PART I

LEGENDS

I

AI-LAAU, THE FOREST EATER

WHEN Pele came to the island Hawaii, seeking a permanent home, she found another god of fire already in possession of the territory. Ai-laau was known and feared by all the people. Ai means the “one who eats or devours.” Laau means “tree” or a “forest.” Ai-laau was, therefore, the fire-god devouring forests. Time and again he laid the districts of South Hawaii desolate by the lava he poured out from his fire-pits.

He was the god of the insatiable appetite, the continual eater of trees, whose path through forests was covered with black smoke fragrant with burning wood, and sometimes burdened with the smell of human flesh charred into cinders in the lava flow.

Ai-laau seemed to be destructive and was so named by the people, but his fires were a part of the forces of creation. He built up the
islands for future life. The process of creation demanded volcanic activity. The flowing lava made land. The lava disintegrating made earth deposits and soil. Upon this land storms fell and through it multitudes of streams found their way to the sea. Flowing rivers came from the cloud-capped mountains. Fruitful fields and savage homes made this miniature world-building complete.

Ai-laau still poured out his fire. It spread over the fertile fields, and the natives feared him as the destroyer giving no thought to the final good.

He lived, the legends say, for a long time in a very ancient part of Kilauea, on the large island of Hawaii, now separated by a narrow ledge from the great crater and called Kilauea-iki (Little Kilauea). This seems to be the first and greatest of a number of craters extending in a line from the great lake of fire in Kilauea to the seacoast many miles away. They are called "The Pit Craters" because they are not hills of lava, but a series of sunken pits going deep down into the earth, some of them still having blow-holes of sputtering steam and smoke.

After a time, Ai-laau left these pit craters and went into the great crater and was said to be living there when Pele came to the seashore far below.

In one of the Pele stories is the following literal translation of the account of her taking Kilauea:

"When Pele came to the island Hawaii, she first stopped at a place called Ke-ahi-a-laka in the district of Puna. From this place she began her inland journey toward the mountains. As she passed on her way there grew within her an intense desire to go at once and see Ai-laau, the god to whom Kilauea belonged, and find a resting-place with him as the end of her journey. She came up, but Ai-laau was not in his house. Of a truth he had made himself thoroughly lost. He had vanished because he knew that this one coming toward him was Pele. He had seen her toiling down by the sea at Ke-ahi-a-laka. Trembling dread and heavy fear overpowered him. He ran away and was entirely lost. When Pele came to that pit she laid out the plan for her abiding home, beginning at once to dig up the foundations. She dug day and night and found that this place fulfilled all her desires. Therefore, she fastened herself tight to Hawaii for all time."

These are the words in which the legend disposes of this ancient god of volcanic fires. He disappears from Hawaiian thought and Pele from a foreign land finds a satisfactory crater in which her spirit power can always dig up everlastingly overflowing fountains of raging lava.
II
HOW PELE CAME TO HAWAII

THE simplest, most beautiful legend does not mention the land from which Pele started. In this legend her father was Moe-moea-au-lii, the chief who dreamed of trouble. Her mother was Haumea, or Papa, who personified mother earth. Moemoea apparently is not mentioned in any other of the legends. Haumea is frequently named as the mother of Pele, as well as the heroine of many legendary experiences.

Pele’s story is that of wander-lust. She was living in a happy home in the presence of her parents, and yet for a long time she was “stirred by thoughts of far-away lands.” At last she asked her father to send her away. This meant that he must provide a sea-going canoe with mat sails, sufficiently large to carry a number of persons and food for many days.

“What will you do with your little egg sister?” asked her father.

Pele caught the egg, wrapped it in her skirt to keep it warm near her body, and said that it should always be with her. Evidently in a very short time the egg was changed into a beautiful little girl who bore the name Hii-aka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele (Hiaka-in-the-bosom-of-Pele), the youngest one of the Pele family.

After the care of the helpless one had been provided for, Pele was sent to her oldest brother, Ka-mo-ho-ali, the king of dragons, or, as he was later known in Hawaiian mythology, “the god of sharks.” He was a sea-god and would provide the great canoe for the journey. While he was getting all things ready, he asked Pele where she was going. She replied, “I am going to Bola-bola; to Kuai-he-lani; to Kane-huna-moku; to Moku-mana-mana; then to see a queen, Koa-hi her name and Niihau her island.” Apparently her journey would be first to Bola-bola in the Society Islands, then among the mysterious ancestral islands, and then to the northwest until she found Niihau, the most northerly of the Hawaiian group.

The god of sharks prepared his large canoe and put it in the care of some of their relatives, Kane-pu-a-hio-hio (Kane-the-whirlwind), Ke- au-miki (The-strong-current), and Ke-au-ka (Moving-seas).

Pele was carried from land to land by these wise boatmen until at last she landed on the island Niihau. Then she sent back the boat to her brother, the shark-god. It is said that after a time he brought all the brothers and sisters to Hawaii.

Pele was welcomed and entertained. Soon she went over to Kauai, the large, beautiful garden island of the Hawaiian group. There is a story of her appearance as a dream maiden before the king of Kauai, whose name was Lobiau, whom she married, but with whom she could not stay until she had found a place where she could build a permanent home for herself and all who belonged to her.

She had a magic digging tool, Pa-ao. When she struck this down into the earth it made a fire-pit. It was with this Pa-ao that she was to build a home for herself and Lobiau. She dug along the lowlands of Kauai, but water drowned the fires she kindled, so she went from island to island but could only dig along the beach near the sea. All her fire-pits were so near the water that they burst out in great explosions of steam and sand, and quickly died, until at last she found Kilauea on the large island of Hawaii. There she built a mighty enduring palace of fire, but her dream marriage was at an end. The little sister Hiaka, after many adventures, married Lobiau and lived on Kauai.

