

## CHAPTER XXXVII

## FIVE HOURS IN A CANOE

GLADLY would I have lingered there for one night of comparative peace! But Nowar sent his son to call me down from the tree, and to guide me to the shore where he himself was, as it was now time to take to sea in the canoe. Pleading for my Lord's continuing presence, I had to obey. My life and the lives of my Aneityumese now hung upon a very slender thread; the risk was almost equally great from our friends so-called, or from our enemies. Had I been a stranger to Jesus and to prayer, my reason would verily have given way, but my comfort and joy sprang out of these words, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; lo, I am with you always!" Pleading these promises, I followed my guide. We reached the beach, just inside the Harbour, at a beautiful white sandy bay on Nowar's ground, from which our canoe was to start. A good number of the Natives had assembled there to see us off. Arkurat, having got a large roll of calico for the loan of his canoe, hid it away, and then refused the canoe, saying that if he had to escape with his family he would require it. He demanded an axe, a sail for his canoe, and a pair of blankets. As Koris had the axe and another had the quilt, I gave the quilt to him for a sail, and the axe and blankets for the canoe. In fact, these few relics of our earthly all at Nowar's were coveted by the Savages and endangered our lives, and it was as well to get rid of them altogether. He cruelly proposed a small canoe for two; but I had hired the canoe for five, and insisted upon getting it, as he had been well paid for it. As he only laughed and mocked us, I prepared to start and travel overland to Mr. Mathieson's Station. He then said, "My wrath is over! You may take it and go."

We launched it, but now he refused to let us go till daylight. He had always been one of my best friends, but now appeared bent on a quarrel, so I had to exercise much patience with him and them. Having launched it, he said I had hired the canoe but not the paddles. I protested.

"Surely you know we hired the paddles too. What could we do without paddles?"

But Arkurat lay down and pretended to have fallen asleep, snoring on the sand, and could not be awaked. I appealed to Nowar, who only said, "That is his conduct, Missi, our conduct!"

I replied, "As he has got the blankets which I saved to keep me from ague and fever, and I have nothing left now but the clothes I have on, surely you will give me paddles."

Nowar gave me one. Returning to the village, friends gave me one each till I got other three. Now Arkurat started up, and refused to let us go. A Chief and one of his men, who lived on the other side of the island near to where we were going, and who was hired by me to go with us and help in paddling the canoe, drew back also and refused to go. Again I offered to leave the canoe, and walk overland if possible, when Faimungo, the Chief who had refused to go with us, came forward and said, "Missi, they are all deceiving you! The sea is so rough, you cannot go by it; and if you should get round the weather point, Miaki has men appointed to shoot you as you pass the Black Rocks, while by land all the paths are guarded by armed men. I tell you the truth, having heard all their talk. Miaki and Karewick say they hate the Worship, and will kill you. They killed your goats, and stole all your property yesterday. Farewell!"

The Teachers, the boy, and I now resolved to enter the canoe and attempt it, as the only gleam of hope left to us. My party of five embarked in our frail canoe; Abraham first, I next, Matthew after me, the boy at the steering paddle, and Abraham's wife sitting in the bottom, where she might hold on while it continued to float. For a mile or more we got away nicely under the lee of the island, but when we turned to go south for Mr. Mathieson's Station, we met the full force of wind and sea, every wave breaking over and almost swamping our canoe. The Native lad at the helm paddle stood up crying, "Missi, this is the conduct of the sea! It swallows up all who seek its help."

I answered, "We do not seek help from it, but from Jehovah Jesus."

Our danger became very great, as the sea broke over and lashed around us. My faithful Aneityumese, overcome with

terror, threw down their paddles, and Abraham said, "Missi, we are all drowned now! We are food for the sharks. We might as well be eaten by the Tannese as by fishes; but God will give us life with Jesus in heaven!"

