

few passing remarks; and here I feel quite confident, that were I present, I could satisfy you all that it is both wise and proper to withdraw from the New Hebrides. I told you before that this race was fast passing away. Do what you may to prevent it, natural causes will have always a tendency to produce natural effects. In a low and feeble state of the constitution, every spasm and ague fit will return with more and more severity, until the brittle thread of life is at last snapped asunder; so with these natives. The Measels, which have been for some time past raging over all the Colonies, and have cut down thousands, both young and old, have been taken to the Islands. The Fijians are being decimated by hundreds; so dreadful do they regard their state that even the christians are saying that the gods have determined on their destruction, because they have given away their country to the white men. It is most likely that this epidemic, which is moving on as a tidal wave, shall pass over all the islands, and prove exceedingly destructive to them. It is quite natural to conceive that if the loss of life was so great where medical aid and skilful physicians, and the best means adapted for the preservation of life existed, and where no care which would add to comfort in any way, would be withheld, how much more so where all these are wanting and unknown. But even apart from any epidemic, the islands are rapidly becoming depopulated, wherever the white man with his vices appears. The cause of the extinction of the Savage is not unaccountable, but it is rather a delicate subject to be brought before the public. In withdrawing from the field, the Mission will not be abandoned; the Australian Churches are fully able to tend it; and if we look upon the world as the field, we find others who are much higher in the scale of civilization and of a higher type of humanity, and are worth much more than those, if value be of any account. But the objector may say, the soul of a Polynesian is as precious in God's sight as that of a Mongolian, European, or American. I am not going to argue the point just now; taking it for granted in its spiritual aspect, humanly speaking, a Polynesian is of much less value, and this is the thing

that I wish to bring to your consideration. The Mongolian race, Chinese, Japanese, and so on, have a higher claim, and they should be attended to first; because they could, in their turn, look after others, and so extend the work. If we follow the example of Christ and the Apostles, who, beginning at Jerusalem and the great centres of population, intelligence, and civilization, such as Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome, leaving the extremes for the last, we would do so. Yes, we should look at the worth of the people, and consider what they could possibly do by themselves when brought under the power of the gospel. Taking this criterion, it cannot be gainsayed that the natives of the groups north of the New Hebrides, including the New Hebrideans themselves, can never be competent to maintain or extend the work beyond themselves, or even among themselves; but, on the other hand, if the Chinese or Japanese were once christianized, they could not only maintain the cause among themselves, but also become very efficient Missionaries to labour in climates too relaxing and insalubrious for either Europeans or Americans. It is well known that they have intelligence and tact enough to compete with and do business even where Europeans fail. They are known to live in the jungles of India, where Europeans and Americans cannot, and you know that the Chinese have built a part of the great Pacific Railway, where others could not stand the miasma and insalubrity of the place. I need not enlarge on this subject.

In withdrawing from the New Hebrides, as I said before, the field will not be neglected, and you can utilise your Missionaries and the funds of the church a thousandfold more to the purpose. China and Japan are large and important fields, white to the harvest, and are well worthy of the efforts of the church in taking possession of them in the name of Christ. Were they only christianized, they would be the right men to labour in the northern groups of the South Sea. Malaria does not seem to have much, if indeed, any effect on them. This may seem strange, but still it is not the less true. Not far from the golden city, Ballarat, and near a little