

in coin. The people of the various villages, and the districts subject to the chiefs of these, prepare dances for this yearly festival for many months, and they vie with one another in the splendour and perfection of the performance. As each band came up and made its contribution, a part or the whole of it at once proceeded to perform the prepared dance, and when this was over another party approached the table, and so on.

“The people as they filed up to the table formed a wonderful spectacle. The girls were most of them without coverings to their breasts, but the upper parts of their bodies were literally running with cocoanut oil, and glistened in the sun. The men and boys were painted in all imaginable ways, with three colours, red, black, and blue (see Plate E, figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4). There were Wesleyans with face and body all red, others with them all blackened soot black, others with one half the face red, and the other black; some had the face red and the body black, and *vice versa*; some were spotted all over with red and black; some had black spectacles painted round the eyes; some had a black forehead and red chin; some were blue spotted, or striped on the face with blue, and so on in infinite variety. How amused would John Wesley have been if he could have seen his Fijian followers in such guise! For many of the dances the men were most elaborately dressed. They were covered with festoons of the finest gauzy white tappa, or cuticle of the shoot of the cocoanut tree. These hung in long folds from the backs of their heads, and were wrapped round their bodies as far up as the armpits, and hung from the waist down to the knees in such quantity as to stick out almost in crinoline fashion. Round the men's heads were turbans, or high cylindrical tubes or mitres of white tappa, whilst hanging on their breasts were pearl oyster shells (see Plate E, figs. 1, 2) set in whales' teeth, the most valuable ornament which a Fijian possesses, and which he is forbidden by the chiefs to sell. Some of the men had remarkable head-dresses. One of them for instance had, sticking out from the front of his head, and secured in his hair, a pair of light thin twigs of wood, which were a yard in length; they were slightly bent over in front of his face, and at their extremities were fastened plumes of red feathers (see fig. 177). The whole was elaborately decorated, and as he danced, the red plumes swayed and shook at each jerk of his head with great effect.

“The most interesting dances were a club dance and a fan dance, in each of which a large body of full-grown fighting men, some of them with grey beards, performed. In all the dances, except the first one already described, the chorus sat on the ground at a corner of the green, and usually contained a number of small girls and boys, and used in addition to the wooden drum, a number of long bamboo joints open at the upper end, which when held vertically and struck on the ground, give out a peculiar booming note. In each of the dances there was a leader, who gave the word of command for the changes in the figures, and his part was especially prominent in the club dance, in which