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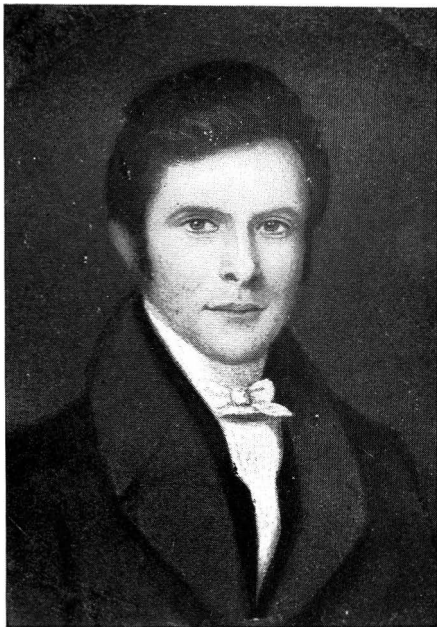
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The Library of Missionary Biography

EDITED BY
REV. JOHN TELFORD, B.A.

JOHN HUNT



Yours faithfully
A Hunt

JOHN HUNT

PIONEER MISSIONARY
AND SAINT

BY THE
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London

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P R E F A C E

I COUNT it a great honour to have been requested to write the life of John Hunt for the 'Library of Missionary Biography.' I entered into his labours, and was a debtor to him as a pioneer. I landed first on Viwa after leaving England in 1860, and went straight from the ship's boat to his grave. There under the palm-trees, on bended knees, I consecrated myself to carry on the work which he commenced with so much heroism and devotion. I used the textbooks in the college for training native pastors which he had prepared. The aromatic saintliness of his life fell like a benediction upon me. I was a better man, and more efficient as a missionary, for the influence of his life and the inspiration of his work. The object of this little book is not to praise the dead, but to prolong the memory, and thus extend the

usefulness, of a wise and good man, a great missionary, and a true saint. The inimitable *Life of John Hunt, Missionary to the Cannibals*, by the Rev. George Stringer Rowe, is a model biography. I have been greatly indebted to it; and also to Mr. Stampe of Grimsby, for the Journals and a few letters of John Hunt. In writing these pages I have been taken back again over familiar ground, and have renewed my fellowship with native colleagues who were trained for their work by John Hunt. I have marvelled, when looking at the wonderful success of these pioneer missionaries to Fiji, to find records in their early letters and journals about 'barren ground,' 'unfruitful labours,' and 'useless toil.' They went forth 'weeping, bearing precious seed.' Their doubts and fears soon yielded to hope and expectation, and they lived to reap in joy. Their success on comparatively small islands has inspired faith and brightened hope for final triumph on great continents, and the winning for Christ of the vast populations of India, Africa, and China.

JOSEPH NETTLETON.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. 'IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH' . . .	9
II. THE EARNEST STUDENT AND MIS- SIONARY-DESIGNATE	18
III. FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FIJI AND THE FIJIANS	26
IV. THE TRANSLATOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES	37
V. SOMOSOMO; OR, REASONABLE EXPEC- TATION DISAPPOINTED	45
VI. VIWA : REVIVALS AND NATIVE PASTORS	63
VII. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION	85
VIII. 'IN JOURNEYINGS OFT'	101
IX. EARLY AND TRIUMPHANT DEATH . .	114
X. TESTIMONIES TO CHARACTER AND USE- FULNESS.	118

JOHN HUNT

PIONEER MISSIONARY AND SAINT



CHAPTER I

' IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH '

ST. AUGUSTINE says, ' The Church owes St. Paul to the dying prayer of St. Stephen.' In giving his testimony in a lovefeast, King Thakombau attributed his conversion to Christianity to the dying prayers of John Hunt. He said, ' I was first favourably impressed towards the Christian religion when I saw it made dying not only easy, but triumphant. John Hunt's whole concern was about my conversion. His wife was soon to be a widow and his children fatherless in a land of savages. He could leave

them to the care of his heavenly Father. I barred the way to the spread of Christianity, and had forbidden the people, at the peril of life, to turn away from the gods of Fiji. My conversion would open the door to many who were waiting to throw off heathenism and to enter the Christian Church. He prayed for Fiji, and for me the chief of sinners. I went to see the body after his death, and Mr. Calvert told me he had left a message of love, and his last prayers were for my conversion. My salvation was the answer to those last prayers.' The conversion, consistent Christian life, and triumphant death of King Thakombau form one of the most wonderful instances of 'grace abounding to the chief of sinners' to be found in the history of the Christian Church.

The beginning of a better life and the foundation of every excellence and of all usefulness in the story of John Hunt must be traced to an early and clear conversion. A serious illness awakened thought and led to religious decision. He attended the Methodist chapel, where conviction was deepened, and he became an anxious inquirer. In the class-meeting he opened his

heart to the members, and asked for their guidance and prayers. He was in an atmosphere of sympathy. Some of the members went with him to Thorpe to hear the Rev. John Smith preach, a minister who had a passion for souls, and who was honoured of God in the conversion of many. The sermon, he says, ‘was plain, pointed, and powerful, and some parts of it were awful; but the effect on my mind was rather hardening than otherwise.’ He stayed to the prayer-meeting, but still seemed unmoved. The party of friends from Swinderby had set out homewards, but Hunt proposed to return again to the chapel. The preacher was praying by the side of a poor woman, ‘Send us more power.’ Hunt was moved to say ‘Amen.’ In a moment he was himself broken down, and prayed in an agony. Before he left the place he had found conscious salvation.

He was now seventeen, and had only the scant education which the village schools of that date provided. At ten years of age he was working on a farm, and beyond the Bible and the *Pilgrim's Progress* he had read only a few tracts and some copies of the

Methodist Magazine. Every reader has his first book that really interested and possessed him. Washington Irving's *Sketch Book* first interested Longfellow. He was spellbound by its pleasant humour. To the end of his life it had the same charm for him, but it awakened a desire to find the same interest in other books. A youth left at home with some little ailment, when the rest of the family had gone to worship, looked through the shelves for a suitable Sunday book. Finding Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*, which he thought must be a religious book, because it was about a vicar, he took it down and found it the most interesting Sunday book he had ever read. He was startled when told, on the return of his mother, that it was a novel, and must not be read on the Lord's Day. He replaced it on the shelf very reluctantly, but early on Monday morning he took it down again, and never let it go until he had read the whole of it. It was the book that led him to love reading, and opened a new and wider world to him.

John Hunt's first book was *Mason on Self-Knowledge*. The eyes of his understanding were opened by that book. He had new

aspirations and a thirst for knowledge which led him to improve his leisure hours, which were very few, in reading good books. His master's library was open to him. Reading opened out to him a new and a larger world. He not only added to his store of facts, but the process brightened his faculties and led him to think and reason. He was soon mentally alert and quick to catch the points and illustrations of the preachers he heard in the village chapel. He had been regarded as slow and dull in his work on the farm. The daily toil of the agricultural labourer is not regarded as skilled labour. Is there anything more monotonous than tramping behind the plough from one end of the field to the other the whole day long? It is dull and dreary work. The ploughboy ‘whistles as he goes, for *want* of thought.’ The expert workman on a farm, who can do anything in its season, is dying out. The men of experience in ploughing, sowing, ditching, fencing, reaping, thatching, threshing, and looking after horses and cattle and sheep, are less numerous in the villages than they once were.

The many-sided work of the farm was more intelligently done as Hunt's intellectual

powers were awakened. He could put thought as well as muscle into his daily task, and his master was astonished at the quantity and the quality of his work. The Bible was the golden milestone from which all his studies radiated ; but he diligently attended a night school, and often spent whole nights in reading and prayer. He had much lost time to make up, and he redeemed every spare moment. In the cattle-stall and the solitary pasture he was secretly meditating upon God and longing for the sacredness of a divine vocation.

The call came sooner than he expected. There was no preacher at Swinderby chapel on the Sunday night, and he was urged to give a short address. In fear, and with much dependence upon the prayers and sympathies of his village audience, he made the attempt. He spoke from a full heart, and all felt the power and pathos of the message. It rested upon them as a benediction all through the week. The conviction grew that the young man had grace and gifts for a local preacher, and that God would honour him with fruit.

In due course his name appeared upon the circuit plan. He sought the divine guidance

in earnest prayer, and all troubled doubts about his call to preach were removed. He was soon in great demand in the villages, and God honoured him with fruit to his ministry. He gave himself still more diligently to study, and Watson's *Institutes* were his theological textbook. His growth in grace, and the rapid improvement in the matter and manner of his preaching, surprised the Methodist people. He realized the peril of the unsaved, and he had a gospel of rescue. To him it was no theory, but a joyful experience. He had known the plague of his own heart. He had found forgiveness. As a saved man he proclaimed the saving power of the gospel with a force and freshness that arrested attention and carried conviction to his hearers.

He was a persuasive preacher, and wise to win souls. Lincolnshire has been the training-ground of many successful preachers. The people soon discover the young man of promise, who has a message from God and can burn it into the hearts of the people. Hunt had a passion for souls, and aimed straight for conviction and conversion. The fire in his own heart kindled the hearts of his hearers until many earnest inquirers were led

to cry, 'What must I do to be saved?' He had a passion for preaching, and great sympathy with the young people of his own class. He knew their difficulties and temptations, and would quickly help the real penitent to get rid of his burden. Telling how he found Christ himself was often a short cut for the seeker of salvation to the same Saviour. About this time he wrote, 'I see, to be useful as a public speaker, I must be eminent as a private Christian.' He had power with the people when he pleaded for God, because he had power with God when he prayed for the people. Success humbled him, and he was not uplifted by his popularity. His simplicity and transparency of soul were a charm that endeared him to the wise and good in the city as well as in the villages.

The city pulpits were now open to the rustic youth. The Rev. William Smith, the superintendent of the Lincoln Circuit, having heard him preach, was convinced that the Church should call him to a wider field, and from ploughing the fields he would break up the fallow ground of many congregations and circuits. He discovered the diamond in the rough, and on his nomination the Quarterly

Meeting unanimously recommended him as a candidate for the ministry. There was at first the shrinking of timidity and a humbling sense of unfitness, but the inner call was as clear as the hearty and unanimous call of the Church. He could only follow the clear leading of the divine Spirit, and at the Conference of 1835 he was received on probation for the work of the ministry and sent to the Theological Institution.

The Rev. Laidman Hodgson, a missionary on furlough from South Africa, had been on deputation in Lincolnshire, and Hunt's ambition was to return with him to the Cape as his servant, to do gardening and farm work, to teach in the Sunday school, and to preach to the English settlers. This ‘ambition,’ as he called it, was the premonition of service he was to give in another field, when the teaching and fellowship of some of the wisest and most saintly men had fitted him for the work.

CHAPTER II

THE EARNEST STUDENT AND MISSIONARY- DESIGNATE

THE man behind the college professor often makes a greater and more lasting impression upon the student than the lessons and lectures of the class-room. The Revs. Dr. Bunting, Joseph Entwisle, and Dr. Hannah belonged to the highest type of men. They were princes in Israel. Hunt felt the elevating power of goodness in their fellowship, and in their teaching the light and gentle leading of true wisdom. They were patient with his deficiencies, and stimulated his diligence by kindly words of encouragement and praise. The change from life in the open air to the quiet of the study was trying at the first, but he soon settled down to steady, patient work. When Carey's grammars and versions of the Holy Scriptures

were almost a library in themselves, he said modestly, 'I can do one thing—I can plod.' The young student was putting his feet into the prints of the great missionary, and the persevering 'plod' soon began to tell. He brought the same energy and intensity into the study that he had previously manifested on the farm. No opportunity was lost. His letters reveal one whose eyes were open to the poverty of his mental furniture, and the rich stores which might be gathered from men who were 'apt to teach' and glad to help those who were wishful to learn. He was soon a favourite with his fellow students. His simple piety, his whole-hearted devotion, his strong personality, made him an influence for good in the college.

