

visit Tanna, Fate, Erromanga and other islands, and to deal with them according to the reports he had received.

2. The Commodore said he went to the island of Aneiteum for interpreters. There he found the missionaries assembled at their annual meeting. They had been apprised by the commander of H.M.S. *Esk*, then in the harbour, of his projected arrival, and they had, after conference with Capt. Luce, prepared memoranda of the outrages committed by the natives of these islands. They presented these to the Commodore, believing that in so doing they were carrying out the original memorial sent out to Sir John Young.

3. The Commodore stated that his intention was to seek a meeting with the native chiefs, in order to get their promise to refrain from acts of violence and wrong on British subjects. He asked them to come on board and guaranteed their safe return. Mr. Paton, at the risk of his life, went four times to treat with the natives, and to induce them to visit the Commodore. Twice, with tears, he entreated the Commodore to delay any firing, that the chief might have longer time. When at length after two days and a-half waiting, and after their threats to fight the big ship, Sir William Wiseman judged it to be necessary on account of the insulting challenge of the Tannese, to take strong measures, he purposely abstained from endangering life. Nor was there any one killed by the guns of the *Curacoa*. One seaman was killed by a Tannese chief, who was cut down immediately by a naval officer; but the chief is now alive and well. He had heard it reported that three individuals were killed accidentally on the following day by the bursting of an unexploded shell against which they had been duly warned. Sir William stated that it was in the interests of humanity that he took the course he did—a course that would have been taken had none of the missionaries been present.

4. In answer to inquiry, Sir William stated that the account of the *Curacoa*, published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in October last, was neither correct nor authorized, and was simply a narrative obtained by a reporter from some on board. Sir William Wiseman had sent his report of the whole affair to the Admiralty, and had received the approbation both of the Admiralty and of the Foreign Office.

5. Sir William stated that the missionaries were present only as interpreters, and had no responsibility whatever for his conduct. His conduct was according to the regulations of the navy and as the representative of the British Government. The principle upon which he proceeded was this, that the natives were quite at liberty to keep

Europeans out of their island and to forbid missionaries to reside; but if they granted or sold land to British subjects, they were bound to protect those residents, and, in case of injury, the British Government was bound to interfere. They had violated the pledges which they gave to Commodore Seymour and the captain of the *Cordelia* to protect the missionaries.

6. The Commodore also informed us that he had orders with respect to Erromanga, and that others beside the missionaries had requested his intervention there. Mrs. Henry, wife of a trader there, one of whose European servants, besides thirty others, natives of neighbouring islands—had been barbarously murdered, had sent a complaint to the Governor of this colony. With regard to Rangî, against whom a complaint had been made to Sir John Young by the missionaries, in 1862, he could not find evidence to convict this man of the murder of the Gordons. He found that at that period Rangî's own life was in great peril in that part of the island. He could not pursue the murderers of the Gordons, as he had no means of land warfare; but he did not consider the case yet closed or beyond punishment. He stated to the chiefs who met him on Erromanga that the vessel would return next year for this purpose. He did not think that Rangî could be removed without force, and, perhaps, much bloodshed, as he was allied to several chiefs.

7. The Commodore was asked whether his conduct in receiving the written document from the missionaries was affected by their unanimity, and whether he had stated that he would not act if they were not unanimous. He replied that such was never before his mind at all, and that he had made no statement with respect to their unanimity—he knew nothing of it. Sir William stated that the chiefs on Tanna had pledged themselves to protect Mr. Paton in the presence of Commodore Seymour and the captain of the *Cordelia*, that there they had entreated Mr. Paton to remain, and promised protection. But they had violated those pledges. Besides, their conduct on the occasion of his visit was such as to leave no alternative but to act as he did.

9. Sir William stated that he was in possession of all the information which the missionaries gave him previous to his interview with them, and to the presentation of their document. His visit to Tanna was occasioned by the information which he had received before he proceeded on his cruise. But as the documents had been lost, he was glad to receive the memoranda supplied.—He felt sorry to think that the missionaries should be blamed for a matter that was entirely in his hands. So far as he had heard, the result on Tanna had been to render the