

## The History of Polynesia.

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Anamooka, Tongataboo, Lefooga, and Kooa. Abel Janssen Tasman, an eminent Dutch navigator, first touched here in 1643, and gave names to the principal islands. Captain Cook laboriously explored the whole cluster, which he found to consist of upwards of sixty. The three islands which Tasman saw, he named Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Middleburg. Tongataboo is the residence of the sovereign and the chiefs. These islands are fertile, and in general highly cultivated. Kooa is described as a beautiful spot; the land, rising gently to a considerable height, presents the eye with an extensive view. Captain Cook and some of his officers walked up to the highest point of the island. "While I was surveying this delightful prospect," says the captain, "I could not help flattering myself with the pleasing idea, that some future navigator may, from the same station, behold these meadows stocked with cattle, brought to these islands by the ships of England; and that the completion of this single benevolent purpose, independent of all other considerations, would sufficiently mark to posterity, that our voyages had not been useless to the general interests of humanity."

Of the nature of their government, no more is known than the general outline. The power of the king is unlimited, and the life and property of the subjects are at his disposal; and instances enough were seen to prove, that the lower order of people have no property, nor safety for their persons, but at the will of the chiefs to whom they respectively belong.

## SOCIETY ISLANDS.

The Society Islands, in the Pacific Ocean, are eight in number; viz., Otaheite, Haheine, Ulitea, Otaha, Bolabola, Maurova, Toobae, and Tabooamanoo. They are situated between the latitude of  $169^{\circ} 10'$  and  $16^{\circ} 55'$  south, and between the longitude of  $160^{\circ} 57'$  and  $162^{\circ}$  west. The people, religion, language, customs and manners, soil, and productions, are nearly the same as at Otaheite, of which we shall speak.

Otaheite was discovered by captain Wallis in 1767, who called it King George the Third's Island. Bougainville, a French circumnavigator, next arrived at it in 1768, and staid ten days. Captain Cook, in the Endeavour, next visited it in 1769, in company with Mr. Banks, (afterwards sir Joseph Banks,) Dr. Solander, and other learned men, to observe the transit of Venus, and staid three months; and it was visited by captain Cook in his two succeeding voyages; since which time the Spaniards, and other Europeans, have called there. It consists of two peninsulas, great part of which is covered with woods, consisting of bread-fruit trees, palms, coco-nuts, and all tropical vegetation. The people of this and the neighbouring islands, are the most honest and civilised of any in the Pacific Ocean; but it appears certain that the in-

habitants have degenerated rather than improved since Cook's time.

## SANDWICH ISLANDS.

The Sandwich Islands, in the North Pacific Ocean, consist of eleven in number. They are called, by the natives, Owhyhee, Mowee, Ranai, Morotoi, Taboorowa, Wookoa, Atooi, Neeshcheew, Orehawa, Morotone, and Takooa; all inhabited, except the two last. They were discovered by captain Cook in 1777 and 1778.

Goats and European seeds were left by the English at their departure the first time; but the possession of the goats soon gave rise to a contest between two districts, in which the breed was entirely destroyed. The inhabitants are undoubtedly of the same race as those that possess the islands south of the equator; and in their persons and manner, approach nearer to the New Zealanders than to their less distant neighbours, either of the Society or Friendly Islands. Tattooing the body is practised by the whole of them.

As these islands are not united under one government, wars are frequent among them. The same system of subordination prevails here as at the other islands, the same absolute authority on the part of the chiefs, and the same unrelenting submission on the part of the people. The government is monarchical, and hereditary.

Owhyhee, the easternmost and largest of these islands, was discovered by captain Cook on the 30th of November, 1778, on his return from his voyage northward. Having circumnavigated the island, and anchored in a bay, called Karakakooa, he found great alteration in the conduct of the natives, and a general disposition to theft; and it appeared evident that the common people were encouraged by their chiefs, who shared the booty with them. Still, however, no hostilities were commenced. The greatest honours were paid to the commander; and, on his going ashore, he was received with ceremonies little short of adoration. A vast quantity of hogs, and other provisions, were procured for the ships; and on the 4th of February, 1779, they left the island, not without most magnificent presents from the chiefs, and such as they had never received in any part of the world. Unluckily, they encountered a storm on the 6th and 7th of the same month, during which the Resolution sprang the head of her fore-mast in such a manner, that they were obliged to return to Karakakooa bay to have it repaired. On the 13th, one of the natives being detected in stealing the tongs from the armourer's forge in the Discovery, was dismissed with a pretty severe flogging; this had but little effect; for, in the afternoon of the same day, another having snatched up the tongs and a chisel, jumped overboard with them, and swam for the shore, and having got on board a canoe, escaped. These tools were soon after returned, through the means of Pa-

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