

further, when she went to Tanna, where, in less than three months, she had collected a class of eight females, who came regularly to her to receive instruction. There was about her a maturity of thought, a solidity of character, a loftiness of aim and purpose, rarely found in one so young. Trained up in the fear of the Lord from childhood, like another Mary she had evidently chosen that good part, which is never taken away from those possessed of it. When she left this island, she had to all human appearance a long career of usefulness and happiness on Earth before her, but the Lord has appointed otherwise. She has gone, as we trust, to her rest and her reward. The Lord has said to her, as He said to David, 'Thou didst well in that it was in thine heart to build a House for My Name.' Let us watch and pray, for our Lord cometh as a thief in the night."

Soon after her death, the good Bishop Selwyn called at Port Resolution, Tanna, in his Mission Ship. He came on shore to visit me, accompanied by the Rev. J. C. Patteson. They had met Mrs. Paton on Aneityum in the previous year soon after our arrival, and, as she was then the picture of perfect health, they also felt her loss very keenly. Standing with me beside the grave of mother and child, I weeping aloud on his one hand, and Patteson—afterwards the Martyr Bishop of Nakupu—sobbing silently on the other, the godly Bishop Selwyn poured out his heart to God amidst sobs and tears, during which he laid his hands on my head, and invoked Heaven's richest consolations and blessings on me and my trying labours.

Sorrow and love constrain me to linger over her last words. She cried, "Oh, that my dear mother were here! She is a good woman, my mother, a jewel of a woman."

Then, observing Mr. Copeland near by, she said, "Oh, Mr. Copeland, I did not know you were there! You must not think that I regret coming here, and leaving my mother. If I had the same thing to do over again, I would do it with far more pleasure, yes, with all my heart. Oh no! I do not regret leaving home and friends, though at the time I felt it keenly."

Soon after this, looking up and putting her hand in mine, she said—

"J. C. wrote to our Janet saying, that young Christians

under their first impressions thought they could do anything or make any sacrifice for Jesus, and he asked if she believed it, for he did not think they could, when tested; but Janet wrote back that she believed they could, and (added she with great emphasis) *I believe it is true!*"

In a moment, altogether unexpectedly, she fell asleep in Jesus, with these words on her lips. "Not lost, only gone before to be for ever with the Lord"—my heart keeps saying or singing to itself from that hour till now.

It was very difficult to be resigned, left alone, and in sorrowful circumstances; but feeling immovably assured that my God and Father was too wise and loving to err in anything that He does or permits, I looked up to the Lord for help, and struggled on in His work. I do not pretend to see through the mystery of such visitations,—wherein God calls away the young, the promising, and those sorely needed for His service here; but this I do know and feel, that, in the light of such dispensations, it becomes us all to love and serve our blessed Lord Jesus so that we may be ready at His call for death and Eternity.

## CHAPTER XV

### AT HOME WITH CANNIBALS

IN the first letter, sent jointly by Mr. Copeland and myself from Tanna to the Church at home, the following statements occur:—

"We found the Tannese to be painted Savages, enveloped in all the superstition and wickedness of Heathenism. All the men and children go in a state of nudity. The older women wear grass skirts, and the young women and girls, grass or leaf aprons like Eve in Eden. They are exceedingly ignorant, vicious, and bigoted, and almost void of natural affection. Instead of the inhabitants of Port Resolution being improved by coming in contact with white men they are rendered much worse; for they have learned all their vices but none of their virtues,—if such are possessed by the pioneer traders among such races! The Sandal-wood Traders are as a class the most godless of men, whose cruelty and wickedness make us

ashamed to own them as our countrymen. By them the poor defenceless Natives are oppressed and robbed on every hand; and if they offer the slightest resistance, they are ruthlessly silenced by the musket or revolver. Few months here pass without some of them being so shot, and, instead of their murderers feeling ashamed, they boast of how they despatch them. Such treatment keeps the Natives always burning under a desire for revenge, so that it is a wonder any white man is allowed to come among them. Indeed, all Traders here are able to maintain their position only by revolvers and rifles; but we hope a better state of affairs is at hand for Tanna."

