

that they are perishing for lack of knowledge and that gross
darkness covers the land. In the time of sickness, and at the
near prospect of death their situation is truly distressing. They
will pray, and that sincerely, but also how awful are their
petitions! The most respectable characters amongst them, for
there is a great difference, will with the utmost fervor
of soul ^{use} words of nearly the same import in the English
Tongue, as in general, the most hardened sinner in a
Christian land would shudder at in the time of severe
illness or at his dying hour. A few days ago one of
the scholars was taken very ill. I heard the prayers of
his father over him, and saw his motions. The poor blind parent
instead of impertuning the Supreme Being as one would
have imagined for the recovery of his son, was uttering the
most dreadful curses and imprecations against him. When
I asked him his reasons for the use of such language, he replied,
it was a good thing at New Zealand. He did it to frighten
the Ara away who would otherwise, very probably have
destroyed his son. The boy had been out in the rain a
whole day, and had caught a severe cold; but the natives
will not allow that excessive heat a cold, or being long
out in the wet can hurt a man. They ascribe every pain