

the sand beach appeared under the trees. A little nearer and the snowy surf could be seen, and then we approach to within a couple of miles and all the details of the island are plainly visible.

From aloft (and it is worth while to go aloft for the view) the island, as Dana in his *Coral and Coral Islands* says, speaking of this identical one "Mariki, lies like a garland thrown upon the waters. The unpracticed eye scarcely perceives the variation from a circular form, however great it may be."

All along on the windward side the surf breaks on the barrier reef, ever beating against the wonderful wall of coral and limestone rock, and at high tide sweeping over the flat surface, sending loosened fragments and finer material up on to the bank of dry sandy saline soil, upon which a few simple varieties of vegetation thrive, and form a narrow belt of verdure. At the north and south ends of the island long lines of reef run out, on which the surf beats continually. As we neared the north end of the island we could see the people running along the beach, and when we ran close into the line of breakers on the west side, quite a crowd was gathered to meet us, and soon a number of canoes put off and were clustered about the vessel.

There came alongside of the *Julia*, before the people were ready to go ashore, one canoe, on the frail platform of which sat, paddle in hand, a man, whom, from his dress, was at first mistaken for one of the elderly natives, but who turned out to be a local trader, calling himself "Byron."

He was short and stout in stature, grizzled if not grey as to beard, which covered half his face; violent and profane in his language, and bleared and beery in expression. He had lived seventeen years on Mariki, and had arrived at the proud distinction of having acquired a native wife, and children, and a homestead, a complete knowledge of the language, and a taste for gin when he could get it, and "toddy" when the gin was gone. Besides the aforesaid beard, he was dressed in a calico shirt and a short petticoat. He told us that he hailed from Providence, R. I., and that he thought of selling out and going back there "to see the boys." While I was picturing to myself his appearance, like a second Rip Van Winkle, in the streets of his native town, he fell into conversation with Tasmania, and finally took him ashore on his canoe.

About this time a curious scene was presented to view on the *Julia* by the appearance on deck from the hold of a number of our Mariki passengers, who had dressed to go to their homes. The deck was swarming with them, in white shirts and collars, black cloth suits, polished boots, and stove-pipe hats! Their wives were arrayed in loose gowns of brilliant colors, and straw hats and bonnets. The children were decked out in all sorts of youthful civilized finery, and clumped awkwardly about in new boots with blood red tops. Such a change as was effected by their donning these clothes was never witnessed before, perhaps. It was impossible to identify them by any likeness they bore to the half naked crowd of the day before, and so the Captain was compelled to muster them by their numbers as they were passed into the boats. And just here it may be remarked that the amount of luggage these people had was surprising. Each one had worked out a three years' contract on the Hawaiian Islands, for which they had been paid, besides their board and lodging, the men an aggregate of \$220 for the three years; the women had been paid for the same length of time \$180. A man and wife together would thus have received \$400 at the expiration of their contracts, and, though they had been paid in cash the sums due them at the end of each month, and had had abundant opportunities and inducements offered them to waste their wages foolishly as they earned them, yet they all had brought back with them at least one, sometimes two or three large boxes filled with useful and ornamental articles and, besides this, many of the men had expensive breech-loading rifles and fixed ammunition, and not a few silver dollars. When I saw this, and how magnificently these returned laborers outshone their stay-at-home friends, and the airs they put on, I realized that civilization was indeed a boon to this people.

**The Great Vulture of the Andes.**

High up among the towering snow-peaks of the Andes you will find the condor—the huge carrion-vulture of South America. As you see him wheeling in circles three or four miles above you, he looks a mere speck; you would never imagine him a bird standing three or four feet high, often measuring as much as twelve feet between the tips of his wings, and six feet or more from beak to tail, with wings strong enough to break one of your limbs, and with beak and talons that might well be a terror to the young lambs and goats of the mountain regions. On his feet he is a white-necked, brown-winged, awkward creature that, like a sea-bird, has to run a long distance before he can fly; but when once he is in the air, there is nothing more beautiful and graceful than his flight. His wings seem to be perfectly motionless, and hour after hour he can be seen, with apparently only the head and neck in action, ascending and descending in spiral curves, and floating in mid-air like a paper kite. Little escapes the far-reaching eye and keen smell of the condor. As they soar so majestically aloft, they seem to be casting a greedy look upon the wayfarers and the cattle feeding or wandering among the mountains. They are terribly voracious birds, and are pretty sure, within a very short time to pounce upon those that fall down through fatigue, exposure or mishap of any kind. Pictures on the old Peruvian vases represent children struggling in the grasp of condors, and so one might suppose that these gluttonous creatures would even attack man, but we know of no case to prove this or the stories that tell of them seizing upon young animals and bearing them upon their backs to their rocky haunts twelve or thirteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. They do attack lambs and goats, first picking out the eyes and then tearing out the entrails with their dagger-like beaks; and it is as much as the shepherd dogs can do to protect their charge. The mere sight of living man, however, is enough to keep them at a distance. They will follow in sweeping circles high above you, as you and your donkey struggle along the valleys, heights and snow-blocked paths; but you will have to use all manner of precautions to bring them even within gunshot. If you should fall over and pretend to be dead, they would sweep down on you in an instant. Thousands of these birds frequent the precipitous cliffs of the Uspallata Pass, which is the great highway over the Andes for travelers and cattle from the Argentine Republic into Chili. Here during the Winter months storms rage, and many a one is lost in the snows or sinks down from exhaustion. Here and there the roadside is strewn with the clean-picked bones of horses, mules, oxen, and occasionally the remains of a human skeleton tell of some poor fellow over whose fate the ravenous condors have rejoiced. Some of the battle-fields of the late war where Chilians and Peruvians fell in such numbers, bear evidence of the quick and thorough work of these great birds; and in the copper regions of Chili the sides of the paths down which the mules bring their pack-loads of ore are covered with the bones of the poor animals that have fallen down exhausted under their burdens. In certain parts of South America the condor feeds almost entirely on the carcass of the guanaco—a kind of wild llama that lives in constant dread of its murderous enemy, the puma. The latter animal, after eating his fill, covers its victim over with bushes and then watches it. In the wild retreats of the Andine valleys when you see great flocks of condors wheeling round a spot and suddenly gliding up and down, you may be pretty sure that they are disputing with the puma over the guanaco that he has just killed.

The Chilean Government has determined to treat the condor as an enemy to the Republic. A price varying from five to twenty-five francs has been put upon its head, so that condor-hunting now combines profit and sport. There are two or three ways of catching the condors. One is to lie in wait at night near a recently-killed animal. As soon as the remarkable scent of these birds brings them to the carcass, the hunters are ready to fire upon them. Others again will climb the trees where the condors are known to roost, and throw their lassos over them while they are in a heavy sleep. But perhaps the most common method is the following: During the night, and with the least noise possible, a circular wall of earth or sticks, about two feet high, is made to inclose a little space into which is thrown a dead animal. The hunters hide a short distance off in waiting. Soon the condors come down and voraciously attack the carcass till they

have gorged themselves to stupidity and heaviness. Then with lassos and clubs, and uttering the most confusing cries, the hunters rush in among them. There is a regular scrimmage. The scanty space will not allow the condors to give their bodies the necessary momentum to rise from the ground; and so one after the other they fall below the fatal blows of the hunters.—*The American.*

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