

sist the temptation to go and see these beautiful isles for himself. He worked his passage accordingly in the "Dayspring," when that beautiful mission vessel—the children's ship—sailed from Halifax on the 7th of November, 1863, with James D. Gordon, Mr. and Mrs. Morrison, and Mr. and Mrs. McCullough, amidst the tears, the prayers, and the cheers of many friends. The only time that the lion-hearted Gordon was seen to weep is said to have been on this occasion, as he looked back upon his native land which he was never to see again. Their route was via the Cape of Good Hope to Melbourne and Sidney. They arrived at Aneityum on the 5th June, 1864. At Melbourne Mr. Robertson was appointed agent for the New Hebrides Cotton Company of Glasgow, and in connection with this business had his home for four and a half years on the island of Aneityum. Part of the time he lived with Mr. Geddie, the founder of the New Hebrides Mission, and a native of Pictou, N.S., and part with Rev. John Inglis a missionary of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Distance no longer lent enchantment to the view. The dream of his early years had become a reality. He saw heathenism in its darkest and most revolting form, on islands north of Aneityum and, knowing now what missionary life was when stripped of its romance, he resolved, on the invitation of the Presbyterian Church of the Maritime Provinces in connection with the Church of Scotland, to become a missionary. Perhaps the lines which we find him quoting in one of his letters about that time had something to do with his decision:—

"My soul is not at rest: there comes a strange
And secret whisper to my spirit, like
A dream at night. Why live I here? The vows
Of God are on me, and I may not stop
To play with shadows, or pluck earthly flowers,
Till my work have done, and render up
Account. The voice of my departed Lord,
'Go teach all nations,' from the eastern world
Comes on the night breeze, and awakes my ear,
Tud I will go. I may no longer doubt
Ao give up friends and home and idol hopes,
And every tender tie that binds my heart
To thee my country. Why should I regard
Earth's little store of borrowed sweet. I, sure,
Have had enough of bitter in my cup
To shew that never was it His design
Who placed me here, that I should live at ease.
Or drink at pleasure's fountain. Henceforth then,
It matters not, if storm or sunshine be
My earthly lot, bitter or sweet my cup;
I only pray, God fit me for the work;
God make me holy, and my spirit nerve
For the hour of strife. Let me but know
There is an arm unseen that holds me up,—
A eye that kindly watches all my path
Till I my weary pilgrimage have done;
Let me but know I have a Friend that waits
To welcome me to glory, and I joy
To tread the dark and dread-fraught wilderness."

Two courses were open to the Missionary aspirant,—to go to work at once as a lay evangelist, or to prepare himself by a course of study for the full work of the Ministry. He preferred the latter, and returned to Nova Scotia where he went through a course of training in the Theological Hall at Halifax. He further fitted himself for his great life-work by a two years course in medicine. He was then licensed and ordained by the Presbyterian Church in connection with the Church of Scotland, on the 11th of August, 1871, and designated as their second missionary to the New Hebrides. On the 6th of September he married Christina McNeill, daughter of the late Mr. John Dawson, an elder of the Presbyterian Church at Little Harbour. On the 24th of October they sailed for Liverpool along with Rev. J. D. Murray and his wife—Dr. Geddie's immediate successor on Aneityum, and Rev. J. W. McKenzie and his wife, now missionaries on the Island of Efate. From Liverpool they sailed to Melbourne in the famous steamship *Great Britain*. What with regular services, prayer meetings, bible-classes, Sunday-schools, lectures, &c., they made the ship a floating Bethel, and the sixty days seemed short. They joined the *Dayspring* at Melbourne and arrived at Aneityum on the 1st of May 1872. After a tour of the islands, it was decided that Mr. Robertson and his wife should be located on Eromanga. Like brave soldiers, they accepted the post of danger. Had they not done so that island, so greatly in need of the Gospel, might have been closed against it for many a day to come.

With mingled feelings of doubt and thankfulness the new missionary and his young wife took possession of the "manse" at Dillon's Bay, such as it was. It was surrounded by a wooden stockade as protection against sudden attack by the heathen people, an occurrence that might take place at any moment, by reason of the unhappy feeling created by the murder of Mr. Gordon in the minds of the Christian portion of the community, now huddled together at Dillon's Bay to the number of about seventy. To the heathen mind mercy means cowardice; forgiveness is weakness; but revenge is manly, and if ten men way-lay and kill one man they are called heroes. Just about the time of Mr. Robertson's settlement seven of the Christians had gone over to Potinia Bay and deliberately shot three men and a woman as a summary reprisal for the murder of their missionary. Two of the avenging party were church members and teachers. This glimpse of Eromangan etiquette is sufficient to shew the kind of material Mr. Robertson had to deal with. During the first few years the lives of the missionaries were frequently in danger from the treachery of the natives, but, by the blessing of God on their patient and self-denying labours during eleven years, a happy change has taken place. How