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A Voyage To The Pacific Ocean

Undertaken, By The Command Of His Majesty, For Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere. To Determine The Position and Extent of the West Side of North America; its Distance from Asia; and the Practicability of a Northern Passage to Europe. Performed Under The Direction Of Captians Cook, ...

Cook, James

London, 1784

Chap. XII.

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C H A P. XII.

The Situation of the Islands now discovered.—Their Names.—Called the Sandwich Islands.—Atooi described.—The Soil.—Climate.—Vegetable Productions.—Birds.—Fish.—Domestic Animals.—Persons of the Inhabitants.—Their Disposition.—Dress.—Ornaments.—Habitations.—Food.—Cookery.—Amusements.—Manufactures.—Working-tools.—Knowledge of Iron accounted for.—Canoes.—Agriculture.—Account of one of their Chiefs.—Weapons.—Customs agreeing with those of Tongataboo and Otabeite.—Their Language the same.—Extent of this Nation throughout the Pacific Ocean.—Reflections on the useful Situation of the Sandwich Islands.

IT is worthy of observation, that the islands in the Pacific Ocean, which our late voyages have added to the geography of the globe, have been generally found lying in groups or clusters; the single intermediate islands, as yet discovered, being few in proportion to the others; though, probably, there are many more of them still unknown, which serve as steps between the several clusters. Of what number this newly-discovered Archipelago consists, must be left for future investigation. We saw five of them, whose names, as given to us by the natives, are Woahoo, Atooi, Oneeheow, Oreehoua, and Tahoorā. The last is a small elevated island, lying four or five leagues from the South East point of Oneeheow,

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heow, in the direction of South, 69° West. We were told, that it abounds with birds, which are its only inhabitants. We also got some information of the existence of a low uninhabited island in the neighbourhood, whose name is Tammata pappa. Besides these six, which we can distinguish by their names, it appeared, that the inhabitants of those with whom we had intercourse, were acquainted with some other islands both to the Eastward and Westward. I named the whole group the Sandwich Islands, in honour of the Earl of Sandwich. Those that I saw, are situated between the latitude of $21^{\circ} 30'$, and $22^{\circ} 15'$ North, and between the longitude of $199^{\circ} 20'$, and $201^{\circ} 30'$ East.

Of Woahoo, the most Easterly of these islands, seen by us, which lies in the latitude of $21^{\circ} 36'$, we could get no other intelligence, but that it is high land, and is inhabited.

We had opportunities of knowing some particulars about Oneeheow, which have been mentioned already. It lies seven leagues to the Westward of our anchoring-place at Atooi; and is not above fifteen leagues in circuit. Its chief vegetable produce is yams; if we may judge from what was brought to us by the natives. They have salt, which they call *patai*; and is produced in salt ponds. With it they cure both fish and pork; and some salt fish, which we got from them, kept very well, and were found to be very good. This island is mostly low land, except the part facing Atooi, which rises directly from the sea to a good height; as does also the South East point of it, which terminates in a round hill. It was on the West side of this point where our ships anchored.

Of Oreehoua we know nothing more than that it is a small elevated island, lying close to the North side of Oneeheow.

Atooi,



Atooi, which is the largest, being the principal scene of our operations, I shall now proceed to lay before my readers what information I was able to collect about it, either from actual observation, while on shore, or from conversation with its inhabitants, who were perpetually on board the ships while we lay at anchor; and who, in general, could be tolerably well understood, by those of us who had acquired an acquaintance with the dialects of the South Pacific Islands. It is, however, to be regretted, that we should have been obliged, so soon, to leave a place, which, as far as our opportunities of knowing reached, seemed to be highly worthy of a more accurate examination.

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Atooi, from what we saw of it, is, at least, ten leagues in length from East to West; from whence its circuit may nearly be guessed, though it appears to be much broader at the East than at the West point, if we may judge from the double range of hills which appeared there. The road, or anchoring-place, which we occupied, is on the South West side of the island, about six miles from the West end, before a village which has the name of Wymoa. As far as we sounded, we found, that the bank has a fine grey sand at the bottom, and is free from rocks; except a little to the Eastward of the village, where there spits out a shoal, on which are some rocks and breakers; but they are not far from the shore. This road would be entirely sheltered from the trade wind, if the height of the land, over which it blows, did not alter its direction, and make it follow that of the coast; so that it blows at North East, on one side of the island, and at East South East, or South East, on the other, falling obliquely upon the shore. Thus the road, though situated on the lee side of the island, is a little exposed to the trade wind; but, notwithstanding this defect, is far from being



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being a bad station, and much superior to those which necessity obliges ships daily to use, in regions where the winds are both more variable and more boisterous; as at Teneriffe, Madeira, the Azores, and elsewhere. The landing too is more easy than at most of those places; and, unless in very bad weather, always practicable. The water to be got in the neighbourhood is excellent, and easy to be conveyed to the boats. But no wood can be cut at any distance, convenient enough to bring it from, unless the natives could be prevailed upon to part with the few *ctoa* trees (for so they call the *cordia sebastina*), that grow about their villages, or a sort called *dooe dooe*, that grow farther up the country.

The land, as to its general appearance, does not, in the least, resemble any of the islands we have hitherto visited within the tropic, on the south side of the *equator*; if we except its hills near the centre, which are high, but slope gently to the sea, or lower lands. Though it be destitute of the delightful borders of Otaheite, and of the luxuriant plains of Tongataboo, covered with trees, which at once afford a friendly shelter from the scorching sun, and an enchanting prospect to the eye, and food for the natives, which may be truly said to drop from the trees into their mouths, without the laborious task of rearing; though, I say, Atooi be destitute of these advantages, its possessing a greater quantity of gently-rising land, renders it, in some measure, superior to the above favourite islands, as being more capable of improvement.

