

Our Foreign Missions.

MR. GEDDIE'S ANNUAL REPORT.

ANEITEUM, Dec. 16, 1862.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—

This being my annual letter ought to have been written some months ago. My reasons for delay were the want of an opportunity to send letters, and a wish to give you some account of the neighbouring islands, which I could not do until the *John Williams* had made her annual voyage. The information which my letter contains is of a varied nature, but I trust that it will not discourage, but rather lead us all to more humble dependence on God, and more powerful and earnest exertions for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

DEATH OF MR. MATHESON.

You have no doubt heard before this time of Mrs. Matheson's death on this island. She died rejoicing in that Saviour whom it was her delight to serve while she lived. Her latter end was a suitable termination to a life adorned with much christian excellence. It is with deep regret that I inform you that Mr. Matheson has followed his wife to an early grave. The sad event took place on Mare, in October last, at the residence of the Rev. S. Creagh. He had gone thither to spend a few months in the hope that a change might benefit his health. It would have been a melancholy satisfaction to us had he been spared to return to this island, and find a resting place beside his wife. You will have a full account of his last illness and death in a letter which Mr. Creagh has written to you. The disease of which he died was consumption. You are aware that Mr. Matheson arrived at these Islands in a very feeble state of health, and though at times he seemed to rally a little, yet there never was any decided improvement in it. We felt reluctant to settle him on a heathen island, and did so only in compliance with his own earnest entreaties. During his residence on Tana he laboured with much devotedness for the salvation of those around him. If he committed an error, it was in imposing too much on his own strength. The spirit indeed was willing, but the flesh was weak.

RESIGNATION AND HOPE.

We would be more or less than human, if we did not feel deeply the affecting providences which have befallen the mission. Our consolation is that all events are under the control of God and that he doeth all things well. Let us therefore bow—humbly bow—beneath the repeated strokes with which our Father in heaven has seen fit to

visit us. We must not forget that though clouds and darkness are round about the Lord, yet that righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. The things that now seem to be against us will sooner or later appear to be for us; and they no doubt form a part of God's all-wise and benignant arrangements, for the promotion of his own purposes of love and mercy in these distant isles.

Let us not be discouraged by the events that have taken place. Though some of our number have died we should bear in mind that Jesus lives, and lives to die no more. His life is a solemn pledge for the permanence and extension of his kingdom. It is easy for him to raise up others to take the place of those who have gone to their rest.

May we who survive have grace to improve the solemn events which have afflicted us. There is a voice in them all which says, "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." God grant that they may be sanctified to us by weaning our hearts more completely from this world, and setting our affections more entirely "on the things that are above."

PROGRESS OF THE WORK ON ANEITEUM.

I have not much to report about this island. Were I to enter into details of our labours it would be to repeat what I have written on former occasions. I feel thankful to say that we have as much encouragement in our work as falls to the lot of most missionaries. The natives, with few exceptions, attend on our instructions, and appear to value the privileges they enjoy. The novelty of Christianity has now passed away, but there is no falling off of the people. May they ever "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

More persons have been added to the church during the past, than any former year, and there never were so many candidates for church membership as at present. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper is dispensed twice a year at each of the two stations, which gives the members an opportunity of communion four times a year. Few persons are absent on sacramental occasions, except the aged and sick who cannot attend. The ordinance of the Supper was dispensed last Sabbath, and about 260 persons took their seats at the Lord's Table. It was a solemn, and I trust, precious season to many souls. It is always an impressive spectacle to see so many persons, who but a few years ago indulged in all the abominations of heathenism, confessing their Saviour before God and their fellow men. Angels are not unmoved spectators of so lovely a scene. What farther proof do we need of the omnipotence of divine truth, than to see the