

happen; for they never give quarters, unless it be to reserve their prisoners for a more cruel death the day following.

All the power and strength of these islands lie solely in their navies. A general engagement on land we never heard of here; and all their decisive battles are fought on the water. When the time and place of battle are fixed upon by both parties, the preceding day and night are spent in feasting and diversions. When the morning approaches, they launch the canoes, make every necessary preparation, and, with the day, begin the battle; the fate of which, in general, decides the dispute. The vanquished endeavour to save themselves by a precipitate flight; and those who reach the shore fly, with their friends, to the mountains; for the victors, before their fury abates, spare neither the aged, nor women, or children. They assemble the next day, at the *morai*, to return thanks to the *eatooa* for the victory, and offer up the slain and the prisoners, as sacrifices. A treaty is then set on foot; and the conquerors usually obtain their own terms; by which large districts of land, and even whole islands, sometimes change their owners. Omai said he was once taken a prisoner by the men of Bolabola, and conducted to that island, where he and many others would have suffered death the next day, had they not been fortunate enough to escape in the night.