

instant decision. I also wished to give them time to reflect upon and canvass the regulations just adopted, and perceived that they began to be fatigued with the length of the conference. I therefore proposed that before they gave me a final answer in relation to Opotuno, they should take time for consideration and reflection, for which purpose I suggested that the meeting should be adjourned until the next day, which was accordingly done.

On the 5th November we again met, when the arguments urged the day before were a second time brought forward, and the necessity of their taking measures that should effectually prevent outrages upon the persons and depredations on the property of white men, strongly set before them. They met these arguments with complaints against the white men who had come to the islands or been left upon them, saying that many of them were bad fellows, and had caused much trouble. I at once told them that if they would bring these turbulent persons to me, I would take them away from the islands, and that the laws they had now assented to, were such as would secure their punishment for any future offences.

In this state of the proceedings we were favoured with a set speech from the official orator of Malietoa, an old blind chief, who stood up, supporting himself by leaning with both hands upon a long stick. In this attitude he poured forth such a torrent of words as few of us had ever before heard; and if eloquence be composed of elocution and a ready flow of language, he was fully entitled to the praise of possessing it.

As we learned from the translation of this speech, its object was to urge the necessity of going to war, in order to secure the murderer, Opotuno, for the purpose of delivering him up. This, however, was intended only for effect; for these, as we well knew, were not the real sentiments entertained by Malietoa.

This speech was made up of short and distinct sentences, was spoken in a loud voice, and contained many repetitions.

However contrary this speech may have been to the cool determination of Malietoa, it seemed to meet the popular feeling; and there is no saying what might have been the consequence, had not the missionaries contrived to check the outburst. It was now proposed that the fono should receive and publish a document, offering a large reward for the seizure and delivery of Opotuno, dead or alive. This proposition was a new source of excitement, and old Malietoa exclaimed with emphasis, 'Give me the paper!—I will put it upon my house; where all the world shall see it.'