

his voice was to be no more raised in proclaiming the glorious gospel.

He had long been anxious to visit Erromanga more thoroughly, to go about and become better acquainted with the people, to establish teachers among them, and to extend the bounds of the kingdom of Christ on that island. For this purpose he had been endeavouring to get a large boat; and last year, through the liberality of a German lady, who placed £40 at the disposal of Mr. Kay, our Missionary Secretary, for Erromanga, and through the energetic exertions of Mr. McKie, of South Yarra, who collected £30 for the purpose, a sum of £70 was invested in the purchase of a large boat, which was brought down in the *Dayspring* this year, but Mr. McNair was unable to make any use of her, and the first voyage that she took was to bring me intelligence of his death.

The house in which Mr. McNair lived and died was one built by a Mr. Henry, formerly a sandal-wood trader on Erromanga. It is a large and commodious building, but the situation is unwholesome, and it is not sufficiently elevated above the surface of the ground. It is close beside a fresh water tidal stream, always an unhealthy situation in a tropical climate. Mr. McNair had long intended to have put up a cottage in a better place, and had brought along with him from Aneytium the frame of a small house, which the missionaries and the men in the *Dayspring* had set up for him opposite to the point on which Williams was killed, at the mouth of the stream, with a full view of the sea. After the vessel left Mr. McNair was unable to do anything to it, and before ten days were past he had reached the house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

As I knew Mr. McNair more intimately than any of his missionary brethren, and have frequently heard him speak of his early life, perhaps a few reminiscences would be interesting to you. He was born in the parish of Inverhollan, on the shores of Loch ———, one of the numerous beautiful lochs that indent the southern coast of Argyleshire. In his youth he used to cross the hills to the school of Glendaniel (a parish in which, by the way, about 200 years ago a certain Mr. McLaurin was minister, who had two sons, one of whom was the celebrated mathematician, and the other the no less celebrated divine.) In this parish school young James McNair received the elements of his education, and was taught to read the English Bible, and to repeat the shorter catechism in English, when he only knew the Gaelic; indeed he scarcely knew any other language than Gaelic until he was thirteen or fourteen years of age.

The Disruption in the Church of Scot-

land occurred when he was a boy about 12, and left upon his mind a vivid impression. He was a warm sympathiser with those who left the Establishment on that occasion, and ever afterwards entertained and expressed deep-rooted hatred of modernism, not unmingled with contempt. When a lad about fourteen he went to Dunoon, where he got a situation in a shop, in conjunction with which was kept the post-office of the place. His master allowed him an hour or two daily to attend school, of which he availed himself, and he also commenced a course of reading under the direction of the Rev. Dr. McKay, whose ministrations he attended, reading such books as Butler's Analogy and others of a like stamp, well calculated to form the mind of a young man.

In the course of time his master resigned the situation of post-master, and Mr. McNair, on the requisition of the inhabitants, was appointed to fill his place; along with the post-office he also kept a store for books and newspapers. This yielded him a sufficient income to keep him in comfortable circumstances, and had he chosen to settle down, he might, with his steady habits, have lived a very happy, respectable, and useful life at home.

But the word of truth had sunk deeply into his heart. Dunoon is a watering-place of considerable extent on the Frith of Clyde, and he was often brought into contact with students who might be residing there as tutors in families, or spending their summer holidays at the sea-side. A time of revival swept over the West of Scotland, and Mr. McNair determined to give himself to the Lord in the ministry of His Son. But how was he to find time for study? He had a government situation, and required to be at his post every day from the beginning of the year to the end of it. It so happened that Sir Rowland Hill (of penny postage fame), had taken a fancy to Dunoon as his summer residence; and what more natural than that being there he should come into contact with the post-master, and that thus a friendship should spring up between them! To him, then, Mr. McNair in his difficulty applied, and through his influence he was permitted to be absent at college five months in winter, supplying his place while away with a substitute. In this way he studied at Edinburgh, taking the regular Arts course at the University, and afterwards some years at theology in the Free Church College there, until in the year 1864 Mr. Paton happened to be home in Scotland, and being in Dunoon, Mr. McNair was introduced to him, and through him offered himself to the Foreign Mission Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, as a candidate for the office of Foreign Missionary in