

fallen several of the islands in these seas, where christianity has been embraced as if to try the faith and sincerity of the natives. After the introduction of christianity on Rarotonga the population was greatly reduced by disease, and the island was desolated by hurricanes. When the missionaries had been on Samoa about as long a time as I have spent on Aneiteum, a civil war broke out and continued for some years, which severely tested the missionary work. I cannot say what effect the calamities which I have mentioned may have on the natives of this island, but so far as I have had an opportunity of conversing with them, they seem to take a proper view of them, and many natives at a distance have sent me word that their trials have in no respect weakened their attachment to christianity, and that they are ready to submit to God's will in all things.

In looking at our troubles, we are sustained by the assurance that God doeth all things well. The mission needed these trials, or they would not have been sent. They appear dark and mysterious to us at present, but God may have gracious and benevolent designs in view by them. I trust that they may not be discouraging to the church at home, they are not so to us here, though we feel them much. May they lead you and us to more humble dependence on God, and more earnest and prayerful efforts for the furtherance of his cause. In the providence of God it sometimes happens that great judgments are followed by great mercies. Let us pray, and hope, and believe that it may be so in the present instance.

NEIGHBOURING ISLANDS

I regret that I cannot give you information about the neighbouring islands, as we have not had communication with them for three months. The "John Knox" was launched this week and will sail for the islands in a few days. Our brethren will probably have trials to record as well as ourselves.

I long much for letters. We have not yet heard of the arrival of our dear children in Nova Scotia. A vessel is expected from Sydney next week, and will probably bring us the letters we so much desire.

THOUGHTS ON THE UNION.

I trust that the union between our own and the Free Church has taken place, or is near at hand. Such an event would be advantageous to the cause of religion at home, and to the missions of the respective churches abroad. As soon as you consummate the matter at home, might not a brother from the Free Church be sent to this mission, and one from our own be sent to Turkey. This would interest both branches in the respective missions, and practically unite us who are on the mission field.

I remain, Rev. and Dear Sir, ever yours, &c..

Rev. James Bayne, Sec. B. F. M.. P. C. N. S.

JOHN GEDDIE.

ANEITEUM, APRIL 18th, 1861.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:—The "John Knox" has just arrived from Tana. She brings the sad tidings that our dear brother Johnston is no more, and that several of the Aneiteumese have died of measles and dysentery. Mr. Paton's valuable letter to you contains all necessary information, and will be read with intense interest by the Church at large. Mrs. Johnston has come to this island, and will remain with us for the present. Her health is not good, and she suffers from fever and ague. She has all our sympathy in her great affliction.

We are all indebted to Mr. Paton for the full account he has written of our brothers' illness. He is of opinion that death was caused by the immoderate use of laudanum. Mr. Johnston thought that his disease was inflammation of the brain. From the information given to me by Mrs. Johnston I should incline to the idea, that he died of apoplexy in its serous form. I think that with the information contained in Mr. Paton's letter to you, and Mrs. Johnston's letters, a medical man might be able to give an opinion of the case satisfactory to friends.

The death of our dear brother, though gain to him, is a serious loss to the Mission. He was an amiable man, and his piety, zeal and devotedness fitted him for eminent usefulness. His affectionate disposition and manner soon won the hearts of the natives, and he was a favourite among those by whom he was known. His name will long be remembered on Aneiteum. But why was a man of such promise removed at the very commencement of his missionary life? This is a mystery which eternity alone will reveal. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, neither are his ways as our ways. Clouds and darkness are round