The height of the land within, the quantity of clouds which we saw, during the whole time we staid, hanging over it, and frequently on the other parts, seems to put it beyond all doubt, that there is a sufficient supply of water; and



that there are some running streams which we did not see, especially in the deep valleys, at the entrance of which the villages commonly stand. From the wooded part to the sea, the ground is covered with an excellent sort of grass, about two feet high, which grows sometimes in tufts, and, though not very thick at the place where we were, seemed capable of being converted into plentiful crops of fine hay. But not even a shrub grows naturally on this extensive space.

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In the break, or narrow valley, through which we had our road to the *morai*, the soil is of a brownish black colour, somewhat loose; but as we advanced upon the high ground, it changed to a reddish brown, more stiff and clayey, though, at this time, brittle from its dryness. It is most probably the same all over the cultivated parts; for what adhered to most of the potatoes, bought by us, which, no doubt, came from very different spots, was of this sort. Its quality, however, may be better understood from its products, than from its appearance. For the vale, or moist ground, produces *taro*, of a much larger size than any we had ever seen; and the higher ground furnishes sweet potatoes, that often weigh ten, and sometimes twelve or fourteen pounds; very few being under two or three.

The temperature of the climate may be easily guessed from the situation of the island. Were we to judge of it from our experience, it might be said to be very variable; for, according to the generally received opinion, it was now the season of the year, when the weather is supposed to be most settled, the sun being at his greatest annual distance. The heat was, at this time, very moderate; and few of those inconveniences, which many tropical countries are subject to, either from heat or moisture, seem to be



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experienced here, as the habitations of the natives are quite close; and they salt both fish and pork, which keep well, contrary to what has usually been observed to be the case, when this operation is attempted in hot countries. Neither did we find any dews of consequence, which may, in some measure, be accounted for, by the lower part of the country being destitute of trees.

The rock that forms the sides of the valley, and which seems to be the same with that seen by us at different parts of the coast, is a greyish black, ponderous stone; but honey-combed, with some very minute shining particles, and some spots of a rusty colour interspersed. The last gives it often a reddish cast, when at a distance. It is of an immense depth, but seems divided into *strata*, though nothing is interposed. For the large pieces always broke off to a determinate thickness, without appearing to have adhered to those below them. Other stones are probably much more various, than in the Southern islands. For, during our short stay, besides the *lapis lydius*, which seems common all over the South Sea, we found a species of cream-coloured whetstone, sometimes variegated with blacker or whiter veins, as marble; or in pieces, as *breccie*; and common writing slate, as well as a coarser sort; but we saw none of them in their natural state; and the natives brought some pieces of a coarse whitish pumice-stone. We got also a brown sort of *hematites*, which, from being strongly attracted by the magnet, discovered the quantity of metal that it contained, and seems to belong to the second species of Cronstedt, though Linnæus has placed it amongst his *intractabilia*. But its variety could not be discovered; for what we saw of it, as well as the slates and whetstones, was cut artificially.

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Besides the vegetable articles, bought by us as refreshments, amongst which were, at least, five or six varieties of plantains, the island produces bread-fruit; though it seems to be scarce, as we saw only one tree, which was large, and had some fruit upon it. There are also a few cocoa-palms; yams, as we were told, for we saw none; the *kappe* of the Friendly Islands, or Virginian *arum*; the *etosa* tree, and sweet smelling *gardenia*, or *cape jasmine*. We saw several trees of the *dooe dooe*, so useful at Otaheite, as bearing the oily nuts, which are stuck upon a kind of skewer, and burnt as candles. Our people saw them used, in the same manner, at Onecheow. We were not on shore at Atooi but in the day time, and then we saw the natives wearing these nuts, hung on strings, round the neck. There is a species of *sida*, or Indian mallow, somewhat altered, by the climate, from what we saw at Christmas Island; the *morinda citrifolia*, which is called *none*; a species of *convolvulus*; the *ava*, or intoxicating pepper; and great numbers of gourds. These last grow to a very large size, and are of a vast variety of shapes, which probably is effected by art. Upon the dry sand, about the village, grew a plant, that we had never seen in these seas, of the size of a common thistle, and prickly, like that; but bearing a fine flower, almost resembling a white poppy. This, with another small one, were the only uncommon plants, which our short excursion gave us an opportunity of observing.

The scarlet birds, already described, which were brought for sale, were never met with alive; but we saw a single small one, about the size of a canary-bird, of a deep crimson colour; a large owl; two large brown hawks, or kites; and a wild duck. The natives mentioned the names of several other birds; amongst which we knew the *otoo*, or blueish heron;

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and the *torata*, a sort of whimbrel, which are known by the same names at Otaheite; and it is probable, that there are a great many sorts, judging by the quantity of fine yellow, green, and very small, velvet-like, black feathers used upon the cloaks, and other ornaments, worn by the inhabitants.

Fish, and other marine productions were, to appearance, not various; as, besides the small mackerel, we only saw common mullets; a sort of a dead white, or chalky colour; a small, brownish rock-fish, spotted with blue; a turtle, which was penned up in a pond; and three or four sorts of fish salted. The few shell-fish, that we saw, were chiefly converted into ornaments, though they neither had beauty nor novelty to recommend them.

The hogs, dogs, and fowls, which were the only tame or domestic animals that we found here, were all of the same kind that we met with at the South Pacific islands. There were also small lizards; and some rats, resembling those seen at every island at which we had, as yet, touched.

