But they are more than contented. They are happy. They sing in the darkness and late into the night. They sing in parts, in splendid time, in beautiful harmony. They sing hymns and rounds. They sing in Fijian and in English. They sing “Tipperary”
and the war songs. They tell stories and exchange comments, and laugh the hearty laugh of happiness. They are out on the green if the night be fine, they are under shelter if it be wet.

And over and around these simple-minded and grown-up children are the sheltering wings of British administration and British justice, and leading them on is the beckoning finger of missionary enterprise.

Every native village throughout Fiji is redolent of the beneficence of British rule. The kindly hand that helps, the ruling mind that guides, the organisation that imposes, the wisdom that instructs, the rod that punishes, the justice that adjusts, all flow from that fountain head which has ever sent forth upon the subject races a crystal stream for the healing of their self-inflicted wounds and putrefying sores. The fragrance of British management pervades the village life. The native huts of reed and bamboo and thatch are detached and set down anywhere. They are all in good repair, are neat and clean. The ground that separates them is all in closely-mown and well-kept grass. No torn newspapers, or broken bottles, or empty tins disfigure the scene—no puddles or stagnant water, or rub-
bish dump. Nothing could exceed the cleanliness, the wholesomeness, the picturesqueness, the simple beauty of the scene.

And it is all done from Whitehall—from Downing Street, London. The village life is communal. No profiteers and victims—no robbers and robbed —no oppressors and oppressed.

The British District Commissioner, with the advice of the Provincial Council—a council made up of the hereditary chiefs and native officials—plans out the duties and tasks for the year from January to December, and posts up the programme in Fijian in the hut of the Bulli, or chief citizen, of the village. During one month huts are to be repaired; during another gardens are to be tilled and food planted, or taxes are to be earned, or distant work to be undertaken. Two months are set apart for themselves. They go where and do what they like. And every night when darkness enshrouds, the town-crier announces—and his voice carries over the laughter and merriment that precedes their rest—that on the morrow some road must be repaired by this one, and some leak stopped by another, and some plot or lawn cleared by another, or some journey taken. No one hoards or profiteers. All
may idle when they dare. All possess in common, but each is allotted his home and his task; and Whitehall, through its long arm and firm but kindly hand, exerts its beneficent will.

A visitor to almost any of the South American Republics is unpleasantly impressed by the infinite variety of human breeds. From the jet black negro to the sallow Spaniard there is not a shade of colour, or a degree in size, that is not represented. If all the breeds of fowls were indiscriminately mixed in a poultry yard, there could not be a better picture or a completer story. In Fiji this story is untold. Fijians everywhere, coolie Indians everywhere, whites everywhere. But few or no half-breeds. The Fijians despise the Indians. The Indians think themselves a superior race. Each keeps to his own people. Whatever tale the darkness may be able to tell, the daylight story is one of scrupulous decorum and unlapsing modesty. Nothing is ever seen to offend the eye of the most sensitive observer. There are not even overtures of affection between the sexes. The women are shy and diffident. The men never leer or follow. The Fijian people might be all of one sex for all that in public is ever betrayed to the contrary. Hyde Park or
Brighton Beach would shock them to stupefaction. This is also equally true of the coolie population one sees abroad, at their daily round of work, and duty, and recreation.

The promiscuous love scenes portrayed in the picture shows reveal the whites in an unfavourable light to the astonished Indians and Fijians, and if some precocious Fijian or agitating coolie on a visit to Britain were to undertake a "report" on the morals of the whites, it might be as lurid as other ventures of a like nature. Let it be said at once, and without hesitation or qualification, that the attitude and behaviour of the Fijians and Indians to each other and amongst themselves, as far as the most critical observers moving amongst them in town and country can see, leave nothing to be desired.

It is a matter for general surprise that a savage so recently cannibalistic, treacherous, and non-moral, should be to-day, after little more than a generation, so docile, and courteous, and manageable. The missionary has taught him and restrained him. To-day he is a Christian—with limitations. But what Christian has not limitations. The only difference is that the field in which his Christianity
operates is circumscribed. He readily gets outside. But up to the limit of his capacity to be a Christian he is one, and he is the higher in the moral and social scale because of the change that missionary zeal has engendered in him. It is little use reciting this fault and that shortcoming. He is infinitely better than he was. He is higher by feet, and he is rising still, and missionary enterprise can lay this to its credit that many a man is alive and fat to-day whose carcase the missionary has saved, perhaps to be put to a worse use than it might otherwise have served. I think as I write of men who sneer at the missionary and rail at the native, but who have reaped profit from them both.

British commercial enterprise has ever been the pioneer of British influence throughout the world. It was always aggressive, often ruthless, and aboriginal races have contributed to its success. But wherever the exploitation of native races was to be found, the missionary was not far off. Every poison has its antidote, and the Christian Mission has neutralised the poison of native exploitation, and not only protected the subject races, but has saved British trade and commerce from itself.
Chapter III

A NATIONAL DISEASE

The medical and surgical needs of the coloured population are catered for in the general hospital in Suva, which also meets the needs of the whites. All the sick congregate and no one is denied. The hospital is a congeries of wooden houses, each with a precarious foothold on an eminence overlooking the harbour. The Island of Benga is in the distance. Old Grandfather Mountain is on the right, with all his numerous offspring extending away to the horizon. Picturesque little Suva is in the foreground to the left. Was ever such a panorama of variegated beauty spread out for sickly saint and sinner to please and brighten, and minister to their therapeutic needs? This hospital is no respecter of persons. Every patient who comes, of whatever colour or status, gets the best it can provide. There was a ward packed with Fijian women suffering from yaws, chiefly in its later stages. This peculiar disease
A National Disease

is Fijian "syphilis," and is not contracted venereally. It has a similar germ to syphilis, produces the same symptoms and signs all through the life of its victim, has the primary, secondary and tertiary manifestations, produces locomotor ataxia and general paralysis of the insane, and can scarcely be distinguished from the European disease. But it is not it, and is not communicated in the ordinary way, and, of course, there is no sentiment against it or shame regarding it. In fact, it was always viewed by the Fijians as measles is viewed by many of our own people. It is a thing a child must have sooner or later, and therefore should have early. The wise and humane administration of Old Mother Britain is dispelling this tragic fallacy, to the infinite advantage of a simple-minded, child-like race. The disease has all the ravages of syphilis, and though communicated by contact, any abrasion on any part of the surface of the body being a site of entrance for the virus, it is never associated with immorality, and is therefore a subject of general and unrestrained conversation.

Modern anti-syphilitic treatment cures it in all three stages. After hypodermic medication by
salvarsan, symptoms disappear as if by magic, and large tertiary sores suddenly close and heal. This disease gives immunity from syphilis to the Fijian, the latter disease being seldom or ever seen in either sex.
Chapter IV

COMMUNISM

ACADEMICIANS and scholars discuss communism. Books are written about it, promises and predictions of unmeasured benefits, are hurled upon the air. It is like a written description of a linotype, or a camel, or a turbine, or a game of chess, in the absence of the object described, to a person who has never seen it. But see the linotype, or the camel, or the turbine, or the chess-men in action, and the description is intelligible, if not superfluous. See communism in Fiji, and read no more. There is no ownership in Fiji, no individual ownership. All things are held in common, except the women—they are strict about that.

Land is common, food is common, the product of labour is common. The delightful elysian simplicity of it all! All that anyone produces or secures is the common property of all. If a thing is indivisible it is in the possession for the time being
of the one who casually remarks "that's a nice hatchet," or "that's a nice saddle," or "that's nice yangona." When a chief makes such an observation the unwritten law is imperative. It becomes his. I gave some jam from my peripatetic larder to a village Fijian. He enjoyed it so noisily and obviously that I suggested that he should make some himself. "What's the good," he replied through an interpreter, "I wouldn't get it." Communism is a fine thing in books. The communism of books, the communism of Fiji is passive, dividing what it has. It is not active like Christianity, producing that it may give. The only communism worth having is the communism which is a by-product of Christianity. If you think it is desirable and are willing to go in pursuit, you must pursue it through Christianity. There is no other route. But it is really not worth pursuing. You have it when you have the substance from which it comes, and when you see how poor a thing it is beside its parent, you cease to value it. It is a shadow. When you sought it for itself it eluded you. Secure the substance and the shadow will be there—for what it is worth. Divide up by an external command and there is famine in body and soul. Divide up from an in-
ternal impulse, and the earth gives up its fruit, the soul is enriched and the body fed. Divide up by a human law and there is nothing to divide. I call Fiji in evidence. Divide up by the law of Christ, the law of service, and all are satisfied, and you may gather up of the fragments that remain twelve baskets full.
Chapter V

A MEKE

No one who has watched the gross, low, vulgar dancing of the Maori women, or the wild ferocity of the Maori haka, can fail to be impressed with the artistic grace and charm, the matchless harmony of time and movement, in the dancing and evolutions of the meke of the Fijian.

Vocal music from a choir of squatting Fijian men and women, often women only, takes the place of the martial band. The dancing women may form in a military square, and the faultless time they keep in their evolutions, whether of joint or muscle or frame, their ease and dignity and grace, make a poem in harmony and motion that can hardly be surpassed in the way of artistic and pleasing effect. The women, tall and lithe and graceful, dress in cotton neck-to-ankle robes. The singing girls wear a coloured cotton sulu, a cotton camisole, and a necklet of leaves and flowers, their hair cut short.
like the men's, cut to the fullest length consistent with its standing erect. Their arms and shapely shoulders freely anointed with coco-nut oil shine in the sun like polished mahogany.

The men joining in the meke wear a kilt of long broad leaves, whose bases are bound in a girth at their waist, and whose sword-points hang to the knees. These leaves are as broad as a hand, and are green or yellow, with a cat’s-eye spot, or of the brightest cerise. They wear an armlet of leaves, perhaps a necklet, and they smirch their faces with black, somewhat resembling a mask. Their marching and their evolutions on the field when they display, would, for time and symmetry and perfection of formation, do credit to a “Trooping of the Colours” in Windsor Park.

The part-singing is a distinctive feature of the vocal music in Fiji. Almost everyone sings in rounds and glee's, and the singing in the open on a cool clear evening in Suva by a group of Fijians is the very perfection of melody.
Chapter VI

FIRE WALKERS

BENGA is the island 25 miles distant, opposite the harbour of Suva. It is the home of the "fire walkers." They gave a display at the reception of Lord Jellicoe. Fire walking is unique, but not mysterious, or even remarkable. A wide pit about 50 feet in diameter and 3 feet in depth is dug and filled with alternate layers of big flat stones and wood. The wood is set burning early in the day, and by the time the hour of demonstration arrives the stones are red hot. Forty or fifty stalwarts pull away the burning logs with rope-like roots tied in loops on the ends of long poles, and the stones are distributed round the periphery of the pit. All then form in a line and walk rapidly over the stones, stepping quickly and lightly from stone to stone, till each has completed or nearly completed the circle. I examined the feet of some of the men immediately after they had circumnavigated the pit. Their soles were no dif-
different from those of other natives, and were neither burnt nor hot. The explanation is that the foot is never in contact with the hot stone for a sufficiently long period of time to dry up the natural moisture of the sole and burn the skin. This phenomenon is well known. Edward VII was once induced by Lord Kelvin to put his moist finger into molten metal. If this is done and the finger withdrawn with sufficient speed, the steam generated around the finger makes a buffer of vapour, and until that is dispersed there is no intimate contact between the skin and the molten metal. Much the same protection is given when one lifts a red-hot ember from the carpet and throws it back into the fire. Time is of the essence of the contract, as the lawyers say. These fire walkers did not stand on the stones. They walked on them. There was no contact long enough to burn. Anyone could do it who practised and had such a good notion of “time” as the Fijian.
Chapter VII

THE INDIANS

THE Indians in Fiji are at present the hewers of wood and drawers of water, though they are fast establishing themselves as agriculturalists and traders. They are the coolies introduced from India to do the work for white employers that the Fijians refused to do.

They have been recruited at the instance of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, the planters and others, by the Fijian Government, under conditions stipulated and set out by the Government of India.

Recruiting agents, appointed and paid by the Fijian Government, sought out in the eastern parts of India, chiefly in Madras and Calcutta, those men and women willing to accept the stated terms, and sail for Fiji. In theory there were adequate safeguards, but in practice abuses crept in. On the whole the coolies have profited materially, many beyond their wildest dreams. Whether morally or not will be discussed later.
The following is a brief description of what was the system of recruiting labour from India to meet the needs of the various industries in Fiji.

"Those requiring labourers notify the local government, and the latter inform their agents in India, who are high officials in the Colonial Civil Service, of the requisitions for the following year.

"After obtaining such knowledge of the total requirements of the various sugar colonies in question, the agents arrange for the necessary transport, also apply to the Protector of Emigrants—an official of the Indian Government—for licenses for the recruiters.

"To avoid confusion in the minds of the intending emigrants, the Indian Emigration Act provides that a Colonial Agency may recruit for only one colony at a time, also that each intending emigrant must be given a printed resumé of the conditions of the pending agreement, and must testify before the local magistrate that he or she fully understands such conditions.

"Those recruited are sent to the depôts in Calcutta or Madras, where they must be examined by the emigration surgeon and the protector of Emigrants within 48 hours after their arrival."
"Any unwilling to proceed further, or who do not come up to the standard required, are sent back with a small gratuity.

"After a period of quarantine, with the usual precautions necessary to the health of such people, those who are passed as fit are submitted to a final examination by the Protector of Emigrants, also by the ship's surgeon before embarking.

"The accommodation and arrangements on the steamers must be approved by the various Indian Government officials.

"Upon arriving in the colony, and after a further short period of quarantine, the immigrants are allotted by the local government to approved employers, but scrupulous care is taken not to separate relations or friends.

"During the whole period between their recruitment in India and their arrival on the plantations in Fiji, the immigrants are fed, clothed, transported and cared for medically under the strict supervision of British European officials throughout, and they commence work without indebtedness of any kind.

"In the case of Fiji, the whole expense incurred in that period is borne by the employers."
“No part is paid by the Government or the immigrants.”

The conditions and terms of indenture were that the labourer had to work for five years, after which he was free to follow his own bent. If he wished to return to India he could do so, but in five years more he was entitled to a free passage.

Penal clauses were inserted in the agreement of indenture, and a deserter from his work could be arrested and returned by the civil authorities. These penal clauses have since been voluntarily abandoned by the employers themselves, and they have also unanimously released all indentured labourers from their articles of indenture as from 31st December, 1919.
Chapter VIII

RECRUITING

All recruiting of emigrants for immigration into other countries has had very similar characteristics and results. About forty years ago New Zealand entered upon an immigration scheme. Recruiters were appointed in London, and were paid so much a head for all they put on board an emigrant ship. Who enlisted? Not the best workers or the best characters in London. The flotsam and jetsam flocked to the ship’s side. The irresponsibles, the bad characters, the unattached to work or women or home—the rejects—those who wished to escape from their environment, not because they were superior to it, but because they were beneath it. The best men and women were at work, in homes, acceptable to their environment—contented—anchored. This was more true of women than of men—and fewer women could be induced to venture.
The superintendent of asylums had occasion to report to the New Zealand authorities nearly thirty years after the inception of this policy, that the gaols and lunatic asylums of the country were filled with the remnants and the progeny of recruited immigrants, and were eloquent of the evil of the system.

It would be amazing if some of these evils, which have nothing to do with indenture or contract labour, but reside in the system of aggressive recruiting in one country for journeyings to another, were not to be found in Fiji. Some of the evils of such a system are to be found amongst the Indians. But they are not to be laid wholly at the door of the contract, of "forced" labour, of oppressive conditions, of callous employers. They arise largely from the fact that aggressive recruiting appeals to the worst class and not to the best.

But Fiji is to be congratulated on the obvious fact that everything has panned out so well for the Indian in his adopted country. If they were not the worst who caught the eye of the recruiter, they were certainly the poorest. One looks in vain for signs of poverty, as India understands it, in Fiji. The coolies are all well fed and look contented. I have
been round the “lines” both day and night, in all parts of the main island, and I could detect nothing that spoke of poverty, or discontent, or misery, or insanitation. There were often dirt and little space. The conditions might have been better—should have been better. Very little concessions from great corporations and wealthy industries and firms would go a long way to improve the coolie’s lot and promote his self-respect and his interest in the wholesome upbringing of his family. But the conditions, as they impinge on health and morals, were in nearly all cases better than in many of the workers’ dwellings in some of the mining districts of Britain. One must keep in mind the climatic conditions of the two countries. In Britain labourers and their families live in their houses. In Fiji, men, women and children live outside their houses. They run under cover for shelter from a shower, and they sleep in their hut. At all other times they are in the open. Naked or half-naked children, bare-footed, bare-headed, scamper about in all directions and everywhere. They grow and thrive, and are happy in the open air. What would be a suffocating space if they had to live indoors in a cold climate, might be ample in the tropics. I am
not justifying all that exists in coolie lines. I am suggesting a correct perspective and a balanced view.