Another story says that Pele was the daughter of Kane-hoa-lani and Hina. The oldest and most authoritative legends say that Kane-hoa-lani was her brother and that Hina was the creator of a flood or great tidal wave which drove Pele from place to place over the ocean. This story says that Pele had a husband, Wahioa, who ran away from her with a sister named Pele-kumu-ka-lani, and that Pele searched the islands of the great ocean as she followed them, but never found them. At last Pele came to Hawaii and escaped the flood by finding a home in Kilauea. In this story she was said to have a son Menchune and a daughter Laka. There is very little foundation for this legend. Wahioa was a chief, well known in the legends, of a famous family of New Zealand and other South Sea islands. Laka was his son, who cut down trees by day which were set up again at night by the fairies. The Menchunes were the fairy folk of Hawaii. The story of Pele’s search for a husband has been widely accepted by foreigners but not by the early Hawaiian writers.

The most authoritative story of the coming of Pele to Hawaii was published in the Hoku-o-ka-Pakipika (Star of the Pacific), in the story of Aukele-nui-aiiku, in 1861, and in another Hawaiian paper, Ke Kuokoa, in 1864, and again in 1865.
Again and again the legends give Ku-waha-ilo as the father and Haumea as the mother of the Pele family. Hina is sometimes said to be Ku-waha-ilo's sister in these legends. She quarrelled with him because he devoured all the people. The Hawaiians as a nation, even in their traditions, have never been cannibals, although their legends give many individual instances of cannibalism. The Pele stories say that "Ku-waha-ilo was a cannibal," and "Haumea was a pali [precipice or a prominent part of the earth]."

The Hawaiians, it is safe to say, had no idea of reading nature-thoughts into these expressions, thus making them "nature-myths." They probably did not understand that Ku-waha-ilo might mean destructive earth forces, and Haumea might mean the earth itself from whom Pele, the goddess of fire, and Na-maka-o-ka-hai, the goddess of the sea, were born. It is, however, interesting to note that this is the fact in the legends, and that it was in a conflict between the two sisters that Na-maka-o-ka-hai drove Pele to the Hawaiian Islands.

A greater sorcerer married Na-maka-o-ka-hai. After a time he saw Pele and her beautiful young sister Hi'aka. He took them secretly to be his wives. This sorcerer was Au-kele-nui-a-iku. Au might mean "to swim," and tele "to glide," or "slip smoothly along." The name then might mean "the great smoothly swimming son of Iku."

He could fly through the heavens, swim through the seas, or run swiftly over the earth. By magic power he conquered enemies, visited strange lands, found the fountain of the water of life, sprinkled that water over his dead brothers, brought them back to life, and did many marvellous deeds. But he could not deliver Pele and Hi'aka from the wrath of their sister. High tides and floods from the seas destroyed Pele's home and lands. Then the elder brother of Pele — Ka-moho-ali'i, the shark-god — called for all the family to aid Pele. Na-maka-o-ka-hai fought the whole family and defeated them. She broke down their houses and drove them into the ocean. There Ka-moho-ali'i provided them with the great boat Honua-i-a-kea (The great spread-out world) and carried them away to distant islands.

Na-maka-o-ka-hai went to the highest of all the mythical lands of the ancestors, Nuu-mealani (The raised dais of heaven). There she could look over all the seas from Ka-la-kee-nui-a-Kane to Kauai, i.e., from a legendary land in the south to the most northerly part of the Hawaiian Islands. Pele carried her Paoa, a magic spade. Wherever they landed she struck the earth, thus opening a crater in which volcanic fires burned. As the smoke rose to the clouds, the angry watching one rushed from Nuu-mealani and tried to

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slay the family. Again and again they escaped. Farther and farther from the home land were they driven until they struck far out into the ocean.

Na-maka-o-ka-hai went back to her lookout mountain. After a long time she saw the smoke of earth-fires far away on the island Kauai. Pele had struck her Paoa into the earth, dug a deep pit, and thrown up a large hill known to this day as the Puu-o-Pele (The hill of Pele). It seemed as if an abiding-place had been found.

But the sister came and fought Pele. There is no long account of the battle. Pele was broken and smashed and left for dead. She was not dead, but she left Kauai and went to Oahu to a place near Honolulu, to Moanalua, a beautiful suburb. There she dug a fire-pit. The earth, or rather the eruption of lava, was forced up into a hill which later bore the name Ke-alla-manu (The-bird-white-like-a-salt-bed or The-white-bird). The crater which she dug filled up with salt water and was named Ke-alla-paa-kai (The-white-bed-of-salt, or Salt Lake).

Pele was not able to strike her Paoa down into a mountain side and dig deep for the foundations of her home. She could find fire only in the lowlands near the seashore. The best place on Oahu was just back of Leahi, the ancient Hawaiian name for Diamond Head. Here she threw up a great quantity of fire-rock, but at last her fires were drowned by the water she struck below.

Thus she passed along the coast of each island, the family watching and aiding until they came to the great volcano Haleakaka. There Pele dug with her Paoa, and a great quantity of lava was thrown out of her fire-pit.

Na-maka-o-ka-hai saw enduring clouds day after day rising with the colors of the dark dense smoke of the underworld, and knew that her sister was still living.

Pele had gained strength and confidence, therefore she entered alone into a conflict unto death.

The battle was fought by the two sisters hand to hand. The conflict lasted for a long time along the western slope of the mountain Hale-a-ka-la. Na-maka-o-ka-hai tore the body of Pele and broke her lava bones into great pieces which lie to this day along the seacoast of the district called Kahiki-nui. The masses of broken lava are called Na-iwi-o-Pele (The bones of Pele).

