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THIRTY YEARS WITH SOUTH SEA CANNIBALS

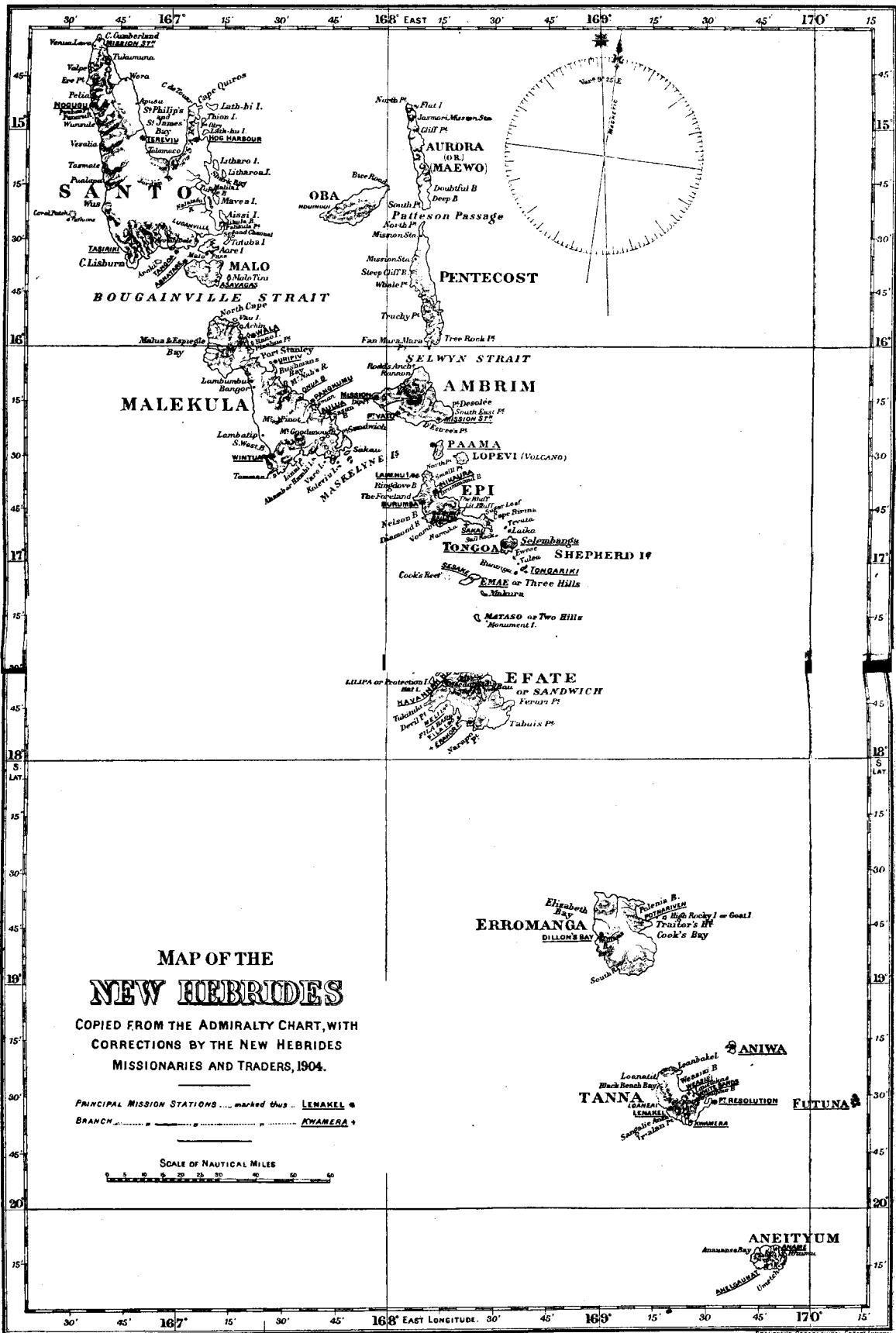
DR. J. G. PATON



THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF JOHN G. PATON

John G. Paton, D.D., Missionary
to the New Hebrides. An Auto-
biography. Edited by his brother,
the Rev James Paton, B.A. 6s. net

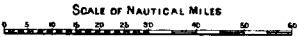




**MAP OF THE
NEW HEBRIDES**

COPIED FROM THE ADMIRALTY CHART, WITH
CORRECTIONS BY THE NEW HEBRIDES
MISSIONARIES AND TRADERS, 1904.

PRINCIPAL MISSION STATIONS ... marked thus - LEMAKEL ☉
BRANCH ... KWAMERA ☉



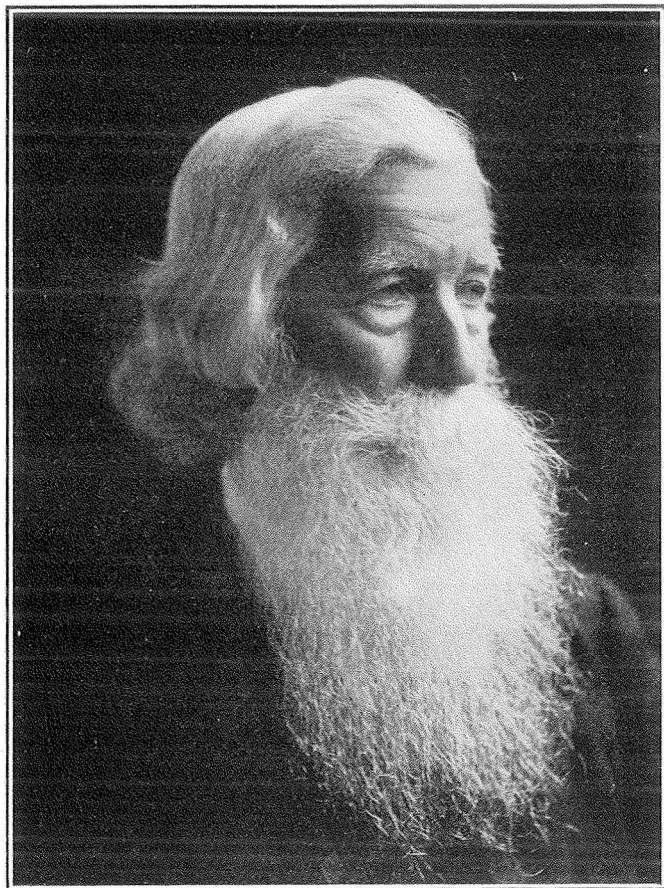


Photo by W. W. Winter, Derby.

John Paton.

THE STORY OF
DR. JOHN G. PATON'S
*Thirty Years with
South Sea Cannibals*

Edited by DR. JAMES PATON

Revised by A. K. LANGRIDGE

THIRD EDITION

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LIMITED LONDON

PREFACE

At the Centenary of Dr. J. G. Paton's birth on the 24th of May, 1924, it was deemed desirable that a New Edition of his *Life* brought up to date should be published. The need was held to be urgent ; and as Dr. John G. Paton's sons live in the Pacific, I was asked, as an old friend of the Missionary and of his brother, to undertake the task. The necessity for curtailing the size of the book rendered imperative the excision of some parts of the story. But those portions only have been omitted—or curtailed—that relate to the world-wide travels of the Missionary undertaken in the interests of the New Hebrides Mission. The rest is left as far as possible just as it came from the hands of his brilliant brother James, so as not to dim the lustre of a book that has become a Missionary classic. Nothing has been added except a brief account of the Missionary's later years, and of his passing to his great reward.

The Centenary Edition having become exhausted a third Edition is now published.

Colchester, Essex,
September, 1927.

A. K. LANGRIDGE.

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CHAPTER I

OUR HOME AND OUR FORBEARS

MY early days were all spent in the beautiful county of Dumfries, which Scotch folks call the Queen of the South. There, in a small cottage, on the farm of Braehead, in the parish of Kirkmahoe, I was born on the 24th May, 1824. My father, James Paton, was a stocking manufacturer in a small way; and he and his young wife, Janet Jardine Rogerson, lived on terms of warm personal friendship with the "gentleman farmer," so they gave me his son's name, John *Gibson*; and the curly-haired child of the cottage was soon able to toddle across to the mansion, and became a great pet of the lady there.

While yet a child, five years or so of age, my parents took me to a new home in the ancient village of Torthorwald, about four and a quarter miles from Dumfries, on the road to Lockerbie. At the time, Torthorwald was a busy and thriving village, and comparatively populous, with its cottars and crofters, large farmers and small farmers, weavers and shoemakers, cloggers and coopers, blacksmiths and tailors.

There, amid the wholesome and breezy village life, our parents found their home for the long period of forty years. There too were born to them eight additional children, making in all a family of five sons and six daughters. Theirs was the first of the thatched cottages on the left, past the "miller's house," going up the "village gate," with a small garden in front of it, and a large garden across the road; and it is one of the few still lingering to show to a new generation what the homes of their fathers were. The architect who planned that cottage had no ideas of art, but a fine eye for durability! It consists at present of three, but originally of four, pairs of "oak couples" (Scotticé *kipples*), planted like solid trees in the ground at equal intervals, and gently sloped inwards till

they meet or are "coupled" at the ridge, this coupling being managed not by rusty iron, but by great solid pins of oak. A roof of oaken wattles was laid across these, till within eleven or twelve feet of the ground, and from the ground upwards a stone wall was raised, as perpendicular as was found practicable, towards these overhanging wattles, this wall being roughly "pointed" with sand and clay and lime. Now into and upon the roof was woven and intertwined a covering of thatch, that defied all winds and weathers, and that made the cottage marvellously cosy.

Our home consisted of a "but" and a "ben" and a "mid room," or chamber, called the "closet." The one end was my mother's domain, and served all the purposes of dining-room, kitchen and parlour, besides containing two large wooden erections, called by our Scotch peasantry "box-beds"; not holes in the wall, as in cities, but grand, big, airy beds, adorned with many-coloured counterpanes, and hung with natty curtains, showing the skill of the mistress of the house. The other end was my father's workshop, filled with five or six "stocking frames," whirring with the constant action of five or six pairs of busy hands and feet, and producing right genuine hosiery for the merchants at Hawick and Dumfries. The "closet" was a very small apartment betwixt the other two, having room only for a bed, a little table, and a chair; with a diminutive window. This was the Sanctuary of that cottage home. Thither daily, and oftentimes a day, generally after each meal, we saw our father retire, and "shut to the door"; and we children got to understand by a sort of spiritual instinct (for the thing was too sacred to be talked about) that prayers were being poured out there for us, as of old by the High Priest within the veil in the Most Holy Place. We occasionally heard the pathetic echoes of a trembling voice pleading as if for life, and we learned to slip out and in past that door on tiptoe, not to disturb the holy colloquy. The outside world might not know, but we knew, whence came that happy light as of a new-born smile that always was dawning on my father's face: it was a reflection from the Divine Presence, in the consciousness of which he lived. Never, in temple or cathedral, on mountain or in glen, can I hope to feel that the Lord God is more near, more visibly

walking and talking with men, than under that humble cottage roof of thatch and oaken wattles. Though everything else in religion were by some unthinkable catastrophe to be swept out of memory, or blotted from my understanding, my soul would wander back to those early scenes, and shut itself up once again in that Sanctuary Closet, and, hearing still the echoes of those cries to God, would hurl back all doubt with the victorious appeal, "He walked with God, why may not I?"

My father's mother, Janet Murray, claimed to be descended from a Galloway family that fought and suffered for Christ's Crown and Covenant in Scotland's "killing time," and was herself a woman of a pronouncedly religious development. Her husband, our grandfather, William Paton, had passed through a roving and romantic career. Forced by a press-gang to serve on board a British man-of-war, he was taken prisoner by the French, and thereafter placed under Paul Jones, the pirate of the seas, and bore to his dying day the mark of a slash from the captain's sword across his shoulder for some slight disrespect or offence. Determining with two others to escape, the three were hotly pursued by Paul Jones's men. One, who could swim but little, was shot, and had to be cut adrift by the other two, who in the darkness swam into a cave and managed to evade their pursuers. In due time he found his way home to Dumfries, where he tackled bravely and wisely the duties of husband, father, and citizen for the remainder of his days.

My mother, Janet Rogerson, had for parents a father and mother of the Annandale stock. William Rogerson, her father, was one of many brothers, all men of uncommon strength and great force of character. His wife, Janet Jardine, was a girl of good position, the ward of two unscrupulous uncles who had charge of her small estate, near Langholm; and while attending some boarding school she fell devotedly in love with the tall, fair-haired gallant young blacksmith, William Rogerson. Her guardians, doubtless very properly, objected to the "connection"; but our young Lochinvar, with his six or seven stalwart brothers and other trusty "lads," all mounted, and with some ready tool in case of need, went boldly and claimed his bride, and she, willingly mounting at his side, was borne off in the light of open day, joyously

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married, and took possession of her "but and ben," as the mistress of the blacksmith's castle.

Her blacksmith lover proved not unworthy of his lady bride, and in old age found for her a quiet and modest home, the fruit of years of toil and hopeful thrift, their own little property, in which they rested and waited a happy end.

From such a home came our mother, Janet Jardine Rogerson, a bright-hearted, high-spirited, patient-toiling, and altogether heroic little woman; who, for about forty-three years, made and kept such a wholesome, independent, God-fearing, and self-reliant life for her family of five sons and six daughters, as constrains me, when I look back on it now, in the light of all I have since seen and known of others far differently situated, almost to worship her memory.

His marriage was on this wise. She had gone with her high spirits and breezy disposition to gladden, as their companion, the quiet abode of some grand or great-grand-uncle and aunt, familiarly named in all that Dal-swinton neighbourhood, "Old Adam and Eve." Their house was on the outskirts of the moor, and life for the young girl there had not probably too much excitement. But one thing had arrested her attention. She had noticed that a young stocking-maker from the "Brig End," James Paton, the son of William and Janet there, was in the habit of stealing alone into the quiet wood, book in hand, day after day, at certain hours, as if for private study and meditation. It was a very excusable curiosity that led the young bright heart of the girl to watch him devoutly reading and hear him reverently reciting Ralph Erskine's *Gospel Sonnets*, which he could say by heart sixty years afterwards, as he lay on his bed of death. Finally that curiosity awed itself into a holy respect, when she saw him lay aside his broad Scotch bonnet, kneel down under the sheltering wings of some tree, and pour out all his soul in daily prayers to God. As yet they had never spoken. What spirit moved her, let lovers tell—was it all devotion, or was it a touch of unconscious love kindling in her towards the yellow-haired and thoughtful youth? Or was there a stroke of mischief, of that teasing, which so often opens up the door to the most serious step in all our lives? Anyhow,

one day she quietly stole away his bonnet, and hung it on a branch near by, while his trance of devotion made him oblivious of all around; then, from a safe retreat, she watched and enjoyed his perplexity in seeking for and finding it! A second day this was repeated; but his manifest disturbance of mind, and his long pondering with the bonnet in hand, as if almost alarmed, seemed to touch another chord in her heart—that chord of pity which is so often the prelude of love, that finer pity that grieves to wound anything nobler or tenderer than ourselves. Next day, when he came to his accustomed place of prayer, a little card was pinned against the tree just where he knelt, and on it these words:—

“She who stole away your bonnet is ashamed of what she did; she has a great respect for you, and asks you to pray for her, that she may become as good a Christian as you.”

Staring long at that writing, he forgot Ralph Erskine for one day! Taking down the card, and wondering who the writer could be, he was abusing himself for his stupidity in not suspecting that someone had discovered his retreat and removed his bonnet, instead of wondering whether angels had been there during his prayer, when, suddenly raising his eyes, he saw in front of old Adam's cottage, through a lane amongst the trees, the passing of another kind of angel, swinging a milk-pail in her hand and merrily singing some snatch of old Scottish song. He knew, in that moment, by a Divine instinct, as infallible as any voice that ever came to seer of old, that she was the angel visitor that had stolen in upon his retreat—that bright-faced, clever-witted niece of old Adam and Eve, to whom he had never yet spoken, but whose praises he had often heard said and sung—“Wee Jen.” I am afraid he did pray “for her,” in more senses than one, that afternoon; at any rate, more than a Scotch bonnet was very effectually stolen; a good heart and true was there virtually bestowed, and the trust was never regretted on either side, and never betrayed.

Often and often, in the genial and beautiful hours of the autumn tide of their long life, have I heard my dear father tease “Jen” about her maidenly intentions in the stealing of that bonnet; and often have heard her quick mother-wit

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in the happy retort, that had his motives for coming to that retreat been altogether and exclusively pious, he would probably have found his way to the other side of the wood, but that men who prowled about the Garden of Eden ran the risk of meeting some day with a daughter of Eve!

CHAPTER II

PARENTS AND SCHOOL DAYS

SOMEWHERE in or about his seventeenth year, my father passed through a crisis of religious experience ; and from that day he openly and very decidedly followed the Lord Jesus.

Our place of worship was the Reformed Presbyterian Church at Dumfries. Dumfries was four miles fully from our Torthorwald home ; but the tradition is that during all these forty years my father was only thrice prevented from attending the worship of God—once by snow, so deep that he was baffled and had to return ; once by ice on the road, so dangerous that he was forced to crawl back up the Roucan Brae on his hands and knees, after having descended it so far with many falls ; and once by the terrible outbreak of cholera at Dumfries.

Each of us, from very early days, considered it no penalty, but a great joy, to go with our father to the church.

On the Lord's Day evenings, we had, too, special Bible Readings, mother and children and visitors reading in turns, with fresh and interesting question, answer, and exposition, all tending to impress us with the infinite grace of a God of love and mercy in the great gift of His dear Son Jesus, our Saviour. The Shorter Catechism was gone through regularly. It has been an amazing thing to me, occasionally to meet with men who blamed this "catechising" for giving them a distaste to religion ; every one in all our circle thinks and feels exactly the opposite. It laid the solid rock-foundations of our religious life. After-years have given to these questions and their answers a deeper or a modified meaning, but none of us has ever once even dreamed of wishing that we had been otherwise trained.

I must, however, leave the story of my father's life.

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His long and upright years made him a great favourite in all religious circles far and near within the neighbourhood. For the last twelve years or so of his life he became by appointment a sort of Rural Missionary for the four nearest parishes, and spent his autumn in literally sowing the good seed of the Kingdom as a Colporteur of the Tract and Book Society of Scotland. His happy partner, our beloved mother, died in 1865, and he himself in 1868, having reached his seventy-seventh year, an altogether beautiful and noble episode of human existence having been enacted, amid the humblest surroundings of a Scottish peasant's home, through the influence of their united love by the grace of God; and in this world, or in any world, all their children will rise up at mention of their names and call them blessed!

In my boyhood, Torthorwald had one of the grand old typical Parish Schools of Scotland. My teacher punished severely—rather, I should say, savagely—especially for lessons badly prepared. Yet, that he was in some respects kindly and tender-hearted, I had the best of reasons to know.

When still under twelve years of age, I started to learn my father's trade. We wrought from six in the morning till ten at night, with an hour at dinner-time and half an hour at breakfast and again at supper. These spare moments every day I devoutly spent on my books, chiefly in the rudiments of Latin and Greek; for I had given my soul to God, and was resolved to aim at being a Missionary of the Cross, or a Minister of the Gospel. Yet I gladly testify that what I learned of the stocking frame was not thrown away; the facility of using tools and of watching and keeping the machinery in order, came to be of great value to me in the Foreign Mission Field.

One incident of this time I must record here, because of the lasting impression made upon me. Our family, like all others of peasant rank in the land, were plunged into deep distress, and felt the pinch severely, through the failure of the potato, the badness of other crops, and the ransom-price of food. Our father had gone off with work to Hawick, and would return next evening with money and supplies; but meantime the meal barrel ran low, and our dear mother, too proud and too sensitive to let anyone know, or to ask aid from any quarter, coaxed

us all to rest, assuring us that she had told God everything, and that He would send us plenty in the morning. Next day, with the carrier from Lockerbie, came a present from her father, who, knowing nothing of her circumstances or of this special trial, had been moved of God to send at that particular nick of time a love-offering to his daughter, such as they still send to each other in those kindly Scottish shires—a bag of new potatoes, a stone of the first ground meal or flour, or the earliest home-made cheese of the season—which largely supplied all our need. My mother, seeing our surprise at such an answer to her prayers, took us around her knees, thanked God for His goodness, and said to us :

“ O my children, love your Heavenly Father, tell Him in faith and prayer all your needs, and He will supply your wants so far as it shall be for your good and His glory.”

Perhaps, amidst all their struggles in rearing a family of eleven, this was the hardest time they ever had, and the only time they ever felt the actual pinch of hunger ; for the little that they had was marvellously blessed of God, and was not less marvellously utilised by that noble mother of ours, whose high spirit, side by side with her humble and gracious piety, made us, under God, what we are to-day.

I saved as much at my trade as enabled me to go for six weeks to Dumfries Academy ; this awoke in me again the hunger for learning, and I resolved to give up that trade and turn to something that might be made helpful to the prosecution of my education. An engagement was secured with the Sappers and Miners, who were mapping and measuring the county of Dumfries in connection with the Ordnance Survey of Scotland. I was promised promotion in the service, and special training in Woolwich at the Government's expense, on condition that I would sign an engagement for seven years. Thanking the Lieutenant most gratefully for this kind offer, I agreed to bind myself for three years or four, but not for seven.

Excitedly he said, “ Why ? Will you refuse an offer that many gentlemen's sons would be proud of ? ”

I said, “ My life is given to another Master, so I cannot engage for seven years.”

He asked sharply, “ To whom ? ”

I replied, “ To the Lord Jesus ; and I want to prepare

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as soon as possible for His service in the proclaiming of the Gospel."

In great anger he sprang across the room, called the paymaster, and exclaimed, "Accept my offer, or you are dismissed on the spot!"

I answered, "I am extremely sorry, but to bind myself for seven years would probably frustrate the purpose of my life; and though I am greatly obliged to you, I cannot make such an engagement."

His anger made him unwilling or unable to comprehend my difficulty; the drawing instruments were delivered up, I received my pay, and departed without further parley. Hearing how I had been treated, and why, Mr. Maxwell, the Rector of Dumfries Academy, offered to let me attend all classes there, free of charge, so long as I cared to remain; but that, in lack of means of support, was for the time impossible, as I would not and could not be a burden on my father, but was determined rather to help him in educating the rest. I went therefore to what was known as the Lamb Fair at Lockerbie, and for the first time in my life took a "fee" for the harvest. On arriving at the field when shearing and mowing began, the farmer asked me to bind a sheaf; when I had done so, he seized it by the band, and it fell to pieces! Instead of disheartening me, however, he gave me a careful lesson how to bind. The second that I bound did not collapse when shaken, the third he pitched across the field, and on finding that it still remained firm, he cried to me cheerily:

"Right now, my lad; go ahead!"

It was hard work for me at first, and my hands got very sore; but this experience came to be valuable to me, when, in after days and other lands, Mission buildings had to be erected, and garden and field cropped and cultivated without the aid of a single European hand.

CHAPTER III

LEAVING HOME AND EARLY STRUGGLES

BEFORE going to my first harvesting, I had applied for a situation in Glasgow, apparently exactly suited for my case. An offer of £50 per annum had been made by the West Campbell Street Reformed Presbyterian Congregation, for a young man to act as district visitor and tract distributor, especially amongst the absentees from the Sabbath School ; with the privilege of receiving one year's training at the Free Church Normal Seminary. Immediately on the close of the harvesting experience, a letter arrived, intimating that I and another had been put upon the short list, and that both were requested to appear in Glasgow on a given day and compete for the appointment.

Two days thereafter I started out from my quiet country home on the road to Glasgow. Literally "on the road," for from Torthorwald to Kilmarnock—about forty miles—had to be done on foot, and thence to Glasgow by rail. Railways in those days were as yet few, and coach-travelling was far beyond my purse. A small bundle contained my Bible and all my personal belongings. Thus was I launched upon the ocean of life.

My father walked with me the first six miles of the way. His counsels and tears and heavenly conversation on that parting journey are fresh in my heart as if it had been but yesterday ; and tears are on my cheeks as freely now as then, whenever memory steals me away to the scene. For the last half-mile or so we walked on together in almost unbroken silence—my father, as was often his custom, carrying hat in hand, while his long, flowing yellow hair (then yellow, but in later years white as snow) streamed like a girl's down his shoulders. His lips kept moving in silent prayers for me ; and his tears fell fast when our eyes met each other in looks for which all speech was vain ! We halted on reaching the appointed parting-place ; he

grasped my hand firmly for a minute in silence, and then solemnly and affectionately, said :

“ God bless you, my son ! Your father’s God prosper you, and keep you from all evil ! ”

Unable to say more, his lips kept moving in silent prayer ; in tears we embraced, and parted. I went on and, when about to turn a corner in the road where he would lose sight of me, I looked back and saw him still standing with head uncovered where I had left him—gazing after me. Waving my hat in adieu, I was soon round the corner and out of sight. But my heart was too full and sore to carry me farther, so I darted into the side of the road and wept for a time. Then, rising up cautiously, I climbed the dyke to see if he yet stood where I had left him ; and just at that moment I caught a glimpse of him climbing the dyke and looking out for me ! He did not see me, and after he had gazed eagerly in my direction for a while he got down, set his face towards home, and began to return—his head still uncovered, and his heart, I felt sure, still rising in prayers for me. I watched through blinding tears, till his form faded from my gaze ; and then, hastening on my way, vowed deeply and oft, by the help of God, to live and act so as never to grieve or dishonour such a father and mother as He had given me. The appearance of my father, when we parted—his advice, prayers and tears—the road, the dyke, the climbing up on it and then walking away, head uncovered—have often, all through life, risen vividly before my mind, and do so now while I am writing, as if it had been but an hour ago. In my earlier years particularly, when exposed to many temptations, his parting form rose before me as that of a guardian angel.

