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"SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY GO FORWARD."—Exodus xiv., 15.

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Religious Intelligence.

AUSTRALIA.

The following letter from the Rev. Robert Hamilton, late of Waterbeck, who was sent out in the beginning of last summer as a missionary to Port-Philip, gives an account of the voyage, of his safe arrival, and of the promising condition of the United Presbyterian Church there. The letter is dated Melbourne, 27th September, 1851.

The Voyage.—I embrace the first opportunity of a ship leaving the port, to inform you of the safe arrival of myself and dear family. We have made a very good passage, having set sail from Liverpool on the 6th June, and having made land on the 10th of September. The commencement of our voyage was very stormy. We had head winds, squalls, and rain incessantly for a few days after sailing, which both retarded our progress, and contributed very much to our discomfort. We soon got into more favourable weather; and after we crossed the latitude of the Bay of Biscay, we seemed to leave the region of storms behind. For about two months, we had very general good weather. Within the tropics, the sun was not so exceedingly oppressive, the thermometer, at the hottest, being 90° in the shade. When we reached the southern latitudes, however, in pursuance of what is called great circle sailing, the sun being far north, we had very severe wintry weather indeed. We had frequent showers of hail and snow, and had gale upon gale, in constant succession. Through the great goodness of our Heavenly Father, our ship was mercifully preserved in the midst of our perils of no ordinary kind.

I am happy to say that I was enabled, after the first Sabbath, to conduct religious services on board every Lord's day. While favourable weather continued, we had worship on the poop deck twice each Sabbath. During the last month we were obliged to assemble within the cabin and between decks, so that, notwithstanding storm and rain, our meetings were never altogether interrupted, although frequently held under very great disadvantages. I distributed a good many tracts and a few Bibles among the passengers and crew. There were upwards of 120 souls on board, and I had some gratification on seeing the happy influence of the Gospel preached, in commanding at least general outward respect, and affording in the experience of a number, much comfort and gratification.

We had three deaths on board—two adults, and a child that was born in the ship. One of the adults was a cabin passenger from Dumfriesshire, who had fallen into consumption, and was coming out to Australia as a last experiment for his life. He received great spiritual benefit from my instructions and conversation in his last illness, and, I have good reason to believe, died at peace with God, and in the well-grounded hope of heaven.

Arrival in Melbourne.—We landed in Melbourne on the 12th, and received a cordial welcome from our dear friends in the city, who are all in the enjoyment of health. We have been not a little surprised at the great extent of the town, its elegant buildings, flourishing merchandise, and large population. We have arrived at a good

season of the year for getting somewhat acclimated before the hot summer weather arrives. It is now spring, and may be compared to mild summer weather in the mother country,—the winter rains have scarcely ceased,—the grass appears in its loveliest hue—many flowers are fully blown—the vines are budding—the first fruits of the earth are, in some instances, already being enjoyed, and numerous signs are given that summer is fast approaching.

Excitement in the Colony.—I have no idea yet in what particular locality I may find a sphere of labour. I trust as I have come out in the Lord's service, He will, in his own good time, open up a door of usefulness. My arrival has coincided with a very particular crisis in the colony. During the last fortnight, the members of the new Legislative Council have been elected amid considerable political excitement throughout the country. Add to this the excitement arising from the discovery of gold, which is fast emptying the towns of their labouring population, and it will be seen that the cause of Christ must have peculiar evils to contend with, and that the wisdom which comes from above will be required for the purpose of employing the most effectual means to advance its interests. Considerable fervour at present exists in the public mind, which, in the meanwhile, is far from favourable to the interests of religion. O that men were as deeply concerned to obtain the incorruptible riches of the kingdom of heaven, then the gold that perishes would not exert a baneful influence on the heart and life!

United Presbyterian Church of Victoria.—I have been already admitted to a seat in the Colonial Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church. I am happy to testify to the prosperity which has hitherto attended the efforts of the brethren to evangelise the colony. There are now about twelve ministers on the field in our connection; either settled or ready to occupy suitable districts. A board of missions is about to be established for the purpose of more effectually supplying the spiritual necessities of the country. It is encouraging to know that a general feeling prevails among various denominations, of opposition to religious endowments,—various members of the Council are avowedly hostile to all government support. The triumph of the voluntary principle, in short, may be regarded as all but complete; and, with the blessing of God, it only requires that we have an evangelical, a well-educated, and an energetic ministry, in order that the cause of God may flourish under our superintendance.—*Miss Record, U. P. Ch.*

Note.—From more recent accounts we have seen, it appears that Mr. Hamilton has been preaching to the multitudes employed in the gold diggings in the interior.

ANEITEUM.

BY REV. JOHN GEDDIE.

Private letters, dated Aneiteum, Nov. 11th 1851, came to hand June 10th. The following extracts have been selected, as containing all that is of public interest for the Church. How very desirable that one of kindred spirit with our present Missionary, should repair to his assistance, now that the mass of heathenism is being moved to its very base. Our refuge must be in him who is known to the Church in every age as *Jehozababueh*. When he gives the word, great shall be the company of them who publish it. Let the friends of the Mission now obey the command of the God of Missions. The harvest truly is great but the laborers are few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers unto his harvest.

A vessel has just called here on her way to China, and I avail myself of the opportunity of sending a few lines by her to you. I sent a letter to the Board, dated in September last, which I hope you have received in safety. I have a heavy communication on hand at present, containing a full report of the Mission for the last year, together with fragments of my journal, but these I reserve to go by way of Sydney. Though the route by China is by far the most expeditious, yet my letters pass through so many strange hands before they are mailed, that they are sent at a venture. In my letter to the Board dated in September, I slightly alluded to the progress of the work and to exciting incidents which have befallen this mission, but these you will find more fully and satisfactorily stated in my forthcoming letter and journal.