

or a large whale's tooth, hangs suspended on their breast. This pith is thought by Mr. Rich, to be the same as that called Chinese paper and obtained from the same plant. Long strings of beads or braided hair are worn round the body, at times a hundred fathoms in length, which serve to fasten the mat. The hair for this purpose is taken from the female slaves, and is braided into a string about the size of a packthread. The beads are manufactured by the old men who are beyond doing any other labour, and are of the size of a small button-mould; they are made of cocoa-nut and shell, and strung alternately black and white, being ground down to a uniform size and fitted together for the purpose.

The food of the natives consists principally of fish, from the whale to the sea-slug; shell-fish of every kind are also eaten.

Whales are represented to have been much more abundant formerly, when they at times got aground on some of the numerous shoals, and were killed by the natives with their spears. Even now a carcass occasionally drifts on shore, which affords an acceptable prize. Sharks are caught by enticing them alongside the canoe, with a bait, and enclosing them in a noose. The smaller fish are taken in traps, like eel-pots, made of withes: these the natives set on the bottom, and place pieces of coral on them to keep them there.

Great numbers of fish are also taken in weirs, or enclosures of stone, which are made in the extensive coral flats, that are left bare by every tide: into these the fish are driven at high water, by a number of natives, who surround the shoal; the weir is then closed, and left until the tide falls, when the fish are easily taken in scoop-nets. Large seines are often used in places where the bottom renders it practicable to draw them. Flying-fish are taken in the daytime, by trailing a hook, attached to a short line, from the stern of a canoe. At night they are caught in scoop-nets, as they fly towards a lighted torch, held in a part of the canoe. Crabs are also decoyed out of their holes at night, by torchlight, and captured.

Turtles are taken in the season on the beaches; and shell-fish, with the sea-slug or biche de mar, are obtained on the reefs by diving.

Their vegetable food consists of cocoa-nuts and pandanus, and a variety of the taro, with a small quantity of the bread-fruit. The preparation of these engages a great deal of their attention, and that of the pandanus-nut in particular. When prepared, it is called kabul and karapapa. The inner or edible portions of these nuts are sliced off, and baked in an oven for several hours, till they are quite hard; they are then taken out, laid on a clean mat, and pounded with a large pestle to the consistency of dough; this is spread out upon mats