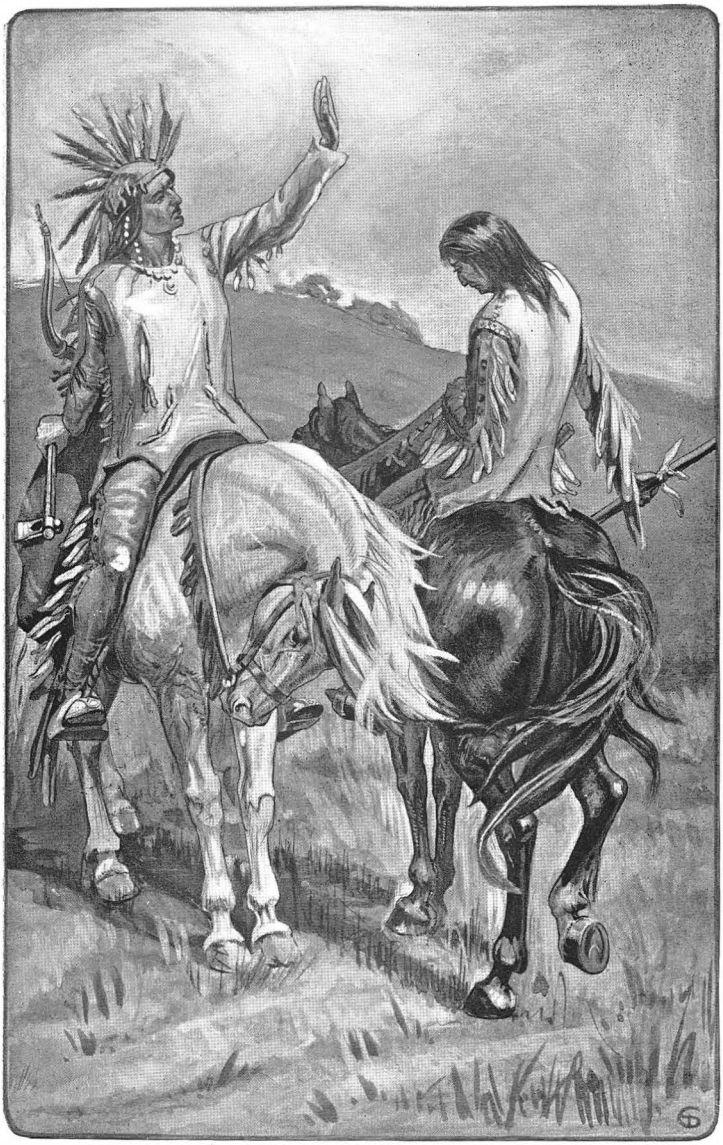

"By all the laws of the Indian tribes you deserve to die, but as I expect the Great Spirit to forgive me, I forgive you," said the chief Muskepetoon, who at an earlier date had sworn, "So long as there is a Blackfoot to scalp I will never become a Christian."

Missionary Heroes
in
North & South America

TRUE STORIES OF THE INTREPID BRAVERY AND
STIRRING ADVENTURES OF MISSIONARIES
WITH UNCIVILIZED MAN, WILD BEASTS
AND THE FORCES OF NATURE
IN THE TWO CONTINENTS
OF AMERICA

BY

JOHN C. LAMBERT, M.A., D.D.

AUTHOR OF
"THE OMNIPOTENT CROSS," "THREE FISHING BOATS"
&c. &c.

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE author desires with much gratitude to acknowledge his debt to the following ladies and gentlemen, who have most kindly assisted him in gathering the materials for this book by giving their consent to his use of their writings, by lending him books and photographs, or in other ways :—

The Rev. E. P. Cachemaille, M.A., and Capt. E. Poulden, R.N., the Secretaries of the South American Missionary Society; Miss M. G. Cowan, Hon. Librarian of the Missionary Library at Lady Stair's House, Edinburgh.

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The South American Society; the Religious Tract Society; the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; Messrs. Marshall Bros.; Messrs. Seeley and Co., Ltd.

INTRODUCTION

IN a "foreword" which he contributes to Dr. Jacob Chamberlain's attractive missionary book, *In the Tiger Jungle*, Dr. Francis E. Clark expresses the opinion that one need not patronize sensational and unhealthy fiction to find stirring adventure and thrilling narrative, and then goes on to say :—

"There is one source which furnishes stories of intense and dramatic interest, abounding in novel situations and spiced with abundant adventure ; and this source is at the same time the purest and most invigorating fountain at which our youth can drink. To change the figure : this is a mine hitherto largely unworked ; it contains rich nuggets of ore, which will well repay the prospector in this new field."

The field to which Dr. Clark refers is the history of modern Christian missions. His meaning is that the adventurous and stirring side of missionary experience needs to be brought out, and emphasis laid upon the fact that the romantic days of missions are by no means past.

There are stories which are among the classics of missionary romance. Such are the expedition of Hans Egede to Greenland, the lonely

journeys of David Brainerd among the Indian tribes of the North American forests, the voyage of John Williams from one coral island of the Pacific to another in the little ship which his own hands had built, the exploration of the Dark Continent by David Livingstone in the hope of emancipating the black man's soul.

But among missionary lives, which are more recent or less known, there are many not less noble or less thrilling than those just referred to ; and the chapters which follow are an attempt to make this plain.

There is, of course, a deeper side to Christian missions—a side that is essential and invariable —while the elements of adventure and romance are accidental and occasional. If in these pages the spiritual aspects of foreign mission work are but slightly touched upon, it is not because they are either forgotten or ignored, but simply because it was not part of the writer's present plan to deal with them. It is his hope, nevertheless, that some of those into whose hands this book may come will be induced by what they read to make fuller acquaintance with the lives and aims of our missionary heroes, and so will catch something of that spirit which led them to face innumerable dangers, toils, and trials among heathen and often savage peoples, whether in the frozen North or the burning

South, whether in the hidden depths of some vast continent or among the scattered "islands of the ocean seas."

In the recently published *Memoirs of Archbishop Temple* we find the future Primate of the Church of England, when a youth of twenty, writing to tell his mother how his imagination had been stirred by the sight of Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand starting for the Pacific with a band of young men who had devoted themselves to the propagation of the Gospel among a benighted and barbarous people. "It is not mere momentary enthusiasm with me," he writes; "my heart beats whenever I think of it. I think it one of the noblest things England has done for a long time; almost the only thing really worthy of herself."

It is the author's earnest desire that the narratives which follow may help to kindle in some minds an enthusiasm for missions like that which characterized Frederick Temple to the very end of his long and strenuous life; or, better still, that they may even suggest to some who are looking forward to the future with a high ambition, and wondering how to make the most of life, whether there is any career which offers so many opportunities of romantic experience and heroic achievement as that of a Christian missionary.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE contents of this volume have been taken from Dr. Lambert's larger book, "The Romance of Missionary Heroism," published at five shillings.

AMONG THE INDIANS AND ESKIMO OF HUDSON BAY

Missionary Heroes In North and South America

CHAPTER I

AMONG THE INDIANS AND ESKIMO OF HUDSON BAY

A world of ice—The Hudson Bay ships—John Horden—A huge parish—Indians and Eskimo—Bishop of Moosonee—Ungava—"The last house in the world"—The tail-less cow—Canoe adventures—The sea-ice—Last labours—*Si monumentum requiris.*

TO those who as boys have read Mr. R. M. Ballantyne's *Ungava* and *Young Fur Traders*, the name of Hudson Bay will always suggest a world of glorious adventure and romance. They have visions of Indians shooting swift rapids in their bark canoes, or of Eskimo on an ice-floe fighting a fierce polar bear or lying in wait for an unwary seal. They see the trapper on a winter morning, with his gun on his shoulder, skimming lightly on broad snowshoes over the powdery snow,

as he goes his rounds from one trap to another through a forest which has been transformed by icicle and snowflake into a wonderland of magical beauty. Or they remember the traders in a lonely fort, doing their best to keep their hearts jolly and their noses free from frostbite, at a time when the thermometer is fifty degrees below zero, and the pen cannot be dipped into the ink-bottle because the ink has turned into a solid lump of ice.

The present writer has a vivid recollection of a sunny midsummer season spent in the Orkneys. In Stromness harbour he saw some strongly built but old-fashioned vessels preparing to set sail, and felt an almost boyish thrill of delight as he learned that these were the Hudson Bay ships about to start on their annual voyage for the coasts of Labrador, from what is their last port of call in the British Isles. He thought of that solitary route, where sometimes never a sail is sighted from one side of the Atlantic to another. And he remembered that, though the bright summer sun might be shining on our islands, these ships would have to struggle with many a

bristling iceberg before they could discharge at Moose Fort or York Factory the precious cargo on which depended the comfort and even the lives of those who held the outposts of the British Empire along the frontiers of the Frozen North.

Let us go back to the year 1851, and imagine ourselves on board of a stout old wooden ship of the whaler type, which has fought its way from Stromness across the North Atlantic and through the floes and bergs of Hudson Straits, and is now entering the wide expanse of Hudson Bay itself. She is squarely built, and armed at her bows with thick blocks of timber called ice-chocks, to enable her to do daily battle with the floating ice. On board of her as passengers are a young Englishman named John Horden and his wife. Horden is a teacher who is being sent out from England by the Church Missionary Society to try to bring some Christian light into the minds and hearts of the Indians and Eskimo scattered round the shores of this great inland sea. The vessel is nearing her destination, but the danger is not yet over;

indeed the worst dangers are yet to come. Horden himself describes their experiences :—

"Ahead, stretching as far as the eye could reach, is ice—ice; now we are in it. More and more difficult becomes the navigation. We are at a standstill. We go to the mast-head—ice; rugged ice in every direction! One day passes by—two, three, or four. The cold is intense. Our hopes sink lower and lower; a week passes. The sailors are allowed to get out and have a game at football; the days pass on; for nearly three weeks we are imprisoned. Then there is a movement in the ice. It is opening. The ship is clear! Every man is on deck. Up with the sails in all speed! Crack, crack, go the blows from the ice through which we are passing; but we shall now soon be free, and in the open sea. Ah! no prisoner ever left his prison with greater joy than we left ours."

A few days after, the voyagers reached Moose Fort, at the extreme south-west corner of Hudson Bay, and the young teacher found himself on the spot which was to be his home for the rest of his life.

A Huge Parish

And now let us look at the task which lay before him. When John Wesley said that he took the whole world for his parish, he was speaking figuratively; but this inexperienced young man found himself literally responsible for the educational and religious welfare of a district 1500 miles long by 1500 broad. Indeed, lengthwise his parish stretched out indefinitely into space, for though bounded on the south by the settled parts of Canada, it might be said to extend in the opposite direction right up to the North Pole. Within this huge area, and planted along the coasts of Hudson Bay, a few trading posts of the Hudson Bay Company were scattered, several hundred miles apart. And here and there small bands of Indians and Eskimo were settled, who gained a precarious livelihood by hunting and fishing. Apart from those who lived in the neighbourhood of Moose Fort, or visited it from time to time to barter skins and furs for English goods, Horden could reach the people of this vast territory only by toilsome and dangerous journeys, performed in summer in a bark canoe, and in winter on snow shoes or

in a sledge drawn by a team of Eskimo dogs.

First of all, however, he had to learn something of the language, or rather of the languages, for there were several of them. Around Moose Fort the Indians were Crees, but in other parts of the country there were Ojjibeways and Chippeways, each of whom spoke an entirely different dialect. Farther north, on both sides of the Bay, were the Eskimo, whose speech bore no resemblance to any of the Indian tongues. The language difficulties did not trouble Horden very seriously. Most Europeans are greatly puzzled by the peculiarities of the agglutinative family of languages used by the native tribes of North America. But though Horden confessed that Cree was a jaw-breaking speech, and that Greek and Latin in comparison were tame affairs, he had so much determination, combined with such a knack for picking up new words and forms of expression, that in a very few months he was able to preach to the people without the help of an interpreter. He made mistakes, of course. Once he was speaking of the crea-

tion of Adam and Eve. All went well till he came to describe Eve's manner of coming into the world, when he observed that his hearers were "smiling audibly." He found that instead of saying that the woman was made "out of one of Adam's ribs," he had said "out of one of Adam's pipes." *Ospikakun* is "his rib," and *ospwakun* "his pipe." But by and by he was able to speak with correctness as well as fluency, not in one language, but in several. And having taught the people to read, and himself learned how to work a printing-press, he scattered abroad thousands of Gospels and other books which he had translated into the various tongues.

Mr. Horden showed such aptness for his work that before long he was ordained as a clergyman by the nearest bishop—the Bishop of Rupert's Land, who had to make for this purpose a journey of six weeks, mostly by canoe. And now Horden himself began to make those constant and arduous expeditions to all parts of the territory which form the most striking feature of the story of his life. "Arduous," his biographer says, "is but a

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mild expression for the troubles, trials, privations, and tremendous difficulties attendant on travel through the immense trackless wastes lying between many of the posts—wastes intersected by rivers and rapids, varied only by tracts of pathless forest swept by fierce storms."

Sometimes he went on from day to day for four or five hundred miles, without ever seeing tent or house or even the trace of a human being by the way. Often he encountered men who delighted in bloodshed, and thought little of killing and eating their fellow-creatures when other means of subsistence failed. Once he met an Indian who during the preceding winter had murdered and devoured, one after another, his whole family of six children, in order to satisfy the cravings of hunger. As for his own food on these journeys, he was obliged to take whatever he could get. "I have eaten," he says, "white bear, black bear, wild cat; while for a week or ten days I have had nothing but beaver, and glad indeed I have been to get it."

Let us follow him to some of his more

distant stations, and see what he found there, or how he fared by the way. First, however, let the fact be mentioned that, after twenty years of remarkably successful labour, he was summoned to England to be consecrated in Westminster Abbey as Bishop of Moosonee, the name given to the new diocese, of which Moose Fort was the strategic centre. His elevation in rank and dignity made little difference in the nature of his ordinary occupations, and so, in describing some of the incidents of his tours, we shall take these without distinction from the earlier or the later period of his life.

Far up the eastern side of Hudson Bay lies the region of Ungava, with the Little Whale and Great Whale rivers flowing through it to the sea. For the Eskimo of this district Horden always had a special affection and regard. He loved his Indian flock too ; but he found these Eskimo more responsive, more eager to learn, and more teachable in every way. Bleak and desolate as the country was around Moose, it was colder and wilder still towards Ungava, where from year's end to year's end the snow

never entirely disappeared, and the white bear of the floes took the place of the black bear of the forest. In summer the Eskimo lived in tents made of sealskins; but in winter, like their Greenland cousins, in houses built of slabs of frozen snow. Bears and seals were hunted in winter, but in summer there came the fiercer excitements of a great whale drive. The whales would come over the river bars in vast numbers, and then every kayak was afloat, and with harpoon and line the eager sportsmen followed their prey to the death. On one occasion Mr. Horden himself took part in a whale fishery in which no fewer than a thousand prizes were secured—a world of wealth and feasting to the poor Eskimo.

But no matter what the Eskimo were about, if they heard that the white teacher had come they dropped spear and harpoon, and trotted off to listen, to sing, and to pray, in a fashion which showed how deeply interested they were. By and by Bishop Horden was able to obtain for them a missionary of their own, who settled on the spot, and under whose teaching the whole colony around the Whale River region

became not only thoroughly civilized, but earnestly Christian.

