

blind revenge for the crimes of their predecessors. Finally the last and worst of a series of horrors was reached when the devoted, the heroic Bishop Patteson, with Rev. Mr. Aitkin, his assistant and a native teacher fell in one day, the victims of revenge and of a devilish traffic, which though faithfully exposed and denounced by the missionaries of all the churches had been defended and protected by men in high places under the controlling influence of mammon.

This kidnapping business with its terrible results, and the means adopted for its repression, constitutes the prominent feature of the mission during the year past. It was the great subject of deliberation at the Mission Council. For years the brethren had struggled to awaken the indignation of Christendom against its atrocities, and to secure the effective intervention of British power, but with very partial success. At last meeting they invoked the immediate aid of all the churches interested, in calling on the British Parliament for the repression of the traffic. Whether their appeals would have succeeded had nothing occurred beyond an increased amount of violence and murder it is impossible to say; but the violent death of a man so widely known, so high in rank and social position, so blameless in demeanour, and so heroic and devoted in his life and public labours, as the martyred Bishop of Melanesia electrified the public, and aroused the nation, so that the petitions forwarded to Government and Parliament have met with prompt attention and a careful consideration. This Board carried out the instructions of Synod by sending a petition to the foot of the Throne which Her Majesty has graciously acknowledged, and a memorial to the Earl of Mulgrave, Governor of Queensland. The Board went further and forwarded petitions on the same subject to both Houses of Parliament, which have been duly presented.

BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

The Bill submitted and now under consideration of Parliament is for the prevention and punishment of criminal outrages on the natives of Polynesia; and empowers Colonial Courts to try and punish British subjects for kidnapping, and to issue commissions for the examination of witnesses; authorizes the Commanders of Her Majesty's ships to obtain the attendance of native witnesses and to remunerate them; authorizes the seizure of suspected vessels; and British Vice Admiralty Courts are to have full power to try them on such charges, and when proved to condemn vessel and cargo as forfeited to Her Majesty.

Most important suggestions for the improvement of the Bill have been made to

Lord Kimberley by the Foreign Mission Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland, such as the appointment of a Public Prosecutor, the more thoroughly to carry out the Act, the rendering null and void of all agreements between the natives and traders unless it can be shewn that the terms of contract were understood by the natives, and requiring on islands occupied by missionaries the signature of the missionary as a guarantee that the contract had been sufficiently explained to, and comprehended by the natives. Should the Bill pass with these amendments the great aim of the missionaries would be secured, the depredations of lawless men checked, and the greatest hindrance to Polynesian missions abated if not removed. And, should these happy results be realized to no body of men will such gratitude be due for the change from the friends of religion and humanity, as to the New Hebridean missionaries who have contended nobly and at great sacrifices for the poor defenceless islanders against unscrupulous and powerful adversaries.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

The responsibility of sending the Gospel to the whole population of the New Hebrides rests chiefly on the Presbyterian churches engaged in evangelizing the group. The London Missionary Society it was expected would take part in the work by occupying some of the northern islands, but the Agents of that Society have been directed to occupy New Guinea, which will engross all their spare force, and accordingly earnest appeals from some of the islands of the New Hebrides for help have been transmitted by them to our missionaries. We rejoice in the fact that they will have four new men, three from these Provinces and one from Victoria, by the *Dayspring*, and pray that they may have opened before them a wide door and effectual, and may all be strengthened to enter and to occupy.

The Board feel thankful in being in a position to report to Synod that Mr. Joseph Annand having completed his Theological studies, and having been licensed by the Presbytery of Halifax met the Board, and expressed his continued desire to be engaged in the work of Foreign Missions, and his readiness to proceed to the New Hebrides at whatever time the Board choose to appoint. His services were accepted with perfect unanimity, and it was decided that he should be sent so as to be in Australia to meet the *Dayspring* early next year. Mr. Annand had a short time given him to renew his medical studies, with notice that he would be expected to spend some months in visiting the churches, commencing soon after the meeting of Synod; and in the meantime the Presbytery of