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FOLK-SONGS AND MYTHS FROM SAMOA. II

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Source: *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. 6, No. 1(21) (March, 1897), pp. 19-36

Published by: [The Polynesian Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20701446>

Accessed: 23/11/2014 16:04

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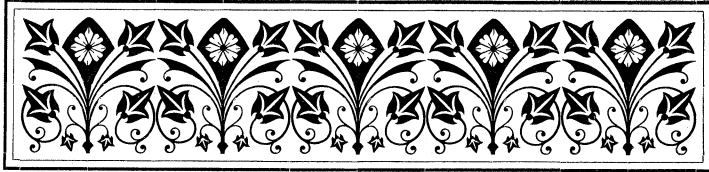
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## FOLK-SONGS AND MYTHS FROM SAMOA.

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BY JOHN FRASER, LL.D., SYDNEY.

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### II.

CHAOS AND STRIFE.—A *Solo*.

*O le Solo o le Va.—‘A Song about Strife.’*

INTRODUCTION.—I quite believe that this Story of Creation is genuine, and in no degree coloured by infiltrations from Europe. When Mr. Pratt went to Manu‘a in 1839, there were only two white men there, and these were so brutish in mind and body that a dog seemed as likely to know and communicate the Mosaic account of Creation as they were. These men were despised by all, and, even if they had possessed either the power or the inclination to talk about Creation, the natives would not have cared to listen to tales from such as they, much less adopt these tales into their own cosmogony. And there were no Samoan Bibles then; nor could any of the natives read English. Anyone who knows the Samoans will find it impossible to believe that such men of honour as were the old chiefs Fofu and Tauanu‘u who communicated this *Solo*, occupying, as they did, so prominent positions in these islands, would allow their sacred records to be corrupted by intermixture from abroad, or would recite this song as genuine when they knew it to be corrupt or borrowed. Such a thing would have been considered a disgrace to all.

The reader who attentively examines this poem will see that it has the whole cast of genuineness and nationality, and that its very thoughts are Samoan. The style is quite unlike prose. It has the abruptness and figurativeness of poetry, and of ancient poetry too; for, when Mr. Pratt and I were working together on it, we came upon words and expressions which even he, who knew Samoan better than the Samoans themselves, found it hard to understand and explain except from the context and composition of the words.

The introductory stanzas seem to describe the condition of the waters before the land was called up from the deep. In fact, these lines look like a description of Chaos; Tangaloa and the Tuli alone moved on the face of the waters. If the poet who composed the opening lines had been an Englishman of our time, the critics would have accused him of trying to imitate the lines on the “Falls of Lodore.”

On the original manuscript, Mr. Powell rendered a portion of this *Solo* into verse; but, in many places, I have been obliged to sacrifice his rhymes in order to make our translation approach more closely to the Samoan text.

## THE SOLO.

Le 'upu a le Tuli, 'o lea ata lea o Tagaloa-savali, ia Tagaloa-fa'a-tutupu-nu'u—

Galū lolo, ma galū fātio'ō,  
 Galū tau, ma galū fefatia'i :—  
 'O le auau peau ma le sologā peau,  
 Na ona fa'afua a e le fati :—  
 5 Peau ta'oto, peau ta'alolo,  
 Peau mālie, peau lagatonu,  
 Peau ālilī'a, peau la'aia,  
 Peau fātia, peau taulia,  
 Peau tautala, peau lagava'a,  
 10 Peau tagatā, peau a sifo mai gagae,  
 O lona soa le auau tata'a.

“ Tagaloa e, taumuli ai,  
 Tagaloa fia mālōlō ;  
 E mapu i le lagi Tuli mai vasa ;  
 15 Ta lili'a i peau a lalō.”

Fea le nu'u na lua'i tupu ?  
 Manu'a tele na mua'i tupu.  
 Se papa le tai lē a o'o atu ;  
 Ma le Masina e solo manao ;  
 20 O le La se tupua lē fano ;

E tupu le vai, tupu le tai, tupu le lagi.

Ifo Tagaloa e asiasi ;  
 Tagi i sisifō, tagi i sasaē ;  
 Na tutulu i le fia tula'i.  
 25 Tupu Savai'i ma mauga loa,  
 Tupu Fiti ma le atu Toga atoa ;  
 Tupu Savai'i ; a e muli  
 Le atu Toga, ma le atu Fiti,  
 Atoa le atu nu'u e iti ;  
 30 Ma Malae-Alamisi,  
 Samata-i-uta ma Samata-i-tai :

THE *SOLO* TRANSLATED.

The word of the Tuli, which is the emblem of Tangaloo the messenger, to Tangaloo the creator of lands—

*The condition of things before  
Creation began.*

- Rollers flooding, rollers dashing,  
Rollers struggling, rollers clashing :—  
The sweep of waters, and the extension of waves,  
Surging high but breaking not :—  
5 Waves reclining, waves dispersing,  
Waves agreeable, waves that cross not,  
Waves frightsome, waves leaping over,  
Waves breaking, waves warring,  
Waves roaring, waves upheaving,  
10 The peopled waves, waves from east to west,  
Whose companion is the wandering currents.

*The Tuli speaks.*

- “ O Tangaloo, who sittest at the helm [of affairs],  
Tangaloo[’s bird] desires to rest ;  
Tuli from the ocean must rest in the heavens ;  
15 Those waves below affright my breast.”

