

too narrow for a ship to beat in, which the prevalence of easterly winds would generally require to be done; but the channel to it is quite clear of patches, and the passage through the reef is a good one, though long. Within the reef there is a circular basin of large extent, in all parts of which a ship may select her berth with good bottom. On anchoring in the harbour, the natives appeared on the beach, armed with clubs, spears, and muskets, and evidently with no friendly intent. They were very shy at first, but, after some persuasion, were induced to bring off cocoa-nuts, yams, &c. They said they were at war with their neighbours on the mountains. Their village was close by the anchorage, covered and embosomed in trees. There never was but one small vessel in the harbour before, which had traded for tortoise-shell. Wood and water are to be had here in plenty. The natives resemble those of the other islands, and are considered as possessing skill in the use of their arms.

The face of the island is broken into volcanic peaks, but has many fertile valleys, and it was thought to exceed any of the other islands in beauty. After surveying the harbour, they proceeded with the survey around the island; and, as they were about finishing it, a native came off to visit them; but all that they could understand from him was, that he professed to be a Christian.

On the eastern side, between the islands, there is a small opening, leading through the reef, but it is full of patches of coral, and offers no facility for vessels.

Moala was next visited. It is a high volcanic island. There is an opening through the reef, on the west side, that leads to an inferior harbour, which the boats surveyed. They found here a white man, calling himself Charley, who was of some use to them in pointing out the localities. Lieutenant Carr sent him, the next morning, with the boats, to examine a supposed harbour, into which, in consequence of the light winds, the tender was unable to enter. The reef on the north side of Moala resembles that of Totoia, being a collection of sunken and detached patches. The reef on the northeast makes off to the distance of two and a half miles. After passing it, there is a deep indentation in the island, with a broad passage through the reef, leading to a safe and very fine harbour, and, what is unusual, the passage is sufficiently wide for a vessel to beat out. This, however, would seldom be necessary, as there are several passages through the reef to the westward, which are safe with a leading wind.

This island affords wood, water, and some provisions, and has about seven hundred inhabitants.

The imprudence and over-confidence of Lieutenant Underwood