

THE HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD.

APRIL, 1861.

FOREIGN MISSIONS:—THEIR RESULTS, AND THEIR CLAIMS.

There was a time when a Church might do little or nothing for Foreign Missions, and yet retain its respectability, and be accounted a living branch of the great family of faith; and till very recently it would be reckoned no ground for impeaching the soundness of a man's Christianity, or the genuineness of his faith, that he did nothing for the conversion of the heathen, especially if he was careful to maintain other good works. But it is not so now. This state of Christian society is gone by forever. To be dead to the claim of Missions is justly regarded as very strong evidence of being *dead in trespasses and sins*. In those times a mist of speculative confusion—a haze of cold doubt seems to have overspread nearly all Christendom in reference to the heathen,—their state—their danger—their conversion—the means to be employed for their conversion, as well as in regard to the duties of individuals and churches towards them. But that mist has been dispelled—the haze, the darkness and the doubt, have fled never to return. Throughout evangelical Christendom there is but one opinion, both in regard to the spiritual condition of the heathen and the duty of all Christians towards them. *The heathen are daily perishing for the lack of a knowledge which we possess in the greatest abundance, and which it is in our power to send to them.*

Among intelligent Christians there can be but one opinion, both as regards the deplorable state of the heathen and the duty of all Christians to hasten to their rescue. Of the power and prevalence of this opinion, we have the most gratifying and conclusive evidence in the fact that all the Evangelical Churches of the world have their Foreign Missionary associations and enterprises. Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Moravians, Baptists and Methodists, are all embarked in this noble work. There is no nation or clime, to which the agents of one or other of these Evangelical Churches have not gone with the precious seed of the kingdom of Heaven. There are now but few languages which they have not mastered, and made to ring jubilant with the "good news which is unto all people." Within the last sixty years the Bible has been translated, through the labours of Missionaries, into no less than one hundred languages. It was computed more than a twelve month since, by the most competent authority on the subject, that there are more than *one million two hundred and fifty thousand* of living Christians who, but for the labours of Missionaries, would all be now the miserable victims of heathen idolatry. In the islands of the Pacific alone (as was mentioned in our last) there are upwards of 250,000 Protestant Christians; in New Zealand 100,000; in Burmah 100,000; in India upwards of 112,000; in Africa upwards of 250,000,—not to speak of the inhabitants of Asia Minor, of