

The missionaries have already been settled from one to five years at the different stations. A press has been established at Rewa, and catechisms have been published in the Ambau, Somu-somu, and Rewa dialects. The book of Mark, with some elementary works, have also been published in the dialect of Rewa and Lakemba.

All the missionaries with whom I had intercourse, were of opinion that the natives of this group were far more intelligent than those of other parts of Polynesia. There are few of them that could not express themselves with great clearness and force. My own experience, and that of the officers generally, is conclusive as to the last point, for the interpreters frequently made use of expressions that I am well persuaded did not emanate from themselves.

Since we left the Feejee Islands, a letter has been received from David Whippy, giving a history of the transactions that have occurred in this group up to 1841. I shall relate the substance of this, as it will illustrate the intrigues and cruelties incident to the character and government of this savage people.

The pilots all reached Levuka safely, three days after they left us, and found all things well, except the garden, which, David says, had come to nought. He was not aware that we ourselves had gathered some of the fruits of it.

Shortly after their return, the mountaineers showed hostile intentions towards them. The reason assigned for this, and which was altogether untrue, was, that the three mountaineers who had been employed at the observatory had never been paid, and that the white men of Levuka were the cause of it. About the same time, Seru and his cousin Wai-nue quarrelled at Ambau, which the latter left, and went to Somu-somu, where he was kindly received. This event caused the war that had been so long in expectation to break out between Ambau and Somu-somu.

Seru came to Levuka, and wanted the white men to engage in the war on his side; but they refused, preferring to remain at home to protect their property, as the natives of Levuka were to accompany him. This greatly affronted him. He then went against Somu-somu, but came back in a few days, having failed in his expedition.

In November, the mountaineers ran away with nine of the women of Levuka. On application being made to Ambau, Seru sent to demand that they should be returned, but the mountaineers refused to give them up. It was afterwards understood that Seru had privately told his messenger to tell the mountaineers not to give the women up,—an act of duplicity which the whites accounted for by their refusal to join him against Somu-somu.