

As we lay at anchor two chiefs came off from a place called Itao. It lies on the main land, about half-way up the harbour. It would be a central place for a mission station, but it is unhealthy. I landed here more than twenty-one years ago. The former chief, Tongolulu, was very friendly, but he died last year. His successor is a stranger, and treated us with reserve. A small present was the first thing that opened his mouth, and then he told us that the people of his district were very bad, and did not wish teachers.

A coffee plantation has recently been formed at this harbour by a company in Sydney. A number of natives were at work on it at the time of our visit, and there was a large piece of ground ready for planting. If the enterprise should prove successful, it will be beneficial to the islands. The manager, Mr. McLeod, has spent many years in Ceylon, and seems to understand his business. I ought to mention that the parties in charge of this plantation expressed a strong desire for a missionary, and offered a piece of ground for mission premises, and promised to aid in building a house also. We feel grateful for this kind offer, but the location is not suitable for our purpose; and it would be undesirable in the first stage of a mission to identify ourselves with any secular enterprise, however legitimate, lest the natives should mistake our object in coming among them.

GNUNA.

This small island lies a little to the north of Fatè. As the weather was calm, and the ship could not put to sea, I decided to make my visit in a boat. The distance from where we lay at anchor was about twelve miles. Our party consisted of Mr. Milne, myself, three men from the ship, and native boat's crew. A sail of three hours brought us to the place visited last year. We were well received by the natives, who had been looking for the vessel for some time. I was sorry to learn that the native who acted as my interpreter last year had been stolen by a slaver. I met, however, two young men who had spent some in Sydney, and could speak intelligibly the English language. They were of essential service to me during my short visit.—Woda, the chief, was very friendly, and gave us a cordial welcome. At his request the people sat down, and I stated to them the object of our visit. *Pomal*, a native of Fatè, then gave them some account of our religion, beginning at the creation of the world and ending at the last day. Most of the natives listened with attention, but some were careless, and a few disposed to deride. The part of his address which seemed to arrest most attention was his account of

Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. The chief and some others repeated that precious name over many times, until they thought they could remember it. The two interpreters were much interested, and everything was new to them. These young men had been long enough in a Christian land to learn most of the vulgar, profane, and revolting expressions with which our language abounds; yet they had never heard of a Saviour before. I was shocked at their profanity, and they were equally surprised when I told them that it was wrong. They evidently thought that it was a manly accomplishment, and they endeavoured to show off before strangers. They promised to abstain from such language in future. I requested *Pomal* to pray at the close of his address. He had no sooner begun than some of the old men and all of the women ran off, and few only had courage to remain with us. They were evidently under the influence of some superstitious fears.

Our special work being over, we visited some native houses and took a short walk, and were favorably impressed with all that we saw. The chief and people invited us to repeat our visit next year, and said that they would count the moons until our return. They requested teachers also, and said they would protect them.

Our favourable opinion of this pretty island was somewhat weakened on our return to Fatè. We were told there that a canoe belonging to that island had recently been captured by the natives of Gunna, and all on board killed and eaten. It is also reported that some Erromangans, who had been drifted from their own island in a canoe, had reached the same place and met with a similar fate.

TONGOA.

The Shepherd's Group comprises five small islands, of which Tongoa is the largest. We found anchorage under the lee of this island, but it is only safe when the wind is off the land. We dropped anchor close beside the *Flirt*, a slaver which had arrived the day before us. Three natives of the island were induced to go on board for a pleasure trip to the neighbouring island of Apee. Their friends were suspicious about the intended trip, and went off in a canoe to bring them ashore. The captain, however, was so desirous to gratify them that he took a gun and threatened to shoot those in the canoe.—This was the state of matters when we arrived, and the natives boarded us mourning the loss of their friends. As it was the Sabbath day, Captain Fraser boarded the slaver to invite her captain and crew to attend worship. In the course of conversation allusion was made to the three natives, but Captain Fraser was assured