

that the *Sunbeam* should be painted *white*, for the sake of coolness, and we were all very curious to see how she would look in her new dress; but unfortunately the wet weather has delayed the work, and there is still a good deal to do.

*Wednesday, December 6th.*—So brisk is the trade carried on between Tahiti and the United States, that the Tahitians can boast of quite a respectable fleet of vessels, not imposing perhaps in point of tonnage, but as smart and serviceable-looking as could be desired. Not a day passes without one or more entering or leaving the harbour, returning from or bound to the lonely isles with which the south-west portion of the Pacific is studded.

Mr. Godeffroy gave us rather an amusing account of the manner in which their negotiations with the natives are conducted. The more civilized islanders have got beyond barter, and prefer hard cash in American dollars for their pearls, shells, cocoa-nuts, sandal-wood, etc. When they have received the money, they remain on deck for some time discussing their bargains among themselves. Then they peep down through the skylights into the cabin below, where the most attractive prints and the gaudiest articles of apparel are temptingly displayed. It is not long before the bait is swallowed; down go the natives, the goods are sold, and the dollars have once more found their way back into the captain's hands.

*Thursday, December 7th.*—At eight o'clock I took Mabelle and Muriel for a drive in a pony-carriage which had been kindly lent me. Just as we returned, a gentleman came and asked me if I should like to see some remarkably fine pearls, and on my gladly consenting, he took me to his house, where I saw some pearls, certainly worth going to look at, but too expensive for me, one pear-shaped gem alone having been valued at £1,000. I was told they came from a neighbouring island, and I was given two shells containing pearls in various stages of formation. What interested me most were the products of this and the neighbouring islands.

*Friday, December 8th.*—At nine o'clock we set out for the shore, and after landing drove along the same road by which we had returned from our excursion round the island. After seeing as much of the place as our limited time would allow, we drove over to Faataua. The grand piano, every table, and the drawing-room floor, were spread with the presents we were expected to