

Two of the officers of the Porpoise remained on shore all night, and had an opportunity of seeing a native dance, in which about one hundred and fifty men and women were engaged. The men and women did not dance together. Their motions were thought to be stiff and inelegant. They kept time to a monotonous chaunt, in which they all occasionally joined.

The whole had a wild and singular effect, as seen by the flickering light of the cocoanut-leaf torches. Many of their movements were highly indecent, and these were much applauded by the natives.

The people of this island seemed to be far from healthy; pulmonary diseases were common, and often fatal, and an unsightly scrofulous affection appeared to be quite prevalent.

The survey of Lakemba gave its length five miles east and west, by three north and south. The reef extends six miles from the island, in an east-northeast direction; in it there are two openings, one on the southeast side, and one opposite to the town on the south or southwest side. Into the latter a vessel of one or two hundred tons may enter; but after getting in, the space is very confined, and it would be necessary to moor head and stern.

This island is the principal location of the people I have heretofore described, under the name of Levukians, as the first settlers of Ambau. They live in a village which is denominated Levuka, and have the character, at Lakemba, of being a wandering, faithless tribe, addicted, occasionally, to piracy. This is not considered the case elsewhere, for the Feejee men, in general, look upon them as a useful class, and through them they carry on the trade between the different islands. It is not surprising that they should bear a bad name among the Tonga men, for I heard that they were the means of checking the depredations of those of that race who now hold possession of the island of Lakemba, and exert a great influence on the southeast islands of this group, which they find essential for their purposes of obtaining war-canoes.

Lakemba was found, like the rest of this group, to be of volcanic formation. The soil is similar to that of Vanua, composed of a dark red loam. The island, in point of fertility, will compare with any of the others, and exceeds all those of the southeast in size and productiveness. It has rich valleys, or rather ravines, gradually rising and contracting until they reach the hills. Extensive groves of cocoa-nuts cover its shores and low lands, and add much to its beauty.

The Porpoise, having taken Tubou Totai on board, proceeded to the island of Naiiau. This is a high island, and rises in perpendicular cliffs from the sea to the height of two hundred and seventy-five feet.