

am well and enjoying my mission as much as can reasonably be expected, where one's time is about equally divided between traveling on small dirty boats, settling quarrels and disputes occasioned by trifles, and exercising the patience of Job in teaching the Gospel to my dark-skinned brethren, by the aid of a single lamp, the light flickering and sputtering in thousand odd drafts of the stiff sea breeze entering through as many apertures of our leak meeting houses. Nor is the intellectual or spiritual light any more profusely manifested than the physical or artificial. It often takes great faith to see or imagine that in the misty future when generations shall have come and gone, these people will ever be anything more than what they are at the present time. I am among a people like unto old Israel of Moses's day, save that they are all as much alike as one chicken's egg is like another. Were these people of the company who traveled from Egypt to Canaan, I feel sure they would be among the first of those who died in the wilderness. Old Israel had poets, prophets, fine workmen, etc., but though different kinds of missionaries have been here 100 years I don't know of one book written by a native, or of a native with sufficient zeal to lead him to choose a hobby.

I dreamed last night I was being catechized by some one high up in the Church, and when I was asked the question "Would you be willing to give up your life for the work," I hesitated so long that daylight came without the question being answered, and I awoke with a troubled mind and have felt queer ever since. This will probably account for the gloomy thoughts I have just been led to write. The question was put as written above, yet it was not the question of dying for truth that troubled me, for I have felt quite willing to do that. It resolved itself into a second question, viz: If I should answer "yes" I was willing to give up my life for the work, would I be willing to be called to labor in this mission for life? It was the question put in this light that drove terror to my heart. Let us hope it was nothing more than a dream.

Since I wrote my last letter of Sept. 10th, I have had nine voyages on the ocean, eight of which have been on small boats from 20 to 25 feet long. Leaving Tahiti Sept. 11th we sailed to Taaroa, an island 330 miles distant, and were eight days in transit, being lost for two days. Here I was publicly forbidden to preach, the governor delivering his commands to me before the congregation just previous to holding meeting. I preached, upon which the governor of the island wrote to the presiding governor of the seventy islands known as the Luamote group informing him of my action and asking for further instructions. I then traveled to Aratika, a distance of eighty miles, on a small boat. These boats are covered over with a deck, having nothing more than a two or sometimes three inch railing to keep one from sliding into the sea. Not being able to stand the stretch below I always sit on deck through rain and snow. On this trip the thermometer registered 104 degrees. I then took another voyage thirty miles further to Faarava, the

residence of the presiding governor, having traveled 110 miles to see him. He said I was a liar, a vagabond, a flatterer for food, and that he would be justified in calling me a thief. He forbade me to preach or teach, and commanded me to remain on his island where I now am until a vessel came and thence go straight to Tahiti and never come back again. I had three interviews with him, and humble and patient pleading and supplicating proving futile, I told him plainly that I was going to preach and teach the Gospel and would not go to Tahiti unless I was taken by force.

I held my school every evening as usual, and one evening while I was in the act of explaining some scripture the police came in and by virtue of a special command of the governor ordered all the people to go home and gave me notice that I would be brought before court next morning. I waited all next day for a summons to go to court but none came. Held my school as usual but though as I have since learned the governor was notified, we were not disturbed. Next day, Sunday, our meetings were stopped by the police but we held them anyway and nothing ever came of it. It knew the governor was acting contrary to law and was not a bit afraid of him though he scowled and tried to frighten me with wild gestures and a bellowing voice. Three days afterward I called on him and asked permission to go to Anaa Island, where conference was to be held.

Judge of my surprise when he said I was useless and could go where I pleased. I did not expect him to condemn himself in this manner. Thus was the way opened up for me to go to conference. I expected trouble at conference for I knew the governor of the island had a letter from headquarters, commanding him to prevent any Mormon missionaries from preaching the Gospel. A second surprise was in store for me. When I called on the governor of Anaa he told me to go ahead, that the presiding governor had written him a letter the day I left, commanding him to let us go ahead, and thus countering his first order. Our conference was a success. It was the first one I ever tried to preside over and the second only I ever attended held in native language. I have been nearly three years on a mission and only attended three conferences during that time.

Then I sailed to Faaita, forty miles away. The sea was heavy and the wind was strong, and I was drenched regularly about every five minutes by waves breaking over the boat. Notwithstanding the skill of the helmsman they would break upon us continually. From Faaita I came here and had another interview with the presiding governor, at which he exhibited further evidence of his ungentlemanliness, but did not endeavor to scare me since he found I would not scare. I held my meetings right along and have not been disturbed. I again gave him notice that I would continue to do so. Not long after this he was taken with a peculiar complaint, his right hand man telling me himself that he went foolish or crazy and he left on the first vessel for Tahiti. In every instance on this trip save with this gov-

ernor, I have been treated with the utmost kindness and consideration by the officers of the government and have been the recipient of special favors from some of them. Since then I have taken two voyages and lived a month in a small but 8x10 feet which let so much wind in its numerous apertures that I could not burn a lamp on a windy night. A coal oil case was my desk and table, while my only chair once contained canned beef. The floor was my bed and my food consisted of coconut, fish and soggy bread. I am healthy and even getting fat on it. During the two months' trip I have had five pigs given me and at other times pigs were killed on account of my presence. I can eat pig meat like a savage now. Will leave for Tahiti this week unless the vessel was wrecked in the late storm.

SUNDAY AT MERCUR.

Sunday in a mining camp is seldom, if indeed ever, characterized with the same regard for the day and what it typifies, as the occasion calls for from communities whose struggles for a livelihood are along different lines. Not that the people who engage in digging the precious metals from the earth are necessarily less Christian than their fellows; but because their occupation, training and desires all tend in one direction—the acquisition of wealth. The hour of the day or the day of the week counts little or no figure when there is a possibility any minute of striking a pick into a vein of hidden richness; of leasing, under an iron-clad bond a claim or a group of them; of disposing of a mine for hundreds of thousands of dollars; of selling so called building lots—not much larger than a good sized parlor and steeper by half than a toboggan slide—for sums that would have made a Salt Lake real estate boomer of '90 turn green with envy; of the hotel proprietor raking in a big silver half dollar for a plate of corn beef and cabbage, a cup of coffee and a "pat" of boarding house butter strong enough to stalk over the the mills unaided; of the consorial "artia" charging twenty-five cents for a "scrape" and twice that amount for a "hair mow;" of the saloon man getting rich by dishing "beers" over the bar to dry throated veterans of the pick, pack mule and giant powder; or in like manner quenching the thirst of the bonazaking and the tenderfoot.

Mercur—for it is of that celebrated camp I intend particularly to write briefly—is a veritable hive of industry with its inhabitants as busy as real bees. On every hand are evidences of intense activity and yesterday was probably the liveliest day in its history, on the principle that each additional day eclipses any that has preceded it. And all signs—and they are substantial—point to a continuance of this condition. Every well developed mine is paying dividends of a character that will soon make their recipients wealthy—those of them who have not already crossed the threshold of money scarcity. Then very many partially developed mines promise to do the same thing for their owners.

Several hundred persons thronged the streets, hotels and business houses of the new town yesterday. For three