The Indian certainly does not look degraded or oppressed—nor does he behave in public as if he were. On the contrary he looks respectable and he wears the aspect of independence. If their colour could be changed to the European hue, I am quite sure the majority would pass for Englishmen and good looking, if undersized, Englishmen at that.

They are the workers of Fiji. They are industrious and thrifty and have continuity of purpose, all of which attributes are conspicuous by their absence in the Kaiviti.

They numbered 35,250 in 1909, and 61,150 in 1917. Their birth-rate in 1909 was 38.8 per thousand, and 35.9 in 1917, while the death-rate per thousand in 1909 was 16.4, and in 1917 it was 9.6.

Of the 61,150 Indians in 1917, 38,550 were males and 22,600 were females. In a recruited immigration this is an unusually high proportion of females. The Chinese, who emigrate to Canada, and Australia and New Zealand, and the United States, have nothing like this percentage of females.
The birth-rate does not indicate venereal diseases, or prostitution, or abortion, or deliberate limitation on the part of the women.

Taking all things into consideration, the positive recruiting that brings them to Fiji, the overcrowded towns of India especially selected for recruitment, the class to which appeal is most attractive, the contract labour with its penal clauses, the overcrowded lines and the disproportion of the sexes, I think the Indians of Fiji are a healthy, wholesome, prosperous, contented, law-abiding lot; that they make good colonists and permanent settlers, and may immigrate freely in the future, to their own and the country's advantage.
Chapter IX

THE INDIAN PROBLEM

WHAT has come to be known as the Indian Problem in Fiji has engaged an unusual amount of attention during quite recent years. As a result of it, "indenture" was totally abolished in 1916, at the instance of the Government of India; all recruitment of labour from India to Fiji has been stopped; and by the action of the Fiji Government, which was generally supported by the various bodies of employers, all indentures were cancelled at the beginning of 1920.

Indian labour had been coming in at an increasing rate, and 3,599 adult immigrants were applied for in 1917 from 130 planters. This was required to meet the drain on the labour market by the transfer of Indians to trade and agriculture, to the growing of cattle and garden truck, and of rice and maize, when their indenture expired.
The sudden stoppage of immigration brought consternation to those whose industries depended on this class of labour.

Britain stands alone at a high and noble pre-eminence amongst the nations of the earth, in her almost hypersensitive interest in the moral and material welfare of the races that Providence has committed to her care. She not only keeps an unsleeping eye upon all that goes on, through her official administrators, but self-appointed societies organise themselves as protectors, standing guard over all who might be exploited or injured or neglected, in their contact with trade rivalries and commercial interests.

Commissions of enquiry, some official, some sectional, and some private, have been instituted during the last five or six years, and the whole subject has been thoroughly explained as far as Fiji is concerned. In June, 1914, an official Commission set up by the Viceroy of India, after an investigation on the spot, reported on indentured labour in the West Indies and Fiji.

The Hon. J. McNeill, a senior civilian in the Bombay Presidency, and subsequently a member of the Viceroy’s Council, and Mr. Chimman Lal,
an influential landowner and merchant in the Punjab, constituted this Commission.

Their report might be considered as untainted by any prejudice. They investigated in the interest of the moral and material welfare of recruited labour, and not in the interest of any colony or any commercial interest. Their report was embodied in a communication by the Viceroy to the India Office and was laid before both Houses of the British Parliament.

This official movement to ascertain the facts and conditions primarily amongst recruited immigrants, was the outcome partly of the agitation in India of the Native Party in the Viceroy’s Council in India, which had urged through the late Mr. Gokhale and others, that malpractices were imposed on prospective Indian emigrants by unscrupulous recruiters, that the penal clauses of the “Contract of Indenture” were oppressive, often abused, and savoured of slavery, and that indentured immigrants lived a different life and were subject to different laws and treatment from their fellows in the colony in which they toiled. Of emigration to the sugar colonies (of which Fiji is one), the report of Mr. McNeill’s Commission says:—
"We are convinced that, notwithstanding our possibly disproportionate presentation of the unsatisfactory features of the existing system, a careful study of the facts elicited during our enquiry will result in the conclusion that its advantages have far outweighed its disadvantages. The great majority of emigrants exchange grinding poverty with practically no hope of betterment for a condition varying from simple but secure comfort to solid prosperity. Emigrants live under very much better conditions than their relatives in India, and have had opportunities of prospering that exceeded their own wildest hopes. They became citizens of the colonies to which they emigrated, and both they and their descendants have attained to positions commanding general respect and consideration.

"We do not regard the system as solely or mainly concerned with securing fair wages and fair treatment for Indian labourers who are content to emigrate for a few years, save a few hundred rupees and return to their homes. Following the example of the great majority of the emigrants themselves and their descendants, we regard it rather as a system of colonisation under which poor cultivating landowners who are content to be
trained and acclimatised under private employers in need of a steady supply of labour, are offered prospects much more favourable than they could hope to realise at home.”

Of Fiji in particular the report says:—

“It will be seen from the statement of wages that the percentage of days worked is very much higher in Fiji than in other colonies (i.e., the West Indies). This result is due to the fact that the colony is healthy, the sanitary conditions are good, and the work is less monotonous, and for about half the year very remunerative. The labourer seems to like the division of the year into a period of hard work for good earnings and a period of quiet, steady work for moderate earnings.

“... On all estates visited by us the houses were good, the water supply good and sufficient, and the latrines well designed, in good order, and in regular use.”

The plantation hospitals were, according to the report, “well built, apparently well equipped, and the treatment and attendance satisfactory.” The construction and administration of these hospitals are subject to the control of the Fijian Government, but the expenses, including part of the medical officer’s salary, are borne by the employers.
In transmitting the report to the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy comments in his despatch of 15th October, 1915:—

"We do not desire to discuss the housing, sanitary, and medical arrangements that exist in the various colonies; it may be at once admitted that they are generally satisfactory, and often excellent, while the weak spots are mostly capable of, or in process of, removal."

These features in the report are borne out by the report of the Commissioner of Lands, which records the fact that at the end of 1917, 12,000 men out of a free Indian population of 52,100, men, women and children, were registered tenants of 10,175 blocks of land, aggregating over 125,000 acres.

In February, 1916, the Rev. C. F. Andrews and Mr. W. W. Pearson, after visiting Fiji on behalf of a body of Indian gentlemen who had taken an interest in the question of the indenture of Indian labour and who had consistently opposed it, drew up a lengthy report.

This report set out that:—

"1. Recruiting of Indians for labour in Fiji was conducted by Fiji Government Agents, who
abused their powers and mislead those whom they sought out and persuaded to emigrate.

"2. These emigrants were not aware of the kind of labour which they contracted to do, nor of the cost of living in Fiji, nor the penal clauses in the contract.

"3. The term of five years indenture was too long, the penal clauses smacked of slavery, the wages were too low and remained fixed while prices rose.

"4. The proportion of 40 per cent. of female emigrants which the Indian Government stipulated must be a minimum had become a maximum, because Fiji employers did not want to be burdened with the expense of women immigrants.

"5. The classification of the Indian population into 'indentured' and 'free' led to invidious distinctions, and the misery and humiliation of the former class.

"6. The disproportion of the sexes led to the sharing of women in common and the abolition of the sanctity of the marriage customs so characteristic of the Hindu religion.

"7. The suicide and murder rate in Fiji amongst Indians was very much greater than in India.
“8. The Fijian State Authorities failed ‘to give any sanction at all to Hindu, Mohammedan and Indian Christian religious marriage,’ and ‘the whole Hindu fabric had gone to wreck on this one rock of marriage.’”

Mr. Andrews’ report suggests the following remedies for the condition of things that he depicts:—

“1. None except married families should be brought out, and Indian women of loose character should be refused admission to the colony.

“2. Every care should be taken to encourage and support among Hindus the religious ceremony of marriage, and to discourage any further civil marriages.

“3. In all forms of labour, ample holiday should be allowed for the religious ceremony itself.

“4. The gradual settlement of the Indians on the land in small groups . . . Government support of the village school, post office, and dispensary,” and an attempt made “to restore the Hindu religious life itself in its daily worship among Hindu women . . . the breaking up of the present coolie ‘lines’ into separate dwellings, in order to make possible in each home the daily practice of
Hindu religious worship . . . and, if a real wish were expressed for a piece of land on which to build a village temple, the Government should grant a freehold for that purpose," and make provision for the panchayat and a burning ghat.

"5. Indian labour must be free in every sense of the word. There must be no penal clauses, no compulsory labour, no invidious State regulations." "There should be no return passage to India," as "the offer of a free return passage is pauperising."

"6. A regular steamer service should run between Suva and Calcutta, bringing immigrants in smaller numbers and at more frequent intervals, and bringing down the price of dhal and spices. By promoting more frequent return visits of Indians, Fiji and India would be brought more closely together.

"7. As far as may be, only married overseers and married sirdars to be employed on plantations.

"8. Education and medical aid to be provided for all Indians in the Islands with help from India in the matter of teachers and doctors, and possibly a grant-in-aid."
Mr. Andrews' report touched on some of the brighter and more hopeful aspects of Indian life in Fiji, and is worthy of quotation. "One feature (in the Indian Christians) was outstanding. Their home life was good. Some of our happiest recollections were those of Indian Christian homes. . . . The brightest side of Indian life in Fiji was the love of India itself, which was still kept warm in every heart. There was practically no religious bitterness; Hindu, Mohammedans and Christians lived amicably together side by side . . . we noticed that whenever those who had come out of indenture were given opportunity to settle on the land, holding it as their own and leading their own free life upon it, the powers of recuperation very soon began to have their effect. We were more and more impressed with this fact the longer we stayed in Fiji. It made us feel convinced that if only the fatal mistakes of the present indenture system could be rectified the Indian immigrants might then recover themselves and become a healthy population. . . . But where the contact with the coolie 'lines' was not especially marked, the healthy life settlement on the soil soon began to have its effect on Indians who had finished their
indenture. This was specially noticeable in certain out-of-the-way settlements, away from the coast on the north side of the island. Nature has wonderful healing powers, and we witnessed them at work. The difficulties concerning the marriage of children were still serious, on account of the complete disproportion of men to women, in Fiji, among the free as well as among indentured Indians. But as life settled down, and more and more children were born, even these difficulties became successfully surmounted; and a new life of hopefulness began to spring up in these new settlements, far away from anywhere. It was one of the greatest pleasures of our visit to come across some such Indian settlement, cleared out of the very jungle. It recalled to our minds many of the best features of village life in India itself . . . face to face with Nature, and close to mother earth, the free Indians, while they tilled their own land and built their own villages, in their own way, recovered a healthier and cleaner moral life. The aspect of joy came back into the women's faces and into the look of the children at their play. The impression of servitude and moral degradation was lost, and a newfound happiness and pleasure in life had clearly
taken its place. In one part of the country we found that a little temple had been built in the middle of such a Hindu village. This showed us that religion itself had begun once more to take its true place in Hindu homes.”
Chapter X

THE INDIAN AS A SETTLER

In order to show how successful the Indian becomes when he is free to cultivate in his own way as an independent colonist, Mr. Andrews states that "in 1914, independent Indian growers of cane supplied to the company's mills at Lautoka, on the north side of the island, a total of 32,328 tons of cane, which realised 285,000 rupees, at an average of eleven shillings and eightpence per ton. In 1915, from the same source, the estimate was 47,000 tons of cane, which would realise 540,500 rupees, at an average of fifteen shillings and fourpence per ton. In this Lautoka district, 34 per cent. of the total sugar-cane land is already in Indian hands, and all along the north coast the percentage is ever increasing. In the district of Nandi alone there is a population of 5,000 free Indians, and the monthly average application for leases of land at the Magistrate's Court was 50 (fifty). There are thus a large number of free In-
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dians who are now growing sugar-cane, quite independently, on holdings varying from five to three hundred acres in extent. The large Indian cultivators employ numbers of free Indians to carry on the ploughing, manuring, weeding and cutting of the cane.

"A settlement of free Indians is on the border of a small European plantation. These have recently come out of indenture and settled near their old employer. The planter gave to them, at a very low rate, during the last year of their indenture, a piece of ground for growing cane. He now uses their free labour, at the heavy season of the year, paying them full wages. In this way, he has been able to reduce the number of coolies under indenture on his estate. The Indians seemed prosperous and contented. The planter was evidently their friend, and they were some distance away from any large coolie 'lines.'

"The Colonial Sugar Refining Company has for some years past introduced this system of settling indentured Indians on the land, near to their own estates, during the last year of their indenture. They pick out carefully those coolies who show capacity for work among the cane. In Lautoka,
A MOUNTAIN STREAM

[Photo by F. Caine]
2,200 acres are thus leased out to 180 Indians under the Company's settlement scheme.

"From all this it will be clear that every year the interests of the Indian free settler will have to be taken into consideration in an increasing measure. For in the long run, if the present rate of progress continues, they will be the chief growers and producers of cane in the Islands. Indeed, the time may not be far distant when the European cane-grower will give place to the Indian altogether, the organising work at the centres alone remaining in the Europeans' hands. If the new offer of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company to place £100,000 at a low rate of interest at the disposal of the Fiji Government for Indians' settlement be accepted and the settlement carried out, this predominance of the Indian cultivator as a grower of sugar-cane for the Company's mills will be practically assured. . . . The Fiji Government is at last beginning to awake to its responsibility for educating the increasing Indian population; for it sees more clearly than before that an unenlightened people is a danger to the well-being of the colony. But, so far, it has been unable to secure properly-qualified men, on account of the low salaries
offered. Certainly there could be no finer opportunity for young men of education and ideals who are anxious to serve their fellow-countrymen, than to go out in educational service to Fiji. For, there, they would have the chance of helping to shape a new country's development, which may eventually become an Indian colony. Not only Government, but also the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, has begun to take up the matter with some feeble interest. The Company has just offered £300 and a site to each of the missionary institutions, in order to relieve itself of the responsibility of running schools of its own. The Vancouver mill at Navua also gives a small contribution to the mission school there.

"... When the present indenture system has been abolished and the present recruiting system stopped, we have every hope that a rapid recovery of the morals of the Indian population will ensue. ... With the improvement of morals, other changes will follow in their turn.

"We wish to state, in conclusion, the reasons which we have for this hope.

"First, our whole experience in Fiji has taught us to place a great faith in the powers of Nature
and mother earth to bring back a wholesome moral life to those Indians who settle on the land. Again and again, the evidence of this fact cheered us in Fiji, and it is one of the most striking pieces of evidence which we have brought back with us. For countless generations in India, the villager has lived close to the soil and he has gained certain moral qualities thereby. He has lost these for the moment by the unnatural life in the coolie ‘lines’ of Fiji. But he has not lost them altogether. They are far too deep-seated for that. They may be very rapidly recovered. And when they are recovered, we could hardly imagine any country in the world which could give them more scope than Fiji.

"The land of Fiji is still virgin soil, over vast areas. Only a fringe of the coast and of the river valleys has been touched by cultivation. The climate is very healthy indeed. It was a pleasure to see the chubby little Indian children in the free Indian settlements, so different from those we knew in malaria-stricken Bengal and in the up-country districts of India. The crops of rice and maize are good, where they have been sown, and there is no over-crowded population."
"Not only is there a natural aptitude in the Indian settler to build up a healthy family life on the land, when the artificial hindrances are removed, but, in the matter of land settlement the Government is now fully awake to its responsibilities. The sugar companies, also, have seen the great advantage to themselves of a free resident population occupying the soil in the neighbourhood of their cane-crushing mills. Hitherto there have been great difficulties and hardships owing to the leases being held by the Fijian communal tribes. A lease could only be entered into with the whole tribe. But Government, while observing strictly the rights of the Fijians, is now at last acting for them on a great scale in the matter of leases. Thus the Indian villager, in future, will be able to obtain his land direct from Government, a method of ownership which he has been used to in India itself. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company has placed fifteen lakhs at the disposal of the Government for Indian settlement alone, the rate of interest charged being only four per cent. They would be prepared to offer still greater amounts of money to Government if this first venture turns out to be a success. The Company's capital, invested in the Islands,
already amounts to 5 (five) crores, so that they are able to do things on a large scale. They have now found out, by practical experience, the great value of the Indian settler as a cultivator of the soil, and are anxious to retain him. Therefore, from a strictly business point of view, it is certain that they will offer to him every inducement to become an independent farmer, sending his sugar-cane to their mills.

“Our second cause of hopefulness is the character of the administration in Fiji. There has been very much indeed in the past, which has been mistaken and even foolish.

“But we found to-day in Fiji, a just and enlightened Government, sincerely anxious to do its duty by the Indians. We discovered, on our arrival, that they had already taken in hand, in a liberal and broad-minded spirit, some of the very reforms which our own experience in Natal had made us anticipate to be necessary in Fiji. The question of land settlement was one of these. The complete revision of the marriage law was another. The practical abolition of all penal clauses from the present law of indenture was a third. Many other questions of great interest to the Indian population
had been carefully considered. There were two separate committees in session dealing with these matters while we were in the Islands.

