

ported to exist, but saw nothing of it; and the wind was again from the northeast. The sick that had been received in the Vincennes from the Porpoise were all recovering rapidly.

On the 18th, the weather was fine and the wind still light; tropic-birds and tern were seen, and a constant look-out was kept, in the expectation of seeing land. This was the second anniversary of our sailing from the United States.

On the 19th, we made an island in the neighbourhood of the position assigned to Kemins' or Gardner's Island. Its true place is in latitude $4^{\circ} 37' 42''$ S., longitude $174^{\circ} 40' 18''$ W. This is a low coral island, having a shallow lagoon in the centre, into which there is no navigable passage; but the reef on the western side is so low that the tide can flow into the lagoon.

When near enough to the island, the boats were lowered, and a number of officers and men landed, after passing for a considerable distance through a dangerous surf, breaking with violence over that part of the reef through which the tide flows into the shallow lagoon. The remainder of the reef which forms the island, is white coral sand, about three hundred feet wide, on which there is a vegetation that, unlike that of the other low islands of Polynesia, is devoid of low shrubbery.

Birds were numerous on the island, and very tame; the tropic-birds so much so that some of the sailors amused themselves by collecting their beautiful tail-feathers, which they twitched from the bird while it sat on its nest,—an operation which the bird often bore without being disturbed. Besides birds, a large rat was found on this island.

The flood here sets strong to the northward, and the rise and fall of the tide was four and a half feet. No coral blocks were seen on this island, and it is less elevated above the water than those further to the eastward. The soil, however, appeared to be better than upon those, the coral sand being finer, and mixed with a greater quantity of vegetable mould. To this may be ascribed the larger growth of the trees upon it, which although of the same kinds as those which have been already mentioned as found growing on the coral islands, are forty or fifty feet in height. The island may be seen on a clear day at the distance of fifteen miles.

Believing this to be the island discovered by Captain Gardner, I have retained his name.

Here we made observations of magnetic declination, inclination, and intensity; after completing which, we passed through the surf without accident, and on reaching the ship, filled away, and stood on our course.