

Recourse was therefore had to Kanuha, the chief of Hilo, who had the name of being a great extortioner. He came, and as he well understood our situation, showed his modesty in asking only twice as much as had been promised to those who had gone before. There was, however, no remedy, and the bargain was made; but it was some consolation that the loads his people took were twice as heavy as those the others bore.

It was amusing to see how this chief operated with his people. Numbers of bearers were soon obtained, and the loads sent off without any further difficulty. The character of Kanuha for energy had not been acquired without some reason, and his authority over those belonging to his district was fully evident. I was delighted when I saw the last package off, and the whole of the bearers winding their way on the road for the mountain. The officers who had been assigned to the different detachments, received orders not to suffer any to stray from the path.

At a short distance from Waiakea, we passed the royal fish-ponds, from which, during our stay at Hilo, by order of the king, my table was constantly supplied with the fine fresh-water mullet that had been taken from the sea when small, as before described. I have frequently had an opportunity of tasting both kinds at the same meal; and I was not quite so well convinced of the superiority of the fresh over the salt-water fish as the natives appear to be. The difference, however, may be much greater when they are eaten raw, which is the favourite mode of the natives, and which I had not curiosity sufficient to induce me to attempt.

In and around these ponds is a very fine species of duck, of which we obtained many. The natives have a mode of catching them which is ingenious: a string is tied to a small stick two or three inches in length, and the other end to a stone of two or three pounds weight, which lies on the bottom of the pond. The stick, which floats on the surface, is baited with a small fish, which the duck pounces upon, and swallows: in attempting to fly away, the stick is crossed in the throat, so that the duck, who is unable to carry off the stone, is secured.

In two hours, we had travelled about five miles, and had ascended five hundred feet. The road proved tolerably good, although it scarcely admitted two persons to walk abreast.

We passed the hill, described by Lord Byron's party, which it would have been difficult to recognise had it not been pointed out, on account of its gradual rise. This hill afforded a magnificent view of Hilo Bay, and of the surrounding country below us.

Six miles from Hilo we entered the first wood, and at 6 P. M. we