

A place about two hundred feet in length is cleared for this purpose, and it excites great interest, often producing quarrels attended with bloodshed, and sometimes wars.

The older boys are trained to the use of the spear, using in the exercise long reeds and sticks, whose ends are rolled up in tapa, in order to prevent accident.

The Feejee mode of sending messages (lotu) is as follows: a chief, when he wishes to send one, gives the messenger as many reeds as the message is to contain separate subjects. These reeds are of different lengths, in order to distinguish them from each other. When the messenger arrives at his destination, he delivers the reeds successively, and with each of them repeats the purport of the part of the message of which it is the memorial. Such messages are carried and delivered with great accuracy; and the messengers, when questioned on their return, repeat them with great precision.

A reed is also used as the pledge on closing an agreement, and the delivery of it makes it binding. If a chief presents a reed, or sticks one in the ground, it is considered as binding him to the performance of his promise.

The women are kept in great subjection, and this is not accomplished without severity. Their lords and masters frequently tie them up and flog them, and even the whites punish their native wives, which they say they are compelled to do, as without the discipline to which they are accustomed, they could not be managed.

The women are besides never permitted to enter the mbure, nor, as we have seen, to eat human flesh, at least in public. They keep the house clean, take care of the children, weed the yam and taro beds, and carry the roots home after the men have dug them up. Like other property, wives may be sold at pleasure, and the usual price is a musket. Those who purchase them may do with them as they please, even to knocking them on the head.

The girls of the lower classes of a town or koro, are entirely at the disposal of the chief, who may sell or bargain them away as he pleases.

Next to war, agriculture is the most general occupation of this people. To this they pay great attention, and have a great number of esculent fruits and roots which they cultivate, in addition to many spontaneous products of the soil.

Of the bread-fruit tree they have nine different kinds, distinguished by fruits of different sizes and shapes, and the figure of their leaves. The variety called umbudu, is the largest, sweetest, and most agreeable to the taste; those known by the names of botta-bot and bucudo, are also excellent.