

against them, and He drove them forth from Paradise.

The Masais have also their story of the Flood. They have their Noah, whose name is Tumbainot. Tumbainot builds an ark in which he saves himself, his two wives, and his six sons. When the waters are subsiding he sends forth a dove. Four rainbows are the sign which tells the Masai Noah that the wrath of God for the iniquity of man has been appeased.

But the most remarkable parallel between the religion of the Masais and the Pentateuch is that of the Ten Commandments. The Masai story of the delivery of the decalogue, says Dr. Emil Reich, might have been translated almost literally from the Bible. The mountain is there with its peals of thunder and its raging storm. Out of the midst of a cloud the voice of God is heard proclaiming His commandments. And this is the first commandment: 'There is one God alone, who hath sent me unto you. Heretofore ye have called him the Forgiver (*E<sup>s</sup> majan*), or the Almighty

(*E<sup>s</sup> magelani*), but henceforth ye shall call him 'Ngai. Of him ye shall make no image. If ye follow his commandments it will be well with you; but if ye obey him not famine and pestilence shall chastise you.'

Is Captain Merker sure that these traditions are not due to Christian teaching? He is quite sure. For no foreign missionary has ever penetrated into the Masai country. And if the traditions had come from Christianity it would be impossible to explain why they stopped short at the Decalogue, why the teaching of the New Testament is utterly unrepresented.

Captain Merker had been some time among the Masais before he discovered that these legends are not the common property of the whole tribe. He discovered that he had to gain the confidence of certain privileged families which alone possess the secret and in which the stories are handed down from father to son. These families may die out. Captain Merker believes that he was sent to the Masais just in time.

## Land Tenure in Fiji.

BY LORIMER FISON, HON. MEMBER OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE.

IF we would get at the root of the system of Land Tenure in Fiji, we must first of all ascertain the structure of society there, and the more closely we examine it the more complicated does it appear to be. Our difficulty is increased by the fact that custom is not uniform throughout the Group; and it is impossible within our present limits of space to do more than to examine one particular field. Since it has been authoritatively asserted that the land is 'vested in the ruling chiefs, under a feudal system which has existed from time immemorial,' it may be well to select a neighbourhood where the power of the chiefs had reached its highest pitch before the Group was annexed to the British Empire. That place is Bau (Mbau), where the great chief Thakombau used to reign. It had in its neigh-

bourhood a number of affiliated *koro*, or villages, more or less closely connected with it, and it was recognized as their *koro turanga levu* = great chief town. In them, as well as in Bau itself, we find chiefs of various degrees, full-born commoners—who are called the *taukei ni vanua* (= owners of the land); and in addition to them, men who have but an imperfect status in the *koro*, or even none at all.

Looking at one of these affiliated *koro*, we find it to be divided into 'quarters,' of which there may be more or fewer than four, and each of them belongs to a part of the community called a *mata-gali*, a word which fortunately tells its own history. Literally, *mata* means 'eye' or 'face.' Hence *mata-ni-singa*, 'the eye of day' = the sun.

Its secondary meaning is an 'eyeful,' so to speak—*e.g. a mata-i-valu*, 'a band of warriors,' *a mata-vei-tathini*, 'a band of brothers.' *Qalia* means 'to twist together,' as a sailor twists yarns by rolling them together under the palm of his hand on his knee. Mata-qali therefore means a band of men who are twisted together; *and the twist is a common descent.*

A mata-qali is composed of a mata-vei-tathini, or band of brothers, from each of whom may be descended a minor division, called a *yavusa*, and each *yavusa* may be divided into a number of *vuvale*, consisting of brothers, with their families, who inhabit either the same house or adjoining houses. That is to say, roughly speaking, a number of *vuvale* make up a *yavusa*, a number of *yavusa* make up a mata-qali, and a number of mata-qali make up a koro. The people of a koro are theoretically of common descent, though they are not always actually so; and the koro may be compared to a cable: the mata-qali are the ropes which are twisted together to form it, the *yavusa* are the strands of the rope, the *vuvale* are the yarns of the strand, and the individuals are the fibres of the yarn.

If we examine a rope, we may see here and there fibres which do not seem to be of quite the same material as the rest. They seem to have got into the rope by accident. These will serve to represent certain individuals who are born into a mata-qali, but are not full-born members of it. And, in addition to these, there are a number of people attached to it who are not 'twisted in' with the mata-qali at all, but who nevertheless belong to it. Our 'cable' simile fails us here, unless we take these unfortunates to be represented by the frayed-out fibres, which belong to neither yarn nor strand, and yet are held hard and fast. Their status will be investigated farther on.

