

taken in deep water by the hook. Among the sea-fish, mullets are very numerous, and are frequently seen leaping from the water in immense shoals.

One of the modes in which fish are caught by the Samoans, was witnessed at Samatau. About a dozen canoes formed themselves into a ring around what appeared to be a dark circular spot in the water, about six feet in diameter, and which was moving along with a slow and unequal motion. This was a shoal of the small fish called lou, which is about two inches in length. The shoal being thus surrounded, the circle of canoes was gradually lessened, until the fish, finding themselves enclosed on all sides, ceased to move forward. At this moment, the head fisher, who was seen standing up in the canoe with a net in his hand, threw it dexterously over the shoal, upon which all the other men dove at once from the boats, and remained for several seconds under the water, where they secured the sides of the net. On reappearing, all regained their canoes except four, who remained to take charge of the net, which with its prize they conveyed to the chief.

These islands furnish abundant supplies for the refreshment of vessels, but as yet there are few articles which can be rendered available in foreign commerce. Tortoise-shell, of which a little has at times been procured at Savaii, cocoa-nut oil, and arrow-root, are nearly all that can be procured in quantities beyond the immediate wants of the visitors. Caoutchouc, gum Arabic, castor beans, orris-root, ginger, and coffee, might however be easily added to the list of exports. In return for what they can furnish, the natives now look to objects of real utility; beads, jews-harps, &c., once so much in request, are now scarcely prized; and cotton cloth, writing-paper, and hardware, particularly needles and other small articles of utility, are the kinds of manufactured goods which are most sought after.

The Samoan language is soft and smooth, and is the only one of the Polynesian dialects in which the sound of *s* is found. The letters that the missionaries have found necessary to adopt in order to write it, are only fourteen in number, viz.: A E F G I L M N O P S T U V. In attempting to sound the words of other languages, they use *L* instead of *R*, *s* for *H*, and *P* instead of *B*. The *G* has a nasal sound, as in *ong*.

It has nearly the same construction as the Tahitian, nevertheless the Samoan is far from being understood by the natives of the Society Islands. The Samoans say that they never can acquire it—"their jaws are too stiff." The missionaries also have great difficulty in speaking it, and are liable to make many mistakes which appear absurd to the natives.