

idols, standing from four to ten feet high, are to be seen, while in the south the superstitious savages are content with rude water-worn stones of all shapes and sizes.

Some thousands of years ago the many languages might have been called dialects, but at the present day the only affinity that can be seen is in a few root words, such as the words for "earth," "water," "house," etc., in various forms, running through a few of the languages as at present spoken.

Even the structure of these languages, the one from the other, are distinctly different, so that each new missionary opening a new station has as a rule been obliged to begin exactly where Drs. Geddie, Inglis, and Paton began, getting from the lips of the heathen people among whom they settled, by many comical pointings and signs, as best they could the nouns, verbs, adverbs, etc., until by painstaking labor, aided by their very isolation from civilized surroundings, the Word of God has, to a greater or less extent, been translated into seventeen of these New Hebridean languages.

The real beginning of this great work was the settlement on Aneityum of native teachers from Samoa; but to the Rev. John Geddie, the Nova Scotian missionary, belongs the credit of having first reduced the language of Aneityum to a written form, the Gospel according to St. Mark, which he translated, being the first complete book published in any language in the western Pacific. The missionaries have all along endeavored to utilize the services of their most intelligent converts as teachers of their brethren. As soon as the back of heathenism was broken on Aneityum Dr. Geddie took charge of the printing-press, while Dr. Inglis established an institution for the training of native teachers.

Many of these Aneityum helpers sacrificed their lives while assisting to carry the gospel of peace to their heathen brethren on their own and other islands. Now, from many islands in the centre of the group, which were in the densest heathen darkness twenty years ago, numbers of Christian teachers have gone and are now helping to evangelize the more recently occupied islands farther north. In this aggressive work the reverend Messrs. Milne, Mackenzie, Macdonald, Robertson, and others have done noble service in training converts and following the example set by the founders of the mission, enlisting their sympathies in foreign service, besides keeping up a necessary staff of village teachers on their own respective islands.

The native teachers at present employed number about 180, mostly married men. These are under the superintendence of 18 resident missionaries, who each work from given centres, endeavoring to influence the whole surrounding region by the aid of these willing helpers.

The mission has now reached a stage when a further development is necessary. The United Synod last year (1894) decided to establish a native teachers' training institution for the group, the students to be drawn from