The novelty of our being among them soon passed away, and they began to show their avarice and deceitfulness in every possible way. The Chiefs united and refused to give us the half of the small piece of land which had been purchased, on which to build our Mission House, and when we attempted to fence in the part they had left to us, they "tabooed" it, *i.e.* threatened our Teachers and us with death if we proceeded further with the work. This they did by placing certain reeds stuck into the ground here and there around our house, which our Aneityumese servants at once knew the meaning of, and warned us of our danger; so we left off making the fence, that we might if possible evade all offence. They then divided the few breadfruit and cocoa-nut trees on the ground amongst themselves, or demanded such payment for these trees as we did not possess, and threatened revenge on us if the trees were injured by any person. They now became so unreasonable and offensive, and our dangers so increased, as to make our residence amongst them extremely trying. At this time a vessel called; I bought from the Captain the things for payment which they demanded; on receiving it, they lifted the Taboo, and for a little season appeared to be friendly again. This was the third payment they had got for that site, and to yield was teaching them a cruel lesson; all this we felt and clearly saw, but they had by some means to be conciliated, if possible, and our lives had to be saved, if that could be done without dishonour to the Christian name.

After these events, a few weeks of dry weather began to tell against the growth of their yams and bananas. The drought was instantly ascribed to us and our God. The Natives

far and near were summoned to consider the matter in public assembly. Next day, Nouka, the high chief, and Miaki, the war-chief, his nephew, came to inform us that two powerful Chiefs had openly declared in that assembly that if the Harbour people did not at once kill us or compel us to leave the island, they would, unless the rain came plentifully in the meantime, summon all the Inland people and murder both our Chiefs and us. The friendly Chiefs said, "Pray to your Jehovah God for rain, and do not go far beyond your door for a time; we are all in greatest danger, and if war breaks out we fear we cannot protect you."

But this friendliness was all pretence; they themselves, being Sacred Men, professed to have the power of sending or withholding rain, and tried to fix the blame of their discomfiture on us. The rage of the poor ignorant Heathen was thereby fed against us. The Ever-Merciful, however, again interposed on our behalf. On the following Sabbath, just when we were assembling for worship, rain began to fall, and in great abundance. The whole inhabitants believed, apparently, that it was sent to save us in answer to our prayers; so they met again, and resolved to allow us to remain on Tanna. Alas! on the other hand, the continuous and heavy rains brought much sickness and fever in their train, and again their Sacred Men pointed to us as the cause. Hurricane winds also blew and injured their fruits and fruit-trees,—another opportunity for our enemies to lay the blame of everything upon the Missionaries and their Jehovah God! The trial and the danger daily grew of living among a people so dreadfully benighted by superstition, and so easily swayed by prejudice and passion.

The Natives of Tanna were well-nigh constantly at war amongst themselves, every man doing that which was right in his own eyes, and almost every quarrel ending in an appeal to arms. Besides many battles far inland, one was fought beside our house, and several around the Harbour. In these conflicts many men were bruised with clubs and wounded with arrows, but few lives were lost, considering the savage uproar and frenzy of the scene. In one case, of which we obtained certain information, seven men were killed in an engagement; and, according to Tannese custom, the warriors and their friends feasted on them at the close of the fray, the

widows of the slain being also strangled to death, and similarly disposed of. Besides those who fell in war, the Natives living in our quarter had killed and feasted on eight persons, usually in sacrificial rites.

It is said that the habitual Cannibal's desire for human flesh becomes so horrible that he has been known to disinter and feast upon those recently buried. Two cases of this revolting barbarism were reported as having occurred amongst the villagers living near us. On another occasion the great chief Nōuka took seriously unwell, and his people sacrificed three women for his recovery! All such cruel and horrifying practices, however, they tried to conceal from us; and many must have perished in this way of whom we, though living at their doors, were never permitted to hear.

