

tical enterprise of Captain Cook, its evangelization to the heaven-directed and sustained zeal of John Geddie and lady, and both discovery and conversion owing to the mercy of Him who rules the Church and the nations; to whom be the glory! Its circumference being 40 miles and its population 3,600, it may be considered, in size and inhabitants, about the average of an ordinary Scotch parish, or about twice the size of Pictou Island. The general aspect of the island is said to be mountainous, some of the mountains rising to the respectable height of 3,000 feet. From this and other circumstances, its origin may be deemed to have been volcanic. It contains a valuable soil, on which grow the usual tropical fruits that sustain life,—the taro, bread-fruit, and yam, and, in point of natural scenery, offers a bewitching sight to the eyes of the admirer of nature. The Geddies, while in this country, saw no gardens to be compared in beauty to their own in the far distant home of their adoption,—so beautiful were the flowers, so lovely their form, so delicate their tints, and so varied their kinds. Such is the agreeable refuge which the hand of God has provided for the tempest-driven mariner, a refuge in which he is now as secure from the cruelty of the savage as from the violence of the storm. The olive branch of peace now blooms on these radiant shores, and the voice of the turtle-dove of peace is heard in that land.

The Aniteumese are said to be of an inferior mixed race—some negroes and some Malays—some claiming kindred with Ham, and some with Shem. Like many modern belles in the fashionable world, they did not *tattoo* their bodies, but they *painted* profusely, and wore ornaments in their ears and round their wrists. So nearly do fashionable extremes resemble barbarism! They had no manufactures. The gospel is the enlightened parent of science and art, and without it men are but one remove from the beasts that perish.

They were, like the heroes of classic antiquity, polytheists: but their principal deity was a mythical being called Nugerain. Their world was Aniteum, and Nugerain its creator. This mythical personage was quite a remarkable fisherman, as the following fishing story would seem to prove:—"On a certain day, he went out to fish, and, as he carried on his fishing operations, his hook got fast to some unknown object, and he hauled away till, lo! he brought up Aniteum." Tom Paine and other infidels used to ridicule the Scriptural account of the Fall, because so much evil was alleged to have followed the simple act of eating an apple—not knowing, or refusing to know, that the *apple* was an invention of their own, and not perceiving that the slighter and more trivial the prohibition, the better was it fitted to be a *test* of obedience. But how would they like the following Aniteumese account of that "unhancement" of human

nature which has been admitted by every inquiring mind? "Nugerain, who was furnished with a shell like a tortoise, cast his shell, and left it behind him when he went to some distant part. During his absence, his children pierced the said shell with the stalk of the cocoa-nut leaf, and burned it with fire, and on account of this the race were doomed to die." A supreme deity with a shell-like a tortoise, offers a fine study to the advocates of mere natural religion, who owe the superior light with which they assail the gospel to the gospel itself; and the screeched shell would form a nice substitute for the Scripture account of the Fall! Viewed as an indistinct tradition of a true history, it is important; but viewed as a rational account, it is contemptible.

There were, in addition to this powerful but most absurd shell-bearing deity, innumerable lesser gods. Like the polytheism of classical antiquity, every place, every disease, every storm, had its god. They worshipped the sun and moon. The lovers of traditional lore, however, will be surprised to hear that in Aniteum the famous "man in the moon" was a woman! As man, in his most degraded state, never wholly loses the instinct of immortality, so the poor Aniteumese held a future state. Their heaven was eating and sensuality; and their hell, being dragged over sharp stones, and a perpetual pinching of the nose and ears.

If such were the religious notions, we may imagine that the moral state of the people would be very debased. The Aniteumese were in constant terror, either from invisible beings or from the murderous club of the assassin. No one could go any distance from his dwelling. The orphan was murdered to save the trouble of nurture. Misery deadened the feelings of maternal affection. The bodies of the slain in battle were cooked and eaten, and the disgusting cannibal feast succeeded the savage encounter. Their battles, in which only two or three were slain, however, presented a favorable contrast to ours, in which thousands of dead bodies are offered up a sacrifice to the unchristian war-demon of Christian men. Widows were invariably slain by strangulation, that their souls might accompany the souls of their husbands to the world of spirits! The widow herself was most anxious for death, and her nearest relation, a father, mother, daughter, &c., was the operator. The details of savage life are of such a nature as cannot even be imagined. The preceding brief remarks ought to suffice to point out our obligation to Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, and prepare us for appreciating the change which has passed over this island.

A. F.