

Mr. Johnston died on the 21st of January at two o'clock p. m. For some time before that he had been complaining with his stomach, and on the 17th he took laudanum to make him sleep, and I feared he had taken an over-dose, for at mid-day Mrs. J. came saying he was asleep and she could not awake him. I found him in a state of coma, with his jaw locked. I gave him an emetic, a clyster, bled him, applied blisters to the back of his ears, and gave him a strong dose of calomel and jalap. All did well, but could not draw blood, so by and bye he began to speak a little. With much difficulty I opened his mouth with two knives, and we kept him awake by the cold dash of ammonia and by exercise—next day he was a little better, and next day again he was up and going about. He was off and on for the following two days, but on the 21st again he slept soundly. I shaved his head and put a blister to the back of it, but his breathing became longer and longer till two o'clock p. m., when he fell asleep calmly in Jesus. Mrs. J. was very attentive to him and sustained the trial of his death with great Christian resignation. But, having also taken laudanum, she was very sleepy and suffered from its effects for weeks after, even till now.

Just now I was nearly clubbed by an enraged savage. This morning the tribe at the head of the bay killed four men, that are to be cooked and feasted on, and now their wild song is ringing in our ears as they are carrying away the dead bodies for cooking. As you may judge all is excitement and terror here to-day. They are also thirsting for my blood on account of the sickness and mortality, which is very great at present, every day three or four dying.

I am glad you did not get either by land or sea, or you would likely have lost your life. Do not on any account attempt to come for a time yet. Our people never were so wicked. A short time ago they killed a man, and now it is blood, blood, that is the daily cry. Many of our leading chiefs are dead, and only three men are left who attended worship.

Kavia and his wife and child are dead—Nafatu, Napige, and Nasouman's child are dead—so that we have had eight deaths on the mission premises, and Nariva (since dead) and several others are all very ill and I fear they will die in a few days. O! may God have mercy on them and spare some.

I am not aware of anything you can do for us. If God spares us we will see you by and bye, but just now it would be certain death to the man who would attempt to travel by land, or, I fear, come here by sea. My very dear brother and sister, let us unitedly and earnestly pray for each other.

I have had a severe fever, and also the native sore mouth disease, but am getting better of both, and able to walk about again. I got a severe cut with an adze, which confined me three weeks in December, but it is now better.

Mrs Johnston was wishing to come and see you, but it is unadvisable in the present state of things. Were your boat coming our people would at present rejoice to kill your Basu\* crew. O! be cautious.

The tribe that killed the man to-day have broken into my cook-house and stole some of my pots and cooking utensils two or three mornings ago, and all the people are talking very bad at present, but God rules—the Lord is our refuge. With kindest regards to yourself and Mrs. Matheson,

I remain, yours affectionately,

Rev. J. W. Matheson, Tanna.

JOHN G. PATON.

P. S.—I have my letters ready for home—are you writing?

#### LETTER FROM MRS. GORDON'S BROTHER.

The Rev. Mr. Bayne received a note from Mr. S. G. POWELL, of London, relative to the murder of his sister and her husband. He says—"We all esteemed Mr. Gordon very highly while residing in this country. I had an opportunity of watching and knowing much of his private character, and can say that he was a most exemplary Christian and a man of prayer. I believe he held communion with God about every circumstance of life. My dear sister was a dutiful and most devoted child and loving sister—of a lively and cheerful temperament, and self-denying in the extreme. She was within five days of her 28th year."

\* The native term applied to the people on this side of the island. We call them the people fei Barabi, and we are called the people fei Basu.