Dr. Johnson once sat up all night to frame resolutions to be an early riser and to keep a diary. He thought the keeping of a diary would help him to live by rule, to have a definite object in life, and to preserve a calm breast. He could neither keep a diary nor get up early. His good resolutions were broken and his vows unfulfilled. When Hunt had been at college a little over a year he writes: '*Nov. 14, 1836.*—I now, in the

fear of God, commence keeping a diary. I think it will be of use to me. As this is a very important period of my life, I have no doubt that what I may write will be useful to me in future days.' That diary has been published in *Work and Workers*. It was not only useful to himself, but to his biographers. The Rev. G. S. Rowe, in his charming *Life of John Hunt*, has made good use of it. The true life of a man will be found in his letters and diaries. Like a flower preserved in its colour and freshness and fragrance, they show us the true inwardness of things. He gives us the plan of his devotions :

' 1. Commence the day with praising God for the mercies of the past night and repeat the Lord's Prayer. 2. As far as possible, lay out the business of the day. 3. Bring every part of this business before God in prayer, and ask His help against the probable dangers of the day. 4. Read a portion of the New Testament, on my knees. 5. Read a portion of the Old Testament, and pray for my friends, relatives, the Church, and the world. Altogether this will occupy an hour.'

' Night. 1. Commit to memory a passage

of Scripture. 2. Self-examination, confession, thanksgiving, prayer.'

Religion with him was a cultivation, and the plant had a kindly and congenial soil. He won the love and confidence of his tutors, and his profiting appeared unto all. When he left the college during his third year of residence, he had the testimony of a good conscience that he had diligently improved his opportunities for growing in knowledge and growing in grace.

It was during his third year at college that 'entire sanctification,' keeping to the old Methodist term, became a joyful experience. The subject had taken hold upon him as a possible grace, and with all the enthusiasm of his nature he was pressing towards it. He says, 'I was praying in my study, and saw very clearly that God's plan of saving was through faith in Christ. I therefore came to the atonement just as I was, polluted indeed, but not so much so that the blood of Christ could not cleanse me. As soon as I ventured I found the Lord faithful to His promise, and the blood of Christ at that moment cleansed me from all sin. Since then (about three weeks before) I have had constant peace and

sometimes ecstatic joy. I have felt no sin, and have consequently been preserved from those troubles which inbred corruption used to cause. I now find daily what for years I thought to be impossible—to live without condemnation. Thank God all is peace, calmness, and love ! I begin in the morning to praise Him the moment I rise, and thus endeavour to begin, continue, and end the day with God.' The new experience brought him increased power in the pulpit, and several of his fellow students enjoyed the same blessing. They were on fire for service, and went from house to house trying to do good. They did not labour in vain. Sinners were converted, and believers were led to full consecration and to a higher life.

From the other side of the world came glad tidings to the Missionary Secretaries in London. King George and thousands of his people had accepted the Christian faith. A revival that seemed like a continual Pentecost awakened missionary enthusiasm. The missionaries had been long sowing in tears, and more than one had left the work in hopeless despair. But those who had the patience of faith were rewarded with a glorious harvest.

They stood in the midst of the ripened corn, and their daily work was to reap in joy. But there came to these successful men from over the waters a Macedonian cry—the wail of the strangled widow, and the throb of the death-drum of the cannibal temple. To gather in the sheaves in Tonga, they had more work than the small number could do well; but without waiting for the sanction of the Missionary Committee in England, they cheerfully appointed two from their own staff to commence the new mission in Fiji. It was the heroism of noble daring and splendid venture of faith. The names of the men who formed that little District Synod ought to live. James Watkin, John Thomas, Charles Tucker, Nathaniel Turner, Peter Turner, William Cross, and David Cargill, M.A., were a band of apostles.

James Watkin was appointed to write an appeal to the supporters of Methodist missions, to be published and circulated in England. He was also to explain the 'forward movement' to the Missionary Committee. His subject possessed him, and he wrote, in burning sentences, *Pity Poor Fiji*. That appeal when published stirred many

hearts, and roused some excitement at Hoxton. Hunt's thoughts were still fixed on South Africa as his prospective mission field, when the pointer of the compass suddenly swung round to the South Pacific. A summons to the Mission House, and an interview with the Secretaries, sent him back to his study with a full heart to pray and to consult with one who had special interest in his appointment. Would *she* go to Fiji? Her answer relieved him of all anxiety, and the official designation was made by the Committee a few days afterwards.

There was an enthusiastic 'rolling off' at Hoxton, and Hunt went away freighted with much sympathy and many prayers, for he was honoured by the tutors and beloved by the students. The Rev. William Arthur gives us the story in his own felicitous style: 'One day, Father Entwisle, after dinner, told us of Cross and Cargill, in Fiji, and of the cry "Pity poor Fiji," and of the intention to send out some men forthwith. The news was soon buzzing in every study that Hunt was to go and Calvert with him. The interest of the students was intense. Were we not there to a man that evening in the little old

chapel at Hackney, up a lane, to see Hunt and Calvert ordained, for their service amongst the fiercest of the fierce and at the very ends of the earth! Hunt's solemn and commanding testimony to the grace of God, Calvert's testimony, warm and homely as a village boy, left upon our hearts a last recollection of these beloved companions, which always had the double effect of knitting the soul to the men and of inspiring faith in the blessing which would attend their mission.'

John Hunt left Gravesend April 29, 1838, and after spending a few weeks in Sydney set sail for Fiji, calling at Tonga on the way. He never put missionary discomforts and sufferings in the front or in full light. Everything he had to sacrifice in the way of comfort was more than compensated for by sweeter fellowship with the divine. The *Letitia* was a small and leaky craft, with very poor accommodation for passengers. No word of complaint is found in the Journal; but there was great joy when, on December 23, 1838, they went on shore at Lākemba to spend their first Sunday in Fiji.

CHAPTER III

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FIJI AND THE FIJIANS

THE Rev. David Cargill, M.A., had been in Lakemba nearly three years, and the Rev. William Cross had opened another branch of the mission on the Rewa. A wonderful providence shielded these pioneers from danger. An English vessel had been seized and burnt. The crew were clubbed, and cooked and eaten. All who took part in that cannibal feast died of the *Mate loaloa* (black death), and the plague spread widely. The Fijian priests explained the epidemic by fixing upon two of the crew who, for some reason, were dressed as missionaries, and said, 'You have killed two priests of the white man's God; therefore He is angry and has sent the black death. You may club white men, but not priests.' A few months after this the first two missionaries landed,

First Impressions of Fiji and Fijians 27

and Tanoa, the great chief, gave orders that no club was to be raised against *them*, or the black death would come back and they would be all dead men. Hunt records this in his *Memoir of the Rev. William Cross*. The superstition about the 'black death' was God's broad shield for the protection of His servants until they had made themselves known as the friends of the people.

These early missionaries knew no fear. They combined the fortitude of the martyr with the intrepidity of the hero. When asked, 'Were you not afraid of being killed?' Calvert replied, 'No, *we died before we went.*' They were heralds of peace to a nation of savages, with whom tribal wars were chronic.

After a few days spent chiefly in prayerful consultation, the Rev. David Cargill, M.A., presided over the first District Synod of the Methodist Church in Fiji. It was deemed unwise to open any new station until the newcomers had gained some knowledge of the language and experience of the country. Mr. Hunt was appointed to Rewa, where the Rev. William Cross was already at work.

The *Letitia* carried Mr. and Mrs. Hunt through the centre of the group to their home

on the bank of a beautiful river. The wonderland of a coral reef was to them a treasury richly stored with rare and curious things, as they sailed away from Lakemba and saw for the first time, through water clear as the atmosphere above it, corals in every conceivable variety of form and in colours wondrously brilliant. It was a submarine flower-garden, where the brightly coloured parrot and coral fishes, blue or yellow or crimson or green, float about like the humming-birds and butterflies in a tropical garden. Miss Gordon Cumming gives a word-picture of this in her *At Home in Fiji*: 'Indeed, the eye that loves exquisite colour can never weary here. The rich blue of the harbour (lagoon) is separated from the purplish indigo of the great ocean by a submarine rainbow of indescribable loveliness. This is caused by the coral reef, which produces a gleaming ray as if from a hidden prism. The patches of coral seaweed, and sometimes white sand, lying at irregular depths beneath a shallow covering of the most crystalline emerald-green water, produce every shade of aquamarine, mauve, sienna, and orange all marvellously blended. The

First Impressions of Fiji and Fijians 29

shades are continually varying with the ebb and flow of the tide. . . . The scene is loveliest at noon, when the sun is right overhead, and lights up the colours beneath the waters in the coral caves. When the tide is low and the sea without a ripple, you float idly over the coral beds, suffering your boat to lie at rest or drift with the current, as a stroke of the oars will disturb the clear surface of the water beneath which lie such inexhaustible stores of loveliness. Every sort and kind of coral grow together there, from the outstretched branches which look like garden shrubs to the great tables of solid coral, on which lie strewn shells and sponges and heaps of brain and mushroom corals. These living shrubs assume every shade of colour: some are delicate pink or blue, others of a brilliant mauve, some pale primrose. But vain is the attempt to carry home these beautiful flowers of the sea. Their colour is their life. It is, in fact, simply a gelatinous slime, which drips away, as the living creatures melt away and die when exposed to the upper air.'

In contrast with the foliage of the islands through which the vessel threaded its way,

and the coral reefs they looked down upon from the taffrail as they stood upon the deck, the town of Rewa presented a cheerless appearance. It had recently been desolated and burnt in war. Most of it was a blackened ruin, and for apparent wretchedness, Mr. Hunt says, 'it comes up to all our expectations. Our way to it was up a beautiful river, said to be a hundred miles long. The island looked exceedingly beautiful as we sailed along the winding stream. Nature all appeared charming, until we saw the masterpiece, *man*; and a sight, and especially the first sight, of a Fijian is very appalling.'

The Fijians have been designated by a great authority, 'a race of Nature's noblemen.' This applies only to their fine physical development. Their moral nature was the reverse of noble. They were treacherous and degraded savages. The moral sense was not destroyed, but perverted. Stealing and lying were condemned only when done clumsily or discovered. Cunning was the highest excellency. The man whose many wrinkles testified to numberless escapes was a hero. Revenge was a virtue, to be gratified by eating his enemy, after dragging him as an

First Impressions of Fiji and Fijians 31

offering to the cannibal temple. The greatest cannibal stood highest on their 'calendar of saints.'

The Fijians were never a nomadic race. They lived in towns, in good, comfortable houses. Their settlements were much after the pattern of an Indian village. They were divided into hereditary trade guilds—a guild of carpenters, a guild of potters, a guild of fishermen, a guild of agriculturists, and a guild of priests. They built better canoes than any of their neighbours in the Pacific, and could steer them by the stars. They have no affinity with the negro or the opossum-hunting aboriginal Australian. They are a fusion of the Malayan and Papuan races. They had no written language. Their history was enshrined in old songs, composed in blank verse, and would be repeated by the priests at marvellous length. Their mythologies and legends and proverbs were in the storehouse of a wonderful memory, and could be recited by the priests as occasion required.

Hunt's first business was to master the Fijian language. A vowel after every consonant, and many expletives, which are

mere ornaments of speech, make it mellifluous and smooth. He soon discovered that war was not an amusement or a necessity with the Fijian, but the business of life. The restless spirit of revenge or ambition pleaded religious zeal as an excuse for slaughter. He made a special study of their mythologies, and found that their worst passions were gratified by their religion. 'The religion of the Fijian requires cannibalism. When the priest promises the applicants that they shall be successful in war, by slaying some of the enemy, the bodies are given by the gods not to be killed only, but to be eaten also. Human flesh is not cooked in the ovens or vessels used ordinarily. Cannibalism has its poisoned source in their religion.' Of the lines of stones in the compound, or notches in the almond-tree growing under the shadow of the great temple of Naitasiri, on the Rewa river, Macdonald writes: 'They were a register of the number of dead bodies brought to the spot, to be *offered up at the temple*, before they were cooked and eaten.' Dr. Seeman also writes: 'There is a degree of religious awe associated with cannibalism, a mysterious hallow akin to a sacrifice to a supreme being,

First Impressions of Fiji and Fijians 33

with which only the select few—the tabu class, the priests, chiefs, and higher orders—were deemed fit to be connected. Ovens for cooking human flesh were not devoted to any culinary purposes.’

The worship of the Fijian became the means of gratifying his worst passions. The bitterness of revenge, his delight in war, his satanic pride, his love of notoriety, were all satisfied by the cannibal festivities of his temple. His vilest orgies were religious festivals. The highest and rarest expression of revenge, however, was not in eating, but in leaving the cooked body in the oven, a sacrifice rejected by the gods and too vile to be eaten of men. The oldest Fijian never knew a case of cannibalism through scarcity of food. Revenge frequently gratified through the temple sacrifice grew into a passion, and the restless warrior was said to be hungering to eat his foes. The priests also promised them to possess the bravery and strength of their victims offered in sacrifice. Sir William des Voeux, in his book *My Colonial Service*, says: ‘The late King Thakombau was a noble savage, who, prior to his conversion to Christianity at fifty years

of age, had eaten portions of probably one thousand human bodies.'

