

were instantly stayed; the fruits of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," in a measure such as had not been seen since apostolic times, began to appear among these simple Tahitians. But certain Roman Catholic priests effected an entrance; and, refusing to depart peaceably, were forcibly expelled by the authorities; and then came the war-ship across the Pacific, to intimate the high displeasure of France at what these simple islanders had done.

Safely at anchor in the bay of Papute, his guns pointed, Captain Du Petit Thouars informed the inhabitants of Tahiti that Franco had been insulted,—that he was here to demand reparation,—and that unless a fine of two thousand dollars was instantly paid, he would blow down every building in their island with his cannon. The Queen replied to this menace, intimating that she wished all honour, glory, and happiness to the French King,—that she was mistress of but this little isle,—nevertheless, being not less independent as its Sovereign than Captain Du Petit Thouars' master was as monarch of France, she was disposed to stand upon her rights. This answer had nothing but its truth and justice to recommend it, and was not likely to be regarded as very formidable by a man who had France and his guns to back him. Two thousand dollars!—a small sum, when we take into account that it was to buy off the displeasure of mighty France, yet the public revenues of Tahiti could not furnish the amount, though the Queen had been willing to submit to the indignity of paying it. The guns in the bay stood threatening the dwellings on shore; and in this extremity the missionaries and the British merchants collected a sum equal to the demand of the French commander, which, being handed to Captain Du Petit Thouars, he weighed anchor and bore away in triumph, carrying to France the two thousand dollars which the terror of his threats had extorted from the defenceless islanders.

Du Petit Thouars was gone, but the sense of the indignities he had inflicted rankled in the breasts of the Queen and her council, and they now passed a law that no one connected with the Romish Church, under the authority of the French Government, should be allowed to settle permanently in the island. Well, a short time elapses, and another French ship of war makes its appearance on the coast. Has Franco been again insulted? Cannot this little State, so far removed from the shores of Europe, take a single step, or pass any law whatever, for the regulation of its affairs, but it must needs give umbrage to France? Here, again, is the representative of the "great nation" complaining of new injuries, and demanding the repeal of the law which forbade the permanent residence of Frenchmen, members of the Romish communion, on the island. The demand is enforced by the old arguments, and Tahiti and her Queen are obliged to submit: the law is repealed, and the *Artimese* departs.

Tahiti had humbled herself before her powerful enemy, but this can procure her no exemption from continued aggressions. In truth, her troubles are only commencing. France feels the necessity of having something like a title to show for taking into her own hands the laws, the religion, and the government of Tahiti, as she now meditates doing. Captain Du Petit Thouars is again despatched; but this time he carries with him an instrument much less formidable in appearance, but far more dangerous in reality, than the guns which on former visits he had pointed against the island. This is a document, drawn and ready for the signature of the Queen and her chiefs, setting forth that Pomare feels herself incapable of governing her kingdom, and earnestly solicits that the "shadow of France" may be thrown over her. But such a scheme must be warily gone about. And so it was. The chiefs were invited to dine on board the vessel in the bay. They were plied with liquor, and then the document was produced. The astonished chiefs refused to sign a paper which virtually amounted to the dethronement of their sovereign. They were told that they had been guilty of offering repeated insults to France, and that these would be fearfully avenged, unless the document was instantly signed. They again faltered forth excuses and denials, but were immediately surrounded with an armed force. Thus overpowered, they took the pen, and, with trembling hands, affixed their names.

Pomare was absent from Tahiti when this scene was enacted. She had left her palace, and retired to the neighbouring isle of Imeo, expecting shortly to give birth to her fourth child.

On the following morning a messenger was despatched with the fatal document. His first request for an interview was refused; but, growing more imperious and insolent, he was at length admitted. The only alternative presented to Pomare was, that she should sign the document, or have her island desolated by the cannon of the French. She saw there the names of her chiefs, but she knew not that their signatures had been affixed in the midst of French threats and bayonets. What was the poor Queen to do? She had no army; for ever since she embraced Christianity she had governed without soldiers. There was no British ship in the bay to which she might appeal for protection; her chiefs had yielded to the demands of France; and could she, a woman, abandoned, as it seemed, by the whole world, stand out alone? The messenger waited in the chamber, and during the intervals of her sufferings,—for it was now the hour of "nature's sorrow,"—plied her with entreaties to sign, and ruffianly threats of violence if she refused. Unhappy Pomare! She had embraced the gospel. This was the head and front of her offending; and now she must atone with the loss of her dominions. She took the document,—affixed her name,—returned it to the messenger,—and then, bursting into a flood of tears, and embracing her eldest son, a child of six years, she exclaimed, "My child, I have signed away thy birth-right."

Such is the simple story of the wrongs of this woman. The actors in these tragedies little imagined that what they perpetrated in the solitudes of the Pacific, would be told upon the house-tops of Europe. But what does France say to this tale of wrong? France,—the land of chivalry,—what says she to triumphs won by force and fraud over defenceless womanhood and unarmed islanders?

Over Tahiti was now thrown, as the French delighted to term it, the "shadow of their country." But that shadow seemed to blight the little isle. Peace and happiness could not live beneath it. The erection of the "Protectorate" was followed by a series of humiliations and sufferings inflicted on both the Queen and her people. Her flag was torn down, and the tricolour mounted upon her palace. The island was filled with French troops. Pomare was driven to seek refuge in the house of the British Consul; while her "protectors" occupied her palace, and issued their decrees in the name of the French monarch. Finding herself in jeopardy even in the British Consulate, she was glad to escape, with her husband and children, on board an English schooner, and take up her abode in a neighbouring island,—Raiatea. Immediately on her departure, Tahiti was plunged into all the horrors of war. The natives refused to disown their Queen and recognise the French Protectorate as supreme; and the attempt was accordingly made to compel them by force of arms. The war broke out; and the inhabitants, forsaking their villages on the plain, where they deemed themselves inadequate to contend with the superior numbers of the French, betook themselves to the fastnesses of their hills. Thither they were followed by the enemy, whom they now encountered, and routed with considerable loss. To avenge their defeat, on their way back to their encampment on the beach, the French set fire to the churches, felled the bread-fruit trees and cocoas, pillaged the villages, and did every thing, in short, which their means enabled them to do to convert this fruitful and beautiful island into a desert. But we cannot farther detail the ravages which have followed French aggression in Tahiti. An important question yet remains,—in what way can Christians in Britain aid their aggrieved and outraged brethren in Polynesia?

THE REVELATIONS OF ASTRONOMY.

(Continued from *North British Review*.)

Hitherto we have been surveying worlds at a respectful distance from each other, and having days and nights, and seasons and aspects, of the same character, but we now arrive at a region in space where some great catastrophe has, doubtless, taken place. Beyond the orbit of Mars, and at the distance of 263 millions of miles from the sun, the celebrated M. Piazzi of Palermo discovered, on the 1st of January, 1801, a small planet, Ceres, which revolved round the sun in 1681 days, and its diameter, according to W. Herschel, is only 163 miles, while Schroeter makes it 1624. Dr. Olbers discovered another small planet, Pallas, on the 21st March, 1802, with a diameter of only