

lucrative fisheries are on the northern side, particularly on that of Vanua-levu, between Anganga and Druau. In this place, the most frequent kind is that which resembles crape. In some places the animal multiplies very fast, but there are others where, although ten years have elapsed since they were last fished, none are yet to be found.

The biche de mar requires a large building to dry it in. That erected by Captain Eagleston, on the island of Tavea, is eighty-five feet long, about fifteen or twenty feet wide, and nearly as much in height. The roof has a double pitch, falling on each side of the ridge to eaves which are about five feet from the ground. The roof is well thatched, and ought to be perfectly water-tight. There are usually three doors, one at each end, and one in the middle of one of the sides. Throughout the whole length of the building is a row of double staging, called batters, on which reeds are laid.

On the construction of this staging much of the success of the business depends. It ought to be supported on firm posts, to which the string-pieces should be well secured by lashing. The lower batter is about four feet from the ground, and the upper from two to three feet above it. Their breadth is from twelve to fourteen feet. Upon the large reeds with which the batters are covered is laid the "fish fence," which is made by weaving or tying small cords together. This is composed of many pieces, the height of each of which is equal to the breadth of the batter.

A trench is dug under the whole length of the batters, in which a slow fire is kept up by natives, under the direction of one of the mates of the vessel. The earth from the trench is thrown against the sides of the house, which are at least two or three feet from the nearest batter, in order to prevent accident from fire. This is liable to occur, not only from carelessness, but from design on the part of the natives. As a further precaution, barrels filled with water are placed about eight feet apart along both sides of the batters.

After the house has been in use for about a week, it becomes very liable to take fire, in consequence of the drying and breaking of the material used in the lashings. In this case it is hardly possible to save any part of the building or its contents. To prevent the falling of the stages by the breaking of the lashings, fresh pieces of cordage are always kept at hand to replace those which are charred, and show signs of becoming weak. A constant watch must be kept up night and day, and it requires about fifteen hands to do the ordinary work of a house.

The fires are usually extinguished once in twenty-four hours, and