Still farther north than Ungava, but on the opposite side of Hudson Bay, is a station called Fort Churchill. Horden dubbed it "the last house in the world," for there was no other between it and the North Pole. There the cold in winter is as intense almost as in any spot on the surface of the globe. The diary of an expedition to this lonely outpost, undertaken in the depth of winter, is specially interesting. Horden travelled in a cariole, or dog sledge, accompanied by Indian guides. The temperature was never less than thirty, and sometimes nearly fifty degrees below zero. The greatest precautions had to be taken against frostbite. Every evening, when they encamped in the forest, about an hour and a half was spent in erecting a thick, high barricade of pine branches as a protection against the piercing wind. An enormous fire was also necessary, for one of ordinary size would have made little impression on the frozen air. When a hearty supper had been cooked and eaten, and the Indians had lighted

their pipes, the little company would sit around the blazing pine-logs and tell of hunting adventures, or of hairbreadth escapes from the perils of the forest and the flood. As bedtime drew near, all joined earnestly in a short service of praise and prayer, and then lay down to sleep under the open sky, which glittered with frosty stars, or glowed and throbbed with the streaming rays of the brilliant Northern Lights.

Though the last house in the world, Fort Churchill had a heterogeneous population of English traders, Indians and Eskimo. The Eskimo of the west were a fiercer people than those on the eastern side of the great bay, and were much feared even by the Chippeway Indians—themselves dangerous customers to deal with. Often an Eskimo would come to the station with his face marked with red ochre, a sign that he had recently committed a murder. This red mark was their peculiar glory, for while they prided themselves on their prowess in killing a walrus or a polar bear, they thought it a much higher honour to have slain a human being. Churchill was thus a very needful field

of operations in the eyes of the Bishop, and Horden did not rest until he had planted a church there, with a minister of its own to attend to the wants of the variegated flock.

In spite of its rigours and occasional tragedies, life at Churchill was not without its own small humours too. Horden was fond of telling his friends farther south about the Churchill cows. There were three of them. The first was a dwarf. The second was so lean and supple that she could milk herself with her own mouth, and was therefore condemned to go in harness, carrying a bag around her udder which effectually prevented her from enjoying a drink of fresh milk whenever she pleased. The third member of the dairy had been despoiled of her tail one winter night by some hungry wolves. The result was that when summer came and the flies began to swarm—and in the brief, hot summer they *do* swarm around Hudson Bay—they threatened to eat up all of her that the wolves had left; for without a tail she was perfectly helpless against their assaults. But an ingenious trader be-

thought himself of a dead cow's tail which was lying in the store :—

"Why not use that? The suggestion was at once acted upon; the tail was attached to the stump by means of some twine, and over it was tied some canvas, well saturated with Stockholm tar. It was a great success, and the creature was again able to do battle with her diminutive but persevering foes."

In the course of his constant journeys in such a land, Bishop Horden, as will readily be imagined, had many a narrow escape. Shooting the rapids in a bark canoe is one of the most exhilarating of experiences, but sometimes one of the most dangerous. Horden, who travelled thousands of miles by water almost every year, had full taste of the dangers. Once a large canoe in which he was ascending a swollen river was caught in a strong current and dragged down towards some difficult rapids, while the Indians, with faces upstream, dug their paddles into the water and strained their muscles nearly to the bursting-point. Their efforts, however, were quite fruitless. The canoe went back and back, and at length was swept at lightning

speed into the boiling flood. Fortunately the crew were equal to the emergency. In a moment they all turned swiftly round in their places, thus converting what had been the stern into the bow, and by careful steering through the rocks the canoe shot safely out at last into the smooth water beneath the rapids.

On another occasion, a smaller canoe struck with a heavy crash upon a rock right in mid-stream. A great hole was made, and the water came pouring in. But by great exertions the canoe was brought to shore before it had time to sink; and in an hour or two it was sufficiently patched up again. For if an Indian canoe is easily damaged, it is easily repaired.

"One goes to a birch tree and cuts off a large piece of bark, another digs up some roots and splits them, a third prepares some pitch, and in the course of an hour or two the bark is sewn into the bottom of the canoe, the seams are covered with pitch, and we are once more loading our little vessel."

But the narrowest escape that Horden ever made was connected with the sudden break-up of the sea-ice. They were crossing a frozen

inlet on the south of Hudson Bay, when the cold season was rather far advanced for a short cut of this kind to be altogether prudent. Just in the middle, when they were about ten miles from the nearest point of land, the guide gave a sudden exclamation and pointed seawards. As they looked, they saw mass after mass of ice rise up and fall back into the sea; and they knew that with the approach of the warmer weather, the solid surface was going to pieces before an incoming tide. The guide next struck his stick sharply on the spot on which they stood, and the stick went clean through. Every one knew what that meant—the ice was quite rotten. "Get into the cariole at once!" the guide cried to Mr. Horden. The Bishop jumped in, but his weight forced the hinder part of the sledge downwards into the sea. Both sledge and occupant might have disappeared in a moment if it had not been for the prompt action of the sagacious dogs. They seemed to realize at once Horden's danger and their own. Straining on their harness, they quickly drew the cariole out of its terrible position, and made for the nearest shore at full gallop, while the

Indians ran behind not less swiftly. Eskimo dogs and Indians are both good long-distance runners, and we are not surprised to be told that neither men nor dogs ever thought of halting until they felt the solid ground once more beneath their feet.

There were many trials and anxieties, as well as dangers, in Bishop Horden's life. Once the annual ship from England, so eagerly expected, was wrecked on a reef, and a large part of the provisions and other goods on which both traders and missionaries depended to carry them through another twelvemonth was utterly lost. Sometimes there came a bad season—no game in the forest, no wild geese for the goose-hunters along the shore—and the poor Indians died by the dozen. Above all, there was the great trial of parting from his wife and children, for Mrs. Horden, his faithful companion and helpmate from the very first, had to take the boys and girls to England to receive their education. But the good Bishop never lost his cheerfulness or relaxed his activity. He was true always to the motto of his life: "*The happiest man is he who is*

most diligently employed about his Master's business."

Even on his death-bed his diligence did not cease. His last letter, dictated when he was no longer able to write himself, shows him, like Bede in the well-known narrative of his pupil Cuthbert, busy to the last with the task of New Testament translation. He suffered dreadful torture from rheumatism, the natural result of forty-two years of "roughing it" in a climate where the temperature varies from 100 degrees in the shade at the height of the brief summer to 50 degrees below zero in the depth of winter. But in the intervals between the sharp attacks of almost intolerable pain, he pushed eagerly on with a revised version of the New Testament in the Cree language: "Picture me in my work," he writes to his friends in England. "I am lying on my back in my bed, Mr. Richards is sitting at a table by my side. I have my English Bible, the Revised Version, in my hand; Mr. Richards has my translation before him, which he is reading to me slowly and distinctly. Every sentence is very carefully weighed, and all errors are

corrected. This is a glorious occupation, and I cannot feel too thankful that I am able to follow it in these days of my weakness."

The end came suddenly, but it did not come too soon. Horden had accomplished his task, and left behind him a splendid record of heroic work heroically done. *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*, is Sir Christopher Wren's appropriate epitaph in St. Paul's Cathedral. John Horden's monument is to be seen in the presence of a pervasive Christian civilization all around the shores of Hudson Bay. When he went there first, he found the people living for the most part under the cruel spell of their conjurors. It was a common thing to strangle the sick with a bowstring in order to save further trouble. Aged parents were got rid of in the same way to avoid the expense of supporting them. Murder for gain was rife on every hand. When Bishop Horden died, a complete change had passed over the great part of the Hudson Bay region. More than one Indian had been educated and ordained for the work of the ministry. Twenty-six native lay teachers, Indian and Eskimo, were busily

engaged in various parts of the diocese. Thousands of persons had been baptized into the membership of the Church, and showed by peaceable and upright lives that they were Christians in fact as well as in name.

LITERATURE.—*Hudson Bay*, by R. M. Ballantyne; *Forty-two Years amongst the Indians and Eskimo*, by Beatrice Batty (the Religious Tract Society); *John Horden: Missionary Bishop*, by the Rev. A. R. Buckland, M.A. (London: The Sunday School Union).

THE "PRAYING-MASTER" OF THE REDSKINS

CHAPTER II

THE "PRAYING-MASTER" OF THE REDSKINS

"The Apostle of the North"—The backwoods schoolmaster—Indians and fur-traders—At Norway House—The "praying-master"—R. M. Ballantyne—A famous dog-train—Camping in the snow—The Arctic night—The talking birch bark—A tragic incident—An Indian mother's forgiveness—Adopted by the Chippeways.

WE have seen how, through the influence of Bishop Horden, Christianity was spread among the Indians and Eskimo around the inhospitable shores of Hudson Bay. But we have now to follow the story of a man whose journeys and adventures amidst the "snowflakes and sunbeams" of the Far North throw even those of Horden into the shade. Being a bishop, the latter naturally confined himself to his diocese; though a vast diocese it was. But James Evans, "the Apostle of the North," as he has been called, was not a bishop, and so was free to take for *his*

diocese the length and breadth of half a continent. From Lower Canada to the Rocky Mountains, and from Lake Superior to the Arctic Circle, he pushed ever forward as a pioneer of Christianity to the Indian races of British North America. It is three-quarters of a century since he began those incessant labours which made him the modern successor of Brainerd and Eliot. The wheatfields of Manitoba now wave where in those days vast herds of buffaloes roamed over the plains. The railway train and the steamboat have taken in some measure the place of the canoe and the dog-sledge. The fur-trader's lonely fort in the wilderness has been supplanted here and there by the flourishing, up-to-date Western city. And yet, after all, civilization has done little more than fringe the borders of those vast territories of the Canadian North-west through which James Evans journeyed unweariedly, whether in the long winter or the short summer, as he bore his message of peace and goodwill to the tribes of the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan, to the fierce Blackfeet and Mountain Stonies of the Rockies,

and even to those of the redskin peoples whose hunting-grounds lay under the North Star by the shores of Lake Athabasca or along the banks of the great Mackenzie River, which pours its mighty flood of waters into the Arctic Sea.

James Evans was an Englishman who, like many another, had gone to Canada in search of a career. Finding it difficult to get employment in business, he became a backwoods schoolmaster. It was a fine training for the life that lay before him, bringing not only experience as a teacher, but familiarity with those arts of the hardy backwoodsman which were by and by to stand him in good stead. He was a Wesleyan, and as the leaders of the Wesleyan Church in Canada came to know his talents and enterprise, as well as his Christian zeal, they offered him a post as teacher in one of their Indian schools in the Lake Ontario district. It was pioneer work of the purest kind, but Evans thoroughly enjoyed it, and lived happily in a tent with his young wife until he had felled cedar trees and sawn them into logs and built both school

and schoolhouse with his own hands. His success as a missionary teacher led before long to his being ordained as a minister, and appointed to labour among the Indian tribes on the northern shores of Lake Superior. This involved a dangerous journey of many days in an open boat, but Evans was now an expert canoeist, who could handle a paddle as if to the manner born. He reached Lake Superior in safety, and began his lifelong fight against the superstitions and cruelties of Red Indian paganism at a place which bore the appropriate name of Devil's Hole.

To any ordinary man the far-stretching coasts of the greatest of all the American lakes would have been a field sufficient for a life's labours. But Evans was not an ordinary man. Like Livingstone in Africa, he was never satisfied unless he was continually pressing on into new regions, and carrying the name of Jesus Christ where it had not been heard before. And in the most unexpected way there came an opening and a call to a new and larger sphere such as he longed for.

The fur-traders of the great Hudson Bay

Company, whose forts were scattered right across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Great Lakes to the Arctic Ocean, had noticed for some time that many of the Indians of the north were drifting steadily southwards. This gave them much concern, for it was from the northern part of their territories that they got a large proportion of their most valuable furs, and this southerly movement of the native hunters threatened the Company with serious loss. At first the migration was set down simply to a desire to escape to a more genial climate, but fuller investigation revealed that the true reason was very different. The Indians of the north had heard some word of a new and wonderful religion which had come to their brothers in the south—a religion given by the Great Spirit to the red man as well as to the white. Around many a camp-fire the tidings had been discussed. And at last religious curiosity became so strong that, in the words of Mr. Egerton Young, the biographer of Mr. Evans and one of his present-day successors, "family after family embarked in their birch canoes and started for the land of the South

Wind, in order to find the teacher and the Book."

And so it occurred to the directors of the Company that it would be to their advantage to bring the missionary to the Indians, instead of leaving the Indians to go in search of the missionary. They applied accordingly to the Wesleyans in England to send without delay several suitable men to work among the tribes of the North-West. This the Wesleyan Society at once proceeded to do, and as the most competent man to be the leader of the movement their choice fell upon Mr. Evans. He lost no time in transferring himself from Lake Superior to Norway House, which is situated at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg, "The Lake of the Sea," and in those days was one of the Hudson Bay Company's most important forts.

As illustrating the conditions of life at that time in those remote regions of the British Empire, it is interesting to know how Norway House received its name. So great were the hardships and loneliness that had to be faced in the service of the Hudson Bay Company that few Englishmen cared for such employ-

ment. Hence, as a matter of fact, it was largely Scottish Highlanders and Islanders, or men from the fiords and fjelds of Norway, who manned the outlying forts. Norway House was originally occupied by a contingent of Norwegians, and it was in compliment to them that the title was given to the fort.

We cannot dwell on the long canoe journey of 1500 miles to the northern lake, though it included perils in the rapids, an adventure with a black bear, and dangers on Lake Winnipeg itself, which got its name from the Indians because of its great size, and the sudden storms which burst upon it and raise its waves to the height of ocean billows.

On reaching his destination, Mr. Evans was received with great kindness by the officials of the Company, and was soon plunged into the kind of work he delighted in. For here were Indians from far and near. Those of the district around the fort were called Swampy Crees, and were a splendid class of men both in physique and intelligence. But in addition to these there came to Norway House large bands of hunters from the warlike tribes of the

Rocky Mountains, men who had come down the Saskatchewan in their canoes for more than 1200 miles. And here too were Indians of a more peaceful blood from the Mackenzie and Peace Rivers in the distant north. All came on the same errand. They brought for sale the skins and furs of bears and beavers, otters and ermines, black and silver foxes, and many other animals. And in exchange they carried back English goods which had come across the Atlantic and through the ice-packs of Hudson Straits and Hudson Bay, and, after being landed at York Factory, had been brought up-country for many hundreds of miles with infinite toil by canoe and dog-train.

Evans turned his attention in the first place to the Indians of Lake Winnipeg itself. Their minds were full of superstitions. They believed in a *Kissa-Manetoo* or Good God, but also and still more strongly in a *Muche-Manetoo* or Evil Spirit, whose power was thought to be the greater of the two. They listened eagerly to the good news which the white preacher brought to their wigwams of a divine love which conquers all evil, and a Father in heaven

to whom every one of His children, whether whiteskin or redskin, is equally dear.

It was more difficult, however, for the *Ayumeaookemow*, or "praying-master," as Evans was called, to get them not only to believe in the divine love, but to give up their own hatreds and cruelties and other wicked ways. There was one chief named Maskepetoon, a man of magnificent stature and strength, who liked Mr. Evans greatly, but said that this new religion was only fit for old women. "I will never be a Christian," he cried, "so long as there is a scalp to take or a horse to steal from the Blackfeet." He was a man of such an ungovernable temper that he scalped one of his own wives in a fit of displeasure. And yet this same man by and by met the murderer of his son on the prairie, and riding up to him, tomahawk in hand, said: "By all the laws of the Indian tribes you deserve to die; but I have learned that if we expect the Great Spirit to forgive us, we must forgive our enemies, and therefore I forgive you."

