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Copy of Instructions to Mr. Dibble.

[Delivered in the Second Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn,
Oct. 6, 1839.]

The Prudential Committee of the American
Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the
Rev. Sheldon Dibble, about returning to the Sand-
wich Islands.

Beloved Brother;

You are now about to end
what you regard as your exile in your native
land, & you hail with gladness your return
to the home of your adoption, far away in the
islands of the sea. There, not here, is your home—
for Jesus' sake, & for the sake of the multitudes
bought with his blood, whom he is now bring-
ing into his kingdom through the gospel. Anima-
ted, as we trust, by his Spirit, who though rich in
heaven for our sakes became poor on earth, you find
delight in resuming the missionary life. And

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You will know well what that life is. Your seven years' experience in the field forbids those romantic feelings, which you may once have had, & which often, no doubt, find a place in the heart of him who for the first time girds on his armor. And yet you rejoice. Aye, & well you may — so long as it is a truth that Jesus died, & that the gospel is not a fiction, & so long as the command is remembered to publish that gospel every where, & the promise, that the Saviour will grant his gracious presence to those who obey that command. Who may rejoice, if the missionary may not? Who is more certainly doing his duty as a Christian? Who is more sure of the divine favor? And, of a crown of glory that fadeth not away? Yes, the missionary — the missionary returning to his field — he who goes forth expecting no more to see the home of his youth, & to die for Christ's sake in foreign lands, — he has a claim on joy, beyond all question greater than that of other men. And he does rejoice. After nearly twenty years of the most intimate converse with missionaries, in a situation most favorable to know, we declare

our belief, that, as a ³body, missionaries among the heathen are the happiest of men. The promise to be with always, uttered by the Saviour, is not mere idle words. They have delightful consciousness of its truth. And herein may you, beloved brother, rejoice, & your joy no man taketh from you.

The field to which you are returning has some special allurements to one who takes pleasure in doing good. No where over the wide world are there such indications as there, of a harvest prepared for the sickle. The mission, from its commencement in the year 1820, has been singularly favored of the Lord. Its history is unparalleled in the records of the Church, since the days of the Apostles. Nor has the history of the people of the Sandwich Islands, for twenty years past, a parallel in the history of nations, except only that of God's ancient people, the Jews. There has been a remarkable series of interpositions of God's providence & grace, all along, from the abrogation of idolatry, just twenty years since, down to the late wonderful turning to the Lord.

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Such a series, indeed, as ought to arouse the Churches from their long sleep over the ruins of the world, & urge them upon a mighty effort for its Spiritual renovation.

You are expected to embark, with your family, early in the present week, in the Ship *Lausanne*, Capt *Spaulding*, bound to the Sandwich Islands. You will be joined with the society of *Cuthbert* in the same work, though of a different religious denomination & proceeding to another field, with whom you will doubtless take delight in going of ten, during the voyage, to the throne of grace in company.

As the spring opens, if the Lord is pleased to give you a prosperous voyage, you will behold the towering summits of Hawaii. And anon there will be the meeting! Brethren in Christ, after a wide separation, will meet on a distant shore, & relate to each other their mutual experience of the Lord's goodness. What an interview!

How like the meeting ^{5.} of saints in another & happier land! What holy fellowship! What thumns for grateful praise! We charge you salute the brethren in our behalf with a holy kiss of charity. Tell them that we remember them in their prosperity, & shall remember them if they shall experience adversity. Tell them that they have our confidence & our love, & shall have our best endeavors to procure them the means of filling the islands, as they went forth hoping to do, "with schools, & churches, & fruitful fields, & pleasant dwellings." You are our epistle to them, a living epistle, & we commission you to say a thousand things, which we would gladly say in person, but cannot write. Make a true & faithful report of all you have seen & heard, during your sojourn among us. Despise not our day of small things, & bring not up an evil report of the churches of your native land, in your communications with your brethren. The spirit of missions in our churches is yet in its infancy; but it exists; it is genuine; it grows

