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95. Nigerian Strolling Players

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

Africa, West.

With Plate N.

Tremearne.

Nigerian Strolling Players. By Major A. J. N. Tremearne, M.A., **95**
LL.M.

The photographs accompanying this article were taken by Dr. W. A. Trumper, at Geidam, Bornu Province, Northern Nigeria. The performers spoke Hausa fluently and were supposed to be Hausa, but there is not sufficient evidence to enable one to say definitely to which tribe they belonged.

There were three distinct "turns" in the performance. In Fig. 1 will be seen a man with a mask, and clothed in a dress of patches and charms, probably the West African representative of the *Bu Sadiya* seen in the northern countries of the continent.* The object of this masking is said to be merely the collection of money and the frightening of children; the people deny that there is any religious significance in it, although it was originated by a marabout from Egypt.

The same may be said of the exhibition of the hyena. Sometimes there may be several of these animals, and, usually, the tamer is clothed in a costume resembling that of the masked man here, except for the fact that he does not wear a mask.† I have seen at Tangier a Bambara from Timbuktu dressed in a similar manner.

In Figs. 3 and 4 may be seen a *gurbi* in course of erection, much resembling the "altars" used in some parts during the bori dances, and in the last photograph a puppet has been set up. This is raised gradually by the performer by means of jointed sticks, and is made to go through various movements supposed to represent the actions of a European, the man working it making comic remarks in a falsetto voice. The drummers keep up a continuous beating, and may reply to the remarks. The performance is comparable to, although not identical with, the *Dubbo Dubbo* described in a former article.‡

A. J. N. TREMEARNE.

Fiji.

Hocart.

More about Tauvu. By A. M. Hocart.

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In a paper on "The Fijian Custom of *Tauvu*"§ we concluded that the relation of *tauvu* is cross-cousinship between two tribes or clans. We saw that the natives commonly define it as "*kalou vata*" (ghosts together) and we translated this "with common ancestors," not "with common gods," as most Europeans do. We inferred that the cross-cousinship of tribes and clans was originally intertwined with ghost or ancestor worship.||

Thanks to the generous assistance of Exeter College, Oxford, I was able to follow up this line of inquiry in Vanua Levu, which island, we found reason to suppose, was the original home of this institution in Fiji.¶ There is little to add to the previous account, but that little is, I think, most important, and proves abundantly the religious nature of the tie between *tauvu* and *tauvu*.

The tribe of Dhakaundrove dwells partly on the mainland of Vanua Levu, partly on Taveuni. They are *tauvu* to Moala in the Moala group, and to Namuka on the north coast of Vanua Levu. Nauluvula, one of their old men, told me that if one of his people went either to Namuka or Moala he would present a whale's tooth to the chief, saying, "Here is the kava I present to the chief." The chief accepts it and prays over it. After that the stranger may pull up kava plants and

* See *The Ban of the Bori*, pp. 240, 241.

† See *Some Austral-African Notes and Anecdotes*, p. 158

‡ See MAN, 1910, 85.

§ *Journ. Roy. Anthr. Inst.*, XLIII., p. 101.

|| *Loc. cit.*, p. 107.

¶ *Loc. cit.*, p. 108.



FIG. 2.

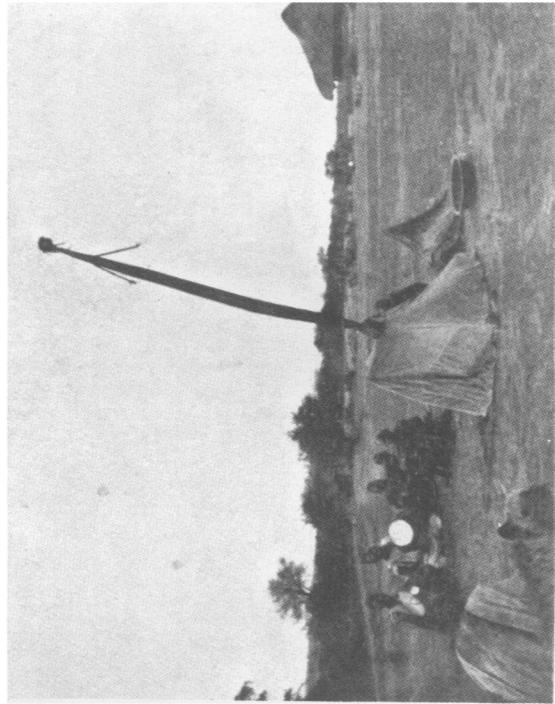


FIG. 4.



FIG. 1.

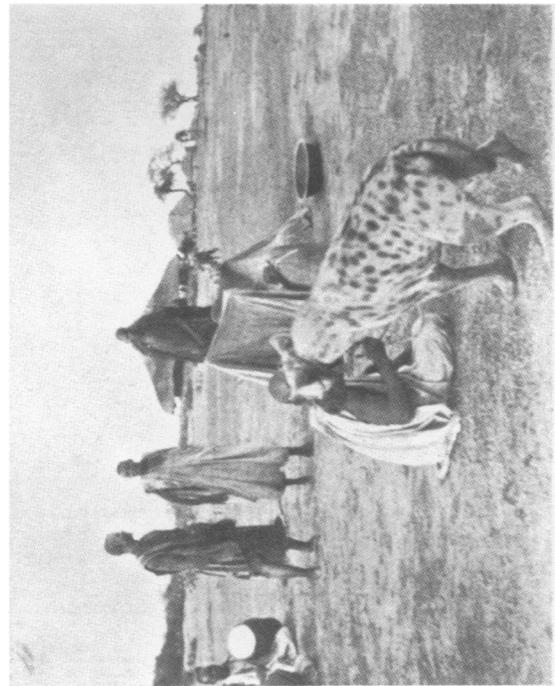


FIG. 3.

NIGERIAN STROLLING PLAYERS.