

## Missionary World.

### DR. PATON AND THE NEW HEBRIDES.

#### MEETING OF THE MISSION SYNOD.

The following letter from Dr. Paton of the New Hebrides Mission appeared in a late issue of the *Belfast Witness* and will be read with pleasure by all interested in Missions.—[ED.]

Rev. Dr. Paton, writing to Mr. Wm. Watson, hon. secretary and treasurer for Ireland of the John G. Paton Mission Fund, from on board the mission ship *Dayspring*, at the New Hebrides, June 23rd, says—"The annual meeting of our mission Synod has just closed. It was one of the most cordial and spiritual Synods we have ever had. From 7 to 8 o'clock a.m. was daily spent in a prayer meeting; breakfast at 8 and family worship. Synod began at 9, and with a short time excepted for dinner and tea continued till midnight, as the business on hand was disposed of, for one week, exceedingly exhausting work. Twenty-one missionaries and one lay helper were present. Our whole company consisted of 40 adults and 10 children, while 9 adults and 5 children, besides those at their education in Britain, Australia, and New Zealand were absent. All these, with our now 271 native teachers and helpers, and our *Dayspring* mission ship, require a large yearly expenditure in support of our mission, which we trust Jesus will provide till the remaining cannibals are taught to sing His praise, and rejoice in His salvation.

The two great events of our Synod this year were the settling of four highly educated and promising young missionaries and one lay helper. The Rev. T. McMillan, M.A., supported by the Presbyterian Church of South Australia, reoccupied their vacant station at Weisise Tanna, which during the vacancy has been kept open by two of my Anewan teachers—one of whom, Notshea, has been there some fourteen years. The Rev. Frank H. L. Paton, B.D., our son, has opened a new station among 4,000 cannibals, to us speaking an unknown language, on the west side of Tanna. The Rev. J. Sandilands, M.B.C.M., was to be placed on the north end of Tanna, if a suitable opening could be got there in a scattered population of about 1,000, speaking a different language or dialect, but at two of the principal boat landings some of the chiefs were opposed, one by his brother, a returned Kanaka labourer from Queensland. A suitable station, I am very sorry, could not be got, and he goes north, by the aid of a deputation of missionaries, to seek a station on the north of Malakula, or the west of Santo. The last two named are supported through Victoria. The Rev. F. G. Bowie, M.A., sent out and supported by the Free Church of Scotland, is appointed to South Santo, not far from Dr. Annand's Teachers' Training Institution, but for medical instruction he remains a time with Dr. Gunn, on Aneityum and Futuna. By the kind support of a lady in England the lay helper is with our son on Tanna. Miss Garton, a lady helper in school teaching, has been engaged by Mr. and Mrs. Mitchelson, of Tongoa, and a trained nurse has been engaged for Dr. Lamb's hospital on Ambrim.

The second great event was Synod's unanimously accepting the steam auxiliary *Dayspring* as our New Hebrides mission ship, to give her a fair and sympathetic trial, which has been already accomplished so far as comfort is concerned. But many doubt if we will be able to meet her yearly expense. Though rather small now for our work, for she had nineteen mission passengers from Sydney to the islands, and fifty to Synod, besides her native and white crew, wood for a house, and provisions for all, etc., etc., yet we never experienced such comfort sailing in any ship in our mission, or to or from Synod, as in this *Dayspring*. She is God's gift by His people to our mission. After her formal reception, Synod offered fervent

prayer and thanks to God for the unanimity of her acceptance as our mission ship by the Synod. She is placed under the special care of a managing committee in Victoria, which is to be responsible for her yearly expense, over some £1,600, hitherto given by the churches supporting our mission, to keep the mission ship. To assist in this they expect the yearly extra £1,000 promised through you and my committee in Britain by the many friends of our mission. The Sydney Dayspring Board, after paying agency expenses, only is to hand over all money got by it for the *Dayspring* to the responsible managing committee in Victoria, which pays or sanctions all her expenditure, so as to keep down her expense as far as possible with efficiency in the work. May the Divine blessing rest upon her and her work in carrying the light of the Gospel to the many thousands on our group yet in heathen darkness.

