

against christianity have become so strong, that it will require some time to eradicate them.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO EFFORT.

In making this proposal we have much to encourage us, both within and without the mission. The Lord has to a large extent graciously blessed our efforts for the evangelization of the natives. One island has for a number of years been won over to christianity. We have churches organized on other three islands, on other four islands we have missionaries settled, so that we have missionaries on eight islands. We have books printed in seven languages. In one of these the whole of the New Testament is printed, and more than the half of the first half of the Old Testament is translated, and is being printed just now, and a great amount of preparatory work has been done, and experience acquired, which will facilitate our progress in time to come, especially if the work is carried vigorously forward.

Without the mission, and looking at the support we have received, the encouragement has been marvellous and striking. Some twenty years ago, in the providence of God, two missionaries met on the island of Aneityum, representatives of two of the smallest Presbyterian churches in christendom,—the least of the thousands of Judah. Neither the missionaries nor the churches had had any previous intercourse. The one of these churches has been more than doubled since that time, by union with other churches; and each, in proportion to its size, has sent a large band of missionaries into this field. But what is more wonderful and encouraging is, that all the presbyterian churches in the Australasian colonies, containing about 350 congregations, as well as another presbyterian church in the New Dominion, have adopted this mission as their own Foreign Mission; and that with a cordiality and unanimity which is as surprising as it is gratifying. Moreover the Dayspring was obtained, and has been supported in a manner equally remarkable. The finger of providence has been conspicuous in the history of this mission from first to last. In the way in which these agencies have been brought together; in the way in which these various churches have been led to co-operate, there has been so much of the doings of the Lord, and so little of the doings of man, that I cannot but regard it as an earnest of what the Lord intends to do for us, and by us, unless we become criminally slothful. I cannot think that God would have brought so many churches into this mission,—all so essentially one, in their evangelical and evangelistic character, unless he had thoughts of goodness, and plans of mercy,

to be developed in this group. I feel assured that he has a great work to accomplish among these islands, if the churches that commenced this mission are only true to their obligations; if they only improve the advantages which God has placed at their disposal. Most certainly God has owned and honoured your church in connexion with this mission. In your leading the way in this work, in the number of missionaries you have sent into the field, in your sending forth the Dayspring so well adapted and so fully equipped for the work, in the part you have taken in bringing other churches into the field, as well as in the direct results of your operations in this group; and if she continue true to her position, as I have no doubt she will, no one can foresee what the Lord may yet honor her to do.

DIFFICULTIES NOT INSURMOUNTABLE.

It is true there are formidable difficulties to be encountered, and much in our position and prospects that is fitted to discourage; but is there not something of the kind in every mission? Of these difficulties the savage and degraded character of the natives is one of the most apparent; it strikes you the moment you land on these shores. But it has been fully shown that the Gospel can overcome this difficulty. Another formidable hindrance is the number and diversity of the languages—nearly as many languages as there islands, and all very widely different. But this is not an insurmountable obstacle; it is being removed, and will yield to patience, persevering labour, and the blessing of God.

THE CLIMATE.

The climate is certainly the most formidable of all our difficulties; its demands have been so heavy upon physical energy, upon health and life, that people feel alarmed. We are not surprised that your young men are afraid to come out here. It would be unwise and unsafe either to ignore, or to underrate this danger. I certainly regard it as the most formidable difficulty we have to contend with in this mission; more formidable perhaps, than all the others put together. It must be recognized, calculated upon, provided carefully against in every step that we take. But from what we know now, we can see that, beyond a fair, or at most a high, average, the causes of sickness and mortality in this group are, to a large extent, preventible.

When we came to live on Aneityum, nineteen years ago, this island bore a worse name for being unhealthy, than any island of the group does at the present day. It was thought then that almost nobody could live here, without being under fever and