*The lands begin to appear.*

- Where is the land which first upsprang ?  
Great Manu’a first rose up.  
Beats on [Manua’s] rock his well-loved waves ;  
On it the moon’s desired light looks down ;  
20 The sun, like statue, changeless found,  
[Darts his refulgent beams around].  
{ The waters in their place appear,  
The sea too occupies its sphere ;  
The heavens ascend, [the sky is clear] ;  
To visit [the scene] Tangaloo comes down ;  
To the west, to the east, his wailing cry he sends ;  
{ A strong desire to have a place whereon to stand  
Possesses him ; [he bids the lands arise.]  
25 Savai’i with its high mountain then sprang up,  
And up sprang Fiti and all the Tongan group ;  
Savai’i arose [I say] ; and afterwards  
The Tongan group, and the group of Fiti ;  
[Together with] all the groups of small lands ;  
30 With the home of Alamisi [the two Samatas arose]—  
Samata inland and Samata by the sea,

Le nofoa a Tagaloa ma lona ta'atuga.  
 'O Manu'a na lua'i gafoa—  
 'O le mapusaga o Tagaloa—  
 35 A e muli le atu nu'u atoa.

Tumau i lou atu manga, ta'alolo ;  
 Tumau, Tagaloa, i mauga o Manu'a,  
 A e lele i lou atu luluga :  
 E fuafua ma fa'atatau,  
 40 Le va i nu'u po ua tutusa.  
 E levaleva le vasa ma savili ;  
 E lili'a Tagaloa ia peau ālili ;  
 Tagi i lagi sina 'ili'ili !  
 Upolu, sina fatu lāitiiti,  
 45 Tutuila, sina ma'a lāgisigisi,  
 Nu'u fa'aō e ā sisii :  
 E mapusaga i ai ali'i,  
 Tagaloa e'ai fa'afē'i'i.

Na fa'aifo ai le Fue-tagata ;  
 50 Fa'atagataina ai Tutuila,  
 Ma Upolu, ma Atua, ma A'ana,  
 Atoa ma Le Tuamasaga.  
 Ona gaoi fua o tino, e lē a'ala,  
 E leai ni fatu-mānava.  
 55 Logologo Tagaloa i luga,  
 Ua isi tama a le Fue-sā,  
 Na ona gaoi i le la ;  
 E lē vaea, o lē lima,  
 E lē ulua, e lē fofoga,  
 60 E leai ni fatu-mānava !  
 Ifoifo Tagaloa i sisifo,  
 I fetalaiiga e tu'u titino :  
 " Fua o le Fue, ni nai ilo,  
 E totoni a'u fa'asinosino ;  
 65 Outou loto na momoli ifo ;  
 Ia pouli outou tino ;  
 Ia malama outou mata,  
 E tali a'i Tagaloa,  
 A e pe ā maui ifo e savalivali."

70 Fiti tele, ma lou atu sasae,

The seats of Tangaloa and his footstool.  
 But great Manu'a first grew up—  
 The resting place of Tangaloa—  
 35 After that all other lands.

*Tangaloa now raises Upolu  
 and Tutuila.*

Abide in thy mountains, these visits [and rest] ;  
 Abide, Tangaloa, on Manu'a's high crest,  
 But fly now and then to thy group in the west :  
 To measure and compare the space  
 40 Which lies between, from place to place.  
 The ocean between is long and breezy ;  
 Terrific waves affright Tangaloa ;  
 'Oh for a little coral strand !' thus he cries to heaven ;  
 Upolu, a very small bit of rock,  
 45 And Tutuila, a little stony land,  
 Are isles that thereupon immediately arise ;  
 Where chiefs [in aftertimes may] find a place of rest,  
 And gods, tho' pinched for room, have many a feast.

*The origin of man.*

And hither came down [from heaven] the peopling vine,  
 50 Which gave to Tutuila its inhabitants,  
 And to Upolu, and Atua, and A'ana,  
 Together with Le Tuamasanga.  
 The bodies only move, they have no breath,  
 Nor heart's pulsation.  
 55 [The godlike] Tangaloa learns [in heaven] above,  
 The sacred vine to gender life has now begun,  
 But that its offspring only wriggle in the sun ;  
 No legs, no arms they have,  
 No head, no face,  
 60 Nor heart's pulsation.  
 Tangaloa then, descending to the west,  
 Speaks but the word and it is done :  
 "These fruits, the product of the vine are worms,  
 But them I fashion into member'd forms ;  
 65 To each of you from above I now impart a will ;  
 Opacity must be the state of your bodies still ;  
 Your faces, they must shine, [I so ordain]  
 That they may Tangaloa entertain,  
 When he comes down to walk this earth again."

*The poet re-asserts the priority  
 of Manu'a.*

70 O great Fiti, with all thy eastern isles,

E ta'ape mauga, a e fa'atasi Manu'a tele :  
 'O Fiti, 'o Toga, 'o le Papa sese'e,  
 Ma le Masoa felefele,  
 Na pāu le lagi toe tete'e ;  
 75 Savai'i e lalan fa'ateve  
 E mamalu fua mauga ina tetele, a e le au 'ese ;  
 E āuga ia fatu-lē-gae'e i Manu'a,  
 Ia le Fatu ma le 'Ele'ele.

Fanau le Papa e faitau i nunu,  
 80 Fua selau e fua sefulu—  
 Ne'i ai se tāese.  
 'O le luai ali'i Alele,  
 'O le alo o Tagaloa ; na ta fa'ase'e.  
 O fea le nu'u na lua'i tupu ?  
 85 'O Manu'a tele na lua'i tupu,  
 E te mata-fanūa i le mata-Saua i Manu'a tele ;  
 A e muli-fanūa i Ofu ma Tufue'e.

