

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 faithlessness of some of our teachers, the incapacity of several, and the natural indolence of all—teachers and scholars. With all these things taken into consideration, could any man expect that our work could be any thing 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 never will 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 purposes 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, deceitful, 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 pro-

mises 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 remembers 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 those battles for earth’s glory compared with the battle fought by the Gordons and McNair here under the banner of the Lord of Hosts?

And how these earthly laurels, which brave warriors have won in victories achieved for their king and country, pale before the starry crown which awaits those heroic men who braving every danger, and facing beings more like devils than men, bore aloft the standard of the cross until they were murdered by savage men for whose eternal happiness they laboured.

I sometimes fear our dear friends are turning away from the New Hebrides, but you will not surely give up the stations you now occupy here. You will not give up Eromanga? I think the success at Anelgauhah, Erakor and Eromanga is encouraging. Do not forget us when you are devising liberal plans for your other mission fields. But if no one comes from your church for Eromanga, one thing I will count upon, your prayers. Brethren pray for us.

HUGH A. ROBERTSON.

LETTER FROM REV. J. W. MCKENZIE.

Erakor, Efate, 25th Nov., 1878.

I AM sorry to hear that the Church at home is losing interest in this mission. God has blessed her labours in the past, He is blessing them still, and if she weary not in well-doing He will bless them yet more and more. No Church connected with the mission has more ground for thankfulness and encouragement than our own. There are not three stations occupied in the group more important and encouraging than those of her missionaries. On Eromanga especially the Master is giving evidence of His blessing. There the field is white to the harvest. It is very sad that the work should be so crippled for want of men. Never, I think, in the history of this mission were there such favourable openings as now. In some respects other fields may be more encouraging. The statistics you receive from this field may not bear favourable comparison with those from other fields. But you must not forget the nature of the material upon which we have to operate. The natives here are a very low type of humanity. You can form but a very faint conception of their degradation and