

sent his boat round to me, being again short of European food. On his crew leaving her to deliver their message to me, some of Miaki's men at once jumped into the boat and started off round the island in search of kava. I went to Miaki, to ask that the boat might be brought back soon, but on seeing me he ran for his club and aimed to strike me. I managed to seize it, and to hold on, pleading with God and talking with Miaki, till by interference of some friendly Natives his wrath was assuaged a little. Returning home, I sent food overland to keep the Mathiesons going till the boat returned, which she did in about eight days. Thus light and shadow pursued each other, the light brightening for a moment, but upon the whole the shadows deepening.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

## THE WAR CHIEFS IN COUNCIL

A TIME of great excitement amongst the Natives now prevailed. War, war, nothing but war was spoken of! Preparations for war were being made in all the villages far and near. Fear sat on every face, and armed bands kept watching each other, as if uncertain where the war was to begin or by whom. All work was suspended, and that war spirit was let loose which rouses the worst passions of human nature. Again we found ourselves the centre of conflict, one party set for killing us or driving us away; the other wishing to retain us, while all old bitter grievances were also dragged into their speeches.

Miaki and Nouka said, "If you will keep Missi and his Worship, take him with you to your own land, for we will not have him to live at the Harbour."

Ian, the great Inland Chief, rose in wrath and said, "On whose land does the Missi live, yours or ours? Who fight against the Worship and all good, who are the thieves and murderers, who tell the lies, you or we? We wish peace, but you will have war. We like Missi and the Worship, but you hate them and say, 'Take him to your own land!' It is our land on which he now lives; it is his own land which he bought from you, but which our fathers sold Missi Turner

long ago. The land was not yours to sell; it was really ours. Your fathers stole it from us long ago by war; but we would not have asked it back, had you not asked us to take Missi away. Now we will defend him on it, and he will teach us and our people in our own land!" So meeting after meeting broke into fiery speech, and separated with many threats.

To the next great meeting I was invited, but did not go, contenting myself with a message pleading that they should live at peace and on no account go to war with each other. But Ian himself came for me. I said, "Ian, I have told you my whole heart. Go not to that meeting. I will rather leave the island or die, than see you going to war about me!"

He answered, "Missi, come with me, come now!"

I replied, "Ian, you are surely not taking me away to kill me? If you are, my God will punish it."

His only reply was, "Follow me, follow me quickly."

I felt constrained to go: He strode on before me till we reached the great village of his ancestors. His followers, armed largely with muskets as well as native weapons, filled one half the Village Square or dancing-ground. Miaki, Nouka, and their whole party sat in manifest terror upon the other half. Marching into the centre, he stood with me by his side, and proudly looking round, exclaimed, "Missi, these are my men and your friends! We are met to defend you and the Worship." Then pointing across to the other side, he cried aloud, "These are your enemies and ours! The enemies of the Worship, the disturbers of the peace on Tanna! Missi, say the word, and the muskets of my men will sweep all opposition away, and the Worship will spread and we will all be strong for it on Tanna. We will not shoot without your leave; but if you refuse they will kill you and persecute us and our children, and banish Jehovah's Worship from our land."

I said, "I love all of you alike. I am here to teach you how to turn away from all wickedness, to worship and serve Jehovah, and to live in peace. How can I approve of any person being killed for me or for the Worship? My God would be angry at me and punish me, if I did!"

He replied, "Then, Missi, you will be murdered and the Worship destroyed."

I then stood forth in the middle before them all and cried, "You may shoot or murder me, but I am your best friend. I

am not afraid to die. You will only send me the sooner to my Jehovah God, whom I love and serve, and to my dear Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for me and for you, and who sent me here to tell you all His love. If you will only love and serve Him and give up your bad conduct, you will be happy. But if you kill me, His messenger, rest assured that He will in His own time and way punish you. This is my word to you all; my love to you all!"

So saying, I turned to leave; and Ian strode sullenly away and stood at the head of his men, crying, "Missi, they will kill you! they will kill us, and you will be to blame!"

Miaki and Nouka, full of deceit, now cried out, "Missi's word is good! Let us all obey it. Let us all worship."