But Evans not only taught the Indians religious truth, he taught them to work—a very

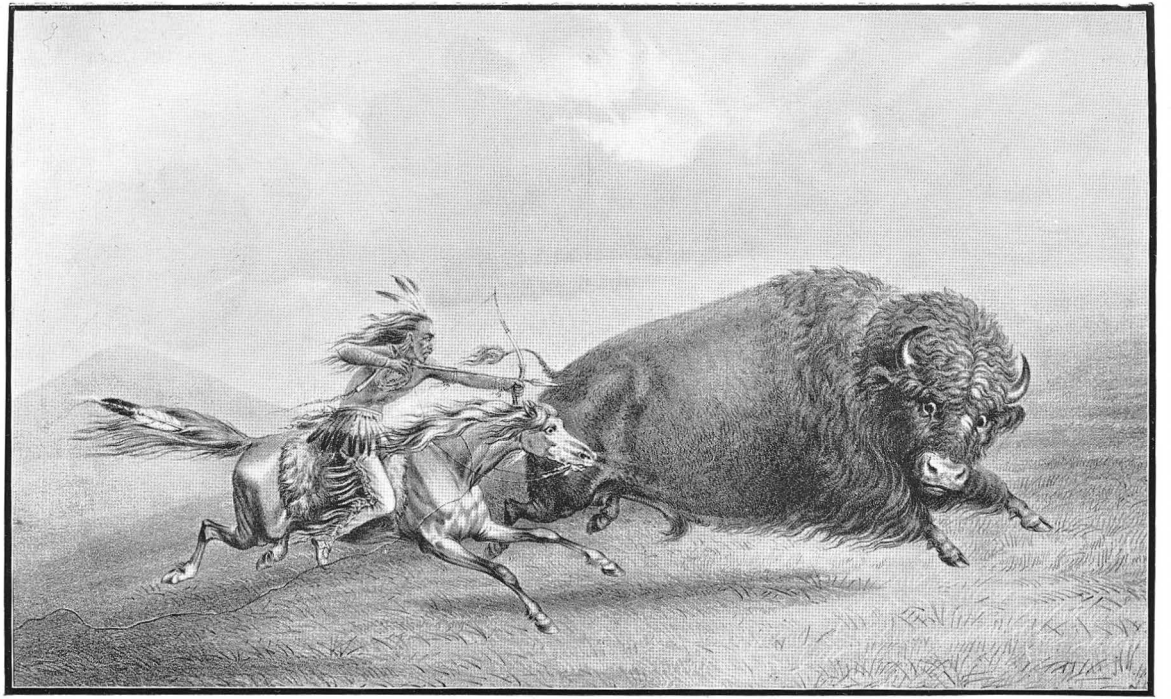
necessary lesson. No doubt there were times when work seemed quite superfluous, for deer abounded in the forest and multitudes of buffaloes browsed on the prairie. There were seasons, however, when game was scarce, and times when the Indians perished by the score for lack of some other means of subsistence. Hitherto they had thought it a degradation for a hunter to engage in any kind of manual toil. But Evans introduced new ideas. He won their respect by his own skill as a shot, and then by his example induced them to till the fruitful soil and build themselves comfortable houses. By the shores of the Lake, and not far from Norway House, there sprang up the neat Indian village of Rossville, with its houses and gardens and school and church, which is still one of the largest and finest Indian missions in North America. Those who have read Mr. R. M. Ballantyne's *Hudson Bay* will remember his humorous and yet sympathetic account of an Indian school festival at Rossville, of which Mr. Evans was the presiding genius, and at which the famous writer of boy's story-books was himself present, when he was a

young clerk in the service of the Hudson Bay Company.

And now Mr. Evans began to turn his attention to those far-off tribes which had their settlements along the foothills of the Rocky Mountains or the banks of the Mackenzie River. Now began those great expeditions by waterway or dog-trail which surpassed in extent even the historic journeys of the Apostle Paul, for Evans would undertake a circuit of five thousand or six thousand miles in a single season. It is these immense journeys through the unknown wilderness that provide the most romantic elements in the story of his life. It was by them that he became known among the Red Indians through all the regions of the North-West not only, like other Christian preachers, as the *Ayumeaookemow*, or "praying-master," but as the *Keche Ayumeaookemow*, the "great praying-master." At one time we find him in his canoe toiling upstream, or darting down the swift rapids with a thrill of dangerous delight to which the artificial joys of the modern water-chute cannot be compared for a moment. Again he is camping out on those rolling plains

of the Far West which are now the most fruitful corn-fields in the world, but were then the special preserves of the buffalo. Sometimes, as he lay down at night, the roaring of the bulls in the immediate neighbourhood would be so loud and incessant that it was impossible to fall asleep. And often, as he closed his eyes, he knew that if the herd should be seized with a sudden panic and stampede in the direction of his little camp, nothing could save him and his companions from being trampled to death.

But it is his winter journeys by dog-train over the frozen snow that strike us most with a sense of adventure and romance. His favourite team of dogs was famous all over the land. They were hybrids—half dogs, half wolves, possessed of such strength that they could do their eighty or ninety miles a day, dragging a load of three hundred pounds or more. In harness they are easily controlled, and yet they were so fierce that they had always to be chained up at night; while through the summer, when sledging was over for the season, they were carefully shut up in a high stockade. Their savage disposition brought about their



A Red Indian pursuing a Bison

death. One morning an old chief who had come to look for Mr. Evans opened the gate of the stockade-yard, thinking he might be inside. In a moment the wolf-dogs sprang upon him and mangled him to death before they could be beaten off. For this crime, of course, they were immediately shot.

Let us take one or two glimpses of a tour in the depths of winter. The sledge which glides so swiftly over the snow is shaped like a boy's toboggan, but is eight or ten feet long, about eighteen inches broad, and is drawn by a team of four powerful dogs. On a long journey two or three of these sledges are necessary, for a plentiful supply of provisions must be carried, as well as bedding and camp utensils.

As the train sweeps forward there is often not a landmark to be seen—nothing from horizon to horizon but a vast unbroken sheet of snow. But the Indian guide pushes on with confidence, led by an instinct which never fails him and is almost as mysterious as that by which the swallows flying south find their way across the trackless sea.

Camping in the Snow

After a long day's drive through an air which is trying enough at 40, 50, or even 60 degrees below zero, though infinitely worse when accompanied by a wind sufficiently strong to raise the fine, powdery snow into a blinding, choking blizzard, both men and dogs are thankful when camping time comes with its prospect of rest and warmth and food. The camp is nothing more than a square hole in the deep snow, scooped out with snowshoes which have to serve as shovels. On three sides the snow is banked up, while on the fourth a huge fire is kindled with logs cut from the forest. The kettles are then filled with snow, and as soon as the snow is melted, a goodly junk of frozen buffalo or bear or beaver is popped into the largest kettle to be boiled. Meanwhile the dogs are being fed, mostly with frozen fish, which has first to be thawed before the fire; and if the night is unusually cold they are allowed to get on their dog-shoes, which are not unlike a boy's socks. For the privilege of getting on their shoes they often beg by howling piteously.

Supper is never luxurious, and is always

taken under difficulties. When the cold is 50 degrees below zero, meat taken out of the boiling kettle freezes so fast that it has sometimes to be thrust back into the water two or three times in the course of a meal. The tea is flavoured with milk which is quite sweet, though it may be several months old, and is presented not in a milk-jug but in a bag, from which pieces of it are broken off with a hatchet as required. There is no lingering over the tea-cups, or rather the pans that do service in the wilderness for those symbols of civilization; and that for the very good reason that if the tea is not quickly drunk, it cannot be drunk at all, having already become solid.

After evening prayers and the evening song, there comes the process of going, or rather being put, to bed. An Indian has a knack of rolling himself up securely in a warm rug of rabbit skins, but a white man is the better for being tucked in. Mr. Evans's Indians always attended to this duty most carefully. They spread blankets and rugs over him, and tucked in his head as well as his shoulders and feet,

leaving not the least chink for the entrance of the outer air at any point. Under such treatment Mr. Evans felt at first as if he were being suffocated, but he soon learned to adjust himself to the necessary conditions of safety. For there is a real danger to the sleeper in neglecting these precautions. Mr. Egerton Young tells of one restless traveller who could not lie still in his camp bed, and so shook his face free from the protecting blankets. Wakening by and by, he put his hand up and felt what he took to be the icy handle of an axe. It turned out to be his own frozen nose.

Sometimes in the night a snowstorm would come on, and the travellers would waken in the morning to find themselves completely buried ; but to those properly wrapped up the dry snow did little harm. It was more discomposing when the wolves, as often happened, gathered in a grim circle round the camp fire and kept up their blood-curdling howl through all the hours of darkness. Then it was necessary that a watch should be kept, and that the watcher should rise every now and then and pile on a fresh supply of logs, for there is no

SHOEING THE DOGS

Dog shoes are long mittens without the thumb. They are fastened to the leg by a piece of deerskin. They are put on when a dog hurts its foot on rough sharp ice or in any other way. The dogs like wearing them, especially in cold weather, when they will lie down on their backs and howl and whine to have them put on.

better protection against a pack of wolves than the glow of a blazing fire.

On a long march Mr. Evans frequently slept during the day and travelled through the night. The reason for this was that the intense white glare of the snow, with the sunshine reflected from it, was apt to bring on a distressing complaint of the eyes called snow blindness. At night there was no similar risk. Besides, to a lover of nature there was a peculiar charm about the winter nights, especially in the sub-Arctic zone. Those northern nights were nearly always beautiful, whether the moon was flooding the world with a soft radiance, or the frosty stars sparkled like diamonds through an atmosphere of absolute purity, or the aurora flashed and blazed, sending its mysterious ribbons of coloured light pulsing up to the very zenith and filling even those who had seen it times without number with a sense of awe in the presence of a glory so unearthly.

But from these romantic wanderings of the "Apostle of the North" we must pass to notice another feature of his varied activities and another great item in the debt owed

him by the Red Indians of British North America. He was not only an intrepid and indefatigable traveller, but a remarkable linguist and a man also of real inventive genius. A matter which troubled him greatly was the difficulty of teaching the Indians to read in the ordinary way. He brooded for years over the problem of inventing a simpler and easier path than that of the alphabet and the spelling-book, and at last hit upon the plan which is known as the Cree Syllabic System. Taking the Cree language as his model, he found that it contained only thirty-six principal sounds, and by devising thirty-six simple characters to represent these sounds, he made it possible for any Cree Indian who learned to identify the characters to read at once without further difficulty. No spelling was necessary, only the pronunciation of the sound that corresponded to the character.

The result was that in a very few days old and young alike were able to read. But next came the difficulty of supplying them with books. Evans had no materials for printing and no experience in work of this kind. But he

begged from the traders at Norway House the thin sheets of lead with which their tea-chests were lined. Then, having carved out models of his syllabic characters and made casts of them in clay, he melted the lead and poured it into the moulds; and so, after many failures, obtained a sufficient supply of type. Printing-ink he manufactured out of soot mixed with sturgeon oil. Paper he could neither get nor make, but he found that sheets of birch bark would serve his purpose very well. Finally, in lieu of a printing-press he begged the loan of a jack screw used for packing bales of furs, and with no better equipment than this, turned out the first books which his Indian flock had ever seen.

The excitement produced by these printed sheets of bark was immense, for it seemed to the people nothing less than magic that birch bark could "talk," and something still more wonderful that it could bring them a message from the Great Spirit Himself. The result was that thousands, young and old, became readers of God's Word. And when the Society in England realized the value of Mr. Evans's

invention, he was furnished with a properly equipped printing-press, from which, year by year, there came a steady supply of Bibles and Testaments in the native tongue.

"The syllabic characters," says Mr. Egerton Young, "are still in use. The British and Foreign Bible Society now furnish all these Northern missions with Bibles and Testaments free of cost. Hundreds of Indians are reading out of them every day of the year. Missionaries to other tribes have utilized these syllabics for other languages by adding additional signs for sounds not found among the Crees. Methodists, Episcopalians, Moravians, Roman Catholics, and others use these syllabics of James Evans, and find them of incalculable value."

As illustrating both the remarkable character of the hero of this chapter and the kind of influence he exerted even over Indians who remained heathen, a tragic incident in his history is worthy of notice.

One day he was out in a canoe shooting ducks, along with a young Indian named Hassel, who had become a Christian. By

some accident which he never understood his gun went off. The full charge entered the head of poor Hassel, who fell back dead into the canoe.

Mr. Evans's grief was terrible. The Indian was a Chippewayan, and all his people were heathen. As such they retained their superstitious beliefs and cruel customs, and held in particular that blood must be given for blood and life for life. But his sorrow and sense of responsibility for his companion's death made him feel that he must surrender himself to Hassel's relatives, even though, as he well knew, it might result in his being put to death himself. Accordingly he wound up all his personal affairs, made arrangements for the management of the Mission, and after a trying scene of farewell to his wife and daughter, set out all alone for the distant part of the country in which the Chippeways lived.

Reaching the encampment of the tribe, he asked for the wigwam of Hassel's father. When it was pointed out to him he entered, and sitting down on the ground told his sad story, tears of sorrow meanwhile trickling down

his face. At once the tent was full of excitement. Grasping their tomahawks and drawing their knives, the men of the family cried out for the blood of this paleface who had slain their kinsman. But there was one person in the tent who had already resolved that the paleface should live. This was no other than Hassel's old mother herself. She had been stricken with anguish when she heard of her son's death, but she had watched the stranger's countenance, and listened to the tones of his voice as he told his story, and she knew by the instincts of love and of grief that Evans was the true friend of her boy, and that his sorrow for what had happened was not less sincere than her own. And so when the avengers of blood were about to spring upon him as he sat unresisting on the ground, she ran forward and, putting both her hands on his head, said firmly :—

"He shall not die. There was no evil in his heart. He loved my son. He shall live, and shall be my son in the place of the one who is not among the living."

And so the Christian missionary was actually

adopted, after the Indian custom, into the tribe and family of these heathen Chippeways. For a time he remained in the wigwam with his new father and mother. And after he returned to his own family and work he still regarded himself as their son, given them in place of the son he had shot. He knew that Hassel, after becoming a Christian, had been very thoughtful of his parents, and had sent them a present from time to time. And though himself a poor man at the best, he made a point to the end of his life of sending regularly to his foster-parents what he regarded as their rightful share of his own yearly income.

LITERATURE.—*The Apostle of the North: Rev. James Evans*, by Egerton R. Young (London: Marshall Brothers); *Hudson Bay*, by R. M. Ballantyne (Thomas Nelson and Sons).

IN THE LAND OF THE DAKOTAS

CHAPTER III

IN THE LAND OF THE DAKOTAS

Hiawatha—Stephen and Mary Riggs—The Sioux Indians—Indian *teepees*—"Eagle Help"—The scalping-party—A sad experience—The return of the bison—The Indian rising—A dreadful flight—The Dakota prisoners—Preaching in the prisoners' camp—A transformation on the prairies.

THE title of the present chapter will remind those who have read Longfellow's *Hiawatha* of one of the most frequently recurring lines in that poem of melodious repetitions—repetitions which are intended to suggest the steady "rushing of great rivers," and the waterfall's monotonous music—

> In the land of the Dacotahs,
> Where the Falls of Minnehaha
> Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,
> Laugh and leap into the valley.

But Longfellow's picture of the Dakotas and their country, though beautiful as poetry, is very misleading as to the realities of life among the uncivilized Indians of the Western

States. He deliberately put their cruelty and squalor out of his mind, and set himself to weave their legends and traditions into a song of pure romance. The tale we have to tell in the following pages may justly claim to be a story of romance. It takes us to the land of Hiawatha and Minnehaha, the land of lakes and prairies and primeval forests, where "the curling smoke of wigwams" is seen rising through the trees. But it is in the first place a story of sheer reality. The merely imaginative side of the romance quite disappears, in the presence of Indian life as it was actually lived in the land of the Dakotas little more than half a century ago; and the true romance is seen to lie in the heroism and self-sacrifice of the young American missionary and his wife, who went out to the Far West in connexion with the American Board of Foreign Missions to spend their days in the midst of those fierce savages. Their life was one of constant toil, of frequent alarms, of hope long deferred. But they had the courage of faith, and also its quiet patience. And one of them at least was spared to see a transform-

ation among the Dakotas which went beyond anything for which they had looked.

