

I am now engaged in translating the Acts of the Apostles. One translation will do for the whole island of Fato, for although at every village they speak a different dialect, yet the language is the same. This will make the work much lighter for us, as Mr. McDonald and I will translate different books, and thus divide the labor.

HEATHEN AND CHRISTIAN NATIVES.

We have so far no opening to the heathen beyond, at least they have not expressed any desire to receive the gospel. I have been preaching to several villages, but they say, by and by, which is just to put us off.

At these two Christian villages we have a little over 200 natives, of whom between sixty and seventy are church members. But it is only a small proportion that seem to have experienced a saving change. Of course it would not be just to compare them with Christians at home. Many of them may have enough of the grace of God in their hearts to save them, it almost seems as if it would require a miracle to change their hearts. It is only by looking on the condition of the heathen that we can realize the change wrought on those professing Christianity.

SEPT. 28TH, 1874.

VISIT OF "DAYSPRING."

The *Dayspr* was back again to day. She is now on her way to Eromanga. She will be back again to take our orders and mails, and will then set out for Sydney. We will then have to wait for six long months before seeing her again.

We were cheered by a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Murray and their little boy George. Mr. and Mrs. M. are enjoying very good health, and so far they have kept free of fever, but George has it very often.

OTHER MISSIONARIES.

All the mission families are well except Mr. Paton. Mr. McDonald, the young missionary on the other side of this island is enjoying better health now than he did the first year. He and Mrs. M. made us a visit about a month ago, and remained nearly a week. Mr. and Mrs. Annand were over about the same time. It was a happy break in the long lonely months. We had the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper dispensed here that Sabbath, which made it very pleasant. How much we miss the advantages of a Christian land.

COOK-HOUSE.

I am now busy making a cook-house. We have been, I might almost say, without one since our coming to Erakor. The one we had was more like a pig-pen than a cook-house. It was put up for us by the natives, and was made by driving stakes

in the ground side by side, and then a grass roof over it. I am now building a plastered one which will be comfortable and neat. Perhaps you are not aware how essential a cook-house is here, but you must remember that we have no stoves in our dwelling houses. There is heat enough from the sun without doing our cooking in the house. It is to have a roof of sheet iron. The principal reason for this is to catch rain water which runs into a large iron tank. We could not use the water here for cooking, it is so bad. We use it for washing, but we get plenty rain water for cooking and drinking. We often long for a drink of water from our home wells.

To-night I am somewhat tired, having been working to-day putting the iron roofing on the cook-house. And oh, the sun was so hot. Some places the iron was so hot that we could not touch it. It is neither wattled nor plastered yet, but I intend doing this next week. Our natives are very busy just now making their new plantations, so that I have all the work to do myself.

OCTOBER 15TH.

WEATHER.

What very unpleasant weather we have had for nearly a fortnight. Day after to-morrow, it will be a fortnight since it began to rain, and with but short intermission, it has rained heavily ever since. To-day it is pouring in torrents, and there is no sign of its ceasing. This is not the rainy season either.

It is this kind of weather, that is so hard on our poor natives. They have to go to their plantations, wet or dry. They don't keep food at their houses. They just go for it as they need it. Sometimes they have a supply of yams at their house, when they are ripe they dig them up. But they generally tie them up to a pole within their plantations. The yam is the only kind of food that will keep for any length of time. The taro will keep, if left in the ground, but after it is taken up, it will only keep for a few days. Bananas and bread-fruit have to be used as soon as ripe. Taro grows like a beet or a turnip at home, but has much larger leaves and longer root.

SLOW PROGRESS OF WORK.

Our work is not advancing so rapidly as we could wish. Oh! what patience we require. But when we see them sunk so low in ignorance and sin, it is not so much to be wondered at, that their progress is slow when they embrace the gospel. The light is so long in penetrating their dark hearts. In their heathenism they don't seem to have a spark of gratitude in their hearts, and very little after they have embraced the gospel. If they do anything for us, or give