

which bear the names of the midshipmen of the squadron. Vatulele is well covered with wood, and is inhabited.

After having finished the examination of Vatulele, we shaped our course for Mbenga, and at noon discovered a coral reef extending about three hundred yards north and south, by one hundred and fifty east and west. It is awash, and bears from the south point of Vatulele east-by-north, distant seven miles. After getting angles on Mbenga Peak and Vatulele, and obtaining chronometer sights, we left this small, though dangerous spot, which I have called Flying-Fish Shoal. We passed the night under the extensive reef that surrounds Mbenga, not being able to find the entrance, as the night was extremely dark.

In the morning early we stood over for Kantavu, to survey its north side, and reached it in time to secure the latitude close to the point of its reef off Malatta Bay, which I found to be in $18^{\circ} 58' 34''$ S. The distance from Mbenga Reef was found to be twenty-six miles by the patent log, in a southeast-by-south direction. We then anchored in its harbour, formed by the coral reefs, which only exist to any extent about this part, where the island is almost divided in two. So low and narrow is the isthmus, that the natives frequently transport their canoes over it.

Many natives came off, but they were not willing to trust themselves on board when they understood who we were.

The whole length of Kantavu is high and mountainous, with the exception of a small part of its centre, near Malatta Bay. This bay was surveyed; it is small, and offers safety to a few vessels for temporary anchorage, although it is difficult to choose a place for the purpose, on account of several reefs that lie across it. The Flying-Fish was anchored in sixteen fathoms, sandy bottom. I now established, from several bases, all the peaks and points for our surveying operations the next day.

Many canoes came off to us before we anchored, but we could not persuade the people to come on board, as long as we were under way; they said we might carry them off; but on our anchoring they came alongside, bringing a few yams, pigs, &c., which they sold cheap.

A chief coming off, we succeeded in getting him on board, and induced him to remain and send his canoe for provisions. He was a remarkably fine-looking man, and extremely intelligent, having strongly marked Jewish features. He counted forty-five towns on Kantavu, which would make its population upwards of ten thousand.

The island is well covered with pine timber, resembling the Kaurie