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& gains strength continually, though not rapidly;
& we are looking & praying for the putting
forth of that divine influence, which shall
develop its gigantic powers in all the closely
related departments of Christian benevolence.
However much we may lament the imperfect
zeal & enterprise of the churches in this work
of the Lord, it is not to be presumed, that any
of us are so far advanced beyond a state of
partial sanctification, as to be authorized
to throw the first stone, on this account; &
the Committee have learned that harsh lan-
guage, in appeals & remonstrances addressed to
the Christian community, does no good. There-
fore entreat the brethren of the mission to be
meek & mild, however earnest they may be in
their calls upon the churches for aid; to entreat
with all long suffering; to plead as fellow-
sinners, not in anger, but in love. So far as we
are able to discern the aspect of the times, as
seen in the world of trade & commerce, we dare
not authorize you to promise your mission an
exemption from second curtailment, which shall
be more trying than the first; though we have

strong hopes it may be avoided. It seems to be God's design to teach his people what is in their hearts, that they may thus be led to repentance - to shew them how little hold the advancement of his cause among the heathen really has upon their affections; & also, by the fearful disasters thus brought upon the missions, as when some mighty conflagration consumes millions of wealth, to convince all, even the incredulous world, that the expenditures of missionary societies & the labors of missionaries have not been in vain. In the calamities that may possibly be coming, Dear Brother, be patient, & have faith in God; for the end of these things will be good. God's ways are never so mysterious, as when he has some wonderful work to perform, & the deepest darkness precedes the breaking of the day.

The annual meeting of the mission will come soon after your arrival at the islands. The Committee have advised, from motives of economy both in time & money, that this meeting be hereafter a delegated, & not a general, meeting.

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At the same time, we are aware of the strong reasons in favor of a general meeting of the mission once a year, & are prepared to acquiesce in such a meeting, if, as the result of experience, the mission is decided in the opinion that it is expedient.

The work of national renovation among the islanders, will be just in that state of progress at the time of your arrival, that it must be set forward still further by a decisive impulse from without, or there will be danger of reaction & retrocession. Of this the mission appears to be fully aware; & could the patrons at home only become as much so, the means would doubtless be provided. But you have found by experience how difficult it is to make the subject well understood & strongly felt at home. The case, however, is a plain one. Scarcely less than ten thousand souls have there been gathered in a single year into the visible church; but these converts are generally

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ignorant, without regular employment, & residing where but an imperfect watch can be kept over their conduct; - & what is there to shield them from temptation, or guard them from apostasy? They cannot long remain where they now are. There is a strange discrepancy between their religious professions & engagements, & their social condition. Having no right to the soil, & being tenants at will, they of course have no powerful motive to industry, no habits of active employment, no proper foundation for intellectual independence & social happiness. Nor do the rulers yet know how to render their system of government a blessing to the nation. The whole national mind, from the highest to the lowest, is yet entirely dependent on their foreign teachers for all manner of instruction. There is not one person among the twelve thousand native church members, who is sufficiently educated & experienced to be ordained as pastor of the small

est native church.¹⁰ There is not one qualified to be a professor in the Seminary. Comparatively few, if any, are competent to stand alone as instructors of common schools. They have no intelligent physicians, civilians, or artists. They have no idea of power, except that which is arbitrary; none of obedience, except what is servile. O how much is wanting, to enable them to exist & rise as a Christian community! And how soon must this be supplied, to enable them to rise at all, & secure a permanent national existence!

Now you will call the prayerful attention of your brethren to this momentous subject, until light begins to shine upon it. We do not despair, & you should not. The Lord hath indeed a controversy with his people; but if he meant to suffer these islanders to waste away & be destroyed, one may venture to believe that he would not have interposed so marvellously, ~~for their rescue~~ as he has done, for their rescue.

