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A Voyage Towards The South Pole, And Round The World

Performed In His Majesty's Ships the Resolution and Adventure, In the
Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775 ; In Two Volumes

**Cook, James
Furneaux, ...**

London, 1777

Chap. VIII. An Account of the Discovery of New Caledonia, and the
Incidents that happend while the Ship lay in Balade.

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Tanna. I cannot say what might occasion this difference in the variation observed at sea and on shore, unless it be influenced by the land; for I must give the preference to that found at sea, as it is agreeable to what we observed before we made the islands, and after we left them.

1774.
August.
Wednes. 31st.

C H A P. VIII.

An Account of the Discovery of New Caledonia, and the Incidents that happened while the Ship lay in Balade.

AT sun-rise on the 1st of September, after having stood to S. W. all night, no more land was to be seen. The wind remaining in the S. E. quarter, we continued to stand to S. W. On the 2^d, at five o'clock P. M., being in the latitude $18^{\circ} 22'$, longitude $165^{\circ} 26'$, the variation was $10^{\circ} 50'$ East; and at the same hour on the 3^d, it was $10^{\circ} 51'$, latitude at that time $19^{\circ} 14'$, longitude 165° East. The next morning, in the latitude of $19^{\circ} 49'$, longitude $164^{\circ} 53'$, the amplitude gave $10^{\circ} 21'$, and the azimuths $10^{\circ} 7'$ East. At eight o'clock, as we were steering to the South, land was discovered bearing S. S. W., and at noon it extended from S. S. E. to W. by S., distant about six leagues. We continued to steer for it with a light breeze at East, till five in the evening, when we were stopped by a calm. At this time we were three leagues from the land, which extended from S. E. by S. to W. by N., round by the S. W. Some openings appeared in the West, so that we could not tell whether it was one connected land or a group of islands. To the S. E. the coast seemed to terminate in a high promontory, which I named

Cape.

September.
Thursday 1st.

Friday 2^d.

Saturday 3^d.

Sunday 4th.



1774.
September.
Sunday 4.

Cape Colnett, after one of my midshipmen who first discovered this land. Breakers were seen about half-way between us and the shore; and, behind them, two or three canoes under sail, standing out to sea, as if their design had been to come off to us; but a little before sun-set they struck their sails, and we saw them no more. After a few hours calm, we got a breeze at S. E., and spent the night standing off and on.

Monday 5.

On the 5th at sun-rise, the horizon being clear, we could see the coast extend to the S. E. of Cape Colnett, and round by the S. W. to N. W. by W. Some gaps or openings were yet to be seen to the West; and a reef, or breakers, seemed to lie all along the coast, connected with those we discovered the preceding night. It was a matter of indifference to me whether we plied up the coast to the S. E., or bore down to N. W. I chose the latter; and after running two leagues down the outside of the reef (for such it proved) we came before an opening that had the appearance of a good channel, through which we might go in for the land. I wanted to get at it, not only to visit it, but also to have an opportunity to observe an eclipse of the sun which was soon to happen. With this view we brought to, hoisted out two armed boats, and sent them to sound the channel; ten or twelve large sailing canoes being then near us. We had observed them coming off from the shore, all the morning, from different parts; and some were lying on the reef, fishing as we supposed. As soon as they all got together, they came down to us in a body, and were pretty near when we were hoisting out our boats, which probably gave them some alarm; for, without stopping, they hauled in for the reef, and our boats followed them. We now saw that

that what we had taken for openings in the coast was low land, and that it was all connected, except the western extremity, which was an island known by the name of Balabea, as we afterwards learnt.

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September.
Monday 5.

The boats having made a signal for a channel, and one of them being placed on the point of the reef on the weather side of it, we stood in with the ship, and took up the other boat in our way, when the officer informed me, that where we were to pass, was sixteen and fourteen fathoms water, a fine sandy bottom, and that, having put along-side two canoes, he found the people very obliging and civil. They gave him some fish; and, in return, he presented them with medals, &c. In one was a stout robust young man, whom they understood to be a chief. After getting within the reef, we hauled up S. $\frac{1}{2}$ E., for a small low sandy isle that we observed lying under the shore, being followed by all the canoes. Our sounding, in standing in, was from fifteen to twelve fathoms, (a pretty even fine sandy bottom) for about two miles; then we had six, five, and four fathoms. This was on the tail of a shoal which lies a little without the small isle to the N. E. Being over it, we found seven and eight fathoms water, which shallowed gradually, as we approached the shore, to three fathoms, when we tacked, stood off a little, and then anchored in five fathoms, the bottom a fine sand mixed with mud. The little sandy isle bore E. by S, three quarters of a mile distant; and we were one mile from the shore of the main, which extended from S. E. by E., round by the South, to W. N. W. The island of Balabea bore N. W. by N., and the channel, through which we came, North, four miles distant. In this situation we were extremely



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 Monday 5.

tremely well sheltered from the reigning winds, by the sandy isle and its shoals, and by the shoal without them.

