

A quarter of a mile's wade brought us to shore, where we were confronted by a band of well armed warriors. They however soon showed themselves friendly and were anxious to greet us. We learned that they were standing guard lest their enemy, some adjacent islanders, enter their harbor unawares. After drinking "ava" with them, a friendly demonstration, and after answering many questions concerning the Gospel, our business here, etc., we were given some mats for beds and bamboo benches for pillows and we were soon wandering in the land of dreams.

Next day we procured the village house and upon ringing the "pate" about fifty persons assembled and listened to the first sermon ever preached by the Latter-day Saints on these islands. At the close of the services many came forward with questions and the people at once manifested an interest in the message we bore. Meetings were held almost daily on this or the adjacent island and our listeners often exceeded 150 in number. Many expressed a desire of identifying themselves with us but laws have long been enacted here prohibiting the people from embracing any other doctrines than those of the London Mission Society. An old minister assisted materially in presenting the truth to his people by preaching against us, thereby keeping the people interested and continually running backward and forward with questions. On Sunday he delivered a sermon endeavoring to prove the necessity of infant baptism. After quoting concerning the jailor and his family, Stephanas and his family, he exultingly exclaimed, "Now where is there a family with no infants?" He was apparently unconscious of the fact that there are so many families even here not blessed with offspring that the population of Samoa has dwindled from 50,000 to 30,000 in 50 years. In the case of the jailor's family he had apparently failed to read the next verse which states that he and all of his household rejoiced and believed in God, and Paul's statement to the effect that Stephanas and family had given themselves to the ministry of the Saints. The exercise of faith, joy in the Gospel and ministering to the Saints is beyond the power of infants, therefore we conclude that the members of the true families mentioned had reached maturity. At any rate it is a gross error to found such a sacred ordinance on mere presumption and that too in spite of the fact that we are repeatedly told in the Bible that baptism is for the remission of sins, and who dare say that an infant hath sins?

We called on Palega, whom the natives said was by far the oldest man on this group of islands, he having been a grown man when the Christian doctrines were first introduced here sixty five years ago. His exact age we could not ascertain, as natives keep no account of such things. From Palega we learned that they were cannibals some 65 years ago, he himself having eaten human flesh which he pronounced very palatable, greatly resembling beef. He said however, that those persons whom he had eaten were not slain for table use, but lost their lives in battle and that they ate only the slain of the enemy. In the days of his youth this people were idolaters, worshipping dogs, cats, eels, fish and even rocks and trees. These were mediums through which they worshipped spirits. Each family

had its own spirit to worship. Family spirits were inferior and in a way subject to the village ghost, which in turn was inferior to the great spirit or good "Tagaloa." Sharp stones, shells, etc., were the only implements for cutting known to him in his youthful days in barbering and the hair was often burned off for want of a better method. Huge trees were felled and shaped into canoes, with stone hatchets, a feat which seems almost incredible.

On the 26th, the wind changed and we once more put forth to sea and our craft was driven back to Futuila, whereupon President J. W. Beck and Elder J. B. Barton boarded a schooner for Upolu. On Christmas day Elders C. A. Alleman, A. Jensen, F. Cluff, L. Horn, A. Olsen, J. Conley and myself were gathered around a Christmas dinner at the residence of Jas. Mackie, a most hospitable brother and our true friend, when of a sudden the dishes began dancing about, the house creaking and the earth reeling to and fro. This continued for about two minutes and although the rocking was quite severe no damage was done except that a few lamps were broken. Another shock was felt on the 26th, but it was less severe. An earthquake shock is accompanied with a peculiar sensation. I almost imagined we were seated on an old worn out car flying over an extremely rough road at an unusual rate of speed.

ORLANDO BARRUS.

### SAILING IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

ISLAND OF ARUTUA, Tuamotu Islands, South Seas, November 28th, 1895.

