

waiting, hot and thirsty, we asked for a cocoa-nut, whereupon a man standing by immediately tied a withy of banana leaves round his feet and proceeded to climb, or rather hop, up the nearest tree, raising himself with his two hands and his feet alternately, with an exactly similar action to that of our old friend the monkey on the stick. People who have tasted the cocoa-nut only in England can have no idea what a delicious fruit it really is when nearly ripe and freshly plucked. The natives remove the outer husk, just leaving a little piece to serve as a foot for the pale brown cup to rest on. They then smooth off the top, and you have an elegant vase, something like a mounted ostrich egg in appearance, lined with the snowiest ivory, and containing about three pints of cool sweet water. Why it is called milk I cannot understand, for it is as clear as crystal, and is always cool and refreshing, though the nut in which it is contained has generally been exposed to the fiercest sun. In many of the coral islands, where the water is brackish, the natives drink scarcely anything but cocoa-nut milk; and even here, if you are thirsty and ask for a glass of water, you are almost always presented with a cocoa-nut instead.

The road round the island is called the Broom Road. Convicts were employed in its original formation, and now it is the punishment for any one getting drunk in any part of the island to be set to work to sweep, repair, and keep in order a piece of the road in the neighbourhood of his dwelling. It is the one good road of Tahiti, encircling the larger of the two peninsulas close to the sea-shore, and surmounting the low mountain range in the centre of the isthmus.

It is now the depth of winter and the middle of the rainy season in Tahiti; but, luckily for us, it is nearly always fine in the daytime. At night, however, there is often a perfect deluge, which floods the houses and gardens, turns the streams into torrents, but washes and refreshes the vegetation, and leaves the landscape brighter and greener than before. If you can imagine the Kew hot-houses magnified and multiplied to an indefinite extent, and laid out as a gentleman's park, traversed by numerous grassy roads fringed with cocoa-nut palms, and commanding occasional glimpses of sea, and beach, and coral reefs, you will have some faint idea of the scene through which our road lay. Before we started on our excursion, instructions had been given