

soever a few of the Lord's people could be gathered together, thither I gladly went, and told the story of our Mission, setting forth its needs and claims.

The contributions and collections were nearly all in very small sums. I recall only one exception,—a gift of £250 from the late Hon. G. F. Angus, South Australia, whose heart the Lord had touched. Yet gently and steadily the required money began to come pouring in; and my personal outlays were reduced to a minimum by the hospitality of Christian friends and their kindly conveying of me from place to place. For all this I felt deeply grateful; it saved money for the Lord's work.

The work was unceasingly prosecuted. Meetings were urged upon me now from every quarter. Money flowed in so freely that, at the close of my tour, the fund had risen to £5000, including special Donations of £300 for the support of Native Teachers. Many Sabbath Schools and many ladies and gentlemen, had individually promised the sum of £5 yearly to keep a Native Teacher on one or other of the New Hebrides Islands. This happy custom prevails still, and is largely developed; the sum required being now £6 per annum at least—for which you may have your own personal representative toiling among the Heathen and telling them of Jesus.

Returning to Melbourne, the whole matter was laid before my Committee. I reported how God had blessed the undertaking, and what sums were now in the hands of the several Treasurers, indicating also larger hopes and plans which had been put into my soul. Dear Dr. Cairns rose and said, "Sir, it is of the Lord. This whole enterprise is of God, and not of us. Go home, and He will give you more Missionaries for the Islands."

Of the money which I had raised, £3000 were sent to Nova Scotia, to pay for the building of our new Mission Ship, the *Dryspring*. The Church which began the Mission on the New Hebrides was granted the honour of building our new Mission Ship. The remainder was set apart to pay for the outfit and passage of additional Missionaries for the field, and I was commissioned to return home to Scotland in quest of them. Dr. Inglis wrote, in vindication of this enterprise, to the friends whom he had just left, "From first to last, Mr. Paton's mission here has been a great success; and it has

been followed up with such energy and promptitude in Nova Scotia, both in regard to the Ship and the Missionaries, that Mr. Paton's pledge to the Australian Churches has been fully redeemed. The hand of the Lord has been very visible in the whole movement from beginning to end, and we trust He has yet great blessing in store for the long and deeply-degraded Islander."

CHAPTER XLVII

AUSTRALIAN INCIDENTS

HERE let me turn aside from the current of Missionary toils, and record a few wayside incidents that marked some of my wanderings to and fro in connection with the Floating of the *Dryspring*. Travelling in the Colonies in 1862-63 was vastly less developed than it is to-day; and a few of my experiences then will, for many reasons, be not unwelcome to most readers of this book. Besides, these incidents, one and all, will be felt to have a vital connection with the main purpose of writing this Autobiography, namely, to show that the Finger of God is as visible still, to those who have eyes to see, as when the fire-cloud Pillar led His People through the wilderness.

Twenty-six years ago, the roads of Australia, except those in and around the principal towns, were mere tracks over unfenced plains and hills, and on many of them packhorses only could be used in slushy weather. During long journeys through the bush the traveller could find his road only by following the deep notches, gashed by friendly precursors into the larger trees, and all pointing in one direction. If he lost his way, he had to struggle back to the last indented tree, and try to interpret more correctly its pilgrim notch. Experienced bush-travellers seldom miss the path; yet many others, losing the track, have wandered round and round till they sank and died. For then it was easy to walk thirty or forty miles, and see neither a person nor a house. The more intelligent do sometimes guide their steps by sun, moon, and stars, or by glimpses of mountain peaks or natural features on the far and high horizon, or by the needle of the compass; but the perils

are not illusory, and occasionally the most experienced have miscalculated and perished.

An intelligent gentleman, a sheep farmer, who knew the country well, once kindly volunteered to lift me in an out-of-the-way place, and drive me to a meeting at his Station. Having a long spell before us, we started at mid-day in a buggy drawn by a pair of splendid horses, in the hope of reaching our destination before dusk. He turned into the usual bush-track through the forests, saying, "I know this road well; and we must drive steadily, as we have not a moment to lose."

Our conversation became absorbingly interesting. After we had driven about three hours, he remarked, "We must soon emerge into the open plain."

I doubtfully replied, "Surely we cannot have turned back! These trees and bushes are wonderfully like those we passed at starting."

He laughed, and made me feel rather vexed that I had spoken, when he said, "I am too old a hand in the bush for that! I have gone this road many a time before."

But my courage immediately revived, for I got what appeared to me a glint of the roof of the Inn beyond the bush, from which we had started at noon, and I repeated, "I am certain we have wheeled, and are back at the beginning of our journey; but there comes a Chinaman—let us wait and enquire."

My dear friend learned, to his utter amazement, that he had erred. The bush-track was entered upon once more, and followed with painful care, as he murmured, half to himself, "Well, this beats all reckoning! I could have staked my life that this was impossible."

Turning to me, he said, with manifest grief, "Our meeting is done for! It will be midnight before we can arrive."

The sun was beginning to set as we reached the thinly-timbered ground. Ere dusk fell, he took his bearings with the greatest possible care. Beyond the wood, a vast plain stretched before us, where neither fence nor house was visible, far as the eye could reach. He drove steadily towards a far-distant point, which was in the direction of his home. At last we struck upon the wire fence that bounded his property. The horses were now getting badly fatigued; and, in order to save them a long roundabout drive, he lifted and laid low a

portion of the fence, led his horses cautiously over it, and, leaving it to be re-erected by a servant next day, he started direct for the Station. That seemed a long journey too; but it was for him familiar ground; and through amongst great patriarchal trees here and there, and safely past dangerous water-holes, we swung steadily on, reached his home in safety, and had a joyous welcome. The household had by this time got into great excitement over our non-appearance. The expected meeting had, of course, been abandoned hours ago; and the people were all gone, wondering in their hearts "whereto this would grow!"

At that time, in the depth of winter, the roads were often wrought into rivers of mire, and at many points almost impassable even for well-appointed conveyances. In connection therewith, I had one very perilous experience. I had to go from Clunes to a farm in the Learmonth district. The dear old Minister there, Mr. Downes, went with me to every place where a horse could be hired; but the owners positively refused—they would be hired, but they would not hire, for the conveyance would be broken, and the horse would never return alive! Now, I was advertised to preach at Learmonth, and must somehow get over the nine miles that lay between. This would have been comparatively practicable, were it not that I carried with me an indispensable bag of "curios," and a heavy bundle of clubs, arrows, dresses, etc., from the Islands, wherewith to illustrate my lectures and enforce my appeals. No one could be hired to carry my luggage, nor could I get it sent after me by coach on that particular way. Therefore, seeing no alternative opening up my path, I committed myself once more to the Lord, as in harder trials before, shouldered my bundle of clubs, lifted my heavy bag, and started off on foot. They urged me fervently to desist; but I heard a voice repeating, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." There came back to me also the old adage that had in youthful difficulties spurred me on, "Where there's a will, there's a way." And I thought that, with these two in his heart, a Scotchman and a Christian would not be easily beaten.

When I found the road wrought into mire, and dangerous, or impassable, I climbed the fence, and waded along in the ploughed fields—though they were nearly as bad. My bundle

was changed from shoulder to shoulder, and my bag from hand to hand, till I became thoroughly tired of both. Pressing on, however, I arrived at a wayside Public-house, where several roads met, and there I inquired the way to Learmouth, and how far it was. The Innkeeper, pointing, answered—

"This is the road. If you are on horseback, it might be three to four miles just now, as your horse is able to take it. If you are in a conveyance, with a good horse, it might be six miles. And if you are walking, it might be eight or ten miles, or even more."

I said, "I am walking. How many English miles is it to Mr. Baird's farm?"

He laughingly replied, "You will find it a long way indeed this dark night, considering the state of the road, fenced in on both sides so that you cannot get off."

I passed on, leaving my Job's comforter; but a surly watchdog got upon my track, and I had much difficulty in keeping it from biting me. Its attacks, renewed upon me again and again, had one good effect,—they stirred up my spirits and made me hasten on.

Having persevered along the Learmouth road, I next met a company of men hastening on with a bundle of ropes. They were on their way to relieve a poor bullock, which by this time had almost disappeared, sinking in the mire on the public highway! They kindly pointed me to a light, visible through the dusk. That was the farm at which I was to stay, and they advised me to clear the fence, and make straight for that light, as the way was good.

With thankful heart, I did so. The light was soon lost to me, but I walked steadily on in the direction thereof, to the best of my judgment. Immediately I began to feel the ground all floating under me. Then at every step I took, or tried to take, I sank deeper and deeper, till at last I durst not move either backward or forward. I was floundering in a deadly swamp. I called out again and again, and "coo-ee-d" with all my strength, but there came no reply. It grew extremely dark, while I kept praying to God for deliverance. About midnight, I heard two men conversing, apparently at no very great distance. I began "coo-ee-ing" again, but my strength was failing. Fortunately, the night was perfectly calm. The conversation ceased for a while, but I kept on crying for help

At length, I heard one voice remark to the other, "Some one is in the swamp." And then a question came, "Whos there?"

I answered, "A stranger. Oh, do help me!"

Again a voice came through the darkness, "How did you get in there?"

And I feebly replied, "I have lost my way."

I heard the one say to the other, "I will go and get him out, whoever he may be. We must not leave him there; he'll be dead before the morning. As you pass by our door, tell my wife that I'm helping some poor creature out of the swamp, and will be home immediately."

He kept calling to me, and I answering his call through the darkness, till, not without peril, he managed to reach and aid me. Once I was safely dragged out, he got my bag in his hand and slung my clubs on his shoulder, and in a very short time landed me at the farm, dripping and dirty and cold. Had God not sent that man to save me, I must have perished there, as many others have similarly perished before. The farmer's wife heartily welcomed me and kindly ministered to all my needs. Though not yet gone to rest, they had given up all hope of seeing me. I heard the kind servant say to his mistress, "I don't know where he came from, or how far he has carried his bundles; but I got him stuck fast in the swamp, and my shoulder is already sore from carrying his clubs!"

A cup of warm tea restored me. The Lord gave me a sound and blessed sleep. I rose next morning wonderfully refreshed, though arms and shoulders were rather sore with the burdens of yesterday. I conducted three Services, and told the story of my Mission, not without comfort and blessing; and with gratifying results in money. The people gave liberally to the work.

Thereafter, a Schoolmaster drove me a long distance across the country to Violet Town, where for the night we had to stay at an Inn. We had a taste of what Australian life really was, when the land was being broken in. A company of wild and reckless men were carousing there at the time, and our arrival was the signal for an outbreak of malicious mischief. A powerful fellow, who turned out to be a young Medical, rushed upon me as I left the conveyance, seized me by the

throat, and shook me roughly, shouting, "A parson! a parson! I will do for the parson!"

Others with great difficulty relieved me from his grips, and dragged him away, cursing as if at his mortal enemy.

After tea, we got into the only bedroom in the house, available for two. The Teacher and I locked ourselves in and barricaded the door, hearing in the next room a large party of drunken men gambling and roaring over their cards. By and by they quarrelled and fought; they smashed in and out of their room, and seemed to be murdering each other; every moment we expected our door to come crashing in, as they were thrown or lurched against it. Their very language made us tremble. One man in particular seemed to be badly abused; he shouted that they were robbing him of his money; and he groaned and cried for protection, all in vain. We spent a sleepless and most miserable night. At four in the morning I arose, and was glad to get away by the early coach. My friend also left in his own conveyance, and reached his home in safety. At that period, it was not only painful but dangerous for any decent traveller to stay at many of these wayside Inns in the new and rough country. Every man lived and acted just as he pleased, doing that which was right in his own eyes; and *Might was Right*.

CHAPTER XLVIII

AMONGST SQUATTERS AND DIGGERS

AFTER this, I made a Mission tour, in a somewhat mixed and original fashion, right across the Colony of Victoria, from Albury in New South Wales to Mount Gambier in South Australia. I conducted Mission Services almost every day, and three or more every Sabbath, besides visiting all Sunday Schools that could be touched on the way. When I reached a gold-digging or township, where I had been unable to get any one to announce a meeting, the first thing I did on arriving was to secure some Church or Hall, and, failing that, to fix on some suitable spot in the open air. Then, I was always able to hire some one to go round with the bell, and announce

the meeting. Few will believe how large were the audiences in this way gathered together, and how very substantial was the help that thereby came to the Mission fund.

Wheresoever railway, steamboat, and coach were available, I always used them; but failing these, I hired, or was obliged to friends of Missions for driving me from place to place. On this tour, having reached a certain place, from which my way lay for many miles across the country, where there was no public conveyance, I walked to the nearest squatter's Station and frankly informed the owner how I was situated; that I could not hire, and that I would like to stay at his house all night, if he would kindly send me on in the morning by any sort of trap to the next Station on my list. He happened to be a good Christian and a Presbyterian, and gave me a right cordial welcome. A meeting of his servants was called, which I had the pleasure of addressing. Next morning, he gave me \$50, and sent me forward with his own conveyance, telling me to retain it all day, if necessary.

On reaching the next squatter's Station, I found the master also at home, and said, "I am a Missionary from the South Sea Islands. I am crossing Victoria to plead the cause of the Mission. I would like to rest here for an hour or two. Could you kindly send me on to the next Station by your conveyance? If not, I am to keep the last squatter's buggy, until I reach it."

Looking with a queer smile at me, he replied, "You propose a rather novel condition on which to rest at my house! My horses are so employed to-day, I fear that I may have difficulty in sending you on. But come in; both you and your horses need rest; and my wife will be glad to see you."

I immediately discovered that the good lady came from Glasgow, from a street in which I had lodged when a student at the Free Normal College. I even knew some of her friends. All the places of her youthful associations were equally familiar to me. We launched out into deeply-interesting conversation, which finally led up, of course, to the story of our Mission.

The gentleman, by this time, had so far been won, that he dipped out and sent my conveyance and horses back to their owner, and ordered his own to be ready to take me to the

next Station, or, if need be, to the next again. At parting, the lady said to her husband, "The Missionary has asked me money, though he sees we have been deeply interested; yet clearly that is the object of his tour. He is the first Missionary from the Heathen that ever visited us here; and you must contribute something to his Mission fund."

I thanked her, explaining, "I never ask money directly from any person for the Lord's work. My part is done when I have told my story and shown the needs of the Heathen and the claims of Christ; but I gratefully receive all that the Lord moves His people to give for the Mission."

Her husband replied, rather sharply, "You know I don't keep money here." To which she retorted with ready tact and with a resistless smile, "But you keep a cheque-book; and your cheque is as good as gold! This is the first donation we ever gave to such a cause, and let it be a good one." He made it indeed handsome, and I went on my way, thanking them very sincerely, and thanking God.

At the next Station, the owner turned out to be a GRUFF Irishman, forbidding and insolent. Stating my case to him as to the others, he shouted at me, "Go on! I don't want to be troubled with the likes o' you here."

I answered, "I am sorry if my coming troubles you; but I wish you every blessing in Christ Jesus. Good-bye!"

As we drove off, he kept growling after us. On leaving his door, I heard a lady calling to him from the window; "Don't let that Missionary go away! Make haste and call him back. I want the children to see the idols and the South Sea curios."

At first he drowned her appeal in his own shoutings. But she must have persisted effectually; for shortly we heard him "goo-ee-ing," and stopped. When he came up to us, he explained, "That lady in my house heard you speaking in Melbourne. The ladies and children are very anxious to see your idols, dresses, and weapons. Will you please come back?"

We did so. I spent fifteen minutes or so, giving them information about the Natives and our Mission. As I left, our boisterous friend handed me a cheque for £5, and wished me great success.

The next Station at which we arrived was one of the

largest of all. It happened to be a sort of pay-day, and men were assembled from all parts of the "run," and were to remain there over night. The squatter and his family were from home; but Mr. Todd, the overseer, being a good Christian and a Scotchman, was glad to receive us, arranged to hold a meeting that evening in the men's hut, and promised to set me forward on my journey next day. The meeting was very enthusiastic; and they subscribed £20 to the Mission—every man being determined to have so many shares in the new Mission Ship. With earnest personal dealing, I urged the claims of the Lord Jesus upon all who were present, seeking the salvation of every hearer. I ever found even the rough digger, and the lowest of the hands about far-away Stations, most attentive and perfectly respectful.

A lively and memorable extemporised meeting on this tour is associated in memory with one of my dearest friends. The district was very remote. He, the squatter, and his beloved wife were sterling Christians, and have been ever since warmly devoted to me. On my arrival, he invited the people from all the surrounding Stations, as well as his own numerous servants, to hear the story of our Mission. Next day he volunteered to drive me a long distance over the plains of St. Arnaud, his dear wife accompanying us. At that time there were few fences in such districts in Australia. The drive was long, but the day had been lovely, and the fellowship was so sweet that it still shines a sunny spot in the fields of memory.

Having reached our destination about seven o'clock, he ordered tea at the Inn for the whole party; and we sallied out meantime and took the only Hall in the place, for an extemporised meeting to be held that evening at eight o'clock. I then hired a man to go through the township with a bell, announcing the same; while I myself went up one side of the main street, and my friend up the other, inviting all who would listen to us to attend the Mission meeting where South Sea islands' idols, weapons, and dresses would be exhibited, and stories of the Natives told.

Running back for a hurried cup of tea, I then hastened to the Hall, and found it crowded to excess with rough and boisterous diggers. The hour struck as I was getting my

articles arranged and spread out upon the table, and they began shouting, "Where's the Missionary?"—"Another box!"—indicating that they were not unwilling for a row. I learned that, only a few nights ago, a so-called Professor had advertised a lecture, lifted entrance money till the Hall was crowded, and then quietly slipped off the scene. In our case, though there was no charge, they seemed disposed to gratify themselves by some sort of promiscuous revenge.

Amidst the noisy chaff and rising uproar, I stepped up on the table, and said, "Gentlemen, I am the Missionary. If you will now be silent, the lecture will proceed. According to my usual custom, let us open the meeting with prayer."

The hush that fell was such a contrast to the preceding hubbub, that I heard my heart throbbing aloud! Then they listened to me for an hour, in perfect silence and with ever-increasing interest. At the close I intimated that I asked no collection; but if, after what they had heard, they would take a Collecting Card for the new Mission Ship, and send any contributions to the Treasurer at Melbourne, I would praise God for sending me amongst them. Many were heartily taken, and doubtless some souls felt the "constraining love," who had till then been living without God.

CHAPTER XLVIII

JOHN GILPIN IN THE BUSH

THE crowning adventure of my tour in Australia came about in the following manner. I was advertised to conduct Services at Narracoort on Sabbath, and at a Station on the way on Saturday evening. But how to get from Penola was a terrible perplexity. On Saturday morning, however, a young lady offered me, out of gratitude for blessings received, the use of her riding horse for the journey. "Garibaldi" was his name; and, though bred for a race-horse, I was assured that if I kept him firmly in hand, he would easily carry me over the two-and-twenty miles. He was to be led at the journey's end, and the lady herself would fetch him back. I shrunk from the undertaking, knowing little of horses, and having vague

recollections of being dreadfully punished for more than a week after my last and almost only ride. But every one in that country is quite at ease on the back of a horse. They saw no risk; and, as there appeared no other way of getting there to fulfil my engagements, I, for my part, began to think that God had unexpectedly provided the means, and that He would carry me safely through.

I accepted the lady's kind offer, and started on my pilgrimage. A friend showed me the road, and gave me ample directions. In the bush, I was to keep my eye on the notches in the trees, and follow them. He agreed kindly to bring my luggage to the Station, and leave it there for me by and bye. After I had walked very quietly for some distance, three gentlemen on horseback overtook me. We entered into conversation. They inquired how far I was going, and advised me to sit a little "freer" in the saddle, as it would be so much easier for me. They seemed greatly amused at my awkward riding! Dark clouds were now gathering ahead, and the atmosphere prophesied a severe storm; therefore they urged that I should ride a little faster, as they, for a considerable distance, could guide me on the right way. I explained to them my plight through inexperience, said that I could only creep on slowly with safety, and bade them Good-bye. As the sky was getting darker every minute, they consented, wishing me a safe journey, and started off at a smart pace.

I struggled to hold in my horse; but seizing the bit with his teeth, laying back his ears, and stretching out his eager neck, he manifestly felt that his honour was at stake; and in less time than I take to write it, the three friends cleared a way for us, and he tore past them all at an appalling speed. They tried for a time to keep within reach of us, but that sound only put fire into his blood; and in an incredibly short time I heard them not; nor, from the moment that he bore me swinging past them, durst I turn my head by one inch to look for them again. In vain I tried to hold him in; he tore on, with what appeared to me the speed of the wind. Then the thunderstorm broke around us, with flash of lightning and flood of rain, and at every fresh peal my "Garibaldi" dashed more wildly onward.

To me, it was a vast surprise to discover that I could sit more easily on this wild flying thing than when at a canter or,

a trot. At every turn I expected that he would dash himself and me against the great forest trees; but instinct rather than my hand guided him miraculously. Sometimes I had a glimpse of the road, but as for the "notches," I never saw one of them; we passed them with lightning speed. Indeed, I durst not lift my eyes for one moment from watching the horse's head and the trees on our track. My high-crowned hat was now drenched, and battered out of shape; for whenever we came to a rather clear space, I seized the chance and gave it another knock down over my head. I was spattered and covered with mud and mire.

Crash, crash, went the thunder, and on, on, went "Garibaldi" through the gloom of the forest, emerging at length upon a clearer ground with a more visible pathway. Reaching the top of the slope, a large house stood out far in front of us to the left; and the horse had apparently determined to make straight for that, as if it were his home. He skirted along the hill, and took the track as his own familiar ground, all my effort to hold him in or guide him having no more effect than that of a child. By this time, I suspect, I really had lost all power. "Garibaldi" had been at that house, probably frequently before; he knew those stables; and my fate seemed to be instant death against door or wall.

Some members of the family, on the outlook for the Missionary, saw us come tearing along as if mad or drunk; and now all rushed to the verandah, expecting some dread catastrophe. A tall and stout young groom, amazed at our wild career, throwing wide open the gate, seized the bride at great risk to himself, and ran full speed, yet holding back with all his might, and shouting at me to do the same. We succeeded—"Garibaldi" having probably attained his purpose—in bringing him to a halt within a few paces of the door. Staring at me with open mouth, the man exclaimed, "I have saved your life. What madness to ride like that!" Thanking him, though I could scarcely by this time articulate a word, I told him that the horse had run away, and that I had lost all control.

Truly I was in a sorry plight, drenched, covered with mud, and my hat battered down over my eyes; little wonder they thought me drunk or mad! Finally, as if to confirm every suspicion, and amuse them all,—for master, mistress, governess,

and children now looked on from the verandah,—when I was helped off the horse, I could not stand on my feet! My head still went rushing on in the race; I staggered, and down I tumbled into the mud, feeling chagrin and mortification; yet there I had to sit for some time, before I recovered myself, so as either to rise or to speak a word. When I did get to my feet, I had to stand holding by the verandah for some time, my head still rushing on in the race. At length the master said, "Will you not come in?"

I knew that he was treating me for a drunken man; and the giddiness was so dreadful still, that my attempts at speech seemed more drunken than even my gait.

As soon as I could stand, I went into the house, and drew near to an excellent fire in my dripping clothes. The squatter sat opposite me in silence, reading the newspapers, and taking a look at me now and again over his spectacles. By and by he remarked, "Wouldn't it be worth while to change your clothes?"

Speech was now returning to me. I replied, "Yes, but my bag is coming on in the cart, and may not be here to-night."

He began to relent. He took me into a room, and laid out for me a suit of his own. I being then very slender, and he a big-framed farmer, my new dress, though greatly adding to my comfort, enhanced the singularity of my appearance!

Returning to him, washed and dressed, I inquired if he had arranged for a meeting? My tongue, I fear, was still unsteady, for the squatter looked at me rather reproachfully, and said, "Do you really consider yourself fit to appear before a meeting to-night?"

I assured him he was quite wrong in his suspicions, that I was a life-long Abstinence, and that my nerves had been so unshinged by the terrible ride and runaway horse. He smiled rather suggestively, and said we would see how I felt after tea.

We went to the table. All that had occurred was now consummated by my appearing in the lusty farmer's clothes; and the lady and other friends had infinite difficulty in keeping their amusement within decent bounds. I again took speech in hand, but I suspect my words had still the thickness of the nippler's utterance, for they seemed not to carry much conviction. "Dear friends, I quite understand your feelings;

appearances are so strangely against me. But I am not drunken, as ye suppose. I have tasted no intoxicating drink, I am a life-long Total Abstainer!"

This fairly broke down their reserve. They laughed aloud, looking at each other and at me, as if to say, "Man, you're drunk at this very moment."