An account of travels in the South Seas, and an occasional letter from missionaries who are here, may prove interesting to some of the readers of the News, hence these few lines.

The Tuamotus are somewhat out of the way of the world, and very few readers of the News know much about them. When I tell you that there are forty-seven inhabited islands in the group, and that there are not more than four or five thousand inhabitants on the whole group, you can have some idea of how scattered they are, and how much traveling it takes to visit them in their isolated condition. In our travels we do not have the privilege of riding on finely furnished ocean steamers, such things would be a curiosity to most of the islanders of this group, but we feel thankful to get the chance of riding on sail boats, twenty-five or thirty feet long. Some of the islands are three or four hundred miles apart, and it takes, at times, two weeks to get from one place to the other.

This month Brother Despain and myself made a trip from the island of Faite to this island, a distance of one hundred and eighteen miles. We left there on the 8th ult., and arrived here on the 21st., of course we were not on the water all this time. In a country where steamboats ply to and fro, one could have made this trip easily in twenty-four hours, but as it is, we have to depend on the wind to take us to our destination, and then wait until a good day comes, as our little crafts will not stand to battle with the storms that arise. Leaving Faite in the morning, we sailed, or rather drifted, until evening, when we stopped at the village of Tetamanu, Fakarava, having come twelve miles. There were eighteen of

us on a boat twenty-nine feet long, and the sun beat down upon us as it only can in a tropical clime. The next day we came to the other village, Potoava, of the same island, distance, thirty-two miles, and it being Saturday we stopped there for Sunday and held meeting with the Saints. Monday morning a storm had arisen, the wind blowing strongly and the rain descending, so we dared not venture out to sea on our small boat. We were kept there until Thursday, when we again set sail, but as a calm always comes after a storm, we did not sail far. Arriving at the pass, the current was coming in, and there being no wind behind us, we could do nothing save anchor on the side, and wait until the current changed. While our boat was at anchor, the natives speared some fish, which served us for our dinner. In the afternoon anchor was heaved, the main and fore-sails were hoisted and we sailed slowly out of the pass. That night and by noon the next day, we had come fifteen miles and had arrived at the island of Toau (an uninhabited isle) where we stopped, caught some fish, and had a night's rest on terra firma. Saturday morning we again sailed for the island of Apataki, and arrived there on the day following. (Sunday) at noon, having sailed thirty miles. Monday and Tuesday adverse winds were blowing, and as the natives said we could not get in the pass at Arutua, we stayed at Apataki until the day following, Wednesday, when we sailed for Arutua and arrived here the day following, on the 21st, having been thirteen days getting to our destination, and having only come one hundred and eighteen miles. Our trip was long, and about the only things noted were calms and extreme heat, of which we had plenty. This account is written so that readers of the News may know that missionaries laboring on this group do not ride on steamers, railroad cars, or even on the backs of mules and horses.

There are, perhaps, three or four hundred people here now on this island, who have about forty boats which carry them from rock to rock in their diving for pearl-shell. They go inside the lagoon on Mondays, and return on Saturdays to the village where we hold meetings on Sundays. The success that the natives have, of course, depends upon how good divers they are, some being able to dive fifty and sixty feet, while others go eighty, ninety, and a hundred feet.

The question may arise, how can they tell where the shell is? They manage this by having a glass to see through, taking a pane of common glass, say 12x12 and putting it in a box frame about the size of a soap box. The glass rests upon the surface of the water, with frame up, and on the side there is a rounded place which fits the neck. The observer then with his arms around the box can gaze down into the briny deep and it is wonderful how clear things appear. My former companion and I once had the privilege of going with some of the natives and seeing them dive. We availed ourselves of the opportunity, took a box, and had a look down into the deep. Its beauties are as pleasant to the eye to behold, as are many of the beauties of nature on land. The many-colored rocks, with the pretty fish of different colors and sizes, was a grand sight to behold.

Too natives sell their shell for seventy