

## ANIMALS.

There is a great scarcity of the larger sort of animals on these islands. With the exception of hogs and fowls, there is hardly any other useful for food to man. The pigs are plentiful on most of the islands, and are sold sufficiently cheap by the natives to the traders for tobacco, muskets, powder and shot, &c.

A few cattle and goats have been imported by the missionaries, which thrive very well, especially the latter. There is, however, no lack of insect life, such as fleas and flies, ants and cockroaches. Rats, too, are sufficiently numerous, and more than troublesome.

## FISHES

Are pretty numerous, and the natives are pretty ingenious *fishers* but neither in quantity nor in quality are they equal to our home fish. Shell-fish are to be had in great abundance and in great variety, but I dare say their shell will constitute their chief value in the eyes of Europeans. Turtles, whales and large sharks are occasionally caught.

## FORESTS.

If you were to examine the tops of the mountains from the Firth of Clyde to Cape Wrath, I suspect you would find them composed of several feet of moss, and in that moss whole forests in decay. Here, on the other hand, the tops of the highest mountains are covered with magnificent forests in full vigor and bloom. The South Sea pine and mahogany, the iron and famous sandal-wood, the stately palm and the huge banian, grace these forests,—in short, one of the drawbacks here is the dense woods and no less dense and huge vegetation. Was the climate of the Old Hebrides once similar to that of the New? or has the forest there come to grief? might be a nice question for geologists to discuss, but for us meanwhile it will be more important, if not also more interesting, to consider the *genus* found on these isles of the sea.

## THE RACE.

In most books that you are likely to read on the subject, you will be told that they are Papuans of the Papuan race; but what in all the world does that mean? that they are improved asses minus the tail? or that they form a sort of intermediate species between the higher kind of monkeys and Hottentots, that they have dark skins and white teeth, and are bountifully provided with hair and nails?

Looking at a naked painted savage sitting at a short distance, I confess he does not give one of the most exalted notions of humanity, viewed even from his physical side, but even he is deficient. Get him started to his feet, and let your observation be more accurate. Mark how erect he stands—his natural position too. Can a monkey accomplish that? Notice, too, how symmetrical and proportion-

ate that form is. Are Messrs. Darwin, Paget, Lyell and Co. themselves much ashamed of him in this respect? His head may not be so large as that of Sir James Young Simpson and Chalmers, nor yet his forehead so broad and high as that of Dr. Candlish, Hugh Miller, and Sir William Hamilton: yet it is far from being ill-shaped, and I should say far in advance of our Connought, Cowgate and Saltmarket friends. In short, physically and impartially viewed, the natives of these islands, are I think, very little if anything behind ourselves. We are, indeed, a little taller, but not more symmetrical or better formed. In the lanes and closes of the High Street, Trongate and Saltmarket, you will even physically find very bad looking characters, so here on Mallicola and Erromanga you will find sufficiently bad looking fellows—devilishly so. I use the word advisedly, as giving one the idea of fiends along with their physical deterioration. But this will lead us to a short analysis of their

## MENTAL AND MORAL CONDITION.

In simple apprehension they are quick—but then “there is an end to it!”—to a process of reasoning they seem to be strangers, and reflection proper appears to be at zero with them. Hence you have in these natives a parcel of big children, whom you may lead wheresoever you list—if so be that you have first gained their confidence and good feeling. They are emphatically an unthinking people, and with the negation of honorable ambition and positive laziness, together with insecurity to life and property, you may easily guess their sad plight.

## SOCIAL STATE.

Their houses are of the most primitive order, very much like tinkers tents, both in shape and size, open at one end and sometimes at both, and no windows. Their canoes are of the rudest description—consisting of a single tree hallowed out, with an outrigger very rudely fastened to it.—Their plantations are small, miserably fenced and planted, and as miserably attended to. Their clothing, as regards the men, is simply negative. The women in general wear a kind of petticoat, made of long leaves. Both men and women use paint freely, and that of red color is most popular. They oil their bodies occasionally, and wear ornaments in the shape of shells round their arms, beads, shells and little smooth stones round the neck. Tortoise shells, carved bits of sticks and tobacco pipes as ear rings—together with a complement of boar's tusks tied to the hair round the head. In short, to see some of these fantastical fellows decked off after their approved notions of fashion, with their paint and trinkets in full style, one would suppose that they had been sorry that they had not been created with horns and other appendages peculiar to the lower animals.