

arrowroot contributed by the natives of Aneiteum to pay for the Scriptures has amounted to about £500, and has enabled us to pay the full amount charged by the British and Foreign Bible Society for 2000 copies of the New Testament, strongly bound in calf, and 2000 copies of the Book of Psalms; and we have a balance on hand of about £50, to be appropriated for payment of the Old Testament, the first half of which is nearly ready for the press. Dr. Geddie was appointed at the annual meeting to superintend the printing of this translation in Melbourne, the Bible Society having agreed to have it printed there, to meet our convenience for its supervision.

DEATH OF MR. MCNAIR.

I am sorry to inform you that our mission band has just sustained another heavy loss. The Rev. James McNair, of Erromanga, died on the 16th ult. He was present at our meeting, attended every sederunt, and took more or less part in all the business. He had been ill for six months with fever and ague, of an obstinate rather than a violent type, but no one suspected any immediate danger. He was home, however, only a fortnight, when he became suddenly worse and died.

[The account of his early life and studies is omitted, because given in a late number by Mr. Neilson.]

HIS WORK AND CHARACTER.

Mr. McNair has been only four years in this mission. But his career, though short, has not been in vain. He was a true-hearted, earnest missionary. He applied himself most assiduously to acquire the Erromangan language. He taught the natives to read, he preached to them the gospel, he translated portions of the Scriptures, he administered medicines to the sick, and in every way he and his devoted wife laid themselves out for the spiritual and temporal well-being of the natives; and their labours were beginning to tell very effectively, both on the Christian natives around them, and on the more distant heathen.—Some months ago they had the satisfaction of seeing a few converts, whom they had carefully instructed, added to the fellowship of the Church, and the heathen, in considerable numbers and from great distances, were paying them friendly visits. During the first two years they lived on Erromanga, owing to epidemics and a great mortality among the natives, their lives were often in danger from the heathen, but during the last two years, owing partly to the absence of these exciting causes, but chiefly, we believe, to their being better known, the heathen had become friendly to them and favourable to Christianity.

They were particularly well liked by

those about them. About two years ago one of our Aneiteum teachers and his wife lived with them for a few months to assist them in their work. When the news of Mr. McNair's death came to this island, and this woman heard of it, she cried bitterly, and said, "Oh! they were so good; they were so good to us: their words were so good, and their conduct was so good; yes, both of them. They two never scolded us, never spoke angry words to us: no, neither the one nor the other; their words were always soft; they were good; yes, they were so good, they were so kind."

Mr. McNair was a large-hearted man: he was devising large schemes of usefulness for Erromanga. On that island travelling is difficult by land: the sea is the principal highway; but then the sea can be traversed only in fine weather. There are no reefs along the coast forming lagoons, inside of which boats may always sail safely, as in many of the eastern and other groups. It is surrounded almost everywhere by an iron-bound coast; even boat harbours are few and far between; hence a specially good boat is required for sailing round the island. Mr. McNair had brought this matter so distinctly before some of his friends in the colonies that the Rev. Mr. Mackie, of South Yarra, and his congregation, at a cost of £55, procured him an admirable life-boat, equally adapted for sailing or rowing, and which would be safe in all seas and in all weathers, that he might be able to visit round the island as far and as often as he might require to do so. This boat was brought down by the *Dayspring*, when she arrived here in May last; but this and other schemes, however wise in themselves, and however wisely laid, have all, in the providence of God, been cut short.

He was an honest, unobtrusive, man, and never strove after effect. He was a true man, and, like all true men, he grew in the esteem of others as he became known; and the longer he was known, the better he was liked. He was an earnest teetotaler: he had been so, I believe, all his life: he used neither alcohol nor tobacco; but cheerfully lent all his influence to assist those who are striving to stem and drive back the fearful flood of intemperance that is desolating both the church and the world.

One prominent feature in Mr. McNair's character was, his thorough reliable honesty. He was a Nathanael—an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile. His piety was sincere, unostentatious: it was best known by its fruits. He was a reliable man, a peaceable man, a loveable man. He was naturally of a quick and hasty temper; his Celtic blood boiled up at every display of