The inhabitants are of a middling stature, firmly made, with some exceptions, neither remarkable for a beautiful shape, nor for striking features, which rather express an openness and good-nature, than a keen, intelligent disposition. Their visage, especially amongst the women, is sometimes round; but others have it long; nor can we say, that they are distinguished, as a nation, by any general cast of countenance. Their colour is nearly of a nut brown; and it may be difficult to make a nearer comparison, if we take in all the different hues of that colour; but some individuals are darker. The women have been already mentioned, as being little more delicate than the men, in their formation; and



and I may say, that, with a very few exceptions, they have little claim to those peculiarities that distinguish the sex, in other countries. There is, indeed, a more remarkable equality in the size, colour, and figure of both sexes, than in most places I have visited. However, upon the whole, they are far from being ugly, and appear to have few natural deformities of any kind. Their skin is not very soft, nor shining; perhaps for want of oiling, which is practised at the Southern islands; but their eyes and teeth are, in general, very tolerable. The hair, for the greatest part, is straight, though, in some, frizzling; and though its natural colour be, commonly, black, it is stained, as at the Friendly and other islands. We saw but few instances of corpulence; and these oftener amongst the women than the men; but it was chiefly amongst the latter that personal defects were observed, though, if any of them can claim a share of beauty, it was most conspicuous amongst the young men.

They are vigorous, active, and most expert swimmers; leaving their canoes upon the most trifling occasion; diving under them; and swimming to others though at a great distance. It was very common to see women, with infants at the breast, when the surf was so high, that they could not land in the canoes, leap overboard, and without endangering their little ones, swim to the shore, through a sea that looked dreadful.

They seem to be blest with a frank, cheerful disposition; and were I to draw any comparisons, should say, that they are equally free from the fickle levity which distinguishes the natives of Otaheite, and the sedate cast observable amongst many of those of Tongataboo. They seem to live very sociably in their intercourse with one another; and,
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except the propensity to thieving, which seems innate in most of the people we have visited in this ocean, they were exceedingly friendly to us. And it does their sensibility no little credit, without flattering ourselves, that when they saw the various articles of our European manufacture, they could not help expressing their surprize, by a mixture of joy and concern, that seemed to apply the case, as a lesson of humility to themselves; and, on all occasions, they appeared deeply impressed with a consciousness of their own inferiority; a behaviour which equally exempts their national character from the preposterous pride of the more polished Japanese, and of the ruder Greenlander. It was a pleasure to observe with how much affection the women managed their infants, and how readily the men lent their assistance to such a tender office; thus sufficiently distinguishing themselves from those savages, who esteem a wife and child as things rather necessary, than desirable, or worthy of their notice.

From the numbers which we saw collected at every village, as we sailed past, it may be supposed, that the inhabitants of this island are pretty numerous. Any computation, that we make, can be only conjectural. But, that some notion may be formed, which shall not greatly err on either side, I would suppose, that, including the straggling houses, there might be, upon the whole island, sixty such villages, as that before which we anchored; and that, allowing five persons to each house, there would be, in every village, five hundred; or thirty thousand upon the island. This number is, certainly, not exaggerated; for we had sometimes three thousand persons, at least, upon the beach; when it could not be supposed, that above a tenth part of the inhabitants were present.

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The common dress, both of the women and of the men, has been already described. The first have often much larger pieces of cloth wrapped round them, reaching from just below the breasts to the hams, or lower; and several were seen with pieces thrown loosely about the shoulders, which covered the greatest part of the body; but the children, when very young, are quite naked. They wear nothing upon the head; but the hair, in both sexes, is cut in different forms; and the general fashion, especially among the women, is, to have it long before, and short behind. The men often had it cut, or shaved, on each side, in such a manner, that the remaining part, in some measure, resembles the crest of their caps or helmets, formerly described. Both sexes, however, seem very careless about their hair, and have nothing like combs to dress it with. Instances of wearing it, in a singular manner, were sometimes met with among the men, who twist it into a number of separate parcels, like the tails of a wig, each about the thickness of a finger; though the greatest part of these, which are so long that they reach far down the back, we observed, were artificially fixed upon the head, over their own hair*.

It is remarkable, that, contrary to the general practice of the islands we had hitherto discovered in the Pacific Ocean, the people of the Sandwich Islands have not their ears perforated; nor have they the least idea of wearing ornaments in them. Both sexes, nevertheless, adorn themselves with necklaces made of bunches of small black cord, like our

* The print of Horn Island, which we meet with in Mr. Dalrymple's account of Le Maire and Schouten's voyage, represents some of the natives of that island with such long tails, hanging from their heads, as are here described. See *Dalrymple's Voyages to the South Pacific*, Vol. ii. p. 58.

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hat-string, often above a hundred-fold; exactly like those of Wateoo; only, that, instead of the two little balls, on the middle before, they fix a small bit of wood, stone, or shell, about two inches long, with a broad hook, turning forward at its lower part, well polished. They have, likewise, necklaces of many strings of very small shells, or of the dried flowers of the Indian mallow. And, sometimes, a small human image of bone, about three inches long, neatly polished, is hung round the neck. The women also wear bracelets of a single shell, pieces of black wood, with bits of ivory interspersed, and well polished, fixed by a string drawn very closely through them; or others of hogs teeth, laid parallel to each other, with the concave part outward, and the points cut off, fastened together as the former; some of which, made only of large boars' tusks, are very elegant*. The men, sometimes, wear plumes of the tropic birds feathers, stuck in their heads; or those of cocks, fastened round neat polished sticks, two feet long, commonly decorated, at the lower part, with *oora*; and, for the same purpose, the skin of a white dog's tail is sewed over a stick, with its tuft at the end. They also, frequently, wear on the head a kind of ornament, of a finger's thickness, or more, covered with red and yellow feathers, curiously varied, and tied behind; and on the arm, above the elbow, a kind of broad shell-work, grounded upon net-work.

