

Feejees. They style themselves Ngali-duva-ki-langi (subject to heaven alone).

The Pantheon of the Feejee Group contains many deities. The first of these in rank is Ndengei. He is worshipped in the form of a large serpent, alleged to dwell in a district under the authority of Ambau, which is called Nakauvaudra, and is situated near the western end of Vitilevu. To this deity, they believe that the spirit goes immediately after death, for purification or to receive sentence. From his tribunal the spirit is supposed to return and remain about the mbure or temple of its former abode.

All spirits, however, are not believed to be permitted to reach the judgment-seat of Ndengei, for upon the road it is supposed that an enormous giant, armed with a large axe, stands constantly on the watch. With this weapon he endeavours to wound all who attempt to pass him. Those who are wounded dare not present themselves to Ndengei, and are obliged to wander about in the mountains. Whether the spirit be wounded or not, depends not upon the conduct in life, but they ascribe an escape from the blow wholly to good luck.

Stories are prevalent of persons who have succeeded in passing the monster without injury. One of these, which was told me by a white pilot, will suffice to show the character of this superstition.

A powerful chief, who had died and been interred with all due ceremony, finding that he had to pass this giant, who, in the legend, is stationed in the Moturiki Channel, loaded his gun, which had been buried with him, and prepared for the encounter. The giant seeing the danger that threatened him, was on the look-out to dodge the ball, which he did when the piece was discharged. Of this the chief took advantage to rush by him before he could recover himself, reached the judgment-seat of Ndengei, and now enjoys celestial happiness!

Besides the entire form of a serpent, Ndengei is sometimes represented as having only the head and half the body of the figure of that reptile, while the remaining portion of his form is a stone, significant of eternal duration.

No one pretends to know the origin of Ndengei, but many assert that he has been seen by mortals. Thus, he is reported to have appeared under the form of a man, dressed in masi (white tapa), after the fashion of the natives, on the beach, near Ragi-ragi. Thence he proceeded to Mbenga, where, although it did not please him, on account of its rocky shores, he made himself manifest, and thence went to Kantavu. Not liking the latter place, he went to Rewa, where he took up his abode. Here he was joined by another powerful god, called Warua, to whom after a time he consented to resign this loca-