

breakfast between nine and ten in the morning and dinner between four and five in the afternoon. They have bread-fruit about six months in a year; occasionally they also eat sweet potatoes and fish. Bananas are also plentiful. For a cheap and easy living Tonga stands ahead of any locality and country that I have ever visited. In fact people could subsist for months on what nature herself provides for the inhabitants, without any exertion on their part except to pick fruit and eat. And this naturally makes the natives of the Tongan Islands the most independent people imaginable. That this has a tendency to make them lazy and indolent is but natural. The average Tongan is not supposed to work more than about one day per week.

The lot upon which the mission house stands is four chains (sixteen rods) deep and three chains and sixty-five links (fourteen and three-fifths rods) wide. The southeast side faces the government road and the opposite side the sea beach, or rather the lagoon shore. Through them is a narrow strip of government land intervening, reserved for beach purposes. The house stands back from the road about five and a half rods, and one and a half rods in from the northeast line. The distance from the house to the boat landing is about twenty rods. On the three sides of the premises are beautiful cocoa-nut groves, and the one immediately in front of the house, across the government road is particularly pleasing to the eye, though it shuts off the inland view entirely. The view to the northwest is toward and over the lagoon, which at the point is about one mile across. The wooded island and peninsula on the other side with their tall cocoa-nut trees rising high above the thick foliage which reaches clear down to the water's edge, presents a very fine landscape. Taking it altogether I think the Tongan mission house is a very good sample of a tropical home. The house itself with its broad verandas and all its surroundings certainly entitles it to that distinction. The lot is not fenced. There is a native home standing just seven rods northeast of the mission house, occupied by what could consistently be termed a sample native family. They are quite neighborly and kind to the missionaries and occasionally attend meeting, but as they belong to the Wesleyan denomination they do not feel at liberty to adopt the religion of their neighbors.

The Elders are supposed to spend most of their time out among the natives in their respective villages; but it is often hard to get food and lodgings, hence the mission house is naturally made more attractive than it otherwise would be the case, and especially for the new Elders who are learning the language, and who, until they can speak it, would not fare well among the natives.

The young Elders when at their mission headquarters are by no means idling away their time. They are studying hard to learn the language and to post themselves in regard to the principles of the Gospel; and their hearts are in the work before them, and it would be unjust to ascribe the little success attending their labors so far in Tonga to any lack of energy and earnestness on their part. The usual daily routine at the mission house is to rise about six o'clock in the morning, and have prayer at seven. Before prayer is offered a

chapter or two is read from the Tongan translation of the Bible, and a hymn sung, the same is repeated in the evening, prayer being offered at 8 p. m. Between breakfast and dinner, the only two meals taken, the brethren attend to their general labors. The evenings are usually devoted to some public duty or other. Thus Tuesday nights are devoted to testimony meetings, conducted in the Tongan language, and Thursday evenings to singing practices. The general meetings are held on Sundays, namely, at 9 a. m. and 3 p. m. In the evening a testimony meeting is held, the English language being used.

Mua, where the mission house is located, is the largest native village on Tongatabu. It is beautifully situated on the south side of the lagoon, and surrounded by cocoa-nut groves. It has a population of nearly one thousand. There are only six white men in the village, five of whom are traders. Three of them have families. By all these the Elders are treated with considerable kindness and consideration, and one of them at least is investigating the principles of the Gospel. There are five Church buildings in Mua, a Catholic and a regular Wesleyan. The Free Church meet in a native house, but is about to build a church. The Catholic priest is a white man—French; the other ministers are all natives. The island of Tongatabu contains about sixty native villages altogether, all of which have been visited repeatedly by our Elders, and meetings have been held in most of them. In September last E. Alonzo D. Merrill and Alfred M. Durham also visited the neighboring island of Eua and preached the Gospel there. That island has five villages and over three hundred inhabitants. The brethren named, during their visit, held one meeting and bore testimonies in every village.