We had hardly got to an anchor, before we were surrounded by a great number of the natives, in sixteen or eighteen canoes, the most of whom were without any sort of weapons. At first they were shy of coming near the ship; but in a short time we prevailed on the people in one boat to get close enough to receive some presents. These we lowered down to them by a rope, to which, in return, they tied two fish that stunk intolerably, as did those they gave us in the morning. These mutual exchanges bringing on a kind of confidence, two ventured on board the ship; and presently after, she was filled with them, and we had the company of several at dinner in the cabin. Our pease-soup, salt beef, and pork, they had no curiosity to taste; but they eat of some yams, which we happened to have yet left, calling them *Oobee*. This name is not unlike *Oofee*, as they are called at most of the islands, except Mallicollo; nevertheless, we found these people spoke a language new to us. Like all the nations we had lately seen, the men were almost naked; having hardly any other covering but such a wrapper as is used at Mallicollo*. They were curious in examining every part of the ship, which they viewed with uncommon attention. They had not the least knowledge of goats, hogs, dogs, or cats, and had not even a name for one of them. They seemed fond of large spike-nails, and pieces of red cloth, or indeed of any other colour; but red was their favourite.

After dinner, I went on shore with two armed boats, having with us one of the natives who had attached himself

* See the Note at Page 34 of this Volume.



to me. We landed on a sandy beach before a vast number of people, who had got together with no other intent than to see us; for many of them had not a stick in their hands; consequently we were received with great courtesy, and with the surprize natural for people to express, at seeing men and things so new to them as we must be. I made presents to all those my friend pointed out, who were either old men, or such as seemed to be of some note; but he took not the least notice of some women who stood behind the crowd, holding my hand when I was going to give them some beads and medals. Here we found the same chief, who had been seen in one of the canoes, in the morning. His name, we now learnt, was Teabooma; and we had not been on shore above ten minutes, before he called for silence. Being instantly obeyed by every individual present, he made a short speech; and soon after another chief having called for silence, made a speech also. It was pleasing to see with what attention they were heard. Their speeches were composed of short sentences; to each of which two or three old men answered, by nodding their heads, and giving a kind of grunt, significant, as I thought, of approbation. It was impossible for us to know the purport of these speeches; but we had reason to think they were favourable to us, on whose account they doubtless were made. I kept my eyes fixed on the people all the time, and saw nothing to induce me to think otherwise. While we were with them, having inquired, by signs, for fresh water, some pointed to the East, and others to the West. My friend undertook to conduct us to it, and embarked with us for that purpose. We rowed about two miles up the coast to the East, where the shore was mostly covered with mangrove-trees; and entering amongst them, by a narrow creek or river, which brought us to a little

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Monday 5.



1774.
 September.
 Monday 5.

straggling village, above all the mangroves, there we landed, and were shewn fresh water. The ground near this village was finely cultivated, being laid out in plantations of sugar-canes, plantains, yams, and other roots; and watered by little rills, conducted by art from the main stream, whose source was in the hills. Here were some cocoa-nut trees, which did not seem burdened with fruit. We heard the crowing of cocks, but saw none. Some roots were baking on a fire, in an earthen jar, which would have held six or eight gallons; nor did we doubt its being their own manufacture. As we proceeded up the creek, Mr. Forster having shot a duck flying over our heads, which was the first use these people saw made of our fire-arms, my friend begged to have it; and when he landed, told his countrymen in what manner it was killed. The day being far spent, and the tide not permitting us to stay longer in the creek, we took leave of the people, and got on board a little after sun-set. From this little excursion, I found that we were to expect nothing from these people but the privilege of visiting their country undisturbed. For it was easy to see they had little else than good-nature to bestow. In this they exceeded all the nations we had yet met with; and, although it did not satisfy the demands of nature, it at once pleased and left our minds at ease.

Tuesday 6..

