

of long curly black hair. By nature the most savage, and in habits the most depraved of all the South Sea Islanders, the Fiji is not without intelligence. Their canoes are the finest in the South Seas. Their religion seems to have been idolatrous, without idols. Every island had its own particular God, priests and temples, but without any visible representation of their deities. Human sacrifices was an important part of their ritual. But the most repulsive and appalling custom was their cannibalism. It was not an occasional or fitful impulse with them. It was their regular habit. The completion of a temple or the launching of a canoe was not duly celebrated without a feast of human flesh. A dozen men would be killed, cooked and eaten in honour of a canoe. The victims were confined to neither age nor sex. Old men and maidens, and even children shared a like fate. Infanticide was fearfully prevalent. Women, from the day they were married, wore a cord around their necks with which when they became widows they were willingly strangled, that their spirits might accompany their brutal husbands into the spirit land, or that they might escape the barbarities that awaited them here. They have been known complacently to dig their own graves. Humanity never appeared so utterly debased as in the Fiji; yet of such a people Sir Arthur Gordon, the Governor of the now British Colony of Fiji, and who is not a Methodist, can say,—“It is impossible to speak in too strong terms of the wonderful service and wonderful results both religious and social, which have attended the Wesleyan missions in Fiji. The condition of the people is as different from what it was as can possibly be conceived. The people of Fiji are now a Christian people.” It is interesting to know that the first efforts to evangelize the savages of Fiji emanated from the native missionary society of the Friendly Islands. When, in 1834, the little Tongan church was blessed with a religious awakening; when the king and queen and thousands of their subjects were converted, their first impulse was to send the Gospel to the benighted people of Fiji. In 1835 two of the Tongan missionaries were appointed to commence the new mission. These were Revs. William Cross and David Cargill, who began the work in Lakemba. In 1838 the Wesleyan Missionary Society sent out three missionaries from England—Messrs. John Hunt, T. J. Jaggar, and James Calvert, with their wives. The Rev. Thomas Williams and his wife arrived in 1840, Mr. and Mrs. Tucker in 1841. Success came slowly and in an unexpected quarter. On the little isle of Ono, one-hundred and fifty miles from Lakemba, chiefly through the instrumentality of some of the Tongan converts, the first ingathering

took place. In 1842 there was not a single heathen left on the Island. From that time Christianity spread rapidly until almost the whole group was reclaimed from heathenism. The year 1847 was remarkable for the completion of the first edition of the New Testament. In 1856 the whole of the Scriptures were translated. On October the 4th, 1848, Fiji lost its greatest missionary, JOHN HUNT, who died at the age of thirty-seven, after ten years of unremitting labour. There are now connected with the Wesleyan mission stations in Fiji about 23,000 church members. Upwards of 104,000 attend public worship in the churches which number 900. The Sabbath is sacredly observed. In every Christian family there is morning and evening worship. Over 42,000 children are instructed in the fifteen hundred schools, and the last relics of heathenism still lingering in some of the remoter mountainous regions are rapidly dying out. Fiji became a British colony in October 1874. Miss Gordon Cumming, in her recent work “At Home in Fiji,” regarding the work of the Wesleyan missionaries, says:—“I often wish that some of the cavillers who are forever sneering at Christian missions could see something of their results in these isles. You may pass from isle to isle, and everywhere find the same cordial reception by men and women. Every village on the eighty inhabited islands has built for itself a tidy church, and a good house for its teacher or native minister, for whom the village also provides food and clothing. Can you realize that there are nine hundred Wesleyan churches in Fiji, at every one of which the frequent services are crowded by devout congregations; that the schools are well attended; and that the first sound which greets your ear at dawn, and the last at night, is that of hymn-singing and most fervent worship rising from each dwelling at the hour of prayer?” And that this religious fervour is not an empty fanaticism is evidenced by the further fact that in all their secular dealings the people are distinguished by simplicity, honesty, and kindness.

THE ELLICE GROUP.—The introduction of the Gospel into these islands came about in a remarkable way. In April, 1861, a party of nine natives of the Penrhyn group having lashed two canoes together set out on a voyage for an island about thirty miles distant; but, a storm coming on, they were driven before the wind a distance of fifteen hundred miles. After three weeks exposure to the perils of the sea, their frail craft was cast ashore upon the island of Nukulaelae, one of the Ellice group. Five of the party perished among the breakers. The four nearly famished survivors effected a landing. They were all Christians. One of them, Elekana, was a native of Samoa and a deacon of