

been five or six hundred feet deep; and if the abyss had not been partly concealed by the overhanging ferns and lilies, my head would have turned giddy, and nothing should have induced me to have attempted it. We continued to ascend, sometimes along ledges, and sometimes along knife-edged ridges, having on each hand profound ravines. In the Cordillera I have seen mountains on a far grander scale, but for abruptness, nothing at all comparable with this. In the evening we reached a flat little spot on the banks of the same stream, which we had continued to follow, and which descends in a chain of waterfalls: here we bivouacked for the night. On each side of the ravine there were great beds of the mountain-banana, covered with ripe fruit. Many of these plants were from twenty to twenty-five feet high, and from three to four in circumference. By the aid of strips of bark for rope, the stems of bamboos for rafters, and the large leaf of the banana for a thatch, the Tahitians in a few minutes built us an excellent house; and with withered leaves made a soft bed.

They then proceeded to make a fire and cook our evening meal. A light was procured, by rubbing a blunt-pointed stick in a groove made in another, as if with the intention of deepening it, until by the friction the dust became ignited. A peculiarly white and very light wood (the *Hibiscus tiliaceus*) is alone used for this purpose: it is the same which serves for poles to carry any burden, and for the floating outriggers to their canoes. The fire was produced in a few seconds: but to a person who does not understand the art it requires, as I found, the greatest exertion; but at last, to my great pride, I succeeded in igniting the dust. The Gaucho in the Pampas uses a different method: taking an elastic stick about eighteen inches long, he presses one end on his breast, and the other pointed end into a hole in a piece of wood, and then rapidly turns the curved part, like a carpenter's centre-bit. The Tahitians, having made a small fire of sticks, placed a score of stones, of about the size of cricket-balls, on the burning wood. In about ten minutes the sticks were con-