

He, in common with the other natives, believed that they were intended for the purpose of looking at the Great Spirit, and in consequence paid them the greatest respect and reverence. This opinion saved us much trouble, for they did not presume to approach the instruments; and although some of them were always to be found without the boundary which had been traced to limit their approach, they never intruded within it. They always behaved civilly, and said they only came to sara-sara (look on).

I afterwards took Seru on board the Vincennes, where, as his father had recommended, I gave him plenty of good advice, to which he seemed to pay great attention. I had been told that he would probably exhibit hauteur and an arrogant bearing, but he manifested nothing of the kind. He appeared rather, as I had been told by his father I would find him, "young and frisky." He was received with the same attentions that had been paid to his father. The firing of the guns seemed to take his fancy much, and he was desirous that I should gratify him by continuing to fire them longer; but I was not inclined to make the honours paid to him greater than those rendered to his father, knowing how observant they are of all forms. The whole party, himself included, showed more pleasure and were much more liberal in their exclamations of *vi naka, vi naka!* and *whoo!* using them more energetically than the king's party, as might be naturally expected from a younger set of natives. Seru is quite ingenious; he took the musket given him to pieces as quickly, and used it with as much adroitness as if he had been a gunsmith. His ambati (priest) was with him, and the party all appeared greatly delighted with the ship. On the whole I was much pleased with him during his visit; shortly afterwards, he, however, visited the ship during my absence, and displayed a very different bearing, so much so as to require to be checked. I learned a circumstance which would serve to prove that the reputation he bears is pretty well founded. He on one occasion had sent word to one of the islands (Goro, I believe), for the chief to have a quantity of cocoa-nut oil ready for him by a certain time. Towards the expiration of the specified interval, Seru went to the island and found it was not ready. The old chief of the island pleaded the impossibility of compliance, from want of time, and promised to have it ready as soon as possible. Seru told him he was a great liar, and without further words, struck him on the head and killed him on the spot. This is only one of many instances of the exercise of arbitrary authority over their vassals.

One day, while at the observatory, I was greatly surprised at seeing