the stronger European strains—were plentiful even in Wallis’s days. The ornithology is very poor as compared with that of the Western Pacific; the Society Islands possess no peculiar genera and but few peculiar species. They claim, however, a thrush, several small parrots of great beauty, doves, pigeons, rails and a sandpiper *(Tringa leucopterd).* A jungle-fowl (var. of *Gallus bankiva)* is found in the mountains, but as domesticated fowls were abundant, even when Tahiti was first discovered by Europeans, these wild birds are doubtless the offspring of tame birds. The lagoons swarm with fish of many species. Insects are poor in species, though some of them are indigenous. Crustaceans and molluscs, on the other hand, are well represented; worms, echinoderms, and corals com­paratively poorly. A noteworthy feature of Tahitian conchology is the number of peculiar species belonging to the genus *Partula,* almost every valley being the habitat of a distinct form.@@1

*Flora.*—The flora, though luxuriant and greatly enhancing the beauty of the islands, is not very rich. It is, however, less poor in trees, shrubs and hardwood plants, than in the smaller under­growth. Orchids, including some beautiful species, and ferns are abundant; but, here as in Polynesia generally, *Rubiaceae* is the order best represented. Remarkable are the banana thickets, which grow at an altitude of from 3000 to 5000 ft. Along the shore—in some places almost to the extinction of all native growth —many exotics have established themselves; and a great variety of fruit-bearing and other useful trees have been introduced.@@2

*Inhabitants.—*The Tahitians are a typical Polynesian race, closely connected physically with the Marquesans and Raro- tongans, but widely divided from them in many of their customs. The dialects, also, of the three groups are different, the Tahitian being perhaps the softest in all Oceania. The women rank with the most beautiful of the Pacific, though the accounts given of them by early voyagers are much exaggerated; and for general symmetry of form the people arc unsurpassed by any race in the world. Even now in its decadence, after generations of drunkenness and European disease and vice, grafted on inborn indolence and licentiousness, many tall and robust people (ó ft. and even upwards in height) are to be found. Men and women of good birth can generally be distinguished by their height and fairness, and often, even in early age, by their enormous corpulence. The skin varies from a very light olive to a full dark brown. The wavy or curly hair and the expressive eyes are black, or nearly so; the mouth is large, but well-shaped and set with beautiful teeth; the nose broad (formerly flattened in infancy by artificial means); and the chin well developed.

The native costume was an oblong piece of bark-cloth with a hole in its centre for the head, and a plain piece of cloth round the loins was worn alike by men and women of the higher classes. Men of all ranks wore, with or without these, the T bandage. The women concealed their breasts except in the company of their superiors, when etiquette demanded that inferiors of both sexes should uncover the upper part of the body. The chiefs wore short feather cloaks, not unlike those of the Hawaiians, and beautiful semicircular breast­plates, dexterously interwoven with the black plumage of the frigate bird, with crimson feathers and with sharks’ teeth; also most elaborate special dresses as a sign of mourning. The priests had strange cylindrical hats, made of wicker-work and over a yard in height. Circumcision, and in both sexes tattooing, were generally practised, and much significance was attached to some of the marks. The houses were long, low, and open at the sides. Household utensils were few—plain round wooden dishes, sometimes on legs, coco-nut shells, baskets, &c. Low stools and head-rests were used. Pottery being unknown, all food was baked in a hole dug in the ground or roasted over the fire. Their chief musical instruments were the nose-flute—often used as the accompaniment of song— and the drum. Conch-shells were also used. Tahitian stone adzes, which are greatly inferior in finish to those of the Hervey Islands, are, like the adzes of Polynesia in general, distinguished from those of Melanesia by their triangular section and adaptation to a socket. Slings were favourite weapons of the Tahitians; they had also plain spears expanding into a wide blade, and clubs. The bow and arrow seem only to have been used in certain ceremonial games. Their canoes, from 20 to 70 ft. in length, were double or single, and provided with sail and outriggers. They were not well finished, but the high curved sterns, rising sometimes to a height of 20 ft., of those destined to carry the images of their gods, were carved with strange figures and hung with feathers. Cannibalism is unknown, though some ceremonies which were performed in connexion with human sacrifices may possibly be survivals of this practice. The staple food of the islanders consisted of the bread-fruit, the taro­root, the yam, the sweet potato, and in some districts the wild

plantain; but they also ate much fish (the turtle was considered sacred food), as well as pigs and dogs, though of the latter, as pets, the women were so fond as to suckle the puppies sometimes even to the exclusion of their own children.

