Strange Romance of an Illinois Boy Who Became Fiji King

ONE of the strangest stories that ever came out of the tropic seas is that of Edward Thompson, the only American who ever became a king in his own right. Nothing more romantic exists in poetry or legend than the tale of the lad from southern Illinois, who founded a kingdom in the far-off isle of Naikeva. For a quarter of a century he ruled in his savage realm, forgetful of the world, that had forgotten him. While he sat in judgment over the affairs of his tribesmen or led his warriors to battle the map of the world was being changed.

Only the faintest echoes from civilization ever reached the island kingdom of Naikeva, where ruled

Walia Nambuka, "the Child of the Sun." To the simple-minded islanders he was always looked upon as a supernatural being. His recent death has plunged his people in gloom. The mourning robes of his subjects have been brought out of the napa huts and worn in the dead king's honor. His two little sons, the princelings of Naikeva, will reign in his stead and King Walia sleeps at the crest of a gentle slope overlooking a coral reef, where the league-long breakers thunder hour after hour. His bones lie far from those of Scotch-American forbears, who settled in southern Illinois nearly a century ago.

A disappointment in love started him out upon the long road of adventure when he was a youth of nineteen or twenty years. One of these unfortunates who run to extremes in matters of sentiment, he fell in love with one of the pretty village girls of old Albion. Things move slowly in this, one of the oldest and proudest towns of Illinois. In the natural course of events it was to be expected that the two would marry in the fullness of time. There was a home to be built and preparations made for a start in life. Something of the methodical slowness of their English ancestors clung then, and still clings, to the every-day life of the citizens of Albion. The town has changed but little in the years that have flown since Thompson left under cover of nightfall. The same houses line the spacious public square. The same homesteads that sheltered the pioneers now shelter their descendants of the third and fourth generations. Red brick homes, low-eaved and with wide dormers, still line the older streets of the little southern Illinois town.

Outwardly the town has changed but little, and in spirit not at all, since the days when young Thompson waited for his girlish sweetheart at the half-lighted corner of the court house square. The Albion of the Flowers, the Thompsons, the Hulmes, the Birkbecks, of "Park House" and "Wanborough Place" still remains. Had the white monarch of the savage isle of Naikeva come back to the place of his birth in the last year of his life he would have found "Little Britain," as the region is known, much as he left it. It is the same little city of schools and churches, of quiet homes and quieter streets that it was when he was a barefoot lad stealing away to fish and loaf along Bonpas creek. The future ruler of Naikeva spent many an idle hour with hook and line along the shallows of old Bonpas, if the traditions of the folk of "Little Britain" are true. He was fond of making long trips to the shores of the Wabash with his chums, but he seemed to lack the ambition dear to every boyish heart, the hope of getting out and seeing the big, round world. There was nothing to set him apart from his fellows as one who would taste of strange adventures before his death in the antipodes. The prosy, uneventful life of a farmer, a storekeeper or at the most a suburban professional man in a country town was all to which he could look forward.

There came an interruption, an awakening to his love's young dream that drove him out of his home town between sundown and sunrise one summer's night. This spur to his pride, this wound to his self-love sent him adventuring among the spicy isles of the south seas and made him a king on his own right before he was twenty-five. He was of that shy, retiring, loyal type of the Scotch who love deeply when they love at all. He had become engaged to the village beauty. The day had been set for the ceremony and the unmarried youth of the town looked upon him as one already lost to the fun and frolics of the single state.

About this time a new business house was opened in the little town and a youthful eastern manager was sent on by the owners to look after its affairs. He came armed with letters of introduction that opened the most exclusive homes of the aristocratic English families to him. Among the many young girls that he met was the village belle, the affianced of the young Scotch-American. It was another variation of that old triangle, the woman and two men. From the first the friends of young Thompson could see that his cause was hopeless. His affianced wife and the young stranger spent more and more of their time together. Little rumors began to find their way about the village. The gossips, ever ready in a small town, were soon busy. Thompson, moody and hurt by her systematic neglect, was the last to hear and the last to countenance the whispered talk that was going the round of the village loafing places.