Before tea was over they appeared, however, to begin to entertain the idea that I *might* address the meeting; and so I was informed of the arrangements that had been made. At the meeting my incredulous friends became very deeply interested. Manifestly their better thoughts were gaining the ascendancy. And they heaped thereafter every kindness upon me, as if to make amends for harder suspicions.

Next morning the master drove me about ten miles farther on to the Church. A groom rode the race-horse, who took no scathe from his thundering gallop of the day before. It left deeper traces upon me. I got through the Services, however, and with good returns for the Mission. Twice since, on my Mission tours, I have found myself at that same memorable house; and on each occasion, a large company of friends were regaled by the good lady there with very comical descriptions of my first arrival at her door.

CHAPTER XLIX

THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA

DETAINED for nearly a week at Balmoral by the breakdowns of the coach on these dreadful roads, I telegraphed to Hamilton for a conveyance; and the Superintendent of the Sunday School, dear Mr. Laidlaw, volunteered, in order to reduce expenses, to spend one day of his precious time coming for me, and another driving me down. While awaiting him, I came into painful and memorable contact with the Aborigines of Australia. The Publicans had organised a day of sports, horse-racing, and circus exhibitions. Immense crowds assembled, and, amongst the rest, tribe after tribe of the Aborigines from all the surrounding country. Despite the law prohibiting the giving of strong drinks to these poor creatures, foolish and

unprincipled dealers supplied them with the same, and the very blankets which the Government had given them were freely exchanged for the fire-water which kindled them to madness.

Next day was Sabbath. The morning was hideous with the yells of the fighting Savages. They tore about on the Commons in front of the Church, leading gentlemen having tried in vain to quiet them, and their wild voices without jarring upon the Morning Service. About two o'clock, I tried to get into conversation with them. I appealed to them whether they were not all tired and hungry? They replied that they had had no food all that day; they had fought since the morning! I said, "I love you, black fellows. I go Missionary black fellows far away. I love you, want you rest, get food. Come all of you, rest, sit round me, and we will talk, till the *fix* (= women) get ready tea. They boil water, I take tea with you, and then you will be strong!"

By broken English and by many symbols, I won their ear. They produced tea and *damper*, i.e. a rather forbidding-looking bread, without yeast, baked on the coals. Their wives hastened to boil water. I kept incessantly talking, to interest them, and told them how Jesus, God's dear Son, came and died to make them happy, and how He grieved to see them beating and fighting and killing each other.

When the tea was ready, we squatted on the green grass, their tins were filled, the *damper* was broken into lumps, and I asked the blessing of God on the meal. To me it was unpleasant eating! Many of them looked strong and healthy; but not a few were weak and dying creatures. The strong, devouring all they could get, urged me to be done, and let them finish their fighting, eager for the fry. But having gained their confidence, I prayed with them, and thereafter said, "Now, before I leave, I will ask of you to do one thing for my sake, which you can all easily do."

With one voice they replied, "Yes, we all do whatever you say."

I got their leaders to promise to me one by one. I then said, "Now you have got your tea; and I ask every man and boy among you to lie down in the bush and take a sleep, and your wives will sit by and watch over your safety!"

In grim silence, their war weapons still grasped in their

hands, they stood looking intently at me, doubting whether I could be in earnest. I urged them, "You all promised to do what I asked. If you break your promise, these white men will laugh at me, and say that black fellows only lie and deceive. Let them see that you can be trusted. I wait here till I see you all asleep."

One said that his head was cut, and he must have revenge before he could lie down. Others filed past showing their wounds, and declaring that it was too bad to request them to go to sleep. I praised them as far as I could, but urged them for once to be men and to keep their word. Finally, they all agreed to lie down, I waiting till the last man had disappeared; and, being doubly exhausted with the debauch and the fighting, they were soon all fast asleep. I prayed that the blessed Sleep might lull their savage passions.

Before daylight next morning, the Minister and I were hastening to the scene to prevent further fighting; but as the sun was rising we saw the last tribe of the distant Natives disappearing over the brow of a hill. A small party belonging to the district alone remained. They shouted to us, "Black fellow all gone! No more fight. You too much like black fellow!"

For three days afterwards I had still to linger there; and if their dogs ran or barked at me, the women chased them with sticks and stones, and protected me. One little touch of kindness and sympathy had unlocked their darkened hearts.

Who wonders that the *dark* races melt away before the *whites*? The pioneers of Civilisation *will* carry with them this demon of strong drink, the fruitful parent of every other vice. The black people drink, and become unmanageable; and through the white man's own poison-gift an excuse is found for sweeping the poor creatures off the face of the earth. Mardens's writings show how our Australian blacks are destroyed. But I have myself been on the track of such butcheries again and again. A Victorian lady told me the following incident. She heard a child's piteous cry in the bush. On tracing it, she found a little girl weeping over her younger brother. She said, "The white men poisoned our father and mother. They threaten to shoot me, so that I dare not go near them. I am here, weeping over my brother till we die!"

The compassionate lady promised to be a mother to the white sufferers, and to protect them. They instantly clung to her, and have proved themselves to be loving and dutiful ever since.

CHAPTER I.

NORA

WHILE I was pondering over Kingsley's words,—about the blacks of Australia being "poor brutes in human shape," and too low to take in the Gospel,—the story of Nora, an Aboriginal Christian woman, whom I myself actually visited and corresponded with, was brought under my notice, as if to shatter to pieces everything that the famous preacher had proclaimed. A dear friend told me how he had seen Nora encamped with the blacks near Hesham in Victoria. Her husband had lost, through drink, their once comfortable home at a Station where he was employed. The change back to life in camp had broken her health, and she lay sick on the ground within a miserable hut. The visitors found her reading a Bible, and explaining to a number of her own poor people the wonders of redeeming love. My friend, Roderick Urquhart, Esq., overcome by the sight, said, "Nora, I am grieved to see you here, and deprived of every comfort in your sickness."

She answered, not without tears, "The change has indeed made me unwell; but I am beginning to think that this too is for the best; it has at last brought my poor husband to his senses, and I will grudge nothing if God thereby brings him to the Saviour's feet!"

She further explained that she had found wonderful joy in telling her own people about the true God and His Son Jesus, and was quite assured that the Lord in His own way would send her relief. The visitors who accompanied Mr. Urquhart showed themselves to be greatly affected by the true and pure Christian spirit of this poor Aboriginal, and on parting she said, "Do not think that I like this miserable, but or the food, or the company; but I am and have been happy in trying to do good amongst my people."

For my part, let that dear Christlike soul look out on me from her Aboriginal hut, and I will trample under foot all teachings or theories that dare to say that she or her kind are but poor brutes, as mere blasphemies against Human Nature! "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

It is easy to understand how even experienced travellers may be deluded to believe that the Aborigines have no idols and no religion. One must have lived amongst them or their kindred ere he can authoritatively decide these questions. Before I left Melbourne, for instance, I had met Nathaniel Pepper, a converted Aboriginal from Wimmera. I asked him if his people had any "Doctors," *i.e.* Sacred Men or priests. He said they had. I inquired if they had any objects of Worship, or any belief in God? He said, "No! None whatever."

But on taking from my pocket some four small stone idols, his expression showed at once that he recognised them as objects of Worship. He had seen the Sacred Men use them; but he refused to answer any more questions. I resolved now, if possible, to secure some of their idols, and set this whole problem once for all at rest.

At Newcastle, on another occasion, I persuaded a whole camp of the Aborigines to come to my meeting. After the address, they waited to examine the idols and stone gods which I had shown. Some of the young men admitted that their "doctors" had things like these, which they and the old people prayed to; but they added jauntily, "We young fellows don't worship; we know too much for that!" No "doctors" were, however, in that camp; so I could not meet with them; but I already felt that the testimony of nearly all white people that the "blacks" had "no idols and no worship" was quickly crumbling away.

On returning to Horsham, from a visit to a great camp of the blacks at Wonwondah, and having purchased, in the presence of witnesses, specimens of their idols from the Doctor or Sacred Man of these tribes, I informed my dear friends, Rev. P. Simpson and his excellent lady, of my exploits and possessions. He replied, "There is a black 'doctor' gone round our horses just now to see one of his people who is washing

here to-day. Let us go and test them, whether they know these objects."

Carrying them in his hand, we went to them. The woman instantly on perceiving them dropped what she was washing, and turned away in instinctive terror. Mr. Simpson asked, "Have you ever before seen stones like these?"

The wily "doctor" replied, "Plenty on the plains, where I kick them out of my way."

Taking others out of my pocket, I said, "These make people sick and well, don't they?"

His rage overcame his duplicity, and he exclaimed, "What black fellow give you these? If I know him I do for him!"

The woman, looking the picture of terror, and pointing to one of the objects, cried, "That fellow no good! he kill men. No good, no good! Me too much afraid."

Then, looking at me, she said, pointing with her finger, "That fellow savvy (knows) too much! No white man see them. He no good."

There was more in this scene and in all its surroundings, than in many arguments; and Mr. Simpson thoroughly believed that these were objects of idolatrous worship.

And now let me relate the story of my visit to Nora, the converted Aboriginal referred to above. Accompanied by Robert Hood, Esq., J.P., Victoria, I found my way to the encampment near Hexham. She did not know of our coming, nor see us till we stood at the door of her hut. She was clean and tidily dressed, as were also her dear little children, and appeared glad to see us. She had just been reading the *Presbyterian Messenger*, and the Bible was lying at her elbow. I said, "Do you read the *Messenger*?"

She replied, "Yes; I like to know what is going on in the Church."

We found her to be a sensible and humble Christian woman, conversing intelligently about religion and serving God devotedly. Next Sabbath she brought her husband, her children, and six blacks to Church, all decently dressed, and they all listened most attentively.

At our first meeting I said, "Nora, they tell me you are a Christian. I want to ask you a few questions about the blacks; and I hope that as a Christian you will speak the truth." Rather hurt at my language, she raised her right hand,

and replied, "I am a Christian. I fear and serve the true God. I always speak the truth."

Taking from my pocket the stone idols from the Islands, I inquired if her people had or worshipped things like these. She replied, "The 'doctors' have them."

"Have you a 'doctor' in your camp?" I asked. She said, "Yes, my uncle is the Sacred Man; but he is now far away from this."

"Has he the idols with him now?" I inquired. She answered, "No; they are left in my care."

I then said, "Could you let us see them?"

She consulted certain representatives of the tribe who were at hand. They rose, and removed to a distance. They had consented. Mr. Hood assured me that no fault would be found with her, as she was the real, or at least virtual head of the tribe. Out of a larger bag she then drew two smaller bags, and opened them. They were filled with the very objects which I had brought from the Islands. I asked her to consult the men of her tribe whether they would agree to sell four or five of them to me, that I might by them convince the white people that they had gods of their own, and are, therefore, above the brutes of the field; the money to be given to their Sacred Man on his return. This, also, after a time was agreed to. I selected three of the objects, and paid the stipulated price. And I have the recorded testimony of "Robert Hood, J.P., Hertham, Victoria, 28th February 1863," certifying on his honour all that I am here affirming.

Mr. Hood asked Nora how he had never heard of or seen these things before, living so long amongst them, and blacks constantly coming and going about his house. She replied, "Long ago white men laughed at black fellows praying to their idols. Black fellows said, white men never see them again! Suppose this white man not know all about them, he would not now see them. No white men live now have seen what you have seen."

Thus it has been demonstrated on the spot, and in presence of the most reliable witnesses, that the Aborigines, before they saw the white invaders, were not "brutes" incapable of knowing God, but human beings, yearning after a God of some kind. Nor do I believe that any tribe of men will ever be found, who, when their language and

customs are rightly interpreted, will not display their consciousness of the need of a God, and that Divine capacity of holding fellowship with the Unseen Powers, of which the brutes are without one faintest trace.

Poor, dear, Christian-hearted Nora! The Christ-spirit shines forth unmistakably through thee,—praying for and seeking to save husband and children, enduring trials and miseries by the aid of communion with thy Lord, weeping over the degradation of thy people, and seeking to lift them up by telling them of the true God and of His love to Man-kind through Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER II

BACK TO SCOTLAND

Each of my Australian Committees strongly urged my return to Scotland, chiefly to secure, if possible, more Missionaries for the New Hebrides. Dr. Inglis, just arrived from Britain, where he had the Annetymuse New Testament carried through the press, also zealously enforced this appeal.

Constrained by what appeared to me the Voice of God, I sailed for London in the *Korissie*, an Aberdeen clipper, on 16th May 1863. Captain Stewart made the voyage most enjoyable to all. The Rev. Mr. Stafford, friend of the good Bishop Selwyn and tutor to his son, conducted along with myself, alternately, an Anglican and a Presbyterian Service. We passed through a memorable thunder-burst in rounding the Cape. Our good ship was perilously struck by lightning. The men on deck were thrown violently down. The copper on the bulwarks was twisted and melted—a specimen of which the Captain gave me and I still retain. When the ball of fire struck the ship, those of us sitting on chairs, screwed to the floor around the Cabin table, felt as if she were plunging to the bottom. When she sprang aloft again, a military man and a medical officer were thrown heavily into the back passage between the Cabins, the screws that held their seats having snapped asunder. I, in grasping the table, got my leg severely bruised, being jammed between the seat and the

table, and had to be carried to my berth. All the men were attended to, and quickly recovered consciousness; and immediately the good Captain, an elder of the Church, came to me, and said, "Lead us in prayer, and let us thank the Lord for this most merciful deliverance; the ship is not on fire, and no one is seriously injured!"

Poor fellow! whether hastened on by this event I know not, but he struggled for three weeks thereafter in a fever, and it took our united care and love to pull him through. The Lord, however, restored him; and we cast anchor safely in the East India Docks, at London, on 26th August 1863, having been three months and ten days at sea from port to port.

It was 5.30 p.m. when we cast anchor, and the gates closed at 6 o'clock. My little box was ready on deck. The Custom House officers kindly passed me, and I was immediately on my way to Euston Square. Never before had I been within the Great City, and doubtless I could have enjoyed its palaces and memorials. But the King's business, entrusted to me, "required haste," and I felt constrained to press forward, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left.

At nine o'clock, that evening, I left for Scotland by train. Next morning, about the same hour, I reported myself at the mansion of the Rev. John Kay, Castle Douglas, the Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, to which I then belonged. We arranged for a meeting of said Committee, at earliest practicable date, that my scheme and plans might at once be laid before them.

By the next train I was on my way to Dumfries, and thence by conveyance to my dear old home at Torthorwald. There I had a Heavenly Welcome from my saintly parents, yet not unminged with many fast-falling tears. Five brief years only had elapsed, since I went forth from their Sanctuary, with my young bride; and now, alas! alas! that grave on Tanna held mother and son locked in each other's embrace till the Resurrection Day.

Not less glowing, but more terribly agonising, was my reception, a few days thereafter, at Coldstream, when I first gazed on the bereaved father and mother of my beloved; who, though godly people, were conscious of a heart-break

under that stroke, from which through their remaining years they never fully rallied. They murmured not against the Lord; but all the same, heart and flesh began to faint and fall, even as our Divine Exemplar Himself fainted under the Cross, which yet He so uncomplainingly bore.

The Foreign Mission Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church met in Edinburgh, and welcomed me kindly, nay, warmly. A full report of all my doings for the past, and of all my plans and hopes, was laid before them. They at once agreed to my visiting and addressing every Congregation and Sabbath School in the Church. They opened to me their Divinity Hall, that I might appeal to the Students. My Address there was published and largely circulated, under the motto—"Come over and help us." It was used of God to deepen vastly the interest in our Mission.

The Committee generously and enthusiastically did everything in their power to help me. By their influence, the Church in 1864 conferred on me the undesired and undeserved honour, the highest which they could confer—the honour of being the Moderator of their Supreme Court. No one can understand how much I shrank from all this; but, in hope of the Lord's using it and me to promote His work amongst the Heathen, I accepted the Chair, though, I fear, only to occupy it most unworthily, for Tanna gave me little training for work like that!

I have ever regarded it as a privilege and honour that I was born and reared within the old covenanting Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland. As a separate Communion, that Church was small amongst the thousands of Israel; but the principles of Civil and Religious Liberty for which her founders suffered and died are, at this moment, the heart and soul of all that is best and divinest in the Constitution of our British Empire. I am more proud that the blood of Martyrs is in my veins, and their truths in my heart, than other men can be of noble pedigree or royal names.

CHAPTER III

TOUR THROUGH THE OLD COUNTRY

My tour through Scotland brought me into contact with every Minister, Congregation, and Sabbath School in the Church of my fathers. They were never at any time a rich people, but they were always liberal. At this time they contributed beyond all previous experience, both in money and in boxes of useful articles for the Islanders.

Unfortunately, my visit to the far North, to our Congregations at Wick and Stromness, had been arranged for the month of January; and thereby a sore trial befell me in my pilgrimages. The roads were covered with snow and ice. I reached Aberdeen and Wick by steamer from Edinburgh, and had to find my way thence to Thurso. The inside seats on the Mail Coach being all occupied, I had to take my place outside. The cold was intense, and one of my feet got bitten by the frost. The storm detained me nearly a week at Thurso, but feeling did not return to the foot.

We started, in a hull, by steamer for Stromness; but the storm burst again, all were ordered below, and hatches and doors made fast. The passengers were mostly very rough, the place was foul with whisky and tobacco. I appealed to the Captain to let me crouch somewhere on deck, and hold on as best I could. He shouted, "I dare not! You'll be washed overboard."

On seeing my appealing look, he relented, directed his men to fasten a tarpaulin over me, and lash it and me to the mast, and there I lay till we reached Stromness. The sea broke heavily and dangerously over the vessel. But the Captain, finding shelter for several hours under the lee of a headland, saved both the ship and the passengers. When at last we landed, my foot was so benumbed and painful that I could move a step only with greatest agony. Two meetings, however, were in some kind of way conducted; but the projected visit to Dingwall and other places had to be renounced, the snow lying too deep for any conveyance to carry me, and my foot crying aloud for treatment and skill.

On returning Southwards I was confined for about two

months, and placed under the best medical advice. All feeling seemed gradually to have departed from my foot; and amputation was seriously proposed both in Edinburgh and in Glasgow. Having somehow managed to reach Liverpool, my dear friend, the Rev. Dr. Graham, took me there to a Doctor who had wrought many wonderful recoveries by galvanism. Time after time he applied the battery, but I felt nothing. He declared that the power used would "have killed six ordinary men," and that he had never seen any part of the human body so dead to feeling on a live and healthy person. Finally, he covered it all over with a dark plaster, and told me to return in three days. But next day, the throbbing feeling of insufferable coldness in the foot compelled me to return at once. After my persistent appeals, he removed the plaster; and, to his great astonishment, the whole of the frosted part adhered to it! Again, dressing the remaining parts, he covered it with plaster as before, and assured me that with care and rest it would now completely recover. By the blessing of the Lord it did, though it was a bitter trial to me amidst all these growing pains to be thus crippled by the way; and to this day I am sometimes warned in over-walking that the part is capable of many a painful twinge. And humbly I feel myself crowning over the graphic words of the Greatest Missionary, "I bear about in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

On that tour, the Sabbath Schools joyfully adopted my scheme, and became "Shareholders" in the Mission Ship. It was thereafter ably developed by an elder of the Church. A *Day-spring* collecting box found its way into almost every family; and the returns from Scotland have yielded ever since about £450 per annum, as their proportion for the expenses of the Children's Mission Ship to the New Hebrides. The Church in Nova Scotia heartily accepted the same idea, and their Sabbath School children have regularly contributed their £450 per annum too. The Colonial children have contributed the rest, throughout all these years, with unflinching interest. And whosoever the true and full history of the South Sea Islands Mission is written for the edification of the Universal Church, let it not be forgotten that the children of Australasia, and Nova Scotia, and Scotland, did by their untiring penance keep the *Day-spring* floating in the New Hebrides;

that the Missionaries and their families were thereby supplied with the necessaries of life, and that the Islanders were thus taught to clothe themselves and to sit at the feet of Jesus. This was the Children's Holy League, ever since referred to; and one knows that on such a Union the Divine Master smiles well pleased.

The Lord also crowned this tour with another precious fruit of blessing, though not all by any means due to my influence. Four new Missionaries volunteered from Scotland, and three from Nova Scotia. By their aid we not only re-claimed for Jesus the posts that had been abandoned, but we took possession of other Islands in His most blessed Name. But I did not wait and take them out with me. They had matters to look into and to learn about, that would be infinitely helpful to them in the Mission field. Especially, and far above everything else in addition to their regular Clerical course, some Medical instruction was an absolute prerequisite. Every Missionary was urged to obtain all insight that was practicable at Medical Mission Dispensary, and otherwise, especially on lines known to be most requisite for these Islands. For this, and similar objects, all that I raised over and above what was required for the *Despatching* was entrusted to the Foreign Mission Committee, that the new Missionaries might be fully equipped, and their outfit and travelling expenses be provided for without burdening the Church at home. Her responsibilities were already large enough for her resources. But she could give men, God's own greatest gift, and His people elsewhere gave the money, —the Colonies and the Home Country thus bidding themselves to each other in this Holy Mission of the Cross.

CHAPTER LIII

MARRIAGE AND FAREWELL

But I did not return alone. The dear Lord had brought to me one prepared, all unknown to either of us, by special calling, by godly training, by many gifts and accomplishments, and even by family associations, to share my lot on the New

Hebrides. Her brother had been an honoured Missionary in the Foreign field, and had fallen asleep while the dew of youth was yet upon him; her sister was the wife of a devoted Minister of our Church in Adelaide, both she and her husband being zealous promoters of our work; and her father had left behind him a fragrant memory through his many Christian works at Edinburgh, Kenneth, and Alton, besides being not unknown to fame as the author of those still popular books, *Writers' Anecdotes*, illustrative of the Shorter Catechism and of the Holy Scriptures. Ere I left Scotland in 1864, I was married to Margaret Whitecross, and God spares us to each other still (1892); and the family which He has been pleased in His love to grant unto us we have dedicated to His service, with the prayer and hope that He may use every one of them in spreading the Gospel throughout the Heathen world.

Our marriage was celebrated at her sister's house in Edinburgh; and I may be pardoned for recalling a little event that characterised the occasion. My youngest brother, then tutor to a gentleman studying at the University, stepped forth at the close of the ceremony and recited an Epithalamium composed for the day. For many a month and year the refrain, a play upon the Bride's name, kept singing itself through my memory:—

“Long may the *Winniest* banner wave,
By the battle-bliss untriven;
Long may our Brother and Sister brave
Rejoice in the light of Heaven.”

He described the Bride as hearing a “Voice from the far Pacific Seas”; and turning to us both, he sang of an Angel beckoning us to the Tanna-land, to gather a harvest of souls:—

“The warfare is brief, the crown is bright,
The pledge is the souls of men;
Go, may the Lord defend the Right,
And restore you safe again!”

But the verse which my dear wife thought most beautiful for a bridal day, and which her memory cherishes still, was this:—

“May the ruddy joys, and the Graces fair,
Wait fondly around you now;
Sweet angel Hopes and young Loves, repeat
To your home and bless your vow!”

My last scene in Scotland was kneeling at the family altar in the old Sanctuary Cottage at Torphorwald, while my venerable father, with his high-priestly locks of snow-white hair streaming over his shoulders, commanded us once again to "the care and keeping of the Lord God of the families of Israel." It was the last time that ever on this Earth those accents of intercession, loaded with a pathos of deathless love, would fall upon my ears. I knew to a certainty that when we rose from our knees and said farewell, our eyes would never meet again till they were flooded with the lights of the Resurrection Day. But he and my darling mother gave us away once again with a free heart, not unpierced with the sword of human anguish, to the service of our common Lord and to the Salvation of the Heathen. And we went forth, praying that a double portion of their spirit, along with their precious blessing, might rest upon us in all the way that we had to go.

Our beloved mother, always more self-restrained, and less demonstrative in the presence of others, held back her heart till we were fairly gone from the door; and then, as my dear brother afterwards informed me, she fell back into his arms with a great cry, as if all the heart-strings had broken, and lay for long in a death-like swoon. Oh, all ye that read this page, think most tenderly of the cries of Nature, even where Grace and Faith are in perfect triumph. Read, through scenes like these, a fuller meaning into the words addressed to that blessed Mother, whose Son was given for us all, "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also."

CHAPTER LIV

FIRST PEEP AT THE "DAYSPRING"

We embarked at Liverpool for Australia in *The Crest of the Wave*, Captain Ellis; and, after what was then considered a fast passage of ninety-five days, we landed at Sydney on 17th January 1865. Within an hour we had to grapple with a new and amazing perplexity. The Captain of our *Dayspring* came to inform me that his ship had arrived three days ago

and now lay in the stream,—that she had been to the Islands, and had settled the Gordons, McCallaghs, and Morrisons on their several stations,—that she had left Halifax in Nova Scotia fourteen months ago, and that now, on arriving at Sydney, he could not get one penny of money, and that the crew were clamouring for their pay, &c. &c. He continued, "Where shall I get money for current expenses? No one will lend unless we mortgage the *Dayspring*. I fear there is nothing before us but to sell her!" I gave him £50 of my own to meet clamant demands, and besought him to secure me a day or two of delay that something might be done.

