

But here I am better than this time last year—a little better—for I am not at all well—the cough still holds on. But am I a better or holier man now than this day twelve months! Alas! I cannot record progress! Would that I could! I hope, however, that I am not in the furnace in vain. I hope that He who sits over the furnace “purifying the sons of Levi,” as gold and silver are purified, can record progress in the growth of grace in my soul. Shall I see another birth-day? Man knows not; but I hope that through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, if I am not on His footstool then, I shall be nearer Himself than now, even when He is beholding His glory.

July 9th.

Sometimes I feel a longing for rest from these tossings and turnings. Probably the quiet of the grave is my only rest on earth, which at times does not seem far off now. This morning when I got up, after a restless night, I could speak only in a whisper. My speech was restored soon after breakfast.

August 15th.

Felt so much worse that I had to call in Dr. Nicholson, of this place. These records are dry, but they are interesting to myself. To me the disease is all the while making progress, gaining ground, destroying vitality. I see at hand the hour that's to number me with the dead! I am wonderfully calm, if not indifferent, at the prospect. I would not be *indifferent* in view of so awful an event. But, alas! the human heart is so callous! With respect to my prospects beyond the grave, I believe I can say, with all humility, that they are good. My only hope is in Christ's finished work—His unspotted righteousness freely given, and imputed to believing sinners. I think I can experimentally say, “I know whom I have believed.” And He has been always so gracious, so tender, so ready to forgive, so long-suffering, such a Saviour of love in times past, that out of the depth of my wretchedness, unworthiness, and half-deservedness, I still have hope big with immortality; and I say again that Jesus Christ, the God man, is the only foundation of it.

Thursday, Sept. 23rd.

I have been rather miserable for the last month. I am now somewhat better, but far from well. Myself and others do all we can to nurse me up, but my cough holds triumphantly on its way notwithstanding. My dear wife is like a ministering angel about me with unwearied attention. I breakfast in bed every morning. I take codliver oil, half-a-pint a week, and pancreatic emulsion, daily. Mr. Whyte has kindly placed his pony at my disposal, so

that I can have saddle exercise as often as I wish. Several other friends are very kind to us, and to myself in particular. He loads me daily with His benefits. For myself I have not much hope of a return to health. I own I have some desire to remain awhile longer. I feel a growing acquiescence in an early removal; if so, the Lord wills it. I have many thoughts passing through my mind—some of them important—but owing to my weakness I cannot put them on record.” This extract, dated Sept. 23rd, exactly a month before his decease, was the last he ever wrote in his diary.

New Hebridean Sketches.

No. V.

Before we begin to descend from these mountain tops into the valleys, we would linger a few minutes to point out that which more than once, during the melting heat of the month of February, invigorated, stimulated, and cheered us. During the month of February, on the low land, the thermometer sometimes stands at 145° in the sun. Up here it stands at 45°. Add to this agreeable change refreshing streams of clear, cold water—over our head a perfect canopy, formed by the broad branches of tall trees, with their thousands of evergreen leaves horizontally spread above us. Many lively waterfalls, whose gushing streams leap from projecting rocks high up in the mountain side, fall in cooling showers of silvery spray all around, and afford not only a most agreeable and healthy, but also a free, bath. Birds with gorgeous plumage, flying from twig to twig, but as if made unhappy by the sinfulness of their land, all refuse to sing. Wild flowers, in great variety and abundance, are seen up here at every step. The trees are very tall, and clusters of pretty ferns are seen growing high up in the branches. I suspect that during the fructification of these ferns the seeds are floating about in the air, and wherever they fall they take root and grow. Creeping vines, entwining themselves around the trees, and to their very tops those trees are decked with flowers and variegated leaves in beauty surpassing description.

As you pass from this peaceful grove to the brow of the hill overlooking the valley,