Such was the material upon which Hunt had to work. One saw in a vision the sower going forth in the early morn, and he said, 'The seed is good, and the sower goes at the peril of his life ; but the soil is bad, and only thorns and thistles will grow there.' Every day brought to the young missionary fresh and startling proofs of the cruelties and degradation of the people. The 'half had not been told him.' He writes, 'I feel myself saved from almost all fear, though surrounded with men who have scarcely any regard for human life. We are in the hands of a God whom even the heathen fear.' How he longed to unburden his heart and tell the people in their own tongue that 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners' ! This was to him a glorious message, and the grandest line in the literature of the world. The message was burning within him, but he was fettered and tongue-tied. He felt the curse of Babel as he had not realized it before. With dogged perseverance he stuck to his pundit and his list of words with their meanings. He had a motive for earnestness all-

First Impressions of Fiji and Fijians 35

consuming in its flame, for, before his eyes, the people were 'perishing for lack of knowledge.' To be dumb because unable to speak in the native language was a sore trial to patience. The people needed the message which he longed to deliver.

Hunt's first attempt to conduct a service was about a month after his arrival at Rewa. The people were attentive, and he says, 'I had, for the first, a comfortable time.' The Fijians are instinctively polite, and never smile when mistakes are made by a new speaker, however ridiculous such mistakes may be. This increases the difficulty of learning the language. It is rudeness on the part of the native to tell the young missionary of his errors in pronunciation or grammar. One young missionary, who, like Hunt, had enjoyed a good time in his first attempt at preaching, waited for an intelligent chief, who was walking home with him from the village appointment, to compliment him upon his quick mastery of the language and his fluency of speech in the new tongue. The chief was very silent, therefore a leading question was put to him as to whether the preacher had been understood by the people.

The chief politely replied, ' They are dark-minded and very ignorant people ; you must not expect them to understand *your* Fijian. Wait until their ignorance is gone, then your words will be clear to them.' It was a wet blanket to the sanguine young man, put over him like a web of gossamer.

CHAPTER IV

THE TRANSLATOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

By diligent study and daily intercourse with the people John Hunt became an accurate native scholar and a most effective speaker and writer of idiomatic and rhythmical Fijian. By common consent among the missionaries he was to be the translator-in-chief of the Holy Scriptures. What other missionaries had already done in that department of work was confidently placed in his hands. His method was to read over the portion carefully in the Greek Testament and look up every doubtful word in his lexicon. Then he consulted Blomfield and other authorities on New Testament Greek, and made his rough translation. He read this over to his native pundit, and wrote and re-wrote as any new light or better word came to his

mind. He commenced with the Gospels, selecting the Lord's Prayer, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and the Beatitudes for his first work.

A well-known bishop, in a brilliant speech delivered in Exeter Hall on the difficulties of Bible translation, dealt with the case of the missionary to the savages of the South Seas who had reduced the language to a written form, and had mastered its grammatical construction. Then, he said, let him sit down to translate for the first time the words of St. Paul, 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' How is he to find a word for 'justification'—a theological term—in the language of a cannibal people? Then 'faith'; not simple credence, but the mind accepting the gospel plan and the heart reposing upon the gospel provision. Where can he find a word with a corresponding meaning in such a tongue? Then 'peace'; not as the cessation of war, but reconciliation with God. They can have no knowledge of atonement by sacrifice; then how can they have a word to express what we mean by 'peace with God'? A still greater difficulty is the word

‘God,’ meaning a Spiritual Being, a Trinity of Persons in a divine Unity. How is he to find a word for God? They may have a word for fetish or idol, but a spiritual personal God has never been one of their mental conceptions.

There are difficulties in translating the Holy Scriptures into the language of a savage people, but there are greater difficulties in translating any other book. John Eliot translated the Bible into the language of the Mohican Indians, but his real difficulties began when he commenced to write a grammar. This taxed his ingenuity almost to the point of despair. When to his own surprise he had finished it, he wrote his famous maxim on the last page, ‘Prayer and pains, with faith in Christ Jesus, can do anything.’ A geography in the language of the Fijians is a far greater puzzle than the translation of the Holy Scriptures. To translate the signs of the Zodiac into the languages of the South Seas will bring the first white hairs upon the head of the missionary. No missionary would begin the translation of the Scriptures with St. Paul’s Epistles. There is not a word in the Lord’s Prayer for which the language of

a savage people has not an equivalent. There is not a sentence in the Parable of the Prodigal Son for which corresponding words will not be easily found in the Fijian. The 'far country' is to him a familiar expression. An island or a mountain is not so many leagues or miles distant; it is 'far' or it is near. Let a savage get the theology of the Parable of the Prodigal Son or the Lord's Prayer into his own heart as an experience, and *he* will find a word to express it. His new emotions will put a new and spiritual meaning into his old words. The very language is lifted higher as a vehicle of new and loftier truth by the Scriptures being translated into it. One who knew him well says of John Hunt, 'He was a thoroughly good translator. He had a fair knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew, he was a careful and diligent student of God's Word, and he was a good Fijian scholar.'

Hunt's New Testament, known as the Tambai Viwa, because printed at the mission press at Viwa, is a paraphrastic version in the idiom and rhythm of the classic Fijian, as spoken at Bau. Other versions have followed, which are much more literal, but

the idiom has been sacrificed. They are only understood by the natives because the Tambai Viwa was a 'John the Baptist,' going before to prepare the way for them. Some of the parables were translated and printed on sheets, to be sung to native lyrics in the schools. Long before the New Testament could be printed as a whole, the young people had the gospel set to music, and were charmed with the story of the 'Good Samaritan,' which they chanted in the schools and also in the home.

The Bible from the beginning was the lever which Hunt believed would be honoured of God as a means of conversion and the moral uplifting of the people. The Fijians needed the Bible as an authoritative standard of appeal in all questions of conduct and character. Conscience was perverted, and called evil good and good evil. The moral sense needed to be corrected by a sure standard. To appeal to the conscience of a Fijian was like appealing for the correct time to a watch with the mainspring broken. The Ten Commandments were to them a new and definite standard of conduct. What saith the Scriptures? became a test question

of moral character. A New Testament conscience had to be created and educated. The Scriptures have been the agent honoured of God in spiritual conversion. By learning to read, spelling out word by word, they were spelling themselves into the conviction of sin and their need of divine forgiveness. Hunt was surprised, as other missionaries have been, to find how many, in giving an account of their spiritual conversion, attributed their first awakening to a sense of sin and danger to the reading of the New Testament. God has put honour upon His own Word by making it the conductor of spiritual life and light.

Once fairly committed to the work of translation, he regarded himself as a tool in God's hands, to be used for the divine glory, in giving to the people that which is their greatest treasure, the Holy Scriptures in their own tongue. The missionary stationed at Lakemba in 1865 wrote to the Bible House: 'It fell to my lot to examine twenty-eight young men, who were recommended by our native ministers as candidates for the office of local preachers. While listening to the accounts of their conversion,

Translator-in-chief of the Scriptures 43

I was struck with the oft-repeated mention of the New Testament as having been the only means used by the Holy Spirit to convince them of their danger and lead them to the "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Since that time I have carefully noted such cases whilst engaged in my missionary work. From conversations and examinations and written documents I have ascertained that more than two-thirds of our two hundred catechists, lay preachers, and schoolmasters have been aroused to a sense of their danger whilst living in sin, and have afterwards obtained peace, solely through the reading of the New Testament, without having received any counsel, admonition, or spiritual instruction from any one. What a blessed fact is here brought out to the glory of God! Hunt was not mistaken in regarding the New Testament as the 'seed having life in itself.' The human agent may translate and distribute the Word; but the life, the generating power, is not in the hand that scatters, but in the *seed* itself. Convincing evidence of the divinity of the Scriptures is found in the transformed lives of bloodthirsty cannibals

into God-fearing, Bible-reading, and consistent Christians.

Hunt kept himself well abreast of the best English literature. He cultivated his imagination by reading Byron and other English poets. He never lost an opportunity of preaching in English on a Sunday evening, if he could get a congregation of two or three. To keep up English studies and preaching he regarded as of the highest importance for every missionary in a heathen country. He faced all his work with a smile, and put his brightest and his best into all he did for the natives ; but he valued any opportunity of doing good to his own countrymen, whether merchants, sailors, or globe-trotters.

CHAPTER V

SOMOSOMO ; OR, REASONABLE EXPECTATION DISAPPOINTED

IN July, 1839, the *Letitia* arrived with reinforcements for the mission staff. A printing-press was a part of the new equipment, and Rewa was regarded as the best available centre for the printing establishment. Mr. Hunt remarks, 'I soon learnt, to my great comfort, that I was to be stationed with brother Lyth at Somosomo. I had offered to go alone, but two are better far than one.' Hunt and Lyth were twin spirits. Both lived on a high level of religious experience and devotion. They were whole-hearted in their work, and ready to go anywhere or to suffer anything, if duty called and the sins and sorrows of the people needed their message of healing and sympathy. Mr. Hunt says, 'We were much attached to Rewa,

especially as God was prospering His blessed cause there.' He had won the confidence of the heathen at Rewa, and the converts to Christianity loved him as their spiritual father and guide. It was a trial to them to part with a wise teacher who understood them and was patient with their faults and many failings. He could see the little that was good in them, and fostered it, until they were no longer weaklings, but could resist the wrong and hold firmly to truth and righteousness.

Telling of this parting from the infant church, of his own planting mainly, he says : ' But the difficulty of leaving Rewa and going to Somosomo affected us only as mortals ; as missionaries we thought nothing of the privations or trials we might have to endure. We expect to sow in tears, as confidently as we hope to reap in joy ; and therefore trials and privations are words seldom used by us, and things that are thought much more of by our friends at home than by ourselves.'

Tui Thakau, the great and powerful chief of Somosomo, had requested the appointment of missionaries to his town. It was in

the centre of Taviuni, an island of wonderful beauty and fertility, generally termed 'the garden of Fiji.' It is the summit of an extinct volcano. The crater is now a fresh-water lake, nine miles long and two in breadth. The sides of the mountain are formed of decomposed lava, gently sloping down to the sea, covered with a foliage of palms, tree-ferns, screw-pines, variegated crotons, and dracaenas. The scenery was charming, with the overflow of the lake making mountain torrents, rushing down the sides like streams of liquid silver, when, on the first Sabbath after their arrival, the mission families looked from the deck of the vessel in the bay upon their future home. Hunt says in his journal, 'It is a land of mountains and streams, of glens and vales, of scenery so varied and beautiful that when we look upon it we are led to say with emphasis, "only man is vile." But, glory be to God, we have brought the gospel, which, by the blessing of God, will be the means of turning the moral chaos into the beauty and harmony of spiritual life.'

The warm welcome they had anticipated from those who had sent the Macedonian

cry, 'Come over and help us,' they did not receive from the people. These appeared utterly indifferent and unconcerned. They were waiting until the pleasure, or otherwise, of the great chief should decide their attitude towards the new arrivals. Tui Thakau received them kindly, and placed one of his own houses at their disposal until a suitable site could be fixed upon for the mission station. They fitted the native house with doors and windows, and were ready the next day to receive their wives and goods on shore. A picture of moral heroism is seen in the ladies going over the side of the schooner into the native canoe, while boarding-nets protect the ship, and the captain and crew are standing with muskets loaded and bayonets fixed, to protect themselves from the ferocious cannibals among whom these ladies and their husbands are going to live. Canoes, filled with fierce-looking savages, are paddling round the vessel, ready, each in turn, to carry the baggage on shore. Every English sailor stands on guard on the deck, and would not risk his life on one of the canoes for a king's ransom. All the mission party reached the shore in safety,

and of all their goods and chattels nothing was missing. The natives all knew this to be the will of the chief.

