

It is usually long and narrow, of a pale yellow or dark red color, with a yellow or slightly pink farinaceous flesh. The best sorts surpass the finest pear in excellence of flavor, according to the taste of some. They are eaten raw, or may be baked, stewed or boiled according to fancy. The leaves of the banana is put to various uses by the natives. One leaf can in a few minutes readily be fashioned into at least half a dozen drinking cups; while by gently heating an entire leaf over a slow fire, through which it is rendered at once pliable and tough, wrappers can be made to bake fowls so as to retain their gravy, or in which even fish-soups can be cooked without any loss of the liquid.

The Rev. Thomas West writes that he frequently saw a banana leaf bag, containing a gallon or more of cocoa-nut oil, that had been carried safely for many miles. Portions of the juicy stem of the tree are generally brought, at the conclusion of a meal to be used by the guests, instead of soap and water, in cleaning their fingers, after these have performed the duties of knife and fork. It does this very effectively when well shredded, by rubbing between the hands. In the Hawaiian Islands, where water is more plentiful, the natives pass around a bowl or pan of water in which they wash their hands both before and after meals.

The soil of the low islands of the Tongan Archipelago is composed of a rich black mould with more or less of admixture with sand, according to the distance from the sea. Such is the natural fertility of the land, and such the rapidity with which vegetation grows and decays, under these tropical skies, that the natives never think of employing artificial means to improve the soil. All the land is owned by the king or chiefs and is never sold to either natives or whites. The whites lease their lands from the government; and every male native, after reaching the age of 14 years, can obtain land for cultivation and use it as long as he likes free of charge but he pays taxes. He cannot become the owner. If a man, either single or married, desires to move to another locality, he can, upon application to the "bulekolo," or local official, obtain land for his use in such locality. Thus, there can be no speculation in lands in Tonga; and this is therefore no field of operation for American real-estate boomers. Though a law thus prohibiting the permanent alienation of land from the government would be extremely obnoxious in a white man's country, it seems to operate well in Tonga. The lands are preserved and retained for the benefit of the natives as the original owners, and does not, as in the case in Samoa and Hawaii, pass into the hands of white speculators.

All the best islands belonging to the Tongan kingdom contain trees which yield good timber for building purposes, especially native houses; but both in variety and quantity the supply is limited. The natives seem to take no pains to increase the stock of timber yielding trees. The best and largest trees are used in the construction of canoes. Babaos, the smallest class of paddling canoes, are always cut out of single trees. Talaagas, the beautiful and swift canoes that are used in fishing, and also the hamatefuas, or sailing canoes, having only a single hull and large outrigger are all built of planking

in the same style as the large kalias. These two classes of canoes involve a great waste of valuable wood, as only two or three planks can be obtained from a single tree. Timbers for the erection of such frame dwellings as the whites occupy are imported from New Zealand.

A Tongan house suits the few necessities and easy habits of the people that has none of the comforts considered assented to a higher type of civilization. With the exception of the dwellings of the chiefs of higher rank and the public native buildings, their dimensions are small, and they contain but one or two apartments. They are, however, constructed with an eye to neatness and great strength. Maui when elaborately finished in the best native style, their interior appearance is by no means to be despised. But they are much smaller than the houses of the Fijians. The walls range from four to eight feet in height, and are formed either of a single or double fencing of reeds, which when interlaced and bound by sinnet to the tokotuns, or stakes and posts, planted all around the eaves of the building, resembles very much strong basket work. These walls are sometimes made more wind and water tight by the addition of a lining of plaited cocoa-nut leaves; but, at the best, they afford a sorry resistance to strong winds or heavy rains. On the other hand there is capital ventilation. To compensate for the lowness of the walls the roof of a Tongan house is carried to a considerable height. The rafters are closely set, and are generally made of the outer wood of the cocoa-nut tree, or the bread-fruit tree, the latter of which has much the appearance of cedar wood and has a very pleasing and beautiful effect when nicely finished. The large beams to which the rafters are attached are laid along the grooved tops of high and durable posts which reach about half way up the entire height of roof. The inner ridge pole is usually ornamented by a profusion of sinnet wrappers of varied colors and geometrically interlaced. The roof itself is covered with a thick thatch made from the leaves of cocoa nut tree, the sugar cane or of the bamboo, and is perfectly water-tight. A well built house will last a good many years, but the thatching requires to be renewed, under the most favorable circumstances, about once in five years. The floor is laid with a profusion of dried leaves, which are in turn covered over with numbers of mats made from the cocoa-nut leaf, upon which again the finer sitting and sleeping mats are placed. No provision is made in the interior of either native or white man's house for cooking conveniences. A separate building contains the kitchen requisites, and the heat of the climate renders a fireplace in the dwelling house unnecessary. The length of an average native dwelling house is 20 feet by 10 feet in width. The ends of the houses are always circular in form. Even the more modern houses built of imported lumber are built with rounded ends. Some of the modern houses are supplied with windows which are lacking in the older dwellings.

ANDREW JENSON.

MUA, Tongatabu, Tonga, Aug. 26, 1895.

Mrs. Mary Johnson, of Oakland, Cal., fell backwards off a porch on Sunday night, a distance of ten feet, breaking her neck.

Written for this Paper.

THE BOY HUNTER IN THE U. S. SENATE

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 5th, 1895.



AS A BOY I HAD two ambitions. One was to be a lawyer and the other was to be a member of the United States Senate.

These were the words of Mr. John M. Thurston, the man who takes Gen. Manderson's place at Washington this week as the new Senator from Nebraska. They were uttered last night during a long chat which I had with him in his rooms at the Arlington Hotel. I had asked him a number of questions about his life and he had told me how starting as a poor boy he had worked his way up the ladder of fame and fortune. He is now, you know, one of the most prominent men of the west. For years he has been one of the greatest of our lawyers. His legal income has run into the tens of thousands of dollars a year, and he has for years been the chief counsel of the Union Pacific railroad. His first ambition was long since attained. He has now for the first time realized his second ambition, as the representative of one of our greatest states in the United States Senate.

Before I give you the story of his life as he told it to me let me describe his looks. Picture to yourself a slender, studious-looking man of about six feet. Let him be well dressed and well groomed. His black silk hat is of the latest block. His prince albert coat was evidently cut by a Broadway tailor and his pantaloons show a decided crease. His hair is as black as his polished boots. It is cut long, and is combed rather carefully across his scalp above a high, full forehead, with just a suspicion of baldness. Let this man have eyes of the deepest blue and let his long, thin face be intellectual in its cast. Let his complexion be dark and rosy, and let the face make you think more of a college professor than of a great lawyer and of the chief representative of the politicians of one of the liveliest and roughest states of the Union, and you have a fairly good idea of John M. Thurston, the new United States Senator from Nebraska. If you could chat with him you would find him a man of much personal magnetism. He has a melodious voice and a good, healthy laugh. He talks freely and he tells a good story. He is a man of ideas, and after he has passed through the apprenticeship which the older Senators make all young men undergo before they are permitted to do much in the Senate chamber he will probably show himself to be one of the ablest and most influential men of that body.

I asked Senator Thurston to tell me something about his ancestry, and especially as to where the name Thurston came from.

He replied: "I don't care much about genealogy. I think it is more important to know what a man is than what his ancestors have been. As for Thurston, the name is Scandinavian. It originally meant Thors-stein, which, translated, is, I believe, the son of Thor. My ances-