

are so simple and graphic that, while we could not improve them, we might injure them by any change." As we trace his life from point to point, and see his character standing the tests of new demands, repeated disappointments, wonderful success and heart-breaking failure, and developing into greater breadth and power year by year, our admiration of the man becomes so great that judgment is almost suspended. He is like one of "the simple great ones" of a bygone age. It is impossible to conceive of an undertaking more difficult, more utterly hopeless to ordinary estimates and ordinary good men, than that to which he gave himself. Well might the great American theologian, Dr. Charles Hodge, say, "What I have done is as nothing compared to what is done by a man who labours among a heathen tribe, and reduces their language to writing. I am not worthy to stoop down and loose the shoes of such a man." But Dr. Geddie, during the most trying period, had none of the companionship or assistance that almost every missionary to a savage race counts upon. When he settled on Aneityum, he had with him a colleague and also one of the London Missionary Society's agents. But they left soon, and for years he was alone, among naked, ferocious cannibals, "1,500 miles from the nearest missionary brother," to gain their confidence, learn their language, reduce it to a fixed form, translate the Scriptures, write catechisms, school books, hymn books, almanacs, teach them the arts and decencies of life, show them how to build houses, mediate between opposing ranks of enemies armed with poison-tipped spears, heal their sick and convince them that they were not brutes, but men for whom Christ died. All this he did.

### HIS GREAT LABOURS.

His resourcefulness never failed. He never lost patience and hope. To the last he appeared a man so weak, diffident and almost insignificant that he would have been overlooked by ninety-nine men out of a hundred. But this man "could turn his hand to anything, whether it was to build a schoolhouse or a church; to translate a gospel, prepare a catechism or print a primer; to administer medicine, teach a class or preach a sermon; to traverse the island on foot, sail round it in his boat or take a voyage to the adjoining islands." What he did is summed up in one sentence, inscribed on a wooden tablet that has been placed behind the pulpit of his church in Aneityum: "In memory of John Geddie. . . . . When he landed in 1848 there were no Christians here, and when he left in 1872 there were no heathen." So completely had idolatry disappeared that when he sought for some of the old gods to bring home he could find—to quote his own words to the Canadian Presbyterian Synod—"no god on the whole island but the God who made the heavens and the earth."

In 1848, he found on Aneityum a French Roman Catholic Mission with about a