

death, hospitable entertainment and reception in their houses is almost certain, and while in them, perfect security may be relied on. The same native who within a few yards of his house would murder a coming or departing guest for sake of a knife or a hatchet, will defend him at the risk of his own life as soon as he has passed his threshold.

The people of the Feejee Group, are divided into a number of tribes, independent and often hostile to each other. In each tribe great and marked distinctions of rank exist. The classes which are readily distinguished are as follows: 1. kings; 2. chiefs; 3. warriors; 4. landholders (matanivanua); 5. slaves (kai-si). The last have nominally little influence; but in this group, as in other countries, the mere force of numbers is sufficient to counterbalance or overcome the force of the prescriptive rights of the higher and less numerous classes. This has been the case at Ambau, where the people at no distant period rose against and drove out their kings.

Among the most singular of the Feejee customs, and of whose origin it is difficult to form a rational opinion, is that which gives certain rights to a member of another tribe, who is called Vasu (nephew). To give an idea of the character of this right, and the manner in which it is exercised, I shall cite the case of Tanoa. He, although the most powerful chief in the group, feels compelled to comply with, and acknowledges Thokanauto (better known to foreigners as Mr. Phillips) as Vasu-togai of Ambau, who has in consequence the right of sending thither for any thing he may want, and even from Tanoa himself. On Tanoa's first visit to me, among other presents, I gave him one of Hall's patent rifles. This Thokanauto heard of, and determined to have it, and Tanoa had no other mode of preserving it than by sending it away from Ambau. When Rivaletta, Tanoa's youngest son, visited me one day at the observatory, he had the rifle with him, and told me that his father had put it into his hands, in order that it might not be demanded.

Afterwards, when Thokanauto himself paid me a visit, he had in his possession one of the watches that had been given to Seru, and told me openly that he would have the musket also. While at Levuka, he appropriated to himself a canoe and its contents, leaving the owner to find his way back to Ambau as he could. The latter made no complaint, and seemed to consider the act as one of course.

When the Vasu-togai or Vasu-levu of a town or district visits it, he is received with honours even greater than those paid to the chief who rules over it. All bow in obedience to his will, and he is received with clapping of hands and the salutation, "O sa vi naka lako mai