

NEW HEBRIDES MISSION.

Letter from Dr. Geddie.

GEELONG, VICTORIA;
Jan. 29th, 1872.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

The *Dayspring* arrived at Melbourne on the first day of the present year, just after the departure of the last English mail. Mr. and Mrs. Inglis came in the *Dayspring* also on account of the health of the latter. Mrs. Neilson and two children have likewise come to Australia on account of the health of the latter, but she hopes soon to return.

The state of religion is on the whole encouraging. Among a large proportion of the young people there has been of late a more than usual attention to religion. The influence of a Tahitian who has been living long on the island has had something to do with this happy change. In former days he was careless about religion, but for more than twelve months past there has been a complete reformation in his conduct. If he should continue steadfast his example will do much good.

I regret to say that slavery still exists with little alteration on most of the islands of this group. It is less vigorous now than formerly, but much more perilous. It is sad to think that the British flag covers so infamous a traffic. It is to be hoped that our own government may yet awaken to a sense of its duty.

You have no doubt heard of the death of Bishop Patteson. He was killed with Mr. Atkin, one of his missionaries, on an island to the north of the New Hebrides group. The particulars of his death have not yet reached us. The Bishop appears to have regarded his death as by no means an improbable event. The report is that the traffic in natives has been the true cause of the murders. It is to be hoped that the death of the excellent bishop may prove the death of slavery in the South Sea islands, and that others may take hold of the work where he has laid it down.

I remain, dear sir, sincerely yours,
J. GEDDIE.

REV. P. G. MCGREGOR.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The *Melbourne Christian Review*, for December, contains a report of the proceedings of the General Assembly from Nov. 14th to 22nd. After sermon from the retiring moderator, the Rev. George Mackie (since deceased) was chosen moderator. Rev. Dr. Macdonald gave in the Report of the Mission to the New Hebrides. Like

Dr. Macdonald's former Reports, it is very succinct. The Rev. James Cosh had resigned on account of family affliction, and the resignation was accepted with much regret. One of the students attending the Theological Classes of the Church in Victoria, would likely proceed to the islands in the *Dayspring*, in March. The deliverance of the Assembly on the Report was:—

"The Assembly approve of the Report, and give their thanks to the Committee, and especially to the convener. The General Assembly renews its expression of deep interest in this Mission, and commends it afresh to the sympathies and liberality of the Church. The Assembly specially approves of the selection of Mr. D. M'Donald to be a missionary of this Church in the New Hebrides group, and instructs the Presbytery of Melbourne to take steps for license and ordination at an early date, commending Mr. M'Donald to the care of the Great Head of the Church. The Assembly rejoices at the continued usefulness of the *Dayspring* as a mission ship, and at the abiding liberality of the children of the Church on her behalf; and learning that Captain Fraser is about to retire from the command of the vessel, instructs the Committee to assure him of the high estimation in which this Church has always held his character and labours. Still farther, the Assembly is deeply impressed with the fearful evils and wrongs which are perpetrated among the South Sea Islands by vessels which are employed in kidnapping the natives, and requests the moderator to memorialise the Victorian and Imperial Governments on the subject. The Assembly adopts the Overture from the Presbytery of Geelong on the lamented death of Bishop Patteson, and is gratified to observe the unanimity which pervades the public mind as to the great loss which the Christian Church has sustained through his decease, and as to the cruel wrongs inflicted on the heathen, to which his untimely death can be directly traced. The Assembly deeply sympathises with the Melanesian Mission, and with all the Missions in the South Seas, at the sufferings and losses which they sustain through the evil influences exerted on the natives of the islands by many evil-disposed persons who unscrupulously wrong the natives; and it implores the protection of Almighty God on their persons and work."

The Queen's Speech on the Slave Trade.

"The slave trade, and practices scarcely to be distinguished from slave-trading, still pursued in more than one quarter of the world, continue to attract the attention of my Government. In the South Sea Islands