

The chiefs convened a meeting to consider the course that ought to be pursued, but could come to no decision, in consequence of the general opinion that the conduct of Koraitamano was justifiable; although, on the other hand, they feared the wrath of the king, in case he should recover, particularly those who had advised and wished to uphold Koraitamano. The queen becoming aware of their hesitation, on the following morning took some whales' teeth and other valuables, and presented them herself to the chiefs, saying they were sent by the king to purchase the death of his son. Fearing to hold out any longer, they went to Koraitamano and announced to him the fatal mandate, and he was immediately killed. They then proceeded to the king's house to report that the deed was done, and on approaching the couch of the king, the putrescent odour which proceeded from the corpse at once disclosed to them the deception that had been practised. It was, however, too late to amend the matter, and Madonovi, the eldest son of the queen, now succeeded his father without opposition. One of the first acts of Madonovi was to build an mbure over the spot where his father was murdered. His succession deprived Seru and Thokanauto (Phillips) of their right to the throne, and of course excited their hostility to the reigning chief, who was by no means so popular as his father, and did not govern to the satisfaction of his subjects. Seru, who was the oldest of the two malcontents, was a very tall and remarkably handsome man, and had great influence among the people, which excited the jealousy of the king. Such was his strength that it is said he could knock down a full-grown hog by a blow on the forehead, and would break a cocoa-nut by striking it on his elbow.

Mutual words of defiance had passed between the two brothers, and they were living in daily expectation of some encounter that would bring on serious disturbances. During the height of this feeling, they met on the road, where the scene that was enacted was quite remarkable, and the narration of it by Phillips equally so.

Seru had one of the short missile clubs (ula) in his girdle, which Feejee men usually wear stuck in behind. As Madonovi approached, Seru placed his back against the fence, without any design. The king had three shaddocks (molitivi) in his hand, of which, as he came up to Seru, he held one up and called out in sport, that he meant to throw it at him. The thought then came into Seru's mind that if the king threw and hit him he would let him pass, but that if he missed he would take the opportunity to put him to death. He, therefore, replied to his brother in the same jocose manner, "Throw, but if you miss, I'll try." The king threw, but missed. He then drew nearer, and holding up another of the shaddocks, cried out, "This time I will hit you." To