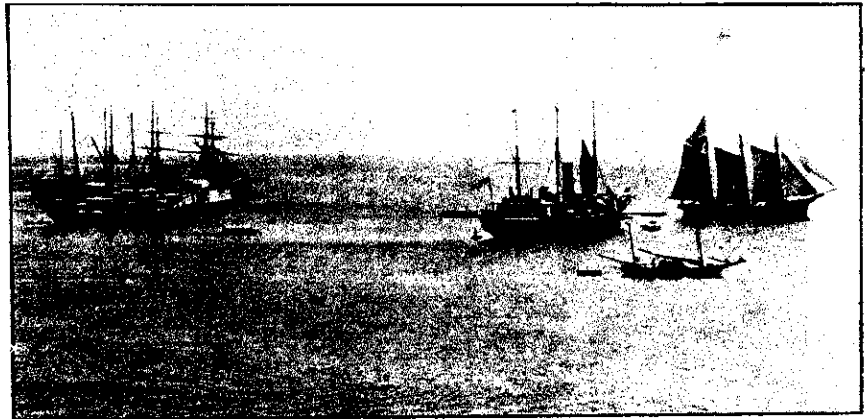


UNION STEAMSHIP COMPANY'S "WAIKARE."  
NOW ON A PLEASURE TRIP TO THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS.

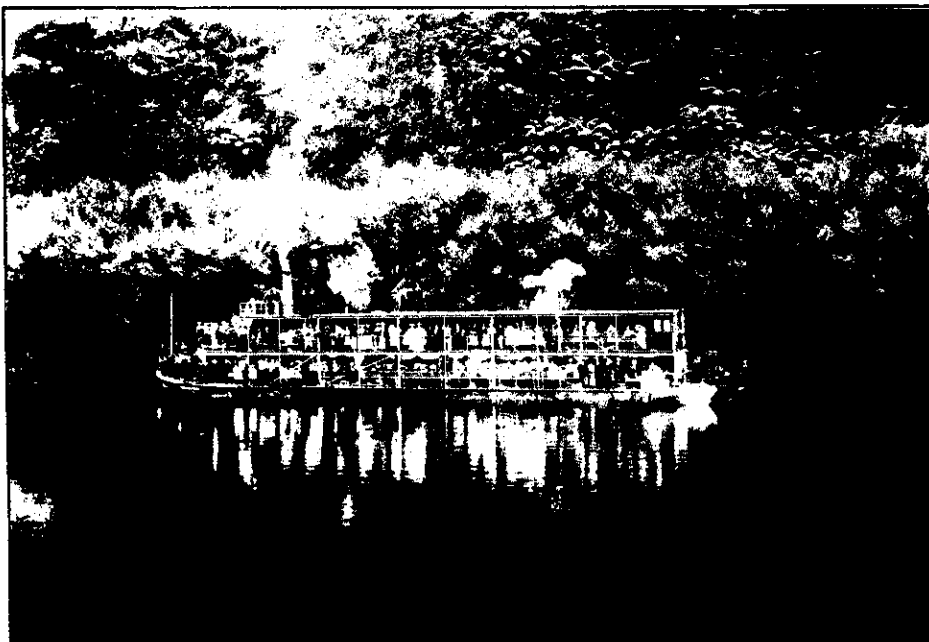
#### IN SUMMER SEAS.

Our illustration of the U.S.S. Waikare is likely to make many of our readers sigh that they are not among the lucky pleasure-seekers aboard the vessel in her trip through the South Sea Islands. The Waikare was timed to leave Apia to-day (Wednesday), and arrives on Saturday at Vavata, in the Tongan Islands. On Monday she leaves Nukualofa for Auckland, at which port she is due on the following Friday. There are 156 excursionists on board, about half of the number hailing from Australia, and arrangements have been made by which those who prefer to stay some time at any of the islands may do so and return later to their homes by any of the company's steamers. Until the vessel comes back we cannot expect any account of the trip, but judging by the route taken and the provisions made by the Union Company for the comfort of the passengers, we expect nothing but enthusiastic satisfaction among the fortunate excursionists. The picture of Apia Harbour which we reproduce derives its chief interest



*Davis. Photo.*

THE SCHOONER "SOPHY SUTHERLAND," AND WARSHIPS LYING IN APIA HARBOUR, SAMOA.



EXCURSION ON THE WANGANUI RIVER IN THE "MANUWAL"

from the fact that it includes the schooner *Sophy Sutherland*, with whose romantic story most of our readers are already familiar through the newspapers. The *Sophy Sutherland* sailed from San Francisco early in 1897, her destination being the Solomon Islands. She was engaged and manned by a sort of co-operative company organised by a man named Sorensen, who told a story of immense quantities of gold to be had for the picking up in the aforesaid islands. Fifteen men went on board, four of whom were sailors. All had put money—more or less—in the venture, and were indulging in dreams of future prosperity, where debt should be no more. "The ship remained in Apia about fourteen days," says the Samoan 'Herald,' "then left for Suva where she remained for some four days before starting for the *El Dorado* of her crew's hopes. While in Apia the organiser of the venture was recognised by several persons who at once prognosticated failure. However, gold was in prospect, and those on the vessel, all of whom looked happy and healthy, went on their way. The first island of the Solomons reached was Florida Island, Taluge Harbour, where Sorensen had stated gold was in abundance. There it was ascertained that the stories told in Apia respecting the promoter were genuine. He had had a difference of opinion with the colonial authorities which had caused social relations to be suspended for some ten years.

'But to return to our gold, the ship went to about six of the British Solomon Islands, and ultimately decided to land Sorensen upon the island

where Mr Woodford (formerly Consul in Samoa) is located as Resident Commissioner. This gentleman speedily decided that he had no use for gentlemen of the class landed and allowed him to leave the island by the first available chance. Sorensen left. Nothing whatever was found to justify the lying reports with which Sorensen inveigled these poor misguided fools to leave a good country on such a wild-goose chase. Plenty of quartz was found, but did not contain anything of value. There was a large quantity of trade on board, also a steam launch which Sorensen endeavoured to obtain possession of, with a view to starting as a trader. It is said that copper was found, so four of the party—Greenwood, Gingg, Smudeke and Cunath remained to prospect. All of the party were attacked by fever, and the captain decided to leave for San Francisco. When the vessel left on March 19th, there were only three men able to move about. It was thought that the change from that fever-stricken country to fresh air would enable them to recover. There days after leaving there was but one man able to assist. A week after, the captain, finding all on board to be getting much worse, decided to head for Samoa, as that was the nearest port, for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment, and fresh food. To add to their trouble scurvy broke out. When within sight of Samoa there were only two men—the captain and another—able to work. The man was very sick, but contrived to take the wheel occasionally. The ship, for three weeks, was within 70 miles of Apia, but did not reach port until