It was a bright beginning to the sad and sorrowful history of that new mission station. Somosomo has many a bitter memory of suffering. The kindness of the heart was often grieved there, and reasonable expectation was more than disappointed. Mr. Hunt soon found that widow-strangling, like cannibalism, had its poisoned roots in the native religion. The Elysium of the Fijians is called Burotu. The priests could see it when the sun was sinking in the west. They described it as a lovely island, with palm fronds tinged with gold, and fragrant with spicy breezes. It receded and vanished as they sailed towards it. The canoe would glide over the place where they had seen it shimmering upon the waters, but their heaven was gone. The shores of this goodly land were guarded by the goddess Yalewa Levu, whose special business it was to club every bachelor that attempted to land. Only married men were welcome in Burotu. When the chief died, his widows were strangled to accompany him to Burotu and

to prove that he was a married man. Five was the minimum number of strangled women; but polygamist chiefs with many wives had more to escort them to the spirit land. The bodies of the women were called cushions and carpets for the chief's grave. The married chief with no strangled widow on his arrival at Burotu was refused permission to land, and became a miserable wanderer for ever on sterile mountains, seeking rest but finding none. Pity for the dead chief, and a wish to secure his welcome in the happy land, was one great motive with the women. A sense of honour made the strangling imperative. To survive was disgrace to the widow of a chief.

The missionaries had not been settled many days, when it was whispered through the town that a large canoe had been wrecked, and Rambithi, the king's son, was drowned, with many others. There was great sorrow in Somosomo. Rambithi was a great warrior, and his loss was deeply mourned. It was soon decided that sixteen wives were to be strangled to accompany the dead chief to Burotu. The missionaries used their influence to prevent the slaughter, but the

king resented their interference, and asserted the claims of the Fijian religion. The Journal refers to this dreadful business: 'On the morning of the 8th we heard the cries of the poor women and their friends, and soon they were mercilessly strangled. We were obliged to be in the midst of it, and truly their cries and wailings were awful. Soon after they were murdered, they were brought to be buried about twenty yards from our house. . . . Our minds were kept in peace during these scenes. Our hearts were affected, of course, but God preserved us from fear.' The wild wailing was the preliminary of the strangling. It was the farewell of the relatives and friends of those who were leaving for Burotu. The actual strangling was done in solemn silence, with a sheet of native cloth thrown over the victim. These terrible experiences caused nervous exhaustion to the missionaries, and, if saved from personal fear, they suffered from sickness of the heart and horror of the cruelty of heathenism.

The strain was too great for Mrs. Hunt. A severe illness brought her very low. It was a great comfort to have the medical

advice of Dr. Lyth, with his never-failing attention and sympathy. All human effort appeared to be in vain. The shadow of death was thrown over the face of the one dearest to Hunt. He wrote at this time, 'I began to realize the sorrows of being left alone, in this land of need, with a feeling quite new to me. Weeping, a strange thing with me, began to be pleasant, and my mind was most severely agitated, though most divinely supported.' When John Hunt found weeping to be 'pleasant,' the strong man was bowed down by a great sorrow. At such a time a missionary is thrown upon his faith in God and the prayers of Christian people. They could only pray, and their prayers were heard. Dr. Lyth says, 'Mrs. Hunt was given back in answer to fervent supplication.' The Fijians to this day quote the recovery of Mrs. Hunt as a marvellous instance of the power of prayer.

With so many troubles in wars, and cannibal feasts near their house, little progress was made in the spiritual condition of the people. The old king was given to paroxysms of rage, and was growing more indifferent to their comfort. He refused to fix upon a

site for a mission station, and kept them in the native house, which was to have been a temporary dwelling only. In letters written at this time there are references to 'unfruitful labour,' 'barren ground,' and 'apparently useless toil.' Faith was sorely tried, and hopeful expectation was bitterly disappointed. They were forbidden to put a screen before the door or window to hide the hideous doings and barbarous ceremonies from their view.

A gleam of light came with the birth of his firstborn, but the child was only spared to them for twelve days. The drying up of that well-spring of joy was made a greater trial, because the burial must be among heathen graves. There was a shrinking from that, and a wish for a corner in 'God's acre' in some Christian land. The child was given back to God, and buried in the mission garden. It was the first grave dug for any member of the mission families. There have been many deep graves dug since then in Fiji. With a faith that recognized the divine hand in both giving and taking, Mrs. Hunt said, 'Thy will be done.' Mr. Hunt says in the Journal, 'Our prospects are

rather mysterious ; the work of God is going on, I doubt not, though we have not much appearance of good. But we know the folly of always expecting to see God in the whirlwind and the storm. "I will be as the dew unto Israel," is His promise to His Church.' Dr. Lyth says of this time, 'The want of direct fruit of our labours of a spiritual kind was greatly calculated to discourage, but it had no such effect on my friend's mind. He looked to the promise of God, and believed we should not labour in vain.' He was a cheerful optimist, and had a great hope and a great faith in the triumph of the mission among the worst and most degraded of all the Fijians.

Somosomo has been from the beginning the most difficult and trying of all the mission stations in Fiji. No sooner has any cheerful sign of progress appeared, than a sudden outburst of tribal war has broken up the schools and scattered the few sheep who were finding pasture under the missionary shepherd. The station has been left without an English missionary, through death or failure of health, and, when resumed again, disturbing elements have arisen to hinder the

work. The restlessness and jealousy of the chiefs, and the rivalries of the sons of Tui Thakau, led to fresh wars, and cannibal feasts were more frequent. Being near the temple where the victims were sacrificed, the missionaries were continually disturbed by the beating of the Derua or death-drum. It is a sound peculiarly weird and dismal, making sensitive people to shiver with a creeping coldness. The situation of the town was unhealthy. It was sheltered by the hills from the trade breezes. Everything was depressing, and no fruit was seen to help their faith or to brighten hope. Mr. Hunt writes, 'In our work we seem to labour in vain, but faith can never come to such a conclusion. I would not believe such a thing, if all the philosophers in the world were to tell me so. If we preach Christ's truth, He is with us, and His presence is not in vain. I love these poor wretches, obstinate as they are.' Referring to the long and painful illness of Mrs. Hunt, he says, 'These things are a sore trial to me, because they keep me from the other duties of my calling. I am almost persuaded at times to think I am of no use, and that the Lord will not accept of

me as His labourer ; but I would not yield to temptation.' The language of humiliation and disappointment sounds strange when we look back upon his splendid work and glorious spiritual triumphs. Hunt was quietly preparing for his greatest and best work—the translation of the Scriptures. If large congregations had listened to his ministry, his evangelistic passion would have drawn him from the less attractive work of Bible translation.

The custom of the Fijians, arising out of the law of their gods, was to kill and offer in sacrifice all who had 'water in their eyes,' or those who had escaped shipwreck. They were among the prescribed victims of the cannibal altar. When Hunt was returning from a missionary voyage on the *Triton*, a mistake was made on entering the Somosomo bay. The ship was heading for the rocks. A wild shout of joy went up from the town, for they made sure the vessel had struck the reef and would be for them a rich prize. They hurried down to the shore, brandishing their clubs, and jumped into their canoes for the work of plunder and massacre. The ship floated off again into deep water, and

they were disappointed of their prey. But some of these frenzied warriors, whose fierce cries were the loudest, were men who had been attending the public services and professing friendship to the missionaries. They were a treacherous people, and most dangerous when they were most amiable and anxious apparently to win favour with those who sought their real welfare. The discovery of deceit and cunning treachery was a shock to those who wished to trust them and to help them to a better life. A visit from Commodore Wilkes, and friendly intercourse with him and the officers of the United States exploring expedition, proved a great help and comfort to the mission families. It was a relief to tell of their hopes and fears, and to have their thoughts taken away from their Fijian surroundings into a wider and a better world. Scientific explorers have always been glad to avail themselves of the experience and knowledge of the missionaries. Their meteorological observations have been acknowledged to be of great value. The *Challenger* when in the South Seas gathered much scientific information from the missionaries.

Mr. Hunt writes in the Journal: 'Captain Wilkes dined with us. We found him most gentlemanly and kind, a real man of war. He seems entirely devoted to the welfare of the natives of these islands.' He also describes a Fijian wedding—a kind of political marriage, for a woman of rank was presented to Tui Thakau by the Bau chiefs, to secure his alliance in an expected war with Vuna. 'The bride was accompanied to the house of the old king by a number of Bau people of both sexes. She took a whale's tooth in her hand, and was welcomed to the house of the chief by an old chief woman. The whale's tooth was then presented, with a speech stating the conditions of the union, &c. The speech, the whale's tooth, and the woman were received by the king's chief speaker with the usual ceremony, and another whale's tooth was presented to the Bau chief as a pledge for the performance of the stipulated kindnesses. The ceremony was then concluded.' The wedding feast followed, and dances and races, with various other sports, amused the many guests.

The three years of residence at Somosomo had been an experience of suffering and

sorrow. The good really done was mainly in the prevention of evil, or modifying the savage cruelties of the people. Old customs had been abandoned, in some cases through the influence of the missionaries. A large war canoe had been launched without the usual *human rollers*—prisoners of war, stretched between the canoe shed and high-water mark, that the canoe might be dragged over them, crushing them to death; the bodies then being presented at the temple with the prayer that for the sacrifices offered the gods would be propitious, and give to the newly launched vessel fair winds and safe voyages. The chiefs were less impatient of reproof. By intercession some doomed men had been spared. Their superiors the Bau chiefs had been feasted for weeks without the dainty dish—*bokola* (human sacrifice). Hunt writes in his Journal: ‘Thus is custom overcome; Satan’s power is broken, and the reign of passion is checked. Even the Fijians are beginning to *think*, and to allow reason to have a place in their conduct of life. I am quite persuaded that nothing but missionary labour could have effected this; and it can only effect it instrumentally.

Somosomo has been a place where every feeling of our nature and every principle of our religion has been tested. We believe that we have been made a great blessing, though the fruits of our labour may not yet fully appear.'

Other benefits came out of Mr. Hunt's residence on Somosomo, beyond the testing of faith and the discipline of suffering and trial. He was thrown upon God, and in closer fellowship with the Divine he found compensation for any discomfort and sacrifice in his surroundings. He studied the habits and customs, the history and etiquette of the people, their code of honour, and their mental twistings or system of reasoning. He found out what was good in them, and could accommodate himself to their prejudices, where no sacrifice of principle was involved. Their bad qualities required no diligent search ; but to understand widow-strangling and cannibalism, a knowledge of their mythologies and religion was required. They were fairly industrious for a tropical people. Their gardens and plantations and systems of irrigation surprised him. They required abundance of food for their many

feasts, as well as for daily use. Dr. Seeman, the author of *Flora Vitiensis*, found their classification of plants to be correct, and does not lose an opportunity of pointing out that in rendering 'palm-branches' by the word 'balabala' (the tree-fern) in the New Testament, the translator had confounded ferns with palms, which the Fijians had not done in their system of botany. Christ's entry into Jerusalem was a triumphal procession, and on all such festive occasions the fronds of the tree-fern were used by the Fijians; therefore the word was used which would convey to them the true meaning of the procession. They were ingenious in the construction of their canoes, and clever in handling them, being shrewd observers of natural phenomena. The women made cloth from the bark of the paper mulberry, and printed it in divers colours and in many different patterns. Circles and angles predominate in their decorative designs. They were a commercial people, buying and selling and getting gain. Whales' teeth were used for currency. Sperm whales in schools visited the islands during the months of August and September. Occasionally one

was stranded. American ships engaged in sperm-whale fishing from New Bedford, called at Kandavu to purchase provisions, and exchanged whales' teeth for pork, yams, and poultry. Thus their currency was supplied without the expenses of a mint. The women made good pottery, without the help of the potter's wheel. They were expert fishers, and the coral reefs were well-stored fishing-grounds.

With a better knowledge of the people, and a much better insight into their dialects, Hunt fixed upon the Bauan as the classic Fijian. The dialects were arbitrary, and made for the purpose of isolating one tribe from another. He was now at his best for real mission work—literary, evangelistic, or quiet teaching.

CHAPTER VI

VIWA : REVIVALS AND NATIVE PASTORS

THE Lord had now prepared John Hunt for special work. The failing health of Mr. Cross made it desirable for him to have the medical care of Dr. Lyth. Mr. Hunt therefore changed stations with him, and went to reside at Viwa, a small island only two miles from Bau, the native capital, and near the coast of Na Viti Levu (Great Viti). It was an important island politically, and its chiefs took high rank and had great influence throughout the group. They were the trusted allies of Bau. Viwa, as an island, is a little gem, set in the coral reef. The palm-trees run over its hills and down into the valleys, but they never bear fruit. There is something in the soil that makes the Viwa palms an arrested development. This has suggested a proverbial saying about religion without fruit. 'Na Niu ni Viwa

na nodra Lotu eso' (the religion of some people is Viwan palms). John Hunt was a complete contrast in personal religion and diligent work to the fruitless palms which spread their fronds over his head. He was a fruitful vine, and the boughs ran over the wall. His literary work at Viwa is a marvel of painstaking diligence. The printing-press was removed there into the first stone house ever built in Fiji. When Mr. Hunt required a house for himself, the white residents of Levuka volunteered to build it, for they loved and respected a true-hearted friend of both white men and natives. They took the timbers from two vessels that had been wrecked on the reef, not far away, and built a good house as an expression of their esteem and gratitude for Mr. Hunt's kindness to them in sickness. There was one peculiarity about that house. The timbers had been accustomed to creak when they were part of a vessel, tossed by the storm at sea. They could not break the habit, but would creak in every gale, and gave the inmates of the house the impression that *they* were at sea, although the house was doubtless on the land.

