

in the fall and winter, but I never found any evidence of their breeding there. They do not leave the island in quest of prey, but may be seen at low-tide picking up their food on the reef, which is then almost dry.

“Some of the social habits of these birds are worthy of remark. The gannets and boobies usually crowd together in a very exclusive manner. The frigate birds likewise keep themselves distinct from other kinds. The tern appropriate to themselves a certain portion of the island ; each family collects in its accustomed roosting place, but all in peace and harmony. The feud between the fishing birds and their oppressors, the frigate birds, is only active in the air ; if the gannet or booby can but reach the land and plant its feet on the ground, the pursuer gives up the chase immediately.”

The extensive reefs about coral islands, as already stated, abound in fish, which are easily captured, and the natives, with wooden hooks, often bring in larger kinds from the deep waters. From such resources a population of 7,000 persons is supported on the single island of Taputeuea, whose whole habitable area does not exceed six square miles.

There are also shell-fish of edible kinds, and others that are the source of considerable activity in pearl-fishing.

An occasional log drifts to the shores, and at some of the more isolated atolls, where the natives are ignorant of any land but the spot they inhabit, they are deemed direct gifts from a propitiated deity. These drift-logs were noticed by Kotzebue at the Marshall Islands, and he remarked also that they often brought stones in their roots. Similar facts have been observed at the Gilbert Group, and also at Enderbury's Island, and many other coral islands in the Pacific. The stones at the Gilbert Islands, as far as could be learned, are generally basaltic or volcanic, and they are highly valued among the natives for whetstones, pestles, and hatchets. The logs are claimed by the chiefs for canoes. Some of the logs seen by the author, like those at Enderbury's Island, were forty feet or more long. Several large masses of compact cellular lava occur on Rose