I reached Glasgow on the third day. Buoyant and full of hope and looking up to God for guidance, I appeared at the appointed hour before the examiners, as did also the other candidate ; and they having carefully gone through their work, asked us to retire. When recalled, they informed us that they had great difficulty in choosing, and suggested that the one of us might withdraw in favour of the other, or that both might submit to a more testing examination. Neither seemed inclined to give it up, both were willing for a second examination ; but the patrons made another suggestion. They had only £50 per annum

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to give; but if we would agree to divide it betwixt us, and go into one lodging, we might both be able to struggle through; they would pay our entrance fees at the Free Normal Seminary, and provide us with the books required; and perhaps they might be able to add a little to the sum promised to each of us. By dividing the mission work appointed, and each taking only the half, more time also might be secured for our studies. We at once accepted this proposal, and got on famously together.

As our fellow-students at the Normal were all far advanced beyond us in their education, we found it killing work, and had to grind away incessantly, late and early. Both of us, before the year closed, broke down in health; partly by hard study, but principally, perhaps, for lack of nourishing diet. A severe cough seized upon me; I began spitting blood, and a doctor ordered me at once home to the country and forbade all attempts at study. My heart sank; it was a dreadful disappointment, and to me a bitter trial. Soon after, my companion, though apparently much stronger than I, was similarly seized. He, however, never entirely recovered.

After a short rest, nourished by the hill air of Torthorwald and by the new milk of our family cow, I was before long at work again. I then began to teach a small school at Girvan, and gradually recovered my health.

Having saved £10 by my teaching, I returned to Glasgow, and was enrolled as a student at the College; but before the session was finished my money was exhausted. Only nine shillings remained in my purse. I had been disappointed in attempting to secure private tuition; and no course seemed open for me, except to pay what little I owed, give up my college career, and seek for teaching or other work in the country. I wrote a letter to my father and mother, informing them of my circumstances, but could not post it. I then locked my room door and went out to find a place where I might sell my books, and hold on a few weeks longer. Passing through one short street into another, I marched on mechanically; but the Lord God of my father was guiding my steps, all unknown to me.

A notice in a window caught my eye, to this effect: "Teacher wanted, Maryhill Free Church School; apply to the Manse." A coach was just passing, I leapt into it;

saw the Minister, arranged to undertake the school, returned to Glasgow, paid my landlady's lodging score, tore up that letter to my parents and wrote another full of cheer and hope; and early next morning entered the School and began a tough and trying job. The Minister warned me that the School was a wreck, and had been broken up, chiefly by coarse and bad characters from mills and coal-pits, who attended the evening classes. They had abused several masters in succession; and, laying a thick and heavy cane on the desk, he said:

"Use that freely, or you will never keep order here!"

I put it aside into the drawer of my desk, saying, "That will be my last resource."

There were very few scholars for the first week—about eighteen in the Day School and twenty in the Night School. The clerk of the mill, a good young fellow, came to the evening classes, avowedly to learn book-keeping, but privately he said he had come to save me from personal injury.

The following week, a young man and a young woman began to attend the Night School, who showed from the first moment that they were bent on mischief. On my repeated appeals for quiet and order, they became the more boisterous, and gave great merriment to a few of the scholars present. I finally urged the young man, a tall, powerful fellow, to be quiet or at once to leave, declaring that at all hazards I must and would have perfect order; but he only mocked at me, and assumed a fighting attitude. Quietly locking the door and putting the key in my pocket, I turned to my desk, armed myself with the cane, and dared anyone at his peril to interfere betwixt us. It was a rough struggle—he smashing at me clumsily with his fists, I with quick movements evading and dealing him blow after blow with the heavy cane for several rounds—till at length he crouched down at his desk, exhausted and beaten, and I ordered him to turn to his book, which he did in sulky silence. Going to my desk, I asked them to inform all who wished to come to the School that if they came for education, everything would be heartily done that it was in my power to do; but that any who wished for mischief had better stay away, as I was determined to secure order and silence, whatever it might cost. Further, I assured them that that cane would

not again be lifted by me, if kindness and forbearance on my part could possibly gain the day. At these words silence fell on the School; everyone buried face diligently in book; and the evening closed in uncommon quiet and order.

The attendance grew, till the School became crowded, both during the day and at night. During the mid-day hour I had a large class of young women who came to improve themselves in writing and arithmetic. By and by the cane became a forgotten implement.

The School Committee had promised me at least ten shillings per week, and guaranteed to make up any deficit if the fees fell short of that sum; but if the income from fees exceeded that sum, all was to be mine. Affairs went on prosperously for a season; indeed, too much so for my selfish interest. The Committee took advantage of the large attendance and better repute of the School, to secure the services of a master of the highest grade. The parents of many of the children offered to take and seat a hall, if I would remain, but I knew too well that I had neither education nor experience to compete with an accomplished teacher.

Once more I committed my future to the Lord God of my father, assured that in my very heart I was willing and anxious to serve Him and to follow the blessed Saviour, yet feeling keenly that intense darkness had again enclosed my path.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE GLASGOW SLUMS

BEFORE undertaking the Maryhill School, I had applied to be taken on as an agent in the Glasgow City Mission; and the very night before I had to leave Maryhill I received a letter from the Superintendent of the Mission, saying that the Directors had kept their eyes on me since my application, and requesting, as they understood I was leaving the School, that I would appear before them the next morning, and have my qualifications for becoming a City Missionary examined into. Praising God, I went off at once, passed the examination successfully, and was appointed to spend two hours that afternoon and the following Monday in visitation with two of the Directors, calling at every house in a low district of the town, and conversing with all the characters encountered there. I had also to preach a "trial" discourse in a Mission meeting, where a deputation of Directors would be present. I went through with it; and on the fifth day after leaving the School a meeting of Directors informed me that I had passed my trials successfully, and that they had unanimously resolved to receive me as one of their City Missionaries. I left that meeting praising God for all His undeserved mercies, and seeing most clearly His gracious Hand in all the way by which He had led me, and the trials by which He had prepared me for this sphere of service.

I found the district a very degraded one. In it were congregated many avowed infidels and drunkards—living together and associated for evil, but apparently without any effective counteracting influence. In many of its closes and courts sin and vice walked about openly—naked and *not* ashamed.

After nearly a year's hard work, I had only six or seven non-churchgoers, who had been led to attend regularly,

besides about the same number who met on a week evening.

By and by, however, meetings and classes were both too large for any house that was available for us in the whole of our district. My work now occupied every evening of the week ; and I had two meetings every Sabbath.

Then came another crisis in a notice to quit the hay-loft where we met. But again help was at hand. A block of buildings at the foot of Green Street that had been used as a church and schools came into the market. It was purchased and handed over for the work.

Availing myself of the increased facilities, the work was reorganised. On Sabbath morning, at seven o'clock, I had one of the most deeply interesting and fruitful of all my classes for the study of the Bible. It was attended by from seventy to a hundred of the very poorest young women and lads of the district. Soon the poorest began to improve in personal appearance ; they gradually got shoes and one bit of clothing after another, to enable them to attend our other meetings, and then to go to the church ; and, above all, they eagerly sought to bring others with them, taking a deep personal interest in all the work of the Mission. My delight in that Bible Class was among the purest joys in all my life, and the results were amongst the most certain and precious of all my Ministry.

Of course there was opposition. On one occasion we had arranged for a special Saturday afternoon Temperance demonstration, and a deputation of publicans complained beforehand to the Captain of the Police that our meetings were interfering with their legitimate trade. The Captain happened to be in full sympathy with us and our work. He informed me of the complaints made, and intimated that his men would be present ; but I was just to conduct the meeting as usual, and he would guarantee that strict justice would be done. The publicans having announced amongst their sympathisers that the police were to break up and prevent our meeting and take the conductors in charge, a very large crowd assembled " to see the fun," and to help in " baiting " the Missionary. Punctually, I ascended the stone stair, and announced our opening hymn. As we sang, a company of police appeared. Our enemies were jubilant, and signals were passed betwixt them and their friends, as if the time had come to provoke

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a row. Before the hymn was finished, Captain Baker himself, to the surprise of friend and foe alike, joined us on the platform, devoutly listened to all that was said, and waited till the close. The publicans could not for very shame leave, while he was there at their suggestion and request, though they had wit enough to perceive that his presence had frustrated all their sinister plans. They had to hear our addresses and prayers and hymns, and they had to listen to the intimation of our future meetings. When all had quietly dispersed, the Captain warmly congratulated us on our large and well-conducted congregation, and hoped that good great would result from our efforts.

I do not stay to mention the opposition from the drinking clubs and other quarters, nor the encouragement of many cases of conversion among the degraded and apparently hopeless people who lived in the district

Happy in my work as I felt through these ten years, and successful by the blessing of God, yet I continually heard, and chiefly during my last years in the Divinity Hall, the wail of the perishing heathen in the South Seas ; and I saw that few were caring for them, while I well knew that many would be ready to take up my work in Calton, and carry it forward perhaps with more efficiency than myself. Without revealing the state of my mind to any person, this was the supreme subject of my daily meditation and prayer ; and this also led me to enter upon those medical studies, in which I purposed taking the full course ; but at the close of my third year, an incident occurred, which led me at once to offer myself for the Foreign Mission field.

CHAPTER V

MISSIONARY TO THE CANNIBALS

THE Reformed Presbyterian Church, in which I had been brought up, had been advertising for a Missionary for the New Hebrides. None offered, and a cloud of sadness appeared to fall over the church synod.

Again and again it flashed through my mind, "Since none better qualified can be got, offer yourself"; but I deliberated and prayed for a time. I was keenly solicitous about the effect upon the hundreds of young people and others attached to my classes and meetings; and yet I felt a growing assurance that this was the call of God, and that He who was willing to employ me in the work abroad, was both able and willing to provide for the on-carrying of my work at home. My medical studies, as well as my literary and divinity training, had specially qualified me in some ways for the Foreign field, and from every aspect at which I could look the whole facts in the face, the voice within me sounded like a voice from God.

At length I called on Dr. Bates and offered myself for the New Hebrides Mission! I returned to my lodging with a lighter heart than I had for some time enjoyed, feeling that nothing so clears the vision, and lifts up the life, as a decision to move forward in what you know to be entirely the will of the Lord. I said to my fellow-student, Joseph Copeland, who had chummed with me all through our course at college, "I have been away signing my banishment; I have offered myself as a Missionary for the New Hebrides."

After a long and silent meditation, in which he seemed lost in thought, his answer was, "If they will accept of me, I am also resolved to go!"

A few minutes later his letter of offer was in the post.

Next morning Dr. Bates called upon us early, and after a long conversation, commended us and our future work

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to the Lord God in fervent prayer. At a meeting of the Foreign Missions Committee, held immediately thereafter, both of us were formally accepted, on condition that we passed successfully the usual examinations required of candidates for the Ministry. And for the next twelve months we were placed under a special committee for advice as to medical experience, acquaintance with the rudiments of trades, and anything else which might be thought useful to us in the Foreign field.

When it became known that I was preparing to go abroad as Missionary, nearly all were dead against the proposal, except Dr. Bates and my fellow-student. My dear father and mother, however, when I consulted them, characteristically replied, "That they had long since given me away to the Lord, and in this matter also would leave me to God's disposal." From other quarters we were besieged with the strongest opposition on all sides. The house connected with my Green Street Church was offered to me for a manse, and any reasonable salary that I cared to ask (as against the promised £120 per annum for the far-off and dangerous New Hebrides), on condition that I would remain at home. But this only tended to confirm my determination that the path of duty was to go abroad.

Amongst many who sought to deter me, was one dear old Christian gentleman, whose crowning argument always was, "The Cannibals! you will be eaten by Cannibals!" At last I replied, "Mr. Dickson, you are advanced in years now, and your own prospect is soon to be laid in the grave, there to be eaten by worms; I confess to you, that if I can but live and die serving and honouring the Lord Jesus, it will make no difference to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or by worms."

The old gentleman, raising his hands in a deprecating attitude, left the room exclaiming, "After that I have nothing more to say!"

On the 1st of December, 1857—being then in my thirty-third year—the other Missionary-designate and I were "licensed" as preachers of the Gospel, and on the 16th April of the following year, we left the Tail of the Bank at Greenock, and set sail in the *Clutha* for the Pacific.

We received a kindly welcome on arrival at Melbourne. My young wife and I went with friends to stay for a few days at Geelong, while Mr. Copeland watched for some

opportunity of reaching our destination in the New Hebrides. He heard that an American ship the *Francis P. Sage*, was sailing for Penang, and an agreement was entered into that, *en route*, we should be landed at Aneityum, the southernmost island of the New Hebrides group. We got on board on the 12th August, but such a gale blew that we did not sail till the 17th. The voyage was most disagreeable to all of us, but fortunately it lasted only twelve days.

I ought here to explain the reason for our landing on the island of Aneityum. This involves a brief glance backward over the story of the Mission. The New Hebrides group of islands were first fully discovered and charted by the famous English Captain Cook. In 1839 efforts were made by the London Missionary Society to evangelise the group. On landing at the island of Erromanga, John Williams and his young Missionary companion, Harris, were instantly clubbed to death and eaten by the cannibals. Samoan teachers followed in the desperate enterprise, and many shared the same fate as the British pioneers. In 1842 other two Missionaries, Messrs. Turner and Nisbet, landed on the island of Tanna—some forty miles south of Erromanga. In less than seven months, after sufferings and dangers innumerable, these two brave pioneers and their wives escaped with bare life; and subsequently other Samoan teachers ventured, but largely in vain.

In 1848 the Rev. John Geddie and his wife from Nova Scotia settled on the southernmost island of Aneityum. In spite of incredible hardships and incessant dangers from the fierce cannibals, and opposition from godless white traders, they held on; and after years of patient toil and suffering a few of the Islanders gathered about them for instruction. Four years later the Rev. John Inglis and his wife, from Scotland, were landed on the other side of the island; and through the combined efforts of these two gallant pioneers the cannibals were won from their gross heathenism, and Aneityum became the base of operations for winning the whole group for Christ.

CHAPTER VI

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF HEATHENDOM

THE landing on Aneityum proved to be no easy task, largely owing to the extraordinary conduct of the Captain of the *F. P. Sage* in refusing to land us in his own boats. We had perforce to wait for the little Mission vessel, the *John Knox*, and another vessel, the *Columbia*. On sheering off from the *F. P. Sage*, one of her davits caught and broke the mainmast of the little *John Knox* by the deck. I saved my wife from being crushed to death by its fall, through managing to swing her instantaneously aside in an apparently impossible manner. The *John Knox*, already overloaded, was thus quite disabled; we were about ten miles at sea, and in imminent danger; but the captain of the *F. P. Sage* heartlessly sailed away, and left us to struggle with our fate.

As God mercifully ordered it, though we had a stiff trade wind to pull against, we had a comparatively calm sea; yet we drifted still to leeward, till other boats with their willing native crews, got fastened to our schooner, and to our great joy she began to move ahead. After pulling for hours under the scorching rays of a tropical sun, we were all safely landed on shore at Aneityum, about six o'clock in the evening of 30th August, just four months and fourteen days since we sailed from Greenock. We got a hearty welcome from the Missionaries and from the Christian natives of Aneityum.

Soon thereafter, a conference was held to consult and decide as to the island to which we should sail to take up our work. It was settled that the Island of Tanna—the next large island to Aneityum and about sixty miles distant—should be our point of attack. My station to be at Port Resolution, if the savages would permit us to land and sell us a site for the Mission House; and my fellow Missionary and his wife from Nova Scotia (Mr. and

Mrs. Mathieson) to be settled on the opposite side of the same island.

Tanna had an evil reputation. As the savages had driven away the two British Missionaries and had killed Samoan teachers, it was considered prudent that our wives should remain on Aneityum until we had seen if the cannibals would agree to our coming. Mr. Inglis kindly sailed with us on the hazardous venture.

My first impressions drove me, I must confess, to the verge of utter dismay. On beholding these natives in their paint and nakedness and misery, my heart was as full of horror as of pity. Had I given up work in Glasgow, with so many delightful associations, to consecrate my life to these degraded creatures? Was it possible to teach them right and wrong, to Christianise, or even to civilise them? But that was only a passing feeling.

To the Tannese, Dr. Inglis and I were objects of curiosity and fear. Party after party of armed men going and coming in a state of great excitement, we were informed that war was on foot; but our Aneityumese teachers were told to assure us that the Harbour people would only act on the defensive, and that no one would molest us at our work. One day two hostile tribes met near; high words arose, and old feuds were revived; the inland people withdrew; but the harbour people, false to their promises, flew to arms and rushed past us in pursuit of their enemies. The discharge of muskets in the adjoining bush, and the horrid yells of the savages, soon informed us that they were engaged in deadly fights. Excitement and terror were on every countenance; armed men rushed about in every direction, with feathers in their twisted hair—with faces painted red, black, and white, and some, one cheek black, the other red; others, the brow white, the chin blue—in fact, any colour and on any part—the more grotesque and savage-looking, the higher the art! The women and children rushed to places of safety.

In the afternoon, as the sounds of the muskets and the yelling of the warriors came unpleasantly near to us, we retired to a native house that had been temporarily granted to us for rest, and there pled before God for them all. The noise and the discharge of muskets gradually receded, as if the inland people were retiring; and towards evening the people around us returned to their villages. We were

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afterwards informed that five or six men had been shot dead ; that their bodies had been carried by the conquerors from the field of battle, and cooked and eaten that very night at a boiling spring near the head of the bay, less than a mile from the spot where my house was being built. When our tea was wanted next morning, a boy who came with us could not be found. After a while of great anxiety on our part, he returned, saying, " Missi, this is a dark land. The people of this land do dark works. At the boiling spring they have cooked and feasted upon the slain. They have washed the blood into the water ; they have bathed there, polluting everything. I cannot get pure water to make your tea. What shall I do ? "

It not a little astonished us to see that the boy regarded their killing and eating each other as a thing scarcely to be noticed, but that it was horrible that they should spoil the water !

CHAPTER VII

SETTLEMENT AND SORROW ON TANNA

HAVING secured and purchased a site for our house, we returned to Aneityum for our wives and our belongings. Our Missionary schooner, the *John Knox*, being too small, we took advantage of a trader to convey our goods from Aneityum to Tanna. The captain kindly offered to take us and about thirty casks and boxes to Port Resolution for £5, which we gladly accepted. After a few hours' sailing, we landed on the 5th November, 1858.

We found the people to be literally naked and painted savages; they were at least as destitute of clothing as Adam and Eve after the Fall, when they sewed fig-leaves for a girdle; and even more so, for the women wore only a tiny apron of grass, in some cases shaped like a skirt or girdle, the men an indescribable affair like a pouch or bag, and the children absolutely nothing whatever!

At first they came in crowds to look at us, and at everything we did or had. We knew nothing of their language; we could not speak a single word to them, nor they to us. One day I observed two men, the one lifting up one of our articles to the other, and saying, "Nungsi nari enu?"

I concluded that he was asking, "What is this?" Instantly, lifting up a piece of wood, I said, "Nungsi nari enu?"

They smiled and spoke to each other. Then they told me their name for the thing which I had pointed to. I found that they understood my question, What is this? or, What is that? and that I could now get from them the name of things around us! We carefully noted down every name they gave us, spelling all phonetically, and also every strange sound we heard from them; thereafter, by painstaking comparison of different circumstances, we tried to ascertain their meanings, testing our own guess by again cross-questioning the natives. One day I saw

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two men approaching, when one, who was a stranger, pointed to me with his finger, and said, "Se nangin?"

Concluding that he was asking my name, I pointed to one of them with my finger, and looking at the other, inquired, "Se nangin?"

They smiled, and gave me their names. We were now able to get the names of persons and things, and so our ears got familiarised with the distinctive sounds of their language; and being always keenly on the alert, we made extraordinary progress in attempting bits of conversation and in reducing their speech for the first time to a written form—for the New Hebrideans had no literature, and not even the rudiments of an alphabet. I began to hire some of the more intelligent lads and men to sit and talk with us, and answer our questions about names and sounds; but they so often deceived us, and we, doubtless, misunderstood them so often, that this course was not satisfactory, till after we had gained some knowledge of their language and its construction, and they themselves had become interested in helping us.

The Tannese had hosts of stone idols, charms, and sacred objects, which they abjectly feared, and in which they devoutly believed. They were given up to countless superstitions, and firmly glued to their dark heathen practices. Their worship was entirely a service of fear, its aim being to propitiate this or that Evil Spirit, to prevent calamity or to secure revenge. They deified their chiefs, like the Romans of old, so that almost every village or tribe had its own Sacred Man, and some of them had many. They exercised an extraordinary influence for evil, these village or tribal priests, and were believed to have the disposal of life and death through their sacred ceremonies, not only in their own tribe, but over all the Islands. Sacred men and women, wizards and witches, received presents regularly to influence the gods, and to remove sickness, or to cause it, by the *Nahak*, i.e. incantation over remains of food, or the skin of fruit, such as banana, which the person has eaten on whom they wish to operate. They also worshipped the spirits of departed ancestors and heroes, through their material idols of wood and stone, but chiefly of stone. They feared these spirits and sought their aid; especially seeking to propitiate those who presided over war and peace, famine and plenty, health

and sickness, destruction and prosperity, life and death. Their whole worship was one of slavish fear ; and, so far as ever I could learn, they had no idea of a God of mercy or grace.

But these very facts—that they did worship something, that they believed in spirits of ancestors and heroes, and that they cherished many legends regarding those whom they had never seen, and handed these down to their children—and the fact that they had ideas about the invisible world and its inhabitants, made it not so hard as some might suppose to convey to their minds, once their language and mode of thought were understood, some clear idea of Jehovah God, as the great uncreated Spirit Father, who Himself created and sustains all that is. It could not, however, be done off-hand, or by a few airy lessons. The whole heart and soul and life had to be put into the enterprise. But it could be done—that we believed because they were men, not beasts ; it had been done—that we saw in the converts on Aneityum ; and our hearts rose to the task with a quenchless hope !

My first house on Tanna was on the old site occupied by Turner and Nisbet, near the shore so as to be handy for landing materials and goods, and, as we imagined, close to the healthy breezes of the sea. Alas ! the site proved to be a hot-bed for fever and ague. We were sheltered behind by an abrupt hill about two hundred feet high, which gave the site a feeling of cosiness. It was surrounded and much shaded by beautiful bread-fruit and cocoanut trees, but there was a long swamp at the head of the bay, and the ground at the other end on which our house stood being scarcely raised perceptibly higher, the malaria almost constantly enveloped us.

I resolved to remove the house to higher ground at the earliest practicable moment ; heavy though the undertaking would necessarily be, it seemed our only hope of being able to live on the island. Alas, for one of us, it was already too late !

My dear wife was in excellent health when she landed with me on Tanna on the 5th November, 1858. On the 12th February, 1859, God sent to us our first-born son ; for two days or so both mother and child seemed to prosper, and our island-exile thrilled with joy ! But the greatest of sorrows was treading hard upon the heels of that joy !

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My darling's strength showed no signs of rallying. She had an attack of ague and fever a few days before; on the third day or so thereafter it returned, and attacked her every second day with increasing severity for a fortnight, with symptoms of pneumonia, with slight delirium at intervals; and then in a moment, altogether unexpectedly, she died on the 3rd March. To crown my sorrows, and complete my loneliness, the dear baby boy was taken from me after one week's sickness.

Stunned by that dreadful loss, my reason seemed for a time almost to give way. Ague and fever, too, laid a depressing and weakening hand upon me, continuously recurring, and reaching oftentimes the very height of its worst burning stages. But I was never altogether forsaken. The ever-merciful Lord sustained me to lay the precious dust of my beloved ones in the same quiet grave, dug for them close by at the end of the house; in all of which last offices my own hands, despite breaking heart, had to take the principal share! I built the grave round and round with coral-blocks, and covered the top with beautiful white coral, broken small as gravel; and that spot became my sacred and much frequented shrine during all the following months and years when I laboured on for the salvation of these savage Islanders amidst difficulties, dangers and deaths; and with ceaseless prayers and tears I claimed that land for God in which I had "buried my dead" with faith and hope. But for Jesus, and the fellowship He vouchsafed me there, I must have gone mad and died beside that lonely grave!

Soon afterwards Bishop Selwyn called at Port Resolution, Tanna, in his Mission Ship. He came on shore to visit me, accompanied by the Rev. J. C. Patteson. They had met Mrs. Paton on Aneityum in the previous year soon after our arrival, and, as she was then the picture of perfect health, they also felt her loss very keenly. Standing with me beside the grave of mother and child, the godly Bishop Selwyn poured out his heart to God amidst tears, during which he laid his hands on my head, and invoked Heaven's richest consolations and blessings on me and my trying labours.

It was very difficult to be resigned, left alone, and in such sorrowful circumstances; but feeling immovably assured that my God and Father was too wise and loving

to err in anything that He does or permits, I looked up to the Lord for help, and struggled on in His work.

The novelty of my presence among the natives soon passed away, and they began to show their avarice and deceitfulness in every possible way. The Chiefs united and refused to give the half of the small piece of land which had been purchased for our Mission House, and when we attempted to fence in the part they had left to us, they "tabooed" it, i.e. threatened our teachers and us with death if we proceeded further with the work. This they did by placing reeds here and there around our house. Warned of our danger, we left off making the fence, that we might, if possible, avoid all offence. They then divided the few bread-fruit and coconut trees on the ground amongst themselves, or demanded fresh payment for these trees, and threatened revenge on us if the trees were injured. Our dangers so increased as to make our residence amongst them extremely trying. At this time a vessel called; I bought from the captain the things for payment which they demanded; on receiving them, they lifted the taboo, and for a little season appeared to be friendly again. This was the third payment they had got for that site, and to yield was teaching them a cruel lesson; all this we felt and clearly saw, but they had by some means to be conciliated, if possible, and our lives had to be saved, if that could be done without dishonour to the Christian name.

