

the brethren spoke of his rights as a British subject, he said that he ought to take higher ground, and remember that he was a christian missionary. As Mr. Inglis has quoted authorities to vindicate the course which he has taken, he cannot find fault with me, when I avail myself of a similar privilege.

I must now say, that I believe the punishment of the Tannese was a great, but unintentional mistake. My missionary brethren never could have anticipated the fearful results, or they would never have invoked the interposition of a man-of-war. As this is the first thing of the kind that happened in the mission, so I hope that it will be the last. The weapons of our warfare in the glorious work to which we have devoted ourselves, must be spiritual, and not carnal. We shall do far more to subdue, humanize and elevate these natives with Bibles in our hands, than with the whole British navy at our backs. It is the grace of God alone which can change the disposition of the heart, and bring these savage islanders, clothed and in their right mind, to the feet of Jesus.

The Tannese have much of my sympathy under the disasters which have befallen them. I visited them for years before they had any missionary of their own, and their treatment of me was all that I could expect from a heathen people. They have not been guilty of any crimes to warrant the severe punishment inflicted on them. I regret the bombardment of Tanna because this proceeding seems to be opposed to the teaching and example of Christ, who did "not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." His kingdom is not of this world, and the gospel is the only instrument which his servants are warranted to employ in the extension of his cause on earth. Our holy religion uniformly breathes a spirit of benevolence, and designs good to all men, and injury to none. I regret the bombardment of Tanna, because it may endanger, rather than add to the security of life and property on these islands. A missionary at Port Resolution and some other vulnerable points may be safer than before; but this temporary advantage will not compensate for the insecurity which it will cause in other places, where no man-of-war can reach the people. I believe that I am correct in saying that for more than eight years previous to the visit of the *Curacoa* not more than five Europeans had been killed in the New Hebrides, but she had not been away from the islands more than sixteen months, when the same number were cut down by the natives. The exercise of physical power is far more likely to irritate than soothe the passions of savage men. The excellent Bishop Pattison, speaking of missionaries, says, "their very defencelessness is their

best protection;" and my own opinion is that the less these islanders have to fear from us, the less we have to fear from them. I regret the bombardment of Tanna because it endangers our friendly relations with the London Society's missionaries who have still a deep interest in the New Hebrides group. They have in no instance resorted to harsh measures with the natives. After the death of Mr. Williams on Erromanga a man-of-war was sent to the islands to punish the deed, but the missionaries on Samoa would not consent to this, so the ship made a pacific visit, and recovered some of the bones of the martyred missionary, which are now buried on Samoa.—The Rev. Messrs. Turner and Nisbet were likewise driven from Tanna, and their perils were great, and their worldly losses considerable; but they cheerfully endured all for Jesus' sake and the gospels'. I may add also that no less than six devoted teachers, four women and two children from Samoa and Raratonga, in the service of the London Missionary Society, have found martyr's graves on the New Hebrides, but there has been no call for vengeance on the natives. I regret the bombardment of Tanna also, because this act sweeps away at one stroke the character which we have been endeavouring for years to establish as ambassadors of the Prince of Peace. Natives walk by sight, rather than by faith, and understand actions better than words. We may now tell these islanders that we come to them with a message of love, but the case of Tanna will arise in their minds. The mission on these islands has now a character to redeem, as well as a character to maintain.

I must now close my long letter. It has been a matter of deep regret to me that my name has been dragged into this unhappy controversy. I hoped to return to the work which I love without any public expression of opinion about events which occurred during my absence. The past, whether right or wrong, cannot be recalled, and the sooner it is sunk into oblivion the better. Instead, therefore, of indulging in uncharitable reflections on any party, let us rather endeavour to eclipse the warlike visit of the *Curacoa* to Tanna, by a bold, an earnest, and a prayerful effort, to give these poor islanders the gospel, which brings peace on earth, and good will towards men.

Ever yours, &c.,

JOHN GEDDIE.

Rev. James Bayne, D.D., Sec. B. F. M.,
P. C. L. P.

THE HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD.

THE HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD is under the control of a Committee of Synod; and is published at Halifax by Mr. JAMES BARNES.