

The port of Papeete is the *entrepôt* of the Society group, the Low Archipelago, Tubuai, and the Cook Islands; and is the point of concentration of all commercial operations in the various groups. In 1880, the arrivals at Tahiti were three French ships from France (1,500 tons), 14 French ships from other countries (1,600 tons), and 87 foreign ships (7,500 tons). The following vessels sailed from Tahiti in the same year:—One French ship bound for France (410 tons), 14 French ships bound to foreign ports (3,600 tons), and 88 foreign ships (10,900 tons).

The outward postal service is from Havre to New York and San Francisco, a monthly service bringing the mails from San Francisco to Tahiti. The mean time of the postal transit from France is 55 days. At present, a subsidized service between San Francisco and Tahiti is kept up by a small sailing vessel; but it will soon be done by steam. The Post Office at Tahiti has branches in the Marquesas, Low Archipelago, Tubuai, and Gambier's.

II. WESTERN PACIFIC.

New Caledonia, Isle of Pines, and Loyalty Isles.—In 1843, a missionaries' establishment was formed in New Caledonia, but abandoned in 1847, on being attacked by the natives. In 1851, the frigate "Alcmene," Count d'Harcourt commander, having anchored at Balade, the natives massacred a boat's crew, when immediate reprisals took place. This event, together with the reports of Count d'Harcourt, and also the desire to possess a distant colony which could, if necessary, receive convicts, decided the French Government to take formal possession of the group. Accordingly, on the 14th June, 1853, Rear-Admiral Febvrier-Despointes arrived at Balade, and, without opposition on the part of the natives, took possession of New Caledonia and its dependencies, in the name of France. From Balade he went to the Isle of Pines, where (some weeks before) an English corvette had come to hoist the English flag. The native Chiefs, however, refused to accept the English proposal, and made their submission to France, under the guns of the English man-of-war, on the 29th September. Captain Tardy de Montravel afterwards completed the act of taking possession, and, after negotiations with the principal Chiefs, obtained their recognition of the French sovereignty. Noumea, on the south-west coast, was chosen as the site of the principal town and convict settlement.

In 1864, military possession was taken of the Loyalty Islands, where missionaries had established themselves since 1859.

These events did not occur without much resistance on the part of the natives, and even of Europeans; but strong and persistent repressions brought about a general pacification. A revolt broke out in June, 1878, which took about ten months to repress: and since then tranquillity in the colony has been unbroken.

New Caledonia is situated between 20° 10' and 22° 26' of south latitude and 161° 35' and 164° 55' east longitude (from Paris).

The population of New Caledonia is as follows:—

(1.) Civil population	...	...	...	...	...	2,500
(2.) Officers and their families	...	...	...	...	...	1,041
(3.) Freed convicts (<i>libérés</i>)	...	...	...	...	...	2,300
(4.) Convicts	...	...	...	...	...	6,500

There are different estimates of the native population, varying between 20,000 and 40,000.

2. The following account of the French possessions at Tahiti and the adjacent islands, is taken from a report to the Foreign Office, by Mr. Miller, Her Majesty's Consul at Tahiti:—

The Island of Tahiti is the seat of the central Government of the French establishments in the Eastern Pacific, comprising—

1.—Tahiti and its dependencies, which consist of Moorea, Tetiaroa, Meetia, the Low Archipelago, known as the Paumotu or Tuamotu group, Tubuai, Raivavae, and Rapa; numbering in all upwards of eighty islands, and under French protection, represented by the protectorate flag of Tahiti. Population of the whole is from 18,000 to 20,000.

2.—The Gambier group of four small islands, also under French protection, but denoted by the national colours of France. Population, about 1,000.

3.—The Marquesas Islands, eleven in number, under the sovereignty and national flag of France. Population of the group, about 5,000. The French Government is represented at Tahiti by an officer with the title of "Commandant of the French establishments in Oceania, Commissioner of the Republic at the Society Islands and Dependencies." He resides at Papeete, the chief town and port of Tahiti, and administers the general government of the establishments above enumerated, with the assistance of a Council composed of official members chiefly, with a small proportion of unofficial ones nominated by himself. Residents, under his orders, occupy the under-mentioned outstations, with authority to exercise French jurisdiction over the districts respectively assigned to them, viz.:—A Resident at the Island of Fakarava, for the Paumotu group; another at Tubuai, for that and the island of Raivavae; another at Mangareva, for the Gambier Islands; and a fourth at Nukahiva, for the Marquesas group. The ports regularly open to foreign trade and shipping are: Papeete, Taunua, and Papeuriri, at Tahiti; Papetoai, at the neighbouring island of Moorea; the port of the island of Fakarava, in the Paumotu group; that of the island of Tubuai; that of the island of Mangareva, in the Gambier group; and Taiohae, at the island of Nukahiva, in the Marquesas group. The duties on goods at all the above-mentioned ports are the same as at the chief port of Papeete, where in fact nearly all the foreign trade of Tahiti and its dependencies is as yet carried on or officially reported. The direct foreign trade of the Gambier and Marquesas Islands is comparatively inconsiderable.