There was a great hue and cry along the quiet old streets one summer morning. Thompson's bride to be had disappeared. Her mother had gone to her room to awaken her and found her gone. She had gone with the young manager of Albion's latest business house, and from that day to this neither of them have been heard from.

Young Thompson changed in a day from a cheerful, happy lad to a grim-faced man. He became moody and silent. He neglected his work and never went near the home to which he had expected to lead his bride. Less than a month after the flight of the elopers there was more excitement in Albion. It was reported that Edward Thompson had disappeared. The strain and the shame of living in a town where every man, woman and child knew the story of his jilting had proven too much for his sensitive, high-strung nature.

While life flowed on in the same uneven current in the village of his nativity he was wandering here and there among the emerald islands, the lagoons and the coral reefs of the seas that behold the Southern Cross.

All the islands that lie off the familiar track of the steamers knew him first and last in the three or four years that he spent with the traders and copra buyers. The Philippines, the Ladrones, the Solomons and a dozen other island groups of the southern Pacific were visited by him in the epic years of his Odyssey. Finally he and his trading companions touched at the island of Naikeva in the Fijis. One of the eternal civil wars that are always disrupting the peace of the little island kingdoms was brewing in Naikeva when the tramp schooner dropped anchor inside the reef of coral that formed the harbor breakwater. A new claimant had risen for the throne and he and his followers were demanding the scepter and the head of the old king.

Thompson had left Illinois, had put the states behind him to escape the constant reminder of his lost love that he saw in every woman. The wandering life of three or four years had cleansed his heart of but little bitterness against womankind. He had put the old life behind him and dreamed only of adventure and never of bright eyes and loving lips. It was a mixed crew of Kanakas, Malaysians and half-castes aboard the little trading schooner. They cared but little for the kings and chieftains of the islands, but it was a part of their policy to be polite to the native rulers. An audience was arranged with the native sovereign and a part of the ship's company attended laden with calicoes, mirrors and brass rods as gifts. It was in the royal hut Thompson first saw the Princess Lakanita. She stood at the side of her father's throne when the white men entered the palm hut for their talk with the old king.

Some indefinite attraction seemed to draw the white adventurer and the brown-skinned princess to each other. They met many times while the schooner was taking on its load of native products. There was more than a little Spanish blood in the veins of the old king's daughter. Her mother was a half-caste Spanish woman and much of the languorous beauty of the maids of old Castile was the heritage of this barbaric princess of the remote isle of Naikeva. In the half twilight of the cocoanut groves he heard her story of danger and distress. The rival claimant of the throne had demanded her hand in marriage, and had promised to spare the life of her father if she would consent to become his queen. It was but a matter of weeks, possibly of days, till his force would be strong enough to back his arrogant demands. In the end the white man knew that the island beauty had fallen in love with him. She pleaded with him to stay and help her escape from the clutches of the oppressor.

It is possible that Thompson would have lingered for a time if his companions had not been eager to get away from the island before the civil war began. They were traders, and as such they did not care to take sides in the dispute. It might hurt their business chances in case they ever made another trip to the island. The anchor was lifted, the brown sails spread and the ugly little schooner slipped out of the harbor of Naikeva while Thompson stood on her deck and waved a farewell to the imperious little island beauty. At the very last she had reminded him of his promise to return to Naikeva.

It was weeks after the departure of the ship from Naikeva that Thompson was dramatically reminded of his promise to the Princess Lakanita. The sun had just set one night and Thompson was lying on deck smoking and watching the swift tropic dark come up out of the east. A native canoe scraped against the schooner's side and a native was heard calling for "the white man with the blue eyes." He was brought aboard and proved to be the faithful messenger of the distressed princess. He had followed the schooner across leagues of unknown seas in his open canoe searching for the only man upon whom she could rely for aid.