The appointment of Mr. Richards, by the King & Chiefs, as their chaplain, teacher, & interpreter, and his willingness to have his connection with the mission dissolved that he might accept that appointment, are omens for good, showing how the Lord can unexpectedly provide for the emergencies which arise in his providence. And it may be found, that the very pressure upon the funds of the mission, will operate as a motive upon the natives to come forward, sooner than they would otherwise do, in aid of their infant Christian institutions. How far it is wise to urge the duty of doing this upon the native churches, is a point to which many of our thoughts have been directed, & which will demand the best discretion of the mission. We perceive that the subject is environed with difficulties. The scriptures throw but little light upon it. The great apostle to the gentiles did not think proper to allow some of the churches

he planted to administer to his support, lest his influence over them should thereby be impaired; but this privilege he allowed to ~~some~~ ^{others}, as, for instance, the churches in Macedonia. It is certainly desirable, if it can be done without danger of the evils dreaded by the apostle, that the native churches should furnish some part at least of the support ~~of the support~~ of all their religious teachers at the islands. It is right in principle that they should do this, even though their poverty be great. The institutions of the gospel we have planted among them, are their own, & for their exclusive benefit. And ultimately, if these institutions are to be permanent on the islands, the native community must support them entirely. What the Committee desire is, that the native churches may be put, as soon as may be on the footing of the feeble churches in our new settlements, & that each church engage to pay a certain portion of its missionary pastor's sal-

ary, on condition that the residue be furnished from the treasury of the Board, or, what is the same thing, from that of the mission. We well know that the natives can be trained to this only in a gradual manner, & as the result of much painstaking & patient labor. The raising of a hundred dollars in this manner, would cost the missionary more time, labor, & trouble, at first, than the money alone would be worth. He would be obliged to apportion the sum among his people, minutely arrange the whole business, attend personally to the reception of the articles which each should contribute, (for the common people have no money,) & then to their disposal, so that they might really aid in his support. We can hardly conceive of a more unpleasant way of providing for our family; but neither can we conceive of any other method of teaching the natives

how to support the ¹⁴institution of the
gospel among themselves, nor how we
may create among them the habit of do-
ing this. The process by which this is
done among ourselves, is so simple & moves
so easily, that we forget how much wis-
dom & time have been required to bring it
to its present perfection. Remember, Dear
Brother, that if this experiment is not
made now, by your mission, there is no
prospect of its being made elsewhere,
for a long time to come. Some, in the
order of reasoning from extreme prin-
ciples, may object to this, as an attempt
to save the churches at home from a
wholesome burden; but no man in the
full exercise of his reason will argue
thus. Could the nation churches at the is-
lands be induced to assume & maintain
the footing of our feeble churches until
they can stand unaided, that fact alone
would be a lever of mighty power to induce

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the Christian community to carry the work of missions as speedily as possible through all the islands of Polynesia.

At any rate, the Committees are of opinion, that the native churches should be made to feel it to be their duty to support their own native teachers. This is a point on which the Committees suppose there can be no doubt, in respect to the Sandwich Islands. And the inquiry should also be made from year to year, in the annual meeting of your mission, how far the native churches can be induced to support the scholars in the boarding schools, or at least those scholars, who are hopefully pious & in a course of liberal education. It would be worth a special agency & great labor to bring this about - not so much on account of the saving in the funds which are raised at home, (though this is an important consideration) as that these institutions may be nationalized,

& be rendered independent of all foreign aid as speedily as may be. The nation, the native churches, the colleges, academies & schools, & all the other institutions appertaining to a civilized & christian community, which we are seeking, in dependence on divine aid, to introduce among them, should be placed, at the earliest possible time, in a situation to stand without us. This is the result at which you & we are aiming, & it is one we have a right to expect; - though probably not until after most of us have rested from our labors.

