

## FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Letters have been received from Mr. Matheson. We have only room in our present No. for the last, containing an account of the late disaster on Tana:—

*January 31st, 1862.*—Since the above was written, we have again been passing through the waters of affliction—deep has been calling unto deep—God's waves and billows have been rolling very heavily over us. On the night of the 16th, we were visited by one of those tremendous hurricanes, which sometimes pass over these islands, sweeping nearly every thing before it. In this instance, nearly everything in the shape of native food was destroyed, and as famine stared the natives in the face, they concluded that we were the cause of the storm, and their anger against us was apparently boundless. On the morning of the 17th, the messenger of death entered our dwelling, and took from us the dear little babe, whom God had loaned us 8 weeks and one day. On the night of the 19th or the morning of the 20th, the station at Port Resolution was broken up, as brother Paton was obliged to flee for his life. In reference to the breaking up of that station, I need not enter into particulars. \* \* \*

What result the breaking up of the station at Port Resolution may have upon the work on this side of the island, remains yet to be seen. The marvel is, that our people have not ere this, resorted to the same measures with us, as the working or the keeping up of this station is (humanly speaking) entirely dependent upon the prosperity of the harbour station. Since we first came here, our people have invariably told us, that they were going to act towards us in everything just as the natives at Port Resolution would act towards their missionary if, say they, the people at Port Resolution will be good to Mr. Paton, we will be good to you—if they receive the word of God, so will we—if they remain in darkness, so will we—if they drive Mr. Paton away, we will drive you away—and if they kill Mr. Paton, we will you.

Since Mr. P. came round here, we have been endeavouring to the best of our ability, to keep matters moving on in the right direction. It is, however, becoming evident that the enemy of souls is mustering more of his forces, and causing them to bear against us; and how long we may be able to hold on, or how soon we must surrender, is known only to God. The work is the Lord's, and what awaits us we know not—but whether we are to fall at our post, or whether God may for a time have us abandon the field—we know that there has been seed sown on Tana, which will yet bring forth fruit unto eternal life.—Though the past month has been in many respects a very trying month—yet during it, I have experienced more real heart satisfaction in the work, than ever before among this people. I believe that more real soul-saving knowledge has been communicated this month, than has ever before been since the commencement of this mission—and there has evidently been a spirit of enquiry among the people, in reference to things spiritual and divine, such as has never before been displayed. The day before yesterday, Kapukid, our young chief, handed over to me all his deceased fathers household gods, which fell to him by right of inheritance, saying that he did not require them any longer—These gods are simply small rude stones, which they supplicate on all occasions, *e. g.*, one is supposed to be a god of war, that they supplicate before going to war—another stone represents a god of the sea, whose favour they supplicate when going to sea, either for the purpose of fishing or of going from one island to another—one stone represents the god of sickness—another of storms, &c. Some chiefs have more, some less of these sacred stones—Kapuka had 20, all of which he has given up. The receiving of these gods, or the seeing of him giving up his idols, has, as you naturally may suppose, ten thousand fold repaid all that we had endured on benighted Tana. Truly the day on which an influential chief on dark Tana delivered up his gods, declaring that he had no further use for them, may well be recorded as “A day of the right hand of the most high.”

*Ancitum, February 20th.*—When I last wrote, matters were worse at our station than I was really willing to believe; I knew that there was a good deal of bad talk among the natives, but I had still hoped for the best, and tried to