

ent generation of Erromangans) and, he must be well reported of by the better class of natives who know him best.

5. He is expected to be willing to go anywhere, on his own Island at least, to labor for Christ and the Salvation of souls.

Now, as only one native complied with all these conditions only one was admitted by baptism into the Presbyterian Church in Erromanga at our Communion in January.

Then again, while in former years we did not insist on old people that could not read, or could not learn to read, attending for a whole year the candidates class, but admitted them after very little instruction from us, if they had been regular in their attendance upon the Services conducted by their respective teachers, we have decided since our return from Canada that none shall be received into the church, but those who have attended the candidates class for twelve months. Those who cannot join in reading the Word etc, with class shall receive special oral instruction. We feel if we have erred in this matter in past years, our error has been that we made entrance into the church too easy and too wide, and that it is better to be more exacting at the outset than to be compelled to suspend members in large (too large) numbers from church fellowship after having once received them. Of course after all has been done that can be done we shall, I fear, continue to be disappointed in many of the church members. But this is not more than we should expect if we but examine with fairness and reasonableness the history and condition of the ordinary South Sea Islanders for a hundred years back, and the very probable degraded condition and sinful surroundings of the race for many hundreds of years before that. Truly "heathenism is bred in the bone and is hard to extract" (J. Cope-land).

Doubtless many who would like to join the church believed, when they gathered to the Summer communion, they would be admitted as others had been, but in this matter I felt my duty was very clear and that I was without doubt studying their spiritual good by keeping to our terms, which terms were thrice intimated during the Sacrament of June 1885.

The more exacting terms in order to entrance into the church, discipline, and the very high mortality, both during our absence and since our return, have brought

down our roll of church members from 195 in 1882 to 170 in 1886 notwithstanding 38 new members admitted in 1885—6, or a net decrease of 63 in four years.

SOME DISCOURAGEMENTS.

Perhaps in connection with our N. H. Mission by far the greatest discouragements are,—first, that they won't take on higher education, and second, that the race is dying out if not rapidly, certainly, so much so as to convince us that it will only be a question of short time until they shall have passed away—the lost tribe, yes, and the lost tribe that cannot be found. There were 200 deaths on Erromanga during the 29 months (or say two years and a half) that we were absent, and as against that large number of deaths there were only about 70 births, or a net decrease of 130.

CANDIDATES CLASS.

I have only just now got four persons attending my Candidates Class, one of these is from Cook's Bay, and three are from Elizabeth Bay and two of these latter are the son and daughter of the high chief of Elizabeth Bay who has had a teacher for several years. He has given up heathen feasting and night dancing and keeps away from heathen gatherings of all kinds, attends church and school and is learning to read, is very kind to us and the Christian party, and is one of nature's born gentlemen—but he retains his four wives yet. I am not quite sure but that some men of fairer skin would do the same (i. e. have more than one wife) if public opinion, business and professional interests and the law were not all against such a course of life.

DEATH AND CHANGE AMONG THE TEACHERS.

I have several blanks in my staff of teachers at present, or will have next week, as then, two of our teachers with their wives go to assist Mr. Michelson on Tongoa. One elder died just before we arrived back here from Canada, and as he was also a teacher his district had to be provided for. Soon thereafter a fine young teacher died of consumption, two had to give up the work on account of very poor health, and two other young teachers were unsuitable and I brought them back to attend school again, and settled older men, and more trustworthy in their places. Mr. Gray of Tānuā applied to me for a teacher in June and I sent him a fine young man and his wife who were teachers at South