After these events, a few weeks of dry weather began to tell against the growth of their yams and bananas. The drought was instantly ascribed to us and our God. The natives far and near were summoned to consider the matter in public assembly. Next day, Nouka, the high chief, and Miaki, the war chief, his nephew, came to inform us that two powerful chiefs had openly declared in that assembly that if the Harbour people did not at once kill us or compel us to leave the island, they would, unless the rain came plentifully in the meantime, summon all the Inland people and murder both our chiefs and us. They themselves were "Sacred Men," and professed to have the power of sending or withholding rain, and tried to fix the blame of their discomfiture on us. The rage of the heathen was thereby fed against us. The Ever-Merciful, however, again interposed on our behalf. On the following

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Sabbath, just when we were assembling for worship, rain began to fall, and in great abundance. The whole inhabitants believed, apparently, that it was sent to save us in answer to our prayers; so they met again, and resolved to allow us to remain on Tanna. Then the continuous and heavy rains brought much sickness and fever in their train, and again the Sacred Men pointed to us as the cause. Hurricane winds also blew and injured their fruits and fruit-trees—another opportunity for our enemies to lay the blame of everything upon the Missionaries! The trial and the danger daily grew of living among a people so dreadfully benighted by superstition, and so easily swayed by prejudice and passion.

Tanna tribes were constantly at war amongst themselves, and almost every quarrel ended in an appeal to arms. Besides many battles far inland, one was fought by our house, and several around the Harbour. In these conflicts many men were bruised with clubs and wounded with arrows, but few lives were lost, considering the savage uproar and frenzy of the scene. In one case seven men were killed in an engagement; and, according to Tannese custom, the warriors and their friends feasted on their bodies; at the close of the fray the widows of the slain being strangled to death and similarly disposed of. Besides those who fell in war, the natives living in our quarter killed and feasted on eight bodies.

It is said that the habitual cannibal's desire for human flesh becomes so horrible that he has been known to disinter and feast upon those recently buried. Two cases of this revolting barbarism were reported as having occurred amongst the villagers living near us. On another occasion the great chief Nouka took seriously unwell, and his people sacrificed three women for his recovery! All such cruel and horrifying practices, however, they tried to conceal from us; and many must have perished in this way of whom we, though living at their doors, were never permitted to hear.

In the New Hebrides *woman* is the down-trodden slave of man. She is kept working hard, and bears all the heavier burdens, the man walks by her side with musket, club or spear. If she offends him, he beats or abuses her at pleasure. A savage gave his poor wife a severe beating in front of our house and just before our eyes. In vain

we strove to prevent it. Such scenes were so common that no one thought of interfering. Even if the woman died in his hands, or immediately thereafter, neighbours took little notice, if any at all. And their children were so little cared for, that my constant wonder was how any of them survived at all! As soon as they are able to knock about, they are left practically to care for themselves; hence the very small affection they show towards their parents, which results in the aged, who are unable to work, being neglected, starved to death or buried alive.

A heathen boy's education consists in being taught to aim skilfully with the bow, to throw the spear faultlessly at a mark, to wield club and tomahawk, and to shoot well with musket when one can be obtained. He accompanies his father and brothers in all the wars and preparations for war, and is diligently initiated into all their cruelties and lusts, as the very prerequisite of his being regarded and acknowledged to be a *man* and a warrior. The women and girls have to toil and slave in the village plantations, to prepare all the materials for fencing, and to bear every burden, and to be knocked about at will by the men and boys.

CHAPTER VIII

SUPERSTITIONS AND CRUELITIES

ABOUT the time of Mrs. Paton's death our fellow-Missionary, Mr. Mathieson, also became exceedingly unwell. His delicate frame fast gave way, and brought with it weakness of the mind as well ; and he was removed to Aneityum apparently in a dying condition. These sad visitations had a bad effect on the natives, owing to their wild superstitions about the cause of death and sickness. We had reason to fear that they would even interfere with the precious grave, over which we kept careful watch for a season ; but God mercifully restrained them. One of my Aneityumese teachers who had gone round to Mr. Mathieson's station took ill and died there, and this rekindled all their prejudices.

The natives insolently demanded of me to tell them the cause of his death, and of Mr. Mathieson's trouble, and of the other deaths. Other reasoning or explanation being to them useless, I turned the tables, and demanded them to tell me why all this trouble and death had overtaken us in their land, and whether they themselves were not the cause of it all ? Strange to say, this simple question turned the whole current of their speculations. They held meeting after meeting to discuss it for several days, and returned the message, " We do not blame you, and you must not blame us, for causing these troubles and deaths ; but we believe that a bushman must have got hold of a portion of something we had eaten, and must have thrown it to the great Evil Spirit in the volcano thereby bringing all these troubles and curses."

Another chief vindicated himself and others thus :—
" Karapanamun, the Aurumanu or great Evil Spirit of Tanna, whom we all fear and worship, is causing these troubles ; for he knows that if we become worshippers of your Jehovah God, we cannot continue to fear him, or

present him with the best of everything, as our forefathers have always done ; he is angry at you and at us all."

The fear of the deaths and troubles being ascribed to them silenced their talk against us for a season ; but very little made them either friends or foes, as the next event will too painfully show.

Nowhat, an old chief of the highest rank from Aneityum, who spoke Tannese and was much respected by the natives all round the south side of Tanna, came on a visit to our island. After returning home, he became very ill and died in a few days. Hearing of his death, the deluded Tannese ascribed it to me and the Worship, and resolved to burn our house and property, and either murder the whole Mission party, or compel us to leave the island. Nowhat's brother was sent from Aneityum to talk to the Tannese and conciliate them, but, unfortunately, he could not speak the language well ; and the Aneityumese teachers felt their lives to be at this time in such danger that they durst not accompany him as interpreters ; while I, on the other hand, did not understand his language, nor he, mine. Within two days after landing, he had a severe attack of ague and fever ; and, though the vessel he came in remained eight days, he was prostrated all the time, so that his well-intentioned visit did us much harm. The Tannese became furious. This was proof positive, that we were the cause of all their sickness and death ! Inland and all along the weather side of the island, when far enough away from us, they said that the natives were enjoying excellent health. Meeting after meeting was held ; exciting speeches were delivered ; and feasts were given, for which it was said that several women were sacrificed, cooked and eaten—such being the bonds by which they entered into covenant with each other for life or death.

The inhabitants for miles around united in seeking our destruction, but God put it into even savage hearts to save us. Old Nowar, the chief under whom we lived, and the chief next under him, Arkurat, set themselves to rescue us. Along with Manuman and Sirawia they opposed every plan in the public assembly for taking our lives. Some of their people also remained friendly to us, and by the help of our Aneityumese teachers, warned us of danger and protected our lives. Determined not to be baffled, a

meeting of all our enemies on the island was summoned, and it was publicly resolved that a band of men be selected and enjoined to kill the whole of those friendly to the Mission, old Nowar among the rest, and not only to murder the Mission party, but also a trader who had lately landed to live there, that no one might be left to give information to the white men or bring punishment on the Islanders. Frenzy of excitement prevailed, and the blood-fiend seemed to override the whole assembly; when, under an impulse that surely came from the Lord of Pity, one great warrior chief, who had hitherto kept silent, rose, swung aloft a mighty club, and smashing it earthwards, cried aloud, "The man that kills Missi must first kill me—the men that kill the Mission teachers must first kill me and my people—for we shall stand by them and defend them till death."

Instantaneously, another chief thundered in with the same declaration; and the great assembly broke up in dismay. All the more remarkable was this deliverance, as these two chiefs lived nearly four miles inland, and, as reputed disease-makers and sacred men, were regarded as amongst our bitterest enemies. It had happened that, a brother of the former chief having been wounded in battle, I had dressed his wounds and he recovered, for which, perhaps, he now favoured us. But I do not put very much value on that consideration; for too clearly did our dear Lord Jesus interpose directly on our behalf that day. I and my defenceless company had spent it in anxious prayers and tears; and our hearts overflowed with gratitude to the Saviour who rescued us from the lions' jaws.

Leaving all consequences to the disposal of my Lord, I determined to make an unflinching stand against wife-beating and widow-strangling, feeling confident that even their natural conscience would be on my side. I accordingly pled with all who were in power to unite and put down these shocking and disgraceful customs. At length ten chiefs entered into an agreement not to allow any more beating of wives or strangling of widows, and to forbid all common labour on the Lord's Day; but, alas, except for purposes of war or other wickedness, the influence of the chiefs on Tanna was comparatively small. One chief boldly declared, "If we did not beat our women,

they would never work ; they would not fear and obey us ; but when we have beaten and killed and feasted on two or three, the rest are all very quiet and good for a long time to come ! ”

I tried to show him how cruel it was, and that kindness would have a much better effect ; but he promptly assured me that Tannese women “ could not understand kindness.” For the sake of teaching by example, my Aneityumese teachers and I used to go a mile or two inland on the principal pathway, along with the teachers’ wives, and there cutting and carrying home a heavy load of firewood for myself and each of the men, while we gave only a small burden to each of the women. Meeting many Tanna-men by the way, I used to explain to them that this was how Christians helped and treated their wives and sisters, and then they loved their husbands and were strong to work at home ; and that, as men were made stronger, they were intended to bear the heavier burdens, and especially in all labours out of doors. Our habits and practices had thus as much to do as, perhaps more than, all our appeals, in leading them to glimpses of the life to which the Lord Jesus was calling them.

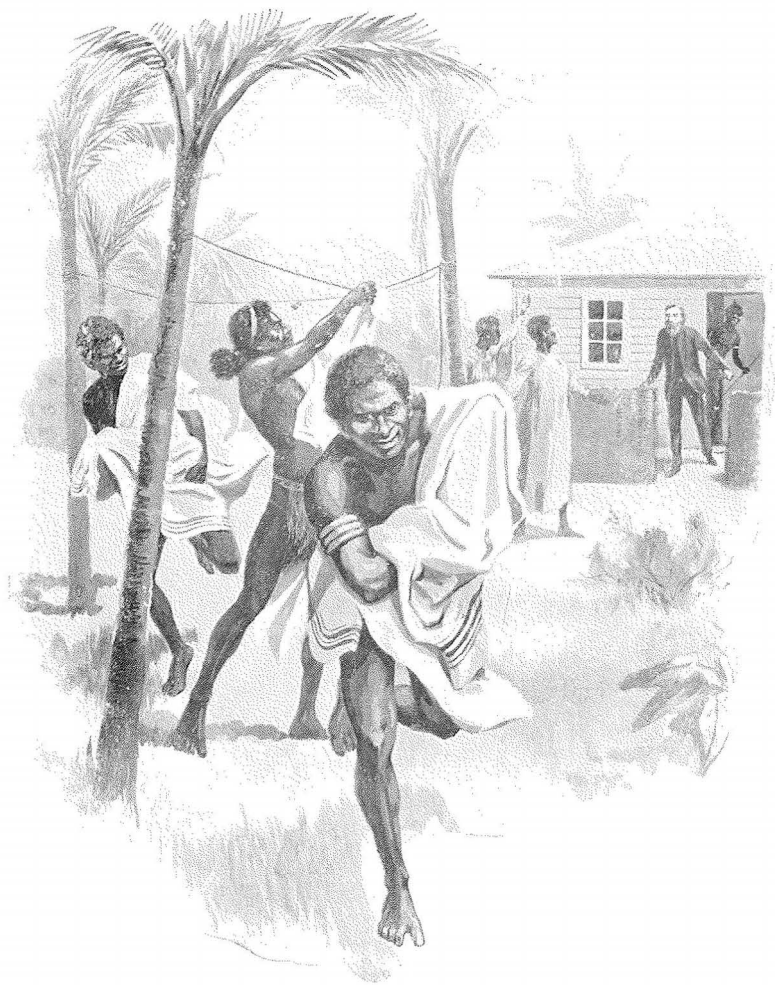
Another war-burst, that caused immense consternation, passed over with only two or three deaths ; and I succeeded in obtaining the consent of twenty chiefs to fight no more except on the defensive—a covenant to which, for a considerable time, they strictly adhered, in the midst of fierce provocations. But to gain any such end, the masses of the people must be educated to the point of desiring it. The few cannot, in such circumstances, act up to it, without laying themselves open to be down-trodden and swept away by the savages around.

About this time several men, afraid or ashamed by day, came to me regularly by night for conversation and instruction. Having seen the doors of the Mission House made fast and the windows blinded so that they could not be observed, they continued with me for many hours, asking all strange questions about the new Religion and its laws. I remember one chief particularly, who came often, saying to me, “ I would be an Awfuaki man (i.e. Christian) were it not that all the rest would laugh at me ; that I could not stand ! ”

The wife of one of those chiefs died, and he resolved to

imitate a Christian burial. Having purchased white calico from a trader, he came to me for some tape which the trader could not supply, and told me that he was going to dress the body as he had seen my dear wife's dressed, and lay it also in a similar grave. He declined my offer to attend the funeral and to pray with them, as in that case many of the villagers would not attend. He wanted all the people to be present, to see and to hear, as it was the first funeral of the kind ever celebrated among the Tannese; and my friend Nowar the chief had promised to conduct a service and offer prayer to Jehovah before all the heathen. It moved me to many strange emotions, this Christian burial, conducted by a heathen and in the presence of heathens, with an appeal to the true and living God by a man as yet darkly groping among idols and superstitions! Many were the wondering questions from time to time addressed to me. The idea of a resurrection from the dead was that which most keenly interested these natives, and called forth all their powers of inquiry and argument. Thus the waves of hope and fear swept alternately across our lives; but we embraced every possible opportunity of telling them the story of the life and death of Jesus, in the strong hope that God would spare us yet to bring the benighted heathen to the knowledge of the true salvation, and to love and serve the only Saviour.

Confessedly, however, it was uphill, weary and trying work. For one thing, these Tannese were terribly dishonest; and when there was any special sickness or excitement from any cause, their bad feelings towards the Worship was displayed by the more insolent way in which they carried off whatever they could seize. When I opposed them, the club or tomahawk, the musket or *kawas* (i.e. killing-stone), being instantly raised, intimated that my life would be taken if I resisted. Their skill in stealing on the sly was phenomenal! If an article fell, or was seen on the floor, a Tanna-man would neatly cover it with his foot, while looking you frankly in the face, and, having fixed it by his toes or by bending in his great toe like a thumb to hold it, would walk on with it, assuming the most innocent look in the world. In this way, a knife, a pair of scissors, or any smaller article, would at once disappear. Another fellow would deftly stick something



STEALING THE BEDCLOTHES.

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out of sight amongst the whip-cord plaits of his hair, another would conceal it underneath his naked arm, while yet another would shamelessly lift what he coveted and openly carry it away.

With most of them, however, the shame was not in the theft, but in doing it so clumsily that they were discovered! Once, after continuous rain and a hot damp atmosphere, when the sun shone out I put my bedclothes on a rope to dry. I stood at hand watching, as also the wives of two teachers, for things were mysteriously disappearing almost under our very eyes. Suddenly, Miaki, who with his war-companions had been watching us unobserved, came rushing to me breathless and alone, crying, "Missi, come in, quick, quick! I want to tell you something and to get your advice!"

He ran into my house, and I followed; but before he had got into his story, we heard the two women crying out, "Missi, Missi, come quick! Miaki's men are stealing your sheets and blankets!"

I ran at once, but all were gone into the bush, and with them my sheets and blankets. Miaki for a moment looked abashed, as I charged him with deceiving me just to give his men their opportunity. But he soon rose to the occasion. He wrought himself into a towering rage at them, flourished his huge club and smashed the bushes all around, shouting to me, "Thus will I smash these fellows, and compel them to return your clothes."

One dark night I heard them amongst my fowls. These I had purchased from them for knives and calico; and they now stole them all away, dead or alive. Had I interfered, they would have gloried in the chance to club me or shoot me in the dark, when no one could exactly say who had done the deed. Several of the few goats which I had for milk were also killed or driven away; indeed, all the injury that was possible was done to me, short of taking away my life, and that was now frequently attempted. Having no fires or fire-places in my Mission House, such being not required there—though sometimes a fire would have been invaluable for drying our bed-clothes in the rainy season—we had a house near by in which all our food was cooked, and there, under lock and key, we secured all our cooking utensils, pots, dishes, etc. One night that, too, was broken into, and everything was

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stolen. In consternation, I appealed to the chief, telling him what had been done. He also flew into a great rage, and vowed vengeance on the thieves, saying that he would compel them to return everything. But, of course, nothing was returned; the thief could not be found! I, unable to live without something in which to boil water, at length offered a blanket to any one that would bring back my kettle. Miaki himself, after much professed difficulty, returned it *minus* the lid—that, he said—probably fishing for a higher bribe—could not be got at any price, being at the other side of the island in a tribe over which he had no control! In the circumstances, I was glad to get kettle *minus* lid—realising how life itself may depend on so small a luxury!

CHAPTER IX

THE VISIT OF H.M.S. "CORDELIA"

ONE morning the Tannese, rushing towards me in great excitement, cried, "Missi, Missi, there is a god, or a ship on fire, or something of fear, coming over the sea! We see no flames, but it smokes like a volcano. Is it a spirit, a god, or a ship on fire? What is it? what is it?"

One party after another followed in quick succession, shouting the same questions in great alarm, to which I replied, "I cannot go at once; I must dress first in my best clothes; it will likely be one of Queen Victoria's men-of-war, coming to ask of me if your conduct is good or bad, if you are stealing my property, or threatening my life, or how you are using me?"

They pled with me to go and see it; but I made much fuss about dressing, and getting ready to meet the great chief on the vessel, and would not go with them. The two principal chiefs now came running and asked, "Missi, will it be a ship of war?"

I called to them, "I think it will; but I have no time to speak to you now, I must get on my best clothes!"

They said, "Missi, only tell us, will he ask you if we have been stealing your things?"

I answered, "I expect he will."

They asked, "And will you tell him?"

I said, "I must tell him the truth; if he asks, I will tell him."

They then cried out, "Oh, Missi, tell him not! Everything shall be brought back to you at once, and no one will be allowed to steal from you."

Then said I, "Be quick! everything must be returned before he comes. Away, away! and let me get ready to meet the great chief on the man-of-war."

Hitherto no thief could ever be found, and no chief had power to cause anything to be restored to me; but

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now, in an incredibly brief space of time, one came running to the Mission House with a pot, another with a pan, another with a blanket, others with knives, forks, plates, and all sorts of stolen property. The chiefs called me to receive these things, but I replied, "Lay them all down at the door, bring everything together quickly; I have no time to speak with you!"

I delayed my toilet, enjoying mischievously the magical effect of an approaching vessel that might bring penalty to thieves. At last the chiefs, running in breathless haste, called out to me, "Missi, Missi, do tell us, is the stolen property all here?"

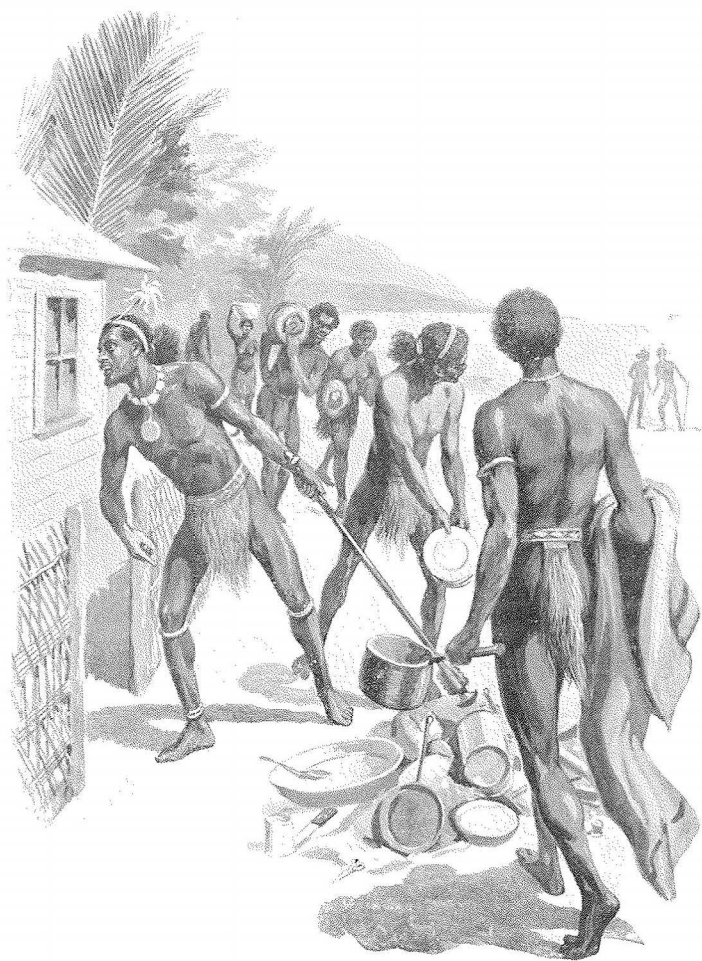
Of course I could not tell, but, running out, I looked on the promiscuous heap of my belongings, and said, "I don't see the lid of the kettle there yet!"

One chief said, "No, Missi, for it is on the other side of the island; but tell him not, I have sent for it, and it will be here to-morrow."

I answered, "I am glad you have brought back so much; and now, if you three chiefs, Nauka, Miaki, and Nowar, do not run away when he comes, he will not likely punish you; but, if you and your people run away, he will ask me why you are afraid, and I will be forced to tell him! Keep near me and you are all safe; only there must be no more stealing from me."

They said, "We are in black fear, but we will keep near you, and our bad conduct to you is done."

The charm and joy of that morning are fresh to me still, when H.M.S. *Cordelia*, Captain Vernon, steamed into our lovely harbour. The Commander, having heard rumour of my dangers on Tanna, kindly came on shore as soon as the ship cast anchor, with two boats, and a number of his officers and men, so far armed. He was dressed in splendid uniform, being a tall and handsome man, and he and his attendants made a grand and imposing show. On seeing Captain Vernon's boat nearing the shore, and the men glittering in gold lace and arms, Miaki the chief left my side on the beach and rushed towards his village. I concluded that he had run for it through terror, but he had other and more civilised intentions in his heathen head! Having obtained, from some trader or visitor in previous days, a soldier's old red coat, he had resolved to rise to the occasion and appear in his best before the Captain and



RETURNING THE STOLEN GOODS.

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his men. As I was shaking hands with them and welcoming them to Tanna, Miaki returned with the short red coat on, buttoned tightly round his otherwise naked body ; and, surmounted by his ugly painted face and long whiplashes of twisted hair, it completely spoiled any appearance that he might otherwise have had of savage freedom, and made him look a dirty and insignificant creature.

The Captain was talking to me, his men stood in order near by—to my eyes, oh how charming a glimpse of Home life!—when Miaki marched up and took his place most consequentially at my side. He felt himself the most important personage in the scene, and with an attempt at haughty dignity he began to survey the visitors. All eyes were fixed on the impudent little man, and the Captain asked, "What sort of a character is this?"

I replied, "This is Miaki, our great war chief"; and whispered to the Captain to be on his guard, as this man knew a little English, and might understand or misunderstand just enough to make it afterwards dangerous to me.

The Captain only muttered, "The contemptible creature!" But such words were far enough beyond Miaki's vocabulary, so he looked on and grinned complacently.

At last he said, "Missi, this great chief whom Queen Victoria has sent to visit you in her man-of-war, cannot go over the whole of this island so as to be seen by all our people; and I wish you to ask him if he will stand by a tree and allow me to put a spear on the ground at his heel, and we will make a nick in it at the top of his head, and the spear will be sent round the island to let all the people see how tall this great man is!" They were delighted at the good Captain agreeing to their simple request; and that spear was exhibited to thousands, as the vessel, her Commander, officers and men, were afterwards talked of round and round the island.

Captain Vernon was extremely kind, and offered to do anything in his power for me, thus left alone on the island amongst such savages; but, as my main difficulties were connected with my spiritual work amongst them, rousing up their cruel prejudices, I did not see how his kindness could effectually interpose. At his suggestion, however, I sent a general invitation to all the chiefs within reach, to meet the Captain next morning at my house. True to

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their instincts of suspicion and fear, they despatched all their women and children to the beach on the opposite side of the island, beyond reach of danger, and next morning my house was crowded with armed men, manifestly much afraid. Punctually at the hour appointed, 10 a.m., the Captain came on shore; and soon thereafter twenty chiefs were seated with him in my house. He very kindly spent about an hour, giving them wise counsels and warning them against outrages on strangers, all calculated to secure our safety and advance the interests of our Mission work. He then invited all the chiefs to go on board and see his vessel. They were taken to see the armoury, and the sight of the big guns running so easily on rails vastly astonished them. He then placed them around us on deck and showed them two shells discharged towards the ocean, at which, as they burst and fell far off, splash—splashing into the water, the terror of the natives visibly increased. But, when he sent a large ball crashing through a cocoa-nut grove, breaking the trees like straws and cutting its way clear and swift, they were quite dumb-founded, and pled to be again set safely on shore. After receiving each some small gift, however, they were reconciled to the situation, and returned immensely interested in all that they had seen. Doubtless many a wild romance was spun by these savage heads in trying to describe and hand down to others the wonders of the fire-god of the sea, and the Captain of the great white Queen.

Fever and ague had now attacked me fourteen times severely, with slighter recurring attacks almost continuously after my first three months on the island, and I felt the necessity of sleeping on the higher ground. I resolved to remove my house, and began to look about for a suitable site. There rose behind my present site, a hill about two hundred feet high, surrounded on all sides by a valley, and swept by the breezes of the trade winds, being only separated from the ocean by a narrow neck of land. On this I had set my heart; there was room for a Mission House and a church. I proceeded to buy up every claim by the natives to any portion of the hill, paying each publicly and in turn, so that there might be no trouble afterwards. I then purchased from a trader the deck planks of a shipwrecked vessel, with which to construct a house of two apartments, a bedroom and a

small store-room adjoining it, to which I purposed to transfer and add the old house as soon as I was able.

Just at this juncture, the fever smote me again more severely than ever; my weakness after this attack was so great that I felt as if I never could rally again. With the help of my faithful Aneityumese teacher, Abraham, and his wife, however, I made what appeared my last effort to creep—I could not climb—up the hill to get a breath of wholesome air. When about two-thirds up the hill, I became so faint that I concluded I was dying. Lying down on the ground, sloped against the root of a tree to keep me from rolling to the bottom, I took farewell of old Abraham, of my Mission work, and of everything around! In this weak state I lay, watched over by my faithful companion, and fell into a quiet sleep. When consciousness returned, I felt a little stronger, and a faint gleam of hope and life came back to my soul.