These divisions are not unchangeable. They run into one another, and it is not always easy at first sight to distinguish one from another. Thus, we may hear a mata-qali spoken of as if it were a *yavusa*, and even find its distinctive title with the contraction *vusa* prefixed to it. But this may be easily explained. From an original *vuvale*, or mata-vei-tathini (band of brothers) several *yavusa* may descend, each of which may branch out into smaller *yavusa*, and so expand into a mata-qali.

This process of expansion is clearly shown in the register of the Israelite families given in the

26th chapter of the Book of Numbers. In the first place, the sons of Jacob are the mata-vei-tathini or *vuvale*. With their children they form the *Vusa Ra Yisrael*. Each of them becomes the Head of a Household, and his descendants are his *yavusa*. Among the *vei-tathini* is Joseph, who branches out into two *yavusa*—Manasseh and Ephraim. Each of these again becomes a tribe, or mata-qali, and even a cluster of mata-qalis. Thus the sons of Manasseh's grandson, Gilead, who founded *yavusa*, were no fewer than six, not counting Zelophehad, whose daughters were married to their father's brothers' sons in order to keep the tribal lands intact.

In Fiji many of the original *yavusa* have grown into mata-qali, some of which are scattered widely among the islands. Their common origin is known by their having the same *Kalou Vu* (god-ancestor), which gives them the privilege of cursing one another without offence. According to the Fijian reckoning, Joseph would have been the *Kalou Vu* of all the Ephraimites, as well as of all the Manasseh *yavusa* on both sides of Jordan. Beyond him, again, would be Jacob, as the *Kalou Vu* of all the tribes of Israel; while still farther back—unless he had utterly faded out of the tradition of the elders—would be Abraham, as the *Kalou Vu*, not of the Israelites only, but of the Edomites also, and other nations. It will be seen that the foregoing explanations have a direct bearing upon the subject of Land Tenure, as well as upon the entire social fabric.

**The Lands.**—The koro has its own lands, distinct from those of other koro. These are of three kinds:—(1) the *Yavu*, or Town-lot; (2) the *Qele* (*ngg-ele*), or Arable Land; (3) the *Veikau*, Forest or Waste, as our own forefathers used to call it. We must note here that the koro may have several affiliated koro, inhabited by men of kindred stock; but we may continue to speak of one koro only for the sake of convenience, examining the lands in their given order.

1. The *Yavu*. Each mata-qali has its own *yavu*, which is the quarter of the town allotted to it. This may be subdivided into smaller *yavu*, and these again into *yavu* smaller still, each Household having its own. The Household may be composed of several families, the Heads of which are brothers, own or tribal, according to the Fijian system of relationship, which is that known as the

Classificatory System. This smaller yavu is the Precinct, and may be surrounded by a fence at the will of its owners. The yavu adjoin one another; but you must not build quite up to the edge of your own yavu, nor must your neighbour build quite up to the boundary of his. You and he must leave a space between the two houses corresponding to that which our own ancestors called the allowance for cavedrip. This leaves a pathway between you. And when you cut down the grass in that pathway, you must not work beyond your own half of it, unless your neighbour be working with you, or have given his consent. The yavu is under the dominion of its owner, and the house standing on it is—in some tribes at least—a Sanctuary which not even the highest chief has a right to violate. If stirred up to fury he may disregard your right; but his so doing would be regarded as *valavala vakaturanga* (a chief-like act), which in this case would be 'masterful wrong.' But if the town be taken in war, the house is no longer a sanctuary. The ancestral gods have shown themselves to be weaker than the invaders, and when they can no longer protect their own, then *væ victis*.

2. The Qele, or Arable Land, is divided into lots in some places, and subdivided into smaller lots, each having its owner or owners. But this does not imply absolute proprietorship as with us. The owner is bound to hand down undiminished to posterity his part of the tribal estate.

3. The Veikau lands (Forest or Waste) are common to the whole community; but each community must keep within its own bounds, unless by special arrangement with its neighbours.

**The Landowners.**—From what has been already stated it is clear that the land is vested in—or at any rate, is held by—certain joint tribal owners, who have a common descent. These are called the Taukei ni vanua (in Kandavu, the Vu ni vanua), or owners of the land; and we have now to ascertain who they are.

Not all the people are landowners. There may be attached to a community a number of men, who, while they belong to it, are not full members of it. These may be either the descendants of *kai tani*—people of another community, aliens, strangers, foreigners, or men who were not 'born,' as the Germans have it, but with a much wider meaning than the Germans give to the word.