It was in the year 1837 that the Rev. Stephen Riggs and his wife Mary left their home in the Eastern States and started westwards to begin work among the Sioux, the leading branch of the great Dakota family of Red Indians. Their first destination was Fort Snelling, a lonely military outpost at the junction of the Minnesota River with the Mississippi, not far from the laughing Falls of Minnehaha, and on the very site of the future city of Minneapolis. It is strange to think that less than seventy years ago the spot which is now the centre of the commercial life of the North-Western States was then an outpost in the wilderness, more difficult of access than most places in Central Africa are to-day. The greater part of the journey of 3000 miles they were able to make by water—first down the Ohio River and then up the Mississippi. But so slow was travelling at that time, especially on the Upper Mississippi, that it was not till three months after leaving Massachusetts that they reached Fort Snelling.

Indian Teepees

Not far from the Fort there was a Mission station, soon afterwards to be broken up by a furious and bloody war between the Sioux on the one side and the Ojjibeways and Chippeways on the other. Here the Riggses stayed for a few months to learn a little of the Dakotas and their language, and then set out with a waggon across the prairies towards a lake known as Lac-qui-parle, "The Speaking Lake," which lay some 200 miles farther to the west and near the border-line between the present States of Minnesota and Dakota. For thirteen days they pushed steadily towards the setting sun, and at length reached the lake with the mysterious name, suggestive of the presence of some haunting spirit. There they joined another pioneer missionary, Dr. Williamson, and had a room assigned them in a log cabin which he had built in the midst of the *teepees* or wigwams of the Sioux nation.

Their first task was to seek the acquaintance of the inmates of those *teepees* which were scattered along the shores of Lac-qui-parle. Approaching a Dakota village of that time, one saw a number of conical tents made of

buffalo skins, with smoke issuing from holes left at the top. Lifting the little door of skin, the only shelter of the inmates against a temperature which in winter often sank to twenty degrees below zero, the visitor found himself in a cold, smoky lodge about twelve feet in diameter, where, besides a dirty lounging warrior with his pipe, there might be "a mother and her child, a blanket or two, a skin, a kettle, and possibly a sack of corn."

The Indians did not give the white men any welcome. On the contrary, they regarded them as intruders into their country, from whom it was legitimate to steal everything they could lay their hands on. They resented, too, any attempts to interfere with their ancestral habits, and especially with their deadly feuds and murderous attacks upon the Indians of other tribes. There was a notable chief called "Eagle Help," a war prophet and war leader among the Dakotas, a man of unusual intelligence, and the very first of all the Sioux nation who learned from Mr. Riggs to read and write his own language. But when the lust of battle came upon him, as it

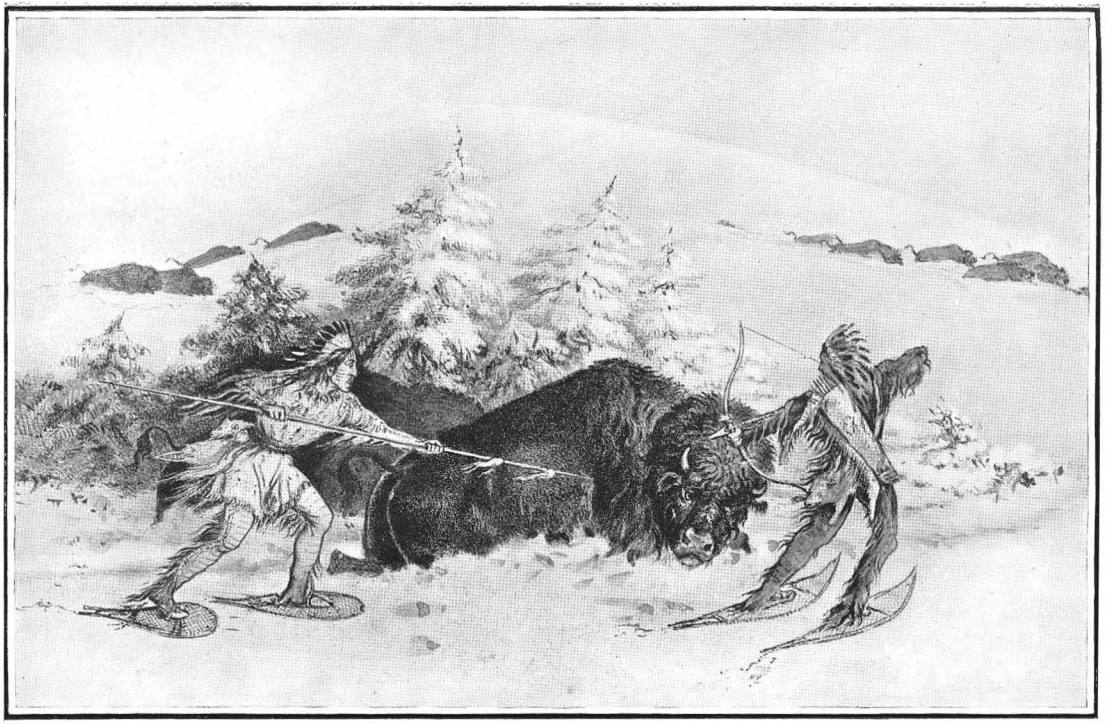
periodically did, he was the most bloodthirsty of savages. Once when he was about to lead out a war-party against the Ojjibeways for the purpose of slaying and scalping the men and carrying off the women as captives, Mr. Riggs argued with him in vain, and finally said that if the Sioux went on the war-trail he would pray that they might not be successful. This so offended the chief that just before starting he and his men killed and ate two cows that belonged to the Mission. And when they returned from their expedition, after a long tramp during which they had not fallen in with a single Ojjibeway, he attributed this failure entirely to the white man's charms, and held himself justified accordingly in killing and eating another cow which still remained.

After spending five years at Lac-qui-parle in hard and unpromising labour, Mr. Riggs decided to push out still farther into the wilderness, and so removed to a district called Traverse des Sioux, where no missionary had ever been before. But if his experiences at Lac-qui-parle had been trying, those which he

now had to encounter were tenfold worse. Accompanied by his wife's brother, a fine young man of twenty-two, by whom they had been joined, he went on in advance and pitched his tent among the Traverse Indians. Many of them objected to his coming, and even tried to drive him away by threats. But his mind was made up to stay, and with the help of his companion he began to cut and haul logs to build a little cabin. The Indians did not interfere with this; but as soon as the two men had felled their logs and painfully dragged them to the spot where they proposed to build, they came down in force demanding payment for the wood taken from the forest, and Mr. Riggs was obliged to give up some of his scanty stock of provisions.

Before the cabin was finished Mrs. Riggs and the children arrived, and their arrival was marked by an incident which left a deep and painful impression on the lady's mind. She was attended by three young Dakota Indians who had become Christians. Some distance from Traverse the road crossed the Chippewa River, and at this point, as one of the three

Indians, whose Christian name was Simon, was riding on ahead of the little company, a war-party of Ojjibeways suddenly emerged from the forest, carrying two fresh and bleeding scalps. They came up to Simon and flourished their trophies in his face, but did him no harm, probably because they saw that he was in the company of white people, and vanished across the river as suddenly as they had appeared. Two miles farther on the road, Mrs. Riggs and her escort met a band of maddened Dakotas in wild pursuit of the Ojjibeways. They told Simon that one of the two scalps he had just seen was that of his own brother; and when they learned that the Ojjibeways were now beyond their reach, they turned their fury on Mrs. Riggs and her three Indian companions for not having tried to kill or stop the scalping-party. Brandishing their muskets in the air, they clustered with savage faces and angry cries round the waggon in which the lonely white woman sat with a child in her arms. Finally, they shot one of the two horses that composed the team, so that she had to get out and walk the rest of the way in the heat of the



RED INDIANS HUNTING BUFFALO IN WINTER TIME

broiling sun, carrying her little girl in her arms. This was Mrs. Riggs' introduction to Traverse des Sioux, and it was only one of various similar episodes which helped to turn her dark hair prematurely grey.

A few days after, her brother was drowned while bathing in the swift river which flowed in front of the cabin. He was a youth of a joyful Christian spirit, and all that morning, while hard at work on the unfinished house, had been singing again and again a couplet from a simple but very appropriate hymn—

> Our cabin is small and coarse our fare,
> But love has spread our banquet here.

By and by he went down to the stream and plunged in for a swim before dinner, but took cramp, and was carried away by the current and drowned. And now in the midst of her weeping for the dead brother, Mrs. Riggs had to take his place in the task of finishing the loghouse, working with her husband at the other end of the cross-cut saw, because there was no one else who could be got to do it.

It was a sad beginning to life in the new

sphere, the forerunner, too, of many another hard experience, but the devoted pair never lost heart. The Dakotas killed their cows and horses, stole their goods, and sometimes threatened their lives. But they worked patiently on, doing their best to live down enmity and opposition. Gradually they made friends with one and another through the power of kindness, but found it difficult to get even the most friendly to become Christians. A redskin might acknowledge that Christianity was true, but the Christian commandments were too much for him. He could not give up his killing and stealing and polygamy. Or if he promised to live a Christian life and actually made a start upon the straight path, a visit to some white trader's settlement where whisky was to be had was enough to turn him into an incarnate devil once again, ready for the worst of his old evil ways, and using vile and insulting language even to the white lady who had done so much for his own women and children.

At length, after several years had been spent at Traverse, the departure of Dr. Williamson

to another station made it necessary in the general interests of the Mission to the Dakotas that the Riggses should return to Lac-qui-parle.

Their trials and hardships, however, did not cease with the change. The Indians robbed them as before, though sometimes, it must be confessed, the thieves had the excuse that they and their children were almost starving. Fortunately this excuse for stealing was taken away not long after their return. For several years the vast herds of bison, on which the Indians chiefly depended for their subsistence, had migrated farther and farther to the west, seeming to justify the complaint of the Dakotas that a curse fell upon their country with the coming of the white man's foot. But now the bison came back again, and all around Lac-qui-parle the hunters might be seen armed with bow and arrow and riding forth over the prairie to shoot down the noble game. For two years the Dakotas revelled in fresh buffalo meat, and were content to leave the white man's horse and cow alone. The children playing around the *teepees* grew sleek and fat.

The very dogs got plump, and peace and contentment reigned on every hand.

But by and by the buffaloes began to move westwards again—a circumstance which the Dakotas might very well have attributed to their own deadly arrows rather than to the white man's foot. The redskin thieves resumed their work in the dark nights; and of all the forms of theft which they practised none was more trying than the spoliation of the gardens of the palefaces. It was hard to sow and plant, to weed and water, and after weeks of toil and months of watching to rise some morning and find that a clean sweep had been made of all the fruits and vegetables during the night. It almost seemed an allegory of what had been going on for years in the larger sphere of missionary labour. "We have sown our seed in toil and tears," Mr. Riggs and his wife said to each other, "but where is the fruit?" And yet it was just when the hope of much fruit was almost disappearing that fruit came most abundantly, though not in any anticipated way.

In the autumn of 1862 a body of 4000 Dakota

The Indian Rising

Indians had gathered at an agency called Yellow Medicine to receive certain annuities from the Government to which they were entitled. But through some mismanagement at head-quarters (not greatly to be wondered at, seeing that the tremendous struggle with the Southern States was absorbing all the energies of President Lincoln's administration at that very time) the annuity money had not come, and the agent could not say when it would arrive. He wished the Indians in the meantime to disperse again to their homes. But as their homes in many cases lay at a distance of a week's journey or more, they refused to go back, and they also demanded that while they were kept waiting they should be fed. By and by they grew unmanageable, and began to attack the stores and help themselves to provisions. Resistance being offered, they became violent, and several white men were killed. As soon as word of this outbreak reached the nearest fort, an officer of the United States Army hurried off with fifty men, hoping to quell the rising. But the Indians met this little company with alacrity, and easily defeated

it. Half of the soldiers were killed, and the rest had difficulty in making good their escape. This victory over the regulars set the prairie on fire. All over the land of the Dakotas the red men rose against the whites.

Fortunately for the missionaries, the Indians who knew them best proved friendly towards them at this crisis, and did what they could to shelter them from the storm of savagery which had burst over the country. The Riggses were smuggled stealthily to an island in the Minnesota River, where for a time they lay concealed. But their situation there was too precarious, and flight to the east was decided on. A terrible flight it was, especially for the women and children. The nearest place of safety was the town of Henderson, far down the Minnesota. They had to make their way cautiously, often in the dead of night, through the long grass of the trackless prairie, grass that was heavy and sodden with water, for it rained incessantly for nearly a week. Starvation stared the fugitives in the face again and again, but they found food more than once in cabins which had been hurriedly deserted by white

settlers, and once, coming upon a cow left in a stable, they did not hesitate to kill it and cook themselves a hearty meal. All the time, by day and by night, there lay heavy upon their hearts the horror of the Red Indian pursuer with his tomahawk and scalping knife. But they reached Henderson safely at last, where they were received by the inhabitants as persons alive from the dead. "Why, we thought you were all dead!" was the first greeting they received. And they found that a telegram had come from Philadelphia saying, "Get the bodies at any cost."

The Sioux rebels were defeated at last in a pitched battle, and 400 of them were taken prisoners. When brought before a military commission, 300 of these were found guilty of having deliberately taken up arms against the U.S. Government, and were sentenced to death. President Lincoln, however, who had the right of reviewing the findings of the commission, leaned towards clemency, and gave instructions that in the meantime only those should be executed who were proved to have taken part in individual murders or in outrages

upon white women. These special crimes were brought home to thirty-eight of the prisoners, and an arrangement was made by which they were all hanged simultaneously in full view of the camp by the cutting of a single rope.

Through the crevices in the walls of their log prison-house the rest of the captives saw their comrades hanged. And the sight produced a profound impression upon them, an impression not only of fear, but in many cases of guilt. Mr. Riggs and Dr. Williamson, who had been present in the camp as interpreters from the first at the request of the commanding officer, found their time fully occupied in dealing with the prisoners, who listened to their message of the love of God and salvation through Christ for the sinful as no Indians had ever listened to them before. Formerly, even in church on the Lord's Day, the Dakotas had heard the most earnest preaching with an air of stolid indifference. They would never rise to their feet at any part of the service, and they continued smoking all the time. Now their whole demeanour was

changed. And as the days passed, a wonderful wave of conversion passed through the camp, in which there were now gathered, in addition to the prisoners, some 1500 other Dakotas who were anxious about the fate of their friends. It was not long till 300 adult Indians in that camp made public profession of their faith in Christ, and were baptized into the communion of the Church. Eventually the prisoners were pardoned by the President and allowed to return to their homes. But the work begun by the missionaries under such strange circumstances at the close of the war still went on, and resulted in the Christianization of the greater part of the Dakotas.