The end was at hand in Naikeva, and Lakanita and her father were about to be put to death. Help must come quickly, and it was more than possible that it was now too late. That night the stanch little trading vessel pointed her prow toward Naikeva. In the final melee along the sands the old king and his rival were both slain and Thompson was stunned by a blow from a war club in the hands of a savage fighting man. When he revived he and his men began a hunt of extermination for all the revolters. They were wiped out and their villages fired before the party returned to the king's village, where the schooner lay anchored. Then the white hero was stricken by one of the malignant island fevers, brought on by his injury on the beach.

It was many days before he was able to recognize his free-trading companions. The princess had been his devoted nurse through his dangerous attack of tropical fever. Now that he was about to leave the island forever she grew sorrowful and listless. She drooped like a dying flower as the ship's preparations for sailing were being made. All his promises to return brought on fits of passionate weeping on the part of the little princess. She wanted him to stay.

"I fought that fever when it tried to take you away from me, and it was all for nothing," was her constant reply, "and now that you are well the white men are taking you away where Lakanita can never hope to see you again."

In the end her pleadings won. After all there was nothing in the outer world to which he cared to go back.

The good news spread quickly over the little kingdom. "The Child of the Sun" was to wed their princess and rule them in the wise ways of the white man.

After twenty-five years of idyllic happiness, Thompson, the love-lorn youth who fled from the quiet streets of the town of his birth, died a king in far-off Naikeva. The princess still lives and his two sons will reign in his place. The silence of twenty-five years has been broken by the news of his passing away surrounded to the last by his dusky retainers.

Protecting the Lyre Bird

So great has been the destruction wrought upon the beautiful lyre bird and stout gallinaceous feet, is by no of Queensland (Henura superba) that means unlike that of a peacock, and the state has absolutely protected the bird till the middle of 1915; a £5 penalty is attached to its capture, or injury, or taking its eggs. Still the bird is getting scarcer and scarcer.

It is the extraordinary lyre form development of the tail feathers which excite the sordid vandals. The contents with the sober plumage of its mate. The fully-developed male lyre bird is one of the most handsome and notable of the forms of bird life of Queensland.

The fully developed male lyre bird is one of the most handsome and notable of the forms of bird life of Queensland.

Per a short period of the year, after January, the lyre bird loses its characteristic plumes and has to be con-

New Fireproof Construction.

A new method of fireproof construction for small buildings has been invented in response to the growing demand. Steel tubing filled with concrete is used for the frame and a network of wire for the basis of walls, floor and roof. On this skeleton a concrete house of such strength can be built that, it is claimed, it will be practically earthquake proof. Six-inch pipe, steel wire and expanded metal, malleable iron fittings and cement are the materials used. The wires are strung to a tension of 1,000 pounds and bind the whole together with enormous solidity. On them the concrete is spread three inches thick in spans not exceeding 16 feet. Construction is so simple that unskilled labor can be largely used.—Youth's Companion.

STATE HAPPENINGS

Owosso.—F. O. Rockwell, a local meat cutter, has withdrawn his suit against Warren H. Serviss, superintendent of construction of the Union Telephone company, for alienation of Mrs. Rockwell's affections. Rockwell gets $400. His wife, who is a grandmother, has filed a bill for divorce.

—The twentieth and twenty-first arrests on the instance of Game Warden James Leggett of Perry, within the past four weeks has resulted in the conviction of Pearl Munn and William Alexander of Bennington township for having skins of game animals in their possession out of season. They each paid $25 fine and costs in municipal court here.

Traverse City.—The board of supervisors has authorized Sheriff Shuter to purchase a bloodhound at a cost not to exceed $125, for use in tracking criminals.—As the result of the breaking of a wood rack, John Ayers, Jr., of Williamsburg, was seriously injured when thrown with part of a load of wood between the team of horses which ran away. He was severely bruised about the head and face and was unconscious for several hours.

Eaton Rapids.—Many of the cider mills in this vicinity will not be opened this fall because of the short age of the apple crop. Other mills were operated a much shorter time than usual.