"We would wish, at this point, to express our sense of the very great benefit which has come to the Indian community in Fiji owing to the visit of the Government of India's Commission to the Islands more than two years ago. It will be seen by those who have read the Commission's Report, that the conclusions arrived at by the two commissioners did not go so far as our own. Nevertheless, there were facts mentioned about excessive prosecutions, frequent suicides, and sexual immorality, which were serious enough to make the thoughtful reader pause. And so far as the commissioners had been able to reach the facts, they had attempted fairly to face them. They suggested also important improvements.

"From the time of the Commission onwards, all these recent changes have taken place, and all these new schemes have been carried forward, especially those with regard to land settlement and marriage—the two subjects which appeared to us of vital importance for Indians in Fiji. There have been valiant attempts, also, to bolster up the indenture
UPPER BA RIVER. INDIAN-OWNED HORSES
[PHOTO BY F. W. HENNINGS]

INDIAN SETTLEMENT ON SUGAR CANE LAND. LAU1OKA
[PHOTO BY F. W. HENNINGS]
system itself, in order to make it look respectable. Fines are to take the place of imprisonment, commutation of indenture is to be allowed, schools are to be built, coolie 'lines' are to be pulled down. The activity has been great since the Government of India's Commission came. Though we cannot but regard all these things as palliatives, while indenture is still in force, there will be much that can be utilised for further progress, when indenture is abolished.

"Along with legislation, both immediate and prospective, we found that administration had gone forward also. We had a continually increasing experience, as soon as we were able to make a comparison with the past, that justice towards the Indian, both on the estates and in the courts of law, was much more impartially administered than it had been in days gone by. The old scandals of administration had almost disappeared." This summary of a report that covers 100 octavo pages of printed matter gives in brief Messrs. Andrews' and Pearson's indictment, remedies, and comforting predictions. By many the report was fiercely attacked as being an over-statement of the case, which it undoubtedly is. Be that as it may, how-
ever, generous acknowledgment is made of the very obvious fact that the evils were inherent in the system, and persisted in spite of the desire and attempts of the Fiji Government, the planters, and the C.S.R. Co., to mitigate or abolish them.

In the year 1918, however, Mr. Andrews, on this occasion unaccompanied by Mr. Pearson, revisited Fiji and spent several months in the Colony. In the report issued after this visit, a much more unfavourable view of the situation was taken by him. This second report was keenly resented in Fiji, and gave rise to the impression that Mr. Andrews had definitely allied himself with the party in India which is opposed to Indian emigration in any form.

**The Governor's View**

The following restrained and deliberate judgment by His Excellency the Governor on the whole question is endorsed by all honest and unprejudiced opinion in Fiji:

1. I consider that the reports which Mr. Andrews has furnished to his leaders in India have cast an unjust and unmerited slur not only upon the employers of labour and the Government, but
The Indian as a Settler

upon the European community of this colony. I include the European community because it is among them that public opinion is formed, and I should be very reluctant to think that public opinion would have tolerated a state of affairs such as Mr. Andrews has depicted.

"2. At the same time, amid much that is exaggerated and misleading (I abstain from using the word disingenuous, for I do not desire to question the writer's honesty of purpose), Mr. Andrews has made certain criticisms which cannot, unfortunately, be refuted. In his condemnation, for example, of the Indian labour lines as unfit for occupation by married couples and their families, I find it impossible to disagree with him. It would be unwise, and indeed impracticable, to insist upon the immediate provision of separate married quarters. Reasonable time must be allowed. But the change ought to be effected as soon as possible. It must also be admitted that the hospital arrangements for Indians, and their medical treatment generally, require improvement; and that the care and education of Indian children demand more attention than they have received in the past. The disproportion of the sexes is also an urgent problem."
“3. In his first report, Mr. Andrews advocated the abolition of the indenture system. On that question a decision has been arrived at, and it is unnecessary for me to make any comment. He went on to recommend that immigration under a free contract should be allowed to continue, subject to certain conditions. Finding, however, that this recommendation was not acceptable to his leaders in India, Mr. Andrews reconsidered his opinion, and finally declared himself an uncompromising opponent of recruited immigration in any form.

“4. With his mind thus made up, Mr. Andrews paid a second visit to Fiji, and in a further report, which is remarkable for the extravagance of its language, he duly proceeded to condemn not only the indenture system, but immigration for labour purposes generally. While it might not be fair to say that he set out with the deliberate intention of obscuring the brighter aspects of Indian life in the colony, it was natural in the circumstances that he should accentuate the darkest.

5. “On the question of free contract immigration I join issue with Mr. Andrews. I refuse to believe that it is impossible to devise some scheme of immigration from India, which shall assist the
industrial development of this colony, and at the same time provide for immigrants, in the first instance, congenial employment under favourable conditions, and, ultimately, a prospect of settlement and advancement far more attractive than any prospect which their own country offers them. I have not been here long, but I have already seen something of the industrial and agricultural possibilities of these Islands, and I do not hesitate to say that the man who makes the errors of the past a pretext for closing the door against immigration from India in the future, will be doing a lasting dis-service to our fellow-subjects of that empire.

"There are many difficulties. Reforms are necessary, especially in the direction which I have above indicated. Employers may have to make sacrifices. The Government of Fiji may have to face increased expenditure. But what is chiefly required, at the moment, is a sane and temperate appreciation of the facts, a frank recognition of existing abuses, and a definite policy for the future such as will satisfy both Indians here and their friends at home that it is the desire and intention of this Administration to introduce the measures
necessary for their social and moral, as well as for their material, welfare."

Now that the indenture system is abolished this chapter in the problem may be considered closed. Indentured labour as we have known it is gone, and there is no cry or desire to revive it, even on the part of those who profited by it. The employers have even anticipated this, and have voluntarily surrendered all labour under indenture as from January, 1920, when all coolie labour will be free to work where it likes and under its own terms and conditions, or not to work at all.

One may look forward then to the realisation of Mr. Andrews' confident prediction of better things and better times.
Chapter XI

FIJI FOR INDIAN COLONISTS

There can be no doubt whatever that there is not to be found within the bounds of our wide Empire a more favoured spot than Fiji for the settlement of willing Indians on the soil.

Free Indians in Fiji flourish amazingly. Many hundreds of thousands could do likewise. The unoccupied and untilled but tillable and fertile land abounds in great tracts along the river flats and water fronts. Even hillsides in great areas are ready and waiting for their industry. The Indian is liable to even fewer diseases and disabilities than afflict him in his native land. His death-rate in Fiji is 9.6 per thousand. In New Zealand (the lowest in the world) the rate is 9.5. In Britain it is 14.2, and in India it is 30.9.

In Malaya (the standard below which the Viceroy tells us no conditions for Indian emigrants must fall) the deaths for 1915 were 8,186, and
the births were 4,674—the deaths thus being nearly twice as many as the births.

The Indian comes to a climate which no tropical spot in India can surpass for comfort at all seasons; and for freedom from malaria, yellow fever, and all tropical diseases. There are no droughts to challenge his agricultural forecasts, and no floods to destroy the fruit of his labours.

He is acceptable to the amiable Fijian, and, when diligent and law-abiding, is respected by residents of all nationalities. He enjoys equality before the law, and, to quote the balanced and wise and fair report of the Hon. W. McNeill and Mr. Chimman Lal:

"Emigrants live under very much better conditions than their relatives in India, and have opportunities of prosperity which exceeded their own wildest hopes. They become citizens of the colonies to which they emigrated, and both they and their descendants have attained to positions commanding general respect and consideration . . . they realise also that in everything affecting their daily lives their equal rights were not merely defined but firmly maintained. . . . For some years the conditions (in Fiji) under which the indentured
people work have compared favourably with those in other colonies. Prosecutions have been fewer, and sentences of imprisonment much fewer. The health conditions are unusually good, owing to the absence of malarial fever and to good sanitary and medical arrangements. Wages are higher than in any other colony, and the standard of task is lower. A circumstance peculiar to the colony is that the sale of alcoholic liquor to Indians is forbidden. Doubtless occasional evasions of the prohibition occur, but, broadly speaking, alcoholic liquor in any form is unobtainable."

If the Home and Indian Governments deny to the surplus population of the overcrowded areas of India the outlet and the prospects that Fiji offers, they will be doing them an incalculable injustice.

Nearly all the prejudice worked up against Fiji is ill-founded. The suicide rate is the great bugbear.

When one considers that the class yielding to aggressive recruiting is a selected class more characterised by failure in life than by success, it is not surprising that it is high. Stated in figures per million it looks formidable, but stated as for the whole of Fiji, it assumes a less terrifying aspect.
That it is due to the disproportion of women is at least but a small part of the truth. In Malaya the proportion of women to men is 20 per cent. In Trinidad 41 per cent, and, according to Mr. McNeill, in other colonies only 30 per cent.; while in Fiji for 1917 it was 61 per cent., and is steadily increasing.

There can be nothing better for the emigrating Indian than that the avenues of settlement in Fiji should be kept open, and his free and rapid emigration to these favoured Islands encouraged and assisted. The Colonial Office is assisting those Britishers wishing to emigrate to the Dominions, by granting cheap fares and free passages for parts of the journey. The Imperial Government is doing this avowedly in the interest of the emigrant and in the interest of the Dominions. Why should not the Imperial Government do something for India and Fiji? At the present moment, by prohibiting all Indian emigration, she is throwing gravel in a Crown Colony's industrial machine, and forcing loyal citizens to look outside our Empire for the sympathy and help they require.

These are two aspects of the problem that dare not be ignored. The industrial and agricultural
development of Fiji requires immigration; and if India is cut off by a shortsighted and anti-Empire policy (which is an anti-British policy), Chinese or Japanese immigration will be sought as a last resource.

If Fiji were an unattractive and forbidding country, in which no one would settle down, except under compulsion of some kind, perhaps this last contingency might not be dreaded. But Fiji is amazingly attractive. In beauty, in fertility, in climate, it is more a white man's country than Queensland or the Northern Territory, or the interior of any northern part of Australia. Its residential conditions all the year round make it preferable to any of these countries for European permanent settlement. The Indians here realise its advantages over their own country. Under the indenture terms each immigrant is entitled to a free passage home, and yet, according to Mr. McNeill, less than one in four so entitled returned to India. Even of this small number there is abundant evidence that many return as passengers, and take up permanent residence. Most observers agree, and frequently reiterate, that Fiji is destined to be an Indian colony, the native, whose numbers are stationary, being un-
likely to hold his own against so prolific a race. Why should China and Japan fill up this empty space in the most beautiful and promising islands in the world?

Yet this is the only alternative to the present policy of the British and Indian Governments.
Chapter XII

THE PACIFIC OF THE 20TH CENTURY

BRITAIN has never been distinguished for the prescience of her policy in the Pacific. It is time she learned her new lesson. The Atlantic is obsolete. The Pacific springs into the place in world polity the Atlantic till recently held. The gaze of Britain must be focussed here. If there is another war during this century, it will be a Pacific War. Nations and navies, in the coming years, will be busy here.

If Britain cannot see beyond the moment, she will ignore her interests in the Pacific. America is under no illusion. It is rather painful to hear from old and loyal Britishers who have spent their lives in one or other of the Pacific Islands, an expression of confidence and hope in America—as if Britain could not be relied upon to see and act in time.

But apart from the strategic importance of occupying the waste areas of Fiji with our own subjects, there is the purely economic question. The
residents and investors of Fiji require labour to keep their industries alive and their investments sound.

The Empire has incurred during the war a great debt in the accomplishment of a great victory and the averting of a great danger.

In this, distant Fiji played a part, according to her population and wealth, in no way inferior to that of any portion of the Empire. The Empire’s debt can only be met by energetic activity and increased production in all parts of the British realm. The Empire’s resources must be developed to their fullest capacity. If British official myopia is going to hinder and not help the development of our colonies, their *shagreen* will be the measure of their stagnation and failure.
Chapter XIII

THE WHITES

The Britisher flourishes everywhere. There are 4,500 of him in Fiji. He has an adjustable circulatory system, and he will not complain if you place him—I beg his pardon, he will complain—he will be placed nowhere—he will go where he pleases—he will not complain of the sun on the Equator, or of the frost at the Pole—or, at least, he will not suffer, and he will not change his constitution, and perhaps not even his habits. The emigrated Britisher was a failure; the Britisher who was placed. By a process of artificial selection he was recruited from the reckless class in London slums. Women recruiting-agents were paid £1 per head for all the bodies they placed on board emigrant ships at one time bound for New Zealand. But the voluntary emigrant was a different animal. He had an outlook, a soul—discovering discontent with his environment, a healthy body, a love of adventure, a desire for self-improvement, a bold and dauntless courage. His recruiting agent was
his metal and his spirit. Of such were the Pilgrim Fathers, and their spirit, as well as their blood, is in the American nation to-day. Of such were all the early colonists everywhere.

In many respects our colonists get narrow and petty. But their courage and resourcefulness never fail. If their field of vision narrows, their clear-sightedness, and thoroughness, and self-confidence, and determination in endeavour, are the more conspicuous because their path is thus illumined. And their outlook has been widened by the war. Every youth who has returned unscathed has been wonderfully enriched by the war. He has been a traveller as well as a soldier. He is a traveller who has met men as well as seen countries. He has exchanged ideas—he has measured himself with other standards in men, in his fellows—he has sparkled in collision with his foes.

Fiji has its share of these types and these qualities. Meet them anywhere, in the clubs, in the streets, in their business, in their homes on their plantations—they are just Britishers. They are no different from the men you will meet in any colony or dominion, or British town. They carry their vices and hide their vices as boldly
and successfully as their compeers anywhere else. The climate has not altered them, nor afflicted them, nor aged them, nor even tanned them much. They work, and worry, and think, and make money, as the John Bull family does everywhere else. They do not suffer in health because they are in the tropics, nor do their women folk, nor do their children. It is said that white children tend to get pale at puberty and should be sent for a spell to a colder climate. One does not detect this at the schools. The boys are well developed and healthy looking, and enter into all games and exercises with a noisy energy.

It is clear that white men can live and enjoy life in Fiji all the year round, as well as they can in Australia.

Though skilled artisans work at their trades, the white man’s chief and most natural and important function is to direct black labour. The average Indian is an intelligent worker. The Fijian is not. But the white brain is necessary, and the white man’s sense of justice, too. There are two attitudes of the white boss to the black worker. One is that of the man who sternly orders, the other that of the man who politely requests.
The Fijian is instinctively polite. His politeness is sincere and universal. I have noticed that when a fellow-traveller was dressing in a native hut in which was a crowd of squatting and recumbent men and boys, not one looked his way till he was attired. A Fijian will not correct a mispronounced Fijian word, or smile or ridicule a crude attempt at phrasing, however clumsy. Innate courtesy is proverbial. It is not necessary to drive. Both Indian and Fijian are susceptible to justice. They will not resent severity, when conscious that they are in the wrong, but are apt to be resentful if conscious of injustice. Some employers of coloured labour are never short of hands, and never have trouble with their men. Others are quite the reverse. The reason is not far to seek.

Now that "indenture" is a thing of the past, and free and voluntary labour must take its place, there will be competition amongst the white employers in civility and wages, and this, I think, will be all to the good. Productivity is so abundant in the Islands, that employers should be able to give their labour a normal and a better deal. Cost of living—of feeding, of clothing, of housing—is so little in Fiji, and the total wage therefore so correspond-
ingly low, that cost of production should be able to compete successfully in the world's markets.

The Britisher need not run away from these beautiful and bountiful Islands because the indenture form of labour, out of which they profited greatly, is replaced by a voluntary form of labour, with which all other countries are content. But he must make labour attractive, or at least less forbidding, to the black. He must make it less burdensome and more productive.

If the white in Fiji is to remain the black man's master—his brain, his organiser and his friend—and if the black man is to be the white man's producer, the black must be a willing and contented and self-respecting co-operator. It would be fatal to harmonious co-operation and productive efficiency for the British director to assume the attitude of a master to his slave, and, with a lofty and superior mien, to declare that the black must rest contented in the place it has pleased God to assign to him. An impatient wave of the hand will not brush aside the inexorable fact that the Indian will occupy the place to which it shall please God to call him, and that is up higher. Let the ethnological fact be accepted, and allowed for in our social and econo-
mic structure, that the Indian is a rising and progressive unit in the human family, and must be found a place at Nature’s banquet.

A Policy That Pays

If we are to find a seat for him with a good grace, at least in Fiji, the white must follow a fourfold policy.

In the first place he must treat him with the same respect and consideration as he would treat a white employee. He must consider his creature comforts, as he would those of his horse or his dog.

It is not enough that an employer should think only of the hour he comes to work, the hour he departs, and the amount he has produced in the interval. He should know how he lives and where, and take a human interest in his welfare. If a horse’s body is well cared for he will work and last. A man’s mind and character must be fed and groomed in addition. This is a business proposition, as well as a moral and humane one. His tastes must be cultivated and catered for by wholesome cinemas and sports and education, and provision should be made for his wholesome recreation. These are as essential to productive work as feeding and groom-
ing to a horse. Every good thing radiates its influence in all directions, though we see only in one; and the recognition by the worker that those who control and direct his toil, take note of, and pleasure in, his higher needs and welfare, has both a moral and a money value. That Indian labour is now free will conduce to it, if those who need and value it are quick to see and adapt themselves to the change.

