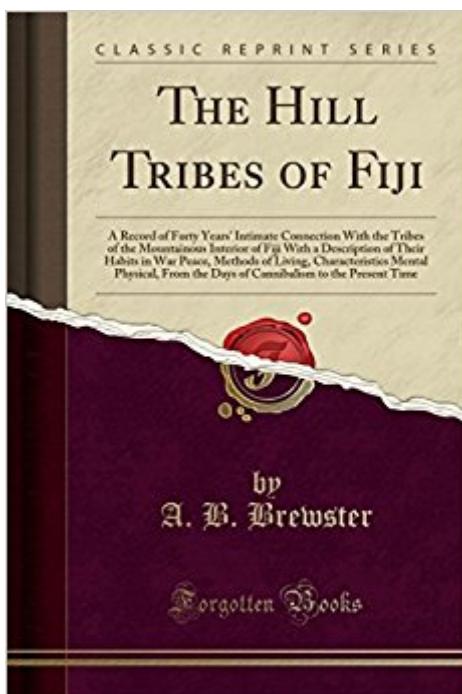


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Excerpt from The Hill Tribes of Fiji: A Record of Forty Years' Intimate Connection With the Tribes of the Mountainous Interior of Fiji With a Description of Their Habits in War Peace, Methods of Living, Characteristics Mental Physical, From the Days of Cannibalism to the Present TimeTambua are the teeth of the cachalot or sperm whale. They are pure ivory, intrinsically weight for weight as valuable as elephant tusks. With constant oiling and polishing they assume a very hand some appearance and in the eyes of the Fijians, unacquainted with gold and precious stones, they seemed the most beautiful things in the world. When Great Britain assumed the reins of government, the native officials were paid regular salaries in sterling coin of the realm. One of them, an old-time gentleman, the Roko Tui, or lieutenant-governor of the Island Of Kandavu, requested that his recompense might be made in Tambua or whales' teeth, as in his estimation they were much more chief-like than mere money. He added that in the days of his unregenerate youth he had assisted in the capture of a trading brig, which had a certain amount of gold coin on board. Not understanding its value then, he and his com panions utilised the coins in matches at ducks and drakes, which the Fijians play in the same way as we do, thus dissipating their fortune according to our own homely proverb.

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