

my first visitation of the New Hebrides Mission.

FUTUNA.

We sailed from this island on the eve of the 24th of July, and reached the station of the Rev. Mr. Copeland, of Futuna, early the following morning. Futuna presents a most singular appearance. It is a high, bluff, almost square mountain of rock, rising abruptly from the ocean; and, as a stranger, you would wonder, on approaching it, what human beings could find to live upon there. On reaching the island, however, you are relieved in discovering that it is not by any means so unproductive of the fruits of the earth as it appeared in the distance. Upon it there are several fertile ravine-like tracts of land, which are capable of supporting a considerable population. The natives, who now number only about 900 souls, are a mongrel race, being partly of Malay and partly of Papuan extraction. Mr. Copeland has been living and labouring among these people for the last seven years; but yet, with all the well-known ability, prudence, perseverance, and previous missionary experience of this esteemed brother, the great mass of the Futunese are still the slaves of the absurd and abominable superstitions of heathenism. A few of these natives assembled on the Sabbath to listen to Christian instruction from the lips of the missionary, but none of them have yet even professedly embraced the Gospel; and we observed along the shore, among the overhanging crags in the vicinity of the mission station, as repulsive specimens of the nude and painted savage as we had any opportunity of seeing elsewhere, in the circuit of the group. But we are not to "despise the day of small things." It is man's to plant and to water, but God giveth the increase, and His word shall not return to Him void. We were gratified to find that so much important external and preparatory mission work had been effected at this station. In many respects the premises here are a model of convenience, and such as would at once impress you with a sense of the ingenuity and industry of the resident missionary. We were sorry, however, to learn that at the principal preaching station, a new church had been recently burnt down by the heathen, but glad and thankful that it has since been rebuilt. There are five places of worship in connection with Mr. Copeland's station, and about 100 people, on an average, attend at these, for Christian instruction on the Lord's Day. A catechism and a book of Scripture extracts have been translated into the native language and printed. The Gospel of Mark, also, is now ready for the press. There are three teachers here, viz., one Futunese, one Aneityumese, and one Savage Islander.

These take charge of three schools. Thirty of the natives are able to read. Four men have cut their hair, and six wear clothing.

TANNA.

From Futuna we sailed for Tanna, and, after a favourable passage of one night, arrived at Kwamera, once the station of the Rev. J. W. Matheson of our own Church, now, that of the Rev. W. Watt of the New Zealand Church. Mr. Watt enjoys in his sphere of labour, one great advantage, viz., that he is comparatively free there from those baneful influences which are being exerted on the minds of natives in many places on these islands by debased foreign traders. This is due, I understand, to the situation of Kwamera, which is often quite inaccessible by ship or boat, on account of the outlying reef, which affords only one narrow and difficult entrance to that region round about. The Tannese in the immediate neighbourhood of Kwamera, are, at least, apparently friendly towards their missionary, and we had satisfactory evidence, that both Mr. and Mrs. Watt are truly alive to the grave responsibilities of their important vocation, and that they have been assiduously and faithfully discharging the duties of their high position. There are six places of worship at this station, whilst about 250 natives occasionally attend church. The average attendance of late, has been 200. There are five Aneityumese teachers under Mr. Watt's superintendence. At each of the out-stations a few of the Tannese are learning to read. At the principal station there is a Sabbath reading school, attended by from 40 to 50. There is, also, a Sabbath School in the afternoon, attended by an equal number. There is a week-day school during the summer months, attended only by women, and held three days in the week, from one to five, p. m. The subjects taught are reading, writing and sewing. There are three elementary books in the hands of the natives.

MR. NEILSON'S STATION.

We next called at Port Resolution, where we were glad to meet with the Rev. Mr. Neilson, and to find that he and his estimable wife and their three dear children were all well. The locality of Mr. Neilson's station is elevated, and affords a lovely view of the semi circular harbour in front of the house, and of the undulating grounds lying beyond; the situation is also healthy, much more so than where Mr. Johnson and his fellow labourers and predecessors lived. We were conducted to the spot where lies the dust of Johnson and the first Mrs. Paton, whose missionary careers were so short, but yet, how greatly conducive to the advancement of the glori-