LIGHTEN THE TASK

In the next place, every task must be lightened where this is possible. Indian and Fijian labour has been cheap, and men have been put to toil that bullocks and horses should have done. The grubbing of weeds with a hand slasher, the mowing of fields with a knife, the digging of land with a spade, the carrying of loads on the shoulder, the lifting of tonnage by the hand, the journeyings over mountains on foot—these are the tasks of beasts of burden and of machinery, and not of men. There are ploughs and bullocks and mules for the land instead of spades; there are scythes and reapers instead of hand slashers; there are cranes and winches instead of hands and arms; there are pack horses instead of human shoulders; there are riding hacks instead of feet.
I would ask no man to do a thing a horse or a machine would do as well if I could help it. This is business and utilitarian, as well as moral. If a man's energy is not spent it is saved—it is available, like credit in a bank. But this policy has a moral value. The man sees that his employer is as considerate of his bones and his comfort as he is for his own. The money value of this is immense, and there are men who like this standard of measurement, for they understand it better. I have seen four men carrying swags on bamboo canes for miles on mountain tracks, and sweating and panting with the toil and the heat of it, that one light horse with a well-fitting pack saddle would have carried with greater ease than the carrying of a rider. And horses are cheap and feed themselves in Fiji, and the heat is great.

**The Machine Wins**

In the next place, a wise and helpful policy in relation to black labour is to get the maximum of production for the minimum of effort on the part of the worker. Wages will have to be higher. Under indenture 5s. 6d. per week was paid to men and 3s. to women. Men that before appeared con-
tent with this are now demanding 12s. to 15s. per week, and even more; while men who are free to choose their occupation and go into trade and town employments earn sums greatly in excess of this, and may become rich. Make the bloodless, nerveless, immaterial products pay the difference! It need not come out of your pocket or mine, nor out of the flesh and blood of the workers. Make the goods pay. Make the machine shell out. The employer's bank balance is not reduced, his dividend is not lessened, his luxuries are not prohibited, nor his wife's extravagances cruelly curtailed. The machine carries the burden, not the man, not his employer. Organisation pays the cost—the thought of the brain, not the sweat of the brow. You all-pervading, all-conquering Britisher, lift this crouching creature to his feet, wipe the perspiration from his brow, treat him more like a brother and less like a slave, and all he has and is, is yours, and all you have and are, is nobler! You can be firm and just, yet tender and humane, and your self-respect and dignity, and influence, will be maintained. Do all this because it is of God; but if you cannot see it thus, do it because it pays!
Chapter XIV

THE WHOLE MAN AND THE FULL LOAD

LASTLY, if British influence is to be maintained, and the subject races developed in harmony and efficient co-operation and mutual respect, alcohol must be strictly controlled, if not kept out of the country.

The law forbids the giving or the selling of alcoholic liquors to the coloured races, and it is fairly well observed. Both Mr. McNeill and Mr. Andrews bear testimony to this, and there is practically no evidence of drinking to be discovered in the streets or in the villages. But the official statistics suggest by inference that half of the drink imported is consumed by the coloured people, and every now and then there is pitiable evidence in the Courts of this unwelcome fact. The responsibility of the whites in this matter, and in all the grave possibilities that the future holds, is very great. It is said that all the coloured people like the white man’s grog, and will do almost anything
ONE OF THE NUMEROUS SMALL CREEKS WATERING THE LARGER ISLANDS
to procure it. It is a doubly-distilled poison to the black. The European has developed, by an age-long contact with the drug, a definite and appreciable amount of resistance to its influence. Many can take it for a number of years and yet keep in check the craving, while the tissues of the brain and body yield more slowly to its cirrhotic influence.

This is the result of a biological law. The resistance of a race to a disease is in direct proportion to the length of time during which that race has been in contact with it; while the degree of resistance is in inverse proportion to the age in the individual at which the susceptibility to the disease is lightest. For example, Europeans are less susceptible to tuberculosis than native races. This is due to the fact that centuries of contact with the disease have carried off by death in early age all those susceptible to it, and who thus have been deprived of the opportunity of leaving progeny inheriting their susceptibility. Those who have resisted or overcome the disease have, on the other hand, lived to leave progeny inheriting their resistance.

But this applies in a high degree to those diseases that attack individuals at an early age—
before the child-bearing period of life has commenced. Tuberculosis is one of these. Those who die of it usually die young, and can leave no susceptible progeny, and thus the degree of resistance increases with the ages and becomes high. With cancer, however, a disease that attacks individuals as a rule after the child-bearing period is passed, the degree of resistance cultivated under this law is low, if it actually exists at all.

This law applies to the racial effect of alcohol. The Europeans have been, to some extent, purged of those presenting a low degree of resistance to its poisonous effect and to its craving. They rapidly came under its influence and died off, leaving no children to inherit their susceptibility; while the resistant ones lived and left progeny inheriting their resistance. Indians, also, to a less degree, have acquired this power of resistance.

But the races of the Pacific have not had this process of elimination by natural selection, and centuries of martyrdom would be required to bring them up to the European standard. Whenever they can get alcohol they fall at once under its influence; a small quantity has the maximum effect on their brain and tissues, both in its immediate and in its
remote effect. They get drunk quickly, and they get diseased rapidly. The craving comes with lightning speed, the intoxication is more violent, and all the sequelæ more certain and more virulent. There is no poison that can get into the brain and body of the Fijian that so rapidly and certainly pervades and destroys them, as alcohol.

Pests have been introduced into Fiji which were unnoticed and disregarded at first, but which struck terror when their power of rapid reproduction and spread were realised, and the country and its people were victims.

The consumption of 50 per cent. of the imported alcohol (and it is no inconsiderable amount) by the coloured races is cultivating a taste and a craving that one day will not be denied. The Indians are making claims that India will convert into demands. They claim equality of rights. The whites prohibit the sale of alcohol to blacks, but they make the blacks minister to them, in an abundant supply. Nearly all the whites drink. They take cocktails before meals, liqueurs after meals, and various alcoholic beverages during meals. The Fijians and the Indian servants are the waiters and the butlers who convey and guard it. The white
gets hilarious and appears to enjoy it; anyway he demands and secures it as the especial privilege of a superior race. But it is bad for the children—bad for the slaves! Drink amongst the blacks of Fiji would make that glorious country a hell upon earth—no man or woman or child would be safe by night or day. But the Britisher to-day is cultivating a taste, is building up a sentiment, is laying the foundation, for the curse. It would be a small sacrifice to make for all the good that would immediately and ultimately flow, if the whites abandoned the vice. Alcohol is the curse of the whites in the hot countries more than in the cold. Thirst is more prevailing in the tropics. Get into the habit of using a bottle to assuage it, and the habit is started and the evil on its way. One sees little drunkenness in Fiji, but that the efficiency of the whites is lowered by alcohol is certain. All who drink alcoholic beverages in tropical climates, sooner or later suffer. The rapid circulation through the blood vessels carrying a definite percentage of alcohol bathes the tissues in a poisoned stream. Cirrhotic and degenerative changes go on, and the soil of health is ploughed for the seed of disease. We can secure the respect and confidence
of the blacks only by deserving it. A little cloud no bigger than a man’s hand on the beautiful and peaceful horizon of Fiji, is alcohol. Those who cannot see it are those who never see a danger till it is at their door; and this is truly British! A gentleman apologetically told me as he quaffed his glass, that one was obliged to take alcohol in Fiji “to keep the pores open.” There are two classes of people who defend drink—those who like it, and those who make it pay—and they are a “cloud” of witnesses. Alcohol keeps you cool in the heat and warms you in the cold! It makes you fat when you are thin, and thin when you are fat! It does all sorts of contradictory things and performs all sorts of wonders—when one likes it, or when it pays. The real truth about it in a word is this, that it limits all kinds of efficiency of mind and body in all kinds of workers, while it engenders some, and helps all, kinds of diseases.

An officer on the Benowa, which recently arrived in Suva from Seattle, declared that in Seattle the prohibition law had been in effect for about eighteen months, and that the workers at the port of Seattle, because of their heightened efficiency and greater saving, were able to come to work in
motor cars, and they so realised the benefits that accrue, that they would not, if they could, restore the saloon.

If America is loyal to prohibition she will be Britain’s most dangerous competitor in the world, because of her increased efficiency and output. Alcohol weighs a man down; he cannot carry a full load outside if he is carrying half a load inside. This is America’s challenge to Britain. But however Britain meets it, one thing is certain, Britain’s Crown Colonies have a more far-reaching reason for courage and action, and for the self-sacrifice on the part of their white population, which the time and the occasion demand.
Chapter XV

KAVA

The national beverage of the Fijian is kava, a cold concoction of the yangona root. The yangona is a shrub which grows to the height and volume of a large currant bush. The roots are gnarled and show largely on the surface of the ground round the trunk as the shrub ages. The root is mature when the bush is about three to five years old, but it increases in size and value for any number of years thereafter. When dry (or even when green and recently dug up) the root is ground or crushed with a stone pestle in a wooden mortar, and then washed in about a gallon or more of water in a wooden bowl. The rough fibrous residue is strained off with tow, and a creamy-coloured drinkable solution is left. This is served in coco-nut cups, and is drunk freely, without any intoxicating or delirious effect. The habit grows very gradually, and natives soon begin to like and look for it. It has absolutely no effect upon the brain or senses. In great excess it is said to weaken the legs, though it does not affect the mind and consciousness.
I saw one man who had for many years been deeply addicted to kava drinking. His skin had the inky-grey appearance of old-weathered, dry, tent calico. His eyes had a slight stare and were deep-sunken; his cheeks were hollow and withered, and his features drawn. He was lying on his face on the floor of a hut, and he answered all my questions quite freely and intelligently, through an interpreter, as to his habit and its effects. He worked no more than was necessary to secure him kava.

Women rarely drink the beverage, especially young women, as it is said to cause sterility.

The drink is not pleasant, but it has a slightly styptic effect on the mucous membrane of the mouth and leaves a rather cleansing taste, which all observers comment upon. Whites drink it freely without apparent effect.

Yangona root-growing has produced as much as £200 per acre; but it is mostly imported from other islands.

The Fijians have no fermented or intoxicating beverages, except those with which the whites may supply them. Small quantities of the white man's grog make them violently drunk and often dangerous.
Chapter XVI

ANIMALS

As the humans in Fiji rejoice and flourish in a climate free from great extremes, so stock thrive abundantly. Cattle do well in most hot climates, and are wonderfully hardy and adaptable. In the worst and overheated areas of Australia and Queensland, and in the Northern Territory, particularly, they thrive and multiply. The cattle ranches of Mexico and Colombia, in South America, on the Equator, are famous. In all parts of India, which ranges from 10° North of the Equator, they are bred and treasured for utilitarian, or sentimental and religious reasons. Fiji is not only not an exception to the rule, but the conditions for cattle raising are superior to all these countries. Cattle have thriven for many years in nearly all the Islands, and there are about 60,000 now. Herds are to be seen in most of the valleys and on the hill sides, and many have run wild. At close quarters they look well, with fine, healthy,
sleek coats. Some are very fat and are good killing beasts. Some are very old, and many are thin. The Indians keep working bullocks, and these, like old worn-out horses, are usually kept long after their period of usefulness has expired. Most of the Indian ploughing and draught work is done by working bullocks. They are difficult to fatten at this period of their life and service, but they are kept on, and not infrequently develop tuberculosis.

Nearly every large herd has one or more cases of obvious tuberculous disease, and others are suspicious. This appears to be practically the only disease that afflicts them.

There is no epidemic disease. Foot and mouth disease, anthrax, epidemic pneumonia, rinderpest, tick, fever—all these diseases are unknown. The climatic conditions are especially favourable to cattle. They do well in the wet and in the dry zones. They breed and thrive without hand tending or herding. Many cows and calves around Indian settlements and towns are thin and underfed; but this appears to be due to the fact that they are all tethered and limited to an area of grass. There are few fences, and the rope, and a short rope at that, must supply the need. In the hill
country they tend to run wild, and are then hard to secure for the butcher or the dairy. Many are weeds, hard to match anywhere for weediness. They are inbred mongrels that make the stockman of other lands wince with pain.

One cattle man on a small scale has had the same bull for nine years, and he serves the breeding purposes of all the generations of the herd. Indian bulls were introduced some years ago, and the cross with Shorthorns and Herefords is a hardy breed for draught purposes. They are docile and staunch, and stand the heat well when in the plough or on the road. They are ugly brutes, but the Indian sees in them something to remind him of his native land and of those religious ceremonies that some people think are so much in need of revival and cherishing in Fiji. The one industry that could be developed in Fiji, and that would defy climate and hurricane, and the many vicissitudes of trade and market and demand, is that of cattle raising and canning. Every valley and river flat and hill side, in all the Islands of Fiji, demonstrates that cattle will live and thrive and breed, free from the diseases and disabilities that afflict them in most other countries. This requires no experiment and no argument—it is a demonstrated fact.
Cattle pay handsomely in New Zealand on land that costs from £50 to £120 per acre, with labour that costs from £2 to £4 per week. Why should cattle not pay on land that costs £2 to £10 per acre, with labour that costs from 15s. to 25s. per week? There are no diseases in Fiji that New Zealand has not got—no noxious weeds that have not their counterpart in New Zealand soil. No housing is necessary, and no winter feeding. Yet thousands of acres of river flat and valley are lying idle in Fiji, which, if located in New Zealand, and cleared, grassed, and fenced, would fetch £100 per acre. It is going begging in Fiji at 2s. or 10s. per acre for a long term of years. Hill sides covered with native grass and reed grass, which cattle and horses eagerly devour—easy slopes that one could ride over without difficulty—are going begging at £10 the thousand acres, or $23d. per acre, for long leases. Cattle could be put on at once, without any preparation, though stockmen with capital would burn, seed, and fence without delay.

It will be asked why all this land and these prospects have been neglected, if this is so. It is not hard to explain. There are two reasons. First, there is nothing but a local demand and a local
MAKING THE NATIVE CLOTH (TAPPA)  [PHOTO BY F. CAINE]

PREPARING YANGONA (KAVA)  [PHOTO BY F. CAINE]
market; and second, the country is unknown to those who know how to use and develop it.

The local market for beef, for instance, is confined to about 4,000 whites and a few prosperous Fijians. Few Indians eat beef, and then only in small quantity. Beef is always dear, and fewer still will pay for it. The Fijians live on yams and taro, and fruit and fish. The Indians mostly live on rice and maize, and vegetarian diet. The local market, therefore, is readily satisfied. Not long ago a cutter (a coastal sailing boat) came to Suva with a load of fat bullocks, of which the owner was very proud. He called on the local butcher, who offered him 50s. each. He called on his rival, who made the same offer, and he had to accept it. £6 is a good wholesale price for a fat bullock weighing 5cwt. in Fiji. The demand is easily and rapidly satisfied. Many coco-nut planters run cattle amongst their trees as scavengers. They keep down the weeds and grass, and help the work of hurricanes, besides being a source of profit. The planters sell off the fats to the butchers, and their profit sometimes pays a large part of the cost of harvesting their copra. This practice keeps up the supply of beef, and nearly always meets the demand. Then
Indians breed cattle for dairy and draught purposes, and sell off the surplus, not often for beef, as they object to have their oxen killed and used for butcher meat; but they sell to fatteners, who in due time pass them on.

Fiji is blissfully ignorant of the world price of beef, because there is no world market. I have seen fat steers sold in Fiji for £7, that would have fetched £25 in any part of New Zealand or Australia near a freezing works. A man during the war bought 50 fat steers for £6 each, paid £6 each to ship them to Australia, and sold them there for £26 each.

The other reason for the neglect of Fiji as a cattle country is that it is undiscovered by those who know what it can be made to do. Millions of acres are in their primitive condition. They are in the same undeveloped state that similar country in Australia and New Zealand was in forty or fifty years ago. Fair hills and open grass lands, but no roads, no bridges, no railways, no freezing works, no ships. Give Fiji all these, and New Zealand and Australia at their best can be matched, if not left far behind. And the problem is even simpler in Fiji. At no point is the land of the largest island
Animals

more than 30 miles from the coast. And the coast is indented with bays and ports, while the shore is mostly protected with encircling reefs that shut the waves and breakers out. The torrential rains in the wet belt damage bridges and roads, and are a source of cost, but this is a detail compared with the service and its results. Miles of open grass hill and rolling country, would, if fenced and grassed, fetch £20 per acre in New Zealand. Yet these broad acres have been in the market at 3d. per acre rent for years past, with cattle demonstrating to conviction what they can do, with land-hungry men, their pockets full of money, pining in other countries for land—with beef at fabulous prices and the demand unsatisfied. There are men in Queensland (I pick Queensland because of its similar latitude, but unrelieved by sea and mountain) there are stockmen fighting droughts and prickly pear, and cattle tick and graduation land taxes, and taxation of Crown leases, and dingoes, and foxes, who, for their own purposes and industrial ends, would think country over which I have ridden in comfort and delight, a stockman's paradise. The perennial water everywhere would rejoice their hearts. Not a valley anywhere that has not its river, not a gully
that has not its stream or spring. It is said that there is scarcely a block of 500 acres capable of being fenced, but has not its own water supply. Even in the so-called dry zone the rainfall averages about 60 inches, and the dews are so constant and so heavy that sheep would often be satisfied without patronising the streams. I have been drenched by an early morning walk in the long grass after the clearest starlit night.