I seized the paddle nearest me; I ordered Abraham to seize another within his reach; I enjoined Matthew to bail the canoe for life, and the lad to keep firm in his seat, and I cried, "Stand to your post, and let us return! Abraham, where is now your faith in Jesus? Remember, He is Ruler on sea as on land. Abraham, pray and ply your paddle! Keep up stroke for stroke with me, as our lives depend on it. Our God can protect us. Matthew, bail with all your might. Don't look round on the sea and fear. Let us pray to God and ply our paddles, and He will save us yet!"

Dear old Abraham said, "Thank you for that, Missi. I will be strong. I pray to God and ply my paddle. God will save us!"

With much labour, and amid deadly perils, we got the canoe turned; and after four hours of a terrible struggle, we succeeded, towards daylight as the tide turned, in again reaching smooth water. With God's blessing we at last reached the shore, exactly where we had left it five hours ago!

Now drenched and weary, with the skin of our hands sticking to the paddles, we left the canoe on the reef and waded ashore. Many Natives were there, and looked sullen and disappointed at our return. Katasian, the lad who had been with us, instantly fled for his own land; and the Natives reported that he was murdered soon after. Utterly exhausted, I lay down on the sand and immediately fell into a deep sleep. By and by I felt some one pulling from under my head the native bag in which I carried my Bible and the Tannese translations—the all that had been saved by me from the wreck! Grasping the bag, I sprang to my feet, and the man ran away. My Teachers had also a hedging knife, a useless revolver, and a fowling-piece, the sight of which, though they had been under the salt water for hours, God used to restrain the Savages. Calling my Aneityumese near, we now, in united prayer and kneeling on the sands, committed each other unto the Lord God, being prepared for the best and worst.



"Quick as lightning, the two dogs sprang at their faces."

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

## A RACE FOR LIFE

As I sat meditating on the issues, Famiungo, the friendly Inland Chief, again appeared to warn us of our danger, now very greatly increased by our being driven back from the sea. All Nowar's men had fled, and were hid in the bush and in rocks along the shore; while Miaki was holding a meeting not half a mile away, and preparing to fall upon us. Faimungo said, "Farewell, Missi, I am going home. I don't wish to see the work and the murders of this morning."

He was Nowar's son-in-law. He had always been truthful and kindly with me. His home was about half-way across the island, on the road that we wanted to go, and under sudden impulse I said, "Faimungo, will you let us follow you? Will you show us the path? When the Mission Ship arrives, I will give you three good axes, blankets, knives, fish-hooks, and many things you prize."

The late hurricanes had so destroyed and altered the paths, that only Natives who knew them well could follow them. He trembled much and said, "Missi, you will be killed. Miaki and Karewick will shoot you. I dare not let you follow. I have only about twenty men, and your following might endanger us all."

I urged him to leave at once, and we would follow of our own accord. I would not ask him to protect us; but if he betrayed us and helped the enemy to kill us, I assured him that our God would punish him. If he spared us, he would be rewarded well; and if we were killed against his wishes, God would not be angry at him. He said, "Seven men are with me now, and thirteen are to follow. I will not now send for them. They are with Miaki and Nouka. I will go; but if you follow, you will be killed on the way. You may follow me as far as you can."

Off he started to Nowar's, and got a large load of my stolen property, blankets, sheets, etc., which had fallen to his lot. He called his seven men, who had also shared in the plunder, and, to avoid Miaki's men, they ran away under a

large cocoa-nut grove skirting the shore, calling, "Be quick! Follow and keep as near to us as you can."

Though Nowar had got a box of my rice and appropriated many things from the plunder of the Mission House besides the goods entrusted to his care, and got two of my goats killed and cooked for himself and his people, yet now he would not give a particle of food to my starving Aneityumese or myself, but hurried us off, saying, "I will eat all your rice and keep all that has been left with me, in payment for my lame knee and for my people fighting for you!"