During his three years' residence at Viwa Mr. Cross had been honoured of God with success. He left to his successor a young but flourishing native church. It was a new atmosphere for Mr. Hunt. The chief was nominally Christian, and very kind, and was ready to do anything for the comfort of the missionary and his family. Many of the people gave evidence of a new creation, in that they were new creatures. In conduct and character they were consistent and devout Christians. Their power in prayer and their religious testimony were a surprise and joy to the missionary. Many of them were young men, and in the eye of the missionary very soon saw the hope of the future. They were God-given instruments, which if wisely trained and directed would be agents of conversion throughout the group. The rapidity with which the work spread from village to village and island to island compelled the use of the most suitable men that could be obtained as teachers. The first requisite was true conversion; then they could be instruments of conversion and teach others all they knew about the Bible and the Christian life.

An Australian statesman, who was the first European to climb the Blue Mountain range and to look upon the great country of the West, with its gums and acacias and kangaroos, turned also to the East, and gazed with wonder upon the sapphire sea, washing the eastern shores, and upon the many islands that gemmed the bosom of the Pacific. He recognized in these the great inheritance of Australia as the mother continent. In his 'Ode to Australia' he addresses his adopted land :

Proud Queen of Isles ;
Thou sittest vast, alone,
A host of vassals bending at thy throne ;
Thy Polynesian brood
Round thee dispersed upon the ocean flood ;
While every tide that doth thy bosom lave
Proclaims thee Empress of the southern wave.

In this there is the dream of empire ; a great Southern world, that will balance the United States in the Western world ; a Commonwealth under the English flag, speaking the English language, and mainly Protestant in its religion. The dream has been realized in the Commonwealth of Australia.

Viwa: Revivals and Native Pastors 67

But there were men of God who had a similar vision about that empire as a field for missionary enterprise. In the same year the General Secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, writing to the Rev. Joseph Orton, the General Superintendent of Wesleyan Missions in Australia, and the first minister of any church to hold a religious service in what is now the Colony of Victoria, says, 'As your societies increase, men will be raised up to help you in your work, and to spread it through the islands of the South Seas. Your New South Wales Mission will spread the light and power of the gospel through New Zealand, Samoa, the Friendly Islands, and Fiji. Keep your eye on this great end. Prepare for these important missions, and nurse up men for them.'

Dr. Bunting was a prophet, and the vision of the seer has been realized, beyond even his hopes and expectations. The first native helpers came, like the first missionaries, from the Friendly Islands. Joel Bulu, Paul Vea, Moses Mamaifanoa (all Tongans) have an imperishable memory in the regenerated hearts, purified homes, brightened lives, and saved souls of Fijians.

But these in their young manhood came under the influence and teaching of John Hunt. With many others they were trained *for* their work, by being trained *in* it. Three times a week they came from the towns and villages where they were stationed, for the lectures of John Hunt on theology. These lectures were carefully prepared, compiled mainly from Dr. Hannah's lectures, and lighted up by local illustrations. They were then printed at Viwa and became the manual of theology for catechists and local preachers. That book, next to the Bible, has been the seed-basket for the Fijian sower. Well grounded in theology, and with a marvellous knowledge of the Scriptures, these men have never been surpassed for practical work by any more fully educated and trained men at the native colleges. John Hunt put himself into these men. He inspired them with a thirst for knowledge, a passion for souls, and an intense desire to experience and preach Scriptural holiness. He died young, but he lives in the native pastors of Fiji to-day.

His manual of theology is in the purest and most beautiful Fijian. New editions

Viwa: Revivals and Native Pastors 69

have been published from time to time, and it is still the chief textbook in the college for training native pastors and catechists. He gave these lectures at six o'clock in the morning, three mornings per week. He prepared a brief outline to be copied by the students. The Fijians have a fine development of the memory. They did not only *hear*, they did 'read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest' this scriptural and suitable material for their own sermons. They became powerful and impassioned preachers.

No native agency in any mission has been so richly owned by God and honoured with success as the pastors and catechists of Fiji. They are the finest product of the mission, and very largely the fruit of Hunt's teaching and holy living. They were ready to go anywhere, and suffer or sacrifice everything, even life itself, to rescue the perishing heathen, and to teach them a better life. They have many excellences, the greatest of which is their wonderful knowledge of the Bible. They quote copiously and accurately from the Scriptures. With memory highly developed, their reasoning is almost limited to analogy. They have all been

students of nature from childhood. The jungle is their almanack, and the months are named from the flowering plants peculiar to each. The habits and peculiarities of plants, insects, birds, fishes, and all manner of life in the wonderland of a coral reef give a never-ending supply of illustration. Their language lends itself to oratory, and their rhetoric never fails. In appeal they are impassioned, but they arrest attention and convince the judgement before they apply their message, pleading for God with a power that is often startling and irresistible. Their native proverbs are often used with more effect than an argument. A proverb clenches the teaching and presents the truth like a flash-light. People trying to evade the consequences of sin, or to get away from its punishment, are likened to the flying fish, that leap out of the water to escape the bonita, and are gobbled up by the seagulls.

Canoes are a never-failing source of illustration, and they are quick to pick up any new suggestion. When steam was up in the morning in the steam-launch, and all was ready for taking up the anchor, the

missionary said, 'We must have morning worship before we start.' After reading a psalm he called upon a local preacher to lead in prayer, who prayed very earnestly for nearly twenty minutes. When he had risen from his knees the native engineer looked at the steam-gauge and said quietly, 'That brother has prayed forty pounds pressure off the boiler. We shall have to make it up again before we start.' At the next weekly prayer-meeting all were warned against long prayers, which lowered the pressure of steam or decreased the spiritual power of united supplication.

While such things lighted up and gave point to their preaching, the Bible was the rich mine whence they obtained their nuggets and wealth of illustration. In the Journal John Hunt says, 'On Wednesday I preached from "Jacob's ladder." The people are fond of historic subjects, and I generally illustrate my discourse from history. They wish to know all about the different persons mentioned in the Bible. One of them frequently prays that I may remain at Viwa until I have told them everything that is written in the Holy Book.'

June 3, 1844.—‘Yesterday was a good day to us. We held our lovefeast and had a good time. The teacher was the first who spoke after I had spoken. He gave a satisfactory account of his conversion, but not so clear as some others who spoke afterwards. His wife was much more clear, and so was the Queen of Viwa. But the best native experience I ever heard was that of Noah, a young man in the Native Training Institution. His account of his conviction of sin, his faith in Christ, and clear sense of his acceptance with God were very cheering. He mentioned some remarkable manifestations of the love of God to him since his conversion, and stated that he believed sin was entirely destroyed in his heart. I have every reason to believe that this is the case. He seemed under a most blessed influence while he spoke, and said he often wished “to go up to his Saviour,” but he was willing to stay if he could be of any use to the people of God and to the world.’

The high tone of spiritual life in the missionary was reflected in the students. He kindled their enthusiasm, their ambition to be good and true, while he taught them

arithmetic, geography, history, and, above all, theology. He was happy in this work when the news of the death of Mr. Cross at Somosomo fell as a great shadow upon the infant church at Viwa. His relation to it was tender, for they were his spiritual children. Mr. Hunt sought to improve this bereavement to the people on the following Sunday, and says, 'It was a time to be remembered of a truth. Many wept; and so did I, as heartily as I ever wept since I left England.'

He was very methodical in all his work. His devotions had not only their stated times, but the subjects for prayer, praise, intercession, and meditation were according to plan. Each portion of the day had its appointed task. Change of work was to him a means of relief and rest. He was always, as he says, on 'full stretch.' In his life of Cross, Hunt gives evidence of his own careful study of the mythologies and native religions of the Fijians, and of their history, superstitions, and customs. The last words of Cross—spoken to Dr. Lyth—were, 'Best for a missionary to go home, to escape to the skies, and join the enraptured host of

heaven, and be with Jesus and angels.' A new and beautiful monument has been recently erected over his grave by the successor of Tuikilakila, Roko Tuithakau. It is one evidence of the change wrought by Christianity that the present Roko should honour the memory of the missionary who suffered persecution along with Hunt and Lyth from his forebears.

Tuikilakila died a miserable leper in a lonely hut. His food was taken within a few yards of his door, and no one but the missionary visited him in the last stages of his malady. He was a humble penitent, and died hoping in mercy. In the days of his power he was a cruel tyrant, and scorned the teaching of the missionaries at Somosomo. Hunt, Lyth, and Cross suffered many things at his hand. In his lingering and painful illness, he was the victim of remorse, and spoke with shame of his treatment of good men, who had always been kind and faithful to him. Lyth was once delivered from his fury, when he held him by the tail of his coat and called loudly for his club, with murderous purpose. A sudden leap left the rent part of the coat in the hand of the

chief, and Lyth never returned to ask for it. St. Paul prayed to be delivered from 'unreasonable and wicked men.' If that prayer had not been answered, some of his Epistles would not have been written and the Church would have been the poorer in its sacred writings. There was a broad shield between the missionaries at Somosomo and the treachery of Tuikilakila, for God had much work for them to do at Viwa and elsewhere.

After much endurance and bitter disappointment Somosomo was abandoned, and Dr. Lyth joined his old friend at Viwa. They worked together, Hunt translating, and Lyth patiently revising and correcting the proof-sheets of the New Testament. They were also cheered by the wave of revival that was passing over the native church. Pentecostal blessings came upon Viwa.

October 19, 1845.—'I commenced the meeting in the usual way, and there was a good feeling, but nothing very extraordinary. After I had prayed, I gave a short exhortation, stating the design and manner of such meetings as we were now holding. Paul

then prayed and the feeling increased, which was the more remarkable, as he is a calm old man, and prays with very little feeling. Another prayed, and, according to rule, not very long, and without being called upon, but by the time he had finished most of the people were engaged in prayer. The feeling and praying became general. Some cried aloud. Clear and decisive work commenced. It was evident that the hand of the Lord was among the people. Many were pricked in the heart, and cried in agonies of prayer for mercy. Some were enabled to believe, and were made exceedingly happy. They prayed for others with new fervour, and thus the flame spread. The meeting was not very long, but the praying continued after it was concluded; and, indeed, the praying commenced that night continued till most of the people were saved. To describe what followed is impossible. Every meeting became a penitent meeting, and almost every family altar a penitent form. This was especially the case at Namosimalua's house. Andi Vatea generally prayed with such earnestness that the people flocked from all parts of the town to join. We were on the

spot in due time, and some glorious meetings we had in this house. On some occasions the glory of the Lord was wonderfully revealed. Some of the instances of conversion were very remarkable. A person would be seized all at once and thrown into the most extraordinary distress. Most of the women fainted two or three times before they found peace. On some occasions the men were so violent, both in their sorrow and joy, that it was almost dangerous to be near them. There was no way of managing them but by throwing them on the ground, and holding them there, which sometimes had to be done for hours together, and in some cases the strength of four or five men was required to manage them. Yet there was nothing wild or silly in what they said; indeed, in general we were astonished at the manner in which they expressed themselves, both in prayer and praise, and in their exhortations to others after they found peace. Generally after they obtained the favour of God, and became a little calm, they would begin to exhort those around them with amazing power and fluency, keeping to the great points about which they formerly said next to nothing,

namely, repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ.