Pele was thought to be dead and was sorely mourned by the remaining brothers and sisters. Na-maka-o-ka-hai went off toward Nuu-mealani rejoicing in the destruction of her hated enemy. By and by she looked back over the wide seas. The high mountains of the island Hawaii,

* Hale-a-ka-la must be classed as an active volcano from evidences of prehistoric fires although long extinct, but the author gives these stories in another book, "Legends of Maui."
snow covered, lay in the distance. But over the side of the mountain known as Mauna Loa she saw the uhane, the spirit form of Pele in clouds of volcanic smoke tinged red from the flames of raging fire-pits below.

She passed on to Nuu-me-a-lani, knowing that she could never again overcome the spirit of Pele, the goddess of fire.

The Pele family crossed the channel between the islands and went to the mountain side, for they also had seen the spirit form of Pele. They served their goddess sister, caring for her fires and pouring out the destructive rivers of lava at her commands.

As time passed they became a part of the innumerable multitude of au-makua, or ghost-gods, of the Pit of Pele, worshipped especially by those whose lives were filled with burning anger against their fellow-men.

The acceptable offerings to Pele were fruits, flowers, garlands (or leis), pigs (especially the small black pig of tender flesh and delicate flavor), chickens, fish, and men. When a family sent a part of the dead body of one of the household, it was with the prayer that the spirit might become an au-makua, and especially an unhipili au-makua. This meant a ghost-god, powerful enough to aid the worshipper to pray other people to death.

Pele is said to have become impatient at times with her brothers and sisters. Then she would destroy their pleasure resorts in the valleys. She would send a flood of lava in her anger and burn everything up.

Earthquakes came when Pele stamped the floor of the fire-pit in anger.

Flames thrusting themselves through cracks in a breaking lava crust were the fire spears of Pele's household of au-makua or ghost-gods.

Pele's voice was explosive when angry. Therefore it was called “pu.” When the natives first heard guns fired they said that the voice of the gun was “pu.” It was like the explosions of gas in volcanic eruptions, and it seemed as if the foreigners had persuaded Pele to assist them in any trouble with the natives.

One of the long legends describes a new island home brought up from ocean depths by Kama-puaa, in which he established his family and from which he visited Hawaii. It says that Pele saw him and called to him:

"O Kama-puaa divine,
My love is for you.
Return, we shall have the land together,
You the upland—I the lowland.
Return, 0 my husband.
Our difficulties are at an end."

He refused, saying that it was best for them to abide by their oath, and not take any part of what belonged to the other. Perhaps this desire for reconciliation underlies the legendary love of Pele for sacrifices of those things which would most intimately connect her with Kama-puaa.

Kama-puaa has figured to the last days of Pele worship in the sacrifices offered to the fire-goddess. The most acceptable sacrifice to Pele was supposed to be puua (a hog). If a hog could not be secured when an offering was necessary, the priest would take the fish humu-humu-nuku-nuku-a-puaa and throw it into the pit of fire. If the hog and the fish both failed, the priest would offer any of the things into which it was said in their traditions that Kama-puaa could change himself.

IX

PELE AND THE SNOW-GODDESS

There were four maidens with white mantles in the mythology of the Hawaiians. They were all queens of beauty, full of wit and wisdom, lovers of adventure, and enemies of Pele. They were the goddesses of the snow-covered mountains. They embodied the mythical ideas of spirits carrying on eternal warfare between heat and cold, fire and frost, burning lava and stony ice. They ruled the mountains north of Kilauea and dwelt in the cloud-capped summits. They clothed themselves against the bitter cold with snow-mantles. They all had the power of laying aside the white garment and taking in its place clothes made from the golden sunshine. Their stories are nature-myths derived from the power of snow and cold to check volcanic action and sometimes clothe the mountain tops and upper slopes with white, which melted as the maidens came down closer to the sea through lands made fertile by flowing streams and blessed sunshine.

It is easy to see how the story arose of Pele and Poliahu, the snow-goddess of Mauna Kea,
but it is not easy to understand the different forms which the legend takes while the legends concerning the other three maidens of the white mantle are very obscure indeed.

Lilinoe was sometimes known as the goddess of the mountain Haleakala. In her hands lay the power to hold in check the eruptions which might break forth through the old cinder cones in the floor of the great crater. She was the goddess of dead fires and desolation. She sometimes clothed the long summit of the mountain with a glorious garment of snow several miles in length. Some legends give her a place as the wife of the great-flood survivor, Nana-Nuu, recorded by Fornander as having a cave-dwelling on the slope of Mauna Kea. Therefore she is also known as one of the goddesses of Mauna Kea.

Waiau was another snow-maiden of Mauna Kea, whose record in the legends has been almost entirely forgotten. There is a beautiful lake glistening in one of the crater-cones on the summit of the mountain. This was sometimes called "The Bottomless Lake," and was supposed to go down deep into the heart of the mountain. It is really forty feet in its greatest depth—deep enough for the bath of the goddess. The name Waiau means water of sufficient depth to bathe. Somewhere, buried in the memory of some old Hawaiian, is a legend worth exhuming, probably connecting Waiau, the maiden, with Waiau, the lake.

Kahoupokane was possibly the goddess of the mountain Hualalai, controlling the snows which after long intervals fall on its desolate summits. At present but little more than the name is known about this maiden of the snow-garment.

Poliahu, the best-known among the maidens of the mountains, loved the eastern cliffs of the great island Hawaii,—the precipices which rise from the raging surf which beats against the coast known now as the Hamakua district. Here she sported among mortals, meeting the chiefs in their many and curious games of chance and skill. Sometimes she wore a mantle of pure white kapa and rested on the ledge of rock overhanging the torrents of water which in various places fell into the sea.

There is a legend of Kauai woven into the fairy-tale of the maiden of the mist—Laileikawai—and in this story Poliahu for a short time visits Kauai as the bride of one of the high chiefs who bore the name Aiwohikupua. The story of the betrothal and marriage suggests the cold of the snow-mantle and shows the inconstancy of human hearts.