An old man, Sirawia, one of Ian's under-chiefs, then said, "Miaki and Nouka say that the land on which Missi lives was theirs; though they sold it to him and he has paid them for it, they all know that it was ours, and is yet ours by right; but if they let Missi live on it in peace, we will all live at peace, and worship Jehovah. And if not, we will surely claim it again."

Miaki and his party hereon went off to their plantations, and brought a large present of food to Ian and his men as a peace-offering. This they accepted; and the next day Ian and his men brought Miaki a return present and said, "You know that Missi lives on our land? Take our present, be friends, and let him live quietly and teach us all. Yesterday you said his word was good; obey it now, else we will punish you and defend the Missi."

Miaki accepted the token, and gave good promises for the future. Ian then came to the hill-top near our house, by which passed the public path, and cried aloud in the hearing of all, "Abraham, tell Missi that you and he now live on our land. This path is the march betwixt Miaki and us. We have this day bought back the land of our fathers by a great price to prevent war. Take of our breadfruits and also of our cocoa-nuts what you require, for you are our friends and living on our land, and we will protect you and the Worship!"

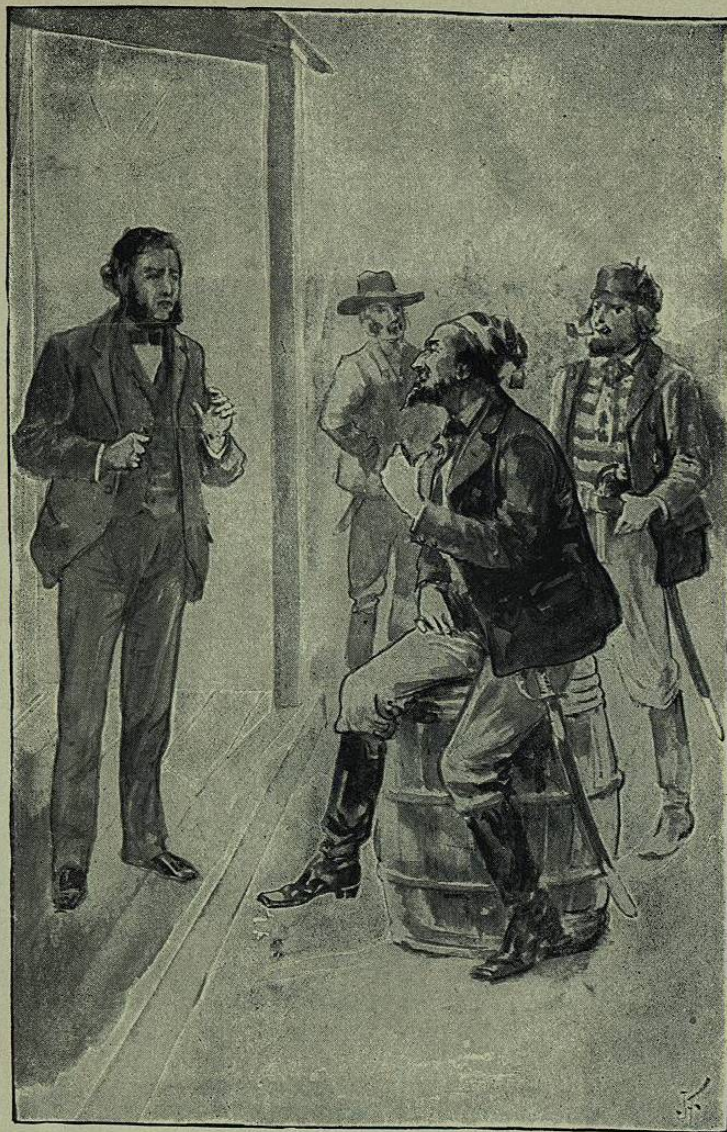
## CHAPTER XXXV

## UNDER KNIFE AND TOMAHAWK

CHAFED at the upsetting of all their plans and full of revenge, Nouka and Miaki and their allies declared publicly that they were now going to kill Ian by sorcery, *i.e.* by Nahak, more feared by the poor Tannese than the field of battle. Strange to say, Ian became sick shortly after the Sacred Men had made the declaration about their Nahak-sorcery. I attended him, and for a time he recovered, and appeared very grateful. But he soon fell sick again. I sent him and the Chief next under him a blanket each; I also gave shirts and calico to a number of his leading men. They wore them and seemed grateful and pleased. Ian, however, gradually sank and got worse. He had every symptom of being poisoned, a thing easily accomplished, as they know and use many deadly poisons. His sufferings were very great, which prevented me from ascribing his collapse to mere superstitious terror. I did all that could be done; but all thought him dying, and of course by sorcery. His people were angry at me for not consenting before to their shooting of Miaki; and Miaki's people were now rejoicing that Ian was being killed by Nahak.

