

I.—Trade and trading arrangements:
Mr. Sterndale.

St. Francis, in the town of Nombre de Dios, upon Darien, wherein Vasco Nuñez is represented in complete armour, standing up to his waist in the salt water, with a sword in one hand and in the other a flag bearing the keys of St. Peter and other religious insignia. Magellan, who, having passed through the straits which bear his name, was the first to reach the Indies by a western route, was slain by the sword in the quarrels of a Carbasian King. Alonzo de Saavedra, who first attempted the passage of the North Pacific from Manila to Mexico, died on the equator. This man (who was of the family of the great Cervantes) proposed to the King of Spain to cut a canal through the Isthmus of Panama, a project which has been revived in these days, and will, beyond all doubt, be effected before the end of this century. In his memoir on the subject, he describes very circumstantially the route between the San Miguel and the Atrato (the one now proposed by the American engineers), and represents to His Majesty that the amount of excavation was but small in comparison to that effected in the great canal of Nabuchodonosor, as related by Herodotus; and recommends that the Indian tribes of the Isthmus should be forcibly compelled to work at its construction, seeing that "Providence had evidently placed them there in order that they, by their labours, might assist in the extension of the commerce of Christendom." This Saavedra was likewise the first discoverer of New Guinea (which he named Tierra del Oro), of which the credit has been given to Luis Vaz Torrez, for he landed about that part which is now known as Dory Harbour, where deserted from him one Brito Patalin and four others, who, finding their way, two years afterwards, back to the Philippines, were there hanged for so doing. Of a like mind and destiny was Alvaro de Mendana, who inaugurated a scheme for the colonization of the Solomon Islands (to which he gave that name, as says Hakluyt, "to the intent that the Spaniards, believing that it was from thence that Solomon had obtained the gold wherewith he beautified the Temple of Jerusalem, might be the more readily disposed to go and inhabit the same"), where he died, and was buried in a settlement which was called Santa Ysabel de la Estrella, where are to this day ruins of great forts and magazines. Although these are grown up with forest, they are known to beachcombers and strolling mariners—a fact which makes it seem the more strange that in these days men of science take no trouble to investigate such interesting remains. After them came our countryman, William Dampier, the discoverer of New Britain, and the most entertaining and veracious of all early voyagers who wrote of their experience of the great South Seas. Let any one who has read his book go and sit, as I have done, on the stone parapet of the battery (of six pieces) which fronts the river of Guam, and he will see in his mind's eye the trick which William played on the Governor of the Ladrones. (There are places in this world upon which three centuries have made no change, and Guam is one of them.) Dampier's fate was more melancholy than all. Of the great captains whom the world remembers, in whatsoever seas, some were slain in brawls (like Fernando Magellan), some lost in storms (like Sir Humphrey Gilbert), some died in their own lands crowned with honours and old age, but Dampier disappeared out of men's memory, and the last that is known of him was that he was seen in a low lodging in Southwark, dwelling in great poverty. Such likewise was the end of Fernando Quiros, who from a common sailor became an admiral, and commanded an expedition wherein he discovered many islands in the Pacific, and on which occasion the famous Torres was his lieutenant, and Torquemada his historian. The last that is known of him is what is written by the Cardinal Valenza: "I have seen in a wineshop of Seville one Fernando Quiros, who had been an adventurer in the Indies and beyond, and who told me he had seen there people who did eat their wives and other relatives in place of consigning them to tombs, which did not so much surprise me, seeing that the same thing has been related by the ancients." Thus we see that it is an infinitely more melancholy destiny to be lost at home than to be lost at sea; for, in the case of these men, no one seemed to have mourned for them, or to have marvelled what became of them, but the whole civilized world was interested in the fate of M. de la Perouse, and would now give much greater rewards to the man who could find out what ultimately became of him than were given to Dillon, who was lucky enough to find his anchors and chains. Roggewein also reaped no reward of his labour; for, after having found the Samoan Isles, and from thence made his way to Batavia, there his journals and charts were impounded, and himself cast into prison, from whence, being discharged, he shortly afterwards died in great misery. To wind up this category of calamities, we cannot cite a more striking instance than that of Dumont d'Urville, who, after having rendered himself famous as a navigator of the Pacific, was burned to death in a railway carriage between Paris and Versailles.

But to return to the discoveries of Cook: he and Sir Joseph Banks, and Dr. Solander, and other scientific "swells," following the tracks of Wallis and Carteret, went out to Tahiti. (It may be said by way of parenthesis here that none of these was really its original discoverer, as there can be no question of it being the La Sagittaria of Fernando Quiros: that island, so long and lofty, where "Francisco Ponce, having bound a rope about his waist, swam through the breakers and landed on the coral shore, where a vast assemblage of Indians, painted and armed, received him with great hospitality, and afterwards took him back in safety to his ship." Also, it is more than probable that this was the land reported by the pilot, Juan Fernandez, "where were many large streams, and people of a light complexion, dressed in woven cloth.") At Tahiti, Cook and his companions planted a tamarind tree, erected an observatory, and took notes of the transit of Venus (for which purpose they had been specially out upon this voyage). That tamarind tree has now become huge and umbrageous, and I have beneath its shadow witnessed upon divers occasions a transit of Venus much more worthy of observation than any which came beneath their notice; for I have there emptied many bottles of Chateau Larose in the company of indigenous damsels, whose eyes and curls (to borrow an expression of Artemus Ward) "were enough to make a man jump into a mill-pond without bidding his relations 'Good-bye.'"

A history of this Island of Tahiti, written by some man possessing the requisite local knowledge, could not fail to be intensely interesting, and, if truthfully recorded, would prove unquestionably valuable in the future. To begin with their own account of themselves. Barbarian tradition is not worth much, but, if supported by any collateral testimony, possesses a certain amount of