The men are frequently punctured, though not in any particular part, as the Otaheiteans, and those of Tongataboo. Sometimes there are a few marks upon their hands, or arms, and near the groin; but frequently we could observe none at all; though a few individuals had more of this sort

* See Plate, N. LXVII.

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of ornament, than we had usually seen at other places, and ingeniously executed in a great variety of lines and figures, on the arms and fore-part of the body; on which latter, some of them had the figure of the *taame*, or breast-plate, of Otaheite, though we did not meet with the thing itself amongst them. Contrary to the custom of the Society and Friendly Islands, they do not slit, or cut off, part of the *prepuce*; but have it, universally, drawn over the *glans*, and tied with a string, as practised by some of the natives of New Zealand.

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Though they seem to have adopted the mode of living in villages, there is no appearance of defence, or fortification, near any of them; and the houses are scattered about, without any order, either with respect to their distances from each other, or their position in any particular direction. Neither is there any proportion as to their size; some being large and commodious, from forty to fifty feet long, and twenty or thirty broad, while others of them are mere hovels. Their figure is not unlike oblong corn, or hay-stacks; or, perhaps, a better idea may be conceived of them, if we suppose the roof of a barn placed on the ground, in such a manner, as to form a high, acute ridge, with two very low sides, hardly discernible at a distance. The gable, at each end, corresponding to the sides, makes these habitations perfectly close all round; and they are well thatched with long grass, which is laid on slender poles, disposed with some regularity. The entrance is made indifferently in the end or side, and is an oblong hole, so low, that one must rather creep than walk in; and is often shut up by a board of planks, fastened together, which serves as a door, but having no hinges, must be removed occasionally. No light enters the house, but by this opening; and though such

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close habitations may afford a comfortable retreat in bad weather, they seem but ill-adapted to the warmth of the climate. They are, however, kept remarkably clean; and their floors are covered with a large quantity of dried grass, over which they spread mats to sit and sleep upon. At one end stands a kind of bench, about three feet high, on which their household utensils are placed. The catalogue is not long. It consists of gourd-shells, which they convert into vessels that serve as bottles to hold water, and as baskets to contain their victuals, and other things, with covers of the same; and of a few wooden bowls and trenchers, of different sizes. Judging from what we saw growing, and from what was brought to market, there can be no doubt, that the greatest part of their vegetable food consists of sweet potatoes, *taro*, and plantains; and that bread-fruit and yams are rather to be esteemed rarities. Of animal food, they can be in no want; as they have abundance of hogs, which run, without restraint, about the houses; and if they eat dogs, which is not improbable, their stock of these seemed to be very considerable. The great number of fishing-hooks found amongst them, shewed, that they derive no inconsiderable supply of animal food from the sea. But it should seem, from their practice of salting fish, that the openness of their coast often interrupts the business of catching them; as it may be naturally supposed, that no set of people would ever think of preserving quantities of food artificially, if they could depend upon a daily, regular supply of it, in its fresh state. This sort of reasoning, however, will not account for their custom of salting their pork, as well as their fish, which are preserved in gourd-shells. The salt, of which they use a great quantity for this purpose, is of a red colour, not very coarse, and seems to be much the same with what our stragglers found



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at Christmas Island. It has its colour, doubtless, from a mixture of the mud, at the bottom of the part where it is formed; for some of it, that had adhered in lumps, was of a sufficient whiteness and purity.

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They bake their vegetable food with heated stones, as at the Southern Islands; and, from the vast quantity which we saw dressed at one time, we suspected, that the whole village, or, at least, a considerable number of people, joined in the use of a common oven. We did not see them dress any animal food at this island; but Mr. Gore's party, as already mentioned, had an opportunity of satisfying themselves, that it was dressed in Oneeheow in the same sort of ovens; which leaves no doubt of this being also the practice in Atooi; especially as we met with no utensil there, that could be applied to the purpose of stewing or boiling. The only artificial dish we met with, was a *taro* pudding; which, though a disagreeable mess from its founness, was greedily devoured by the natives. They eat off a kind of wooden plates, or trenchers; and the women, as far as we could judge from one instance, if restrained from feeding at the same dish with the men, as at Otaheite, are, at least, permitted to eat in the same place near them.

Their amusements seem pretty various; for, during our short stay, several were discovered. The dances, at which they use the feathered cloaks and caps, were not seen; but from the motions which they made with their hands, on other occasions, when they sung, we could form some judgment that they are, in some degree at least, similar to those we had met with at the Southern Islands, though not executed so skilfully. Neither had they, amongst them, either flutes or reeds; and the only two musical instruments

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which we observed, were of an exceedingly rude kind. One of them does not produce a melody exceeding that of a child's rattle. It consists of what may be called a conic cap inverted, but scarcely hollowed at the base above a foot high, made of a coarse, sedge-like plant; the upper part of which, and the edges, are ornamented with beautiful red feathers; and to the point, or lower part, is fixed a gourd-shell, larger than the fist. Into this is put something to rattle; which is done by holding the instrument by the small part, and shaking, or rather moving it, from place to place briskly, either to different sides, or backward and forward, just before the face, striking the breast with the other hand at the same time*. The other musical instrument (if either of them deserve that name) was a hollow vessel of wood, like a platter, combined with the use of two sticks, on which one of our gentlemen saw a man performing. He held one of the sticks, about two feet long, as we do a fiddle, with one hand, and struck it with the other, which was smaller, and resembled a drum-stick, in a quicker or slower measure; at the same time beating with his foot upon the hollow vessel, that lay inverted upon the ground, and thus producing a tune, that was by no means disagreeable. This music was accompanied by the vocal performance of some women, whose song had a pleasing and tender effect.

