

You know this island is about ninety miles in circumference. Supposing, then, I were to take but one-half, that would be still forty-five miles of coast to visit, which, upon the whole, is exceedingly rough. Yet there are a few good boat harbours where we could anchor and sleep at night. It is unsafe to sleep on shore, for two reasons, viz., the malaria, and the tomahawks of the heathen; hence the necessity for a good Mission boat, in order to visit, if they are to be visited at all. Besides, some of our young men are very good boatmen, which, of itself, is some inducement for getting a good one. We have a little boat already, but it is far too small to venture beyond Dillon's Bay in it. It was my intention to have written an old fiend on the Clyde to get a nice one built there for the purpose, but Capt. Fraser and others advise me not to do so as the risk and expense of bringing it out would be considerable. On the other hand, the cost of such a boat in Australia is about double that on the Clyde. I am quite convinced, however, my notions and plans of Mission work cannot be carried out on this island without a suitable boat.

Mr. Gordon has remained on the other side of this island instead of proceeding to Santo, as was supposed. He is busy building his house at present. The Erromangans are quiet on both sides of the island, and, upon the whole, things look much more hopeful than they did last year. The Mission wish us to remain here.

On Friday last, 14th inst., H. M. S. *Challenger*, Commodore Lambert, paid us a very short visit, as the wind was unfavourable. The Commodore and a number of the officers came on shore. They were all very kind and polite. We were mutually disappointed on account of the wind, for they were as anxious to remain a day or two at Dillon's Bay as we were that they should.

JAMES McNAIR.

#### Letter from Rev. John Morton.

IERE VILLAGE, }  
February 15th, 1869. }

*Rev. and Dear Brother*.—I mentioned in a previous letter that Nagee, the leading Coolie of this village, stood charged with cutting and wounding. At the last sitting of the Supreme Court he was found guilty, and sentenced to five years imprisonment with hard labour. Nine of his abettors were sentenced to three years each. Nagee is no loss to the village. He was a wily fellow, and for one so unscrupulous his influence was becoming entirely too great. On meeting him one day, I asked if he drank rum. "No," he replied, "I am a Mussulman, and neither drink rum nor eat

hog's flesh"—"But you sell it in your shops; is that not just as bad?"—"Yes," he said, "I sell it, but there is a difference; in the first place, I never give it to any one unless he pays his money for it. Then, I must keep it for my customers. Indeed, shopkeeping would not pay without it."—"But you must know that almost every quarrel and disturbance in the village is caused by rum."—"Quite true," he replied; "but if I did not sell, the others down the village would only sell the more. I would be very glad if all were shut up, but unless that is done, the same amount will be sold, and I may as well get a share of the profits, for you know I must live." These sentiments awake recollections of bygone days, and other lands, where they serve to quiet more enlightened consciences than Nagee's.

On Sunday morning, 24th January, as I opened the door at daybreak, the house servant informed me that Juraman, the groom, had had his throat cut—in fact, was all but murdered, and that I was wanted at once. I found that he was at Malgretoute estate, a mile from this. On riding there I found the report true to the letter. He had received a blow from a cutlass, which made a gash between five and six inches long slanting across the side of his neck, and an inch and a half in depth. On front it came within an eighth of an inch of the carotid artery. The doctor who dressed it had good hope that it would not prove fatal, although to inexperienced eyes the man seemed no better than dead. Juraman is the young Hindu referred to in my report as working his task and attending school. When we returned to our work after the New Year he became our groom. A woman living with a Coolie named Pirhiti, in this village, wishing to leave him, had for some time pestered Juraman to take her in. Juraman would not take her into his house in the village, but after some time he took her to a room on Malgretoute estate. Pirhiti threatened his life, and a few nights after his house was burned. I dealt faithfully with Juraman, but he assured me that all was right—Coolie assurances. On Saturday evening he went to the estate. Pirhiti was seen loitering there, too; and at 3 o'clock he slipped his cutlass through a crack of the door, cut the string that fastened it, and struck the blow. The woman gave the alarm at once, and by six o'clock Pirhiti was in the hands of the police. His audacity was enough to take one's breath away. Over Juraman's body he appealed to God that he knew nothing about it, and assured us that his cutlass had not been sharpened for a fortnight, although it was almost as sharp as a penknife, and had fresh marks which forty-eight ours of Trinidad air