

was most ludicrous, and the audience, instead of crying the oft repeated 'Vinaka, vinaka,' fairly shouted with laughter. A band of women of the district, headed by the Queen of Rewa and her daughter, who were both dressed in bright blue striped prints, marched slowly forwards across the green to deposit their offerings, singing a chant, descriptive of various incidents from the New Testament, the descriptive part being a solo, whilst the whole band joined in a constantly repeated chorus containing the words 'Allelujah, Amen.' This song was in lieu of a dance.

"The principal interest of the performances, however, lay in the obvious fact that here were to be observed in development the germs of the drama, of vocal and instrumental music, and of poetry in almost their most primitive condition. In these Fijian dances they are all still intimately connected together, and are seen to arise directly out of one another, not having as yet reached the stage of separation. The dance is evidently first invented by the savage, then rhythmical vocal sounds are used by the dancers to accompany it, and simple instruments of percussion are employed to keep time. As the dance becomes gradually more varied and complex, the accompanists are separated as an orchestra, the actual performers joining less and less in the vocal part, until, as here, they merely utter a single loud cry or note occasionally during the dance. The instrumental music of the orchestra remains long subordinate to the vocal and very simple, being represented at Fiji, as described, by the single small wooden drums and the bamboos. The orchestra continuing its performance in short intervals in the dancing, and commencing somewhat before the first figures, in order to allow the dancers to be ready to take up the measure, as was the case at Nakello, comes at length to perform solos; and hence the origin of music apart from dancing. The gradual complication of the music and improvement and multiplication of instruments follow, until vocal and instrumental music change places in importance and become also at length separated from one another. The dances being descriptive of victorious battles and such exploits, the chants, at first mere musical sounds and war-cries, become short descriptions of the fight, or praises of the warriors, and hence the origin of poetry. I could get no explanation of the meaning of the chants used at Nakello; as far as I could gather, they were without meaning, mere convenient sounds; but Fijian songs do exist, for Joe, our pilot, sang part of one, and explained that it related to the superiority of the Mbau men to the Rewa men. The origin of the drama is clearly seen in the stepping forward of the leader of the dance, as described, and dramatic enunciation by him of a short speech. A further step was to be seen in one of the other dances, when the leader, before his troop came on to the ground, rushed forward brandishing two spears in his hands, and gave a short



FIG. 178.—Queen of Rewa, from a Sketch by Lieut. Swire, R.N.