Fiji has spelt failure to cotton planters, following the American Civil War. She has spelt failure to coffee planters, because of the coffee leaf disease introduced from afar. She has spelled failure to many a banana planter, because of a hurricane or the borer blight. She may spell failure to the cane planter because there is no Indian labour. I do not see how she can spell failure to the stockman if he can get his goods into the world's market. The labour that is denied to cane growers may be available to stockmen. Stock raising is not so laborious. It is much more interesting and varied. Cane is cut by hand in the heat, and carried to the rail lines. The constant tilling of the land and the harvesting are tedious and unattractive. The Fijians will not do it, nor will
the white. Neither will the Indian, if something more inviting offers, unless the pay is greatly increased, which the planters say the industry will not stand. Stock raising, on the other hand, is fascinating. There is little labour about it. It is mostly sport. A riding horse and a few dogs relieve the industry of its burden and its boredom. Following the policy I have referred to, I would ask no man to run if he could ride, no man to carry if there was a pack saddle or a cart, no man to do what a machine could do. A man should never be happy on his horse unless he is sure that horse is comfortable and not unduly burdened. Neither should he be happy unless all his workmen are content and performing their tasks with the minimum expenditure, and the maximum reserve, of physical energy. Horses are cheap, and can be bred and fed by the score, with only a very trifling cost. No stables are necessary, no covers, no shoes, no harvested or stored food, no barns. A rope only, with which to tether, and a bridle made out of the hide of a working bullock that has ceased to be, because of senile decay. A saddle may be provided for stock boys who have graduated in the art of riding and stock droving, as a prize and an encouragement. The
Fijians love horses. They gallop them to death if they are not under control, but there are thousands of young Fijian lads of 13 to 16 years, who have had a bit of schooling and are fit for life on a stock farm, and who could be trained to, and made to love the work.

Dogs can be trained, and so can horses, and there is no joy that can be brought into the life of a dog or a horse greater than the exercise and the excitement of stock driving. The Fijian is no less teachable and intelligent.

With the exception of the Indian tether-rope and the limitations of the coco-nut plantations, cattle have had a wide range over which they roam and feed. This is bad for stock, and they tend to get wild and unmanageable. When required they are difficult to muster and yard. They get excited, break away, and escape into the valleys and bush. Fencing, secure and substantial, is necessary. Land can only be properly "broken in" if it is "crushed" with cattle. The growth is so rank and abundant in Fiji that it can only be kept within reasonable limits by overstocking, or stocking up to its full carrying capacity. If suitable areas are securely fenced, the reeds and rough grass burnt off, and the ash sown
with paspalum, or some suitable permanent grass, and stock is then put on in sufficient numbers to keep the reeds and rank growth down, a fine sward of a very nourishing and permanent grass should result, and little else should require to be done, except keep down guava and weeds. Paspalum is growing in so many places, and the testimony regarding its value and permanence is so conclusive, that one might depend on its suitability. Reed grass, though appreciated by stock, will not stand crushing. It soon disappears when run through and fed off by cattle. Other native grasses come on, but their fodder value is doubtful, and appears to be low. Fires are frequent on the reed hills of Fiji. The Fijian rejoices in a fire, and puts a match to a dry dense reed patch with delight. Wooden posts in fences are therefore in danger. In any case it has been shown that concrete posts are cheap and eternal. At Waindoi they have been made for 1s. each, and ensure a strong, durable, and fire-proof fence. Gravel and water are found almost everywhere, and only the cement has to be provided and carried. All the gullies and valleys have little clumps of forest trees that serve for shade and shelter, and during the heat of a hot, sunny day they are the resorts of stock where stock are to be found.
The Government of Fiji is alive to the possibilities of the cattle industry. They have appointed a veterinary surgeon of repute, and have taken in hand the development of the country along these lines. If tuberculosis is grappled with, it can be stamped out, or reduced to negligible proportions. But it must be done thoroughly and scientifically. Tuberculosis is a disease of humans, as well as of domestic animals. It accounts for the largest mortality amongst Indians of all endemic diseases. It should be rigorously dealt with in a preventive way, in the interest of humans and stock alike.

Though the cattle industry can be entered upon with great confidence in Fiji (if the world’s market is opened up), there is still much to be discovered for the guidance of the people engaging in its development. One hundred questions could be asked that could not be satisfactorily answered—and there is no one to whom they could be appropriately or hopefully addressed. No one knows the breed that thrives and multiplies best, the most suitable cross, the milk and butter returns, the best grasses, the most suitable season for calving. In a properly organised Agricultural Department in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, there
is hardly a question that would suggest itself to the mind of a cattle or sheep man, that would not elicit a complete and satisfying reply. If the waste lands of Fiji are to be used, these questions must be anticipated, and their replies prepared.

Horses thrive as cattle do, and there is nothing more to be said.

**Sheep.**—Sheep are a different story. Everyone believes that sheep would "do" in Fiji, but every explanation of why they have not "done" is the easy street logic of the man who has a fatal facility for coming to a conclusion in the absence of the facts. Fiji has never been without its "bunch" of sheep—but they are only a bunch all told. Facts and laws that pervade the universe can be demonstrated in a test tube in a laboratory. The factors that affect sheep could be demonstrated in a ten-acre paddock. But the laboratory does not exist, and the experiments, when they were puddled with had no experts, and no reliable observers, and no records.

Very little that is definite and conclusive can be said about sheep, though there is much that is encouraging.

Sheep exist. There is a small mob in Suva. There is nothing wrong with them, except their
family connections. They are low caste sheep. No one can give their pedigree. But they live and thrive, and are fat and contented. They grow wool, and when it is clipped it grows again. If they do not breed there is a physiological reason not far to seek. And this is the wet zone, with an average rainfall of 110 inches.

I saw sheep in Singatoka, 60 miles from Suva, in the dry zone, where the rainfall is 60 inches. No self-respecting New Zealand or Australian farmer would have acknowledged ownership. But that was because of their breed, or the absence of it. They were fat, however, and healthy and unashamed. If ten will live and thrive and grow wool and multiply, why should not 10,000? Speaking generally and theoretically, the sheep is a cold climate animal. Its fleece of wool is Nature’s provision against the cold of winter. But in Fiji, though there is a relative winter, there is no absolute winter, except at Nandarivatu, and the higher altitudes. Notwithstanding, if you shear a sheep in Fiji in the spring, he will grow another fleece in anticipation.

Mr. Howard, an old and highly-respected Queenslander, who owned the sheep at Singatoka to which I have referred, said that he clipped $7\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
of wool per head. He runs 500 amongst the reeds on open native hills uncultivated by the sheep-farmer's art. He gets 50 per cent. of lambs. "But, then," he adds in apologetic explanation, "the sheep are all too fat."

I could find no evidence of liver-fluke or lung-worm anywhere on the Islands. I heard of foot-rot on the low, wet flats. No farmer that I have heard of, drenches or dips. The rams in at least two of the flocks I saw run all the year with the ewes and the ewe lambs.

A large flock in the second largest island (in the dry zone) was sold off some years ago, because, running unherded in the scrub and tall reeds, the village dogs began to worry them, and there was no capital available to fence off areas for their protection. But the owners declared emphatically, and they are intelligent, reliable witnesses, that there was nothing against sheep and sheep farming, excepting the lack of capital. They thrrove and bred, and were healthy. No diseases afflicted them, and nothing suggested that on a large scale they would not have been a complete success.

Messrs. Edwards and Hall, with both of whom I have fully discussed the problem, assure me that
they have satisfied themselves that sheep offer no obstacle to success, but capital is required for fencing and stocking on a sufficiently large scale. Some have hazarded the opinion that Fiji is too wet for sheep. Sheep do not suffer so much from the rain that falls upon them, as from the water that is beaten into their sides and back, by the rain or dew drenched scrub and grass, through which they have to forage for food, after the rain has fallen or the dew formed. Rain may fall on a sheep’s back for half an hour, but may be beaten into its fleece for hours afterwards, and the grass and reeds and shrubs are just large enough and dense enough to favour it. Whole tracts of country have been abandoned as sheep runs in British Columbia, because this distinction was not made, the scrub cleared and the high grass eaten down by cattle. There is evidence that even in the dry zone in Fiji sheep suffer in this way. Sheep must have clean, low pasture, or they will do badly. High, dense grass favours snails and ground life, which often forms the second host in the alternation of generations. A little grass snail is the second host of liver-fluke. The fluke cannot exist without both the snail and the sheep. It lives one life in the snail, and the other in the
liver of the sheep. Banish the snail and the fluke is impossible as a parasite of the sheep.

Sheep require dry, elevated runs, and clean, sweet, low grass. Cattle are the best friends and companions of sheep. They eat down the rank grass and keep it low, and the sheep get a closer bite. They let the smaller and sweeter grasses get elbow room, and the sheep get the first meal with the close bite. Hill climbing is good for sheep. The heat of Fiji may discourage climbing, but the higher the elevation of the land the colder it is, and the heavier the dew. The nights on the Singatoka hills at the end of August were so cold that quite heavy clothing was necessary.

These hills appeared to me to offer good prospects of being adapted to sheep by burning the reeds and native grasses off, and then sowing permanent grasses, and fencing and stocking. It should be done tentatively and on a small scale, in such a way as to demonstrate that it could be extended indefinitely with a proportionate degree of success.

Pigs.—All that need be said of pigs is that there is not a spot in Fiji, wet or dry, plain or mountain top, where the pig will not thrive. Pig rootings are to be seen all over the Singatoka hills, right up to
the mountain ridges, as well as in the gullies. They are wild now, and are rarely seen, unless hunted. Domestic rearing of pigs is carried on fitfully, but only little people in a little way keep a sow or two. On a large scale it is still to be tried.

**Fowls, Ducks and Turkeys.**—These have nothing to complain about, except the mongoose. This little Indian immigrant was introduced as the natural enemy of the rat, at one time the plague of the cane fields. Now the pest is the plague of the hen roost, or rather the chicken coop. It is very tiny, not much larger, but longer, than a good-sized rat, but it has multiplied enormously, and now over-runs the country. The country has been too lax in its control of experiments. No one should be allowed to introduce plant or seed or animal of any kind without the permission of the Agricultural Department, and then only after the most rigid and detailed inspection on each successive occasion.

Any industry flourishing to-day might be ruined by the incautious or even quite innocent introduction of a pest. If a pair of rabbits were let loose on the land in the west of the Island, I would confidently predict that the country would be over-run and ruined before many years were over. If there
is a tame rabbit in Fiji to-day, I hope the Government will ruthlessly pursue the criminal who possesses it.

**GOATS.**—The goat is an old and valued friend of man. Before the war I extracted from the president of the Agricultural Board in Britain the promise of a return showing the number and value and productivity of the goat in France, where millions are kept for their milk. It is the poor man's cow in France. The little goats of Malta are most wonderful milk producers. Nothing in Fiji thrives better than goats. Great herds are to be seen in the northern districts of Viti Levu. They are herded, as they have little respect for fences, and roam far and wide amongst the mountains if not tended. They are allowed to “hang as they grow,” as most things do in these soporific islands. But they are much prized by the Indians. Many whose religious prejudices will deter them from eating beef, have no such compunction regarding goats' flesh. They give 25s. and 30s. freely for goats, and goat-rearing is a profitable and growing industry. One man of whom I know has 1,000 goats, and would not part with a breeder for much above its intrinsic value, so anxious is he to increase his flock. They are of
no special breed, but just plain goat. Tens of thousands could be kept where only few run now. But then they would glut the market. Nothing will flourish greatly in Fiji, that is on a large scale, that does not meet an outside need, tap the outside world, and find a market in Liverpool or New York.
Chapter XVII

THE NAVAL DEFENCE OF THE PACIFIC

For more than a thousand years the Atlantic has claimed the world’s attention. She does so no more. The Atlantic is settled and at rest. Peace be to her once troubled waters. Germany is laid aside for repairs, and a century will not set her on her feet again. But the Pacific will no longer be the Pacific. All the attention of the world must be riveted there. We all hope and pray that war will never again raise its horrid head, or disturb the placid calm of peace. But if this hope is forsworn, the centre of the disturbance will be the Pacific Ocean. America for nearly a generation has laid her plans on the assumption that this contingency may arise. We must do so, too. The United States has made the Panama Canal, and was careful to construct it in order to pass easily through its gates the largest battleships. She never thought of, or cared for, merchant ships, as a justification for the cost. That was a detail. She
wanted to get to the Pacific with her largest ships of war. She fortified Honolulu, the "Heligoland" of the United States. She is now ready for every naval emergency in the North Pacific. If we and she are now the guardians of the world's peace, trusted by the world to ensure it for them, we cannot do less in the South Pacific than she has already done in the North Pacific. The complement of Honolulu in the North is Suva in the South. If Nature had in the days of her effulgent youth anticipated all that was to come in the matter of naval warfare, and had distributed "Heligolands" in preparation, she could not have been more even-handed than she has been in the placing of these two strategic centres. Fiji is to New Zealand and Australia and the South Pacific what Honolulu is to the States and the North. Let us leave Honolulu to the Americans. What of Fiji? Suva has an extensive, deep-water, land and reef-locked harbour, capable of accommodating a commanding fleet. During the early years of the war sixteen great ships of war, with all their attendant supply ships, safely anchored within these ample shores. She proved to be the great strategic centre of the South Pacific. Automatically, German ships got around. British
and Japanese ships were in the offing. Suva was the centre. Suva gave hospitably. Suva had the key. Suva was the key. But this is not enough, if we are to think of war as a coming possibility. If there is to be war in the Pacific, it will be no tip-and-run German raid. Viti Levu must be fortified. How she invites it! A glance at the Admiralty chart and the guardian islands is eloquent. Benga guards the entrance to the harbour. It is the “Gibraltar” of Suva. Guns to the right of her. Guns to the left of her. Kandavu guards another section and another channel. Ovalau guards another quarter and other channels. All the reefs are guardians, too. Viti Levu could store guns and munitions, and coal and oil, and supplies, and challenge the naval forces of the world. The Dardanelles proved impregnable.

The British, the Allied Fleet in fact, dared not approach Heligoland. Land forts can be made secure against sea attack. It is a simple matter to fortify Fiji, and a matter compelling as it is simple. Someone suggested Samoa as a naval base. This suggestion recalls the time when a wind sprang up and drove all the ships ashore at Apia, except the Calliope, which escaped their fate by steaming out to sea in the teeth of the gale.
If Britain must turn to the Pacific, the great natural advantages of Fiji, the accommodation and suitability of her chief harbour, the strategic value which her geographical position gives her, all single her out for approving notice. Her reef-locked stretch of encircling sea, which surrounds her chief island for three-fourths of its circumference "like a moat defensive to a house," is undisturbed by ocean waves, and is an ideal lake-like sheet of water for a naval hydroplane force.
Chapter XVIII

FIJI AS A FIELD FOR INVESTMENT

For years before the war British capital was the most impartial, cosmopolitan, and nomadic thing in the world. It would go anywhere, love anyone, be friends and bosom chums with all and sundry. It never waited for an introduction, never asked for credentials. It was anybody's for the asking—at a price. For this cosmopolitanism British investors have dearly paid. Investors in Mexico are down in the dumps, in Russia up the spout, in Argentine in suspense, in Germany abashed. "Under the Flag" is the motto now! There is British capital now for all the Empire's needs. During the war the cost ran up to £8,000,000 a day in Britain. This was not given to Germany, or sunk in the sea. It was distributed. The currency was expanded by the aid of the British Printing Press. And many men have more than they know how or where to invest. Many are afraid of
industrial unrest in Britain. Many are afraid of taxation, and others are afraid of “Labour.” They are willing, indeed anxious, to invest in the colonies. Moreover, the colonies and dominions have played so handsome a part in the war, and rendered so signal a service to Britain and liberty and civilisation, that all Britishers at Home know them better and love them more. There is plenty of goodwill towards the colonies in British hearts to-day; and plenty of money for their legitimate needs. The undeveloped colonies, therefore, can go to the investing British public with perfect confidence that their reasonable requests will be freely granted.

There are few Crown Colonies that have had so little spent on them as Fiji. Just consider—a public debt of less than £200,000, and no roads, no railways, few telephones, no bridges, no tracks in most places, no land taxes, no war taxes, no absentee taxes! Beyond the customs tax and the buildings tax there is no tax worthy of the name. Such a tax-free country and a debt-free country! These are not signs of progress, they are signs of stagnation—not indications of health, they are symptoms of disease.

