

to preach his gospel to every creature; and the promise of his own presence with them will be sweet and precious in proportion to the sincerity of their faith and the difficulties of their work. Their instrumentality in the salvation of lost souls in Africa cannot be dispensed with, and will not fail at last to be richly rewarded.

The missions of the Board in Africa are found in Liberia,—at Monrovia, Sinoe, Kentucky, and Setra Krow; and near the Equator, on the island of Corisco. These are two distinct missionary fields, distant from each other more than a thousand miles. Each has its own features of interest, and both are highly important spheres of Christian benevolence.

The mission to Liberia was commenced in 1822, but has been repeatedly suspended, on account of the death or the return to this country of the missionaries.

The repeated bereavements of the mission on the Liberia coast had led to the enquiry whether a more healthy location could not be discovered elsewhere; and the comparative exemption from fever enjoyed by missionaries of the American Board on the Gaboon river, attracted the attention of many to the region near the Equator. Accordingly, in 1849 the Rev. Messrs. James L. Mackay and George W. Simpson and their wives went out to form a new mission in this part of the African field. They were greatly aided in their enquiries by the counsels of the brethren connected with the American Board, and particularly of the Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, a respected minister of our body, who had been long a missionary,—first at Cape Palmas and afterwards at the Gaboon, and who is now one of the Secretaries of the Board. After making full examination of various places, they were led to select the island of Corisco as their station. This is a small island, four miles long from north to south, and about the same in breadth at the south end, but at the north not exceeding a mile,—having a circumference of about fifteen miles, and an irregular surface, diversified with narrow valleys and steep hills of no great height. It is fifty-five miles north of the equator, and from fifteen to twenty miles from the mainland. Its population is about 4,000, and its situation, midway in the sea-line of the Bay of Corisco, affords a ready access to people of the same language, the Benga, who live on the shores of the bay and on the sea-coast. In this part of Africa there are no roads, and journeys can be most conveniently made in boats along the coast or on the rivers, so that the situation of the missionaries on an island is rather an advantage than a hindrance to their intercourse with the natives. The chief inducement, however, for choosing Corisco as the site of the mission, was the hope that it would prove a healthy place. It contains few local causes of diseases, while it is removed from the malaria of the coast on the mainland, and it is surrounded and pervaded by the atmosphere of the sea.

Thus far the missionaries have enjoyed remarkable health, for foreigners in Africa.

Small schools for boys and girls have been opened, religious worship has been conducted on the Lord's-day, and Mr. Mackay has exerted a happy influence over the natives by his medical skill. Already many of their superstitious practices have been abandoned, the Sabbath is in some degree honored, and the influence of the mission is visible in the improved conduct of the people. The principal employment of the missionaries, however, has been the acquisition of the native language.—Some interesting tours have been made on the main land, one extending nearly one hundred and fifty miles into the interior, which have tended to confirm the hope, that this mission will afford a door of entrance to a very large population. Its location on an island may remind the reader of the celebrated island of Iona, on the borders of Scotland—the home of a Presbyterian and missionary clergy in the sixth century. May Corisco become to Africa what Iona was to great Britain, Ireland and many parts of the continent of Europe!

MADAGASCAR.

REPORT OF A DEPUTATION OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Many years ago, as our readers are aware, the London Missionary Society had a successful mission in the island of Madagascar. Then followed the expulsion of all the missionaries and a time of severe persecution. In our own day, our Christian brethren in this island have been called to lay down their lives for Christ; they have been as truly martyrs for their religion as were any of the primitive Christians, the Waldenses, the Huguenots, or the Covenanters. And their religion has supported them as nobly as the same faith supported the martyrs in the times of Nero or Clayhouse. Christianity has lost none of its power in our age, however little worldly-minded professors may share its virtue, or however a scoffing world may deride its claims.

For several years has persecution raged in Madagascar. Recently, some signs of change have appeared, but it has been difficult to obtain accurate information concerning matters in the island. The London Missionary Society sent Messrs. Ellis and Cameron to the Isle of France, with instructions to visit Madagascar if practicable, and to strengthen the persecuted brethren while endeavoring to promote a happier state of things. Mr. Ellis formerly of the South Sea Mission, and his companion, visited Tamatave during last summer, and on their return to Mauritius, Mr. Ellis communicated to the Directors a narrative, from which we take the following extract. It is under date of September 9, 1853, and we are sure it will be read with deep interest.

