

they were on all sides so closely encompassed, and, as might be expected, extremely ill-informed on the subject; so much so, as has been remarked by an author who has written on this topic with admirable learning and ability, that when Hanno, the Carthaginian, returned from his investigation of a small part of the west coast of Africa, he had no difficulty in making his countrymen believe that two hides, with the hair still on, which he brought back with him, and which he had taken from two large apes, were actually the skins of savage women, and deserving of being suspended in the temple of Juno as most uncommon curiosities.

But, little as these matters seem in general to have attracted the attention of the ancient writers, their works still contain many notices of the practice of tattooing. We may cite only one or two of a considerable number that have been collected by Lafitau,* although even his enumeration might be easily extended. Herodotus mentions it as prevailing among the Thracians, certain of whom, he says, exhibit such marks on their faces as an indication of their nobility. Other authors speak of it as a practice of the Scythians, the Agathyrses, and the Assyrians. Cæsar remarks it as prevailing among the Britons; and there can be no doubt that the term *Picti* was merely a name given to those more northerly tribes of our countrymen

*"Mœurs des Sauvages Américains."