

the climate, with its changes; the *flora* and *fauna*; the influence of Europeans for good or for evil on the natives: all such matters are treated in due detail, while the descriptions are never dull. The epistolary form of authorship, no doubt, has its own advantages, particularly with regard to the record of travel impressions. Anyhow, to Miss Gordon Cumming's letters may well be applied the epithets "fresh" and "natural." The book is very readable, as well as informing. Upon the subject of Missions, the chief test with a Christian critic, the traveller's testimony is clear; and most readers probably will say that it is candid. What she saw or heard on the spot, taking pains only to get at the truth, that she wrote home. Her witness, therefore—that of an acute and unbiassed observer—has weight.

From an introductory page we learn how it was that the cruise in the man of war came about. When, in the spring of 1875, Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon was appointed first Governor of Fiji, Miss Gordon Cumming was invited to form one of the party who accompanied Lady Gordon to those lovely isles. Two years slipped away, brimful of interest, and each month made her feel more "at home in Fiji." She was not unwilling, however, to see more of the islands of the great Ocean. In 1877 a French man of war, which had been placed at the service of a Roman Catholic Bishop, called at Fiji; and, recognizing her keen appreciation of scenery and love of sketching, the officers invited her to complete *le tour de la mission*. The invitation was again and again renewed; and so it came to pass that on Sept. 5, 1877, commenced a cruise which "proved one of the most delightful episodes in many years of travel."

The French vessel, the *Seignelay*, was commanded by Captain Aube, and the bishop on his diocesan voyage was Monseigneur Elloi. The officers, "a particularly gentleman-like set, pleasant, well-informed," were exceedingly kind; and all the people on board, in fact, from the officers and quartermaster down to Antoine, the Italian *maître d'hôtel*, did their best to make the English lady feel at home. A charming little cabin was assigned to her—full of natty contrivances to make the most of space, with a bookcase containing a very nice selection of French and English books. Life on the *Seignelay* seemed that of "a happy family:" the relations of the officers with their fine old captain were "those of cordial sons with their father." At evening tea, a ceremony instituted specially out of respect to the supposed habits of their guest, six or eight of the officers were generally present.

They first made for the Friendly Islands; and in a letter, dated "Off Tongatabu, Sept. 7, 1877," we read:—

We are now about 250 miles east of Fiji, and sighted land this afternoon; we have just anchored off Tonga, which certainly compares unfavourably with our beautiful Fijian Isles. This is the dullest, flattest land I have yet seen—a low shore, fringed with long lines of cocoa palm, which, seen from the sea, are singularly monotonous. The king's town, Nukualofa, consists of a long row of more or less ugly villas, stores, and barracks, built of wood and painted white: one is bright green. The houses are roofed with zinc or shingle, and the general effect is that of a new English watering-place. King George's palace is a rather handsome wooden building, like an hotel, and is reserved for his guests. The Government offices occupy another wooden building; and just beyond them is the printing-office, in which a few books, a magazine, and an almanack, are printed in the native tongue; a large Wesleyan church, painted white, and with a very small steeple, stands on a green hill on the site of an old fortification, and close to it is the house of Mr. Baker, Wesleyan missionary.

About a mile and a half along the shore is another village called Maofanga, where there is another Wesleyan church, but it is chiefly a Roman Catholic settlement; and near a neat thatched chapel of the true Tongan type, I see a long pleasant-looking bungalow, which I am told is a convent, the home of a society of French Sisters. To-morrow morning I hope to go ashore and see everything.

The shore-reef is so wide, it appears, that at low tide there is a broad expanse of slimy mud and sharp coral; so it was with some difficulty a landing was effected. On the king's house floated the flag of Tonga—red, with a white cross on one corner. King George, with a guard of 200 men, waited for a formal visit from Captain Aube and the bishop: twenty-one guns were fired from the ship, and the same salute was returned. For ourselves, writes Miss Gordon Cumming:—

we naturally made for the highest point of this very flat town—namely, the Wesleyan Church, which, although it only stands about fifty feet above the sea, commands a good bird's-eye view of its surroundings—thatched roofs just seen through luxuriant bread-fruit trees, cocoa-palms, and large-leaved bananas, with scarlet hybiscus and rosy oleanders, to give an occasional touch of colour.