Flint.—Ralph Russell, 26, is under arrest, charged with violating the local option law. Russell was recently released after serving a sentence in the Detroit house of correction for "bootlegging."

St. Johns.—The golden wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Emmet Nichols was celebrated at their home here under the auspices of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Marshall.—Mrs. Mary Alcox, seventy-five years old, poured kerosene in the stove. Neighbors later found her badly burned, lying on the floor. She will recover.

Lansing.—Judge Fraser of this city has held that a child cannot be held for its board bill. The question arose when a Syrian woman tried to regain possession of her six-year-old girl.

Bessemer.—It is understood that the steel trust is negotiating for the purchase of the Corrigan-McKinney mines on the Gogebic range. The deal, if consummated, will involve about $20,000,000.

Bay City.—Charles O. Smith, son of the late Peter Smith, and manager of the extensive Smith interests, died of excitement caused by a collision between his automobile and a farmer's rig. He expired three hours after the accident.

Eaton Rapids.—Mr. and Mrs. Fred Lankin celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in the house in which they have lived 45 years.

Battle Creek.—Mrs. Edgar Tyler of Charlotte fell dead in the home of her granddaughter, and Mrs. Mary A. Jones, for 20 years a teacher in the public schools of this city, was found dead in her room. Both were victims of heart disease.

Saginaw.—Ten boys, about twelve years old, of the Buena Vista rural school, were taken in custody charged with stealing 500 pounds of sugar from a freight car.—At the Republican city convention here Mayor George W. Stewart was renominated.

Ithaca.—The "wet" agitators were greatly surprised when the Gratiot county supervisors adjourned on October 22, sine die, not to meet for a year. Petitions for the resubmission of the local option question cannot be presented except at a regular meeting, and this means that Gratiot county will remain "dry" until 1911.

Ypsilanti.—W. H. Little, of the Buick Motor company of Flint, was arrested October 17 for speeding. He deposited $10 with Officer Ryan and agreed to return. A letter was received by Justice Stadtmiller asking the authorities to accept the $10 and strike off the case. The usual fine for first offenders is only $5.

Flint.—Bishop Foley of Detroit dedicated the new Polish church on Industrial avenue.

East Lansing.—Seven members of the senior forestry class of the M. A. C. have gone to Au Sable to take the examination for forest ranger, which will be held there. Should they pass the examination they will be eligible for positions worth $1,100 per year.

Muskegon.—Hubert Stein, eighty, the oldest pioneer of this county and at one time owner of 2,900 acres of land, part of which was later settled as Muskegon Heights, is dead at his home here. He was a native of Luxembourg, Germany, and is survived by three daughters and one son.

Owosso.—George Thompson, fifty-eight years old, was kicked over the heart by a playful colt a week ago and died. Silas Shaft put in several barrels of hard cider to help beguile a hard winter, commenced to drain them early and was sentenced to 15 days in jail on his plea of guilty of a charge accusing him of being a tippler.

Cadillac. — Miss Minnie Quaver, twenty years old, fell from a horse and as a result has lost her memory. Earl Moore, Rodney, received a charge of birdshot in his face while hunting with a companion. Moore walked into the bush when the companion raised his rifle and fired at a bird about to light on it. Moore's eyesight may possibly be saved. Both boys are sixteen years old.

Royal Oak.—Rev. William I. St. Johns was ordained into the ministry here at the annual meeting of the Detroit Association of Congregational Churches.

Benton Harbor.—"Three times and out," said Frank Huber, forty, recently, when the officers frustrated his second attempt at self-destruction. He made good, for word from South Bend, Ind., states that Huber killed himself by turning on the gas in his room. Another roomer in the house was nearly asphyxiated.

Saginaw.—Henry Rochaw, seventy-two, a lifelong resident of Saginaw, disappeared October 14, according to a report made to the police. His mind is said to be blank and no trace of him has been found, although the river has been repeatedly dragged.

NATURE'S SIGNALS.

