

they pointed in a direction west of north, and called it Maraki,—Matthew's Island; and the other Taritari and Makin, which they said were two days' sail, and which was believed to be Pitt's Island.

In the centre of the little village was one of the sacred stones, which was described by Kirby as an object of worship. It consisted of a flat slab of coral rock, about three feet high and two wide, set up on end and dressed with a thick wreath of cocoanut-leaves. It was placed in the centre of a circular platform of sand and pebbles, about nine feet in diameter, raised five or six inches above the soil, and surrounded by a ring of stones. At the foot of the coral slab were several large coconuts, placed there as an offering to the divinity, whom the natives styled Tabu-eriki. The wood-cut at the end of the next chapter is a drawing of one. The priest, a young man, with a mild and intelligent countenance, remained constantly near the stone, never quitting the platform for a moment. The houses were built like those of Drummond's Island, but the scuttles into the lofts were much larger, occasionally occupying half the dividing floor. In some of the houses there were two or three floors or stages, the second about two feet above the first.

In the survey of this island the tender got aground inside the lagoon. The moment that it was discovered by the natives that the vessel was on shore, they began to flock around her, and were only kept off by being fired at. Lieutenant Emmons did not join her with the boats till after dark, when he found her situation such as to require great vigilance on the part of the officers and men to preserve her. She had taken the coral reef at high water, and the tide was rapidly falling, leaving her on her bilge, and rendering her guns of no use for protection. The natives were making signals by burning fires, blowing war-conchs, and evincing every disposition to attack her.

Captain Hudson, who observed the situation of the tender at sunset, determined to keep the Peacock close to the island throughout the night, to be near at hand to despatch boats in case of signal being made that they required more aid, should the natives show a disposition to make an attack, and overpower the force that had already gone to the tender's assistance. The Peacock was hove-to, with a moderate breeze blowing, and from the fires seen during the night they believed themselves close to the position they had taken at sunset. At daylight, while lying-to, they drifted on a coral sand-bank, where the ship was aground for a few minutes only. Their surprise was great when they found that it was Tarawa or Knox's Island, on which they were ashore, on its northwest side, and that they had drifted fully twelve miles by current to the southward during the night. On board of the