

together was tabu. For a woman to eat pork, bananas or cocoanut was tabu. It was tabu to go near certain houses and locations specified by chiefs or priests, almost every phase of life was hedged about with tabus without rhyme nor reason, and to break tabu meant death.

When a temple was consecrated it required one or more human victims. When a chief or king died, his death was supposed to be due to the influence of some enemy who must be put to death. The people were in constant terror of the priests and medicine men who were the executioners in these cases. There was no trial, but the victim was approached in the dark, or when asleep and knocked on the head. He had no means of defence and no opportunity of proving his innocence.

The people were naturally light hearted and joyous and had many games and pastimes in which they engaged. But these gradually lost their beneficial character and became scenes of licentiousness and cruelty.

There was scarcely any family life, infanticide was terribly rife and abortion was practised with a skill and frequency only excelled by the army of inhuman females of our own race and time who have recourse to that most degrading and murderous practise. All these were unrebuked by the prevailing religion which became more and more burdensome until about the opening of the nineteenth century the people rose in their might and threw off the dominance of their old gods with the whole system of tabu, thus preparing the way for the coming of the missionaries in 1820.

No brighter chapter adorns the pages of missionary literature than the story of these islands. The people, naturally warm-hearted and kindly, received the missionaries with open arms, and in less than twenty years the whole group was evangelized. Of course there were many difficulties to be overcome and many back eddies in the stream of progress, but the people seemed prepared by the course of their own history for the change which Christianity brought.

The men sent out by the A. B. F. M. of the Congregational Church, were all from the New England States, and were men of rare ability as well as deep piety. The names of Bingham and