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978-1-108-05755-4 - An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands in the South Pacific Ocean: Volume 2

William Mariner Edited by John Martin

Excerpt

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## CHAPTER XV.

The king annihilates the divine chiefdom of Tootonga, and the ceremony of *inachi*—Mr. Mariner's adopted mother departs for Hapai—The stratagem used to prevent her female attendants from accompanying her—Spirited speech of Tálo on this occasion—All communication with the Hapai islands shut up—The king's extraordinary attention to the cultivation and defence of the country—Interesting anecdote respecting two chiefs, Hála A'pi A'pi and Tálo—Attempt from the people of Hapai—Mr. Mariner discovers an European vessel whilst on a fishing excursion: his men refusing to take him on board, he wounds one mortally, and threatens the others, upon which they paddle towards the ship—Anecdote of the wounded man—Mr. Mariner's arrival on board, and reception from the captain—The king visits him in the ship: his behaviour on board: his earnest wish to go to England—Mr. Mariner sends on shore for the journal of the Port au Prince, and procures the escape of two of his countrymen—Further transactions on board—He takes a final leave of the king—The ship sails for the Hapai islands.

IN consequence of Tootonga's death, the great obstacle to shutting up the communication with Hapai was, for a time at least, removed; but that it might be so more completely, the king came to a determination of having no more Tootongas, and thus to put a stop for ever to the ceremony of *inachi*; for he conceived

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that there was very little public utility in what was supposed to be the divine authority of Tooitonga; but that it was, on the contrary, a great and useless expense to the people. This measure, as may be imagined, did not prove very objectionable to the *wishes* of the multitude, as it relieved them from the *inachi*, a very heavy tax; and, in times of scarcity, of course extremely oppressive. In regard to the religious objections which one might suppose would be started against the endeavour to set aside an institution so ancient, so venerable, and so sacred, as that of Tooitonga's divine authority,—it must be noticed that the island of Tonga had, for many years, been deprived of the power, presence, and influence of Tooitonga, owing to its political situation; and, notwithstanding, appeared in the eyes of Finow, and of all his chiefs, warriors, and subjects, to be not less favoured with the bounties of heaven and of nature than the other islands, excepting the mischief and destruction which arose from human passion and disturbances: and if Tonga could exist without this divine chief, why not Vavaoo, or any other island? This strong argument growing still stronger, upon a little reflection, brought the chiefs, matabooles, and older members of society, to the resolution, that Tooitonga was of no use at all; and the people

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themselves, ever willing to fall into measures that greatly promote their interest, notwithstanding a few religious scruples, very soon came to be of the same opinion too.

As soon as Finow had come to this determination, and to that of shutting up all communication with the Hapai people, it became necessary to acquaint Tongamana, at his next arrival, with this new regulation, and to forbid him ever to return to Vavaoo again. In the mean time, however, as Finow had promised Tooí Bolotoo that his daughter (Mr. Mariner's adopted mother) should be allowed to proceed to him at the Hapais, she was ordered to get herself and attendants ready to accompany Tongamana on his way back. Now it happened this person had a great number of female attendants, many of whom were some of the handsomest women at Vavaoo; and, as the leave granted to her to depart was equally a licence for the departure of her attendants, Finow became apprehensive that the alienation of so many fine women from the country would occasion considerable discontent among his young men, and would perhaps tempt some of them to take the same step. He sent, however, for Máfi Hábe, and told her, that, with her leave, he would contrive some means to keep back her women, whose departure might occasion so much disturbance: in

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this intention she perfectly coincided, as she should have little use for them hereafter, in the retired life she meant to lead with her father, —two favourite attendants, however, excepted, whom she begged to take with her. Matters being so far agreed on, Finow, to avoid the appearance of injustice on his part, gave Mr. Mariner instructions how to act, with a view to bring about his object, as if it were a thought and impulse of his own. Accordingly, when Tongamana's canoe was ready to depart, and every one in it, save Mafi Hábe and her attendants, she was carried on board, and her two favourite attendants immediately followed: at this moment, when the rest of the women were about to proceed into the canoe, Mr. Mariner, who had purposely stationed himself close at hand with his musket, seized hold of the foremost, and threw her into the water, and forbad the rest to follow, at the peril of being shot. He then called out to Finow's attendants, who were purposely seated on the beach, to come to his assistance, pretending to express his wonder at their folly, in permitting those women to leave them, for whose protection they had often hazarded their lives in battle: upon this (as had been previously concerted) they ran forward, and effectually prevented any of them from departing. At this moment, while their lamenta-

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tions rent the air, Finow came down to the beach; and enquiring the cause of this disturbance, they told him that Togi (Mr. Mariner) had used violent measures to prevent their accompanying their beloved mistress, and that the young chiefs had cruelly assisted him. One of these chiefs (Talo) then addressed Finow:—

“ We have all agreed to lose our lives rather than suffer these women, for whom we have so often fought, to take leave of us for ever. It is probable that we shall soon be invaded by the people of Hapai: and are we to suffer some of the finest of our women to go over to the men who will shortly become our enemies? Those women, the sight and recollection of whom have so often cheered our hearts in the time of danger, and enabled us to meet the bravest and fiercest enemies, and to put them to the rout? If our women are to be sent away, in the name of the gods, send away also the guns, the powder, and all our spears, our clubs, our bows and arrows, and every weapon of defence: with the departure of the women our wish to live departs also, for then we shall have nothing left worth protecting, and, having no motive to defend ourselves, it matters little how we die.”

