

rope; and hence the rival interests of parties come in collision, and war is too frequently the result, even where the natives all call themselves by the name of the Prince of Peace: but many of them are christians—falsely so called.—The Huahineans, a few years ago, gallantly defended their country against a French invasion, after which a civil war broke out among themselves, and one party then invited the French to come and help them against their neighbours, but the French rejected their invitation, although it has been stated that the French were the occasion of this war, which does not appear to be correct.—A great change for the worse, no doubt, has been effected in the morals of the Tahitians in general, since the French have removed some of the restrictions of hated Puritanism in relation to heathen dances, and such like things, which may have some evil influence on the Churches of the neighbouring islands, yet, as there is much reason to believe that the Tahitian Mission was much injured by trading missionaries before the French landed on that island—the French should not be made scapegoats. The French Government is now seeking to reform the natives by suppressing the heathen dances, which it found to be the prolific source of destructive abominations, and now permits only a modified style of dancing in fashion with European society to take place on Sablath evenings and some other particular occasions.

We left the Rev J. Barff and family at Raiatea, who are to settle at Tahaa, and sailed for the Hervey Islands on the 25th, where we arrived on the 31st.—The Hervey Islands are seven in number, and lie from 500 to 600 miles west of Tahiti. The whole group contained at one time, it is supposed, a population of about 14,000. It is now much less.—Mangaia was the first of these islands at which we called. Early on the morning of the 31st, ere the sun arose, our eyes were greeted with a pleasant view of this island, which presents a lower appearance than any of the Polynesian islands which I have yet seen. It belongs to the hilly class of islands, and has a barrier reef like the other islands of this group, which runs parallel to the coast, (which has no harbour,) and embracing the island preserves it safely from the destructive power of the proud waves which ever and anon break their hoary

heads against it. As these islands have no asylum for vessels the "John Williams" does not cast her anchor here, and the Captain consequently has much difficulty in landing the missionaries' stores in unpropitious seasons. Several canoes started to meet us, as soon as the flag of our welcome barque was spied in the distant horizon, in one of which were the Rev Messrs. Geo. and W. W. Gill, who gave us a most cordial reception, and we were quickly taken over the reef by the natives, who stood in the water on the reef, and as soon as the canoes came near seized them and dragged them over amid the joyful acclamations and shouts of the multitude, who seemed much pleased at the return of the Mission ship. Some of the sailors who were in the vessel to England are natives of Mangaia, and were received by their friends in their usual way of manifesting affection on such occasions—by rubbing of noses together. To touch the hand of a friend or stranger with the nose seems to denote an expression of much respect and affection. Our English sailors thought that this mode of salutation accounted for the phenomenon of the flat nose which these islanders exhibit.—When we got to the Mission premises, which exhibit some fine buildings and are very tastefully arranged, we were happy to find the Mission families in the enjoyment of health and many comforts. To the Mission families on some of these isolated islands, where they live as if banished from the world, the return of the Mission ship is a circumstance which sometimes produces tears of joy. If the "John Williams" were scld, and no other vessel provided to take her place, I fear the Mission stations on several islands would be speedily broken up. On the 3rd of April, Mr George Gill having kindly provided Mrs Gordon and me with horses to go over the island to a Mission station on the opposite side, we set off for it in company with Mr W. W. Gill, and in the kind providence of God had a pleasant and profitable tour. Meanwhile the natives took up Charlotte Geddie upon their shoulders in Mrs Gill's carrying chair, and amid the shouts and tumultuous noise of those who followed us, ran off with her, and we saw no more of her till we got to the opposite side of the island, where we found her at the Mission premises in the midst of a large assembly of natives who were very kind to her, and seemed much pleased with their