

ous cause to which they devoted their lives, who can tell? The graves of these two witnesses of the truth of Jesus are about the same distance from the residence of Mr. Neilson as that of the sainted Mrs. J. W. Matheson is from our own, on Aneityum. We would all, perhaps, naturally prefer having our sepulchre in the land of our nativity, and near by those who were dear to us in life, by the ties of nature, friendship, or grace; but if we sleep in Jesus, and so rise to everlasting life, at the voice of the trump of God, our prospects ought surely to make us feel that, after all, the place of our burial is a matter of very little consequence.

Both Mr. Neilson and his associate, Mr. Watt, can now preach fluently in the Tannese language, and have acquired an extensive acquaintance with native character and customs; and for this we should all be thankful. It is, however, discouraging to reflect that these missionaries and their predecessors, with all their talents, energy and devotedness have not yet succeeded in forming a Christian Church on Tanna. There is not a baptized person on the island, nor one who gives evidence of his having become the subject of a saving change. Some of those, indeed, who live about Port Resolution say that they are Christians, but when asked why they thought so, answered, "Because we do no work on Sabbath, but sleep." By this you may judge of the extent of their knowledge of the Gospel. It is now upwards of thirty years since Drs. Turner and Nisbet attempted to plant the standard of the Cross on this island, but still heathenism seems to prevail upon it unbroken. But we must not become "weary in well-doing, for, in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." "He that goeth forth bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him." Let us thank God and take courage if any can be prevailed upon even to *listen* to the reading and preaching of the word of life, and labour on in faith and hope, "till the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." At present the attendance at worship at Mr. Neilson's station is 120. There are three preaching places. About 25 read. There are two small elementary books, and the work of translating is diligently carried on.

Tanna is one of the most fertile islands in the New Hebrides. From the water's edge to the mountain tops, the most luxuriant vegetation everywhere abounds. Near the centre of the island rises to view one of the three active volcanoes of the group, the other two being on the isles of Ambrym, or Chynambrym, and Lopevi. The eruptions of the Tanna volcano occur about every five minutes, and the ashes

have been known to be carried out to sea as far as 40 miles. We had an opportunity of witnessing some magnificent eruptions during the night we were coasting along from Kwamera to Port Resolution.

#### ANIWA.

Having taken our leave of Tanna, we arrived after about twelve hours' sail at Aniwa, the isle on which Mr. Paton is now located. As you are aware, Mr. Paton spent the first part of his missionary life on Tanna, but, like Turner and Nisbet, was obliged to leave that island on account of the hostility of the heathen. On Aniwa he has now been labouring for a period of seven years, during which a very important change for the better has been effected in the history of the Aniwas, through his instrumentality. Nevertheless much land remains to be possessed among these natives. Although in their conversion from heathenism to the profession of the faith of Christ, Mr. Paton has much reason to bless the Name of the Lord, yet he has still trials not a few among them, trials which none but men of such earnestness and tenderness of heart as his are capable of enduring. Although all the natives on the islands are professedly Christian, they are yet very ignorant, many of them, at least, of even the first principles of the doctrines of Christ, and, practically, scarcely distinguishable from the heathen on the adjacent islands. But by the blessing of God attending the labours of Mr. Paton and his most excellent wife, I have no doubt but that, in a short time, there will be a native church on Aniwa, which, in many respects, shall be regarded as a model one.

The population of Aniwa is only 222, of whom 120 are males and 102 females. There has been a considerable decrease in the population during the past year—a remark which applies to these islands generally. There are 50 church members, 26 of whom are males and 24 females. The whole population attend church. There are five churches and schools. Two thirds of the people have got books and a considerable number are making satisfactory progress in reading. Three Aniwan books have been printed during the past year, viz., a primer, catechism and hymn book. Portions of Scripture, also, have been translated, printed and placed in the hands of the natives. There are two Aneityumese and one Eastern teacher on the island. These will take charge of the mission premises, and of the worship and work in general, during the absence of Mr. Paton and his family, who are, at present, cheering us with their presence, as our guests on their way to the colonies.