A few years after the Sioux war was over brave Mary Riggs passed away, worn out by labours and sorrows. Her husband, however, was spared to see his name become an honoured one in America, and not only among the friends of Christian missions, but in academic circles as well. For this bold pioneer of the Church militant had also the instincts of an original scholar. Through all his years of

frontier toil and peril, often with no better study than a room which served at the time for kitchen, bedroom, and nursery, and no better desk than the lid of the meal-barrel, he had carried on laborious researches into the language of the Indians, which resulted at last in his *Dakota Grammar* and *Dakota Dictionary*, and brought him the well-deserved degrees of D.D. and LL.D. But his highest honours were written not in the records of Universities, but in the changed lives of the Dakota people. In his old age, looking back over forty years of service, he could trace a wonderful contrast between *then* and *now*. In 1837, when he came to the Far West, he was surrounded by the whole Sioux nation in a state of ignorance and barbarism. In 1877 the majority of the Sioux had become both civilized and Christianized. Then in the gloaming his young wife and he had seen the dusky forms of Indian warriors flitting past on their way to deeds of blood. Now the same race was represented not only by sincere believers, but by native pastors in the churches and native teachers in the schools. And on the same prairies where

the war-whoop of the savage had once been the most familiar sound, the voice of praise and prayer might be heard to rise with each returning Day of Rest from Indian cabins as well as Indian sanctuaries.

The story told in this chapter is drawn from Mr. Riggs' book, *Mary and I: Forty Years with the Sioux* (Chicago: W. G. Holmes).

IN THE FOREST OF GUIANA

CHAPTER IV

IN THE FOREST OF GUIANA

The Caribbean Islands—The Waraoons of the Orinoco—Kingsley's *At Last*—The tribes of Guiana—Rivers and *itabbos*—In the high woods—Swamps and forest bridges—Alligator and anaconda—The spotted jaguar—Humming-birds and fireflies, marabuntas and mosquitoes—The house in the palm tree—Legends and sorcerers—Cannibal mounds—A spiritual romance.

FOUR hundred years ago, when the beautiful West Indian Islands were first discovered by the white men, they were inhabited by various native races of which the most powerful were the Caribs, a fierce and cannibal people. The original home of the Caribs, according to all their own traditions, was on the mainland of South America, in the dense forests which stretch along the lower reaches of the great river Orinoco. From the wide mouths of that river they had issued from time to time in their war canoes and swept like a storm cloud on the nearer islands of the West Indian Archipelago, killing and devouring the gentle and peaceful Arawaks and Waraoons

who were in possession before them. In *Robinson Crusoe* we have the most vivid description in English literature of those cruel Caribs of long ago. For though Alexander Selkirk served as the prototype of Defoe's immortal story, and Juan Fernandez in the South Pacific was the island in which that Scottish buccaneer was marooned for several years, it is really one of the West Indian Islands, perhaps Tobago, that Defoe takes as the stage of Crusoe's exploits and experiences. The incident of the footprint on the sand, as well as the decidedly tropical vegetation of the island, is undoubtedly adopted from West Indian sources. And the cannibal scenes which are described with so much realism are probably derived from the writings of the early voyagers, who told of the inhuman habits of that savage Indian race which gave its name to the fair waters of the Caribbean Sea.

From the Caribbean Islands the old Indian races, both the conquering and the conquered, have now almost entirely disappeared. To find a pure-blooded representative of those primitive people whom Columbus and the

other early discoverers found there at the close of the fifteenth century, we have to go to the forests of the South American mainland, to which the broken relics of the aboriginal West Indian peoples—Caribs, Arawaks, Waraoons, and the rest—were long since driven by the tyranny of the Spaniard. Within the recollection of the present writer, Waraoons of the Orinoco used still to come paddling once a year across the blue Gulf of Paria on a visit to the old home of their fathers in Trinidad—the nearest of all the West Indies to the South American Continent. He can remember, as a boy, going down with his father to the wharf at San Fernando to see these Waraoons arriving —statuesque, sad-looking savages, absolutely naked, who brought with them for barter articles of their own manufacture—hammocks of great strength such as they swung to the trees in their forest homes, baskets ornamented with stained porcupine quills skilfully woven into the framework, mats similarly embellished with "jumbie-beads"[1] and other wild seeds, red, black, or brown.

[1] Why "jumbie-beads" are so called by the Trinidad children who

Kingsley's "At Last"

In his *At Last: A Christmas in the West Indies*, Kingsley gives a beautiful description of the annual visit of the Waraoons to Trinidad, although he had not the opportunity of seeing this curious sight for himself :—

"Once a year, till of late—I know not whether the sight may be seen still—a strange phantom used to appear at San Fernando. Canoes of Indians came mysteriously across the Gulf of Paria from the vast swamps of the Orinoco; and the naked folk landed and went up through the town, after the Naparima ladies (so runs the tale) had sent down to the shore garments for the women, which were worn only through the streets, and laid by again as soon as they entered the forest. Silent, modest, dejected, the gentle savages used to vanish into the woods by paths made by their kinsfolk centuries ago—paths which run, wherever possible, along the vantage-ground of the topmost chines and ridges of the hills. The smoke of their fires rose out of lonely glens as they col-

play with them the writer is unable to say. A "jumbie" is a spirit or ghost. Thus on every negro's grave a plant called the "jumbie-bush" used to be planted, presumably to keep ghosts from rising.

lected the fruit of trees known only to themselves. In a few weeks their wild harvest was over, and they came back through San Fernando! made, almost in silence, their little purchases in the town, and paddled away across the Gulf towards the unknown wildernesses from whence they came."

In the forest of Guiana the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has long carried on a most interesting work among the Caribs, Arawaks, Waraoons, and other Indian tribes which still represent those island aborigines around whom gathers so much of the romance and tragedy of early West Indian history. None of the Society's agents has been more diligent or successful than the Rev. Mr. Brett, whose *Mission Work in Guiana* is a standard book on the subject of the Indian races of Venezuela and British Guiana. We shall follow Mr. Brett as he tells us something of his canoe voyages on the rivers and *itabbos* of the Essequibo district, of his tramps through the tropical forest and swamps, of dangers from pumas and jaguars by land and alligators and *camudis* by water, of the ways and thoughts of

the Indian folk, and the power of religious truth to deliver them from the tyranny of immemorial superstitions and make them good Christians as well as law-abiding British subjects.

It is more than sixty years since Mr. Brett began his labours among the Indians of Guiana, and his task was beset in those early days by many serious difficulties. One was the wild character of the people, and their hostility, the hostility especially of their sorcerers, to the teachers of a new religion. Mr Youd, a predecessor of Mr. Brett's, had received a gift of poisoned food from one of those sorcerers, with the result that he and his whole family were poisoned. His wife and children all died, and though he himself lingered on for a few years, it was in shattered health ; while he too eventually succumbed to the fatal influences in his blood.

Another difficulty was caused by language, for in penetrating into the country the traveller, as he leaves the coasts and plunges into the forest, passes rapidly from one tribe to another all speaking different tongues. Nearest to the sea are the Waraoons and the Arawaks,

farther inland are the Caribs, beyond these are the migratory Acawoios, who do not live in villages, but wander through the woods with their deadly blow-pipes, by means of which they bring down from the highest trees the birds, monkeys, and other animals that they use for food. Mr. Brett found it necessary to learn four Indian languages, none of which had ever before been reduced to a written form. And not only did he master them for himself, but prepared grammars and vocabularies which made the task of his successors infinitely easier, and also translated into all of them large parts of the New Testament.

Not the least of the difficulties was that of travelling in such a country. It involved laborious and often dangerous canoe voyages, and weary tramps through dense forests which at certain seasons were converted into dismal swamps. But Mr. Brett had the true enthusiasm and pluck of the pioneer missionary, and seems to have considered the hardships that fell to his lot as all "in the day's work."

Guiana is a land of many rivers, and this makes canoeing the chief method of travelling,

especially as the forests themselves become inundated after the rains, and it is then possible to cross from river to river by means of passages called *itabbos*. In this way, for example, an Indian crew can paddle across country from the Essequibo to the mouth of the Orinoco, a distance of two or three hundred miles.

It is not all plain sailing, however, in a voyage of this kind. Every few minutes the Indians have to use their cutlasses to lop away the network of interlacing branches and creepers which the prodigal growth of the tropics weaves so quickly from side to side of the narrow waterway. Sometimes again the passage is blocked by a great fallen tree, and then the missionary must lie down in the bottom of the canoe while his boatmen try to thrust it underneath the barrier. This has to be done as quietly and swiftly as possible, for fear of disturbing any venomous snake which may have taken up its abode in a hollow of the decaying trunk.

But canoeing was not always feasible, and then would begin the tramp through the forests —those mysterious and awesome "high woods

of the tropics" of which Kingsley writes with such enthusiasm. To the inexperienced traveller in this wilderness of rank vegetation majestically confused there sometimes comes the fear of being lost, for he feels his own helplessness as to direction, and knows that but for the instinct of his Indian guides he would soon go utterly astray. He is bewildered, too, by the multiplicity of strange sounds. Parrots are screeching, monkeys are chattering, *cigales* are piping on a high note which suggests a shrill steam-whistle, insects innumerable are chirping and whirring; while at times, perhaps, there comes a noise like a muffled crash of thunder, which tells that some ancient giant of the woods has fallen at last.

The forests of Guiana are full of swamps, and when Mr. Brett came to these there was nothing for it but to take off his shoes and socks, sling them round his neck, and wade on through mud and slime. Repeated soakings often made his feet swell so badly that it was hardly possible to pinch them into shoes again, and he found it easier simply to go barefooted like an Indian. But this also had its dis-

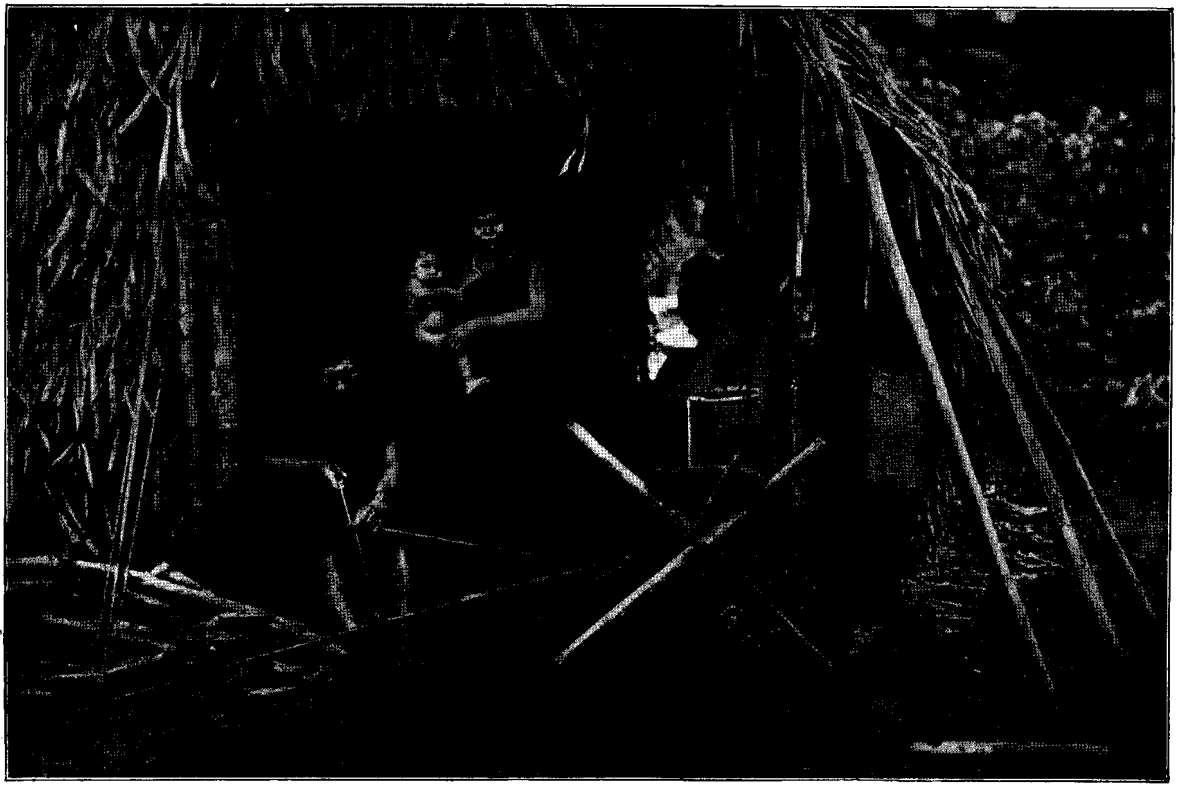
advantages, for alternate wading through marshes and walking with bare feet over the burning sandy soil brought on painful blains which, unless great care was taken, would pass into ulcers. Sometimes the swamps were so deep that they could not be waded, and the only means of crossing was by trees cut down and thrown across. These primitive forest bridges, which are also used for crossing the smaller streams and ravines, are often of considerable length. Mr. Brett tells of one which he measured, the trunk of a mora tree, which was 108 feet long from the place where the trunk was cut to the point at which the lowest branches began to spring. The Indians are quite expert at walking on these slippery pathways, but to a European with his boots on they present a formidable task. Mr. Brett's Indian companions were sometimes quite anxious about him, and on one occasion exhorted him to "hold on with his feet," forgetting that toes encased, as his were, in a good thick sole are of no use for prehensile purposes.

Apart from the malarial fevers to which in those low-lying tropical regions a European is

constantly liable, the chief dangers encountered by Mr. Brett in his journeys into the interior came from the wild animals which swarm in Guiana, both on land and water. There are alligators of various sorts which, as amphibious creatures, are dangerous on both elements. Mr. Brett tells of one which made its nest in his own churchyard, and rushed savagely one evening at an assembly of mourners gathered round a grave, just after he had finished reading the burial service, scattering them in all directions. But not less dreaded than the alligator is the great anaconda, or *camudi*, as the Indian calls it, a species of water-boa which swims like an eel, and grows to the length of thirty feet. In the water the *camudi* is more than a match for the alligator itself, and has been known even to attack persons who were inside a canoe. One Sunday morning an exciting fight took place in mid-stream between a *camudi* and an alligator, exactly in front of a chapel on the bank of the river Pomeroon in which Mr. Brett was conducting divine service. At the news of the fight his congregation deserted him to a man, and even he could not

resist the temptation to follow them as speedily as possible to the scene of action. The battle went on desperately for a long time, but at last the *camudi* succeeded in getting that deadly grip with its tail which gives it full purchase for its gigantic strength, and then it drew its coils tighter and tighter round the body of its formidable antagonist until the life of the alligator seemed to be completely squeezed out. At this point one of the onlookers, who had a gun and was a good marksman, fired and killed the *camudi*, which sank to the bottom. The alligator drifted ashore by and by, with its ribs crushed in, and in a dying condition, when it too was dispatched.

Besides the labaria, a very deadly snake which lurks among bushes or in the holes of old trees, the traveller through the forests has always to be on his guard against the puma and the jaguar. The puma is a formidable beast, but the great spotted jaguar is the tiger of South America, and is not much inferior in size or ferocity to the tiger of the Indian jungle. It is very destructive of goats, sheep, and cattle; and Mr. Brett tells us that he has often



MAKING POISONED ARROWS IN THE GUIANAS

MAKING POISONED ARROWS IN THE GUIANAS

seen its footmarks in the morning on the moist ground all round a house—showing how it had been prowling about through the night in search of prey. The jaguar does not hesitate on occasions to attack men, and within Mr Brett's own knowledge several persons lost their lives in this way, being both killed and devoured. Its habit of concealing itself in a tree and making its deadly spring from that coign of vantage upon any animal that passes underneath renders great caution necessary in going along the forest ways. It has a wholesome dread of the rifle, however, and the march of civilization is driving it farther and farther into the recesses of the woods.

