

### CHAPTER III.

#### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE KINGSMILL ISLANDERS.

1841.

IN order to obtain all the information possible from Kirby and Wood, Captain Hudson placed them under the immediate control of Mr. Hale, the philologist. This gentleman had thus an opportunity to examine and cross-question them, during the whole time they remained on board the Peacock. To his report to Captain Hudson, I am principally indebted for the following information respecting the entire group. Captain Hudson states to me, that the opportunity Mr. Hale enjoyed was the very best for eliciting information, as they were upwards of a month on board the ship, and were under examination day after day.

Their accounts are deemed entitled by Captain Hudson and his officers to much credit, from the fact that many things had passed under their own eyes that perfectly agreed with the accounts that Kirby, in particular, gave; and he was found to have obtained much fluency in speaking their language. It is likewise some confirmation of Kirby's account, that Wood's in many particulars corresponded with it, and in all as much so as could be expected between islanders that, although allied in race, are now living under totally different circumstances. Wood, it must be observed, had not, though a much longer resident than Kirby, acquired so thorough a knowledge of the language, or of their manners and customs, principally, it was thought, from a want of aptitude for such observation.

The Kingsmill Group consists of fifteen islands, of which the geographical positions have been already given in speaking of them separately.