

numbers; and by the close of the day about two hundred had been purchased, together with a quantity of fern-root to feed them on.

Up to this time, therefore, no hostile disposition had been manifested by the savages; and their intercourse with the ship had been carried on with every appearance of friendship and cordiality, if we except the propensity they had shown to pilfer a few of the tempting rarities exhibited to them by their civilised visitors. Their conduct as to this matter ought perhaps to be taken rather as an evidence that they had not as yet formed any design of attacking the vessel, as they would, in that case, scarcely have taken the trouble of stealing a small part of what they meant immediately to seize upon altogether. On the other hand, such an infraction of the rules of hospitality would not have accorded with that system of insidious kindness by which it is their practice to lull the suspicions of those whom they are on the watch to destroy.

During the night, however, the thieving was renewed, and carried to a more alarming extent, inasmuch as it was found in the morning that some of the natives had not only stolen the lead off the ship's stern, but had also cut away many of the ropes, and carried them off in their canoes. It was not till daybreak, too, that the chief returned with his second cargo of water; and it was then observed that the ship's