These two classes must be clearly distinguished from one another.

The *kai tani* may have been in the first place fugitives from other tribes, broken men, war-captives, or other commoners, who have attached themselves to a mata-qali, but were not born into it. Some of the tribes can assimilate these foreign particles to a certain extent. One of them may prove himself to be an exceptionally useful man. Wishing to attach him to yourself, you give him one of your daughters, and with her a piece of your land. He himself can never be aught but a stranger, but his son is *vasu* to your son, and inherits the piece of land given with his mother. His grandson will take his place among the town-folk as long as he does not assert himself too loudly. If he does so, he will be put to open shame by a public reproof from the elders—'How is it that you are loud-voiced here? Hold your peace, for your grandfather was a stranger.'

**The Vasu.**—The term Vasu, Vatuvu, or Batuvu, has been improperly translated 'nephew.' It is a title of office, not a term of relationship. The word for that relationship is vungo, vunga, quva, suquva, or u. The vasu has extraordinary privileges with regard to his uncle, who is his mother's brother, or his father's sister's husband,<sup>1</sup> and can make free with his property to an extent which would be unaccountable if we did not know the vasu-right to be a survival of inheritance through the mother, which still prevails in some of the Fijian tribes; and under which a man's sister's son becomes his heir to the exclusion of his own son. We find traces of this in the Old Testament. The fact that Joab was David's sister's son may account for his high-handed action towards the king. Abimelech was vasu to Shechem, and so had influence enough there to effect his brothers' murder. If the vasu elect to settle down in his mother's koro, he may do so, and his mother's dower land will be given to him.

The right of the ordinary vasu extends only to his maternal uncle's family; but when a great *marama* (lady of high rank) is given in marriage to a great chief, her son by him is the *vasu levu* (great vasu) not to her brother only, but to all the community of which he is the Head. His right is

<sup>1</sup> *Note.*—Under the Classificatory System of Relationship mother's brother and father's sister's husband are synonymous terms.

of long endurance. One day when I was talking over with my Fijian students the 22nd chapter of the First Book of Samuel, I asked (for my own information) why David sent his father and mother to the king of Moab, when he was afraid that Saul would revenge himself upon them. 'Because David was Vasu to Moab,' they replied. 'Not so,' I said. 'David's mother was not a Moabitess.' 'That is true, sir, but Ruth was,' they replied. 'But that was far away,' said I. 'Yes; but it would be borne in mind,' they asserted; and a thoughtful young fellow went on to point out that Ruth must have been a woman of the royal clan—not necessarily a marama of the highest rank, but certainly a full-blooded member of the clan, otherwise David could not have taken his parents to the king of Moab.

From all this it is clear that, in order to be a full-blown taukei, or landowner, it is necessary that descent should be traced through an uninterrupted succession of full-born males; to which statement we may now add the words, 'and of females also, who came to their husbands in a proper manner.' Even in cases of elopement, which not unfrequently occur, though the offence may be condoned, and the parties recognized as man and wife, the son of such a marriage must not assert himself too prominently. If he does, he will be rebuked by the elders. 'You there! Let not your voice be loud! As for your mother, we know nothing about her. We did not eat her marriage feast, nor did we make presents to her kinsfolk for her.' He would not be looked upon as base-born; but there was a fault in his birth, which should keep him humble in the presence of full-born men.

**The Kaisi.**—The resources of the language have been ransacked for terms of contempt to pour upon the kaisi, or base-born men. They are Children of the Path, Children of Theft, Children who never had a father, Children of the Unknown, Evil Things, Children of periwinkles, Children of pigs. Other designations are mere untranslatable filth. These wretched kaisi can own neither land nor anything else. They are *tamata tawa vakayalo*—men without souls. They have no ancestors, and consequently no gods, excepting such as they may make for themselves, and they have, therefore, no portion either in this life or that which is to come. So also the Friendly Islanders say that their *mea vale* (worthless, foolish things) have no

souls. The full-born Tongan is a descendant of the gods who dwelt in Bulotu, but the *mea vale* are the children of worms. So also the Institutes of Manu tell us: 'Those animals destroy, both in this world and in the next, the food presented by those who make offerings to the gods and to the dead.'

