

Written for this Paper.

FROM THE FRIENDLY ISLANDS.

MU'A, TONGATABU, TONGA,
February 12, 1894.

Some time has passed since you have heard from the Friendly Islands, and thinking your many readers who are interested in missionary labors, among whom we have friends that time will not permit us writing personally to, would desire to learn something further, I take this opportunity of writing you and hope you will deem these lines worthy of space in your paper.

For the past few months we have had very hot weather. At Christmas and two or three weeks following, it was almost suffocating. What little wind there was came from the north, and while it was very damp, often bringing with it showers of rain, it was exceedingly warm and oppressive. It was the most sultry weather we have had since landing here in July, 1891. There were also heavy rains, such as we read about in New Zealand, during the latter part of January and the first week of the present month; but at this writing the regular southeast trade wind is again blowing and we hope for some good weather, so that traveling will not be so disagreeable.

Since you last heard from us, there has been considerable change in government offices, the most important of which was the resignation of Hon. J. U. Tukuaho and the appointment of a man from Vava'u to succeed him. This was done by the young king, who became dissatisfied with the management of affairs and thought a change would be for the better; but the people of Tongatabu are not well satisfied with what has been done. The new premier, however, is endeavoring to show himself as being in favor of improvement, by putting in force (in native fashion, which, by the way, is haphazard style) the sanitary clause of the law. This of course makes him unpopular among some classes, and I do not think it brings him much applause from the "whites" living here. I speak from my own way of thinking and not from what I have heard others say. While I am in favor of good laws and a strict enforcement of the same, so the people will receive all the benefits of cleanliness, peace and good order, I do not like to see a mock made of everything in that direction so that instead of it being a benefit to the people it proves a disadvantage. For example, the doorway of every home must be swept and cleaned every month, but the inside of the houses are not cleaned from year to year; and the smell of some of them is very repulsive indeed. The filth remains inside the house, being covered from time to time by a new coconut-leaf carpet. Thus decaying matter is left in the sleeping rooms to breed disease. No wonder the rate of decrease is very heavy among the Tongans.

Again, if one person tears the clothing of another, whether with evil intent or not, he may be fined fifty dollars and imprisoned three months; but a man can whip his wife because she will not roll his cigarettes for him, and kick her out into the street, and the law does not handle him; the people applaud him.

There are those who think they

merit great praise for introducing civilization (so called) and Christianity (false), and framing laws for the natives to be governed by, but from all I can learn the people are in a much worse condition than they were fifty years ago. Sexual sins are not curtailed in the least, and where nature took its course formerly, infamous crimes are practiced now.

Modern alleged Christianity has been among this people for many years, and the result is as described. The Savior said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits," etc. In viewing the situation of the natives the only conclusion we can come to is that the tree which was planted many years ago and which is producing much fruit at present, is not "a good tree," for "the fruit is evil." It is high time the true Gospel was introduced among the natives and the precious truths that were advocated by the Apostles of old taught them, to prevent utter destruction.

Our progress seems to be rather slow, but we are working to the best of our knowledge for the advancement of the work of the Lord. We hold two meetings every Sabbath here in Mu'a, which, by the way, are not always well attended. Then we travel from village to village on this island, holding meetings wherever we can, and testifying to the truth of the Gospel to all with whom we come in contact.

The school which has now been established for some time, is proving to be a success and we have the pleasure of enrolling a few more names occasionally. The members are all males, but we hope to be able to get a class of little girls as soon as the sisters become a little more familiar with the native language, and have them taught sewing, knitting, etc., as well as book learning and Gospel principles.

For some three months Sister Luella R. Adams has been afflicted with some kind of a disease in her feet and she is still unable to walk; her appetite is also very poor, not being able to relish the food we are obliged to eat in this country; but I think she is now on the improve and will be around in a few weeks.

We have been called upon to record the account of a sorrowful event in the Tongan mission. On the 26th of January Sister Margaret R. Durham gave birth to a girl baby, but on account of not being able to procure sufficient aid at the proper time the little one died and the mother was in a critical condition when the nurse arrived. All the assistance in the neighborhood was called in and everything was done that could be done; but it was not until eight hours had passed away that there were any signs of her recovery; and then it was continual prayer and the performance of the ordinance for the healing of the sick that gave her relief. The whole of the night was spent in watching and praying for her, as well as doing everything in our power for her welfare. Next morning we made preparations for the funeral and prepared a place to bury the body of the infant in one corner of our lot, but as it is unlawful to hold a funeral without first making it known to the mayor of the town, we went and informed him of our intention. While he showed his willingness for us to do as we desired, he said he

was afraid it would not be satisfactory to the minister of lands to make a new cemetery; so he dispatched a messenger to Nukualofa to get the consent of the governor, which was not obtained. Then a portion of their burying grounds was given us, and at 3 o'clock in the afternoon the funeral was held, there being quite a concourse of natives present. The opportunity was taken advantage of to explain to the natives the true principles of redemption for children.

At present Sister Durham is on a fair way to recovery; but she has indeed had a serious time of it, and nothing but the faith and prayers of the Elders has saved her life. We are all thankful to our Heavenly Father for His blessings.

Trusting the Saints will aid us with their faith and prayers to surmount the many obstacles placed in our way, so that truth may prevail, I subscribe myself as an earnest worker to that end.

KOAU BUKUBUKU.

LABORS IN TENNESSEE.

MCMINNVILLE, Warren county,
Tennessee, March 17, 1894.

I take liberty of addressing a few lines for publication if considered worthy of such notice. We are getting along nicely, and are enjoying the blessings of God in our labors. We were called to open up a new field of labor in this county, and we had very many that never heard a Mormon, as they term them, preach. Those who have heard them have come here from other parts. There are many queries put to us in regard to our doctrine and a general interest is manifested to hear us. We are successful in getting houses to preach in with some exceptions.

We called recently upon a gentleman by the name of Mr. Cartwright, near here, who has charge of the Christian or Campbellite church. He said he would see his members and give us an answer inside of two days. We waited until the time was fully up, and it being Sunday and we holding services in a school house near the church at 11 a.m., we went to his church at 2 p.m. After its close he called us out to one side and said with all kindness and respect to us he was afraid to let us have the house to preach in, urging that his was a young church and it would cause confusion and perhaps break up the body. He also said he hoped we would not hold or harbor any feeling against him for this. We told him, Oh no, certainly not; this we would not think of doing in any case, especially as he was so frank in giving us to understand that his doctrines would not stand the light of truth—afraid of two poor, weak mortals like us preaching the plain and simple plan of salvation as God dictates it by His Holy Spirit.

There are many good, kind, hospitable people in this part of Tennessee—good church-going people, starving for the eternal truths of salvation. The ministers of the day do not feed them to their satisfaction. There is something wanting by the great majority—something tangible, with foundation and soundness; but many lack courage to face the world in leaving the tutor of their family faith and enlisting in the great and only plan of salvation whereby man can enter into God's Kingdom. They listen to our