What young country ever thrived without a public debt? It cannot be done. No debt, no progress;
no debt, no blood, no nerves, no life; no debt, no conveniences, no amenities of civilisation; no debt, no public works, no immigration, no tourists; no debt, no business, no trade, no commerce—a tiny tin-pot island when she might be a great state, bursting with energy, throbbing with life: Fiji is worthy of a debt. All the Colonial Office would require in order to confer this blessing on her or permit others to do it instead, would be some guarantee that the money would be spent on public works which would open up the undeveloped country, not on luxuries that could wait, however advisable. So much of public money is spent, by the people, for the people, who have the spending of it. I know of cases in which public money was spent by the tradesmen in the chief town for the benefit of the tradesmen in the chief town, when it should have been spent for the benefit of all in the country. Nothing benefits the tradesmen of the chief town so much as the radiating roads from that chief town to all the country districts. It makes avenues to all their business premises, and brings custom and customers. But I have known tradesmen who thought that if wages were paid out next door to them the wage-earners would come in and hand over the wages in return for goods. I am
referring to Canada, lest there should be any doubt. Assure the Colonial Office that public monies loaned to Fiji will go in essential developmental works economically carried out, and the money waits. Private investors would lend half a million pounds on Fijian securities to-morrow, and rejoice in the deed. But Fijians must have confidence in themselves first. Confidence is infectious. And they must be public-spirited. It must be "All for Fiji," trusting to the never-failing law in national economics, that what benefits a country benefits all who live and work there. There are few countries in the world less heard of and less known than Fiji. I predict that this will be soon rectified. She is on the threshold of great things. She is in the Pacific. She is in the best spot in the Pacific. She would be foolish to change it for any other if she could. She need not go and seek, she will be sought. But when she is found she had better have something to sell and something to show, or at least some routes by which that something to show may be seen. As no young country ever prospered without a debt, so no country ever prospered without roads —roads in all directions. The best opening-up policy that I know of in a new country, is that of
NATIVE MADE ARTICLES

[PHOTO BY F. CAINE]
Canada. The Canadian authorities, or the Canadian Pacific Railroad, will send out scouts to spy out new land. They will go into areas previously un-trodden by the foot of man, and when they find a stretch of good wheat land they come back like Noah’s dove carrying a twig. The railway engineer goes to work and makes a track, lays rails, puts up stations, and constructs branch lines. When all is finished, or about finished, the surveyed sections of land are advertised, and are rushed, and the empty spaces are filled up while you wait.

In New Zealand, for instance, the converse policy is followed. A petition comes year after year from “settlers,” patient, tired-out settlers, for a railroad. But careful calculations have already shown, that, adding prospective fares to prospective freights, and deducting running expenses, there would be a loss, and the petition goes into the waste-paper basket. The Canadian policy is best for Fiji, but it requires faith. Anyone who knows the tropical countries and the growing demands in the world’s markets for the things they do and can produce, and who knows Fiji, can supply the faith.

Panama is the “Clapham Junction” of the West, Singapore is the “Clapham Junction” of the East,
Honolulu the "Clapham Junction" of the North Pacific. Fiji is the "Clapham Junction" of the South Pacific. A Fijian inter-island shipping service, manned by Fijians (the best of sailors in tropical waters), could voyage all round and across the Pacific and tap all the great ocean lines of East and West. Fiji could thus, with very little cost, be in touch with all the great markets of the world, without her ships ever leaving the tropical seas, or going far from home. Her ships could carry her own unloading and loading labour, at little cost if necessary, and so reduce the only extra cost to be considered, viz., transshipping. In any case, Fiji is, on account of her position, destined to be the calling port of great ocean services, whatever be her inter-island development. There can be little doubt that the tonnage soon to be afloat will meet all the world's needs. America, which had 1,700,000 tons at the commencement of the war, now has 6,700,000 tons, and is fast building more. Britain and Japan and Canada are building, too, and Germany is at it in hope. Ocean tonnage will be abundant, and freight will be cheap. This is all to the good for an island colony, and Fiji will share all the good things that will be going in the matter of shipping.
Chapter XIX

DIRECT SHIPPING—BRITAIN AND FIJI

HITHERTO, all goods to and from Fiji, in her trade with Britain, had to be trans-shipped at Sydney or Auckland. The goods had to pass Fiji, and then be returned over the same waters. The extra cost, the protracted delay, and the great inconvenience, militated against trade, and Fiji tended to be left out of account.

The Panama Canal is Fiji’s fairy godmother. Ships to and from Australia have now to pass Fiji, and even call for their own convenience. Ships coming to Auckland via Panama can suit their convenience, too, by calling at Fiji, though ships going to Panama may find it slightly out of their way. But when tonnage is abundant, it will go in search of trade, and Fiji will be pursued. No post-war reconstruction will be so rapid as shipping; for ships were being laid down during all the later years of the war to meet the submarine wastage, and these ships, unlike munitions and munition fac-

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tories, are not to be scrapped. They serve peace purposes just as well as they would have served war purposes, and all the progressive nations of the world felt at the end of the war, as they felt during it and feel now, that shipping is each nation’s life-blood, and the promise of a place in the industrial and commercial sun.

As I write, it is announced that the S.S. Waimana is to call at Fiji on her way from Britain to Australia, via Panama, and discharge her cargo there—a new experience for the Island Colony, and a promise of things to come. I hear, further, that the Government of Fiji is making efforts to secure a direct service with Great Britain, via Eastern ports, and to kill two birds with one stone by lessening freights on imports of manufactured goods and by providing a ready channel for the over-populated East to send some of its surplus thousands to under-populated Fiji.
Chapter XX

LAND

ONE of the striking things about Fiji is that so little of the available land is in use. On every side is luxuriant growth. It may be trees, or shrubs, or grass, or weeds, but it is plant life, thrust up by the rich soil and drawn up by the sunshine and the rain. In the wet belt the growth is rank and excessive, and often embarrassing. But most of all this grows wild, and is unkempt. The level land is as a rule broad river flats, made by centuries of denudation of the hills by torrential rains and rivers and weathering. It is deep, rich alluvium, that grows phenomenal crops when tilled. About 75,000 acres of the river flats and fairly level land are devoted to cane growing, but there are still large areas of similar land still untouched. The cane-growing lands are near to the coast or to a river that is navigable. Cane growing and handling constitutes laborious work, and without train or punt it cannot be carried far. The more
remote areas are, therefore, available for use. Native villages are usually situated in the midst of or near rich soil, but very small areas are used, or even needed, for native tillage. A few small plots well selected and well tilled by hand will supply for the year all that the villagers will consume. A few acres will often keep a considerable village in all the necessaries of life. Rivers and streams are to be found everywhere intersecting the Islands, and fertile banks and flats are the rule. The mountain land is about 2,000,000 acres, out of a total of 4,500,000 acres. This mountain area is practically all covered with bush of varying quality, but it is more or less inaccessible, owing to the absence of railways or roads. Of the 2,500,000 acres, much the greater portion is open hill country covered with reed grass, and native grass, and with patches of bush and clumps of trees. Of the total acreage, only 864,008 acres have been disposed of. This includes freehold, and Crown and native leasehold. There are roughly, therefore, about 1,500,000 acres of land in Fiji that could be with enterprise and capital developed and used, and turned to practical account. Sugar-cane, and bananas especially, require rich deep soil, and the successful growth of
those profitable products of tropical countries is proof of these qualities in the land.

The alluvial flats are easily tilled, a team of mules or a team of two bullocks being sufficient to do ploughing or discing. On these flats the growth of weeds and grass is so rank and rapid that if the land is not in constant use it soon goes back into its native state, and in a year or so may not be recognisable as land that has been tilled. When grass is cultivated on this rich soil, and the land is not overstocked, it is possible to keep large areas weed free, by the simple inability of the noxious seeds or young plants to get foothold or breathing space in the dense sole of grass. Careful and systematic stocking, alternating with periodic resting of the fields, is necessary if this is to be attained.

It is not infrequent to find fields in para grass and sensitive plant, or in paspalum and sensitive, carrying all the year round one cattle beast to the acre. Para is a Mauritius grass, and grows with great luxuriance on river flats, in swamps, and in the salt water of the estuaries. It can be seen growing in mudbanks washed constantly by the tide. It is devoured eagerly by all stock, and is fattening, but it is said not to be sustaining, because it is soft
and watery. It will not stand close feeding, and requires very careful stocking. All the rich land grows para, and since its introduction it has spread rapidly wherever the conditions are favourable. If it is cut into chaff when green and the chaff is sown broadcast, it will take root wherever it reaches the soil. From each node in the stem of the grass, roots shoot down into the soil.

On the rich soil, also, sensitive plant grows luxuriantly. Stock will eat it when other favourable grasses are not available. And when they take to it, it is sustaining and fattening, and good for milk. The stem is very prickly, and sheep and cattle at first eat it gingerly. Soon, however, the mucous membrane of the mouth gets tough and hard, and they require to be less cautious. It is a very satisfactory fodder.

Most of the hill sides are too steep for the plough, but a large proportion of the undulating land would be ploughed if in Britain. On all these open hilly lands there is abundant growth. In the rich soil of the best hills dense heavy reeds grow. They are not unlike the toe-toe of New Zealand. They grow about the same height, from five to ten or twelve feet, have a definite round stick-like stem,
and on this broad leaves grow, which horses and cattle eat greedily. They are so dense in many places that it is not possible to ride a horse through them, especially up a hill, though a way may be forced riding down a hill. In the poorer lands these reeds are less dense and luxuriant. Where the soil is light and dry the reeds are patchy, and between them there is a wiry, dry grass, that appears to have little fodder value. Reeds are thus a good index to the richness of the soil. They grow best in the rich lands of the moderately wet belt, but are all over the dry belt also. Where they grow well, paspalum and other grasses grow with equal virility. But they never stand close feeding, and whenever cattle are allowed to graze continuously over and through them in large numbers they disappear. In the dry season of the year and in the dry belt they ripen fairly well and give a sufficiently inflammable undergrowth to make a good fire. Fires are frequent, therefore, and if paspalum seed were scattered over the ash bed, and the reeds subsequently prevented from smothering the new grass by feeding off, a good sole of paspalum would take possession. This would prove a good and cheap way of replacing reeds and
native grasses with a permanent fodder grass of high value.

Paspalum is the staple grass of Australia, and farmers of that country have frequently expressed the opinion that this grass has made the dairying industry the phenomenal success it has proved to be. Paspalum will stand any amount of close feeding; it will stand drought and flood and frequent fires. Its tenacity for life is as great an asset to the graziers as its high feeding value. It can be found growing vigorously in many parts of Fiji, and those who have had experience of it have discovered its virtues. Some of the hill sides in the dry belt are very poor, and it is questionable whether it would do well there, but it should be tried more often and in more places for experimental and demonstration purposes.

The land generally is of volcanic origin. Over large tracts in the hilly districts the soil is black and friable, and is densely covered with growth. On large areas on hill sides and in basins it is red, almost as red as hematite, and grows very little of anything, sometimes a stunted, miserable fern. Some areas show a chocolate soil, and this is usually very fertile. There is a great deal of lime-
stone in some districts. There are high limestone bluffs in the Singatoka Valley, with large caves and bat guano. On the tops of even high hills shell conglomerate is often found, and limestone outcrops are frequent. In the dry belt the reddish grey gritty soil over a volcanic base is shallow and poor. But there is a fine growth, notwithstanding, and some of those areas would be worth a serious and prolonged test with sheep or Angora or common goats. About the latter there would be little doubt.

The bush-clad mountains in the wet belt would be hard to deal with. There is a dense jungle, but it is rarely dry enough to burn. If it is felled and cannot be burned it must lie and rot, which it does very rapidly.

Mr. Duncan, of Taviuni, has felled some of this light bush land at 15s. per acre, and the fallen trees have all disappeared within two years. His method of breaking in all this land is to slash all the scrub and undergrowth, then to sow paspalum amongst the fallen debris, next to fell the bush on top of all, and finally to turn cattle in. The latter force their way through the fallen scrub, tree trunks rot and disappear, while the paspalum comes on and the area becomes good grazing land, improving with each year of use and treatment.
But even where the soil is poor or indifferent, the climate, the heat, and the rainfall promote rapid and abundant growth. One coco-nut planter runs all the year round 1,200 head of cattle on 1400 acres, where coco-nuts are his crop, not grass. Another runs 180 on 100 acres of nuts. Another runs eight sheep to the acre on small paddocks, and horses and cattle share the same fields. Mr. Turbert, who has run a small flock of sheep, and bred from them in a field in Suva (110 inches of rainfall), declares that he has kept eight sheep to the acre all the year round, and has provided no additional food. Few have succeeded with sheep, or at least have succeeded in keeping and breeding from them over a long period of years, but all who have tried say that their trouble is that they get too fat.

Mr. Knight, of the State Farm, Nasinu, tells me that he has taken eleven crops of lucerne off a plot in one year. Lucerne does not seem to "stay." It has run out in most cases when it has been tried, but no one can say why. A miserable patch is to be seen at the State Farm now, but the roots had no nodules, and Mr. Knowles, the Superintendent of Agriculture, intends inoculating the soil.
The soil varies so much in the same district, and so much in different districts, that very few general conclusions can be arrived at. A soil that will produce a certain result in the wet zone may do something quite different in the dry. Demonstration plots would therefore be required all over the Islands, and these would require to be under observation and skilled interpretation.

One thing, however, is certain, the productive power of the soil all over the Islands is enormous. The most extravagant production would probably be realised if labour and intelligence were applied to the soil. Where small patches of land no bigger than a back yard are dealt with, the results are amazing, and the healthiness of all that is produced in the way of garden truck is obvious everywhere. And this land can be secured from the Government of Fiji at rentals of from 1d. per acre to 5s. per acre. No land is sold by the Government or by the natives. But much of the alienated land is held as freehold, and can be bought from private individuals. Some very rich river flats in use for cattle grazing and milking were recently for sale near Suva at £8 per acre. This land would easily have fetched £60 per acre in New Zealand.
Grazing leases are for 21 years, with the right of renewal for another 21 years, and the rent varies from 1d. per acre to 6d. per acre. Most of the land in the hands of the Government for lease has sea frontages or river frontages, but little, or none, has road frontages. There are horse tracks to most of the land, but nothing wide enough for a wheeled vehicle. Still, water carriage is good. For three-fourths of the circumference of the main Island, on which Suva and its harbour are situated, a small launch can sail round within the reef. There is no open sea in these waters, and very frail and small craft can therefore skirt the Island. Some of the rivers are navigable for long distances, the river craft getting smaller as the river is ascended, till they are mere flat-bottomed punts poled by a native. These lands, therefore, are not altogether inaccessible, and merely require a little management.

Agricultural leases are for 99 years, and the rent usually runs from about 1s. to about 5s. or 6s. Rentals in developed areas are, of course, higher, but some leases are offering for as low as 3d. per acre, or a rising rent with re-assessment in 33 years. The Government has now 180,000 acres of grazing and agricultural land available for selec-
tion, in areas ranging from a few acres to 50,000 acres. All the rest of the land suitable for grazing or agriculture is in the hands of the natives, but any applicant desiring an area is at liberty to select it, state approximately its position and boundaries, and apply to the Government. If the native owners give permission to the Government to deal with the land on their behalf, the terms are fixed and the lease completed. Before final transfer, however, the lease thus finally completed as to terms, etc., is put up to auction at the upset premium of £1. The highest bidder gets the lease, and the Government subsequently administers on behalf of the native owners, paying rents over to them, less 10 per cent. cost of administration.

The natives for many years have had to deal with and resented white intrusion. Many stories are told of the manner in which Fijians were induced to sign their lands away. All negotiations were once made direct between the purchaser or lessee and the natives, and the bargain was then confirmed and registered by a Government Department. The natives are now, however, evincing a more ready disposition to hand over their surplus lands to the Government, for disposal under lease.
Those Fijians who have a rent all become the envy of those who have none, and, as all the lands in any particular district were jointly held, those who derive no rent soon come to see that they can be as well off as their neighbours if they allow the Government to deal with those lands they cannot use, and which are entirely waste. The Government is aiming at a policy of getting from all the natives throughout the Islands the option to lease their lands to those who will use and pay for them. A land tax on idle lands has been much discussed in Fiji as a means of making white holders of idle lands, as well as black, bring their lands into use, or dispose of them to those who will. The Government has, further, threatened to force the natives to use their lands or hand them over for administration on their behalf.