We observed great numbers of small polished rods, about four or five feet long, somewhat thicker than the rammer of a musquet, with a tuft of long, white dog's hair fixed on the small end. These are, probably, used in their diversions. We saw a person take one of them in his hand, and,

* See Plate, N^o LXVII.



holding it up, give a smart stroke, till he brought it into an horizontal position, striking with the foot, on the same side, upon the ground, and, with his other hand, beating his breast at the same time. They play at bowls, with pieces of the whetstone mentioned before, of about a pound weight, shaped somewhat like a small cheese, but rounded at the sides and edges, which are very nicely polished; and they have other bowls of the same sort, made of a heavy, reddish brown clay, neatly glazed over with a composition of the same colour, or of a coarse, dark grey slate. They also use, in the manner that we throw quoits, small, flat, rounded pieces of the writing slate, of the diameter of the bowls, but scarcely a quarter of an inch thick, also well polished. From these circumstances, one would be induced to think, that their games are rather trials of skill than of strength.

In every thing manufactured by these people, there appears to be an uncommon degree of neatness and ingenuity. Their cloth, which is the principal manufacture, is made from the *morus papyrifera*; and, doubtless, in the same manner as at Otaheite and Tongataboo; for we bought some of the grooved sticks, with which it is beaten. Its texture, however, though thicker, is rather inferior to that of the cloth of either of the other places; but, in colouring or staining it, the people of Atooi display a superiority of taste, by the endless variation of figures which they execute. One would suppose, on seeing a number of their pieces, that they had borrowed their patterns from some mercer's shop, in which the most elegant productions of China and Europe are collected; besides some original patterns of their own. Their colours, indeed, except the red, are not very bright; but the regularity of the figures and stripes is truly surprising; for, as far as we knew, they have nothing like stamps or prints, to
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make the impressions. In what manner they produce their colours, we had not opportunities of learning; but besides the party-coloured forts, they have some pieces of plain white cloth, and others of a single colour, particularly dark brown and light blue. In general, the pieces which they brought to us, were about two feet broad, and four or five yards long, being the form and quantity that they use for their common dress, or *maro*; and even these we sometimes found were composed of pieces sewed together; an art which we did not find to the Southward, but is strongly, though not very neatly, performed here. There is also a particular fort that is thin, much resembling oil-cloth; and which is actually either oiled or soaked in some kind of varnish, and seems to resist the action of water pretty well.

They fabricate a great many white mats, which are strong, with many red stripes, rhombuses, and other figures interwoven on one side; and often pretty large. These, probably, make a part of their dress occasionally; for they put them on their backs when they offered them to sale. But they make others coarser, plain and strong, which they spread over their floors to sleep upon.

They stain their gourd-shells prettily with undulated lines, triangles, and other figures of a black colour; instances of which we saw practised at New Zealand. And they seem to possess the art of varnishing; for some of these stained gourd-shells are covered with a kind of lacker; and on other occasions, they use a strong size, or gluey substance, to fasten their things together. Their wooden dishes and bowls, out of which they drink their *ava*, are of the *etooa*-tree, or *cordia*, as neat, as if made in our turning-lathe, and perhaps

perhaps better polished. And amongst their articles of handicraft, may be reckoned small square fans of mat or wicker-work, with handles tapering from them of the same, or of wood; which are neatly wrought with small cords of hair, and fibres of the cocoa-nut coir, intermixed. The great variety of fishing-hooks are ingeniously made; some of bone, others of wood pointed with bone, and many of pearl shell. Of the last, some are like a fort that we saw at Tongataboo; and others simply curved, as the common fort at Otaheite, as well as the wooden ones. The bones are mostly small, and composed of two pieces; and all the different sorts have a barb, either on the inside, like ours, or on the outside, opposite the same part; but others have both, the outer one being farthest from the point. Of this last sort, one was procured, nine inches long, of a single piece of bone, which, doubtless, belonged to some large fish. The elegant form and polish of this could not, certainly, be outdone by any European artist, even if he should add all his knowledge in design, to the number and convenience of his tools. They polish their stones, by constant friction, with pumice-stone in water; and such of their working instruments, or tools, as I saw, resembled those of the Southern Islands. Their hatchets, or rather adzes, were exactly of the same pattern, and either made of the same sort of blackish stone, or of a clay-coloured one. They have also little instruments made of a single shark's tooth, some of which are fixed to the forepart of a dog's jaw-bone, and others to a thin wooden handle of the same shape; and at the other end there is a bit of string fastened through a small perforation. These serve as knives occasionally, and are, perhaps, used in carving.

