

the conviction of the common origin of the inhabitants of the two groups.*

To one unacquainted with the great height of the mountains of Hawaii, this island might appear of comparatively small elevation, for its surface rises gradually from the sea, uniform and unbroken; no abrupt spurs or angular peaks are to be seen, and the whole is apparently clothed with a luxuriant vegetation.

The scene which the island presents as viewed from the anchorage in Hilo Bay, is both novel and splendid: the shores are studded with extensive groves of cocoa-nut and bread-fruit trees, interspersed with plantations of sugar-cane; through these, numerous streams are seen hurrying to the ocean; to this succeeds a belt of some miles in width, free from woods, but clothed in verdure; beyond is a wider belt of forest, whose trees, as they rise higher and higher from the sea, change their characters from the vegetation of the tropics to that of polar regions; and above all tower the snow-capped summits of the mountains.

From this point of view, Mauna Kea, distant about thirty-five miles, has the appearance of being by much the highest mountain on the island; while Mauna Loa, distant sixty miles, and rounded at its summit to the shape of a regular dome, requires an effort of reason to satisfy the observer that it really has as great an elevation. A conviction that this is the case may be reached by tracing with the eye the edge of the forest that encircles both mountains, and noting how large a portion of the dome of Mauna Loa rises above the woody region.

No snow was visible to the naked eye on Mauna Loa, but with a telescope it was seen scattered here and there on its rounded summit. The appearance of this mountain is so deceptive, that one would not suppose it to have half its real altitude; and it might easily be passed unnoticed, so unpretending is its aspect. From Hilo, Mauna Loa looks as if one might walk over its smooth surface without difficulty; there is, indeed, so much optical deception in respect to this mountain, that it served to give us all great encouragement, and we set about making our preparations with a determination to succeed in the attempt to reach its highest summit. The position of the crater of Kilauea was denoted by the silvery cloud which hangs over it by day; which, as evening closed in, was, by the glare of the fires burning beneath, made visible throughout the night.

My time was now actively employed in establishing the observatory at Waiakea Point, for rating the chronometers, and in arranging the

* This subject will form a part of the report of Mr. Hale, the Philologist to the Expedition, to which I refer for a full investigation of it, and of its bearing upon the migrations of the Polynesian tribes.