

you will see when I have told you one or two things about them in their heathen state.

They had a cruel law amongst them that all foreigners who landed on their shores should be killed directly; and this it was that prevented Teachers taking the Gospel to them for so many years. If any of their own people got away in ships to otherlands and returned, they were instantly killed. This was the case with two young men taken away by Mr Williams. They were told about Jesus, and taught the Word of God at Raiatea, and then carried back to their own land. But soon after they landed they were barbarously murdered by their dark, savage countrymen. They were also almost always at war amongst themselves. People of one village dared not visit the people of another, lest they should be killed. In their wars they were very fierce, and must have had a dreadfully savage look. Their hair and beard were suffered to grow very long, and then twisted round and held between the teeth. They put on the fiercest looks, and made their eyes stand out from their heads in an awful manner. They danced about and yelled, brandishing their spears in a peculiar quivering manner. The weapons which they carried were a club, a bundle of ten spears, and a bag of large round stones hung from their neck. You may form some idea from this description, of what a fierce, savage people they were. And they were cunning as well as savage. A large number of Tongans once came in their canoes and conquered the people of the place at which they landed. After they had lived some time amongst them, the Savage Islanders resolved they would get rid of their oppressors, and this was their plan. There was a deep chasm, narrow at the top and broad at the bottom, which just suited their purpose. The top of this they covered over with cocoanut and other leaves that it might look like solid ground. As the Tongans were living on one side of this chasm, the people assembled on the other side, as though they were going to fight. Seeing this, the Tongans rushed down upon them, and falling headlong into the pit, they were soon killed. Their whitened bones are now lying at the bottom. Another large party of Tongans soon came, and these the people frightened away. They stained their hands and faces with a red juice resembling blood, and then, taking some of their screaming children, went down to the reef and pretended to be eating them. They say the Tongans were so horrified at the idea of their eating their own children that they hurried off, and have never troubled them since.

Of course they were very ignorant. They worshipped a number of false gods, but they do not seem to have made any idols. They had temples, to which they went to pray to

their foolish gods, who, they thought, had power over the wind, rain, disease, life and death. When the wind blew very much for a long time, a large party of men would go into the woods and cut canes and young trees, and take them to their temple for the god to tie the wind up with. Many were their delusions, and dark, very dark were their hearts before the light of the Gospel reached them. But I shall make your letter too long if I write any more about their heathen state. All this has now passed away. If you could see Savage Island as we see it to day, you would not think it could be the place I have been describing. About sixteen years ago one of their own countrymen who had been away to Samoa, was allowed to land to teach them the "new religion." This prepared the way for a Samoan Teacher, who settled on the Island a year or two after. But his box was broken to pieces, and all his little property thrown into the sea, while his life was often threatened, and for some time he was in great danger. But he trusted in God, and continued teaching the people and praying for them. God heard his prayers, and blessed his work. One after another of the people embraced the Gospel. Other teachers came, and the Word of God soon spread over the whole land. Every sign of idolatry was soon swept away. The people are very quick and energetic, and the zeal which they showed as savages is now seen in the service of God. They are decently clothed, and they all attend the house of God. Instead of the wretched huts in which they used to live, scattered about in the woods, they have now respectable houses in nice little villages. They have built five large substantial chapels, seven school houses, and six good houses for the Teachers and the Missionary. You may wonder how they did this, as they had no nails, and the chapels are large and lofty (one will hold a thousand people). I will tell you; they tie their houses together with cinnet—a string made from the fibres of the cocoa nut. They are very strong and firm, and will stand many years. All the people are most persevering traders. As soon as a ship comes in sight, they are all busy collecting their pigs, fowls, arrow root, yams, &c., to take off to her for sale. They will paddle a long way out to sea in their little canoes to get a fathom of print or a hatchet; and they come back sometimes with strange things they have bought. One lad got a pair of ladies white stockings from a ship, and the next Sunday wore them at chapel, but not as you would suppose, on his feet, but on his hands. He looked odd enough as he sat there, with his dark skin and white arms and hands, but he thought himself very grand. Many of the men have some English print or a shirt, but most of the women wear native cloth, which they