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The only iron tools, or rather bits of iron, seen amongst them, and which they had before our arrival, were a piece of iron hoop, about two inches long, fitted into a wooden handle *; and another edge-tool, which our people guessed to be made of the point of a broad-sword. Their having the actual possession of these, and their so generally knowing the use of this metal, inclined some on board to think, that we had not been the first European visitors of these islands. But, it seems to me, that the very great surprize expressed by them, on seeing our ships, and their total ignorance of the use of fire-arms, cannot be reconciled with such a notion. There are many ways, by which such people may get pieces of iron, or acquire the knowledge of the existence of such a metal, without having ever had an immediate connection with nations that use it. It can hardly be doubted, that it was unknown to all the inhabitants of this sea, before Magellan led the way into it; for no discoverer, immediately after his voyage, ever found any of this metal in their possession; though, in the course of our late voyages, it has been observed, that the use of it was known at several islands, to which no former European ships had ever, as far as we know, found their way. At all the places where Mendana touched, in his two voyages, it must have been seen and left; and this would extend the knowledge of it, no doubt, to all the various islands with which those, whom he had visited, had any immediate intercourse. It might even be carried farther; and where specimens of this favourite article could not be procured, descriptions might, in some measure, serve to make it known, when afterward seen. The next voyage to the Southward of the line, in

* Captain King purchased this, and has it now in his possession.

which



which any intercourse was had with the natives of this ocean, was that of Quiros, who landed at Sagittaria, the Island of Handsome People, and at Tierra del Espiritu Santo; at all which places, and at those with whom they had any communication, it must, of consequence, have been made known. To him succeeded, in this navigation, Le Maire and Schouten, whose connections with the natives commenced much farther to the Eastward, and ended at Cocos and Horn Islands. It was not surprising, that, when I visited Tongataboo in 1773, I should find a bit of iron there, as we knew that Tasman had visited it before me; but, let us suppose, that he had never discovered the Friendly Islands, our finding iron amongst them would have occasioned much speculation; though we have mentioned before*, the method by which they had gained a renewal of their knowledge of this metal, which confirms my hypothesis. For Neecotaboo taboo, or Boscawen's Island, where Captain Wallis's ships left it, and from whence Poulaho received it, lies some degrees to the North West of Tongataboo. It is well known, that Roggewein lost one of his ships on the Pernicious Islands; which, from their situation, are, probably, not unknown to, though not frequently visited by, the inhabitants of Otaheite and the Society Islands. It is equally certain, that these last people had a knowledge of iron, and purchased it with the greatest avidity, when Captain Wallis discovered Otaheite; and this knowledge could only have been acquired, through the mediation of those neighbouring islands where it had been originally left. Indeed they acknowledge, that this was actually the case; and they have told us since, that they held it in such

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* See Vol. i, p. 370.



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estimation, before Captain Wallis's arrival, that a Chief of Otaheite, who had got two nails into his possession, received no small emolument, by letting out the use of these to his neighbours, for the purpose of boring holes, when their own methods failed, or were thought too tedious*. The men of the Society Islands, whom we found at Wateoo, had been driven thither, long after the knowledge and use of iron had thus been introduced amongst their countrymen; and though, probably, they had no specimen of it with them, they would naturally, and with ease, communicate at that island their knowledge of this valuable material, by description. From the people of Wateoo again, those of Hervey's Island might derive that desire to possess some of it, of which we had proofs during our short intercourse with them.

The consideration of these facts sufficiently explains how the knowledge of iron has been conveyed throughout this ocean, to islands which never have had an immediate intercourse with Europeans; and it may easily be conceived, that wherever the history of it only has been reported, or a very small quantity of it has been left, the greater eagerness will be shewn by the natives to get copious supplies of it. The application of these particulars, to the instance now under consideration, is obvious. The people of Atooi and Onceheow, without having ever been visited by Europeans before us, might have received it from intermediate islands,

* A similar instance of profitable revenue, drawn from the use of nails by the Chiefs of the Caroline Islands, is mentioned by father Cantova: " Si, par hazard, un vaisseau étranger laisse dans leurs isles quelques vieux morceaux de fer, ils appartiennent de droit aux Tamoles, qui en font faire des outils, le mieux qu'il est possible. Ces outils font un fond dont le Tamole tire un revenu considerable, car il les donne à louage, & ce louage se paye assez cher." p. 314.



lying between them and the Ladrones, which have been frequented by the Spaniards, almost ever since the date of Magellan's voyage. Or, if the distant Western situation of the Ladrones should render this solution less probable, is there not the extensive continent of America to windward, where the Spaniards have been settled for more than two hundred years; during which long period of time, shipwrecks must have frequently happened on its coasts? It cannot be thought at all extraordinary, that part of such wrecks, containing iron, should, by the Easterly trade wind, be, from time to time, cast upon islands scattered about this vast ocean. The distance of Atooi from America, is no argument against this supposition. But even if it were, it would not destroy it. This ocean is traversed every year by Spanish ships; and it is obvious, that, besides the accident of losing a mast, and its appendages, casks with iron hoops, and many other things containing iron, may be thrown, or may fall overboard, during so long a passage, and thus find their way to land. But these are not mere conjectures and possibilities; for one of my people actually did see some wood in one of the houses at Wymoa, which he judged to be fir. It was worm-eaten, and the natives gave him to understand, that it had been driven ashore by the waves of the sea; and we had their own express testimony, that they had got the inconsiderable specimens of iron found amongst them, from some place to the Eastward.

From this digression (if it can be called so), I return to the observations made during our stay at Atooi; and some account must now be given of their canoes. These, in general, are about twenty-four feet long, and have the bottom, for the most part, formed of a single piece or log of wood, hollowed out to the thickness of an inch, or an inch and an

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half, and brought to a point at each end. The sides consist of three boards, each about an inch thick, and neatly fitted and lashed to the bottom part. The extremities, both at head and stern, are a little raised, and both are made sharp, somewhat like a wedge; but they flatten more abruptly; so that the two side-boards join each other, side by side, for more than a foot. But Mr. Webber's drawing will explain their construction more accurately than my description in words. As they are not more than fifteen or eighteen inches broad, those that go single (for they sometimes join them as at the other islands), have out-riggers, which are shaped and fitted with more judgment than any I had before seen. They are rowed by paddles, such as we had generally met with; and some of them have a light triangular sail, like those of the Friendly Islands, extended to a mast and boom. The ropes used for their boats, and the smaller cords for their fishing-tackle, are strong and well made.