Next morning we were visited by some hundreds of the natives; some coming in canoes, and others swimming off; so that before ten o'clock, our decks, and all other parts of the ship, were quite full with them. My friend, who was of the number, brought me a few roots, but all the others came empty in respect to eatables. Some few had with them their arms, such as clubs and darts, which they exchanged for nails, pieces of cloth, &c. After breakfast, I



sent Lieutenant Pickersgill with two armed boats to look for fresh water; for what we found the day before was by no means convenient for us to get on board. At the same time, Mr. Wales, accompanied by Lieutenant Clerke, went to the little isle to make preparations for observing the eclipse of the sun, which was to be in the afternoon. Mr. Pickersgill soon returning, informed me that he had found a stream of fresh water, pretty convenient to come at. I therefore ordered the launch to be hoisted out to complete our water, and then went to the isle to assist in the observation.

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Tuesday 6.

About one P. M. the eclipse came on. Clouds interposed, and we lost the first contact, but were more fortunate in the end, which was observed as follows:

By Mr. Wales with Dollond's $3\frac{1}{2}$ foot achromatic refractor, at - - - - -	3 ^h 28' 49" $\frac{1}{4}$	} Apparent time.
By Mr. Clerke with Bird's 2 foot reflector, at - - - - -	3 28 52 $\frac{1}{4}$	
And by me with an 18 inch reflector made by Watkins - - - - -	3 28 53 $\frac{1}{4}$	

Latitude of the isle or place of observation $20^{\circ} 17' 39''$ South.
Longitude per distance of the sun and moon, and moon and stars, 48 sets, $164^{\circ} 41' 21''$ East.
Ditto per watch 163 58 0.

Mr. Wales measured the quantity eclipsed by a Hadley's quadrant, a method never before thought of. I am of opinion it answers the purpose of a micrometer to a great degree of certainty, and is a great addition to the use of this most valuable instrument. After all was over, we returned on board, where I found Teabooma the chief, who soon after slipped out of the ship without my knowledge, and by that means lost the present I had made up for him.

In



1774.
September.
Tuesday 6.

In the evening, I went ashore to the watering-place, which was at the head of a little creek, at a fine stream that came from the hills. It was necessary to have a small boat in the creek to convey the casks from and to the beach over which they were rolled, and then put into the launch; as only a small boat could enter the creek, and that only at high-water. Excellent wood for fuel was here far more convenient than water, but this was an article we did not want. About seven o'clock this evening, died Simon Monk, our butcher, a man much esteemed in the ship; his death being occasioned by a fall down the fore-hatch-way the preceding night.

Wednes. 7.

Early in the morning of the 7th, the watering-party, and a guard, under the command of an officer, were sent ashore; and soon after a party of us went to take a view of the country. As soon as we landed, we made known our design to the natives, and two of them undertaking to be our guides, conducted us up the hills by a tolerably good path. In our route we met several people, most of whom turned back with us; so that at last our train was numerous. Some we met who wanted us to return; but we paid no regard to their signs, nor did they seem uneasy when we proceeded. At length we reached the summit of one of the hills, from which we saw the sea in two places, between some advanced hills, on the opposite, or S. W. side of the land. This was an useful discovery, as it enabled us to judge of the breadth of the land, which, in this part, did not exceed ten leagues.

Between those advanced hills, and the ridge we were upon, was a large valley, through which ran a serpentine river. On the banks of this were several plantations, and





Drawn from Nature by

Engraved by W. Byrne.
N^o. L.

ED ONIA



Drawn from Nature by W. Hodgkin

Engraved by W. Byron
N^o 1.

VIEW IN THE ISLAND OF NEW CALEDONIA

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OLDENBURG



some villages, whose inhabitants we had met on the road, and found more on the top of the hill gazing at the ship, as might be supposed. The plain, or flat land, which lies along the shore we were upon, appeared from the hills to great advantage; the winding streams which ran through it, the plantations, the little straggling villages, the variety in the woods, and the shoals on the coast, so variegating the scene, that the whole might afford a picture for romance. Indeed, if it were not for those fertile spots on the plains, and some few on the sides of the mountains, the whole country might be called a dreary waste. The mountains, and other high places, are, for the most part, incapable of cultivation, consisting chiefly of rocks, many of which are full of muddicks. The little soil that is upon them is scorched and burnt up with the sun; it is, nevertheless, coated with coarse grass and other plants, and here and there trees and shrubs. The country, in general, bore great resemblance to some parts of New Holland under the same parallel of latitude, several of its natural productions seeming to be the same, and the woods being without underwood, as in that country. The reefs on the coast, and several other similarities, were obvious to every one who had seen both countries. We observed all the N. E. coast to be covered with shoals and breakers, extending to the northward, beyond the isle of Balabea, till they were lost in the horizon. Having made these observations, and our guides not chusing to go farther, we descended the mountains by a road different from that by which we ascended. This brought us down through some of their plantations in the plains, which I observed were laid out with great judgment, and cultivated with much labour. Some of them were lying in fallow; some seemingly lately laid down; and others of longer date,
pieces

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September.
Wednesd. 7.



