

CIVILIZATION SEEMS TO BRING A CURSE UPON SIMPLE TAHITAN FOLK



Type of Tahitian Family.

Papeete, Tahiti, Jan. 13.—Civilization seems to be bringing nothing but curses on the simple people of Tahiti.

When Robert Louis Stevenson lived on the island 50 years ago the Tahitians were fine specimens of manhood. Now they are weak and puny. When the island was discovered its population was estimated at 200,000 but today the Tahitians number about 11,000.

In the days before civilization, the natives lived on sun-cooked food but the white man came with his canned goods, tobaccos and liquor and the natives began to degenerate.

Consumption is common. The religion that has been taught to the natives by missionaries has

caused the natives to fear ghosts and now these simple folk, who once slept out of doors, sleep in closed sheds, with doors and windows bolted and with a light burning throughout the night, to keep away the spirits.

The latest infliction on Tahiti was brought by the Mormons who have a large temple in Papeete.

It is now not an uncommon thing to see a Tahitian with two wives, though, before the Mormons came the Tahitians were monogamists.

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How it warms one's heart to see 'em selling for 48 cents the article that cost him \$3.48 before Christmas?