

his head on the mast; they then took a rope, an inch and a half in thickness, when, beginning at his ankles, they wound it around his body and the mast, the turns being taken not far apart, up to his shoulders, allowing his head only to move a little, and thus exposed him all day to the sun! He was, towards evening, unbound and suffered to go, but he could not move, and was carried by four men. It is supposed if the ships had not been there, another and more deadly punishment would have been inflicted upon him.

I have now to speak of the examination the Porpoise made of the great sea-reef and islands to the west of the Asaua Group. They left the anchorage of Ya-asaua on the 21st of July, and shortly after discovered a sail, which proved to be the ship Triton, an American whaler, from which they obtained a few articles of provisions. Occasional soundings were found all over the space to the east of the island of Biva, the most western of the group, which I have already spoken of as being in sight from the high peaks that were observed on.

On the night of the 21st the brig struck several times with great violence on a coral shoal, but got over in safety. The next day they were near Biva, a long low island, with two smaller ones connected with it covered with cocoa-nut trees. Boats were sent out to examine it. The island is surrounded by a reef, and affords no anchorage; it is inhabited by about fifty souls. Fifteen of them came around the boat's crew on their landing, armed with clubs and spears, but they seemed very timid and inoffensive. They said they had suffered much from want of food, and that some had even perished from starvation. The island did not seem to produce any thing but cocoa-nuts, of which, after much difficulty, a few were procured. In their trade with us they preferred fish-hooks to any thing else, and gave as a reason to Aliko the pilot, that with them they could obtain food. They stated that in times of scarcity each person was allowed no more than three cocoa-nuts a day. Their koro was small and not far from the place of landing; but it was not visited, as they seemed unwilling that the party should do so.

After obtaining sights for chronometers and making the necessary examinations, they returned to the brig, and found the whaling-ship in company.

The reef that surrounds Biva extends three miles to the south of the island. Near its southern end is the opening, but it is not practicable even for a small vessel, without danger from the numerous coral lumps.