

"The revival of religion at home and the universal spread of the Gospel were regarded by many as events which might be expected to flow from existing calamities." To the Christians of that day "the prospects of the future triumph of the Church spread a mildness over existing gloom, and cheered them amid the miseries and wickedness which distressed the nations and distracted the world."

This little band were armed for their work with books, tools, medicines, printing apparatus, etc. Among the presents was one somewhat singular in its character. Two ladies presented a brass plate, on which was engraved the following inscription: "See that ye fall not out by the way" (Gen. 45 : 24) ; "Fear thou not, for I am with thee : be not dismayed, for I am thy God" (Isa. 41 : 10).

Ten ministers of different denominations took part in the farewell service, showing the catholicity of the society that was sending them out. The missionaries were told plainly that "it was not Calvinism, nor Arminianism, but Christianity that they were to teach. It was not the hierarchy of the Church of England nor the principles of Protestant Dissenters, but the Church universal that they were to serve." They were to be "infinitely more concerned to make men Christians than to make them Church of England men, Dissenters, or Methodists."

This being the pioneer mission in Polynesia, all subsequent missions have profited by its example, its errors, its failures, and its successes. Its history has effectually exploded the idea that civilization should precede Christianity in the evangelization of a heathen people. This, the greatest of all reforms, must begin *within* and work *outwardly*.

There was a long dark night of toil in that first mission to the islands of the sea. Deaths, desertions, and martyrdoms reduced the ranks of that little army, but a faithful few held on, hoping, working, praying. The interest awakened in England at the outset had almost died away, and the question was seriously discussed of abandoning the enterprise. There were, however, a few friends of the mission who were determined to persevere and sustain the efforts of the missionaries, and, like all faithful builders of the spiritual kingdom, they had their reward.

Seventeen years after the landing of that brave little band a crowd of savages were assembled in one of the beautiful cocoanut groves of Tahiti. The blending of the feathery tops of the trees protected them from the sun, while the branchless stems allowed the refreshing trade wind to fan the group. Mr. Nott, the missionary, was reading to them a translation of the third chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. It was a strange congregation—a motley group. Tall, well-built, powerful savages, decked in feathers, flowers, and paint, leaning on their spears or squatting with their clubs between their knees. Some are talking and laughing, others are declaring what is being read to be untrue ; but there is one man in the crowd who is looking earnestly at Mr. Nott, who, when the sixteenth verse is read, calls out in Tahitian, "Will you read that again?" What