

much of the *al fresco* in the native costume for me—I wasn't a Fijian.

I was surprised to find that among the white people there, those who indulged in liquor, almost invariably drank Scotch and soda. Upon expressing my astonishment that under a tropical sun ardent spirits were used in preference to beer or wine, I was told that the latter affected the liver. This same explanation was given later too in Australia and in India. Not knowing whether I have a liver or not I can't personally corroborate the theory.

My next experience was when I set up my instrument and gazed on the southern sky. The good old Pole-star that had kept me straight, or, as the astronomer would say, had given me my azimuth, these many years, had long sunk in the sea, and in my march to these shores other stars had risen from the southern horizon. You have all heard of the Southern Cross—kate would be a more significant name—well, 99 out of a hundred persons must be shown the Cross before they recognize it. It is a poor constellation beside our Dipper or Great Bear. The fact that the ancients did not recognize the Cross as a separate constellation, but included it in Centaur shows that it is not very conspicuous. The people of the southern hemisphere can boast, however, of having the star nearest to the earth, the bright star in Centaur. To give an idea how near it is, let us imagine it to be peopled and that the people could see things going on on the earth, then they would now be seeing the last stages of the Boer War, soldiers moving about South Africa,—for the light takes about four years to travel from the earth to Alpha Centauri.

Two other phenomena of the southern sky may be referred to, viz., the Coal Sacks and Magellanic Clouds—the first are dark spots in the heavens resembling small black clouds, and are due to the absence (to the naked eye) of stars. Especially one of them is well marked; but the casual observer on a clear night, would not have his attention arrested to infer its true meaning—just as the Magellanic clouds are in reality a galaxy of stars, appearing as two fleecy, white, drifting terrestrial clouds. Primitive man was and is more observant of nature than we of the strenuous life.

The astronomer, armed with his star catalogues soon feels himself at home in any part of this wide world. The observer's