

that it should not form the sole sphere of the church's missionary efforts. We yield to none in the church in interest in that mission. We have stood by its cradle and followed every step of its progress with our sympathy, our support and our prayers; we have rejoiced in its joys and wept in its trials. We know that there is much in the character of these islands, the simple manners of the inhabitants, the rapidity with which success among them has commonly been attained, as well as the extraordinary changes (though we fear we will not be able to say the same for the future), the cheapness with which they have been maintained render them a suitable field for a small church. We believe that the New Hebrides mission throughout its entire history has been the work of God, and we have not the least intention of uttering one word that would ever seem to indicate any desire to abandon it. But still when we look at all the circumstances connected with it we must say that they present strong reasons for having another mission. Compare the importance of a Missionary's labours in the East and in the Pacific, and the comparative results of expenditure of time and labour in the two places. Messrs. Geddie and Inglis spend the greater part of their lives in translating the scriptures, and publishing other books in the language of four thousand people—who will probably never be more numerous, and when they have done so, their labours are of no use to others, who on the very next island must go through the same labours for the sake it may be of a few hundreds of a population. In the East the missionary, who translates the Bible into Arabic, or publishes a book in that language, does it in the language of fifty millions of souls, and his labours are as available, for his successors or for fellow labourers in neighbouring lands as for himself. Then it is a fact now clearly established in regard to most of the Islands in the South Seas, that the native races are dying out, even where they have embraced Christianity. Even on the Sandwich Islands, which are perhaps the most thoroughly christian of any islands in the Pacific, the fact is now admitted. It is not

yet quite certain whether the same will be the case on the New Hebrides or not, but the extreme physical as well as moral degradation in which the missionaries found their inhabitants and the observations of the missionaries seem to indicate that it will. Even before the late ravages of the measles in some years the births scarcely equalled the deaths. And if this was the case in ordinary years, what must be the result of such epidemics as from time to time sweep over them. If then the same thing should happen in the New Hebrides as in the other islands, in a few generations the native races will be extinct, and our missionary efforts, so far as these tribes are concerned, will leave no traces on earth. They will have their fruit in ransomed souls before the throne, and this is a glorious and sufficient reward for all that we have done or may do. But how much more important the mission work among races in the East, of such energy as the Armenians and the Greeks, whose vitality has been undiminished by centuries of oppression, which instead of becoming extinct or being supplemented by others, are under the light of a purer faith now bursting forth into new life, and are likely to supplant the effete races around them and to play an important part in the world's history. In this case instead of the work dying out in a few generations there is the likelihood of its going on from age to age while the world stands.

But this is not the point in the case which we consider of most importance. It is certain that the Australian Churches will soon be ready, if they are not so now, to take upon themselves all the charge of missions on these islands. We believe they have the means already, and their want is men. Now any man who knows anything of geography must see that it must be more natural for these churches to undertake the evangelization of these islands than for us. It would be absurd for us to continue to send missionaries at so heavy an expense, half round the globe, and to maintain them there, while there are churches richer than ours, at their very doors able and willing to carry on the work.