

On the island of Epi we note under the Nikaura station the peace which prevails, the opening of new schools, the increased attendance at school and Sabbath services, the eagerness of some of the people to possess books, and also the formation of a class for candidates for baptism, and some young men confessing that Jesus has won their hearts.

At Burumba station, on the island of Epi, we hear the same cry as at Nikaura for more teachers, and note an increased number of schools, the beginning of work among new tribes, the publication of the Gospel of Matthew in Bakian, and a fair number of natives under training as teachers.

On Nguna and the islands attached to that station the forward movement is shown by the establishment of schools in hitherto dark and heathen villages, and the number of teachers sent out to help in the evangelization of other islands.

From Havannah Harbor, island of Efate, we hear of continued accessions from heathenism, a dictionary of Efatese and other books printed.

At Eraker, Efate, (Mr. McKenzie's station) we observe with gratification the publication of new books paid for by the natives themselves, and the certain triumph of the Gospel is vindicated by the now wide open door on long closed Mele, and the earnest of further blessing is seen in the 52 persons who have renounced heathenism.

From the "martyr isle" of Erromanga we hear of the consolidation of the work among the natives, the publication of new books for their use, and payment being made by them to refund outlay by the Bible Society, and also to support teachers.

Then far away in the south of the group in "dark Tanna," as it is frequently called, in connection with Port Resolution station, not only do we learn of increased attendance at school and of new churches built, but we hear also the now familiar cry for teachers and rejoice over some added to the church.

At Aneityum, the first field taken by the mission, the services have been regularly held by the natives themselves during the absence of their missionary.

For these things we thank God and take courage.

**One Change in Fifty Years.** One contrast between now and fifty years ago, when our church decided to undertake mission work, is the decrease in the population of our first field, the New Hebrides. When the Geddies landed on Aneityum in 1848, the population of the island was about four thousand, and Rev. John Inglis, who was for many years a co-worker with Mr. Geddie, estimated that it must have been at one time ten or twelve thousand. In 1880 it was reduced to twelve hundred, and in 1893 to seven hundred and ten.

On Futuna, a small island, lying partly between Aneityum and Tanna, within sight of both, and occupied by the Free Church of Scotland, the population as late as 1873 had been reduced to about 800. Twenty years later, 1893, it was nearly 500, and then an epidemic of dysentery swept away one-fourth of the population, leaving it, according to last report, at 347. In Aniwa, where Dr. Paton labored from 1866 to 1881, the population in 1878 was 194, and last year 151.

With regard to the larger islands towards the north there is no means of comparison. The present population can be fairly estimated, but the past is unknown. The same causes, however, smallpox, measles, and other diseases introduced by traders, the labor traffic, etc., that have decimated the older mission fields, have been in some measure operative all over the group, and Prof. Drummond, who has himself visited the islands, has been so impressed by the decrease that in a missionary address in Edinburgh a few months since he made a statement to the effect that fifty years hence there will scarce be a native New Hebridean living upon the group. His prophecy is no doubt too strongly put, but the fact remains that these peoples are dying out, and their islands are destined to be the homes of some more enduring race.

**The "Santo" Fund.** The "Santo" Fund has done good service for the New Hebrides.

It was raised by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, East, for the purpose of helping to send a fourth missionary to the South Seas, and when the Church decided not to send another missionary in the meantime to that field, the Fund was kept "in retentus." Part of it was since used to erect a church for Mr. Annand, of which he writes, "It is a small building 18 x 26 feet, with a small porch, and is very comfortable and pretty. The frame and flooring are of good Australian hardwood, the roof of galvanized iron, the inside limed over wattle between the posts. The seats are the handiwork of your humble servant."

The remainder of the "Fund" has just been heartily voted, at Mr. Annand's request, for the Institution which is being established at Santo for the training of native teachers and pastors in the New Hebrides.

**From Efate.** "We dispensed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper twice during the past year," says Rev. J. W. Mackenzie, and on the two occasions I admitted thirty-three members. Among the remaining heathen on our side of the Island hostility has entirely ceased, and there is much friendliness. A teacher's house was lately built in their village, in the erection of which many of them assisted the Christian party. They gave the ground gratis. Their superstitious dread of sacred spirits and sacred places is gradually disappearing.