

them. On coming alongside the boat, he seemed somewhat uneasy, until he had gone through the ceremony of rubbing noses, which I must confess was any thing but agreeable with so dirty and diseased a person. He was extremely anxious to get hold of the presents, and amused us by at once plunging them under the water, seeming in no manner concerned about keeping them dry. He was all the while making a noise like the purring of a cat. In return for my presents, he at once offered me the short mantle of matting which he had over his shoulders.

They understood the Tahitian language. The chief gave his name as Korokoa, and the name of the island as Wytoohee. He appeared about sixty years of age, and his teeth were all sound and good.

His brother was the priest, to whom I also gave some presents. This man had a very remarkable head, the forehead being very high, and narrow almost to deformity, with a dark and suspicious bright eye. His hands were deformed, being destitute of joints, and the lower part bent at right angles. The son of the chief was a remarkably fine-looking lad of fifteen. We saw no women, as they had all been hid. The colour of these natives was much darker than those seen before; in some the hair was inclined to frizzle, and the beard curly. All the grown men that I saw had mustaches; their features were strongly marked with a good-humoured expression of countenance; they wore the maro, and some had a few feathers in their hair.

The boats of the Peacock succeeded in landing on the east side of the island, where the coral reef shelves at about an angle of 10° , and having the wind blowing obliquely on it, there is comparatively little surf. Some half a dozen natives were here seen; an officer approached them making signs of friendship, which they returned. At first they seemed quite timid, meeting the advances made in a manner which showed that they were anxious to propitiate us, but still fearful. They were reassured of our good-will by offering them some small presents, when two old men came forward, holding their arms upright above their heads, with their hands open, and became desirous of shaking hands, and even offered to rub noses. Each was armed with a stick, (for it could not be called a spear,) six or seven feet long: on some of them were fastened the jaws of the porpoise.

They appeared to be greatly astonished, and their looks bespoke amazement at our appearance. Occasionally, as if to satisfy themselves of the reality, they would put their hands on us. On receiving a few trifling presents, they broke forth into the same song or chaunt that was heard on their first coming towards the ship. The younger ones were the first to show confidence, and were much disposed to laugh and joke