

number of children. An old and very savage-looking chief made signs for them not to land, threatening them with spears if this was attempted. Lieutenant-Commandant Ringgold threw them some presents, and received in return a few cocoa-nuts and two large fish, the smallest of which measured five feet two inches in length, and its greatest circumference was four feet four inches. These proved to be excellent food. They were remarkable for their splendid colour, the great size of the canine teeth in each jaw, and a large protuberance over the eyes; the head was without scales, the body being covered with large circular plates, over which the epidermis was very thick and of a rich blue colour, with regular concentric stripes of yellowish white; the fins and tails were striped with straight lines of alternate blue and yellow; the lips were fleshy, and the jaws strong and bony.

The men were of the dark-skinned race, resembling the Feejeeans, of fine form, and crispy hair, with crowns of matting on their heads: the old man had a silvery beard. They would not permit our people to land, and on an attempt being made by a Sandwich Islander, they stood prepared to spear him. Lieutenant-Commandant Ringgold, wishing to avoid collision, ordered him to return.

After searching around this locality for other islands, the Porpoise steered to the northward, for the island of Aratica (Carlshoff). On the 15th they made the island of Tahanea: its south end is a bare reef, but there are trees on the east and west sides. Fires were seen after dark on the island. This, like all the other islands, has small islets around it, connected by low coral reefs, over which the sea in places washes.

Passing in sight of Saken, Raraka, and Taiara, they made Aratica on the 18th, where they found the party all well, and at once began to embark them, which was completed on the 19th. The Porpoise then bore away for Tahiti, two hundred and fifty miles distant, which they made on the 21st, and the same day they anchored in Matavai Bay.

At the time the brig left him, Lieutenant Johnson had succeeded in making a beginning with the apparatus. Considering the novelty of the business, and that all were unacquainted with the uses of the different parts of the machinery, I was aware of the difficulty of the task that would be imposed upon the officer who directed the operation. I had therefore designated Lieutenant Johnson for this business, who, on account of his ingenuity, perseverance, and mechanical contrivance, was considered by me as most suitable for this duty. The undertaking proved fully as laborious as I had anticipated, and Lieutenant Johnson's exertions were worthy of better success. The principal difficulties he had to encounter were the looseness of the sand, and the falling in of the coral stones. Every means were devised to overcome