But there are smaller creatures of the tropics for which civilization and the rifle have no terrors. There are myriads of butterflies, of course, which flutter past on wings of crimson and gold; darting humming-birds, with ruby or emerald breasts gleaming in the sunlight; fireflies which come out at dusk, and flit to and fro with their soft twinkling lights in the warm night air that is heavy with the breath of flowers. If the tiny creatures of the tropic

woods were all like these, the traveller might fancy himself in a kind of Earthly Paradise. But what of the marabuntas—which Trinidad boys used to call "marrow-bones," from some idea that the stings of these fierce wasps, which are fond of building their clay nests in the corners of the white man's verandah, would penetrate to that region of the juvenile anatomy? What of scorpions, centipedes, tarantulas, blood-sucking bats, *bêtes rouges*, chigoes, or "jiggers," and biting ants, whether black, white, or red? Worst of all, what of the ubiquitous, irrepressible, unconquerable mosquito which sometimes almost drives its victims mad, and whose victories over man, its mortal foe, deserve to be sung in the notes of its own musical humming and written with the blood of its helpless victims in some epic of the jungle? Mr. Brett does not exaggerate in the least when he reckons insect and other small annoyances among the most serious trials of missionary life in the inland districts of British Guiana. What sensitive white-skinned people have suffered from mosquitoes alone may be judged from this. At the season when the

mosquitoes were at their worst, Mr. Brett's Indian crew, after a long and hard day's pull up the river, would sometimes paddle through the night for many a weary mile to the river's mouth and out to the open sea, in the hope of escaping for two or three hours from the stings of these excruciating pests.

Of the Indian tribes described by Mr. Brett, the Waraoons are in some respects the most interesting, precisely because they are the most primitive. When Sir Walter Raleigh was passing through the channels of the Orinoco delta in search of his imaginary El Dorado, he and his men were astonished to see fires burning high up in the air under the leafy crowns of palm trees. These were the hearth fires of the Orinoco Waraoons, who become tree-dwellers for several months of the year when the country is turned into a vast sheet of muddy water. Building a platform far up the stem of a palm tree, under the shelter of its overarching fronds, they plaster a part of this platform with clay to serve as a hearth, and sit smoking contentedly in their airy habitations, except at such times as they feel disposed to

slip down into a canoe so as to visit a friend in a neighbouring tree or go out fishing with a view to supper.

The Waraoons of Guiana are not tree-dwellers, for the floods on their rivers are not so severe as to make this necessary. But they are just as simple and unsophisticated as their brethren of the Orinoco. Except when Europeans come into their neighbourhood and set up a standard and a rule of social decency, both men and women go absolutely naked. They are gentle and unwarlike, even as their forefathers were three or four centuries ago when the Caribs swept down upon them and drove them into the swamps. While skilful in their own arts of canoe hollowing and hammock weaving, they are extremely easy-going in their way of life, and combine a good-natured disposition with a vein of humour which is somewhat rare among the Indian peoples. Like all other Indians, they have a genuine belief in the Great Spirit, and they have many legends of their own about Him and His dealings with men. The account they give of their origin is striking—though with a

touch of the grotesque humour which characterizes them. The Waraoons, they say, originally dwelt in a country above the sky. The arrow of a bold hunter, falling by chance through a hole, revealed to this hunter the existence of the lower world. Making a rope of cotton, he descended by it to the earth, and when he climbed up again brought such a glowing report of the game that swarmed in earthly forests that the whole race was tempted to come sliding down the cotton rope out of the Paradise above. The last to make the attempt was a woman, and she, being fat, stuck in the hole and could neither squeeze herself through nor yet struggle back again. There she remains to this day; and that is the reason why the human race cannot even peep through the hole in the sky into the world above. A curious version, we may think, of the story of Paradise Lost, and an equally curious version of woman's responsibility for the absolute closing of the gates of Eden.

Among all the Indian tribes of Guiana *piai* men, or sorcerers, are the priests of religion. The *piai* man corresponds to the "medicine

man" of the North American Indians and the "obeah man" of Africa. No one dares to oppose him in anything, for he is an expert in poisons, and his enemies have a way of dying suddenly. In sickness, the most implicit confidence is placed in his powers, which to some extent are medicinal no doubt, for he generally has a real acquaintance with the healing virtues of the plants of the forest, but to a much greater degree are supposed to be supernatural. His special function is to drive away the evil spirit that has taken possession of the sick man. This he does by rattling a hollow calabash containing some fragments of rock crystal —an instrument of magical efficacy and the peculiar symbol of the *piai* man's office, by chanting a round of monotonous incantations, and by fumigating the patient plentifully with tobacco smoke, the incense of this "Indian weed" being firmly believed to exert a potent if mysterious influence.

It was naturally from these *piai* men that the strongest resistance came to the introduction of Christianity among the Indians of Guiana. One of them, as has been mentioned already,

poisoned an English missionary and his family; and Mr. Brett himself was frequently warned that the sorcerers were going to *piai* him also. Instead of this a strange thing happened. Saccibarra ("Beautiful Hair"), the chief of the Arawaks and their leading sorcerer, became disgusted with the tricks and hypocrisies of his profession, broke his *marakka* or magical calabash rattle, and came to Mr. Brett's hut, asking to be taught about "the Great Our Father, Who dwelleth in heaven." By and by he was baptized, receiving, instead of his heathen name, the Christian name of Cornelius. Cornelius the Arawak was a man of great intelligence, and it was with the aid of this converted Indian and his family that Mr. Brett was able to carry through his first efforts at translation. Still better things ensued, for five other sorcerers followed the example of Cornelius, gave up their *marakkas* to Mr. Brett in token that they had renounced the practice of magic, and became faithful and useful members of the Christian Church. Evangelists arose among the Indians themselves. Chapels sprang up here and there in the depths of the forest—two

of them, as was accidentally discovered at a later stage, having been built on ancient cannibal mounds. Struck by the appearance of these mounds, Mr. Brett was led to undertake a little excavation ; and his researches speedily proved that the very spots where the House of God now stood and Christ's Gospel was preached from Sunday to Sunday had once been the kitchen middens of large cannibal villages. There, heaped together, were the skulls and other bones of human beings slaughtered long ago, these skulls and bones being invariably cracked and split in a way which showed that the hungry cannibals in their horrible feasts had eaten the very brains and marrow of their victims.

We speak of the romance of missions ; and even from the most external point of view they are often full of the romance that belongs to all heroism and adventure. But to those who look deeper the spiritual romance is the most wonderful—the transformation of character and life, the turning of a savage into a Christian. In the Pomeroon district of Guiana, the centre of Mr.

Brett's labours, more than five thousand persons have been brought into the Church through baptism. As for the moral and spiritual effect of his patient and heroic exertions, we may cite the testimony of the Pomeroon civil magistrate, who at first did not encourage Christian work among the Indians:—

"A more disorderly people than the Arawaks," he wrote, "could not be found in any part of Guiana. Murders and violent cases of assault were of frequent occurrence. Now the case is reversed. No outrages of any description ever happen. They attend regularly divine service, their children are educated, they themselves dress neatly, are lawfully married, and as a body there are no people in point of general good conduct to surpass them. This change, which has caused peace and contentment to prevail, was brought about solely by missionary labour."

The chief authority for this chapter is Mr. Brett's *Mission Work in Guiana* (London, S.P.C.K.). Reference has also been made, however, for some points to *Ten Years of Mission Life in British Guiana*, by the Rev. W. T. Veners (S.P.C.K.), and *Protestant Missions in South America*, by Canon F. P. L. Josa and others (New York, Student Volunteer Movement).

THE SAILOR MISSIONARY OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO

CHAPTER V

THE SAILOR MISSIONARY OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO

"The Neglected Continent"—The despised Fuegian—Darwin's testimony—Captain Allen Gardiner—South American Missionary Society—A sly Patagonian—An exploring expedition—The final enterprise—At Banner Cove—How the tragedy came about—The *cache* in the rocks—Spaniard Harbour—The end—Search and discovery—The diary—Victory through death.

IF from the point of view of Christian evangelization South America has justly been called "The Neglected Continent," there is no part of it to which until modern times the description more fitly applied than that southern portion of the mainland called Patagonia, together with the large archipelago of closely huddled islands which projects still farther towards the Antarctic Ocean, and is known by the rather inappropriate name of Tierra del Fuego, or "Land of Fire."[1]

[1] The name was given to the group by Magellan, who discovered the islands in 1520. It is supposed to have been suggested to him either by volcanic flames which are now extinct, or by the numerous fires kindled by natives which he saw along the coast.

The Despised Fuegian

The inaccessibility and desolation of the whole region, and the ferocious and almost inhuman character of the tribes encountered by vessels passing through the Straits of Magellan, which divide Fuegia from the mainland, for long made any thoughts of carrying the Christian Gospel to this part of the heathen world seem absolutely visionary. The Fuegians in particular were looked upon as degraded almost beyond the hope of recovery. Travellers dwelt on their stunted figures, their repulsive faces, their low grade of intelligence, their apparent lack of natural affection, as shown by the readiness of parents to throw their children overboard in a storm in order to lighten a canoe, or of children to eat their own parents when they had grown old and useless. Darwin, the most careful of observers, spent some time in the Magellan Straits in the course of his famous voyage in the *Beagle*, and he records the conviction that "in this extreme part of South America man exists in a lower state of improvement than in any other part of the world." "Viewing such men," he says on another page of his *Journal*, "one can hardly

make oneself believe that they are fellow-creatures and inhabitants of the same world." Of their speech he writes: "The language of these people, according to our notions, scarcely deserves to be called articulate. Captain Cook has compared it to a man clearing his throat, but certainly no European ever cleared his throat with so many hoarse, guttural, and clicking sounds."

And yet, through the enterprise begun and inspired by that heroic man of whom we have now to tell, the almost unpronounceable sounds of the Fuegian speech have been reduced to writing and made to convey the story of the Gospels, while the Fuegians themselves have been changed from murderous cannibals and thieves into peaceful, honest, and industrious members of a Christian community. When Darwin learned, on the unimpeachable authority of a British admiral, of the extraordinary difference which a few years had made in the habits of these people, whom he had once been inclined to regard as possibly furnishing a missing link between the monkey and the man, he confessed his astonishment. "I could not

have believed," he wrote, "that all the missionaries in the world could ever have made the Fuegians honest," and he went on to speak of this transformation as one of the wonders of history. More than this. Though not by any means a professing Christian, nor an advocate in general of Christian missions, he became from that time a regular subscriber to the funds of the society with whose founder we are at present concerned—"about as emphatic an answer to the detractors of missions," the *Spectator* once remarked, "as can well be imagined."

Allen Gardiner was an ex-captain of the British Navy. As a midshipman he had distinguished himself during a fierce engagement in 1814 between his ship, the *Phœbe*, and an American man-of-war, in which the British vessel was victorious; and he had risen step by step to the position of commander. When about forty years of age, however, he determined to abandon his chosen profession and devote the rest of his life to work among the heathen, by whose wretched condition he had been deeply impressed as a Christian man in

the course of his many voyages in all parts of the world.

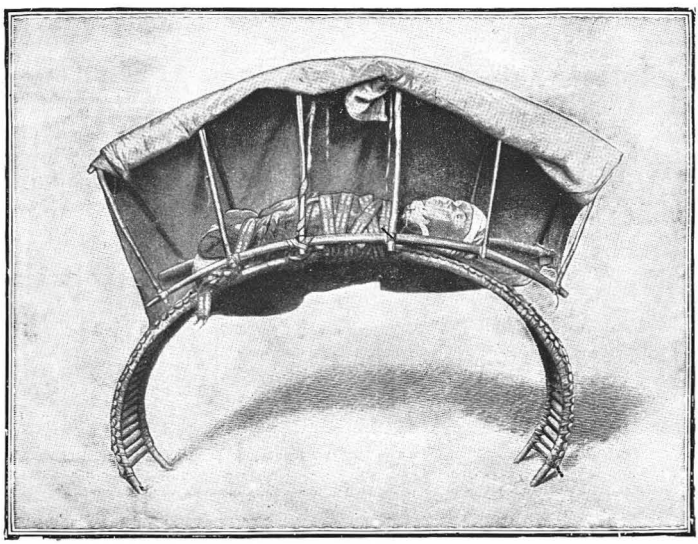
He turned first of all to South Africa, and had some interesting experiences among the subjects of Dingaan, the redoubtable Zulu chief. But war broke out between the Zulus and the Boers, and he was forced to leave the country. Several years thereafter were spent in the search for a suitable field of operations among the most neglected peoples of the world. We find him for a time on the coast of New Guinea, where, if he had not been thwarted by the Dutch officials, who had not the slightest sympathy with his aims, and declared that he might as well try to instruct monkeys as the natives of Papua, he might have largely anticipated the splendid work which was afterwards accomplished by the heroic "Tamate."

But it was in the Western, not in the Eastern, Hemisphere that the great work of his life was to lie, and it was towards South America in particular that his steps were now guided. He was not drawn, however, in the first instance towards the Straits of Magellan, but to the

brave Araucanian tribes of the Pampas and the Cordilleras. Two or three years were spent in toilsome and dangerous journeys through bristling forests and swampy jungles, and over wellnigh impassable mountains, where precipices yawned on one hand, while on the other avalanches of snow or rock threatened to hurl the traveller to destruction. But though he met with many kindnesses from the natives, he found wherever he went that the Romish friars and priests poisoned the minds of the ignorant people against him and prevented him from being allowed to settle down among them. And so he had to go forth again in search of his proper sphere.

It was at this stage that he began to think of that dreary and desolate region in the neighbourhood of Cape Horn, which as a sailor he had more than once visited, and with which in the history of modern missions his name will for ever be associated. How to get there was his first difficulty, and it was a difficulty which only an experienced and skilful seaman could have overcome. He chartered a crazy

TYPES OF PATAGONIAN WOMEN



A NATIVE CRADLE IN PATAGONIA

old schooner, the owners of which regarded her as no longer fit to go to sea, and though still further hampered by a drunken and troublesome crew, succeeded in reaching the Straits of Magellan in March, 1842. He had provided himself with a few stores, and his plan was to settle on one or other of the islands and try to win the confidence of the inhabitants. How difficult this task would be he soon discovered. Wherever he landed, whether on the islands or on the Patagonian coast, the Indians showed themselves so unfriendly that he realized the impossibility of making any headway without some help and some more adequate equipment. He resolved accordingly to return to England without delay, and try to persuade one or other of the great missionary societies to take Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego under its care.

Unfortunately not one of the existing societies was in a position at that time to undertake any fresh responsibilities. But Gardiner, nothing daunted, next made his appeal to the Christian public, and succeeded at last in originating on a very humble scale what is now

known as the South American Missionary Society. He undertook to labour, as he had always done before, at his own expense, but the Society furnished him with an assistant in the shape of a catechist named Mr. Hunt.

Embarking in a brig called the *Rosalie*, which was to pass through the Magellan Straits, these two devoted men were landed with their stores about three months after on the south coast of Patagonia, and there left to their own devices. For a time they could see nothing of any natives, though they lighted fires in the hope of attracting notice. Meanwhile they set to work to build huts in which to shelter themselves; and shortly after they had completed this task received some troublesome visitors in the persons of a chief whose name was Wissale, his wives and children, and a party of followers. Wissale, who had picked up a few words of English from passing ships, combined unbounded greed with a good deal of slyness. He soon began to make matters exceedingly uncomfortable for the two Englishmen. His intention apparently was to force his company

upon them, especially at meal times, and compel them to put their scanty stores at his disposal. He came into the hut attended by his patriarchal family, and placing one child in Captain Gardiner's arms said, "This your son Hontechi"; while he handed another to Mr. Hunt with the remark, "Mitter Hunt, this your son Lux." From greed and impudence he gradually passed to threats of violence, and it was speedily evident to the two unfortunate philanthropists, not only that their provisions would soon be eaten up, but that in the mood of Wissale and his men their lives were hanging by a very slender thread. In this state of matters a passing ship bound for Valparaiso seemed to be providentially sent. Captain Gardiner felt that he had no alternative but to confess himself defeated, and once more to return to England.

