

WES. MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Annual Meeting.
(Continued.)

The Rev. Dr. Bascham read the General Report. The state and prospects of the Missions were reviewed in order.

In IRELAND, the Society's Missions are eighteen in number, scattered throughout the kingdom.

The Reports abundantly prove that the Society's operations are instrumentally productive of a large amount of benefit. The promised blessing of the Great Head of the Church renders the labours of his servants effectual in the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways, and in the edification of those who had previously been united together in church-fellowship in connexion with the Society. The pure truth of the gospel has not access to the mass of the population of Ireland; but it is a gratifying fact, that in many places there is an increasing desire for religious instruction manifested by the Roman Catholics.

At the last Conference, 60 Schools were reported as in successful operation, and the number of children amounted to nearly 4,000. Trained masters are supplied from the Model School, in Dublin, which continues to prosper.

Adverting to the Missions on the Continent of Europe, the Report, commencing with GERMANY, states, that at Winnenden, in the Kingdom of Wirtemberg,

The operations of the Society are still prosecuted by Mr. Muller and his Assistants, in the midst of many difficulties. Much political excitement continues, and opposition is offered, in various ways, to the spread of pure evangelical truth; but the spirit of religious enquiry extends, and many experience the saving effects of the Gospel. Weekly religious services are held at about 60 places, at which upwards of 1,000 individuals are now united together in Church-fellowship.

FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND come next in order. At Paris, a considerable improvement in the English Congregation has taken place during the year; but the French department of the work has not recovered from the shock which it received from the late political convulsions.

The Teacher whom the Committee were enabled, by the liberality of the esteemed Treasurer of the Society, Thomas Farmer, Esq., to place at Bar-le-Duc, is prosecuting his labours under circumstances of considerable interest. A great sensation has been produced in the neighbourhood. Several Roman Catholic villages are welcoming his ministrations. In some instances, the Municipal Authorities place themselves at the head of the movement, and offer the Parish-Schools, and even the Mass-Houses or Churches, for Protestant worship. The Priests have become alarmed, and are endeavouring to excite opposition. Complaints have been made to the Government against the proceedings of our Agent, and a struggle is likely to ensue. The importance of this new Station is increased by the consideration that it is the only Protestant interest in the extensive department of the Meuse.

The French and Swiss Circuits, generally are efficient, or present indications of improvement.

At GIBRALTAR the schools are (Mr. Alton reports) in efficient operation, and well answering the design of their establishment.

The foundation of an extensive Spanish work, it may be reasonably hoped, is being silently laid, by the religious training of a large number of Spanish children. The process may be comparatively slow, but succeeding generations will witness the beneficial effects.

CEYLON AND CONTINENTAL INDIA were then referred to.

In the *Sinhalese District, South Ceylon*, the return of two Missionaries has reduced the number of European labourers, but has also developed the value of native energy.

The members in the Society have increased to twelve hundred and fourteen, chiefly native converts; and the Schools have received considerable additions to their number. Four new Chapels have been built during the year, and four more are in the course of erection. Considerable activity has been exhibited among the Builders in behalf of their own system, and in opposition to Christianity. This circumstance is viewed as a sure indication that the truth is felt to be powerful, and that the interests of the Gospel are advancing.

The manifold labours of the Missionaries, at Jaffna, in the *Tamil District, North Ceylon*, have been continued with encouraging results.

The opposition of the heathen has been aroused by the diligent and noble agency of the Mission. Lectures on Hinduism have been given in the temple of Siva, and some devotees of the present superstition have become more orientated in their idolatrous worship. But the truth is winning an entrance into the minds of both old and young.

The Educational and School Report of this District is very full and satisfactory.

After alluding to the lamented death of the Rev. Joseph Roberts, General Superintendent of the *Madras District*, it was stated,

The aspect of the Mission in *Madras* has varied

but little during the year. The congregations and Societies remain in the same state, but would be much improved if a more efficient subordinate agency should be raised up.