Finow upon this was obliged to explain to Tongamana the necessity of yielding to the sen-

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timents of these young chiefs, to prevent the discontent and disturbance which might otherwise take place. The canoe was now ordered to leave Vavaoo for the last time, and never more to return, for if she or any other canoe should again make her appearance from Hapai, her approach would be considered hostile, and proper measures would accordingly be adopted. At this moment, the women on the beach earnestly petitioned Finow to be allowed to take a last farewell of their dear and beloved mistress, which on being agreed to, nearly two hours were taken up in this affecting scene.

From this time Finow devoted his attention to the cultivation of the island; and the exertions of this truly patriotic chief were so far successful that the country soon began to promise the appearance of a far more beautiful and cultivated state than ever: nor did he in the mean time neglect those things which were necessary for the better defence of the place, and accordingly the fortress underwent frequent examination and improvements.

In the midst of these occupations, however, a circumstance happened which might have been the cause of much civil disturbance. It is well worth relating, as it affords an admirable character of one of the personages concerned, and shews a principle of honour and generosity of

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mind, which must afford the highest pleasure to those who love to hear of acts worthy the character of human nature. On one of the days of the ceremony known by the name of *tow tow*\*, which is celebrated on the *malái*, with wrestling, boxing, &c., a young chief, of the name of Talo, entered into a wrestling-match with Hala Api Api (the young chief who, as may be recollected, was mentioned on the occasion of Toobó Nuha's assassination). It should however be noticed, that a few days before, these two had held a debate upon some subject, in which neither could convince the other. It is usual on such an occasion, to prevent all future fruitless argument upon the same topic, to settle the affair by wrestling: not that this mode is considered in the light of a knock-down argument, perfectly convincing in its nature, but it is the custom for those who hold a fruitless contention in argument, to end the affair the next opportunity, by a contention in physical strength, after which the one who is beaten seldom presumes to intrude his opinion again on the other, at least not upon the same subject. Hala Api Api therefore challenged Talo on the spot. For a long time the contest

\* An offering to the god of weather, beginning at the time when the yams are full grown, and is performed every tenth day for eighty days.

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was doubtful; both well made, both men of great strength: at length, however, it was the fate of Talo to fall, and thus the contest ended. The fallen chief, chagrined at this event, could not allow, in his own mind, that his antagonist had overcome him by superior strength, but rather owing to an accidental slip of his own foot; and consequently resolved to enter the lists with him again at some future and favourable opportunity. This occasion of the ceremony of *tow tow* presenting itself, Talo left his companions and seated himself immediately opposite Hala Api Api; a conduct which plainly indicated his wish that the latter in particular should engage with him: a conduct, too, which, though sometimes adopted, is generally considered indicative of a quarrelsome disposition, because the challenge ought not to be made to one in particular, but to any individual among those of a different place or party who chooses to accept it. As soon as Hali Api Api and his friends perceived this, it was agreed among them that he alone should oppose him. In a short time Talo arose and advanced; Hala Api Api immediately closed with him and threw him, with a severe fall. At this moment the shouts of the people so exasperated Talo, (for he had made sure in his own mind of gaining a victory) that, on the impulse of passion, he struck his antagonist, whilst



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rising off him, a violent blow in the face; on which Hala Api Api threw himself in a posture of defence and demanded if he wished to box with him: Talo, without returning an answer, snatched a *tocco tocco*\*, and would evidently have run him through the body if he had not been withheld. Hala Api Api, with a nobleness of spirit worthy of admiration, seemed to take no notice of this, but smiling returned to his seat amid the acclamations of the whole assembly. All applauded his greatness of soul, as conspicuous now as on other occasions; Finow in particular shewed signs of much satisfaction, and in the evening, when he was drinking cava with the matabooles, whilst this noble chief had the honour to wait on them, the king addressed himself to him, returning thanks for the presence of mind which he had proved, and his coolness of temper; which conduct had placed his superiority and bravery in a far more splendid light than if he had given way to resentment: and as to his retiring, without seeking farther to prolong the quarrel, he was convinced (he said) that he had in view nothing but the peace and happiness of the people, which would undoubtedly have been disturbed by an open rupture with a man who was at the head of so pow-

\* A spear about five feet long, used by them as a walking stick, but seldom employed in battle.

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erful a party. To this the young chief made only this reply: “*Co ho möóni ;*” \* and appeared overcome by a noble modesty, at being so much praised (contrary to custom) before so large an assembly.

In the mean while, Talo, conscious of his error, and ashamed to appear in public, retired to one of his plantations called *Mótë*; whilst Hala Api Api, imagining what must be the distress of his feelings, resolved upon a reconciliation, and having intimated this to his men, he desired them to go armed, in case any misunderstanding should accidentally arise. Accordingly, one morning he and his men left the *mooa*, after having given out that he was going up the country to kill some hogs of his that were running wild: this he did lest the circumstance of his men being armed should give rise to false and dangerous suspicions respecting his intention; and, at the same time, he invited several of Finow’s men to come and partake of the feast. As soon as they had left the fortress, he imparted to them all his real intention to offer Talo his former friendship, and to assure him that he had forgotten the late affair. When they arrived near the plantation, Hala Api Api went on a short distance before, and on entering

\* Meaning literally, “it is your truth:”—that is, what you say is true.