' Our public services were most extraordinary times, especially on the Sabbath morning. Sometimes before we reached the chapel we heard the cries of penitents, or the expressions of joy of pardoned sinners, who were glad to go to the house of the Lord. It was almost impossible for the priest to minister, because of the glory of the Lord. To hear the preacher's voice in prayer was out of the question, except the first few sentences. The people were praying all over the chapel, with all their might, and several of them prostrate on the ground, fainting or overcome by the power of their emotions. Those who fainted were removed by those about them, without any confusion, so that, though to a mere spectator it appeared all confusion, yet to a person engaged in it there was but little. A great deal of saving influence was felt among the people. Frequently the preacher and people were weeping aloud together, and anything like a regular service was impossible. The Te Deum was chanted with amazing triumph. When they came to such passages as "Thou art the King of

Glory, O Christ," some of them would clap their hands and shout for joy, almost in raptures. The name of Jesus had a particular charm such as they never felt before. This beautiful piece never seemed half so beautiful as now. It appeared to be just in unison with their feelings. We used to preach as well as we could, but many could hear next to nothing, such was the crying. In general, however, they were still during the reading of the lesson and the sermon. Indeed, all those who could restrain their feelings did—a thing, however, which some could not do.

‘We had many meetings. Noah used to go about in the night, seeking the penitents and praying with them, and many obtained the blessing in this way. Some had remarkable dreams, others what almost amounted to visions ; indeed, the excitement was very great, and some strange, useless, and dangerous things could not but take place. It always was so in revivals. Many cases of conversion were as remarkable as any we have heard or read of ; many of the penitents had no command of themselves for hours together, but were completely under the

influence of their feelings. It is not wonderful to us that such people should be affected in such a manner. When we consider what dreadful cannibals, murderers, and polygamists many of them were only a few months since, who can be surprised that a proper view of themselves should produce such an effect on their minds? When we saw their agonies and heard their wailings, it frequently appeared to us as the most consistent thing we had ever seen. Suppose twenty men should murder a hundred of their neighbours, and eat them, or divide them among their friends to be eaten. Suppose they afterwards attend the ministry of the gospel, and are convinced of the desperate wickedness of the kind of deed they had committed. Who would believe they were truly convinced of the awful nature and consequences of such a sin, if they merely shed tears, or manifested their contrition in the ordinary way? We should say, "Nay, these men cannot be truly penitent, for true repentance consists in having a proper knowledge of our sins and corresponding feelings." Now if these men saw the proper nature of the sins of murder and

cannibalism, their feelings would be more than ordinary. Ordinary repentance is not the kind of repentance we should expect to see in such sinners.'

The revival was a new era in the Fijian mission ; it spread from one island to another. Hunt had much of the revival element in his own nature, and these wonderful conversions were the manifestation of a divine power that could change the savage warrior and cannibal into a humble, devout, and childlike Christian. He cherished a great hopenow for the conversion of King Thakombau. Vatea, the Queen of Viwa, besought that chief with tears to turn his back upon the Fijian deities, and his face towards the true God, who loved peace, not war, righteousness and not vindictive cruelty. On Kandavu, when such a revival was going on, thirty young chiefs banded themselves together to put a stop to it. Some of the young women to whom they were betrothed were among the penitents. They feared that their conversion and confession of Christianity might make difficulties about their marriage with them as heathen. With uplifted clubs they marched round the chapel,

threatening death to those within, who were in earnest prayer with several penitents. They called some by name to come out, or be killed. No notice was taken of their savage yells and threats. At length one ventured inside the church, and fell immediately on the floor in a swoon. The others followed, greatly excited, till one by one they were all prostrate, every nerve quivering convulsively, and the perspiration running from their bodies. Their veins stood out like whipcord and they moaned as if in agony. The missionary went to one, and, touching him gently, said, 'Be calm, and I will pray for you.' 'Calm! calm!' replied the man. 'Hell fire is burning me. I deserve to perish.' A shrewd native minister advised the missionary to go home, saying, 'The excitement is too great for you.' He went home to bed, and on rising at six in the morning saw the native minister at the door. 'What time did you break up last night?' he asked. He replied, 'We have just left the chapel. The last penitent has come out of his third faint, and is now shouting for joy.' They had been all night with these young chiefs, witnessing great

Viwa: Revivals and Native Pastors 83

contortions and struggles; but all were converted, and the fruits of their repentance were abiding and goodly.

In a letter to Mr. Calvert at this time Hunt writes, 'I have felt some power in prayer for Thakombau lately; and I think most of us have. The Lord can save him. I never thought He could save heathens so easily till I saw it.' The effect of the revival was not only to strengthen faith and brighten hope in the power of the gospel, to humble satanic pride and to cleanse the moral leper; it gave a band of young men for the training college, whose 'hearts the Lord had touched.' After a few years of careful teaching and wise oversight catechists were sent out from Viwa for the distant islands who were godly men, powerful preachers, and examples to the people in industry and family life and training. The home of each catechist was a pattern for the village where he lived. Viwa has always been the poorer for all the purposes of town life and church work, because her best sons and daughters were sent out at that time to enrich other islands.

New hymns in the Fijian had to be prepared for congregational use. Their native

lyrics could be adapted to the *Te Deum*, the *Magnificat*, or any of the *Psalms*. Some of these first hymns, composed by Lyth, Watsford, and Hunt, will never go out of use. Hunt's free rendering of Charles Wesley's hymn, 'Jesu, Lover of my soul,' is an exquisite native poem, more tender, if possible, than the original. The widow of a minister, who had been away from Fiji for more than thirty years, when on her dying bed quoted the Fijian rendering of the hymn, saying, 'It is sweeter music to my soul than the English.' With many other fruits of literary industry, Hunt's hymns are mellow and sweet in the Fijian churches to-day. He lives in the vernacular Scriptures, the vernacular ministry, the theological textbooks, the hymn-book, and the transfigured lives of the people.

CHAPTER VII

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

HOLY living was a passion with Hunt, almost from the time of his conversion. The subject of Entire Sanctification was not a life-study only, but an embodiment of daily living. He was no mere demonstrator of the doctrine, but its living exemplification. The aromatic saintliness of his life is one of the most precious memories of the good man in Viwa. In his teaching the students found the germs of true wisdom, and in his life they found the elevating power of real goodness. There are many books on the subject of holiness. John Hunt's theology on that subject was the outcome of personal experience, by the light of the divine Word and close fellowship with the Holy Spirit. As a good preacher, he was often preaching to himself; and the fidelity with which he

used the search-light in his own heart gave him light and leading in trying to help others. He defines entire sanctification as including three things: First, entire purity of heart; secondly, the maturity of the Christian character; thirdly, all practical holiness—by which is meant a uniform attention to the claims of God and the duties we owe to ourselves and to all men. There were holy seasons, like the Sabbath and the religious festivals. There were holy places, like the tabernacle and the temple. There were holy things, like the vessels of the tabernacle and the ark. There were holy men, like the priests and the Levites. The common quality underlying all these is *consecration*—set apart from secular to religious purposes. What was partial in the Old Testament, and temporary, is made universal and permanent in the New Testament. Not the priests only, but all believers are to be holy. Every day is to be a Sabbath, and devotion is to diffuse itself through the whole life. ‘Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.’ Holiness was to be written upon the ‘bells of the horses’; daily business and domestic

life were to be shot through and through with integrity, with love and loyalty to God, and righteousness and truth towards all men.

Entire sanctification with Hunt meant the sanctification of everything. Sanctification presupposes repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, past sin blotted out in pardon; and the regenerating grace of a new life, with the witness of the Spirit to our adoption, will break the habit of sinning. All these are the fruits of the Spirit, but not in their maturity. The Christian character is still imperfect. The work of sanctification, though commenced in every faculty of the soul, is incomplete. The roots of evil have not been destroyed. Pride, envy, anger, the love of the world, unbelief, unconcern about the souls of others—*all* remains of the carnal mind, are contrary to the spirit of holiness and to the will of God. Pardon and purification are distinct blessings. One is the forgiveness of past sin, the other is the depravity we have inherited destroyed by the 'expulsive power of a new affection.' So we read, 'He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and

to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Hunt says, 'Seek to be cleansed from all sin, and never rest until you find what you seek.' This cleansing must be first an intense desire, then it will be a fervent prayer: 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.'

Purity of heart is the absence of sin, and brings clearness of spiritual perception. Isaiah tells us what we must do ourselves, as the condition of this cleansing. 'Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do well.' The only sin God never forgives is the sin which we never give up. The unpardonable sin is an incurably sinful condition. God helps the man who wills to get away from sin; therefore we read of the divine provision on God's part: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.' St. Paul gives us the very words of consecration:

'Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.' The power that cleanses is the Eternal Spirit, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. The words used in the Bible about cleansing refer to that which saturates the substance—not that only which washes the surface. Hunt guards this doctrine of Christian purity. It is not the absence of liability to sin. It is not absolute perfection; that belongs to God only. It is not perfection in wisdom and knowledge, not freedom from frailties and misconceptions, but the perfection of our love. It is a growth, beginning with our conversion or being in Christ. Its maturity is being like Christ. There must be a moment when sin is destroyed within us, and the new life is in full health. The old English word 'hallow' meant to restore to perfect wholeness of heart. It is our highest nature in full spiritual health or at its best for service. Hunt insists upon holiness as essential to usefulness and happiness, and being perfect in love is simply 'loving God with all the heart and mind and

soul and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves.'

The Fijians used to say that Hunt loved them more than he loved himself. There is nothing more wonderful in their recollections of his life on Viwa than their reverence for his saintliness. They cherish his memory as a man of the highest type, and one whose daily life illustrated his best teaching. They read the Bible in his life before they saw the printed book. With so few helps in the fellowship of English Christians, his successors have admired and tried to imitate the closeness of his fellowship with the divine. The echoes of his footsteps, as he walked and talked with God under the palms of Viwa, are still heard, and his favourite spots are holy places to those who cherish his memory. His grave has been the place of consecration to the young missionary on his arrival in the islands. He might look no longer for the mantle of Elijah; but if the mantle of John Hunt might fall upon him, his life would be diffused with the spirit of holiness, and his work would be honoured of God and crowned with success.

A letter written to the Rev. Francis Wilson of Tonga subordinates everything else to the subject that dominated Hunt's whole life. The letter is dated Viwa, September 11, 1845.

'MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

'I need not say I deeply sympathize with you, your dear wife, and the cause of God at Tonga, in your affliction. . . . Allow me, my dear brother, to direct your attention to a subject which is equally important to those who are ill or those who are well, the living or the dying, and which cannot therefore be out of place; I mean the subject of Entire Sanctification. I doubt not but you do think much upon the subject. There is one aspect under which it presents itself to me which is very encouraging, namely, that it makes an essential part of gospel salvation. Christ died that we might be entirely holy. He is a perfect Saviour, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. Faith, simple faith in Jesus, will help us to the efficacy of His blood, by which we are cleansed from all sin. It is by the same faith we shall receive that degree of the Spirit's grace necessary to

perfect our love to God and man. I like Mr. Wesley exceedingly in the latter part of his sermon, "On the Scripture way of Salvation" (a most appropriate title) especially these words, "Expect it by faith, expect it as you are, expect it now." The whole of paragraph eighteen is to me inestimable, but not more so than St. Paul, who, after he had prayed for the entire sanctification of the Thessalonians, declares, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." Again, that passage in Hebrews is delightfully encouraging: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works." The apostle's argument is triumphant. If the animal sacrifices under the Old Testament dispensation answered the purposes for which they were offered, which no one can deny, then shall not the blood of Christ effect all the purposes for which it was shed? Yes, thank God, it shall much more fully effect them all. One purpose was to purge our conscience from dead works. This expression perhaps would not show that Christ shed His blood to

cleanse us from all sin, or some people might limit its meaning; but who can limit the meaning of Eph. v. 25-27: "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blemish"? All the unbelief in the world cannot rob us of this blessed text. Jesus intends to cleanse us and fill us with His Spirit, that we shall be glorious even in His pure eyes. Glory be to God, He will fully fit you for Himself. Then, "to live is Christ and to die is gain." I will not refer to any other subject except just to say that the good work continues to prosper here in all its departments, and is becoming somewhat established as well as much extended. My dear wife joins in sympathy with you, who sympathized with her when in trouble. I should like much to see you. God bless you, my dear brother and sister. Accept the tear of sympathy,

'From yours very affectionately,

'JOHN HUNT.'

Such a letter to an afflicted brother missionary could only be written by one pure in heart and with a great *soul*.

One of his prayers is given in his book on *Entire Sanctification*—and the true inwardness of a man's life may be known from his prayers, especially when they are written for private use. The prayer reveals the man in God's presence.