Amongst the Heathen, in the New Hebrides, and especially on Tanna, *woman* is the down-trodden slave of man. She is kept working hard, and bears all the heavier burdens, while he walks by her side with musket, club, or spear. If she offends him, he beats or abuses her at pleasure. A Savage gave his poor wife a severe beating in front of our house and just before our eyes, while in vain we strove to prevent it. Such scenes were so common that no one thought of interfering. Even if the woman died in his hands, or immediately thereafter, neighbours took little notice, if any at all. And their children were so little cared for, that my constant wonder was how any of them survived at all! As soon as they are able to knock about, they are left practically to care for themselves; hence the very small affection they show towards their parents, which results in the aged who are unable to work being neglected, starved to death, and sometimes even more directly and violently destroyed.

A Heathen boy's education consists in being taught to aim skilfully with the bow, to throw the spear faultlessly at a mark, to wield powerfully the club and tomahawk, and to shoot well with musket and revolver when these can be obtained. He accompanies his father and brothers in all the wars and preparations for war, and is diligently initiated into all their cruelties and lusts, as the very prerequisite of his being regarded and acknowledged to be a *man* and a warrior. The girls have, with their mother and sisters, to toil and slave in the village plantations, to prepare all the materials for fencing



"Amongst the Heathen, especially on Tanna, *woman* is the downtrodden slave of man."

these around, to bear every burden, and to be knocked about at will by the men and boys.

Oh, how sad and degraded is the position of Woman where the teaching of Christ is unknown, or disregarded though known! It is the Christ of the Bible, it is His Spirit entering into Humanity, that has lifted Woman, and made her the helpmate and the friend of Man, not his toy or his slave.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SUPERSTITIONS AND CRUELITIES

ABOUT the time of my dear wife's death, our brother Missionary, Mr. Mathieson, also became exceedingly unwell. His delicate frame fast gave way, and brought with it weakness of the mind as well; and he was removed to Aneityum apparently in a dying condition. These sad visitations had a bad effect on the Natives, owing to their wild superstitions about the cause of death and sickness. We had reason to fear that they would even interfere with the precious grave, over which we kept careful watch for a season; but God mercifully restrained them. Unfortunately, however, one of my Aneityumese Teachers who had gone round to Mr. Mathieson's Station took ill and died there, and this rekindled all their prejudices. He, poor fellow, before death said, "I shall not again return to Port Resolution, or see my dear Missi; but tell him that I die happy, for I love Jesus much, and am going to Jesus!"

Hearing these things, the Natives insolently demanded me to tell them the cause of this death, and of Mr. Mathieson's trouble, and of the other deaths. Other reasoning or explanation being to them useless, I turned the tables, and demanded them to tell me why all this trouble and death had overtaken us in their land, and whether they themselves were not the cause of it all? Strange to say, this simple question turned the whole current of their speculations. They held meeting after meeting to discuss it for several days, and returned the message, "We do not blame you, and you must not blame us, for causing these troubles and deaths; but we believe that a

Bushman must have got hold of a portion of something we had eaten, and must have thrown it to the great Evil Spirit in the volcano, thereby bringing all these troubles and curses."

Another Chief vindicated himself and others thus:—"Karanamun, the Aurumanu or great Evil Spirit of Tanna, whom we all fear and worship, is causing these troubles; for he knows that if we become worshippers of your Jehovah God, we cannot continue to fear him, or present him with the best of everything, as our forefathers have always done; he is angry at you and at us all."

The fear of the deaths and troubles being ascribed to them silenced their talk against us for a season; but very little made them either friends or foes, as the next event will too painfully show.

Nowhat, an old Chief of the highest rank from Aneityum, who spoke Tannese and was much respected by the Natives all round the south side of Tanna, came on a visit to our island. After returning home, he became very ill and died in a few days. The deluded Tannese, hearing of his death, ascribed it to me and the Worship, and resolved to burn our house and property, and either murder the whole Mission party, or compel us to leave the island. Nowhat's brother was sent from Aneityum to talk to the Tannese and conciliate them, but unfortunately he could not speak the language well; and the Aneityumese Teachers felt their lives to be at this time in such danger that they durst not accompany him as interpreters, while I, on the other hand, did not understand his language, nor he, mine. Within two days after landing, he had a severe attack of ague and fever; and, though the vessel he came in remained eight days, he was prostrated all the time, so that his well-intentioned visit did us much harm. The Tannese became furious. This was proof positive, that we were the cause of all their sickness and death! Inland and all along the weather side of the island, when far enough away from us, they said that the Natives were enjoying excellent health. Meeting after meeting was held; exciting speeches were delivered; and feasts were given, for which it was said that several women were sacrificed, cooked, and eaten,—such being the bonds by which they entered into covenant with each other for life or death.

