

Arrival and Location of a Colleague.—You will be surprised to learn that I have now a colleague in the missionary work on this island. The Rev. Mr. Ingles, formerly of New Zealand, has joined this mission. He arrived here in the *Harder Maid*, about three weeks ago. He is a minister of the Reformed Church of Scotland, and has been in New Zealand labouring among the natives and colonists for some years. Had Mr. Ingles been accompanied by a fellow labourer, it is probable that Tanna would have been their field; but coming, as he did, alone, and considering the very pressing claims of this island, my own peculiar circumstances, and the faint prospect of aid from Nova Scotia within a reasonable period, I did not and could not hesitate to invite this excellent brother to share with me in the labors, joys and trials of the Aneiteum mission. Mr. Ingles is my senior in years, and he brings with him to the work a well disciplined mind, a heart devoted to the interests of the Redeemer's cause, and much invaluable experience. I feel thankful to God, that an agent, so eminently suited to the present exigencies of the mission has thus unexpectedly come to aid in the work. Mrs. Ingles accompanies her husband, and is a woman of the right spirit. Mrs. Geddie has been greatly cheered by her presence. The energies of both will be devoted to the improvement and elevation of the degraded females on this island; and let us pray to God their efforts for this object may be abundantly blessed.

Want of Printing Materials.—I sent an application to you nearly three years ago for a grant of printing paper and ink for the mission, which you have never noticed. The consequence is, that the press is now at a stand, and the mission is suffering for want of books. Our first books are now nearly expended, and I have often to send away natives, unsupplied with books, who have come a long way to procure them. This is a very distressing state of things. If the Board can do nothing to relieve us, are there not individuals or bible societies in our church willing to aid us? The missionary work must be carried on at great disadvantage, if we cannot make books for the natives and teach them to read. In the meantime, I have applied to the Samoan mission, for the loan of fifteen reams of paper, which I expect about next January. Would you, on the receipt of this, write to the Secretary of the London Missionary Society; and request him to send on to Samoa, at your expense, fifteen reams of paper to repay what I have borrowed? Please let me know at your earliest convenience, if any of our bible societies are willing to assist in giving to the New Hebrideans the word of God in their own tongue. I did not send the Gospel by Matthew, to be printed at New Zealand, as I intended. My sickness interrupted the translation, and I could not complete it time to send it by the bishop who lately visited us. I will endeavor to print a first edition on this island, as soon as our paper comes to hand.

Anxiety for another Missionary.—I trust that the change in the circumstances, on this island, will not induce you to relax your exertions to procure another missionary; let it rather encourage you to more vigorous efforts for this object. Aneiteum is supplied, but Tanna calls loudly for help. This island lies to the northwest of Aneiteum, about 35 miles distant. It is an island of much interest, and contains a population of 10,000 souls, according to the reckoning of Captain Erskine, of H.M.S. Havana. It is a very fertile island, and much visited by whalers and seal wood vessels to purchase pigs and yams. It is not exempt from fever and ague, but the teachers represent it as vastly more healthy than Aneiteum. Teachers who were almost constantly sick on this island enjoy good health there. There are four teachers at present labouring at Port Resolution on Tanna; the wife of one of them is sister to the Queen of Karotonga. The island of Tanna is at present an inviting field for missionary labour, and the prospects are greatly more encouraging there now than they were at Aneiteum four years ago, when we landed on it. It is more than probable that Tanna will be the field of your next missionary. How very desirable that our church could have an interest in two islands, instead of one. It would give a variety to your missionary information, and tend more deeply to interest the church in the work. A mission on Tanna will not at all increase your expenses.

A door is also open at Fate, and four missionaries might at present be landed on that island. Any missionary whom you send must make Aneiteum his first destination. He might spend six or twelve months here with great advantage. It will be necessary for him to prepare the materials for a house, and this can be done here, and at the same time he may study the language with advantage. Our chief Nohout speaks the Tanna language fluently, and would give any assistance to a missionary studying it. But the missionary whom you send will require an associate on Tanna; and where shall we look for help? The church with whom Mr. Ingles is connected, and that they are pledged to take a part in the evangelization of this group, will no doubt act energetically in the cause; but it is not at all likely that they can send a missionary to meet one from you. In that case we must fall back upon the Samoan mission, and I feel assured that the brethren of that mission will make every effort to assist us. They may even send one of their number to remain temporarily or permanently in the work on these islands. I may inform you now that my services are always at your disposal for missionary work, and I shall hold myself in readiness to give place at any time, to an agent from you on this island, and undertake the labours of a new mission on any of the neighbouring islands whenever providence seems to indicate that such a measure is desirable.