My three Aneityumese and I started after Faimungo and his men. We could place no confidence in any of them; but, feeling that we were in the Lord's hands, it appeared to be our only hope of escaping instant death. We got away unobserved by the enemies. We met several small parties of friends in the Harbour, apparently glad to see us trying to get away. But about four miles on our way, we met a large party of Miaki's men, all armed, and watching as outposts. Some were for shooting us, but others hesitated. Every musket was, however, raised and levelled at me. Faimungo poised his great spear and said, "No, you shall not kill Missi to-day. He is with me." Having made this flourish, he strode off after his own men, and my Aneityumese followed, leaving me face to face with a ring of levelled muskets.

Sirawia, who was in command of this party, and who once, like Nowar, had been my friend, said to me, Judas like, "My love to you, Missi." But he also shouted after Faimungo, "Your conduct is bad in taking the Missi away; leave him to us to be killed!" I then turned upon him, saying, "Sirawia, I love you all. You must know that I sought only your good. I gave you medicine and food when you and your people were sick and dying under measles; I gave you the very clothing you wear. Am I not your friend? Have we not often drunk tea and eaten together in my house? Can you stand there and see your friend shot? If you do, my God will punish you severely."

He then whispered something to his company which I did not hear; and, though their muskets were still raised, I saw in their eyes that he had restrained them. I therefore began gradually to move backwards, still keeping my eyes fixed on them, till the bush hid them from my view, whereon I turned

and ran after my party, and God kept the enemy from following. We trusted in Jehovah Jesus, and pressed on in flight.

A second hostile party encountered us, and with great difficulty we also got away from them. Soon thereafter a friendly company crossed our path. We learned from them that the enemies had slaughtered other two of Manuman's men, and burned several villages with fire. Another party of the enemy encountered us, and were eager for our lives. But this time Faimungo withstood them firmly, his men encircled us, and he said, "I am not afraid now, Missi; I am feeling stronger near my own land!"

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### FAINT YET PURSUING

HURRYING still onwards, we came to that village on their high ground called Aneai, *i.e.* Heaven. The sun was oppressively hot, the path almost unshaded, and our whole party very exhausted, especially Faimungo, carrying his load of stolen goods. So here he sat down on the village dancing-ground for a smoke, saying, "Missi, I am near my own land now. We can rest with safety."

In a few minutes, however, he started up, he and his men, in wild excitement. Over a mountain, behind the village and above it, there came the shoutings, and anon the tramp, tramp of a multitude making rapidly towards us. Faimungo got up and planted his back against a tree. I stood beside him, and the Aneityumese woman and the two men stood near me, while his men seemed prepared to flee. At full speed a large body of the tallest and most powerful men that I had seen on Tanna came rushing on and filled the dancing-ground. They were all armed, and flushed with their success in war. A messenger had informed them of our escape, probably from Miaki, and they had crossed the country to intercept us.

Faimungo was much afraid, and said, "Missi, go on in that path, you and your Aneityumese; and I will follow when I have had a smoke and a talk with these men."

I replied, "No, I will stand by your side till you go; and if I am killed, it will be by your side. I will not leave you."

He implored us to go on, but that I knew would be certain death. They began urging one another to kill us, but I looked round them as calmly as possible, saying, "My Jehovah God will punish you here and hereafter, if you kill me or any of His servants."

A killing-stone, thrown by one of the Savages, grazed poor old Abraham's cheek, and the dear soul gave such a look at me, and then upwards, as if to say, "Missi, I was nearly away to Jesus." A club was also raised to follow the blow of the killing-stone, but God baffled the aim. They encircled us in a deadly ring, and one kept urging another to strike the first blow or fire the first shot. My heart rose up to the Lord Jesus; I saw Him watching all the scene. In that awful hour I beheld His own words, as if carved in letters of fire upon the clouds of Heaven: "Seek, and ye shall find. Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." I could understand how Stephen and John saw the glorified Saviour as they gazed up through suffering and persecution to the Heavenly Throne!

