

eye of man a fearful risk must be encountered, thus to tread the path, which hitherto led invariably to a cruel death and the martyr's grave. It was, indeed, taking their life in their hand—and it certainly required, on their part, strong faith and an entire surrender of life and all else into the hands of their Lord, whom they wished to serve, and who could shield them amid every peril. Such was the aspect which Eromanga presented and the barriers which confronted your missionary when arriving there. Weak and helpless and very lonely, doubtless, the dreary shores appeared in view. Human aid there was none. The Master's promise was all. They had this—they trusted in it, and it was sufficient. Your Committee would, at the time, have preferred that your missionary had been appointed to a field where perils less formidable were to be encountered; but they would now express their gratitude to the God of Missions that the decision was not as their wisdom would dictate, and that your missionary was endowed with the Christain daring that enabled him to brave the perils of Eromanga. By the good hand of God upon and around them, Mr. Robertson and his faithful partner have not only been protected from every danger, but have succeeded in some measure in securing the confidence and good-will of the natives, of even these still devoted to their superstition, and who continue unwilling to believe the truth. Your Committee feel that, in making this statement, they are justified in assuming that a great work has been accomplished. The great barrier which every missionary finds in the way is the distrust entertained, and the suspicion with which the poor savage regards his friendly efforts. When this has been removed and confidence has taken its place and the missionary is looked upon as a friend, then the tendency naturally is to go to the almost opposite extreme of simple and childlike docility. That your missionary has been successful beyond what we could hope for in already disarming hostility and securing confidence, is evident both from the statement given by himself, and from the communication from Dr. Steele, who visited the Islands in the summer of 1874. He writes, 'I was glad to find Mr. and Mrs. Robertson and their child at Yana, and in good health. They accompanied us to Eromanga, where I was surprised and gratified by the warm welcome which greeted them from the natives. Mr. Robertson seems to have gained the confidence of the people—heathen as well as Christian—and he has now a net-work of Christian teachers all over the Island. He has ten native teachers employed in the mission work. These are in different places, and succeed in getting a few in each place to attend their schools and their religious services. There are more encouragements at present on Eromanga than on any former period.' This is the report of one who would not exaggerate, and it fully confirms all the facts given at greater length in Mr. Robertson's own statement. These facts are most gratifying, and show results far in advance of what our weak hopes could anticipate. What a great and very decided change has taken place on Eromanga is certain in the one fact stated, viz., that your missionary felt he could safely leave his wife and child there when absent for weeks at Aneityum, attending the Missionary Synod. When entering on his work, the small band of professedly Christian belief consisted of only six individuals. He is enabled to state that already he has received into the Church on the profession of their faith in Christ 19 of the natives, and celebrated 3 marriages in the Church, an important fact, especially as one of the parties was a young chief, now a Christian in profession. Under date 22nd September your missionary writes, 'It was our privilege to join with 26 Eromangans and 3 Aneityumese in comemorating our Saviour's death.' In reference to teachers, and after stating their different stations, he adds, 'In short, we have 11 teachers at work on the Island, and hope soon to settle 4 or 5 more. Over the whole Island between 450 and 500 attend Sabbath service more or less regularly. Out of these a large number attend morning school, for reading praise, and prayer, four days a week, and on Wednesday afternoon the weekly prayer meeting.' It is unnecessary to quote at further length from your missionary's letter, as it was read in the pages of the RECORD. He writes very cautiously, and while his statement shows no disposition to boast, it clearly manifests that his heart is in the work, and that he is doing that work wisely and well. While it is yet the day of small things, and the results are known to God alone, your Committee feel that in the fact stated, and in the progress made, there is great cause of gratitude and encouragement, for the arm of the Lord is visible, and His blessing has come down on the arid fields of Santo—and may we but confidentially trust these drops may soon be followed by the abundant and refreshing shower. To see the Lord's Table spread out at Dillon's Bay, and around that Table seated 26 Eromangans, lately brutal savages now clothed and in their right mind,—to see those hands, accustomed only to the murderous javelin, take the