

ed, a fight took place around his premises, and he fled for safety. At night the teachers and the friendly natives removed to a place of safety all his property that they could. There remained however some articles which they could not remove, and fighting having been resumed on the following day, the natives broke into his house and destroyed its contents.

What more could have been reasonably expected of the natives? Would British property have been as well taken care of on a battle-field between the late Federal and Confederate armies? Yet for this a British Commodore fires on men, women, and children, killing a number of them, destroying their canoes, plantations, &c. The whole thing is deplorable, and we need not wonder that in the Australian colonies the affair has been the subject of severe animadversion, and it is likely seriously to injure the interests of the mission there. It is not impossible that an enquiry will be made into the conduct of the British Commodore. If the London Missionary Society do not ask this from the British Government we are persuaded it will be because of the connexion of missionaries with the affair.

This leads to the really painful and humiliating feature of the business. Were the responsibility confined to the British naval officers, we would give ourselves comparatively little thought about the matter. On the first intelligence we could scarcely believe it possible that the missionaries were implicated, and we have read their letters in the hope of finding that they had kept themselves clear of all share in these measures of violence, and that as in the case of other missionaries, they would have shown themselves the friends of the weak and have lent their influence on behalf of the much abused natives. But with equal shame, astonishment and sorrow, we have read their own statements showing too plainly that the missionaries and the mission are deeply involved in the proceedings from first to last. From their own account it appears that they first memorialized the Commodore, and that it was on their memorial that he acted, that Mr. Paton was

the interpreter at Port Resolution, and conveyed the message of the Commodore to the chiefs—that the *Dayspring* lay along side the man-of-war, while engaged in her work of destruction,—that most of the missionaries were there by their presence lending their countenance to the sad proceedings, and when it was over in solemn council passed a vote of thanks to the commodore.

It is but just to say that we have not received full explanations from the missionaries of the circumstances in which they have acted, and the reasons for this course. More minute explanations from them may present their conduct in a more favorable light. We cannot for an instant believe that they could have contemplated the destruction of life which resulted from the proceeding. If we could believe that they really expected the loss of human life in revenge for the loss of some trumpery property of Mr. Paton's, we would say that the sooner they left the mission work the better for the cause of Christianity in the South Seas. Still we cannot see how they can be held altogether blameless in regard to the lives of those unfortunates. It may be added, that our missionaries at present in the field have not had much experience in mission work, and might be expected to yield to the opinions of others, who had been longer there. Mr. Gordon it appears at first opposed the measure Mr. Copeland was absent, and Mr. Paton's practice and experience of missionary life on Tanna has only shown how totally ineffectual was his plan of winning the heathen to Christianity by threats of man-of-war, &c. We are, however, astonished beyond measure, that a man of Mr. Inglis's experience should have lent himself to these proceedings.

Still with all the palliations we can offer, it remains under the hand of our own missionaries an undeniable fact, that they have been implicated in transactions which are a disgrace to a christian and civilised nation, and which, had they been committed by a French man-of-war, at the instigation of Roman Catholic missionaries, would have roused the indignation of all the Protestant