

priests, however, came on shore and went about among the people. One who speaks a little English, told them that he should soon come and baptize all their children. Some of the people hid themselves and their children on the approach of the priests. It was rumoured about that thirty-two days would be allowed for the people to remove from the island if they wished. The Spanish governor was to have bought a house of Mr Lynslager for £400.

WEDNESDAY, May 26.—Don Chacon assumes the command of the colony; but a tornado prevents the promulgation of the expected proclamation. The Spanish soldiers and sailors roam through the town, robbing the gardens of their vegetables, and the people of their fowls, ducks, yams, and all they meet with. Payment is altogether refused. "It's all ours," say they, "and in two days you all go away."

THURSDAY, May 27.—The expected day is come. Notice is sent round for people to gather at Mr Lynslager's house to hear the proclamation at noon. In the pouring rain a few only attend the summons. Mr Saker remains at home, but Mr Diboll is present. Amidst the thunder and lightning of the tornado the proclamation is read. The first two clauses, an illustration of the genius of Spanish rule and of Romish intolerance, run thus:

"1. The religion of this colony is that of the Roman Catholic Church, as the only one in the kingdom of Spain, with the exclusion of any other; and no other religious professions are tolerated or allowed, but that made by the missionaries of the aforesaid Catholic religion."

"2. Those who profess any other religion which be not the Catholic should confine their worship within their own private houses or families, and limit it to the members thereof."

The firing of cannon announces the issue of this intolerant but faithfully Romish edict. The people disperse, to meet again for prayer and counsel at Mr Saker's house. One more meeting that evening, Mr Diboll is informed, must be their last.

Meanwhile Mr Saker, prepared and forwarded a most respectful letter to the Governor-General. He reminded him of the liberty granted the colony by Don Lerena in 1843, and which was confirmed in the year 1846 by the Consul-General. No breach of the laws of Spain

could be, or had been, charged on the people of Clarence; yet they were now to be deprived of a freedom they highly valued. As Protestants, their religion taught them to obey the laws of their rulers, and this the teachers of the people had constantly inculcated; but now their allegiance to the law of God was set in opposition to the laws of the Queen of Spain, and in conscience they were bound to obey God rather than man. Mr Saker further urged that the effect of this decree would be to banish the people from the island; for no other alternative could be left them, if the decree were enforced, than to seek a home where they could serve God in freedom, and enjoy the liberty of worship which they had hitherto possessed. He therefore requested that there might be some delay granted in the execution of the decree, until the effect of an appeal to the Queen of Spain could be seen.

The meeting in the evening was deeply affecting. The passage of God's Word read and commented on was Acts xii.—the deliverance of Peter from the hands of his enemies. This closed, probably, the last open public service of the mission, in the island of Fernando Po.

FRIDAY, May 28.—The Governor sends his reply. His orders, he says, are strict. He must adhere to them. It is impossible to grant the request made to him; but he will willingly forward the petition of the inhabitants to her Most Catholic Majesty. Meanwhile the established regulations must be carried out.

These documents are read in a public assembly of the people. They determine to make another effort to delay the execution of the decree. They intimate that, if some toleration be not allowed them, they must immediately remove to a distant locality; and they trust that the Governor-General will consider their circumstances, and be anxious to preserve the colony from that decay which their departure will necessarily bring upon it. The memorial is signed by the missionaries and some thirty of the people.

During the evening, the missionaries and the native assistants hold many *family* prayer-meetings throughout the town.

SATURDAY, May 29.—Arrangements are devised by Mr Saker, in conjunction with the English Consul, to seek, on the opposite coast of the continent a suitable locality for a new settlement, where under the protection of the British Govern-