

this in six months. Little wonder that dark-coloured races melt away before the white.

On the 20th of September, Yosian, Miaki's colleague, saw me engaged with some inland people, and stole a quantity of reeds, for which I had just given his daughter a knife. On seeing him, I called the people to see a chief's conduct, and asked if it was good or bad, when he ran at me with his axe and the usual threat; but having a spade in my hand, I was able to defend myself till the others interfered, and he left subdued. Some time ago a musket was fired at my bed-room window in the night, with what design I know not; and last night another was discharged near to it. Miaki says, "Let us fight Missi, till he leave or till we kill him."

Such are a few of the constant dangers and trials attending our mission in Tana. Yet let none think that we are disheartened, so as to wish to leave. We believe that God's promises regarding the heathen are true, and that he is all-sufficient to fulfil them; and though our opposition is very great, our work as a whole never has been so encouraging on Tana as it is at present. The prejudices of such a heathen people are not generally broken down at once; and though it requires time, with the diligent and prayerful use of means, and even sometimes costs a few lives, yet what is this compared with the taking of a stronghold in Satan's kingdom, and rescuing thousands of perishing souls from his dominion and from eternal misery. Surely we ought never to lose sight of what God has done for us; and though many native teachers and one and another of God's faithful servants have fallen in the siege on Tana, and four have reached the martyr's crown from Erromanga, and though the clouds gather and darken over us, so that others may fall from our already weakened band, we cannot despair of success or raise the siege, but are resolved to try and keep at our posts of duty while able, not only defending our position, but constantly assailing the enemy, whose kingdom, though strong, is destined to fall, so that of our ultimate victory there can be no doubt. But Oh, that God may soon raise up and prepare some of the noble-minded, pious youths of our church to come, that they not only may occupy the places of his departed servants, but take up new ground, until all these islands shall be vocal with the praises of Jesus. To the efficient oncarrying of this work we must have reinforcements, and the sooner the better. Meantime the standard is fallen on Erromanga, and may soon fall here; but surely the sons and daughters of our Scottish Covenanters cannot rest till they see it again unfurled, maintained, and extended in glorious triumph over all these islands, and over "all the world," in accordance with their oath of allegiance to the King of Zion and of all nations. Entreating you all to continue earnestly and constantly remembering the heathen and us in prayer, I remain yours, &c.,

JOHN G. PATON.

Rev. John Kay, S. R. P. F. M. Committee, Castle-Douglas.

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## FIRESIDE READING.

### DEATH IN THE MIDST OF USEFULNESS.

If there be a real and necessary, not merely a shadowy agency in heaven, as well as on earth; and if human nature is destined to act its part in such economy, then its constitution, and the severe training it undergoes, are at once explained; and then, also, the removal of individuals in the very prime of their fitness for useful labour, ceases to be impenetrably mysterious. This excellent mechanism of matter and mind, which, beyond any other of his works, declares

the wisdom of the Creator, and which, under his guidance, is now passing the season of its first preparation, shall stand up anew from the dust of dissolution, then, with freshened powers, and with a store of hard-earned and practical wisdom for its guidance, shall essay new labours in the service of God, who by such instruments chooses to accomplish his designs of beneficence.

That so prodigious a waste of the highest qualities should take place, as is implied in the notions which many Christians entertain of the future state,