Having landed, and been heartily welcomed by dear Dr. and Mrs. Moon and other friends, I went with a kind of trembling joy to have my first look at the *Dayspring*, like a sailor getting a first peep at the child born to him whilst far away on the sea. Some of the irritated ship's company stopped us by the way, and threatened prosecution and all sorts of annoyance. I could only urge again for a few days' patience. I found her to be a beautiful two-masted Brigantine, with a deck-house (added when she first arrived at Melbourne), and every way suitable for our necessities,—a thing of beauty, a white-winged Angel set a-floating by the penicles of the children to bear the Gospel to these sin-darkened but sun-lit Southern Isles. To me she became a sort of living thing, the impersonation of a living and throbbing love in the heart of thousands of "shareholders"; and I said, with a deep, indestructible faith,—"The Lord has provided,—the Lord will provide."

Since she sailed, £1400 had been expended; for present liabilities at least £700 more were instantly required; and, at any rate, as large a sum to pay her way and meet expenses of next trip to the Islands. Having laid our perplexing circumstances before our dear Lord Jesus, having "spread out" all the details in His sympathetic presence, pleading that the Ship herself and the new Missionaries were all His own, not mine, I told Him that this money was needed to do His own blessed work.

On Friday morning, I consulted friends of the Mission, but no help was visible. I tried to borrow, but found that the lender demanded 20 per cent for interest, besides the six-pence of the ship for security. I applied for a loan from

the agent of the London Missionary Society (then agent for us too) on the credit of the Reformed Presbyterian Church's Foreign Committee, but he could not give it without a written order from Scotland. There were some who seemed rather to enjoy our perplexity!

Driven thus to the wall, I advertised for a meeting of Ministers and other friends, next morning at eleven o'clock, to receive my report and to consult re the *Dryspring*. I related my journeyings since leaving them and the results, and then asked for advice about the Ship.

"Sell her," said some, "and have done with it."—"What?" said others, "have the Sabbath Schools given you the *Dryspring* and can you not support her yourselves?"

I pointed out to them that the salary of each Missionary was then only £120 per annum, that they gave their lives for the Heathen, and that surely the Colonial Christians would undertake the upkeep of the Ship, which was necessary to the very existence of the Mission. I appealed to them that, as my own Church in Scotland had now one Missionary abroad for every six Ministers at home, and the small Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia had actually three Missionaries now on our Islands, it would be a blessed privilege for the Australian Churches and Sabbath Schools to keep the *Dryspring* afloat, without whose services the Missionaries could not live nor the Islanders be evangelised.

Being Saturday, the morning Services for Sabbath were all arranged for, or advertised; but Dr. McGibbon offered me a meeting for the evening, and Dr. Steel an afternoon Service at three o'clock, combined with his Sabbath School. Rev. Mr. Patterson of Piermont, offered me a Morning Service; but, as his was only a Mission Church, he could not give me a collection. These openings I accepted, as from the Lord, however much they fell short of what I desired.

At the Morning Service I informed the Congregation how we were situated, and expressed the hope that under God and their devoted pastor they would greatly prosper, and would yet be able to help in supporting our Mission to their South Sea neighbours. Returning to the vessel, a lady and gentleman waited to be introduced to me. They were from Launceston, Tasmania.

"I am," said he, "Captain and owner of that vessel lying

at anchor opposite the *Dryspring*. My wife and I, being too late to get on shore to attend any Church in the city, heard this little Chapel bell ringing, and followed, when we saw you going up the hill. We have so enjoyed the Service. We do heartily sympathise with you. This cheque for £50 will be a beginning to help you out of your difficulties."

The reader knows how warmly I would thank them; and how in my own heart I knew *Who* it was that made them arrive too late for *their* plans, but not for *His*; and led them up that hill, and opened their hearts. Jehovah-jireh!

At three o'clock, Dr. Steel's Church was filled with children and others. I told them in my appeal what had happened in the Mission Chapel, and how God had led Captain Frith and his wife, entire strangers, to sound the first note of our deliverance. One man stood up and said, "I will give £10." Another, "I will give £5." A third, "I shall send you £20 to-morrow morning." Several others followed their example, and the general collection was greatly encouraging.

In the evening I had a very large as well as sympathetic Congregation. I fully explained the difficulty about the *Dryspring*, and told them what God had already done for us, announcing an address to which contributions might be sent. Almost every Mail brought me the free-will offerings of God's people; and on Wednesday, when the adjourned meeting was held, the sum had reached in all £456. Believing that the Lord thus intervened at a vital crisis in our Mission, I dwell on it to the praise of His blessed Name. Trust in Him; obey Him, and He will not suffer you to be put to shame.

Clearing out from her sister ships, then in harbour, the *John Williams* and the *John Wesley*, our little *Dryspring* sailed for Tasmania. At Hobart we were visited by thousands of children and parents, and afterwards at Launceston, who were proud to see their own Ship, in which they were "shareholders" for Jesus. Daily, all over the Colony, I preached in Churches, and addressed public meetings, and got collections, and gave out Collecting Cards to be returned within two weeks.

We received many tokens of interest and sympathy. The steam tug was granted to us free, and the harbour dues were remitted. Many presents were also sent on board the *Dryspring*. Still, after meeting all necessary outlays, the trip

to Taranaki gave us only £227 : 8 : 11 clear for the Mission fund.

Sailing now for South Australia, we arrived at Adelaide. Many friends there showed the deepest interest in our plans. Thousands of children and parents came to visit their own Mission Ship by several special trips. Daily and nightly I addressed meetings, and God's people were moved greatly in the cause. After meeting all expenses while in port, there remained a sum of £634 : 9 : 2 for the upkeep of the vessel. The Honourable George Fife Angus gave me £241—2 dear friend belonging to the Baptist Church. But there was still a deficit of £420 before the *Deyspring* could sail free of debt, and my heart was sore as I cried for it to the Lord.

Leaving the ship to sail direct for Sydney, I took steamer to Melbourne; but, on arriving there, sickness and anxiety laid me aside for three days. Under great weakness, I crept along to my dear friends at the Scotch College, Dr. and Mrs. Morrison, and Miss Fraser, and threw myself on their advice.

"Come along," said the Doctor cheerily, "and I'll introduce you to Mr. Butchart and one or two friends in East Melbourne, and we'll see what can be done!"

I gave all information, being led on in conversation by the Doctor, and tried to interest them in our work, but no subscriptions were asked or received. Ere I sailed for Sydney, however, the whole deficiency was sent to me. I received in all, on this tour, the sum of £1725 : 9 : 10. Our *Deyspring* once more sailed free, and our hearts overflowed with gratitude to the Lord and to His stewards!

CHAPTER LV

THE FRENCH IN THE PACIFIC

We went down to the Islands with the *Deyspring* in 1865. The full story of the years that had passed was laid before my Missionary brethren at their Annual Synod. They resolved that permanent arrangements must now be made for the French's support, and that I must return to the Colonies and

see these matters, to prevent any such crisis as that through which we had recently passed. This, meantime, appeared to all of them the most clamant of all Missionary duties—their very lives, and the existence of the Mission itself, depending thereon. The Lord seemed to leave me no alternative; and, with great reluctance, my back was again turned away from the Islands.

The *Deyspring*, doing duty among the Loyalty Islands, left me, along with my dear wife, on May, there to await an opportunity of getting to New Caledonia, and thence to Sydney. Detained there for some time, we saw the noble work done by Messrs. Jones and Creagh, of the London Missionary Society, all being cruelly undone by the tyranny and Popery of the French. One day, in an inland walk, Mrs. Faton and I came on a large Conventicle in the bush. They were teaching each other, and reading the Scriptures, which the Missionaries had translated into their own language, and which the French had forbidden them to use. They cried to God for deliverance from their oppressors! Missionaries were prohibited from teaching the Gospel to the Natives without the permission of France; their books were suppressed, and they themselves placed under military guard on the Island of Ulu. Even when, by Britain's protest, the Missionaries were allowed to resume their work, the French language was alone to be used by them; and some, like Rev. J. Jones (as far down as 1883), were marched on board a Man-of-war, at half an hour's notice, and, without crime laid to their charge, forbidden ever to return to the Islands. While, on the other hand, the French Popish Missionaries were everywhere fostered and protected, presenting to the Natives as many objects of idolatry as their own, and following, as in the custom of the Romish Church in these Seas, in the wake of every Protestant Mission, to pollute and to destroy.

Being delayed also for two weeks on Noumea, we saw the state of affairs under military rule. English Protestant residents, few in number, appealed to me to conduct worship, but liberty could not be obtained from the authorities, who hated everything English. Again a number of Protestant parents, some French, others English and German, applied to me to baptize their children at their own houses. To have

asked permission would have been to court refusal, and to mislay my position. I laid the matter before the Lord, and baptized them all. Within two days the Private Secretary of the Governor arrived with an interpreter, and began to inquire of me, "Is it true that you have been baptizing here?"

I replied quite frankly, "It is."

"We are sent to demand on whose authority?"

"On the authority of my Great Master."

"When did you get that authority?"

"When I was licensed and ordained to preach the Gospel, I got that authority from my Great Master."

Here a spirited conversation followed betwixt the two in French, and they politely bowed, and left me.

Very shortly they returned, saying, "The Governor sends his compliments, and he wishes the honour of a visit from you at Government House at three o'clock, if convenient for you."

I returned my greetings, and said that I would have pleasure in waiting upon his Excellency at the appointed hour. I thought to myself that I was in for it now, and I earnestly cried for Divine guidance.

He saluted me graciously as "de great Missionary of de New Hebrides." He conversed in a very friendly manner about the work there, and seemed anxious to find any indication as to the English designs. I had to deal very cautiously. He spoke chiefly through the interpreter; but, sometimes dismissing him, he talked to me as good, if not better English himself. He was eager to get my opinions as to how Britain got and retained her power over the Natives. After a very prolonged interview, we parted without a single reference to the baptisms or to religious services!

That evening the Secretary and interpreter waited upon us at our Inn, saying, "The Governor will have pleasure in placing his yacht and crew at your disposal to-morrow. Mrs. Paton and you can sail all around, and visit the Convict Island, and the Government Gardens, where lunch will be prepared for you."

It was a great treat to us indeed. The crew were in prison garments, but all so kind to us. By Ceavick labour all the public works seemed to be carried out, and the Gardens were most beautiful. The carved work in bone, ivory, cocco-nuts,

shells, etc., was indeed very wonderful. We bought a few specimens, but the prices were beyond our purse. It was a strange spectacle—these things of beauty and joy, and beside them the chained gangs of fierce and savage Convicts, kept down only by bullet and sword!

Thinking the Governor for his exceeding kindness, I referred to their Man-of-war about to go to Sydney, and offered to pay full passage money if they would take me, instead of leaving me to wait for a "trader." He at once granted my request, and arranged that we should be charged only at the daily cost for the sailors. At his suggestion, however, I took a number of things on board with me, and presented them to be used at the Galba table. We were most generously treated—the Captain giving up his own room to my wife and myself, as they had no special accommodation for passengers.

Noumea appeared to me at that time to be wholly given over to drunkenness and vice, supported as a great Convict Settlement by the Government of France, and showing every extreme of reckless, worldly pleasure, and of cruel, slavish toil. When I saw it again, three-and-twenty years thereafter, it showed no signs of progress for the better. If there be a God of justice and of love, His light cannot but rest on a nation whose pathway is stained with corruption and steeped in blood, as is undeniably the case with France in the Pacific Isles.

CHAPTER LVI

THE GOSPEL AND GUNPOWDER

ARRIVING at Sydney, I was at once plunged into a whirlpool of horrors. H.M.S. *Corymbus* had just returned from her official trip to the Islands, in which the Commodore, Sir William Wiseman, had thought it his duty to inflict punishment on the Natives for murder and robbery of Traders and others. On these Islands, as in all similar cases, the Missionaries had acted as interpreters, and of course always used their influence on the side of mercy, and in the interests of peace. But Sydney, and indeed Australia and the Christian

World, were thrown into a ferment just a few days before our arrival, by certain articles in a leading publication there, and by the pictorial illustrations of the same. They were pronounced by an officer on board Her Majesty's ship, and the sensation was increased by their apparent truthfulness and reality. Tanna was the scene of the first event, and a series was to follow in succeeding numbers. The *Carygos* was pictured lying at anchor off the shore, having the *Drystriving* stern. The Tannese warriors were being blown to pieces by shot and shell, and lay in heaps on the bloody coast. And the Missionaries were represented as safe in the lee of the Man-of-war, directing the onslaught, and gloating over the carnage.

Without a question being asked or a doubt suggested, without a voice being raised in fierce denial that such men as these Missionaries were known to be could be guilty of such conduct,—men who had jeopardised their lives for years on end rather than hurt one hair on a Native's head,—a cry of execration, loud and deep, and even savage, arose from the Press, and was apparently joined in by the Church itself. The common witticism about the "Gospel and Gunpowder" headed hundreds of bitter and scolding articles in the journals; and, as we afterwards learned, the shocking news had been telegraphed to Britain and America, losing nothing in force by the way, and, while filling friends of Missions with dismay, was dished up day after day with every imaginable enhancement of horror for the readers of the secular and infidel Press. As I stepped ashore at Sydney I found myself probably the best-abused man in all Australia, and the very name of the New Hebrides Mission sinking in the nostrils of the People.

The gage of battle had been thrown and fell at my feet. Without one moment's delay I lifted it in the name of my Lord and of my maligned brethren. That evening my reply was in the hands of the editor, denying that such battles ever took place, retelling the actual facts of which I had been myself an eye-witness, and intimating legal prosecution unless the most ample and unequivocal withdrawal and apology were at once published. The Newspaper printed my rejoinder, and made satisfactory awards for having been imposed upon and deceived. I waited upon the Commodore, and appealed for his help in redressing this terrible injury to our Mission. He

informed me that he had already called his officers to account, but that all denied any connection with the articles or the pictures. He had little doubt all the same, that some one on board was the prompter, who gloried in the evil that was being done to the cause of Christ. He offered every possible assistance, by testimony or otherwise, to place all the facts before the Christian public and to vindicate our Missionaries.

The outstanding facts are best presented in the following extract from the official report of the Mission Synod:—

"When the New Hebrides Missionaries were assembled at their annual meeting on Anietyum, H.M.S. *Carygos*, Sir Wm. Wiseman, Bart., C.B., arrived in the harbour to investigate many grievances of white men and trading vessels among the Islands. A petition having been previously presented to the Governor in Sydney, as drawn out by the Revs. Messrs. Geddie and Copeland, after the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon on Erromanga, requesting an investigation into the sad event, and the removal of a Sandal-wood Trader, a British subject, who had incited the Natives to it,—the Missionaries gave the Commodore a memorandum on the loss of life and property that had been sustained by the Mission on Tanna, Erromanga, and Efate. He requested the Missionaries to supply him with interpreters, and requested the *Drystriving* to accompany him with them. The request was at once acceded to. Mr. Paton was appointed to act as interpreter for Tanna, Mr. Gordon (brother of the martyr) for Erromanga, and Mr. Morrison for Efate.

"At each of these Islands, the Commodore summoned the principal Chiefs near the harbours to appear before him, and explained to them that his visit was to inquire into the complaints British subjects had made against them, and to see if they had any against British subjects; and when he had found out the truth he would punish those who had done the wrong and protect those who had suffered wrong. The Queen did not send him to compel them to become Christians, or to punish them for not becoming Christians. She left them to do as they liked in this matter; but she was very angry at them because they had encouraged her subjects to live amongst them, sold them land, and promised to protect them, and afterwards murdered some of them and attempted to murder others, and stolen and destroyed their property; that

the inhabitants of these islands were talked of over the whole world for their treachery, cruelty, and murders; and that the Queen would no longer allow them to murder or injure her subjects, who were living peaceably among them either as Missionaries or Traders. She would send a Ship of War every year to inquire into their conduct, and if any white man injured any Native they were to tell the Captain of the Man-of-war, and the white man would be punished as fast as the black man."

After spending much time, and using peaceably every means in his power in trying to get the guilty parties on Tanna, and not succeeding, he shelled two villages,—having the day before informed the Natives that he would do so, and advising to have all women, children, and sick removed, which in fact they did. Indeed nearly the whole of the inhabitants, young and old, went to Nowa's land, where they were instructed they would be safe, while they witnessed what a Man-of-war could do in punishing murderers. But before the hour approached, a foolish host of Tannese warriors had assembled on the beach, painted and armed and determined to fight the Man-of-war! And the Chief of a village on the other side of the bay was at that moment assembled with his men on the high ground within our view, and dancing to a war song in defiance.

The Commodore caused a shell to strike the hill and explode with terrific fury just underneath the dancers. The earth and the bush were torn and thrown into the air above and around them; and next moment the whole host were seen disappearing over the brow of the hill. Two shots were sent over the heads of the warriors on the shore, with terrific noise and uproar; in an instant, every man was making haste for Nowa's land, the place of refuge. The Commodore then shelled the villages, and destroyed their property. Beyond what I have here recorded, absolutely nothing was done.

We return then for a moment to Sydney. The public excitement made it impossible for me to open my lips in the promotion of our Mission. The Rev. Dr. Dunmore Lang and Steel, along with Professor Smith of the University, waited on the Commodore, and got an independent version of the facts. They then called a meeting on the affair by public advertisement. Without being made acquainted with the

results of their investigations, I was called upon to give my own account of the *Commodore's* visit and of the conduct of the Missionaries therewith. They then submitted the Commodore's statement, given by him in writing. He exonerated the Missionaries from every shadow of blame and from all responsibility. In the interests of mercy as well as justice, and to save life, they had acted as his interpreters; and there all that they had to do with the *Commodore* began and ended. All this was published in the Newspapers next day, along with the speeches of the three deputies. The excitement began to subside. But the poison had been lodged in many hearts, and the ejection of it was a slow and difficult process.

Feeling absolutely conscious that I had only done my Christian duty, I left all results in the hands of my Lord Jesus, and pressed forward in His blessed work. But more than one dear personal friend had to be sacrificed over this painful affair. A Presbyterian Minister and a godly elder and his wife, all most excellent and well-beloved, at whose houses I had been received as a brother, intimated to me that owing to this case of the *Commodore* their friendship and mine must entirely cease in this world. And it did cease; but my esteem never changed. I had learned not to think unkindly of friends, even when they manifestly misunderstood my actions. Nor would these things merit being recorded here, were it not that they may be at once a beacon and a guide. God's people are still belied. And the mob is still as ready as ever to cry, "Crucify! Crucify!"

CHAPTER LVII

A PLEA FOR TANNA

EVERYTHING having been at length arranged for in the Colonies, in connection with the Mission and *Dearyfing*, as far as could possibly be,—and I having been adopted by the Victorian Assembly of 1866, as the first Missionary from the Presbyterian Church of Australia to the New Hebrides,—we sailed for the Islands on the 31st August of that year. Readers,

my wife and child, the following accompanied us to the field: Revs. Copeland, Cash, and McNeil, along with their respective wives. On 10th August we reached Anietyum; and, having landed some of our friends, we sailed Northwards, as far as Kikā, to let the new Missionaries see all the Islands open for occupation, and to bring all our Missionaries back to the annual meeting, where the permanent settlements would be finally agreed upon.

While staying at Anietyum, I learned with as deep emotion as man ever felt for man, that noble old Abraham, the sharer of my Tamese trials, had during the interval peacefully fallen asleep in Jesus. He left for me his silver watch—one which I had myself sent to the dear soul from Sydney, and which he greatly prized. In his dying hour he said, "Give it to Miss! my own Miss! Paton; and tell him that I go to Jesus, where Time is dead."

I learned also, and truly human-hearted readers will need no apology for introducing this news in so grave a story—that my faithful dog *Clerks*, entrusted to the care of a kindly Native to be kept for my return, had, despite all coaxing, grown weary of heart amongst all these dark faces, and fallen asleep too, truly not unworthy of a grateful tear!

At our annual Synod, after much prayerful deliberation and the careful weighing of every vital circumstance, I was constrained by the united voice of my brethren not to return to Tanna, but to settle on the adjoining Island of Aniwa (= A-net-wa). It was even hoped that thereby Tanna might eventually be the more surely reached and evangelised.

By the new Missionaries all the other old Stations were re-occupied and some fresh Islands were entered upon in the name of Jesus. As we moved about with our *Doggying*, and planted the Missionaries here and there, nothing could repress the wonder of Natives.

"How is this?" they cried; "We slew or drove them all away! We plundered their houses and robbed them. Had we been so treated, nothing would have made us return. But they come back with a beautiful new ship, and with more and more Missionaries. And is it to trade and to get money, like the other white men? No! no! But to tell us of their Jehovah God and of His Son Jesus. If their God makes these do all that we may well worship Him too."

In this way, Island after island was opened up to receive the Missionary, and their Chiefs bound themselves to protect and cherish him, before they knew anything whatever of the Gospel, beyond what they saw in the disposition and character of his Preachers or heard rumoured regarding its fruits on other Islands. Imagine *Centurials* found thus prepared to welcome the Missionary, and to make not only his property but his life comparatively safe. The Isles "wait" for Christ.

On our way to Aniwa, the *Doggying* had to call at Tanna. By stress of weather we lay several days in Port Resolution. And there many memories were again revived—wounds that after five-and-twenty years, when I now write, still bleed afresh! Nowra, the old Chief, unstable but friendly, was determined to keep us there by force or by fraud. The Captain told him that the council of the Missionaries had forbidden him to land our boxes at Tanna.

"Don't land them," said the wily Chief, "just throw them over; my men and I will catch everything before it reaches the water, and carry them all safely ashore!"

The Captain said he durst not. "Then," persisted Nowra, "just point them out to us; you will have no further trouble; we will manage everything for Miss!"

They were in distress when he refused; and poor old Nowra tried another tack. Suspecting that my dear wife was afraid of them, he got us on shore to see his extensive plantations. Turning eagerly to her, he said, leaving me to interpret, "Plenty of food! While I have a yam or a banana, you shall not want."

She answered, "I fear not any lack of food."

Pointing to his warriors, he cried, "We are many! We are strong! We can always protect you."

"I am not afraid," she calmly replied.

He then led us to that chestnut-tree, in the branches of which I had sat during a lonely and memorable night, when all hope had perished of any earthly deliverance, and said to her with a manifest touch of genuine emotion, "The God who protected Miss! there will always protect you."

She told him that she had no fear of that kind, but explained to him that we must for the present go to Aniwa, but would return to Tanna, if the Lord opened up our way.

Novar, Artuat, and the rest, seemed to be genuinely grieved, and it touched my soul to the quick.

A beautiful incident was the outcome, as we learned only in long after years. There was at that time an Aniwa Chief on Tanna, visiting friends. He was one of their great Sacred Men. He and his people had been promised a passage home in the *Deryytag*, with their canoes in tow. When old Novar saw that he could not keep us with himself, he went to this Aniwa Chief, and took the white shells, the insignia of Chieftainship, from his own arm, and bound them on the Sacred Man, saying, "By these you promise to protect my Missi and his wife and child on Aniwa. Let no evil befall them; or, by this pledge, I and my people will revenge it."

In a future crisis, this probably saved our lives, as shall be afterwards related. After all, a bit of the Christ-Spirit had found its way into that old Cannibal's soul! And the same Christ-Spirit in me yearned more strongly still, and made it a positive pain to pass on to another island, and leave him in that dim-grooping twilight of the soul.

CHAPTER LVIII

OUR NEW HOME ON ANIWA

ANIWA became my Mission Home in November 1866; and for the next fifteen years it was the heart and centre of my personal labours in the Heathen World. Since 1881, alas! my too frequent deputation pilgrimages among Churches in Great Britain and in the Colonies have rendered my visits to Aniwa but few and far between. God never guided me back to Tanna; but others, my dear friends, have seen His Kingdom planted and beginning to grow amongst that slowly relapsing race. Aniwa was to be the land wherein my part years of toil and patience and faith were to see their fruits ripening at length. I claimed Aniwa for Jesus, and by the grace of God Aniwa now worships at the Saviour's feet.

The island of Aniwa is one of the smaller isles of the New Hebrides. It measures scarcely seven miles by two, and is everywhere girt round with a belt of coral reef. The sea

breaks thereon heavily, with thundering roar, and the white surf rolls in furious and far. But there are days of calm, when all the sea is glass, and the spray on the reef is only a fringe of silver.

