

leaves, were then laid on the stones, with the fowl in the centre, and the whole covered up. In about an hour the oven was carefully opened, the contents exposed, and found to be thoroughly cooked. The dinner was then served in an earthen dish, with a knife and fork, when, although the fowl was somewhat tough, it was greatly relished. The dinner hour was one o'clock.

Taua, according to the universal opinion of the squadron, did not improve upon a closer acquaintance. His intrusive and greedy disposition, not to mention his fondness for the bottle, rendered him daily a less welcome visiter than at first. I must, however, do him the justice to say, that if he were wanting in other traits of character that ought to distinguish a chief, he did the honours of his house admirably, and that he must be seen in the capacity of a host, if a favourable opinion is to be formed of his character.

On the invitation of the Rev. Mr. Wilson, I visited him at the mission-house, and was kindly received. This gentleman is seventy-two years of age, and is the oldest missionary on the island. In spite of his advanced age, he still performs all the duties of his cure. The church and the parsonage are both frame houses. The former, which is neatly built, is capable of containing a large congregation. The Sabbath occurred on Saturday, by our reckoning, and all labour was suspended. I thought the attendance on worship small, compared with what I had been led to anticipate. There were less than two hundred persons present, and they did not appear to be as attentive as they had been represented. The women were more numerous than the other sex, and were dressed in a most unbecoming manner. They wore high flaring chip bonnets of their own manufacture, loose gay-coloured silk frocks, with showy kerchiefs tied around their necks. Nothing can appear more *outré* than they do in these habiliments, and I was at a loss to conceive how they could, in particular, have been induced to adopt a covering for the head, which affords no protection from the sun, and is in consequence so ill-adapted to the climate.

On Sunday, 15th September, as many of the officers and crews as could be spared from the vessels, attended divine service in the Mission church. Our chaplain performed the service, with the aid of the Rev. Mr. Pratt. This exercise attracted great crowds of the natives, of whom an unusual number had collected at Matavai. They flock, on the arrival of vessels, and particularly of ships of war, to the port in which they lie, partly from curiosity and a desire of amusement, but more from a hope of gain. A Tahitian changes his residence without difficulty or inconvenience; food is every where to be had in abundance, and lodgings never enter into his calculation. While the