What we saw of their agriculture, furnished sufficient proofs that they are not novices in that art. The vale ground has already been mentioned as one continued plantation of *taro*, and a few other things, which have all the appearance of being well attended to. The potatoe fields, and spots of sugar-cane, or plantains, on the higher grounds, are planted with the same regularity; and always in some determinate figure; generally as a square or oblong; but neither these, nor the others, are inclosed with any kind of fence, unless we reckon the ditches in the low grounds such; which, it is more probable, are intended to convey water to the *taro*. The great quantity and goodness of these articles may also, perhaps, be as much attributed to skilful culture, as to natural fertility of soil, which seems better adapted

adapted to them than to bread-fruit and cocoa-nut trees; the few which we saw of these latter not being in a thriving state, which will sufficiently account for the preference given to the culture of the other articles, though more labour be required to produce them. But notwithstanding this skill in agriculture, the general appearance of the island shewed, that it was capable of much more extensive improvement, and of maintaining, at least, three times the number of the inhabitants that are at present upon it; for the far greater part of it, that now lies quite waste, seemed to be as good a soil as those parts of it that are in cultivation. We must therefore conclude, that these people, from some cause, which we were not long enough amongst them to be able to trace, do not increase in that proportion, which would make it necessary to avail themselves of the extent of their island, toward raising a greater quantity of its vegetable productions for their subsistence.

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Though I did not see a Chief of any note, there were, however, several, as the natives informed us, who reside upon Atooi, and to whom they prostrate themselves as a mark of submission; which seems equivalent to the *moe*, *moea*, paid to the Chiefs of the Friendly Islands, and is called here *hamoea* or *moe*. Whether they were, at first, afraid to shew themselves, or happened to be absent, I cannot say; but after I had left the island, one of these great men made his appearance, and paid a visit to Captain Clerke on board the Discovery. He came off in a double canoe; and, like the king of the Friendly Islands, paid no regard to the small canoes that happened to lie in his way, but ran against, or over them, without endeavouring, in the least, to avoid them. And it was not possible for these poor people to avoid him, for they could not manage their canoes; it being a necessary
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mark of their submission, that they should lie down till he had passed. His attendants helped him into the ship, and placed him on the gang-way. Their care of him did not cease then; for they stood round him, holding each other by the hands; nor would they suffer any one to come near him but Captain Clerke himself. He was a young man, clothed from head to foot; and accompanied by a young woman, supposed to be his wife. His name was said to be Tamahano. Captain Clerke made him some suitable presents; and received from him, in return, a large bowl, supported by two figures of men, the carving of which, both as to the design and the execution, shewed some degree of skill. This bowl, as our people were told, used to be filled with the *kava*, or *ava* (as it is called at Otaheite), which liquor they prepare and drink here, as at the other islands in this ocean. Captain Clerke could not prevail upon this great man to go below, nor to move from the place where his attendants had first fixed him. After staying some time in the ship, he was carried again into his canoe, and returned to the island, receiving the same honours from all the natives, as when he came on board. The next day, several messages were sent to Captain Clerke, inviting him to return the visit ashore, and acquainting him, that the Chief had prepared a large present on that occasion. But being anxious to get to sea, and join the Resolution, the Captain did not think it adviseable to accept of the invitation.

The very short and imperfect intercourse which we had with the natives, put it out of our power to form any accurate judgment of the mode of government established amongst them; but, from the general resemblance of customs, and particularly from what we observed of the honours paid to their Chiefs, it seems reasonable to believe, that



that it is of the same nature with that which prevails throughout all the islands we had hitherto visited; and, probably, their wars amongst themselves are equally frequent. This, indeed, might be inferred from the number of weapons which we found them possessed of, and from the excellent order these were kept in. But we had direct proof of the fact from their own confession; and, as we understood, these wars are between the different districts of their own island, as well as between it and their neighbours of Oneecheow and Orrehoua. We need scarcely assign any other cause besides this, to account for the appearance, already mentioned, of their population bearing no proportion to the extent of their ground capable of cultivation.

Besides their spears or lances, made of a fine chestnut-coloured wood, beautifully polished, some of which are barbed at one end, and flattened to a point at the other, they have a sort of weapon which we had never seen before, and not mentioned by any navigator, as used by the natives of the South Sea. It is somewhat like a dagger; in general, about a foot and a half long, sharpened at one or both ends, and secured to the hand by a string. Its use is to stab in close fight; and it seems well adapted to the purpose. Some of these may be called double daggers, having a handle in the middle, with which they are better enabled to strike different ways. They have also bows and arrows; but, both from their apparent scarcity, and their slender make, it may almost be presumed that they never use them in battle. The knife or saw, formerly mentioned, with which they dissect the dead bodies, may also be ranked amongst their weapons, as they both strike and cut with it, when closely engaged. It is a small flat wooden instrument, of an oblong shape, about a foot long, rounded at the corners,

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corners, with a handle, almost like one sort of the *patoos* of New Zealand; but its edges are entirely surrounded with sharks' teeth strongly fixed to it, and pointing outward; having commonly a hole in the handle, through which passes a long string, which is wrapped several times round the wrist. We also suspected that they use slings on some occasions; for we got some pieces of the *hematites*, or blood-stone, artificially made of an oval shape, divided longitudinally, with a narrow groove in the middle of the convex part. To this the person, who had one of them, applied a cord of no great thickness, but would not part with it, though he had no objection to part with the stone, which must prove fatal when thrown with any force, as it weighed a pound. We likewise saw some oval pieces of whetstone well polished, but somewhat pointed toward each end, nearly resembling in shape some stones which we had seen at New Caledonia in 1774, and used there in their slings.

