

That Foreign Mission Committee appointed 45 years ago is the foreign mission work of our church first taking definite, visible, shape.

Next year they reported progress, and were authorized to select a field and appoint a missionary. They met Sept. 24, 1845, and after much prayerful consideration chose the South Sea Islands as their field, and Rev. John Geddies as their missionary. Of that committee that first opened our mission work among the heathen, the only survivors are Rev. George Christie and Sir William Dawson.

Mr. Geddies spent a year in visiting the church and learning what he could of medicine and the mechanical arts, and sailed from Halifax Nov. 30, 1846. Reaching the South Seas he chose as his field the New Hebrides and landed on

#### ANEITEUM,

the most southerly island of the group, July 29, 1848, over 41 years ago. The people were low-sunken in savage barbarism; feuds and fighting were constant—killing and eating each other the custom. Maidens when married, had, instead of a marriage ring, a cord tied on their neck. With this they were strangled if the husband died before them, that they might accompany him and serve him in the spirit world. For some fifteen years previous to this native teachers from Samoa had been laboring there, but not much impression had as yet been made on the mass of heathenism. Our missionary, in bodily presence weak, but strong in faith, went to work, amid dangers and hindrances, both from natives and sandal wood traders, and on May 18, 1852, less than four years after he landed he organized a church by the baptism of 13 converts.

A few weeks later John Inglis of the reformed church of Scotland was settled on the other side of the island, and in two years more, or six years after Mr. Geddies landed, there were 30 schools, 2,600 of the people attended public worship, while the whole population, about 4,000, had practically renounced heathenism.

For the onward history of that mission let few words suffice. He came home on furlough in 1864. During his absence his station was wrought by Rev. William McCullagh, sent out by our church, who remained in the mission about three years. Mr. Geddies returned, labored six years and died of paralysis Dec. 15, 1872, aged

57. He died early but he lived long.

Rev. J. D. Murray, formerly settled in Antigonish, succeeded him, remaining four years, when he removed to Australia.

Mr. Annand, who had been laboring in Fila, was now settled in Aneiteum, remaining until 1884, when, owing to the decreasing population, it was felt that two missionaries were no longer needed. Our work there was handed over to the Free Church of Scotland, which had the mission on the other side of the island, and Mr. Annand, after a visit home, went north from Aneiteum, the most southerly island of the group, to Santo, the most northerly, to open a new mission. The people of Aneiteum have for some time had the Bible in their own language, paid for by their own labor, chiefly in the production of arrow root, and probably as large a proportion of them can read it as in Nova Scotia.

Fifty miles N. W. from Aneiteum lies  
TANNA.

John Williams first placed three native teachers there in 1839, nine years before the Geddies went to Aneiteum. One died; the others had to leave. Three years later, Messrs. Nesbit and Turner, of the London missionary society, the first European missionaries to settle in any part of the New Hebrides, landed there, but in seven months they had to flee for their lives in an open boat. For the next 15 years, it was not deemed safe for missionaries to settle but native teachers at intervals labored there. In 1853 small pox was introduced by a trading vessel, and made fearful havoc. The heathen were angry, murdered some of the native Christians, and the only surviving teacher escaped to Aneiteum.

Next year two teachers went from Aneiteum (where Mr. Geddies had been working for six years), and prepared the way once more for European missionaries, and, as we look in upon the island in 1858, and 9, we find Mr. and Mrs. Paton, from the Reformed church of Scotland, and Rev. J. W. Matheson, of Green Hill, Pictou, and his wife. We see them joined July 6th, 1860, by Rev. S. F. Johnson, from Stewiacke, and his wife, and prospects are bright on Tanna. Soon they darken. Measles are brought by a vessel, and spread rapidly and fatally. Hurricanes sweep the island, and destroy the plantations and food. The new religion