

headed. Captain Hope was desirous to see the volcano, but doubted the propriety of venturing after the proceedings of the *Cura-coa* last year. All possible inquiries were made, however, from the chiefs who were friendly, as well as the two Aneiteumese teachers now resident at Port Resolution. Next morning, having satisfied Captain Hope as to all particulars about the route, the distance, the tribes, the chiefs, &c., &c., we formed a party of fourteen including six officers from the *Brisk*, and accompanied by the Captain's favourite Newfoundland dog 'Prince.' We engaged the services of a chief who has considerable influence in the district near the volcano, and whom we found a most intelligent and interesting guide.

Having joined us with a party of his men we numbered about twenty-four in all and assayed the heights in the direction of the volcano. To provide for accidents in the ascent or descent, such as spraining, fractures, wounds or fainting fits, we had the valuable services of the Surgeon and Assistant Surgeon. The former is an Ulster-man like myself, and is esteemed for his skill in the healing art. The latter is from Edinburgh and is named Cruikshank. He is the very essence of good-nature. We had also the Chaplain the Rev. J. B. Smyth brother of the Surgeon W. D. Smyth M.D. and also two or three lieutenants.

At first we did not relish the steep ascent and narrow paths, but we soon got more freedom in the joints and ease in our limbs generally. We passed through dense bush reminding Captain Hope of New Zealand and a day in the woods there. He said it was not uncommon to make a way for oneself with an axe, so thick were the branches and so dense the wood. Frequently a stately tree would tempt him to pause and admire, at other times he would single out a fern and compare it with some he had seen. Or he would refer to the Surgeons who from their study of botany would assist him to describe or classify. Meanwhile the chief who lead the way would point out objects of interest, and tell of parties who went pigeon shooting with him. Thus we proceeded till we reached a village where we

paused to get a cocoa-nut with its refreshing milk. Having allayed our thirst, we continued our journey till we approached the smoking mountain. Here a gentle shower cooled our heated skin, and we set off again to reach the height of our ambition.

At length we found ourselves at the edge of the crater. There had just been an eruption and we saw stones hurled away into the air a considerable height, and followed by a dense cloud of smoke and sulphur. The noise of the eruption resembled grape shot in the water, or not unlike the sound of a rocket as it shoots up towards the sky. Several Tannese remained at some distance from the edge of the crater, and when an eruption occurred, and we started back as if afraid of suffocation or getting a shower of stones about our heads, they laughed loud and long at us and seemed to enjoy it very much.

Having satisfied ourselves with the sight of the black mountain, we came down to take a little nourishment, and enjoyed a few biscuits very much. But we had not sat very long till a heavy shower came on and we were forced to beat a hasty retreat. Following our guide or guides (for we now had several) we returned to the village and made some purchases of fowls, vegetables, and yams, which were forthwith conveyed to the boat. When we reached the boat our clothes were drenched, and we used all expedition in changing them. Thus ended our expedition to the burning mountain on Tanna.

Captain Hope had no hesitation in attributing our safety to the result of the *Cura-coa's* proceedings last year. Instead of molesting us, these Tannese were delighted to see us. Had they meditated revenge they could easily have overpowered us, but not the slightest injury was offered to any one of our party.

As for Captain Hope, a more thorough gentleman I have never had the pleasure of knowing. He is a fine scholar, an ardent lover of nature, and a very successful diplomatist. He is very considerate, and has a high sense of honour and the dignity of his office. His men are like himself very efficient, and I venture to say that no ship in