Abraham and his devoted wife Nafatu lifted me and carried me to the top of the hill. There they laid me on cocoa-nut leaves on the ground, and erected over me a shade or screen of the same; and there the two faithful souls, inspired surely by something diviner even than mere human pity, gave me the cocoa-nut juice to drink and fed me with native food and kept me living—I know not for how long. Consciousness did, however, fully return. The trade wind refreshed me day by day. The Tannese seemed to have given me up for dead; and providentially none of them looked near us for many days. Amazingly my strength returned, and I began planning about my new house on the hill. Afraid again to sleep at the old site, I slept under the tree, and sheltered by the cocoa-nut leaf screen, while preparing my new bedroom.

Here again, but for these faithful souls, the Aneityumese teacher and his wife, I must have been baffled, and would have died in the effort. The planks of the wreck, and all other articles required, they fetched and carried; and it taxed my utmost strength to get them in some way planted together. But life depended on it. It was at length accomplished; and after that time I suffered comparatively little from anything like continuous attacks of fever and ague. That noble old soul, Abraham, stood by me as an angel of God in sickness and in danger; he

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went at my side wherever I had to go ; he helped me willingly to the last inch of strength in all that I had to do ; and it was perfectly manifest that he was doing all this not from mere human love, but for the sake of Jesus. That man had been a cannibal in his heathen days, but by the grace of God there he stood verily a new creature in Christ Jesus. Any trust, however sacred or valuable, could be absolutely reposed in him ; and in trial or danger I was often refreshed by that old teacher's prayers, as I used to be by the prayers of my saintly father in my childhood's home. No white man could have been a more valuable helper to me in my perilous circumstances ; and no person, white or black, could have shown more fearless and chivalrous devotion.

The prejudices and persecutions of heathen were a sore enough trial, but sorer and more hopeless was the wicked and contaminating influence of, alas, my fellow-countrymen. One, for instance, a Captain Winchester, a trader, living with a native woman at the head of the bay, a dissipated wretch, though a well-educated man, was angry at the state of peace which was beginning. There was not the usual demand for barter for the fowls, pigs, etc., in which he traded. He developed a wonderful interest in the affairs of the natives ; presented the chiefs around with powder, caps and balls, and lent among them a number of flash-muskets. He urged them not to be afraid of war, as he would supply any amount of ammunition. I remonstrated, but he flatly told me that peace did not suit his purposes ! Incited and encouraged thus, the savages were goaded into a most unjust war on neighbouring tribes. The trader immediately demanded a high price for the weapons he had lent. The price of powder, caps, and balls rose exorbitantly with every fresh demand, and his yards became crowded with poultry and pigs, which he readily disposed of to passing vessels. He might have amassed great sums of money but for his vile dissipations. Glorifying in the war, he required a large hog for a wineglass full of powder, or three or four bullets, or ten gun-caps ; and boasted of his "good luck" in getting rid of all his old muskets and filling his yards with pigs and fowls.

Miaki the war chief had a young brother, Rarip by name, about eighteen years of age. When this war began Rarip came to live with me at the Mission House. After it had

raged some time, Miaki forced his brother to join the fighting men ; but he escaped through the bush, and returned to me, exclaiming, " Missi, I hate this fighting ; it is not good to kill men ; I will live with you ! "

But Miaki came, and forced Rarip to join in the fight. This time he placed him at his own side in the midst of his warriors. As the foe rushed from the bush, a bullet pierced young Rarip's breast, and he fell dead into the arms of Miaki. The body was carried home to his brother's village. On hastening thither, I found him quite dead, and the centre of a tragic ceremonial. Around him, some sitting, others lying on the ground, were assembled all the women and girls, tearing their hair, cutting themselves with split bamboos and broken bottles, dashing themselves headlong to the earth, painting all black their faces, breasts, and arms, and wailing with loud lamentations ! Men were also there, knocking their heads against the trees, gashing their bodies with knives till they ran with streaks of blood, and indulging in every kind of savage symbol of grief and anguish. I returned and brought a white sheet and some tape, in which the body of Rarip was wrapped and prepared for the grave. The natives appeared to be gratified at this mark of respect ; and all agreed that Rarip should have a Christian burial. The men prepared the grave in a spot selected near to his own house ; I read the Word of God and offered prayer, amidst a scene of weeping and lamentation never to be forgotten.

As the war still raged on, and many more were killed, vengeance threatened the miserable trader. Miaki attacked him thus : " You led us into this war. You deceived us, and we began it. Rarip is dead, and many others. Your life shall yet go for his." Heartless as a dog so long as pigs and fowls came to the yard at whatever cost to others' lives, he now trembled like a coward for himself. He implored me to let him sleep at my house for safety ; but I refused to allow my Mission to be in any way identified with his crimes. The natives from other islands, whom he kept to work like slaves for him, he now armed with muskets for his defence ; but, having no faith in them, he implored me to send one of my teachers, to assist his wife in watching till he snatched a few hours of sleep every day. The teachers were disinclined to go ; and I could not honestly ask them to do so. His peril and

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terror became so real that by night he slept armed in his boat anchored out in the centre of the bay, with a crew ready to start off at the approach of danger. By day he kept watch on shore, armed and ready to fly. Thus his miserable existence dragged on, keeping watch alternatively with his wife, till a trading vessel called and carried him off, for which deliverance we were unfeignedly thankful! The war, which he had wickedly instigated, lingered on for three months. Then, by a present given secretly to two leading chiefs, I managed to bring it to a close. But feelings of revenge for the slain burned fiercely in many breasts; and young men had old feuds handed on to them by the recital of their fathers' deeds of blood.

CHAPTER X

UNDER AXE AND MUSKET

By this time, about forty attended our Sabbath services. Of these, Nowar and three or four more seemed to love and serve Jesus. They were, however, changeable and doubtful, though they exerted a good influence on their villages, and were generally friendly to us and to the worship.

One morning at daybreak I found my house surrounded by armed men, and a chief intimated that they had assembled to take my life. Seeing that I was entirely in their hands, I knelt down and gave myself away body and soul to the Lord Jesus, for what seemed the last time on earth. Rising, I went out to them, and began calmly talking about their unkind treatment of me and contrasting it with all my conduct towards them. I also plainly showed them what would be the sad consequences if they carried out their cruel purpose. At last some of the chiefs, who had attended the worship, rose and said, "Our conduct has been bad ; but now we will fight for you, and kill all those who hate you."

Grasping hold of their leader, I held him fast till he promised never to kill any one on my account. During this scene, many of the armed men slunk away into the bush and those who remained entered into a bond to be friendly and to protect us. But again their assembly resolved that we should be killed. They declared their hate for the worship, because it made them afraid to continue their present courses, and argued that if I would give up visiting the villages and praying and talking with them, they would let me stay and trade with them, as they liked the traders but hated Missionaries ! I told them that the hope of being able to teach them the worship of Jehovah alone kept me living amongst them ; that I was there, not for gain or pleasure, but to lead them to know and serve the only true God.

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But the heathen seldom slackened their hateful designs against my life, however calmed or baffled for the moment. Within a few days of the above events, when natives in large numbers were assembled at my house, a man furiously rushed at me with his axe ; but a chief snatched a spade with which I had been working, and dexterously defended me from instant death. Life in such circumstances led me to cling very near to the Lord Jesus ; I knew not, for one brief hour, when or how attacks might be made ; and yet, with my trembling hand clasped in the Hand once nailed on Calvary, calmness and resignation abode in my soul.

Next day a wild chief followed me about for four hours with his loaded musket, often directed towards me, but God restrained his hand. I spoke kindly to him, and attended to my work as if he had not been there, fully persuaded that God had placed me there, and would protect me till my allotted task was finished. I left all in His hands, and felt immortal till my work was done. Trials and hairbreadth escapes strengthened my faith, and seemed only to nerve me for more to follow ; and truly they did tread swiftly upon each other's heels. The abiding consciousness of the presence and power of my Saviour preserved me from losing my reason. His words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," became to me so real that it would not have startled me to behold Him, as Stephen did, gazing down upon the scene. It is the sober truth, and it comes back to me sweetly after all the years, that I had my nearest and dearest glimpses of the Face and smile of my blessed Lord in those dread moments when musket, club, or spear was being levelled at my life.

One evening I awoke three times to hear a chief and his men trying to force the door of my house. Though armed with muskets, they had some sense of doing wrong, and were wholesomely afraid of my little retriever dog which had often stood betwixt me and death. God restrained them again ; and next morning the report went all round the Harbour, that those who tried to shoot me were "smit-ten weak with fear," and that shooting would not do. A plan was therefore deliberately set on foot to fire the premises, and club us if we attempted to escape. But our teacher heard of it, and God helped us to frustrate their designs. When they knew that their plots were revealed

to us, they seemed to lose faith in themselves, and cast about to circumvent us in some more secret way.

Namuri, one of my teachers from Aneityum was placed at our nearest village. There he had built a house for himself and his wife, and there he led amongst the heathen a pure and humble Christian life. Without books or a school, he yet instructed the natives, conducted the worship, and taught much by his good example. His influence was increasing, when one morning a sacred man threw at him the *kawas* or killing-stone, a deadly weapon, like a scythe stone in shape and thickness, usually round but sometimes angular, and from eighteen to twenty inches long. They throw it from a great distance and with fatal precision. The teacher, with great agility, warded his head but received a deep cut in his left hand. With savage yells the priest sprang upon him with his club. He received many blows, and reached the mission house, bleeding, fainting and pursued by howling murderers. I had been anxiously expecting him, and hearing the noise I ran out.

On seeing me, he sank down by a tree, and cried, "Missi, Missi, quick! and escape for your life! They are coming to kill you; they say they must kill us all to-day, and they have begun with me; for they hate Jehovah and the worship!"

I bound up, washed, and dressed his wounds; and God, by the mystery of His own working, kept the infuriated Tannese watching at bay. Gradually they began to disappear into the bush, and we conveyed Namuri to the Mission House. In three or four weeks, he so far recovered by careful nursing that he was able to walk about again. Some petitioned for him to return to the village; but to test them I insisted, as a preliminary, that the Harbour chiefs should unitedly punish him who had abused the teacher; for I knew he had only carried out their own wishes. They made a pretence of atoning by presenting the teacher with a pig and some yams as a peace-offering; but I said, "No! such bad conduct must be punished."

After three week's palaver, the chiefs seized him, tied him with a rope and sent me word to come and see him punished. I had to go, for fear of more bloody work, and after talk with them, followed by many fair promises, he was loosed.

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All appearing friendly for some time, Namuri earnestly desired to return to his post. To my suggestion that he should remain, he replied, "Missi, when I see them thirsting for my blood, I just see myself when the missionary first came to my island. I desired to murder him, as they now desire to kill me. Had he stayed away for such danger, I would have remained a heathen; but he came, and continued coming to teach us, till, by the grace of God, I was changed to what I am. Now the same God that changed me to this, can change these Tannese to love and serve Him. I cannot stay away from them; but I will sleep at the Mission House, and do all I can by day to bring them to Jesus."

It was not in me to keep such a man, under such motives, from what he felt to be his post of duty. He returned to his village work, and for several weeks things appeared most encouraging. The inhabitants showed growing interest in us and our work, and less fear of the pretensions of their heathen priest, which, alas! fed his jealousy and anger. One morning during worship, when Namuri knelt in prayer, the savage priest sprang upon him with his great club and left him for dead, wounded and bleeding and unconscious. The people fled and left him in his blood, afraid of being mixed up with the murder. Recovering a little, Namuri crawled to the Mission House, and reached it about midday in a dying condition. On seeing him, I ran to meet him, but he fell near the teacher's house, saying, "Missi, I am dying! They will kill you also. Escape for your life."

Trying to console him, I sat down beside him, dressing his wounds and nursing him. His pain and suffering were great, but he bore all very quietly, and kept saying, "For the sake of Jesus! For Jesu's sake!" He was constantly praying for his persecutors, "O Lord Jesus, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing. Oh, take not away all Thy servants from Tanna! Take not away Thy worship from this dark island! O God, bring all the Tannese to love and follow Jesus!"

To him Jesus was all and in all; and there were no bands in his death. He passed from us, in the assured hope of entering into the Glory of his Lord. Humble though he may appear in the world's esteem, I knew that a great man had fallen there in the service of Christ, and

that he would take rank in the glorious army of the martyrs. I made for him a coffin, and dug his grave near the Mission House. With prayers, and many tears, we consigned his remains to the dust in the certainty of a happy resurrection.

For fully three months, all our available time, with all the native help which I could hire, was spent in erecting a building to serve for church and school. It was fifty feet long, by twenty-one feet six inches broad. The studs were three feet apart, and all fixed by tenon and mortise into upper and lower wall plates. The roof of iron-wood and sugar-cane leaf was supported by three massive pillars of wood, sunk deeply into the ground. The roof of thatch extended about three feet over the wall plates, both to form a veranda and to carry the rain free beyond the walls. The floor was laid with white coral, broken small, and covered with cocoa-nut leaf mats. I bought the heavy wood for it on Aneityum—price, fifty pairs of trousers for natives, the gift of my Bible Class in Glasgow. I gave also one hundred and thirty yards of cloth, along with other things, for other needful wood.

As we were preparing a foundation for the church, a huge and singular-looking round stone was dug up, at sight of which the Tannese stood aghast. The eldest chief said, "Missi, that stone was either brought there by Karapanamun (the Evil Spirit), or hid there by our great chief who is dead. That is the Stone God to which our forefathers offered human sacrifices; these holes held the blood of the victim till drunk up by the Spirit. The Spirit of that stone eats up men and women and drinks their blood, as our fathers taught us. We are in greatest fear?"

A sacred man claimed possession, and was exceedingly desirous to carry it off; but I managed to keep it, and did everything in my power to show them the absurdity of these foolish notions. Idolatry had not indeed yet fallen throughout Tanna; but one cruel idol, at least, had to give way for the erection of God's house on that benighted land.

An ever-memorable event was the printing of my first book in Tannese. I had been given a printing-press and a fount of type. Printing was one of the things I had never tried, but I got my press into order, and began fingering the type. Book-printing turned out to be for me a much more difficult affair than house-building had been. Yet

by dogged perseverance I succeeded at last. My biggest difficulty was how to arrange the pages properly! After many failures, I folded a piece of paper into the number of leaves wanted, cut the corners, folding them back, and numbering as they would be when correctly placed in the book; then folding all back without cutting up the sheet, I found now by these numbers how to arrange the pages in the frame or case for printing, as indicated on each side. I shouted out in joy when the first sheet came from the press all correct. It was about one o'clock in the morning. I was the only white man then on the island, and all the natives had been fast asleep for hours! Yet I literally pitched my hat into the air, and danced like a schoolboy round and round that printing-press.

One day, while toiling away at my house, the war chief and his brother, and a large party of armed men, surrounded the plot where I was working. They all had muskets, besides their own native weapons. They watched me for some time in silence, and then every man levelled a musket straight at my head. Escape was impossible. Speech would only have increased my danger. My eyesight came and went for a few moments. I prayed to my Lord Jesus, either Himself to protect me or to take me home to His Glory. I tried to keep working on at my task, as if no one was near me. In that moment, as never before, the words came to me—"Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, I will do it"; and I knew that I was safe. Retiring a little from their first position, no word having been spoken, they took up the same attitude somewhat farther off, and seemed to be urging one another to fire the first shot. But restrained once again, they withdrew, leaving me with a new reason for trusting God with all that concerned me for Time and Eternity.

The Chief, Nowar Nōukamara, usually known as Nowar, was my best and most-to-be-trusted friend. He influenced the harbour chiefs and their people for eight or ten miles around to get up a great feast in favour of the Worship of Jehovah. All were personally and specially invited, and it was the largest assembly of any kind that I ever witnessed on the Islands.

When all was ready, Nowar sent a party of chiefs to escort me and my teachers to the feast. Fourteen chiefs, in turn, made speeches to the assembled multitude. The

Tannese are born talkers, and can and will speechify on all occasions; the drift of all being, that war and fighting be given up on Tanna—that no more people be killed by Nahak, for witchcraft and sorcery were lies—that sacred men no longer profess to make wind and rain, famine and plenty, disease and death—that the dark heathen talk of Tanna should cease—that all here present should adopt the Worship of Jehovah as taught to them by the Missionary—and that all the banished tribes should be invited to their own lands to live in peace! These strange speeches did not draw forth a single opposing voice, for most of the talk meant nothing.

After these speeches, a scene followed which gradually assumed shape as an idolatrous ceremonial and greatly bewildered me. It was in connection with the immense quantity of food that had been prepared for the feast, especially pigs and fowls. A great heap had been piled up for each tribe represented, and a handsome portion also set apart for the Missionary and his teachers. One hundred or so of the leading men marched into the large clear space in the centre of the assembled multitudes, and stood there facing each other in equal lines, with a man at either end closing up the passage between. At the middle they stood eight or ten feet apart, gradually nearing till they almost met at either end. Amid silence for a few moments, all stood hushed; then every man kneeled on his right knee, extended his right hand, and bent forward till his face nearly touched the ground. Thereon the man at the one end began muttering something, his voice rising ever louder as he rose to his feet, when it ended in a fearful yell as he stood erect. Next the two long lines of men, all in a body, went through the same ceremonial, rising gradually to their feet, with mutterings deepening into a howl, and heightening into a yell as they stood erect. Finally, the man at the other end went through the same hideous forms. All this was thrice deliberately repeated, each time with growing frenzy. And then, all standing on their feet, they united as with one voice in what sounded like music running mad up and down the scale—closing with a long, deep-toned, hollow howl as of souls in pain. With smiles of joy, the men then all shook hands with each other. Nowar and another chief spoke; and the food was then divided and exchanged.

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At this stage, Nowar and Nerwangi addressed the Missionary to this effect: "This feast is held to move all the chiefs and people here to give up fighting, to become friends, and to worship your Jehovah God. We wish you to remain, and to teach us all good conduct. As an evidence of our sincerity, and of our love, we have prepared this pile of food for you."

In reply, I addressed the whole multitude, saying how pleased I was with their speeches and with the resolutions and promises which they all had made. I further urged them to stick fast by these, and that grand fruits would arise to their island, to themselves, and to their children.

Having finished a brief address, I then walked forward to the very middle of the circle, and laid down before them a bundle of lengths of red calico and pieces of white calico, a number of fish-hooks, knives, etc., etc., requesting the two chiefs to divide my offering of goodwill among the tribes assembled, as well as the pile of food presented to us, as a token of my love and friendship to them all.

Not without some doubt, and under considerable trial, did I take this apparently unfriendly attitude of refusing to take their food. But I feared to seem even to approve of any act of devil-worship, or to confirm them in it, being there to discourage all such scenes, and to lead them to acknowledge only the true God. Nowar and Nerwangi explained what I meant, and how I wished all to be divided amongst the assembled tribes to show my love. With this all seemed highly satisfied.

Heathen dances were now entered upon, their paint and feathers and ornaments adding to the wildness of the scene. The men seemed to dance in an inside ring, and the women in an outside ring, at a considerable distance from each other. Music was supplied by singing and clapping of hands. The order was perfect, and the figures highly intricate. But I have never been able to associate dancing with things lovely and of good report! After the dancing, all retired to the bush; and a kind of sham fight then followed on the public cleared ground. A host of painted savages rushed in and took possession with songs and shoutings. From the bush, on the opposite side, the chanting of women was heard in the distance, louder and louder as they approached. Snatching from a burning fire flaming sticks, they rushed on the men with these,

beating them and throwing burning pieces of wood among them, till with deafening yells amongst themselves and amidst shouts of laughter from the crowd, they drove them from the space, and danced thereon and sang a song of victory. The dancing and fighting, the naked painted figures, and the constant yells and shoutings, gave one a weird sensation, and suggested strange ideas of Hell broken loose.

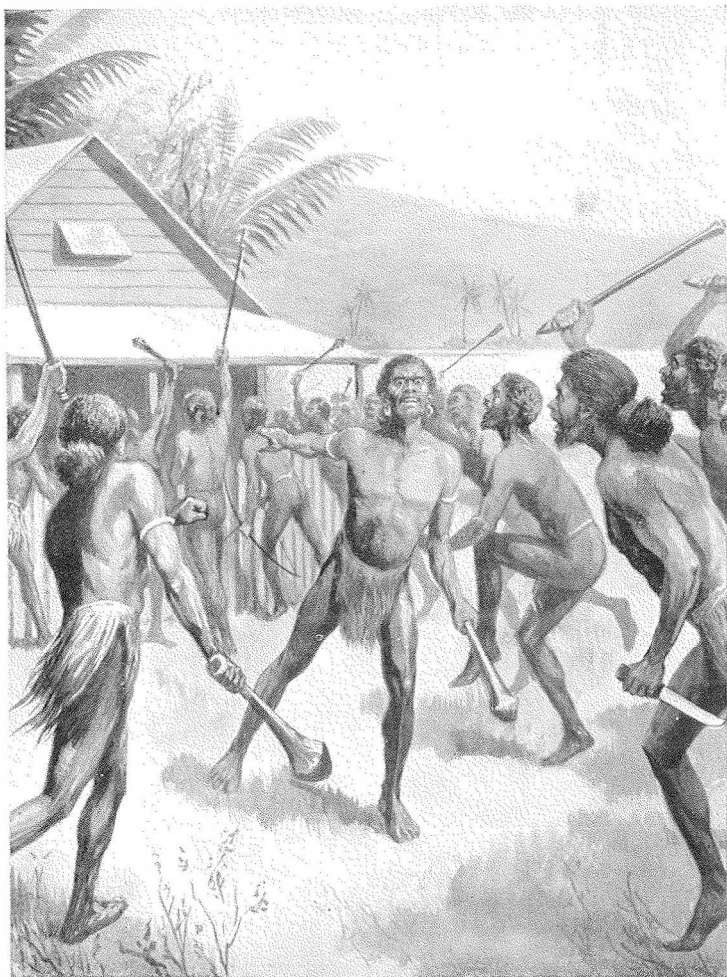
The final scene approached, when the men assisted their women to fill all the allotted food into baskets, to be carried home and eaten there ; for the different tribes do not sit down together and eat together as we would do ; their coming together is for the purpose of exchanging and dividing the food presented. The effusion and ceremonial of the gifts and exchanges seemed to betoken a loving people ; and so they were for the feast—but that laid not aside a single deadly feud, and streams of blood and cries of hate would soon efface all traces of this day.

CHAPTER XI

CANNIBALS AT WORK

EARLY one morning, the savage yells of warring tribes woke me from sleep. They had broken into a quarrel about a woman, and were fiercely engaged with their clubs. According to my custom, I rushed in amongst them, and, not without much difficulty, separated them before deadly wounds had been given or received. On this occasion, the chiefs of both tribes, being very friendly to me, drove their people back from each other at my earnest appeals. Sitting down at length within earshot, they had it out in a wild scolding match, a contest of lung and tongue. Meanwhile I rested on a canoe midway betwixt them, in the hope of averting a renewal of hostilities. By and by an old sacred man, a chief called Sapa, with some touch of savage comedy in his breast, volunteered an episode which restored good humour to the scene. Leaping up, he came dancing and singing towards me, and there, to the amusement of all, re-enacted the quarrel, and mimicked rather cleverly my attempt at separating the combatants. Smashing at the canoe with his club, he yelled and knocked down imaginary enemies; then, rushing first at one party and then at the other, he represented me as appealing and gesticulating and pushing them afar from each other, till he became quite exhausted. Thereon he came and planted himself in great glee beside me, and looked around as if to say, "You must laugh, for I have played." At this very juncture, a loud cry of "Sail O!" broke upon our ears, and all parties leapt to their feet, and prepared for a new sensation; for in those climes, everything—war itself—is of smaller interest than a vessel from the Great Unknown Beyond sailing into your harbour.

Not many days thereafter, a very horrible transaction occurred. Before daybreak, I heard shot after shot quickly discharged. A teacher came running and cried, "Missi,



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six or seven men have been shot dead this morning for a great feast. It is to reconcile tribes that have been at war, and to allow a banished tribe to return in peace."

I learned that the leading men had in council agreed upon this sacrifice, but the name of each victim was kept a secret till the last moment. The torture of suspense and uncertainty seemed to be borne by all as part of their appointed lot ; nor did they prepare as if suspecting any dread assault. Before daylight, the sacred men allocated a murderer to the door of each house where a victim slept. A signal shot was fired ; all rushed to their doors, and the doomed ones were shot and clubbed to death, as they attempted to escape. Their bodies were then borne to a sacred tree, and hung up there by the hands for a time, as an offering to the gods. Being taken down, they were carried ceremoniously and laid out on the shore near my house, placed under a special guard.

Information had reached me that my teachers and I were also destined victims for this same feast ; and sure enough we espied a band of armed men, the killers, despatched towards our premises. Instantaneously I had the teachers and their wives and myself securely locked into the Mission House ; and, cut off from all human hope, we set ourselves to pray. All through that morning and forenoon we heard them tramp-tramping round our house, whispering to each other, and hovering near window and door. Our safety lay in our appeal to that blessed Lord who had placed us there, and to whom all power had been given in Heaven and on Earth.

All through that dreadful morning, and far into the afternoon, we thus abode together. Towards sundown, constrained by the Invisible One, they withdrew from our Mission House, and left us once more in peace. They bore away the slain to be cooked, and distributed amongst the tribes, and eaten in their feast of reconcillation ; a covenant sealed in blood, and soon, alas, to be buried in blood again ! For many days thereafter we had to take unusual care, and not unduly expose ourselves to danger ; for dark characters were seen prowling about in the bush near at hand, and we knew that our life was the prize. We took what care we could, and God the Lord did the rest ; or rather He did all—for His wisdom guided us, and His power baffled them.

