

restraint. Having promised to protect us, they fear to kill us themselves, lest they should betray confidence and thus lose the respect of their people. They consider however, that if the people of another land kill us, that they are free from all blame, and can thus wash their hands in innocency. In order to carry out their bloody design, they delegated Fiamaga (who was a man of blood from his youth and who can probably count his slain by hundreds) and Yaresi to deliver their message, knowing that we would not suspect Yaresi to have any evil design against us. Previous to the sending of the deputation, they had agreed, that as soon as we had gone to Port Resolution, they would fall upon us all and despatch us together. I did not know until yesterday the nature of the plot, which they had laid, though it was evident that our not complying with their request, caused them much apparent dissatisfaction.

That evening I went down to the shore and saw some 150 or 200 persons sitting in groups along the beach. Some of them were persons, whom I had never seen before, and others were from all parts of my district, and even miles beyond. The seeing of them there confirmed our suspicion of Fiamaga's visit in the morning. I asked several persons, wherefore they were thus assembled. They all declared that their meeting was purely accidental, though I afterwards heard that they had agreed upon our complying with Fiamaga's and Yaresi's request (which they naturally supposed we would do) to rob the premises of everything upon which they could lay their hands. I soon set their minds to rest as to whether or not we were going away, and set some three or four of them to work to make a boat house, for which I promised to pay them when they would have it completed. I always find it work well when I come across a party manufacturing devilment, to set them to work at something, even though it should not always be essentially necessary. If you find a number assembled planning mischief, and say anything to them, they will immediately flee in every direction and afford you no opportunity of speaking or reasoning with them. But give them a small piece of work to perform, promise them a trifle for the completing of it, and while engaged you can say what you will, and have an opportuni-

ty for saying a word in season, which you could not under any other circumstances. The natives among whom we hire are beginning to understand my method of procedure, and so great is their hatred to the word of God, that we cannot get one of them to perform the smallest piece of work for any remuneration, lest while thus engaged, we should speak to them about their souls and the necessity of seeking an interest in Christ. I do not remember of even Kapuka being inside our yard since about New Year's, and he is the only one on this side of the island, who we can say is not our inveterate enemy, whose hatred to the Gospel and everything connected with the name of the blessed Jesus is not inveterate in the extreme. At present he seems to hold a neutral position—says little for or against us. Probably if the excitement had not run so high, he would have less hesitation in openly declaring on the Lord's side; but while matters continue as they are, he or any other person, who should open his mouth in favour of the Gospel or even come about us to receive instruction would be shot.

The Aneiteumese have all been obliged to flee to the mission premises for protection. Those living nearest to Mr. Paton fled to his station. Those nearest this station have taken refuge in our yard, where they will remain if spared until they have an opportunity of going home. We are all well at both stations. I need not ask you to pray for us. I know you do. May God soon answer your prayers.

Average male attendance at public worship during the past 3 months, Jan. 94, Feb. 121, March 114.

Yours truly,
J. W. MATHESON.

TANA, May 1, 1861.

Rev. and Dear Brother,—Having so few opportunities of forwarding letters from this out of the world kind of a place, it seems useless to write—as those who are living at harbours have more frequent opportunities of corresponding with you, and of keeping you well posted in all passing events.

Of the dreadful hurricane which passed over this and the adjacent islands on the 14th of March, you have doubtless been duly informed, and also of some of the consequences which neces-