

the apparent liberality with which these were furnished, they do it in expectation of a full return. In pursuance of this hospitality, it is the custom when a stranger passes through a village without showing an intention to stop, to follow him and offer food.

The Samoans are usually very inquisitive, and it was amusing to excite their curiosity. Among other things mentioned for the purpose was, that white men often wore false teeth and wigs. The latter practice in particular seemed strange to them, and they called it "thatching the head." A terrestrial globe was also shown to some of them, whereon the position of their islands and their small relative importance was pointed out. This excited great surprise, for until within a few years they had no idea that there was any country except their own.

If the chiefs are liberal in their tenders of presents to their visitors, they on the other hand do not hesitate to ask for whatever they see. They may, in fact, be styled sturdy beggars. One of the most persevering in his mendicancy, was no less a person than Vavasa, the proud and overbearing chief of Manono. They usually began with begging from the humblest individual, and ended with the highest; and when they had obtained all they could, would go over the side of the ship ridiculing our folly for giving so much.

Old Pea, by way of excusing himself when charged with being a great beggar, said he did not keep any thing he got for himself; that it was the Samoan fashion always to ask for every thing he saw. It mattered not if his request was refused, he was as content as if he obtained what he desired, but he said he should have blamed himself if he had not asked.

The beneficial effects of the labours of the missionaries are more evident among the Samoans than at Tahiti. The spread of the gospel has not been opposed by evil habits of the same inveterate character, and the natives of this group have been more easily reclaimed from their vices than those of the Society Islands. The greatest obstacle to the success of the missionaries has arisen from the presence of a few abandoned white men, who attach themselves to the heathen chiefs. Their opposition, although injurious to the missionary cause, yields little benefit to themselves, for of every thing they acquire, the chief under whose protection they are, takes half; and although no opposition is ever made to their departure from the islands, they are not permitted to take any thing with them. The vices of these men excite the disgust of the more well-disposed of the natives, who often express their astonishment at their ignorance of sacred subjects, and ask if it be possible that such men can have been brought up in a civilized community.