1774.
September.
Wednes. 7.

pieces of which they were again beginning to dig up. The first thing I observed they did, was to set fire to the grass, &c. which had over-run the surface. Recruiting the land by letting it lie some years untouched, is observed by all the nations in this sea; but they seem to have no notion of manuring it, at least I have no where seen it done. Our excursion was finished by noon, when we returned on board to dinner; and one of our guides having left us, we brought the other with us, whose fidelity was rewarded at a small expence.

In the afternoon, I made a little excursion along shore, to the westward, in company with Mr. Wales. Besides making observations on such things as we met, we got the names of several places, which I then thought were islands; but, upon farther inquiry, I found they were districts upon this same land. This afternoon a fish being struck by one of the natives near the watering-place, my clerk purchased it, and sent it to me after my return on board. It was of a new species, something like a sun-fish, with a large, long, ugly head. Having no suspicion of its being of a poisonous nature, we ordered it to be dressed for supper; but, very luckily, the operation of drawing and describing took up so much time, that it was too late, so that only the liver and row were dressed, of which the two Mr. Forsters and myself did but taste. About three o'clock in the morning, we found ourselves seized with an extraordinary weakness and numbness all over our limbs. I had almost lost the sense of feeling; nor could I distinguish between light and heavy bodies, of such as I had strength to move; a quart pot, full of water, and a feather, being the same in my hand. We each of us took an emetic, and after that a sweat, which gave us

us much relief. In the morning, one of the pigs, which had eaten the entrails, was found dead. When the natives came on board and saw the fish hang up, they immediately gave us to understand it was not wholesome food, and expressed the utmost abhorrence of it; though no one was observed to do this when the fish was to be sold, or even after it was purchased.

1774.
September,
Wednesday 7.

On the 8th, the guard and a party of men were on shore as usual. In the afternoon I received a message from the officer, acquainting me that Teabooma the chief was come with a present consisting of a few yams and sugar-canes. In return, I sent him, amongst other articles, a dog and a bitch, both young, but nearly full grown. The dog was red and white, but the bitch was all red, or the colour of an English fox. I mention this, because they may prove the Adam and Eve of their species in that country. When the officer returned on board in the evening, he informed me that the chief came, attended by about twenty men, so that it looked like a visit of ceremony. It was some time before he would believe the dog and bitch were intended for him; but as soon as he was convinced, he seemed lost in an excess of joy, and sent them away immediately.

Thursday 8.

Next morning early, I dispatched Lieutenant Pickersgill and Mr. Gilbert with the launch and cutter to explore the coast to the West; judging this would be better effected in the boats than in the ship, as the reefs would force the latter several leagues from land. After breakfast, a party of men was sent ashore to make brooms; but myself and the two Mr. Forsters were confined on board, though much better, a good sweat having had an happy effect. In the afternoon, a man was seen, both ashore and along-side the ship, said to be as white as any European. From the account I had of him (for I did

Friday 9.



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September.
Friday 9.

not see him) his whiteness did not proceed from hereditary descent, but from chance or some disease; and such have been seen at Otaheite and the Society Isles*. A fresh easterly wind, and the ship lying a mile from the shore, did not hinder these good-natured people from swimming off to us in shoals of twenty or thirty, and returning the same way.

Saturday 10.

On the 10th, a party was on shore as usual; and Mr. Forster so well recovered as to go out botanizing.

Sunday 11.