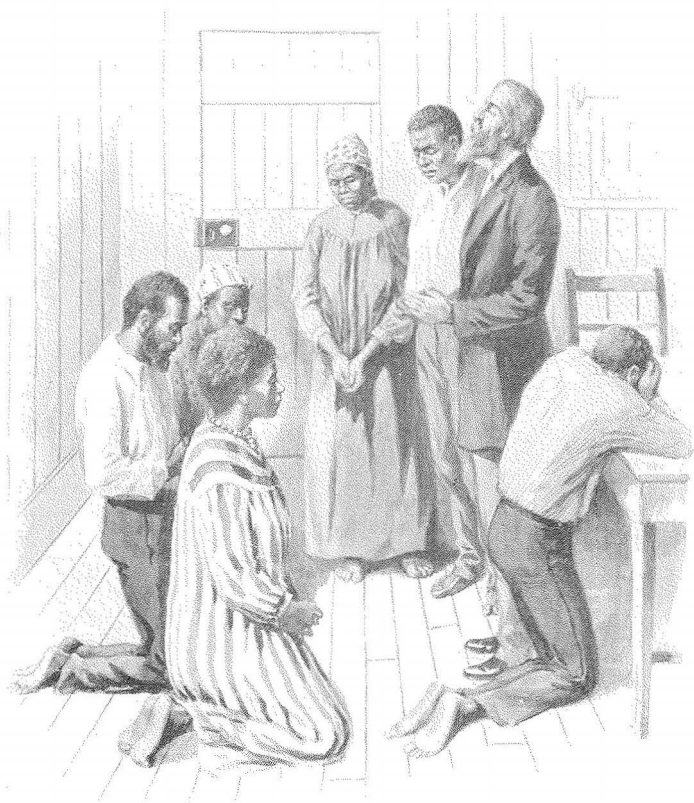
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Shortly thereafter war was again declared, by the Inland people attacking our Harbour people. It was an old quarrel; and the war was renewed and continued, long after the cause thereof had passed away. I did my utmost to stop hostilities, setting the evils of war before them, and pleading with the leading men to renounce it. Thereon arose a characteristic incident of island and heathen life. One day I held a service in the village where morning after morning their tribes assembled, and declared that if they would believe in and follow the Jehovah God, He would deliver them from all their enemies and lead them into a happy life. There were present three sacred men, of whom the whole population lived in terror—professors of sorcery, and claiming the power of life and death, health and sickness, rain and drought, according to their will. On hearing me, these three stood up and declared they did not believe in Jehovah, nor did they need His help; for they had the power to kill me by Nahak (i.e. sorcery or witchcraft), if only they could get possession of any piece of the fruit or food of which I had eaten. This was an essential condition of their black art; hence the peel of a banana or an orange, and every broken scrap of food, is gathered up by the natives, lest it should fall into the hands of the sacred men, and be used for Nahak. This superstition was the cause of most of the bloodshed and terror upon Tanna; and being thus challenged, I asked God's help, and determined to strike a blow against it.

A woman was standing near with a bunch of native fruit in her hand, like our plums, called quonquore. I asked her to give me some; and she, holding out a bunch, said, "Take freely what you will!"

Calling the attention of all the assembly to what I was doing, I took three fruits from the bunch, and taking a bite out of each, I gave them one after another to the three sacred men, and deliberately said in the hearing of all, "You have seen me eat of this fruit, you have seen me give the remainder to your sacred men; they have said they can kill me by Nahak, but I challenge them to do it if they can, without arrow or spear, club or musket; for I deny that they have any power against me, or against anyone, by their sorcery."

The challenge was accepted; the natives looked terror-struck at the position in which I was placed! The cere-



THE DEFENCE OF THE MISSION HOUSE.

mony of Nahak was usually performed in secret—the Tannese fleeing in dread, as Europeans would from the touch of the plague; but I lingered and eagerly watched their ritual. As the three chiefs arose, and drew near to one of the sacred trees, to begin their ceremonial, the natives fled in terror, crying “Missi, Iawé! Alas, Missi!”

But I held on at my post of observation. Amidst wavings and incantations, they rolled up the pieces of the fruit from which I had eaten, in certain leaves of this sacred tree, into a shape like a waxen candle; then they kindled a sacred fire near the root, and continued their mutterings, gradually burning a little more and a little more of the candle-shaped things, wheeling them round their heads, blowing upon them with their breaths, waving them in the air, and glancing wildly at me as if expecting my sudden destruction. Wondering whether after all they did not believe their own lie, for they seemed to be in dead earnest, I, more eager than ever to break the chains of such vile superstition, urged them again and again, crying, “Be quick! Stir up your gods to help you! I am not killed yet; I am perfectly well!”

At last they stood up and said, “We must delay till we have called all our sacred men. We will kill Missi before his next Sabbath comes round. Let all watch, for he will soon die and that without fail.”

I replied, “Very good! I challenge all your priests to unite and kill me by sorcery or Nahak. If on Sabbath next I come again to your village in health, you will all admit that your gods have no power over me, and that I am protected by the true and living Jehovah God!”

Every day throughout the remainder of that week the conchs were sounded; and over that side of the island all their sacred men were at work trying to kill me by their arts. Now and again messengers arrived from every quarter of the island, inquiring anxiously after my health, and wondering if I was not feeling sick, and great excitement prevailed.

Sabbath dawned upon me peacefully, and I went to that village in more than my usual health and strength. Large numbers assembled, and when I appeared they looked at each other in terror, as if it could not really be I myself still spared and well. Entering into the public ground, I saluted them to this effect, “My love to you all, my friends!

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I have come again to talk to you about the Jehovah God and His worship."

The three sacred men, on being asked, admitted that they had tried to kill me by Nahak, but had failed ; and on being questioned, why they had failed they gave the acute and subtle reply, that I also was myself a sacred man, and that my God being the stronger had protected me from their gods. Addressing the multitude, I answered thus, " Yea, truly ; my Jehovah God is stronger than your gods. He protected me, and helped me ; for He is the only living and true God, the only God that can hear or answer any prayer from the children of men. Your gods cannot hear prayers, but my God can and will hear and answer you, if you will give heart and life to Him, and love and serve Him only. This is my God, and He is also your friend if you will hear and follow His voice."

Having said this, I sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, and addressed them, " Come and sit down all around me, and I will talk to you about the love and mercy of my God, and teach you how to worship and please Him."

Two of the sacred men then sat down, and all the people gathered round and seated themselves very quietly. I tried to present to them ideas of sin, and of salvation through Jesus Christ, as revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures.

The third sacred man, the highest in rank, a man of great stature and uncommon strength, had meantime gone off for his warrior's spear, and returned brandishing it in the air and poisoning it at me. I said to the people, " Of course he can kill me with his spear, but he undertook to kill me by Nahak or scorcery, and promised not to use against me any weapons of war ; and if you let him kill me now, you will kill your friend, one who lives among you and only tries to do you good, as you all know so well."

Thereon I seated myself calmly in the midst of the crowd, while he leaped about in rage, scolding all who were present for listening to me. The other sacred men, however, took my side, and, as many of the people also were friendly to me and stood closely packed around me, he did not throw his spear. To allay the tumult and obviate further bloodshed, I offered to leave with my teachers at once, and, in doing so, I ardently pled with them to live at peace. Though we got safely home, that old sacred man seemed

still to hunger after my blood. For weeks thereafter, go where I would, he would suddenly appear on the path behind me, poising in his right hand that same Goliath spear. God only kept it from being thrown, and I, using every lawful precaution, had all the same to attend to my work, as if no enemy were there, leaving all other results in the hands of Jesus. This whole incident did, doubtless, shake the prejudices of many as to sorcery; but few even of converted natives ever get entirely clear of the dread of Nahak.

The other mission station, on the south-west side of Tanna, had to be visited by me from time to time. Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson, there, were both in a weak state of health, having a tendency to consumption. At this juncture, a message reached me that they were without European food, and a request to send them a little flour if possible. The war made the journey overland impossible. A strong wind and a high sea round the coast rendered it impracticable for my boat to go. The danger to life from the enemy was so great that I could not hire a crew. I pled therefore with Nowar and Manuman, and a few leading men, to take one of their best canoes, and themselves to accompany me. I had a large flat-bottomed pot with a close-fitting lid, and that I pressed full of flour; and, tying the lid firmly down, I fastened it right in the centre of the canoe, and as far above water-mark as possible. All else that was required we tied around our own persons. Sea and land being as they were, it was a perilous undertaking, which only dire necessity could have justified. They were all good swimmers, but as I could not swim, the strongest man was placed behind me, to seize me and swim ashore, if a crash came.

Creeping round near the shore all the way, we had to keep just outside the great breakers on the coral reef, and were all drenched through and through with the foam of an angry surf. We arrived, however, in safety within two miles of our destination, where lived the friends of my canoe's company, but where a very dangerous sea was breaking on the reef. Here they all gave in, and protested that no further could they go; and truly their toil all the way with the paddles had been severe. I appealed to them, that the canoe would for certain be smashed if they tried to get on shore, that the provisions would be

lost, and some of us probably drowned. But they turned to the shore, and remained for some time thus watching the sea. At last their captain cried, "Missi, hold on! There's a smaller wave coming; we'll ride in now."

The wave came rolling on; every paddle with all their united strength struck into the sea; and next moment our canoe was flying like a sea-gull on the crest of the wave towards the shore. Another instant, and the wave had broken on the reef with a mighty roar, and rushed passed us hissing in clouds of foam. My company were next seen swimming wildly about in the sea, Manuman, the one-eyed sacred man, alone holding on by the canoe, nearly full of water, with me still clinging to the seat of it, and the very next wave likely to devour us. In desperation I sprang for the reef, and ran for a man half wading, half swimming to reach us; and God so ordered it, that just as the next wave broke against the silvery rock of coral, the man caught me and partly swam with me through its surf, partly carried me till I was set safely ashore. Praising God, I looked up and saw all the others nearly as safe as myself, except Manuman, my friend, who was still holding on by the canoe in the face of wind and sea, and bringing it with him. Others ran and swam to his help. The paddles were picked up amid the surf. A powerful fellow came towards me with the pot of flour on his head, uninjured by water! The chief who held on by the canoe got severely cut about the feet, and had been badly bruised and knocked about; but all the rest escaped without further harm, and everything that we had was saved. Amongst friends at last, they resolved to await a favourable wind and tide to return to their own homes. Singing in my heart unto God, I hired a man to carry the pot of flour, and soon arrived at the Mission Station.

After supplying the wants of Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson, whom we found as well as could be expected, we had to prepare, after a few hours of rest, to return to our own station by walking overland through the night. I durst not remain longer away, lest my own house should be plundered and broken into. Before I had gone far on my return journey, the sun went down, and no native would accompany me. They said I would for certain be killed by the way. But I knew that it would be quite dark before I reached the hostile districts, and that the heathen

are great cowards in the dark and never leave their villages at night in the darkness, except in companies for fishing and such-like tasks. I skirted along the sea-shore as fast as I could, walking and running alternately; and, when I got within hearing of voices, I slunk back into the bush till they had safely passed, and then groped my way back near the shore, that being my only guide to find a path.

Having made half the journey, I came to a dangerous path, almost perpendicular, up a great rock round the base of which the sea roared deep. With my heart lifted up to Jesus, I succeeded in climbing it, cautiously grasping roots, and resting by bushes, till I safely reached the top. There, to avoid a village, I had to keep crawling slowly along the bush near the sea, on the top of that great hedge of rock—a feat I could never have accomplished even in daylight without the excitement; but I felt that I was supported and guided in all that life or death journey by my dear Lord Jesus. I had to leave the shore and follow up the bank of a very deep ravine to a place shallow enough for one to cross, and then through the bush away for the shore again. By holding too much to the right, I missed the point where I had intended to reach it. Small fires were now visible through the bush; I heard the voices of the people talking in one of our most heathen villages.

Quietly drawing back, I now knew where I was, and easily found my way towards the shore; but on reaching the Great Rock I could not in the darkness find the path down again. I groped about till I was tired. I feared that I might stumble over and be killed; or, if I delayed till daylight, that the savages would kill me. I knew that one part of the rock was steep-sloping, with little growth or none thereon, and I searched about to find it, resolved to commend myself to Jesus and slide down thereby, that I might again reach the shore and escape for my life. Thinking I had found this spot, I hurled down several stones and listened for their splash, that I might judge whether it would be safe. But the distance was too far for me to hear or judge. At high tide the sea there was deep; but at low tide I could wade out of it and be safe. The darkness made it impossible for me to see anything. I let go my umbrella, shoving it down with considerable force, but neither did it send me back any news.

Feeling sure, however, that this was the place I sought,

and knowing that to await the daylight would be certain death, I prayed for help and protection, and resolved to let myself go. First, I fastened all my clothes as tightly as I could, so as not to catch on anything; then I lay down at the top on my back, feet foremost, holding my head downwards on my breast to keep it from striking on the rock; then, having let myself down as far as possible by a branch, I at last let go, throwing my arms forward and trying to keep my feet well up. A giddy swirl, as if flying through the air, took possession of me; a few moments seemed an age; I rushed quickly down, and felt no obstruction till my feet struck into the sea below. Adoring and praising Jesus, I regained my feet. It was low tide; I had received no injury; and, wading through, I found the shore path easier and lighter than the bush had been. The very darkness was my safety, preventing the natives from rambling about. I saw no person to speak to till I reached a village quite near to my own house, fifteen or twenty miles from where I had started; here I left the sea path and promised some young men a gift of fish-hooks to guide me the nearest way through the bush to my Mission Station, which they gladly and heartily did. I ran a narrow risk in approaching them; they thought me an enemy, and I arrested their muskets only by a loud cry:

“I am Missi! Don't shoot; my love to you, my friends!”

Praising God for His preserving care, I reached home and had a long refreshing sleep. The natives, on hearing next day how I had come all the way in the dark, exclaimed:

“Surely any of us would have been killed! Your Jehovah God alone thus protects you and brings you safely home.”

With all my heart I said, “Yes! and He will be your protector and helper too, if only you will obey and trust in Him.”

Certainly that night put my faith to the test. Had it not been the assurance that I was engaged in His service, and that in every path of duty He would carry me through or dispose of me therein for His glory, I could never have undertaken either journey. St. Paul's words are true to-day and for ever: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

CHAPTER XII

THE PLAGUE OF MEASLES

ABOUT this time I had a never-to-be-forgotten illustration of the infernal spirit that possessed some of the traders towards these poor natives. One morning, three or four vessels entered our Harbour and cast anchor. The captains called on me; and one of them, with manifest delight, exclaimed, "We know how to bring down your proud Tannese now! We'll humble them before you!"

I answered, "Surely you don't mean to attack and destroy these poor people?"

He replied, not abashed but rejoicing, "We have sent the measles to humble them! That kills them by the score! Four young men have been landed at different ports, ill with measles, and these will soon thin their ranks."

Shocked above measure, I protested solemnly and denounced their conduct and spirit; but my remonstrances only called forth the shameless declaration, "Our watchword is—Sweep these creatures away and let white men occupy the soil!"

Their malice was further illustrated thus: they induced Kapuku, a young chief, to go off to one of their vessels, promising him a present. Having got him on board, they confined him in the hold amongst natives lying ill with measles. They gave him no food for about four-and-twenty hours; and then, without the promised present, they put him ashore far from his own home. Though weak and excited, he scrambled back to his tribe in great exhaustion and terror. He informed the Missionary that they had put him down amongst sick people, red and hot with fever, and that he feared their sickness was upon him. I am ashamed to say that these sandal-wood and other traders were our own degraded countrymen; and that they deliberately gloried in thus destroying the

heathen. A more fiendish spirit could scarcely be imagined ; but most of them were horrible drunkards, and their traffic of every kind amongst these islands was, generally speaking, steeped in human blood.

The measles, thus introduced, became amongst our islanders the most deadly plague. It spread fearfully, and was accompanied by sore throat and diarrhœa. In some villages, man, woman, and child were stricken, and none could give food or water to the rest. The misery, suffering, and terror were unexampled, the living being afraid sometimes even to bury the dead. Thirteen of my own Mission party died of this disease ; and, so terror-stricken were the few who survived, that when the little Mission schooner *John Knox* returned to Tanna, they all packed up and left for Aneityum—except my own dear old Abraham.

At first, thinking that all were on the wing, he also had packed his chattels, and was standing beside the others ready to leave with them. I drew near to him and said, "Abraham, they are all going ; are you also going to leave me here alone on Tanna, to fight the battles of the Lord ?"

He asked, "Missi, will you remain ?"

I replied, "Yes ; but, Abraham, the danger to life is now so great that I dare not plead with you to remain, for we may both be slain. Still, I cannot leave the Lord's work now."

The noble old chief looked at the box and his bundles, and, musing, said, "Missi, our danger is very great now."

I answered, "Yes ; I once thought you would not leave me alone to it ; but, as the vessel is going to your own land, I cannot ask you to remain and face it with me !"

He again said, "Missi, would you like me to remain alone with you, seeing my wife is dead and in her grave here ?"

I replied, "Yes, I would like you to remain ; but, considering the circumstances in which we will be left alone, I cannot plead with you to do so."

He answered, "Then, Missi, I remain with you of my own free choice, and with all my heart. We will live and die together in the work of the Lord. I will never leave you while you are spared on Tanna."

So saying, and with a light that gave the fore-gleam of a martyr's glory to his dark face, he shouldered his box

and bundles back to his own house ; and thereafter, Abraham was my dear companion and constant friend, and my fellow-sufferer in all that remains still to be related of our Mission life on Tanna.

Before this plague of measles was brought amongst us I had sailed round in the *John Knox* to Black Beach on the opposite side of Tanna, and prepared the way for settling teachers. And they were placed soon after with encouraging hopes of success, and with the prospect of erecting there a station for Mr. and Mrs. Johnston, the newly-arrived Missionaries from Nova Scotia. But this dreadful imported epidemic blasted all our dreams. We carried medicine, food, and even water, to the surrounding villages every day, few of themselves being able to render us much assistance. Nearly all who took our medicine and followed instructions as to food, etc., recovered ; but vast numbers of them would listen to no counsels, and rushed into experiments which made the attack fatal all around. When the trouble was at its height, for instance, they would plunge into the sea, and seek relief ; they found it in almost instant death. Others would dig a hole into the earth, the length of the body and about two feet deep ; therein they laid themselves down, the cold earth feeling agreeable to their fevered skins ; and when the earth around them grew heated, they got friends to dig a few inches deeper, again and again, seeking a cooler and cooler couch. In this ghastly effort many of them died, literally in their own graves, and were buried where they lay ! It need not be surprising, though we did everything in our power to relieve and save them, that the natives associated us with the white men who had so dreadfully afflicted them, and that their blind thirst for revenge did not draw fine distinctions between the traders and the Missionaries. Both were whites—that was enough.

Before leaving this terrible plague of measles, I may record my belief that it swept away, with the accompanying sore throat and diarrhoea, a third of the entire population of Tanna ; in certain localities more than a third. The living declared themselves unable to bury the dead, and great want and suffering ensued. The teacher and his wife and child, placed by us at Black Beach, were also taken away ; and his companion, the other teacher there.

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embraced the first opportunity to leave along with his wife for his own island, else his life would have been taken in revenge. Yet, from all accounts afterwards received, I do not think the measles were more fatal on Tanna than on the other islands of the group.

New Year's Day, 1861, will ever be remembered. Mr. and Mrs. Johnston, Abraham and I, had spent nearly the whole time in a kind of solemn yet happy festival. Anew in a holy covenant before God, we unitedly consecrated our lives and our all to the Lord Jesus, giving ourselves away to His blessed service for the conversion of the heathen on the New Hebrides. After evening family worship, Mr. and Mrs. Johnston left my room to go to their own house, only some ten feet distant; but he returned to inform me that there were two men at the window, armed with huge clubs, and having black painted faces. Going out to them and asking them what they wanted, they replied, "Medicine for a sick boy."

With difficulty I persuaded them to come in and get it. At once, it flashed upon me, from their agitation and their disguise of paint, that they had come to murder us. Mr. Johnston had also accompanied us into the house. Keeping my eye constantly fixed on them, I prepared the medicine and offered it. They refused to receive it, and each man grasped his killing-stone. I faced them firmly and said, "You see that Mr. Johnston is now leaving and you too must leave for to-night. To-morrow, you can bring the boy or come for the medicine."

Seizing their clubs, as if for action, they showed unwillingness to withdraw, but I walked deliberately forward and made as if to push them out, when both turned and began to leave.

Mr. Johnston had gone in front of them and was safely out. But he bent down to lift a little kitten that had escaped at the open door; and at that moment one of the savages, jerking in behind, aimed a blow with his huge club, in avoiding which Mr. Johnston fell with a groan to the ground. Both men sprang towards him, but our two faithful dogs ferociously leapt in their faces and saved his life. Rushing out, but not fully aware of what had occurred, I saw Mr. Johnston trying to raise himself, and heard him cry, "Take care! these men have tried to kill me, and they will kill you!"

Facing them sternly I demanded, "What is it that you want? He does not understand your language. What do you want? Speak with me."

Both men thereon raised their great clubs and made to strike me; but quick as lightning the two dogs sprang at their faces and baffled their blows. One dog was badly bruised, and the ground received the other blow, that would have launched me into eternity. The best dog was a little cross-bred retriever, with terrier's blood in him, splendid for warning us of approaching dangers, and which had already been the means of saving my life several times. Seeing how matters stood, I now hounded both dogs furiously upon them, and the two savages fled.

In their flight, a large body of men, who had come eight or ten miles to assist in the murder and plunder, came slipping here and there from the bush and joined them, fleeing too.

Accustomed to such scenes, I retired to rest and slept soundly; but Mr. Johnston could not sleep for one moment. His pallor and excitement continued next day, indeed for several days; and after that, though he was naturally lively and cheerful, I never saw him smile again.

When adzing a tree for house-building I observed that Mahanan, the war chief's brother, had been keeping too near me, and that he carried a tomahawk in his hand; and, in trying both to do my work and to keep an eye on him, I struck my ankle severely with the adze. He moved off quickly, saying, "I did not do that," but doubtless rejoicing at what had happened. The bone was badly hurt, and several of the blood-vessels cut. Dressing it as well as I could, and keeping it constantly soaked in cold water, I had to exercise the greatest care. In this condition, amidst great sufferings, I was sometimes carried to the villages to administer medicine to the sick, and to plead and pray with the dying.

But Mr. Johnston had scarcely ever slept since the 1st of January, and during the night of the 16th he sent for my bottle of laudanum. Being severely attacked with ague and fever, I could not go to him, but sent the bottle, specifying the proper quantity for a dose, but that he quite understood already. He took a dose for himself, and gave one also to his wife, as she too suffered from sleeplessness. This he repeated three nights in succession, and both of

them obtained a long, sound, and refreshing sleep. He came to my bedside, where I lay in the ague-fever, and said with great animation, amongst other things, "I have had such a blessed sleep, and feel so refreshed! What kindness in God to provide such remedies for suffering man!"

At midday his wife came to me crying, "Mr. Johnston has fallen asleep, so deep that I cannot awake him."

My fever had reached the worst stage, but I struggled to my feet, got to his bedside, and found him in a state of coma, with his teeth fixed in tetanus. With great difficulty we succeeded in slightly rousing him; with a knife, spoon, and pieces of wood, we forced his teeth open, so as to administer an emetic with good effects, and also other needful medicines. For twelve hours we had to keep him awake by repeated cold dash in the face, by ammonia, and by vigorously moving him about. He then began to speak freely; and next day he rose and walked about a little. For the two following days he was sometimes better and sometimes worse; but we managed to keep him up till the morning of the 21st, when he again fell into a state of coma, from which we failed to rouse him. At two o'clock in the afternoon he fell asleep—another martyr for the testimony of Jesus in those dark and trying Isles, leaving his young wife in indescribable sorrow, which she strove to bear with Christian resignation. Having made his coffin and dug his grave, we two alone at sunset laid him to rest beside my own dear wife and child, close by the Mission House.

Another tragedy followed with, however, much of the light of Heaven amid its blackness, in the story of Kowia, a Tannese chief of the highest rank. Going to Aneityum in youth, he had there become a true Christian. He married an Aneityumese Christian woman, with whom he lived very happily and had two beautiful children. Some time before the measles reached our island he returned to live with me as a teacher and to help forward our work on Tanna. He proved himself to be a decided Christian; he was a real chief amongst them, dignified in his whole conduct, and every way a valuable helper to me. Everything was tried by his own people to induce him to leave me and to renounce the worship, offering him every honour and bribe in their power. Failing these, they



"I HEARD AS IN A DREAM KOWIA PLEADING THAT I MIGHT SPEAK WITH HIM BEFORE HE DIED."

threatened to take away all his lands, and to deprive him of chieftainship, but he answered, "Take all! I shall still stand by Missi and the worship of Jehovah."

From threats they passed to galling insults, all which he bore patiently for Jesu's sake. But one day a party of his people came and sold some fowls, and an impudent fellow lifted them after they had been bought and offered to sell them again to me. Kowia shouted, "Don't purchase these, Missi; I have just bought them for you, and paid for them!"

Thereon the fellow began to mock at him. Kowia, gazing round on all present, and then on me, rose like a lion awaking out of sleep, and with flashing eyes exclaimed, "Missi, they think that because I am now a Christian I have become a coward! a woman! to bear every abuse and insult they can heap upon me. But I will show them for once that I am no coward, that I am still their Chief, and that Christianity does not take away but gives us courage and nerve."

Springing at one man, he wrenched in a moment the mighty club from his hands, and swinging it in air above his head like a toy, he cried, "Come, any of you, come all against your chief! My Jehovah God makes my heart and arms strong. He will help me in this battle as He helps me in other things, for He inspires me to show you that Christians are no cowards, though they are men of peace. Come on, and you will yet know that I am Kowia your chief."

All fled as he approached them; and he cried, "Where are the cowards now?" and handed back to the warrior his club. After this they left him at peace.

He lived at the Mission House, with his wife and children, and was a great help and comfort to Abraham and myself. He was allowed to go more freely and fearlessly amongst the people than any of the rest of our Mission staff. The ague and fever on me at Mr. Johnston's death so increased and reduced me to such weakness that I had become insensible, while Abraham and Kowia alone attended to me. On returning to consciousness I heard as in a dream Kowia lamenting over me, and pleading that I might recover, so as to hear and speak with him before he died. Opening my eyes and looking at him, I heard him say, Missi, all our Aneityumese are sick. Missi Johnston is

dead. You are very sick, and I am weak and dying. Alas, when I too am dead, who will climb the trees and get you a cocoa-nut to drink? And who will bathe your lips and brow?"