The Committee have perceived with great pleasure, that some natives connected with the seminary at Lahainaluna have taken up the art of engraving on copper, & have engraved & printed an atlas of maps in a perspicuous & respectable style. Now could not those native engravers be set up in the business, with-

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out pecuniary risk to the mission, & on their
own responsibility, do the work of copper-
plate engraving & printing for the mission
& for their own people? And could not those
natives, too, who have been taught in our
printing establishments to print & bind
books, be put in the way of doing busi-
ness for themselves on a small scale, by
being furnished with printing for the
mission? In this manner, under judi-
cious management, the time may perhaps
be hastened, when the press shall become
fully domesticated at the islands, & exert
its powers & scatter its blessings without any
other aid than it shall derive from the
reading capacities & habits of the people.
The Committee are by no means confident
that the time has come for these things,
& these inquiries are therefore to be regarded
merely as suggestions.

Your particular connection in the

mission, Dear Brother, ¹⁸ is with the Sem-
inary at Lahainaluna, as one of its three
professors. The Committee share deeply with
you & your associates in the regret that they
have had & now have no greater amount
of funds to place at the disposal of this
highly important institution. The spacious
edifice already erected will accommodate
thrice the number of students now there;
& the extraordinary circumstances of the
nation, in consequence of the late wonder-
ful outpouring of the Holy Spirit, de-
mand that the Seminary should have
its full complement of pupils. We feel,
too, that there should be a more ample
supply of apparatus & of books, & also
a medical professor; together with the
means of facilitating the self-supporting
manual labors of the scholars, when out of
school, on the lands appropriated to the sem-
inary by the government. And who does
not see, that numerous manuals & text-
books, in the secular & sacred departments

of learning, should be prepared & printed
in the native language? Mind can nowhere
be educated there, without appropriate means & in-
struments, than it can here; & why should a lib-
eral & learned education be deemed more essential
here, than there? You need not fear that this
important institution will be overlooked, or un-
dervalued by the Committee. We believe it to be
vital to the success of all your other institutions
— the mainspring in the system of means em-
ployed to renovate the islands. [¶] Nor must the sem-
inary for educating females, in another district
of Maui, be suffered to languish. It is not
less essential to our main object, than the other.
Indeed the other must in a great measure fail
without it, as the educated man is but half
educated, if denied an educated wife. Nor can
the deep fountains of intellectual & moral ruin
at the islands be reached & purified, nor the na-
tive mind be freed entirely from the shackles of su-
perstition, nor the foundations for virtuous & honora-
ble character be properly laid, except through the
medium of early maternal influence. Both sexes

must rise together. ²⁰ The wife, the mother, the woman, is relatively as powerful in her influence there, as she is here; & here the power & importance of her influence are yet too much overlooked. As soon as the necessary funds are at command for the purpose, the seminary at Wailuku should be made the counterpart of that at Lahainaluna; though we do not mean by this, that it should be endowed as expensively as the other, either in buildings, library, apparatus, or teachers. The best teachers, indeed, for female seminaries, provided they are properly educated, are females. ^A It having been settled by experience, that the most economical & satisfactory method of supporting missionaries is by fixed salaries, rather than on the plan of common stock, it is probable that the Committee will be prepared to determine on the amount of salary in your mission, early in the ensuing year. But in respect to the other specific appropriations, & perhaps even in respect to that, much will be referred to the discretion of the mission. The practice, however, of limiting the sum total of the annual expenditures in

each mission, has²¹ become & will remain a part of our system. The mission will make the best use of their appropriation in their power, & will report through the Treasurer of the Board, as to the manner of its disposition. Should special grants be made by the Committee to your Seminaries, or press, or to any other object, these will of course be respected; but otherwise, in appropriating the annual grant made by your mission to its specific objects, the mission will be authorized to vary, if it sees reason for doing so, from the schedule of necessary expenditure it had previously forwarded, & which the Committee had before them when determining the amount of the grant.

