

assembled. Pomare divided the men into three parties or squads, and stationed these at some distance from each other. Shortly after this was done, I received a message from him, to say that they were all hungry, and wanted me to treat them to something to eat. This was refused until they had finished their dance, and much delay took place in consequence. Pomare and his warriors were at first immovable: but they in a short time determined they would unite on the hill-top, which was accordingly ordered, although I was told they were too hungry to dance well. Here they arranged themselves in a solid column, and began stamping, shouting, jumping, and shaking their guns, clubs, and paddles in the air, with violent gesticulations, to a sort of savage time. A more grotesque group cannot well be imagined; dressed, half-dressed, or entirely naked. After much preliminary action, they all set off, with a frantic shout, at full speed in a war-charge, which not only put to flight all the animals that were feeding in the neighbourhood, but startled the spectators. After running about two hundred and fifty yards, they fired their guns and halted, with another shout. They then returned in the same manner, and stopped before us, a truly savage multitude, wrought up to apparent frenzy, and exhibiting all the modes practised of maiming and killing their enemies, until they became exhausted, and lay down on the ground like tired dogs, panting for breath. One of the chiefs then took an old broken dragoon-sword, and began running to and fro before us, flourishing it, and at the same time delivering a speech at the top of his voice. The speech, as interpreted to me, ran thus: "You are welcome, you are our friends, and we are glad to see you;" frequently repeated. After three or four had shown off in this way, they determined they must have something to eat, saying that I had promised them rice and sugar, and they ought to have it. Mr. Clendon, however, persuaded them to give one of their feast-dances. The performers consisted of about fifteen old, and as many young persons, whom they arranged in close order. The young girls laid aside a part of their dress to exhibit their forms to more advantage, and they commenced a kind of recitative, accompanied by all manner of gesticulations, with a sort of guttural husk for a chorus. It was not necessary to understand their language to comprehend their meaning, and it is unnecessary to add, that their tastes did not appear very refined, but were similar to what we have constantly observed among the heathen nations of Polynesia. Their impatience now became ungovernable, and hearing that the rice and sugar were being served out, they retreated precipitately down the hill, where they all set to most heartily, with their wives and children, to devour the food.