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STORY OF THE RACE OF PEOPLE CALLED THE MENEHUNES, OF KAUAI.

(A HAWAIIAN TRADITION.)

TRANSLATED¹ BY THOS. G. THURM.

THE race of people called Menehunes were small people, it is said they were below the knees of Naipualehu.² If that is true as stated by the ancients then they were small indeed, short and rotund, according to some descriptions. They were known to be powerfully built, stout and muscular; their skin was red, their body hairy; their nose short and thick set, and their low protruding forehead was covered with hair. They had big eyes hidden by long eyebrows, and their set countenance was fearful so that they were unpleasant to look upon.

Their dwelling place was in the mountains, above Waimea, near perhaps to a place known as Waineki. There was where this race was frequently seen. Their houses were of banana leaves; their conversation was a kind of murmur like the low growl of a dog; they were loud-voiced in their laughter, and were in perfect accord in all their undertakings and manner of living. They subsisted on bananas, silver-sides and shrimps. The Menehunes' hunger was satisfied with one or two bananas, or a single handful of small fish sufficed for each. The silver-sides and shrimps were the meat [food] to supply this people on account of their great number, whereby they were able to perform important tasks in a single night and complete by dawn the work undertaken.

The watercourse of Kikiaola, above the Waimea River, was built by this race of Menehunes who dug the course and laid the stones smooth and tight in the following manner: In the night of Akua (full moon) perhaps was their construction of the watercourse of Kikiaola brought to completion. It is said that they stood in line from above the waterhead of the watercourse of Kikiaola to below Polihale, and by the hand of this and that Menehune each stone was passed this long distance of some five or six miles, and yet, the course was completed and the water turned in by morning in its construction. The chief that encouraged this race of Menehunes to the task, rejoiced greatly at hearing of, and seeing the completion of the watercourse of Kikiaola,

1. A somewhat free translation to lessen the tautology of the original.
2. A celebrated Kauai dwarf of but three feet in height.

to benefit the laboring people residing at Paliuli, and the water flowing down its course to enable the *taro* to grow thriftily for their sustenance.

The durability of the Kikiaola watercourse. From the construction by the Menehunes up to this day none have broken down this firmly built watercourse of Kikiaola, a kind of mysterious labor of these diminutive people. At its completion they had insufficient food for their maintenance, therefore, as they could not longer remain at Waimea, on account of the scarce and diminishing supply of the silver-sides there, they learned that a couple of young chiefs at Puna, Kauai Island, were seeking [them]. There, living in the valley between the Kipu River and Niumalu, resided Ale-koko, the brother, and Ka-lala-lehua, the sister, young chiefs of handsome countenance, who agreed together to construct a fish-pond each for themselves. At the removal hither of the Menehunes they began the construction of the fish-ponds of these young chiefs of Niumalu, afore mentioned.

In the erection of the fish-ponds of these young chiefs, that of the brother was built on one side of the Niumalu River (now leased to Chinese), while the sister's was located on the side toward Kipu, but, strange to say, the wall around the pond of Alekoko, the brother, was completed, while that of Ka-lala-lehua, the sister's was not.

It is said that the work on these fish-ponds was done in one night. The stone gathering and smooth fitting of these enclosures reached from the sea-beach of Makalii, about a mile and a-half from Niumalu, was and declared by some to be perhaps two miles or more distant. As in the construction of the Kikiaola watercourse, done at night, so were these fish-ponds, the pond of the brother completed, and that of the sister unfinished at dawn, when all the Menehunes returned to the mountains because they were a queer people at the approach of daylight. There was only a small section more to complete Ka-lalal-ehua's pond when daylight came on, but one by one the Menehunes fled to the mountains until all had disappeared by dawn. The sister seeing her fish-pond incomplete was grieved, and wept at its unfinished state, while the brother rejoiced at the completion of his. The stones gathered for the sister's pond still remain in the stream to this day.

These two young chiefs, Alekoko, the brother, and Ka-lala-lehu, the sister, were born in the valley and dwelt near that stream, and over it the rainbow continues to arch to the present time. Residents of the place upon beholding the rainbow spanning the valley acknowledged that it was for those young chiefs, saying: "These are vigilant chiefs."

According to the statements of residents of this valley of Niumalu, this regal pair possessed supernatural powers, the sister at times changing to a lizard, and the brother assuming a shark form on his back at times. Directly beneath that valley was a deep hole wherein the water at times was hot, and at other times cold. It might have been true, but now it has entirely disappeared.