To me the work of two and a half days this week was intensely interesting in landing the wood and clearing the ground for the house of my son Frank, the missionary of the John G. Paton Fund on the west side of Tanna. The Tannese received them more kindly than we expected, and the trader and his wife living there were very kind. Messrs. Small, Mackenzie, and Dr. Sandilands also gave us all the help possible. The natives are nude, painted savages; women wear grass skirts or aprons, and many girls seven or eight years of age nothing. How very sad to see a noble race so extremely degraded. The trader told us that a few days before we landed, in a quarrel about a woman, two women were shot and two children murdered and it is not long since they killed three persons and feasted on their bodies near his house; but we hope the Lord's Day to favour poor Tanna is near now. Frank and his party live in tents till they can erect his house, and to help in this Mr. Mackenzie, the carpenter in the *Dayspring*, has been engaged by him for about two months, when on the return of the *Dayspring* he goes on to help another, etc. He is a good Christian, deeply interested in our work, and will be a great help for the first two months to the young people. The humane commander of Her Majesty's ship *Royalist* was passing Tanna, saw the *Dayspring* at anchor landing the material for the house, and came to anchor near by us just as the *Dayspring* was leaving. The natives were threatening the life of the trader, and boasted that no man-of-war could call at this side of Tanna, so his providential call will do good, it is hoped, for all parties. He is going to call again on his return voyage in about a month, and let the natives see some demonstration, and give them some advice which may help to keep them from taking lives, but the Gospel is the only real civilizer of man—yet we felt grateful for his kind call in the circumstances. We had to leave the young people, commending them to God's care and guidance in their work on Tanna.

As I am writing, the *Dayspring* seemed to stop, and I ran on deck to know why. We were passing between the islands of My and Makuru, both wrought by Mr. Milne, chiefly by teachers, for Makuru is some 16 miles from his head station at Nguna, and it has a population of about 200, now all professed Christians. Three men had come off in a canoe to get their mail, and see if the captain wanted any boat hands. On being informed that the vessel would return in about six weeks, and receiving their mail as thrown to them tied to the end of a rope, the leader said, "Good-bye and God bless you," and placing the letter or letters between his teeth against a strong headwind and heavy sea they paddled back to their own island. What a proof these islanders, who were cannibals a few years ago, now give of the mighty, elevating and civilizing power of the teaching of Jesus Christ. Truly the Gospel is the only true and real civilizer of man. It has never failed. Mr. Milne has seven islands in his charge; five of them are now inhabited by professed Christians, and the other two have only a few heathens left on them. On one of them lately 200 persons at once embraced the Gospel. On Efate, Erromanga, Epi, and Tongoa the success has also been marvellous, and on the other islands encouraging. Last Sabbath on Nguna we had the great joy of worshipping with 500 converts and addressing them. On our calling at dear old Anewa I had the pleasure of a short service in the church, and baptized four children. There the population is increasing. They have from seventy to eighty healthy, nice-looking children. They have had no missionary visiting them since I left a year, yet the chief and his two fellow-elders, assisted by the teachers, have conducted all the church services and the schools regularly, and there has been no falling away or cases of Church discipline, but everything to encourage and show progress.

## Young People's Societies.

CONDUCTED BY A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEE.

#### THE SOCIETY'S SEEDTIME.

Seasons in the natural world and those in the spiritual do not always follow the same calendar. The ideal for the church on earth as well as for that above is to re- sult over not less than twelve manner of fruits, yielded every month; but the ideal is not reached without diligent planting and watering. Sowing is always timely, but there are seasons that make an especially loud call for effort. Now, when the farmer is gathering the reward of his toil, is a time when most of our societies have their spring-time. Officers, committees, and members that mean to have the coming year a fruitful one must lose no time in making their plans.

The autumn brings more or less of change. Many societies will feel the loss of some of their best workers, who leave for other fields of work. Members that have not been giving the best of service in the past will not be likely to show great zeal after an absence of weeks when their responsibility was not kept before them. On the other hand, there may be new faces to welcome, and many will return with a heart for harder work after a summer's rest or a chance to see what is being done in other places. The situation has in it promise of advance and decline. The two may in some cases be nearly balanced. Even when the prospect is very decidedly one way, almost everything may depend on the beginning. An enthusiastic start will turn the scale with the indifferent and give cheer to the others. A year of blessing may be ensured. It is not enough to equal past deeds. Whatever the disadvantages, God is ready to make the coming year the best. Now is the time for every one, from the president to the weakest member, to be thinking what he can do to strengthen weak places, to win new members, to deepen the spiritual life, to make the society more helpful to the Church. Is your society ready to go forward? Are you praying and planning?—*Golden Rule*.