**Emigrants and Kaso.**—We have not space to explain the relations borne to the high chiefs by the various grades of the *tamata lalai* (little men), or commoners, but there are two or three things to which brief reference must be made. In the days before Annexation, certain tribes could be found settled on lands where they had been living for many generations, and yet they were not the owners of the soil. Tribes such as these are emigrants, who have either left their own lands voluntarily, owing to disagreement with their kinsfolk, or have been driven thence by internecine quarrels. They begged land from a taukei tribe, and settled down upon it. They are not landowners where they are now living, but they are far above the level of the 'men without a father.' You cannot degrade a taukei into a kaisi. You may drive him from his lands, but you cannot rob him of his ancestors. He is far above the level of a base-born serf. He is, however, only a tenant-at-will; and though he may have occupied the lands for generations, the taukei tribe can always resume possession upon giving formal notice, and presenting some property or other, which is called the 'vakalutu ni qele,' or 'That which causes the falling back of the soil.'

Another class of landless men are the *Kaso*. These are the sons of chiefs by women of inferior rank. The term is significant. The cross spars which join the body of a canoe to its outrigger are called its kaso. The chiefs being represented by the hull, and the commoners by the outrigger, the Kaso are between the two, belonging to neither and yet tied to both. These kaso are *vei-tathini* (to coin a term, 'brothered together') with the chief's sons by his marama (lady) wife, or wives, but they are far from being of equal rank with them. It takes nobility on both sides of the house to make up a full-blooded chief; and while a kaso is a chief by his father's side, he is a commoner by his mother's. The kaso are landless as far as birthright from the father is concerned. They are dependent on their high-born brother. They are his tail or following, and must do his bidding.

We find in the Old Testament a good illustration of the exclusion of the kaso from the inheritance. Sarah was Abraham's own spouse; Keturah was, as the Fijians put it, *watina lailai*, 'his little wife.' Hence Isaac was his heir; Midian and the rest were kaso. 'And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.' To the others he 'gave gifts, and sent them away into the east country.' In other words, he provided for them during his lifetime, but left them nothing. They were kaso. It is not a little interesting to note that though Ishmael was disinherited, he was not reckoned among the kaso, because Sarai 'gave' his mother to Abraham *in her own stead*, whereas Abraham 'took' Keturah. Both Isaac and Ishmael are called 'the sons of Abraham' in the genealogical table given in the First Book of Chronicles (1<sup>28</sup>), whereas the kaso are called 'the sons of Keturah.' So also the sons of the handmaidens of Leah and Rachel are numbered among the sons of Jacob.

Another clear instance of the Old Testament kaso is Jephthah, the son of Gilead by an alien woman, who certainly was not a 'harlot' according to our meaning of the word. Had she been a mere prostitute, her son could have had no status at all. The Jews were not particular in their use of the term when they spoke of low-caste alien women.

Jephthah, as a kaso, was landless; and since his full-born brethren refused to give him any help, he removed to Tob, where he became the captain of a band of 'vain men'—men of no standing, broken men—like some of those who flocked to David in the cave Adullam. In Jephthah's case, Tob, the place to which he removed, was most likely where his mother came from. The kaso, whose father is a great chief, is always sure of a welcome among his mother's people. But we have no certain information about the place.

Ancient records such as these go far to show that hereditary ruling chiefs were in the beginning simply heads of families. But, especially when descent is reckoned through males, one family takes precedence of another by birthright, and its Head is therefore exalted above his fellows. The Elder Brother, as a general rule, takes precedence of the younger, and the yavusa, of which he is the ancestor, takes precedence of the others. And furthermore, since in many tribes the descendants of the Elder Brother are the Elder Brothers to all generations, no wonder that so much importance

is attached to the Birthright. No wonder that Esau was despised for selling his to Jacob; no wonder that Joseph was 'displeased' when he saw the right hand of the dying Israel placed on Ephraim's head instead of that of Manasseh.

From the foregoing necessarily imperfect statement we may gather the broad principles of Land Tenure in Fiji from the commoners' point of view. Their statement is doubtless a fair representation of ancient custom; but we must bear in mind that there has long been in Fiji a power which has been untrammelled by ancient custom, and this is the power of the chiefs. It has been so long exercised that it has established for itself a sort of 'prescriptive right' to override ancient custom. Nor is this denied by the commoners. They acknowledge that they owe service to their lords, and they render it willingly; *but they most certainly deny that they owe it either as tenants or as serfs*. The chief, they say, is their lord, but he is not their landlord. He is but one of the Joint Tribal Owners together with them. As a member of the land-owning tribe, he has his own share of the tribal estate; and as far as rightful ownership is concerned, he has not one acre more. The lands were not vested in the ruling chief to the exclusion of the commoners, nor in any class of men that excludes them, and their service rendered to the chief was neither rent for lands held by his tenants, nor homage rendered to a feudal lord by his dependants. In the case of his own tribesmen, it was a freewill, religious offering made to the *Tu*, the Head of the House, the earthly representative of the Ancestral Gods, from whom both givers and receiver claimed a common descent. It differed from so-called ancestor worship only in that its recipient was still in life; for ancestor worship, in the stage it had reached in most of the Fijian tribes, was simply an act of filial piety, supplying the near ancestors with articles of which they stood in need. They partook of the invisible essences of the offerings, and their high-born incarnations consumed or utilized the gross material particles.