It was stated by my grandparents, now dead, that they heard of the character of the Menehunes in this wise: They were in the upland region of Waineki, where they slept, the place of the Menehunes in olden time. At night, on lighting a fire to roast bananas, before being cooked for eating they would be snatched away with long poles by these Menehune folk, snatching them off the burning coals. Not indeed is the like of the small size of this race; their countenance inspired fear should you behold them, and unsightly was the appearance of their eyes, yet they were not angry or quarrelsome men, said my ancestors, who learned clearly of their characteristics.

The Menehunes were very diminutive, a people greatly afraid of daylight, but at night, oh my! it was glory to them. They were united in all their great undertakings, and were certainly of supernatural kind, as witness the watercourse of Kikiaola unto this day; no one dared break down the structures of the Menehunes. On observing closely the stones used in the work, they were large indeed, and so it is with the fish-pond of Alekoko unto this day; the strength which they put into their work has endured to the present time, as is seen, though the grass has grown among the outer stones of the enclosure, those in sight, but the top stones are hidden by the thick growth of grass. Stones that had fallen were replaced by the Chinese. In past years of great flood this fish-pond suffered no damage by freshet, the water flowed over the walls, but no part has tumbled down to this day.

The way of my ancestors hearing of this kind of people was by going up to Waineki, right above and looking down into Wainiha valley. They went up there to collect sandalwood for the chiefs, and slept in the mountains from time to time, and thus became familiar with the locality of this strange race, and learned they were good people; they molested no one without cause. In the matter of food, they approached if bananas were being roasted by kanakas in the mountains in the ancient time of long ago.

The lasting quality of these structures erected by the Menehunes continue to this era, these places renowned by their labors show the goodness of God in creating people of different races by whose labors His magnanimity is manifest. Some claimed these were *Mu-ai-maia*³ (banana-eating-bugs), but my grandparents maintained they were true Menehunes.

[It is a question whether these Menehune were, or were not, some of the negroid people of Indonesia brought into the Pacific by the ancestors of the Polynesians to man their canoes. There are several things in the traditions of other branches of the race than the Hawaiian that seem to confirm this view. In Tahiti the Manahune were a lower class of people than the Polynesians. In Rarotongan

3. The *Mu-ai-maia* and Menehune myths of Hawaii may be likened to the gnomes and fairy stories of our day.

traditions they are known as Manaune, and in Mangaia Island there is still a tribe known by that name. The Maori name for a strange people known to their traditions is Manahua, probably the same word as Menehune. In Maori, the word *manahune* means a scar, such as some of the Melanesians burnt into their flesh instead of tattooing.—EDITOR.]

MOOLELO O KA LAHUI KANAKA I KAPAIA MENEHUNE, O KAUAI.

O ka lahui kanaka i kapaia ka Menehune, he kanaka liiliii, ua oleloia malalo iho o na kuli o Naipualehu. Ina he oiaio ia olelo pela a kahiko, alaila, ua liilii io no; he ano peke, a pahaa ma kahi olelo ana. He kino ano paakiki, he puipui nae a ka lawakua; he ili ulaula, a he huluhulu ke kino, he mukokikoki ka ihu, he muomuo ka lae me ka paa i ka huluhulu; he nunui na maka i uhiia aku e ka hulu o ke kuemaka, a he pupuka a ku i ka hoo-maka'u-kau na helehelena, e hoihoi ole ai oe ke nana aku ia lakou.

O ko lakou noho ana aia ma na kuahiwi o uka o Waimea la, aia paha makahi e kokoke ana ia wahi i kapaia o Waineki, Malaila ka iike nuiia ai keia ano lahui. O ka lauhulu o ka maia oia ka ko lakou hale, o ka lakou kamailio ana he ano nu-nu-lu elike ka me ka nu-nu-lu ana a ka ilio; o ka lakou akaaka ana he nunui ka leo; he poe like loa keia ma ka lakou mea e hana ai. He ano lahui eepa no keia ma ko lakou ano, ka lakou hana a me ko lakou noho ana. Ko lakou ola ana, ka maia, ka hinana ame ka opae, ua moana no ka ka Menehune ina akahi a elua maia, a o ka piha lima hookahi ua maona ihola no ka mea hookahi. O ka hinana ame ka opae na i-a e lawa ai keia poe, no ka nui maoli o keia ano lahui kanaka; pela i hiki ai ia lakou ke hana i kekahi hana nui, i hookahi no po a ao, ua paa a pau ia hana i ka hanaia.