The cleansing from sin ushered in a new life. He was conscious of the gift of heavenly strength in all his activities. It was not only deliverance from the bondage of sin, but power for service. The sufficiency of divine grace to transform character, and to give power with men when pleading for God, was not a theory, but an experience. Christ was to Him the Enabler, and made all things possible. This revelation changed the whole aspect of his work. It was the secret of his unfailing optimism. 'I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.' 'The Lord stood by me and gave me power' (2 Tim. iv. 17). This was the secret of St. Paul's enablement for his ministry, and it was the explanation of Hunt's missionary success. Holiness was

to him a religion of power. When he became a Christian, he saw what a vast work needed to be done before he was sanctified. When he obtained the power of holiness, he saw how much the indwelling Christ could do through him, in making him a blessing. It would be, not so much working for God, as God working through him. He was the sanctified vessel that God condescended to use. His whole life was lifted higher, and he had a divine vocation for the salvation of the degraded savages. The supreme evidences of Christianity to him were the experience of his own faith and practice, and the marvellous transformations made by grace abounding in the chief of sinners in such men as Verani. Miracles of grace were common events at that time in Viwa, and Christianity put a light into the face of heathens, when converted, that never shone there before. He was always having a good time. No happier man ever lived. The hardships and sufferings of missionary life were as nothing compared with the joy of service, the gladness of reaping in saved souls, which will be the crown of his rejoicing in the great 'Day of the Lord.' When Calvert

came from Bau on a Sunday morning, where all the people were still heathen, and his heart had been chilled by sneers and scornful words about the God he loved and served, he found Hunt as he passed the Viwa church in the midst of a red-hot revival. 'Brother Calvert,' he cried, 'come in and show these men the shortest way to Jesus and salvation.' He pointed to several notorious heathen warriors, prostrate on the floor, praying in very agony, and quivering with nervous excitement. Calvert replied, 'I am just from Bau, which is hell upon earth. The blasphemy of the heathen has made me shiver with cold. I have been shocked, and this is too sudden. It is from the north pole to the equator. I must go home and get my own heart warmed with prayer, then I will come and help you.' Hunt's only reply was, 'Hallelujah! several have got through,' and he went on with his prayer-meeting.

The nervous expenditure of such meetings was exhausting, and if on 'full stretch,' as he termed it, the strain was severe and began to tell upon a strong physical frame. Writing to his friends at home he says, 'We have now 1,730 in Society and 159 on trial for

membership. We have been very busy during the past year on the New Testament, which is now printed in the native language. This, as you may suppose, has cost some one a good deal of trouble. I hope we may have the Old Testament done in five or six years hence, if our life and health are spared. These things are little thought of by our friends at home. They know something of that part of our work which consists in visiting various places, preaching the gospel, and teaching schools; but they know of little that is done in the study—what hours of anxious thought spent in deciding the meaning of words and phrases, and how the Word of God is to be put into the language of the people without altering its meaning, or making it difficult for them to understand it. A pale face, a feverish state of the body, a mind almost distracted, and an appetite perhaps impaired, indicate that something severe has been going on behind the scenes. Thank God! He affords His aid, and then,

Labour is rest, and pain is sweet.'

About the same time he writes in his Journal about other missionaries as well as

himself. 'Our missionaries here are hard-working men, and men-of-all-work. They rise early and translate the Scriptures, or prepare other good books; they teach the natives useful arts, and guide them in all they do; one part of the day is devoted to native schools, and another to the schooling of their own children. They preach the gospel to all who will hear it, morning, noon, and night. They administer medicine to the sick, and settle disputes for all parties. They are consulted about every important enterprise, and have their hand in everything that is going on. They are lawyers, physicians, privy councillors, builders, agriculturists, and frequent travellers on the high seas in the frail native canoes. They are men

Whose path is on the mountain wave,
Whose home is on the deep.

They study hard that they may give a faithful translation of the Word of God—several of them daily read Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, for this end; besides their constant application to the perfecting of their knowledge in the native language, in which they

preach and converse daily, with ease and fluency. These things they do in the ordinary course of their daily labour as pastors of the flock of Christ; beside the oversight they are obliged to take of their own domestic affairs, where the busy housewife plies her care, and where the tedious natives crowd around.'

This is a word-picture of Hunt's common task and daily round. It also gives a sidelight upon the real helper who sustained him by sympathy and prayer, who inspired him with hope and joy, who comforted him in every sorrow, who understood his devotion to his work and was not exacting in attention to herself. The love in that home circle grew sweeter as the years sped away and the raven locks were touched with grey. A good wife was one of God's best gifts to John Hunt. Some of the finest heroines Methodism, or any other Church, ever produced were to be found in such noble women and fellow helpers as Mrs. Hunt, Mrs. Mary Calvert, and Mrs. R. B. Lyth. Too little has been said or written of the self-sacrifice, patient endurance, courage, and cheerful hopefulness of these wives of the pioneer

missionaries in the land of savages. They never held their husbands back from posts where duty called or danger threatened. They sent them forth in an atmosphere of sympathy, and shielded them by continual prayer and faith in God.

CHAPTER VIII

' IN JOURNEYINGS OFT '

AFTER his appointment as Chairman of the District, in addition to the distant places in his own circuit, Hunt had to visit the out-stations and distant islands like Rotuma. In the Viwa Circuit he had one hundred thousand people on the large island, Na Viti Levu. Three important centres required frequent visits and continual intercourse with the teachers in charge. One of these centres was sixty miles from Viwa, another was ninety, and the third one hundred and twenty. These places had to be visited in what he calls 'frail canoes.' When a small schooner was sometimes available, he had to be his own captain, with a native crew. It was never safe to sleep in the night, for the Fijian helmsman invariably tied the helm and went to sleep also, with all

his fellows in the hold of the vessel. Any person knowing the 'perils of the sea,' through which the early missionaries to Fiji were safely brought, will have no difficulty in believing in a special providence. That no one of those missionaries was drowned is cause for wonder and thankfulness. Some narrow escapes were experienced, and the workers could tell of wonderful providences.

During his first year of residence at Lakemba, when Dr. Langham was on a voyage, in a small schooner, to visit one of the distant islands in his circuit, the bumping of the vessel on the reef woke him up from his bed under an old sail, to find himself alone on the deck, with the tiller tied to the taffrail. The crew were fast asleep in the hold, but thinking they had all gone overboard to swim for the shore, and left him to perish, he leaped into the water to swim for his life. Fortunately one of the crew was awakened by the splash, and, running on deck, jumped into the sea to follow the missionary. The land was much farther away than it looked in the starlight, and Dr. Langham was soon exhausted. The

brave native youth was an expert swimmer, and bore up the missionary for several hours, as he struggled for the shore. With his last strength he carried his charge on shore, still alive, but very feeble. For several weeks Dr. Langham was nursed by the natives on that distant island before he could be placed on the deck of a canoe to be taken home. During all these weeks Mrs. Langham spent most of each day upon a little sugar-loaf hill, called Observation Point, looking out for a sail upon the horizon, and knowing nothing of the cause of the delay. The Rev. William Wilson was wrecked off the Island of Koro and was reported to be drowned, but he drifted to another island on a part of the canoe, and said, 'Man is immortal till his work is done.'

Bishop Patteson says, 'Mission work in the South Seas cannot be done in kid gloves and lawn sleeves.' Verani, the Christian chief of Viwa, frequently took Hunt in his own canoe around the circuit. He slept in Fijian huts and lived on Fijian food, and was often surrounded by the wildest savagism when on shore. He never longed for easy-chairs, or pined for dainties. He was always

cheerful, looking at the bright side of things, and seeing the humour of any ridiculous situation. There is a law of compensation. When a man leaves the comforts of home or its conveniences for the kingdom of God's sake, he has sweeter fellowship with the divine. He finds a deeper well and sweeter water than physical comforts can ever yield. All sense of personal danger is lost in the full assurance that between him and peril God spreads His broadest shield.

On the deck of the canoe, when becalmed, he had the opportunity for English reading. He always had good standard books with him, and his Journal of these many voyages testifies to his love of the best literature, as well as to the careful improvement of every opportunity. In visiting these infant churches, planted in the midst of cannibal savages, the commanding influence of a great personality was an immense advantage. His tall, manly figure made him a fit leader of a great national reformation. His strength, courage, and dignity compelled respect. To the average Fijian he was every inch a chief. To their superstitious fears, he had some reserve

of power in the God whose ambassador he was. Those who rejected his religion revered the man who loved them and proved himself to be their friend in sickness, and who was always a messenger of peace.

Preaching was only a small part of the work in visiting these out-sections of the large Viwa Circuit. Educational work was of great importance. The day schools for both children and adults had to be examined and the teachers encouraged by suggested improvements, or admonished if the results were not satisfactory. The candidates for baptism had to be met, and such as were eligible for church membership chosen with great care. The service for the baptism of adults was one of special importance and solemnity. Heathen marriages, where the wife had been purchased in childhood, and taken by force to her husband, were not recognized. The compact of Christian marriage was entered into where the women had only been the slaves of their husbands, and were henceforth to enjoy Christian home-life. The dignity of womanhood had to be taught. Polygamists who wished to enter the Christian Church selected the wife of

highest rank and set the others free. This involved no hardship or injustice to the liberated women. Through the prevalence of infanticide, practised only on *female* children, and chronic tribal wars, where the victims were often women and girls, men came to be in a large majority. The women, liberated from the tyranny of the harem, soon found husbands and homes of their own. Where children were concerned, the chief had the right of veto, in case the intended husband of his freed wife was not likely to take care of his children, or he could take them to his own home.

Polygamy was never tolerated in the Fijian Christian Church. Any sanction of it would have involved what was not only wrong in principle, but impolitic in practice. When the people were accepting the Christian religion in thousands, the visit of the missionary involved the joining of scores in marriage at one service. This service was made the opportunity for explaining what the New Testament taught of the relative duties of husband and wife, and of parents and children. The foundation principles

of Christian home life were clearly expounded from the Scriptures. Hunt sanctified every service of this sort by the ‘ Word of God and prayer.’ Home life had to be taught, not only in the light of the equality of the woman before God, but also by showing the rights of children and the duties of parents. Dutifulness in children was not expected in savage life. A great moral reformation required continual oversight in its development and practical working. Everything good in home and civil life had to be noticed and approved. The cultivation of sufficient food was urgently taught, and all useful industries were encouraged. From miles around the sick would come for medicine, and the travelling missionary had to modify suffering by healing ‘ all manner of diseases.’

Such visits were red-letter times for the infant churches and the people generally, but they were a heavy tax upon the patience and strength of the missionary. In the Journal numerous details of these visits are recorded, and they give many side-lights on his work.

‘ April 28, 1847. Kavula.—I made the necessary inquiries this morning respecting

those who had been preparing for baptism. In the afternoon I married two couples, baptized seventeen adults and two children, and preached from "I indeed baptize you with water," &c. I had a very bad headache, but that did not prevent a blessing.' Next morning he preached at daylight on 'Lovest thou Me?' Afterwards he met the Society and questioned them on their personal experience, and listened to several pleasing testimonies of changes 'grace had wrought.' Then he administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and 'found a special blessing as I explained the presence of Christ in the sacrament; which is real to every believer, though much perverted by the Papists. Of course it can only be a spiritual presence, for what else can be present to the spirit?' After attending to the sick and the schools he sailed away for Nairara, going through much the same round of work at that place. On May 4 he gets to Ba, late at night, where the chief had lately renounced heathenism. 'After taking refreshment we had some conversation and prayer and retired to rest. Perhaps a missionary owes it to the grace of God that

he is without fear under such circumstances, as he certainly does to His providence that he is quite safe. The Ba people have the worst characters of any in Fiji for cannibalism.’ The next morning he held a service in the house of the chief, when the household, consisting of eleven persons, embraced Christianity.

These extracts will be sufficient to show how the foundations of a native Christian church were being laid, with great care as to doctrine, character, and polity. Nothing has been a greater surprise to the missionaries who succeeded these pioneers than the wisdom of their plans and lines of development. Their successors had only to consolidate and extend a work begun on right principles of church life and growth. The education of the children was provided for in day and Sunday schools, and Christian home life was cultivated by the daily reading of the Scriptures and prayer. Regular attendance at Sabbath worship was required, and any one failing in Christian conduct was admonished by his fellows. The New Testament was the standard of doctrine and character.