Ifoifo i Malae-a-Vevesi ;  
 Lepalepa i Malae-a-Toto'a.  
 90 Na sao ai le alofi o Tagaloa,  
 Po 'o fono ia le alofi ;  
 A e lomaloma :—  
 “‘Ava mua Tufuga i lona alofi,  
 A e ola atu le va'a lalago !  
 95 Toe i le lagi i'a atoa,  
 A e atu le ola a Tagaloa.  
 Fagotalia le tai e Losi.  
 E tau i le lagi ona tafo'e.  
 Sā-Tagaloa i tou aofia ane,  
 100 Tou fono i le malae i lagi,  
 I Malae-Papa ma Malae-a-Vevesi,  
 Ma Malae-a-Toto'a,  
 I Malae-Asia ma Malae-Tafuna'i,  
 I lologo ma Pule-Fa'atasi.  
 105 Malae-a-Toto'a tou fono ai,  
 I si oa mōu inā 'a'e ;  
 Pe mua va'a, pe mua fale,  
 Alaala Tagaloa ma lona tapua'i,  
 A e ifo Tufuga ma ona au tauave.”

110 O ai ea na lua'i oa ?

{ And thy scattered mountains,  
 { Yet each and all [look to] great Manu'a ;  
 Fiti, Tonga, the slippery rock,  
 And the spreading Masoa,  
 Which raised again the fallen heavens ;  
 75 Savai'i, leafy like the *teve*,  
 In vain displays its lofty range ;  
 She cannot supplant the firm seed-stone of Manu'a,  
 [Whose father is] the stone, and [mother] the earth,

*Manu'a and its first king.*

The Rock produced, and soon could show,  
 80 At least ten hundred sons—  
 Let none gainsay the truth [in unbelief].  
 Alele was Manua's first known chief,  
 The son of Tangaloa ; he wrought unrighteous judgment.  
 Where is that land that first upsprang ?  
 85 [I answer,] great Manua first arose.  
 The Saua point is its eastern bound ;  
 At Ofu and Tufue'e is the leeward end of the land.

*Tangaloa's council.*

The gods come down to the *fono* of Confusion ;  
 They rest quietly at the *fono* of Tranquillity.  
 90 Here Tangaloa's [the builder] council was convened,  
 The council of the circle of the chiefs on high ;  
 While thus he spake, a solemn silence reigned :—  
 "Let the Builder have the first *kava* cup in his circle,  
 Then perfect will be the ship whose keel is laid !  
 95 To heaven's disposal leave all fish besides,  
 But offering unto Tangaloa made must be bonito.  
 Let fisher Losi ply his craft the wide seas o'er,  
 But offer unto heaven the choicest of his store.  
 And ye of Tangaloa's race, when ye desire to meet,  
 100 May make the heavens your noble council seat ;  
 Or *fono* of the Rock, or where Confusion reigned,  
 Or peaceful *fono*, which Tranquillity is named ;  
 The *fono* of Asia, the *fono* of Assembly,  
 Or of Lolonga, or Pule-Fa'atasi.  
 105 At *fono* of Tranquillity your councils you must hold,  
 When ye build ship or house ;  
 But whether ship or house be first, [this is my will],  
 In heaven will Tangaloa sit at peace with his peers,  
 But the Builder and his workmen will come down."

*Confusion and strife.*

110 Pray, who was first a work so honoured to begin ?



Na lua'i va'a Tui-Manu'a.  
 Na fa'aifo le fale Tufuga—  
 O le fale Tufuga e taomana,  
 A e toatasi le fatamānu.

115 Fa'aifo le atua gau-aso ;

Sātia si o'ū ta fale ua ato,  
 O !!

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NOTES.

Line 1.—The title of this poem in the original is 'O le Solo o le Va.' Now *va* means 'a space between two objects, variance, confusion.' I cannot help thinking, both from the meaning of the word *va* and from the scope of the opening stanzas, that there is here a parallel to the Mosaic account of the first acts in the creation of the world ; for this *solo* shows an antecedent state of chaos, in which the waters are surging about ; there is 'a space between,' *va*, which (Gen. i. 6), 'divides the waters from the waters,' for the Tuli (lines 12-14) flies away from the 'lower waves' of the ocean to Tangaloa's seat above. Then, in the poem, after the creation of Manu'a's land the heavens grow up (line 21) ; the moon first looks down benignly on the land (line 19), and then the sun ; the waters and the sea occupy their appointed sphere. Tangaloa comes down and calls for other lands (line 24) ; then, much later, he creates mankind (line 65). Now, in Genesis, the heaven and the earth are first created, and the waters long continue to sweep over the face of the earth. A firmament, the lower sky which we call the heavens (*lit.*) 'that which is lifted up,' is placed between the upper and nether waters ; the seas retire into their place, and various portions of the dry land appear ; later on the sun and the moon are made to shine on the earth ; then, after fish, fowl, and beast, comes man, the last act of creation.

The view which I here take of the application of the Samoan word *va* is confirmed by the word *pada* in the Motu language of New Guinea ; *pa-da* is the same root-word as *va*, and means 'the space between earth and sky.'

*Tuli* or *Turi* is a common bird in Polynesia ; it is the *Charadrius fulvus*, the Golden Plover of Australia also. Every family in Samoa has its own tutelary animal—its *aitu*—a pigeon or some other bird, a fish, &c. This *aitu* is specially revered by the members of the family from generation to generation, and none of them will ever mention its name. A convert renounces heathenism by publicly destroying his *aitu*. The spectators stand by, expecting that he will immediately fall down dead.

It is an odd coincidence that some of the Australian blacks connect this plover with the acts of creation. The tribe at Lake Tyers (Victoria) call the grey plover *bunjil borandang*. Now *Bunjil* is the Victorian name for the Creator of all things, and the verb *bunjilliko* means to 'make, fashion, create.'