Yet I never could say that on such occasions I was entirely without fear. Nay, I have felt my reason reeling, my sight coming and going, and my knees smiting together when thus brought close to a violent death, but mostly under the solemn thought of being ushered into Eternity and appearing before God. Still, I was never left without hearing that promise in all its consoling and supporting power coming up through the darkness and the anguish, "Lo, I am with you alway." And with Paul I could say, even in this dread moment and crisis of being, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, . . . nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Faimungo and others now urged us to go on in the path. I said, "Faimungo, why are we to leave you? My God heard your promise not to betray me. He knows now what is in your heart and in mine. I will not leave you; and if I am to die, I will die by your side."

He replied, "Now, I go on before; Missi, keep close to me."

His men had gone, and I persuaded my Aneityumese to

follow them. At last, with a bound, Faimungo started after them. I followed, keeping as near him as I could, pleading with Jesus to protect me or to take me home to Glory. The host of armed men also ran along on each side with their weapons ready; but leaving everything to Jesus, I ran on as if they were my escort, or as if I saw them not. If any reader wonders how they were restrained, much more would I, unless I believed that the same Hand that restrained the lions from touching Daniel held back these Savages from hurting me! We came to a stream crossing our path. With a bound all my party cleared it, ran up the bank opposite, and disappeared in the bush. "Faint yet pursuing," I also tried the leap, but I struck the bank and slid back on my hands and knees towards the stream. At this moment I heard a crash above my head amongst the branches of an overhanging tree, and I knew that a *Kowas* had been thrown, and that that branch had saved me. Praising my God, I scrambled up on the other side, and followed the track of my party into the bush. The Savages gazed after me for a little in silence, but no one crossed the stream; and I saw them separate into two, one portion returning to the village and another pressing inland. With what gratitude did I recognise the Invisible One who brought their counsels to confusion!

I found my party resting in the bush, and amazed to see me escaped alive from men who were thirsting for my blood. Faimungo and his men received me with demonstrations of joy, perhaps feeling a little ashamed of their own cowardice. He now ascended the mountain and kept away from the common path to avoid other Native bands. At every village enemies to the Worship were ready to shoot us. But I kept close to our guide, knowing that the fear of shooting him would prevent their shooting at me, as he was the most influential Chief in all that section of the island.

One party said, "Miaki and Karewick said that Missi made the sickness and the hurricanes, and we ought to kill him."

Faimungo replied, "They lie about Missi! It is our own bad conduct that makes us sick."

They answered, "We don't know who makes the sickness; but our fathers have taught us to kill all Foreign men."

Faimungo, clutching club and spear, exclaimed, standing betwixt them and us, "You won't kill Missi to-day!"

Faimungo now sent his own men home by a near path, and guided us himself till we were close upon the shore. There, sitting down, he said, "Missi, I have now fulfilled my promise. I am so tired, I am so afraid, I dare not go farther. My love to you all. Now go on quickly! Three of my men will go with you to the next rocks. Go quickly! Farewell."