Aniwa, having no hills to attract and condense the clouds, suffers badly for lack of genial rains; and the heavy rains of hurricane and tempest seem to disappear as if by magic through the light soil and porous rock. The moist atmosphere and the heavy dews, however, keep the island covered with green, while large and fruitful trees draw wondrous nourishment from their rocky beds.

Aniwa has no harbour, or safe anchorage of any kind for ships; though, in certain winds, they have been seen at anchor on the outer edge of the reef, always a perilous haven! There is one crack in the coral belt, through which a boat can safely run to shore; but the little wharf, built there of the largest coral blocks that could be rolled together, has been once and again swept clean off by the hurricane, leaving "not a wrack behind."

When we landed, the Natives received us kindly. They and the Aneityunese Teachers led us to a temporary home, prepared for our abode. It was a large Native Hut. Walls and roof consisted of sugar-cane leaf and reeds, intertwined on a strong wooden frame. It had neither doors nor windows, but open spaces instead of these. The earthen floor alone looked beautiful, covered thick with white coral broken small. It had only one apartment; and that, meantime, had to serve also for Church and School and Public Hall. We screened off a little portion, and behind that screen planted our bed, and stored our valuables. All the Natives within reach assembled to watch us taking our food! A box at first served for a chair, the lid of another box was our table, our cooking was all done in the open air under a large tree, and we got along with amazing comfort. But the house was under the shelter of a coral rock, and we saw at a glance that at certain seasons it would prove a very hotbed of fever and ague. We were, however, only too thankful to enter it, till a better could be built, and on a breezier site.

The Aniwaans were not so violently dishonourable as the Tannese. But they had the knack of asking in a rather menacing manner whatever they coveted; and the tomahawk,

was sometimes strung to enforce an appeal. We strove to get along quietly and kindly, in the hope that when we knew their language, and could teach them the principles of Jesus, they would be saved, and life and property would be secure. But the rumour of the *Caracas's* visit and her punishment of murder and robbery did more, by God's blessing, to protect us during those Heathen days than all other influences combined. The savage Cannibal was heard to whisper to his bloodthirsty mates, "not to murder or to steal, for the Man-of-war that punished Tanna would blow up their little Island!"

Sorrowful experience on Tanna had taught us to seek the site for our Amivan house on the highest ground, and away from the malarial influences near the shore. There was one charming mound, covered with trees, whose roots ran down into the crevices of coral, and from which Tanna and Erromanga are clearly seen. But there the Natives for some superstitious reason forbade us to build, and we were constrained to take another rising ground somewhat nearer the shore. In the end, this turned out to be the very best site on the island for us, central and suitable every way. But we afterwards learned that perhaps superstition also led them to select us this site, in the malicious hope that it would prove our ruin. The mounds on the top, which had to be cleared away, contained the bones and refuse of their Cannibal feasts for ages. None but their Sacred Men durst touch them; and the Natives watched us hewing and digging, certain that their gods would strike us dead! That failing, their thoughts may probably have been turned to reflect that after all the Jehovah God was stronger than they.

In levelling the site, and gently sloping the sides of the ground for good drainage purposes, I had gathered together two large baskets of human bones. I said to a Chief in Tannese, "How do these bones come to be here?"

And he replied, with a shrug worthy of a cynical Frenchman, "Ah, we are not Tanna-men! We don't eat the bones!"

CHAPTER LIX

HOUSE-BUILDING FOR GOD

THE site being now cleared, we questioned whether to build only a temporary home, hoping to return to dear old Tanna as soon as possible, or, though the labour would be vastly greater, a substantial house—for the comfort of our successors, if not of ourselves. We decided that, as this was work for God, we would make it the very best we could. We planned two central rooms, sixteen feet by sixteen, with a five feet wide lobby between, so that other rooms could be added when required. About a quarter of a mile from the sea, and thirty-five feet above its level, I laid the foundations of the house. Coral blocks raised the wall about three feet high all round. Air passages carried sweeping currents underneath each room, and greatly lessened the risk of fever and ague. A wide trench was dug all round, and filled up as a drain with broken coral. At back and front, the verandah stretched five feet wide; and pantry, bath-room, and tool-house were partitioned off under the verandah behind. The windows sent to me had hinges; I added two feet to each, with wood from Mission-houses, and made them French door-windows, opening from each room to the verandah. And so we had, by God's blessing, a healthy spot to live in, if not exactly a thing of beauty!

The Mission House, as ultimately finished, had six rooms, three on each side of the lobby, and measured ninety feet in length, surrounded by a verandah, one hundred feet by five, which kept everything shaded and cool. Underneath two rooms a cellar was dug eight feet deep, and shelved all round for a store. In more than one terrific hurricane that cellar saved our lives,—all crushing into it when trees and houses were being tossed like feathers on the wings of the wind. Altogether, the house at Amiva has proved one of the healthiest and most commodious of any that have been planted by Christian hands on the New Hebrides. In selecting site and in building "the good hand of our God was upon us for good."

I built also two small Orphanages, almost as liberally,

necessary as the Missionary's own house. They stood on a line with the front of my own dwelling, one for girls, the other for boys, and we had them constantly under our own eyes. The orphans were practically boarded at the Mission premises, and adopted by the Missionaries. Their clothing was a heavy drain upon our resources; and every odd and curious article that came in any of the boxes or parcels was utilised. We trained these young people for Jesus. And at this day many of the best of our Native Teachers, and most devoted Christians helpers, are amongst those who would probably have perished but for these Orphanages.

Every day after dinner we set the bell-ringing—intimating from our first arrival on Aiwra, readiness to give advice or medicine to all who were sick. We spoke to them, so soon as we had learned, a few words about Jesus. The weak received a cup of tea and a piece of bread. The demand was sometimes great, especially when epidemics beset them. But some rather fled from us as the cause of their sickness, and sought refuge from our presence in remotest corners, or rushed off at our approach and concealed themselves in the bush. They were but children, and full of superstition; and we had to win them by kindly patience, never losing faith in them and hope for them, any more than the Lord did with us!

Our learning the language on Aiwra was marked by similar incidents to those of Tanna, related in a preceding chapter; though a few of them could understand my Tannese, and that greatly helped me. One day a man, after carefully examining some article, turned to his neighbour and said, "Taha tnei?" I inferred that he was asking, "What is this?" Pointing to another article, I repeated their words; they smiled at each other, and gave me its name.

On another occasion, a man said to his companion, looking toward me, "Taha nede?" Concluding that he was asking my name, I pointed towards him, and repeated the words, and they at once gave me their names.

Readers would be surprised to discover how much you can readily learn of any language, with these two short questions constantly on your lips, and with people ready at every turn to answer—"What's this?" "What's your name?" Every word was at once written down, spelled phonetically and arranged in alphabetic order, and a note appended as to the

circumstances in which it was used. By frequent comparison of these notes, and by careful daily and even hourly imitation of all their sounds, we were able in a measure to understand each other before we had gone far in the house-building operations, during which some of them were constantly beside me.

One incident of that time was very memorable, and God turned it to good account for higher ends. I often tell it as "the miracle of the speaking bit of wood"; and it has happened to other Missionaries exactly as to myself. While working at the house, I pencilled a few words on it, and requested our old Chief to carry it to Mrs. Paton, and she would send what I wanted. In blank wonder, he innocently stared at me, and said, "But what do you want?"

I replied, "The wood will tell her." He looked rather angry, thinking that I befooled him, and retorted, "Who ever heard of wood speaking?"

By hard pleading I succeeded in persuading him to go. He was amazed to see her looking at the wood and then fetching the needed articles. He brought back the bit of wood, and eagerly made signs for an explanation. Chiefly in broken Tannese I read to him the words, and informed him that in the same way God spoke to us through His Book. The will of God was written there, and by and by, when he learned to read, he would hear God *speaking* to him from its page, as Mrs. Paton heard me from the bit of wood.

A great desire was thus awakened in the poor man's soul to see the very Word of God printed in his own language. He helped me to learn words and master ideas with growing enthusiasm. And when my work of translating portions of Holy Scripture began, his delight was unbounded and his help invaluable. The miracle of a speaking page was not less wonderful than that of speaking wood!

One day, while building the house, an old Inland Chief and his three sons came to see us. Everything was to them full of wonder. After returning home one of the sons fell sick, and the father at once blamed us and the worship, declaring that if the lad died we all should be murdered in revenge. By God's blessing, and by our careful nursing and suitable medicine, he recovered and was spared. The old Chief superstitiously wheeled round almost to another extreme.

He became not only friendly, but devoted to us. He attended the Sabbath Services, and listened to the Assiyanese Teachers, and to my first attempts, partly in Tannese, translated by the trader Tala or the Chief Namatzi, and explained in our hearing to the people in their mother tongue.

But on the heels of this another calamity overtook us. So soon as two rooms of the Mission House were roofed in, I hired the stoutest of the young men to carry our boxes thither. Two of them started off with a heavy box suspended on a pole from shoulder to shoulder, their usual custom. They were shortly after smacked with vomiting of blood; and one of them, an *Birongangan*, actually died. The father of the other swore that, if his son did not get better, every soul at the Mission House should be slain in revenge. But God mercifully restored him.

As the boat-landing was nearly three-quarters of a mile distant, and such a calamity recurring would be not only sorrowful in itself but perilous in the extreme for us all, I steeped my wigs, and with such crude materials as were at hand, I manufactured not only a hand-barrow, but a wheel-barrow, for the pressing emergencies of the time. In due course, I procured a more orthodox hand-cart from the Colonies, and coaxed and bribed the Natives to assist me in making a road for it. Perhaps the ghost of *Makadam* would shudder at the appearance of that road, but it has proved immensely useful ever since.

CHAPTER IX

A CITY OF GOD

WHEN, in the course of years, everything had been completed to our taste, we lived practically in the midst of a beautiful village,—the Church, the School, the Orphanage, the Smithy and Joiner's Shop, the Printing Office, the Banana and Yam House, the Cook House, etc.; all very humble indeed, but all standing sturdy up there among the orange-trees, and preaching the Gospel of a higher civilization and of a better life for *Savva*. The little road leading to each door was laid with

the white coral broken small. The fence around all these fresh and clean with new paint. Order and taste were seen to be laws in the white man's New Life; and reversal of the Natives began diligently to follow our example.

Many and strange were the arts which I had to try to practice, such as handling the axe, the mysteries of tenon and mortise, and other feats of skill. If a Native wanted a fish-hook, or a piece of red calico to bind his long whipcord tail, he would carry me a block of coral or fetch me a beam; but continuous daily toil seemed to him a mean existence. The women were tempted, by calico and beads for pay, to assist in preparing the sugar-cane leaf for thatch, gathering it in the plantations, and tying it over reeds four or six feet long with strips of bark of pandanus leaf, leaving a long fringe hanging over on one side. How differently they acted when the Gospel began to touch their hearts! They built their Church and their School then, by their own free toil, rejoicing to labour without money or price; and they have ever since kept them in good repair, for the service of the Lord, by their voluntary offerings of wood and sugar-cane leaf and coral-lime.

The roof was firmly tied on and nailed; thereon were laid the reeds, fringed with sugar-cane leaf row after row tied firmly to the wood; the ridge was bound down by cocoa-nut leaves, dexterously plaited from side to side and skewered to the ridge pole with hard wooden pins; and over all a fresh storm-roof was laid on yearly for the hurricane months, composed of folded cocoa-nut leaves, held down with planks of wood, and bound to the frame-work below—which, however, had to be removed again in April to save the sugar-cane leaf from rotting beneath it. There you were snugly covered in, and your thatching good to last from eight years to ten; that is, provided you were not caught in the sweep of the hurricane, before which trees went flying like straws, huts disappeared like autumn leaves, and your Mission House, if left standing at all, was probably swept here alike of roof and thatch at a single stroke! Well for you at such times if you have a good barometer indicating the approach of the storm; and better still, a large cellar like ours, four-and-twenty feet by sixteen, built round with solid coral blocks,—where goods may be stored, and wherein also all your household may creep for

safety, while the tornado tosses your dwelling about, and sets huge trees dancing around you!

We had also to invent a lime-kiln, and this proved one of the hardest nuts of all that had to be cracked. The kind of coral required could be obtained only at one spot, about three miles distant. Lying at anchor in my boat, the Natives dived into the sea, broke off with hammer and crowbar piece after piece, and brought it up to me, till I had my load. We then carried it ashore, and spread it out in the sun to be blistered there for two weeks or so. Having thus secured twenty or thirty boat-loads, and had it duly conveyed round to the Mission Station, a huge pit was dug in the ground, dry wood piled in below, and green wood above to a height of several feet, and on the top of all the coral blocks were orderly laid. When this pile had burned for seven or ten days, the coral had been reduced to excellent lime, and the plaster work made therefrom shone like marble.

On one of these trips the Natives performed an extraordinary feat. The boat with full load was struck heavily by a wave, and the reef drove a hole in her side. Quick as thought the crew were all in the sea, and, to my amazement, bearing up the boat with their shoulder and one hand, while swimming and guiding us ashore with the other! There on the land we were hauled up, and four weary days were spent fetching and carrying from the Mission Station every plank, tool, and nail, necessary for her repair. Every boat for these seas ought to be built of cedar wood and copper-fastened, which is by far the most economical in the end. And all houses should be built of wood which is as full as possible of gum or resin, since the large white ants devour not only all other soft woods, but even Colonial blue gum-trees, the hard coconut, and window sashes, chairs, and tables!

Glancing back on all these toils, I rejoice that such exhausting demands are no longer made on our newly-arrived Missionaries. Houses, all ready for being set up, are now brought down from the Colonies. Zinc roofs and other improvements have been introduced. The Synod appoints a deputation to accompany the young Missionary, and plant the house along with himself at the Station committed to his care. Precious strength is thus saved for higher uses; and not only property but life itself is oftentimes preserved.

I will close this chapter with an incident which, though it came to our knowledge only years afterwards, closely bears upon our Settlement on Aniva. At first we had no idea why they so determinedly refused us one site, and fixed us to another of their own choice. But after the old Chief Namakei became a Christian, he one day addressed the Anivan people in our hearing to this effect:—

"When Misai came we saw his boxes. We knew he had blankets and calico, axes and knives, fish-hooks and all such things. We said, 'Don't drive him off, else we will lose all these things. We will let him land. But we will force him to live on the Sacred Plot. Our gods will kill him, and we will divide all that he has amongst the men of Aniva.' But Misai built his house on our most sacred spot. He and his people lived there, and the gods did not strike. He planted bananas there, and we said, 'Now when they eat of these they will all drop down dead, as our fathers assured us, if any one ate fruit from that ground, except only our Sacred Men themselves.' These bananas ripened. They did eat them. We kept watching for days and days, but no one died! Therefore what we say, and what our fathers have said, is not true. Our gods cannot kill them. Their Jehovah God is stronger than the gods of Aniva."

I enforced old Namakei's appeal, telling them that, though they knew it not, it was the living and true and only God who had sent them every blessing which they possessed, and had at last sent us to teach them how to serve and love and please Him. In wonder and silence they listened, while I tried to explain to them that Jesus, the Son of this God, had lived and died and gone to the Father to save them, and that He was now willing to take them by the hand and lead them through this life to glory and immortality together with Himself.

The old Chief led them in prayer—a strange, dark, groping prayer, with streaks of Heathenism colouring every thought and sentence; but still a heart-breaking prayer, as the cry of a soul once Cannibal, but now being thrilled through and through with the first conscious pulsations of the Christ-Spirit, throbbing into the words—"Father, Father; our Father."

When these poor creatures began to wear a bit of calico or a kiti, it was an outward sign of a change, though yet far from

civilisation. And when they began to look up and pray to One whom they called "Father, our Father," though they might be far, very far, from the type of Christian that takes itself "respectable," my heart broke over them in tears of joy; and nothing will ever persuade me that there was not a Divine Heart in the Heavens rejoicing too.

CHAPTER LXI

THE RELIGION OF REVENGE

On landing in November 1866 we found the Natives of Aniwa, some very shy and distrustful, and others forward and imperious. No clothing was worn; but the wives and elder women had grass aprons or girdles like our first Parents in Eden. The old Chief interested himself in us and our work; but the greater number showed a far deeper interest in the axes, knives, fish-hooks, strips of red calico, and blankets, received in payment for work or for bananas. Even for payment they would scarcely work at first, and they were most unreasonable, easily offended, and started off in a moment at any imaginable sight.

For instance, a Chief once came for medicine. I was so engaged that I could not attend to him for a few minutes. So off he went, in a great rage, threatening revenge, and muttering, "I must be attended to! I won't wait on *him*." Such were the exactions of a naked Savage!

Shortly before our arrival, an Aneityumese Teacher was sacrificed on Aniwa. The circumstances are illustrative of what may be almost called their worship of revenge. Many long years ago, a party of Aniwas had gone to Aneityum on a friendly visit; but the Aneityumese, then all Savages, murdered and ate every man of them save one, who escaped into the bush. Living on coconuts, he awaited a favourable wind, and, launching his canoe by night, he arrived in safety. The bereaved Aniwas, hearing his terrible story, were furious for revenge; but the forty-five miles of sea between proving too hard an obstacle, they made a deep cut in the earth and vowed to renew that cut from year to year till the day of revenge

came round. Thus the memory of the event was kept alive for nearly eighty years.

At length the people of Aneityum came to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. They strongly yearned to spread that saving Gospel to the Heathen Islands all around. Amid prayers and strong cryings to God they, like the Church at Antioch, designated two of their leading men to go as Native Teachers and evangelise Aniwa, viz. Navalak and Nemeyan; whilst others went forth to Fotuna, Tanna, and Erromanga, as opportunity arose. Namakei, the principal Chief of Aniwa, had promised to protect and be kind to them. But as time went on, it was discovered that the Teachers belonged to the Tribe on Aneityum, and one of them to the very land, where long ago the Aniwas had been murdered. The Teachers had from the first known their danger, but were eager to make known the Gospel to Aniwa. It was resolved that they should die. But the Aniwas, having promised to protect them, shrank from doing it themselves; so they hired two Tannamen and an Aniwan Chief, one of whose parents had belonged to Tanna, to waylay and shoot the Teachers as they returned from their tour of Evangelism among the villages on Sabbath afternoon. Their muskets did not go off, but the murderers rushed upon them with clubs and left them for dead.

Nemeyan was dead, and entered that day amongst the noble army of the Martyrs. Poor Navalak was still breathing, and the Chief Namakei carried him to his village and kindly nursed him. He pled with the people that the claims of revenge had been satisfied, and that Navalak should be cherished and sent home,—the Christ-Spirit beginning to work in that darkened soul! Navalak was restored to his people, and is yet living (1888)—a high-class Chief on Aneityum, and an honour to the Church of God, bearing on his body "the marks of the Lord Jesus." And often since has he visited Aniwa, in later years, and praised the Lord amongst the very people who once thirsted for his blood and left him by the wayside as good as dead!

For a time, Aniwa was left without any witness for Jesus, —the London Missionary Society Teachers, having suffered dreadfully for lack of food and from fever and ague, being also removed. But on a visit of a Mission vessel, Namakei sent his orator Tais to Aneityum, to tell them that now revenge

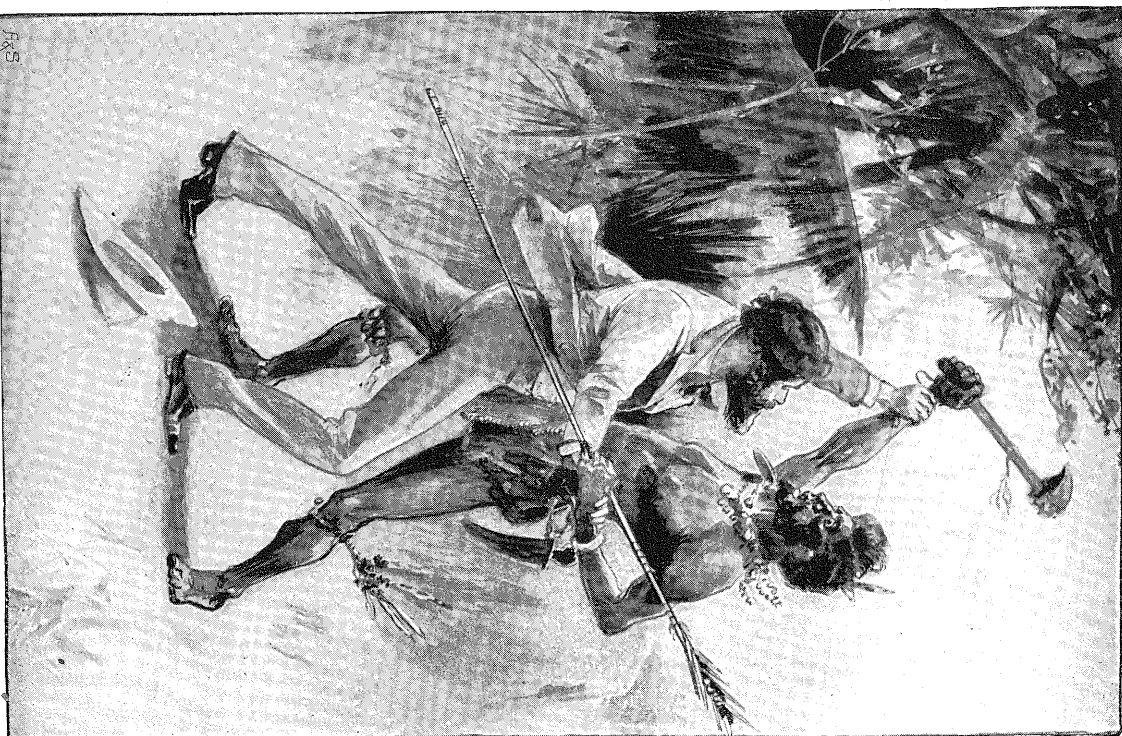
was satisfied, the cut in the earth filled up, and a cocoa-nut tree planted and flourishing where the blood of the Teachers had been shed, and that no person from Anetiymu would ever be injured by Aniwa. Further, he was to plead for more Teachers, and to pledge his Chief's word that they would be kindly received and protected. They knew not the Gospel, and had no desire for it; but they wanted friendly intercourse with Anetiymu, where trading vessels called, and whence they might obtain mats, baskets, blankets, and iron tools. At length two Anetiymuse again volunteered to go, Kargaru and Neimai, one from each side of the Island, and were located by the Missionaries, along with their families, on Aniwa, one with Nemakei, and the other at the south end, to lift up the Standard of a Christlike life among their Heathen neighbours.

Tais, who went on the Mission to Anetiymu, was a great speaker and also a very cunning man. He was the old Chief's appointed "Orator" on all state occasions, being tall and stately in appearance, of great bodily strength, and possessed of a winning manner. On the voyage to Anetiymu he was constantly smoking and making things disagreeable to all around him. Being advised not to smoke while on board, he pled with the Missionary just to let him take a whiff now and again till he finished the tobacco he had in his pipe, and then he would lay it aside. But, like the widow's meal, it lasted all the way to Anetiymu, and never appeared to get less—at which the innocent Tais expressed much astonishment!

CHAPTER LXII

FIRST FRUITS ON ANIWA

The two Teachers and their wives on Aniwa were little better than slaves when we landed there, toiling in the service of their masters and living in constant fear of being murdered. Doubtless, however, the mighty conquest presented by the life, character, and disposition of these godly Teachers was the sowing of the seed that bore fruit in other days,—though as yet no single Aniwa had begun to wear clothing out of respect



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to Civilization, much less been brought to know and love the Saviour.

So soon as I could speak a little to them in their own language, we began to visit regularly at their villages and to talk to them about Jesus and His love. We tried also to get them to come to our Church under the shade of the banyan tree. Nasi and some of the worst characters would sit scowling not far off, or follow us with loaded muskets. Using every precaution, we still held on doing our work; sometimes giving fish-hooks or beads to the boys and girls, showing them that our objects were kind and not selfish. And however our hearts sometimes trembled in the presence of imminent death and sank within us, we stood fearless in their presence, and left all results in the hands of Jesus. Often have I had to run into the arms of some Savage, when his club was swung or his musket levelled at my head, and, praying to Jesus, so clung round him that he could neither strike nor shoot me till his wrath cooled down, and I managed to slip away. Often have I seized the pointed barrel and directed it upwards, or, pleading with my assailant, uncapped his musket in the struggle. At other times, nothing could be said, nothing done, but stand still in silent prayer, asking God to protect us or to prepare us for going home to His Glory. He fulfilled His own promise—"I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

The first Aniwan that ever came to the knowledge and love of Jesus was the old Chief Namakei. We came to live on his land, as it was near our diminutive harbour; and, upon the whole, he and his people were the most friendly, though his only brother, the Sacred Man of the tribe, on two occasions tried to shoot me. Namakei came a good deal about us at the Mission House, and helped us to acquire the language. He discovered that we took tea evening and morning. When we gave him a cup and a piece of bread, he liked it well, and gave a sip to all around him. At first he came for the tea, perhaps, and disappeared suspiciously soon thereafter; but his interest manifestly grew, till he showed great delight in helping us in every possible way. Along with him and as his associates came also the Chief Naswai and his wife Katus. These three grew into the knowledge of the Saviour together. From being savage Cannibals they rose before our eyes, under the influence

of the Gospel, into noble and beloved characters, and they had loved each other exceedingly.

