

dangers and afflictions through which our brother here has passed during the last year, they would feel that the trials and dangers of mission life still largely exist.

For some time after Mr. Paton was located on Tanna the natives did not give him much annoyance; but so soon as the work began to make any perceptible progress, the latent hatred and opposition to God's work burst forth. When he commenced to build a church a number of chiefs, with their people, assembled and ordered him to desist. They said—"We hate Jehova, his teachings, his people, and love Satan, his worship, and our sins, &c. We fought away Mr. Turner and one teacher after another whom you sent to teach us. We have now come to fight you (Mr. P.) away; for we know that if you *build that church* we will never be able to drive you and your worship away. So, if you do not leave, we will shoot you." With that some of them raised their guns to shoot him and one man struck at him with a hatchet, but the fatal blow was warded off by an *Anciteum-ese teacher*. He then told them that they might *kill and eat* him, but he would not leave them—that love to their souls brought him here, that his dear wife had died in this cause, and that he would die in it too. These words affected one chief, who sprang before Mr. P. saying, "He that kills *missi* kills me." Others soon imitated him; the strength and spirit of the opposition was broken; the party dispersed; the church is *built*; the missionary still lives; and we hope the native's words will be realized—"If that church is built we can never drive you and your worship from this island." They said afterwards that their arms were powerless, and that they desired to shoot him, but could not. They have frequently threatened to take his life. But with heroic faith and Paul-like courage and devotedness to his Master's service he remains at his post and refuses to leave it. I trust God will effect a great work through our dear brother among this savage and cruel people, who have so long rejected the gospel and excluded it from their shores. Since the scene referred to above there has been a decided change for the better, which appears to be extending daily. But it is a most *critical* time. A small event may lead to the most ruinous results—death of the missionary and the exclusion of the gospel from Tanna. Many earnest prayers should be offered up by the lovers of Zion for Tanna.

As there is no harbour round at Mr. Matheson's side of the island we did not see him, but made provision to meet him on our return at Port Resolution.

We left Tanna at midnight, and reached Dillon's Bay Saturday evening too late to land. It was with peculiar and indescribable feelings that I set my foot upon the blood-stained shores, near the spot where the devoted herald of the cross, full of great and glorious projects for the glory of God and the regeneration and salvation of degraded heathendom, was massacred by those whose present and eternal good he so earnestly sought. After an ascent of 1000 feet we reached Mr. Gordon's station, and received a most cordial welcome from him and his amiable lady. We found them both in the enjoyment of excellent health. We attended native service and found about 50 present, who listened to the Divine Word with apparent attention. During the last year the mission here has passed through sore trials. Prospects of success were blighted, the natives who were attending upon their united instructions dispersed and returned to their former degradation. We hope that this may be the darkness which precedes the light of day. At present there are many indications that the powers of darkness have been foiled in their desperate and malignant efforts, and that already there is a growing and deepening reaction in favour of the cause of Christ. Mr. G. is vigorously prosecuting the work of translation. He has a class of ten young men, whom he is endeavouring to prepare for teachers. Some of these can read very fluently, count, and have some knowledge of Geography. Mrs. G. is once more gathering around her some girls, whom she is instructing. She is patiently labouring on amidst all her trials and discouragements. She appears to be truly devoted to her work and well qualified for it.

It is most sad to reflect that they meet with powerful opposition and that their work was greatly retarded by foreigners (Europeans).

Tuesday, 11th. This morning we are preparing to leave for Anciteum, in company with Mr. Gordon. I have written this letter to you in haste, as an opportunity to forward it to America, by way of China, has just offered itself.