

We have visited a few villages both on week and Sabbath days. These have promised to take teachers when their fastings are over, but I don't lay much stress on these promises. They are often made to please us for the time being. I hope, however, some few may be sincere. The Aneiteumese teacher and the more intelligent of the Erromangan natives go to three different settlements to have worship on the Sabbath. On some days their meetings are pretty well attended, while on others very few come out to hear the word. The days I went myself they came out pretty well, but not the women, except Mrs. McNair be present. The women, as a rule, are, I think, more superstitious than the men. Some of them are afraid to shake hands or to enter within our door—but when kindly spoken to and presented with some small gift, the more forward gradually enter in, and when they see themselves in the looking glass, are shown some picture, and listen to a little music, they go off seemingly well pleased with their visit. In fact the difficulty is to get them off, for these Erromangan gentry have little idea of the value of time. I think I mentioned in my last I was very anxious to visit some remote parts of this island, and got a minute to that effect passed at our last general meeting. That minute has not been implemented, and I fear will not this year. I don't mean to blame Capt. Fraser for this, if any is at fault I should be inclined to put it on the shoulders of Dr. Geddie. He fights for Tana and I fight for Erromanga, and between us all you may guess Capt. Fraser has not the quietest life in the world.

Since writing you last, another of our best teachers died—*Unou* by name. He was the most intelligent native we had, and very useful both as a cook and as a pundit. He was one of those lads who were not far from Rev. George Gordon on the day he was killed. After that sad event he went to Aneiteum, and was assisting Mr. Geddie in the kitchen and Mr. Copeland with the Erromangan language until the arrival of Rev. James Gordon, when he returned with him here. In July last year he was sent to *Ravelou* to teach. He remained there until he was obliged to fly for his life in March last. While at the other side he caught cold, which settled in his chest, and as is commonly the case, ended in consumption and in death. This is now the fourth teacher who has been carried off during the last thirteen months. Strange and mysterious Providence to us, when there is so much to do and so few to do it on this dark isle. Brethren pray for us. Mrs. McN's. kindest regards to Mrs. McG. and children.

JAMES MCNAIR.

REV. P. G. MCGREGOR.

NOVEMBER 13, 1868.

P. S.—Ten days ago another of our Church members died after a week's illness. His complaint was, I think, pneumonia or acute inflammation of the lungs, caused very likely by working exposed to the sun and afterwards by exposure to the night air. Natives are so extraordinarily foolish in this respect that the wonder is any of them live, and yet they are often too wise in their own eyes to act upon the missionary's advice. There are now only seven church members left on this side of the island, three having gone with Mr. G. to the other side. I have commenced a candidates' class for baptism—four men and four women attend it.

We have had great work for the last four months endeavouring to make this house, if possible, healthier. It was well built by the traders, but they stupidly laid the sills on the soft earth, hence they soon became rotten and the back of the house began to sink. Besides no ventilation underneath. This want we have been trying to remedy.

We expect the *Dayspring* to-morrow.—We are both very well indeed.

J. McN.

Mr. McNair to Com. Lambert.

DILLON'S BAY, ERROMANGA, }
October 22, 1868. }

To Commodore Lambert,
Australian Squadron.

SIR,—When I had the pleasure of seeing you here two months ago, you will, I dare say, recollect a part of our conversation related to the semi, or rather *real* slave traffic carried on among the islands by a parcel of ruffians of the lowest type, hailing, as the case may be, from Queensland, Figi, or New Caledonia, and employing as agents old Sandal-wooders who have acquired a smattering of some of the New Hebrides languages, and who have at the same time distinguished themselves for their treachery, foul murders, and gross immorality.

You will perhaps remember I mentioned a case which occurred on the 2nd of July last. On the morning of that day a suspicious little schooner was noticed to pass the bay, but did not call here. In a day or two some natives from the north end of the island came to the mission premises to see if the missionary could do anything for them, because *Charley* was on board the vessel in question, and had deceived them by representing that *Capt. Joe* (Joseph Hastings, a kind man to natives,) was on board with plenty of tobacco, powder and shot, etc. The bait took well; for the wily Sandal-wooder managed to hook a dozen or more stalwart Erromangans on the shoulders of Capt. Hastings, who were no