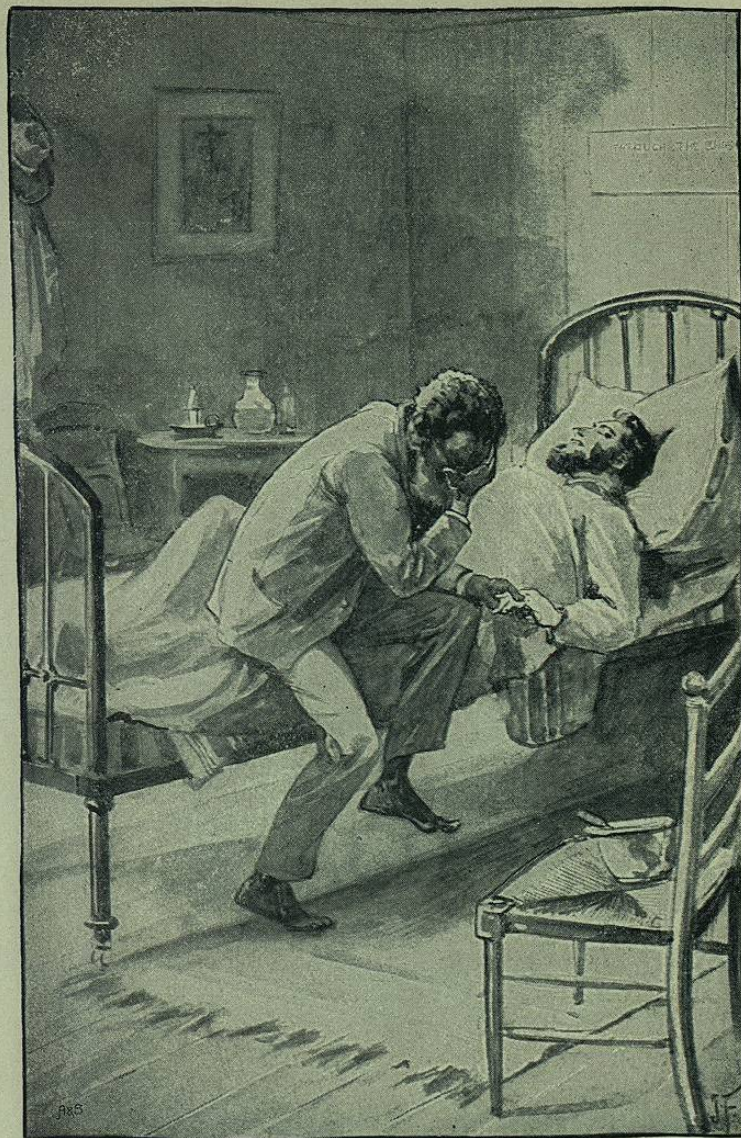
These men went on a little, and then said, "Missi, we dare not go! Faimungo is at war with the people of the next land. You must keep straight along this path." So they turned and ran back to their own village.

To us this district was especially perilous. Many years ago the Aneityumese had joined in a war against the Tannese of this tribe, and the thirst for revenge yet existed in their hearts, handed down from sire to son. Most providentially the men were absent on a war expedition, and we saw only three lads and a great number of women and children, who ran off to the bush in terror. In the evening the enraged Savages of another district assaulted the people of the shore villages for allowing us to pass, and, though sparing their lives, broke in pieces their weapons of war—a very grievous penalty.

In the next district, as we hastened along the shore, two young men came running after us, poisoning their quivering spears. I took the useless revolver out of my little native basket, and raising it cried, "Beware! Lay down your spears at once on the sand, and carry my basket to the next landing at the Black Rocks."

They threw their spears on the sand, lifted the bag, and ran on before us to the rocks which formed the march betwixt them and their enemies. Laying it down, they said appealingly, "Missi, let us return to our home!" And how they did run, fearing the pursuit of their foes.

In the next land we saw none. After that we saw crowds all along, some friendly, others unfriendly, but they let us pass on, and with the blessing of Almighty God we drew near to Mr. Mathieson's Station in safety. Here a man gave me a cocoa-nut for each of our party, which we greatly required, having tasted nothing all that day, and very little for several days before. We were so weak that only the struggle for life enabled us to keep our feet; yet my poor Aneityumese never



KOWIA'S LAMENT

complained and never halted, not even the woman. The danger and excitement kept us up in the race for life; and by the blessing of God we were now approaching the Mission House, praising God for His wonderful deliverances.

Hearing of our coming, Mr. Mathieson came running to meet me. They had heard of our leaving my own Station, and they thought I was dead! They were themselves both very weak; their only child had just been laid in the grave, and they were in great grief and in greater peril. We praised the Lord for permitting us to meet; we prayed for support, guidance, and protection; and resolved now, in all events, to stand by each other till the last.

## CHAPTER XL

### WAITING AT KWAMERA

BEFORE I left the Harbour I wrote and left with Nowar letters to be given to the Captains of any vessels which called, for the first, and the next, and the next, telling them of our great danger, that Mr. Mathieson was almost without food, and that I would reward them handsomely if they would call at the Station and remove any of us who might be spared thence to Aneityum. Two or three vessels called, and, as I afterwards learned, got my letters; but, while buying my stolen property from the Natives for tobacco, powder, and balls, they took no further notice of my appeals, and sailed past Mr. Mathieson's, straight on to Aneityum. "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel!"

