

tremely rare, causing an immense amount of labour. With our time so much cut up, considering the material upon which we operate—in the first instance—the extent of the field, the feebleness of native character, the hasty and imperfect training of some of our teachers received when we wished to lay hold of some district, which, if not occupied at once might be closed against us for many a day to come, the faithfulness of some of our teachers, the incapacity of several, and the natural indolence of all—teachers and scholars. With all these taken into consideration, could any man expect that our work could be anything else than preparatory and superficial? But a beginning has been made, and we greatly need another missionary to manage and carry forward the work. If one cannot be got, or if the Church will not any more consider dark Eromanga. I fear after the “first love” of the natives has lost its freshness, that unless God shame and confound us by converting this people without us, the work will go back. I will not deny that any missionary coming to labour, say in Portinia or Cook’s Bay, will have to meet with difficulties and many hindrances in his work. Such he must expect and so long as the heart remains unchanged these things will continue. He will be amazed to find matters very different from what he had expected, wonder why the missionaries did not explain the true state of things, which I suppose will never be done to satisfaction, seeing it *can not*, as each man forms his own opinion after he has seen with his own eyes the field and has become somewhat acquainted with the people. He will find the natives great liars. If a false statement seems to answer their present purpose they will not hesitate to tell a lie. He will find them dirty in body and mind. He will find them lazy. He will find them cunning, detectful, treacherous, malicious, full of envy, cruel, ungrateful, passionate, obstinate and fickle. But he will meet with some very

interesting people, and he will soon begin to see what a power the Gospel will have over them. He will see the very faces of men change after they begin to “take the Word,” and he will by and by find that many of his young men will risk their own lives should it be required, to protect him. He will have a large field and many waiting for the Word that he will proclaim to them. He will be in a land of plenty so far as yams and taro constitute plenty; he will come to like many of the people and with good management he will generally carry his point against all odds.

The natives will gather about the missionary and his wife, (for I do not think any missionary should come to these islands unmarried), and be daily learning some useful knowledge and he will find them generally very cheerful and happy, in their own way. But above all, he will feel as he cannot at home, the reality of the work. Actually, God’s servants are engaged in person in a heathen field (no dream) fighting daily the battles of the Lord against the powers of darkness.

The Lord will be very near him. His promises will give a lively hope. The Mighty God of Jacob will be his stronghold and he will be able to think lightly of ingratitude and selfishness on the part of the natives when he remembered his main object—the glory of God.

And to you brethren of the Maritime Provinces do I look for a fellow-labourer. All that has ever been done for this Island has been done by your agents. Our church may well be proud of the Gordons and McNair. Noble missionaries! To you Eromanga can never, never lose its interest. What are battles for earth’s glory compared with the battle fought by the Gordons and McNair here under the banner of the Lords of Hosts?

And how these earthly laurels, which brave warriors have won in victories achieved for their king and country, pale