

of Tanna. On arriving at Port Resolution the chiefs received a summons to go on board of the ship, which they did not obey. The summons was repeated with a threat, but it was unheeded still. The threat drew from the natives a message which amounted to something like a challenge. The Commodore now thought that his honour was at stake, and that he must give the natives a practical demonstration of his power; and so the ship was cleared out for action. A bombardment was commenced which lasted for some hours, during which nearly two hundred shots were fired from large guns, besides hosts of rifle shots, and a proportionate number of rockets. A party was also sent on shore to "destroy canoes, houses, plantations, and property of every description that was accessible." The whole scene is described by the spectators as grand, impressive and terrible. I am sure that my missionary brethren must have felt themselves for once out of their proper element; and more than the Tannese will be inclined to say that Rom. x. 15 would be inappropriate to them at the time, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." The effect of all this display of physical power was the destruction of a large amount of property, from which the Tannese will suffer for years to come. This would have been bad enough, but we have to deplore the loss of life also. One man belonging to the ship was shot by a native who had concealed himself in a tree. A native was cut down also, and thought to be killed, but has since recovered from his wounds. Three natives were instantly destroyed by the bursting of an unexploded shell after the ship left, and some others were wounded. The wife of one of the men killed by the shell went and hanged herself from respect or grief for her husband. A few months later the daughter of a friendly chief who had assisted the missionaries to interpret was shot to revenge his conduct, and he was severely beaten. Such are the results of the *Curacoa's* visit to Tanna, and her achievements there will add but little to the lustre of the British name. I ought to mention that my brethren decline the responsi-

bility of what has been done. They consider that their duty ended when their complaint was made, and that the Commodore is responsible for the rest. This melancholy case teaches solemn lessons, and if we had no higher considerations for our guidance, it ought to make us pause before we invoke a power to our aid over which we have no control.

The question now arises why were the Tannese so severely dealt with? One charge against them is breach of promise to protect their missionary. If this means a promise of protection against enemies outside of the tribe in whose district he lived, no such promise was ever made. Indeed the late Mr. Gordon would have been settled at Port Resolution had not Miaki the chief positively refused all protection against neighbouring tribes. I made arrangements about the settlement of Mr. Paton before his arrival on the islands, and all that I asked of the chief was that his people should not molest him. As far as I know of the history of the mission he adhered to the spirit of this request to the last.

Another charge against the Tannese is the destruction of human life. The first case is that of Vasa, a Samoan teacher, who, during the prevalence of a fatal disease, was waylaid by some natives and killed, under the impression that the new religion was the cause of it. The deed was committed more than twenty years ago when Tanna was the mission field of the London Missionary Society. As the brethren of that Society had made no complaint against the natives, respect for their views and feelings should have prevented the revival of this case after such a lapse of time. Another case, mentioned in a letter of one of the missionaries, is the murder of a white man at Port Resolution. This happened before Mr. Paton left Scotland for the islands. I was there a few days after the deed took place. The account given to me was as follows:—"The white man had a quarrel with one of the chiefs about some trifle, and angry words passed between them. The former seized his gun and aimed it at the native, but the gun missed fire. He next raised the gun to strike him,