

of the Aniwas are Church members, and the whole population are professedly Christian.

#### ANNUAL MEETING.

We all reached Aniwa on Saturday, the 1st of July, and began our Annual Meeting on the Monday. We continued our sittings daily till the evening of the following Monday. The results of our deliberations were embodied in forty-three Minutes,—a copy of which, I trust, will be in your hands before this reaches you. Mr. Neilson, as you will see, was chairman, and I was clerk. It is but justice to say that all the members attended to the whole business of the meeting with exemplary diligence. It may seem wonderful to some what we could get to do or to talk about for seven long days. It must be remembered, however, that our work here is to be a great extent new and untried, and many questions come up requiring very careful consideration, and involving very important consequences. Moreover, we are anxious to reach as much unanimity as possible in all matters that come before us. On no question recorded in our forty-three minutes did we come to a vote. Our Annual Meeting is a very important institution. However, it is every year becoming a matter of more difficulty to bring us all together. To some of the brethren it involves a considerable loss of time to be present. But then it is their only holiday occasion; and after eleven months of isolation and solitude—it may be, also, more or less of sickness and danger,—it is looked forward to as a time of sweet social intercourse, alike cheering and refreshing to both the outer and the inner man. It brings us together at stated intervals, increases our acquaintance with one another, makes us all familiar with the position, prospects, and circumstances of the whole Mission; the difficulties of each station become, in some degree, understood by all; and the experience and counsel of all become available for the guidance of each. Above all it, tends to give unity and vigour to the arrangements and proceedings of the Mission, which is especially needed in a Mission such as this, composed of the representatives of so many Churches. I ought not to forget to say, that Mrs. Paton supplied the requirements of hospitality so abundantly, and with such a cheerful welcome, that every day was a day of feasting and gladness of heart.

#### VOYAGE.

It is also a great advantage for all of us to take a voyage now and again round the group in the "Dayspring," and see the other stations. It is three years now since I was round the Mission, and I felt very much gratified and cheered by what I saw during this voyage. I shall leave the brethren themselves to report on their own sta-

tions; a general remark or two is all I shall offer. I have at this time seen ten out of our twelve stations, that are or have been occupied by missionaries, and everywhere there is a steady, healthful progress: a great advance on what I saw three years ago. We have settled four new missionaries since that time, although we have lost two by death within the same interval. Our brethren are all labouring with earnest, unremitting diligence, and grappling with formidable difficulties in the spirit of men who have resolved to conquer them. Some of our younger brethren are not a little wild and visionary in their notions when they first come out. Their zeal is not always guided by knowledge; but after a year or two it is astonishing how these visions vanish,—how soon they realize their true position, and become as sound in their views, and practical in their plans, as the oldest and soberest among us could desire.

#### STATE OF EFATE.

I was afraid that the work might be going seriously back at our two vacant stations—Erakor and Epang—on Efate; but I was agreeably disappointed to find it otherwise. Mr Cosh has repeatedly, both in public and private, in the most generous spirit, born testimony to the fact that the people of Erakor, where Mr Morrison laboured, were, as might be expected in the circumstances, greatly more advanced, both in Scriptural knowledge and Christian character, than the people of Epang, where he laboured. When Mr Cosh went to Auckland last year his station was left in charge of Natonga, an Aneityum teacher, from my side of the island. He took ill in the early part of this year, and died shortly before the "Dayspring" went there on her first voyage. His widow and her two children returned home in the "Dayspring." Dr Geddie had another Aneityum teacher with him, from his side of the island, for Havannah Harbour, where another of his teachers is labouring; but he left him at Epang, to take charge of the station in the meantime. He was on his way to Efate eighteen months before that time, but his wife became so alarmingly ill with sea sickness that they had to be put ashore on Aniwa, and had remained there since. This teacher, Tupatai, had been six weeks there when I visited Epang, and he had nothing but good to say of the people. "The people of Epang," he said, "are not like the people of Aniwa: a great many of the people of Aniwa are not true Christians, but they are all true at Epang." After some further remarks he resumed his comparison, and said: "The people of Epang are not like the people of Aneityum. Many of the people of Aneityum are weak in their hearts, and do not come regularly to church