We remained at Tamatave twenty-one days, had intercourse with the

officers and people there almost daily, learned much from their conversation among themselves, and with many strangers from the capital and elsewhere, and thus became acquainted with the circumstances and opinions of the people in different parts of the country. We had also much intercourse with foreign residents, French and American, who not only readily answered all our enquiries, but made us acquainted with the state of affairs as regarded from their point of view. The native Christians, of whom there are some in the neighborhood, soon found means of communicating with us, and verbally and by writing, in answer to inquiries which we proposed in writing, we obtained a considerable amount of deeply-affecting and most valuable information. This intelligence we obtained from parties to whom the highest sources of intelligence were accessible, and whose veracity is more than guaranteed by their present circumstances. I shall never forget our first interview with the native Christian with whom we had most frequent intercourse. We were seated at breakfast with one of the foreign residents, when according to appointment, he arrived. After looking earnestly at each of us for a few moments, and almost mechanically giving us his hand, there came over his whole countenance such an expression of emotion as I had never before witnessed in any human being. It was not ecstasy, it was not terror, and yet a seeming blending of both, marked by a measure of intensity but rarely seen. During the whole interview, which was long, there was a strange uneasiness mingled with apparent satisfaction, which it would be unsuitable now to make any mention of his name or rank, or the present circumstances of some, and the tragical end of others most closely connected with him.

During all our intercourse with the people, nothing surprised me so much as the earnest, importunate and reiterated applications for the Holy Scriptures and other Christian books, which reached us through all available mediums. One fine-looking young officer who had come from a distance, on hearing that we were at Tamatave, almost wept, when, in reply to his solicitations for a book, Mr. Cameron told him we had not a single copy left. In answer to an enquiry as to the number of Christians in his neighborhood, he replied, "We are few in number because we have so few books. If we had books, many would read them, and would unite themselves with us." We have made arrangements which will, as far as practicable, enable us to furnish them with books from this place.

Fifteen days after our arrival we received at the hands of the chief judge, the official answers to our letters. The answers, though very brief, were courteous and friendly, containing kind enquiries after some of the missionaries who had formerly resided amongst them, stating that the Queen and her relations were well; that at present there was much public business of the Queen's to attend to, requiring a considerable time to finish it; and that, in the mean time, we had better return to the other side of the water, lest we should be overtaken with sickness by remaining at Tamatave. Our Christian friends regarded the letters as by no means unfriendly, but more favorably than could have been expected; and a short time before we received them, the officers had made us a present by the Queen's order and in her name, of a bullock, with poultry of different kinds, and three bags of rice.

Before leaving Madagascar, I wrote at some length to the chief persons connected with those in whose welfare we are most deeply interested. I assured them of the undiminished affection and sympathy of British Christians, of their readiness to aid in relieving their present suffering, of their prayers to the Supreme Head of the Church on their behalf, and their willingness, when the Lord in his providence should open the way, to send them Christian teachers, holy and faithful men, who should assist them more fully to comprehend and more widely to diffuse that blessed gospel which they had found so precious, and for which they had suffered so much. I expressed my regret that we had not been favored with an opportunity for personal communication with them, and my hope that this might yet be afforded; and requested that, if I could in any way further their wishes, they would write to me at Mauritius, and also acquaint me with the circumstances and the prospects of the Christians. I also sent, partly from myself, and partly in conjunction with Mr. Cameron, who translated my communications, what were deemed suitable presents to some, and relief for the suffering Christians in bonds. All these I begged them to receive as small tokens of the affectionate remembrance in which they were held by the friends of Christ our Lord, in England and elsewhere. I also pointed out to them the medium through which they might, at any future time, after our departure, communicate directly with their friends in England. One short letter from the capital was received by Mr. Cameron just before we left; but it communicated little more than the fact, that the writer had heard we were at Tamatave, reiterated their great want of the Holy Scriptures, and begged that some might be sent. From other quarters, however, we heard that important changes would probably soon take place. Short as our stay was among the people, it afforded many indications of the probability of some great change at no distant period.—The interests involved are too important, the rank and position of the individuals principally affected too high, and the parties in reality, perhaps, too nearly balanced to allow the existing state of things long to continue; and the people generally, if we may judge from the hypothetical expressions so frequently used by them, expect something of the kind.

So far as the objects of greatest interest to us are concerned, the people may be regarded as constituting two great parties; viz., those favorable to education, improvement and Christianity, and those opposed