O ka auwai o Kikiaola, mauka o ka muliwai o Waimea, na keia lahui Menehune i hana ia auwai, i eli a i nini i ka pohaku a paa, a penei ka lakou hana ana. I ka po paha o Akua i hana ai lakou i ka auwai o Kikiaola, a paa no i ka po hookahi. Ua oleloia, ua ku laina lakou mai luna aku nei o ke poo-wai o ka auwai o Kikiaola a hiki ilalo o Polihale, a maluna o ka lima o kela ame keia Menehune pakahi i halihali ia mai ai ka pohaku mai keia loihi mai aneane paha e piha na mile he elima a eono paha, eia nae, ua paa ua auwai, ua komo ka wai a e kahe ana i ke kakahiaka ana ae i hanaia ai ua auwai nei o

Kikiaola. Hauoli ke 'lii nana i hoo-lale-lale i ua lahui kanaka Menehune nei i ka lohe a ike maka ana i ka paa o ua auwai o Kikiaola, a ola no hoi na maka-ainana e noho ana ma Paliuli, a hala loa mai i kai i ke komo ana o ka wai, a ulu na puepue o na loi kalo a na kanaka, a manao ae ke ola.

O ka paa no o ka auwai o Kikiaola. Mai ke hanaia ana a ka Menehune a hiki i keia la, aohe mea nana wawahi ae i keia paa o ka auwai o Kikiaola, he ano hoo-kala-kupua no ka hana a keia ano kanaka liilii. I ka paa ana o ka auwai o Kikiaola, ua hiki ole e lawa ua lahui Menehune nei i ka mea ai ole e ola ai lakou, nolaila, i ka hiki ole ana e ola lakou ke noho aku no Waimea, ke uuku a ke emi maila ka ku ana o ka hinana ia Waimea, ua loheia aia he mau keiki alii no ke huli ma Puna, Kauai, e noho ana i ke awawa o ka muliwai o Kipu mauka, a o Niumalu makai. E noho ana he kaikunane, o Ale-koko ame ke kaikuahine, o Ka-lala-lehua, he mau alii ui keia o na hele-helena, hooholo like laua e u hana i mau loko i-a pakahi na laua. I ka nee ana mai o ka Menehune e hana i keia mau loko i-a a keia mau keiki alii o Niumalu i ikeia ae nei mamua.

I ka hanaia ana o ka loko i-a a ua mau keiki alii nei, hanaia no hoi ka ke kaikunane ma kekahi aoao mai o ka muliwai o Niumalu, e hoolimalimaia nei i ka pake, a hanaia no hoi ka loko i-a a ke kaikuahine ma ka aoao ma Kipu, ka mea kupanaha ea, paa ke kuapa i niniia me ka pohaku ka loko i-a hoi a ke kaikunane, o Alekoko, a paa ole hoi ka loko i-a a ke kaikuahine, o Kalalalehua.

I ka oleloia, hookahi no po i hanaia ai keia loko i-a, o ka pohaku i hahau a niniia ai keia mau loko i-a, mai lalo mai ia o kahakai o Makalii, me he la he mile me hapa mai Niumalu mai, a i oleloia he elua paha mile a oi aku ka manao o ka pohaku o keia mau loko i-a i kii ia ai. E like no me ka hanaia ana o ka auwai o Kikiaola, i ka po a paa, pela no keia loko i-a i hanaia ai, paa ka loko a ke kaikunane a paa ole hoi ka loko i-a a ke kaikuahine, ao e ka, pau ka Menehune i ka hoi i uka o kuahiwi, no ka mea, he lahui eepa loa keia i ke puka ka la, he wahi iki wale no koe a puni no hoi ka loko i-a a ke kaikuahine ao e, lele ae ka ia Menehune, a lele ae a pela a pau loa na Menehune i ka lele, a ao no hoi. Ike ke kaikuahine aole i paa kana loko i-a, kaumaha loa oia a uwe no ka paa ole ana o kana loko i-a, a hauoli hoi ke kaikunane i ka paa ana o kana loko i-a, oia o Alekoko. O ka pohaku i nini ia ai ka ke kaikuahine eia no ia ke paanei iloko o ka muliwai a hiki i keia la.

