

tive by the Devil at his will, whose hearts have never been penetrated by one ray of gospel light, upon whose minds not one divine truth has ever been savingly impressed—a people resolutely determined that in gospel terms the Lord Jesus shall never reign in their hearts—a people who tell you plainly that they hate God, that they hate the gospel, and that they will never receive it, but that they love the Devil and delight in his works. Such are the people among whom we dwell, and for whose salvation we labour and pray night and day. Yes, such are the people for whom we entreat you to besiege the throne of God, and to give him no rest day or night until you prevail, and until, in answer to your prayers, he opens the windows of his spiritual heavens and pours out of the influences of his Spirit from on high.

Yours truly,

J. W. MATHESON.

TANA, FEBRUARY 18, 1861.

*Rev and Dear Brother.*—Ere the receipt of this, you will probably have heard from other sources, that God is still dealing very mysteriously with the Tana Mission. He has again commissioned the angel of death to visit our little band, and to take from our midst our dear and much esteemed brother Johnston, who departed this life on the 21st of January at 2½ P. M.

Not having been with our brother in his dying hour, not having heard of what the Lord had done, for twenty-seven days after his death, and not even then having permission to visit that station, I cannot write you anything particularly respecting any of the circumstances connected with this sad event. Enclosed you will find a note which I received from Brother Paton the night before last, which contains all the information which I have yet received, native report excepted, upon which no dependence can be placed.

During the past week, there were various reports in circulation among the natives—respecting the state of matters at that station—many of which were so conflicting, as to leave little room for supposing that any of them were very correct.

Last Saturday week, Kali went to Inakaruk, (one of Mr. Paton's stations), to visit some of his relations. He returned the following Monday, after which I went in search of him, in order to ascertain whether or not he had heard any word either directly or indirectly from the harbour. I did not succeed in finding him until Thursday forenoon. As he gives me credit for all the mortality on this side of the island, he has kept a very respectable distance from us for many weeks, and it was only accidentally that I came across him in the bush. He said that he was not at the harbour, but that he had heard many reports, some of which he believed were true. I returned home, and consulted some little time with Mrs. Matheson, as to what was best to be done, or what could be done under present circumstances. Indeed to ascertain the path of duty in such a case was extremely difficult. We had reason, but no certainty to believe, that our brethren were in distress. To attempt visiting them either by sea or land, in daylight was probably certain death; and to leave Mrs. M. alone in the present state of affairs (if the natives knew that I was away) would doubtless be death, if not worse.

I had just concluded to go the inland road after dark, get there during the night, and return the next night, when a native from one of the neighboring villages came in, and said in a state of great excitement, "Misi, don't you go, I know something that you don't." "What do you know," I asked. "I know," says he, "that when the other Misi died, the natives knew that you or some of the Aneiteumese would be going to the harbour, or that Misi Paton or some of his Aneiteumese would be coming here: and all the villages have agreed, that if any of you are seen upon the road either by day or by night, you are to be shot. They have also got all their canoes collected along the shore, that if either of your boats are seen going between the three stations, they may go out quickly and take them." I then abandoned the idea of going inland, but still hoped that after dark I might go into the boat, get there during the night, sink the boat inside the reef in smooth water, where she could not be seen from the shore, get the crew stowed away in some safe corner, and remain until the next night. That attempt