

LETTER FROM REV. H. A. ROBERTSON, MISSIONARY TO ERROMANGA.

Sydney, N. S. W., Jan, 2, 1878.

Though I hope to write you by next mail and to enclose my annual report, I wish in this note to inform you of the safe arrival here of Rev. Wm. McDonald and myself, with our wives and families, by "Dayspring." When we left the New Hebrides, No. 23, all the Missionaries on the islands were in pretty good health. Mr. and Mrs. Neilson were not quite as well as usual but were attending to their work, and at their post. As you know, Mr. and Mrs. Inglis have returned to Scotland, Mrs. Paton had been ill in Australia, before their return to the New Hebrides, and is still delicate, but possessed of such wonderful natural energy, that she is as cheerful and active as ever. I see the Melbourne people are moving to get Mr. Paton appointed agent for the mission, so as to draw forth steadier and more abundant support from the Australian churches. Mr. Copland is at New Zealand, not being yet able for any public work, and his dear children with Mr. and Mrs. Gerdlet, of Syney. The Missionaries whom we left on the islands are Messrs. Annand, Watt, Neilson, Mackenzie and Milne.

Mr. and Mrs. McDonald and three children left this for Melbourne, four days after arrival, and found Mrs. Geddie, John and Ella well. The McDonalds expect to return to Sydney about the 15th of March, and the "Dayspring" is appointed to sail from this port for the New Hebrides, April 1st.

I had the pleasure of meeting with "The Heathen's Mission Committee," and "The Dayspring Board" here on the 13th of last month. The Heathen's Mission Committee agreed to pay the cost of printing my Erromangan Catechism, and Dr. Steel has written to the

B. & F. B. Society, asking them to be at the expense of printing a translation of the *Acts* of the *Apostles* in Sydney. I expect our Christian natives in Erromanga will refund the cost of printing the *Act* before the close of the year. I am to be employed by the Presbyterian Church of N. S. Wales under the direction of the above named committee, to address meetings in town and country on behalf of our mission. This, with the transcribing of the *Acts*, and correcting the proof sheets, and preaching occasionally, will keep me pretty well occupied until we return to Erromanga again.

Mrs. Robertson, our little girl and little boy, with a young man from Erromanga, who is one of two Erromangans acting as boat's crew to the "Dayspring," and a little girl—a daughter of the notorious Rangi—and I, went to Parramatta a fortnight ago and spent a week with our dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Murray, and their two very interesting children. To us the sojourn with our kind friends of St. Andrew's Manse, was simply delightful. There was but one painful and sad circumstance, which, though we might try to persuade ourselves that we were mistaken, forced itself upon our notice. I refer to Mrs. Murray's partial blindness. Poor thing! It is sad to see one so young, cheerful, and companionable thus afflicted, and to know that while she hear the plaintive cry of her sweet little daughter, she cannot see her. And then to think that she is thousands of miles from her dear native land and her own mother. Our presence only I fear reminded her too much of all these things. May she have the lively sympathy and prayers of the Lord's people, for her trial results for her devotion to the missionary work.

By the "Dayspring," in October, we received the invaluable Mission goods. Mr. Annand kindly divided his from mine and sent our full share.

P. S.—On New Year's day, Mrs. Robertson presented us with a New