

chewing of the kaava root, which is now grated instead. The chewing method was believed to spread disease. The people are diminishing notwithstanding all the efforts of the missionaries. There are now only about 8,000 islanders in the whole group.

The Tongans are a fine manly race, and delighted us all. We should all have liked a longer stay in their island. They are an extremely merry race, fond of practical jokes; and as I was rowed on shore by a crew of them, they kept playing all kinds of pranks on one another between the strokes of the oars, such as bending over and catching at each other's legs, and they were full of laughter the whole time.

I had some difficulty in persuading one of the natives to get fire for me by friction of wood. Matches are now so common in Tonga that the natives do not care to undergo the labour necessary for getting fire in the old method, except when driven by necessity. No doubt the younger generation will lose the knack of getting fire by friction altogether.

The method adopted in Tonga is the usual Polynesian one of the stick and groove. The wood of the *Hibiscus tiliaceus* is made use of. It is extremely light when dry. It must be extremely dry in order that it can be used for getting fire. In order to procure fire, a stick or stout splinter of the wood about a foot in length is cut at one end so that it has a sharp edge bounded by two sloping surfaces on one side of the end. The side of the tip is thus in the form of a wedge with a sharp edge.

This stick is held in a slanting position between the two thumbs crossed behind it, and the fingers of the two hands crossed in front of it. The sharp edge of the wedge is applied to the surface of a large billet or stem of the same dry wood, and the stick is rubbed backwards and forwards, a certain amount of pressure being exerted. A V-shaped groove about four or five inches in length is thus cut into the billet. If the piece of wood to be grooved is rounded and smooth, a slight score is sometimes made upon it with a knife beforehand in order to prevent the stick from slipping.

Of course everything depends on the larger billet being kept absolutely immovable during the process. Sometimes the operator holds it with his own feet, or often gets some one else to stand on it for this purpose. The stick is rubbed backwards and forwards, slowly at first. It must not be pressed on too hard or the rubbing surfaces become polished, nor too softly or no heating results. In applying the exact amount of pressure, a great deal of the knack of getting the fire readily, no doubt, depends.

If the operation is proceeding well, there should be a