The first indication of kidney disorder is often backache. Then comes pain in the hips and sides, lameness, soreness and urinary trouble. These are the warnings of nature's signals for help. Doan's Kidney Pills should be used at the first sign.

Ira Clark, North Main St., Savanna, Ill., says: "I was confined to bed with kidney trouble and never expected to be up again. A doctor said I had acute inflammation of the bladder, but he could not help me. How grateful was I for the prompt relief Doan's Kidney Pills gave me! Continued use removed every sign of kidney trouble."

Remember the name—Doan's.

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Getting a Reputation.

There is a desk in the senate particularly convenient as a place from which to make speeches. It is next to the aisle and almost in the center of the chamber, and affords an opportunity for the speaker to make everybody hear.

At least a dozen senators, according to the Washington correspondent of the St. Louis Star, have borrowed this desk when they had special utterances to deliver to the senate. This led, not long ago, to a mild protest from its legitimate occupant.

"I am perfectly willing to give up my desk," said he, "but I am afraid people will think that the same man is talking all the time. I don't want to get the reputation of constantly filling the senate with words."—Youth's Companion.

Procrastination.

"I heard a talk the other day of a postponing chap, who thought he'd buy a wheel so gay, but—they will be cheaper, perhaps.' And so he dallied year by year, the cheapest wheel to buy; but long before the cheapest gear, that yap he had to die! And so, by putting off the day, we miss the wine of life; and some there are in just that way who thus will miss a wife! Get busy now, you timid swain, procrastinate no more, for time is surely on the wane, and you a bachelor! Some wait too long to make a pick of husbands or of wife, and then some take a broken stick and make a mess of life."—H. B. Benedict, in Judge.

Not Easy.

Pat was a married man—a very much married man. He had married no fewer than four times, and all his wives were still in the fore. According to Pat's own account before the court where he was tried for bigamy and found guilty, his experiences were not altogether satisfactory. The judge, in passing sentence, expressed his wonder that the prisoner could be such a hardened villain as to delude so many women.

"Yer honor," said Pat, apologetically, "I was only tryin' to get a good one, an' it's not aisy!"—Lippincott's Magazine.

Lovemaking and Practice.

The only way to become an expert at lovemaking is to practice. This was the information handed out to a handful of hearers by the Hindu philosopher, Sakharam Ganesh Pandit, in a lecture on "The Science of Love."

"Love is a divine discontent," said the philosopher, "and if you want to arouse love in others it can be done only by giving them love. How to develop the emotion of love in another, is the great question of today—the art of making love. It needs a great deal of study and a great deal of practice."

Deserved the Shoes.

The weary wayfarer leaned over the fence and watched the housewife doing her chores.

"Ah, lady," he said, tipping his hat, "I used to be a professional humorist. If I tell you a funny story will you give me an old pair of shoes?"

"Well, that depends," responded the busy housewife; "you must remember that brevity is the soul of wit."

"Yes, mum, I remember that, and brevity is the sole of each of my shoes, mum."

SWELLING THE HOTEL BILL

Hotel Keeper's Method of Taxing Traveler Had Set Leaden the Method of Novelty.

One of the things which help swell the traveler's expenses, both in this country and abroad, is the "extras." It may be may not be charged in the bill, but it is sure to be paid for. Probably even the most generous traveler, however, will have some sympathy for the gentleman in the following story which was made to pay liberally for a certain amazing privilege.

During his stay at the hotel the weather had been very hot.

"Charles," said the landlord to the clerk who was making out the bill to be presented to the departing guest, "have you noticed that the temperature in number seven has consulted the thermometer on the piazza at least ten times every morning during his stay?"

Charles replied that he had.

"Well," said the landlord, "charge him the price of one dinner a day for the use of the thermometer."—Youth's Companion.

"Off Day" of Favorite.

Chapley—How did she happen to refuse you; I thought you were her favorite?

Washley—Well, the favorite didn't win, that's all.

They who talk much of dying are usually dead already.

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