

in their favour. The same thing is to be seen on the neighbouring island.

#### THE MISSION WORK.

The missionary work goes on with little change on this island. Our time is fully occupied with our varied duties. Though the island is small, we often feel as if we were insufficient to overtake the labour before us. The life of a minister at home is one of ease when compared with that of a missionary on these islands; as I have had a trial of both I can speak from experience on this subject. You will better understand me when I say that we have to study, preach, translate print, dispense medicine, plan and superintend the erection of churches and school-houses, visit schools, go to the neighbouring islands, &c. Our duties are too numerous, and you will be quite prepared to hear that we perform few of them to our own satisfaction, and probably not to the satisfaction of others. But we serve a gracious Master, who once said to a poor woman, "She hath done what she could," and more will not be required of us.

#### VISITING THE SCHOOLS.

I am engaged in visiting my schools at the present time. This duty is performed twice a year by Mr. Copeland and myself, in our respective districts. It is a laborious duty, but the welcome that everywhere awaits us makes it a pleasant one. There are between 50 and 60 schools on the whole island, none of which are large, and others very small. A school on Aneiteum differs from a school at home. The scholars consist of persons of both sexes, and of every age from 70 years downward. It is indeed an interesting spectacle to see grand parents and grand children struggling to master the same simple lessons. Few of the old people will ever learn to read, but I endeavour to encourage them by telling them, that if they cannot get learning into their heads there is nothing to prevent them getting God's word into their hearts. Many of them, though unable to read, have treasured up portions of scripture in their memories; and there are very few persons on the island who cannot repeat the whole of our Catechism, which contains a summary of christian doctrine and duty. I trust that some

of these aged disciples who have been called into the Lord's vineyard at the eleventh hour, will be accepted by Him, though they can only offer the close of a life spent in the darkness of heathenism. We truly labour among a population of children who stand much in need of the good shepherd's care. In our visitations we are always accompanied by a party of natives, whose help is invaluable in travelling bad roads, climbing precipices, crossing streams, &c. Wherever we go the people are ready to receive us, and the best that the land can furnish is prepared for us. The collections of food on such occasions consist of taro, bananas, coconuts, sugar-cane and fowls or fish. The natives are very hospitable, and we can appreciate their kindness all the more because we know it is genuine. It is our practice in these visitations to give a small new book to all who can make use of them. During the past year we have been distributing portions of a scripture history prepared in the form of tracts of 8 pages each. These tracts are so arranged that each part is complete in itself, and yet when finished the whole may be bound up and form a connected history of the notable persons and events mentioned in the Bible. This little work is written in a plain familiar style, and appears to be much prized by the natives.

#### SANDAL WOOD TRADERS.

I must now turn to a more unpleasant theme. You are aware that there are two sandal wood establishments on the island. One of them is well conducted and the natives derive some advantages from it, as it furnishes them with the means of procuring clothing and other useful articles. The person in charge of it is an upright and moral man, friendly to the natives, and most honourable in all his dealings with them. All persons in his employ have orders to avoid interference with us at our work, and hitherto we have had no ground of complaint. The mission is under deep obligations to parties belonging to this establishment, for the removal of our brethren from Tana to this island when they were in danger, and for other acts of kindness. The other establishment is of a very different character, and from this quarter the mission has suffered many annoyances, and the natives have been exposed to a series of insufferable outrages. These things have been going on for years, and matters instead of improving have been getting worse. The forbearance of the