Here he broke down into deep and long weeping, and then resumed, "Missi, the Tanna-men hate us all on account of the worship of Jehovah; and I now fear He is going to take away all His servants from this land, and leave my people to the Evil One and his service!"

I was too weak to speak, so he went on, bursting into a soliloquy of prayer: "O Lord Jesus, Missi Johnston is dead; Thou hast taken him away from this land. Missi Johnston the woman and Missi Paton are very ill; I am sick, and Thy servants the Aneityumese are all sick and dying. O Lord, our Father in Heaven, are Thou going to take away all Thy servants and Thy worship from this dark land? What meanest Thou to do, O Lord? The Tannese hate Thee and Thy worship and Thy servants; but surely, O Lord, Thou canst not forsake Tanna and leave our people to die in the darkness! Oh, make the hearts of this people soft to Thy Word and sweet to Thy worship; teach them to fear and love Jesus; and oh, restore and spare Missi, dear Missi Paton, that Tanna may be saved!"

Touched to the very fountains of my life by such prayers from a man once a cannibal, I began under the breath of God's blessing to revive.

A few days thereafter Kowia came again to me, and rousing me out of sleep, cried, "Missi, I am very weak; I am dying. I come to bid you farewell, and go away to die. I am nearing death now, and I will soon see Jesus."

I spoke what words of consolation and cheer I could muster, but he answered, "Missi, since you became ill my dear wife and children are dead and buried. Most of our Aneityumese are dead, and I am dying. If I remain on the hill, and die here at the Mission House, there are none left to help Abraham to carry me down to the grave where my wife and children are laid. I wish to lie beside them, that we may rise together in the Great Day when Jesus comes. I am happy, looking unto Jesus! One thing only deeply grieves me now; I fear God is taking us all away from Tanna, and will leave my poor people dark and benighted as before, for they hate Jesus and the worship

of Jehovah. O Missi, pray for them, and pray for me once more before I go ! ”

He knelt down at my side, and we prayed for each other and for Tanna. I then urged him to remain at the Mission House, but he replied, “ O Missi, you do not know how near to death I am ! I am just going, and will soon be with Jesus, and see my wife and children now. While a little strength is left, I will lean on Abraham’s arm, and go down to the graves of my dear ones and fall asleep there, and Abraham will dig a quiet bed and lay me beside them. Farewell, Missi, I am very near death now ; we will meet again in Jesus and with Jesus ! ”

With many tears he dragged himself away ; and my heart-strings seemed all tied round that noble, simple soul, and felt like breaking one by one as he left me there on my bed of fever all alone. Abraham sustained him, tottering to the place of graves ; there he lay down, and immediately gave up the ghost and slept in Jesus ; and there the faithful Abraham buried him beside his wife and children. Thus died a man who had been a cannibal chief, but by the grace of God and the love of Jesus changed, transfigured into a character of light and beauty. I lost, in losing him, one of my best friends and most courageous helpers ; but I knew that day, and I know now, that there is one soul at least from Tanna to sing the glories of Jesus in Heaven—and oh, the rapture when I meet him there !

CHAPTER XIII

DEEPENING SHADOWS

MAY, 1861, brought with it a sorrowful and tragic event, which fell as the very shadow of doom across our path. I mean the martyrdom of the Gordons on Erromanga. The Rev. G. N. Gordon, a native of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, was the Missionary on Erromanga. The hurricanes and the measles had caused great mortality in Erromanga also; and the degraded traders, who had introduced the plague in order to save themselves from revenge, stimulated the superstitions of the heathen, and charged the Missionary there too with causing sickness and all other calamities. The sandal-wooders hated him for fearlessly denouncing and exposing their hideous atrocities.

On the 20th May, 1861, a party of Erromangans from a district called Bunk Hill, under a chief named Lovu, had been watching him. They hid in the bush and sent two of their men to the Missionary to ask him to go with them to the Mission House, as they needed medicine for a sick boy. He tied up in a napkin a meal of food, which had been brought to him but not eaten, and started to go with them. He requested the native Narubulet to go on before with his companion, but they insisted upon his going in front. In crossing a streamlet his foot slipped. A blow was aimed at him with a tomahawk, which he caught; the other man struck, but his weapon was also caught and wrenched out of his grasp. Next moment a blow on the spine laid the brave Missionary low, and a second on the neck almost severed the head from the body. The natives then rushed from their ambush, and began dancing round him with frantic shoutings. Mrs. Gordon hearing the noise, came out and stood in front of the Mission House, looking in the direction of her husband's working place, and wondering what had happened. Ouben, one of the party, who had run towards the Station the moment

that Mr. Gordon fell, now approached her. A merciful clump of trees had hid from her eyes all that had occurred, and she said to Ouben, "What's the cause of that noise?"

He replied, "Oh, nothing! only the boys amusing themselves!"

Saying "Where are the boys?" she turned round. Ouben slipped stealthily behind her, sank his tomahawk into her back, and with another blow almost severed her head!

Such was the fate of those two devoted servants of the Lord; loving in their lives, and in their deaths not divided. They had laboured four years on Erromanga, amidst trials and dangers manifold, and had not been without tokens of blessing in the Lord's work. Never more earnest or devoted Missionaries lived and died in the heathen field.

Immediately thereafter, a sandal-wood trader brought in his boat a party of Erromangans by night to Tanna. They assembled our harbour chiefs and people, and urged them to kill us and Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson and the teachers, or allow them to do so, as they had killed Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. Then they proposed to go to Aneityum and kill the Missionaries there, and thus sweep away the worship and the servants of Jehovah from all the New Hebrides. Our chiefs, however, refused, restrained by the Merciful One, and the Erromangans returned to their own island in a sulky mood.

Notwithstanding this refusal, as if they wished to reserve the murder and plunder for themselves, our Mission House was next day thronged with armed men, some from inland, others from Mr. Mathieson's station. They loudly praised the Erromangans! The leaders said again and again in my hearing, "The men of Erromanga killed Missi Williams long ago. We killed the Rarotongan and Samoan teachers. We fought Missi Turner and Missi Nisbet, and drove them from our island. We killed the Aneityumese teachers on Aniwa, and one of Missi Paton's teachers too. We killed several white men, and no man-of-war punished us. Let us talk over this, about killing Missi Paton and the Aneityumese, till we see if any man-of-war comes to punish the Erromangans. If not, let us unite, let us kill these Missionaries, let us drive the worship of Jehovah from our land!"

An inland chief said, or rather shouted, in my hearing,

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"My love to the Erromangans! They are strong and brave men, the Erromangans. They have killed their Missi and his wife, while we only talk about it. They have destroyed the worship and driven away Jehovah!"

After I left them Abraham heard them say, "Miaki is lazy. Let us meet in every village, and talk with each other. Let us all agree to kill Missi and the teachers."

The night after the visit of the Erromangan boat and the sad news of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon's death, the Tannese met on their village dancing-grounds and held high festival in praise of the Erromangans.

Groups of natives assembled suspiciously near us and sat whispering together. They urged old Abraham to return to Aneityum by the very first opportunity, as our lives were certain to be taken, but he replied, "I will not leave Missi."

Under the strain of these events, Miaki came to our house, and attacked me in hearing of his men to this effect: "You and the worship are the cause of all the sickness and death now taking place on Tanna! The Erromanga men killed Missi Gordon the man and also the woman, and yet they are all well. The worship is killing us all; and the inland people will kill us for keeping you and the worship here; for we love the conduct of Tanna, but we hate the worship. We must kill you and it, and we shall all be well again."

To know what was best to be done in such trying circumstances was an abiding perplexity. To have left altogether, when so surrounded by perils and enemies, at first seemed the wisest course, and was the repeated advice of many friends. But again, I had acquired the language, and had gained a considerable influence amongst the natives, and there were a number warmly attached both to myself and to the worship. To have left would have been to lose all, which to me was heart-rending; therefore, risking all with Jesus, I held on while the hope of being spared longer had not absolutely and entirely vanished.

Bishop Selwyn, writing about my standing fast on Tanna at the post of duty, said: "Talk of bravery! talk of heroism! The man who leads a forlorn hope is a coward in comparison with him who, on Tanna, thus alone, without a sustaining look or cheering word from one of his own race, regards it as his duty to hold on in the face

of such dangers. We read of the soldier, found after the lapse of ages among the ruins of Herculaneum, who stood firm at his post amid the fiery rain destroying all around him, thus manifesting the rigidity of the discipline amongst those armies of ancient Rome which conquered the world. Mr. Paton was subjected to no such iron law. He might, with honour, when offered to him, have sought a temporary asylum in Auckland, where he would have been heartily received. But he was moved by higher considerations. He chose to remain, and God knows whether at this moment he is in the land of the living ! ”

For my part I feel quite confident that, in like circumstances, that noble Bishop of God would have done the same. I, born in the bosom of the Scottish Covenant, descended from those who suffered persecution for Christ's honour, would have been unworthy of them and of my Lord had I deserted my post for danger only. Yet not to me, but to the Lord who sustained me, be all the praise and the glory !

At that time, though my life was daily attempted, a lad named Katasian was coming six miles regularly to the worship and to receive frequent instruction. One day, when engaged in teaching him, I caught a man stealing the blind from my window. On trying to prevent him, he aimed his great club at me, but I seized the heavy end of it with both my hands as it swung past my head, and held on with all my might. What a prayer went up from me to God at that dread moment ! The man, astonished and abashed at my kind words and appeal, slunk away and left me in peace.

For some time Nouka and his wife and daughter—a handsome girl, his only child—and Miaki's principal wife and her two sons, and nine chiefs attended worship regularly at the Mission House, on Sabbaths and on the afternoon of every Wednesday. In all, about sixty persons somewhat regularly waited on our ministrations at this time ; and amidst all perils I was encouraged, and my heart was full of hope. Yet one evening, when feeling more consoled and hopeful than ever before, a musket was discharged at my very door, and I was constrained to realise that we were in the midst of death. Father, our times are in Thy hand !

In my Mission School I offered as a prize a red shirt for

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the first chief who knew the whole alphabet without a mistake. It was won by an Inikahi chief, who was once a terror to the whole community. Afterwards, when trying to teach the A B C to others, he proceeded in something like this graphic style: "A is a man's legs with the body cut off; B is like two eyes; C is a three-quarters moon; D is like one eye; E is a man with one club under his feet and another over his head; F is a man with a large club and a smaller one," etc., etc.; L was like a man's foot; Q was the talk of the dove, etc. Then he would say, "Remember these things; you will soon get hold of the letters and be able to read. I have taught my little child, who can scarcely walk, the names of them all. They are not hard to hold, but soft and easy. You will soon learn to read the book if you try it with all your heart!"

But Miaki was still our evil genius, and every incident seemed to be used by him for one settled purpose of hate. A Kaserumini chief, for instance, and seven men took away a young girl in a canoe to Aniwa, to be sold to friends there for tobacco leaf, which the Aniwans cultivated extensively. They also prepared to take revenge there for a child's death, killed, in their belief, by the sorcery of an Aniwan. When within sight of the shore, the canoes were upset and all were said to have been devoured by sharks, excepting only one canoe out of six. This one returned to Tanna and reported that there were two white traders living on Aniwa, that they had plenty of ammunition and tobacco, but that they would not come to Tanna as long as a Missionary lived there. Under this fresh indictment, a party of Miaki's men came to my house, praising the Erromangans for the murder of their Missionaries, and threatening me.

Even the friendly Nowar said, "Miaki will make a great wind and sink any man-of-war that comes here. We will take the man-of-war and kill all that are on board. If you and Abraham do not leave us we will kill you both, for we must have the traders and the powder."

Just as they were assuming a threatening attitude other natives came running with the cry, "Missi, the *John Knox* is coming into the harbour, and two great ships of fire, men-of-war, behind her, coming very fast!"

I retorted upon Nowar and the hostile company, "Now is your time! Make all possible haste! Let Miaki raise

his great wind now ; get all your men ready ; I will tell them that you mean to fight, and you will find them always ready ! ”

Miaki's men fled away in unconcealed terror ; but Nowar came to me and said, “ Missi, I know that my talk is all lies, but if I speak the truth, they will kill me ! ”

I answered, “ Trust in Jehovah, the same God who sent these vessels now, to protect us from being murdered.” But Nowar always wavered.

And now from all parts of the island those who were most friendly flocked to us. They were clamorous to have Miaki and some others of our enemies punished by the man-of-war in presence of the natives ; and then they would be strong to speak in our defence and to lead the Tannese to worship Jehovah.

Commodore Seymour, Captain Hume and Dr. Geddie came on shore. After inquiring into everything, the Commodore urged me to leave at once, and very kindly offered to remove me to Aneityum, or Auckland, or any place of safety that I preferred. Again, however, I hesitated to leave, knowing that both stations would be instantly broken up, that all the influence gained would be thrown away, that the Church would lose all that had been expended, and above all, that those friendly to us would be left to persecution and destruction. For a long time I had seldom taken off my clothes at night, needing to be constantly on the alert to start at a moment's notice ; yet, while hope burned within my soul I could not withdraw, so I resolved to risk all with my dear Lord Jesus, and remained at my post. At my request, however, the Commodore met and talked with all the leaders who could be assembled at the Mission House. The natives declared frankly that they liked me, but did not like the worship. The Commodore reminded them that they had invited me to land among them, and had pledged their word more than once to protect me ; he argued with them that as they had no fault to find with me, but only with the worship, which could do them only good, they must bind themselves to protect my life. Miaki and others promised, and gave him their hands to do so.

At last old Nouka spoke out for all and said, “ Captain Paddan and all the traders tell us that the worship causes all our sickness and death. They will not trade with us,

nor sell us tobacco, pipes, powder, balls, caps, and muskets, till we kill our Missi like the Erromangans, but after that they will send a trader to live among us and give us plenty of all these things. We love Missi. But when the traders tell us that the worship makes us sick, and when they bribe us with tobacco and powder to kill him or drive him away, some believe them and our hearts do bad conduct to Missi. Let Missi remain here, and we will try to do good conduct to Missi; but you must tell Queen 'Toria of her people's bad treatment of us, and that she must prevent her traders from killing us with their measles, and from telling us lies to make us do bad conduct to Missi! If they come to us and talk as before, our hearts are very dark and may again lead us to bad conduct to Missi."

After this little parley the Commodore invited us all on board, along with the chiefs. They saw about three hundred marines ranked up on deck, and heard a great cannon discharged. For all such efforts to impress them and open their eyes, I felt profoundly grateful; but too clearly I knew and saw that only the grace of God could lastingly change them! They were soon back to their old arguments.

For instance, while the man-of-war lay in the harbour, Nowar kept himself closely concealed; but no sooner had she sailed than the cowardly fellow came out, laughing at the others, and protesting that he was under no promise and was free to act as he pleased! Yet in the hour of danger he generally proved to be our friend; such was his vacillating character. Nor was Miaki very seriously impressed. Mr. Mathieson shortly thereafter sent his boat round to me, being again short of European food. On his crew leaving her to deliver their message to me, some of Miaki's men at once jumped into the boat and started off round the island in search of kava. I went to Miaki, to ask that the boat might be brought back soon, but on seeing me he ran for his club and aimed to strike me. I managed to seize it, and to hold on, pleading with God and talking with Miaki, till by interference of some friendly natives his wrath was assuaged a little. Returning home, I sent food overland to keep the Mathiesons going till the boat returned, which she did in about eight days. Thus light and shadow pursued each other, the light brightening for a moment, but upon the whole the shadows deepening.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WAR CHIEFS IN COUNCIL

A TIME of great excitement amongst the natives now prevailed. War, war, nothing but war was spoken of! Preparations for war were being made in all the villages far and near. Fear sat on every face, and armed bands kept watching each other, as if uncertain where the war was to begin or by whom. All work was suspended, and that war spirit was let loose which rouses the worst passions of human nature. Again we found ourselves the centre of conflict, one party set for killing us or driving us away; the other wishing to retain us, while all old bitter grievances were also dragged into their speeches.

Miaki and Nouka said, "If you will keep Missi and his worship, take him with you to your own land, for we will not have him to live at the harbour."

Ian, the great inland chief, rose in wrath and said, "On whose land does the Missi live, yours or ours? Who fight against the worship and all good, who are the thieves and murderers, who tell the lies, you or we? We wish peace, but you will have war. We like Missi and the worship, but you hate them and say, 'Take him to your own land!' It is our land on which he now lives; it is his own land which he bought from you, but which our fathers sold Missi Turner long ago. The land was not yours to sell; it was really ours. Your fathers stole it from us long ago by war; but we would not have asked it back, had you not asked us to take Missi away. Now we will defend him on it, and he will teach us and our people in our own land!" So meeting after meeting broke into fiery speech, and separated with many threats.

To the next great meeting I was invited, but did not go, contenting myself with a message pleading that they should live at peace and on no account go to war with each other. But Ian himself came for me. I said, "Ian, I

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have told you my whole heart. Go not to that meeting. I will rather leave the island or die, than see you going to war about me ! ”

He answered, “ Missi, come with me, come now ! ”

I replied, “ Ian, you are surely not taking me away to kill me ? ”

His only reply was, “ Follow me, follow me quickly. ”

I felt constrained to go. He strode on before me till we reached the great village of his ancestors. His followers, armed largely with muskets as well as native weapons, filled one half the village square or dancing-ground. Miaki, Nouka, and their whole party sat in manifest terror upon the other half. Marching into the centre, he stood with me by his side, and proudly looking round, exclaimed, “ Missi, these are my men and your friends ! We are met to defend you and the worship. ” Then pointing across to the other side, he cried aloud, “ These are your enemies and ours ! The enemies of the worship, the disturbers of the peace on Tanna ! Missi, say the word, and the muskets of my men will sweep all opposition away, and the worship will spread and we will all be strong for it on Tanna. We will not shoot without your leave ; but if you refuse they will kill you and persecute us and our children, and banish Jehovah’s worship from our land. ”

I said, “ I love all of you alike. I am here to teach you how to turn away from all wickedness, to worship and serve Jehovah, and to live in peace. How can I approve of any being killed for me or for the worship ? My God would be angry at me and punish me, if I did ! ”

He replied, “ Then, Missi, you will be murdered and the worship destroyed. ”

I then stood forth in the middle before them all and cried, “ You may shoot or murder me, but I am your best friend. I am not afraid to die. You will only send me the sooner to my Jehovah God, whom I love and serve, and to my dear Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for me and for you, and who sent me here to tell you all His love. If you will only love and serve Him and give up your bad conduct, you will be happy. But if you kill me, His messenger, rest assured that He will in His own time and way punish you. This is my word to you all ; my love to you all ! ”

So saying, I turned to leave ; and Ian strode sullenly away and stood at the head of his men, crying, “ Missi, they

will kill you! they will kill us, and you will be to blame!"

Miaki and Nouka, full of deceit, now cried out, "Missi's word is good! Let us all obey it. Let us all worship."

An old man, Sirawia, one of Ian's under-chiefs, then said, "Miaki and Nouka say that the land on which Missi lives was theirs; though they sold it to him and he has paid them for it, they all know that it was ours, and is yet ours by right; but if they let Missi live on it in peace, we will all live at peace, and worship Jehovah. And if not, we will surely claim it again."

Miaki and his party hereon went off to their plantations, and brought a large present of food to Ian and his men as a peace-offering. This they accepted; and the next day Ian and his men brought Miaki a return present and said, "You know that Missi lives on our land? Take our present, be friends, and let him live quietly and teach us all. Yesterday you said his word was good; obey it now, else we will punish you and defend the Missi."

Miaki accepted the token, and gave good promises for the future. Ian then came to the hill-top near our house, by which passed the public path, and cried aloud in the hearing of all, "Abraham, tell Missi that you and he now live on our land. This path is the march betwixt Miaki and us. We have this day bought back the land of our fathers by a great price to prevent war. Take of our breadfruits and also of our cocoa-nuts what you require, for you are our friends and living on our land, and we will protect you and the worship!"

Chafed at the upsetting of all their plans and full of revenge, Nouka and Miaki and their allies declared publicly that they were now going to kill Ian by sorcery or Nahak, more feared by the Tannese than the field of battle. Strange to say, Ian became sick shortly after the sacred men had made the declaration about their Nahak-sorcery. I attended him, and for a time he recovered, and appeared very grateful. But he soon fell sick again. I sent him and the chief next under him a blanket each; I also gave shirts and calico to a number of his leading men. They wore them and seemed grateful and pleased. Ian, however, gradually sank and got worse. He had every symptom of being poisoned, a thing easily accomplished, as they know and use many deadly poisons. His sufferings were very

great, which prevented me from ascribing his collapse to mere superstitious terror. I did all that could be done ; but all thought him dying, and of course by sorcery. His people were angry at me for not consenting before to their shooting of Miaki ; and Miaki's people were now rejoicing that Ian was being killed by Nahak.

One night, his brother and a party came for me to go and see Ian, but I declined to go till the morning for fear of the fever and ague. On reaching his village, I saw many people about, and feared that I had been led into a snare ; but I at once entered into his house to talk and pray with him, as he appeared to be dying. After prayer, I discovered that I was left alone with him, and that all the people had retired from the village ; and I knew that, according to their custom, this meant mischief. Ian said, " Come near me, and sit by my bedside to talk with me, Missi."

I did so, and while speaking to him, he lay as if lost in a swoon of silent meditation. Suddenly he drew from the sugar-cane leaf thatch close to his bed a large butcher-like knife, and instantly feeling the edge of it with his other hand, he pointed it to within a few inches of my heart and held it quivering there, all a-tremble with excitement. I durst neither move nor speak, except that my heart kept praying to the Lord to spare me, or if my time was come to take me to Himself. There passed a few moments of awful suspense. My sight went and came. Not a word had been spoken, except to Jesus ; and then Ian wheeled the knife around, thrust it into the sugar-cane leaf, and cried to me, " Go, go quickly ! "

Next moment I was on the road. Not a living soul was to be seen about the village. I understood then that it had been agreed that Ian was to kill me, and that they had all withdrawn not to witness it, so that when the man-of-war came to inquire about me Ian would be dead, and no punishment could overtake the murderer. I walked quietly till quite free of the village, lest some hid in their houses might observe me. Thereafter, fearing that they, finding I had escaped, might overtake and murder me, I ran for my life a weary four miles till I reached the Mission House, faint, yet praising God for such a deliverance. Poor Ian died soon after, and his people strangled one of his wives and hanged another, and took out the three bodies together in a canoe and sank them in the sea.

Miaki was jubilant over having killed his enemy by **Nahak**; but the inland people now assembled in thousands to help **Sirawia** and his brother to avenge that death on **Miaki**, **Nouka**, and **Karewick**. These, on the other hand, boasted that they would kill all their enemies by **Nahak**-sorcery, and would call up a hurricane to destroy their houses, fruit-trees, and plantations. Immediately after **Miaki's** threat about bringing a storm, one of their great hurricanes actually smote that side of the island and laid everything waste. His enemies were greatly enraged, and many of the injured people united with them in demanding revenge on **Miaki**. Hitherto I had done everything in my power to prevent war, but now it seemed inevitable, and both parties sent word that if **Abraham** and I kept to the Mission House no one would harm us. We had little faith in any of their promises, but there was no alternative for us.

On the following Saturday, 18th January, 1862, the war began. Musket after musket was discharged quite near us, and the bush all round rang with the yell of their war-cry, which if once heard will never be forgotten. It came nearer and nearer, for **Miaki** fled, and his people took shelter behind and around our house. We were placed in the heart of danger, and the balls flew thick all around us. In the afternoon **Ian's** brother and his party retired, and **Miaki** quickly sent messengers and presents to the **Inikahimini** and **Kaserumini** districts, to assemble all their people and help him "to fight **Missi** and the **Tannese** who were friends of the worship." He said, "Let us cook his body and **Abraham's**, and distribute them to every village on this side of the island!"

Yet all the while **Miaki** assured me that he had sent a friendly message. The war went on, and **Nowar**, the chief, protected us, till he had a spear broken into his right knee. The enemy would have carried him off to feast on his body; but his young men, shouting wildly his name and battle-cry, rushed in with great impetuosity and carried their wounded chief home in triumph. The inland people now discharged muskets at my house and beat against the walls with their clubs. They smashed in the door and window of our store-room, broke open boxes and casks, tore my books to pieces and scattered them about, and carried off everything for which they cared, including my

boat, mast, oars, and sails. They broke into Abraham's house and plundered it ; after which they made a rush at the bedroom, into which we were locked, firing muskets, yelling, and trying to break it in. A chief, professing to be sorry for us, called me to the window, but on seeing me he sent a tomahawk through it, crying, " Come on, let us kill him now ! "

I replied, " My Jehovah God will punish you ; a man-of-war will come and punish you, if you kill Abraham, his wife, or me."

He retorted, " It's all lies about a man-of-war ! They did not punish the Erromangans. They are afraid of us. Come on, let us kill them ! "

He raised his tomahawk and aimed to strike my forehead, many muskets were uplifted as if to shoot, so I raised a revolver in my right hand and pointed it at them. The Rev. Joseph Copeland had left it with me on a former visit. I did not wish it, but he insisted upon leaving it, saying that the very knowledge that I had such a weapon might save my life. Truly, on this occasion it did so. Though it was harmless, they fell back quickly. My immediate assailant dropped to the ground, crying, " Missi has got a short musket ! He will shoot you all ! "

After lying flat on the ground for a little, they all got up and ran to the nearest bush, where they continued yelling about and showing their muskets. Towards nightfall they left, loaded with the plunder of the store and of Abraham's house.

In the evening, after they left, I went to Miaki and Nouka. Miaki, with a sneer, said, " Missi, where was Jehovah to-day ? There was no Jehovah to-day to protect you. It's all lies about Jehovah. They will come and kill you, and Abraham, and his wife, and cut your bodies into pieces to be cooked and eaten in every village upon Tanna."