The Tagalas of the Philippine Islands believe that, at first, there was only sky and water, and between these flew a glede which, being weary and finding no place to rest, made variance between the water and the sky ; the sky (*cf.* Tangaloa's action here) then loaded the water with many islands ; and so the glede got rest.

The first to own a ship was great Manu'a's king ;  
 This errand brought the Builder's people down,  
 A clan of workmen as ten thousand known,  
 With architect-in-chief but one alone.

[The tradition goes on to say that the workmen next proceeded to build a splendid house for the king of Manu'a, without first consulting Tangaloa. The god, therefore, descended in anger and destroyed the buildings, scattering the builders. The myth accordingly ends with these two lines :]

115 { The rafter-breaking god came down ;  
 { [With wrath inflamed and angry frown ;]  
 { Alas ! my building all complete,  
 { Is scattered in confusion great.

Tangaloa is the chief god of the Polynesians.\* In this poem, line 90 and elsewhere, he is represented as a quiescent god, the origin and cause of all things. In these respects he resembles the Indian Brahmā. Tangaloa loves absolute rest and peace (line 108). Although his abode is in the heavens, he intervenes in the affairs of men (lines 64 and 115) ; in his active manifestations he has many forms, as, *Tagaloa fa'a-tutupu-nu'u* : 'Tangaloa who makes (*fa'a*) the lands (*nu'u*) spring up (*tutupu*)' ; *Tagaloa savali* : 'Tangaloa who walks,' that is 'the messenger,' 'the ambassador' ; *Tagaloa totonu* : Tangaloa who puts everything 'straight' ; *Tagaloa le-fuli* : Tangaloa the 'immovable' ; *Tagaloa asiati-nu'u* : Tangaloa the 'visitor of lands,' 'the omnipresent.'

10.—The peopled wave. It is hard to understand what that means, although it is the translation given to me. In the original, *tagata*, which is a noun meaning 'men,' 'mankind,' is evidently used as an adjective to describe the waves in another of their aspects. I think it would be better to give to *tagata* a verbal transitive meaning as in lines 49 and 50, and to translate *peau tagata* as the 'peopling waves,' referring to the fact, so common in Polynesia, that the waves and storms have often driven canoes with their living freight of men and women from one island to another, and have thus contributed to the 'peopling' of these islands. But probably, after all, the word *tagata* in the manuscript may be a mistake for some other word.

11.—'Wandering current' here seems to be the great equatorial current which crosses the Pacific from east to west.

13.—Desires to rest. The word *mālolo* means 'to rest absolutely,' 'to be quiescent,' but *mapu*, in the next line, means 'to rest from work,' *sc.* here, from the work of creation. The Tuli is the bird through which Tangaloa is represented when he works—the *ata*, 'shadow' or second self of Tangaloa.

17.—'Great Manu'a' (for Manuka) is not 'great' because of its size, but it is 'great' in importance as the first resting-place of the Polynesian race ; like the

\* This statement requires some qualification. The Maoris of New Zealand form a not inconsiderable portion of the Polynesian race, and yet Tangaroa with them is by no means their chief god. As with the Hawaiians, Tane was the principal Maori god, though in later years Tangaroa—or, as they call him, Kanaloa—has taken the first place. *Vide* Fornander.—EDITORS.

Delos of Ancient Greece, it is the sacred hearth-stone of the race. The Manu'a cluster, in the east of the Samoan group, consists of three rocky volcanic islands, Taū, Ofu, Olosenga; of those Taū is the largest, and is about eight miles long.

18-19.—The moon; the sun. The Polynesians, like the Gauls and some other ancient nations, gave precedence to the moon, and counted by nights, not by days. The sun, they say, is changeless like a statue, and every day is very much like another; whereas the moon changes, and they can reckon time by its phases.

21.—The waters here are *vai*, 'fresh water,' and in the next line *tai*, 'salt water,' is the sea. The poem thus makes a distinction between *vai*, the waters 'above the firmament' (Gen. i.), and *tai*, the waters below; the space between is *te va*. The science of this passage seems to be correct enough; for as soon as the sun (line 20) sends his hot beams on the ocean, vapours arise and form reservoirs of fresh water in the clouds above.

22.—To visit. Here Tangaloa becomes *Tagaloa-asiasi-nu'u*: 'Tangaloa the visitor of lands.'

24.—A strong desire. The mere desire creates the object desired. See also lines 43, 46. One of the Indian Upanishads says, "The Primeval Being saw nothing but himself in the Universe, and said 'I am I.' He felt no delight, being alone; he wished for another, and instantly became such; he caused himself to fall in twain, and thus became husband and wife."

25.—High mountain. There is on Savai'i, a lofty mountain called *Mauga-loa*.

27.—Arose Savai'i. A Samoan poet will always maintain that the Samoan islands came into existence before all others.

28.—The Group of Fiti. Here I observe that the Fijis, which are Melanesian islands, are included in Tangaloa's realm, and there he dwells as well as in Samoa. This is quite in harmony with statements made in other Samoan poems. In one of these, Tangaloa in anger, changes the colour of two of his sons; the one he makes brown and the other black.

30.—Alamisi; the two Samatas. The two Samatas are now villages on the south side of Savai'i; at the west end of the island is the descent of Sā-Fe'e, the Samoan Hades. Alamisi is another place on that island; the word means a 'land-crab,' but the Samoans have a tradition that *alamisi* was a quadruped brought down from heaven for them to feast on long ago.

32.—His footstool. Warriors sat on a wooden stool, and an armour-bearer carried this about for their use when required.

33.—Manu'a first grew up. All the legends agree in giving priority to Manuka, and its bards continually assert this priority (cf. line 72); 'thy mountains' are the mountains of Manuka.