The inhabitants for miles around united in seeking our

destruction, but God put it into even savage hearts to save us. Old Nowar, the Chief under whom we lived, and the Chief next under him, Arkurat, set themselves to rescue us. Along with Manuman and Sirawia they opposed every plan in the public assembly for taking our lives. Some of their people also remained friendly to us, and by the help of our Aneityumese Teachers, warned us of danger and protected our lives. Determined not to be baffled, a meeting of all our enemies on the island was summoned, and it was publicly resolved that a band of men be selected and enjoined to kill the whole of those friendly to the Mission, old Nowar among the rest, and not only to murder the Mission party, but also a Trader who had lately landed to live there, that no one might be left to give information to the white men or bring punishment on the Islanders. Frenzy of excitement prevailed, and the bloodfiend seemed to override the whole assembly; when, under an impulse that surely came from the Lord of Pity, one great warrior Chief who had hitherto kept silent, rose, swung aloft a mighty club, and smashing it earthwards, cried aloud, "The man that kills Missi must first kill me,—the men that kill the Mission Teachers must first kill me and my people,—for we shall stand by them and defend them till death."

Instantaneously, another Chief thundered in with the same declaration; and the great assembly broke up in dismay. All the more remarkable was this deliverance, as these two Chiefs lived nearly four miles inland, and, as reputed disease makers and Sacred Men, were regarded as amongst our bitterest enemies. It had happened that, a brother of the former Chief having been wounded in battle, I had dressed his wounds and he recovered, for which perhaps he now favoured us. But I do not put very much value on that consideration; for too clearly did our dear Lord Jesus interpose directly on our behalf that day. I and my defenceless company had spent it in anxious prayers and tears; and our hearts overflowed with gratitude to the Saviour who rescued us from the lions' jaws.

Leaving all consequences to the disposal of my Lord, I determined to make an unflinching stand against wife-beating and widow-strangling, feeling confident that even their natural conscience would be on my side. I accordingly pled with all who were in power to unite and put down these shocking and

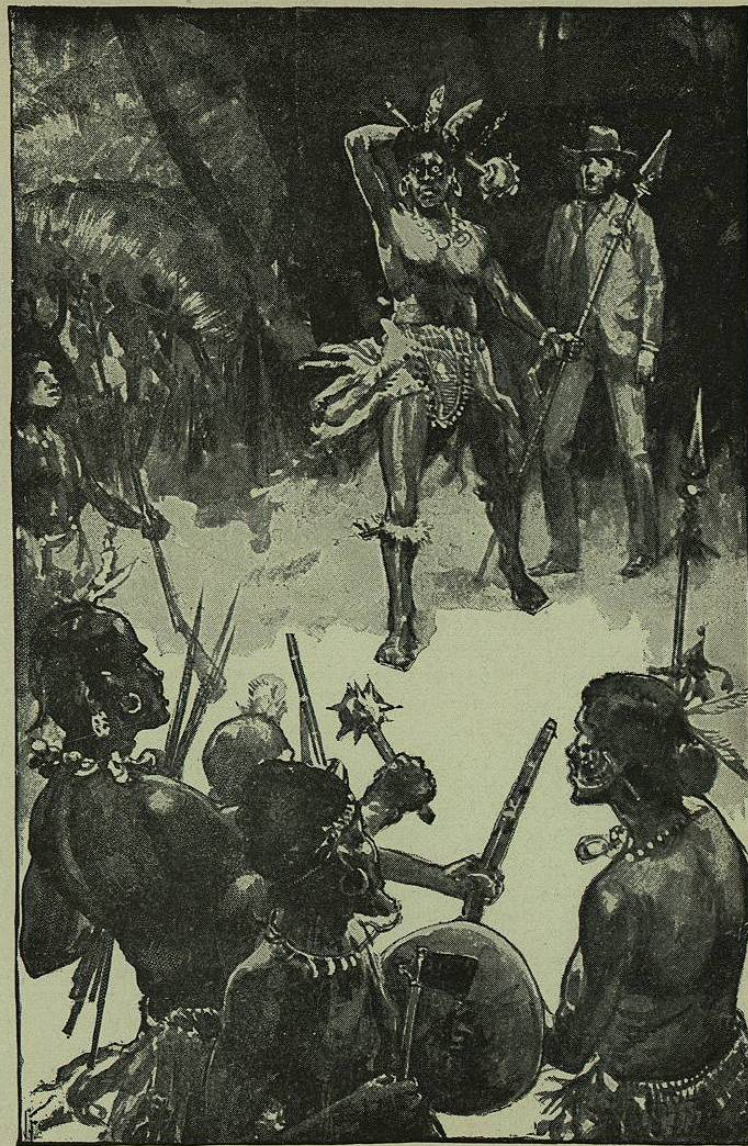
disgraceful customs. At length, ten Chiefs entered into an agreement not to allow any more beating of wives or strangling of widows, and to forbid all common labour on the Lord's Day; but alas, except for purposes of war or other wickedness, the influence of the Chiefs on Tanna was comparatively small. One Chief boldly declared, "If we did not beat our women, they would never work; they would not fear and obey us; but when we have beaten, and killed, and feasted on two or three, the rest are all very quiet and good for a long time to come!"

