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REPORT OF THE CRUISE OF H.M.S. CURACOA, COMMODORE SIR W. WISEMAN.

[FROM THE S. M. HERALD, OCTOBER 4.]

We sailed from Sydney, on the 4th June last, and made a good passage to Norfolk Island. We sighted Lord Howe Island on the 7th, and arrived at the former island on the 9th. The quondam Pitcairners received us with great hospitality. The Commodore returned their civility by permitting the band to be landed for their amusement, and by getting up a very fair ball two nights before our departure. The weather being very boisterous, we were detained here by the ship having suddenly to leave the roadstead and put to sea, many of the officers being on shore at the time. The ship having returned again on the 18th, we proceeded to sea, and met with foul winds for some days. Sighting Sunday Island, we at length arrived at Savage Island, from whence, after a short stay, we sailed for Pango Pango, a beautiful harbor in the Island of Tutuila, one of the Samoan Group. Here the natives performed their war dance on board, to the great amusement of all. Our next visit was to Apia, the capital of the Samoan Group, in the Island of Upolu, where we received great kindness from Mr Williams, H. M. Consul, and the European residents. After five days' stay we proceeded to Vavau, in the Friendly Islands, and remained there about two days. On the 17th July we arrived at Tonga-tabu, the capital of the Friendly Group, where the great King George (for he is a giant in stature) paid his respects to the Commodore, who received him with his yards manned, and other honors due to royalty. On leaving the ship the king was saluted with twenty-one guns. Leaving the Friendly Islands, we made for the Fiji Group, the first island we touched at being Ovalau; from thence we went to Mban, a small island in the Fiji Group.

Upon our arrival King Thakambau, with the principal chiefs of the island, visited the ship. On one occasion he was accompanied by the Queen, who was a wonderful woman in bulk and stature, a giantess in fact, calculated to take the first prize in any competitive exhibition of the relative proportions of the fair sex in any part of the world. Upon the king leaving the ship he was saluted with twenty-one guns. On the following day, when the Commodore returned his visit, Thakambau saluted him from his battery, consisting of four small guns, with which his lieg subjects were occupied fully half a day. Kanda-a, also in the Fiji Group, was next visited, after which we made for Aneiteum, an island in the New Hebrides Group, where we found H.M.S. Esk, with our English mail. We remained at Aneiteum four days, and sailed from thence to the island of Tanna, in the same group, accompanied by several missionaries in their schooner, the Day Spring. The day previous to our departure the Commodore, in consequence of the cruel treatment which British subjects had suffered from its cannibal inhabitants, conceived it to be his duty to shell the villages in the vicinity of the ship, and to land a force of small-arm men and marines to destroy their villages, canoes, and plantations; a just retribution for the barbarities they had committed, and a warning to them for the future. We had one seaman wounded, who was shot through the abdomen; he was taken on board and died shortly after. The exact number killed and wounded among the Tannese we are not able to ascertain, but we believe it must exceed twenty. The day after our departure, a party of natives, coming accidentally upon an unexploded

shell in the bush, were seized with a curiosity to see the contents of the brass percussion fuse; they squatted themselves round the shell and began to beat the fuse with a stone, when it suddenly exploded, killing six of them and wounding others. The next morning we sailed for Erromanga and anchored in Dillon's Bay, when the Commodore landed and visited the sandalwood station of Mr Henry, who he found had only just returned from Sydney. He also saw Mrs Henry, who informed him that during her husband's absence, the natives had besieged her castle, and had carried on a prolonged attack from the opposite side of the river, some thirty or forty yards in width, from whence they kept up a harassing fire on the station buildings. These brave islanders were, of course, aware of her husband's absence, and she bravely kept her ground, with the few retainers she had at command, against the barbarian anthropophagite hordes, until they raised the siege and fled to their mountain homes.

Viti Harbor, in Sandwich Island, was the next place we visited. From thence we proceeded to Havannah Harbor, another port in the same island. After a short stay, we sailed for Vanua Levu, an island in Bank's Group. Here we fell in with Bishop Patteson, of the Melanesian Mission, whom the Commodore had engaged to meet here in his schooner, the Southern Cross, and who afterwards kept in company with us until our departure from the Solomon Group. We then proceeded to Contrarieties Island, in the Solomon Group, passing through the Santa Cruz Group on our way. From

thence we went to Ugi, or Gulf Island, and, after visiting Recherche and Wano Bays, in the islands of San Christoval; Marau Sound, in Guadalcanar; Mboli Bay, in Florida Island; and St. George's Bay, Ysabel Island, all of the Solomon Group, we finally bade adieu to Bishop Patteson—who left for Curtis Island—and took our departure for Erromanga, where we arrived on the 25th September; the purport of our second visit being to ascertain whether the natives were disposed to be more amicably inclined to British residents in the island. In consequence of the ill-treatment to which British subjects had of late been exposed at Dillon's Bay, the Commodore was induced to inflict some little punishment on the natives of Sivu, a village on the coast a short distance from Dillon's Bay, by throwing a few shot and shell into the place, and instructing Mr Gordon, at the same time, to inform the natives that a man-of-war would visit the island next year, and inflict still further punishment upon them if they did not in the meantime amend their ways.

We took our departure for New Caledonia on the 26th, arriving on the 30th. On our arrival we found the Governor, M. Guillaud, had just returned from an expedition to the west coast of the island to inflict summary punishment on the natives for the murder of several French subjects, whom they not only killed, but devoured afterwards. A full account of their proceedings may be seen in the *Moniteur* of the 1st October. We remained a week at Port de France, where we received great hospitality by the Governor and residents, and finally took leave of our friendly allies, and then made sail for Sydney, which we reached on the 13th. Thus terminated our pleasant and deeply interesting cruise.