

For several months the brethren have been able to address the Natives intelligibly, in their own tongue. Services have been conducted by themselves, and the Teachers from Samoa and Raratonga, at six principal stations, and, in addition to this, a number of services are conducted in villages in the neighbourhood of the principal stations, and conversations engaged in—with different parties, and under various circumstances, with a view to explain to them the truths of Christianity, and urge its claims on their attention.

The Natives do not attend the services in large numbers, nor yet very steadily; still a considerable number hear the Gospel every Sabbath, and a large part of the population have their attention frequently called to the truths of the Gospel. Moreover, there appears a growing disposition to consider the claims of the new religion, and five or six individuals afford some ground to hope that the truth is not only enlightening their minds, but taking also some hold of their hearts. The most decidedly hopeful of these are young men named, Paulo, Namuli, and Umra; the last, it will be recollected, has been for a length of time in Samoa. He, with his wife, has become a member of Mr. Geddie's family, and will, I trust, be not a little helpful to him in his labours. All these individuals appear decidedly convinced of the truth of Christianity, and of the falsehood of the notions entertained by their countrymen; they have abandoned the worship of their imaginary deities, have attached themselves to the Teachers, and appear sincere as far as their light extends. In addition to these, there are three or four others who have professedly forsaken the Native superstitions, and commenced the worship of the true God. Thus have our esteemed friends a gleam of light amidst the thick darkness that surrounds them; that darkness, alas! is still deep, and almost unbroken, yet there is a glimmering of light, which seems to indicate, that the time to favour this degraded and wretched people is near at hand, if it has not actually come.

The great body of the people still continue to cling to the delusive notions, and practise the cruel and abominable rites and customs of heathenism. No less than ten poor widows have been strangled during the short space of about twelve months; and one was added to the number from a place at a short distance from where the Missionaries lived, while we were

gone to visit the islands beyond. It is probable that more than these have fallen a sacrifice to this cruel and unnatural practice during the above space, as the Natives try to conceal their deeds of darkness from the Missionaries and Teachers, and doubtless, they often succeed, especially in the remoter districts.

Foreign residents and visitors still continue to exert a very unfavourable influence, especially in the neighbourhood of the principal Missionary station, which is their chief resort; their conduct generally is disgraceful in the extreme, and directly calculated to thwart the efforts of the Missionaries; still, notwithstanding the strong counteracting influence that is constantly operating against them, they are making some way against it. The Natives are not slow to distinguish character; they soon find out who are really their friends; and though many of them, no doubt, suffer great injury from the example and seductive influence of their foreign neighbours, there are those who shun them, and flee to the Missionaries and Teachers, that they may escape the snares laid by them to draw them into sin. This is especially the case with some of the poor females; and the other sex complain bitterly of the shameful attempts of the foreigners to draw their wives into sin.

We found the Samoan and Rarotongan Teachers all living, and most of them in good health. Two children belonging to Akulla, one of the Samoans, had died. It being thought expedient to remove two Rarotongan Teachers placed on the island last voyage, we left two others, also Rarotongans to take their place. In addition to these there are three Samoans, so that altogether Mr. Geddie has five Samoans and Rarotongans to assist him in this important work.

Popery does not appear to be gaining any ground in Aneiteum, and no direct attempts have as yet been made to introduce it into the neighbouring islands. There are at present only two priests on the island, a party of ten or twelve, including a bishop, having just left for New Caledonia, with a view to resume operations there.

CRUELITIES OF HEATHENISM.

The following extract of a letter, dated 'Aneiteum, August 3, 1849,' from the Rev. Thomas Powell, lately associated with our Missionaries there, affords a specimen