

poor heretics and the Word of God than did our poor natives against us and the new religion. They agreed to kill one young man, but he escaped in a trading boat, which fortunately happened to be in the harbour when they were in pursuit of him. For some time previous to the breaking out of the measles their open hatred and their violent opposition to the gospel, and everything connected with it, were becoming daily more and more apparent. Taking our lives excepted, they resorted to every imaginable expedient to have us flee, or at least to say nothing more to them about the new religion. When taken ill they declared that I had smitten them with the measles, in order to be revenged on them for having recently stolen from us with such a high hand. Their being all sick, and my health having never before been so good on Tanna, confirmed their suspicion. This, as you may naturally suppose, added fresh fuel to the flame, and increased the hitherto apparently boundless rage of the infuriated natives. But what could they do? They were every soul, man, woman and child, prostrated, and not one had any power to lift a hand against us. Their rage on that occasion surpassed everything that I had ever before witnessed, but that God who can set restraining bounds to the wrath of man, and who can even cause it to redound to his own praise, has, after permitting the enemy to vent his wrath upon us to a certain extent, restrained the remainder of that wrath.

I am not aware of the measles having proved fatal in a single case on this side of the island. That disease was, however, accompanied with diarrhoea, which has cut off many of our old people; and now diarrhoea is followed by sore throat, which is likely to prove more fatal than either of the former. I cannot say to what extent either of these diseases may have prevailed at Mr. Paton's station, but as Mr. Johnston is on the spot he can give you all particulars. It is just about as easy to get letters from Nova Scotia as between the stations on this island. Even in a case of life and death I could not get a messenger to go to Port Resolution, and it is the same case when there is war at either station or between them.

Though I write you thus plainly, think not that we are in the least discouraged. Think not, though the poor Tannese treat us thus badly, that our love to them is in the least degree abated. No, there is not a missionary on Tanna this day but would cheerfully spend his or her life ten times over simply to see one of Tanna's sons or daughters brought to the foot of the Cross--brought to acknowledge blessed Jesus as the only Saviour. O! pray that we may soon witness such a glorious sight. Fear not our personal safety. God is all sufficient, and, from what he has done for us already, we would be encouraged to hope in him for the future.

Yours truly,

J. W. MATHESON.

Rev. James Bayne.

TANA, FEBRUARY 1, 1861.

*Rev. and Dear Brother,*—Though I have not yet had an opportunity of forwarding my last, and know not when I may, still owing to the difficulty in the early stages of a mission—of communicating correct information when writing at long intervals—I have come to the conclusion of writing monthly, of forwarding as opportunities occur, and thus affording you a better opportunity of judging of the true state of the work in which we are engaged.

From the above you must not infer, that when we only write occasionally, that we do not write the truth, but until the Gospel takes hold upon a people, every thing is so fluctuating, that a person requires to be upon the spot, and to witness every movement of the pupils, in order to form anything like a correct idea as to the progression in the retrogression of the work. To-day everything may be encouraging—prospects bright and cheering as you could desire; to-morrow every thing may be the reverse, you may be beaten, your life threatened, and perhaps you dare not venture outside your yard. To-day you may be cheered by seeing numbers listening to the Word of God, apparently with much attention; to-morrow your former prospects may be all blasted, you may be grieved by seeing or by hearing of those of whom you may but yesterday have entertained so favourable an opinion, being engaged in a cannibal feast, eating of the flesh, and