

some information in relation to the naval architecture of Tahiti. The vessel was a small schooner, and the building of it was superintended by a Yankee. The timber employed was that called by the natives mape, (*Inocarpus edulis*), which is said to be of excellent quality. The supply of this wood is, however, limited. The poorou (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*), is also employed in ship-building, but it can only be procured of small size, and is therefore unfit for the structure of many parts of a vessel.

Several vessels of about one hundred and thirty tons burden have already been built upon the island. These have been employed in the trade to New South Wales, whither they carry sugar, cocoa-nut oil, and arrow-root, and whence they bring back in return hardware, cloths, calicoes, &c. In the ports of New South Wales they pay the same duties and charges as British bottoms.

The commercial resources of these islands are very limited; most of the vessels that visit Tahiti are those belonging to our whaling fleet: these average less than a hundred annually. From them the natives are enabled to dispose of some of the supplies they raise, and in return obtain such articles as will promote their comfort and add to their pleasure. The whale-ships, for the most part, have articles of trade which they barter with the natives, so that little money is required to carry on their business. The natives, particularly the chiefs, are however well acquainted with the value of money. An estimate has been made that each of these vessels introduces goods into the islands to the amount of \$500 each, making a total amount of \$50,000; but I very much question whether it can reach this extent; and if this amount be sold, it must include the profits: half the sum, I should think, was a large estimate.

The few other vessels that visit the islands bring little cargo; if two arrive at the same time, they destroy each other's ventures by glutting the markets.

The pearl-shell fishery of the Paumotu Group centres here. I was told it was principally in the hands of the French consul. For a few years before our arrival, viz., from 1832 to '38, it had been very productive. The amount obtained was about nine hundred tons, which was estimated to be valued at \$45,000 to \$50,000; the greater part of this was sent to France. Of the agricultural products they have little to dispose of as yet; neither is the island susceptible of any very extended operations, to induce vessels to visit it exclusively for its trade or productions. The three chief articles of production are sugar, cocoa-nut oil, and arrow-root. The following statement was furnished me of the quantities produced.