38.—'Thy group in the west' may be Fiji.

39.—To measure the space. It was the duty of Tangaloa, as the great 'artificer' (line 114) to see that the islands were all at their proper distances from each other, and that everything was in order. By a poetical ellipsis, line 41 implies that he is flying towards the west, and describes his experience while so doing.

44-45.—Upōlu and Tutuila are two of the larger islands of the Samoan group.

47.—A place of rest. 'Rest from toil,' *mapusaga*.

48.—Tangaloa, pinched for room ; *i.e.*, the islands are too small for the dignity and the convenience of the gods. At all feasts the gods received the first share of the food and the drink.

49.—The peopling vine. The 'vine' here is a native climbing-plant, for which the general name is *fue* ; it is called 'peopling' here because it is connected with the origin of mankind. The Samoan tradition asserts that from this vine came the worms or maggots which ultimately were turned into men and women. It is described in this passage as *fue-tagata*, *lit.* 'the mankind vine,' and one variety of it is called by the Samoans *fue-sā*, the 'sacred *fue*.' In another legend, the *fue* is represented as the special gift of Tangaloa ; he caused it to be brought down from heaven and set in a place exposed to the sun ; there 'it brought forth something like worms, a wonderful multitude of worms' ; these he fashioned (see note 64, *infra*) into men and women.

I think that the *fue* bears some relation to the sacred *soma* plant of India, or its more modern substitutes. Like the *soma*, the *fue* is a creeper and climber, and is a sacred plant ; one variety of it in Samoa is a *Hoya*, and this belongs to the same natural order, the *asclepiads*, as the *Sarcostemma*, which is generally considered now as the nearest approach to the original *soma*. Another variety of the *fue* is full of a refreshing juice which the natives drink ; so also the *soma* juice was used as a drink in the Vedic sacrifices. The *soma* had reference to the generative power of the sun ; so also the *fue* in the Samoan legend here. The word *soma* comes from the Sanskrit root *su*, 'to bear, bring forth, squeeze out juice,' and from it *suta* means, 'a son, a daughter, children' ; so also the Samoan word *fue* is allied to *fua*, 'to produce fruit,' *fua*, 'fruit, a child.'

In New Britain *toto* is a strong climbing vine and a *Hoya*, like the *fue*. It is the 'Sun-nooser.' Like the *asclepiads*, too, it has large fleshy flowers.

51.—*Atua*, *A'ana*, *Tuamasanga*, are the three districts of the island of Upolu.

61.—To the west. The god comes down on the declining rays of the sun.

62.—One word. *Fetalaiga*, in the text, means a decisive decree spoken by one having the highest authority ; it is a word which none but chiefs may use. With this compare, 'Let there be light, and there was light.'

64.—I fashion, *totosi*. This word corresponds with the meaning of the French verb *tailler*, 'to fashion,' for it means 'to cut and shape into form and limbs.'

65.—A will, *loto*, which is 'the heart and inward parts' ; this, as in the Homeric age, was taken to be the seat of the affections and desires.

66.—Opacity, &c. Literally, 'Let your bodies be darkness ; let your eyes (face) be light.' *Mata*, 'the eye, the face,' comes from a root which means 'to shine.'

69.—To walk this earth. Here Tangaloa becomes *Tagaloa-savali*, 'Tangaloa 'the walker.' See note 1, *supra*.

70.—O Great Fiti, *Fiti tele*. The Fijians themselves call this island *Viti levu*, 'the great Fiji.'

71.—To great Manu'a look. That is, they cannot overshadow the importance of Manuka. See note 6, *supra*.

72.—Slippery rock. There is such a rock on Tutuila ; boys slide on it.

73.—The spreading *masoa*. The *masoa* is the arrowroot tree of Tahiti, found there and on all the other islands. As it grows, its leaves spread out like the

surface of a round table; hence the fable that it was by the growth of a prodigious tree of this *Tacca* genus the heavens were raised aloft. Can the sacredness of the Dodonean oak and the Norse *ygdrasil* have originated in some such idea as this? *Masoa* seems to be used here as a synonym for the name of some one of the islands of the Pacific.

75.—Leafy like the *teve*. The *teve* is also a variety of the arrowroot tree; but the root of it is so acrid that criminals are compelled to bite it as a punishment. The bite causes severe blistering of the lips and mouth.

77.—The firm seed-stone, *fatu lē gae'e*. *Gae'e* means 'to move,' as a stone is moved by means of a lever; *lē* is the negative 'not'; and *fatu* is 'the hard stone of a fruit, the kernel.' The whole expression here suggests the idea that Manuka had a fruitful seed dropped into its bosom, which sprang up and became a mighty tree, spreading its branches into all the islands of the Pacific. This seed-stone represents the first ancestors of the present population of Eastern Polynesia. The notion that mankind first came from eggs or seeds is a very ancient one.

*Fatu*, as an adjective, means 'hard' in contrast with the rest of the fruit around the kernel, which is soft. The word *fatu* is quoted as a proof that the Polynesians are of Malay origin, for the Malay word *batu* means 'hard.' But on the same reasoning the negroid natives of New Britain and the Duke of York island must also be Malays, for they say *wat* 'a stone,' and *pat-ina*, the 'hard seed of a fruit'; and the Melanesians of the New Hebrides must also be Malays, for the Aneityumese say *inhat* (i.e., *in-fat*) for 'stone,' and the Eromangans say *nevat* (i.e., *ne-fat*), the *in* and *ne* being merely demonstrative prefixes. I observe also that the New Hebrideans treat 'stone' as a word of their own, for they give to it the prefix which belongs to words used as nouns in their own languages. And the same word is found in New Zealand; there *whatu* is 'hail,' 'the pupil (i.e., kernel) of the eye,' and *ko-whatu* is 'stone.'

