

ISLANDS OF THE SEA.

—Great success now attends the work of the Rhenish Mission in Sumatra. At the beginning of last year there were 6000 candidates for baptism in the Battak tribe, and of these 1000 were converts from Mohammedanism. In the southern part of the island the entire population have been followers of the false prophet, and until six years ago no one thought it wise to attack the enemy in such a stronghold. At that time a missionary established himself among them, and recently reported 350 baptisms and 500 others as receiving instruction with a view to baptism. In this number are several chiefs. Evangelists are asked for on all sides, and even Mohammedan fanatics are turning to Christianity. Moslem priests, in despair of their cause, have actually left some of the villages, and there is a general impression that Islam has had its day in a great part of that region.

—Rev. Oscar Michelsen, writing from Tongoa, New Hebrides, in July last, said: "The work for which we live continues to prosper. Do not suppose that there are not a thousand little things to try us; but these are only spiritual tonics, and things are going forward for all that. As an indication of that I may mention that three weeks ago I baptized 72 men and women on their profession of faith in Jesus. They were first instructed by the teachers, and then examined by myself. They had also been attending my Friday afternoon Bible-class for over a year. The Sunday before last 193 of us sat down at the Lord's table, and there was a cash collection of £13 4s. as an expression of gratitude to the Savior."

—What strange reading is this from a missionary on the island of New Britain! Note, not the literary style, but the frequency of a name which not long since stood for the extreme of ferocity and nameless vices: "We sadly need a few more Fijians to open up Kaibaira, Port Webber. We want to extend our

operations on New Britain, which will of course require a few Fijians as well as what native teachers we can raise. Already we have 3 boys stationed in the bush, at some considerable distance from the coast, and the results they have already achieved urge us to further effort. During the past year 4 Fijians have returned to Fiji from Raluna and 1 has died, while I have received but 3 new men, leaving me with 2 Fijians less than at the commencement of the past year, while at Kaba-kada 1 Fijian has died and 5 have returned home, whereas we have only received 2 Fijians and 2 Samoans. I would like just enough Fijians to oversee the boys."

—The French missionaries in the Society Isles report that the condition of public education in Tahiti is very critical at present. In order to be economical and to *Frenchify*, the Government is seeking more and more to Catholicize the schools. It has a very simple plan—to close all the schools with which it is not satisfied. The field is thus thrown open to the Catholic priests, with whom the Protestants can only compete at a disadvantage. The future of Protestantism in these islands seems to be in danger, and the prayers of Christian sympathizers are entreated.—*Journal des Missions Évangéliques.*

—So far the reports from Madagascar are of a reassuring character. The French have been humane in the hour of victory. When a deputation of missionaries waited on General Duchesne, he received them very kindly, and assured them that they need fear no interference from him or his; and to a deputation of native pastors he declared that they would all be allowed full liberty of conscience and worship.

—A cable message from Autanarivo, the capital of Madagascar, *ria* Port Louis, island of Mauritius, states that 2 missionaries at Arivonimamo, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, of the English Friends' Mission, have been murdered during a riot.