Close to the church is the grave of the commander of an English man of war, who, forty years ago, allowed his valour to overcome his discretion, and himself led an armed force to assist the present King George in asserting his claim to the throne. In charging a stockade he and several of his men were killed, and an English gun was captured, which still lies at the village of Bea, about four miles from here. Another very sad memory clings to this place—namely, that of the barbarous massacre, in the year 1799, of three of the very first missionaries who ever landed in the South Pacific. A party of ten men were sent to Tonga in 1796 by the London Mission; and for three years they contrived to hold their ground, till, on the breaking out of a civil war, three of their number were murdered, and the

others were compelled to fly and conceal themselves as best they could. On this occasion, as on almost every other when the lives of Christian teachers have been sacrificed, the action of the savages was distinctly due to the influence of wicked white men. The culprit at Tonga was an escaped English convict, who, having won the ear of the king, persuaded him that these men were wizards, and that an epidemic which was then raging was due to their malignant sorceries. So, at the bidding of this scoundrel, the poor savages murdered their true friends. That any should have escaped was due to the most providential and unlooked-for arrival of a ship captured in the Spanish war, and brought to Tahiti—whence a member of that mission undertook to navigate her to New South Wales, on condition she might call at Tongatabu, to see how it fared with his brethren in the Friendly Isles. Thus happily were the survivors rescued, and the missions abandoned, till the Wesleyans ventured to re-occupy the dangerous ground, with what success we well know, seeing that to the aid given by their Tongan converts was due much of their wonderful progress in Fiji. On the green hill of Nukualofa are the graves of those early martyrs, shadowed by dark mournful casuarina trees. Leaving the church, on the little grassy hill, we descended to the dead level, and passed long rows of thatched houses embowered in flowering shrubs, with banana and pine-apple gardens. These are the homes of the mission students and their families, all very tidy, and with well-kept grass paths, and green lawn all round.

All the native houses in Tonga are oval in form, having both ends rounded. They have the same deep thatch as the Fijian houses, generally of reeds or wild sugar-cane. The walls are of plaited cocoa palm leaves or reeds interlaced; and the floors are strewn with dried grass, except in the wealthier houses, where there are mats. The cooking is generally done in a hut by itself, built over an oven in the ground; but many ovens are *al fresco*, and the daily yams, or the pig of high festivals, are baked quite in public. There are a number of horses, descendants of those left by Captain Cook, A.D. 1777. The roads are kept in good order. King George is too wise to waste the labour of his subjects; so instead of useless stone-drill or treadmill, all Tonga criminals labour for the commonwealth.

During her stay at Tonga, Miss Gordon Cumming was the guest of some French Sisters in the Maofanga Cottage Convent. At high mass in the large native church, "the better to impress the native mind," all the French sailors were paraded; and the officers, dressed in full uniform, were ranged in a semi-circle inside the altar rails. The priests wore "richly brocaded vestments," and the bishop's adornments were really splendid. "I confess," wrote the Protestant visitor—"I confess that to my irreverent eyes the preponderance of yellow and scarlet, and a good many other things besides, forcibly recalled the last gorgeous ritualistic services I had witnessed in many Buddhist

temples in Ceylon and on the borders of Thibet." For all the foreigners present chairs were provided; but the natives, as is the custom in this island with Roman Catholics, sat on mats or on the polished wooden floor.¹

These people, like most kindred races when brought in contact with civilization, are fast dying out. There are now only about 9,000 on the Tonga group, 5,000 on Happai, and 5,000 in the Vavau district. They are a fine well-built race, with clear yellowish-brown skin, and features like those of an average good-looking European. The King is a very fine old man, in height about 6 ft. 2 in. At the villa-palace, on one occasion, the King could not be seen; he was in council with his chiefs over church matters:—

Hearing of the great assembly of the chiefs to discuss the affairs of the Wesleyan Church [writes the visitor] brought back vividly to my mind all that I had heard in former days of this very King George, and of the prominent part taken by him in rousing these islanders to abandon their gross heathenism and cannibalism. So effectual has been his work, that now not one trace of these old evils remains, and these islanders are looked upon as old-established Christians.

On Sept. 12 the *Seignelay* sailed away from Tonga. Passing through the Happai group, they reached Neiafu, in Vavau, on the third day. Here, as elsewhere throughout the Friendly Isles, the Wesleyan Mission flourishes. In the three groups it has 125 chapels, with an average attendance of 19,000 persons, of whom 8,000 are "members." Four white missionaries superintend the work of thirteen native ministers, about 100 schoolmasters, and 150 local preachers. At the Theological College there are about 100 students. In Tonga there are no orange trees; but the district of Neiafu is one orange-grove.² Mr. Fox, the Wesleyan missionary, escorted the English lady to the summit of a hill, commanding a view of the intersected land and water:

¹ The Protestants have abandoned the Tongan custom. Miss Gordon Cumming writes:—"In the Wesleyan churches, which are here built as much as possible on ugly foreign models, regular benches are the rule. I trust it will be long ere our simple and suitable churches in Fiji are replaced by buildings of that sort." Again, as to European cloth and garments of unsuitable shape, she writes:—"Is it not strange that this admirable mission, which has done such magnificent work in these isles, cannot be content to allow its Tongan converts the same liberty in outer matters as its wise representatives in Fiji allow their congregations?"