What we could learn of their religious institutions, and the manner of disposing of their dead, which may, properly, be considered as closely connected, has been already mentioned. And as nothing more strongly points out the affinity between the manners of these people and of the Friendly and Society Islands, I must just mention some other circumstances to place this in a strong point of view; and, at the same time, to shew how a few of the infinite modifications of which a few leading principles are capable, may distinguish any particular nation. The people of Tongataboo inter their dead in a very decent manner, and they also inter their human sacrifices; but they do not offer, or expose any other animal, or even vegetable, to their Gods, as far as we know. Those of Otaheite do not inter their dead, but expose them to waste by time and putrefaction,



though the bones are afterward buried; and, as this is the case, it is very remarkable, that they should inter the entire bodies of their human sacrifices. They also offer other animals, and vegetables, to their gods; but are, by no means, attentive to the state of the sacred places, where those solemn rites are performed; most of their *Morais* being in a ruinous condition, and bearing evident marks of neglect. The people of Atooi, again, inter both their common dead, and human sacrifices, as at Tongataboo; but they resemble those of Otaheite, in the slovenly state of their religious places, and in offering vegetables and animals to their gods.

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The *taboo* also prevails in Atooi, in its full extent, and seemingly with much more rigour than even at Tongataboo. For the people here always asked, with great eagerness and signs of fear to offend, whether any particular thing, which they desired to see, or we were unwilling to shew, was *taboo*, or, as they pronounced the word, *tafoo*? The *maia, raü*, or forbidden articles at the Society Islands, though, doubtless, the same thing, did not seem to be so strictly observed by them, except with respect to the dead, about whom we thought them more superstitious than any of the others were. But these are circumstances with which we are not, as yet, sufficiently acquainted, to be decisive about; and I shall only just observe, to shew the similitude in other matters, connected with religion, that the priests, or *tabounas*, here, are as numerous as at the other islands; if we may judge, from our being able, during our short stay, to distinguish several, saying their *poore*, or prayer.

But whatever resemblance we might discover, in the general manners of the people of Atooi, to those of Otaheite, these,



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of course, were less striking than the coincidence of language. Indeed, the languages of both places may be said to be almost, word for word, the same. It is true, that we sometimes remarked particular words to be pronounced exactly as we had found at New Zealand, and the Friendly Islands; but though all the four dialects are indisputably the same, these people, in general, have neither the strong guttural pronunciation of the former, nor a less degree of it, which also distinguishes the latter; and they have not only adopted the soft mode of the Otaheiteans, in avoiding harsh sounds, but the whole idiom of their language; using not only the same affixes and suffixes to their words, but the same measure and cadence in their songs; though in a manner somewhat less agreeable. There seems, indeed, at first hearing, some disagreement, to the ear of a stranger; but it ought to be considered, that the people of Otaheite, from their frequent connections with the English, had learnt, in some measure, to adapt themselves to our scanty knowledge of their language, by using not only the most common, but even corrupted expressions, in conversation with us; whereas, when they conversed among themselves, and used the several parts necessary to propriety of speech, they were scarcely at all understood by those amongst us, who had made the greatest proficiency in their vocabulary. A catalogue of words was collected at Atooi, by Mr. Anderson, who lost no opportunity of making our voyage useful to those, who amuse themselves in tracing the migrations of the various tribes, or families, that have peopled the globe, by the most convincing of all arguments, that drawn from affinity of language.

How shall we account for this nation's having spread itself, in so many detached islands, so widely disjointed from each

each other, in every quarter of the Pacific Ocean! We find it, from New Zealand, in the South, as far as the Sandwich Islands, to the North! And, in another direction, from Easter Island, to the Hebrides! That is, over an extent of sixty degrees of latitude, or twelve hundred leagues, North and South! And eighty-three degrees of longitude, or sixteen hundred and sixty leagues, East and West! How much farther, in either direction, its colonies reach, is not known; but what we know already, in consequence of this and our former voyage, warrants our pronouncing it to be, though perhaps not the most numerous, certainly, by far, the most extensive nation upon earth*.

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Had the Sandwich Islands been discovered at an early period, by the Spaniards, there is little doubt that they would have taken advantage of so excellent a situation, and have made use of Atooi, or some other of the islands, as a refreshing place to the ships, that sail annually from Acapulco for Manilla. They lie almost midway between the first place and Guam one of the Ladrões, which is at present their only port in traversing this vast ocean; and it would not have been a week's sail out of their common route, to have touched at them; which could have been done, without running the least hazard of losing the passage, as they are sufficiently within the verge of the Easterly trade-wind. An acquaintance with the Sandwich Islands would have been equally favourable to our Buccaneers; who used sometimes to pass from the coast of America to the Ladrões, with a stock of food and water scarcely sufficient to preserve life. Here they might always have found plenty, and have been within a month's sure sail of the very part of California, which the

* See more about the great extent of the colonies of this nation, in the Introductory Preface.



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Manilla ship is obliged to make, or else have returned to the coast of America, thoroughly refitted, after an absence of two months. How happy would Lord Anson have been, and what hardships would he have avoided, if he had known that there was a group of islands, half way between America and Tinian, where all his wants could have been effectually supplied; and in describing which, the elegant historian of that voyage, would have presented his reader with a more agreeable picture, than I have been able to draw in this chapter?

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C H A P.

