

CHAPTER V.

SAMOAN GROUP.

1839.

DURING the time that the squadron remained in the Samoan Group, all the islands of which it is made up were visited; not only were the examinations, spoken of in the two preceding chapters, made, but their shores were minutely surveyed by boats; the meteorological instruments were duly registered; astronomic and magnetic observations made, and a full record of the tides kept. We have thus obtained a large amount of information, which will be more easily intelligible in a condensed form, together with a great number of facts in relation to the aboriginal population, which may be made more interesting when applied to give a general view of the habits, character, and state of civilization among the natives, than if dispersed in isolated remarks in the accounts of the separate tours in which it was obtained.

The group lies between the latitudes of $13^{\circ} 30'$ and $14^{\circ} 30'$ S., and the longitudes of 168° and 173° W. The islands, as has been seen, agree in the general character of being of volcanic structure, and having coral reefs; differing, however, in the modifications of these formations, which have been from time to time described. The harbours are usually situated within the reefs, but Tutuila is an exception to this rule, by the possession of the deep land-locked basin of Pago-pago. This is, of all the ports, the one best adapted for the refitting of vessels; but Apia, in Upolu, in the latitude of $13^{\circ} 48' 56.6''$ S., and longitude $171^{\circ} 41' 09''$ W., is not so difficult of egress, and in consequence of its proximity to the fertile district of Aana, the most convenient for vessels seeking only a temporary anchorage and refreshment.

The approach to Pago-pago, and the other harbours of the Samoan