

TIDINGS OF THE "DAYSPRING"; Important News from the Loyalty Islands: French Outrages.

We learn from correspondence in the *Missionary Magazine and Chronicle* that the *Dayspring* called at Lifu, one of the Loyalty Islands, on the first of July. There were seven missionaries on board, including Messrs Creagh and Jones of the London Missionary Society. Lifu is, we believe, about 200 miles from Anciteum.

The French had taken possession of Lifu in the most outrageous manner, led on by Romish priests. Protestant Missions have been successfully prosecuted on the island for twenty years. The population, 7000 in number, are all Christian and the whole of the Loyalty Group appears to be under Missionary influence. The following details of the recent outrage are from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of the 21st September:

The island was not declared to be part of the French dominions, nor was it so treated, until May last, when a proclamation was issued asserting this sovereignty. In tracing the supposed causes of these outrages it seems that a young man in Lifu, while conversing with one of the French missionaries, expressed his disdain of the French, using words to this effect, "Who are the French that I should be afraid of them?" This was assumed to be the expression of settled hostility, and was transmitted by the missionary to the French Government. On another occasion a French missionary presented himself in a village exclusively Protestant, and demanded of the chief that they should build him a house. Under these circumstances the native teacher consulted the European missionary, who replied that as for the priest he was neither a chief nor their pastor, and they were not bound to render him services without payment.—This letter, coming into his hands, was translated into French, and forwarded to the Governor of New Caledonia.

In the month of May, an officer, not much more than twenty years of age, arrived in a steamer sent by the Governor of New Caledonia to take possession of the island. He was accompanied by twenty-five soldiers.—On the day following the flag of France was planted for the first time on the island of Lifu. The natives were informed that henceforth they were to consider themselves subject to the commandant; and that their own laws were null and void. A few days afterwards a steamer arrived, bringing cases of books, and an order was issued that no other should be used. The Protestants were pro-

hibited exercising the functions of their religion, and the schools were closed. In the island there were seventeen churches, 1,500 communicants, as many candidates, and about 2,000 children, under instruction. The improvement of their social circumstances was great. They had not only made improved roads, but they had also erected lath and plaster cottages, and one of their chiefs had all the usual conveniences of civilisation. On the 21st June, the Governor of New Caledonia himself arrived, accompanied by about 300 men. On the day following a party of officers examined the village and made enquiries of the missionary as to the arms and numbers of the natives. A chief of the district propagated among them a statement that unless they conformed to the French religion, they would be exterminated. Under the influence of these fears the population retreated to the bush. On the following day the Governor landed, accompanied by 150 soldiers, and attended by a small party of natives. Having taken up his position on a public road, it was there announced that the island was French.—The natives were prohibited from supporting the missionaries, or doing anything for them without payment, and they were informed that they were to consider the commandant as their ruler. The soldiers then dispersed and looted the dwellings of the natives. Finding one of the teachers, they ejected him at the point of the bayonet, and robbed him of his property. In the evening the French retired, when the natives returned armed with various weapons, among which were some muskets. This circumstance was alleged as the justification of the subsequent proceedings. The natives were advised by the missionary not to make any resistance, and they resolved to retire into the interior, beyond the reach of the French. The missionary and native teachers, according to custom met on the following morning for prayer. They were so engaged when the chapel door was burst open, and the house filled with soldiers. Finding the people quietly at prayer, the French retired, but surrounded the building. Except the missionary all were detained as prisoners. A collision then took place between the French and the natives outside, when four of the natives were killed, and one of the soldiers. The French again entered the chapel, and bound several of the native teachers. A woman who had crept under one of the seats was wounded several times with a bayonet. An aged man, one of the deacons of the congregation, was pierced by a bayonet.—The native teachers were conveyed on board ship in irons. After being kept for five days they were sent ashore to await the arrival of the John Williams to convey them to Samoa. Their hands and feet bore the marks of ill-usage, and they were under the