

The necessary coal and stores having been embarked, the "Mapourika" left Auckland at five minutes past 3 on Sunday morning, the 19th April. At 11 o'clock a.m. divine service was conducted in the saloon by the captain, who continued to perform this duty every Sunday throughout the voyage.

On Monday, the 20th, a fresh breeze and squally weather were experienced, which confined many to their berths. During the next few days nothing of note occurred, and members busied themselves with the fine selection of South Sea Island and other books that had been courteously supplied by the Chief Librarian of the General Assembly Library for the use of the party during the voyage.

RAROTONGA.

Saturday, 25th April.—During the morning the magnificent Island of Rarotonga was sighted, the rugged pinnacle of Ikurangi, with its attendant peak on either side, being observed about 11.30 a.m. rising trident-like from the ocean. By 4 o'clock in the afternoon we were off the Village of Avarua, and cast anchor in 8 fathoms of water. Colonel Gudgeon, the Resident Commissioner; the Rev. W. Lawrence, of the London Missionary Society; Dr. Gatley, Health Officer; Mr. E. Blaine, Registrar of the High Court; Mr. Digby Smith, Agent for the Union Steamship Company; and other residents came off at once in the surf-boats, and on their arrival on board were introduced to the members of the party by the Hon. Mr. Mills. After the Minister and the Commissioner had briefly discussed matters, the party went ashore, and proceeded to the palace of Makea Ariki, where the old Queen, who was evidently expecting us, was found seated on the verandah, dressed in deep mourning.

Colonel Gudgeon having made the necessary introductions, the Hon. Mr. Mills addressed Makea as follows: Before I left Auckland the Right Hon. the Premier wired to me telling me the sad news of the death of Ngamaru Ariki, and asking me to express the deep sorrow of the Governor, himself, and colleagues, and all the members of this party, for the loss you have sustained, and their sincere sympathy with you in your bereavement. We are all very much grieved that Ngamaru was called away to the great spirit-land of his ancestors before our arrival here. We had been told of the good works he did during his lifetime, and of his loyalty to the great British Empire to which we all belong. And since you and others have become more closely connected with that Empire, we are glad of the opportunity of acquiring a more intimate knowledge of those residing in these islands. When the Premier returned to New Zealand after visiting the islands he gave us his impressions of what he had seen, and naturally there was great interest shown by the members of both Houses of Parliament. As the Minister in charge of the islands I have found it very difficult to deal with many matters which have come before me from Colonel Gudgeon, not having had the opportunity of seeing things for myself and forming my opinions on the various important matters that continually affect the welfare of so many different islands; and so I and the friends who are with me—all eminent men from our colony—are now travelling expressly for the purpose of gaining further information. The Premier asked me to specially mention that he realised what great benefits your late husband had been able to render Colonel Gudgeon since his arrival here, and he desired me to at once procure a wreath for Ngamaru's grave, and to convey his and his family's deep sympathy with you under such a heavy bereavement. I hope you will kindly allow me to place this wreath on the grave in fulfilment of what I feel to be a solemn duty, and in order that I may be able to tell the Premier that you have kindly permitted me to do as he desired.

Queen Makea, who appeared to be much affected, then replied, and the Rev. W. N. Lawrence, conveying the substance of her remarks, said,—She wishes me to express to you, Mr. Mills, her sense of pleasure in receiving such expressions of sympathy from the Governor, the Premier, yourself, and your colleagues, and more especially is she pleased with the token of respect for her deceased husband which you intend to give by placing a wreath upon his tomb.

Hon. Mr. Mills, resuming his speech, said,—Queen Makea, this is the emblem which I wish to place on the grave of your late husband. You will see that it represents an anchor, and it is suggestive of the good work Ngamaru Ariki used to do between the different islands of this Group, for we are told that wherever his vessel dropped her anchor at the different islands good results were sure to follow. I have been told that he was a brave sailor, a just and good man; and I have also heard that he was always doing his best to improve the laws and regulations which were framed to guide the people of these islands. I need only say that every one of my party feels the deepest sympathy with you, and I have to ask you to kindly convey to your friends the Arikis, Rangatiras, chiefs, and the people themselves our warmest sympathy and our sincere feeling of respect for your late husband, who has so recently been called away. And now, with your permission, before laying the wreath on the grave, I will introduce the Hon. T. Thompson, who has another wreath to present on behalf of the Auckland people.

Hon. Mr. Thompson: Queen Makea,—I have been requested by many of your friends, especially the Glover family, in Auckland, to present to you this wreath as a last token of respect and love for your departed husband. I have been asked to assure you that you have their deepest sympathy in the great loss you have sustained. It is needless for me to say that individually I indorse what our Minister has said, and I believe all our party share the same feelings.

We then proceeded to the burial-ground of the Makea family, which adjoins the palace, and the Hon. Mr. Mills reverently placed the wreath on the tomb as a tribute from the New Zealand Government. After this ceremony the party dispersed to see as much of the island as the lateness of the hour would permit, and the Minister and Private Secretary proceeded to the Commissioner's residence with Colonel Gudgeon. Darkness fell after a very short twilight, and the majority of the members returned on board; others looked up friends and stayed the night on shore, and were very hospitably entertained.