

from the commonest of the people; indeed they are common enough, and after our notions of a highland chieftain have been formed, it is rather hard to regard these filthy naked savages, pretending to be chiefs, with any other feelings than those of pity and contempt. Of tenderness of heart, nobleness of spirit, and self respect they appear to be destitute, and if it be added that they are mean and cowardly, as well as *notorious* cannibals, how can they be respected! Yet this is not all. They are also gross polygamists, whose laziness and inhumanity entail upon their poor wives burdens too grievous to be borne. They not only compel them to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, but also cultivators of the soil,—truly female life here is miserable in the extreme, so much so indeed that they not unfrequently seek relief in suicide. Most of the men as well as the chiefs would, I presume, have more than one wife, were it not for the simple reason that they cannot have them, because, generally speaking, there is *one-third* more men on the island than there are of women.

THEIR WRETCHEDNESS.

An account of their superstitions and religious ceremonies we shall leave for a future occasion. Meanwhile, suffice it to say, that the poor savage is far from happiness. He is ever in dread of enemies from without. He is tortured by superstitious fears from within. He is afraid of ghosts. He is afraid of night. He is afraid of his fellows. He is afraid of the shaking of a reed. He is afraid of himself. Such is a brief and imperfect sketch of the field and the materials on which to work, and now for the cure, viz.:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

Fully nineteen years ago the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia sent out the Rev. John Geddie (now Dr. G.) in order to labour on this group. He settled on the island of Aneiteum, where four years afterwards he was joined by Rev. John Inglis of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland. Soon after Mr. Inglis' arrival, all the people, with very few exceptions, declared themselves Christians, and the good work has gone on very well since. They have now Genesis, Exodus, the book of Psalms, and the whole of the New Testament printed in their own language. Life and property are safer now on Aneiteum than in any part of Scotland. Doors are left unlocked at night. Goods, house and all may be left exposed from morning to night, and nothing will be touched. I have seen, I dare say several thousand pounds worth of mission stores left exposed in open shades on that island last year, while the mission ship *John Williams* was undergoing repairs in Sydney, and so far as I am

aware not a single article was missed. Several attempts have been made to establish a mission on the noble island of Tana; but, hitherto, all these attempts have failed. In 1842 Messrs. Turner and Nisbet, of the London Missionary Society, after a residence of six months, were glad to escape with their lives. Messrs. Johnson and Matheson from Nova Scotia, died after being there for a short period. Mr. J. G. Paton from Scotland, was also obliged to quit that field about five years.

To do justice to Erromanga would require a volume. You remember it was on the shores of this romantic isle that the famous Williams and the youthful Harris fell under the clubs of the savages in November 1839, and where within half-a-mile of the same bloody spot Mr. and Mrs. Gordon from Nova Scotia fell under the tomahawk of the cannibal in May 1861. The bodies of Harris and Williams were cooked and eaten, but not those of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. Mr. G. lived on the island about four years, and did much in reducing the language to a written form. There is now a Church on Erromanga, consisting of about a dozen members and fifty adherents, and they have the gospel by Luke printed in their own tongue. There is also a small Church formed on Fate or Sandwich Island, who have the gospel by Mark in their own language. There are now nine missionaries on the group, and we are distributed as follows, viz.,—Messrs. Geddie and Inglis on Aneiteum; Jos. Copeland on Fotuna; J. G. Paton on Aniwa; Messrs. Morrison and Cosh on Fate; T. Neilson likely to be on Tana; Mr. Gordon, brother of the martyr, and your obedient servant on Erromanga. But what are we among so many? Tana would require at least three missionaries; Erromanga three; Api two; Ambrim two; Whitsuntide two; Aurora one; Isle of Lepers two; Mallicola six; and the largest of all, Santo, ten,—i. e., twenty-eight more as a reasonable number for the evangelization of the whole group. Now the Presbyterian Church of Canada is ready to send one; the Nova Scotia Church is advertising for more; New South Wales is ready to send two; the young Church of New Zealand is wishing to send one, and, I understand, the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland is ready to send one more. But where are they to come from? Why from your ranks, you are the men.—The New South Wales, the New Zealand, and shall I add the Nova Scotia and Canadian Churches, look in some measure to you for aid; and will you refuse to give it? dare you do so? Pray consider if a Church rising up on the vast plains of Australia and amid cannibal New Zealand, ready to send the gospel of peace to cannibal Polynesia, yet so it is; and glory to God in the