

The two missionaries of Aneiteum report with thankfulness that the tide of population which, from many concurrent causes, especially from the spread of diseases arising from their contact with civilized races, had been ebbing for some years back, has begun to flow. The births again exceed the deaths, and they confidently expect a steady increase, such as has been found in the Eastern christianized islands, to succeed the period of decline.

But we are told that after all they are not civilized—that they are a kind of Christian barbarians. Indeed! And were our own forefathers, whether Celt or Saxon, Pict or Scot, civilized 20 years after receiving the gospel. How slowly did they emerge from the lowest servitude; and how numerous and varied and long-continued the influences, commercial and political, civil and sacred, military and educational, which combined to secure progress?—When we consider that 20 years ago these people were naked, degraded, repulsive cannibals, and look at them now evangelized, clothed, shewing some industry and attempting some trade,—having books, schools, the Sabbath, public worship; having law as well as religion, and respect for life, chastity and property,—have we not at least the elements of civilization? Surely we can say, Here are the foundations laid, and so securely laid, that we can wait in full expectation of seeing the complete structure rise, in all its symmetry.

Meanwhile, the missionaries are carrying forward a work which lies at the foundation of all permanent progress,—the translation of the Word of God. Dr. Geddie and Messrs. Inglis and Copeland have combined their exertions, to effect this most desirable object, and the translation of the whole Bible into the language of the Aneiteumese approaches completion, and arrangements have been made for its publication in Australia, when Dr Geddie returns toward the close of the present year.

ERROMANGA.

Next to Aneiteum comes Erromanga in interest to this church. It is about four times the size of Aneiteum, and capable of containing a much greater population. Its inhabitants are much more numerous, and are, in general, a more energetic race. Like the Tannese they have been demoralized by the sandalwood traders and lawless, ungodly sailors. The faith and patience of the church have been severely tried by the apparently fruitless results of evangelistic efforts on this land. Twelve years ago our Secretary was telling us of the labours on Erromanga of George N. Gordon, as he went in search of the lost sheep. After his melancholy death, and followed by a season of inaction, his brother led the forlorn hope

and again took possession in the name of Immanuel. Mr. McNair followed after some years, and both co-operated for a season at Dillon's Bay, but above a year ago Mr. Gordon broke new ground at Potinia Bay, and still more lately a third labourer, Rev. Peter Milne, with his wife, has been located at Cooke's Bay, which Mr. Gordon recommended some time ago, but which the *Dayspring* had not visited. The island is now, therefore, more fully occupied than ever before.

Mr. Milne is newly settled, and Mr. Gordon has been, during nearly half the year, absent at Espiritu Santo, and we have no details of his work since his return. Mr. McNair reports visits to his premises of many from the interior of the island, accounts of which have been published in full in the *Record*. It will be remembered that the object of these visits seemed to be veiled in some mystery. The visitors were met with firmness and fearlessness, and treated with kindness, and they departed apparently pleased.

The *Dayspring* has at length sailed round the island with Messrs. McNair and Milne. They met with bitter complaints against the slavers, but were welcomed, when their character was known. They settled a teacher in the end of the island, and would have settled another if they had had the man. Mr. McNair thinks that the people's prejudices against the missionary are disappearing, and that the reception of native teachers is one of the best evidences of this change. The Christian natives at the Bay have shewn steadiness and attachment. The school is attended by about 50 persons, and public worship on the Lord's day by 50 and 60, and once or twice by 70. There are 9 church members and eleven candidates, and occasional worship at five out stations.

We see then that the darkest part of the night is past, and that the day is breaking. Doubtless the Sun of Righteousness will arise on this dark and dimmed valley of death with healing in his wings. As yet, darkness prevails. There is little knowledge of the Lifegiver, little sense of personal guilt and less of their need of the true light. Let us help the three brethren by our prayers. Let us make special petition of our God, constantly, during 1870, that they themselves may enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit and see His manifested power, subduing the proud, so that they may no longer say, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

FATE.

Mr. Morrison is gone, but we claim an interest in the island on which he was the first missionary. Mr. and Mrs. Coshre-