One night, his brother and a party came for me to go and see Ian, but I declined to go till the morning for fear of the fever and ague. On reaching his village, I saw many people about, and feared that I had been led into a snare; but I at once entered into his house to talk and pray with him, as he appeared to be dying. After prayer, I discovered that I was left alone with him, and that all the people had retired from the village; and I knew that, according to their custom, this meant mischief. Ian said, "Come near me, and sit by my bedside to talk with me, Missi."

I did so, and while speaking to him he lay as if lost in a swoon of silent meditation. Suddenly he drew from the sugar-cane leaf thatch close to his bed a large butcher-like knife, and instantly feeling the edge of it with his other hand, he pointed it to within a few inches of my heart and held it quivering there, all a-tremble with excitement. I durst neither move



A FIENDISH DEED.

nor speak, except that my heart kept praying to the Lord to spare me, or if my time was come to take me home to Glory with Himself. There passed a few moments of awful suspense. My sight went and came. Not a word had been spoken, except to Jesus; and then Ian wheeled the knife around, thrust it into the sugar-cane leaf, and cried to me, "Go, go quickly!"

Next moment I was on the road. Not a living soul was to be seen about the village. I understood then that it had been agreed that Ian was to kill me, and that they had all withdrawn so as not to witness it, that when the Man-of-war came to inquire about me Ian would be dead, and no punishment could overtake the murderer. I walked quietly till quite free of the village, lest some hid in their houses might observe me. Thereafter, fearing that they, finding I had escaped, might overtake and murder me, I ran for my life a weary four miles till I reached the Mission House, faint, yet praising God for such a deliverance. Poor Ian died soon after, and his people strangled one of his wives and hanged another, and took out the three bodies together in a canoe and sank them in the sea.

Miaki was jubilant over having killed his enemy by Nahak; but the Inland people now assembled in thousands to help Sirawia and his brother to avenge that death on Miaki, Nouka, and Karewick. These, on the other hand, boasted that they would kill all their enemies by Nahak-sorcery, and would call up a hurricane to destroy their houses, fruit-trees, and plantations. Immediately after Miaki's threat about bringing a storm, one of their great hurricanes actually smote that side of the Island and laid everything waste. His enemies were greatly enraged, and many of the injured people united with them in demanding revenge on Miaki. Hitherto I had done everything in my power to prevent war, but now it seemed inevitable, and both parties sent word that if Abraham and I kept to the Mission House no one would harm us. We had little faith in any of their promises, but there was no alternative for us.

On the following Saturday, 18th January 1862, the war began. Musket after musket was discharged quite near us, and the bush all round rang with the yell of their war-cry, which if once heard will never be forgotten. It came nearer

and nearer, for Miaki fled, and his people took shelter behind and around our house. We were placed in the heart of danger, and the balls flew thick all around us. In the afternoon Ian's brother and his party retired, and Miaki quickly sent messengers and presents to the Inikahimini and Kaserumini districts, to assemble all their people and help him "to fight Missi and the Tannese who were friends of the Worship." He said, "Let us cook his body and Abraham's, and distribute them to every village on this side of the island!"

Yet all the while Miaki assured me that he had sent a friendly message. The war went on, and poor Nowar the Chief protected us, till he had a spear broken into his right knee. The enemy would have carried him off to feast on his body; but his young men, shouting wildly his name and battle-cry, rushed in with great impetuosity and carried their wounded Chief home in triumph. The Inland people now discharged muskets at my house and beat against the walls with their clubs. They smashed in the door and window of our store-room, broke open boxes and casks, tore my books to pieces and scattered them about, and carried off everything for which they cared, including my boat, mast, oars, and sails. They broke into Abraham's house and plundered it; after which they made a rush at the bedroom, into which we were locked, firing muskets, yelling, and trying to break it in. A Chief, professing to be sorry for us, called me to the window, but on seeing me he sent a tomahawk through it, crying, "Come on, let us kill him now!"