O keia mau keiki alii, oia o Alekoko, ke kaikunane, ame Kalalalehua, ke kaikuahine, aia no he wahi awawa e pili ana ma ka muliwai, oia kahi i hanaia ai keia mau keiki alii; na ke anuenue e pio mau ana ma ia wahi a hiki no i keia la. Ua ike a kamaaina na kanaka o keia wahi ke pio ke anuenue ma ua wahi awawa nei, e olelo ana lakou no ua mau alii nei, ma ka oleloia, "he mau alii ui ka keia."

Ma ka olelo a kamaaina o keia awawa o Niumalu, he ano kupua no keia mau keiki, o ke kaikuahine e loli ana i moo i kahi wa, a o ka kaikunane e kua mano ana i kahi wa. A aia malalo pono-i mai no o ua wahi awawa nei, he lua hononu, i kahi wa wela ka wai o keia wahi, i kahi wa koekoe ka wai. I kela wa paha mamua hoikeia ia mau mea, i keia wa nalowale loa.

Ma ka olelo a ko'u mau kupuna i make, ua lohe no laua i ke ano o ka Menehune penei: Aia laua i uka o kela wahi o Waineki, moe laua malaila, ma kahi a ka Menehune o ka wa kahiko. I ka po ua ho-a ia, a e puu-ahi nui pulehu maia, aole lakou i ai mua i ka maia, e lilo mua e ana i keia poe Menehune me ka laau loloa ka e ki-oe mai ai i ka maia iloko o ka puu-ahi e aa ana. Aole no ka hoi o ka liilii a kana mai o keia ano lahui, hoo-maka'u-kau no hoi na helehelena ke nana aku oe, a pupuka no hoi a ke ino o na maka, eia nae, aole keia he kanaka ano puni huhu a hoala hakaka wahi a kuu mau kupuna i lohe pono i ko lakou ano.

He kanaka liilii io maoli no, he poe maka'u loa i ke ao, a ina i ka po, auwe, he hulu a-a ia no keia poe kanaka. He lokahi loa lakou ma ka lakou mau hana ano nui, he ano hookala-kupua maoli no, nana aku i ka auwai o Kikiaola a hiki mai i keia la, aole he mea hiki e aa ae e hele e wawahi i ka paa i hanaia e ka lahui Menehune. I ka nana pono ana i ke ano o ka pohaku o ka nini ana he nunui maoli no; a pela no me ka loko i-a o Alekoko a hiki mai i keia la, oia paa no a ka Menehune i hana ai oia paa no ia i keia la e ike ia nei, eia nae, ua uluia e ka manienie mawaho mai o ke kuapa, oia kau pohaku e ike ana, aka, o ka pohaku maluna iho ua nalowale i ka ulu nuiia o ka manienie. O ka pohaku helelei iho ilalo oia ka ka pake e hookau ae iluna. I na makahiki wai-nui aku nei i hala, aole i hoopoino iki ia keia loko i-a e ka wai-kahe, ua pii no ka wai a a-e maluna o kuapa, aole nae i hiolo iki kekahi wahi o ka loko i-a a hiki i keia la.

O ke kumu o ko'u mau kupuna i lohe ai i keia ano poe kanaka, i uka oia wahi o Waineki, a maluna pono ae o ke awawa o Wainiha e nana pono iho ana ka i lalo. I pii hoi ko'u mau kupuna i ka oli laau ala, na na 'lii, a moe ai i kuahiwi, a moe aku i kuahiwi, a pela ko lakou ike ana i ua wahi o ua lahui eepa nei, he poe maikai, aohē he hana wale mai, ma ka mea ai ka lakou e kii mai ai ina e pulehu maia kanaka i kuahiwi ia manawa o ke au kahiko i o kahiko loa. Ke paa nei keia mau wahi a ka Menehune i hana ai, oia paa no ia la oia no ia i keia la. Na keia mau wahi kaulana a ka Menehune i hana ai i ikeia ai ka nani o ka Akua, i ka hana ana ina ano kanaka o kela ano ame keia ano, a ma na hana nae i ikeia ai ka nani o ke Akua. Ma ka olelo a kahi poe he Mu-ai-maia, aka, ma ka olelo no a ko'u mau kupuna, o ua lahui Menehune nei no ia.