

sumed, and the stones hot. They had previously folded up in small parcels of leaves pieces of beef, fish, ripe and unripe bananas, and the tops of the wild arum. These green parcels were laid in a layer between two layers of the hot stones and the whole then covered up with earth, so that no smoke or steam could escape. In about a quarter of an hour the whole was most deliciously cooked. The choice green parcels were now laid on a cloth of banana leaves, and with a cocoanut shell we drank the cool water of the running stream; and thus we enjoyed our rustic meal.

I could not look on the surrounding plants without admiration. On every side were forests of banana; the fruit of which, though serving for food in various ways, lay in heaps decaying on the ground. In front of us there was an extensive brake of wild sugar cane: and the stream was shaded by the dark green knotted stem of the Ava—so famous in former days for its powerful intoxicating effects. I chewed a piece, and found that it had an acrid and unpleasant taste, which would have induced any one at once to have pronounced it poisonous. Thanks to the missionaries, this plant now thrives only in these deep ravines, innocuous to every one. Close by I saw the wild arum, the roots of which, when well baked, are good to eat, and the young leaves better than spinach. There was the wild yam, and a liliaceous plant called Ti, which grows in abundance, and has a soft brown root, in shape and size like a huge log of wood: this served us for dessert, for it is as sweet as treacle, and with a pleasant taste. There were, moreover, several other wild fruits, and useful vegetables. The little stream, besides its cool water, produced eels and cray-fish. I did indeed admire this scene, when I compared it with an uncultivated one in the temperate zones. I felt the force of the remark, that man, at least savage man, with his reasoning powers only partly developed, is the child of the tropics.

As the evening drew to a close, I strolled beneath the gloomy shade of the bananas up the course of the stream. My walk was soon brought to a close by coming to a water-