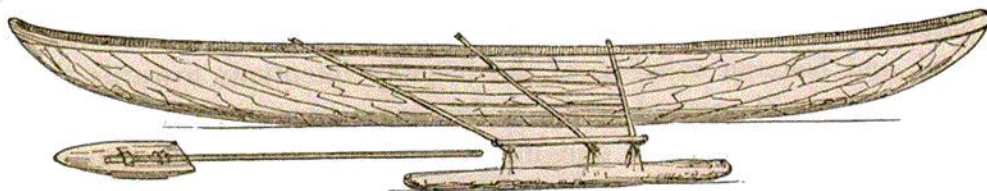


Their chief desire was to obtain tobacco, of which they seem to be extravagantly fond; it was their constant request, and whilst in their canoes alongside, or on deck, the cry was constantly "tebake." It was not begged as a gift; for, what appeared singular enough for South Sea islanders, they seemed to have no idea of receiving any thing as a gratuity, but instantly made a return of something for whatever was given them. So eager were they after it, that when one had put a piece in his mouth, others would seize him, and actually force it out with their fingers.

Besides the mats, they had fans, fly-brushes, and baskets of different sizes and shapes, with nets and hooks for fishing. Some had wigs, and others carved images, all of which were readily parted with for tobacco. Another article which was brought off for sale, was a kind of treacle, made from the sap of the cocoa-nut tree, which they had in cocoa-nut shells: into these they frequently thrust their fingers, and drawing them through their mouths, smacked their lips most significantly of its goodness.

The canoes of these natives were different from those of any other islanders: their average length is from twelve to fifteen feet; they are from two to three feet deep, and vary from fifteen inches to two feet in width. Each canoe has six or eight timbers in its construction;



KINGSMILL CANOE.

they are well modelled, built in frames, and have much sheer. The boards are cut from the cocoa-nut tree, from a few inches to six or eight feet long, and vary from five to seven inches in width. These are arranged as the planking of a vessel, and very neatly put together, being sewed with sennit; for the purpose of making them water-tight, they use a slip of the pandanus-leaf, inserted as our coopers do in flagging a cask. They have evinced much ingenuity in attaching the upright to the flat timbers, which are so secured as to have all the motion of a double joint, which gives them ease and comparative security in a sea-way, and thus renders them capable of withstanding the waves. They use an out-rigger, much smaller than those of other islands, and the staging or platform covers less space. One of the sides is nearly flat, in which respect they resemble the proa of the Ladrões, as figured in Anson's Voyages.