Let me now cull the leading events from my Journal, that intervened betwixt this date and the break-up of the Mission on Tanna—at least for a season—though, blessed be God! I have lived to see the light rekindled by my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Watt, and shining more brightly and hopefully than ever. The candle was quenched, but the candlestick was not removed!

On the 23rd January 1862 Mr. Mathieson sent for Taura, Kati, and Kapuku, his three principal Chiefs, to induce them to promise protection till a vessel called to take us away

They appeared friendly, and promised to do their best. Alas! the promises of the Tannese Chiefs had too often proved to be vain.

On Friday, 24th January, report reached our Station that Miaki and his party, hearing that a friendly Chief had concealed two of Manuman's young men, compelled him to produce them and club them to death before their eyes. Also, that they surrounded Manuman's party on a mountain, and hemmed them in there, dying of starvation, and trying to survive on the carcasses of the dead and on bark and roots. Also, that Miaki had united all the Chiefs, friends and foes alike, in a bond of blood, to kill every one pertaining to the whole Mission on Tanna. Jesus reigns!

On Sunday, the 26th January, thirty persons came to worship at the Mission House. Thereafter, at great risk, we had Worship at three of the nearest and most friendly villages. Amidst all our perils and trials we preached the Gospel to about one hundred and sixteen persons. It was verily a sowing time of tears; but, despite all that followed, who shall say that it was vain! Twenty years have passed, and now when I am writing this, there is a Church of God singing the praises of Jesus in that very district of Tanna. On leaving the second village, a young lad affectionately took my hand to lead me to the next village; but a sulky, down-browed Savage, carrying a ponderous club, also insisted upon accompanying us. I led the way, guided by the lad. Mr. Mathieson got the man to go before him, while he himself followed, constantly watching. Coming to a place where another path branched off from ours, I asked which path we took, and, on turning to the left as instructed by the lad, the Savage, getting close behind me, swung his huge club over his shoulder to strike me on the head. Mr. Mathieson, springing forward, caught the club from behind with a great cry to me; and I, wheeling instantly, had hold of the club also, and betwixt us we wrested it out of his hands. The poor creature, craven at heart however bloodthirsty, implored us not to kill him. I raised the club threateningly, and caused him to march in front of us till we reached the next village fence. In terror lest these villagers should kill him, he gladly received back his club, as well as the boy his bow and arrows, and they were lost in the bush in a moment.

At the village from which this man and boy had come, one Savage brought his musket while we were conducting Worship, and sat sullen and scowling at us all the time. Mocking questions were also shouted at us, such as, "Who made the rains, winds, and hurricanes? Who caused all the disease? Who killed Miss Mathieson's child?" They sneered and scoffed at our answers, and in this Taura the Chief joined the rest.

On the 27th, at daylight, a vessel was seen in the offing, as if to tantalise us. The Captain had been at the Harbour, and had received my letter from Nowar. I hoisted a flag to induce him to send or come on shore, but he sailed off for Aneityum, bearing the plunder of my poor Mission House, purchased for ammunition and tobacco from the Natives. He left the news at Aneityum that I had been driven from my Station some time ago, and was believed to have been murdered.

On the 29th January, the young Chief Kapuku came and handed to Mr. Mathieson his own and his father's war-gods and household idols. They consisted chiefly of a basket of small and peculiar stones, much worn and shining with use. He said, "While many are trying to kill you and drive the Worship of Jehovah from this island, I give up my gods, and will send away all Heathen idols from my land."

On the 31st, we learned that a party of Miaki's men were going about Mr. Mathieson's district inciting the people to kill us. Faimungo also came to inform us that Miaki was exerting all his artifice to get us and the Worship destroyed. Manuman even sent, from inland, Raki, his adopted son, to tell me of the fearful sufferings that he and his people were now passing through, and that some were killed almost every day. Raki's wife was a Chief's daughter, who, when the war began, returned to her father's care. The Savages of Miaki went to her own father's house and compelled him to give her up as an enemy. She was clubbed and feasted on.