Namakei brought his little daughter, his only child, the Queen of her race, called Lisi Soré (= Lisi the Great), and said, "I want to leave my Lisi with you. I want you to train her for Jesus."

She was a very intelligent child, learned things like any white girl, and soon became quite a help to Mr. Paton. On seeing his niece dressed and so smart-looking, the old Chief's only brother, the Sacred Man that had attempted to shoot me, also brought his child, Lisi Sisi (= the Little) to be trained like her cousin. The mothers of both were dead. The children reported all they saw, and all we taught them, and so their fathers became more deeply interested in our work, and the news of the Gospel spread far and wide. Soon we had all the Orphans committed to us, whose guardians were willing to part with them, and our Home became literally *the School of Christ*—the boys growing up to help all my plans, and the girls to help my wife and to be civilised and trained by her, and many of them developing into devoted Teachers and Evangelists.

Our earlier Sabbath Services were sad affairs. Every man came armed—indeed, every man slept with his weapons of war at his side—and bow and arrow, spear and tomahawk, club and musket, were always ready for action. On fair days we assembled under the banyan tree, on rainy days in a Native hut partly built for the purpose. One or two seemed to listen, but the most lay about on their backs or sides, smoking, talking, sleeping! When we stopped the feast at the close, which the Anetiyumese Teacher had been forced to prepare before our coming, and for which they were always ready, the audiences at first went down to two or three; but these actually came to learn, and a better tone began immediately to pervade the Service. We informed them that it was for their good that we taught them, and that they would get no "pay" for attending Church or School, and the greater number departed in high dudgeon as very ill-used persons! Others of a more commercial turn came offering to sell their "idols," and when we would not purchase them, but urged them to give up and cast them away for love to Jesus, they carried them off, saying they would have nothing to do with this new Worship.

Amidst our frequent trials and dangers in those earlier times on Aniwa, our little Orphans often warned us privately and saved our lives from cruel plots. When, in heated rage, our enemies demanded who had revealed things to us, I always said, "It was a little bird from the bush." So the dear children grew to have perfect confidence in us. They knew we would not betray them; and they considered themselves the guardians of our lives.

CHAPTER LXIII

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

WHAT a suggestive tradition of the Fall came to me in one of those early days on Aniwa! Upon our leaving the hut and removing to our new house, it was asked upon by Tupa for his sleeping-place, though still continuing to be used by the Natives as club-house, court of law, etc. One morning at daylight this Tupa came running to us in great excitement, wielding his club furiously, and crying, "Missi, I have killed the Tebil. I have killed Teapolo. He came to catch me last night. I raised all the people, and we fought him round the house with our clubs. At daybreak he came out and I killed him dead. We will have no more bad conduct or trouble now. Teapolo is dead!"

I said, "What nonsense; Teapolo is a spirit, and cannot be seen."

But in mad excitement he persisted that he had killed him. And at Mrs. Paton's advice, I went with the man, and he led me to a great Sacred Rock of coral near our old hut, over which hung the dead body of a huge and beautiful sea-serpent, and exclaimed, "There he lies! Truly I killed him."

I protested, "That is not the Devil; it is only the body of a serpent."

The man quickly answered, "Well, but it is all the same! He is Teapolo. He makes us bad, and causes all our troubles."

Following up this hint by many inquiries, then and afterwards, I found that they clearly associated what's troubles and

sufferings somehow with the serpent. They worshipped the Serpent, as a spirit of evil, under the name of *Matshkshiki*; that is to say, they lived in abject terror of his influence, and all their worship was directed towards propitiating his rage against men.

Their story of Creation, at least of the origin of their own *Aniwa* and the adjacent Islands, is much more an outcome of the unaided Native mind. They say that *Matshkshiki* fished up these lands out of the sea. And they show the deep print of his foot on the coral rocks, opposite each island, wherever he stood as he strained and lifted them up above the waters. He then threw his great fishing-line round *Fonna*, thirty-six miles distant, to draw it close to *Aniwa* and make them one land; but, as he pulled, the line broke and he fell, where his mark may still be seen upon the rocks—so the Islands remain separated unto this day.

Matshkshiki placed men and women on *Aniwa*. On the southern end of the Island there was a beautiful spring and a freshwater river, with rich lands all around for plantations. But the people would not do what *Matshkshiki* wanted them; so he got angry, and spilt off the richer part of *Aniwa*, with the spring and river, and sailed with them across to *Aneiyum*, leaving them where *Dr. Inglis* has since built his beautiful Mission Station. To this day, the river there is called "the water of *Aniwa*" by the inhabitants of both Islands; and it is the ambition of all *Aniwans* to visit *Aneiyum* and drink of that spring and river, as they sigh to each other, "Alas, for the waters of *Aniwa*!"

Their picture of the Flood is equally grotesque. Far back, when the volcano now on *Tanna* was part of *Aniwa*, the rain fell and fell from day to day, and the sea rose till it threatened to cover everything. All were drowned except the few who climbed up on the volcano mountain. The sea had already put out the volcano at the southern end of *Aniwa*; and *Matshkshiki*, who dwelt in the greater volcano, becoming afraid of the extinction of his big fire too, spilt it off from *Aniwa* with all the land on the south-eastern side, and sailed it across to *Tanna* on the top of the flood. There, by his mighty strength, he heaved the volcano to the top of a high mountain in *Tanna*, where it remains to this day. For, on the subsiding of the sea, he was unable to transfer his big fire to *Aniwa*;

and so it was reduced to a very small island, without a volcano, and without a river, for the sins of the people long ago.

Even where there are no snakes they apply the superstitions about the serpent to a large, black, poisonous lizard called *ketowu*. They call it *Teapolo*, and women or children scream wildly at the sight of one.

One of the darkest and most hideous plots on Heathenism is the practice of Infanticide. Only three cases came to our knowledge on *Aniwa*; but we publicly denounced them at all hazards, and awoke not only natural feeling, but the selfish interests of the community for the protection of the children. These three were the last that died there by parents' hands. A young husband, who had been jealous of his wife, buried their male child alive as soon as born. An old *Tanna* woman, who had no children living, having at last a fine healthy boy born to her, threw him into the sea before any one could interfere to save. And a Savage, in anger with his wife, snatched her baby from her arms, hid himself in the bush till night, and returned without the child, refusing to give any explanation, except that he was dead and buried. Praise be to God, these three murderers of their own children were by and by touched with the story of Jesus, became members of the Church, and each adopted little orphan children, towards whom they continued to show the most tender affection and care.

Wife-murder was also considered quite legitimate. In one of our inland villages dwelt a young couple, happy in every respect except that they had no children. The man, being a Heathen, resolved to take home another wife, a widow with two children. This was naturally opposed by his young wife. And, without the slightest warning, while she sat plaiting a basket, he discharged a ball into her from his loaded musket. It crashed through her arm and lodged in her side. Everything was done that was in my power to save her life; but on the tenth day tetanus came on, and she soon after passed away. The man appeared very attentive to her all the time; but, being a Heathen, he insisted that she had no right to oppose his wishes! He was not in any way punished or disrespected by the people of his village, but went out and in amongst them as usual, and took home the other woman as his wife a few weeks thereafter. His second wife began to

attend Church and School regularly with her children; and at last he also came along with them, changing very manifestly from his sullen and savage former self. They have a large family; they are avowedly trying to train them all for the Lord Jesus, and they take their places meekly at the Lord's Table.

It would give a wonderful shock, I suppose, to many namby-pamby Christians to whom the title "Mighty to Save" conveys no ideas of reality, to be told that nine or ten converted murderers were partaking with them the Holy Communion of Jesus! But the Lord who reads the heart, and weighs every motive and circumstance, has perhaps much more reason to be shocked by the presence of some of themselves. Penitence opens all the heart of God—"To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

CHAPTER LXIV

NELWANG'S ELOPEMENT

SOME most absurd and preposterous experiences were forced upon us by the habits and notions of the people. Amongst these I recall very vividly the story of Nelwang's elopement with his bride. I had begun, in spare hours, to lay the foundation of two additional rooms for our house, and felt rather uneasy to see a well-known Savage hanging around every day with his tomahawk, and eagerly watching me at work. He had killed a man, before our arrival on Aniwa; and had also started my wife by suddenly appearing from amongst the boxes, and causing her to run for life. On seeing him hovering so alarmingly near, tomahawk in hand, I saluted him, "Nelwang, do you want to speak to me?"

"Yes, Missi," he replied; "if you will help me now, I will be your friend for ever."

I answered, "I am your friend. That brought me here and keeps me here."

"Yes," said he very earnestly, "but I want you to be strong as my friend, and I will be strong for you!"

I replied, "Well, how can I help you?"

He quickly answered, "I want to get married, and I need your help."

I protested—"Nelwang, you know that marriages here are all made in infancy, by children being bought and betrothed to their future husbands. How can I interfere? You don't want to bring evil on me and my wife and child? It might cost us our lives."

"No! no! Missi," earnestly retorted Nelwang. "No one hears of this, or can hear. Only help me now. You tell me, if you were in my circumstances, how would you act?"

"That's surely very simple," I answered. "Every man knows how to go about that business, if he wants to be honest! Look out for your intended, find out if she loves you, and the rest will follow naturally,—you will marry her."

"Yes," argued Nelwang, "but just there my trouble comes in!"

"Do you know the woman you would like to get?" I asked, wishing to bring him to some closer issue.

"Yes," replied he very frankly, "I want to marry Yakin, the Chief's widow up at the inland village, and that will break no infant betrothals."

"But," I persevered, "do you know if she loves you or would take you?"

"Yes," replied Nelwang; "one day I met her on the path and told her I would like to have her for my wife. She took out her ear-rings and gave them to me, and I know thereby that she loves me. I was one of her late husband's men; and if she had loved any of them more than she loved me, she would have given them to another. With the ear-rings she gave me her heart."

"Then why," I insisted, "don't you go and marry her?"

"There," said Nelwang gravely, "begins my difficulty. In her village there are thirty young men for whom there are no wives. Each of them wants her, but no one has the courage to take her, for the other nine-and-twenty will shoot him!"

"And if you take her," I suggested, "the disappointed thirty will shoot you."

"That's exactly what I see, Missi," continued Nelwang; "but I want you just to think you are in my place, and tell me how you would carry her off. You white men can always succeed. Missi, hear my plan, and advise me."

With as serious a face as I could command, I had to listen to Nelwang, to enter into his love affair, and to make suggestions, with a view to avoiding bloodshed and other mischief. The result of the deliberations was that Nelwang was to secure the confidence of two friends, his brother and the orator Tais, to place one at each end of the coral rocks above the village as watchmen, to cut down with his American tomahawk a passage through the fence at the back, and to carry off his bride at dead of night into the seclusion and safety of the bush! Nelwang's eyes flashed as he flourished his tomahawk about and cried, "I see it now, Missi! I shall win her from them all. Yakin and I will be strong for you all our days."

Next morning Yakin's house was found deserted. They sent to all the villages around, but no one had seen her. The hole in the fence behind was then discovered, and the thirty whispered to each other that Yakin had been wooed and won by some daring lover. Messengers were despatched to all the villages, and Nelwang was found to have disappeared on the same night as the widow, and neither could anywhere be found.

The usual revenge was taken. The houses of the offenders burned, their fences broken down, and all their property either destroyed or distributed. Work was suspended, and the disappointed thirty solaced themselves by feasting at Yakin's expense.

Three weeks passed. The runways were nowhere to be found. It was generally believed that they had gone in a canoe to Tanna or Erromanga. But one morning, as I began my work at my house alone, the brave Nelwang appeared at my side!

"Hillo!" I said, "where have you come from? and where is Yakin?"

"I must not," he replied, "tell you yet. We are hid. We have lived on coconuts gathered at night. Yakin is well and happy. I come now to fulfil my promise: I will help you, and Yakin will help Missi Paton the woman, and we shall be your friends. I have ground to be built upon and fenced, whenever we dare; but we will come and live with you, till peace is secured. Will you let us come to-morrow morning?"

"All right!" I said. "Come to-morrow!" And, trembling with delight, he disappeared into the bush.

Thus strangely God provided us with wonderful assistance. Yakin soon learnt to wash and dress and clean everything, and Nelwang served me like a faithful disciple. They clung by us like our very shadow, partly through fear of attack, partly from affection; but as each of them could handle freely both musket and tomahawk, which, though laid aside, were never far away, it was not every enemy that cared to try issues with Nelwang and his bride. After a few weeks had thus passed by, and as both of them were really showing an interest in things pertaining to Jesus and His Gospel, I urged them strongly to appear publicly at the Church on Sabbath, to show that they were determined to stand their ground together as true husband and wife, and that the others must accept the position and become reconciled. Delay now could gain no purpose, and I wished the strife and uncertainty to be put to an end.

Nelwang knew our customs. Every worshipper has to be seated, when our Church bell ceases ringing. Amvans would be ashamed to enter after the Service had actually begun. As the bell ceased, Nelwang, knowing that he would have a clear course, marched in, dressed in shirt and kilt, but grasping very determinedly his tomahawk! He sat down as near to me as he could conveniently get, trying hard to conceal his manifest agitation. Slightly smiling towards me, he then turned and looked eagerly at the other door through which the women entered and left the Church, as if to say, "Yakin is coming!" But his tomahawk was poised ominously on his shoulder, and his courage gave him a defiant and almost impudent air. He was evidently quite ready to sell his life at a high price, if any one was prepared to risk the consequences.

In a few seconds Yakin entered; and if Nelwang's bearing and appearance were rather inconsistent with the feeling of worship,—what on earth was I to do when the figure and costume of Yakin began to reveal itself marching in? The first visible difference betwixt a Heathen and a Christian is,—that the Christian wears some clothing, the Heathen wears none. Yakin had determined to show the extent of her Christianity by the amount of clothing she could carry upon her person. Being a Chief's widow before she became Nel-

wang's bride, she had some idea of state occasions, and appeared dressed in every article of European apparel, mostly portions of male attire, that she could beg or borrow from about the premises! Her bridal gown was a man's drab coloured great-coat, put on above her Native grass skirts, and sweeping down to her heels, buttoned tight. Over this she had hung on a vest, and above that again, most amazing of all, she had superinduced a pair of men's trousers, planting the body of them on her neck and shoulders, and leaving her head and face looking out from between the legs—a leg from either side streaming over her bosom and dangling down absurdly in front! Fastened to the one shoulder also there was a red shirt, and to the other a striped shirt, waving about her like wings as she sailed along. Around her head a red shirt had been twisted like a turban, and her notions of art demanded that a sleeve thereof should hang aloft over each of her ears! She seemed to be a moving monster loaded with a mass of rags. The day was excessively hot, and the perspiration poured over her face in streams. She, too, sat as near to me as she could get on the women's side of the Church. Nalwang looked at me and then at her, smiling quietly, as if to say, "You never saw, in all your white world, a bride so grandly dressed!"

I little thought what I was bringing on myself when I urged them to come to Church. The sight of that poor creature sweltering before me constrained me for once to make the service very short—perhaps the shortest I ever conducted in all my life! The day ended in peace. The two souls were extremely happy; and I praised God that what might have been a scene of bloodshed had closed thus, even though it were in a kind of wild grotesquerie!

CHAPTER LXV

THE CHRIST-SPIRIT AT WORK

The progress of God's work was most conspicuous in relation to wars and revenges among the Natives. The two high Chiefs, Namaki and Navai, frequently declared, "We are the

men of Christ now. We must not fight. We must put down murders and crimes among our people."

Two young fools, returning from Tanna with muskets, attempted twice to shoot a man in sheer wantonness and display of malice. The Islanders met, and informed them that if man or woman was injured by them, the other men would load their muskets and shoot them dead in general council. This was a mighty step towards public order, and I greatly rejoiced before the Lord. His Spirit, like heaven, was at work!

My constant custom was, in order to prevent war, to run right in between the contending parties. My faith enabled me to grasp and realise the promise, "Lo, I am with you always." In Jesus I felt invulnerable and immortal, so long as I was doing His work. And I can truly say that these were the moments when I felt my Saviour to be most truly and sensibly present, inspiring and empowering me.

Another scheme had an excellent educative and religious influence. I tried to interest all the villages, and to treat all the Chiefs equally. In our early days, after getting into my two-roomed house, I engaged the Chief, or representative man of each district, to put up one or other of the many outhouses required at the Station. One, along with his people, built the cook-house; another, the store; another, the banana and yam-house; another, the washing-house; another, the boys' and girls' house; the houses for servants and teachers, the Schoolhouse, and the large shed, a kind of shelter where Natives sat and talked when not at work about the Premises. Of course these all were at first only Native huts, of larger or smaller dimensions. But they were all built by contract for articles which they highly valued, such as axes, knives, yards of prints and calico, strings of beads, blankets, etc. They served our purpose for the time, and when another party, by contract also, had fenced around our Premises, the Mission Station was really a beautiful, little, lively, and orderly village, and in itself no bad emblem of Christian and Civilised life. The payments, made to all respectively, but only for work duly done and according to reasonable bargain, distributed property and gifts amongst them on wholesome principles, and encouraged a well-conditioned rivalry which had many happy effects.

Heathenism made many desperate and some strange efforts to stamp out our Cause on Aniwa, but the Lord held the helm. One old Chief, formerly friendly, turned against us. He ostentatiously set himself to make a canoe, working at it very openly and defiantly on Sabbaths. He, becoming sick and dying, his brother started, on a Sabbath morning and in contempt of the Worship, with an armed company to provoke our people to war. They refused to fight; and one man, whom he struck with his club, said, "I will leave my revenge to Jehovah."

A few days thereafter, this brother also fell sick and suddenly died. The Heathen party made much of these incidents, and some clamoured for our death in revenge, but most feared to murder us; so they withdrew and lived apart from our friends, as far away as they could get. By and by, however, they set fire to a large district belonging to our supporters, burning cocoa-nut and breadfruit trees and plantations. Still our people refused to fight, and kept near to protect us. Then all the leading men assembled to talk it over. Most were for peace, but some insisted upon burning our house and driving us away or killing us, that they might be left to live as they had hitherto done. At last a Sacred Man, a Chief who had been on Tanna when the *Caveiros* punished the murderers and robbers but protected the villages of the friendly Natives there, stood up and spoke in our defence, and warned them what might happen; and other three, who had been under my instruction on Tanna, declared themselves to be the friends of Jehovah and of His Missionary. Finally, the Sacred Man rose again, and showed them rows of beautiful white shells strung round his left arm, saying—

"Now, the great Chief at Port Resolution on Tanna, when he saw that Missi and his wife could not be kept there, took me to his heart, and pledged me by these, the shells of his office as Chief, taken from his own arm and bound on mine, to protect them from all harm. He told me to declare to the men of Aniwa that if the Missi be injured or slain, he and his warriors will come from Tanna and take the full revenge in blood." This turned the scale. The meeting closed in our favour.

Close on the heels of this, another and a rather perplexing incident befell us. A party of Heathens assembled and made

a great display of fishing on the Lord's Day, in contempt of the practice of the men on Jehovah's side, threatening also to waylay the Teachers and myself in our village circuit. A meeting was held by the Christian party, at the close of the Sabbath Services. All who wished to serve Jehovah were to come to my house next morning, unarmed, and accompany me on a visit to our enemies, that we might talk and reason together with them. By daybreak, the Chiefs and nearly eighty men assembled at the Mission House, declaring that they were on Jehovah's side, and wished to go with me. But, alas! they refused to lay down their arms, or leave them behind; nor would they either refrain from going or suffer me to go alone. Pledging them to peace, I was reluctantly placed at their head, and we marched off to the village of the unfriendly party.

The villagers were greatly alarmed. The Chief's two sons came forth with every available man to meet us. That whole day was consumed in talking and speechifying, sometimes chanting their replies—the Natives are all inveterate talkers! To me the day was utterly wearisome; but it had one redeeming feature,—their rage found vent in hours of palaver, instead of blows and blood. It ended in peace. The Heathen were amazed at the number of Jehovah's friends; and they pledged themselves henceforth to leave the Worship alone, and that every one who pleased might come to it unmolested. For this, worn out and weary, we returned, praising the Lord.

CHAPTER LXVI

THE SINKING OF THE WELL

BUT I must here record the story of the Sinking of the Well, which broke the back of Heathenism on Aniwa. Being a flat coral island, with no hills to attract the clouds, rain is scarce there as compared with the adjoining mountainous islands; and even when it does fall heavily, with tropical profusion, it disappears, as said before, through the light soil and porous rock, and drains itself directly into the sea. The rainy season

is from December to April, and then the disease most characteristic of all these regions is apt to prevail, viz. fever and ague.

At certain seasons, the Natives drank very unwholesome water; and, indeed, the best water they had at any time for drinking purposes was from the precious cocoa-nut, a kind of Apple of Paradise for all these Southern Isles! They also cultivate the sugar-cane very extensively, and in great variety; and they chew it, when we would fly to water for thirst; so it is to them both food and drink. The black fellow carries with him to the field, when he goes off for a day's work, four or five sticks of sugar-cane, and puts in his time comfortably enough on these. Besides, the sea being their universal bathing-place, in which they swathe like fish, and little water, almost none, being required for cooking purposes, and none whatever for washing clothes (!), the lack of fresh-springing water was not the dreadful trial to them that it would be to us. Yet they appreciate and rejoice in it immensely too; though the water of the green cocoa-nut is refreshing, and in appearance, taste, and colour not unlike lemonade—one nut filling a tumbler; and though when mothers die they feed the babies on it and on the soft white pith, and they flourish on the same, yet the Natives themselves show their delight in preferring, when they can get it, the water from the well.

Aniwa, having therefore no permanent supply of fresh water, in spring or stream or lake, and my own household also suffering sadly for lack of the same, I resolved by the help of God to sink a well near the Mission Premises, hoping that a wisdom higher than my own would guide me to the source of some blessed spring. Of the scientific conditions of such an experiment I was comparatively ignorant; but I counted on having to dig through earth and coral above thirty feet, and my constant fear was, that owing to our environment, the water, if water I found, could only be salt water after all my toils! Still I resolved to sink that shaft in hope, and in faith that the Son of God would be glorified thereby.

One morning I said to the old Chief and his fellow-Chief, both now earnestly inquiring about the religion of Jehovah and of Jesus, "I am going to sink a deep well down into the earth, to see if our God will send us fresh water up from below."

They looked at me with astonishment, and said in a tone of sympathy approaching to pity, "O Missi! Wait till the rain comes down, and we will save all we possibly can for you."

I replied, "We may all die for lack of water. If no fresh water can be got, we may be forced to leave you."

The old Chief looked imploringly, and said, "O Missi! you must not leave us for that. Rain comes only from above. How could you expect our Island to send up showers of rain from below?"

I told him, "Fresh water does come up springing from the earth in my Land at home, and I hope to see it here also."

The old Chief grew more tender in his tones, and cried, "O Missi, your head is going wrong; you are losing something, or you would not talk wild like that! Don't let our people hear you talking about going down into the earth for rain, or they will never listen to your word or believe you again."

But I started upon my hazardous job, selecting a spot near the Mission Station and close to the public path, that my prospective well might be useful to all. I began to dig, with pick and spade and bucket at hand, an American axe for a hammer and crowbar, and a ladder for service by and bye. The good old Chief now told off his men in relays to watch me, lest I should attempt to take my own life, or do anything outrageous, saying, "Poor Missi! That's the way with all who go mad. There's no driving of a notion out of their heads. We must just watch him now. He will find it harder to work with pick and spade than with his pen, and when he's tired we'll persuade him to give it up."

I did get exhausted sooner than I expected, toiling under that tropical sun; but we never own before the Natives that we are beaten; so I went into the house and filled my vest pocket with large, beautiful English-made fish-hooks. These are very tempting to the young men, as compared with their own,—skillfully made though they be out of shell, and serving their purposes wonderfully. Holding up a large hook, I cried, "One of these to every man who fills and turns over three buckets out of this hole!"

A rush was made to get the first turn, and back again for another and another. I kept those on one side who had got a

turn, till all the rest in order had a chance, and bucket after bucket was filled and emptied rapidly. Still the shaft seemed to lower very slowly, while my fish-hooks were disappearing very quickly. I was constantly there, and took the heavy share of everything, and was thankful one evening to find that we had cleared more than twelve feet deep,—when lo! next morning, one side had rushed in, and our work was all undone.