In the *Mysore District*, There has been a small increase to the number of Native Members in the Bangalore Canarese-Station. They are all believed to be living in the fear of God; and their outward walk and conversation during the year have been consistent and exemplary.

The Missionaries in the District are bestowing much time and labour on the Revision of the Translation of the Holy Scriptures in the Canarese language, in which they are co-operating with Missionaries of other denominations.

The AUSTRALIAN and POLYNESIAN Missions came next in order. The local Reports from the Stations in Australia communicate a great amount of encouraging information. It has been found necessary to enlarge the York-street Chapel, in the Sydney North Circuit, by the erection of a gallery. The Chapel now contains sittings for Twelve Hundred persons. The cause at Surrey Hills has increased so considerably in importance that it is deemed desirable to constitute a separate Circuit. A large place of worship is requisite to provide for the rapidly increasing population. The general aspect of the work in the Melbourne Circuit, in the colony of *Australia Felix*, or Victoria, is reported as "very encouraging." The Society's Missions in South Australia is rapidly rising in importance, and extending its beneficial influence throughout the Colony. In Western Australia, the Mission embraces as large a sphere as could well be occupied by a single Missionary. The Hobart-Town and New-Norfolk Circuits, in Van Diemen's Land, are in a prosperous state.

The Review of the operations of the Society's Mission, in New Zealand, during the past year, affords much gratification. In every department of the work there is much activity and progress. The Missionaries have been greatly cheered by the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher to take charge of the Establishment for the education of their children; and Mr. and Mrs. Reid have made a very encouraging commencement of their duties at the Native Training Institution, and the Central School. The influence of Christianity is more decidedly manifested among the people generally within the influence of the Mission, in the gradual enlightenment of their minds, and the elevation of their character; and, as a consequence, a growing improvement is taking place in their temporal condition. Nor do these effects of the state of the work depend exclusively upon Missionary evidence. They are amply supported by the independent testimonies of others, who, from their position have the means of examining the subject for themselves, and are placed in circumstances which shield them from the suspicion of allowing their judgment to be warped by any undue bias or partiality. One of those independent testimonies in favour of the great Missionary work in New Zealand, in which it is the honour and privilege of this Society to take a leading part, the Committee are happy to adduce. In one of the Despatches of the Governor of New Zealand to the Noble Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, presented during the last Session to both Houses of Parliament, by command of Her Majesty, His Excellency remarks:—"This short review of the present state of the present state of the principal Settlements in New Zealand, will, I think, satisfy your Lordship of the general state of prosperity of this Colony. It only remains for me to add that the exertions of our most excellent Bishop and his Clergy, together with those of the numerous, and I may say admirable body of Missionaries of different denominations, have secured to this Colony a greater amount of religious supervision and of religious instruction than any other young country has probably ever enjoyed; and this circumstance cannot fail ultimately to produce a very powerful effect upon the future population of the country; while at the present day it secures to New Zealand advantages which may be really imagined, but which it would be difficult to describe in detail, as they enter into all the ramifications of the Society of the Country, and the domestic life of both the Natives and Europeans. However, there can be no doubt that the present state of tranquillity and prosperity of this country, and the rapid advances which the Native population are making, are in a very great degree to be attributed to the exertions of the various religious bodies in New Zealand."

In the Friendly Islands,

Some of the Missionaries and their families have been visited by affliction, which will probably render necessary their removal to a more salubrious climate. To this painful topic, considerable prominence, of course, is given. And information is also communicated respecting the interruption which has been experienced in the Training Institution, the buildings in which it had been commenced having been twice levelled to the ground by destructive hurricanes. These discouraging circumstances exercise the faith and patience of the Missionaries, and, at the same time, give them a strong claim upon the sympathy of the friends and supporters of the Society at home. But the Local Reports from

the District exhibit also a bright side of the question. From Tonga the Missionaries write, that they realize the gracious promise of the Saviour to his faithful servants in the ministry of the Gospel, "Lo, I am with you always;" and that this cheers them in the difficulties and trials with which they have to contend.