The members of the Patagonian Society, as the South American Society was originally called, were much discouraged. The leader of their forlorn hope, however, never for a moment lost heart. "Hope deferred, not lost," is now the Society's motto: and the faith embodied

in these words was the faith by which Gardiner lived. In the meantime he volunteered to see whether anything could be done among the Indians of Bolivia, and flung himself into this new departure with characteristic energy, until one of those domestic revolutions which are so common in the history of South American republics drove him out of the country, and made him feel once again that Tierra del Fuego was his Macedonia which was calling to him for help.

On this occasion, having raised the necessary funds by his own exertions, he persuaded the Society to allow him to take out a party of four sailors and a ship's carpenter. He intended the expedition to be in a measure one of exploration, the special purpose being to see whether a suitable base of operations could not be secured, and what would be the best method of reaching the scattered tribes of the archipelago. Owing to his former connexion with the Navy he had some influence at headquarters, and by this means one of Her Majesty's ships, the *Clymene*, which was about to sail for Peru, was placed at his disposal.

Hostile Natives

The *Clymene* reached Magellan Straits at a time when a hurricane of wind was blowing, accompanied by violent storms of sleet and hail ; but after suffering severely from exposure to the inclement weather, Captain Gardiner was able to select a spot for his proposed station in a cove to which he gave the name of "Banner Cove" (with reference to Psalm LX. 4). The friendly warship, however, had not yet proceeded on her voyage when a band of natives came down on the little party encamped on the shore in so hostile and threatening an attitude that Gardiner felt that he must decide immediately whether it would be right to remain in this situation without any possible means of escape in the event of an attack. He had only a few hours in which to make up his mind, and the conclusion he came to was that he had no right to run the risk of sacrificing the lives of his five companions. He now began to realize that the only way in which he could hope to evangelize Fuegia was by having a vessel of his own, on board of which he might live when necessary, and be free at the same time to move about among the

islands. Accordingly, he re-embarked with his party on the *Clymene*, and continued his voyage to Peru, from which he made his way homeward *via* Panama and the West Indies.

Though his new idea filled him with fresh enthusiasm, his enthusiasm was not widely shared. At this we can hardly wonder. There are not many persons who possess a hero's indomitable courage together with the perseverance of Bruce's spider. Some of the Captain's best friends advised him to give the whole thing up. "Only with my life," was his reply. Finding so little prospect of help in England, he went over to Germany and tried to enlist the sympathies of the Moravian Brethren; but though deeply impressed by the man and his story, and very anxious to do what they could, they were obliged to abandon the thought of giving him any practical aid. He next visited Scotland, and laid his plans before the mission boards of the three great Presbyterian Churches, but none of them felt free to plunge into a new and difficult undertaking. At this juncture, just when the

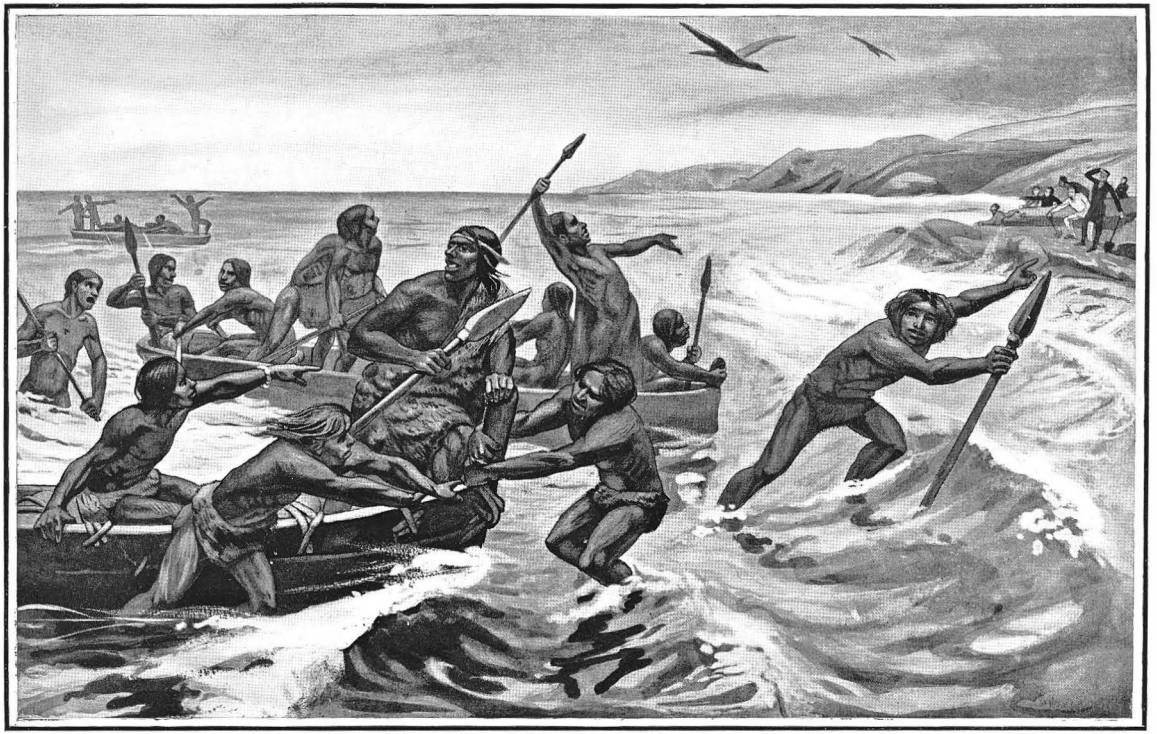
prospects were most unpromising, a lady in Cheltenham came forward with a munificent donation, while at the same time several exceedingly suitable offers of personal service were received by the Society. The result was that a party of seven was made up which included, besides Captain Gardiner himself, Mr. Williams, a surgeon; Mr. Maidment, a Sunday-school teacher; three Cornish fishermen, and the ship's carpenter who had taken part in the previous expedition. Further, in accordance with the leader's plans, two strong double-decked launches were provided, either of which could furnish sleeping accommodation for the whole party.

Having taken passage from Liverpool in the *Ocean Queen*, Captain Gardiner and his companions with their stores and boats were landed in Banner Cove on December 17th, 1850. Writing by the *Ocean Queen*, which left next day for California, Gardiner says, in the last letter which his friends in England were ever to receive: "Nothing can exceed the cheerful endurance and unanimity of the whole party. I feel that the Lord is with us,

and cannot doubt that He will own and bless the work which He has permitted us to begin."

From that point all communication with the outer world absolutely ceased. From the hour when they stood in their two launches, the *Pioneer* and the *Speedwell*, waving their last farewells to the departing ship, those seven brave men were never seen by friendly eyes in life again. It was in the awful loneliness and desolation of those barren islands and bleak southern seas that the tragedy was enacted of which we have now to tell.

When the party landed they were provided with necessaries for only half a year, the arrangement being that early in 1851 supplies for the other six months should be dispatched from England. Early in January the Society began to make enquiries about a vessel, but to their dismay not one could be got to undertake the commission. From every quarter to which they applied the answer came, "No vessel would risk her insurance by attempting to land so small a freight as your stores in such a place as Tierra del Fuego." Matters



CAPTAIN GARDINER IN PERIL

Several war canoes full of armed Fuegians approached, and it was evident that nothing but dread of guns kept them from attacking instantly.

were now growing very serious, for ocean telegraphs were still things of the future, and those were the slow days of sailing ships. Application was made to the Admiralty in the hope of getting the goods conveyed by one of their vessels. At the time, however, no Government ship was commissioned to that quarter of the world, and it was not till the last day of October, 1851, more than a year after the departure of the *Ocean Queen* from Liverpool, that H.M.S. *Dido* left Devonport with the belated stores on board. By that time Captain Gardiner and every member of his party had already been starved to death, and their unburied corpses were lying here and there along a wild and rocky shore.

But we must now return to Banner Cove and follow the story as it lies revealed in Gardiner's own diary. Having landed with some difficulty owing to a sudden gale which sprang up before the *Ocean Queen* was out of sight, the seven pioneers succeeded in making a *cache* among the rocks without being observed by the natives. Here they deposited a reserve stock of provisions, thinking it safer to do this

than to keep everything stored in the launches. Not long after the Fuegians made their appearance. Several war-canoes gathered in the bay, the men on board being all armed with spears, and it was clear from their demeanour that nothing but their dread of guns kept them from attacking instantly, and that they were only waiting for a suitable opportunity to make a sudden and overwhelming rush. The Captain accordingly resolved, though with great reluctance, to leave Banner Cove, and sailed to another inlet known as Spaniard Harbour. A few days after their arrival in that place, one of those violent hurricanes sprang up for which the region all around Cape Horn is so notorious. The boats were torn from their anchorage and dashed ashore. The stores and bedding were much damaged, but were secured and transferred to a damp cave. Here the whole party slept for two nights, with the result that every one of them was attacked by severe rheumatism. Meanwhile, the *Pioneer* had been driven high up on the beach in so disabled a condition as to be past repairing, and it was decided to let her

lie where she was and use her cabin as a sleeping-place.

Troubles now began to thicken. Scurvy broke out—a deadly disease for men in such a situation, and not long after provisions began to run short. Now and then a few fish were caught, or an occasional wild fowl was knocked over on the beach, but no reliance could be put upon these sources of support. An expedition was accordingly made in the *Speedwell* to Banner Cove, in the hope of securing the provisions left in the *cache*, but two casks of biscuits were all that could now be found, and these were hardly got when the natives again gathered in force and compelled a hasty retreat.

The remaining months were months of dreadful suffering. It had now become evident that food might utterly fail before any relief came. The outlook was dark indeed. Not only was starvation staring them in the face, but disease had laid its enervating hand upon every one of them. We can picture those weary men with each returning morning standing on the shore and scanning the horizon with anxious eyes,

"waiting for the ship that never came, while the waves beat monotonously on the beach and the sea-birds screamed ominously overhead." And yet they seem never to have lost their courage or their faith. When the hope of life was gone they waited patiently for death, and when it came at last met it with cheerful resignation.

And now something must be said of the search for Gardiner and its results. H.M.S. *Dido* was not the first vessel to reach Banner Cove. The schooner *John Davidson*, under Captain W. H. Smyley, which had been hastily commissioned for the purpose in a South American port, arrived there on 21 October, 1851. No one was to be seen, but on the rocks at the entrance to the cove the words were painted :—

"DIG BELOW
GO TO SPANIARD HARBOUR
MARCH 1851"

Digging they found a note written by Captain Gardiner in which he said, "The Indians being so hostile, we have gone to Spaniard Harbour." Following these

directions, Captain Smyley sailed to the place indicated, where, in his own words, he saw a sight that was "awful in the extreme." In a stranded boat on the beach a dead body was lying; not far off was another washed to pieces by the waves; while yet a third lay half-buried in a shallow grave. One of the three was the surgeon, Mr. Williams; the other two were fishermen. No traces of Captain Gardiner and the rest were to be seen, and a heavy gale which sprang up all at once made it impossible to linger. Captain Smyley and his men had barely time to bury the dead on the beach in the teeth of a blinding snowstorm, and, as it was, experienced great difficulty in getting back to the schooner. They sailed at once for Monte Video with their dreadful news.

Next came the *Dido* from England. She too was guided from Banner Cove to Spaniard Harbour by the notice on the rocks, and her commander, setting to work with the energy and thoroughness characteristic of a British naval officer, succeeded in clearing up all that remained of the painful mystery. The body of Mr. Maidment was found in a cave to which

direction was given by a hand painted on the rocks, with Psalm LXII. 5–8 painted underneath. The remains of Captain Gardiner himself were discovered by the side of a boat from which he seemed to have climbed out and been unable to get in again. For protection against the cold he had put on three suits of clothes and drawn woollen stockings over his arms above the other clothing. Below the waistcoat the seagulls had been at work, and had lessened the effects of corruption. His Bible was at hand, containing numberless underlined passages, many of which seemed to have been marked during the time of his suffering as peculiarly suited to his circumstances. Gardiner's journal was also found, carefully written up to the last, and giving many touching details of those dreadful months of starvation, disease, and slowly approaching death. Throughout all that period of anxiety and pain the strong faith of this heroic man appears to have burned like a lamp, while a spirit of affectionate brotherhood and quiet acceptance of the Divine will was displayed by every member of the doomed band. The Captain's

last words seem to have been written when death was very near, and when his mind had begun to wander a little. He addresses himself to Mr. Williams—apparently forgetful of the fact (which is proved by his own journal) that the surgeon was already gone. The note is in pencil, written very indistinctly, and obliterated here and there.

"My dear Mr. Williams,—The Lord has seen fit to call home another of our little company. Our dear departed brother left the boat on Tuesday afternoon, and has not since returned. Doubtless he is in the presence of the Redeemer, Whom he served faithfully. Yet a little while, and though . . . the Almighty to sing the praises . . . throne. I neither hunger nor thirst, though five days without food. . . . Maidment's kindness to me . . . heaven.

"Your affectionate brother in . . .

"Allen F. Gardiner.

"September 6th, 1851."

Captain Morshead, of the *Dido*, gathered the remains together and buried them close to

the cave in which the body of Mr. Maidment was found. The ship's flags hung at half-mast, one of the officers read the service for the dead, and three volleys of musketry were fired over the solitary grave.

Allen Gardiner's life is apt to strike us at first as one that was no less tragic in the fruitlessness of its great purpose than in the misery of its end. But it was not in vain that he strove, and, above all, it was not in vain that he and his brave comrades laid down their lives for Tierra del Fuego. The story of Captain Gardiner's death stirred England as he had never been able to stir her during his strenuous life. It gave a new impulse to the ideals which had led to the formation of the South American Missionary Society. It helped to bring about in due course, through the heroic labours of other noble men who took up the unfinished task, that complete transformation of the Fuegians to which reference was made in the beginning of this chapter. The people of Tierra del Fuego are no longer a degraded and cruel race, the terror of the sailor wrecked upon

their dreary coasts. In every part of the archipelago to which the message of the Gospel has penetrated they are a humane and civilized folk, ready to give a kindly Christian welcome to any poor shipless mariner who has struggled to their shores out of the devouring waves.

LITERATURE.—*Hope Deferred, not Lost*, by the Rev. G. P. Despard, B.A. (South American Missionary Society); *From Cape Horn to Panama*, by Robert Young, F.R.S.G.S. (Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, and Co.); *Captain Allen Gardiner: Sailor and Saint*, by Jesse Page (S. W. Partridge and Co.); *Journal of Researches during the Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle*, by Charles Darwin (John Murray).

THE SCHOONER OF KEPPEL ISLAND

CHAPTER VI

THE SCHOONER OF KEPPEL ISLAND

A problem and a plan—The schooner—The island—Captain Gardiner's son—Jemmy Button—A disastrous enterprise—The massacre—Adventures of the ship's cook—Holding the fort—The new expedition—Forgiveness, not vengeance—Life on Keppel Island—The graves of the martyrs—Bishop Stirling and Ushuaia.

NOT long before the death of the heroic sailor who forms the subject of the preceding chapter, he drew up a plan for the future prosecution of the work to which he had devoted his life. He had learned by painful familiarity the difficulties and dangers which beset any attempt to settle at that time among a savage and unfriendly people in a barren and inhospitable land. Experience had shown him that there was a better way of attacking the problem of how to reach the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego. And though he was not spared to make trial of that way himself, those who took up the task which death compelled

him to lay down reaped the benefit of his hard-earned wisdom.