² It is the part of true hospitality to peel oranges for a guest, as their thick green skins contain so much essential oil, that the mere act of removing them makes the hands very oily and uncomfortable. Woe betide the rash and thirsty stranger who puts the green fruit to his lips to suck it, as he might a golden orange in Europe! A burning pain and almost blistered lips will teach him his mistake.

natives from the mission had made an early start, and breakfast was prepared on the hill top. The islands are densely wooded; at intervals along the shore villages nestle among the trees, One small island has lately been ceded to the Germans as a coaling station.

On the 16th the *Seignelay* was steaming along for Tutuila, in the Samoan Islands. The next English letter begins thus:—

Sept. 19.—We have had a long delightful day, and I am tolerably tired; but before taking to my mat, I must give you some notion of what I have seen. All the early morning the ship was surrounded by canoes full of natives, offering clubs, native cloth, and baskets for sale. Some of the canoes had ornamental prows, with carved birds, &c. After breakfast I went ashore. . . . We were invited to enter several houses, which are much more open, and less like homes, than those in Tonga and Fiji. But the people are all in a ferment, for, as usual in poor Samoa, this is only a lull in the course of incessant tribal war.¹ They are noble-looking men, the fairest race in Polynesia, and truly dignified in their bearing.

The coast here is rugged, caved with volcanic rocks; the breakers are heavy. Miss Gordon Cumming, in a boating expedition of twelve miles, had ample reason to recall regretfully the smoothness of the Fijian shores. Not a single place was seen where it would have been safe to land. With ten stout rowers in their boat progress was slow; the spray was serious; so much water was shipped, in fact, that two men were told off to bale incessantly. Even at the town, it appears, there is only a narrow break in the rocks, where landing is tolerably safe in fine weather.

When the Samoan Isles were first discovered, an indigenous dog was found in the mountains—a small, dark grey animal, with a long back, and short crooked legs. It fed on bread-fruit and yams, having no other animal on which to prey except a little native rat. The natives naturally considered both dog and rat dainty dishes for high days. On some of the islands there was a native breed of pigs. These three—the only indigenous quadrupeds—are now extinct.²

From Tutuila the "French man of war" sailed for Upolu, on which is situated Apia, the capital. Upolu, like Savai and Tutuila, the principal isles of the group called Samoa (or the Navigator's) is very beautiful—richly wooded, with high moun-

¹ Some Samoan chiefs had made a voyage to Sir Arthur Gordon at Fiji, to claim a protectorate from England. The protectorate was not granted; but Sir Arthur received them with kind courtesy, and gave them good advice.

² The aboriginal Samoan *Manu-mea* (*Didunculus strigirostris*) a little kind of dodo, or tooth-billed pigeon, is very rare. The introduction of cats and foreign rats has driven it into the recesses of the forests. The body resembles a pigeon, but its head and beak are those of a parrot.

tain ranges. Apia, the chief town, consists of about 200 houses and stores; German, English, and American Consulates, a Roman Catholic Cathedral, and a Congregational Chapel. Our author's first visit was to Dr. and Mrs. Turner, of the London Medical Mission,¹ in connection with a Training College. She stayed in the house of Mr. Liardet, H.B.M.'s Consul, whose wife was an old friend. The state of affairs in the island was critical: unscrupulous whites, jealous of each other's trade, fanned the flames of discord. Inter-tribal disputes were fostered; while arms and ammunition were liberally supplied to the combatants. One firm, Godeffroy of Hamburg, in a thoroughly anti-Christian spirit, opposed itself to all efforts for the improvement of the natives. They absorbed a large portion of the Pacific traffic;² and to their agents was given this direction:—"Never assist missionaries by word or deed; but wheresoever you may find them, use your best influence with the natives to obstruct and exclude them." This was a plain acknowledgment of the principles which animate a large section of the mercantile communities in all quarters of the earth:—

In every case [writes Miss Gordon Cumming] the opposition seems due to the same cause—a covert hatred to the teaching which discountenances immorality of all sorts, including that of exchanging bad goods at fictitious prices for useful products. It matters little whether blue beads and muskets, or opium (with a background of English artillery) be the goods to be disposed of; the principles involved, and the consequent antagonism to every agency for good, are necessarily the same.

It is unfortunately only too notorious that wherever . . . the natives have derived their first impressions of civilization from traders, they have invariably deteriorated. On the other hand, throughout Polynesia, the missionaries were the first to occupy the field, where traders dared not venture, and in every case they so tamed the fierce savages that commerce naturally followed in their wake. Yet even here no debt of gratitude is considered due to the successors of those early pioneers, and the antagonism of the traders to the missionaries is unfortunately notorious.