I tried to show him how cruel it was, besides that it made them unable for work, and that kindness would have a much better effect; but he promptly assured me that Tannese women "could not understand kindness." For the sake of teaching by example, my Aneityumese Teachers and I used to go a mile or two inland on the principal pathway, along with the Teachers' wives, and there cutting and carrying home a heavy load of firewood for myself and each of the men, while we gave only a small burden to each of the women. Meeting many Tanna-men by the way, I used to explain to them that this was how Christians helped and treated their wives and sisters, and then they loved their husbands and were strong to work at home; and that as men were made stronger, they were intended to bear the heavier burdens, and especially in all labours out of doors. Our habits and practices had thus as much to do as, perhaps more than, all our appeals, in leading them to glimpses of the life to which the Lord Jesus was calling them.

## CHAPTER XVII

### STREAKS OF DAWN AMIDST DEEDS OF DARKNESS

ANOTHER war-burst, that caused immense consternation, passed over with only two or three deaths; and I succeeded in obtaining the consent of twenty Chiefs to fight no more except on the defensive,—a covenant to which, for a considerable time, they strictly adhered, in the midst of fierce provocations. But to gain any such end, the masses of the people must be



"The man that kills Missi must first kill me."

educated to the point of desiring it. The few cannot, in such circumstances, act up to it, without laying themselves open to be downtrodden and swept away by the Savages around.

About this time, several men, afraid or ashamed by day, came to me regularly by night for conversation and instruction. Having seen the doors of the Mission House made fast and the windows blinded so that they could not be observed, they continued with me for many hours, asking all strange questions about the new Religion and its laws. I remember one Chief particularly, who came often, saying to me, "I would be an Awfuaki man (*i.e.* a Christian) were it not that all the rest would laugh at me; that I could not stand!"

"Almost persuaded"—before you blame him, remember how many in Christian lands and amid greater privileges live and die without ever passing beyond that stage.

The wife of one of those Chiefs died, and he resolved to imitate a Christian burial. Having purchased white calico from a Trader, he came to me for some tape which the Trader could not supply, and told me that he was going to dress the body as he had seen my dear wife's dressed, and lay her also in a similar grave. He declined my offer to attend the funeral and to pray with them, as in that case many of the villagers would not attend. He wanted all the people to be present, to see and to hear, as it was the first funeral of the kind ever celebrated among the Tannese; and my friend Nowar the Chief had promised to conduct a Service and offer prayer to Jehovah before all the Heathen. It moved me to many strange emotions, this Christian burial, conducted by a Heathen and in the presence of Heathens, with an appeal to the true and living God by a man as yet darkly groping among idols and superstitions! Many were the wondering questions from time to time addressed to me. The idea of a resurrection from the dead was that which most keenly interested these Natives, and called forth all their powers of inquiry and argument. Thus the waves of hope and fear swept alternately across our lives; but we embraced every possible opportunity of telling them the story of the life and death of Jesus, in the strong hope that God would spare us yet to bring the benighted Heathen to the knowledge of the true salvation, and to love and serve the only Saviour.

