

tuem of Dr. Geddie. It is date July 19, 1867. After stating that the prospects of the Mission are on the whole encouraging, he proceeds:—

“For various reasons our annual meeting has been postponed till September. On Tanna dysentery had broken out some months ago, and had been severe—in many cases fatal. This, as usual, rendered the natives averse to Christianity, and the teachers were simply holding on. They had been threatened; but as the epidemic was abating, no fears were entertained for their safety. At Port Resolution the natives were afraid of an attack from the inland tribes, and did not wish any missionary settled among them till they could calculate on peace. On Fate matters were also in a somewhat unsatisfactory state. The Christian settlement of Errakor was threatened with an attack from the heathen; and it required all Mr. Morrison’s patience and firmness to guide the counsels of this interesting community, so that their present difficulties may be safely tided over. At Pango appearances are very encouraging, and Mr. Cosh’s place of worship is filled every Sabbath. On Erromanga the natives are fighting among themselves over a great part of the island; but their antagonism to Christianity and the mission has ceased, and more of them are rallying round Mr. Gordon. On Fotuna Mr. Copeland does not report much progress; the natives keep shy of the missionary; but they are quiet and offer no molestation. The island is very healthy. There is little sickness and few deaths among the natives. The population is at least 900, which is 200 more than the number at which it has always been estimated. The accounts from Aniwa are very encouraging. The population is scarcely 300, but they are nearly all professedly Christian. They have built a new church since Mr. Paton settled among them. There is a large attendance on public worship, and Mrs. Paton has about thirty-six women who come to her to be taught sewing and singing. Mr. Paton has prepared and printed a small primer, and reading will follow. A party of ten of the leading men of Aniwa came over here with one of the Aneiteum teachers, to see the Christianity of Aneiteum. Mr. Paton is not only doing more for Christianity on Aniwa than if he had been settled on Tanna, but he is, perhaps, doing more for Tanna itself than if he had occupied his former situation at Port Resolution. I have been long of opinion that, as a general rule, these small islands, like Fotuna and Aniwa, should be taken up before the larger islands. Small numbers can be far more easily dealt with than large masses; and they form new centres of influence for good, and new bases of operations

from which to act on the larger communities. Besides, a large field is not an essential condition for great usefulness. David Brainerd, who still stands, and perhaps ever will stand, in the first rank of modern missionaries, began with ten natives, and had never more than a hundred and fifty under his instructions. It was the character of his converts, not their number, that astonished the Churches. On the other hand, look at China, with its three hundred millions. After fifty years of missionary toil, carried on by missionaries of the first class—Morrison, and Milne, and Medhurst, and a host of others, scarcely if at all inferior,—with one written language for the whole empire; with the whole Bible translated many years ago; with a “million New Testaments for China,” and every other available appliance; and yet, out of this dense mass of heathenism, some two thousand are all the converts that have been won to Christianity. Of course a vast amount of preparatory work has been accomplished, and other men will enter into the labours of those who have sown so long and so diligently in faith of the future harvest. I allude to these things simply to show that little isles and small communities are not to be undervalued, despised, or neglected.

On this island, from January to June, we were holding on the even tenor of our way, there was scarcely anything noteworthy occurring. The summer months were unusually dry and hot, the weather often oppressive, but the public health was good, and all the ordinary work of the mission went on in the usual way; but, about the beginning of June, whooping-cough appeared. It was brought here by a trading vessel from Sydney, which, on her way hither, called at Maré, where the whooping-cough has been prevailing for many months. It is also supposed that it may have been brought by another trading vessel from Fiji, one of the *quasi* slavers—a class of vessels that, under the pretence of engaging natives of this group to work for five years on cotton plantations in Fiji, are really carrying on, so far as we can learn, a system of modified slavery. The whooping-cough still continues; it is making something like a clean sweep of the young children; it is telling severely on half-grown boys and girls, and weakly adults of all ages. The epidemic of last year was confined almost entirely to the strong and vigorous; children entirely escaped; any of them that died during its continuance, died from other causes; but this year the children are the chief sufferers. Almost every family, where there were young children, are mourning.

Under the blessing of God, and with the means at our command, we can make some headway against the ordinary diseases of