

pieces about six inches in length ; but we also disposed of a great quantity of so-called " trade gear."

Trade gear is regularly manufactured for Polynesian trading, and sold by merchants in Sydney and elsewhere. We had bought a stock of about £300 worth for the ship's use. It consisted of a cask of small axes, worthless articles, with soft iron blades, butchers' knives of all sizes, some of them with the blade 12 or 14 inches in length ; cotton cloth, Turkey red and navy blue, beads, and other similar articles.

The islanders had possibly traded with Europeans before our visit within tolerably recent time.* They brought off their tortoiseshell ready done up in bundles, and they knew the relative value of various qualities. The chief had a large European axe, which I believe was not procured from the ship, and many natives had hoop iron adzes. Nevertheless they must have had very little experience indeed, otherwise they would not have taken old German newspapers freely as trade as they did at the first, thinking them to be fine cloth, until rain had fallen. They soon took to making trade goods, shell hatchets, and models of canoes, to sell to us, which were as badly made as the trade gear which we gave in exchange. They understand the rules of barter well, and, as in Labillardière's time, seemed anxious to pay their debts. They pretended, with many expressive grimaces, to be unable to bend pieces of tortoiseshell which they offered for sale, and of the thickness (*i.e.*, fine quality) of which they wished to impress the purchaser. They often thus pretended to try ineffectually to bend very thin pieces indeed, and fully entered into the joke when we did the same with thin bits of hoop iron. They always required to see the hoop-iron tested by bending before accepting it. They must trade with one another regularly. They made signs that the ore of manganese which they use came in canoes from a distance eastwards. The native canoes are so seaworthy, and the natives so enterprising and fearless in going to sea, that possibly articles may pass by barter from island to island here over wide distances, even to New Hanover and New Britain.

The natives took all the hoop-iron from us which they could get, evidently receiving more than they could use, no doubt intending it for future barter. My colleague, the late R. von W. Suhm, believed that the natives on Wild Island recognised the native name of Humboldt Bay (Talok Lintju), and pointed in

* There were specimens of Admiralty Island lances and gourds in Gen. Lane Fox's Collection, and in the Christy and British Museum Collections, procured before the " Challenger " visit. These have probably been obtained from Cape York, and no doubt were taken there by tortoiseshell and pearl-shell traders who had visited the Admiralty Group.