

dore Loring, inflicted a severe punishment on the village where the latter outrage was committed.

But suppose we admit that the statement in the *Record* is correct in the main, and that there is only an error of about three years as to the time, may it not have been their fear of a man-of-war that has kept them so long quiet. They saw that traders would be protected, and they were afraid to injure them. During those seven years there has been more trading, especially along the west side of Tanna, than at any former period, and the natives have obtained more tomahawks, muskets, and ammunition, than perhaps all they ever received since white men began to trade with them, yet the traders were unmolested. On the other side of the island, however, all the trials of the mission occurred during that period; and at Port Resolution the natives had latterly become so insolent and troublesome, that even the traders had in a great measure ceased to call there.

Any one reading the article in the *Record* would be led to believe, if he knew nothing of these islands, that but for wicked traders and injudicious missionaries there would be no difficulty in getting along with the natives, and comparatively little danger in living among them. No doubt were all the traders good, and the missionaries judicious, the dangers and difficulties would be greatly reduced, but even were that the case they would still be sufficiently numerous. Bishops Selwyn and Patteson are held up to us as models; they are wise as serpents and harmless as doves. I yield to man in my respect for those two courageous and self-denying missionaries; but even they are not always safe. Innate cruelty is a prominent characteristic of the natives of this and of the adjoining groups. Perhaps in no part of the heathen world is human life, especially the lives of foreigners, held so cheap. In 1851 Bishop Selwyn and the Bishop of Newcastle were in great danger of their life from the natives of Mallicolla; although H. M. S. "Havannah" had made a very friendly visit at the same place the year before; and, so far as I am aware, no trading vessel had ever been there up to that time. And about three years ago, in an island to the north of this group, Bishop Patteson's boat was attacked, after friendly intercourse on shore, while pulling off from the reef; three of his seamen were wounded with poisoned arrows, two of them mortally, who died a few days afterwards; and the third recovered with difficulty. When the *Curacoa* left us at Fate, it was to meet Bishop Patteson at one of Banks's islands, and, as we understood, to see if any thing could be done to insure for him greater safety.

Bishop Selwyn made his first visit to the

South Sea Islands on board a man-of-war, the first voyage he made in his own mission vessel was under the shadow of a man-of-war, and when watering at Black Beach, the very spot where poor Peacock was killed, as the natives were assuming a threatening attitude, a boat, with an armed crew, was sent to protect him; and in another voyage, at least, he was part of the time in company with a man-of-war; so that he commenced his missionary voyages among these islands, with all the advantages which man-of-war influence could secure for him, which was vastly more efficacious than if he himself had sailed armed to the teeth.

And even Mr. Geddie himself—the unerring and immaculate of the *Record*—accompanied H. M. S. *Iris* to Erromanga and Tanna, in very much the same capacity as that in which we accompanied the *Curacoa*, when the *Iris* was winding up proceedings of a greatly more questionable character than anything undertaken last year by the *Curacoa*. Alas for men who live in glass houses when their friends begin to throw stones at their neighbours! Be it observed, I am not blaming those esteemed brethren for any of these things. I have no fault whatever to find with Mr. Geddie for his connexion with the *Iris*. I mention these things simply in self-defence; and, that if we are to be condemned for this crime, that the witnesses who are summoned to appear against us, may be brought into court with clean hands, and that the world may know for what it is, that we are so severely censured, and our friends so highly eulogized.

The *Record* holds, in *terrorum* over our heads, the frowns and censures of the agents of the London Missionary Society. I happen to be personally acquainted with the greater number of those in the South Seas. Since the *Curacoa* was here, we have been in communication with nearly every one of them within fifteen hundred miles of the New Hebrides; and as yet no vote of censure or disapprobation, either official or private has reached us from any of them. When the first exaggerated reports of the affair were published in Sydney, the Presbytery of the Union Church there, afraid of being compromised, owing to their connection with this mission, appointed a committee to enquire into our conduct, and report. That committee instituted a searching investigation; but when the report was given in, "it was unanimously agreed, that the presbytery thank the committee for its diligence, and without pronouncing judgment on the matters dealt with in the report, agree to receive said report *simpliciter*." Dr. Johnson says that "the Lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach, and even this negative recompense has been yet granted to very few." In our circumstances,