

the number of old persons, longevity is by no means uncommon. The venereal disease has not made the same devastation here as elsewhere; probably because, as respects morals and virtue, these natives are the opposite to those of Tahiti.

Desirous of obtaining some of their arms, implements, and other curiosities, Mr. Waldron, Mr. Hale, and Mr. Vanderford, went to Nukualofa to make purchases, taking with them a large assortment of articles for the fair. The difficulties to be encountered in making purchases of the natives is scarcely to be imagined; no small amount of patience is required to go through the chaffering that is necessary to secure the article desired; for if their price is at once acceded to, they consider their bargain is a bad one. No inducement is sufficient for them to part with several articles of a kind at once; each must be disposed of separately, and on all, a like chaffering must be gone through with. The natives, before they bring articles for sale, fix their minds upon something they desire to obtain, and if that is not to be had, they take their things away again, it matters not whether the article is equivalent in value or not. Mr. Vanderford, who has been here several times since 1810, told me "he had never found the Tonga people such saucy fellows."

During our stay here, we were much incommoded by the musquitoes. I never saw them more troublesome; and for three or four nights the officers and men obtained no sleep, which, added to the excessive heat, was overpowering, after the fatigues of a day spent in surveying. I never saw the men look as much fatigued when the day dawned; some of them declared that the musquitoes had bitten through every thing but their boots and hats; they even sought shelter in the tops and cross-trees, hoping thus to escape the attacks of these tormentors; the ship was so filled with them, that she was (not unaptly) likened to a musical-box. Their attacks bade defiance to all defences in the way of musquito-nets; night observations became almost impracticable in consequence of this intolerable annoyance, and I felt quite desirous for the time of our departure from the island to arrive.

On the 1st of May, our observations and surveying duties being completed, the instruments were embarked, and the boats hoisted in. A new difficulty now arose; for I was informed that the native pilots had received a message from the king, forbidding them to take the ships through the reefs; and although we needed their services but little, yet I thought it was a circumstance that required some investigation. I however gave orders to weigh anchor; but, while in the act of doing so, the Porpoise was reported as in sight: I therefore awaited her joining company. She had been detained in consequence of light,