

ships whose cruising-ground is the North Pacific; and the amount of property engaged in this business, visiting the ports of the Sandwich Islands annually, is equal to three millions of dollars. To the supply of this fleet, the labour of the inhabitants has principally been directed.

The groves of sandalwood, which were formerly represented by a number of designing persons, who professed a strong friendship for the chiefs, to be an inexhaustible mine of wealth, soon gave out. The chiefs have ceased to look to them as a source of profit, and have begun the cultivation of sugar, which, together with silk, now attract much attention; but, until some capital be invested in these cultures, and the business be better understood, these articles cannot be raised to any large amount; yet the provisions and supplies to ships, suffice to afford all the necessary comforts to the inhabitants of this group.

Fortunately for the Sandwich Islands, they have no port that is defensible against a strong naval force, and therefore their consequence will be comparatively small in a political point of view. No foreign power, in fact, could well hold them, without great expense and difficulty. Honolulu is the port where vessels can best receive repairs, but it can only be used by the smaller class. By these circumstances, the neutral position of this group I think is insured; and this is most desirable for its peace and happiness. This fact seems to me to be tacitly acknowledged by the maritime powers, as no attempt has as yet been made to take possession of them, and they will, in all probability, be long left in the enjoyment of their neutrality, which King Kamehameha III. is now endeavouring to establish through a formal recognition of his kingdom by the United States, England, and France, by negotiations that are now pending. Such recognition will render them less liable, if not altogether exempt from aggressions, exerted in the manner that has already been related, in the course of this Narrative. These islands seem intended for peaceful occupations alone; their products, situation, and inhabitants, require and wish it. The power on which they must become dependent hereafter, is that which is to be established in Oregon and California; and, adapted as they are to supply all the products of the tropics, they will become a valuable appendage to those states; but, I deem the idea entertained by many, who suppose they ever can become so powerful as to command those states, to be a mistake. So far as the consumption of a small amount of manufactures go, and the convenience of our whaling fleet, but no farther, they will be beneficial to the United States. In this relation, the character of the government becomes a source of solicitude to us. It