

last, and was buried that same evening beside the martyred Gordons. I attended his funeral along with four Erromangans. By this last attention, you may, to some extent, judge of the appreciation and gratitude of the people to a man who had done so much for the cause of Christianity among them.

Sep. 10th—I attended the funeral of another young man this forenoon. He took ill on the Friday last, and died last night. He belonged to Ravedia, or Cook's Bay side of the island; he is the second of the eight young men of that side who have died of this epidemic here—Nokopan being the other. They are both laid close to the martyred Gordons. When so many are dying, both among the Christian party and the heathen around us, you will probably be anxious to know what may be the feeling of the latter towards us at such a crisis. You are, I daresay, aware that there are now no foreigners, in the shape of traders, residing on this Island. It does not follow, however, that the natives have altogether forgotten the doctrine of their nefarious, trite and contemptible view, viz., that the missionaries are the cause of disease, and that tobacco will do them more good than the New Testament. But let the traders be as bad as they may, that does not make the natives good, at least so far as this Island is concerned, and as to the present state of things, they are simply contemplating our destruction. Since Mr. Gordon left, we had deputation after deputation of our people giving us many warnings, and pretty sound advice. The rage of the heathen, they say, on account of their losses by death is great, therefore they are going to tell the missionaries the same as they did the Gordons, and then run off to the bush, or to their own people. They tell us not to go out when we see any of the heathen are about the premises, but to stay in the house, and lock the doors. We are not to walk out alone, even to visit the sick on the mission grounds. We are not to sit opposite the windows at night. Watch is kept by day and night; when we visit the sick, we are accompanied by a man or two, armed with a hatchet or musket. When we go to church, hatchets, clubs, bows and arrows, and a gun or two may be seen around the little place of worship: some of the Christian party are advising us to leave for a time, for some other Island, and that they will go with us. This is, however, a question for much consideration, and which shall be attended to, after Mr. Gordon's return. Such is the mission life at present on Erromanga. You may easily guess that we have had an anxious time of it since the *Dayspring* left us, and we look with great pleasure for her return. The thought of seeing her so soon, has been a great relief to us in the midst of such trials, difficulties and death.

I have not seen Cook's Bay yet, nor is it considered very safe at present to abide there,—indeed if we are allowed to remain at all on Erromanga this year, it must be very much *barely living* and no more.

Of course I cannot give you any of the decisions they have arrived at in Aneiteum, at the general meeting. These, I doubt not, will be forwarded to you in due course. We have had no opportunity of getting our letters off since January last. I intend sending this, per *New Caledonia*, through the French, but whether it may reach you or no, is another question.

D. V.—I shall endeavour to write again, per *Dayspring*, which is the only sure source of communication we have with the civilized world. So far as we know, all the mission families here are enjoying good health. We are in excellent health notwithstanding all our troubles otherwise.

"Pe of good courage, and he strength unto your heart shall send,
All ye whose hope and confidence doth on the Lord depend."

With kindest regards and best wishes,

Yours very truly,

JOHN McNAIR.