The old Chief and his best men now came around me more earnestly than ever. He remonstrated with me very gravely. He assured me for the fifth time that rain would never be seen coming up through the earth on Aniva!

"Now," said he, "had you been in that hole last night, you would have been buried, and a Man-of-war would have come from Queen Toria to ask for the Missi that lived here. We would have to say, 'He is down in that hole.' The Captain would ask, 'Who killed him and put him down there?' We would have to say, 'He went down there himself!' The Captain would answer, 'Nonsense! who ever heard of a white man going down into the earth to bury himself? You killed him, you put him there; don't hide your bad conduct with lies!' Then he would bring out his big guns and shoot us, and destroy our Island in revenge. You are making your own grave, Missi, and you will make ours too. Give up this mad freak, for no rain will be found by going downwards on Aniva. Besides, all your fish-hooks cannot tempt my men again to enter that hole; they don't want to be buried with you. Will you not give it up now?"

I said all that I could to quiet his fears, explained to them that this falling in had happened by my neglect of precautions, and finally made known that by the help of my God, even without all other help, I meant to persevere.

Steering my poor brains over the problem, I became an enterprised engineer. Two trees were searched for, with branches on opposite sides, capable of sustaining a cross tree betwixt them. I sank them on each side firmly into the ground, passed the beam across them over the centre of the shaft, fastened thereon a rude home-made pulley and block, passed a rope over the wheel, and swung my largest bucket to the end of it. Thus equipped, I began once more sinking away at the well, but at so great an angle that the sides might

not again fall in. Not a Native, however, would enter that hole, and I had to pick and dig away till I was utterly exhausted. But a Native Teacher, in whom I had confidence, took charge above, managing to hire them with axes, knives, etc., to seize the end of the rope and walk along the ground, pulling it till the bucket rose to the surface, and then he himself swung it aside, emptied it, and lowered it down again. I rang a little bell which I had with me, when the bucket was loaded, and that was the signal for my brave helpers to pull their rope. And thus I toiled on from day to day, my heart almost sinking sometimes with the sinking of the well, till we reached a depth of about thirty feet. And the phrase, "living water," "living water," kept chiming through my soul like music from God, as I dug and hammered away!

CHAPTER LXVIII

RAIN FROM BELOW

As this depth the earth and coral began to be soaked with damp. I felt that we were nearing water. My soul had a faith that God would open a spring for us; but side by side with this faith was a strange terror that the water would be salt. So perplexing and mixed are even the highest experiences of the soul; the rose-flower of a perfect faith, set round and round with prickly thorns. One evening I said to the old Chief, "I think that Jehovah God will give us water to-morrow from that hole!"

The Chief said, "No, Missi; you will never see rain coming up from the earth on this Island. We wonder what is to be the end of this mad work of yours. We expect daily, if you reach water, to see you drop through into the sea, and the sharks will eat you! That will be the end of it; death to you, and danger to us all."

I still answered, "Come to-morrow. I hope and believe that Jehovah God will send you the rain water up through the earth."

At the moment I knew I was risking much, and probably incurring sorrowful consequences, had no water been given;

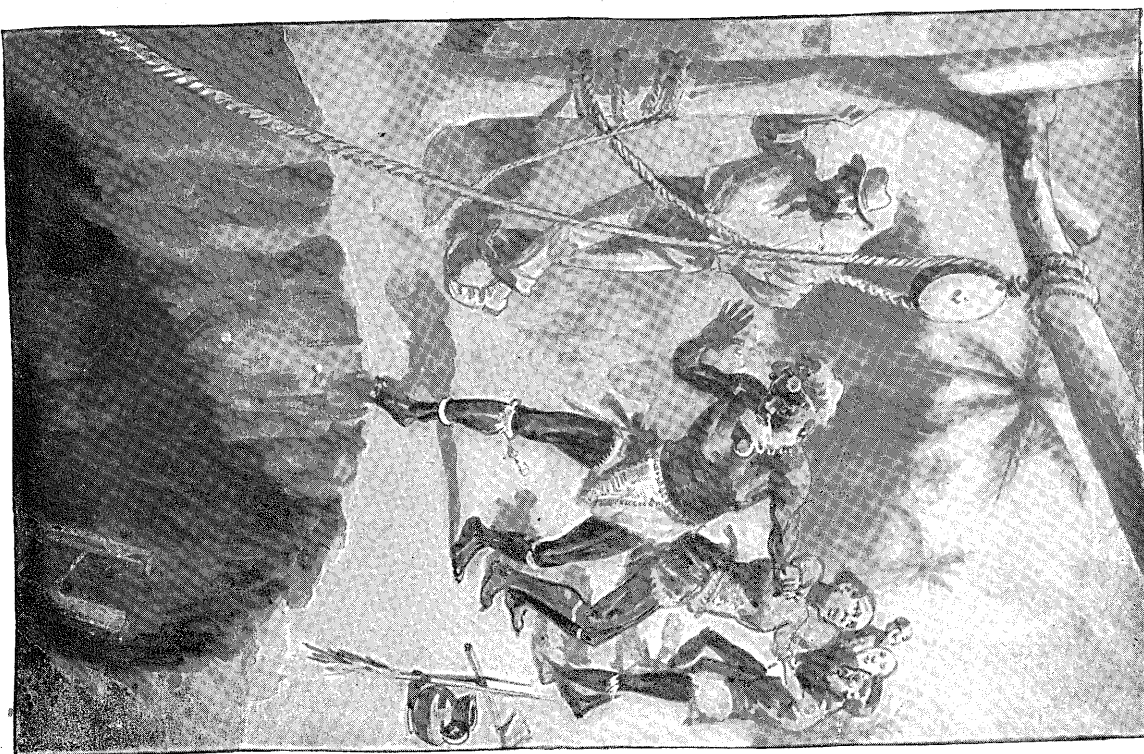
but I had faith that the Lord was leading me on, and I knew that I sought His glory, not my own.

Next morning, I went down again at daybreak and sank a narrow hole in the centre about two feet deep. The perspiration broke over me with uncontrollable excitement, and I trembled through every limb, when the water rushed up and began to fill the hole. Muddy though it was, I eagerly tasted it, lapping it with my trembling hand, and then I almost fell upon my knees in that muddy bottom as my heart burst up in praise to the Lord. It was water! It was fresh water! It was living water from Jehovah's well! True, it was a little brackish, but nothing to speak of; and no spring in the desert, cooling the parched lips of a fevered pilgrim, ever appeared more worthy of being called a Well of God than did that water to me!

The Chiefs had assembled with their men near by. They waited on in eager expectancy. It was a rehearsal, in a small way, of the Israelites coming round, while Moses struck the rock and called for water. By and bye, when I had praised the Lord, and my excitement was a little calmed, the mud being also greatly settled, I filled a jug, which I had taken down empty in the sight of them all, and ascending to the top had given us through the well. They closed around me in haste, and gazed on it in superstitious fear. The old Chief shook it to see if it would spill, and then touched it to see if it felt like water. At last he tasted it, and rolling it in his mouth with joy for a moment, he swallowed it, and shouted, "Rain! Rain! Yes, it is Rain! But how did you get it?"

I repeated, "Jehovah my God gave it out of His own Earth in answer to our labours and prayers. Go and see it springing up for yourselves!"

Now, though every man there could climb the highest tree as swiftly and as fearlessly as a squirrel or an opossum, not one of them had courage to walk to the side and gaze down into that well. To them this was miraculous! But they were not without a resource that met the emergency. They agreed to take firm hold of each other by the hand, to place themselves in a long line, the foremost man to lean cautiously forward, gaze into the well, and then pass to the rear, and so on till all had seen "Jehovah's rain" far below. It was somewhat



"They agreed to take firm hold of each other by the hand."—Page 228.

comical, yet far more pathetic, to stand by and watch their faces, as man after man peered down into the mystery, and then looked up at me in blank bewilderment! When all had seen it with their own very eyes, and were "weak with wonder," the old Chief exclaimed—

"Missi, wonderful, wonderful is the work of your Jehovah God! No god of Aniwa ever helped us in this way. The world is turned upside down since Jehovah came to Aniwa! But, Missi," continued he, after a pause that looked like silent worship, "will it always rain up through the earth? or will it come and go like the rain from the clouds?"

I told them that I believed it would always continue there for our use, as a good gift from Jehovah.

"Well, but, Missi," replied the Chief, some glimmering of self-interest beginning to strike his brain, "will you or your family drink it all, or shall we also have some?"

"You and all your people," I answered, "and all the people of the Island, may come and drink and carry away as much of it as you wish. I believe there will always be plenty for us all, and the more of it we can use the fresher it will be. That is the way with many of our Jehovah's best gifts to men, and for it and for all we praise His Name!"

"Then, Missi," said the Chief, "it will be our water, and we may all use it as our very own."

"Yes," I answered, "whenever you wish it, and as much as you need, both here and at your own houses, as far as it can possibly be made to go."

The Chief looked at me eagerly, fully convinced at length that the well contained a treasure, and exclaimed, "Missi, what can we do to help you now?"

I was thankful, indeed, to accept of the Chief's assistance, now sorely needed, and I said, "You have seen it fall in once already. If it falls again, it will conceal the rain from below which our God has given us. In order to preserve it for us and for our children in all time, we must build it round and round with great coral blocks from the bottom to the very top. I will now clear it out, and prepare the foundation for this wall of coral. Let every man and woman carry from the shore the largest blocks they can bring. It is well worth all the toil thus to preserve our great Jehovah's gift!"

Scarcely were my words uttered, when they rushed to the

shore, with shoutings and songs of gladness; and soon every one was seen struggling under the biggest block of coral which he dared to tackle. They lay like limestone rocks, broken up by the hurricanes, and rolled ashore in the arms of mighty billows; and in an incredibly short time scores of them were tumbled down for my use at the mouth of the well. Having prepared a foundation, I made ready a sort of bag-basket, into which every block was firmly tied and then let down to me by the pulley—a Native Teacher, a faithful fellow, cautiously guiding it. I received and placed each stone in its position, doing my poor best to wedge them one against the other, building circularly, and cutting them to the needed shape with my American axe. The wall is about three feet thick, and the masonry may be guaranteed to stand till the coral itself decays. I wrought incessantly, for fear of any further collapse, till I had it raised about twenty feet; and now, feeling secure, and my hands being dreadfully cut up, I intimated that I would rest a week or two, and finish the building then. But the Chief advanced and said—

"Missi, you have been strong to work. Your strength has fled. But rest here beside us; and just point out where each block is to be laid. We will lay them there, we will build them solidly behind like you. And no man will sleep till it is done."

With all their will and heart they started on the job; some carrying, some cutting and squaring the blocks, till the wall rose like magic, and a row of the hugest rocks laid round the top, bound all together, and formed the mouth of the well. Women, boys, and all wished to have a hand in building it, and it remains to this day a solid wall of masonry, the circle being thirty-four feet deep, eight feet wide at the top, and six at the bottom. I floored it over with wood above all, and fixed the windlass and bucket, and there it stands as one of the greatest material blessings which the Lord has given to Aniwa. It rises and falls with the tide, though a third of a mile distant from the sea; and when, after using it, we tasted the pure fresh water on board the *Dryad's*, the latter seemed so insipid that I had to slip a little salt into my tea along with the sugar before I could enjoy it! All visitors are taken to see the well, as one of the wonders of Aniwa; and an Elder of the Native Church said to me, on a recent visit, "But for that

water, during the last two years of drought, we would all have been dead!"

Very strangely, though the Natives themselves have since tried to sink six or seven wells in the most likely places near their different villages, they have either come to coral rock which they could not pierce, or found only water that was salt. And they say amongst themselves, "Missi not only used pick and spade, but he prayed and cried to his God. We have learned to dig, but not how to pray, and therefore Jehovah will not give us the rain from below!"

CHAPTER LXVIII

THE OLD CHIEF'S SERMON

THE well was now finished. The place was neatly fenced in. And the old Chief said, "Missi, I think I could help you next Sabbath. Will you let me preach a sermon on the well?"

"Yes," I at once replied, "if you will try to bring all the people to hear you."

"Missi, I will try," he eagerly promised. The news spread like wildfire that the Chief Namakei was to be Missionary on the next day for the Worship, and the people, under great expectancy, urged each other to come and hear what he had to say.

Sabbath came round. Aniwa assembled in what was for that island a great crowd. Namakei appeared dressed in shirt and kilt. He was so excited, and flourished his tomahawk about at such a rate, that it was rather lively work to be near him. I conducted short opening devotions, and then called upon Namakei. He rose at once, with eye flashing wildly, and his limbs twitching with emotion. He spoke to the following effect, swinging his tomahawk to enforce every eloquent gesticulation:—

"Friends of Namakei, men and women and children of Aniwa, listen to my words! Since Missi came here he has talked many strange things we could not understand—things

all too wonderful; and we said regarding many of them that they must be lies. White people might believe such nonsense, but we said that the black fellow knew better than to receive it. But of all his wonderful stories, we thought the strangest was about sinking down through the earth to get rain! Then we said to each other, The man's head is turned; he's gone mad. But the Missi prayed on and wrought on, telling us that Jehovah God heard and saw, and that his God would give him rain. Was he mad? Has he not got the rain deep down in the earth? We mocked at him; but the water was there all the same. We have laughed at other things which the Missi told us, because we could not see them. But from this day I believe that all he tells us about his Jehovah God is true. Some day our eyes will see it. For to-day we have seen the rain from the earth."

Then rising to a climax, first the one foot and then the other making the broken coral on the floor fly behind like a war-horse pawing the ground, he cried with great eloquence—

"My people, the people of Aniwa, the world is turned upside down since the word of Jehovah came to this land! Who ever expected to see rain coming up through the earth? It has always come from the clouds! Wonderful is the work of this Jehovah God. No god of Aniwa ever answered prayers as the Missi's God has done. Friends of Namakei, all the powers of the world could not have forced us to believe that rain could be given from the depths of the earth, if we had not seen it with our eyes, felt it and tasted it as we here do. Now, by the help of Jehovah God the Missi brought that invisible rain to view, which we never before heard of or saw, and"—(beating his hand on his breast, he exclaimed)—

"Something here in my heart tells me that the Jehovah God does exist, the Invisible One, whom we never heard of nor saw till the Missi brought Him to our knowledge. The coral has been removed, the land has been cleared away, and lo! the water rises. Invisible till this day, yet all the same it was there, though our eyes were too weak. So I, your Chief, do now firmly believe that when I die, when the bits of coral and the heaps of dust are removed which now blind my old eyes, I shall then see the Invisible Jehovah God with my soul, as Missi tells me, not less surely than I have seen the rain from

the earth below: From this day, my people, I must worship the God who has opened for us the well, and who fills us with rain from below. The gods of Aniwa cannot bear, cannot help us, like the God of Missi. Henceforth I am a follower of Jehovah God. Let every man that thinks with me go now and fetch the idols of Aniwa, the gods which our fathers feared, and cast them down at Missi's feet. Let us burn and bury and destroy these things of wood and stone, and let us be taught by the Missi how to serve the God who can hear, the Jehovah who gave us the well, and who will give us every other blessing, for He sent His Son Jesus to die for us and bring us to Heaven. This is what the Missi has been telling us every day since he landed on Aniwa. We laughed at him, but now we believe him. The Jehovah God has sent us rain from the earth. Why should He not also send us His Son from Heaven? Namakei stands up for Jehovah!"

This address, and the Sinking of the Well, broke the back of Heathenism on Aniwa. That very afternoon, the old Chief and several of his people brought their idols and cast them down at my feet beside the door of our house. Oh, the intense excitement of the weeks that followed! Company after company came to the spot, loaded with their gods of wood and stone, and plied them up in heaps, amid the tears and sobs of some, and the shoutings of others, in which was heard the oft-repeated word, "Jehovah! Jehovah!" What could be burned, we cast into the flames; others we buried in pits twelve or fifteen feet deep; and some few, more likely than the rest to feed or awaken superstition, we sank far out into the deep sea. Let no Heathen eyes ever gaze on them again!

One of the very first steps in Christian discipline to which they readily and almost unanimously took was the asking of God's blessing on every meal and praising the great Jehovah for their daily bread. Whosoever did not do so was regarded as a Heathen. (Query: how many *white* Heathens are there?) The next step, and it was taken in a manner as if by some common consent that was not less surprising than joyful, was a form of Family Worship every morning and evening. Doubtless the prayers were often very queer, and mixed up with many remaining superstitions; but they were

prayer to the great Jehovah, the compassionate Father, the Invisible One—no longer to gods of stone!

Necessarily there were the conspicuous features of our life as Christians in their midst—morning and evening Family Prayer, and Grace at Meal; and hence, most naturally, their instinctive adoption and imitation of the same as the first outward tokens of Christian discipline. Every house in which there was not Prayer to God in the family was known thereby to be Heathen. This was a direct and practical evidence of the New Religion; and, so far as it goes (and that is very far indeed, where there is any sincerity beneath it), the test was one about which there could be no mistake on either side.

A third conspicuous feature stood out distinctly and at once,—the change as to the Lord's Day. Village after village followed in this also the example of the Mission House. All ordinary occupations ceased. Sabbath was spoken of as the Day for Jehovah. Saturday came to be called "Cooking Day," referring to the extra preparations for the coming day of rest and worship. They believed that it was Jehovah's will to keep the first day holy. The reverse was a distinctive mark of Heathenism.

The first traces of a new Social Order began to rise visibly on the delighted eye. The whole inhabitants, young and old, now attended School,—three generations sometimes at the one copy of A B C book! Thiefs, quarrels, crimes, etc., were settled now, not by club law, but by fine or bonds or lash, as agreed upon by the Chiefs and their people. Everything was rapidly and surely becoming "new" under the influence of the leaven of Jesus. Industry increased. Huts and plantations were safe. Formerly every man, in travelling, carried with him all his valuables; now they were secure, left at home.

Even a brood of fowls or a litter of pigs would be carried in bags on their persons in Heathen days. Hence at Church we had sometimes lively episodes, the chirruping of chicks, the squealing of piglets, and the barking of puppies, one gaily responding to the other, as we sang, or prayed, or preached the Gospel! Being glad to see the Natives there, even with all their belongings, we carefully refrained from finding fault; but the thread of devotion was sometimes apt to slip through one's fingers, especially when the conflict of the owner's

shines a baby-pig inspired the little wretch to driven everything in a long-sustained and high-pitched scream.

The Natives, finding this state of matters troublesome to themselves, and disagreeable all round, called a General Assembly, unanimously condemned dishonesty, agreed upon severe fines and punishments for every act of theft, and were wanted to stand by each other in putting it down. The Chief, however, found this a long and difficult task, but they held at it under the inspiration of the Gospel and prevailed. Even the trials and difficulties with which they met were overruled by God, in assisting them to form by the light of their own experience a simple code of Social Laws, fitted to repress the crimes there prevailing, and to encourage the virtues specially needing to be cultivated there. Heathen Worship was gradually extinguished; and, though no one was compelled to come to Church, every person on Aniva, without exception, became ere many years an avowed worshipper of Jehovah God. Again,

"O Gallian, Thou hast conquered!"

CHAPTER LIX

THE FIRST BOOK AND THE NEW EYES

The printing of my first Anivan book was a great event, not so much for the toil and worry which it cost me, though that was enough to have broken the heart of many a compositor, as rather for the joy it gave to the old Chief Namakei.

The break-up at Tanna had robbed me of my own neat little printing-press. I had since obtained at Aneityum the remains of one from Kromangan, that had belonged to the murdered Gordon. But the supply of letters, in some cases, was so deficient that I could print only four pages at a time; and, besides, bits of the press were wanting, and I had first to manufacture substitutes from scraps of iron and wood. I managed, however, to make it go, and by and by it did good service. By it I printed our Anivan Hymn-Book, a portion of Genesis in Anivan, a small book in Kromangan for the second Gordon, and some other little things.

The old Chief had eagerly helped me in translating and preparing this first book. He had a great desire "to hear it speak," as he graphically expressed it. It was made up chiefly of short passages from the Scriptures, that might help me to introduce them to the treasures of Divine truth and love. Namakel came to me, morning after morning, saying, "Missi, is it done? Can it speak?"

At last I was able to answer, "Yes!"

The old Chief eagerly responded, "Does it speak my words?"

I said, "It does."
With rising interest, Namakel exclaimed, "Make it speak to me, Missi! Let me hear it speak."

I read to him a part of the book, and the old man fairly shouted in an ecstasy of joy, "It does speak! It speaks my own language, too! Oh, give it to me!"

He grasped it hurriedly, turned it all round every way, pressed it to his bosom, and then, closing it with a look of great disappointment, handed it back to me, saying, "Missi, I cannot make it speak! It will never speak to me."

"No," said I; "you don't know how to read it yet, how to make it speak to you; but I will teach you to read, and then it will speak to you as it does to me."

"O Missi, dear Missi, show me how to make it speak!" persisted the bewildered Chief. He was straining his eyes so, that I suspected they were dim with age, and could not see the letters. I looked out for him a pair of spectacles, and managed to fit him well. He was much afraid of putting them on at first, manifestly in dread of some sort of sorcery. At last, when they were properly placed, he saw the letters and everything so clearly that he exclaimed in great excitement and joy—

"I see it all now! This is what you told us about Jesus. He opened the eyes of a blind man. The word of Jesus has just come to Aniwa. He has sent me these glass eyes. I have gotten back again the sight that I had when a boy. O Missi, make the book speak to me now!"

I walked out with him to the public Village Ground. There I drew A B C in large characters upon the dust, showed him the same letters in the book, and left him to compare them, and find out how many occurred on the first

page. Fixing these in his mind, he came running to me, and said, "I have lifted up A B C. They are here in my head, and I will hold them fast. Give me other three."

This was repeated time after time. He mastered the whole Alphabet, and soon began to spell out the smaller words. Indeed, he came so often, getting me to read it over and over, that before he himself could read it freely he had it word for word committed to memory. When strangers passed him, or young people came around, he would get out the little book, and say, "Come, and I will let you hear how the book speaks our own Aniwan words. You say, it is hard to learn to read and make it speak. But be strong to try! If an old man like me has done it, it ought to be much easier for you."

One day I heard him read to a company with wonderful fluency. Taking the book, I asked him to show me how he had learned to read so quickly. Immediately I perceived that he could recite the whole from memory! He became our right-hand helper in the Conversion of Aniwa.

Next after God's own Word, perhaps the power of Music was most amazingly blessed in opening up our way. Amongst many other illustrations, I may mention how Namakel's wife was won. The old lady positively shuddered at coming near the Mission House, and dreaded being taught anything. One day she was induced to draw near the door, and fixing a hand on either post, and gazing inwards, she exclaimed, "Awa! Missi! Kái, Missi!"—the Native cry for unspeakable wonder. Mrs. Paton began to play on the harmonium, and sang a simple hymn in the old woman's language. Manifestly charmed, she drew nearer and nearer, and drank in the music, as it were, at every pore of her being. At last she ran off, and we thought it was with fright, but it was to call together all the women and girls from her village "to hear the *bokei* sing!" (Having no *z*, the word *for* is pronounced thus.) She returned with them all at her heels. They listened with dancing eyes. And ever after the sound of a hymn, and the song of the *bokei*, made them flock freely to class or meeting.

Being myself as nearly as possible destitute of the power of singing, all my work would have been impaired and sadly hindered, and the joyous side of the Worship and Service of Jehovah could not have been presented to the Native, but

for the gift bestowed by the Lord on my dear wife. She led our songs of praise, both in the Family and in the Church, and that was the first avenue by which the New Religion winged its way into the heart of Chumbel and Savage.

The old Chief was particularly eager that this same aged lady, his wife Yasuwaki, should be taught to read. But her sight was far gone. So, one day, he brought her to me, saying, "Missi, can you give my wife also a pair of new glass eyes like mine? She tries to learn, but she cannot see the letters. She tries to sew, but she pricks her finger, and throws away the needle, saying, 'The ways of the white people are not good!' If she could get a pair of glass eyes, she would be in a new world like Namakai." In my bundle I found a pair that suited her. She was in positive terror about putting them on her face, but at last she cried with delight, "Oh, my new eyes! my new eyes! I have the sight of a little girl. Oh, my new eyes!"

CHAPTER LXX

A ROOM-TREE FOR JESUS

At first we moved about amongst the Natives from village to village, acquired their language, and taught them everywhere, —by the roadside, under the shade of a tree, or on the public Village Ground. Our old Native Hut, when we removed to the Mission House formerly referred to, was also used for all sorts of public meetings. Feeling by and by, however, that the time had come to interest them in building a new Church, and that it would be every way helpful, I laid the proposal before them, carefully explaining that for this work no one would be paid, that the Church was for all the Islanders and for the Worship alone, and that every one must build purely for the love of Jesus.

