

She was commanded by Captain Williams, son of the lamented Missionary who fell on Erromanga. She generally made her round among the islands once in two years.

The Captain thus describes her wreck on a reef, on Danger Island, on the 16th May :

"The three boats then proceeded to the nearest landing place, distant about three miles, when two of our native crew swam through the surf to inform the native teacher of our circumstances, and to request the assistance of some canoes to save, if possible, some provisions and clothing from the wreck. Daylight now breaking, several canoes came off and took the passengers twenty-two in number, out of the boats and through the surf. We then proceeded again to the wreck with the three boats, and found the ship with her keel high on the reef, and filling fast, while under her bows was fifty fathoms of water, lurching heavily, and rendering it highly dangerous for the boats to come near the ship until the masts were cut away, after which she lay more easily. As the mainmast fell it crushed the remaining whaleboat, which was on the skins. About seven a. m. we threw overboard the mast and sails of the long-boat for the boats to pick up, and succeeded in saving about eighty or ninety lbs. of sugar and about the same quantity of coffee, but no bread or water. She was now settling down by the head very fast, and we had to quit the wreck, when three or four minutes after she lurched off the reef and disappeared altogether, taking her masts and sails, &c., all down with her. Nearly all my personal effects were lost or spoiled. The crew have saved some of their clothes, and the passengers have lost the greater part of their effects. Just four hours elapsed from the time she first struck till she disappeared. Picked up a barrel of flour, a few pigs, fowls and ducks which were left on the surface, and about noon succeeded in getting the long-boat through the surf without injury, the other two boats being damaged in getting them over the reef—the natives rendering us every assistance and treating us kindly. No lives were lost. The passengers numbered twenty-two, with nineteen in number of crew, making a total of forty-one souls. I have my right leg rather severely injured from the knee to the ankle; and one of the crew has hurt his foot with a spike nail from the wreck."

Happily the Bibles, Printing Presses, and other supplies which she had on board on leaving England had all been landed at their various destinations before the accident occurred. The escape of the passengers

and crew is also matter for devout thankfulness. The "*Dayspring*" will have to supply the place of the *John Williams* as far as possible for a year or so. We learn that preparations are already being made for building a new "*John Williams*."

Letter from Captain Williams.

"At sea, on board of the brig '*Lalla Rookh*.'
July 29th, 1864.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—It is my painful duty to inform you of the loss of the Mission barque '*John Williams*,' on Puka-puka, or Danger Island, on the morning of the 17th of May. We made the island the previous day and at night were heading well off the land. At midnight it fell calm, and the ship drifted about two miles per hour towards the reef, with the life-boat ahead.—About three a. m., finding she was going astern and fast towards the reef, we got out the long-boat and whale-boat. About four she struck the first blow, and I then got all the passengers put into the boats safely.—About five o'clock, I, with the rest of the crew, left the wreck, joined the other two boats, and pulled in company to the landing place, distant about three miles. At day-break we reached the landing place, and two of our native crew swam over the reef to inform the native teacher *Okati* of our sad condition, and to get him to send canoes to take the passengers over the reef. These included the Rev. C. Barff and family, numbering five, Rev. H. Royle and daughter, two teachers their wives, and children, and Mrs. Williams. After they were safely landed, the three boats and some canoes returned to the wreck to endeavour to save what we could. But I am sorry to say that very little could be got at; for we found her filling fast, and settling down at the bows, hanging with her keel on the reef. At great risk we got some coffee and sugar. I also succeeded in saving some nautical instruments and a few articles of clothing. These had to be thrown overboard and picked up by the boats for they could not approach the ship on account of the surf and the heavy rolling of the vessel. I am sorry to tell you that Mr. Barff and myself have lost almost everything.

"About eight o'clock we found it impossible to remain any longer, and, with an almost broken heart, I left the much-loved but ill-fated '*John Williams*' for ever. In about three minutes after leaving she launched off the reef, going down head foremost in very deep water, taking all with her.

"Although I have the satisfaction to know that the calamity was not caused by any neglect, my feelings, sir, can be better imagined than described when I saw her go en-