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"SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY GO FORWARD."—Exodus xiv., 15.

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Religious Intelligence.

ANEITEUM.

BY REV. JOHN OEDDIE.

I have already informed you of the death of two of our number, during the past year—a Rarotongan teacher and a Samoan woman. The surviving teachers and their families have likewise suffered severely from the disorders peculiar to the island. I have also had occasional and slight attacks of intermittent fever, but through the goodness of God I have always been able to attend to the duties of the mission. After a residence on this island of nearly three years and a half, I must yield to the conviction that it possesses an unhealthy climate. Its effects on Samoans and Rarotongans are much worse than on white men, but scarcely any of the latter escape sickness. I fear that the great mortality among the native teachers on this and the neighboring islands may discourage others from coming. Our missionary brothers in Samoa write me, that it seems like sending teachers to their graves to send them to these islands. My own opinion is, that all our energies at present should be confined to one, or at most to two islands, say Aneiteum and Tanna, and were these through the blessing of God brought under the saving influence of the Gospel, we should then have a band of native teachers who would go forth to the neighboring islands, and while they breathed their pestilential atmosphere with comparative impunity, they would be received by the natives with far less suspicion than Samoans or Rarotongans.

I must now give you a brief account of my labors at this station. I preach twice every Sabbath in the native language. About 100 hearers are regular in their attendance on public worship. I am sure it would gladden and encourage your hearts if you could observe the attention and earnestness with which many of them listen to the word of life. At the close of our morning worship, which commences at 9 o'clock, our Sabbath School meets.

I have in a great measure discontinued the practice of itinerating on the Sabbath day. I commenced this duty when I landed on the island, and kept it up for more than two years and a half; but the excitement against the cause and myself at last became so great, during the early part of last year, that I could not venture far from home without exposing myself to insult, perhaps to danger; and now my duties on the Sabbath day have become so onerous at home that I find it difficult to go abroad.

We have two week day schools in operation at this station, the one for females and the other for males. The former is under Mrs. Geddie's Superintendence, and she is assisted by the Rarotongan widow whom I brought from Tanna year before last, and also by two native young women who have been living with us for more than two years. This is our largest and most advanced school, and numbers about 40 scholars. My own school contains about 30 scholars, some of them old men. Nohoit, the chief, is one of my scholars. After much effort he has mastered his alphabet, and is now reading words of one syllable. He says that his

minds is very dark, but he wishes to learn. Many in both schools can read well and a few are able to write.

Our school meets every morning at sun rise. As soon as the day breaks two boys go through the settlement in different directions with the *nitai ah luine*, i. e. the thing to call people. It is just a piece of hard wood neatly dug out something in the shape of a trough, and when struck with a round stick it gives out a sound which may be heard at some distance. It is however a poor substitute for a bell, and when the wood is wet it is almost useless. If persons friendly to the cause only know what an acquisition a bell would be to the station, they would, I think, make an effort to send one. But to return to our schools. With the aid of our assistants we get through before breakfast. Our most advanced scholars meet again at 10 o'clock a.m., for writing.

The present account of our schools is more encouraging than I have hitherto been able to give. We labored amidst many discouragements, for three long years, to form schools, and have succeeded to some extent. The natives now begin to appreciate the value of instruction, and they are desirous to learn. Often when I have invited them to attend our schools, have I been asked "what payment will you give us." But now they speak with gratitude of my kindness in coming to their dark land to instruct them.

You will not be surprised to learn that we encounter much opposition; it would be a matter of surprise if it were not so. The cause of God has been opposed ever since the days of Cain and Abel, and will be so "until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." Satan will not retire from his strongholds without a struggle. Nor is opposition in so sacred a work an unfavorable symptom, for if we do not molest the enemy he will not molest us. I feel more encouraged in the hope that we are doing some good, than if we were permitted to go quietly on. We have been much opposed by the heathen, especially during the past year. If we except Tahiti, on no island in the Pacific has the gospel been so violently opposed as on Aneiteum. The sacred men or priests are foremost in opposing us—They, like Demetrius of old, feel that their craft is in danger. They know that if the gospel succeeds they will lose much of their influence as well as gain. But several persons of this class have already joined our ranks, and others will follow. Again, the body of the people are averse to the gospel, on account of the great change which it is likely to effect in the state of society. They wish to live and die as their forefathers did, in the observance of customs and practices, venerable on account of their antiquity. They would not object to some slight improvement in the state of things, but they cannot consent to give up their fighting, feasting, polygamy, treating women as if they were not human beings, &c. And others still have been taught by our own countrymen to believe that we are liars, impostors, and the harbingers of disease and death, and they treat us as such. The conduct of the heathen to those who have embraced christianity has been very bad. They have persecuted them in various ways.—Not a few have had their property stolen, plantations destroyed, pigs killed &c. They are constantly threatening to make war on us, and kill us all. This ill treatment has been borne with great forbearance. But we could bear with the opposition of the heathen if left to themselves. We have encountered from another quarter as unmanly, as ungenerous, and as unmerited an opposition as was ever offered to the cause of righteousness in a heathen land by men from a Christian country.

The work at present is at a kind of a stand. The natives are now taking sides all over the island, and feeling runs high among both parties. The heathen exceeds us in numbers but not in influence. All the highest chiefs on the island and men of rank, have declared themselves on the side of christianity. The murder of the lad, which I have recorded in my journal, has tended more than any thing else to bring matters to this issue. Such is the state of feeling that I am now in a great measure confined to my district, and cannot freely visit around as I use to do. The teachers have less to apprehend than I have, but they are also limited in their movements. The natives may go about with greater safety than any of us. All that we can do at present is to improve every little opening that we can. Things will not continue long as they are. The cloud is fast passing away, and we will again enjoy the sunshine of prosperity. The ranks of the heathen contain many who are favourable to Christianity, but they dare not come out and avow themselves to be