

men, one from each side, stand up in the middle, and proceed to exchange the mats for iriris and the oil; the provisions of one side for those of the other. The exchange is made with great care, so that each receives an equivalent. When this is finished, the parties gather up their exchanges and retire, leaving the married couple, whose presence was deemed necessary to sanction the sale, no better off than before. This custom is called *katiro*, and is often resorted to for making exchanges, on ordinary occasions.

Children are often betrothed at an early age, sometimes as soon as born, in which case the ceremony of marriage is not deemed necessary. Polygamy, as before observed, is allowed to any extent, and limited only by the ability of the person to support his wives. On *Makin*, no marriage ceremony takes place, for every female child is betrothed as soon as born, usually to some near relative, who takes her to his house at whatever age he may think proper; and those who are not so betrothed remain all their lives unmarried, forming temporary connexions with the young men who are similarly situated. Of the latter there are great numbers, owing to the majority of the women being monopolized by the wealthy and powerful, to whom this custom affords every facility for obtaining wives. This state of things brings about, as is naturally to be expected, many intrigues and squabbles.

At the birth of a child, the priest gives it a name, at the request of the father; but if the infant should be taken sick soon afterwards, the first name is abandoned, and another adopted, in hopes that it may prove a more fortunate one; for they believe that the illness may be owing to its name. It is very common to call a child after its grandfather.

A woman has seldom more than two, and never more than three living children. After the birth of a third, they consider it necessary to prevent the increase of their families, and resort to that most unnatural means, a systematic abortion. So soon as a woman believes herself to be *enceinte* for the third or fourth time, she determines that the offspring shall not survive, and calls in the aid of an experienced midwife to destroy it, who effects the purpose by external pressure on the abdomen or back, and though not unattended with much pain and difficulty to the mother, the operation rarely proves fatal. This practice is looked upon without any sort of horror or shame, being considered as a necessary and proper means to prevent their families from becoming so large as to be a burden to them, and not because the island might become over-peopled, for this latter idea does not seem ever to have occurred to them. The practice of destroying the *fœtus* is universal among the unmarried females, but children are never