In the evening of the 11th, the boats returned, when I was informed of the following circumstances. From an elevation, which they reached the morning they set out, they had a view of the coast. Mr. Gilbert was of opinion, that they saw the termination of it to the West, but Mr. Pickersgill thought not; though both agreed that there was no passage for the ship that way. From this place, accompanied by two of the natives, they went to Balabea, which they did not reach till after sun-set, and left again next morning before sun-rise; consequently this was a fruitless expedition, and the two following days were spent in getting up to the ship. As they went down to the isle, they saw abundance of turtle, but the violence of the wind and sea made it impossible to strike any. The cutter was near being lost, by suddenly filling with water, which obliged them to throw several things overboard, before they could free her and stop the leak she had sprung. From a fishing canoe, which they met coming in from the reefs, they got as much fish as they could eat; and they were received by Teabi, the chief of the isle of Balabea, and the people, who came in numbers to see them, with great courtesy. In order not to be too much

* Wafer met with Indians in the isthmus of Darien of the colour of a white horse. See his *Description of the Isthmus*, p. 134. See also Mr. de Paw's *Philosophical Inquiries concerning the Americans*, where several other instances of this remarkable whiteness are mentioned, and the causes of it attempted to be explained.

crowded



crowded, our people drew a line on the ground, and gave the others to understand they were not to come within it. This restriction they observed; and one of them, soon after, turned it to his own advantage. For happening to have a few cocoa-nuts, which one of our people wanted to buy, and he was unwilling to part with, he walked off, and was followed by the man who wanted them. On seeing this he sat down on the sand, made a circle round him, as he had seen our people do, and signified that the other was not to come within it; which was accordingly observed. As this story was well attested, I thought it not unworthy of a place in this journal.

1774.
September.
Sunday 11.

Early in the morning of the 12th, I ordered the carpenter to work, to repair the cutter, and the water to be replaced, which we had expended the three preceding days. As Teabooma the chief had not been seen since he got the dogs, and I wanted to lay a foundation for stocking the country with hogs also, I took a young boar and sow with me in the boat, and went up the mangrove creek to look for my friend, in order to give them to him. But when we arrived there, we were told that he lived at some distance, and that they would send for him. Whether they did or no I cannot say; but he not coming, I resolved to give them to the first man of note I met with. The guide we had to the hills happening to be there, I made him understand, that I intended to leave the two pigs on shore, and ordered them out of the boat for that purpose. I offered them to a grave old man, thinking he was a proper person to intrust them with; but he shook his head, and he, and all present, made signs to take them into the boat again. When they saw I did not comply, they seemed to consult with one another what was to be done; and then our guide told me to carry

Monday 12.

Q 2

them



1774.
September.
Monday 12.

them to the *Alekee* (chief). Accordingly I ordered them to be taken up, and we were conducted by him to a house wherein were seated, in a circle, eight or ten, middle-aged persons. To them I and my pigs being introduced, with great courtesy they desired me to sit down; and then I began to expatiate on the merits of the two pigs, explaining to them how many young ones the female would have at one time, and how soon these would multiply to some hundreds. My only motive was to enhance their value, that they might take the more care of them; and I had reason to think I, in some measure, succeeded. In the mean time, two men having left the company, soon returned with six yams, which were presented to me; and then I took leave and went on board.

I have already observed, that here was a little village; I now found it much larger than I expected; and, about it, a good deal of cultivated land, regularly laid out, planted and planting, with taro or eddy root, yams, sugar-canes, and plantains. The taro plantations were prettily watered by little rills, continually supplied from the main channel at the foot of the mountains, from whence these streams were conducted in artful meanders. They have two methods of planting these roots, some are in square or oblong patches, which lie perfectly horizontal, and sink below the common level of the adjacent land; so that they can let in on them as much water as they think necessary. I have generally seen them covered two or three inches deep; but I do not know that this is always necessary. Others are planted in ridges about three or four feet broad, and two, or two and an half high. On the middle or top of the ridge, is a narrow gutter, in and along which is conveyed, as above

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described,

described, a little rill that waters the roots, planted in the ridge, on each side of it; and these plantations are so judiciously laid out, that the same stream waters several ridges. These ridges are sometimes the divisions to the horizontal plantations; and when this method is used, which is for the most part observed where a pathway or something of that sort is requisite, not an inch of ground is lost. Perhaps there may be some difference in the roots, which may make these two methods of raising them necessary. Some are better tasted than others, and they are not all of a colour; but be this as it may, they are a very wholesome food, and the tops make good greens, and are eaten as such by the natives. On these plantations men, women, and children were employed.

1774.
September.
Monday 12.

In the afternoon, I went on shore, and, on a large tree, which stood close to the shore, near the watering place, had an inscription cut, setting forth the ship's name, date, &c. as a testimony of our being the first discoverers of this country, as I had done at all others, at which we had touched, where this ceremony was necessary. This being done, we took leave of our friends, and returned on board; when I ordered all the boats to be hoisted in, in order to be ready to put to sea in the morning.

CHAP.

