

1856.

evangelization of these Islands. What you do in this matter let it be done speedily, and communicate the result to us as soon as possible.

I long to hear from you, and to know when we are to expect missionaries from Nova Scotia. I trust that you will find men willing to come, and that you will lose no time in sending them here. We long to see them, for the harvest here is great and the labourers few.

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN MISSION TO
NEW ZEALAND.

We have recently heard that the Mission on New Zealand, in connexion with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, is about to be given up, and that the Mission Committee wish their missionary, the Rev. J. Duncan, to come to this group. If Mr. Duncan should come it is probable that the Island of Fotuna will be his destination. I trust that he may feel it to be his duty to comply with the wishes of the Missionary Committee of his Church. Doors of usefulness are now opening on the Islands around, but unless they are speedily entered they may again be closed.

I must now close my letter, as the time to which I am limited for writing it has nearly expired. I have other communications on hand for you, but I reserve them for a more direct and certain opportunity. Wishing you every blessing and all needful direction in every thing pertaining to the cause of God,

I remain, Rev. and dear sir,

Your's very sincerely,

JOHN GEDDIE.

REV. JAMES BAYNE, Sec. B. F. M.

*Ancitum, New Hebrides,
July 27, 1855.*

DEAR BRETHREN:

It is now seven years since I landed with my family on this island. During this period of time we have witnessed important changes, been subjected to no common trials and dangers, and experienced a more than ordinary measure of Divine goodness. I feel as if a review of the past ought to inspire in our hearts feelings of thankfulness to God who has sustained us hitherto, and induce us to more unreserved devotedness to his work.

HEALTH OF THE MISSION FAMILIES.

The mission families, I am glad to say, are well at present. While death has been making breaches in the mission on

the Loyalty Islands, where the diseases common to the New Hebrides are unknown, we have been spared. The painful bereavements to which our beloved friends have been subjected, teach impressively the uncertainty of life in the most salubrious regions, and the power of God to shield us in those which are unhealthy.

RECORD OF LABOURS—PREACHING.

I will now give you a brief record of our labours since the date of my last communication to you. The preaching of the gospel I regard as our first and most important duty among the natives. We endeavour, as best we can, to tell these poor islanders the wonderful works of God in their own tongue. Our efforts to make known the glad tidings of salvation have, I trust, not been altogether in vain. This has been God's most honored instrument for the conversion of souls in other ages and in other lands, and it has been so here. The exhibition of a crucified Saviour in the gospel has done more for the overthrow of satan's kingdom on this island than any other instrumentality used. As soon as we could tell these degraded savages of a Saviour's dying love, and not till then, did their hearts begin to melt. When expounding the essential truths of Christianity to the natives, we endeavour, as occasion offers, to expose to them the error, folly and impiety of their old superstitions, in order that they may be more effectually weaned from them, and feel more thankful to God, who has translated them from the darkness of heathenism to the light of the gospel. And the more they see the dark abyss from which they have been rescued, the more will their hearts be inclined to magnify the grace to which they owe their deliverance. We can now speak of ancient ideas and customs, with a freedom which at one time would have been offensive, or made our instruction repulsive.

To preach the gospel in a barbarous and heathen tongue is by no means easy. The difficulty arises from the paucity of words and phrases adapted to express religious ideas. There is, indeed, a fulness and variety in this language that makes it sufficient for the ordinary affairs of life; but, when made the vehicle of divine truth, its barrenness appears.—There are no technical terms of well understood import to aid us in imparting religious instruction. Hence circumlocution and varied illustration are necessary