

islands of the group. Two missionaries were at that time located on the island. In ten years, from the location of the missionaries, the whole population (3500), with the exception of a few stragglers, had abandoned heathenism, and placed themselves under Christian instruction. There were never more than two missionaries on the island, and for three of those years there was only one, my colleague, Mr. Geddie. When I left the island, a tenth of the entire population had been admitted to the membership of the church. Life and property were perfectly secure. The Sabbath externally as well observed as in Scotland; the whole population attending school; public worship as well attended as among our own church-going population; family worship observed in every dwelling, regarded indeed as an essential of Christianity; the Bible recognized in everything, ecclesiastical and civil, as the supreme and infallible authority. The chiefs repeatedly declaring, in public assemblies, "We have no king but Jesus."

But let us not be mistaken, when we make statements like these, as if Christianity among them were as fully developed, and as firmly consolidated as among us. No. Theirs is like the new-born infant; it has all the parts and all the proportions; it is vital, and it is growing; but it is small, weak, and cannot, as yet, stand alone. Ours is like the strong, full-grown man; and can not only stand alone, and sustain itself, but lend invaluable assistance to others.

The past year was one of unparalleled trial, both to the natives and the missionaries; God gave command to the winds and the waves, and they swept over these isles with desolating fury: He gave commission to the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and to the destruction that wasteth at noon-day, and hundreds and thousands of the natives were laid in their graves. He withdrew his restraining hand from the agents and emissaries of Satan, and the blood of His servants was cruelly shed on the ground. But precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints; and our hope is that He who brings good out of evil, light out of darkness, order out of confusion, who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, while the remainder of that wrath He can restrain, will overrule all these sad calamities, for the more speedy overthrow of Satan's power, and the more speedy and full establishment of His Son's kingdom—that kingdom of truth, justice, peace, and holiness. Already favorable and cheering omens are being seen amid the darkest of these clouds. The sight of the man who killed John Williams weeping at the grave of the Gordons, was a kindred sight with that of Saul of Tarsus addressing the Jewish Sanhedrim in defence of Christianity. It was a phenomenon produced by the same influences, a signal triumph of the power of divine grace. By our latest ac-

counts there is much to afford encouragement on Tanna: there is a seed left in Erromanga which we are persuaded will never die. On Fate, where native agency alone has been at work for twenty years, the result is, that at the late visit of the "John Williams," the missionaries formed a church, consisting of eleven members; and there is there a fair opening for the settlement of missionaries. A new station has been opened at Apee, and another at Espirito Santo. The islands to the north are fertile and populous in a high degree, and openings for missionary operations are gradually increasing.

On Aneityum we expect that a healthful commerce will soon follow in the wake of Christianity; thus laying the foundation for a sound and permanent civilization. When commerce precedes Christianity in those islands, it confers few, if any, benefits on the natives; it develops neither the resources of the islands nor the capacities of the people; it purchases their labor and their produce, and pays them, for the most part, with trinkets, tobacco, and firearms; it leaves foreign vices and foreign diseases, noxious luxuries, and the means of mutual destruction. In this way it both diminishes the food, and reduces the strength and number of the population, and renders their conversion to Christianity much more difficult. But when commerce follows Christianity, after life and property are become safe, and when a taste for the conveniences, comforts, and advantages of civilized life has been created: and when that commerce is conducted not upon short-sighted, selfish, avaricious principles, but guided by an enlightened, enlarged Christian spirit; looking to the future more than the present; the natural resources of the islands are developed, the capacities of the natives are drawn out, profitable and permanent exports are created, sources of increasing wealth are secured, and the blessing implied in Agur's prayer, neither poverty nor riches—a moderate competency—is realized, in the happy experience of the native Christians.

Let no one think that by lengthening our cords we are in danger of weakening our stakes: that by extending our missionary operations, abroad, we are in danger of crippling the energies of the church at home. No congregation need fear that, by giving up its minister to the heathen, it would be left desolate, and never obtain another. The church in Leicester that gave up its pastor, William Carey, from a sense of duty to the heathen, received as his successor, Robert Hall, the most eloquent preacher in England. What has been our own experience? Since you commenced missionary operations thirty-three years ago, the number of ministers has been doubled; since you commenced your mission to the heathen twenty years ago, your ministers have increased one-third: within that time the debt on your ecclesias-