

evidence of an exactly similar description given by one of the chiefs to Nicholas, is probably an alligator. The natives, as we learn from Cruise, have the greatest horror of a lizard, in the shape of which animal they believe it is that the atua (or demon) is wont to take possession of the dying, and to devour their entrails—a superstition which may not be unconnected with the dread the alligator has spread among them by its actual ravages, or the stories that have been propagated respecting it. They report that in the part of the country where it is found it makes great havoc among children, carrying them off and devouring them whenever they come in its way.*

There are not many species of insects, those seen by Anderson, who accompanied Cook, being only a few dragonflies, butterflies, grasshoppers, spiders, and black ants, vast numbers of scorpion flies, and a sandfly, which is described as the only noxious insect in the country. It insinuates itself under the foot, and bites like a mosquito.

The birds of New Zealand are very numerous, and almost all are peculiar to the country. Among them are wild ducks, large wood-pigeons, seagulls, rails, parrots, and parrakeets. They are generally very tame.

Rutherford states that during his long residence he became very expert, after the

*The alligator is purely mythical. The only reptiles in New Zealand are lizards, and a lizard-like animal called Tuatara. It is about 18 inches long, and is allied to crocodiles and turtles, as well as lizards. It is the sole representative of an ancient reptilian order named Rhyncocephalia.