

were assembled at Point Venus, during our stay. They are, however, inveterate beggars.

At the invitation of Mr. Pritchard, I visited the school under his direction at Papieti. This gentleman was, a few years since, a missionary, but now holds the station of Her Britannic Majesty's Consul. He has not, however, abandoned all his missionary duties. We were also invited to visit the school at Matavai Bay, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Wilson. There was so much similarity in the two schools, that I shall content myself with a description of the former, and a circumstance or two that occurred at the latter.

The school at Papieti is held in the church, a large frame building, much like a New England meeting-house. It has numerous windows, a large gallery, and pews capable of containing a great number of people. All who were present were well dressed, and the assemblage, except from the colour of their skins, could have been, with difficulty, distinguished from a Sunday school in the United States.

The exercises were opened with prayer. The children then sang the A B C song, and went through the *a-b ab*, at the word of command from Mr. Pritchard. To this succeeded an examination of the larger children, and an exhibition of some of their performances. The number of scholars was from three hundred and fifty to four hundred, between eight and sixteen years of age. A large proportion of them read, sang, and wrote on a slate, manifesting a fair proficiency in each, and answered intelligently the questions that were put to them.

To test the character of the instruction given in this school, I felt desirous of putting some questions on subjects foreign to the ordinary routine, and particularly in relation to natural phenomena. For this purpose I called the attention of the scholars to the eclipse of the sun which had happened a few days before. This was received with a variety of expression of countenance by different scholars, but among them I could only remark stupid wonder, indifference, or listlessness, which showed too clearly that no attempt had been made to awaken their attention to such subjects.

When the examination was concluded, I made a trifling present to the native teachers in the name of the American government, and desired Mr. Pritchard to express the satisfaction it had given myself and officers to witness the exhibition of a progress, which in the elementary branches of education had exceeded our expectations; and to state that I was assured it would be gratifying to our country to hear of their improvement. I concluded by expressing my hope that they would persevere in their attention to the missionaries, who