Aiwohikupua, passing near the cliffs of Hamakua, saw a beautiful woman resting on the rocks above the sea. She beckoned with most graceful gestures for him to approach the beach. Her white mantle lay on the rocks beside her. He landed and proposed marriage, but she made a betrothal with him by the exchange of the cloaks which they were wearing. Aiwohikupua went away to Kauai, but he soon returned clad in the white cloak and wearing a beautiful helmet of red feathers. A large retinue of canoes attended him, filled with musicians and singers and his intimate companions. The three mountains belonging to the snow-goddesses were clothed with snow almost down to the seashore.

Poliahu and the three other maidens of the white robe came down to meet the guests from Kauai. Cold winds swayed their garments as they drew near to the sea. The blood of the people of Kauai chilled in their veins. Then the maidens threw off their white mantles and called for the sunshine. The snow went back to the mountain tops, and the maidens, in the beauty of their golden sun-garments, gave hearty greeting to their friends. After the days of the marriage festival Poliahu and her chief went to Kauai.

A queen of the island Maui had also a promise given by Aiwohikupua. In her anger she hastened to Kauai and in the midst of the Kauai festivities revealed herself and charged the chief with his perfidy. Poliahu turned against her husband and forsook him.

The chief's friends made reconciliation between the Maui chiefess and Aiwohikupua, but when the day of marriage came the chiefess found herself surrounded by an invisible atmosphere of awful cold. This grew more and more intense as she sought aid from the chief.

At last he called to her: "This cold is the snow mantle of Poliahu. Flee to the place of fire!" But down by the fire the sun-mantle belonging to Poliahu was thrown around her and she cried out, "He wela e, he wela!" ("The heat! Oh, the heat!") Then the chief answered, "This heat is the anger of Poliahu." So the Maui chiefess hastened away from Kauai to her own home.

Then Poliahu and her friends of the white mantle threw their cold-wave over the chief and his friends and, while they shivered and were chilled almost to the verge of death, appeared before all the people standing in their shining robes of snow, glittering in the glory of the sun; then, casting once more their cold breath upon the multitude, disappeared forever from Kauai, returning to their own home on the great mountains of the southern islands.

It may have been before or after this strange legendary courtship that the snow-maiden met
Pele, the maiden of volcanic fires. Pele loved the holua-coasting—the race of sleds, long and narrow, down sloping, grassy hillsides. She usually appeared as a woman of wonderfully beautiful countenance and form—a stranger unknown to any of the different companies entering into the sport. The chiefs of the different districts of the various islands had their favorite meeting-places for any sport in which they desired to engage.

There were sheltered places where gambling reigned, or open glades where boxing and spear-throwing could best be practised, or coasts where the splendid surf made riding the waves on surf-boards a scene of intoxicating delight. There were hillsides where sled-riders had opportunity for the exercise of every atom of skill and strength.

Polihau and her friends had come down Mauna Kea to a sloping hillside south of Hamakua. Suddenly in their midst appeared a stranger of surpassing beauty. Polihau welcomed her and the races were continued. Some of the legend-tellers think that Pele was angered by the superiority, real or fancied, of Polihau. The ground began to grow warm and Polihau knew her enemy.

Pele threw off all disguise and called for the forces of fire to burst open the doors of the subterranean caverns of Mauna Kea. Up toward the mountain she marshalled her fire-fountains. Polihau fled toward the summit. The snow-mantle was seized by the outbursting lava and began to burn up. Polihau grasped the robe, dragging it away and carrying it with her. Soon she regained strength and threw the mantle over the mountain.

There were earthquakes upon earthquakes, shaking the great island from sea to sea. The mountains trembled while the tossing waves of the conflict between fire and snow passed through and over them. Great rock precipices staggered and fell down the sides of the mountains. Clouds gathered over the mountain summit at the call of the snow-goddess. Each cloud was gray with frozen moisture and the snows fell deep and fast on the mountain. Farther and farther down the sides the snow-mantle unfolded until it dropped on the very fountains of fire. The lava chilled and hardened and choked the flowing, burning rivers.

Pele's servants became her enemies. The lava, becoming stone, filled up the holes out of which the red melted mass was trying to force itself. Checked and chilled, the lava streams were beaten back into the depths of Mauna Loa and Kilauea. The fire-rivers, already rushing to the sea, were narrowed and driven downward so rapidly that they leaped out from the land,
becoming immediately the prey of the remorseless ocean.

Thus the ragged mass of Laupahoehoe was formed, and the great ledge of the arch of Onomea, and the different sharp and torn lavas in the edge of the sea which mark the various eruptions of centuries past.

Poiha'i in legendary battles has met Pele many times. She has kept the upper part of the mountain desolate under her mantle of snow and ice, but down toward the sea most fertile and luxuriant valleys and hillside slopes attest the gifts of the goddess to the beauty of the island and the welfare of men.

Out of Mauna Loa, Pele has stepped forth again and again, and has hurled eruptions of mighty force and great extent against the maiden of the snow-mantle, but the natives say that in this battle Pele has been and always will be defeated. Pele's kingdom has been limited to the southern half of the island Hawaii, while the snow-maidens rule the territory to the north.

X

GENEALOGY OF THE PELE FAMILY

HERE were gods, goddesses, and ghost-gods in the Pele family. Almost all had their home in volcanic fires and were connected with all the various natural fire phenomena such as earthquakes, eruptions, smoke clouds, thunder, and lightning.

Pele was the supreme ruler of the household. She had a number of brothers and sisters. There were also many au-makus, or ancestor ghost-gods, who were supposed to have been sent into the family by incantations and sacrifices. Sometimes when death came among the Hawaiians, a part of the body of the dead person would be thrown into the living volcano, Kilauea, with all ceremony. It was supposed that the spirit also went into the flame, finding there its permanent dwelling-place. This spirit became a Pele-au-makua.

