

THOSE ISLANDS IN THE PACIFIC.



THE late revolution in the Hawaiian or Sandwich islands, and the present unsettled state of the Hawaiian Government have attracted much attention from the press of both Canada and the United States. The latter

country is particularly interested as it will most likely assume the ownership of the islands. The Hawaiian group consists of twelve islands, eight of which are habitable and four uninhabitable. The total area of the eight habitable islands is something over six thousand square miles. The islands are of volcanic origin. On Hawaii the largest, and from which the group derives its name, is to be found Kilauea, an intermittently active crater, the largest of its kind in the world. Volcanic eruptions and earthquakes have been frequent on the islands. Owing to Meteorological causes, the vegetation of the islands is not everywhere the same. On the eastern or windward coast the rain-fall is double that of the western or leeward coast, the effect being that there is a heavy bush growth on the eastern side whilst the western is comparatively bare.

To Captain Cook, the famed English navigator, is attributed the discovery of the islands, in 1778. It is said, however, that some Spanish sailors were shipwrecked there in 1527 and that two Spaniards, Gaetano and Mendana visited the islands in 1542 and 1567 respectively. This if true would give Spain the honor of discovery. England at any rate gives it to Cook. At the time of Cook's visit to Hawaii, Lord Sandwich was first Lord of the Admiralty, and in his honor Cook named the group the Sandwich Islands. The year following Cook was killed by the natives, but his bones are said to have been preserved and honored by the priests and people. The Hawaiians are thought to have been at one time cannibals, but such was not the case when Cook visited them. At this time the government consisted of a chief

for each island, but shortly after, on the death of the chief of Hawaii, his successor Kamehameha, having instilled a war-like spirit into his subjects, asserted his supremacy over the entire group. The dynasty thus established reigned uninterruptedly until 1872 when King Leo died without issue. The next King, William Lu'ialilo was elected, but enjoyed his royal prerogatives for the brief space of a month, at the end of which time he was gathered in by the Grim Harvester. A parliament was assembled for the purpose of electing a successor and the choice fell on David Kalakaua who reigned until 1891, when in starting out to make a tour of the United States, was taken ill at San Francisco and after a brief illness "shuffled off this mortal coil" leaving the throne to his sister Liliuokalani, the widow of John O. Dominis, who was of American extraction.

The government was at one time an absolute monarchy and the islands were the property of the reigning head, but the people at different times forced concessions from their rulers, and from absolute monarchy the government became a constitutional monarchy which it was when the late revolution occurred. There were two houses, called the Representatives and Nobles, or the Lower and Upper Houses. The members of the latter were formerly appointed for life by the King, but the constitution of 1887 made that body elective and fixed the number of members at twenty-four for each house. The Representatives were elected for two years and the Nobles for six years.

The civilization of the Hawaiian islands has been principally effected during the present century. Idolatry was not abolished until 1819, and the first missionaries were Americans who landed in 1820. In 1827 a French Catholic mission was established but in 1829 it was suppressed. Catholic proselytes were put in irons, and Catholic missionaries that arrived were not allowed to land. Ten years later the French government forced the King to declare the Catholic religion free. The missionaries reduced the Hawaiian language to writing, using