

THE ETHNOLOGY OF FUNAFUTI.

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INTRODUCTION.

MUCH of the information conveyed in the "General Account" could have been included with equal appropriateness in the present chapter; to it the reader is therefore referred for details not here repeated.*

The natives of the Ellice Group appear to be closely allied to those of the Phoenix and Union Groups, and also to those of several small outlying islands,† and atolls in the same neighbourhood, extending perhaps as far as Rotumah and Fotuna. This branch of the Polynesian Race may, for want of a better comprehensive term, be called the Tokelau People.

We are much in want of a satisfactory subdivision of the Polynesian Race. The only classification with which I am acquainted is that of Dr. H. Stolpe,‡ based upon ornamental art. Good though this undoubtedly is, yet a broader basis including physique, language, religion, and so on, is required for a sound arrangement. Dr. Stolpe throws the branch here proposed to be called Tokelau into his Province of Tonga-Samoa, from the remainder of which I would clearly distinguish it by, *inter alia*, the different gods they worshipped and the difference of tattoo.

The Tokelau People are closely related to the Samoans, whose standard of civilisation is, however, far superior. Either therefore, they have degenerated, as is probable, amid unfavourable surroundings or they branched from the parent stock before the latter reached the degree of superiority they afterwards attained.

Glancing for an instant further afield, I would draw attention to many points of resemblance between the Japanese§ and Polynesians that have occurred to me; such are their graceful courtesy

* For an article "The Legendary History of Funafuti," by Prof. W. J. Sollas, see *Nature*, 11 Feb., 1897.

† Compare the account given of Fotuna or Horne Island.—*Journ. Polyn. Soc.* i., 1892, pp. 33-52; of "Rotuma and the Rotumans," *Rev. W. Allen.—Proc. Aust. Assoc. Adv. Sci.*, 1895, (1896) p. 569; and Lister, "Notes on the Natives of Fakaofu."—*Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xxi., 1892, p. 43.

‡ *Trans. Rochdale Lit. and Sci. Soc.*, iii. 1893, p. 73.

§ Polynesian relations to the Corea are noted by Stair.—*Journ. Polyn. Soc.*, iv., 1895, p. 55.