

THE MISSIONARY REGISTER.

OF THE

Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia.

DORN, bless and pity us, shine on us with thy face,
That the earth thy way, and nations all, may know thy saving grace.—*Psalms* lxxvii. 1, 2

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FOREIGN MISSIONS.

LETTER FROM MR. MATHESON.

Aneiteum, Oct. 17, 1859.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—

You are probably in the receipt of our last letters sent by China. It so, you will be aware that we have left our station upon Tana for some time, and also of the cause of our having returned to Aneiteum. As twelve months have now nearly elapsed since our settlement upon Tana, and as missionaries are generally expected to write an annual report of their labors, I embrace the present opportunity of forwarding you a brief account of the manner in which we have been employed during the past year. During the first month of our residence upon Tana, my time was wholly occupied with manual labour about the house and premises. After that we began to apply ourselves as closely as possible to the acquisition of the language, which is the first thing demanding attention after you have a house in which to live. We soon succeeded in gathering up a sufficient number of phrases to enable us to converse a little with the natives in their own language. Early in January we opened a morning school at our station, which I superintended, and another at

a village called Anuakaraka, about a mile distant, which was conducted by Talip, one of the Aneiteum teachers. As might be naturally expected, the attendance at each of the schools was but small and very irregular for several weeks. Their conduct however while in school was much better than we could have expected, considering that they know nothing of the nature of a school—had never before seen a letter, and could not perceive any temporal advantage that might be gained by attending the school. One of our chiefs named Viavia, who lives quite near us, attended regularly, and soon mastered the alphabet, which he considered a great achievement. He appears very anxious to learn to read, and often used to go into the school room and point out the letters (which were pasted upon the wall), to others equally desirous to read, but not so far advanced. On the Sabbath we had three places of public worship—the central one at our own station, in which we had service every Sabbath morning; one at Anuakaraka, and the third at a village called Kuamara; at each of those two stations we had service every alternate Sabbath afternoon. Having no Church, or even a large school house at our station, we were obliged to as-