

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—it 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 hollowed 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 colour is most popular. They oil their bodies occasionally, and wear ornaments in the shape of shells round their arms, heads, 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.

LANGUAGES.

Almost every island in this group has its own language, not merely a dialectical difference, but so far as practical purposes are

concerned a radical one. To say that they belong to the same family proves nothing. Latin, Greek and Gaelic belong to the same family, yet my knowledge of the latter did not avail me much in acquiring the former, with the exception of the numerals, which may be said to be the same in the three languages, and yet that much cannot be affirmed of those here. The Tannese differ from Anciteumese, the Erromangan from the Futunese, and both from the Fatese; and in the names given to their surprising results and mental calculations, for they have actually reached No. 5 from what I have asserted regarding the thinking powers of this people, you cannot expect to find many logical or metaphysical terms in their language. Yet it is far from being poor, or ill-adapted to express their ideas. We don't consider it harsh, or very difficult to acquire, and in many respects it is very definite and accurate—e.g., they have two forms of the pronoun *we*; now, if we were speaking of a certain gentleman, say Prof. Smeaton, and intended to include him, our Erromangans would use *kos we*, if intended to exclude him, they would employ *kam we*.

The verb in Erromanga is most elaborate, quite a puzzle. There is another somewhat strange tongue spoken here called sandal-wood English, or another, but I fear I cannot say an improved, edition of negro-English, as written by Mrs. B. Stowe and Artemus Ward. It is very amusing to hear the natives talk in this novel dialect—as there is no neuter gender in their language, so you cannot expect them to be too ready to insert it into their *new* tongue, hence you have almost everything becoming *masculine*, even women themselves are not excluded from this gender, for they all become *he* in this wonderful speech.

WARS

Are almost constant, not merely between two or three tribes only, but between it may be half-a-dozen tribes or half an island. Their wars, however, are more cruel than destructive. They don't kill many, but they must wound a great number. When they do kill one or two the war ceases, for a month or so, and then it is resumed with possibly greater vigour than before. They burn whole villages, destroy one another's plantations, and in other respects act as one would suppose demons in such circumstances would have done. Their laws of revenge are very intricate, cruel and cowardly, taking advantage of the innocent and defenceless. Their implements of war are spears, bows and arrows, clubs, hatchets and muskets. The spears and arrows are sometimes pointed with poisoned bone. The chiefs are many, and have very little power, and with the exception of a few extra ornaments, they cannot be distinguished