

peculiar beauty to the landscape, and many of the officers considered that none of the islands we had yet visited offered so beautiful a scene as that which lay before us."

It possesses one great advantage over the other islands of the New Hebrides to the south, in its magnificent bays and harbours. With the exception of the harbour of Ancelcauhat at Aniteum, there is nothing to compare with them in the New Hebrides, and there is no island in all Eastern Polynesia furnished with such a number of them. The finest harbour on the island yet examined, is Havannah Harbour on the Western side of the island and near its northern extremity. This harbor is formed by the mainland of Fate, on the North and East sides, and on the West and North by two islands. The entrance is wide and free from obstruction. In breadth it averages from two to three miles, and in depth cannot be less than seven or eight miles, with good anchorage in every part. A few miles to the south of this is Erakor, situated on a capacious bay of that name, where Mr. Morrison is now stationed.

Respecting the capabilities of the soil, Capt. Erskine remarks, "The land of Fate, of which a minute portion is cultivated, must be exceedingly fertile and capable of supporting a large population. In none of the islands did we see a greater supply of both vegetables and pigs, although the people seemed disinclined to part with the latter. They are in fact, sandal wood being now scarce, the only article of trade with Europeans."

Those who have visited this island have been favourably impressed with the appearance of the natives. Capt. Erskine thus describes them. "These people, though differing a good deal among themselves, have except the black colour of their skins, few points of resemblance to the Tannese. They were of larger stature, and more regular features, some having straight or aquiline noses, good foreheads, and heads of a moderate size. As their manners were more composed, so their dress was much more decent, consisting of a broad belt of matting, seven or eight inches wide, very neatly worked in a diamond pattern of red, white and black

colours, with a species of maro presented in front. Many of them had their skins tattooed, or rather covered with raised figures, the arms and chest being the part generally operated upon. The cartilage of the nose was frequently pierced and filled with a circular piece of stone, and the lobes of the ears always so, large ornaments of white shell being hung from them, so as often to extend the orifice to a great size. Round their arms, and in some cases round their ankles, they wore handsome bracelets, made of small rings, ground out of shells, exactly resembling chain armour, and so neatly strung together in black and white rows or figures, that the inside resembled a coarse woven cloth. Garters of a green leaf were often tied tight round the leg under the knee; and in one or two instances the crisp hair, which was in general of a moderate length, was gathered up into a large top-knot, coloured yellow by lime, and a neat plume of cock's feathers attached to the scratching pin inserted in it.

"They seemed to have no wish for tobacco, saying it was "tapu," but were clamorous for pieces of red cotton or handkerchiefs; while strips of calico were sufficient to buy yams, which they brought in considerable quantities, or even their bows and spears. The latter were of beautiful design, the heads being either covered with tortoiseshell, resembling the finest Gothic work, or composed of several prongs, which they told us were poisoned, and kept wrapped up in banana leaves, inserted into sockets prettily ornamented with red and white plaited cord, and decorated with a bunch of cock's feathers. Two spears were sold to us as particularly valuable the one being headed by a fragment of human bone, about a foot long, and the other by a piece of wood, shaped into an exact copy of the former. Their ordinary canoes were constructed with outriggers, and although of coarser model and workmanship, were similar to those in Samoa. We afterwards however, saw hauled up on the beach a much larger canoe, on the body of which (apparently single) was built a kind of box to sit in, resembling a gondola without the enclosed top."

Regarding the women Capt. Erskine says,