

was as might naturally be expected, a severe struggle between ignorance and light. The heathen were roused, and they made every effort to prevent the spread of the new religion which had come to their Island. The mission, in the early years of its existence, was exposed to many and great dangers and trials. Plots were laid for their lives, which were happily defeated by that God whom they served. Two of the early converts were cruelly put to death and eaten by their companions; but by God's blessing a happy change had taken place. The wilderness and solitary places had been made glad and the desert blossomed like the rose. These people, who but a few years ago worshipped gods of their own imagination, were now worshippers of the true God. They were now clothed, and many of them sat at the feet of Jesus.

The people who had not a written word in their own language now had the whole of the New Testament, and could read the word of God in their own tongue. The Sabbath was observed and great attention was paid to family religion. The schools were attended by persons of every age and sex, being taught by native teachers. The instruction rested on a Scripture basis. The question of uniting religious and secular training had never been mooted among them. The school-book was a simple one, illustrating the truths of Christianity. A great revolution had also taken place in the social habits of the people. Polygamy prevailed to a large extent, the marriage tie was scarcely known among them, and it was the practice for husbands to sell their wives. When he landed it was difficult to find a young woman thirty years of age who had not been a wife of six or seven husbands; but now the marriage vow was observed, marriages were published and the usual amount of domestic happiness was enjoyed among the people. They were also making great progress in other ways. As they became more civilised their wants increased and gave rise to habits of industry. The surplus of their produce was sold to trading vessels for clothing, &c. On that one little Island there was more business carried on than in all the surrounding Islands where the people were involved in darkness. The people a short time ago commenced the cultivation of cotton, which promised to be very successful. The first load of it was shipped a few weeks ago. There was a great desire among the natives to carry the Gospel to the Islands around them. This was the true spirit of christianity. It was a bad evidence of the state of religion in any church when they manifested no concern for the ignorant around them. The Islanders were now accustomed to make contributions for missionary purposes, and a number of them had gone out as mission-

aries to Other Islands. (Hear.) When he received an application from the surrounding Islands for a Christian teacher, he generally made it known on the Sunday before to the congregation, and he has seldom to ask the question as to who would go, but rather who should be sent, some of the high chiefs of the Island having sacrificed all their property and gone to the other Islands and died in the service of the Gospel. Native agency was most important; a great deal had to be done by their own people under the guidance of Christian missionaries. The Rev. gentleman next alluded to Fate, where they had teachers laboring for several years. A Christian Church was formed on that Island some three years ago. This was gathered in through the instrumentality of native teachers and it now numbered 70 members. The people had given up heathenism and had a missionary of their own. Mr. Morrison, the missionary, was received with great joy and loaded with presents on his arrival amongst the people. He wrote that when he left this country he left a congregation attached to him; but when he landed on the Island he found one equally so. Mr. Geddie next alluded to the Island of Eromanga, where Mr. Williams fell, and where Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were cut off. This act was committed from ignorance and superstition, the people believing that the missionary was the cause of a disease which was sweeping them off. This put a stop to missionary operations there for a time, but they were soon resumed, and a reaction had taken place in favor of christianity. When the missionary vessel touched there a few months ago they found a church erected on the spot where Williams fell, the congregation numbering 120. The natives were also building four other churches. Another missionary had also been sent there. Then there were native teachers laboring on other Islands and fast preparing the way for Christian missionaries. There were missionaries or native teachers on six of the Islands of the New Hebrides group, but the most important had never been visited for missionary purposes. It would require fifty missionaries to reach them, and he was now looking for them. Some years after the work was commenced other missionaries were sent out from the Church of Scotland, and he believed two others were preparing to accompany him back. Nothing would rejoice him more than to welcome missionaries from the Presbyterian Church of Canada in these distant Islands. (Hear, hear.) There was room for all these. The New Hebrides group of Islands, although an interesting field of missionary labor, was one in which some difficulty might be anticipated. The climate was unhealthy, most missionaries going out being attacked with fever. Then they had to contend with di-