The Tongan or Friendly Islands, lie about five hundred miles southeast of the Fiji Islands, and about the same distance south of Samoa. The distance from Nukualofa, the capital to Auckland, New Zealand is about one thousand miles, and to Sydney Australia, seven hundred miles. The islands are divided into three subgroups, by two wide channels. In the southern cluster lies Tongatabu, the largest island of the archipelago. They are surrounded by dangerous reefs. The natives belonging to the fair Polynesian race, compare favorably with other South-Sea Islanders in mental development, in the structure of their dwellings, and preparation of their implements, weapons, dress, etc., betraying considerable skill and dexterity. The islands are all low, consisting either of raised coral or volcanic deposits, and there are still several active volcanoes among them. Tufua, to the west of Haapai is always smoking; Late, southwest of Vavau, is also active occasionally, as is Amurgura, to the northwest; and there are several other extinct cones.

The Tongan dialect is harsher than the Samoan, and is supposed to have been influenced by contact and intermixture with the Fijians. The people have all been converted to some sort of Christianity many years ago, but, as in almost every other instance, they are diminishing in numbers. In 1847 the population was estimated by the missionaries at 40,000 or 50,000, which has now diminished to less than 20,000. The chief exports are cocoa-nuts, oranges,

bananas and pine apples; while ships obtain ample supplies of other vegetables. The people rank as first class boat-builders and sailors, visiting in times past all the adjacent groups in their fine canoes.

The foregoing is taken from an old geographical work; and the following is culled from the Rev. Thomas West's "Ten years in South Central Polynesia," an excellent work of 500 pages, published in London, England, in 1865. This and Wm. Mariner's "Tonga" written by John Martin and published in London in 1818, appear to be the best works ever published on the Friendly Islands. Nothing important has been issued from the press in regard to Tonga of late years, except some letters written by "The Vagabond" for the Melbourne Leader, which subsequently appeared in pamphlet form, entitled "Holy Tonga," but is said to be unreliable.

The Tongan Islands comprehend three principal and well defined groups. Fifteen of the islands rise to a considerable height; thirty-five are moderately elevated; and the rest are low. The three divisions are known as the Tongatabu, the Haapai and the Vavau Islands. The Tongatabu group contains Tonga, the chief and largest island, from which the group is named and which by way of distinction and eminence is most generally called Tongatabu, which means Tonga the Sacred. This island is about forty-five miles long and from seven to eight miles wide. It is situated between latitude 21° and 21° 20' south, and longitude 175° and 175° 20' west and contains Nakualofa, the capital of the kingdom of Tonga. Next in importance is Eua, situated about eleven miles southeast of Tongatabu. It is thirteen miles long by about six miles in breadth, and attains an elevation in some places of nearly six hundred feet. There are also about twenty small islands surrounding the two above named, of which Eueiki, Bagaimotu, Atata and Fafa are the largest. With the single exception of Eua, none of the Tongatabu group reach any considerable elevation.

The Haapai Islands are separated from the Tongatabu group by about thirty miles of clear sea at their nearest point, from whence they extend northward over a distance of seventy miles. The whole group is composed of fifty-seven islands, most of which are small, lying between latitude 19° 35' and 20° 45' south, and between longitude 174° 10' and 175° 10' west. A few only are inhabited. The whole group is intersected by alternate reefs and deep sea channels, which make the navigation both intricate and dangerous to strangers. The islands are all of low elevation with the exception of the volcanic islands of Tofua and Kao. In addition to the two islands named, Lufuka, Haano, Foa, Laiaga, Mougaoe, Uihā, Fonualoa, Uoleva, Otu-Tolu, Nomuka, Haaleva, Tugua and Fotuhā are the principal islands in the Haapai group. Between Tonga and Haapai there are also two high islands called Huga Toga and Huga Haapai. They lie about twenty miles to the westward of the usual course from the one group to the other, and they are separated from each other by a deep sea channel of about one and a half miles wide. They give clear evidences of volcanic origin, and are haunted by innumerable flocks of sea birds.

The Vavau group (also sometimes