

Hawaiian Antiquities Contd.

Fishing.

Squid 21

Some of the people of Hawaii were skilful in fishing and were therefore termed fishermen. Hooks was one method used, net was another, and basket was still another. This was in fishing with the hook: The fisherman would first twist the line, the kind of line twisted was three stranded, of olona, 120 fathoms was the length of some lines, some were 160 and some longer, according to the fisherman's desire. Provided with line, the hook was then made. Supplied with these things the fisherman would say, confidently, "In times of rain work in the house; so also this: when there is a calm in prospect, get your line and hook ready." Thus would this man boast, and when calm prevailed he would then go and dive for squid, catching it he would proceed to the house, eat till satisfied, then caution his wife against giving herself over to pleasures, or pastimes in our house here, this first day is mine, you are restricted from frivolities." The wife assents, then, the fisherman will seize the gourd, line, and paddle, and proceed to the landing place, outfit the canoe completely, then launch forth the canoe; the man climbing into it will paddle out until he reaches the fishing station when he will look landward to find the bearings he had learned previously, then he baits his hook, chews the fish-lure into his coconut covering and loosely binding the lure with

a stone lowers it by the cord into the sea with the hook also placed below. When the stone [sinker] strikes bottom, then scatter the lure from the coconut covering. The fish will scent the lure and collect about the suspended line and baited hook. At the lowering of the hook and line the man will offer this prayer: "O awake the ulua, awake the kahala, O awake the ulua, awake to the great work, here comes the squid, a soft bait, a sweetness, when you eat it, the kahala, eat and swallow it, swallow it into the stomach. O Ku, my god of the ocean here indeed, on the fish eating our bait fasten firmly to the float our line, do, O Ku, my god of the ocean here indeed, give a sacrifice, O Ku, but turn your mouth to the fish that satisfies the desires."

The prayer ended, the fisherman will rest awhile, the fish will take his hook, whereupon he will call: "O Ku, hold fast our fish," with that he will haul in his line and put the fish in the canoe, if a kahala it is a very good fish for a new line if returning ashore. If there are many fishing canoes afloat then the fisherman will lower eight hooks on each line, fastening bait thereon then lowering it down. When the fish have taken all the hooks, then the man will boastingly say: "perhaps my sow has had a litter, what is it? There's a tugging at my fifth hook." At end of his exultation he hauls in his line, and like the number of hooks lowered, such were the number of fish caught. He continues fishing in this manner till catching many, then

goes ashore, bathes in water, goes to the house and puts on dry clothing, then lights the oven fire for the fish. When all the fish are cooked then the fisherman makes his first offering, with a distinctive prayer in this manner: "O the east, the west, the north, the south, above, below, the sun, observe me a fisherman, observe the complaining one, the jealous one, we are first, we are last, take care of me on rainy days, on windy days, on calm days. That's my day for the fisherman well outfitted with line and hook. O the day, if not for me for my wife, my child, my parents, amen, 'tis free." Then all the people of the house eat till satisfied, distribute the fish, cut the fish, salt it and put it in a fish calabash, whereupon restriction ends and it remains free.

There is this also. When the fisherman goes out and reaches the fishing station and lets down his line and hook, if the fish do not take the hook, then the luckless fisherman looks ashore, saying, "blood perhaps, wakeful perhaps, longing perhaps with those of my house, perhaps my wife has gone astray, but serve you right, your mouth will have no fish. I can live, the fisherman with bait heads." Thus would he continue hauling in his line with heavy hand for the absence of fish. That is the end of fishing with the hook. The next will be by net and basket.