

far as it relates to the native Christians. The prospects of the mission are now deemed more assuring. "Although some members of the Government may not be favourable to foreigners or to their religion; yet," writes one of the missionaries, "Christianity is spreading far and wide, and the seed scattered in the days of persecution is still springing up and bearing fruit in places where one would least of all have expected it."

TRAVANCORE.—The Rev. H. Baker, an experienced Church missionary, writes that in one district under his charge—that of Pallam—he has in two years baptized nearly 450 converts from Chogans, Palaries, and Pariahs, with five Nairs (a wealthy, military caste). In another district—Mundakayam—during the same period, seventy Arrians (a wild hilltribe) have been baptized from heathenism, and about the same number of slaves. One outstation is entirely Arrian, and had driven out those families who adhered to the mission: now they have called them back, and placed some of themselves under Christian teaching.

THE PACIFIC, *Samoa*.—The Rev. Dr. Turner, writing to the Secretary of the London Missionary Society, says—"I have now the pleasure of forwarding you the Twentieth Annual Report of our Mission Seminary.

"In the adjacent villages, where there is a population of 2000 people who look to Mr. Nisbet and myself for pastoral superintendence, the Church members number 297, and the candidates for church-fellowship 277. In the course of the year they have shown their usual liberality in contributing to the cause of God. Their annual presents to the nine village preachers this year amount in cash to 79l. 17s. 6d. This, you are aware, is exclusive of presents of food to these worthy men every week, all over the year. The contributions to the London Missionary Society in May amounted to 81l. 10s. In the course of the year also they have made two extra efforts, viz., a present of supplies to the vessel

which brought Captain Williams and party from the scene of the wreck of the 'John Williams,' and took them on to Sydney, and also a contribution from the children of the district to help in the purchase of a new Missionary Ship.

"We have in our schools between 500 and 600 children. They all look forward to the examination-day with interest. They had all a great treat this examination-day, and their parents, too, in getting a sight of a number of the diagrams of the working Men's Educational Union—a fine selection of which I brought out for the Institution, the kind gift of John Henderson Esq., of Park, and John Wemyss, Esq., of Fraserburgh.

"The new Bible is greatly prized. Already upwards of 1500l. worth of them have been disposed of; and, if the sale goes on as at present, the whole edition of 10,000 will soon be in the hands of the people; and that will be a complete copy of God's Word for every 3½ of the entire population.

"There is a marked increase, you will observe by the late statistics, in the Samoan people—about 1000 in seven years. We now number 35,000. This, and some other facts, will enable you to contradict, or at least to modify, what you often hear—viz., that the South Sea Islanders are fast melting away."

AMERICA.—The American Board of Missions, ended its financial year out of debt. It proposed a year ago to raise about 600,000 dollars. At first the receipt fell far short of this standard. So lately as August 1st there remained 100,000 dollars to be collected. But, according to their custom, the officers of the Board issued their appeal, the hearts of their constituents responded, and before the first of September the whole sums came together like the moisture of dew which the sun gathers into a cloud. The exact amount needed and raised has been 534,763 dollars. This, indeed, leaves a small balance in the treasury.

### THE DEAD SEA.

During the past year I spent many weeks on the shores of the Dead Sea. I walked round a great portion of it, and examined every nook and cranny of the cliffs which enclose it. The climate is perfect and most delicious. At no other place in the world could a sanatorium be established with such prospects of benefit as at Ain Jidy (Engedi). Baths, hot and cold, salt and mineral, with luxurious shade, cascades and purling streams—everything but security for life and property is there. There are many spots near the sea where fresh-water streams flow throughout the year, and where sweet water bubbles up within a few feet of the salt shore. I may mention (beside Ain Jidy) Feskhab, Terabeh, Un Hagkek, Callirhoe, the Arnon, and, above all, the Safieh, at the east side. Wherever these occur there is a prodigality of life, animal and vegetable, to the very shores of the sea. I collected one hundred and eighty species of birds, several of them new to science, on the shores of the lake, or swimming or flying over its waters. The canebrakes and oases which fringe it are the homes of

about forty species of mammalia, several of them animals never before brought to England; and innumerable tropical or semitropical plants, of Indian or African affinities perfume the atmosphere. The rich plain of the Safieh is cultivated with indigo, maize, and barley to within a few feet of the water's edge, and the date-palm still waves over the mouth of the Arnon and the Zerka. The bitterness of the water of the lake itself is simply due to the saturation from the great salt mountain of Usdum, at its southern extremity, and to the many hot sulphur springs which stud its shores. This saturation of salt and sulphur soon destroys the fresh-water fish, which enter the sea in shoals, and supply food, to the three species of kingfishers, the gulls, ducks, and grebes, which may be seen and shot on all parts of the lake. Let no one, then, be deterred from extending his investigations round the Dead Sea shores. He will find abundance of life to repay him if a naturalist, of varied scenery and wondrously painted skies and precipices if he is an artist, and night after night he may pitch his tent by springs of sweet water."