

was our communion, and the attendance was larger, in proportion to our numbers, than I ever remember.

#### OLD CALABAR.

The following paper, prepared by the Rev. M. Robb, who visited for the sake of health the stations of the American missionaries, was read to the Presbytery of Biafra :—

#### NATIVE AGENCY.

Corisco is a small island lying in a bay of that name. Its population is supposed to be about fourteen hundred; and, of course, there would not be scope for the labours of four missionaries at three stations, did they not devote themselves, though not exclusively, to the training of youth. The instruction of youth, and chiefly with the view of finding persons fit to teach others, is one of their principal objects.

At the station of Ugobi, under the care of Mr. De Heer, there is a school for Benga boys. At Evngasimba, under the care of Mr. Ogden, there is a school for Benga girls. An advanced school for Benga boys, under the care of Mr. Mackey, is at present discontinued, on account of Mr. Mackey's absence. At Alongo, Mr. Clemens has a school for mainland boys of different tribes.

These boys and girls are fed, clothed, and taught at the expense of the mission—the food, clothing, and housing being of the plainest kind, as it is right they should be. The expense of each child varies, with the station and the sex, from twelve to twenty dollars, or from £2 10s. to £3, *per annum*. This is the actual outlay for food, clothing, and books; but it is lessened by the value of the work done by the pupils. The males put up bamboo houses, tie roof mats, find and carry wood, help in boating, and keep the mission enclosures in order. In one year the girls' school paid their own expenses by making clothing, which was sold to the natives.

The girls' school is under the care of a young lady from America, assisted by a coloured female from Monrovia. The missionaries employ the bigger lads to teach the younger.

There appears to be no difficulty in getting Benga boys, and in retaining them. Benga girls are secured to be trained as wives for the Christian and instructed youths, by paying, at once, the sum usually paid in small instalments by a Benga man to the parents of his betrothed. They are then handed over to the mission, trained in the girls' school, betrothed to some of the young men, who repay the money; and, in due time, the parties are married. Five or six couples were thus united recently.

The pupils in these schools have, hitherto, been taught chiefly in the English language. This has been a necessity, as the mission has existed only ten years, and books in the native language cannot be prepared in so short a period.

One Benga youth, trained at Corisco, was lately licensed as an evangelist, and stationed at Large Ilobi, an island thirteen miles from Corisco. He enjoys the confidence of the brethren, and is not without honour even among his own people.

Another young man—an elder of the church, who interpreted with fluency, emphasis, and accuracy in a service which I was privileged to conduct—is also about to be licensed.

Mr. Clemens gets his boys from as many different towns and tribes as possible along the coast. They are given to him not unwillingly, at his request, to be kept five years. Means are used for their conversion; and the end in view will not be fully attained unless they shall be found qualified to carry back the word of God to the places whence they came.

This school has existed three years; and several of the lads have given such evidence of being converted to God, as that they have been admitted to the fellowship of the church.

After three or four hours of lessons in the morning, which are prepared and recited under the care of one or two advanced lads, they go to labour for the rest of the day.