After holding the Annual Synod Mr. Hunt was again on the wing. On this voyage he was the companion and confidential adviser of the Rev. Walter Lawry, the General Superintendent of Wesleyan Missions in the South Seas. The new mission ship *John Wesley*, on which they sailed, afforded comfortable accommodation, and was a contrast in every respect to the native canoe or island schooner, or even the *Triton*, which was the forerunner of mission vessels in the South Seas. Verani, the Christian chief of Viwa, was the pilot, and the purpose of the voyage was to select the best positions for two new mission stations on the Large Land (Vanua Levu). The negotiations with native chiefs were delicate and often difficult. They were jealous of letting their land go, as they often said, from under their feet, even when it was to be utilized for churches, schools for the education of their children, and for the residence of their own missionary. Great practical wisdom was required in the selection of suitable sites, or much expenditure might prove to be a waste of money. Bau and Nandi were the two stations fixed upon, with the best information that could

be obtained. Nandi has a history only of suffering and disaster. The Solevu chiefs were of higher rank, and were offended when their town was passed by in favour of an inferior tribe. Tribal wars made Nandi useless, and in a few years it was abandoned. While on this cruise Mr. Lawry writes, ‘ In the evening Mr. Hunt preached a thoroughly Wesleyan sermon on “ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,” &c. He poured forth thought upon thought, so just, so weighty, so original, so luminous, that I sat upon the deck, looking at this wonderful man with amazement and admiration. There was an energy and a simplicity about his appeals, all but overwhelming. The scene was altogether lovely : the setting sun, the cloud-capped mountains, the placid ocean, the listening crew and native teachers, and the intelligent, zealous preacher, from whom were coming forth “ rivers of living water,” united in giving effect to the occasion, and made me willing to ride upon the mountain wave, and feel at home upon the sea. “ This was none other than the house of God, this was the gate of heaven.” ’

Mr. Lawry, as General Superintendent,

was on an episcopal visit of inspection, and says, ' Everything takes from the Chairman, not a sombre hue, but a tinge of evergreen, a glow of life ; and giant strides are being made in every part of the Fijian work.' These testimonies show Mr. Hunt to have been one of the men, like Nehemiah, who count for thousands, who kindle enthusiasm and inspire others with their own zeal and devotion.

In June, 1848, Mr. Hunt is again upon the sea, on board H.M.S. *Calypto*. Captain Worth required his services as official interpreter in visiting various islands. Fijian missionaries have cheerfully given their help to ships of war, in translating for the officers the treaties into which the various Governments wished to enter with the native chiefs.

Mr. Hunt's voyage on the *Calypto* involved a journey overland, and the long walk in the heat of the sun was followed by exposure to the damp night air. He was chilled, and the cold, which in England would strike the throat or chest, strikes in Fiji the mucous membrane of the bowels. Repeated attacks of dysentery wore away

the strength of a fine constitution. He had the unremitting attention of his colleague Dr. Lyth. Intervals of relief were followed by repeated attacks, and the end drew near. When slightly better, he visited the schools, and tried to give his little strength to teaching the children when he could not preach to adults. He preached his last sermon at the mission house from the text ‘Praying in the Holy Ghost.’ It was an appropriate subject for a man who lived in the spirit of prayer. In the last analysis the source of power in spiritual work is God, and the power of God is given in answer to prayer. Missions in difficult fields and under adverse conditions have had large spiritual success, because the feebleness of man has necessitated prayer for divine power, and developed a faith that could remove mountains. Missionary success hinges upon prayer. It is the unlocking force that opens barred doors and inspires every true forward movement for the world’s conversion.

CHAPTER IX

EARLY AND TRIUMPHANT DEATH

How ought such a life to end? It was, comparatively, death at an early age. He was only thirty-six. He had crowded the work of a long life into ten short years. Some ripen for an early harvest. Some pioneer missionaries in the South Seas were honoured by a martyr's death. The noble Bishop Patteson was killed 'in revenge for wrongs suffered at the hands of white men, by savage natives whom he loved and for whom he had left home and country and friends dearer than his life.' John Williams fell under the clubs of the savages on Erromanga, to whom he was carrying the gospel of peace. Thomas Baker was killed by the cannibal mountaineers of Viti Levu (Great Fiji), and wears a martyr's crown. In the Martyrs' Memorial Church of Erromanga, under the

names of those who have fallen on that island, are the words, 'They hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus.' But the same epitaph may be written over other graves. All pioneer workers amongst treacherous, savage tribes hazard their lives. We must learn to honour the martyr spirit, and that spirit has been present in many to whom the honour of actual martyrdom never came. Some persons wish for sudden death, almost like translation ; to be spared lingering weakness with paroxysms of pain. Others shrink from that, and from the terrible shock which it must be to loved ones ; hence the prayer of the Liturgy, 'And from sudden death, good Lord, deliver us.'

Hunt's was a triumphant death, after a short but wasting illness. He prayed repeatedly for the Fijians and especially for the conversion of King Thakombau, who visited him as the end drew near, and was greatly affected. To Mrs. Hunt he said, 'I have had a fresh manifestation of the love of God. I bless the Lord. I see nothing but Jesus. He is my joy. I thought I should have entered heaven, singing Jesus and Salvation ! Now I shall enter singing,

Jesus, Salvation, and *Glory*, Eternal Glory ! 'Hallelujah !' he repeated twenty or thirty times, every time fainter till his voice was hushed.

Why was such a triumphant departure given to this pioneer missionary ? To the Fijian Christians it was a striking contrast to the death of the heathen, and a wonderful confirmation of the Christian religion. To die in a rapture of praise was a new light upon the shadowed valley. The happy death to John Hunt was specially given, not only to complete and crown a life of goodness, but to confirm the faith and brighten the hope of the infant churches. It was the gleam of light into the dark soul of King Thakombau. He said, 'I was first favourably impressed towards the Christian religion when I saw it made dying not only easy but triumphant.' To this day the death of John Hunt in the arms of his friend and colleague James Calvert is quoted in many a Fijian pulpit as evidence that the Christian religion lights up the dark valley and gives a good man a triumphant entrance into the Paradise of God. 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.' By

death, as truly as by life, they glorify God. Death sums up and completes the service. It is the forerunner of life, the forward movement in the infinite progression of the soul. They enter upon nobler service in a higher sphere. No one ever earned a better right to say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith,' &c., than John Hunt, the missionary hero and saint, who died at Viwa on October 4, 1848.

An iron monument and palisade mark the missionary's grave at Viwa. The Revs. John Polglase and Joel Bulu are buried near. The ground is holy in its memories and associations. It has been the shrine where succeeding missionaries have come to dedicate themselves for service and for consecration to holy living. From the grave of John Hunt they have gone forth to repeat his life of high and noble purpose.

CHAPTER X

TESTIMONIES TO CHARACTER AND USEFULNESS

A GREAT missionary is one of God's best gifts to His Church. The reflex influence of the life and work of John Hunt has kindled the missionary enthusiasm of British and American churches and deepened the religious experience of many hundreds of Christians. His power was in his entire consecration. He 'served the Lord fully.' He was 'full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom'—and therefore a magazine of spiritual forces. His missionary principles were well thought out and scriptural. He sought to found no exotic church, but one that would be native to the soil. He did not denationalize the Fijian, but made the cannibal into a Fijian Christian. No church can take root without a vernacular Bible and a vernacular ministry,

therefore he translated the Scriptures and trained the native pastor. His main power with the natives was love. He tried to see their difficulties, in the way of Christianity, with their eyes, and gave credit for whatever was good in the native religion, and then made clear to them wherein Christianity was supreme. He won their confidence and esteem by patience and forbearance.

His main hope was with the young. The real work of the school and lecture-hall is the hardest, but it is the most hopeful. The Indian proverb applies here: 'It is in the morning that the lotus opens to receive the light.' Anything is possible with a Fijian truly converted in youth.

He had ruddy health and buoyant spirits. He was favoured with good natural gifts and the genius of infinite patience, by which these were cultivated with diligence and perseverance, until he could do his best and finest work in the pulpit and with his pen. The Conference Obituary Notice says of him: 'He was a man of singular intellectual energy, of a piety which breathed the purest spirit of love to God and charity to man, of a patience which accumulated trials and

difficulties failed to move, and of a calmly fervent zeal, which in sickness and in health, in strength and in weakness, was always in pursuit of its one grand object, the salvation of man.'

Dr. Hannah, his revered tutor in theology, said of him: 'Grace called forth mind; that mind discovered unexpected energies; and these energies, under the guidance and blessing of the Lord the Spirit, yielded labours, the fruits of which shall not easily die. I never knew a man more right-hearted with respect to the great work of our Lord and Saviour. I never knew a man whose principles were more staid, whose zeal was more perpetually fed by charity, and who was more disposed to devote himself in every possible way to the advancement of his Master's praise. And although his life, in human estimation, may seem to have been cut short in the midst, yet in abundance of labours, and in extraordinary success, John Hunt lived a long life. He crowded the labours and successes of many years into ten; and, although he has passed away when we wished he might remain, I trust his example will yet live, and will yet operate.'

Another testimony must be given, that of his warm-hearted colleague, and a born revivalist, the Rev. John Watsford, whose visit to England in 1881, as representative of the Australasian Conference, will not soon be forgotten. He is the only survivor of these pioneer missionaries of Fiji. 'Hunt was a very holy man, so humble, so fully consecrated to God, and so earnest in his work. When he wrote his letters on Christian Perfection, so widely known and so highly valued, he wrote *his own life*. I heard those letters delivered as lectures, and a specially powerful influence was on all who heard them. As a preacher, I have never known his equal. His exposition of God's Word was so clear that in listening to him I felt greatly surprised that I had not before seen those truths that now appeared exceedingly plain and simple. His praying was indeed pleading with God. With mighty faith he laid hold of God's promises and wrestled until he prevailed. I shall never forget some seasons of prayer we had together, when the Lord very graciously revealed Himself to us. He was a diligent student. . . . By hard labour he had

acquired a good knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, which was invaluable to him in the work of translating. He was better acquainted with the Fijian language than any other missionary. As a translator all his brethren regarded him as their chief. When he was ill and it was feared he would die, the distress of every one was very great. I was at the special prayer-meeting held at Viwa to pray for his recovery, and I heard that wonderful prayer by Verani which has often been referred to. Telling the Lord what His servant had done, he cried, "If some one must go, Lord, take me, but spare Thy servant. If one will not do, take ten; and if ten are not enough, take twenty; only spare Thy servant, to do Thy work in Fiji." As the end drew near, Thakombau came to see the dying missionary, and was greatly affected. Well he might be, for Fiji was losing one of its best friends. Verani's prayer was not answered; Mr. Hunt died—died most triumphantly—died praying for Fiji, and *his* prayer has been answered, for to-day heathenism in Fiji is a thing of the past.'

The jubilee of missions in Fiji was cele-

brated in 1887. At the great central meeting at Suva, with the British Governor in the chair, one of the most interesting speakers was the Rev. John Faubula, the first Fijian to profess the Christian religion. His life was in danger from the heathen priests, who meant to kill him. He fled to Tonga, and remained there until he was appointed by the Australasian Conference as one member of the deputation. When called upon by the Governor of the Colony, he said: 'When I left Fiji I was the only one of my race to confess the Christian religion. Fiji was a dark and terrible land. I have returned to find all things new. I have travelled from island to island on my way to this seat of government at Suva. In my visits to towns once familiar as centres of cannibalism, I cannot find a heathen temple or a cannibal oven. I hear of no widow-strangling, nor can I discover a single Fijian who is still a declared heathen. Fiji has become a Christian country, and claims the protection of a Christian sovereign. Churches and schools are on the sites of heathen temples. The Bible and family prayer hallow our homes.'

James Calvert said, on his return from the

jubilee rejoicings, ' Fiji is a nation of Methodists.' An intelligent traveller and popular writer, Miss C. F. Gordon Cumming, says : ' Probably the whole world contains no whole nation of such simple, gentle Christians as the Fijians of 1884.' The reproductive power of Christianity is shown by the fact that nearly a hundred trained Fijians are missionaries in New Guinea, New Britain, and the Solomon Islands. The contributions of the Fijians to foreign missions during the past six years have averaged over £4,000 per year. They give not only their money, but their sons and daughters. The latest statistics, for the year ending March, 1904, give : Churches, 752 ; other preaching-places, 344 ; missionaries, 16 ; native ministers, 81 ; catechists and teachers, 1,076 ; local preachers, 3,084 ; class-leaders, 5,951 ; members, 36,205 ; on trial, 6,057 ; attendants on public worship, 88,345 ; Sunday scholars, 26,935.

' What hath God wrought ! ' ' Praise ye the Lord ! '