

our Missionary operations are again suspended, and instead of being actively engaged among the natives, we are obliged to keep inside, with our doors locked and windows bolted, not only by night but also by day. We are not however idle, and though we may eat the bread of sorrow, we do not eat the bread of idleness. Since the breaking out of the war, I have been devoting my time almost wholly to translation, and the revision of some passages, which we had previously translated. We have not yet attempted the translation of any of the Gospels in order, but have simply selected such portions as we considered most easily translated, and such as might be most easily comprehended by the natives. The following are some of the portions translated, viz :—The parable of the rich man and Lazarus ; of the young ruler ; God's gift of his Son ; Christ stilling the tempest ; the book of Jonah, &c.

As none of our natives can read, and as all our instruction (example excepted) is communicated orally, we have not considered it necessary to do anything in the printing department for some time, until we see what turn matters are likely to take. Indeed our remaining here is so uncertain, that we know not what is best to be done. We endeavour as best we can, so to spend our time, that if matters come to the worst, they will not forget us, even though they should not always think of us with a very quiet conscience. They seem more than ever resolved that we must either flee or die at their hands. The former we will not do. The latter we leave with God. I don't think that God will let matters get any worse ; we cannot however tell. Our trust is in him and he is all sufficient. Our situation has never before been so frail as in dark Tana, neither have our prospects been so clouded, but dark tho' the night be, I do think that the morning is soon to dawn. If we are not permitted to see it, be not discouraged by the past, but arise and in God's name and strength take possession of this dark isle, and give God no rest, until the Tanese be given to the Lord Jesus Christ, as a portion of his inheritance.

Yours very truly,

J. W. MATHESON.

TANA, Aug. 1, 1861.

*Rev. and Dear Brother,*—Though the enemy of souls, is still waging war against us, and though the united powers of darkness are apparently combined in endeavouring to obtain the victory, yet you will be pleased to see, that the God who reigneth over the kingdoms of the heathen, is still permitting us to stand to our post—to hold our ground, and giving us renewed evidence, that stronger is he who is for us than any that can be against us.

In many respects the past month has been one of unusual excitement among our natives, and of more than ordinary trial and peril to ourselves at both stations, the causes of which are the following :—1. The report of the Erromangan massacre—and secondly, the death of an influential chief.

Though the natives at Port Resolution heard of the massacre shortly after it took place, yet owing to the little communication among our natives between the stations, the natives on this side of the island heard nothing of it until the 18th of July. The report of it caused universal joy and gladness, and led many of our more influential men to resolve unhesitatingly, that they should not be behind the Erromangans, in the perpetration of a deed so noble in their estimation. For several days in succession, consultations were held, for the purpose of devising plans for more effectually accomplishing their design ; and not only were our poor infuriated natives bent on our destruction, but they were urged on to the speedy execution of the hellish deed—*ly*—(pardon me if I say) white devils ! Surely man created in the image of God is not a term applicable to persons, who could exert themselves so actively for the overthrow of God's work, as individuals of our own colour and speaking our own language, have done during the past month. Yes—at that very time—there was a trader round this island, (I don't know his name, God knows him.) who promised our natives to come and live on the island—to supply them liberally with tobacco, tortoise shell, guns, powder, &c., &c., provided they would drive us off the island ; or in the event of our desiring to remain among them, that they should do us as the Erromangans had recently done to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon.

God however overruled the interfer-