

and of there being no possibility of passing over the reef to enable them to join the brig before the night closed in. They were kindly treated.

During the night a heavy squall was experienced from the north-northwest, with vivid lightning and rain; but the following day proved fine. In the morning the boats rejoined the brig and brought off a native who gave his name as Tiana, and through Jim, the interpreter, they gathered the information that the island is subject to Tui Neau, king of Lakemba. He also gave the names of all the islands in sight. He knew our flag, and spoke of vessels often visiting this island.

In preparing the boats for service after dinner, an accident happened which nearly proved fatal to a man named Henry Hammond; in passing the arms into the boat, one of the carbines went off when the muzzle was within six inches of his side; he gave a loud shriek, and fell; his shirt took fire from the explosion, and all thought the ball had passed through his body; but his position was fortunately such that it only passed through the integuments, and came out about three inches from the place where it entered, having glanced off from one of the short ribs. The wound did not prove dangerous.

The boats left the brig in the afternoon, under the pilotage of Tiana, finished the survey of the island, and made the west bluff of Fulanga, by triangulation, one hundred and fifty feet high. They then returned, bringing on board a chief of the island, whose name was Soangi, and the native missionary from Tonga, called Toia. Neither of them had any covering but the maro. They remained on board all night.

In the morning, Lieutenant-Commandant Ringgold and several officers visited the island. The passage through the reef was intricate, and a strong tide was rushing through it. After passing the reef, an extensive basin, with numerous islets and reefs in it, is reached, in which the water is deep and of a dark blue colour. The islets are composed of scoriaceous materials of volcanic origin, and, what seemed singular, was their being undermined by the action of the sea to the distance of ten or twelve feet. Some of the rocks had, in consequence, the appearance of a large overhanging shelf, of the form of a mushroom.

They landed at the village at the head of the bay, which consists of twenty or thirty huts. These were of an oval form, and composed of a light frame covered with mats. They contained little else than a few mats spread on the ground, and had but a temporary appearance. The natives were civil, and had picked up some phrases in English, in which they soon began to beg for small articles, such as buttons, needles, &c. They sold their fowls and vegetables for tobacco, cloth,