Tahitians were good fishermen and bold seamen. They steered by the stars, of which they distinguished many constellations. The land was carefully tended and the fields well irrigated. Three great classes were recognized:—∙(1) The sovereign, who bore a semi- sacred as well as a political character, and the reigning chiefs of districts; (2) the proprietors and cultivators of inherited land, who also built canoes, made arms, &c.; to these two classes also belonged the priests, who were medicine-men as well ; (3) the fishers, artisans. &c., and slaves. As wars and infanticide depopulated the island this class gradually acquired land and with it certain privileges. Rank is hereditary and determined by primogeniture, not necessarily in the male line. The firstborn of a sovereign succeeded at once to titular sovereignty; the father, who was the first to pay homage to his child, then abdicated, and became regent. It is easy to see that, while this custom tended to keep honours within a family, it may have encouraged the practice of infanticide, which was common in all grades of society when Tahiti was first visited by Europeans. The age at which the child’s authority became real varied according to his own abilities and the will of his subjects. Though arbitrary, the power of the king was limited by the power of his vassals, the district chiefs, who ruled absolutely over their respective districts, and who might be of as good blood as himself. The king had a councillor, but was alone responsible for any act. The bi-insular form of Tahiti promoted the independence of the chiefs, and war was rarely declared without their being first sum­moned to council. Their power over their own people was absolute. The form of government was thus strictly feudal in character, but it gradually centralized into a monarchy, which, in the person of Pomare 11., the English missionaries greatly helped to regulate and strengthen. The sovereign sent his commands by a messenger, whose credentials were a tuft of coco-nut film. This tuft was returned intact as a sign of assent or torn in token of refusal.

The temples were square tree-surrounded enclosures, with a single entrance and several small courts, within which were houses for the images and attendant priests. A pyramidal stone structure, on which were the actual altars, stood at the further end of the square. In the temples were buried the chiefs, whose embalmed bodies, after being exposed for a time, were interred in a crouching position. Their skulls, however, were kept in the houses of their nearest relations. In the great temple at Atahura the stone structure was 270 ft. long, 94 ft. wide, and 50 ft. high, and its summit was reached by a flight of steps built of hewn coral and basalt. Sacrificial offerings, including human sacrifices, formed a prominent part of Tahitian worship. An eye of the victim was offered to the king, and placed within his mouth by the officiating priest. Every household possessed its own guardian spirits, but there were several superior divinities, of which, at the beginning of the 19th century, Oro was the most venerated. The images, which are less remarkable than those of Hawaii, were rough representations of the human form carved in wood. The A*reoi,* a licentious religious association, was a special feature of Tahitian society.

The Tahitians are light-hearted, frivolous, courteous and generous, but deceitful and cruel. They were always notorious for their immorality, one of their customs being a systematized exchange of wives. Besides dancing, the singing of songs, and the recitation of historical and mythical ballads, the natives had also a variety of sports and games. Wrestling, boxing, and spear-throwing matches, with foot and canoe races, were held; also sham fights and naval reviews. They had several ball games—one (played chiefly by women), a kind of football; but surf-swimming was perhaps the favourite sport, and cock-fighting was much practised.

*Products, Trade, Administration.—*Papeete, as the emporium for a widely scattered archipelago (including Paumotu, &c.). has an export trade in mother-of-pearl, pearls (mainly from the Paumotu islands), oranges, trepang (for China), copra and vanilla. Many whalers formerly visited Papeete harbour. During the American Civil War, in the middle of the 19th century, Tahitian cotton was put upon the European market, but its cultivation had ceased by 1884, and it has been little grown since. This is also true of coffee and tobacco, among other crops which have been tried. Sugar and rum are also produced.

The importation of “ labour,” chiefly for the plantations, from other Polynesian islands was placed under government control in 1862. The Tahitians themselves prefer handicrafts to agricultural work, and many are employed as artisans by European masters.

The total value of exports was £140,325 and of imports £127,600 in 1904. Papeete is the seat of government. The French establish­ments in the Eastern Pacific are administered by a governor, a privy council, and a council including the *maire* of Papeete and the presidents of the chambers of commerce and agriculture.

*History.—*The discovery and early exploration of the Society Islands is treated under that heading. In 1788, when Lieutenant Bligh in the “ Bounty ” visited Tahiti, the leading chief was Pomare, whose family had been pre-eminent in the island for

I @@@1 Finsch and Hartlaub, *Fauna Central-Polynesiens,* Halle, 1867.

@@@2 De Castillo, *Illustrationes Florae Insularum Maris Pacifici,* Paris, 1886.