

500 feet high ; Three Hills Island is readily distinguished, the peaks all being high, the middle one the lowest ; there is not much difference in their height, and the saddles between them are comparatively low. Two Hills Island has one sharp peak on its north side, the other hill is flat-topped and comparatively low, and between the two hills the island is very low, so that seen from a distance this island appears as two. The Monument is a small high rock with precipitous sides. Makura Island is wedge-shaped, "steep-to" to the southward, sloping to the northward, its summit bare, but on the northern slope are bushes and trees, and at its northwest point a small sandy beach ; the sea was seen to break against the island itself, so that it can have but a very small fringing reef, if any. Occasionally through the rain squalls a lofty peak was seen, which by its bearing must have been on the east side of Sandwich Island. Westward of Three Hills Island and Two Hills Island no bottom could be obtained at 250 fathoms.

At 1.30 A.M., on the 18th, the ship wore and "hove to" on the starboard tack. At 6 A.M. Two Hills Island bore E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  S., and the left peak of Three Hills Island N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., and a course was shaped to pass westward of Cook's Reef, which, however, was not seen. At 7 A.M., when Three Hills Island bore east, a course was shaped for the southwest point of Api Island, as some natives of the New Hebrides had been brought from the Fiji Islands to be landed at Api. At 8 A.M. the right extremity of Api Island bore N.  $72^{\circ}$  E., and the left extremity, the Foreland, N. by W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  W. ; from this position the ship was steered along the west coast a short distance, and at 9 A.M. sails were furled and the vessel steamed in towards the land. At this time, when the right extremity of Api bore S.  $57^{\circ}$  E., the apex of the Foreland N.  $9^{\circ}$  W., and a high hill over the coast N.E. by E., a sounding was obtained in 130 fathoms, hard ground, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles off the shore. Steering in eastwards towards the land, soundings of 125, 95, 55, and eventually 15 fathoms were successively obtained, the latter close to a reef which fringes the point next north of the S.W. point of the island, and extends about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cables from the shore. This being the spot where the Api men wished to be landed, an armed boat was sent in to the shore as the natives were reported to be treacherous ; they proved, however, friendly enough, coming down to the beach with green branches, bows and arrows, and other weapons, so in the afternoon the officers and naturalists landed, whilst the ship dredged in the offing, there being no secure anchorage (see fig. 180).

Api lies south of Ambrym and Malicolo, between these islands and Efate or Sandwich Island, and in about the same latitude as the northern part of the Fiji group. The island is upwards of 20 miles long, and its highest peak is about 1500 feet above the sea level. The island rises in steep slopes from the sea, with only here and there a stretch of flat shore land, and consists of a series of peaks and steep-sided valleys and ridges. The whole is entirely covered with the densest possible vegetation, except on very small spots with difficulty discerned with a glass, where plots are cleared by the