

missionary societies of England and America. We would be unfaithful to the cause of justice and humanity, as well as christianity, if we did not strongly denounce the whole affair as entirely contrary to the spirit of the gospel, as opposed to the practice of the most successful missionaries of ancient or modern times, likely to be attended with most disastrous consequences to our missionary affairs, and directly in the teeth of the commission of our great Master.

It may be said that at this distance we are not capable of judging what is right in the circumstances. But independent of the view we hold of the right or wrong of such proceedings, in condemning them we are only expressing the convictions of the most successful missionaries everywhere, particularly of those in the South Seas. With the exception of that miserable abortion, called "Muscular Christianity," we know of no instance of such a proceeding in the history of modern missions. For sixty years the London Missionary Society has been conducting missionary operations in the South Seas, and during all that time the agents have repudiated any interference of British men-of-war with the natives. Their missionaries have gone to people as savage as any in the New Hebrides, and have been placed in circumstances of as great trial and danger as ever our missionaries were, and yet, never in a single instance, have they resorted to arms, or allowed a single shot to be fired on the natives in their behalf; nor have they, in a single instance, become answerable for the wanton or revengeful destruction of a single article of property, even of the poorest savage. Acting in this way they have subdued to the Prince of peace, people the most noted in the South Seas for their cruelty. The *John Williams* has sailed among these islands for twenty years, but has ever gone as a messenger of peace, and though sometimes placed in very trying and perilous circumstances, has never yet been implicated in a single act of violence against the natives. Mr. Geddie, or Bishop Selwyn, would have died rather than have had a finger in such proceedings. Alas that our missionaries should have so yielded to wordly policy as

to adopt a course so entirely opposed to the experience of these men. We have not the least doubt that unless such a mode of proceeding be repudiated for the future, the agents of the L. M. S. in the South Seas will refuse all connection with our mission, as conducted on principles that they regard as opposed to the spirit of the gospel of peace.

The successes which have followed the labours of devoted men acting in this spirit, are among the most glorious evidences of the power of the gospel in modern times. We may observe also that their experience has shown, that it is the only way in which we can hope to win such savages. While they can be won by kindness, all the power of the British Navy cannot bring them one step nearer to Christianity. Nay, the employment of such power on its behalf can have no other effect than to render them more opposed to it than ever. We think that he must be blind indeed, who can expect any other result from the proceedings on Tanna and Erromanga, than a more bitter hostility against the gospel. For the opening of the door of entrance on the former, we have long prayed; but by these proceedings we may consider it locked and double barred and bolted, so that unless some remarkable interposition of divine Providence takes place it will be years before it be again opened; and if even missionaries labor there they will find their difficulties vastly increased. It is well known that some of the greatest difficulties of missionaries in Western Polynesia, arose from the conduct of white men. Their untold brutalities have excited such hatred against all white men, that it is only by showing the natives the difference between missionaries and other white men, that any access can be obtained to them. Hence it has been the first aim of missionaries hitherto, to give their confidence by peaceable conduct and the entire disuse of weapons of war. But the deplorable thing about this affair is, that now the missionaries are so identified with these violent proceedings, that they can not, for a long time at least, be separated in the minds of the natives, from other white