I told them that God would be pleased with such materials as they had to give, that they must not begin till they had divided the work and counted the cost, and that for my part I would do all that I could to direct and help, and would

supply the sinnet (= cocoa-nut fibre rope) which I had brought from Anethyrum, and the nails from Sydney.

They held meeting after meeting throughout the Island. Chiefs made long speeches; orators chanted their psalms; and warriors acted their part by waving of club and tomahawk. An unprecedented friendliness sprang up amongst them. They agreed to sink every quarrel, and unite in building the first Church on Aniva, —one Chief only holding back. Women and children began to gather and prepare the sugar-cane leaf for thatch. Men searched for and cut down suitable trees.

The Church measured sixty-two feet by twenty-four. The wall was twelve feet high. The studs were of hard iron-wood, and were each by tenon and mortise fastened into six iron-wood trees forming the upper wall plates. All were not only nailed, but strongly tied together by sinnet-rope, so as to resist the hurricanes. The roof was supported by four huge iron-wood trees, and a fifth of equally hard wood, sunk about eight feet into the ground, surrounded by building at the base, and forming massive pillars. There were two doorways and eight window spaces; the floor was laid with white coral, broken small, and covered with cocoa-nut tree leafmats, on which the people sat. I had a small platform, floored and surrounded with reeds; and Mrs. Faton had a seat enclosing the harmonium, also made of reeds, and in keeping. Great harmony prevailed all the time, and no mishap marred the work. One hearty fellow fell from the roof-tree to the ground, and was badly stunned. But, jumping up, he shook himself, and saying—"I was working for Jehovah! He has saved me from being hurt"—he mounted the roof again and went on cheerily with his work.

But our pride in this New Church soon met with a dreadful blow. That very season a terrific hurricane levelled it with the ground. After much weeping the principal Chief, in a public Assembly, said, "Let us not weep like boys over their broken bows and arrows! Let us be strong, and build a yet stronger Church for Jehovah."

By our counsel, ten days were spent first in repairing houses and fences, and saving food from the plantations, many of which had been swept into utter ruin. Then they assembled on the appointed day. A hymn was sung. God's

blessing was invoked, and all the work was dedicated afresh to Him. Days were spent in taking the iron-wood roof to pieces, and saving everything that could be saved. The work was allocated equally amongst the villages, and a wholesome emulation was created. One Chief still held back. After a while, I visited him and personally invited his help,—telling him that it was God's House, and for all the people of Aniwa; and that if he and his people did not do their part, the others would cast it in their teeth that they had no share in the House of God. He yielded to my appeal, and entered vigorously upon the work.

One large tree was still needed to complete the couples, and could nowhere be found. The work was at a standstill; for, though the size was now reduced to fifty feet by twenty-two, the roof lowered by four feet, and there was still plenty of smaller wood on Aniwa, the larger trees were apparently exhausted. One morning, however, we were awake at early daybreak by the shouting and singing of a company of men, carrying a great black tree to the Church, with this same Chief dancing before them, leading the singing, and beating time with the flourish of his tomahawk. Determined not to be beaten, though late in the field, he had lifted the roof-tree out of his own house, as black as soot could make it, and was carrying it to complete the couplings. The rest of the builders shouted against this. All the other wood of the Church was white and clean, and they would not have this black tree, conspicuous in the very centre of all. But I praised the old Chief for what he had done, and hoped he and his people would come and worship Jehovah under his own roof-tree. At this all were delighted! and the work went on apace, with many songs and shoutings.

Whenever the Church was roofed in, we met in it for Public Worship. Coral was being got and burned, and preparations made for plastering the walls. The Natives were sharp enough to notice that I was not putting up the bell; and suspicions arose that I kept it back in order to take it with me when I returned to Tanna. It was a beautiful Church bell, cast and sent out by our dear friend, James Taylor, Esq., Birkenhead. The Aniwans, therefore, gave me no rest till I agreed to have it hung on their new Church. They found a large iron-wood tree near the shore, cut a road

for half a mile through the bush, tied poles across it every few feet, and with shouts lifted it bodily on their shoulders—six men or so at each pole—and never set it down again till they reached the Church; for as one party got exhausted, others were ready to rush in and relieve them at every stage of the journey. The two old Chiefs, flourishing their tomahawks, went capering in front of all the rest, and led the song to which they marched, joyfully bearing their load. They dug a deep hole, into which to sink it; I squared the top and screwed on the bell; then we raised the tree by ropes, letting it sink into the hole, and built it round eight feet deep with coral blocks and lime; and there from its top swings and rings ever since the Church bell of Aniwa.

CHAPTER LXXI

"KNOCK THE DEVIL OUT!"

ONE of the last attempts ever made on my life resulted, by God's blessing, in great good to us all and to the work of the Lord. It was when Nourai, one of Nasai's men, struck at me again and again with the barrel of his musket; but I evaded the blows, till rescued by the women—the men looking on stupefied. After he escaped into the bush I assembled our people, and said, "If you do not now try to stop this bad conduct, I shall leave Aniwa, and go to some island where my life will be protected."

Next morning at daybreak, about one hundred men arrived at my house, and in answer to my query why they came armed they replied, "We are now going to that village where the men of wicked conduct are gathered together. We will find out why they sought your life, and we will rebuke their Sacred Man for pretending to cause hurricanes and diseases. We cannot go unarmed. We will not suffer you to go alone. We are your friends and the friends of the Worship. And we are resolved to stand by you, and you must go at our head to-day!"

In great perplexity, yet believing that my presence might prevent bloodshed, I allowed myself to be placed at their

head. The old Chief followed next, then a number of fiery young men; then all the rest, single file, along the narrow path. At a sudden turn, as we neared their village, Nourai, who had attacked me the Sabbath day before, and his brother were seen hurrying with their muskets; but our young men made a rush in front, and they disappeared into the bush.

We took possession of the Village Public Ground; and the Chief, the Sacred Man, and others soon assembled. A most characteristic Native Palaver followed. Speeches, endless speeches, were fired by them at each other. My friends declared, in every conceivable form of language and of graphic illustration, that they were resolved at any cost to defend me and the Worship of Jehovah, and that they would as one man punish every attempt to injure me or take my life. The orator, Taia, exclaimed, "You think that Missi is here alone, and that you can do with him as you please! No! We are now all Missi's men. We will fight for him and his rather than see him injured. Every one that attacks him attacks us. That is finished to-day!"

In the general scolding, the Sacred Man had special attention, for pretending to cause hurricanes. One pointed out that he had himself a stiff knee, and argued, "If he can make a hurricane, why can't he restore the joint of his own knee? It is surely easier to do the one than the other!"

The Natives laughed heartily, and taunted him. Mean-time he sat looking down to the earth in sullen silence; and a ludicrous episode ensued. His wife, a big, strong woman, scolded him roundly for the trouble he had brought them all into; and then, getting indignant as well as angry, she seized a huge cocoa-nut leaf out of the bush, and with the butt end thereof began thrashing his shoulders vigorously as she poured out the vials of her wrath in torrents of words, always winding up with the cry, "I'll knock the Tevil out of him! He'll not try hurricanes again!"

The woman was a Malay, as all the Anivans were. Had a Papuan woman on Tanna or Erromanga dared such a thing, she would have been killed on the spot. But even on Aniva, the unwonted spectacle of a wife beating her husband created uproarious amusement. At length I remonstrated, saying, "You had better stop now! You don't want to kill him, do you? You seem to have knocked 'the Tevil' pretty well

out of him now! You see how he receives it all in silence, and repents of all his bad talk and bad conduct."

They expected from him a solemn promise as to the making of no more diseases or hurricanes, and that he would live at peace with his neighbours. The offending villagers at length presented a large quantity of sugar-cane and food to us as a peace-offering; and we returned, praising God that the whole day's scolding had ended in talk, not blood. The result was every way most helpful. Our friends knew their strength and took courage. Our enemies were disheartened and afraid. We saw the balance growing heavier every day on the side of Jesus; and our souls blessed the Lord.

CHAPTER LXXII

THE CONVERSION OF YOWULLI

THESE events suggest to me another incident of those days, full at once of trial and of joy. It pertains to the story of our young Chief Yowulli. From the first, and for long, he was most audacious and troublesome. Observing that for several days no Natives had come near the Mission House, I asked the old Chief if he knew why, and he answered, "Yowulli has *takooed* the paths, and threatens death to any one who breaks through it."

I at once replied, "Then I conclude that you all agree with him, and wish me to leave. We are here only to teach you and your people. If he has power to prevent that we shall leave with the *Doystring*."

The old Chief called the people together, and they came to me, saying, "Our anger is strong against Yowulli. Go with us and break down the *takoo*. We will assist and protect you."

I went at their head and removed it. It consisted simply of reeds stuck into the ground, with twigs and leaves and fibre tied to each in a peculiar way, in a circle round the Mission House. The Natives had an extraordinary dread of violating the *takoo*, and believed that it meant death to the offender or to some one of his family. All present entered

into a bond to punish on the spot any man who attempted to replace the *taboo*, or to revenge its removal. Thus a mortal blow was publicly struck at this most miserable superstition, which had caused bloodshed and misery untold.

One day, thereafter, I was engaged in clearing away the bush around the Mission House, having purchased and paid for the land for the very purpose of opening it up, when suddenly Youwill appeared and menacingly forbade me to proceed. For the sake of peace I for the time desisted. But he went straight to my fence, and with his tomahawk cut down the portion in front of our house, also some bananas planted there—the usual declaration of war, intimating that he only awaited his opportunity similarly to cut down me and mine. We saw the old Chief and his men planting themselves here and there to guard us, and the Natives prowling about armed and excited. On calling them, they explained the meaning of what Youwill had done, and that they were determined to protect us. I said, "This must not continue. Are you to permit one young fool to defy us all, and break up the Lord's work on Aniwa? If you cannot righteously punish him, I will shut myself up in my House and withdraw from all attempts to teach or help you, till the Vessel comes, and then I can leave the Island."

Now that they had begun really to love us, and to be anxious to learn more, this was always my most powerful argument. We retired into the Mission House. The people surrounded our doors and windows and pleaded with us. After long silence, we replied, "You know our resolution. It is for you now to decide. Either you must control that foolish young man, or we must go!"

Much speech-making, as usual, followed. The people resolved to seize and punish Youwill; but he fled, and hid himself in the bush. Coming to me, the Chief said, "It is left to you to say what shall be Youwill's punishment. Shall we kill him?"

I replied firmly, "Certainly not! Only for murder can life be lawfully taken away."

"What then?" they continued. "Shall we burn his houses and destroy his plantations?"

I answered, "No."

"Shall we bind him and beat him?"

"No."
"Shall we place him in a canoe, thrust him out to sea, and let him drown or escape as he may?"

"No! by no means."

"Then, Missi," said they, "these are our ways of punishing. What other punishment remains that Youwill cares for?"

I replied, "Make him with his own hands, and alone, put up a new fence, and restore all that he has destroyed; and make him promise publicly that he will cease all evil conduct towards us. That will satisfy me."

This idea of punishment seemed to tickle them greatly. The Chiefs reported our words to the Assembly; and the Natives laughed and cheered, as if it were a capital joke! They cried aloud, "It is good! It is good! Obey the word of the Missi!"

After considerable hunting, the young Chief was found. They brought him to the Assembly and scolded him severely and told him their sentence. He was surprised by the nature of the punishment, and cowed by the determination of the people.

"To-morrow," said he, "I will fully repair the fence. Never again will I oppose the Missi. His word is good."

By daybreak next morning Youwill was diligently repairing what he had broken down, and before evening he had everything made right, better than it was before. While he toiled away, some fellows of his own rank twitted him, saying, "Youwill, you found it easier to cut down Missi's fence than to repair it again. You will not repeat that in a hurry!"

But he heard all in silence. Others passed with averted heads, and he knew they were laughing at him. He made everything tight, and then left without uttering a single word. My heart yearned after the poor fellow, but I thought it better to let his own mind work away, on its new ideas as to punishment and revenge, for a little longer by itself alone. I instinctively felt that Youwill was beginning to turn, that the Christ-Spirit had touched his darkly-grooping soul. My doors were now thrown open, and every good work went on as before. We resolved to leave Youwill entirely to Jesus, setting apart a portion of our prayer every day for the enlightenment and conversion of the young Chief, on whom all other means had been exhausted apparently in vain.

A considerable time elapsed. No sign came, and our prayers seemed to fail. But one day, I was toiling between the shafts of a hand-cart, assisted by two boys, drawing it along from the shore loaded with coral blocks. Youwill came rushing from his house, three hundred yards or so off the path, and said, "Missi, that is too hard for you. Let me be your helper!"

Without waiting for a reply, he ordered the two boys to seize one rope, while he grasped the other, threw it over his shoulder and started off, pulling with the strength of a horse. My heart rose in gratitude, and I wept with joy as I followed him. I knew that that yoke was but a symbol of the yoke of Christ, which Youwill with his change of heart was beginning to carry! Truly there is only one way of regeneration, being born again by the power of the Spirit of God, the new heart; but there are many ways of conversion, of outwardly turning to the Lord, of taking the actual first step that shows on whose side we are.

Like those of old praying for the deliverance of Peter, and who could not believe their ears and eyes when Peter knocked and walked in amongst them, so we could scarcely believe our eyes and ears when Youwill became a disciple of Jesus, though we had been praying for his conversion every day. His once sullen countenance became literally bright with inner light. His wife came immediately for a book and a dress, saying, "Youwill sent me. His opposition to the Worship is over now. I am to attend Church and School. He is coming too. He wants to learn how to be strong, like you, for Jehovah and for Jesus."

Oh, Jesus! to Thee alone be all the glory. Thou hast the key to unlock every heart that Thou hast created.

CHAPTER LXXIII

FIRST COMMUNION ON ANIWA

AND this leads me to relate the story of our First Communion on Aniwa. It was Sabbath, 24th October 1869; and surely the Angels of God and the Church of the Redeemed in Glory were amongst the "great cloud of witnesses" who eagerly "peered" down upon the scene,—when we sat around the Lord's Table and partook the memorials of His body and blood with those few souls rescued out of the Heathen World. My Communicants' Class had occupied me now a considerable time. The conditions of attendance at this early stage were explicit, and had to be made very severe, and only twenty were admitted to the roll. At the final examination only twelve gave evidence of understanding what they were doing, and of having given their hearts to the service of the Lord Jesus. At their own urgent desire, and after every care in examining and instructing, they were solemnly dedicated in prayer to be baptized and admitted to the Holy Table. On that Lord's Day, after the usual opening Service, I gave a short and careful exposition of the Ten Commandments and of the Way of Salvation according to the Gospel. The twelve Candidates then stood up before all the inhabitants there assembled; and, after a brief exhortation to them as Converts, I put to them the two questions that follow, and each gave an affirmative reply, "Do you, in accordance with your profession of the Christian Faith, and your promises before God and the people, wish me now to baptize you?"

And—"Will you live henceforth for Jesus only, hating all sin and trying to love and serve your Saviour?"

Then, beginning with the old Chief, the twelve came forward, and I baptized them one by one according to the Presbyterian usage. Two of them had also little children, and they were at the same time baptized, and received as the lambs of the flock. Solemn prayer was then offered, and in the name of the Holy Trinity the Church of Christ on Aniwa was formally constituted. I addressed them on the words of the Holy Institution—1 Corinthians xi. 23—and then, after the prayer of Thanksgiving and Consecration, administered the

Lord's Supper,—the first time since the Island of Aniva was heaved out of its coral depths! Mrs. McNair, my wife, and myself, along with six Aneityunese Teachers, communicated with the newly baptized twelve. And I think, if ever in all my Farthy experience, on that day I might truly add the blessed words—"Jesus in the midst."

The whole Service occupied nearly three hours. The Islanders looked on with a wonder whose unwonted silence was almost painful to bear. Many were led to inquire carefully about everything they saw, so new and strange. For the first time the Dorcas Street Sabbath School Teachers' gift from South Melbourne Presbyterian Church was put to use—a new Communion Service of silver. They gave it in faith that we would require it, and in such we received it. And now the day had come and gone! For three years we had toiled and prayed and taught for this. At the moment when I put the bread and wine into those dark hands, once stained with the blood of Cannibalism, but now stretched out to receive and partake the emblems and seals of the Redeemer's love, I had a foretaste of the joy of Glory that well nigh broke my heart to pieces. I shall never taste a deeper bliss till I gaze on the glorified face of Jesus Himself.

On the afternoon of that Communion Day an open-air Prayer Meeting was held under the shade of the great banyan tree in front of our Church. Seven of the new Church members there led the people in prayer to Jesus, a hymn being sung after each. My heart was so full of joy that I could do little else but weep. Oh, I wonder, I wonder, when I see so many good Ministers at home, crowding each other and treading on each other's heels, whether they would not part with all their home privileges, and go out to the Heathen World and reap a joy like this—"the joy of the Lord."

CHAPTER LXXIV

THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

The new Social Order, referred to already in its dim beginnings, rose around us like a sweet-scented flower. I

never interfered directly, unless expressly called upon or appealed to. The two principal Chiefs were impressed with the idea that there was but one law—the Will of God; and one rule for them and their people as Christians—to please the Lord Jesus. In every difficulty they consulted me. I explained to them and read in their hearing the very words of Holy Scripture, showing what appeared to me to be the will of God and what would please the Saviour; and then sent them away to talk it over with their people, and to apply these principles of the Word of God as wisely as they could according to their circumstances. Our own part of the work went on very joyfully, notwithstanding occasional trying and painful incidents. Individual cases of greed and selfishness and vice brought us many a bitter pang. But the Lord never lost patience with us, and we durst not therefore lose patience with them! We trained the Teachers, we translated and printed and expounded the Scriptures, we ministered to the sick and dying; we dispensed medicines every day, we taught them the use of tools, we advised them as to laws and penalties; and the New Society grew and developed, and bore amidst all its imperfections some traces of the fair Kingdom of God amongst men.

Our life and work will reveal itself to the reader if I briefly outline a Sabbath Day on Aniva. Breakfast is partaken of immediately after daylight. The Church bell then rings, and ere it stops every worshipper is seated. The Natives are guided in starting by the sunrise, and are forward from farthest corners at this early hour. The first Service is over in about an hour; there is an interval of twenty minutes; the bell is again rung, and the second Service begins. We follow the ordinary Presbyterian ritual; but in every Service I call upon an Elder or a Church Member to lead in one of the prayers, which they do with great alacrity and with much benefit to all concerned.

As the last worshipper leaves, at close of second Service, the bell is sounded twice very deliberately, and that is the signal for the opening of my Communicants' Class. I carefully expound the Church's Shorter Catechism, and show how its teachings are built upon Holy Scripture, applying each truth to the conscience and the life. This class is conducted all the year round; and from it, step by step, our Church

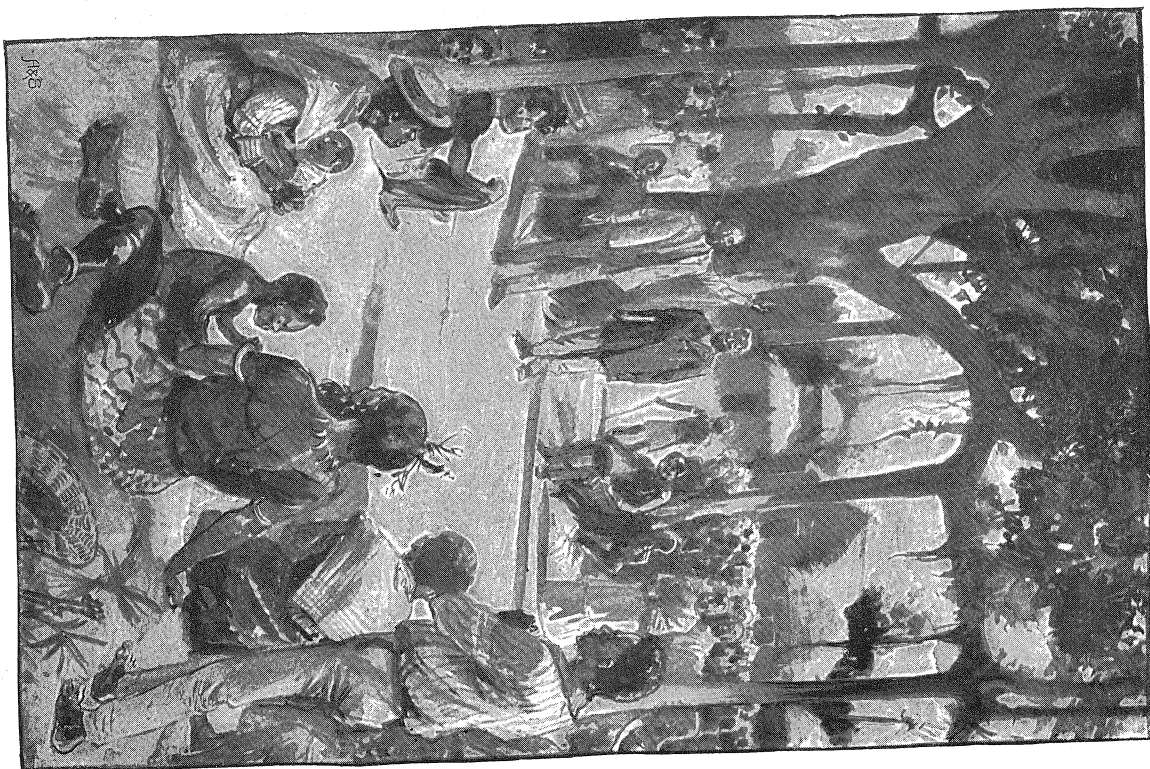
Members are drawn as the Lord opens up their way, the most of them attending two full years at least before being admitted to the Lord's Table. This discipline accounts for the fact that so very few of our baptized converts have ever fallen away—as few in proportion, I verily believe, as in Churches at home. Meantime, many of the Church members have been holding a prayer-meeting amongst themselves in the adjoining School,—a thing started of their own free accord,—in which they invoke God's blessing on all the work and worship of the day.

Having snatched a brief meal of tea, or a cold dinner cooked on Saturday, the bell rings within an hour, and our Sabbath School assembles,—in which the whole inhabitants, young and old, take part, myself superintending and giving the address, as well as questioning on the lesson, Mrs. Paton teaching a large class of adult women, and the Elders and best readers instructing the ordinary classes for about half-an-hour or so.

About one o'clock the School is closed, and we then start off in our village tours. An experienced Elder, with several Teachers, takes one side of the Island this Sabbath, I with another company taking the other side, and next Sabbath we reverse the order. A short Service is conducted in the open air, or in Schoolrooms, at every village that can be reached; and on their return they report to me cases of sickness, or any signs of progress in the work of the Lord. The whole Island is thus steadily and methodically evangelised.

As the sun is setting I am creeping home from my village tour; and when darkness begins to approach, the canoe drum is beat at every village, and the people assemble under the banyan tree for evening village prayers. The Elder or Teacher presides. Five or six hymns are joyously sung, and five or six short prayers offered between, and thus the evening hour passes happily in the fellowship of God. On a calm evening, after Christianity had fairly taken hold of the people, and they loved to sing over and over again their favourite hymns, these village prayer-meetings formed a most blessed close to every day, and set the far-distant bush echoing with the praises of God.

Nor is our week-day life less crowded or busy, though in different ways. At gray dawn on Monday, and every morning



“The people assemble under the banyan tree for evening village prayers.”—Page 250.

the *Zwaka* (= the canoe drum) is struck in every village on Aniwa. The whole inhabitants turn in to the early School, which lasts about an hour and a half, and then the Natives are off to their plantations. Having partaken breakfast, I then spend my forenoon in translating or printing, or visiting the sick, or whatever else is most urgent. About two o'clock the Natives return from their work, bathe in the sea, and dine off cocoanut, breadfruit, or anything else that comes handily in the way. At three o'clock the bell rings, and the afternoon School for the Teachers and the more advanced learners then occupies my wife and myself for about an hour and a half. After this, the Natives spend their time in fishing or lounging or preparing supper,—which is amongst them always *the* meal of the day. Towards sundown the *Zwaka* sounds again, and the day closes amid the echoes of village prayers from under their several banyan trees.

Thus day after day and week after week passes over us on Aniwa; and much the same on all the Islands where the Missionary has found a home. In many respects it is a simple and happy and beautiful life; and the man, whose heart is full of things that are dear to Jesus, feels no desire to exchange it for the poor frivolities of what calls itself "Society," which seems to find its life in pleasures that Christ cannot be asked to share, and in which, therefore, Christians should have neither lot nor part.

