

the islands. The most important business before us was the location of the newly arrived missionaries. Our missionary force was distributed as follows: Mr. Copeland was appointed to Futuna, Mr. Paton to Niua, Mr. McNair to Erromanga, and Messrs. Cosh and Neilson to Fate. All these appointments were made in accordance with the wishes of the parties themselves who chose their own fields of labour. Mr. McCullagh was unfortunately absent from our meeting, having gone to Sydney in the *Dayspring* on account of Mrs. McCullagh's health. They both expressed a wish before leaving to be appointed to Futuna or Niua,* which are exempt from fever and ague; but Messrs. Copeland and Paton having been longer in the mission had a prior choice. Mr. and Mrs. McCullagh have recently returned, and are much disappointed to find the islands, to which their choice was limited, occupied by others. Their only alternative was to commence a mission on some of the islands where fever and ague prevail, or to leave the mission, and they have chosen the latter course. I must candidly say that I believe Mrs. McCullagh is not in a state of health to undertake the arduous duties of a new mission, and a person of her active habits would probably soon sink under them. The mission will no doubt approve of the step which they are about to take, though a very serious one. I trust that you will lose no time in sending others to take Mr. and Mrs. McCullagh's places in the mission. The harvest is truly great, but the labourers few.

MISSIONARY WORK ON ANEITUM.

I have little to report about the missionary work on this island. The late sickness led to the suspension of several of the schools, and little work was done for some months. I have recently visited the whole of my district, and endeavoured to instruct, encourage and comfort the natives under their trials. The book of Psalms which I brought with me is now in general circulation, and is a favourite book with the natives. The communion has been dispensed once since my return, and twenty-seven persons took their seats at the Lord's table for the first time. There are at present about twenty candidates for church membership, and the number increases. The novelty of christianity has now passed away on this island, and I trust that many persons seek religious privileges from a proper sense of their value.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA.

I am glad to say that the different branches of the Presbyterian Church in the Aus-

tralian Colonies continue to manifest a deep interest in the New Hebrides mission.— They have given evidence of this interest in their liberal contributions towards the purchase and support of the *Dayspring*, and some of them now wish to support missionaries themselves. I believe that application will be made to you for the services of Messrs. Gordon and Morrison. The Presbyterian Church of New South Wales wish to adopt the former as their missionary, and the Free Church of the same Colony have made choice of the latter. If the Presbyterians in the Australian Colonies are brought to take a part in the missionary work on these islands, it must be in some such way as this. They are at present dependent on the mother country for ministers, and they cannot procure a sufficient number to meet the wants of the Colonies, far less to send to the heathen. It is quite probable that our Australian friends will in a few years have Theological Institutions of their own, but in the mean time they must depend on the churches already labouring on this group of islands for their missionaries. As the missionary work on these islands is essentially one, I do not see that there should be any serious objection to the transference of missionaries from one branch of the church to another, provided the change is agreeable to themselves.— The forming of a new connexion will never extinguish the interest which missionaries must always feel in the Church which sent them out.

MASSACRE ON FATE.

We have just heard that the natives of Fate have captured a small vessel and murdered the crew consisting of four white men. It is little more than sixteen months since the memorable visit of H. M. S. *Curaçoa* to these islands, and during that short time no less than five Europeans have been killed on the New Hebrides group, whereas that number was not killed during the seven or eight years preceding her arrival there. The beneficial results expected from her summary dealings with the Tannese are not likely to appear. If ever these islanders are subdued, it must be by the gospel which brings peace on earth and good will towards men. After what we have already seen of its omnipotence in changing the hearts of savage men we may hope well for the future.

PROSPECT FOR TANNA.

I have had a visit from a most interesting stranger. His name is *Nauka*, the principal chief of Port Resolution, island of Tanna. He came here most unexpectedly in a vessel which was taking him from Futuna to Tanna. It is with this man to say whether or not the island of Tanna shall receive the gospel, and therefore I had a

* Dr. Geddie adheres to the old spelling, though we observe that the others call this island Auiwa.—ED. RECORD.