

The time to which my voyage among the northern islands of the group was restricted being up, we sailed for the island of Fate. The islands which could not be overtaken this year are Aurora, Pentecost, Leper's Island, Maficolo, Paama, Apee, and Two Hills. The New Hebrides islands present an interesting field for missionary enterprise, and we cherish a hope that the Churches committed to their evangelization will act worthy of their sacred trust. The missionary work on these islands is still in its infancy, and though so nothing has been accomplished, a great work still remains to be done. It is true that the difficulties to be encountered in evangelizing these islands are numerous and formidable, but by no insurmountable. The success which has already followed missionary effort among these degraded islanders ought to stir us up to more earnest, prayerful, and self-denying efforts to extend the gospel among them. May God bless and prosper his own work on these islands, so long the scenes of darkness, desolation and crime, and then shall "the wilderness and the solitary place be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

JOHN GEDDIE.

Aneiteum, Nov. 10, 1868.

Minutes of Conference.

Aneiteum, May 17th, 1869.

The annual meeting of the New Hebrides Mission was held this day at Anelganhat. Present: the Rev. Messrs. Geddie, Inglis, Paton, Copeland, Morrison, Neilson, McNair, and Capt. Fraser. Mr. Copeland occupied the chair, and opened the meeting with praise, reading of the scriptures, and prayer, after which he read a suitable address, bearing directly on the mission work on the New Hebrides group of islands. Mr. Morrison was then appointed chairman for the ensuing year; after which the meeting proceeded to business.

2. Mr. Watt being introduced to the meeting as the first missionary of the Presbyterian Church of the northern part of New Zealand, it was resolved that this meeting express its gratitude to God for the safe arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Watt, and welcome them as fellow-labourers in the cause of Christ, and assure them of our readiness to afford them every facility in their power to aid them in their work.

3.—This meeting expresses satisfaction at the manner in which the several appointments made at last meeting have been fulfilled, and sustains the reasons assigned for deviation from the same.

4. This meeting having heard the reports from the various mission stations, with one exception, agrees to accept the

same; and expresses its thankfulness to God that, notwithstanding some adverse circumstances, the work of God is on the whole in so favorable a condition on these islands.

5. This meeting having heard a statement of the circumstances which led to Mr. Neilson's settlement on Tanna, in accordance with the appointment of the annual meeting in 1867, and his report of the state of that island, expresses its satisfaction at the course pursued, and thankfulness to God that the prospects of the mission on Tanna are so encouraging.

8. It was resolved that, in accordance with the request of the Rev. Dr. Steel, the *Dayspring* on her first voyage north take Mr. Gordon on to Santo, and land him at whatever place he may wish to remain, and that she return to Santo in October or November to bring him to Erromanga.

10. Mr. Gordon having removed from the mission premises at Dillon's Bay, Erromanga, and opened for himself another station on that island, the station at Dillon's Bay is hereby declared vacant.

11. Mr. McNair, whose appointment to Dillon's Bay has hitherto been only temporary, is now appointed permanently to that station.

12. As the smoking of tobacco by natives has now become a source of much trouble and annoyance to some of the missionaries, and a cause of degradation to the natives themselves, this meeting enjoins on all missionaries to use their influence to discourage the practice.

13. It was resolved that, should Mr. Smith request to be settled on the mission premises, Dillon's Bay, Erromanga, for the purpose of whaling, Mr. McNair be empowered to grant him a lease of such a portion of land as they may agree upon for a term not exceeding three years, under stipulation that no alcoholic stimulant be kept or used on the premises, and that his business be conducted in such a way as not to interfere with the moral improvement of the natives. Said lease not to be transferable.

14. It was agreed that Mr. Cosh's request to accompany the *Dayspring* to New Zealand, in order to obtain medical advice for his child be granted.

15. Mr. Morrison requests, on the score of health, leave to return to the Australian colonies by the *Dayspring* towards the close of the season, if he deems such a step necessary; also to sail in the vessel as often during the season as he may think proper; and should he deem it necessary to remove to some of the other islands during the season, in order to avoid over-exertion in Erakor, he should be permitted to do so. It was unanimously agreed that all these requests be granted.