

lity, on condition of receiving the choicest parts of all kinds of food, as the heads of the turtle and pig,—which are still held sacred. Under this agreement he determined to proceed to Verata, where he has resided ever since, and by him Verata is believed to have been rendered impregnable.

Next in rank, in their mythology, stand two sons of Ndengei, Tokairambe and Tui Lakemba.* These act as mediators between their father and inferior spirits. They are said to be stationed, in the form of men, at the door of their father's cabin, where they receive and transmit to him the prayers and supplications of departed souls.

The grandchildren of Ndengei are third in rank. They are innumerable, and each has a peculiar duty to perform, of which the most usual is that of presiding over islands and districts.

A fourth class is supposed to be made up of more distant relatives of Ndengei. These preside over separate tribes, by whose priests they are consulted. They have no jurisdiction beyond their own tribe, and possess no power but what is deputed to them by superior deities.

In addition to these benignant beings, they believe in malicious and mischievous gods. These reside in their Hades, which they call Mbulu (underneath the world). There reigns a cruel tyrant, with grim aspect, whom they name Lothia. Samuialo (destroyer of souls) is his colleague, and sits on the brink of a huge fiery cavern, into which he precipitates departed spirits.

These notions, although the most prevalent, are not universal. Thus: the god of Muthuata is called Radinadina. He is considered as the son of Ndengei. Here also Rokora, the god of carpenters, is held in honour; and they worship also Rokavona, the god of fishermen.

The people of Lakemba believe that departed souls proceed to Namukaliwu, a place in the vicinity of the sea. Here they for a time exercise the same employments as when in this life, after which they die again, and go to Mbulu, where they are met by Samuialo. This deity is empowered to seize and hurl into the fiery gulf all those whom he dislikes. On Kantavu they admit of no god appointed to receive departed souls, but suppose that these go down into the sea, where they are examined by the great spirit, who retains those he likes, and sends back the others to their native island, to dwell among their friends. Another belief is, that the departed spirit goes before the god Tasetu, who, as it approaches, darts a spear at it. If the spirit exhibits any signs of fear, it incurs the displeasure of the god, but if it advances with courage, it is received with favour.

* Some say he has but one son, called Mautu (the bread-fruit).