

(Sent for Publication.)

## MARTYRS MEMORIAL CHURCH ON EROMANGA.

The island of Eromanga has had its martyrs for the faith of Christ. In 1829 the Apostolic John Williams fell there, smitten by the club of the savage islanders. Along with him was killed Mr. James Harris, a young gentleman who was on a voyage for his health, and intended to offer himself to the service of the mission. The death of Williams made a profound impression on the friends of missions, and awakened a deep interest in the island where he fell. It was resolved at once to send out two missionaries to plant the standard of the Cross, as near as possible to the spot where Williams was killed. This led Messrs. Turner and Nisbet to Tanna in 1842, but they had soon to flee for their lives.

In 1861 the Rev. G. N. Gordon and his devoted wife, who had resided on the island for four years, were barbarously murdered by a treacherous band of the heathen savages. They had been gaining the confidence of some and were making progress in the language. But in the beginning of 1861 a violent hurricane swept over the island and destroyed much native fruit and property. This was followed by an epidemic of measles introduced by a trading vessel, and which caused the death of hundreds. It is believed that out of a spirit of revenge the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were taken.

In 1864 the Rev. James D. Gordon took up the fallen standard of his brother on the island, and spent eight years in faithful labour. In March 1872, he also fell a sacrifice to the heathen superstition. He was a noble and faithful martyr for Christ.

The Rev. James McNair died on the island in 1870. His health had not been robust, and he suffered much from the malaria around Dillon's bay where he resided. His life also was threatened for some time, and his house had to be barricaded and guarded. Death prevented him from being a martyr indeed; but he was really a martyr in will for the cause of Christ on Eromanga.

It was proposed in 1862 by the Rev. W. Wyatt Gill, B.A., of Mangraia, one of the London Missionary Society's Agents, then on a visit to Sydney to erect a memorial on Eromanga to the memory of the Martyrs. A sum of £23 was collected by friends in Sydney, chiefly from Congregationalists, though there were several Presbyterians among the contributors. The troubled state of the island at the time prevented the object being carried out, and the money was put to interest by the Rev. William Slatyer of Redfern. When Mr. Wyatt Gill passed through Sydney again on his return to the sphere of his labour after a visit to England, about a year ago, he conferred with a few friends about the disposal of this money, which had accumulated to £45. A tablet to the memory of the martyred missionaries had been placed in the Church at Dillon's Bay, by the exertions of a few friends. Mr. Wyatt Gill agreed therefore to refer the matter regarding the application of the money raised by him to the Rev. H. A. Robertson missionary at Eromanga, the Rev. W. Slatyer, the Rev. J. P. Sudderland, and the Rev. Dr. Steel. Mr. Robertson having visited Sydney in December 1877, an opportunity was offered to these gentlemen to confer together on the subject. At a meeting recently held it was stated by the Rev. H. A. Robertson that the Church at Dillon's Bay had been blown down, and that a new one was necessary. He recommended a wooden building in preference to a stone one on account of occasional earthquakes. He stated that there was a suitable site near the mission premises for such a building. It was then agreed that the money, now accumulated to £46 9s. 6d., be appropriated to a fund for erecting a Martyrs Memorial Church on Eromanga.

This is estimated to cost some £200. Already £4 have been contributed by the Presbyterian congregation at Parramatta, which brings up the sum in hand to £50. An appeal is now made to the friends of missions to contribute to this Church, and we trust that by the next year the sum may be secured, and the materials be ready to be sent by the Dayspring. Many have read with deepest sympathy the record of the lives of Williams and of the Gordons, and we