



South Sea Foam: The Romantic Adventures of a Modern Don Quixote in the Southern Seas

A. Safroni-Middleton

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When dusk came and I heard the tribal drums beating the stars in far away up in the forest villages, I thought, Here at least I shall find rest from the hot-footed turbulency of civilized humanity; here I can dwell ! beneath the Eden-like shades of feathery palms, and listen to the wind-blown melodies as they come in from the sea and run across the island trees. I revelled in such like thoughts. I felt that I had come across a pagan world where no more should I hear servile mumblings of a conventional people. I would peer into savage bright eyes and listen to the poetic lore of people who worshipped at the shrine of the stars and counted their days by the fading moons.... -from "Chapter I: Samoa: First Impressions" Subtitled "The Romantic Adventures of a Modern Don Quixote in the Southern Seas," this charming 1919 work chronicles not only a journeys through the islands by one young man full of the "ardent, adventurous spirit of youth," it's also a fascinating resource on Polynesian gods and goddesses, myths and legends as seen through the eyes of a Westerner. Sharing the stories of the distant past and the unparalleled experiences of his own that he collected on his voyages, the author weaves an enchanting tale-and a mostly true one, he assures us-of a tropical paradise just as it was on the verge of being subsumed by Western culture. OF INTEREST TO: armchair travelers, amateur anthropologists, readers of crosscultural studies AUTHOR BIO: British author, composer, and playwright ARNOLD SAFRONI-MIDDLETON (b. 1873) wrote numerous books of travel adventure, including *Sailor and Beachcomber: Confessions of a Life at Sea, in Australia and Amid the Islands of the Pacific* (1915), *Sestrina: A Romance of the South Seas* (1921), and *Tropic Shadows* (1927).

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