Pele's brother, Ka-moho-ali'i, and her older sister, Na-maka-o-ka-hai, however, belonged to the powers of the sea. Ka-moho-ali'i, whose name was sometimes given as Ka-moo-ali'i, was king of the sharks. He was a favorite of the

age was carried out in the most diverse as well as the most ancient of the legends and seems to be worthy of acceptance. Ku-waha-ilo is in some legends called Ku-aha-ilo. In both cases the name means "Ku with the wormy mouth," or "Ku, the man-eater" (The cannibal), whose act made him ferocious and inhuman in the eyes of the Hawaiians.

Pele has long been the fire-goddess of the Hawaiians. Her home was in the great fire-pit of the volcano of Kilauea on the island of Hawaii, and all the eruptions of lava have borne her name wherever they may have appeared. Thus the word "Pele" has been used with three distinct definitions by the old Hawaiians. Pele, the fire-goddess; Pele, a volcano or a fire-pit in any land; and Pele, an eruption of lava.

King Kalakaua was very much interested in explaining the origin of some of the great Hawaiian myths and legends. He did not make any statement about the parents of the legendary family, but said that the Pele family was driven from Samoa in the eleventh century, finding a home in the southwestern part of the island Hawaii near the volcano Kilauea. There they lived until an eruption surrounded and overwhelmed them in living fire. After a time the native imagination, which always credited ghost-gods, placed this family among the most
powerful au-makusas and gave them a home in the heart of the crater. From this beginning, he thought, grew the stories of the Pele family.

The trouble with Kalakaua's version is that it does not take into account the relation of Pele to various parts of Polynesia.

The early inhabitants of the region around Hilo in the southwestern part of the island Hawaii, near Kilauea, brought many names and legends from far-away Polynesian lands to Hawaii. Hilo (formerly called Hiro), meaning to "twist" or "turn," was derived from Whiro, a great Polynesian traveller and sea-robber. The stories of Maui and Puna came from other lands, so also came some of the myths of Pele.

Fornander, in "The Polynesian Race," says: "In Hawaiian, Pele is the fire-goddess who dwells in volcanoes. In Samoan, Fie is a personage with nearly similar functions. In Tahitian, Pere is a volcano."

These varieties of the name Pele, Fornander carries back also to the pre-Malay dialects of the Indian Archipelago, where pelah means "hot," belem to "burn." Then he goes back still farther to the Celtic Bel or Belen (the sun god), the Spartan Bela (the sun), and the Babylonian god Bel. It might be worth while for some student of the Atlantic Coast or Europe to find the derivation of the name Pele as applied to the explosive volcano of Martinique, and note its apparent connection with the Pacific languages.

In Raratonga is found a legend which approaches the Hawaiian stories more nearly than any other from foreign sources. There the great goddess of fire was named Mahuike, who was known throughout Polynesia as the divine guardian of fire. It was from her that Maui the demi-god was represented by many legends as procuring fire for mankind. Her daughter, also a fire-goddess, was Pere, a name identical with the Hawaiian Pele, the letters l and r being interchangeable. This Pere became angry and blew off the top of the island Fakarava. Earthquakes and explosions terrified the people. Mahuike tried to make Pere quiet down, and finally drove her away. Pere leaped into the sea and fled to Va-ihi (Hawaii).

A somewhat similar story comes in from Samoa. Mahuike, the god of fire in Samoa, drove his daughter away. This daughter passed under the ocean from Samoa to Nuuhiwa. After establishing a volcano there, the spirit of unrest came upon her and she again passed under the sea to the Hawaiian Islands, where she determined to stay forever.

In Samoa one of the fire-gods, according to some authorities, was Fe-e, a name almost the same as Pele, yet nearly all the Samoan legends describe Fe-e as a cuttlefish possessing divine power, and at enmity with fire.

Hon. S. Percy Smith, who was for a long time Minister of Native Affairs in New Zealand and now is President of the Polynesian Society for Legendary and Historical Research, writes that the full name for Pele among the New Zealand Maoris is "Para-whenua-mea, which through well-known letter changes is identical with the full Hawaiian name Pele-honou-mea."

From several continued Pele stories in newspapers in the native language, about 1865, the following sketch of the Pele family is compiled:

The god Ku, under the name Ku-waha-ilo, was the father. Haumea was the mother. Her father was a man-eater. Her mother was a precipice (i.e., belonged to the earth). Others say Ku-waha-ilo had neither father nor mother, but dwelt in the far-off heavens. (This probably meant that he lived beyond the most distant boundary of the horizon.)

Two daughters were born. The first, Namaka-o-ka-hai, was born from the breasts of Haumea. Pele was born from the thighs.

After this the brothers and sisters were given life by Haumea. Ka-moho-ali'i, the shark-god, was born from the top of the head. He was the elder brother, the caretaker of the family, always self-denying and ready to answer any call from his relatives. Kane-hekili, Kane who had the thunder, was born from the mouth. Kauwila-nui, who ruled the lightning, came from the flashing eyes of Haumea. Thus the family came from the arms, from the wrists, the palms of the hands, the fingers, the various joints, and even from the toes. A modern reader would think that Haumea as Mother Earth threw out her children in the natural outburst of earth forces, but it is extremely doubtful if the old Hawaiians had any such idea. Yet the expression that Haumea was a precipice might imply a misty feeling in that direction.

The youngest of the family, Hi'iaka-in-the-bosom-of-Pele, was born an egg. After she had been carefully warmed and nourished by Pele, she became a beautiful child. When she grew into womanhood she was the bravest, the most powerful, except Pele, and the most gentle and lovable of all the sisters.

