

persuade myself that the storm might blow over without breaking up this station, my hopes were however disappointed. On Saturday the first of February, there was a consultation held among the chiefs, (of which neither our friendly natives nor I knew anything until afterwards) at which it was agreed that they should burn our houses, rob us of our property, and oblige us flee the island. On Sabbath night, our Church which had previously been partially injured by the hurricane, was burnt, and an attempt it is said, made to burn our house. Our friends say that the design of our enemies was to burn the Church, to murder us all in our beds, to rob, and then to burn the mission house. Their design was however frustrated, as we saw the fire shortly after it was kindled. There were a number of armed and painted savages about the Church, who said that they had come for the purpose of extinguishing the fire. It is evident that the fire must have been kindled by some of the party present, as they live some two or three miles distant, and were seen by us upon the spot immediately after the fire had originated—as nothing could be done to save the Church, I did not leave Mrs. Matheson, who was then very ill,—Mr. Paton however went out and prevented them from setting fire to the house. As I was not out they took it for granted that I was sleeping, and Mr. Paton overheard them asking one another where we slept, at the same time there was an unarmed native (followed closely by an armed one,) attempted to collar Mr. Paton—as he advanced Mr. P. presented his revolver, the seeing of which caused the murderous assassin to retrace his steps.

I was pleased to see that none of our friends were present, from which I inferred at the time (and which I afterwards found to be true,) that they knew nothing of the secret plots, which our enemies have of late been laying for the overthrow of the Gospel upon this island.

The following morning Kati came to see us, and seemed quite delighted with the proceedings of the past night. Knowing that he was the instigator of the burning of the Church, I asked him if they were going to continue their bad conduct, he coolly replied yes, we are going to burn your house to-day or to-morrow, if you don't go away; I asked him, if they burnt our house where we would live—he said, you can go and live on Aneiteum, or in some other land—he also went on to say, Missi, you don't know what we have been talking among ourselves, but I will now tell you the truth, and you may believe my word. It is my word and the talk of all the dark-hearted people on Tana, that if you do not all go away to-day or to-morrow, we will burn or break down your house, and steal everything that you have; before you came here, people used to hear my word far and near, they used to believe that I could do anything and make anything, they also used to say great is the word of Kati, but now you tell them God makes everything, and the people are beginning to hear your word; and all who receive the word of God don't hear my word, or believe that I am god of the sea, of sickness, of food, &c. If, continued he you will all go away, we will let your house stand until it rots, as the natives at Port Resolution did with Mr. Turner's. It was in vain to attempt reasoning with him, he had passed his word that he would not protect us any longer; and while we were at his tender mercy, he might command any person to despatch us any moment, and his command no man dare disobey, under penalty of death. I told him that I was not afraid of them, that I had come here with God's word to them, and that God's word was never going to leave Tana. I said you see that Mrs. Matheson is now very weakly, and perhaps I may go away with her, until she gets strong; but I am going to come back again, when two moons come and go, he said no, you are not to come back, I told him that perhaps God might make his heart good before two moons would be past, and that he might then want me back. While we were talking, the natives saw a vessel bearing down to our station—we regarded it as a special interposition of providence—and after some little consultation as to what was best to be done, Mr. Paton and I agreed that we should signalize her; we did so; and shortly after, the Captain suspecting that something was wrong, sent the mate on shore, saying that if we were in distress, he would be happy to afford us any relief in his power. The mate seeing the perilous situation in which we were placed, returned to the vessel and got a body of armed natives. During his absence,