

then went off to send out his scouts and spies, in order to bring me the earliest information.

Seru was on board the ship when I heard these things. I, therefore, sent off word that he should be kept on board as a kind of hostage, and ordered forty men to reinforce the observatory, after dark, for the ship was not near enough to use our guns in defending it. The night, however, was quiet, and there were no signs of the natives moving about on shore. Indeed they are extremely averse to go out after dark, from a fear of meeting kalous, or spirits. Seru was amused with rockets, &c., on board, and passed his time to his satisfaction.

On the 21st, the ship was moved up abreast the observatory point, in order to protect it, and moored so that her guns might rake each side of the point in case of an attack. The knoll on which I had erected the observatory was a strong position, and we now set to work to make it more so, by clearing it of all the rubbish and brushwood that might afford cover to assailants. Signals were arranged with the ship in case of attack, to direct the fire of the guns, and all things made ready to give any hostile force a warm reception. About eight o'clock in the evening, Whippy told me that a report had reached Tui Levuka that there was trouble at Rewa, and that the king and chiefs were prisoners; but to this we gave no credit at the time. In the morning, however, I learned through him, that one old chief had got information that Vendovi was a prisoner, and that the king and queen would be released; in fact, nearly the whole story that has been related in the preceding chapter, reached Levuka before the day on which it occurred had passed. On inquiring of Tui Levuka, through Whippy, after I had heard the particulars and learned how nearly they corresponded with the report, how he obtained his information, his answer was, "Did you not tell me to bring you the earliest news, and have my spies out?" The news must have been brought a distance of twenty miles in less than six hours, for I can scarcely believe that any native could possibly have invented the story, or could have surmised what was to take place.

Early on the morning of the 22d, Seru left the ship and proceeded to Ambau, although I had been informed that it was his intention to go to the different islands, to bring us hogs and yams. Tui Levuka called my attention to this, and also to the fact that a messenger had brought Seru intelligence of what had happened at Rewa during the stay of the Peacock there, and of the sailing of that ship with Vendovi on board.

During this time many things occurred to keep us on the alert. On the night of the 23d, the usual number of men were landed at the ob-