

## THE 'NEW HEBRIDES.

## ANETHYUM.

Though this island is no longer ours, but given over to the care of the Free Church Missionary, Mr. Lawrie, the interest that has so long centred in that name has not yet died out, and the following statement from its missionary as given in the *Free Church Monthly*, will be welcome:

"The general mission work on this island still continues to be encouraging; all our ordinary meetings are being kept up with regularity, and the Sabbath forenoon services at all the stations are usually well attended. Our eight a. m. Sabbath morning schools for boys and girls are kept up at seven different stations on the island. This is an institution of only three years' standing. Previous to that we had Sabbath afternoon Bible classes at all the villages for old and young; but there was no Sabbath gathering specially for the young—the lambs of the flock.

"Our Sabbath morning schools owe their origin to a little Leith girl of four years who sent some handkerchiefs and pretty cards 'for my best Sabbath-scholars.'

"On questioning myself I found that I had week-day scholars, but of really Sabbath scholars I had none. At the very next meeting of our session, I tried to enlist the sympathies of the elders, got my best deacon to act as monitor, and established the Sabbath school at Aname.

"Now we have a similar gathering at Ahelcauhat, Umej, Anumej, Inyathpoig, Uca, Itau. Parental authority is very lax among these natives. This may be owing to the ease with which any boy may obtain all that is necessary to sustain a native's life—namely, roots, fruits, water, and fish. If offended at home, a boy will remove to the next village without hesitation, where he may live for months until the cause of his displeasure has died out. We feel anxious to influence the young as much as we can, lest the coming generation relapse into former heathen habits. It is a fact that witchcraft and sorcery are still practised on this island by a limited few.

"We have often wished and prayed for 'showers' of blessing to fall upon this people. Two evenings ago I was sitting wondering why even the 'droppings' were so few and far between. We heard a scratching noise at the window. We lifted the blind, but saw nothing, it being very

dark. A few minutes more there came a tap-tap at the study door. It was 9-30 p. m., and raining hard. I was astonished, and could not think who it could be at that hour, when most of the natives had retired to rest. I opened the door, and found it to be an intelligent native with a Bible under his arm, who could not retire to rest until he got a portion of Scripture explained. He expressed himself anxious, and wished to seek refuge from the wrath to come. I sat with him until 11 p. m., and tried to point this Nicodemus to Jesus, the seeking sinner's Saviour. In prayer this man compared himself to the hundredth sheep which was lost, but now rejoiced in having been found by Jesus himself.

"Such cases as the above whet our appetite for more real spiritual fruit of our labors; but in this we are reminded that 'this wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' So in all mission work we must learn to labor and to wait.

"Four cases came recently before our session, of church members having fallen into the sin of intemperance. Many of the inland 'kava' planters persist in keeping up the practice, as they say it is an article of barter with the shore people for cloth and tobacco. The chiefs, however, made a raid lately upon the districts where the kava plant grows, and over a hundred plants were rooted up, a portion of which, along with a wooden kava basin, was brought and burned in the presence of the missionary.

"During the months of September and October I made a parochial visitation of all the districts on both sides of the island. This helps to keep alive the interest of those people most distant from the mission station.

"The difficult paths to some of the places prevent frequent visitation; as, for instance, I had to go six miles by boat, then cross five ridges, up hill and down dale, before I reached the most distant village on the Anelcauhat side. Mrs. Geddie is the only white lady who has ever accomplished that part of the journey, and she was carried by natives most of the way on a sedan chair.

"Dr. and Mrs. Gunn and family spent two months on this island as a change and rest from their work among the Futunese.