

the most trying season of the year. I feel that he is filling a distinct post of usefulness in connection with Mr. Grant's work in this mission. Should Mr. Grant leave for Nova Scotia early in the year, as seems likely, Mr. McDonald's work will be still more important in 1876. Those therefore who contribute to his support may rest assured that they are doing a useful work through him, and that the coming year promises more abundant opportunities of labour and usefulness.

I am, &c.,

JOHN MORTON.

NEW HERBRIDES MISSION.

Sandwich or Fate.

BY THE REV. DR. STEEL.

"But here it was a sailor's thought
That nam'd the island from the Earl,
That dreams of England might be brought
To these soft shores and seas of pearl.
How very fair they must have seem'd
When first they darkened on the deep,
Like all the wandering seaman dream'd
When land rose lovely on his sleep.
How many dreams they turn'd to truth
When first they met the sailor's eyes,
Green with the sweet earth's southern youth,
And azure with her southern skies.
And yet our English thought beguiles
The mariner where'er he roam,
He looks upon the new found isles,
And calls them by some name of home."

—L. E. Landon.

Captain Cook, who discovered this island in 1774, named it after the Earl of Sandwich, then the first Lord of the Admiralty. He had attached his name to the group on the north of the Equator. He had named a port after him in the large island of Mallicollo. Yet Cook was always anxious to discover the native names of localities. It is astonishing how correctly he gathered these from people of whose languages he was ignorant. The native name of this large and beautiful island is Fate. It is sometimes written Vate, and missionaries longest familiar with the language say that the proper spelling is Efaté.

The island is about sixty miles north of Eromanga, and has a circumference of seventy-five miles. It is richly diversified with scenery. Mountains rise in the interior, while near the coast are terraces of tableland. The soil is very productive. The harbours are singularly large and beautiful. That on the south has two islands within it. That on the north is bounded by two islands of considerable size, which make it nearly landlocked.

The people of Fate exhibit a higher physique than the natives of the southern islands. They have also much better huts and canoes. But they are even more in-

terate cannibals, and practise revolting cruelties. The women are bolder and stronger than those of the south. They do not wear the petticoat of leaves, but had a simple girdle of matting when first seen, with a pendant tail behind. Now almost all have a piece of calico around their loins. The hair is cut closely to the skin, and their bosoms are uncovered for the most part. In the huts many bones are suspended from the roof. The vertebrae of pigs, merry-thoughts of fowls, all sorts of bones of fishes, and in some cases human bones meet the eye. They have the same reverence for departed ancestors as is found among all Polynesians; but in this island they erect large hollow drums of wood in a place sacred to the dead, and beat these in a sort of melancholy music while they dance around them in honour of the dead. This is done at certain times when the moon is full.

The language of Fate is, with some dialectical differences diffused over the island, and it is found on at least ten more islands to the north. This is quite an exception to the ordinary state of things in the tongues of the New Hebrides, and it invests the island with a greater interest in a missionary point of view. Hitherto the polyglot tongues have seemed so many that every island was credited with one or more; but subsequent research has shown that the Fatese language with mere dialectal differences, extends all over the Shepherd islands. There is a remarkable exception, however; for the two islands of Fila and Mel in the Bay of Pango have a language altogether different, and strikingly allied to those of Aniwa and Fotuna, and some of the eastern islands. Indeed, these four islands, though so far apart, have dialects of one tongue.

Fate was visited by the missionary vessel John Williams in 1845, and four native teachers were then settled. They were all Samoans. A few years after they were so persecuted or murdered that all the stations were abandoned except one. The island had a repetition of the atrocities of Eromanga in connection with sandalwood, and the issue was as melancholy. However, the stations at Erakor and Pango were kept up, and visited from time to time by the missionary vessel. They had fluctuations, but the people waited upon the native teachers, and became interested in the Christian faith. In 1861 Mr. Geddie had the pleasure of baptizing ten converts there, and of celebrating among them the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In 1864, the Rev. Donald Morrison was settled at Erakor amidst considerable encouragement. He got mission premises erected including a church and house. He prepared a hymn-book and the Gospel according to Mark, which were printed. Several from time to