

Church in England. Born at Dun, Scotland, April 1st, 1815, arrived in China, November, 1847.—Died at port of Nieu-chang, 4th April, 1868. 2 Corinthians, chap. v."

Ten Years in the New Hebrides.

By REV. P. MILNE, OF NGUNA.

TEN years ago Aneityum was the only Christian island in the group, and there were printed in the language of that island the New Testament and several small portions of the Old Testament; now the whole Bible is printed, as also the Shorter Catechism, the Pilgrim's Progress, etc., etc., the whole of which have been edited by the Rev. John Inglis, he and Dr. Geddie being the sole translators, and for the payment of which the Aneityumese have contributed the sum of £1,700 in arrowroot. Mr. Lawrie is now Free Church missionary.

Ten years ago Aniwa and Futuna were all but heathen islands, with nothing, or next to nothing, printed in the language; now Aniwa is a Christian island, the whole population attend Church and school, and a good many of them are Church members. There are seven schools taught by native Aniwan Christians; the greater part of the New Testament and small portions of the Old are translated. The Gospels by Matthew and Mark, the Acts of the Apostles, and several other portions are printed. And although on Futuna the work has been much retarded through the long absence of Mr. Copeland (Free Church), owing to ill-health, I think I am safe in saying that about half of the population there regard themselves as worshipping people; some of whom, though not yet baptized, act as teachers, and go and preach the gospel to their heathen countrymen. The substance of all the four Gospels are now in print in the Futuna dialect.

Ten years ago Messrs. Neilson (Free Church) and Watt had been but recently settled on Tanna, and it was still a question whether they would have to flee for their lives, as Messrs. Turner and Nisbet had to do in 1843, and Messrs. Paton and Matheson had again to do in 1861; but they have been, through the help of God, able to continue until now, and preach the gospel to thousands, and translate the most of the New Testament into the language of the people, part of which Mr. Watt has printed with his own hands. And when I saw Mr. Watt in December last, on my way home, he seemed to be more hopeful than ever I saw him before. He has just formed a communicants' class, and hoped to be able to baptize some of them soon. And what seemed to encourage him most was the fact of all those who were worshipping people before he came home on furlough continuing to be so during his absence and when he returned none of them had gone back to heathenism.

Ten years ago Christianity on Eromanga was at a very low ebb indeed. Mr. McNair had just died, and soon after that Mr. Gordon was killed, and there were not above eight or ten church members alive on the island. Two years ago there were fifty church members, twenty-five of whom were stationed out as teachers. A good many more have been baptized since then. The majority of the people are now favourable to Christianity; and if there were a second missionary along with Mr. Robertson, to take up the work on the other side of the island, heathenism on Eromanga would, in all probability, soon be a thing of the past. The New Testament is nearly all translated; Genesis, Matthew, Luke, and the Acts are now in print.

Ten years ago there were but two Christian villages on Efate. There are now five Christian villages on that island, and other five or six villages partially so. Genesis, Mark, Luke, and the Acts are printed, and Exodus is ready for printing.

Ten years ago I was appointed to Nguna, a small heathen island, about five miles north from Efate, where no missionary had ever been before; on which island, and on several other small ones near to it, principally Pêle and Mataso, I have been labouring ever since, and although it has been a time of sowing rather than reaping, I am happy to be able to say that I am now beginning to see some fruit. Last year I baptized thirty-four adults and seven children. Up to that time I had baptized only six adults and one child. There are thus now in all forty church members in full communion, and eight baptized children. Two of those baptized last year are chiefs, one of whom is the highest chief on the island. He had ten wives, but before his baptism he put them all away except one. That one and three of the others were baptized along with himself, as also his two sons with their wives, and one daughter.

Nearly every island of the New Hebrides is so, and asking for missionaries, and we have none to give them. We have been able to occupy as yet scarcely one-third of the group. We would require at least thirty or forty missionaries to enable us to overtake the whole group. The largest and the finest islands still remain unoccupied. About one hundred thousand people still remain in heathenism, most of whom never heard the gospel. About twenty different languages are spoken, requiring as many separate translations of the Bible. The whole Bible has as yet been translated into only one of these languages, thus leaving eighteen or nineteen translations, in whole or in part, yet to be made. Surely, then, those who think that the New Hebrides is too small and unimportant a field for them to go to, make a great mistake.

We are anxious also to have a medical missionary to be stationed on Efate, the most central island of the group, where there is a fine harbour, at which all ships going down to the islands call to get water.