79.—The Rock. How the Samoans came to regard 'the rock'—a hard parent—as their first progenitor, I cannot tell, possibly from their having lost the meaning which *papa* originally had in the language of their ancestors. At all events in the genealogy of the kings of Samoa, the very first words are 'Papa-tu (standing-rock) married Papa-ele (earth-rock) and their son Ma'a-ta'anoa (loose-stone) married Papa-pala (mud-rock).' I suppose man has always been regarded as 'of the earth earthy.' But in the mythology of the Hervey islanders,\* 'Papa' is a woman, the last of the primary gods. Her name means 'foundation,' and that is more appropriate here than 'rock' in Samoan.

82.—Alele. His story is given in another myth; he was a perverter of justice, for he was a plunderer; hence the expression here 'pretence of justice,' which literally means 'he caused the blows (of justice) to glance aside.'

88.—*Fono* of confusion. I have used the Samoan word *fono* here and in other lines simply because I can find no word in English to convey the idea concisely. In the text the word is *malae*, and means 'a place where assemblies of the people are held.' Every village had a *malae* or open space where the villagers came together for public purposes, but only certain places had the right to hold a *fono* or general assembly for the discussion of weightier matters. In such place-names as *Malae-Alamisi*, the word *malae* corresponds in its use to the Latin *Appii-forum*, and the English *market-Bosworth*.

\* As also in New Zealand.—EDITORS.

91.—The council. *Fono* is the word for a council of the gods or of chiefs; *alofi* is 'a circle of chiefs.'

92.—Solemn silence. Literally: 'but (they were) very quiet.' Compare with this the Homeric councils. In Samoa it is highly unseemly to disturb a *fono* by any noise; see the myths about Fanonga and Pava.

93.—Let the Builder. Tangaloa is here called *Tufuga*, 'the carpenter,' 'the builder.' *Tufuga* is not now a word of dignity; it would not now be applied to a chief, much less to a god. This fact, and other similar words in the poem, go to prove its antiquity.

India too has degraded the 'Carpenter'; but in early Indian story there was a famous race called the Takshakas or 'builders,' and although at the present time artizans have a low place in the community, yet in some parts the carpenter still has special religious privileges and functions. Sakya Muni's own hymn on becoming a Buddha says: 'I must travel if I do not discover the Builder [God] whom I seek. Painful are repeated transmigrations; I have seen the Architect [and said], "Thou shalt not build me another house; thy rafters are broken; thy roof timbers scattered; my mind is detached; I have attained to the extinction of desire."'

Kava cup. This is the beverage so well known in many of the Pacific Islands. It is made from the roots of *Piper methysticum*. See other myths and other sources of information about it. The first kava cup: a first libation to the gods at a feast was an almost universal custom.

At great feasts in Polynesia, the proper ritual is this: The kava drink having been prepared in the usual way, the official cup-bearer approaches the bowl which contains it, puts in his hands and with his fingers lifts the fibre from the liquid, and so drains it; he then calls out the name of the god, either Tangaloa or some local god, to whom the first libation is made; he next carries the cup to the chief who of those present is highest in rank, and so in succession to the others. With this compare the office of Ganymede and the libations of the gods both in Greece and Rome.

94.—Whose keel is laid. To the Polynesian islanders canoe-building is the most important of all architectural achievements; and so they will prosper in it, if they have first shown, by libations, due reverence for the gods.

96.—Must be bonito. Tangaloa here claims the bonito as his favourite fish; and the fishers, if they wish to secure his favour and get prosperity, must show him respect by offering a bonito as first-fruits as soon as they come to land. Any neglect will bring disaster.

97.—Fisher Losi appears in other Samoan legends. He is the foremost of his craft.

99.—Tangaloa's race, *Sā-Tagaloa*. There were numerous chiefs in Samoa who bore the name of Tangaloa and claimed descent from him, and yet none of them were 'high chiefs.' Cf. the Homeric 'Diotrophées basilées.'

104.—Asia. The name Asia or Atia occurs also in the traditions of the Barotongans, for they say that their ancestor-land was in Atia. Where was Atia?

Mr. Ella's discovery (see the last No. of this Journal) that *avaiki* in the Mangarevan dialect fifty years ago meant 'down,' 'below,' points to the West (Samoan *gaga-ifo*, *sis-ifo*) as the original fatherland (Hawaiki) of the Polynesians.

109.—His workmen. Tangaloa, in other myths, is said to send down these workmen to do his behests.

114.—Architect-in-chief. In the building of a house or a canoe there is always a 'chief architect' to give orders and to superintend the work. The real meaning of *fatāmanu* in the text here is 'scaffolding.'

It is much to be regretted that the Rev. T. Powell did not write down here the rest of this interesting *solo*. The substance of the lines omitted is given just as I found it in his manuscript.

115.—The rafter-breaking god. Tangaloa destroys the main beams (*aso*) of the roof, and thus the whole building falls. Cf. note 93, *supra*.

116.—Alas! is scattered, &c. This is the exclamation of the king on seeing his house destroyed. Samoan recitations end with a long-drawn *O-o!* from the mouth of the speaker.

### III.

#### LE FOA-FOAGA.—THE CREATION.

INTRODUCTION.—This brief song (*solo*) appears to be a fragment, but it was given in this form by Rapi-sa-Soatoā of Fitiuta (Manu'a) in 1870. I place it here because it corroborates the *Solo o le Va* as to the origin of man. The unartificial way in which it refers to the contents of that and other Samoan songs as well-known things is also to me a proof that both they and it are genuine. As usual, the allusions in it are not manifest to us without some interpolations in the translation. As usual, also, the poet magnifies the priority of Manu'a—because there the first canoe was made, spirits and men had their origin, the kingly dignity was first established, and the *senga* parroquet had its first abode.

