

they to be found clubbing each other, murdering wives and infants, or revelling in cannibalism. They might now be seen sitting at the feet of Jesus, asking that they might learn from him what to do. As the sun rose in the morning they might be seen approaching the mission schools with little baskets containing those portions of God's word they possessed, and when at the school, they might be seen sitting and meekly asking what God would have them do. Some of those schools he (Mr. Paton) had visited, and had observed children of four or five years, with their mother and her infant, around an aged father, all desiring to be instructed. Not being able to read, the aged frequently sat with the young boys who read aloud to them, the elder ones listening with the gravest attention imaginable. They treasured up and committed to memory that which was read to them. Mr Geddie asked one of the aged men some questions from the Gospel of Matthew. The old man began apparently to read, but he (Mr. Paton) was told that he could not read a letter, and, indeed, when the book was closed he answered just as well as before, having whilst listening to what was read to him by the boys, committed to memory many of the passages, so that when told in what part of the gospel he was to read, he could repeat them from memory. The whole of these people were professed believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in their knowledge of the Scriptures would put to the blush many of the professed Christians of our native land. At sunrise their voices might be heard in prayer and praise to Almighty God, and when in the evening they retired to rest, the family assembled and poured forth their hearts to him in fervent devotions.

It was scarcely within the bounds of conception that such a change should have been wrought by missionary labour within fourteen years. When, on visiting some of the schools, he had seen old and young, women and children, pouring forth their voices and their hearts to God in thanksgiving, tears of joy had rolled down his cheeks. The change that had taken place on this island within the last three years, was a hopeful indication of what he expected as the result, in a short period, of the labour of those who worked with the aid of the Holy Spirit. It was, however, but a small island of a large group, and many thousands were still living in a state of savage heathenism, killing and feasting upon their fellow-creatures, bowing down to the most brutish idols, and worshipping even the Evil Spirit, to whom they sacrificed their children, whom they often threw into the boiling springs in a passion. He and the other missionaries had known them to club their children, cook them, and invite their neighbours to feast on them. They had known them to kill more than seven individuals for one feast, to which they invited the whole community. They had been known to seek to drag the missionary to these feasts, and would have succeed-

ed, had they not, in the providence of God, been protected from such a degradation. How seldom was it considered that there were on earth people revelling in the grossest crimes, utterly depraved, and sinking daily into eternal misery, and that, too, within so short a distance from this highly-favored city. But now he had come to appeal to its Christian people for the means wherewith to enable the missionary to pursue his efforts for giving these miserable savages the enjoyment of the gospel as it was in Jesus. If those who now listened to his appeal loved Jesus, the appeal would not be in vain. As they valued those opportunities of eternal salvation conferred upon themselves, in the same degree would they be anxious to use every effort to rescue from misery those who had not the blessing of the gospel among them. Had his hearers seen these wretched heathens as he and his brother missionaries had seen them, they would put forth every effort until they rescued them from their misery. The missionaries could only visit a few of these islands, having but a small vessel, the *John Knox*, of eighteen tons, with which, however, they had managed with difficulty to place native teachers on five islands. On account of the high winds and heavy seas which frequently prevailed in these quarters, this small vessel did not admit of their extending their visits farther. The society had been requested to make arrangements for the *John Williams* on her return from England, to visit these islands. The request was listened to, and instructions were given to carry out this object as far as it was practicable; she was to visit the islands beyond Aneiteum. But that vessel had so much to do that the captain was unable to carry out the wishes of the missionaries. All they could do, therefore, was to bring back the native teachers, and for a time to turn their back upon those perishing heathens; willing as they were to hear of Christ, the missionaries were not able to stretch out a helping hand for the salvation of those wretched beings.

With regard to the *John Williams*, he might remind them how much had been done by the Sabbath school children in England, and Scotland, in purchasing and fitting out that vessel for the missionary service. Even when the directors thought of selling her for want of funds, the Sabbath-school children again come forward to supply the money required for the service of a vessel when it was to be engaged in the work of Jesus Christ. The vessel was not sold, more money being thus obtained than was actually required, the Sabbath-school children having been taught to love Christ, and to desire that the word of God might be carried to the heathens in the South Sea Islands. But as she could not extend the missionary work in the New Hebrides and Loyalty Groups, the missionaries in that quarter unanimously resolved to make an appeal to the children of the Sabbath schools