

with the sprout or top of a young cocoa-nut tree. The leaves of this are doubled in after a particular fashion, and according as the folds coincide or not it is deemed a good or a bad omen. When these folds do not coincide, they believe that one of their gods is probably offended, and proceed to find out whether he be so or not, by taking a cocoa-nut that is kept for the purpose, which they spin like a top before the sacred stone or altar: if it falls with the upper end towards the stone, it is a favourable omen; if otherwise, the god is angry, and must be appeased by offerings and prayers.

At times they pretend to receive an intimation that their ancestors are displeased, in which case their skulls are taken down and propitiated by offerings.

They believe also in a species of cursing, called wainak, which consists in invoking or praying to Death, in order to procure illness or the displeasure of the gods on any one.

Shooting stars are deemed ominous of death to some member of the family, which may occupy the part of the council-house nearest the point of the heavens from which it took its flight. If accompanied by a train, it foretells the death of a female; if otherwise, that of a male.

Some of the chiefs are believed to hold communication with spirits, and to be able at times to foretell future events: they usually exercise this pretended power at night; and when a number of people are sleeping in the mariapa, they are awakened by unnatural sounds, proceeding from the chief, which are considered as the words of the god, who speaks by him to announce the arrival of ships, the approach of war, and other great events. When these predictions do not come to pass, they always impute the failure to the intervention of some other spirit.

They believe in an existence after death, and that on the death of a person, his spirit ascends into the air, where it is carried about by the winds, wherever they may chance to blow, until it finally reaches the Kainakaki elysium. Only those who are tattooed can expect to reach it, and these are generally persons of rank; all others are intercepted on their way, and doomed by a large giantess, called Baine. If those who die are old and feeble, their spirits are conducted to the Kainakaki by the shades of those who have died before them. The spirits of children are carried to the realms of bliss by their female relatives, and are nursed and taken care of until they are able to provide for themselves.

The Kainakaki is supposed to be situated in the island of Tavaira, or Gilbert's Island. On this island there are several curious mounds,