

nations not far from two hundred and seventy ordained missionaries and male assistant missionaries, with their families, all of them with many others who have died or been called from their labors from various causes, have been sent into the field during the last thirty years; and all sustained by a missionary spirit that could scarcely be said to exist before that time.

By permission of a Christian friend, to whom it is addressed, we extract the following passage from a letter written by a youthful missionary. It is dated from Sydney, whence, as will be seen, he expected soon to sail to his destined field of labour. It is thus that labourers are raised up, baptized for the dead, and "thrust forth" by the heavenly impulse of enlightened zeal, to reap the moral harvest of the world.

I sailed from London with several other missionaries, in the *William Lushington*, on the 11th August, and after a tedious passage of twenty-four weeks, reached Sydney *via* the Cape of Good Hope. We were only a few days at the Cape for fresh provisions and water. I am now waiting for the missionary brig *Cumden*, to proceed to the Island; and as she is not expected for a few weeks, it may be a month or two before we can leave the colony. You will be glad, however, to learn, that we are far from feeling as strangers in this strange land. Some of the most wealthy settlers here are true friends of missions, and would do anything to secure our comfort. We are now living with a Mr. Foss, in a lovely spot, about three miles from the town. I like the climate and situation of the colony very much, and find here an extensive field of usefulness. I have been a good deal engaged since I came, and this will continue, I suppose. According to present arrangements, on leaving Sydney we proceed to Tahiti, and then bending our course in a westerly direction, and touching at the intermediate missionary stations, we make for the Island of Tana, in the New Hebrides, where we hope, by the blessing of God, to terminate our long voyage from England. We are to be accompanied by some others, who will be left at islands on the way, and by a Mr. Nisbet, who has been my associate and fellow-student for several years, and who has likewise been appointed to Tana. I suppose you are aware that Tana is within a few hours' sail of Erromanga, where the lamented Williams fell, and that Tana was the last scene of his successful labours. He left native teachers at Tana, under the most cheering circumstances, the day before he landed at Erromanga. More have since been left and treated with great kindness, and there is now a strong desire in England that we should proceed without delay, and endeavour to plant a mission. If we are blessed, and succeed in introducing the gospel and a written language to the New Hebrides, this will be a glorious step towards the evangelization of Western Polynesia. I feel that the work is almost overwhelming, but my encouragements are all that I could wish. In the name of the Lord will we lift up our banner, and in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

MAHARATTAS.—The worship of "creeping things" is not yet extinct. What a speaking

proof do the following facts present of man's intellectual degradation; what a powerful incentive do they supply to the earnest and energetic propagation of that gospel which alone can raise him to the true dignity of a rational intelligence! Mr. Hume, Missionary at Bombay, writes as follows:

July 23. Nagpanchme, or day kept sacred to the nag or cobra, [a species of snake.] In the sacred books directions are given to worship the cobra and the day is observed by all classes of Hindoos. Shesh, the king of the serpent race, is described as having one thousand heads, on one of which the earth is sustained. This serpent is both the canopy and the couch of Vishnoo. On this day a clay image of the snake is made in each house, or his picture is drawn on wood or paper or upon the walls. The people then present to it offerings of milk, flowers, plantains, parched-rice, sugar, coconuts, etc. They bow or prostrate themselves before the god, saying, "O divine cobra, preserve and sustain us. O shesh partake of these offerings and be gracious unto us," or something similar to this. These offerings are afterwards given to the brahmins or eaten by themselves and their friends.

Near the mission-chapel is a large rock from which it is said that formerly a large cobra annually issued on this day, and received the worship of the people. Of late years the snake, it is said, has not appeared as usual, but has made his appearance from a rock in another part of the town. Some, however, suppose that the divinity still continues to reside in the old place, and accordingly they worship there and present their offerings of milk, flowers, etc.

This afternoon I went to the stone near the chapel. An abundance of leaves, flowers, and powders were lying upon it. There were also offerings of milk, sugar, etc. Few persons were present, the great mass preferring the new place. To this I afterwards went, and found the streets filled with people and lined with the venders of sweetmeats, toys, fruits, etc. Near the rock in which the divinity is represented to have taken up his abode, were a number of snake-charmers, with baskets containing cobras. These were occasionally made to erect themselves and to spread out the hood. To them the people were presenting offering of milk and sometimes a trifle to their keepers. At the hole in the rock from which the snake is said to issue were two *gosavees*,* busily engaged in receiving the offerings of the people. These consisted of money, milk, coconuts, red powders, flowers, plantains, parched rice, etc. Milk was the most common offering. Scores of people each with a little vessel of this, which had been purchased nearby, were pressing forward to present it to the god. I thought it rather a poor offering to his snakeship, as, judging from its appearance, by far the larger portion was water. The hole in the rock was covered with leaves, and upon these were thrown the powders, flowers, and milk, while the money, plantains, coconuts, etc., were put into baskets for preservation. The *gosavees* presented me with a part of their plantains, etc.; but these I refused and endeavoured to point out the folly and wickedness of what I saw.—*Missionary Herald*.

**Gosavees*, religious mendicants, originally without house, wife, or children, who have renounced worldly business, pleasures, and affections.