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Eromanga.



REV. HUGH A. ROBERTSON.

EROMANGA, memorable in the annals of Christian missions, is one of the New Hebrides group, situated between 18° and 18° S. Lat., and between 168° and 169° East Long. It is stated about 200 miles N.E. from New Caledonia, 1,000 north from New Zealand and 1,400 from Sidney, N.S.W. The island is about 95 miles in circumference. Its coast line is indented with numerous ways—

the largest being Cook's Bay on the East, Potinia on the North and Dillon's Bay on the West, into each of which mountain streams empty themselves. In the interior, mountains rise to a height of from 2,000 to 3,000 feet. The soil is rich and the scenery beautiful. The climate during the greater part of the year is delightful, the luxuriant foliage of the palm and the cocoa-nut tree affording grateful shade. It is seldom oppressively hot, the thermometer never rising above 92 in the shade. The island of Tanna, eighteen or twenty miles to the south, is visible by night as well as by day, by reason of its volcano, which has been in a state of ceaseless eruption since the group was discovered by Capt. Cook in 1774.

After twenty-three years of missionary labours in various parts of the South Seas, years crowned with brilliant success, John Williams, "the apostle of Polynesia," took up his headquarters at Upulo, one of the Samoan group. While there his attention was attracted to the New Hebrides, numerous peopled by tribes of whom little was known excepting that they were naked savages of the lowest type—Cannibals whose mode of life was so revolting as to be indescribable. On the 20th of November, 1839, after his return from England, Williams with a party of twelve missionaries arrived at Eromanga with a view of settling some Christian teachers upon it. Immediately after landing he and his companion, Mr. Harris, were murdered by the natives at Dillon's Bay. A mission thus baptized with blood, however, was not to be abandoned. Before six months had elapsed a party of brave Samoan teachers renewed the attempt. They not only landed but they lived a whole year on the island.