

able-bodied men. The usual desolations of slavery are very visible on this productive island. The eye meets in every quarter with abandoned homes, neglected plantations, and a great scarcity of food. A few years ago, Tana supplied nearly all the trading vessels on this group with their yams and pigs; but on our late voyage, it was impossible to purchase food of any kind. Famine brings pestilence in its train, and the mortality is greater than in former years. Society is in a completely disorganized state at the present time, by the removal of so many natives from their own island. More sad still, many of these poor slaves will see their homes no more. It is reported that some of the Tanese have stolen boats on the Fijis, and put to sea in them, vainly hoping to reach their own island; but, as they have in no case succeeded, they have no doubt met with a watery grave.

A few days before our arrival at Tana, the "Spunkie" called to bury a man who had been mortally wounded by a poisoned arrow on another island, and the captain of the same vessel was severely wounded on the head by a blow from a club. We met at this place also the "Margaret Chessel," which lost her mate at Apee during the previous voyage, being killed by the natives. Since these events happened, the "Donald McLean" has buried a man likewise, who died from the effect of a spear wound, inflicted, it is said, by the natives of Mallicolo.

The natives on the west side of Tana have sold much of their land to white men. Efforts are being made to cultivate it, but the climate has proved hitherto unhealthy. It is very doubtful if these land transactions are properly understood by the natives, and they will at no distant time be a fruitful source of trouble.

We have just heard of a very sad event on this island. Two respectable young men from Melbourne are reported to have been killed by the natives. Their names are Messrs. Bell and Ross. They had only been about three months on the island, and could have known but little of the savage disposition and customs of the natives. All that is known of their death as yet is, that they were travelling to a neighbouring station, mistook their way, and were shot down by hostile natives. As these deeds are seldom done, even on these islands, without a reason, there was no doubt a cause, real or imaginary. It often happens, however, that the innocent suffer for the guilty. It is sad to think of the death of two young men under such circumstances. Those who value their lives and property will find no safety in the New Hebrides, except in those parts

under Christian influence. "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."

Since this letter was commenced, the mission at Port Resolution has met with a severe trial. A severe and fatal epidemic broke out among the natives, from which many of the natives died, and, among others, Nauka, the principal chief. He has been for many years the warm friend of the mission. He had not given up many of his heathen customs, but he was a straightforward and honest man. Mr. Neilson, writing of the sickness, says—"It has not occasioned any ill-feeling towards us; the people, on the contrary, seem rather subdued and more willing to listen to the Word."

ANIWA.

The annual meeting of our mission was held on this small island. All the members of the mission were present, except Mr. Goodwill, who was absent by leave of the mission. Much important business was done at our meeting.

The consideration of the slave trade occupied much of our time. The mission unanimously agreed to present a memorial on the subject to the Imperial Government, and petition for the total abolition of the system. We have no reason to hope that it will ever be conducted in harmony with the humane and benevolent spirit of the age. The laws which have been enacted for the regulation of the trade are valueless on these islands, and any attempt to enforce them would doom the system at once. We have a right to expect that something will be done to suppress the rising traffic on these islands by a nation which has expended £20,000,000 for the abolition of slavery in the West Indies.

IFATE.

The stations at Erakor and Pango are both vacant, the former by the death of Mr. Morrison, and the latter by the temporary removal of Mr. Cosh. I visited both places, and found the people doing well. They improve all the religious privileges within their reach. I brought with me the Gospel by John, translated by Mr. Cosh, and printed in New Zealand under his superintendence, which was received as a great boon. The elders applied for a missionary to be sent during the season to dispense the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to them, which will be done.

The small islands of Fill and Mel are still closed against the Gospel. The people are, however, becoming more friendly. The chief sacred man on the former island acknowledges that heathenism is doomed, and says that the rising generation will be