If our remarks thus far have had a business aspect, that was a thing of course. So far as human agency is concerned, the work of bringing a barbarous nation under the steady & permanent influence of the gospel, is a business, an arduous labor, involving a multitude of cases that demand the suggestions of experience & reflection. The work is not one to

be entrusted to dashing, ²²unreflecting minds.
It is not to be accomplished by mere itinerant
~~set forth~~ ^{proclamations} ~~of~~ the gospel. It never was so ac-
complished. Leviathan was never thus tamed. The
cause must be adapted to the effect, the means
~~is~~ suited to the end. There is the same scope,
the same demand for talent & wisdom in the
missionary work, that there is in any other; &
we are specially concerned with the work
as a labor, a business, an enterprise, on an oc-
casion like the present.

Perhaps the Committee ought
not to bring these counsels to a close, with-
out adverting to the extraordinary number
of native converts admitted to the church
during the late revival at the islands.
Whatever the result may be, there can be no
doubt that there was an error in several
of the churches in receiving members upon so
short a probation. And there is strong reason
to apprehend serious evils in those churches,
as the result of that error. But the danger
most apprehended by the Committee is, that
Satan will take advantage of such evils to
betray the brethren into mutual crimination, &

thus give rise to alienations & divisions in the mission. Let the first symptoms of so monstrous an evil be met on all hands by that heaven-born spirit, which leads the possessors in lowliness of mind to esteem others better than themselves, and which is a spirit of love & conciliation of irresistible power to bind together the hearts of good men. Better disband those churches altogether, than suffer them to become the occasion of disunion among yourselves. But should the churches, to which we refer, disappoint our fears, & through a miracle of grace, adorn their profession, we must still entreat the brethren to avoid the repetition of so fearful a risk in future;— if for no other reason, out of deference to the views & feelings of the great body of their patrons. The tidings of that glorious work of the Spirit at the Sandwich Islands, has exerted far less influence among us than it would have done, had there been no precipitancy in admitting members in some of the churches, even had the number of admissions been not half so great as it was.

And now, beloved Brother & Sister, we bid you arise & go forth. Go in the name & strength of the Lord of hosts. Go from country & friends, & toss upon the ocean-billows, & dwell afar off upon the sea-girt islands of the great Pacific. Go make your home among a people once degraded, intellectually, morally, socially, below the utmost depths of our conceptions; now raised, through the gospel of the ^{grace} power of God, to the consciousness of spiritual life, & made to sit in heavenly places, & to exult in the hope of immortality & eternal blessedness. Go, not as travellers, not as merchants, not as votaries of science, but as humble missionaries of the cross of Christ. Live as such; & when you die, let the simple monument erected over your graves tell what you were, that the traveller, the merchant, the votary of science may read, & have their thoughts elevated, for a moment at least, from earth to heaven, from time to eternity. Your title, the work it implies, the call to the profession, & the reasons which justify it, all have a primary rela-

tion to what ²⁵lies beyond the bounds of time,
beyond the limits of the world. Go, then,
& live & die as missionaries of the cross of
Christ. Like Paul, determine to know
nothing but Christ crucified. And oh, when
the archangel's trump shall be heard on those
islands, & you shall start into life, many
thousands rise with you to testify to your
faithfulness as missionaries of Christ en-
trusted with the gospel for them. "Now the God
of peace, that brought again from the dead
our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the
sheep, through the blood of the everlasting
covenant, make you perfect in every good
work to do his will, working in you that
which is well pleasing in his sight, through
Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever & ever".

With this prayer, & the blessed hope
it inspires, we bid you, beloved Brother &
Sister, an affectionate farewell.

By order & in behalf of the Prudential Committee,

Missionary House, Boston,
Oct. 5. 1839.

R. Anderson,
D. Greere, } Secretaries.
W. J. Armstrong,

Copy of the
Instructions delivered
to Rev. Helder Dibble:

for the
Andros Island Mission.