After this, a number of the people sat down around me, and I prayed with them. But I left with a very heavy heart, feeling that Miaki was evidently bent on our destruction.

CHAPTER XV

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

I SENT Abraham to consult Nowar, who had defended us till disabled by a spear in the right knee. He sent by Abraham, advising me to take some of my goods to his house by night, and he would try to protect them and us. The risk was so great, we could only take a very little. Enemies were on every hand to cut off our flight, and Miaki, the worst of all, whose village had to be passed in going to Nowar's. In the darkness of the Mission House, we durst not light a candle for fear of some one seeing and shooting us. Not one of Nowar's men durst come to help us. But in the end it made no difference, for Nowar and his men kept what was taken there, as their portion of the plunder. Abraham, his wife, and I waited anxiously for the morning light. Miaki, the false and cruel, came to assure us that the heathen would not return that day. Yet, as daylight came in, Miaki himself stood and blew a great conch not far from our house. I ran out to see why this trumpet-shell had been blown, and found it was the signal for a great company of howling armed savages to rush down the hill on the other side of the bay and make straight for the Mission House. We had not a moment to lose. To have remained would have been certain death to us all. I held on while one gleam of hope remained. Escape for life was now the only path of duty. I called the teachers, locked the door, and made quickly for Nowar's village. There was not a moment left to carry anything with us. In the issue, Abraham and his wife and I lost all our earthly goods, and all our clothing except what we had on. My Bible, the few translations which I had made into Tannese, and a light pair of blankets I carried with me.

We durst not choose the usual path along the beach, for there our enemies would have quickly overtaken us. We

entered the bush in the hope of getting away unobserved. But a cousin of Miaki, evidently secreted to watch us, sprang from behind a breadfruit tree, and swinging his tomahawk, aimed it at my brow with a fiendish look. Avoiding it, I turned upon him and said in a firm, bold voice, "If you dare to strike me, my Jehovah God will punish you. He is here to defend me now!"

The man, trembling, looked all round as if to see the God who was my defender, and the tomahawk gradually lowered at his side. With my eye fixed upon him, I gradually moved backwards in the track of the teachers, and God mercifully restrained him from following me.

On reaching Nowar's village unobserved, we found the people terror-stricken, crying, rushing about in despair at such a host of armed savages approaching. I urged them to ply their axes, cut down trees, and blockade the path. For a little they wrought vigorously at this; but when, so far as eye could reach, they saw the shore covered with armed men rushing on towards their village, they were overwhelmed with fear, they threw away their axes and weapons of war, they cast themselves headlong on the ground, or knocked themselves against the trees as if to court death before it came. They cried, "Missi, it's of no use! We will all be killed and eaten to-day! See what a host are coming against us."

Mothers snatched up little children and ran to hide in the bush. Others waded as far as they could into the sea with them, holding their heads above the water. The whole village collapsed into a condition of indescribable terror. Nowar, lame with his wounded knee, got a canoe turned upside-down and sat upon it where he could see the whole approaching multitude. He said, "Missi, sit down beside me, and pray to our Jehovah God, for if He does not send deliverance now, we are all dead men. They will kill us all on your account, and that quickly. Pray, and I will watch!"

They had gone to the Mission House and broken in the door, and finding that we had escaped, they rushed on to Nowar's village. For, as they began to plunder the bedroom, Nouka said, "Leave everything. Missi will come back for his valuable things at night, and then we will get them and him also!"

So he nailed up the door, and they all marched for

Nowar's. We prayed as one can only pray when in the jaws of death and on the brink of eternity. We felt that God was near, and Omnipotent to do what seemed best in His sight. When the savages were about three hundred yards off, at the foot of a hill leading up to the village, Nowar touched my knee, saying, "Missi, Jehovah is hearing! They are all standing still."

Had they come on they would have met with no opposition, for the people were scattered in terror. On gazing shorewards, and round the harbour, as far as we could see, was a dense host of warriors, but all were standing still, and apparently absolute silence prevailed. We saw a messenger or herald running along the approaching multitude, delivering some tidings as he passed, and then disappearing in the bush. To our amazement the host began to turn, and slowly marched back in great silence, and entered the remote bush at the head of the harbour. Nowar and his people were in ecstasies, crying out, "Jehovah has heard Missi's prayer! Jehovah has protected us and turned them away back."

About midday, Nouka and Miaki sent their cousin Jonas, who had always been friendly to me, to say that I might return to my house in safety, as they were now carrying the war inland. Jonas had spent some years on Samoa, and been much with traders in Sydney, and spoke English well; but we felt they were deceiving us. Next night, Abraham ventured to creep near the Mission House, to test whether we might return, and save some valuable things, and get a change of clothing. The house appeared to stand as when they nailed up the door. But a large party of Miaki's allies at once enclosed Abraham, and, after asking many questions about me, they let him go since I was not there. Had I gone there, they would certainly that night have killed me. Again, at midnight, Abraham and his wife and Matthew went to the Mission House, and found Nouka, Miaki and Karewick near by, concealed in the bush among the reeds. Once more they enclosed them, thinking I was there too, but Nouka, finding that I was not, cried out, "Don't kill them just now! Wait till Missi comes."

Hearing this, Matthew slipped into the bush and escaped. Abraham's wife waded into the sea, and they allowed her to get away. Abraham was allowed to go to the Mission

House, but he, too, crept into the bush, and after an anxious waiting they all came back to me in safety. We now gave up all hope of recovering anything from the house.

Towards morning, when Miaki and his men saw that I was not coming back to deliver myself into their hands, they broke up my house and stole all they could carry away. They tore my books and scattered them about. They took away the type of my printing-press, to be made into bullets for their muskets. For similar uses they melted down the metal lining of my boxes, and everything else that could be melted. What they could not take away, they destroyed.

As the night advanced, Nowar declared that I must leave his village before morning, else he and his people would be killed for protecting me. He advised me, as the sea was good, to try for Mr. Mathieson's station; but he objected to my taking away any of my property—he would soon follow with it himself! But how to sail? Miaki had stolen my boat, mast, sails and oars, as also an excellent canoe made for me and paid for by me on Aneityum; and he had threatened to shoot any person that assisted me to launch either the one or the other. The danger still increasing, Nowar said, "You cannot remain longer in my house! My son will guide you to the large chestnut tree in my plantation in the bush. Climb up into it, and remain there till the moon rises."

Being entirely at the mercy of such doubtful and vacillating friends, I, though perplexed, felt it best to obey. I climbed into the tree, and was left there alone in the bush. The hours I spent there live all before me as if it were but of yesterday. I heard the frequent discharging of muskets and the yells of the savages. Yet I sat there among the branches, as safe in the arms of Jesus. Never, in all my sorrows, did my Lord draw nearer to me, and speak more soothingly in my soul, than when the moonlight flickered among those chestnut leaves, and the night air played on my throbbing brow, as I told all my heart to Jesus. Alone, yet not alone! If it be to glorify my God, I will not grudge to spend many nights alone in such a tree, to feel again my Saviour's spiritual presence, to enjoy His consoling fellowship. If thus thrown back upon your own soul, alone, all, all alone, in the midnight,

in the bush, in the very embrace of death itself, have you a Friend that will not fail you then ?

Gladly would I have lingered there for one night of comparative peace ! But Nowar sent his son to call me down from the tree, and to guide me to the shore where he himself was, as it was now time to take to sea in the canoe. Pleading for my Lord's continuing presence, I had to obey. My life and the lives of my Aneityumese now hung upon a very slender thread ; the risk was almost equally great from our friends, so-called, or from our enemies. Had I been a stranger to Jesus and to prayer, my reason would verily have given way, but my comfort and joy sprang out of these words, " I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee ; lo, I am with you always ! " Pleading these promises, I followed my guide. We reached the beach, just inside the harbour, at a beautiful white sandy bay on Nowar's ground, from which our canoe was to start. A good number of the natives had assembled there to see us off. Arkurat, having got a large roll of calico for the loan of his canoe, hid it away, and then refused the canoe, saying that if he had to escape with his family he would require it. He demanded an axe, a sail for his canoe, and a pair of blankets. I gave the quilt to him for a sail, and the axe and blankets for the canoe. In fact, these few relics of our earthly all at Nowar's were coveted by the savages and endangered our lives, and it was as well to get rid of them altogether. He cruelly proposed a small canoe for two ; but I had hired the canoe for five, and insisted upon getting it, as he had been well paid for it. As he only laughed and mocked us, I prepared to start and travel overland to Mr. Mathieson's station. He then said, " My wrath is over ! You may take it and go."

We launched it, but now he refused to let us go till daylight. He had always been one of my best friends, but now appeared bent on a quarrel, so I had to exercise much patience with him and them. Having launched it, he said I had hired the canoe but not the paddles. I protested. " Surely you know we hired the paddles too. What could we do without paddles ? "

But Arkurat lay down and pretended to have fallen asleep, snoring on the sand, and could not be awaked. I appealed to Nowar, who only said, " That is his conduct, Missi, our conduct ! "

I replied, "As he has got the blankets which I saved to keep me from ague and fever, and I have nothing left now but the clothes I have on, surely you will give me paddles."

Nowar gave me one. Returning to the village, friends gave me one each till I got other three. Now Arkurat started up, and refused to let us go. A chief and one of his men, who lived on the other side of the island near to where we were going, and who was hired by me to go with us and help in paddling the canoe, drew back also and refused to go. Again I offered to leave the canoe, and walk overland if possible, when Faimungo, the chief who had refused to go with us, came forward and said, "Missi, they are all deceiving you! The sea is so rough, you cannot go by it; and if you should get round the weather point, Miaki has men appointed to shoot you as you pass the Black Rocks, while by land all the paths are guarded by armed men. I tell you the truth, having heard all their talk. Miaki and Karewick say they hate the worship, and will kill you. They killed your goats, and stole all your property yesterday. Farewell!"

The teachers, the boy and I now resolved to enter the canoe and attempt it, as the only gleam of hope left to us. My party of five embarked in our frail canoe; Abraham first, I next, Matthew after me, the boy at the steering paddle, and Abraham's wife sitting in the bottom, where she might hold on while it continued to float. For a mile or more we got away nicely under the lee of the island, but when we turned to go south for Mr. Mathieson's station, we met the full force of wind and sea, every wave breaking over and almost swamping our canoe. The native lad at the helm paddle stood up, crying, "Missi, this is the conduct of the sea! It swallows up all who seek its help."

I answered, "We do not seek help from it, but from Jehovah."

Our danger became very great, as the sea broke over and lashed around us. My faithful Aneityumese, overcome with terror, threw down their paddles, and Abraham said, "Missi, we are all drowned now! We are food for the sharks. We might as well be eaten by the Tannese as by fishes; but God will give us life with Jesus in heaven!"

I seized the paddle nearest me; I ordered Abraham to

seize another within his reach ; I enjoined Matthew to bail the canoe for life, and the lad to keep firm in his seat, and I cried, " Stand to your post, and let us return ! Abraham, where is now your faith in Jesus ? Remember, He is Ruler on sea as on land. Abraham, pray and ply your paddle ! Keep up stroke for stroke with me, as our lives depend on it. Our God can protect us. Matthew, bail with all your might. Don't look round on the sea and fear. Let us pray to God and ply our paddles, and He will save us yet ! "

Dear old Abraham said, " Thank you for that, Missi. I will be strong. I pray to God and ply my paddle. God will save us ! "

With much labour, and amid deadly perils, we got the canoe turned ; and after four hours of a terrible struggle, we succeeded towards daylight, as the tide turned, in again reaching smooth water. With God's blessing we at last reached the shore, exactly where we had left it five hours ago !

Now drenched and weary, with the skin of our hands sticking to the paddles, we left the canoe on the reef and waded ashore. Many natives were there, and looked sullen and disappointed at our return. Katasian, the lad who had been with us, instantly fled for his own land ; and the natives reported that he was murdered soon after. Utterly exhausted, I lay down on the sand and immediately fell into a deep sleep. By and by I felt someone pulling from under my head the native bag in which I carried my Bible and the Tannese translations—the all that had been saved by me from the wreck ! Grasping the bag, I sprang to my feet, and the man ran away. My teachers had also a hedging-knife, a useless revolver and a fowling piece, the sight of which, though they had been under the salt water for hours, God used to restrain the savages. Calling my Aneityumese near, we now, in united prayer and kneeling on the sands, committed each other unto the Lord God, being prepared for the last and worst.

CHAPTER XVI

A RACE FOR LIFE

As I sat meditating on the issues, Faimungo, the friendly inland chief, again appeared to warn us of our danger, now very greatly increased by our being driven back from the sea. All Nowar's men had fled, and were hid in the bush and in rocks along the shore; while Miaki was holding a meeting not half a mile away, and preparing to fall upon us. Faimungo said, "Farewell, Missi, I am going home. I don't wish to see the work and the murders of this morning."

He was Nowar's son-in-law. He had always been truthful and kindly with me. His home was about half-way across the island, on the road that we wanted to go, and under sudden impulse I said, "Faimungo, will you let us follow you? Will you show us the path? When the Mission Ship arrives, I will give you three good axes, blankets, knives, fish-hooks, and many things you prize."

The late hurricanes had so destroyed and altered the paths, that only natives who knew them well could follow them. He trembled much and said, "Missi, you will be killed. Miaki and Karewick will shoot you. I dare not let you follow. I have only about twenty men, and your following might endanger us all."

I urged him to leave at once, and we would follow of our own accord. I would not ask him to protect us; but if he betrayed us and helped the enemy to kill us, I assured him that our God would punish him. If he spared us, he would be rewarded well; and if we were killed against his wishes, God would not be angry at him. He said, "Seven men are with me now, and thirteen are to follow. I will not now send for them. They are with Miaki and Nouka. I will go; but if you follow, you will be killed on the way. You may follow me as far as you can."

Off he started to Nowar's, and got a large load of my stolen property—blankets, sheets, etc.—which had fallen to his lot. He called his seven men, who had also shared in the plunder, and, to avoid Miaki's men, they ran away under a large cocoa-nut grove skirting the shore, calling, "Be quick! Follow and keep as near to us as you can."

Though Nowar had got a box of my rice and appropriated many things from the plunder of the Mission House besides the goods entrusted to his care, and got two of my goats killed and cooked for himself and his people, yet now he would not give a particle of food to my starving Aneityumese or myself, but hurried us off, saying, "I will eat all your rice and keep all that has been left with me, in payment for my lame knee and for my people fighting for you!"

My three Aneityumese and I started after Faimungo and his men. We could place no confidence in any of them; but, feeling that we were in the Lord's hands, it appeared to be our only hope of escaping instant death. We got away unobserved by the enemies. We met several small parties of friends in the harbour, apparently glad to see us trying to get away. But about four miles on our way we met a large party of Miaki's men, all armed, and watching as outposts. Some were for shooting us, but others hesitated. Every musket was, however, raised and levelled at me. Faimungo poised his great spear and said, "No, you shall not kill Missi to-day. He is with me." Having made this flourish, he strode after his own men, and my Aneityumese followed, leaving me face to face with a ring of levelled muskets.

Sirawia, who was in command of this party, and who once, like Nowar, had been my friend, said to me, Judas like, "My love to you, Missi." But he also shouted after Faimungo, "Your conduct is bad in taking the Missi away; leave him to us to be killed!" I then turned upon him, saying, "Sirawia, I love you all. You must know that I sought only your good. I gave you medicine and food when you and your people were sick and dying under measles; I gave you the very clothing you wear. Am I not your friend? Have we not often drunk tea and eaten together in my house? Can you stand there and see your friend shot? If you do, my God will punish you severely."

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He then whispered something to his company which I did not hear ; and, though their muskets were still raised, I saw in their eyes that he had restrained them. I therefore began gradually to move backwards, still keeping my eyes fixed on them, till the bush hid them from my view, whereon I turned and ran after my party, and God kept the enemy from following. We trusted in Jehovah Jesus, and pressed on in flight.

A second hostile party encountered us, and with great difficulty we also got away from them. Soon thereafter a friendly company crossed our path. We learned from them that the enemies had slaughtered other two of Manuman's men, and burned several villages with fire. Another party of the enemy encountered us, and were eager for our lives. But this time Faimungo withstood them firmly, his men encircled us, and he said, " I am not afraid now, Missi ; I am feeling stronger near my own land ! "

Hurrying still onwards, we came to that village on their high ground called Aneai, i.e. Heaven. The sun was oppressively hot, the path almost unshaded, and our whole party very exhausted, especially Faimungo, carrying his load of stolen goods. So here he sat down on the village dancing-ground for a smoke, saying, " Missi, I am near my own land now. We can rest with safety."

In a few minutes, however, he started up, he and his men, in wild excitement. Over a mountain, behind the village and above it, there came the shoutings, and anon the tramp, tramp of a multitude making rapidly towards us. Faimungo got up and planted his back against a tree. I stood beside him, and the Aneityumese woman and the two men stood near me, while his men seemed prepared to flee. At full speed a large body of the tallest and most powerful men that I had seen on Tanna came rushing on and filled the dancing-ground. They were all armed, and flushed with their success in war. A messenger had informed them of our escape, probably from Miaki, and they had crossed the country to intercept us.

Faimungo was much afraid, and said, " Missi, go on in that path, you and your Aneityumese ; and I will follow when I have had a smoke and a talk with these men."

I replied, " No, I will stand by your side till you go ;



THE RACE FOR LIFE.

"I RAN ON AS IF THEY WERE MY ESCORT, OR AS IF I SAW THEM NOT."

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and if I am killed, it will be by your side. I will not leave you."

He implored us to go on, but that I knew would be certain death. They began urging one another to kill us, but I looked round on them as calmly as possible, saying, "My Jehovah God will punish you here and hereafter if you kill me or any of His servants."

A killing-stone, thrown by one of the savages, grazed poor old Abraham's cheek, and the dear soul gave such a look at me, and then upwards, as if to say, "Missi, I was nearly away to Jesus." A club was raised to follow the blow of the killing-stone, but God baffled the aim. They encircled us in a deadly ring, and one kept urging another to strike the first blow or fire the first shot. My heart rose up to the Lord Jesus; I saw Him watching all the scene. In that awful hour I beheld His own words, as if carved in letters of fire upon the clouds of Heaven: "Seek, and ye shall find. Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." I could understand how Stephen and John saw the glorified Saviour as they gazed up through suffering and persecution to the Heavenly Throne!

Yet I never could say that on such occasions I was entirely without fear. Nay, I have felt my reason reeling, my sight coming and going, and my knees smiting together when thus brought close to a violent death, but mostly under the solemn thought of being ushered into Eternity and appearing before God. Still, I was never left without hearing that promise in all its consoling and supporting power coming up through the darkness and the anguish, "Lo, I am with you alway."

Faimungo and others now urged us to go on in the path. I said, "Faimungo, why are we to leave you? My God heard your promise not to betray me. He knows now what is in your heart and in mine. I will not leave you; and if I am to die, I will die by your side."

He replied, "Now, I go on before; Missi, keep close to me."

His men had gone, and I persuaded my Aneityumese to follow them. At last, with a bound, Faimungo started after them. I followed, keeping as near him as I could. The host of armed men also ran along on each side with their weapons ready; but I ran on as if they were my

escort, or as if I saw them not. We came to a stream crossing our path. With a bound all my party cleared it, ran up the bank opposite, and disappeared in the bush. "Faint yet pursuing," I also tried the leap, but I struck the bank and slid back on my hands and knees towards the stream. At this moment I heard a crash above my head amongst the branches of an overhanging tree, and I knew that a *kawas* had been thrown and that that branch had saved me. Praising my God, I scrambled up on the other side, and followed the track of my party into the bush. The savages gazed after me for a little in silence, but no one crossed the stream; and I saw them separate into two, one portion returning to the village and another pressing inland. With what gratitude did I recognise the Invisible One who brought their counsels to confusion!

I found my party resting in the bush, and amazed to see me escaped alive from men who were thirsting for my blood. Faimungo and his men received me with demonstrations of joy, perhaps feeling a little ashamed of their own cowardice. He now ascended the mountain and kept away from the common path to avoid other native bands. At every village enemies to the worship were ready to shoot us. But I kept close to our guide, knowing that the fear of shooting him would prevent their shooting at me, as he was the most influential chief in all that section of the island.

One party said, "Miaki and Karewick said that Missi made the sickness and the hurricanes, and we ought to kill him."

Faimungo replied, "They lie about Missi! It is our own bad conduct that makes us sick."

They answered, "We don't know who makes the sickness; but our fathers have taught us to kill all foreign men."

Faimungo, clutching club and spear, exclaimed, standing betwixt them and us, "You won't kill Missi to-day!"

Faimungo now sent his own men home by a near path, and guided us himself till we were close upon the shore. There, sitting down, he said, "Missi, I have now fulfilled my promise. I am so tired, I am so afraid, I dare not go farther. My love to you all. Now go on quickly! Three of my men will go with you to the next rocks. Go quickly! Farewell."

These men went on a little, and then said, "Missi, we dare not go! Faimungo is at war with the people of the next land. You must keep straight along this path." So they turned and ran back to their own village.

To us this district was especially perilous. Many years ago the Aneityumese had joined in a war against the Tannese of this tribe, and the thirst for revenge yet existed in their hearts, handed down from sire to son. Most providentially the men were absent on a war expedition, and we saw only three lads and a great number of women and children, who ran off to the bush in terror. In the evening the enraged savages of another district assaulted the people of the shore villages for allowing us to pass, and, though sparing their lives, broke in pieces their weapons of war—a very grievous penalty.

We saw crowds all along, some friendly, others unfriendly, but they let us pass on, and with the blessing of Almighty God we drew near to Mr. Mathieson's station in safety. Here a man gave me a cocoa-nut for each of our party, which we greatly required, having tasted nothing all that day, and very little for several days before. We were so weak that only the struggle for life enabled us to keep our feet; yet my Aneityumese never complained and never halted, not even the woman. The danger and excitement kept us up in the race for life; and by the blessing of God we were now approaching the Mission House, praising God for His wonderful deliverances.

Hearing of our coming, Mr. Mathieson came running to meet me. They had heard of our leaving my own station, and they thought I was dead! They were themselves both very weak; their only child had just been laid in the grave, and they were in great grief and in greater peril. We praised the Lord for permitting us to meet; we prayed for support, guidance and protection; and resolved now, in all events, to stand by each other till the last.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LAST DREAD NIGHT—BUT SAVED!

BEFORE I left the harbour I left letters to be given to the captains of any vessels which called, telling them of our great danger, and that I would reward them handsomely if they would call at the station and remove any of us who might be spared thence to Aneityum. Two or three vessels called and, as I afterwards learned, got my letters; but, while buying my stolen property from the natives for tobacco, powder and balls, they took no further notice of my appeals, and sailed past.

Mr. Mathieson tried to induce his three principal chiefs to promise protection till a vessel called to take us away. They appeared friendly, and promised to do their best. Alas! the promises of the Tannese chiefs had too often proved to be vain.

Next day we heard that Miaki and his party had compelled Manuman to club two men to death before their eyes; and that they had then surrounded Manuman's party and hemmed them in, to starve them to death. Also that Miaki had united all the chiefs—friends and foes alike—in a bond of blood, to kill every one pertaining to the whole Mission on Tanna.

On the Sunday thirty natives, at great risk, came to worship. Amidst all our perils and trials we preached the Gospel to about one hundred and sixteen persons. It was verily a sowing time of tears. On leaving a village a young lad affectionately took my hand to lead me to the next village; but a sulky savage, carrying a ponderous club, also insisted upon accompanying us. I led the way, guided by the lad. Mr. Mathieson got the savage to go before him, while he himself followed, constantly watching. Coming to a place where another path branched off from ours, I asked which path we took, and, on turning to the left as instructed by the lad, the savage, getting close

behind me, swung his huge club over his shoulder to strike me on the head. Mr. Mathieson, springing forward, caught the club from behind with a great cry to me; and I, wheeling instantly, had hold of the club also, and betwixt us we wrested it out of his hands. I raised the club threateningly, and caused him to march in front of us till we reached the next village fence. In terror lest these villagers should kill him, he gladly received back his club, and was lost in the bush in a moment.

The next morning a vessel was seen in the offing. The captain had been at the harbour, and had received my letter. I hoisted a flag to induce him to send or come on shore, but he sailed off for Aneityum, bearing the plunder of my Mission House, purchased for ammunition and tobacco from the natives. He left the news at Aneityum that I had been driven from my station some time ago, and was believed to have been murdered.

As if to cheer us in our anxiety, the young chief, Kapuku, came and gave up his own and his father's war-gods and household idols. They consisted chiefly of a basket of small and peculiar stones, much worn and shining with use. He said, "While many are trying to kill you and drive the worship of Jehovah from this island, I give up my gods, and will send away all heathen idols from my land."

We learned that a party of Miaki's men were going about inciting the people to kill us.

During the day, on 3rd February, a company of Miaki's men came to the Mission House, and forced Mrs. Mathieson to show them through the premises. Providentially, that morning I was writing in an inner room. They went through every other room in the house and did not see me. Concluding I had gone inland, they discharged a musket into our teacher's house, but afterwards left quietly, greatly disappointed at not finding me. My heart still rose in praise to God for another such deliverance, neither by man nor of man's planning!

Worn out with long watching and many fatigues, I lay down that night early, and fell into a deep sleep. About ten o'clock the savages again surrounded the Mission House. My faithful dog, Clutha, clinging still to me amid the wreck of all else on earth, sprang quietly upon me, pulled at my clothes, and awoke me, showing danger in

her eye glancing at me through the shadows. I silently awoke Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson, who had also fallen asleep. We committed ourselves in hushed prayer to God and watched. Immediately a glare of light fell into the room! Savages passed with flaming torches. First they set fire to the church all round, and then to a reed fence connecting the church and the dwelling-house. In a few minutes the house, too, would be in flames, and armed savages waiting to kill us on attempting an escape!