Confessedly, however, it was uphill, weary, and trying work.

For one thing, these Tannese were terribly dishonest; and when there was any special sickness, or excitement from any cause, their bad feeling towards the Worship was displayed by the more insolent way in which they carried off whatever they could seize. When I opposed them, the club or tomahawk, the musket or *kawas* (*i.e.* killing-stone), being instantly raised, intimated that my life would be taken, if I resisted. Their skill in stealing on the sly was phenomenal! If an article fell, or was seen on the floor, a Tanna-man would neatly cover it with his foot, while looking you frankly in the face, and, having fixed it by his toes or by bending in his great toe like a thumb to hold it, would walk off with it, assuming the most innocent look in the world. In this way, a knife, a pair of scissors, or any smaller article, would at once disappear. Another fellow would deftly stick something out of sight amongst the whip-cord plaits of his hair, another would conceal it underneath his naked arm, while yet another would shamelessly lift what he coveted and openly carry it away.

With most of them, however, the shame was not in the theft, but in doing it so clumsily that they were discovered! Once, after continuous rain and a hot damp atmosphere, when the sun shone out I put my bedclothes on a rope to dry. I stood at hand watching, as also the wives of two Teachers, for things were mysteriously disappearing almost under our very eyes. Suddenly, Miaki, who with his war-companions had been watching us unobserved, came rushing to me breathless and alone, crying, "Missi, come in, quick, quick! I want to tell you something and to get your advice!"

He ran into my house, and I followed; but before he had got into his story, we heard the two women crying out, "Missi, Missi, come quick! Miaki's men are stealing your sheets and blankets!"

I ran at once, but all were gone into the bush, and with them my sheets and blankets. Miaki for a moment looked abashed, as I charged him with deceiving me just to give his men their opportunity. But he soon rose to the occasion. He wrought himself into a towering rage at them, flourished his huge club and smashed the bushes all around, shouting to me, "Thus will I smash these fellows, and compel them to return your clothes."

One dark night, I heard them amongst my fowls. These I



“Teaching by example.”



had purchased from them for knives and calico; and they now stole them all away, dead or alive. Had I interfered, they would have gloried in the chance to club or shoot me in the dark, when no one could exactly say who had done the deed. Several of the few goats, which I had for milk, were also killed or driven away; indeed, all the injury that was possible was done to me, short of taking away my life, and that was now frequently attempted. Having no fires or fireplaces in my Mission House, such being not required there,—though sometimes a fire would have been invaluable for drying our bed-clothes in the Rainy Season,—we had a house near by in which all our food was cooked, and there, under lock and key, we secured all our cooking utensils, pots, dishes, etc. One night that too was broken into, and everything was stolen. In consternation, I appealed to the Chief, telling him what had been done. He also flew into a great rage, and vowed vengeance on the thieves, saying that he would compel them to return everything. But, of course, nothing was returned; the thief could not be found! I, unable to live without something in which to boil water, at length offered a blanket to any one that would bring back my kettle. Miaki himself, after much professed difficulty, returned it *minus* the lid,—that, he said, probably fishing for a higher bribe, could not be got at any price, being at the other side of the island in a tribe over which he had no control! In the circumstances, I was glad to get kettle *minus* lid—realising how life itself may depend on so small a luxury!

## CHAPTER XVIII

## THE VISIT OF H.M.S. "CORDELIA"

ONE morning, the Tannese, rushing towards me in great excitement, cried, "Missi, Missi, there is a God, or a ship on fire, or something of fear, coming over the sea! We see no flames, but it smokes like a volcano. Is it a Spirit, a God, or a ship on fire? What is it? what is it?"

One party after another followed in quick succession, shouting the same questions in great alarm, to which I replied, "I