

This of course can be considered only as an approximation, but I am inclined to believe it rather above than below the actual number of inhabitants. It will be perceived that I have set down no more than five thousand for the number of inhabitants of the interior, although there are a number of persons who believe that this portion of the large islands is densely peopled. But all my own observations tend to confirm me in the opinion, that there are very few inhabitants in the interior of these islands. The circumstances attending a residence there are so contrary to Feejee habits, that I cannot give credit to a statement so entirely at variance with what we find at the other Polynesian islands. The food that the natives most esteem, is gathered near the sea-shore and from the sea, and there is little probability that any persons would dwell in the interior unless compelled by necessity.

The natives of the different islands are of various sizes: some have their forms more fully developed than others, as will have been seen. In the opinion of the white residents, the natives of Ovolau were thought to be of inferior size to those of the other islands; this, however, did not strike us particularly, and I was of opinion that they were a fair specimen of the natives of the group. Those who have Tonga blood are designated as the Vitonga, and are decidedly the best-looking natives that are met with. These are to be found more among the eastern islands than elsewhere, showing the effects of the intercourse.

Our accounts of the language are derived from the missionaries, who are making great exertions to become thoroughly acquainted with it, in its different dialects, of which there are several in the group. They have found more than ordinary difficulty in bringing the language into a written shape, and have not yet fully completed the task. The characters they have employed for this purpose are the Roman, and they have made such changes in the usual sounds of some of the letters, as are absolutely necessary to express the peculiar sounds of the Feejee tongue. The vowels are used generally to express the sounds they denote in the French language, except the broad sound of the *a*, which that letter is not always confined to; *b* is used to represent the sound *m'b*; *c*, that of the Greek *θ*; *d* is sounded *n'd*; *g*, *n'g*. Of all the letters, *r* and *s* retain most closely the sounds by which they are known to us; *t* has a peculiar sound, partaking of *th*, and in some of the districts is not used at all. The sound of *k* is entirely wanting in the Somu-somu dialect, whilst it is much used and distinctly uttered in the others.

In the Lakemba dialect they use the *j*, sounded *nja*, which they derive from the Tongese.

The following is the alphabet adopted by the missionaries. It con-