

New Hebrides.

EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM MR. MORTON IN MALEKULA.

Two students of Glasgow College were sent out at the latter part of 1887 by the Presbyterian Church in Victoria and settled in Malekula, one of the largest islands of the New Hebrides. One of them Rev. Alex. Morton writes the following interesting letter concerning his work and the people of Malekula:

"School attendance varies very much, and often during any heathen ceremony we have none at all. Mrs. Morton has a sewing school which has been pretty well attended so far. Previously no woman would enter our school building. The Malekulans are very low and degraded. Their houses are small and poor.

The only things wherein they display the least genius is in the carving and painting of their large drums and images, and in cutting or rather building canoes. Some of their canoes are fully 50 feet in length, and I have seen 40 men in one.

The lot of woman is very hard. They do all the heaviest of the work and carry all the burdens. When a girl has got her second set of front teeth she is taken to the sea and the two upper middle incisors are broken out. Strange to say this custom does not obtain on the islets near Port Stanley is about 20 miles north of us although both people have frequent dealings with each other.

They are very unwilling to tell us anything about their superstitions. We discovered lately that they do not bury the bodies of old men or any principal men but lay them on a table about six feet high. They offer yams at the same time to the spirits of the dead. The people often tell me that they are a mere handful compared to what they used to be, and there is the clearest evidence in every village one visits that the population is greatly reduced. They ascribe this fading away to wars, deaths of so many children, and so many young men going away in labour vessels.

All make professions of friendship towards us but it does not count for very much, we have found them so rapidly changeable. In January we had one of our helpers shot. It is generally believed that the murderer did not find the person

he wished for, but determined not to be foiled he took the life of our servant a quiet inoffensive young man.

The Roman Catholic priest who has his head quarters in Sasoon Bay has a house in our district and another at Port Sandwich, but he is very seldom in the house here. The languages at the three different places are totally different from each other.

ALEX MORTON.

REPORT OF THE MISSION VESSEL, "DAYSRING"

FOR THE YEAR, 1888.

On the 28th March 1888, the well-known "Dayspring" was towed down Sydney Harbour and stood out to sea, on her way to the New Hebrides, carrying a full cargo of stores and building materials for the missionaries, as well as the anxiously looked for mails. The Rev. J. W. and Mrs. M'Kenzie of Efate and their child were on board, returning to their field of labour after a short rest in New South Wales.

After a rather long passage through a heavy sea she arrived safely at Anietyumi on the 20th April. From thence, after watering and taking some timber on board, she proceeded northward, calling at all the Missions Stations with goods and mails. She received on board at various points Missionaries proceeding to the meeting of Synod, held this year at the most Northern Station, Tangoa, Santo. She cast anchor in the harbour there on the 26th May, and put to sea again on the 15th June, having had to lie becalmed for about 10 days after the meeting of Synod was closed. She then called at Epi, Havannah Harbour and Aniwa. At the later place the Rev. W. and Mrs. Watt were left to labour among the Aniwas for some weeks. Returning again to Santo she proceeded to call at all the stations for mails, &c., as she went on her way to Sydney. At Havannah Harbour the Rev. D. McDonald and family joined the vessel, he being on his way to Melbourne to get the New Testament printed in Efatese. After a pleasant passage from the Islands, Sydney was reached on the 5th of September.

After reloading stores, &c., she set out on her mission again on the 18th September, having on board the Rev. W. and Mrs. Gray, Missionaries from South Aus-