

natives grew suspicious and less friendly at once because they found that I could speak French. Possibly if the English were in the position of rulers they would lose their popularity. The natives have remained mostly Protestants, notwithstanding the efforts of Roman Catholic missionaries during the French occupation.

Tahiti is the principal colony of France in the Pacific, and even New Caledonia is under the rule of the head government at Tahiti.

Tahiti is wretchedly supplied with provisions. The Guava bush has overrun all the lower country and covered it with scrub; hence there is scarcely any pasturage. Cattle are procured from the Sandwich Islands, and it depends on the kind of weather which the sailing-vessels that bring them meet with, whether they are worth eating or not when they arrive.

We bought for the use of our mess at Papeete the most miserable specimens of sheep that I have ever seen. They had come from Easter Island, which is now principally occupied as a sheep run, the inhabitants having been largely deported to Tahiti, where some of them are employed as household servants, the men waiting very well at the dinner-table in European dress. The sheep had been long on the voyage, and were so miserably poor that one of them only weighed about ten pounds when skinned. Pork is the only animal food which is cheap and plentiful at Tahiti.

One of the greatest treats to the natives is tea and bread-and-butter. A Chinaman keeps a restaurant to which Tahitian girls are taken by their lovers in order to consume these luxuries. Wheaten bread is greatly appreciated by Polynesians, and a baker is one of the first tradesmen who finds a profitable business amongst the natives on any of the islands when in process of civilisation. There was an English baker on Tongatabu, who was almost the only White retail dealer established there. He told me he sold a great quantity of bread to the natives.

I made an excursion up into the mountains in search of plants. Some of the mountains rise to a height of over 7,000 feet, and I hoped to be able to reach a considerable altitude in the search of mountain forms. It was settled that at all events I was to reach the head of a valley called Papeno in the interior. I was provided with native guides; one, an old man, supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with the mountains.

I started with Lieut. Channer and F. Pearcey, our excellent bird skinner and factotum. The men carried our little baggage on the ends of poles, resting on their shoulders, like Chinese coolies. The practice of this method of carrying has been