

THE ROSARIO AND THE MURDERERS OF BISHOP PATTESON.

From a Sydney, Australia, paper of the 9th February we extract the following account of the cruise of H. M. S. *Rosario*. It will be read with painful interest:—

Called at Norfolk Island, and from thence proceeded to Havanah Harbour. The ship's boats went from thence to Nuna or Montague Island, to inquire into the circumstances attending the murder of the mate and two of the crew of the cutter *Fanny*. Captain Challis landed, and opened communication with the natives, who refused to give up the murderers. The boats thereupon opened fire on them, which the natives returned with arrows, &c.

November 15.—The *Rosario* steamed round to Nuna, and shelled the native village.

November 19, 6 a. m.—The *Rosario* anchored off Cherry Islands, and the Captain left the ship with a boat's crew to make inquiries about the Marian Renny murder. The natives were supposed to have a boat in their possession, but the surf was too great to land. The natives came down to the beach in great numbers, and appeared friendly. Two chiefs came off, and seemed to be fine intelligent fellows, greatly resembling in appearance the New Zealanders. One of the chiefs was put on the scales, and turned 18st. They spoke but little English, and no understanding could be arrived at respecting the murder.

November 24.—A boat's crew landed, and saw the head chief, but could make out nothing. All the women had been sent away, and only a few men remained. Went over the island, which was very fertile, and wildfowl were very plentiful. The native huts were very roomy and clean. No fire-arms were seen. Returned to the ship and sailed at 5 p. m.

November 29, Noon.—The *Rosario* steamed up to the south-east side of Nukapu (Swallow Group), where Bishop Patteson had been murdered. Captain Challis's object was to communicate with the natives respecting the affair; but the ship could get no nearer than a mile and three-quarters, in consequence of a reef which encircles the bay. A boat was sent to endeavour to cross the reef, and communicate with the natives. The boat followed round the outside of the reef, and about 20 native canoes approached from the inside. The *Rosario's* boat had got to within 50 yards of the mainland when the natives commenced their war dance and made other hostile demonstrations. They then sent a shower of arrows at the *Rosario's* boat, which, however, all fell short. The boat then returned to the ship to report the attack, and to ask

permission to return it. The boat was ordered to return, and the ship was cleared for action, and opened fire with shell from the 40-pounder Armstrong, and the 7in. six and a half ton gun; while the crew of the boat opened fire with their rifles. The *Rosario* made a circuit of the island, and when abreast of the native village fired on it with shell at 2,300 yards. At 4 p. m., it being high water, the boats were able to cross the reef, and four of them advanced on the village with small arms, and engaged the natives, who kept up a continual discharge of arrows; the ship sent in shell at the range of a mile. After firing several hundred rounds, the men landed from the boats and drove the natives in from the beach. Here one of the arrows struck Corporal Marcus in the arm, and the wound afterwards proved fatal. The native canoes were destroyed, and the seamen pulled on to the village, where one of them received two bad wounds, but ultimately recovered from their effects. The village proved to be very strongly fortified with stone work, which was thrown up in front of each hut. In a few minutes the native habitations were set in flames. It was estimated that from 20 to 30 natives were killed in the engagement. At half-past 5 p. m. the boats started for the ship, which made sail for Santa Cruz. Just as the ship was leaving, the natives were seen at work extinguishing the flames, but their reflection was visible for three hours after the ship had sailed.

An instance of capital shooting is recorded on the part of the wounded corporal, Marcus. Five natives were seen on a point of land with their canoes, when Marcus lodged a shell which burst in the midst of them, causing most terrible havoc and destroying their canoes.

November 30.—Arrived off Santa Cruz, and witnessed a native engagement; the shore party were fighting against the canoes; the cause of quarrel could not be ascertained. One hundred and ten native canoes came round the vessel for trade, their favourite articles being beads and bottles.

November 31.—The natives came on board in great numbers.

December 6.—Anchored off Port Patteson, and communicated with the native missionary.

December 9.—Left for Espirito Santo.

December 12.—Had a fine view of the eclipse of the sun, two-thirds of which was covered. The first contact was at 25 minutes to 4 p. m., greatest at a quarter to 5 p. m., last contact at 20 minutes to 6 p. m.

December 15.—Anchored at Cape Lisbon, and inquired of Mr. Goodwill respecting the murderers of the crew of the New Zealand craft, the *Wild Duck*.

December 16.—Landed at the village.