

could not but be most advantageous that the plant should be introduced into many other tropical countries. On our way up the valley we had passed numerous natives, going down to Papeete with loads of "Fei."

Rats live in the mountains, and climb up and devour the ripe Bananas, and the groves of the trees are traversed in all directions by the tracks of wild pigs, which likewise feed on the fruit. It is strange that the pig should run wild and thrive, under such widely different conditions as it does, and should be able to exist equally well on wild Plantains in the warm Tahiti, and on Penguins and Petrels in the chilly Crozets. In this power of adaptation it approaches man.

It had been raining heavily during our walk, and was still pouring when we halted, and we were all wet through. The guides soon built a small waterproof hut, with sticks and the huge wild Banana leaves. Then they put up another small roof of leaves, and finding dry dead Banana leaves under the shelter of the freshly fallen ones, soon lighted a fire under the roof, and we dried our clothes in the smoke before nightfall, in the midst of the heavy rain. The Banana leaves afforded further waterproof covers for our clothes and for my botanical drying paper.

We had brought no blankets with us, because I wished to make the utmost attempt to scale the mountains as far as possible, and had therefore reduced the baggage to a minimum. I had not expected that we should suffer from cold as we did. The thermometer showed, at about half an hour before sunset, 75° F.; about an hour later 68°·5; at midnight 63°·0; at daybreak 60°·5, and in about half an hour after daybreak it rose to 61·5°. The main stream of the valley running past the huts had a temperature at daybreak of 65°·0, having retained throughout the night the heat of the former day, which the air had so rapidly lost. The effect of the stream on the climate here is thus just the opposite of that of the streams of such an island as Tristan da Cunha.*

From this camp, the way led over several steep minor ridges in the head of the valley, and then up to an elevation of 3,000 feet, which was reached on one of the extremely narrow ridges, characteristic of Tahiti, situate just to the west of the "Diadem." From the ridge, a descent was made into the Punaru Valley by the aid of ropes fastened to the trees. The precipitous side of the valley which we thus descended was covered at this elevation, from about 3,000 to 2,000 feet altitude, with a dense vegetation, composed almost entirely of ferns. A Tree Fern (*Alsophila tahitiensis*) formed a sort of forest, to the exclu-

* See page 96.