The Mission-work in the important District of Feejee has suffered serious interruptions from the diminution which has taken place in the number of faithful labourers, male and female, chiefly by the visitations of disease and death. The Committee have made arrangements for supplying, in part, the vacancies which have thus been created, by directing that three new Missionaries should be sent, as soon as possible, from Australia to Feejee; but considerable time must necessarily elapse before they can acquire the language, and thus be able to enter upon the work in full efficiency. The brethren who have been left in the District, under the accumulated burden of cares and labours, which will continue to press upon them until they obtain adequate help, especially need all the aid which can be afforded by the sympathy and prayers of the friends of the Society. The official Reports from the District contain much information, which is thus partly of a painful character, but on the whole, warranting the most cheering anticipations as to the ultimate triumph of Christianity throughout dark and cannibal Feejee.

The inhabitants of the town in which the Missionaries reside in the Nandy Circuit, and those of another town about three miles distant, are all Christians. Like all the other Christian Natives in Feejee, they highly prize such portions of the Holy Scriptures as they possess. "One of the young men," write the Missionaries, "to whom we gave a copy of the New Testament, pressed the blessed treasure to his heart, and literally danced for joy."

A letter recently received from the Rev. Jas. Calvert, of Vewa, furnishes a most remarkable instance of Christian heroism displayed by two Missionaries' wives,—one of whom was his own wife, and the other, the wife of his colleague, Mr. Lyth—in an attempt to save some Native females from destruction at a Cannibal Feast. Visitors had arrived at Bau, and, according to the native custom, human beings must be procured for their entertainment. A war-party was accordingly sent out, under the sanction of the Priest, and returned with a number of females whom they had captured. Mr. Lambert says,—

"Before their arrival, the report of their success had reached Bau. All was glee and triumph. Food is procured! A great thing has been accomplished! The canoes were awaited with anxious anticipation. In the meantime, the report reached Vewa also. Mrs. Lyth and Mrs. Calvert were all alone. Fourteen women are to arrive at Bau to-morrow, who are to be killed and cooked for the Butone people. Female sympathy and female courage were excited and raised to the uttermost. They resolved to go! A canoe was procured. Trembling from head to foot, they were poled along to the bloody city. As they went, canoes with streamers were seen approaching, muskets were fired in triumph, the shrieks of some murdered, as they were brought ashore, were heard! 'Alas! we're too late!' However, they urged their way. On the beach they were met by a Christian Bau Chief, who dared boldly to join our wives, and urged them onwards. 'Make haste. Some are dead; but some are alive.' With a whale's tooth in each hand, they approached his cannibal Majesty, Tanoa, and besought him to spare the lives of the women. The unfeeling heart, one would think, felt then; but that dark mind, it is to be feared, will continue grossly dark, and he cast into outer darkness. However, he issued his orders: 'Those who are dead are dead, but those who are still alive shall live only.' With haste, a messenger went to Nga Vinde, the chief of the fishermen, and speedily returned to report that five were still alive. Our wives, however, could not hastily return. They went to the house of the murderer. There he sat in state, in full dress, with an admirably dressed head of hair, but manifestly now ashamed of what no one dared formerly to reproach him for. Our wives reproved him and exhorted him. He vainly excused, and expressed his love to the *lotu*. Many of the chief and other women blessed our wives for their efforts, even amidst the general rejoicings of Bau, on that, to them, festival day."

The Missions in SOUTH AFRICA commenced with the Cape of Good Hope District.