The names of the members of the household of fire are worth noting as revealing the Hawaiian recognition of the different forces of nature. Some said there were forty sisters. One list gives only four. They were almost all called "The Hi'iakas." Ellis in 1823 said the name meant "cloud holder." Fornander says it means "twilight bearer." Hi'i conveys the idea of
lifting on the hip and arm so as to make carrying easy. Aka means usually “shadow,” and pictures the long shadows of the clouds across the sky as evening comes. There is really no twilight worth mentioning in the Hawaiian Islands and Hiaka would be better interpreted as “lifting sunset shadows,” or holding up the smoke clouds while their shadows fall over the fires of the crater, conveying the idea of fire-light shining up under smoke clouds as they rise from the lake of fire.

The Hiakas were “shadow bearers.” There were eight well-known sisters:

Hiaka - kapu - ena - ena (Hiaka-of-the-burning-tabu), known also as Hiaka-pua-ena-ena (Hiaka-of-the-burning-flower) and also as Hiaka-pana-ena-ena (Hiaka-of-the-burning-hills).

Hiaka-wawahi-lani (Hiaka-breaking-the-heavens-for-the-heavy-rain-to-fall).


Hiaka-makole-wawahi-waa (Hiaka-the-fire-eyed-canoe-breaker).

Hiaka-kaa-lava-maka (Hiaka - with - quick - glancing-eyes).


Hiaka-i-kaholo-Pele (Hiaka-in-the-bosom-of-Pele), who was known also as the young Hiaka.

Some of the legends say that Kapo was one of Pele's sisters. Kapo was a vile, murderous poison-goddess connected with the idea of “praying to death,” and in the better legends is dropped out of the Pele family. There were eleven well-known brothers:

Ka-moholo-ali (The-dragon-or-shark-king).

Kane-hekihi (Kane-the-thunderer).

Kane-pohaku-kaa (Kane-rolling-stones, or The-earthquake-maker).

Kane-moalani (Kane-the-divine-fire-maker).

Kane-huli-honua (Kane-turning-the-earth-upside-down-in-eruptions-and-earthquakes).

Kane-kauwila-nui (Kane-who-ruled-the-great-lightning).

Kane-kauila-koa (Kane-who-broke-coral-reefs).

Ka-poa-i-kahi-ola (Explosion-in-the-place-of-life, i.e., fountains of bursting gas in the living fire).

Ke-ua-akepo (The-rain-in-the-night, or The-rain-of-fire-more-visible-at-night).


The Thunderer and the Child-of-War were said to be hunchbacks. According to the different legends Pele had four husbands, each of whom lived with her for a time. Two of these were with her in the ancient homes of the Hawaiians, Kuai-he-lani† and Hapakuela. These husbands were Aukele-nui-aka and Wahihi. Two husbands came to her while she dwelt in Kilauea, her palace of fire in the Hawaiian Islands. One was the rough Kama-puua, the other was Lohiau, the handsome king of Kauai.

THE story of Hiiaka's journey over the seas which surround the Hawaiian Islands, and through dangers and perplexities, cannot be fully told in the limits of these short stories. There are several versions, so only the substance of all can be given.

On each island she slew dragons which had come from the ancient traditional home of the Polynesians, India. She destroyed many evil-minded gnomes and elves; fought the au-makua and the demi-gods of land and sea; found the body of Lohiau put away in a cave and watched over by the dragon-women who had been defeated by Pele when in her long sleep she chanted the songs of the Winds of Kauai. She slew the guardians of the cave, carried the body to a house where she used powerful chants for restoration. She captured the wandering ghost of Lohiau and compelled it again to take up its home in the body, and then with Lohiau and Wahine-omao made the long journey to her home in the volcano. From the island of Hawaii to the island Kauai, and along the return journey Hiiaka's path was marked with experiences beneficial to the people whom she passed. This must all be left untold except the story of Lohiau's restoration to life and the conflict with Pele.

As Hiiaka and her friend came near the island Kauai, Hiiaka told Wahine-omao that Lohiau was dead and that she saw the spirit standing by the opening of a cave out on the pali of Haena.

Then she chanted to Lohiau:

"The lehua is being covered by the sand,
A little red flower remains on the plain,
The body is hidden in the stones,
The flower is lying in the path.
Very useful is the water of Kaunu."

Thus she told the ghost that she would give new life even as dew on a thirsty flower. They landed and met Lohiau's sisters and friends.

Hiiaka asked about the death of Lohiau, and one sister said, "His breath left him and the body

became yellow." Hiiaka said: "There was no real reason for death, but the two women dragons took his spirit and held it captive. I will try to bring him back. Great is the magic power and strength of the two dragons and I am not a man, and may not win the victory. I will have something to eat, and then will go. You must establish a tabu for twenty days, and there must be quiet. No one can go to the mountains, nor into the sea. You must have a house made of ti* leaves for the dead body and make it very tight on all sides."

The next day they made the house. Hiiaka commanded that a door be made toward the east. Then Hiiaka said, "Let us open the door of the house." When this was done, Hiiaka said: "To-morrow let the tabu be established on land and sea. To-morrow we commence our work."

She made arrangements to go to the cave in the precipice at dawn. Rain came down in floods and a strong wind swept the face of the precipice. A fog clung fast to the hills. The water rushed in torrents to the sea. It was an evil journey to Lohiau.

At sunrise they went on through the storm. Hiiaka uttered this incantation:

* Ti or ki or lauki, Cordyline terminalis.
Hiāka told Wahine-ōmao to cover her body with leaves and sticks near the pali and in event of her death to return with the tidings to Hawaii.

One dragon caught Hiāka and bent her over. The other leaped upon Hiāka, catching her around the neck and arm. One tried to pull off the pa-u and tear it to pieces.