I replied, "My Jehovah God will punish you; a Man-of-war will come and punish you, if you kill Abraham, his wife, or me."

He retorted, "It's all lies about a Man-of-war! They did not punish the Erromangans. They are afraid of us. Come on, let us kill them!"

He raised his tomahawk and aimed to strike my forehead, many muskets were uplifted as if to shoot, so I raised a revolver in my right hand and pointed it at them. The Rev. Joseph Copeland had left it with me on a former visit. I did not wish it, but he insisted upon leaving it, saying that the very knowledge that I had such a weapon might save my life. Truly, on this occasion it did so. Though it was harmless,

they fell back quickly. My immediate assailant dropped to the ground, crying, "Missi has got a short musket! He will shoot you all!"

After lying flat on the ground for a little, they all got up and ran to the nearest bush, where they continued yelling about and showing their muskets. Towards nightfall they left, loaded with the plunder of the store and of Abraham's house. So God once more graciously protected us from falling into their cruel hands.

In the evening, after they left, I went to Miaki and Nouka. Miaki, with a sneer, said, "Missi, where was Jehovah to-day? There was no Jehovah to-day to protect you. It's all lies about Jehovah. They will come and kill you, and Abraham, and his wife, and cut your bodies into pieces to be cooked and eaten in every village upon Tanna."

I said, "Surely, when you had planned all this, and brought them to kill us and steal all our property, Jehovah did protect us, or we would not have been here!"

He replied, "There was no Jehovah to-day! We have no fear of any Man-of-war. They dare not punish us. They durst not punish the Erromangans for murdering the Gordons. They will talk to us and say we must not do so again, and give us a present. That is all. We fear nothing. The talk of all Tanna is that we will kill you and seize all your property to-morrow."

I warned him that the punishment of a Man-of-war can only reach the body and the land, but that Jehovah's punishment reached both body and soul in Time and in Eternity.

He replied, "Who fears Jehovah? He was not here to protect you to-day!"

"Yes," I said, "my Jehovah God is here now. He hears all we say, sees all we do, and will punish the wicked and protect His own people."

After this, a number of the people sat down around me, and I prayed with them. But I left with a very heavy heart, feeling that Miaki was evidently bent on our destruction.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

## THE BEGINNING OF THE END

I SENT Abraham to consult Nowar, who had defended us till disabled by a spear in the right knee. He sent a canoe by Abraham, advising me to take some of my goods in it to his house by night, and he would try to protect them and us. The risk was so great, we could only take a very little. Enemies were on every hand to cut off our flight, and Miaki, the worst of all, whose village had to be passed in going to Nowar's. In the darkness of the Mission House, we durst not light a candle for fear of some one seeing and shooting us. Not one of Nowar's men durst come to help us. But in the end it made no difference, for Nowar and his men kept what was taken there, as their portion of the plunder. Abraham, his wife, and I waited anxiously for the morning light. Miaki, the false and cruel, came to assure us that the Heathen would not return that day. Yet, as daylight came in, Miaki himself stood and blew a great conch not far from our house. I ran out to see why this trumpet-shell had been blown, and found it was the signal for a great company of howling armed Savages to rush down the hill on the other side of the bay and make straight for the Mission House. We had not a moment to lose. To have remained would have been certain death to us all, and also to Matthew, a Teacher just arrived from Mr. Mathieson's Station. Though I am by conviction a strong Calvinist, I am no Fatalist. I held on while one gleam of hope remained. Escape for life was now the only path of duty. I called the Teachers, locked the door, and made quickly for Nowar's village. There was not a moment left to carry anything with us. In the issue, Abraham and his wife and I lost all our earthly goods, and all our clothing except what we had on. My Bible, the few translations which I had made into Tannese, and a light pair of blankets I carried with me.

We durst not choose the usual path along the beach, for there our enemies would have quickly overtaken us. We entered the bush in the hope of getting away unobserved. But a cousin of Miaki, evidently secreted to watch us, sprang

from behind a breadfruit tree, and swinging his tomahawk, aimed it at my brow with a fiendish look. Avoiding it, I turned upon him and said in a firm bold voice, "If you dare to strike me, my Jehovah God will punish you. He is here to defend me now!"

