

deal hospitably and honestly by all who visit them. There is no superstition, no barbarism, no want or discontent among them. They are industrious, and cultivate the ground assiduously when assured of a market for their produce. They also practise all manner of handicrafts; among them are good carpenters, smiths, sailmakers, stonemasons, &c. They plant cotton and coffee, and export great quantities of oranges. They have stores, plantations, cotton-gins, and several small vessels trading round the Hervey group, and running to Tahiti and Auckland with their produce.

All the sympathies of the Rarotongans are English. The islanders of Rarotonga regard Auckland as the centre of civilisation. About the year 1864 they made a formal application to Her Majesty's Government, in the shape of a letter addressed to the then Governor of New Zealand, signed by the King and his chiefs of Awarua, Ngatangia, and Arorangi, which represent the whole people of Rarotonga, praying to be taken under the protection of Her Majesty, or to be made subjects of Great Britain. The same feeling continues. Unfortunately, no notice was taken of the petition of the Rarotongans; but the same desire animates them now, and no doubt can exist in the minds of all true friends of these islanders but that their annexation by some British colony would be to them the commencement of a new era of prosperity.

The other islands of the Hervey group, Atiu Maukè and Mitiaro, are from ten to twenty miles in circumference; they are of upheaved coral, with fertile soil. There are altogether about 1,000 inhabitants, of a like disposition to those of Rarotonga. The islands are not much visited. Their products are cotton, coffee, cocoanut-oil, fungus, Tomano wood, tobacco, and dried bananas. These islands, especially Maukè, bear great quantities of splendid ironwood; it is obtainable in long lengths, from twenty to forty feet and even more, and from a foot to three feet in diameter. The value of this timber I believe to be very great at this time, when heavy and hard wood is so much in request for the timbers of armour-plated ships, for slides of heavy ordnance, and similar purposes. Some of this wood is so extremely heavy that the interior portions weigh within a fraction of two ounces to the cubic inch.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORT ON SOUTH SEA ISLANDS BY MR. W. SEED, SECRETARY FOR CUSTOMS, IN 1873.

COOK'S ISLANDS.

This group of islands, which lie scattered over a considerable space, extending from lat. 18° 54' S. to 21° 57' S., and from long. 157° 20' W. to 160° W., without any intimate connection between each other, consists of nine or ten separate islands, the greater part of which were discovered by Cook; hence the appropriateness of their collective appellation.

Mangaia is the south-easternmost of the group, is of volcanic origin, and is about thirty miles in circumference; population, 2,000. The productions of the island are numerous and cheap; they consist of pigs, turkeys, fowls, ducks, yams, sweet potatoes, pineapples, which the inhabitants obtain, in spite of the poverty of the soil, by assiduous labour and care but little common to these islanders.

Rarotonga is a beautiful island; it is a mass of mountains, which are high, and present a remarkable and romantic appearance. It has several good boat-harbours. The productions of this island, which is much more fertile than Mangaia, are exactly the same. The population does not exceed 4,000.

Atiu resembles Mangaia in appearance and extent. It is a mere bank of coral, 10 ft. or 12 ft. high, steep and rugged, except where there are small sandy beaches and some clefts, where the ascent is gradual.

Mitiero is a low island, from three to four miles long and one mile wide.

Mauki or *Parry Island* is also a low island; it is about two miles in diameter, well wooded, and inhabited.

Hervey Islands.—This group consists of three islands, surrounded by a reef, which may be six leagues in circumference.

Aitutaki presents a most fruitful appearance, its shores being bordered by flat land, on which are innumerable cocoanut and other trees, the higher ground being beautifully interspersed with lawns. It is eighteen miles in circuit. Population, 2,000.