The Report from Cape-Town is very satisfactory. During the year a gracious visitation from above has been experienced, and the labours of the Missionaries have been attended with much success. A considerable number of individuals, having experienced the saving power of the Gospel, have become consistent members of our Religious Society. A net increase of ten Church-Members has taken place at Bhamies-Berg, in Little Namaqualand. From Nisbett-Bach in Great Namaqualand, the Missionary reports that they have had many indications of good in the Circuit during the year. Some of the parents are endeavouring to instruct their children, and "train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." A number of young men are making

progress in reading, and "evince a strong desire to be instructed in the things of God." There is consequently a great demand for copies of the New Testament, of a convenient size for them to carry in their pockets while attending to their flocks and herds in the fields; which demand the Missionary regrets he has not yet been able properly to supply.

The review of Missionary operations in the Albany and Kaffraria District, during the last year, is highly encouraging. The Mission-Station which were suspended during the war, have resumed under very auspicious circumstances. An influence seems to rest upon the minds of many of the Chiefs and people highly favourable to the Mission-cause. The promised blessing of the Great Head of the Church has, in a very marked manner, accompanied the use of the appointed means. The beneficial effects of the "Watson Institution," the Mission-School, and the press, are now becoming strikingly manifest. An improved Class of Native Teachers is rising up, and the whole country, embraced within the limits of the District, presents a more hopeful and inviting prospect than was ever before witnessed. Were an adequate number of devoted English Missionaries employed in the direction of the native agency, and in the general management of the Missions, the anticipation of most important results might now be reasonably indulged.

At Faku's great place, (in the Buntingville Circuit) a public religious service is now held every fortnight, under encouraging circumstances. One of the brothers of Faku died some time since, as it is believed, "in the Lord." He had become a resident near the Station, and invited the Missionaries to make his village one of their regular preaching-places. He became much afflicted, and in his affliction called upon God. He often sent for the Missionary and Native Preachers to converse with him about "that Saviour who died for sinners." For three days, the principal men of his tribe endeavoured to persuade him to send for the "Witch-Doctor," to ascertain the cause of his illness, with the view of having those murdered on whom the charge of bewitching him should be fixed; "but no argument could induce him to consent," and a little before he died, he charged his sons to take care that no man should be killed on his account: "For," he said, "I am a man of the word of God."

The Mission in the Bechuana District has been exposed to severe trials. Discontent has arisen between the Native tribes and the Colonial Government, and in the Eastern part war has prevailed among the Natives. Thaba Unchu, the Missionaries thankfully report, partly in consequence of its distance from the scene of hostilities, and partly from the pacific disposition of the Chief, has been preserved in peace. The Members of Society at that Station have maintained their integrity amidst the temptations to which they were exposed. Regular in their attendance upon the Ordinances of Religion, and assiduously endeavouring to improve in experimental and practical godliness, "many of our Native Christians might be pointed out as patterns worthy of imitation." The meekness with which they receive admonition or reproof is particularly mentioned, as a striking feature in their Character. In the course of the year, accessions have been made to the Church. Some have been received by baptism, after edifiable preparation, and a few of the number have experienced the efficacy of converting grace.

(To be Continued.)

EDUCATION.

House of Commons—Wednesday, April 17.

(Continued.)

Lord Ashley said it was altogether impossible to overrate the importance of this question; and he thought its very importance demanded from the house that they should come to its consideration with forbearance, calmness, and deliberation. This was altogether a novel proposition; for, although measures akin to it might have been propounded, there had never before been submitted to that house a proposal so clear, so unmistakable, and which was calculated to be so prodigious in its results. (Hear, hear.) The hon. gentleman who had just spoken had admitted what had been stated by the noble lord the member for Arrondel, that this was the beginning of a new series of conflicts, and he added that, although they might possibly be defeated in this instance, they would, on a future occasion, renew the attempt. He (Lord Ashley) had no doubt that such was the intention of the proposers of this proposition; and it was because they had so determined to persevere in the course they had begun that he felt so deep an alarm; because he solemnly declared his firm belief, that upon the issue of the question proposed that day would hang altogether the future history of the British Empire. (Hear, hear.) The hon. gentleman had declared that the chief object of the proposal was to "diffuse the influence of education among those who were themselves Clari-