

Committee of the Presbyterian church of Victoria.

ANEITYUM.

It is with a feeling of regret that we present our last report from this island. Here our first missionary, Rev. Dr. Geddie the first foreign missionary sent out by any colonial church, began his work. Here was the scene of his toil and triumph, and for nearly two score years the name "*Aneityum*"—has been dear to our people. A few years after Dr. Geddie's settlement, he was gladdened by the arrival of Rev. Dr. Inglis of the Reformed Presbyterian church in Scotland,—who settled on the opposite side of the Island, and the two stations have ever since been maintained by their respective churches. Five years ago the Mission Synod forwarded a resolution, respectfully entreating F.M. committees, of this Church and of the Free Church of Scotland, with which the Reformed Presbyterian Church had united, to consult as to the propriety, in consequence of the decreasing population, of placing Aneityum as soon as possible under the charge of one missionary, the other to be freed from his station, and to be placed on one of the heathen islands. Your Committee, approved cordially of the resolution and entreaty, and, although feeling that our church had priority of claim, agreed to leave the whole matter to the Mission Synod as the best judges in the case, to remove either missionary, pledging itself to abide by the Synod's decision, provided the F. M. Committee of the Free Church would concur in this mode of settlement. The Free Church Committee resolved that it would be unwise to remove their missionary, and there the matter in the meantime ended.

On Mr. Annand's return a year ago, he again brought the matter before your Committee, and offered, even though he had been once removed, and had learned two languages, to leave Aneityum to the missionary of the Free Church, and go to Santo, the largest and most Northerly island of the group, or any other heathen island to which he might be appointed. Your Committee again opened correspondence with the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, offering, in the event of Mr. Annand concurring in, and the Mission Synod approving of, the proposal, to transfer Mr. Annand to Santo or such other island as the Mission Synod

might select, leaving Mr. Lawrie, if the F. M. Committee of the Free church, and the New Hebrides Synod, approved, to take charge of the whole island, and, as the Mission Synod have already expressed the opinion that a mission to Santo should not be attempted by a single missionary, this Committee would express the hope that should Santo be chosen, the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church of Scotland may see their way clear to the appointment of a colleague to be associated with Mr. Annand in this effort to extend the mission. The F. M. Committee of the Free Church replied, accepting the sole charge of the whole island of Aneityum, agreeing to correspond with Dr. Gunn, their missionary on Futuna leaving it with him and the Mission Synod to decide whether he should be transferred from Futuna to Santo. Should Dr. Gunn and the Synod decide against the transfer, they suggest that the Rev. J. G. Paton is empowered to select for the Presbyterian church in Victoria a new missionary, who might be associated with Mr. Annand in Santo, and they express strongly the opinion that any further development of the New Hebrides mission should be undertaken by the Australasian Churches. Your Committee on receipt of the above, remitted the matter to the Mission Synod, to take all necessary steps for the transference, on Mr. Annand's return, in the event of their approving of it, and reiterated its conviction of the desirableness of another missionary being associated with Mr. Annand in the occupancy of so large and important an island as Santo. They further brought to the notice of the Free Church Committee that there were mission premises at Aneityum belonging to this church, asking that this be taken into account, as the cost of breaking ground at Santo will be considerable. This question of property, the Free Church Committee, agreed to leave to the Mission Synod and Mr. Lawrie for equitable settlement, promising to pay the amount that may be decided by them.

Mr. Laurie has already assumed charge of the whole Island, and writes: "I have thus the superintendence of 36 village teachers, 2 main, and 4 branch stations. With the aid of native preachers we have kept up Sabbath services at each of these six churches during the year. Recently I have held daily Evangelistic services for three weeks devoting a week each to three