Contingent Fund.—I have made arrangements for the purchase of a boat on Samoa, to be forwarded by the John Williams on her return to

this island. The boat costs £15, but oars, anchor, cable, paint, planking, &c. for repairs, will bring her up to about £25.

Concluding Observations.—I had almost forgot to mention that Mr. Ingles will occupy a station on the north side of the island at a place called Anuimo. He brought with him from New Zealand the materials for a dwelling house, which cost him £58 stig. We have been engaged, since his arrival, in erecting the house. It will be habitable in a few days. During the heaviest part of the work we had about 120 natives daily assisting. They are overcome with joy, at the prospect of having another missionary among them.

I must now conclude this letter. Dear brethren pray for us, and pray that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be abundantly glorified, in this dark and distant land.

I am very sincerely yours, &c.

JOHN GEDDIE.

CHINA—LETTER FROM THE REV. A. W. LOOMIS.

WHAT IS DONE FOR DEPARTED SPIRITS BY THE CHINESE.

From what has been said in the previous letter about the importance with which the Chinese regard the worship of ancestors, you may imagine, as is the fact, that it is considered a great misfortune not to have sons, who may survive, to present the accustomed offerings and worship to the manes of the dead. In China, a person without sons born to him, is regarded as extremely unfortunate; and to lose a son by death is the greatest calamity that can be suffered. Daughters are not valued, for the reason that their services are less profitable than that of boys, and when married they go out of the family, and cannot perpetuate the ancestral name, (for it is contrary to Chinese law for those of the same family name to be in matrimony) or be depended upon to perform the ancestral worship. Therefore it is that in these parts where infanticide is practiced male children are spared, and females only destroyed.

With many of the Chinese polygamy is adopted, in the hope of having sons. Others adopt boys. Some buy, and some steal little boys to bring up as their sons. We have known some instances in which children have been stolen from Nungpo, and carried off to other provinces.

But notwithstanding all these expedients there are many left without male descendants or heirs, and who die without leaving provision for the feeding of their spirits after death. These are provided for by charity.—Each ward or street provides for its own hungry ghosts. It is believed that all who die without posterity are left without sustenance, or clothing, or money for necessary expenses, and must wander about in the invisible regions, or linger about the place which was their residence while living, cold, hungry, and wretched. The living are actuated not only by pity, but by self-interest, to furnish succour to famishing ghosts, for they believe that if they are not fed and clothed they may cause evil to those through whose neglect they suffer. One festival for their benefit is called *scen e*, or burning of clothes, on which occasion they make a profuse display of all kinds of garments, or rather of coloured paper, cut and pasted to represent in miniature different kinds of garments; also, miniature furniture and figures of servants are prepared of the same material. These are fixed upon strings along the streets, and left fluttering in the wind for a day and a night, after which they are burned together with paper money. Theatrical exhibitions are provided for the entertainment of the ghosts, and feasts with abundance of good things, could they eat them; but there is little doubt that the children and beggars that scramble for the cakes and fruit, after the feasting time for the spirits is over, find that very little of the substantial part has been carried off by them.

Buddhist priests are employed on this occasion, who, by their prayers, profess to obtain, for such souls as are in purgatory, a temporary release, that they may come forth to enjoy a holiday, and receive their share of the food, clothing, and money, etc.

Once when in Canton, we witnessed the festival called *Ta tsau*, it was for the same purpose as that above described. It occurred some time during the month of November, and the display surpassed anything of the kind we had witnessed in other parts of China. Silk and cotton goods of brilliant colors were hung in festoons along the narrow streets; many stagings were erected over the streets on which they were arranged small images of men and women, to represent persons of different offices and occupations. Homes were erected of bamboo poles, very high, covered with matting, and the inside adorned with scenery, very well executed, to illustrate certain portions of Chinese history. Glass lamps, with lustres, and painted lanterns of all forms and sizes, were hung near together, and when lighted at night the effect was gorgeous. There were stages for theatrical performances, others for bands of music, or for the feasts designed for the spirits, where also the priests rehearsed their prayers. After one street had enjoyed this exhibition for a day or two, every thing was taken down and moved to the next street, and put up in the same manner as before; the shopkeepers and occupants of the houses defraying the expense by contributions.

The ancestral tablets of extinct families are not neglected. In each district provision is made by yearly subscriptions, or by a fund established by charity, for providing a place in which such tablets are deposited; and for hiring a person to serve them. In most cases a small temple is built for this express purpose; but in some places a hall in one of the monasteries is obtained, where these tablets are placed, and the monastery paid for furnishing the officiating priest, with the incense, candles, and other offerings.