#### AN IMPORTANT STEP.

It will be remembered that the General Assembly in June last instructed its Committee on Young People's Societies to consider how the doctrine, polity, history and work of our Church might be brought more adequately before the young people through their societies and to propose a plan to this and to the societies. The Committee on Wednesday last considered the question in all its bearings and decided upon a plan which it is hoped may meet with the hearty approval of the Church, and may be taken up enthusiastically by the young people. Details will be sent out to the societies in due time. Meanwhile it may be stated that the grafting method is the one suggested. Present programmes and topic cards are to be interfered with as little as possible. For doctrine, a short period, say, five minutes at each meeting, is to be given to that best of all manuals of Presbyterian belief, the Shorter Catechism. Six meetings are proposed during the year to consider the polity and history of the Church and six the Schemes, making one each month. For the year 1897 the topics for these meetings give a general survey. In succeeding years many avenues of interesting detail will invite study. The completed scheme will be sent out in good time for the new year, and an effort is to be made to have it printed by a well known Christian Endeavor publishing house on the uniform topic cards, so that societies will have both the uniform topics and these special topics side by side. This will be exceedingly convenient for those societies, and we trust it may be a very large number, who may fall in with the proposal of the General Assembly's Committee.

Say what you have to say in the fewest words possible. "If I send a man to examine a horse for me, I expect him to give me his points, not how many hairs he has in his tail," was Abraham Lincoln's way of emphasizing the value of brevity.—*Ex.*

## WHY I BELIEVE IN THE ATONEMENT.

REV. W. S. M'TAVISH, B.D., DESERONTO.

Oct. 4.—Heb. ix: 11-28.

At the outset we must try to get a clear idea of the term atonement. Dr. Hodge, an authority of the highest repute, objects to the use of the word atonement in expressing the work of Christ and would use instead the word satisfaction. Inasmuch as the former is the word used in the topic, we shall use it here. There are some who think that Jesus came to earth merely to show a good example—to show men how to live, and to show them how to die. There are others who think that God punished sin in Christ to show His hatred of it, and to preserve a measure of law and order in His moral universe. But by the term atonement we mean that Christ has made a true and proper satisfaction for sin by paying the full price, and by obtaining through His merits the acquittal of the sinner on the ground of justice.

I. We believe in the atonement, and in this view of it, because the Scriptures plainly teach it. "To the law and to the testimony!" What do we find? "Ye were redeemed by a price (1 Cor. vi: 20). "Ye were redeemed from your vain conversation, not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter i: 19). "Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus ii: 14). "In Whom ye have redemption through His blood" (Eph. i: 7). "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Him and with His stripes we are healed." "Christ also has suffered for us, the just for the unjust" (1 Peter iii: 18). These, and many other passages which might be adduced, clearly establishes the view of the atonement that we have taken. We believe in the atonement because God has taught it.

II. We believe in the view of the atonement as presented, because it is the only one which comports with scriptural views of God. "God is love," and because He loves sinners, it is natural that He should desire to save them. Of course He could pardon freely without any atonement being made, but this would be done at the expense of His justice. But God is just as well as loving, and so must demand the penalty when His law is violated. When we accept the view that we have taken, we can understand how God can be just and the justifier of those who believe in Jesus.

III. We believe in the atonement as we have viewed it because it seems to meet the needs of men of all classes and conditions. When this view of it is accepted, its tendency always is to humble the sinner, to make him hate sin, to impress on him the need of a Saviour, to give him a lofty conception of God's character, and to induce him to trust entirely in Christ for salvation. Whatever exalts Christ in the eyes of a sinner, and humbles a sinner in his own eyes, is productive of good. This seems to have ever been the result when this view of the atonement has been earnestly and lovingly presented. Those who reject it, and who regard Christ as coming to the world merely to show an example of righteous living and triumphant dying are apt to fall into dreamy speculations of "sweetness and light." But it is one thing to admire goodness; it is another and very different thing to abhor that which is evil, to cleave to that which is good, to be humble because of sin, and to rest implicitly for salvation on a Saviour's almighty arm. To look upon the death of Christ in any other light than as an atonement for the sins of the world is to take the very heart out of the Gospel, to rob Christianity of its strongest features and to deprive man of one of the highest incentives to holy living. One of the great secrets of Paul's strength of purpose, of his true devotion, of his holy ambition and of his dauntless courage was that he was able to say, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."