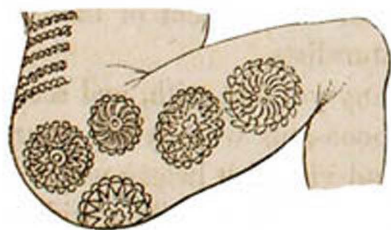


On Raraka we soon discovered a party of natives, near the entrance to the lagoon, waving a Tahitian flag, three horizontal stripes, red, white, and red. They were partly dressed, some in shirts, without hats, others with vests, and others again with trousers of all colours. I joined the schooner, stood in for the mouth of the lagoon, and landed.

Nothing could be more striking than the difference that prevailed between these natives and those of the Disappointment Islands, which we had just left. The half-civilization of the natives of Raraka was very marked, and it appeared as though we had issued out of darkness into light. They showed a modest disposition, and gave us a hearty welcome. We were not long at a loss as to what to ascribe it; the missionary had been at work here, and his exertions had been based upon a firm foundation; the savage had been changed to a reasonable creature. Among the inhabitants was a native missionary, who had been instrumental in this work. If the missionaries had effected nothing else, they would deserve the thanks of all those who roam over this wide expanse of ocean, and incur its many unknown and hidden dangers. Here all shipwrecked mariners would be sure of kind treatment, and a share of the few comforts these people possess. No savage mistrust and fear were seen here. The women and children came about us, receiving our trifles. They showed much joy and curiosity at the sight of us, and were eager to supply our wants. The chief was an old man, much tattooed about the breast and arms, which gave him the appearance of a blue and brown checker-board; others had large rosettes on their legs, and horizontal bands on the back, passing a considerable distance on each side of the spine, elaborately executed in various patterns.



TATTOOING.

This is believed to be the tattooing peculiar to the inhabitants of Anaa or Chain Island. They frequent the different islands of the group, and are generally employed by those engaged in the shell-fishery.

I was particularly struck with the modest and quiet behaviour of the native missionary, who was a Tahitian. He kept himself aloof, whilst all the others were crowding round to partake in the presents we were distributing, and seemed much gratified and astonished when I selected him out as the recipient of a present similar to the one I had given the chief.

All the males' heads were shaven, somewhat after the fashion of a Dominican friar. This practice is said to have been adopted by the missionaries at Tahiti, for the sake of cleanliness, and also to dis-