On Sabbath, 2nd February, thirty-two people attended the Morning Service. I addressed them on the Deluge, its causes and lessons. I showed them a doll, explaining that such carved and painted images could not hear our prayers or help us in our need, that the living Jehovah God only could hear and help. They were much interested, and after Worship carefully examined the doll. Mr. Mathieson and I, commit-



ing ourselves to Jesus, went inland and conducted Worship at seven villages, listened to by about one hundred people in all. Nearly all appeared friendly. The people of one village had been incited to kill us on our return; but God guided us to return by another way, and so we escaped.

During the day, on 3rd February, a company of Miaki's men came to the Mission House, and forced Mrs. Mathieson to show them through the premises. Providentially, I had bolted myself that morning into a closet room, and was engrossed with writing. They went through every room in the house and did not see me, concluding I had gone inland. They discharged a musket into our Teacher's house, but afterwards left quietly, greatly disappointed at not finding me. My heart still rose in praise to God for another such deliverance, neither by man nor of man's planning!

## CHAPTER XLI

### THE LAST AWFUL NIGHT

WORN out with long watching and many fatigues, I lay down that night early, and fell into a deep sleep. About ten o'clock the Savages again surrounded the Mission House. My faithful dog Clutha, clinging still to me amid the wreck of all else on Earth, sprang quietly upon me, pulled at my clothes, and awoke me, showing danger in her eye glancing at me through the shadows. I silently awoke Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson, who had also fallen asleep. We committed ourselves in hushed prayer to God and watched them, knowing that they could not see us. Immediately a glare of light fell into the room! Men passed with flaming torches; and first they set fire to the Church all round, and then to a reed fence connecting the Church and the dwelling-house. In a few minutes the house, too, would be in flames, and armed Savages waiting to kill us on attempting an escape!

Taking my harmless revolver in the left hand and a little American tomahawk in the right, I pled with Mr. Mathieson to let me out and instantly again to lock the door on himself and wife. He very reluctantly did so, holding me back and

saying, "Stop here and let us die together! You will never return!"

I said, "Be quick! Leave that to God. In a few minutes our house will be in flames, and then nothing can save us."

He did let me out, and locked the door again quickly from the inside; and, while his wife and he prayed and watched for me from within, I ran to the burning reed fence, cut it from top to bottom, and tore it up and threw it back into the flames, so that the fire could not by it be carried to our dwelling-house. I saw on the ground shadows, as if something were falling around me, and started back. Seven or eight Savages had surrounded me, and raised their great clubs in air. I heard a shout—"Kill him! kill him!" One Savage tried to seize hold of me, but, leaping from his clutch, I drew the revolver from my pocket and levelled it as for use, my heart going up in prayer to my God. I said, "Dare to strike me, and my Jehovah God will punish you. He protects us, and will punish you for burning His Church, for hatred to His Worship and people, and for all your bad conduct. We love you all; and for doing you good only you want to kill us. But our God is here now to protect us and to punish you."

They yelled in rage, and urged each other to strike the first blow, but the Invisible One restrained them. I stood invulnerable beneath His invisible shield, and succeeded in rolling back the tide of flame from our dwelling-house.

At this dread moment occurred an incident, which my readers may explain as they like, but which I trace directly to the interposition of my God. A rushing and roaring sound came from the South, like the noise of a mighty engine or of muttering thunder. Every head was instinctively turned in that direction, and they knew, from previous hard experience, that it was one of their awful tornadoes of wind and rain. Now, mark, the wind bore the flames *away* from our dwelling-house; had it come in the opposite direction, no power on Earth could have saved us from being all consumed! It made the work of destroying the Church only that of a few minutes; but it brought with it a heavy and murky cloud, which poured out a perfect torrent of tropical rain. Now, mark again, the flames of the burning Church were thereby cut off from extending to and seizing upon the reeds and the bush; and, besides, it had become almost impossible now to