To what purpose these lands can best be put will depend on the experience and the aptitude of the user, and the amount of capital he has available. But the variety and the abundance of the products that the soil will yield to appropriate tillage and effort are not in question. If a white man accustomed to the use of land wants land he can get it cheaply in Fiji, and it will reward his toil with an abundant harvest.
BREAD FRUIT AND BANANAS

[Photo by F. Caine]
But the fertility of the soil that gives him a bounteous harvest will almost in a night give him a crop of weeds. A man must turn his energies and his ingenuity to the skilful treatment of his land in Fiji, as he must in every other part of the world, if he wishes to succeed. But there is no weed or noxious growth that cannot be mastered in Fiji, as it can elsewhere. And the mastering pays. "Kosters' Curse" is a beautiful shrub which grows in the wet belt. It soon covers the ground, and has a great tenacity for life. It can be grubbed up, and where the ground is ploughable can be eradicated. It is no worse than ti-tree in New Zealand, and not nearly as bad as blackberry. It has no fodder value or any noxious properties, and no disadvantage is connected with its presence. Lantana and coumouithi are other shrubs that have considerable vitality in the wet zone, and require constant supervision, especially the former, which has, however, a parasite enemy that preys on the seeds and is believed to be sufficient to keep it in check if not to eradicate it. The guava is a tree, which, like the New Zealand ti-tree, scatters itself over the better soil of the dry belts, and is difficult to keep down. Out of the fruit guava jelly is made, and is a delicacy, but cattle
eat and like the fruit, and spread the seeds in this way. When grass fires occur the guava is killed, but suckers shoot up again afterwards. It is said that if the ground is well stocked after a fire, the stock eat the young shoots and thus kill off the pest, but I am not sure that there is much evidence to justify this view. Though the growth is phenomenal, and the variety of products unsurpassed, there are relatively vulnerable and relatively invulnerable products of the soil.
Chapter XXI

UPS AND DOWNS IN FIJI

FIJI is dotted with persons and families who have been alternately prosperous and poor all their lives. Bananas are a healthy and an abundant crop. The market is available and the prices are good. But a hurricane or a borer comes and the planters are poor. Cotton is in demand, and as Fiji soil is responsive and hospitable, cotton growers abound and flourish like a green bay tree. But a collapse comes in cotton, precipitated by unanticipated conditions in the United States, and cotton growers are poor. Copra is in pressing demand and the price is high; labour is abundant, cheap, and willing, and everyone feels rich. But there is a collapse in the market, or a hurricane comes inopportune, and rejoicing is turned to wailing. Coffee of the very finest kind adorns acres of fertile ground, and everyone turns to coffee. But the coffee leaf disease comes as if from pure malice, and tears take the place of
laughter. No ups and downs in digger days in Victoria, or New Zealand, or California, can rival in dramatic change the fluctuations in fortune in Fiji. Cane pays 30 per cent. profit, and flourishes amazingly, but a visitor from India writes a report on morals, Indian labour is withheld, and the industry is in jeopardy.

Sisal farms are established, and flourish and promise well, but the war breaks out, and a few white hands—or rather heads—are withdrawn, and the farms go back to the jungle. For a fertile land, a fine climate, glorious scenery and a bounteous response to every human effort, no country that I know has had so many vicissitudes, and yet no interest in Fiji and no one contemplating settlement need despair. The Islands are on the threshold of great prosperity. The Empire wants and needs the things that the soil of Fiji can produce. The Panama Canal has put her on the line of great ocean routes, and ships will soon be calling in ever-increasing numbers. The transference of strategic interest from the Atlantic to the Pacific cannot leave Fiji unconsidered. The high prices of land in the other Dominions will drive land seekers where land is cheap and fertile and abundant. The
heavy and increasing burdens of taxation, especially in the higher reaches of wealth in these countries, upon which the war costs have pressed most heavily, will suggest investment in less-burdened lands. And no countries have escaped so unscathed by war taxation as the Crown Colonies.

The rapidly-increasing pressure of labour costs and the shortening of labour hours, and the lessening of labour output, will suggest to the employers of labour and capital that the black labour of tropical countries might be better worth exploiting than the labour of temperate zones. The cry “Off to the Tropics” was not infrequently heard in Britain after the Armistice was signed and the end of the war was assured and in sight. Young capitalists and eager youths, like unleashed greyhounds springing to the chase, were talking about the Malay States, the East and West Indies, and British East Africa. “The immediate future is with the tropical countries” was a frequent remark of men straining their eyes to see which way the industrial cat would jump. Rubber and coco-nuts, tea and coffee, and many tropical products have made great fortunes for men and firms in London, and Glasgow, and Edinburgh.
It is the land that produces these things—the judicious application of labour and capital to the use of the land. The question for Fiji, on the threshold of the world’s reconstruction, is, how shall she make every acre yield its best, and yield its maximum for the supply of the world’s needs?
Chapter XXII

FIJI VERSUS EAST AFRICA

THE first essential in the development of the resources of Fiji is that those resources should be made known to those who are able and willing to develop them. No one who knows the Empire could fail to appreciate the advantages of Fiji as a field for settlement and investment, if the land were made accessible to them and the facts were made known. Contrast Fiji with the latest attempt made at Home to interest emigrating soldiers in East Africa. "The Government of the East Africa Protectorate," says an official statement in the London Times of 27/6/19, "are prepared to receive applications for grants of land in the Protectorate from persons who have served in the Forces during the war. It is proposed to allot land on easy terms of leasehold for 999 years to two classes of applicants." The applicants must have a certain amount of experience and some capital. "Applicants are warned," the statement
proceeds, "that (1) The land is almost entirely remote from existing railways, and no undertaking is given that communications will be available within any specified time. (2) Native labour is likely to be short, and there will be at first a scarcity of agricultural implements, wagons and trained oxen. (3) It is doubtful whether European children can be brought up in East Africa without periodical changes to a temperate climate." If the land in Fiji were made as easily obtainable and for as long a lease, she could offer a much more handsome and attractive invitation than this one to ex-service soldiers.

The freedom from tropical diseases alone would put Fiji out of sight ahead of all rival tropical countries as a field for settlement, while the climate is more tolerable to white settlers than any climate of a similar latitude in the world. As I have been five times round the world, and know the Empire well, I speak with confidence on this point.
Chapter XXIII

THE LAND IN RELATION TO THE FIJIAN NATIVE

SOMETHING over 600,000 acres of the land in Fiji have been alienated, either by freehold or lease. The balance of nearly 4,000,000 acres belongs to the Fijian natives. Where land is secured from them by the Government it is held in trust for them, and the proceeds by way of rent are divided amongst them, according to their tribal rights and customs. When land is thus secured and leased, areas are reserved for the villages and for the agricultural needs of the villagers, the outside limit likely to be needed being always taken as the guide, unless the natives stipulate for more. The power of veto over alienation and the delimitation of the reservations rest with them. But the native Fijians, unfortunately, are not a progressive race. They have no racial ideals or ambitions. They live a largely vegetable existence. They grow and blossom and flower in the sunshine, and fade and die. And the history of the individual is the history of the race. The more the rent the less necessity of effort to grow
taro or yam. The less the effort required the more the rent receiver vegetates. The more he vegetates the sooner he dies. It is no injustice to the Fijian to use his land and pay him the rent. It is no injustice to lease it from him for 999 years rather than 99 or 21. It is no injustice even to give him a low rent, if that rent provides sufficient for his needs, and use the excess in rental value for the roading and development of the country. He will use and delight in the roads, and share in any advantage that comes to the community from development. The regulations for the disposal of lands and their development and use are not satisfactory, and need modification. But there is evidence that the Fiji Government is alive to this necessity, and that changes will be approved by the Colonial Office at Home. The Empire must go ahead. America and Japan and Germany have thrown down the challenge to a war of trade and commerce, and the heavily-handicapped British Empire, laden with the staggering debts of war, must be helped, and not hindered, in the contest. It is due to every Crown Colony, to each outpost of Empire, that Whitehall should lend a sympathetic ear to every wish and a helping hand to every effort they must make in the coming struggle.
Chapter XXIV

TAXATION AND INVESTMENT

Capital will always follow the line of least resistance, and yield to the pull of high returns. In obedience to this law of Nature, it flowed freely to Russia, and Mexico, and Germany and Argentina in the long years of peace before the war. In these excursions under foreign flags it did an unpatriotic thing, and has suffered badly. From a patriotic point of view there is no doubt Capital is unrepentant. From a business point of view it feels the pain of smarting fingers. Under this corrective it is looking for fresh fields. One of the considerations that puzzle it most just now is the question of taxation.

A resident in Britain dare not invest in any of the Dominions to-day. If he is unlucky enough to have investments there he must either pull up his British roots and go and live in the Dominion where his money is, or he must get a bigger return on his invested capital, or he must remove it.
He is hit in two ways. He may have an absentee tax of 50 per cent. in addition to his ordinary land tax, and he must pay in Britain the British tax on all his capital earns in the Dominion on the higher rate levied on "uneearned income." Whether this is fair taxation or good policy is for disputatious politicians to decide. One thing is certain, and that is, that Capital must adjust itself to the burden, or remove or lessen it. It can do this by going where the burden is less, or it will insist on earning more by raising the price to those who want to use and must have it. It will follow the line of least resistance and yield to the pull of high returns. Profits have been high in New Zealand and Australia, but they cannot remain at that high level unless all values are readjusted in accordance. Investors, however, will not wait for the mysterious working of subtle changes in financial values and prices. They will look for new fields that give high returns and low taxation. Fiji is one of these fields.

Here is a land tax demand upon a resident in London who owns some land in a New Zealand town. It is valued by the Taxation Department at £7,455 and carries a mortgage of £2,750, so that the value to the owner is £4,705. The rent is £200
per annum, which, after paying interest, rates and repairs, yields nothing at the end of the year to the owner. The demand is for "land tax, £37 6s. 6d.; additional 50 per cent. super-tax, £18 13s. 3d.; total, £55 19s. 9d.; absentee tax, 50 per cent., £27 19s. 10d. Total tax payable, £83 19s 7d."

I do not say that this tax is unfair, and the taxpayer, as far as I know, has never complained. The winning of this war would have been worth while if it had deprived every British subject of all the material goods he possessed and left him in poverty. But capital which has to bear this weight of taxation must seek a new adjustment within the Empire. If this capital were similarly invested in Fiji it would pay no land tax whatever, and the whole of this £83 19s. 7d. would be saved.

The above property pays rates in New Zealand in addition to the land tax to the extent of about £65 per year. This is a municipal rate, however, and has nothing to do with the general tax for State purposes.

Fiji raises her revenue by customs duties, which range over all articles imported, except animals, coal, manure, seeds, and many articles of lesser importance. This import duty averages out at about
13\(\frac{3}{4}\) per cent. on the invoice price of imported goods.

Capital will not pause to argue whether the tax it is called on to bear is wise or just. It will simply flow silently from the country when the burden is heavy to a country where the burden is light.

Fiji has hardly a rival in this latter respect, and she may expect some attention from investors. A public-house keeper once resented bitterly the pressure and restrictions of liquor regulations, and exclaimed in his wrath that he would go and build a hotel on the top of the highest mountain, where there was not a law to bother him. Capitalists looking for lighter burdens would not be so blind to prospective returns. But capital on the wing that finds a resting place in Fiji will have just as good prospects of high returns and low taxation as in any country within the Empire.
Chapter XXV

SOIL PRODUCTIVITY

With regard to the productivity of the soil, the following crops have been gathered, or results obtained:—An acre in sugar cane has produced 80 tons of cane, the general average being 23 tons per acre, taken over wet and dry belts. This average has yielded the planter £15 per acre gross, or £4 per acre net. An acre in coco-nuts has produced 10 cwt. of copra, the average being 6 cwt. per acre. This average has yielded the planter £9 per acre gross, or £7 per acre net, when copra brought £30 per ton. An acre in bananas produces an average of 200 bunches from the first crop. In good soil, and with good cultivation, the crop may be double this figure. A bunch of bananas is worth about 2s. on the plantation. An acre in maize has produced 60 bushels, the average being 35 bushels per acre, yielding the grower £6 2s. 6d. per acre, or £1 15s. net. (This is for one crop only in the year. It is possible to
grow two crops in succession on the same acre, but hurricanes have to be anticipated, and, as one crop would mature in the hurricane season, the second crop is generally of some other kind). An acre in coffee has produced 13 cwt., the average being 6 cwt. per acre, yielding to the grower at 6d. per lb. £16 per acre gross, or £10 per acre net. An acre in paspalum grass has carried all the year round one bullock. An acre in rubber (in eighth year of growth, and rubber at 2s. per lb.) has produced a yield of £12 10s., the cost of upkeep and collection being £8 10s., and the net yield £4.
Chapter XXVI

COSTS

LABOUR.—Black labour, whether of Indians or Fijians, costs about £40 per annum, including food. An artisan’s wage (white) is from 12s. to 15s. per day of eight hours. An overseer’s salary is from £200 to £250 per annum, with residential quarters provided by the employers. A manager’s salary is from £300 to £400 per annum, with quarters provided. Clerks get from £12 to £25 per month.

White workers on plantations get what the estate produces in milk and vegetables; and fowls and other domestic animals are usually kept by the employees. The cost of living under these circumstances is generally estimated at from £5 to £6 per month. In the towns, board and lodging can be got for about 30s. per week.

FENCING.—A fence in Taviuni, consisting of four barbed wires and tavu tavu posts (an everlasting wood, affected only by fire) 9 feet apart,
with wire at £30 per ton, cost £80 per mile. The posts cost 2½d. each, but they were on the estate, and simply had to be cut and carried. Bua bua is another similar wood, which costs about the same to cut and carry, when the trees are available. Concrete posts, reinforced with wire, can be produced 4 inches by 4 inches, at 1s. each, when gravel, sand and water are handy, which they usually are.

Clearing.—Grubbing open grass lands studded with screw pines (pandanus, the native name is balawa), and clearing ready for the plough, costs from 20s. to 30s. per acre. When trees are felled in the dry zone they are dry enough to burn in six months. Ploughing costs 20s. per acre, and is generally let by contract to Indians at this figure. Grassing with paspalum costs 10s. to 12s. 6d. per acre, with seed at 6½d. per lb., and about 20 lb. to the acre. Burning of reeds should take place in September, and the seed sown then is watered by light rains till December, when heavy rains do not wash the seeds away.

Houses.—A small European house of three rooms—one 14 x 12, another 14 x 14—with a verandah, mosquito-proof room, kitchen and out-
houses, made of wood and iron, costs somewhere about £500.

“Coolie lines” of 2 rooms each, and made barrack fashion, cost £12 per room, made of wood and iron.

Fijian huts made of bamboo and reed thatch, with floor raised from the ground by built-up earth, are very popular, and cost £2 to £3 per fathom of the house in length. Many are only 30 feet long, and cost £12. They have to be re-thatched in about five years. A good house of this kind, constructed for European habitation, and consisting of two rooms, will cost about £50.

Freight.—Inter-island freights are 24s. per ton. Freights to Sydney and Auckland are 47s. 6d. a ton. The freight on copra to London is £12 per ton, and from Sydney to London £10 6s. 8d.
Chapter XXVII

SUGAR CANE

THE production of sugar is the first industry in the Colony, 120,528 tons having been exported in 1916. Cane is grown in both the wet and dry zones, and gives better yields of sugar in the latter, because it ripens better. The largest mills have some of their own plantations, but as a rule they buy the cane from white and Indian planters, who supply it under contract at so much per ton of cane. From 10s. to 25s. per ton, according to the density of sugar in the cane, is paid under these contracts, and under normal and average conditions planters can net about £4 per acre. The first cane grown was in the Rewa River valley, but the dry zone has proved more successful as a cane-producing country. Large tracts of rich river flats have gone out of cane, and the process of abandonment in the poorer districts seems continu-
ous. The work of cane cultivation is expensive, and of cane gathering laborious. Cane cutting must be done by hand, and it is not an easy matter to keep Indians at the work when there are so many attractive occupations more congenial to them. The temptations to trading and to agriculture on their own account are formidable enemies of the sugar mills. Under indenture these temptations were powerless in the presence of the contract of indenture and the penal clauses which it carried. But with labour free to follow the line of least resistance and to please itself, a laborious occupation, like cane tilling and cane cutting and carrying, is not likely to appeal to many in Fiji, where the hardships that attend a low earning power are not great and the attractions of an independent life upon the soil are strong and constant. But the sugar mills have capital that runs into several millions, the capital of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company alone being £3,000,000. They will not allow this large sum, together with the annual earning of something between a quarter and half a million pounds, to be imperilled because of the cessation of coloured immigration, without making a supreme effort to find labour at a cost that will at least leave them a good working margin.
The Colonial Preference policy of the Imperial Government might considerably benefit the sugar industry in Fiji, but if the paralysing policy of cutting off the labour supply from India is continued, preference for a sugar that cannot be produced will be a poor gift. The practice with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company has been to crush the cane at their Fiji mills and export the crude products for final treatment at their refineries in New Zealand.

