

the "taboo" operates as a matter of course, even were we to say nothing of the numerous exigencies in which a resort to it seems to be at the option of the parties concerned. Among the former, we may merely mention that a person supposed to be dying seems to be uniformly placed under the "taboo"; and that the like consecration, if it may be so called, is always imposed for a certain space upon the individual who has undergone any part of the process of tattooing. But we are by no means fully informed either as to the exact rules that govern this matter, or even as to the peculiar description of persons to whom it belongs, on any occasion, to impose the "taboo." It is common in New Zealand for such of the chiefs as possess this power to separate, by means of the "taboo," any thing which they wish either to appropriate to themselves, or to protect, with any other object, from indiscriminate use.

When Tetoro was shown, in the "Dromedary," a double-barrelled fowling-piece, belonging to one of the officers, he "tabooed" it by tying a thread, pulled out of his cloak, round the guard of the trigger, and said that it must be his when he got to New Zealand, and that the owner should have thirty of his finest mats for it. But this, according to Cruise, any native may do with regard to an article for which he has bargained, in order to secure it till he has paid the price agreed upon.