

discouragements. The latter indeed seem at present in our view to overbalance the former, but it will not be so always. We must bear in mind that it is the Lord who reigneth, and he can overrule even those events which appear adverse to us, for the promotion of his own merciful purposes on earth.

I remain, yours, &c.

JOHN GEDDIE.

Rev. James Bayne, Sec. For. Miss.

LETTERS FROM MR. MATHESON.

The Board of Foreign Missions have received, since our last number was issued, several letters from Mr. Matheson, which we subjoin. They tell their own tale of peril and privation, but one fact which they indicate must cause intense gratification throughout the Church. viz., that his health is not only greatly improved, but seemingly entirely restored. The very hand-writing of his letters marks the change which has taken place, while their contents show himself to be almost another man from what he was some time ago. This we cannot but regard as an answer to the many prayers which have been offered throughout the Church on his behalf. In any circumstances the intelligence would have been matter for thankfulness, but in the present state of the Mission calls still more loudly for gratitude to the Preserver of men. And yet it will be seen what reason there still is for earnest prayer that our Missionaries may be preserved under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty.

TANNA, JANUARY 2ND, 1861.

Rev. and Dear Brother.—Wishing you a very happy New Year and many returns of the same, I embrace the present opportunity of writing you a few lines. I am happy to say that we have been permitted to enter upon the duties of another year under circumstances of much comfort and mercy. The Mission families are well, and all of them are busily and happily engaged in their work. Mr. and Mrs. Johnston are still living at Port Resolution, and probably report themselves every opportunity. Matters are not much improved here since we last wrote. God still seems to have a controversy with dark Tanna; and is this year, no less than formerly, resorting to the same expedient to show us where our true strength lies, and that it is in vain to look for aid from any other quarter. Sickness, you know, has always been the great objection of the Tannese against embracing the religion of Jesus; and, strange though it may appear to man, disease and death have invariably followed in the train of every effort which has yet been made to introduce the Gospel to this island. Some of the Samoan and Rarotongan teachers, who were landed here in 1842, soon fell victims to the climate. The year following the arrival of Messrs. Turner and Nisbet dysentery broke out among the natives and swept off great numbers of them. They immediately blamed the missionaries for making them sick, and, whatever opinion they may formerly have entertained about missionaries and their work, they have since looked upon them as the forerunners of everything that is evil. Since our return here there had been very little sickness among the natives; and, as far as that is concerned, we get along as well as we could naturally have expected. Some six weeks ago, however, measles broke out upon this side of the island, from the effects of which many have suffered and are still suffering. Kapuka, who had been living with us for some time, was the first taken ill. His friends endeavoured, and that too effectually, to persuade him that we were the cause of the sickness, and that, if he still continued to live with us, they would all die. He at length yielded to their oft repeated entreaties and left us—more from fear of being killed, I think, than from any fear about us causing the sickness. He knew that if the disease should spread, and if the chiefs should attribute it to the new religion, according to their custom some one or more of our professedly worshipping people should be killed, and none more likely than himself, as he had declared himself most favorable to us. The disease did spread, and, as we feared, the new religion got the credit of it, and never did Pope or Priest more violently hurl anathemas against