The man, trembling, looked all round as if to see the God who was my defender, and the tomahawk gradually lowered at his side. With my eye fixed upon him, I gradually moved backwards in the track of the Teachers, and God mercifully restrained him from following me.

On reaching Nowar's village unobserved, we found the people terror-stricken, crying, rushing about in despair at such a host of armed Savages approaching. I urged them to ply their axes, cut down trees, and blockade the path. For a little they wrought vigorously at this; but when, so far as eye could reach, they saw the shore covered with armed men rushing on towards their village, they were overwhelmed with fear, they threw away their axes and weapons of war, they cast themselves headlong on the ground, and they knocked themselves against the trees as if to court death before it came. They cried, "Missi, it's of no use! We will all be killed and eaten to-day! See what a host are coming against us."

Mothers snatched up little children and ran to hide in the bush. Others waded as far as they could into the sea with them, holding their heads above the water. The whole village collapsed in a condition of indescribable terror. Nowar, lame with his wounded knee, got a canoe turned upside-down and sat upon it where he could see the whole approaching multitude. He said, "Missi, sit down beside me, and pray to our Jehovah God, for if He does not send deliverance now, we are all dead men. They will kill us all on your account, and that quickly. Pray, and I will watch!"

They had gone to the Mission House and broken in the door, and finding that we had escaped, they rushed on to Nowar's village. For, as they began to plunder the bedroom, Nouka said, "Leave everything. Missi will come back for his valuable things at night, and then we will get them and him also!"

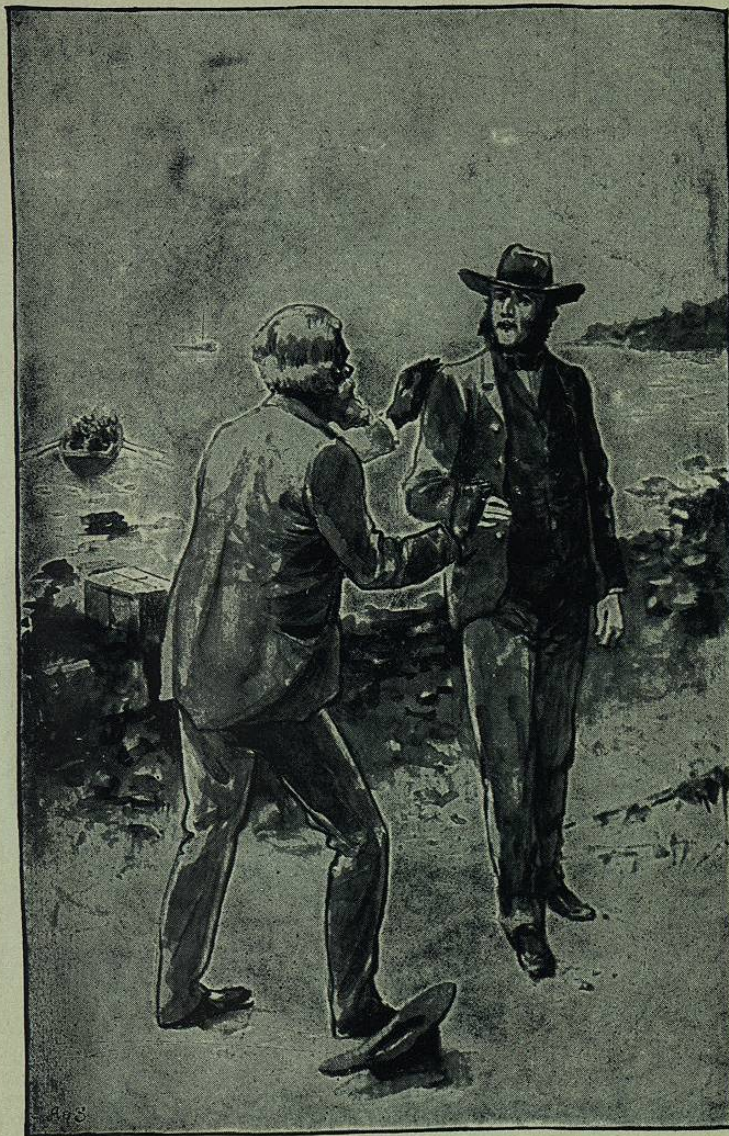
So he nailed up the door, and they all marched for Nowar's. We prayed as one can only pray when in the jaws

of death and on the brink of Eternity. We felt that God was near, and omnipotent to do what seemed best in His sight. When the Savages were about three hundred yards off, at the foot of a hill leading up to the village, Nowar touched my knee, saying, "Missi, Jehovah is hearing! They are all standing still."

