

and some spots from which sulphurous exhalations arose. As we neared the volcano the earth in some places emitted a hollow sound, as if we were walking over a crust which might give way under the pressure of a heavy weight, and spots were pointed out to us where the earth had actually caved in, leaving deep and dangerous pits. After a pleasant and by no means tiresome walk, we suddenly emerged into an open plain covered with black sand, and devoid of vegetation, and from this plain the crater of the volcano arose before us in awful grandeur, well suited to inspire feelings of awe. We ascended to the margin of the crater over sand and scoriae, which have become hardened by exposure to the weather and time. The circumference of the crater at the top appears to be about two miles, and its depth is about 300 feet. Its fires are to some extent concealed by dense masses of smoke which are constantly rising up, but they are reflected at night on the clouds above, and give them a luminous appearance. The eruptions occur about every quarter of an hour, and red hot fragments of volcanic matter are then thrown up to a great height in the air, most of which fall back into the crater, though large portions are sometimes projected to a distance. This process has been going on since Capt. Cook visited this spot nearly a century ago, and for ages before. As we stood on the brink of the crater our guides warned us of danger, and mentioned cases of natives being killed by red hot fragments from the volcano falling on them. We remained to witness some eruptions, and then retired to a safe distance to rest ourselves and take some refreshment before our return. The eruptions vary in intensity, and it was our privilege to be spectators of one which startled us all. As we sat on the ground viewing the wonderful sight before us, a noise was heard like the simultaneous discharge of a whole battery or cannon; this was followed by a tremulous motion of the earth; the volcano then emitted forth a dense shower of liquid fire, which passed right over the spot where some of our party had been standing twenty minutes before. One fragment of red hot scoriae which fell not far from us measured over twenty feet, and we broke off portions of it as a memento of our visit. Our whole party were much gratified with what they saw; and some who had visited Vesuvius said that the palm must be yielded to the volcano on Tana, probably because it is more active. The heart must be insensible that can contemplate such a sight without feelings of reverential awe, and as I retired from the scene I could not help saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." The day was now far spent,

and it was time to return. On our way back to the harbour we passed through a village, where the natives performed a heathen dance to gratify the strangers who had never seen anything of the kind. Thus ended our pleasant, and, I trust, profitable visit to the greatest wonder which these islands contain.

#### SUPERABUNDANCE OF PASSENGERS.

The *Dayspring*, while we were at Tana, made a trip to the small island of Aniwa, distant about 15 miles. She went for the double purpose of taking Mr. Paton's mail and procuring some materials which we required for the house. A few natives requested a passage, which was readily granted to them, but before we could get under way the number increased to sixty-nine. The passengers spent a night on shore, and came off next morning bringing friends with them who wished to visit Tana, and over forty pigs also. Most of the Tanese belonged to a place called Sulphur Bay, in the vicinity of the volcano, and had been enemies to the mission in former days. We were glad to make their acquaintance in circumstances so favourable. They made a present of two pigs to the vessel before leaving us. The chief applied for an Aneiteini teacher also, and wished me to go and select a site for his house, but we cannot supply him at present. I need scarcely say that such acts of kindness as the above win the natives, and are no doubt beneficial to the cause, but they sometimes subject us to trouble. We had a striking example of this when we were leaving Tana for this island. A promise had been made of a passage to Aneiteum to eight or ten natives belonging to another part of the island, and we called to take them on board. The vessel heaved, and Mr. Neilson went in the boat to bring them off. He found about 100 natives with a large quantity of native property and many pigs collected on the shore, and waiting to be taken to the vessel. When they found that a limited number only could be taken, this gave rise to contention among themselves which almost ended in a fight, and they were angry with us also because we could not yield to their unreasonable demands. The boat eventually got away from the shore with as many as could crowd into her, and after a hard pull against a strong wind and heavy sea reached the vessel in an almost sinking state. The captain says that this is the first season since the *Dayspring* has been among the islands that the Tanese could be induced to voyage in her: but their confidence in our vessel is quite as much now as we could desire, and likely to become oppressive to us. It is an easy matter to take a few natives from one