

piece of finest net-work it is! Light as air, and transparent as glass, and flexible as the will of the owner, it carries the creature through the wide element in which he lives, day after day, without ever wearying. No loom of man's invention has ever produced a fabric so fine as that. What perfect command he has over these gauzy sails, with which he skims the ocean of the air! How beautifully he can tack and turn, or float at ease on the bosom of the sunbeam, glittering in drapery of green and gold and softest purple! And if his wings grow dry and dusty (as they must needs do in this dusty world), he has but to alight for a moment or two, and, with his supple limbs and padded feet, he trims them again, and is away on his glad free course. Here is a fine little song that a poet-heart sung, on the impulse of the moment, to a little fly, a hundred years ago. There are only twelve lines in it, but that fly which came to drink out of William Oldy's cup of ale with him, and which he did not drive away, left its benediction upon him:—

"Busy, curious, thirsty fly,
Drink with me, and drink as I.
Freely welcome to my cup.
Couldst thou sip and sip it up.
Make the most of life you may,
Life is short and wears away;
Both alike are mine and thine,
Hastening quick to their decline.
Thine 's a summer—mine no more,
Though repeated to three score.
Three score summers, when they're gone,
Will appear as short as one.

W. M. P.

Abdon Mines, 19th Oct., 1866.

Letter from Rev. Dr. Geddie to Rev.
G. M. Grant.

SHIP "FEARNOUGHT," June 14,
Lat. 42° S. Long. 120° E.

REV'D. AND DEAR SIR,—

I am just writing to some friends, and I esteem it a privilege to include you among the number. We are now approaching the coast of Australia, and long to be on *terra firma* once more. It is fifteen weeks to-day since we sailed from Liverpool, and we expect to complete our voyage in one or two weeks more.

Our voyage has been long and unusually stormy. This is the worst season of the year for a voyage to this part of the world. It is the winter season, and we have sailed some thousands of miles in high southern latitudes. But our inconveniences have been far exceeded by our mercies and comforts. We are sailing in a fine ship. The Captain, officers, and crew, are all that we could expect, and do all in their power to promote our comfort. Our fellow-passengers are likewise very agreeable.

The voyage, though long, has not been without its advantages. It has afforded, to me at least, opportunities for reading, writing, and relaxation, which I have not enjoyed for years, and do not expect again to enjoy. I begin, however, to be impatient, and long to be at my work on the islands once more.

I expended in Glasgow the £30 sterling entrusted to my care by your Committee, in the purchase of such articles as we give to our native teachers. If God spares me to reach the islands, it will be one of my first efforts to settle some teachers for your Church. We have always found them valuable pioneers in the missionary cause. They are at first received by the heathen with less suspicion than missionaries; and their adaptation to the climate, their acquaintance with native modes of thought and habits, and their few wants and simple customs, eminently fit them for the early stages of a mission. Their knowledge is limited at best, but it is of the right kind. We have much satisfaction in our native teachers, and instances of failure among them are rare. God has given the sanction of His blessing to their labours on many islands.

I trust that your Church will make an effort to send one or more missionaries to the New Hebrides. There is room for us all there, and a loud call to us all to go over and help them. It will require fifty missionaries for that group alone; and when the work of evangelization is completed there, then there are hundreds of islands beyond which have never yet been visited by the Christian missionary. If you provide the means and look to God in prayer for the man, He will no doubt raise up some one who will be willing to forsake the endearments of home, and labour for Christ among the heathen. If you as a Church do your part, God will reward your faith and do His. Don't fear that the cause of religion will suffer at home by sparing a minister for the mission field. It is when Churches, as well as individuals, endeavour to become a blessing to others that they are usually blessed themselves.

I intend to write an occasional letter to your Mission Committee. If you wish information at any time about the missionary work on these islands, I shall be glad to furnish it. It is my prayer to God that He may bless your efforts to give the Gospel to the heathen, and stir up your Church to generous and prayerful efforts in His cause. Embark in the missionary work with strong faith, believing that sooner or later God will prosper your efforts, and you shall not labour for Christ in vain. Do not be discouraged if you do not at once meet with success; you must be prepared for reverses, as well as for triumphs. Do your duty, and leave results to the God of missions.

I must now close my short letter. You have my best wishes for your success in the important sphere of usefulness which you occupy.