As to the influence of Christianity in Samoa, distracted as that island is, one noteworthy fact may be mentioned. On the Lord's day the belligerents, by common consent, abstain from

¹ Founded by the elder Dr. Turner in the year 1844. Fully 2,000 teachers have been trained, including a number of men from far distant Papuan isles—from the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, the Tokelau and Savage Isles. "It is difficult to imagine a healthier, happier life," we read, "than that of these students."

² Shortly after Miss Gordon Cumming's letter was written this huge mercantile house failed for one million sterling.

fighting; missionaries and teachers pass freely in and out of their camps, while in the religious services all join.

We remember hearing Bishop Wilberforce, at the time of the visit to England of Queen Emma of the Sandwich Isles, make a remark concerning a rather ornate service as specially suitable for the converted islanders of the Pacific. The dignity of "Anglican" ceremonial, said the bishop, would be more likely to attract, and to satisfy them, than the simple services of American¹ or English Congregationalism. Miss Gordon Cumming, we observe, is not of this opinion. "The majority of the people in the Sandwich Isles (as throughout Polynesia)," she writes, "find the less ceremonious forms of religious observance better adapted to their needs." Her sketch of the Samoan Mission is interesting in the extreme; and she does full justice to the tact, self-denial, and prayerful patient labour of the Missionaries of the London Mission and the great Wesleyan Society. While there are some 35,000 Protestants, the Roman Catholics number 5,000. Many of the Samoan Christians have become zealous missionaries.

On the first of October the English lady returned to her cabin on board the French man of war, and Tahiti was reached on the seventh. The 1,700 miles were done in a week.² They entered Papeete harbour in a howling storm; everything looked dismal. The dreary grey day was in keeping with the sad news which the pilot brought: Queen Pomare was dead.

Miss Gordon Cumming was most hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Green, of the London Mission. Their "lovely home, just out of the town, and close to the Consulate—a delightful nest, embowered in mango and bread-fruit trees, with oleanders and hibiscus to lend colour to the whole—was separated from the sea by a pleasant garden." From the representatives of the French Protestant Mission the traveller also received a cordial welcome. One *pasteur*, M. Vernier, had been a student friend of Lord Lorne's at Geneva (under Merle d'Aubigné); and it must have been a goodly sight for Scottish eyes, under a Tahitian roof, to see photographs of Inverary. On another occasion, paying a visit to Mrs. Brander, the traveller found out that *la Maison Brandère* was, in fact, a link with a Scottish neighbour.³ At Mrs. Brander's town-house, on

¹ *Micronesia*, the small low islands, in the N.W. Pacific, American. *Melanesia*, S. Western Isles, Church of England and Presbyterian. *Polynesia*, groups in the S.E. Pacific, London and Wesleyan.

² The total distance travelled in the steamer from Fiji to Tahiti, including trips from isle to isle, was 2,985 miles.

³ Mr. Brander, a half brother of Lady Dunbar Brander, in his early youth left Elgin for the South Seas. He married a Tahitian lady, and as an enterprising merchant and shipowner amassed a gigantic fortune.

one occasion, the traveller met a very delightful old lady, Mrs. Simpson, a true "mother in Israel," widow of one of the early missionaries.

The Romanist Mission in Fiji has had large aid and encouragement from the French Government. Nevertheless, out of the 8,000 native population, it appears, 300 nominal adherents is the maximum which the Romanists themselves have ever claimed; 50 is said to be nearer the mark. The English missionaries, it must be borne in mind, were subjected to very oppressive regulations when the French Protectorate was established in 1843. At that time the people were all Christians, and still in the fervour of first love; but that love has sadly faded under French influence, and from the influx of "infidel, or, at the best, wholly indifferent foreigners." (See vol. ii. p. 192.)

Without further extract, we must take our leave of these extremely interesting volumes. To our notice, however, it must be added, that they are printed in large, clear type; there are several delightful illustrations, and the map is good.

ART. IV.—THE IRISH QUESTION.

THE pacification of Ireland is the great political problem of the day. In the conflict of opinion between rival parties it is not by any means an easy task to unravel that tangled web which hitherto has tried the temper of the coolest heads, and baffled the ingenuity of the profoundest thinkers of the age. During the last Session of Parliament the Irish Question occupied the closest and the most careful attention of both Houses of the Legislature, to the exclusion of almost every other topic of home or foreign policy. And yet, judging from the present state of things, we seem as far off as ever from solving the great national controversy as to the best mode of restoring peace, prosperity, and contentment to the Irish people.

It is hardly necessary to observe that there exists a great diversity of opinion as to the origin of the present embroglio. The concerns of Irish political life are so varied and entangled, and subject to such rapid and complicated changes, that even the most experienced statesmen cannot easily devise rules to legislate for them all. How much more troublesome, then, must it be for ordinary Englishmen clearly to comprehend a subject involved in such intricacy and confusion! There are some who attribute this unhappy state of things to political, and others to ecclesiastical, causes. Others, again, think that it