His plan in brief was this. The head-quarters of the Mission should be transferred to one of the Falkland Islands, a lonely British group lying in the South Atlantic, some four or five hundred miles to the north-east of Cape Horn. To this station a few of the Fuegian natives should be taken in successive parties, so that the missionaries might have the double opportunity of acquiring their language and instructing them in Christian truth and the elements of a Christian civilization. As soon as sufficient progress had been made in both directions, a little vessel of about one hundred tons was to be built for the purpose of cruising about in the Straits of Magellan. It must be perfectly seaworthy, so as to face the fierce storms that rage around Cape Horn from the icy waters of the Antarctic Ocean. But it must also be fitted up internally in keeping with its character as a floating mission-house. In this way Captain Gardiner hoped that the problem which had baffled him so long would at last be solved.

The Schooner

When the news reached England of the dreadful calamity which had overtaken the founder of the South American Missionary Society and his whole party, the general feeling was that the brave seaman's hopes and plans were now buried with him for ever in his lonely grave. But it was not so. At a time when most of the supporters of the Society were crushed and dispirited, the honorary secretary, the Rev. G. P. Despard, uttered the noble words, "With God's help, the Mission shall be maintained." He aroused in many others a spirit of prayerful determination like his own, and before long Captain Gardiner's schemes began to be literally fulfilled. A stout little schooner, fitly called the *Allen Gardiner*, was launched at Dartmouth, and sailed from Bristol in 1855 with a fresh staff of missionaries. Keppel Island, one of the West Falklands, was secured from the British Government as a mission station. To crown the brightening prospects, Mr. Despard himself offered his services as superintendent of the Mission, and sailed for the Falklands with his own family and several

additional helpers. Among these, it is interesting to note, was Mr. Allen W. Gardiner, demy of Magdalen College, Oxford, the only son of the departed hero.

The first work that faced the missionaries, on reaching the dreary uninhabited island which was to be their home, was the building of houses, the digging of peat for winter fuel, and the endeavour to contribute to their own maintenance by catching fish and birds for food and spearing seals for oil. It was a toilsome life they had to live, but not without variety. Every morning the men turned out at 6.30 to dig in the peat moss till breakfast-time. Each following hour of the day brought its appointed tasks. But when evening fell they gathered round their seal-oil lamps to study those languages which seemed most likely to fit them for the greater work to which they eagerly looked forward.

The first voyage which Mr. Despard made to Tierra del Fuego in the *Allen Gardiner* was chiefly important because it enabled the members of the new staff to see among the wild rocks of Spaniard Harbour the last resting-

place of their seven predecessors. A pathetic feature of the cruise was the fact that Mr. Allen W. Gardiner was one of those on board. He kept a careful diary, some of the entries in which are particularly touching. Thus we find him, when the schooner is about to leave Spaniard Harbour, asking the captain for the gig and rowing himself ashore alone to take a last look, with what feelings we can imagine, at Pioneer Cavern and his father's grave.

There was comparatively little intercourse with the natives on this first expedition to the islands, but better success attended a voyage in the following year. There was a well-known native at that period who had once been taken to England by a ship-captain, and had picked up a little English which he was always pleased to air before the sailors of any passing vessel. He had also acquired an English name, for he called himself Jemmy Button; while the little island on which he lived, and which lay off Woollya in the large island of Navarin, was known as Button Island.

Abreast of Button Island

In the hope of coming across Jemmy Button, the *Allen Gardiner* bore up for Woollya. It was a regular winter morning when they arrived, "snow lying on the deck and drifting into the sails and rigging, the wind, fitful, howling, and gusty." Running for a cove abreast of Button Island, they found two canoes lying in shelter. One of the natives shouted out as the schooner approached, "Hillo, hoy, hoy!" which suggested that he might be the celebrated Button in person. But when the name "Jemmy Button" was shouted back, he only pointed to the island.

It was two days after, a lovely winter morning, with the sun shining brightly on the frosty ground and the high peaks of the mountains all dazzling white with snow, when four canoes were seen rounding the point of Button Island and coming across the sound. As soon as they were within hailing distance Mr. Gardiner sang out, "Jemmy Button," whereupon a man stood up in the foremost canoe and answered, "Yes, sir." In a few minutes Jemmy came up the ladder and shook hands, and was soon down in the cabin en-

joying a breakfast of bread and butter with coffee. He seemed very frank, and gave his own people a good character, but mentioned that an English ship had fallen shortly before into the hands of an adjoining tribe, by whom every one of the crew was killed.

As Jemmy's command of a little English promised to be useful with a view to intercourse, he was asked if he would like to come with his wife and children to Keppel Island for several months. He was perfectly willing to do so, perhaps thinking that a course of English breakfasts would be a pleasant change from an unvarying diet of fish and seaweed. His family and he were accordingly given a passage to Keppel, the history of which as a mission station may now be said properly to begin.

The Buttons made themselves both agreeable and useful during their stay. Mrs. Despard speaks of Jemmy's great politeness, and tells how for any little trifle she might give him he would go and pick her a beautiful bouquet of wild flowers, or spear her a basket of fish. His eldest child also, to whom he

had given the curious and unexplainable name of Threeboys, became a general favourite. But the family were of less service as instructors in the Fuegian language than had been expected. They did not like to speak their own tongue before the white strangers, and when they conversed with one another always did so in a whisper.

On his next voyage to Tierra del Fuego Mr. Despard took Jemmy Button, according to promise, back to the familiar life of the wigwam and the canoe. He had no difficulty, however, in persuading three other natives with their wives and children to return with him to the Falklands. These families stayed, as the Buttons had done, through the winter and spring, and delighted everyone by their progress. Two lads named Okokko and Lucca seemed to be especially promising. They not only learned with ease to do a little carpentry, but appeared to understand all that was told them about God and Christ, and even began to give thanks at their meals and to pray at their bedside.

Forming his judgment of the Fuegian char-

acter from what he had seen of the natives at Keppel during months of close observation, Mr. Despard believed that the ferocity of the people must have been overstated, and that they could not be so bloodthirsty as they were commonly represented. He thought therefore that the first steps should now be taken towards establishing a missionary station in Tierra del Fuego itself, and he resolved to make a start at Woollya, the neighbourhood from which all his visitors had come. The enterprise was put into the hands of Mr. Phillips, one of the most trusted of the staff, and the *Allen Gardiner* sailed from Keppel Island for Woollya in the month of October, 1859.

Week after week passed away, and there was no sign of the returning vessel. At length Mr. Despard grew so anxious that he made his way to Stanley, the chief port of the Falklands, and engaged Captain Smyley, of the schooner *Nancy*, to sail at once on a voyage of inquiry.

It was not long before Captain Smyley returned with news not less terrible than that which he had been the first to bring eight years before regarding the fate of Captain Gardiner

and his party. The natives at Woollya had massacred Mr. Phillips, Captain Fell of the *Allen Gardiner*, and six others. Of the whole company on board the schooner only one had escaped. From this man, who had been the ship's cook, the following narrative was obtained.

When the *Allen Gardiner* reached Woollya, the people appeared perfectly friendly, and for several days a good deal of intercourse went freely on between the vessel and the shore. Sunday coming round, a landing was made on the island with a view of conducting Christian worship in the presence of the natives, only the cook being left on board in charge.

For a time everything seemed to go well. But suddenly a concerted rush was made upon the white men and all were barbarously murdered. Not a hand or a voice was raised in their defence, though the cook saw the lad Okokko running up and down the beach in evident distress. We can imagine the feelings of that solitary watcher on the schooner's deck as he gazed with horror-stricken eyes on the dreadful scene which was enacted on the shore

a few hundred yards from where he stood. With a sense of absolute powerlessness to help them, he saw all his companions brutally done to death, and he knew that his own turn would come next unless he could make his escape before the savages, now drunk with blood, attacked the vessel.

Realizing that now or never was his chance, he slid down into a boat, and rowing with all haste to the shore, disappeared in the depths of the dense forest before his red-handed pursuers could overtake him. In these forest depths he hid for several days, till at length hunger and cold drove him out among the natives. By this time their passion for blood seemed to have been sated, and though he got rough treatment from some of them, others supplied him with food and showed him a little kindness until the arrival of the *Nancy* placed him once more in the midst of friends.

Meanwhile the *Allen Gardiner* had been completely ransacked and plundered, but not burned or otherwise destroyed, and Captain Smyley was able to convey her back to the Falkland Islands in safety. He brought along

with him the lad Okokko and his wife Camilenna, who were very earnest in their entreaties to be removed from their barbarous surroundings and taken back once more to their Christian friends at Keppel Island.

Thus, what may be called the first chapter in the strange romance of a missionary schooner closed in a scene of tragedy and blood. It was more than three years before the *Allen Gardiner* sailed to Tierra del Fuego again.

The next voyage of the schooner was to England, to which Mr. Despard now returned, leaving two missionaries to hold the fort in Keppel Island until better days should come. One of these was William Bartlett, who had charge of the Mission farm. The other was Mr. Bridges, Mr. Despard's adopted son, a young man of a very fine spirit and possessed of a rare faculty for language. To him more than to any other the missionaries owed their eventual mastery of the difficult Fuegian tongue—an acquirement which smoothed away many obstacles and misunderstandings. In the care of the Mission property, in the further instruction of Okokko and Camilenna, and in the task of learning

not only to speak Fuegian, but how to reduce it to a grammar, these two brave men whiled away the lonely months and years of waiting.

After two such crushing blows as had now fallen upon the South American Society within the space of eight years, it might almost be supposed that any idea of converting the Fuegians would be finally abandoned. But the patient heroism of the founder had become part of the Society's inheritance, and there was no slackening in the determination to go on. The story of some Missions is inspiring because of the vast and striking results which are achieved. There was no possibility of vast results among the scanty and dwindling tribes of a desolate archipelago. But this only makes us admire the more the undaunted courage and unfaltering perseverance of those who, in the face of one terrible disaster after another, still took for their motto, "With God's help the Mission shall be maintained."

With a view to increasing both her seaworthiness and her accommodation, the *Allen Gardiner* was now lengthened, and thereafter

this historic schooner sailed from Bristol once again, with a fresh missionary party, to resume her work in the icy Southern seas. The leader of the enterprise on this occasion was the well-known Mr. Stirling, who seven years afterwards was consecrated as the first Bishop of the Falkland Islands.

The plans of the Society as well as its schooner had now been enlarged. Its operations were about to be extended northwards along the South American coasts until they should reach from Cape Horn to Panama. Tierra del Fuego, however, still remained the special objective of the *Allen Gardiner*, and one of Mr. Stirling's earliest duties was to reopen that communication with the natives which had ceased after the massacre of 1859. He was greatly assisted in this task by both Mr. Bridges and Okokko, for the former had now become quite an expert in Fuegian, while the latter could speak English very well. As the schooner sailed about among the islands, the missionaries by means of these two highly competent interpreters made their friendly intentions everywhere known. At Woollya they

were received with some suspicion, for the people there, recognizing the vessel, thought not unnaturally that it had come back now on a mission of vengeance. But when persuaded that their crime had been forgiven, and that Mr. Stirling and his companions had no thoughts towards them but thoughts of peace, they became quite enthusiastic, and far more of them volunteered to come to Keppel Island than could possibly be accommodated there. The chief difficulty now was to select from among the applicants those who were most likely to be of use in furthering the aims of the Mission.

The change for the natives from Tierra del Fuego to the Falklands was, no doubt, great. At home their time was largely spent in paddling about in their frail canoes. They lived mainly on fish, which they speared with great dexterity, their only vegetable diet being seaweed from the rocks, or fungi, which grew plentifully on the rugged hills. One of the occasional excitements of existence came from the arrival of a shoal of whales. They did not venture to attack those monsters of the

deep in the open sounds, but they were frequently indebted to the fierce swordfish, which would so harass the clumsy creatures that they floundered into the shallows and got stranded; and then the hungry and watchful Indians had their chance.

At Keppel Island the Fuegians had to live a life that was much more civilized. They were expected to attend at Christian worship every day, and the younger members of the community were taught the elements of an ordinary education; but they were not asked to live after a fashion which would have been quite unnatural for them, as it was recognized that allowance and provision must be made for their hereditary instincts. And so, while they were trained to habits of industry in the Mission gardens and the peat valley, they still enjoyed the pleasures of spearing fish, as well as the novel and to them most exhilarating excitement of chasing the cattle, which were bred on the Mission farm, but allowed to run in a wild state over the island. It shows the deep-seated impulses of the natural man that even those who had stayed for a

period at the station, and had learned to appreciate the comforts of a settled life and the blessings of Christianity, were generally quite glad by and by to go back to their own people. Their minds were now uplifted and enlarged, but they still loved the old, familiar, adventurous canoe life among the creeks and sounds of the Magellan Straits.

Some time after the arrival of Mr. Stirling the growing confidence inspired by the missionaries received a striking illustration. On one of the cruises of the *Allen Gardiner* the natives of Woollya of their own accord pointed out the spot where they had laid the bodies of the eight men whom they had murdered in November, 1859. They had carefully carried them to a quiet place among the rocks and covered them with large stones to keep them from being eaten by the foxes; and here ever since in their rocky sepulchres they had been lying undisturbed. Two of the bodies—those of Mr. Phillips and Captain Fell—could still be identified quite unmistakably. All were reverently lifted and buried in a Christian grave, with the simple and beautiful rites of

the Church of England. The collect for St. Stephen's Day was most appropriately read, with its reference to the first Christian martyr and his prayer for those who murdered him. The schooner's flag meanwhile hung half-mast high, and at the close of the service two signal guns, booming across the water and echoing from rock to rock, announced to the company of Christian mourners and awestruck natives that all was over.

Year after year the *Allen Gardiner* continued to go forth on her blessed work, bringing successive batches of natives to Keppel, and taking them back again after a while to their wild homes to act the part of the leaven in the midst of the meal. And at last in 1869 a mission station was opened by Mr. Stirling in person at Ushuaia, some distance to the west of Spaniard Harbour, sacred to the memory of Captain Gardiner, and on the south coast of the main island of Tierra del Fuego. Here for seven months Mr. Stirling lived in a little hut, before which he often paced up and down as the shadows of evening were falling upon sea and mountain, feeling, he tells us, as if he

were "a sentinel stationed at the southernmost outpost of God's great army."

From this remotest outpost of the Church of Christ he was summoned suddenly to England to be consecrated Bishop of the Falkland Islands, with a diocese which included practically the whole of the South American continent. The work he had begun in Ushuaia was taken up by Mr. Bridges and others, and when Bishop Stirling next saw the place in 1872 it was a little Christian settlement that lay before him. Stirling House, the iron house of the Mission, occupied a conspicuous position, while around it were the wigwams and cultivated gardens of a native colony. A little chapel showed the consecration of the whole to God, and in that chapel on the Lord's Day the Bishop joined with Mr. Bridges—now an ordained clergyman—in administering the sacrament of Baptism to thirty-six Fuegians, adult and infant, and in joining seven couples in Christian marriage.

A genuine reformation in the Fuegian character had now begun. That for which, first, Captain Gardiner and his whole party, and at

a later date Mr. Phillips and Captain Fell, with six other gallant men, had laid down their lives was already in process of accomplishment. The brutal natives of the Archipelago were being transformed into the likeness of peaceable Christian men and women. The best, because the most disinterested proof of this, is found in a British Admiralty chart of 1871. In this chart the attention of mariners passing through the Straits of Magellan is directed to the existence of the mission station of Ushuaia; and they are assured that within a radius of thirty miles no shipwrecked crew need expect other than kindly treatment from any natives into whose hands they may fall.

For the foregoing narrative the author is indebted to *The Story of Commander Allen Gardiner, R.N.*, by the Rev. John W. Marsh, M.A., and the Rev. W. H. Stirling, D.D., Bishop of the Falkland Islands (James Nisbet and Co.), and also to Mr. Marsh's *First Fruits of the South American Mission*, which was kindly lent him by the Secretaries of the Society.

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