In the case of the subject tribes, the service rendered was not rent, but tribute. In the case of the emigrants, it was doubtless rent; but the rent-payers were not the tenants of the chief alone; for the lands they occupied were not vested in him alone. They were the tenants of

all the landowners, including the chief himself. The end of the whole matter is that the tenure of land in Fiji is tribal, and that the title is vested in all the full-born members of the tribe, commoners as well as chiefs. No man, whether chief or commoner, is the absolute owner of the soil; he has no more than a life interest in it.

He may dispose of that life interest, if he please, and if his kinsfolk consent; but he can do no more. Nor is the whole tribe the absolute owner of the soil. Each generation does but hold it in trust for the next, and the whole tribe is under obligation to hand down the tribal estate undiminished for ever.

## The Great Text Commentary.

### THE GREAT TEXTS OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

ACTS XXVI. 19.

**'Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.'**—R. V.

#### EXPOSITION.

**'Wherefore.'**—Literally *whence*, but sometimes logically used, for *which cause* as in Mt 14<sup>7</sup>, 1 Jn 2<sup>18</sup>, an idiom particularly frequent in the Epistle to the Hebrews (2<sup>17</sup> 3<sup>1</sup> 7<sup>25</sup> 8<sup>8</sup> 9<sup>18</sup>). This is the only sense appropriate in this place, where the reference is clearly to the previous description of the work to which he had been called.—ALEXANDER.

**'King Agrippa.'**—This Agrippa II. was the son of the Herod Agrippa who had been king of Judæa, and died in 44 (chap. 12). At the time of his father's death Agrippa II. was only seventeen, and he was in Rome at the Court of Claudius. In 53 he returned to Palestine, where we now find him at the age of thirty.

The emphasis lies on the word king. Christianity is the religion of glad tidings to the poor, and it began with them. But as it affects all human life, sooner or later it reaches the highest ranks and royalty itself. Since the Incarnation all kings and ruling powers within the sphere of Christian influence have had to make their reckoning with the church. They cannot avoid it, for the life of the church is intimately connected with the welfare of their subjects; and because of their public character and the widespread consequences of their actions, the attitude of rulers towards Christianity is at once most conspicuous and most pregnant with results for good or evil.—RACKHAM.

**'I was not disobedient.'**—The language of the apostle is significant in its bearing on the relations of God's grace and man's freedom. Even here, with the 'vessel of election,' 'constrained' by the love of Christ, there was the possibility of disobedience. There was an act of will in passing from the previous state of rebellion to that of obedience.—ELLCOTT.

**'Unto the heavenly vision.'**—The noun is used of Zacharias's vision in the temple (Lk 1<sup>23</sup>), and again by St. Paul, in reference to this and other like manifestations (2 Co 12<sup>1</sup>). It is distinctly a vision as contrasted with a dream.—PLUMPTRE.

THE SERMON.

#### The Heavenly Vision.

By the Rev. Alex. MacLaren, D.D.

St. Paul's words may be translated 'I *became* not disobedient'; as if the disobedience was the prior condition from which he was in the very act of passing by the yielding of his will.

i. Note, then, first, that this heavenly vision shines for us too. The revelation that is made to the understanding and the heart is the same whether it is made, as it was to Paul, through a heavenly vision, or, as it was to the other apostles, through the facts of the life of Jesus, or, as it is to us, by the record of the same facts, permanently enshrined in Scripture. Paul's sight of Christ was but for a moment, we can see Him as often and as long as we will, in the word, in the history of the world, in the pleading of the preacher, in the warnings that He breathes into our conscience, and in the illuminations which He flashes on our understanding. To every one this vision is granted.

ii. The vision of Christ, however perceived, comes demanding obedience. We have not done what God means us to do with any knowledge of Him which He grants unless we carry it into practice in our daily conduct. There is plenty of idle gazing at the heavenly vision, but let us remember that the Heavens are rent, not that we may *know*, but that we may *do*, and unless our knowledge makes us do and keep from doing a thousand things, it is only an idle vision which adds to our guilt. The obedience which we must give is the obedience of faith based upon the recognition of our own unworthiness and Christ's pity and pardon.