CHAPTER LXXV

THE ORPHANS AND THEIR BISCUITS

THE habits of morning and evening Family Prayer and of Grace at Meat took a very wonderful hold upon the people; and became, as I have shown elsewhere, a distinctive badge of Christian *versus* Heathen. This was strikingly manifested during a time of bitter scarcity that befell us. I heard a father, for instance, at his hut door, with his family around him, reverently blessing God for the food provided for them, and for all His mercies in Christ Jesus. Drawing near and conversing with them, I found that their meal consisted of fig-

leaves which they had gathered and cooked—a poor enough dish, but hunger makes a healthy appetite, and contentment is a grateful relish.

During the same period of privation, my Orphans suffered badly also. Once they came to me, saying, "Missi, we are very hungry."

I replied, "So am I, dear children, and we have no more white food till the *Dayspring* comes."

They continued, "Missi, you have two beautiful fig trees. Will you let us take one feast of the young and tender leaves? We will not injure branch or fruit."

I answered, "Gladly, my children, take your fill!"

In a twinkling each child was perched upon a branch; and they feasted there happy as squirrels. Every night we prayed for the vessel, and in the morning our Orphan boys rushed to the coral rocks and eagerly scanned the sea for an answer. Day after day they returned with sad faces, saying, "Missi, *Tawaka jiwra!*" (= No vessel yet).

But at gray dawn of a certain day we were awoke by the boys shouting from the shore and running for the Mission House with the cry,—"*Tawaka oa! Tawaka oa!*" (= The vessel, hurrah!)

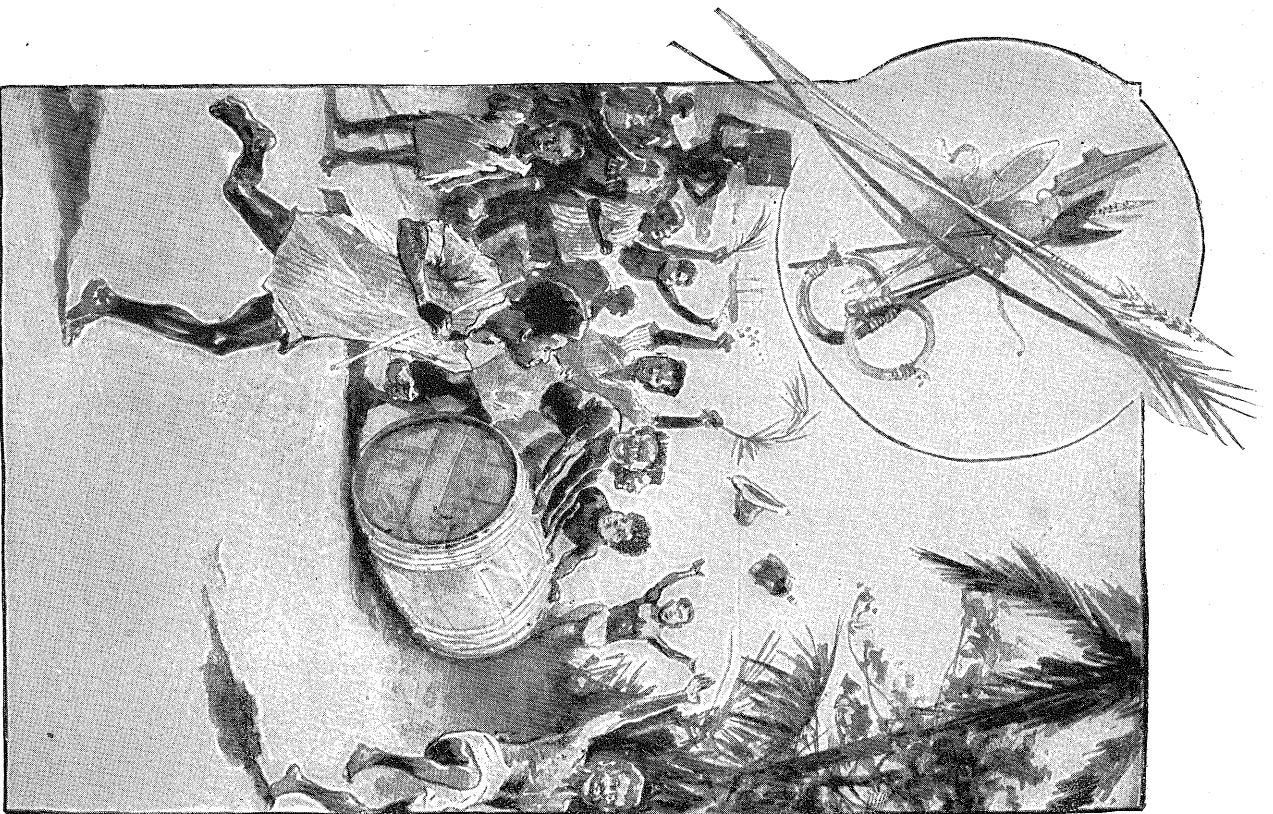
We arose at once, and the boys exclaimed, "Missi, she is not our own vessel, but we think she carries her flag. She has three masts, and our *Dayspring* only two!"

I looked through my glass, and saw that they were discharging goods into the vessel's boats; and the children, when I told them that boxes and bags and casks were being sent on shore, shouted and danced with delight. As the first boat-load was discharged, the Orphans surrounded me, saying, "Missi, here is a cask that rattles like biscuits! Will you let us take it to the Mission House?"

I told them to do so if they could; and in a moment it was turned into the path, and the boys had it flying before them, some tumbling and hurting their knees, but up and at it again, and never pausing till it rolled up at the door of our Store-house. On returning I found them all around it, and they said, "Missi, have you forgotten what you promised us?"

I said, "What did I promise you?"

They looked very disappointed and whispered to each other, "Missi has forgot!"



"Forgot what?" inquired I.

"Missi," they answered, "you promised that when the vessel came you would give each of us a biscuit."

"Oh," I replied, "I did not forget; I only wanted to see if you remembered it!"

They laughed, saying, "No fear of that, Missi! Will you soon open the cask? We are dying for biscuits."

At once I got hammer and tools, knocked off the hoops, took out the end, and then gave girls and boys a biscuit each. To my surprise, they all stood round, biscuit in hand, but not one beginning to eat.

"What," I exclaimed, "you are dying for biscuits! Why don't you eat? Are you expecting another?"

One of the eldest said, "We will first thank God for sending us food, and ask Him to bless it to us all."

And this was done in their own simple and beautiful child-like way; and then they *did* eat, and enjoyed their food as a gift from the Heavenly Father's hand. (Is there any child reading this, or hearing it read, who never thanks God or asks Him to bless daily bread? Then is that child not a *white* Heathen?) We ourselves at the Mission House could very heartily rejoice with the dear Orphans. For some weeks past our European food had been all exhausted, except a little tea, and the cocoa-nut had been our chief support. It was beginning to tell against us. Our souls rose in gratitude to the Lord, who had sent us these fresh provisions that we might love Him better and serve Him more.

The children's sharp eyes had read correctly. It was not the *Dayspring*. Our brave little ship, as I afterwards learned, had gone to wreck on 6th January 1873; and this vessel was the *Paragon*, chartered to bring down our supplies. Alas! the wreck had gone by auction sale to a French slaving company, who cut a passage through the coral reef, and had the vessel again floating in the Bay,—elated at the prospect of employing our Mission Ship in the blood-stained *Kanaka*-traffic (= a mere euphemism for South Sea slavery)! Our souls sank in horror and concern. Many Natives would unwittingly trust themselves to the *Dayspring*; and revenge would be taken on us, as was done on noble Bishop Patteson, when the deception was found out. What could be done? Nothing but cry to God, which all the friends of our Mission

did day and night, not without tears, as we thought of the possible degradation of our noble little Ship. Listen! The French Slavers, anchoring their prize in the Bay, and greatly rejoicing, went ashore to celebrate the event. They drank and feasted and revelled. But that night a mighty storm arose, the old *Doystring* dragged her anchor, and at daybreak she was seen again on the reef, but this time with her back broken in two and for ever unfit for service, either fair or foul. Oh, white-winged Virgin, daughter of the waves, better for thee, as for thy human sisters, to die and pass away than to suffer pollution and live on in disgrace!

CHAPTER LXXVI

THE FINGER-POSTS OF GOD

I HAD often said that I would not again leave my beloved work on the Islands unless compelled to do so either by the breakdown of health, or by the loss of our Mission Ship and my services being required to assist in providing another. Very strange, that in this one season both of these events befell us! During the hurricane, from January to April 1873, when the *Doystring* was wrecked, we lost a darling child by death, my dear wife had a protracted illness, and I was brought very low with severe rheumatic fever. I was reduced so far that I could not speak, and was reported as dying. The Captain of a vessel, having seen me, called at Tanna, and spoke of me as in all probability dead by that time. Our unflinching and ever-beloved friends and fellow-Missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Watt, at once started from Kawerau, in their open boat, and rowed and sailed thirty miles to visit us. But a few days before they arrived I had fallen into a long and sound sleep, out of which, when I awoke, consciousness had again returned to me. I had got the turn; there was no further relapse; but when I did regain a little strength, my weakness was so great that I had to travel about on crutches for many a day.

In the circumstances of our baby Lena's death, every form of heart-rending tenderness seemed to meet. On Friday,

23th March, at 3 A.M. she came from God, and seemed to both of us the Angel-child of all our flock. Alas, on Saturday I was seized with sciatica, so dreadful and agonising, that I had to be borne to my bed, and could not stir a limb any more than if my back had been broken. My dear wife struggled to attend to the baby, with such help as Native girls could give; and I directed the Teachers about the Services in Church next Sunday, the first time as yet that I had been unable to appear and lead them. From the beds where we lay, my wife and I could hear each other's voices, and tried to console one another in our sorrowful and helpless state. On Tuesday, 1st April, the child was bright and vigorous; but the mother's strength had been overtaxed, and she fell back, fainting in her bed, when helping to dress the baby. Next morning, to our dismay, there were symptoms of wheezing and feverishness in the little darling. All due measures were at once taken to check these; and Willing, an experienced Native, now having charge, kept everything warm and cosy. Before tea, when receiving a little food, Lena opened her dark blue eyes, and gazed up peacefully and gladly in her mother's face. But, immediately after tea, within less than an hour, when the nurse brought her and placed her in the mother's arms, the Angel-Soul fled away. Poor Willing, seeing the mother's pathetic look, and as if she herself had been guilty, fell on her knees and cried,—“I knew it, Missi, I knew it! She gave two big sighs, and went! Away, Missi, Away!” When the mother called to me something about the child having “fainted,” I was talking with Koris, but my heart guessed the worst. Alas, all means were seen to be vain! I could not rise, could not move, nor could the mother, but we prayed, in each other's hearing, and in the hearing of our blessed Lord, and He did not leave us without consolation. In such cases, the Heathen usually fly away in terror, but our Teachers were faithful and obedient; and our little boys, Bob and Fred, six and four respectively, followed all our tearful directions. One of their small toy-boxes was readily given up to make the baby's Coffin. Yawaci brought calico, and dressed the precious body at the mother's instructions. I then offered a prayer to the dear Lord, whilst the mother clasped the Coffin in her arms. The little Grave, dug by the Teachers in the Mission plot, was within earshot of where we lay, and there

Bob and Fred, kneeling in their snow-white dresses, sang "There is a Happy Land," as their sister's dust was laid in the Earth and in the arms of Jesus who is the Resurrection and the Life. God only can ever know how our hearts were torn by the pathos of that event, as we lay helpless, almost dying, and beseeched to our children's trembling voices! John, the Teacher, then prayed; while the Heathen, in groups of wonder, but holding far aloof, had many strange ideas awakened in their puzzled brains. The mother and I gave ourselves once more away to God, and to the Service of our dear Lord Jesus, as we parted with our darling Lena; and when, by and bye, we were raised up again, and able to move about, often, often, did we find ourselves meeting together at that precious Grave.

Being ordered to seek health by change and by higher medical aid, and if possible in the cooler air of New Zealand, we took the first opportunity and arrived at Sydney, anxious to start the new movement to secure the *Paragons* there, and then to go on to the Sister Colony. Being scarcely able to walk without the crutches, we called privately a preliminary meeting of friends for consultation and advice. The conditions were laid before them and discussed. The Insurance Company had paid £2000 on the first *Dagyring*. Of that sum £1000 had been spent on chartering and maintaining the *Paragons*; so that we required an additional £2000 to purchase her, according to Dr. Steel's bargain with the owners, besides a large sum for alterations and equipment for the Mission. The late Mr. Learmouth looked across to Mr. Goodlet, and said, "If you'll join me, we will at once secure this vessel for the Missionaries, that God's work may not suffer from the wreck of the *Dagyring*."

Those two servants of God, excellent Elders of the Presbyterian Church, consulted together, and the vessel was purchased next day. How I did praise God, and pray Him to bless them and theirs! The late Dr. Fullarton, our dear friend, said to them, "But what guarantee do you ask from the Missionaries for your money?"

Mr. Learmouth's noble reply was, and the other heartily echoed it—"God's work is our guarantee! From them we will ask none. What guarantees have they to give us, except their faith in God? That guarantee is ours already."

I answered, "You take God and His work for your guarantee. Rest assured that He will soon repay you, and you will lose nothing by this noble service."

Having secured St. Andrew's Church for a public meeting, I advertised it in all the papers. Ministers, Sabbath School Teachers, and other friends came in great numbers. The scheme was fairly launched, and Collecting Cards largely distributed. Committees carried everything out into detail, and all worked for the fund with great goodwill.

I then sailed from Sydney to Victoria, and addressed the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in session at Melbourne. The work was easily set agoing there, and willing workers fully and rapidly organised it through Congregations and Sabbath Schools.

Under medical advice, I next sailed for New Zealand in the S.S. *Hero*, Captain Logan. Reaching Auckland, I was in time to address the General Assembly of the Church there also. They gave me cordial welcome, and every Congregation and Sabbath School might be visited as far as I possibly could. The Ministers promoted the movement with hearty zeal. The Sabbath Scholars took Collecting Cards for "shares" in the New Mission Ship. A meeting was held every day, and three every Sabbath. Auckland, Nelson, Wellington, Dunedin, and all towns and Churches within reach of these were rapidly visited; and I never had greater joy or heartiness in any of my tours than in this happy intercourse with the Ministers and People of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand.

I arrived back in Sydney about the end of March. My health was wonderfully restored, and New Zealand had given me about £1700 for the new ship. With the £1000 of insurance money, and about £700 from New South Wales, and £400 from Victoria, besides the £500 for her support also from Victoria, we were able to pay back the £3000 of purchase money, and about £800 for alterations and repairs, as well as equip and provision her to sail for her next year's work amongst the Islands free of debt. I said to our two good friends at Sydney:

"You took God and His work for your guarantee. He has soon relieved you from all responsibility. You have suffered no loss, and you have had the honour and privilege of

servng your Lord. I envy you the joy you must feel in so using your wealth, and I pray God's double blessing on all your store."

Our agent, Dr. Steel, had applied to the Home authorities for power to change the vessel's name from *Paragon* to *Day-spring*, so that the old associations might not be broken. This was cordially granted. And so our second *Dayspring*, owing no man anything, sailed on her annual trip to the New Hebrides, and we returned with her, praising the Lord and reinvigorated alike in spirit and in body.

CHAPTER LXXVII

THE GOSPEL IN LIVING CAPITALS

IN Heathendom every true convert becomes at once a Missionary. The changed life, shining out amid the surrounding darkness, is a Gospel in largest Capitals which all can read. Our Islanders, especially, having little to engage or otherwise distract attention, become intense and devoted workers for the Lord Jesus, if once the Divine Passion for souls stirs within them.

A Heathen has been all his days groping after peace of soul in dark superstition and degrading rites. You pour into his soul the light of Revelation. He learns that God is love, that God sent His Son to die for him, and that he is the heir of Life Eternal in and through Jesus Christ. By the blessed enlightenment of the Spirit of the Lord he believes all this. He passes into a third heaven of joy, and he burns to tell every one of this Glad Tidings. Others see the change in his disposition, in his character, in his whole life and actions; and amid such surroundings, every Convert is a burning and a shining light. Even whole populations are thus brought into the Outer Court of the Temple; and Islands, still Heathen and Cannibal, are positively eager for the Missionary to live amongst them, and would guard his life and property now in complete security, where a very few years ago everything would have been instantly sacrificed on touching their shores! They are not Christianised, neither are they

Civilised, but the light has been kindled all around them, and though still only shining afar, they cannot but rejoice in its beams.

But even where the path is not so smooth, nor any welcome awaiting them, Native Converts show amazing zeal. For instance, one of our Chiefs, full of the Christ-kindled desire to seek and to save, sent a message to an inland Chief, that he and four attendants would come on Sabbath and tell them the Gospel of Jehovah God. The reply came back sternly forbidding their visit, and threatening with death any Christian that approached their village. Our Chief sent in response a loving message, telling them that Jehovah had taught the Christians to return good for evil, and that they would come unarmed to tell them the story of how the Son of God came into the world and died in order to bless and save His enemies. The Heathen Chief sent back a stern and prompt reply once more, "If you come, you will be killed."

On Sabbath morning, the Christian Chief and his four companions were met outside the village by the Heathen Chief, who implored and threatened them once more. But the former said, "We come to you without weapons of war! We come only to tell you about Jesus. We believe that He will protect us to-day."

As they steadily pressed forward towards the village, spears began to be thrown at them. Some they evaded, being all except one most dexterous warriors; and others they literally received with their bare hands, striking them and turning them aside in an incredible manner. The Heathen, apparently thunderstruck at these men thus approaching them without weapons of war, and not even flinging back their own spears which they had turned aside, desisted from mere surprise, after having thrown what the old Chief called "a shower of spears." Our Christian Chief called out, as he and his companions drew up in the midst of them on the village Public Ground:

"Jehovah thus protects us. He has given us all your spears! Once we would have thrown them back at you and killed you. But now we come not to fight, but to tell you about Jesus. He has changed our dark hearts. He asks you now to lay down all these your other weapons of war, and to hear what

we can tell you about the love of God, our great Father, the only living God."

The Heathen were perfectly overawed. They manifestly looked upon these Christians as protected by some Invisible One! They listened for the first time to the story of the Gospel and of the Cross. We lived to see that Chief and all his tribe sitting in the School of Christ. And there is perhaps not an Island in these Southern Seas, amongst all those won for Christ, where similar acts of heroism on the part of Converts cannot be recited by every Missionary to the honour of our poor Natives and to the glory of their Saviour.

Larger and harder tests were sometimes laid upon their new faith. Once the war on Tanna drove about one hundred of them to seek refuge on Aniwa. Not so many years before, their lives would never have been thus entrusted to the inhabitants of another Cannibal Island. But the Christ-Spirit was abroad upon Aniwa. The refugees were kindly cared for, and in process of time were restored to their own lands by our Missionary ship the *Dreyfuss*. The Chiefs, however, and the Elders of the Church laid the new laws before them very clearly and decidedly. They would be helped and sheltered, but Aniwa was now under law to Christ, and if any of the Tannese broke the public rules as to moral conduct, or in any way disturbed the Worship of Jehovah, they would at once be expelled from the Island and sent back to Tanna. In all this, the Chief of the Tanna party, my old friend Nowar, strongly supported our Christian Chiefs. The Tannese behaved well, and many of them wore clothing and began to attend Church; and the heavy drain upon the poor resources of Aniwa was borne with a noble and Christian spirit, which greatly impressed the Tannese and commended the Gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

THE DEATH OF NAMAKEI

IN claiming Aniwa for Christ, and winning it as a small jewel for His crown, we had the experience which has ever marked

God's path through history.—He raised up around us and wonderfully endowed men to carry forward His own blessed work. Among these must be specially commemorated Namakei, the old Chief of Aniwa. Slowly, but very steadily, the light of the Gospel broke in upon his soul, and he was ever very eager to communicate to his people all that he learned. In Heathen days he was a Cannibal and a great warrior; but from the first, as shown in the preceding Chapters, he took a warm interest in us and our work,—a little selfish, no doubt, at the beginning, but soon becoming purified, as his eyes and heart were opened to the Gospel of Jesus.

On the birth of a son to us on the Island, the old Chief was in ecstasies. He claimed the child as his heir, his own son being dead, and brought nearly the whole inhabitants in relays to see the *white* Chief of Aniwa! He would have him called Namakei the Younger, an honour which I fear we did not too highly appreciate. As the child grew, he took his hand and walked about with him freely amongst the people, learning to speak their language like a Native, and not only greatly interesting them in himself, but even in us and in the work of the Lord. This, too, was one of the bonds, however purely human, that drew them all nearer and nearer to Jesus.

It was this same child, who, in the moment of our greatest peril, when the Mission House was once surrounded by Savages who had resolved to murder us, managed in some incredible way to escape, and appeared, to our horror and amazement, dancing with glee amongst the armed warriors. He threw his arms around the neck of one after another, and kissed them, to their great surprise,—at last, he settled down like a bird upon the ringleader's knee, and therefrom prattled to them all, while we from within gazed on in speechless and helpless terror! He roundly scolded them for being "Naughty! Naughty!" The frowning faces began to relax into broad grins, another spirit came over them, and, one after another, they rapidly slipped away. The Council of Death was broken up; and we had a new illustration of the Lord's precious word,—"A little Child shall lead them."

The death of Namakei had in it many streaks of Christian romance. He had heard about the Missionaries annually meeting on one or other of the Islands, and consulting about the work of Jehovah. What ideas he had formed of a Mission-

Synod one cannot easily imagine; but in his old age, and when very frail, he formed an impassioned desire to attend our next meeting on Aneiyyum, and see and hear all the Missionaries of Jesus gathered together from the New Hebrides. Terrified that he would die away from home, and that that might bring great reverses to the good work on Aniwa, where he was truly beloved, I opposed his going with all my might. But he and his relations and his people were all set upon it, and I had at length to give way. His few booklets were then garnered together, his meagre wardrobe was made up, and a small Native basket carried all his belongings. He assembled his people and took an affectionate farewell, pleading with them to be "strong for Jesus," whether they ever saw him again or not, and to be loyal and kind to Missi. The people waited aloud, and many wept bitterly. Those on board the *Daphning* were amazed to see how his people loved him. The old Chief stood the voyage well. He went in and out to our meeting of Synod, and was vastly pleased with the respect paid to him on Aneiyyum. When he heard of the prosperity of the Lord's work, and how Island after Island was learning to sing the praises of Jesus, his heart glowed, and he said, "Missi, I am lifting up my head like a tree. I am growing tall with joy!"

On the fourth or fifth day, however, he sent for me out of the Synod, and when I came to him, he said, eagerly, "Missi, I am near to die! I have asked you to come and say farewell. Tell my daughter, my brother, and my people to go on pleasing Jesus, and I will meet them again in the fair World."

I tried to encourage him, saying that God might raise him up again and restore him to his people; but he faintly whispered, "O Missi, death is already touching me! I feel my feet going away from under me. Help me to lie down under the shade of that banyan tree."

So saying, he seized my arm, we staggered near to the tree, and he lay down under its cool shade. He whispered again, "I am going! O Missi, let me hear your words rising up in prayer, and then my Soul will be strong to go."

Amidst many choking sobs, I tried to pray. At last he took my hand, pressed it to his heart, and said in a stronger and clearer tone, "O my Missi, my dear Missi, I go before

you, but I will meet you again in the Home of Jesus. Farewell!"

That was the last effort of dissolving strength; he immediately became unconscious, and fell asleep. My heart felt like to break over him. He was my first Aniwan Convert—the first who ever on that Island of love and tears opened his heart to Jesus; and as he lay there on the leaves and grass, my soul soared upward after his, and all the harps of God seemed to thrill with song as Jesus presented to the Father this trophy of redeeming love. He had been our true and devoted friend and fellow-helper in the Gospel; and next morning all the members of our Synod followed his remains to the grave. There we stood, the white Missionaries of the Cross from far distant lands, mingling our tears with Christian Natives of Aneiyyum, and letting them fall over one who only a few years before was a blood-stained Cannibal, and whom now we mourned as a brother, a saint, an Apostle amongst his people. Ye ask an explanation? The Christ entered into his heart, and Namakei became a new Creature. "Behold, I make all things new."

CHAPTER LXXIX

CHRISTIANITY AND COCOA-NUTS

Naswai, the friend and companion of Namakei, was an inland Chief. He had, as his followers, by far the largest number of men in any village on Aniwa. He had certainly a dignified bearing, and his wife Katua was quite a lady in look and manner as compared with all around her. She was the first woman on the Island that adopted the clothes of civilization, and she showed considerable instinctive taste in the way she dressed herself in these. Her example was a kind of Gospel in its good influence on all the women; she was a real companion to her husband, and went with him almost everywhere.

Naswai was younger and more intelligent than Namakei, and in everything, except in translating the Scriptures, he was much more of a fellow-helper in the work of the Lord. For many