

proportion to the vast ocean out of which they abruptly rise; and it seems wonderful that such weak invaders are not overwhelmed by the all-powerful and never-tiring waves of that great sea, miscalled the Pacific.

November 15th.—At daylight, Tahiti, an island which must forever remain classical to the voyager in the South Sea, was in view. At a distance the appearance was not attractive. The luxuriant vegetation of the lower part could not yet be seen, and as the clouds rolled past, the wildest and most precipitous peaks showed themselves toward the centre of the island. As soon as we anchored in Matavai Bay, we were surrounded by canoes. This was our Sunday, but the Monday of Tahiti: if the case had been reversed, we should not have received a single visit; for the injunction not to launch a canoe on the Sabbath is rigidly obeyed. After dinner we landed to enjoy all the delights produced by the first impressions of a new country, and that country the charming Tahiti. A crowd of men, women, and children was collected on the memorable Point Venus, ready to receive us with laughing, merry faces. They marshalled us toward the house of Mr. Wilson, the missionary of the district, who met us on the road, and gave us a very friendly reception. After sitting a short time in his house, we separated to walk about, but returned there in the evening.

The land capable of cultivation is scarcely in any part more than a fringe of low alluvial soil, accumulated round the base of the mountains, and protected from the waves of the sea by a coral reef, which encircles the entire line of coast. Within the reef there is an expanse of smooth water, like that of a lake, where the canoes of the natives can ply with safety and where ships anchor. The low land which comes down to the beach of coral sand is covered by the most beautiful productions of the intertropical regions. In the midst of bananas, orange, cocoanut, and bread-fruit trees, spots are cleared where yams, sweet potatoes, the sugar-cane, and pineapples are cultivated. Even the brushwood is an imported fruit-tree, namely, the guava, which from its abun-