

"ABORIMA is about two miles in circumference, from 200ft. to 300ft. in height, and is situated half-way between Manono and Savaii. It received its name, which signifies the hollow of the hand, from its remarkable shape. Most probably it is the crater of an extinct volcano. It is precipitous and inaccessible except at one small opening; and the people of Manono, to whom it is subject, use it in time of war as a fortress for their families and property, and, in event of defeat, as a retreat for themselves. For these purposes it is well adapted, as it is so completely protected on all sides by inaccessible rocks that it is only necessary to guard the narrow entrance. This is done most effectually: first, by throwing tripping-lines across it, so that men stationed on the jutting rocks that flanked the passage could easily overturn every canoe that entered it; and, secondly, by constructing a platform or bridge on the rocks that overhang this opening, from which they could hurl huge stones upon the invaders. Although, therefore, the people of Manono have been at times driven from their own island, this retreat was so effectually guarded, and so well provided with food, that they have never been, and scarcely could be, subdued. Barren and sterile as are the sides of the rocks, a very different appearance is presented when you arrive opposite to the point where the crater has emptied itself. Here the whole of the interior opens at once to the view, and anything more beautiful or unique I never beheld. The island is a basin, most regularly scooped out, and ascending with a gentle slope from the centre to the circumference; and, although on approaching it nothing meets the eye but sterile cliffs, when you catch a glimpse of the amphitheatre within, you discover there a glorious contrast to the dreariness and desolation without. Not a barren spot is to be seen, but one verdant mass of tropical vegetation, the whole of which, from the peculiar form of the island, presents itself at a single view, and fills the beholder with delight. If anything could enhance the beauty of the scene, it is the group of native dwellings which, half revealed among the trees of cocoanut, breadfruit, and banana, form the settlement.

"SAVAII, the last and largest of the group, which is said to be 250 miles in circumference. The mountains of this superb island are very lofty, and visible at a distance of sixty or seventy miles. These gradually increase in height from the sea to the centre of the island, and all of them are covered and crowned with noble forests. Savaii, in beauty, extent, and importance, yields to few of the many charming islands that bestud and adorn the bosom of the Pacific."

The straits between Upolu and Savaii are from ten to fifteen miles wide, and at their southern entrance are Manono and Aborima. They may be passed by vessels of the largest class with perfect safety, and are entered either between Savaii and Aborima, or between Manono and Aborima, both openings being sufficiently wide, and perfectly free from rocks and shoals.

Mr. G. F. Angas, in his valuable little work "Polynesia," makes the following remarks upon Samoa. I given them *in extenso*, as so very little is known in the Australasian Colonies regarding these islands; yet the subject is of the utmost importance to our future welfare:—

"All the islands of the Samoan chain are lofty and volcanic. The mountains in Savaii attain an altitude of 3,000ft., and the group is generally fertile and beautiful in the extreme. The abundance of trees, bearing the usual nutritious fruits of tropical Polynesia, maintain the natives in plenty, which supply of food is further augmented by the great number of dogs, poultry, and hogs, of which latter, it is stated, La Pérouse purchased 500 at the period of his visit."

"Since the year 1845 the village of Apia, on the Island of Upolu, has been the residence of a British, German, and American Consul, whose duty it is to look after the interests of the numerous vessels belonging to their respective nations which visit the harbours of Upolu and Tutuila.

"The United States exploring expedition under Lieutenant Wilkes visited and surveyed all the Samoan Group in the year 1839.

"The devoted John Williams, in connection with the London Missionary Society, first planted a Christian mission in the Samoas in 1830, since which period the islanders generally have embraced Christianity. There exists at Upolu an institution for training and educating native teachers; and, at the printing-press of this establishment, the scriptures are issued in the Samoan tongue. A periodical, called the *Samoan Reporter*, formerly had an extensive circulation throughout Polynesia.

"The population of the entire group is calculated not to exceed 37,000 at the present time, though formerly it appears to have been considerably greater.

"Upolu is estimated, with Manono, as having about 20,000 inhabitants, whilst the population of Savaii may be taken at 12,000, leaving the aggregate amount of 5,000 for Tutuila and the Manua Group. These islands are subject to the diseases of ophthalmia and elephantiasis, and for several years past, during the wet season, a severe kind of influenza has occurred in the form of an epidemic; whooping-cough has also been introduced.

"This group, like others in the same parallel of latitude in the Western Pacific, is subject to violent hurricanes between the months of November and May, during which period the trade-winds are sometimes suspended for two or three days at a time. These rotatory storms are called by the natives *afa fuli fao*, or "knock-down winds." Earthquakes are also of frequent occurrence, but they do no injury to the elastic buildings of the country."

The romantic harbour of Pangopango, in the Island of Tutuila, is an ancient crater, very deep, but completely landlocked by lofty mountains, under the protection of which a vessel, with proper precautions, might ride out even one of the fearful summer hurricanes. Mr. Hood, of H.M.S. "Fawn," thus describes the aspect of Tutuila in 1862: "To those who have never beheld tropical scenery, it is difficult to give any description which will enable them to realise the singular beauty of these islands. Here, high rugged mountains, clothed with dense green forests, sink sheer down to the water; a grey precipice now and then relieving the eye. Against the blue sky the outline is broken by a graceful palm, or some high pinnacle, or by the waving bamboo or banana. Silvery sands stretch along in front of the narrow plain, shaded by thick groves of cocoanut trees, whose leaves wave and dance, reflecting the rays of the bright sun; underneath which are the scattered villages of the natives. Upon the narrow fringing coral-reef the dark-green waves break dazlingly, while at the head of the bay the white cottage and mission church give an air of quiet