Pau-o-palae saw the danger. From her home on the island of Hawai‘i, she saw the dragons shaking Hiāka. Then she sent her power and took many kinds of trees and struck the dragons. The roots twisted around the dragons, entangling their feet and tails, and scratching eyes and faces.

The dragons tried to shake off the branches and roots—the leaf bodies of the wilderness, and one let go the pa-u of Hiāka, and the other let go the neck. Pau-o-palae called all the wind bodies of the forest and sent them to aid Hiāka, the forces of the forest, and the wind spirits.

At last Hiāka turned to say farewell to Wahine-ōmao because the next fight with the dragons in their new bodies might prove fatal.

The dragons were now stronger than before. They leaped upon her, one on each side. The strong winds blew and the storm poured upon her, while the dragons struck her to beat her down. But all kinds of ferns were leaping up rapidly around the place where the dragons renewed the fight. The ferns twisted and twined around the legs and bodies of the dragons.

Hiāka shook her magic skirt and struck them again and again, and the bodies of these dragons were broken in pieces. Then the wind ceased, the storm passed away, and the sky became clear. But it was almost evening and darkness was falling fast.

The natives have for many years claimed that Hiāka found the time too short to climb the precipice, catch the ghost of Lohiau and carry it and the body down to the house prepared for her work, therefore she uttered this incantation:

"O gods! Come to Kauai, your land.
O pearl-eyed warrior (an idol) of Halawa!
O Kona! guardian of our flesh!
O the great gods of Hiāka!
Come, ascend, descend,
Let the sun stop over the river of Hea.
Stand thou still, O sun!"

The sun waited and its light rested on the precipice and pierced the deep shadows of the cave in which the body lay while Hiāka sought Lohiau.

Hiāka heard the spirit voice saying, "Moving, moving, you will find me in a small coconut calabash fastened in tight." Hiāka followed
the spirit voice and soon saw a coconut closed up with feathers. Over the coconut a little rainbow was resting. She caught the coconut and went back to the body of Lohiau. It had become very dark in the cave, but she did not care, this was as nothing to her. She took the bundle of the body of Lohiau and said: "We have the body and the spirit, we are ready now to go down to our house."

Then she called the spirits of the many kinds of ferns of Pau-o-palae to take the body down. The fern servants of Pau-o-palae carried the bundle of the body down to the house.

Hiiaka said to her friend: "You ask how the spirit can be restored into the body. It is hard and mysterious and a work of the gods. We must gather all kinds of ferns and maile and lehua and flowers from the mountains. We must take wai-lua (flowing water) and wai-lani (rain) and put them into new calabashes to use in washing the body. Then pray. If my prayer is not broken [interrupted or a mistake made], he will be alive. If the prayer is broken four times, life will not return."

The servants of Pau-o-palae, the goddess of ferns, brought all manner of sweet-scented ferns, flowers, and leaves to make a bed for the body of Lohiau, and to place around the inside of the house as fragrant paths by which the gods could come to aid the restoration to life.

There were many prayers, sometimes to one class of gods and sometimes to another. The following prayer was offered to the au-makua, or ghost-gods, residing in cloud-land and revealing themselves in different cloud forms:

"Dark is the prayer rising up to Kanaloa,
Rising up to the ancient home Kealohilani,
Look at the kupuaus above sunset!
Who are the kupuaus above?
The black dog of the heavens,
The yellow dog of Ku in the small cloud,
Ku is in the long cloud,
Ku is in the short cloud,
Ku is in the cloud of red spots in the sky.
Listen to the people of the mountains,
The friends of the forest,
The voices of the heavens.
The water of life runs, life is coming,
Open with trembling, to let the spirit in,
A noise rumbling,
The sound of Ku.
The lover sent for is coming.
I, Hiiaka, am coming.
The lover of my sister Pele,
The sister of life,
Is coming to life again.
Live, Live."

After each one of the prayers and incantations the body was washed in the kind of water needed for each special ceremony. Thus days passed by; some legends say ten days, some say a full month. At last the body was ready for the incoming of the spirit.

The coconut shell in which the spirit had been kept was held against the body, the feet and limbs were slapped, and the body rubbed by Wahine-omao while Hiiaka continued her necessary incantations until the restoration to life was complete.

Many, many days had passed since the fiery and impetuous Pele had sent her youngest sister after the lover Lohiau. In her restlessness Pele had torn up the land in all directions around the pit of fire with violent earthquakes. She had poured her wrath in burning floods of lava over all the southern part of the island. She had broken her most solemn promise to Hiiaka.

Whenever she became impatient at the delay of the coming of Lohiau, she would fling her scorching smoke and foul gas over Hiiaka’s beautiful forests—and sometimes would smite the land with an overflow of burning lava.

Sometimes she would look down over that part of Puna where Hopoe dwelt and hurl spurs of lava toward her home. At last she had yielded to her jealous rage and destroyed Hopoe and her home and then burned the loved spots of restful beauty belonging to Hiiaka.

Hiiaka had seen Pele’s action as she had looked back from time to time on her journey to Kauai. Even while she was bringing Lohiau back to life, her love for her own home revealed to her the fires kindled by Pele, and she chanted many songs of complaint against her unfaithful sister.

Hiiaka loyal fulfilled her oath until she stood with Lohiau on one of the high banks overlooking Ka-lua-Pele, the pit of Pele in the volcano Kilauea. Down below in the awful majesty of fire were the sisters.

Wahine-omao went down to them as a messenger from Hiiaka. One of the legends says that Pele killed her; another says that she was repulsed and driven away; others say that Pele refused to listen to any report of the journey to Kauai and hurled Wahine-omao senseless into a hole near the fire-pit, and raved against Hiiaka for the long time required in bringing Lohiau.

