

1823 Aug 28

53

Natives that there was some fine spars ~~at~~ about 30 miles to the Southward at a place called Tootoakaha he therefore had determined to go there and take some in if there was an Harbour for the Ship to lay safe, when I was in New Zealand before I had observed the spars at a distance when at Sea, but had not examined them on shore I determined to go down in the vessel and immediately got a Boat and went on board of the had three Chiefs with us who were interested in the timber - An American Vessel called the Cossack had been lately wrecked in coming out of the Gambier River on the west side of New Zealand commonly called by the Natives Shukoo-Hanga - The loss of the Vessel has been a subject of much conversation amongst the New Zealanders - The chiefs gave me the following reasons for the loss - There are two rocks on the south side of the entrance of the Harbour, which they considered sacred being the residence of the God of the winds and waves - The sailors belonging to the Cossack paid no respect to these Rocks, but struck them with Hammers. The Natives cautioned them against doing so, and intreated them not to touch them for if they did, their God would be angry - The sailors paid no attention to what the Natives said - When the Cossack got out of the Harbour upon the Bar, the God of the rocks got under her bottom and in great anger danced under her and threw her up and down like a Ball -