

account. But perhaps, after all, it is not necessary to refer their hostility to any immediate cause of this kind. These savages had probably many old injuries, sustained from former European visitors, yet unrevenged; and, according to their notions, therefore, they had reason enough to hold every ship that approached their coast an enemy, and a fair subject for spoliation. It is lamentable that the conduct of Europeans should have offered them an excuse for such conduct.

The wanton cruelties committed upon these people by the commanders and crews of many of the vessels that have been of late years in the habit of resorting to their shores, are testified to, by too many evidences, to allow us to doubt the enormous extent to which they have been carried; and they are, at the same time, too much in the spirit of that systematic aggression and violence, which even British sailors are apt to conceive themselves entitled to practise upon naked and unarmed savages, to make the fact of their perpetration a matter of surprise to us. We must refer to Mr. Nicholas's book* for many specific instances of such atrocities; but we may merely mention here that the conduct in question is distinctly noticed and denounced in the strongest terms, both in a proclamation by Governor Macquarie, dated the 9th of November, 1814, and also in

*Nicholas's "Voyage to New Zealand."