

generally covered with clouds. From its gradual rise and its surface being smoother, it is susceptible of a much higher state of cultivation than the other islands. The soil is a reddish loam, and it appears to be considered as the most fruitful of the islands.

Kandavu is the south-westernmost of the Fiji Islands; it is twenty-five miles long, and throughout its whole length is high and mountainous, except a small part at its centre, near Malatta Bay. The island is well covered with pine timber, resembling the New Zealand kauri pine, and most of the large canoes used in the Fiji Islands are built here. The people are industrious, and have abundance of provisions.

Vanua-Valavo is the largest of the group called the Exploring Isles; it is of a serpentine shape, and fourteen miles in length. Each island of this group has its own separate reef around its shore, and the whole are enclosed within an extensive reef, somewhat in the shape of a triangle, whose sides are twenty-four miles in length.

Vairi, or *Nairi*, is the largest of the Yasawa group, and rises to the height of 954 feet above the sea.

Yasawa, or *Ya-asau*, is the northernmost island of this group; it is very narrow, and about ten miles in length; towards its southern end it rises to a peak 780 feet in height.

Area.—According to Dr. Petermann's calculation the superficial area of the Fiji group is equal to that of Wales (7,397 English square miles), or eight times that of the Ionian Islands.

Productions.—Mr. Consul March, in his report for 1869, in speaking of the capabilities of Fiji, says,—“The productions and resources of Fiji have been described in previous reports; it is sufficient, therefore, to state that these islands, rich and fertile, yield an almost endless variety of vegetable treasures. They abound in edible roots, medical plants, scents, and perfumes, and timber of various descriptions; whilst sugar, coffee, and tobacco grow most luxuriantly, and if cultivated would, I think, prove as remunerative as cotton.” Dr. Seeman's report to the Colonial Office, printed in the Appendix to “Correspondence relative to the Fiji Islands,” presented to Parliament in 1862, contains an elaborate description of the productions of Fiji. He remarks that “*Colonial produce*, properly so called, such as sugar, coffee, tamarinds, and tobacco, may be expected from Fiji in considerable quantities, as soon as Europeans shall have devoted their attention to the subject, since the plants yielding them, long ago introduced, flourish so well that a judicious outlay of capital might prove a profitable investment. The sugar-cane grows as it were wild in various parts of the group, and a purple variety, attaining 16 feet in height and a corresponding thickness, is cultivated to some extent. Coffee will one day rank amongst the staple products of the country, the mountain slopes of the larger islands, especially those of Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, and Kandavu, and, above all, those of the Valley of Namosi, seeming well adapted for its growth.”

Population.—Colonel Smythe in 1860 estimated the native population at 200,000, and the permanent white residents at less than 200. Mr. Thurston, formerly Acting Consul at Fiji, in 1867 estimated the natives at 100,000; but this number must be considerably below the mark, for in the report of the Australasian Wesleyan Missionary Society for the year ending March, 1873, there is a return given of 109,250 attendants on public worship. Mr. March in 1870 estimated the native population at 170,000. In 1868 the number of white settlers had increased to 1,288, and in 1870 to about 4,000, of whom three-fourths were British subjects.

Notwithstanding the unsettled condition of Fiji, the progress of the group, especially in the production of cotton, has been remarkable, as will be seen from the following statistics, taken from the commercial reports of the Consul for 1869 and 1870:—

“In 1865 the quantity of cotton exported was 2,400 cwt., valued at £9,300.

In 1870 the value was, of sea island cotton, £91,500; and of short staple cotton, £1,200;—total, £92,700.

The total value of exports in 1870 was £98,735. The approximate total value of imports in that year was £71,950. Most of the articles were of English manufacture, and shipped from Australia and New Zealand. The imports from the latter place amounted to about 2,000 tons; and, judging by the efforts there made to establish regular communication with the South Sea Islands, it is probable that the present year (1871) will see the trade doubled, and competing successfully with that of Sydney, which port has hitherto supplied Fiji with the bulk of its requirements.

The principal articles exported in 1870 were,—

Cotton, Sea Island	...	...	...	...	...	...	£91,500
Do., Short Staple	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,200
Cocoa-nut oil	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,950
Tortoise shell	...	...	...	...	...	...	260
Cotton seed	...	...	...	...	...	...	250
Kauri gum	...	...	...	...	...	...	100
Other articles	...	...	...	...	...	...	475
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	£98,735

This augmentation in the trade of Fiji is due to the increasing operations in cotton planting, and the continued immigration from the neighbouring colonies.

The passenger lists of the vessels reported at the Consulate show that the white population in these islands received an accession of 1,035 souls during the past twelve months (1870).”—

NAVIGATORS ISLANDS.

The following description of this group is by the Rev. J. Powell, F.L.S., of the Samoan Mission:—

“*Samoa* is the native name of the Navigators Group, which lies between 13° 30' and 14° 20' S. lat., and 169° 24' and 172° 50' W. long. Its number of inhabited islands is ten, with a population of about 34,700. It is 265 miles long, and includes an area 1,650 square miles. All the islands are of