#### 'O LE SOLO I LE FOA-FOAGA.

- Fa'aifo lalago 'o le Folasa.  
 Na ta i-fea le luai va'a ?  
 Tonusia lalago 'o le Folasa.  
 Na ta i-fea le luai va'a ?  
 5 Tupu se aitu, tupu se tagata.  
 'O Li'a ma Li'a le luai tui.  
 Gasalo ao i Luluga,  
 Ia Tui-Toga ma Tui-Manu'a,  
 Pea foi le Tui-A'ana,  
 10 'O le tui-fa'atu-lalo-fata.  
 Fa'avā fua Atua ma A'ana  
 [Ia] le tama a le ilo ma le fu'e-sā.  
 A e tupu le sega i Manu'a na,  
 E fa'avā fua lo ta Manu'a,  
 15 A e tupu le sega i Fiti-uta.—O !

#### THE SOLO TRANSLATED.

The props of Le-Folasa's canoe came down [from heaven].  
 Where did they cut the first canoe ?  
 The props of Folasa's canoe were set upright.  
 Where did they cut the first canoe ?

- 5 [’Twas where] a spirit-god grew up, a man grew up.  
Li’a and Li’a were the first princes.  
[Thence] the kingly dignity passed on to Luluga,  
To Tui-Tonga and Tui-Manu’a,  
And so also to Tui-A’ana,
- 10 Who is *tui-fa’atu-lalo-fata*.  
In vain Atua and A’ana are rivals [with me]  
[About] the child of the worm and the *fue-sā*.  
But [certainly] the *senga* first grew up in Manu’a.  
In vain do they set up rivalry with our Manu’a,
- 15 For the *senga* grew up in Fiti-uta [of Manu’a].—O!

## NOTES.

1.—Props of canoe, *lalago*; also ‘a chief’s bamboo pillow.’

3.—Set upright. Preparations were made for the building of the first canoe. In the *Solo o le Va* (*q.v.*) the builders are said to have come down from heaven.

Folasa, a famous prophet (*i’ite*). See other myths, such as that about Malitetoa and the *senga* bird.

5.—A spirit-god, *se aitu*. In another myth—that about Valua and Tiapa—both spirits (*aitu*) and men are said to have first gone forth from Manu’a; line 2 says, “*Folau aitu, folau tagata.*”

6.—*Li’a* means ‘a chief’s dream, a vision.’

7.—Kingly dignity, *ao*. See the myth about Ali’a-tama. *Luluga* here may mean ‘to the west, westwards.’

10.—*Tui-fa’atu-lalo-fata*, ‘the-prince-who-causes-to-stand-under-the-pal-enquin’—a special prerogative of his dignity. Cf. Egyptian and Eastern kingly processions, with attendant bearers of the *fata* and fly-flappers. Another emblem of authority in Samoa was the *to’o-to’o*, a staff or rod, perhaps five feet long, carried in the hand.

11.—Atua and A’ana are districts of Upolu. The poets there try to dispute the priority of Manu’a, but in vain; so says this *solo*.

12.—The child, &c. The first men were the progeny of the *fue sā*, ‘the holy bindweed,’ which produced worms, afterwards fashioned into men. See the *Solo o le Va*.

13.—The *senga*. See the myths about this bird. It is a pretty little migratory parroquet in these islands.

15.—Fiti-uta, ‘inland Fiji,’ is in the little island of Taū of the Manu’a Group.



## IV.

VAVAU AND HIS FAMILY.—A *TALA*.*Vavāu ma Sā-Vavāu.*

INTRODUCTION.—This story is about one of the ancients—one of the founders of the Samoan race; for *vavāu* is ‘ancient,’ and *sā*, as a prefix, means the family of the person named. *Sā-Tagaloa*, for instance, means the children and descendants of the god *Tangaloa*. *Vavau* was one of these; and so, when *Tangaloa* in high heaven saw men on earth below quarrelling and fighting, he sent down his son *Vavau* to show them how to live at peace; but in this errand *Vavau* failed, and *Tangaloa* in anger expelled him from the heavens. So *Vavau* and his family had to depart. The story then goes on to tell the names and some of the achievements of the sons, several of whom figure in our Samoan myths. It ends with a list of the descendants of *Tangaloa* himself in the *Tangaloa* line.

THE *TALA* TRANSLATED.

*Tangaloa* was the chief god—the god of the sky. There were many *Tangaloas*, (but) the principal one is *Tangaloa-sisila*, ‘the keen-eyed.’ The keen-eyed *Tangaloa* looked down on the world; it was bad. They were fierce to one another. Then *Tangaloa-sisila* said to *Vavau* his son that he would send him down to show them the *Malae-a-toto’a*. Then he went down. He did not show the *Malae-a-toto’a*, but he showed the *Malae-a-vevesi*. Then *Tangaloa-sisila* was angry, and *Vavau* and the *Sā-Vavau* were driven down. Then said *Vavau*, ‘I was made a sacrifice; I am taken for *Tingilau*, the sister of the man that has the daily offering.’ *Tingilau* is the sister.

2. *Tutu* and *Ila* were people of the dispersion of the *Sā-Vavau*; they two reached *A* by swimming, and their child *Salaia* was born there. Another person of the dispersion of the *Sā-Vavau* is *Au-au*. He came down and got to the grove of *toi* trees; hence his name *Le Au-au-ulu-toi*. *Au-au* went to bathe in the fresh water which the birds frequented. Then he gave directions to kindle a fire, (for) he was about to call to the birds to fall down; and they fell down; hence his name *Au-au-māna*.

