

saw enough, however, to satisfy ourselves that Tongataboo is not the cultivated garden it has been represented to be. The *Ficus* tree figured in the voyage of the *Astrolabe*, whose trunk is there stated to be one hundred feet in circumference, was visited. We were surprised to find it had no proper trunk, but only a mass of intertwined roots, through which it is possible to see in many directions, rising to a height of eighty or ninety feet, when it throws around its great and wide-spreading branches. Two other species of *Ficus* were found, one with labiate branches and horizontal spreading arms, the other with a trunk about nine feet in diameter.

The climate cannot be considered salubrious; very heavy dews fall at night, and no constitution can endure frequent exposure at this time; the transitions from heat to cold are sudden and great, and the nights are often so chilly as to make blankets necessary.

Hurricanes are frequent in this group, scarcely a season passing without some occurrence of the kind: the months of February and March are those in which they occur; but they have also taken place in November and December. The missionaries as yet have made no series of observations, nor kept any kind of meteorological diary; but in answer to my inquiries I obtained the information, that the storms begin at the northwest, thence veer to the eastward, and end in southeast. The wind continues to increase until it becomes a hurricane: houses are levelled, and trees torn up by the roots; vessels are driven on shore; canoes lost or driven hundreds of miles away to other islands. In these storms the wind is frequently observed to change almost immediately from one point to its opposite; and in the same group of islands, trees have fallen, during the same gale, some to the south and others to the north. They are local in their effects, and fall chiefly upon Hapai and Vavao; if the fury of the storm be felt at Vavao, Tonga generally escapes, and vice-versâ; but Hapai is more or less the sufferer in both cases, situated as it is between the two places. A very severe hurricane was felt at Lefooka, Hapai, in 1834. These hurricanes vary in duration from eighteen to thirty-six hours; after a destructive one, a famine generally ensues, in which numbers of the natives die: it destroys all their crops. The natives give the name to those which are most severe, "Afa higa faji," or the hurricane that throws down the banana-trees.

Earthquakes are frequently felt here, though there is no knowledge of any destructive effects from them.

The diseases of this climate are influenza, colds, coughs, and consumption; glandular swellings, some eruptive complaints, fevers, and some slight irregular intermittents are experienced; but to judge from