The Colonial Sugar Refining Company is to Fiji what the C.P.R. has been in Canada. Each has exerted a profound influence on the development of the country that gave it hospitality. And each has used its power to acquire more power, even to the point of dominance. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company has 300 miles of permanent railway, apart from the portable rails that fetch and carry amidst the cane fields. On this railway nothing is carried for a private trader or producer, except as an act of grace, and, while much generosity is shown by the company to the settlers in the vicinity of the railway, a stern rule provides that no product will be carried that grows on land which might be used to produce cane. “Grow cane!” is the stern command that the coolie and white alike disobey at
their peril. The Government, sooner or later, may be compelled, in the interest of settlement and development, to take over the lines. It would not in the least put the sugar industry to any disadvantage, for cane would be carried for the mills as now, at a cost to the company no greater, if as great, but the general public would not have to endure the restrictions of a monopoly that enjoys the country's hospitality.
Chapter XXVIII

COCO-NUTS

ONE of the most attractive and stable industries in the Colony is that of growing coco-nuts. The trees grow wild in most places along the sea coasts, but when planted systematically make one of the most beautiful and the most profitable estates in tropical countries. A gentleman can grow coco-nuts and a lady can harvest them. It is a truly tropical occupation. Coco-nut trees are very graceful and beautiful in themselves. They grow to maturity or to "bearing" in about eight years, and the crop increases to a maximum in from ten to twelve years. The nut matures and falls, and, as the lucky planter sits on his verandah and listens to the music of this announcement, he murmurs with no little satisfaction to himself, "There's another three-farthings for me." The fallen nuts are gathered by Indian men and women, are cracked open with a strong blade, the kernel scooped out with a sheath knife and left in the sun to dry, and the resulting copra is then collected into
sacks and exported to the great markets of the world. Nothing could be simpler and more automatic than the growing and harvesting of coco-nuts, nor, in fact, could anything be more profitable. The nuts keep dropping all the year round, so that labour is continuously but not hurriedly employed and rushed, as it is apt to be in harvests that follow the ripening in a week, which happens at one season of the year. Copra has been selling in Fiji recently (September, 1919) at £34 per ton, and in London at £58 per ton. And planters have been growing and harvesting it at £6 per ton.

But there is no ointment in the tropics, however fragrant or however healing, that has not its fly. Cane has its labour shortage; the banana has its borer; coffee has its leaf disease; the coco-nut has its hurricane, its blight and its capricious market. Even at the moment of writing comes the cable announcement that copra has dropped £9 a ton in a few hours. The hurricanes are the terror of the coco-nut planter. The tree is so tall and slender in its trunk, so insecure in its roots, so broad and sail-like in its high-perched fronds, that it is the frailest plaything of the wind in a frolic. Nothing in the tropics, except perhaps the banana, suffers so much
from a hurricane as a coco-nut plantation. The tree is stripped of its broad leaves and of most of its growing fruit, even if it be not broken or torn up by the roots. There was a hurricane in 1912. During that year the export of copra reached 13,710 tons. In 1913 it fell to 7,929 tons; in 1914 it was 9,429 tons, and it was not till 1915, three years after the hurricane, that it rose to 15,238 tons. These figures give in brief the results of the "blows" on the trees and crops. The crop falls suddenly and then gradually recovers, and when recovery is complete the trees are more fertile than ever, because of the pruning and the rest. Hurricanes are usually partial in their visitation, and cannot be insured against. The nuts all over the Island are subject to some parasitic blight but none is so devastating as the moth blight, that covers the whole of, and is confined to, Viti Levu, the largest island, and a few small ones adjacent.

This moth (Levuana iridescens), about the size of a small housefly and having iridescent indigo blue wings, lays on the under side of the coco-nut leaf 10 to 16 eggs at a time. These become caterpillars and eat into the substance of the leaf. They then creep to the base of the frond, where they
DRYING COCO-NUT KERNELS TO MAKE COPRA

PHOTO BY F. CAINE
pupate, and ultimately developing into moths, commence the cycle of insect life again. Nothing has been able to grapple with them. Little or no fruit matures on the affected tree, though it does not die, and if the moth is kept away the tree at once recovers and bears normally. It has not spread to any of the other islands, though there must have been ample opportunity and facility during the past thirty years of its depredations. Natives carry fruits and goods from one island to another in baskets made of the green coco-nut leaves, and no precautions whatever have been taken against inter-island infection. Still, after thirty years of danger, the other islands are immune, while nothing has been able to stay the ravages on Viti Levu. Winds, and especially hurricanes, must have carried frequently the moths and the broken and infected leaves from the infected island to its neighbours. Yet the immunity remains complete. These facts suggest that there must be a natural enemy in the other islands that is an effective barrier to its spread. A close observation of the affected trees in various parts of the island suggests that the spider is a natural enemy that might be studied with some promise of success. I watched
a common spider with a moth as its prey hurrying home with its prize. I discovered a clump of coconuts isolated and compact. They were entirely free from the blight. The leaves were green and healthy, and the fruit unaffected and abundant. The only other distinctive feature of this group of escapees was the abundance of spiders’ webs. They were everywhere amongst the lower trees and shrubs. It may be that here we have cause and effect. An experiment would prove or disprove it. If these spiders were collected and cultivated on an affected island round the coast, and their habits and development watched, a remedy might be at hand much simpler and cheaper of application than the lady beetle in California. In any case, a remedy lies concealed within the womb of observation, and any intelligent and patient youth might be the accoucheur.

Every tropical country is alive with parasites of one kind or another, just as it teems with plant and animal life of all kinds. The never-ceasing problem, before ever-vigilant effort, is to foster those that are of value to men by hindering or destroying those that are not. They all struggle to possess the soil, or what the soil possesses. And all
man has to do is to help the struggler that helps him, to overcome his rival in the struggle. If the Fijian helps the spider against the moth the spider will be successful, or if not there is some other fighter that can be secured.

The Imperial Institute of Science and Technology, in Kensington, London, has a full curriculum for the study of plant pathology. Diseases of plants are studied there, just as diseases of animals are studied in the schools of veterinary science, and of humans in the schools of medicine. A graduate of this plant pathology school was recently appointed to a rubber plantation in Malaya, and within a year of his taking up his duties he had discovered the cause of, and the remedy for, a parasitic disease of rubber trees. He was getting £300 a year then, but the planters from adjoining rubber estates clubbed together and offered to raise his salary to £1,000 a year if he could be made their consultant. Every tropical country should have its plant pathologist. He should be continuously employed observing and investigating, and should be at the disposal of every industry that requires his advice. This function should be curative and preventive in relation to every disease and parasite to which plant life is heir.
He should be the guardian against the introduction of new plant diseases, as the Health Officer is the guardian against the introduction of the infectious diseases of humans, or veterinary surgeons of animals. He should, by the study of what was going on in other tropical countries, be ready to warn when danger threatens, and advise when cures and preventives are discovered. In a country like Fiji, where every good thing comes from the soil in the form of the kindly fruits of the earth (and she would be a volcanic rock if it were not so), no time or trouble or money would be so well and profitably spent, as that which would express itself in this reform.
Chapter XXIX

RUBBER

Fortunes have been made and lost in rubber. As a product of the soil, filling a great need and performing high service in war as in peace, it stands unchallenged. Synthetic rubber came just prior to the war with a resounding threat. The specimens that were exhibited in London certainly made an imposing show, and I know men who saw that exhibition and straightway went and sold out their rubber shares. Worn motor-car tyres were shown that had run 5,000 miles and seemed little the worse. Floor tiles and boot soles, and an infinite variety of articles, were on view, and the threat was formidable to natural rubber. One could handle and indent this synthetic product, and be quite unable on naked eye examination to tell the difference from ordinary rubber. And the cheapness with which it could be turned out was equally striking. Nothing has come of it, and the rubber tree still flourishes and pays. Germany has had every incentive during the war to
invent synthetic rubber. There is no evidence that she has succeeded. Steel springs were her best substitute.

Rubber plantations, like coco-nuts, are automatic in their production after maturity. The trees grow and the harvest ripens daily, and simply has to be garnered. By courtesy of Mr. Powell, the managing partner, I am able to give the particulars of the largest and most successful rubber estate in Fiji. One plantation of the Waidoi Estate consists of 3,000 acres of land, purchased in its jungle state for £1 per acre. Of this area only 1,200 acres are flat, of which 450 acres have been planted in rubber.

The first tree planting was done about 1908. The jungle was felled and the trees allowed to rot. The area is in the wet belt, and burning was impracticable. The estate is beautifully situated about 12 miles from Suva by launch, which navigates still water within the coral reef, and anchors up from the mouth of beautiful Waidoi River, about a mile from the homestead and plantation. The undergrowth was abundant and not easy to keep under, but bananas were planted and harvested during the first few years, and contributed in relief of the cost
while the trees were young and growing. In the seventh year of growth, tapping yielded from each tree very nearly 1 lb. of rubber for the year. The cost of upkeep and collecting the rubber was about £8 10s. per acre, and the gross yield, at 2s. per lb., was £12 10s., leaving a net £4 per acre as the return for the seventh year of growth. Mr. Powell estimated that by the end of the twelfth year each tree would yield 4 lb. to 5 lb. of rubber, and this, at 2s. per lb., would mean a net return of from £14 to £18 per acre.

Mr. Foy, of the Bank of New Zealand, who has taken a great interest in the development of Fiji, and is enthusiastic about its potentialities, looks upon rubber as offering better prospects of return than coco-nuts, because of the lesser cost of bringing to mature bearing, and the lesser susceptibility to damage by hurricane. His reports on this subject are interesting and valuable.

There are about 2,000 acres planted in rubber trees in Fiji at the present time (1919), which would probably have been considerably increased but for the war.

A large part of the Waidoi Estate is river flat, the soil being alluvial, heavy and of great fertility.
Of another estate, the Yarawa, a large portion consists of low rolling volcanic hills, composed of heavy red clay soil.

On these hills the trees were showing vigorous and healthy growth, and great promise. The Waidoi Estate consists of 3,000 acres, which cost £1 per acre, including the hilly portions. About one-third of this comprises the best land, and would be valued at about £3 per acre. It cost £5 per acre per annum for the first seven years to bring it to its present state, and the capital value of the improved and planted land would therefore be about £38 per acre. Land costing this per acre, when brought to its present state of development will produce a net yield of £4 per acre when rubber is 2s. per lb. Thereafter it increases in yield and revenue rapidly, without a corresponding increase in the cost of production.

Rubber trees thrive in the climate and soil of Fiji in the wet belt and appear healthy. Some "Pink Disease" has shown itself, but is being vigorously and successfully combated. Labour has been sufficient so far, chiefly on account of the attractiveness of the employment and its remuneration. Labour follows the line of least resistance, and rubber plantation work is such a line, and draws
from the cane fields when there is not enough to go round. It has been estimated that there are 150,000 acres suitable for rubber growing in Fiji, and if the poor red clay hills can be relied on to grow rubber as well as it does at Yarawa, this area will be much greater.

It is obvious that rubber trees are much less vulnerable to hurricanes than bananas and coconuts. One severe test passed over Waidoi when the trees were young, and very little damage was done. Leaves were stripped and branches were torn off, but, with the trunk standing, the tree soon survives, and the rubber flow and tapping go on.

In an admirable report to his bank, Mr. Foy, in 1918, sums up his conclusions thus:—“I think it may be safely conceded, after consideration of the data I have given and my remarks on the industry, that it is now very nearly out of the experimental stage as far as Fiji is concerned, and given that comparative immunity from hurricanes due to the lesser vulnerability of the trees to which I have referred elsewhere, and an assured supply of labour, the industry presents an exceptional opportunity for a profitable investment, yielding from 10 per cent. to 30 per cent., and perhaps even more, according to market conditions, and it is worth the
attention of New Zealand capitalists or others having surplus capital to invest. It may be also recognised that taxation to the planter is much less here relatively to that in Australia and New Zealand, and this is an important consideration likely to become more marked in favour of Fiji, under post-war conditions."

Though Waidoi has been carved out of the jungle where the wild growth is most riotous, in a beautiful valley with a meandering and still more beautiful river, no one, white or black, young or old, male or female, suffers more from any tropical or topical, endemic or epidemic, disease than he does in New Zealand or Australia. There are no wild nor noxious animals. What innocuous snakes there were have been taken in hand and accounted for by the tiny mongoose, now ubiquitous, introduced to take care of the rats in the cane fields. Whether inside or outside, wet or dry, clad or not, in summer or in winter, in the darkness or in the sunshine, the health of both black and white is as free from danger as in the most healthy temperate zones.
Chapter XXX

PINEAPPLES

ONE of the most hardy fruits, thriving almost in the wild state in Fiji, is the pineapple. One sees it in many parts remote from habitation, growing and thriving on the hill sides. It lifts itself no higher from the ground than the garden cabbage, and the heart of the cabbage is the pineapple—one only. It is very hardy, and only requires freedom from weeds and smothering growth.

A profitable industry could be built up from this source alone, either for export in the fresh state, or for tinning purposes.

With the exception of sugar and coco-nuts, practically no product of any kind has had the skill and care of organised tilling. Nature does so much in Fiji that art in agriculture is unvalued, and her powers unknown.
Chapter XXXI
COAL AND OIL

A narrow band of coal, about three inches thick, is to be seen on a bank in the Rewa River, and a geological report records the fact that another seam one foot thick exists between deeper strata in the same locality. Local Fijian tradition asserts that early settlers used coal which they found about 15 miles up the Navua River, and that with this coal fires were made that were used for welding iron and repairing rifles.

It is said that lumps of coal have been found by Fijians in the beds of streams, but no tangible evidence is available to justify much confidence in the statement. The lure of such a tradition, however, was irresistible to me, and was responsible for one of the most pleasant excursions possible in Fiji, a canoe journey up the fascinating and romantic Navua River, with its gorges, its cascades, its rapids and the riotous foliage of its rugged banks.
A man with faith and a boring rod started to put his faith in oil in Fiji to the test about six miles from Suva. He was found dead in his tent beside his plant before he had explored much more than 100 feet. What justification he had for his faith I have been unable to discover, but the Superintendent for Agriculture, Mr. Knowles, told me that bubbles of oil gas can be seen near the mouth of the river running into Viti Levu Bay and little showers of black sand can be seen falling back as the bubbles burst on the surface of the water. This black sand accompaniment of oil bubbles is very characteristic of surface oil indications in the Caucasus.

The coal and oil indications in Fiji are quite sufficient to justify investigation, and it is high time that either State enterprise or private venture made the test. The strategic position of Fiji to which I have already referred, would make the islands paramount and unrivalled in the South Pacific, if oil or coal were found in sufficient quantity.
Chapter XXXII

BAMBOO AND PAPER PULP

ONE of the most striking evidences of soil fertility in many parts of Fiji is the amazingly rapid growth of the bamboo. The supply of raw material of paper must rapidly diminish, and the world’s supply is fast becoming impoverished. It cannot keep pace with the growing demand if left to the unaided natural growth of suitable trees.

Rapid tropical and sub-tropical growth must be called in aid if a paper famine and high priced reading matter are not to result. Cellulose experts have pointed out that bamboo pulp can be used for the manufacture of all grades of paper. Mr. W. Raitt, cellulose expert to the Government of India, says on this subject:

"After 25 years’ work on this problem in various parts of the world I have come to the conclusion that no permanent settlement of the papermakers oft-recurring difficulties of supplies can
be found except in the annual waste growths of tropical and sub-tropical forests. For newsprint, bamboo pulp (while it does not entirely take the place of strong sulphite) can be advantageously used to the extent of half the present percentage of sulphite, and if mechanical pulp continues to maintain anything like its present value, it can be so cheaply produced that it can take the place of mechanical pulp entirely. The total cost of production will not exceed one half of that now being experienced with wood pulp."

Schemes for the production of 70,000 tons of bamboo pulp per annum are now (1920) being developed in India.

Fiji offers ideal prospects for the development of this industry, or at least for the provision of the raw material.
Chapter XXXIII

FINAL NOTES

THE world moves very quickly nowadays, and while this little work has been going through the press, certain things have changed in Fiji.

Fiji has followed the example of most countries and has set up an income tax—but surely the mildest of income taxes. There is total exemption on the first £1000 of income, from £1001 to £5000 tax of 1/- in the £1 will be collected, from £5001 to £10,000 1/6 in £1, and the rate of tax rises eventually to 3/- in the £1 on incomes above £50,000 a year. Absentees will pay 6d. in the £1 more than residents at every stage.

The labour position has got worse instead of better. After a strike in early 1920 against the high cost of living, thousands of Indians have determined to demand the return tickets to India which the Fiji Government was bound under contract to give them, and have left or are leaving.
A temporary phase—so Fiji opinion considers—and arrangements are being made to give such of these Indians as wish to return again to Fiji a free passage back after their little holiday, but this time without of course the liability to contract service or the right of a second return to India at Government expense.

Fiji has not handled the Indian question particularly well, but there are signs of improvement and that she has learned from experience. But given renewed immigration, a free and not a recruited immigration, prospects are extraordinarily good.

Sugar is booming. The largest sugar company will in 1920 make a profit of not much less than 50 per cent. of its capital. Copra prices ruled high in the early part of the year. Rubber is steady, and the enormous price of cotton is encouraging the recrudescence of Fiji's oldest plantation industry. A new dairy scheme for returned soldiers has been initiated, and settlement has commenced. On the other hand, the Government Veterinary Officer in his report on the possibilities for stock in Fiji is less enthusiastic than my journey through Fiji made me, as to the chances of obtaining a good growth of fodder grasses on the uplands
particularly in the "Dry Zone." But, when once the problem of an adequately large population has been solved and my readers will have learned that I consider more intelligent handling and more liberal treatment will find an easy solution, the possibilities before Fiji are very great. The old world is finding an increasing need for tropical products, and in no part of the tropical world are there bigger chances for new development under as healthy and pleasant conditions as in Fiji.
Appendix

TRADE IN FIJI

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Figures for 1920 estimated on basis of actual returns for first three quarters of year 1920.