

EXTRACT OF A PRIVATE LETTER  
FROM REV. JOSEPH ANNAND.SANTO, NEW HEBRIDES,  
June 17th, 1883.

I am thankful to be able to report our health good. My sciatica still makes itself felt almost continually but it has eased down so that I am never laid aside from work by it. Throughout the summer I have worked hard at manual labor and other duties. We are now getting fairly into harness here. For over two months I have been addressing the people briefly in their own tongue.

Our work among the natives is now quite interesting. Studying up their language gives pleasure. I am speaking to them on Sabbath now, but I am not by any means fluent yet. They understand however, what I say which is so far satisfactory. Two weeks ago I despatched to Sydney by a man of war, the manuscript of a first book. This I expect printed and returned by the "Dayspring" in October or November. It is not very elaborate only about 16 pages. We need very much a printing press in this end of the group. Sending away to Sydney everything we need printed is not only great delay, but expensive as well.

The people here as in all the other islands are very superstitious. They are very much afraid of spirits. There are quite a number of places near us that are believed to be haunted by evil spirits. We have never seen any of them yet. When I asked the people about them and how it would be with me if I disturbed any of their places of abode, they said, oh the spirits will not know you so they may not trouble you. I presume that they do not recognize us as we have not been molested by them unless they have entered into the pigs and so vent their anger upon us through them. Now, however, having got up a stone wall all around our premises the pigs are kept at bay, excepting one that jumps the fence like a dog.

The women seem afraid to come into the school house lest the spirits kill them. Certain customs prevail here that are interesting also. No man dare eat food cooked at a fire made for cooking the women's own food and vice versa. The women do most of the cooking but she has to make one fire for her husband's food and one for her own. None of the men dare eat any food cooked on our premises

nor even light their pipes at our fires. For me to eat any part of the food being eaten by them would surely bring the wrath of the spirits upon them. Though there is so much to be obtained in the way of keeping the spirits favor toward them yet I find nothing like any regular worshipping of these. They make no offerings no sacrifices, nor do they pray to them so far as I can yet learn.

## LETTER FROM MRS. ANNAND.

SANTO, June 23rd, 1888.

*My Dear Mrs. McCurdy:—*

In regard to our health it has been good since Christmas. Mr. Annand still feels the Sciatica. I may say that he is rarer free from it, but it has not been bad enough since the New Year set in to keep him from work.

The Lord is very good to us. We are enjoying many blessings. He has caused the people to be very friendly towards us. Whilst some others in the mission have been in great danger, we so far have felt quite safe. Of course we can never know when heathen people may turn around. They are so fickle.

Poor, Mr. and Mrs. Morton who were settled in Malekula last year just a week before we settled here have passed through a trying season. One of the natives who belonged to another village near the one where Mr. and Mrs. Morton live was angry with some one in the latter village, so he said

*"I WILT KILL THE MISSIONARY."*

He came one evening with his gun to look for Mr. Morton. The blinds happened to be down that night. They had not been in the habit of putting them down but Mrs. Morton says that something prompted her to put them down that night, though Mr. Morton thought it useless. Of course they were neither of them aware of any danger. When the man could not see the missionary he went to a young man a servant of Mr. Morton, talked to him, got him off his guard, and shot him through the back. As soon as the poor lad was shot he ran to Mr. Morton, fell down at the door and soon died.

It was a great shock to Mrs. Morton. They have not lighted a light at night since. They have both suffered very much from fever. They were here at the meeting (of Synod) and have gone in the "Dayspring" as far South as Aniwa for a