

## CHAPTER II.

### O V O L A U.

1840.

AT daylight on the 4th of May, the squadron got under way from the harbour of Nukualofa, and passing without the reefs through a narrow passage, safely bore off to the westward under all sail, having the wind from east-northeast. At meridian we had the islands of Honga Tonga and Honga Hapai to the north of us; these are both high, and are distant from Tonga twenty-seven miles. On the 5th we had a sight of Turtle Island, and determined it to be in longitude  $178^{\circ} 33' W.$ , latitude  $19^{\circ} 48' S.$ ;\* it has the appearance of a small rounded knoll. The wind was blowing fresh from the southeast, and after dark I determined to heave-to, to await daylight, off the southern and eastern islands of the Feejee Group; this was done in order to set the Porpoise at her work. Since leaving Tonga, we have found ulcers prevalent among our men, from the bites they had received; they were inflammatory and difficult to cure, prevailing among those apparently most healthy. Just at dawn we made an island, and at the same time a large sandbank, about half a mile from us; had darkness continued half an hour longer, we should have probably been wrecked upon the latter, as I did not believe myself within five miles of it. Our unexpected vicinity to it was caused by a strong current to the northward.

At 6 A. M. we began our observations, and at eight I made signal to the Porpoise to part company, in order that Lieutenant-Commandant Ringgold might proceed to carry into execution the orders which will be found in Appendix II.

We continued our course with the Peacock and Flying-Fish in

\* Subsequent observations by the Porpoise, place it in longitude  $178^{\circ} 37' 13'' W.$ , latitude  $19^{\circ} 50' S.$