

pursuing his studies, and be ordained at home; and this mission will cordially welcome him as a fellow labourer in the cause of Christ in these Islands: and Dr. Geddie is appointed to transmit this minute, and communicate with Mr. McLean on this subject."

JOHN GEDDIE, Clerk.

Letter from Rev. Dr. Geddie.

Ancientum, May 18th, 1868.

REV. A. MACLEAN.

My Dear Sir,—I received your welcome letter. It gives me pleasure to hear of your continued interest in the missionary cause on these Islands. Oh! how would that interest increase if your Church had its own missionaries labouring for Christ in these dark regions. I trust that the time is not far distant when this will be the case.

I have not been able to do much for you since my return to these islands. This has arisen from various causes. In the first place there were several missionaries to be settled, and the "Day Spring" was fully occupied in attending to them. In the next place the unhappy "Curacao" affair has given a sad check to our work on these Islands, from which the mission will not entirely recover for years to come. And finally the wreck of the missionary bark "John Williams" has interrupted for a time, the intercourse between Western and Eastern Polynesia, from which latter place we receive our most efficient native teachers. The prospects are certainly less favourable on these islands than they were some years ago, but the clouds have begun to break once more, and we may confidently anticipate a bright and glorious future. Our disappointments should not discourage us, but rather lead us to more humble dependence on God, whose cause we labour to promote.

As regards native teachers, I sent two from this island to Fate or Efat last year. They have been studying the dialect of that island, and will probably be settled very soon on one of the small islands adjacent to it. Our mission has also made an application to the missionaries of the London Missionary Society, on Samoa and Rarotonga for native teachers, and we have a promise of four or five as soon as they can be sent to us. We are now pre-

paring to extend our mission beyond its present limits, and let us pray for God's blessing on all the efforts made for the furtherance of His own cause. The islands on which missionaries now labour, in this group, are Aneiteum, Futuna, Aniwa, Erromanga, and Fae; all the other islands are still in heathen darkness. The work of evangelization has only begun on this group of islands, and not less than 50 missionaries are required to occupy it. And I may add that a chain of islands extends onward from the New Hebrides to the Indian Ocean, comprising hundreds, if not thousands of islands, where the darkness of heathenism has never yet been penetrated by a single ray of gospel light.

I trust that God may soon raise up men among you, who will be willing to forsake the endearments of home, and come far hence to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. How it would gladden our hearts to welcome one or more missionaries from you. Do not delay until we can report favourable openings to you, for if the way is not clear for the settlement of missionaries when they arrive, they can help to open islands for themselves. It would be a positive advantage indeed to missionaries coming to these islands, to spend a year or more at one of the older stations. They would then enter on their own sphere of labour acclimated to some extent, and with much practical knowledge of the missionary work, which could not fail to be useful to them.

The mission families, so far as I know, are well, with the exception of Mr. Morrison. He has been obliged from failing health to visit Australia, and his medical advisers have forbidden his return at present. His withdrawal from the work has been a serious trial to our mission. May God in mercy restore his health, and grant him years of usefulness in these islands.

I hope this season to make a long voyage among the islands of this group. The "Day Spring" has hitherto done little beyond visiting the islands on which missionaries and teachers are settled. It is now time that we should begin to operate on the dark regions beyond. I may be able to give you further information about the islands in my next letter to you.

I beg to thank you for your kind letter and hope your correspondence will continue. I still cherish pleasing recollections of the Sabbath I spent in your congregation. Nothing impressed me more when I was home, than the simple, earnest, and fervent piety which it was my privilege to witness in some of the Highland congregations of your church and our own. It leads one's mind back to primitive times, and reminds me strongly of what I have seen among native converts on these islands. My sheet is full, and I must now conclude. Pray for us.

Ever yours &c.,

JOHN GEDDIE.