

middle age. They have little hair on their bodies, and take pains to eradicate it from the armpits and breasts, under a notion of cleanliness.

Almost as great a variety of physiognomy is observable in Polynesia as among any people of Europe. Perhaps the only general characteristic, besides the complexion and hair, is the slight spread of the nostrils at the base, as though the nose had been a little depressed. The eyes are black, but neither large nor very bright; we observed a few individuals in whom they were set obliquely, like those of the Chinese, but in general their direction is rectilinear. The forehead varies very much in height and angle of direction, but is usually well developed. The cheek-bones project slightly, rather more forward than laterally. The nose is commonly short and straight, but in certain tribes, and in some individuals of all tribes, it is long and aquiline,—always appearing, however, to be slightly depressed and widened at the lower part. The mouth is commonly the best feature in the face, the lips being moderately full, and the teeth white, even, and well set. The chin is short and seldom prominent. The ears are large, standing out from the head. The whole contour of the face is oval, and the features, though not strongly marked, are often so regularly disposed as to be truly handsome.

The form of the head is not such as accords with our ideas of elegance. It is short and broad, the transverse diameter just above the ears being nearly as great as the longitudinal, from the middle of the forehead to the occiput. It is, at the same time, rather more elevated than usual among barbarous races, rising highest at the coronal region. The head is remarkably flat behind, a peculiarity that is most striking in the women, from its contrast with the long, graceful oval, which we are accustomed to admire in the female head.

The foregoing general description is applicable to all the tribes of Polynesia. But there are certain minor peculiarities which distinguish the inhabitants of the different groups from one another, and which require to be noticed.

The natives of the Samoan and Tongan Islands are a fine-looking people. They are generally tall and well-proportioned, with full, rounded faces and limbs, but without that grossness and laxity of fibre common in the Tahitians. Their features, though not always regular, are generally pleasing; and in particular, the forehead is remarkable for its ample developement, which, with the breadth between the eyes, gives to the countenance an expression of noble-