Had they come on they would have met with no opposition, for the people were scattered in terror. On gazing shorewards, and round the Harbour, as far as we could see, was a dense host of warriors, but all were standing still, and apparently absolute silence prevailed. We saw a messenger or herald running along the approaching multitude, delivering some tidings as he passed, and then disappearing in the bush. To our amazement, the host began to turn, and slowly marched back in great silence, and entered the remote bush at the head of the Harbour. Nowar and his people were in ecstasies, crying out, "Jehovah has heard Missi's prayer! Jehovah has protected us and turned them away back."

About mid-day, Nouka and Miaki sent their cousin Jonas, who had always been friendly to me, to say that I might return to my house in safety, as they were now carrying the war inland. Jonas had spent some years on Samoa, and been much with Traders in Sydney, and spoke English well; but we felt they were deceiving us. Next night, Abraham ventured to creep near the Mission House, to test whether we might return, and save some valuable things, and get a change of clothing. The house appeared to stand as when they nailed up the door. But a large party of Miaki's allies at once enclosed Abraham, and, after asking many questions about me, they let him go since I was not there. Had I gone there, they would certainly that night have killed me. Again, at midnight Abraham and his wife and Matthew went to the Mission House, and found Nouka, Miaki, and Karewick near by, concealed in the bush among the reeds. Once more they enclosed them, thinking I was there too, but Nouka, finding that I was not, cried out, "Don't kill them just now! Wait till Missi comes."

Hearing this, Matthew slipped into the bush and escaped. Abraham's wife waded into the sea, and they allowed her to get away. Abraham was allowed to go to the Mission House, but he too crept into the bush, and after an anxious waiting



NOBLE OLD ABRAHAM.

"Missi, I remain with you of my own free choice, and with all my heart."

they all came back to me in safety. We now gave up all hope of recovering anything from the house.

Towards morning, when Miaki and his men saw that I was not coming back to deliver myself into their hands, they broke up my house and stole all they could carry away. They tore my books, and scattered them about. They took away the type of my printing-press, to be made into bullets for their muskets. For similar uses they melted down the zinc lining of my boxes, and everything else that could be melted. What they could not take away, they destroyed.

As the night advanced, Nowar declared that I must leave his village before morning, else he and his people would be killed for protecting me. He advised me, as the sea was good, to try for Mr. Mathieson's Station; but he objected to my taking away any of my property—he would soon follow with it himself! But how to sail? Miaki had stolen my boat, mast, sails, and oars, as also an excellent canoe made for me and paid for by me on Aneityum; and he had threatened to shoot any person that assisted me to launch either the one or the other. The danger still increasing, Nowar said, "You cannot remain longer in my house! My son will guide you to the large chestnut tree in my plantation in the bush. Climb up into it, and remain there till the moon rises."

Being entirely at the mercy of such doubtful and vacillating friends, I, though perplexed, felt it best to obey. I climbed into the tree, and was left there alone in the bush. The hours I spent there live all before me as if it were but of yesterday. I heard the frequent discharging of muskets, and the yells of the Savages. Yet I sat there among the branches, as safe in the arms of Jesus. Never, in all my sorrows, did my Lord draw nearer to me, and speak more soothingly in my soul, than when the moonlight flickered among these chestnut leaves, and the night air played on my throbbing brow, as I told all my heart to Jesus. Alone, yet not alone! If it be to glorify my God, I will not grudge to spend many nights alone in such a tree, to feel again my Saviour's spiritual presence, to enjoy His consoling fellowship. If thus thrown back upon your own soul, alone, all, all alone, in the midnight, in the bush, in the very embrace of death itself, have you a Friend that will not fail you then?