Hiiaka at last broke out in fierce rebellion against Pele. On the hill where they stood were some of the lehua trees with their brilliant red blossoms. She plucked the flowers, made wreaths, and going close to Lohiau hung them around his neck.

All through the long journey to the crater Lohiau had been gaining a full appreciation of the bravery, the unselfishness, and the wholly lovable character of Hiiaka. He had proposed
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Lono-makua, with his helpers, to kindle eruptions around Lohiau and Hiiaka. This could not harm Hiiaka, for she was at home in the worst violence of volcanic flames, but it meant death to Lohiau.

Lono-makua kindled fires all around Lohiau, but for a long time refrained from attacking him. Hiiaka could not see the pit as clearly as Lohiau, so she asked if Pele's fires were coming.

He chanted:

"Hot is this mountain of the priest. Rain is weeping on the awa. I look over the rim of the crater. Roughly tossing is the lava below. Coming up to the forest— Attacking the trees— Clouds of smoke from the crater."

The lava came up, surrounding them. Tossing fountains of lava batters them. Wherever any spot of his body was touched Lohiau became stone. He uttered incantations and used all his powers as a sorcerer-chief. The lava found it difficult to overwhelm him. Pele sent increased floods of burning rock upon him. Lohiau's body was all turned to stone. His spirit fled from the pit to the cool places of a forest on a higher part of the surrounding mountains.

Hiiaka was crazed by the death of Lohiau. She had fought against the eruption; now she

THE ANNIHILATION OF KEOUA'S ARMY

XVIII

THE ANNIHILATION OF KEOUA'S ARMY

ALMOST exactly thirty-four years before Kapiolani defied the worship of the fire-goddess Pele, Keoua, a high chief, lost a large part of his army near the volcano Kilauea. This was in November, 1790.

Ka-lani-opuu had been king over the island Hawaii. When he died in 1782, he left the kingdom to his son Kiwalao, giving the second place to his nephew Kamehameha.

War soon arose between the cousins. Kamehameha defeated and killed the young king. Kiwalao's half-brother Keoua escaped to his district Ka-u, on the southwestern side of the island. His uncle Keawe-mauhi killed to his district Hilo on the southeastern side.

For some years the three factions practically let each other alone, although there was desultory fighting. Then the high chief of Hilo accepted Kamehameha as his king and sent his sons to aid Kamehameha in conquering the island Maui.

Keoua was angry with his uncle Keawe-mauhi. He attacked Hilo, killed his uncle and
ravaged Kamehameha’s lands along the northeastern side of the island.

Kamehameha quickly returned from Maui and made an immediate attack on his enemy, who had taken possession of a fertile highland plain called Waimea. From this method of forcing unexpected battle came the Hawaiian saying, “The spear seeks Waimea like the wind.”

Keoua was defeated and driven through forests along the eastern side of Mauna Kea (The white mountain) to Hilo. Then Kamehameha sent warriors around the western side of the island to attack Keoua’s home district. Meanwhile, after a sea fight in which he defeated the chiefs of the islands Maui and Oahu, he set his people to building a great temple chiefly for his war-god Ka-ili. This was the last noted temple built on all the islands.

Keoua heard of the attack on his home, therefore he gave the fish-ponds and fertile lands of Hilo to some of his chiefs and hastened to cross the island with his army by way of a path near the volcano Kilauea. He divided his warriors into three parties, taking charge of the first in person. They passed the crater at a time of great volcanic activity. A native writer, probably Kamakau, in the native newspaper *Kuokoa*, 1867, describes the destruction of the central part of this army by an awful explosion from Kilauea.

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THE ANNIHILATION OF KEOUA’S ARMY

He said: “Thus was it done. Sand, ashes, and stones grew up from the pit into a very high column of fire, standing straight up. The mountains of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa were below it. The people even from Ka-wai-hae [a seaport on the opposite side of the mountains] saw this wonderful column with fire glowing and blazing to its very top. When this column became great it blew all to pieces into sand and ashes and great stones, which for some days continued to fall around the sides of Kilauea. Men, women, and children were killed. Mona, one of the army, who saw all this but who escaped, said that one of the chiefesses was ill and some hundreds of the army had delayed their journey to guard her and so escaped this death.”

Dibble, the first among the missionaries to prepare a history of the islands, gave the following description of the event:

“Keoua’s path led by the great volcano of Kilauea. There they encamped. In the night a terrific eruption took place, throwing out flame, cinders, and even heavy stones to a great distance and accompanied from above with intense lightning and heavy thunder. In the morning Keoua and his companions were afraid to proceed and spent the day in trying to appease the goddess of the volcano, whom they supposed they had offended the day before by rolling stones
one of the families which had been so suddenly bereft of life. In those perilous circumstances, the surviving party did not even stay to bewail their fate, but, leaving their deceased companions as they found them, hurried on and overtook the company in advance at the place of their encampment.

"Keoua and his followers, of whom the narrator of this scene were a part, retreated in the direction they had come. On their return, they found their deceased friends as they had left them, entire and exhibiting no other marks of decay than a sunken hollowness in their eyes; the rest of their bodies was in a state of entire preservation. They were never buried, and their bones lay bleaching in the sun and rain for many years."

A blast of sulphurous gas, a shower of heated embers, or a volume of heated steam would sufficiently account for this sudden death. Some of the narrators who saw the corpses affirm that, though in no place deeply burnt, yet they were thoroughly scorched."

Keoua's prophets ascribed this blow from the gods to their high chief's dislike of Hilo and gift to sub-chiefs of the fish-ponds, which were considered the favorite food-producers for offerings to Hiiaka, the youngest member of the Pele family.

Kamehameha's prophets said that this eruption was the favor of the gods on his temple building.

The people said it was proof that Pele had taken Kamehameha under her especial protection and would always watch over his interests and make him the chief ruler.