3. Another man of the *Sā-Vavau* was *Le Mana*: he was the child of *Le Mana*. He and his son *Folasa* went down from the sky. Then *Folasa* took to wife *Maia*, a woman of the *Folasa* line. Then *Maia* bore to *Folasa* *Uli* and *Ma’o*, the spirit-gods of *Atua*. Another man of the dispersion of the *Sā-Vavau* was *Tapu-a’au*. *Fasi* was married to *Tapu-a’au* and bore to him their (two) sons, *To’o-uta* and *To’o-tai*. The *Fe’e* was the spirit-god of *Tapu-a’au*. Then the *Fe’e* became a spirit-god of *A’ana*. *Sangatēa* was another of the dispersion of the *Sā-Vavau*. *Sangatēa* went down to *Apolima*. *Sangatēa* took to wife *Tava’e-lua-lanu* and *Sina-lua* in foreign (parts). Then *Tava’e-lua-lanu*

bore to Sangatēa (a daughter) Sina-ofu-fanga. This was the word of Vavau and Sā-Vavau—'Cover things up because of Tangaloa the keen-eyed.'

4. This is the genealogy of the chief spirit Tangaloa: Tangaloa is 'the immovable,' and his son was Tangaloa 'the keen-eyed.' The son of Tangaloa-sisila was Tangaloa langi; his son was Tangaloa-ulu-tua-tua; his son was Tangaloa-pu'u; his son was Tangaloa-asi-asi. The son of Tangaloa-asi-asi was Tangaloa-soli-soli-nu'u; his son was Tangaloa-fa'af-ofo-nu'u; his daughter was Mai-u'u-le-apae (Moi-u'u-le-Apai); her sister was Le-Senga.

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NOTES.

1.—A *tala* in Samoan is a story given in prose; hence the late R. L. Stevenson was called *tusi-tala*, 'story-writer,' by the Samoans. A *solo* is a poem on some lofty subject, but without metre or rhyme.

Was the chief god; '*aitu sili*.' *Aitu* is only one of the spirits of the lower order, not an *atua* or high god. The Tangaloas in this myth are all inferior deities, except Tagaloa-lē-fuli, 'Tagaloa the immovable'; and Tagaloa-i-le-langi, 'Tagaloa of the sky,' who seem to have got into low company here.

*Sisila*, 'to look steadily, to see'—a chief's word; reduplicated, it is *sila-sila*, 'looked down,' as in next clause.

World; '*lalo-lagi*'; lit. 'under-the-sky.'

*Vavau* means 'ancient,' 'lasting ever.' Sā-Vavau is the 'Vavau-family.' Malae-a-Vavau is a village on Tāu, named from them. For '*malae*,' see note 88 in Myth ii.

'Son' all through this myth is *atalii*, 'the son of a common man'; not *alo*, 'the son of a chief.'

The *Malae-a-toto'a*, 'the *malae* of tranquillity,' and the *Malae-a-Vevesi*, 'the *malae* of disturbance or confusion,' are mentioned in lines 101 and 105 of Myth ii., the *Solo-o-le-Va*.

2.—*Tutu* and *Ila*; thus they account for the name of the island Tutuila. Dispersion; *ta'apega*, that is, 'their expulsion.'

'A' is a place a little to the west of Aoloau. *Sala-ia* means 'fined, punished.'

*Toi* is the *Alphitonia excelsa*; 'grove' is *ulu*; '*au-au*' means 'to swim about'—a chief's word.

Frequented; '*lele ane*'; *lele* means 'to fly.' Call; *valau*, 'to call, to give directions.'

Fell down; 'an instance of *mana*, miraculous or supernatural power'; hence his new name.

3.—From the sky. The word here is *i* 'to,' which seems to be a mistake for *ai*, 'from.' Line.—*Atu*, 'a row,' 'a series.'

*Uti* is 'black,' and *Ma'o* is the name of a tree. *Ma'o-ma'o* is a kind of bird; the Samoans do not like to hear this bird's cry; they say, 'Don't provoke the bird; its cry will bring rain.'

Their (two) sons. *A la tama*, that is 'the sons of them two.'

*To'o-uta*, &c. *To'o* is 'a perch'; *uta* is 'inland'; and *tai* is the 'sea.' *Fe'e* is the 'octopus.' *Sā-le-Fe'e*, 'the family of Fe'e,' is a name for the Samoan Hades.

Apolima, a very small island, about two miles in circuit, off Upolu.

Tava'e-lua-lanu, 'the frigate-bird of the two lagoons'; *lanu* is a lagoon of fresh water, often on the top of a mountain, filling an extinct crater. There is one such in Savai'i and another in Upolu.

Foreign; *papālagi*, 'bursting (through) the sky.' White men are called '*papalagi*' on the islands, because their ships seem to burst through the sky.

*Sina-ofu-faga*. '*Ofu* is a 'garment,' and *faga* is a 'net.'

4.—Tangaloa. Some of these epithets are foolish enough; *ulu-tua-tua* is 'thick head'; *pu'u* is 'dwarf'; *asi-asi* is 'visiting'; *soli-soli-nu'u* is 'trampling on lands'; *fa'a-ofo-nu'u*, 'causing to bestow lands.' For this last one I prefer to read *fa'a-nofo-nu'u*, 'causing lands to be dwelt in.'

*Moi-u'u-le-Apai*; *Le Senga*; *Sangatea*. See myths under these headings.

