

# THE HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD.

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## DISASTROUS INTELLIGENCE FROM THE NEW HEBRIDES.

By the letters of Mr. Paton, which we publish in another part of our present No., it will be seen that the trials of our New Hebrides Mission have been crowned by the entire breaking up of our Mission on Tana. For some time every communication from that island has been looked for with the deepest anxiety. The ceaseless perils by which the Missionaries were surrounded for twelve months, had prepared us for the worst intelligence that could be received, so that now we receive these tidings almost with a feeling of relief, since the lives of all are safe. Still God has been laying his hand heavily upon us. The loss of Mission property is serious, but it is far more sad to contemplate the total cessation of all Missionary labour on that island, after years of arduous toil,—after so much self-denial—after the endurance of privations and the encountering of dangers, such as have been the portion of few modern Missionaries—after so many prayers—and even after the precious lives that have been freely given for its evangelization. The fact is all the more striking and mysterious, that the new danger like the past has originated in another remarkable visitation of Divine Providence. He who gathereth the winds in his fists has let loose the hurricane, scattering desolation in its track, and Satan has taken advantage of this to excite the ignorant and superstitious natives, to drive away God's servants and extinguish his work on that island.

Distressing as these events are, we have reason for the deepest gratitude to God for the mercy which has been mingled with this cup—especially in the remarkable interposition of Divine Providence by which the lives of his servants were preserved. At Mr. Matheson's station there is no harbour, and access at times was so difficult, that at the last visits of the *John Knox* and the *John Williams*, it was found impossible to hold communication with the shore. It is therefore the more surprising, that a vessel should arrive just at the moment of danger, and that the wind and sea were in such a state that the Missionaries could take refuge on board. He must be blind or hard hearted, who refused to see and gratefully acknowledge the hand of Him who ruleth over all, and who has said said, "He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within thee, bless his holy name. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercy."

For the present of course the work on Tana may be considered as definitely abandoned. It would be madness to think of attempting to resume it, until a great change has passed over the island and the disposition of the inhabitants. Indeed one almost doubts whether we ever had a call to go