

The boats now explored the reef, and anchored at night under Namuka, within the same reef as Mbenga. They found about one hundred natives on this island, who were very friendly, bringing them quantities of cocoa-nuts, fish, and some small articles, for traffic.

The reef on the northwest side was found to contain many ship-passages.

After the examination of these, they visited Bird Island, lying in the passage between Mbenga Reef and Vitilevu. The reef off this part of Vitilevu nearly joins that of Mbenga. Two miles beyond this, Lieutenant Emmons entered a well-sheltered harbour, where the boats stayed over-night. About three miles to the westward of it, they found another similarly situated, after which they continued to proceed down the coast, along the reef, without meeting any harbour until after dark, when they succeeded in getting into the exposed one at Ndronga. Just before anchoring, it being quite dark, they were hailed several times in the native language from a small vessel, and not answering, they were about being fired into from the "Who would have thought it!" Mr. Winn, who was lying here collecting tortoise-shell for the ship Leonidas, Captain Eagleston, which vessel was then curing biche de mar at Ba, on the north side of the island.

The harbour (if so it may be called) of Ndronga, affords no protection against the southwest winds, and is only suitable for small vessels. The anchorage is in five fathoms water. The reef from this point westward increases in distance from the shore from one to two miles. It extends to the westward six miles further, where an opening in the reef occurs, which leads to a harbour. The entrance of this was narrow, and open to the southward and westward, the reef broken, and some sunken patches of rock. On the eastern side of the harbour there is a small islet with cocoa-nut trees, on which Lieutenant Emmons landed. Here he found a native's hut, but no inhabitants. Some shells and cocoa-nuts were procured, and the harbour was sounded out, after which the boats put to sea.

Five miles beyond this harbour they came to the Malolo Island Passage, where the great sea-reef from the westward joins, having two entrances, the largest of which I have named the Malolo Passage. That to the eastward, which I called the Navula Passage, they passed through, and anchored at night under the town of Navula. The "Who would have thought it!" again joined their company.

On the 26th, Lieutenant Emmons gained Ba, the point where his work was to terminate, and be joined by that of the other parties. On the 28th they went alongside of the Peacock, after having been in the boats seventeen days.