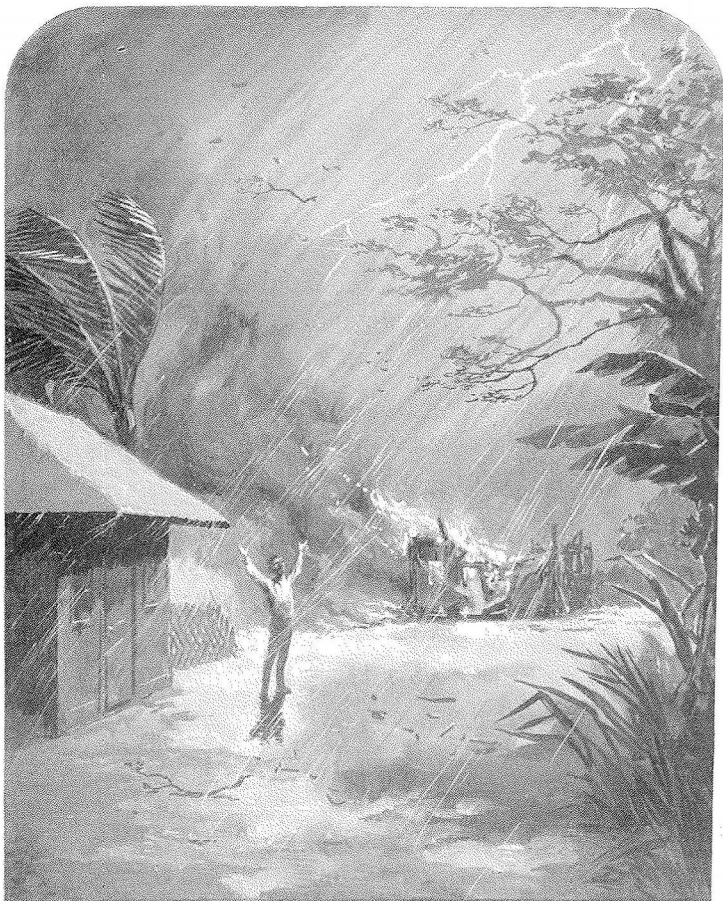
Taking my harmless revolver in the left hand and a little American tomahawk in the right, I pled with Mr. Mathieson to let me out, and instantly again to lock the door on himself and wife. He very reluctantly did so, holding me back and saying, "Stop here and let us die together! You will never return!"

I said, "Be quick! Leave that to God! In a few minutes our house will be in flames, and then nothing can save us."

He did let me out, and locked the door again quickly from the inside; and, while his wife and he prayed and watched from within, I ran to the burning reed fence, cut it from top to bottom, and tore it up and threw it back into the flames, so that the fire could not by it be carried to our dwelling-house. I saw on the ground shadows, as if something were falling around me, and started back. Seven or eight savages had surrounded me, and raised their great clubs in air. I heard a shout—"Kill him! kill him!" One savage tried to seize hold of me, but, leaping from his clutch, I drew the revolver from my pocket and levelled it as if for use, my heart going up in prayer to my God. I said, "Dare to strike me, and my Jehovah God will punish you. He protects us, and will punish you for burning His church, for hatred to His worship and people, and for all your bad conduct. We love you all; and for doing you good only you want to kill us. But our God is here now to protect us."

They yelled in rage, and urged each other to strike the first blow, but the Invisible One restrained them.

At this dread moment occurred an incident which I trace directly to the interposition of God. A rushing and roaring sound came from the south, like the noise of a mighty engine or of muttering thunder. Every head was instinctively turned in that direction, and they knew,



JEHOVAH'S RAIN.

"I WAS LEFT ALONE PRAISING GOD FOR HIS MARVELLOUS WORKS."

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THE LAST DREAD NIGHT—BUT SAVED! III

from previous hard experience, that it was one of those awful tornadoes of wind and rain. Now, mark, the wind bore the flames *away* from our dwelling-house; had it come in the opposite direction, no power on earth could have saved us from being all consumed! It made the work of destroying the church only that of a few minutes; but it brought with it a heavy and murky cloud, which poured out a perfect torrent of tropical rain. Now, mark again, the flames of the burning church were thereby cut off from extending to and seizing upon the reeds and the bush; and, besides, it had become almost impossible now to set fire to our dwelling-house.

The mighty roaring of the wind, the black cloud pouring down unceasing torrents, and the whole surroundings, awed the savages into silence. Some began to withdraw from the scene, all lowered their weapons of war, and several, terror-struck, exclaimed, "That is Jehovah's rain! Truly their Jehovah God is fighting for them and helping them. Let us away!"

A panic seized upon them; they threw away their remaining torches, and in a few moments they had all disappeared in the bush, and I was left alone, praising God for His marvellous works. "O taste and see that God is good! Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him!"

Returning to the door of the Mission House, I cried, "Open and let me in. I am now all alone."

Mr. Mathieson exclaimed, "If ever, in time of need, God sent help and protection to His servants in answer to prayer, He has done so to-night! Blessed be His holy Name!"

All through the remainder of that night I lay wide awake keeping watch, my noble little dog lying near me with ears alert. Early in the morning friendly natives came weeping around us. Our enemies were loudly rejoicing. It had been finally resolved to kill us at once, to plunder our house and then to burn it. The noise of the shouting was distinctly heard as they neared the Mission premises, and our friendly natives looked terror-struck, and seemed anxious to flee for the bush. But just when the excitement rose to the highest pitch we heard, or dreamed that we heard, a cry higher still, "Sail O!"

We were by this time beginning to distrust almost our very senses; but again and again that cry came rolling

up from the shore, and was repeated from crowd to crowd all along the beach, "Sail O! Sail O!"

The shouts of those approaching us gradually ceased, and the whole multitude seemed to have melted away from our view. I feared some cruel deception, and at first peered out very cautiously. But yonder in very truth a vessel came sailing into view. It was the *Blue Bell*, Captain Hastings. I set fire to the reeds on the side of the hill to attract his attention, and put a black shawl as a flag on one end of the Mission House and a white sheet on the other.

This was one of the vessels that had been to Port Resolution, and had sailed past to Aneityum some time ago. I afterwards saw the mate and some of the men wearing my shirts, which they had bought from the Tannese on their former visit! At the earnest request of our fellow missionaries on Aneityum, the owner had sent Captain Hastings to Tanna to rescue us if yet alive. For this purpose he had brought twenty armed men from Aneityum, who came on shore in two boats, in charge of the mate, the notorious Ross Lewin. He returned to the ship with a boat-load of things, leaving ten of the natives to help us to pack more and carry them down to the beach.

We lost several hours before we were ready to start and the vessel had drifted leeward; darkness suddenly settled upon us, and when we were out at sea we lost sight of her and she of us. After tumbling about for some hours in a heavy sea, we advised that they should steer for Port Resolution and there await the vessel. The boats were to keep within hearing of each other by constant calling. As the light appeared, we anchored beyond the reach of musket shots; and there without water or food we sat under a tropical sun till midday came, and still there was no sign of the vessel. The mate at last put all the passengers and the poorest seamen into one boat and left her to swing at anchor, while, with a strong crew in the other, he started off in search of the vessel.

In the afternoon, Nowar and Miaki came off in a canoe to visit us. Nowar had on a shirt, but Miaki was naked and frowning. He urged me to go and see the Mission House, but as we had seen a body of men near it I refused to go. Miaki declared that everything remained as I had left it, but we knew that he lied. Old Abraham and a party had

slipped on shore in a canoe, and had found the windows smashed and everything gone except my books, which were scattered about and torn in pieces. They learned that Miaki had sold everything that he could sell to the traders. The mate and men of the *Blue Bell* had on my very clothes. They boasted that they had bought them for a few figs of tobacco and for powder, caps and balls. But they would not return a single shirt to me, though I was without a change! We had all been without food since the morning before, so Nowar brought us off a cocoa-nut each, and two very small roasted yams. These, however, only seemed to make our thirst the more severe, and we spent a trying day in that boat under a burning sun.

Nowar informed me that only a few nights before this, Miaki and his followers went inland to a village where last year they had killed ten men. Having secretly placed a savage at the door of every house, at a given signal they yelled, and when the terrified inmates tried to escape, they killed almost every man, woman and child. Some fled into the bush, others rushed to the shore. A number of men got into a canoe to escape, but hearing women and children crying after them they returned, and taking those they could with them, they killed the rest, lest they should fall alive into Miaki's hands. Thus the chief and nearly his whole village were cut off in one night!

About five o'clock in the evening the vessel hove in sight. Before dark we were all on board, and were sailing for Aneityum. Though both Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson had become very weak, they stood the voyage wonderfully. Next day we were safely landed. We had offered Captain Hastings £20 to take us to Aneityum, but he declined any fare. However, we divided it amongst the mate and crew, for they had every one shown great kindness to us on the voyage.

After arriving on Aneityum, Mrs. Mathieson gradually sank under consumption, and fell asleep in Jesus on 11th March, 1862, and was interred there in the full assurance of a glorious resurrection. Mr. Mathieson, becoming more and more depressed after her death, went to Maré, and there died on 14th June, 1862.

After their death I was the only one left alive, in all the New Hebrides Mission north of Aneityum, to tell the story of those pioneer years, during which were sown the seeds of what is now fast becoming a glorious harvest.

CHAPTER XVIII

TO AUSTRALIA FOR A MISSION SHIP

WHEN I landed on Aneityum early in 1862, all that I owned on earth were the clothes on my back, my Bible and the translations of portions of the Scriptures that I had made into the language of the tribes living in the Port Resolution district of the Island of Tanna.

The constant dangers of our pioneer years on Tanna and the reluctance of trading vessels to help in cases of emergency had impressed upon the two Missionaries on Aneityum the urgent necessity, if the New Hebrides Mission was ever to develop, of securing a ship owned by the Mission and capable of visiting the various islands; and of reinforcements to carry on the Christian warfare for the conquest of the group. The need was pressed upon me so strongly that at length I felt it to be no less than the call of God. It meant, of course, leaving the islands to plead for the money to build such a ship; and though this was much against my will, I cherished the prayerful hope that God would so order my path that I might succeed in the double object by my temporary withdrawal.

A sandal-wood vessel, then lying at Aneityum, was to sail in a few days direct for Sydney. My passage was secured for £10. And, as if to make me realise how bare the Lord had stripped me in my late trials, the first thing that occupied me on board was the making with my own hands, from a piece of cloth obtained on Aneityum, another shirt for the voyage, to change with that which I wore—the only one that had been left to me.

The captain proved to be a profane and brutal fellow. And how my heart bled for some poor Islanders whom he had on board! They knew not a word of English, and no one in the vessel knew a sound of their language. They were made to work, and to understand what was expected

of them, only by hard knocks and blows, being pushed and pulled hither and thither. They were kept quite naked on the voyage up ; but, when nearing Sydney, each received two yards of calico to be twisted as a kilt around his loins. A most pathetic spectacle it was to watch these poor natives—when they had leisure to sit on deck—gazing, gazing, intently and imploringly, upon the face of the sun ! This they did every day, and at all hours, and I wept much to look on them, and not be able to tell them of the Son of God, the Light of the world, for I knew no word of their language.

When we arrived at Sydney the Inspecting Officer of the Government, coming on board, asked how these Islanders came to be there. The captain impudently replied that they were “passengers.” No further question was put. No other evidence was sought. Yet all who knew anything of our South Sea Island traders were perfectly aware that the moral certainty was that these natives were there practically as slaves. They would be privately disposed of by the captain to the highest bidder ; and that, forsooth, is called the *Labour Traffic—Free Labour* ! I will, to my dying breath, denounce and curse this *Kanaka* traffic as the worst of slavery.

As we came to anchorage, about midnight, in Sydney harbour, I anxiously paced the deck, gazing towards the gas-lighted city, and pleading with God to open up my way, and give success in the work before me, on which the salvation of thousands of the heathen might depend. Still I saw them perishing, still heard their wailing cry on the islands behind me. At the same time, I knew not a soul in that great city ; though I had a note of introduction to one person which, as experience proved, I would have been better without.

On my second Sabbath in Sydney I wandered out with a great yearning at heart to get telling my message to any soul that would listen. It was the afternoon ; and children were flocking into a church that I passed. I followed them—that yearning growing stronger every moment. My God so ordered it that I was guided thus to the Chalmers Presbyterian Church. The Minister, the Rev. Mr. M'Skimming, addressed the children. At the close I went up and pleaded with him to allow me ten minutes to speak to them. After a little hesitation, and having consulted

together, they gave me fifteen minutes. Becoming deeply interested, the good man invited me to preach to his congregation in the evening. This was duly intimated in the Sabbath school; and thus my little boat was at last launched—surely by the Hand of the dear Lord, with the help of His little children.

I now appealed to a few of the most friendly ministers to form themselves into an Honorary Committee of advice; and, at my earnest request, they got J. Goodlet, Esq., an excellent elder, to become Honorary Treasurer, and to take charge of all funds raised for the Mission Ship. For the public knew nothing of me; but all knew my good treasurer and these faithful ministers, and had confidence in the work. They knew that every penny went direct to the Mission; and they saw that my one object was to promote God's glory in the conversion of the heathen. Our dear Lord Jesus thus opened up my way; and now I had invitations from more schools and congregations than I knew how to overtake—the response in money being also gratifying beyond almost all expectation.

It was now that I began a little plan of interesting the children, that attracted them from the first, and has since had an amazing development. I made them shareholders in the new Mission Ship—each child receiving a printed form, in acknowledgment of the number of shares, at six-pence each, of which he was the owner. Thousands of these shares were taken out, were shown about amongst families, and were greatly prized. The ship was to be their very own! They were to be a great shipping company for Jesus.

Having done all that could at that time be accomplished in New South Wales, and as rapidly as possible, my committee gave me a letter of commendation to Victoria. The ministers had heard of our work in Sydney and received me most cordially.

As in New South Wales, I made, chiefly by correspondence, all my own engagements, and arranged for churches and Sabbath schools as best I could. I addressed three or four meetings every Sabbath, and one or more every week-day; and thus travelled over the length and breadth of Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. Wheresoever a few of the Lord's people could be gathered together, thither I gladly went, and told the story of our Mission, setting forth its needs and claims.

The work was unceasingly prosecuted. Meetings were urged upon me now from every quarter, and money flowed in so freely that, at the close of my tour, the fund had risen to £5,000, including special donations of £300 for the support of native teachers.

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

Of the money which I had raised, £3,000 were sent to Nova Scotia, to pay for the building of our new Mission Ship, the *Dayspring*. The church which sent Dr. Geddie to begin the Mission on the New Hebrides was granted the honour of building the new Mission Ship. The remainder was set apart to pay for the outfit and passage of additional Missionaries for the field, and I was commissioned to return home to Scotland in quest of them. Dr. Inglis wrote, in vindication of this enterprise, to the friends whom he had just left, "From first to last, Mr. Paton's mission here has been a great success; and it has been followed up with such energy and promptitude in Nova Scotia, both in regard to the ship and the Missionaries, that Mr. Paton's pledge to the Australian churches has been fully redeemed. The Hand of the Lord has been very visible in the whole movement from beginning to end, and we trust He has yet great blessing in store for the long and deeply-degraded islanders."

CHAPTER XIX

IN SWAMP AND SADDLE

ONE or two exciting incidents that occurred during my travels in Australia may be told here.

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

At that time, in the depth of winter, the roads were often wrought into rivers of mire, and at many points almost impassable even for well-appointed conveyances. Once I was advertised to preach at Learmouth, and must somehow get over the nine miles that lay between. This would have been comparatively practicable, were it not that I carried with me an indispensable bag of "curios," and a heavy bundle of clubs, arrows, dresses, etc., from the islands, wherewith to illustrate my lectures and enforce my appeals. No one could be hired to carry my luggage, nor could I get it sent after me by coach on that particular way. Therefore, seeing no alternative opening up my path, I committed myself once more to the Lord, as in

harder trials before, shouldered my bundle of clubs, lifted my heavy bag, and started off on foot. They urged me fervently to desist; but I heard a voice repeating, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." There came back to me also the old adage that had in youthful difficulties spurred me on: "Where there's a will, there's a way." And I thought that, with these two in his heart, a Scotchman and a Christian would not be easily beaten.

When I found the road wrought into mire and dangerous or impassable, I climbed the fence and waded along in the ploughed fields—though they were nearly as bad. My bundle was changed from shoulder to shoulder, and my bag from hand to hand, till I became thoroughly tired of both. Pressing on, however, I arrived at a wayside public-house, where several roads met, and there I inquired the way to Learmouth, and how far it was. The innkeeper, pointing, answered:

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

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

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

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

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

With thankful heart I did so. The light was soon lost to me, but I walked steadily on in the direction thereof,

to the best of my judgment. Immediately I began to feel the ground all floating under me. Then at every step I took, or tried to take, I sank deeper and deeper, till at last I durst not move either backward or forward. I was floundering in a deadly swamp. I called out again and again, and "coo-ee-d" with all my strength, but there came no reply. It grew extremely dark, while I kept praying to God for deliverance. About midnight I heard two men conversing, apparently at no very great distance. I began "coo-ee-ing" again, but my strength was failing. Fortunately, the night was perfectly calm. The conversation ceased for a while, but I kept on crying for help. At length I heard one voice remark to the other, "Some-one is in the swamp." And then a question came, "Who's there?"

I answered, "A stranger. Help me!"

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

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

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

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

A cup of warm tea restored me. The Lord gave me a sound and blessed sleep. I rose next morning wonderfully refreshed, though arms and shoulders were rather sore with the burdens of yesterday. I conducted three services, and told the story of my Mission, not without comfort and

blessing ; and with gratifying results in money. The people gave liberally to the work.

The crowning adventure of my tour in Australia came about in the following manner. I was advertised to conduct services at Narracoort on Sabbath, and at a station on the way on Saturday evening. But how to get from Penola was a terrible perplexity. On Saturday morning, however, a young lady offered me, out of gratitude for blessings received, the use of her riding-horse for the journey. "Garibaldi" was his name ; and, though bred for a race-horse, I was assured that if I kept him firmly in hand, he would easily carry me over the two-and-twenty miles. He was to be left at the journey's end, and the lady herself would fetch him back. I shrank from the undertaking, knowing little of horses, and having vague recollections of being dreadfully punished for more than a week after my last and almost only ride. But every one in that country is quite at ease on the back of a horse. They saw no risk ; and, as there appeared no other way of getting there to fulfil my engagements, I, for my part, began to think that God had unexpectedly provided the means, and that He would carry me safely through.

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

I struggled to hold in my horse ; but seizing the bit

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

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

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

Some members of the family, on the outlook for the Missionary, saw us come tearing along as if mad or drunk ;

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

Truly I was in a sorry plight, drenched, covered with mud, and my hat battered down over my eyes; little wonder they thought me drunk or mad! Finally, as if to confirm every suspicion, and amuse them all—for master, mistress, governess, and children now looked on from the veranda—when I was helped off the horse, I could not stand on my feet! My head still went rushing on in the race; I staggered, and down I tumbled into the mud, feeling chagrin and mortification; yet there I had to sit for some time, before I recovered myself, so as either to rise or to speak a word. When I did get to my feet, I had to stand holding by the veranda for some time, my head still rushing on in the race. At length the master said, "Will you not come in?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

We went to the table. All that had occurred was now consummated by my appearing in the lusty farmer's clothes; and the lady and other friends had infinite difficulty in keeping their amusement within decent bounds. I again took speech in hand, but I suspect my words had still the thickness of the tippler's utterance, for they seemed not to carry much conviction. "Dear friends, I quite understand your feelings; appearances are so strangely against me. But I am not drunken, as ye suppose. I have tasted no intoxicating drink, I am a life-long total abstainer!"

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

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

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

CHAPTER XX

TO SCOTLAND AND BACK

As my Australian Committees had so strongly urged my going to Scotland, chiefly to secure, if possible, more Missionaries for the New Hebrides, I felt constrained to follow their pleading; and lost no time thereafter in finding a ship homeward bound. I sailed to London in the *Kosciusko*, an Aberdeen clipper, on the 16th May, 1863.

We cast anchor in the East India Docks, London, on the 16th of the following August. At nine o'clock the same evening I left for Scotland on my way to Dumfries and thence to my old home at Torthorwald. There I had a heavenly welcome from my saintly parents, yet not un-mixed with many fast-falling tears. Five brief years only had elapsed since I went forth from their sanctuary with my young bride; and now, alas! alas! that grave on Tanna held mother and son locked in each other's embrace till the Resurrection Day.

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

The Lord crowned my tour with success. Four new Missionaries volunteered from Scotland for the New Hebrides; and at about the same time three volunteers came forward in Nova Scotia.

Ere I left Scotland in 1864 I was married, in Edinburgh, to Margaret Whitecross, whose brother had been an

honoured Missionary in the foreign field, and whose sister was the wife of a devoted minister in Adelaide much interested in our Mission.

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

Our beloved mother, always more self-restrained and less demonstrative in the presence of others, held back her heart till we were fairly gone from the door; and then, as my dear brother afterwards informed me, she fell back into his arms with a great cry, as if all the heart-strings had broken, and lay for long in a death-like swoon.

We embarked at Liverpool for Australia in *The Crest of the Wave*, Captain Ellis; and, after what was then considered a fast passage of ninety-five days, we landed at Sydney on 17th January, 1865.

I found that our new little Mission Ship, the *Dayspring*, had arrived before me from Nova Scotia, where she had been built; and had actually been to the New Hebrides and settled the three new Missionaries from there who had volunteered for the Mission. I found her to be a beautiful two-masted brigantine, with a deck-house (added when she first arrived at Melbourne), and every way suitable for our necessities—a thing of beauty, a white-winged angel set a-floating by the pennies of the children to bear the Gospel to these sin-darkened but sun-lit Southern Isles. To me she became a sort of living thing,

the impersonation of a living and throbbing love in the heart of thousands of "shareholders"; and I said, with a deep, indestructible faith—"The Lord *has* provided—the Lord *will* provide.'

And my faith was to be instantly tested, for the captain informed me that the crew were clamouring for their pay, etc., and that he could get no money for current expenses! I gave him £50 of my own to meet clamant demands, and besought him to secure me a day or two of delay, that something might be done.

I found to my dismay that since our little ship sailed from Nova Scotia £1,400 had been expended, and that present liabilities amounted to at least £700! Having laid our perplexing circumstances before our Lord, having "spread out" all the details in His sympathetic presence, pleading that the ship itself and the new Missionaries were all His own, not mine, I told Him that His money was needed to do His own blessed work.

I consulted friends of the Mission, but no help was visible. I tried to borrow, but found that the lender demanded 20 per cent. for interest, besides the title-deeds of the ship for security. I applied for a loan, but in vain.

Driven thus to the wall, I advertised for a meeting of ministers and other friends, and related my journeyings since leaving them and the results, and then asked for advice about the ship.

I pointed out to them that the salary of each Missionary was then only £120 per annum, that they gave their lives for the heathen, and that surely the Colonial Christians would undertake the upkeep of the ship, which was necessary to the very existence of the Mission. I appealed to them, and on the Sabbath I had the opportunity of stating our difficulties to congregations in the city. After the service a lady and gentleman waited to be introduced to me.

"I am," said the gentleman, "Captain and owner of that vessel lying at anchor opposite the *Dayspring*. My wife and I, being too late to get on shore to attend any church in the city, heard a little chapel bell ringing, and followed when we saw you going up the hill. We do heartily sympathise with you. This cheque for £50 will be a beginning to help you out of your difficulties."

Thus encouraged I launched a scheme for securing from

the children of the Sabbath Schools—who had so liberally helped to build the ship—the means for her upkeep ; and with this object in view the *Dayspring* voyaged to various ports to be inspected by the children. Everywhere she was received with acclamation ; and within a short time the deficiency was made up and our little ship was able to sail to the islands free—so far—from debt.

CHAPTER XXI

TO THE ISLANDS AND FRESH DIFFICULTIES

I WAS now free to return again to the New Hebrides. We sailed in the *Dayspring* and reached Aneityum. There I had the joy of being welcomed back by my missionary colleagues upon whose counsel I had been absent to secure the little vessel which was henceforth to be at our own disposal in the service of the Mission. Our hearts rose in thankful adoration for the blessings and success which had thus crowned our efforts.

But again perplexities were to beset our pathway. The Missionaries met on Aneityum in Annual Synod, and to them I gave a full report of all that had happened since my departure. The matter for gravest concern was the crisis through which we had recently passed in finding the means for paying the immediate burden in connection with the maintenance of the *Dayspring*. It was realised at once that we still had no guarantee of permanency in the contributions for the upkeep of our vessel.

It was felt by all that constant anxiety must result, as regards supplies and as regards assistance in case of menacing conditions, if the *Dayspring* were withdrawn. Future permanent support of the vessel was of paramount importance, and therefore some means must be devised for placing the financial requirements connected with the ship upon a thoroughly stable and permanent basis. After prayerful consideration it was resolved that, seeing that none of my colleagues would be likely to secure better success with the supporters of the Mission than myself, I must allow a yet further period of some months to elapse before I could again begin my missionary labours in the Islands, and that I should return to Australia and endeavour to find a solution to the problem of meeting the requirements.

Accordingly, I had again to retrace my steps and voyage

to Australia, there to face afresh the further task to which it seemed clear that God had called me. The *Dayspring* was at that time doing duty among the Loyalty Islands as well as the New Hebrides, and my wife and I proceeded in her to Maré, there to await an opportunity of getting to New Caledonia, and thence to Sydney.

On arrival in Australia—after unavoidable delays in the Loyalty Islands and New Caledonia—we found, to our dismay, that a fierce public controversy was taking place, due to some false accusations against Missionaries in the New Hebrides. In brief, the fact that H.M.S. *Curaçoa* had been to the Islands and had punished some natives for murder and robbery of traders and others, had been garbled into a damaging accusation against the Missionaries of having “directed” the punishment against the defenceless natives! The common witticism about “Gospel and Gunpowder” headed hundreds of bitter and scoffing articles in the journals; and, losing nothing in force, was cabled to Britain and America, where it was dished up day after day with every imaginable enhancement of horror for the readers of the secular and infidel Press. Of course, I instantly met the challenge; and at length, after many anxieties and constant effort, the lie was laid low and the excitement subsided. But it made my task of raising funds for our Mission Ship all the more difficult, though, thanks be to God, I was able to accomplish it, and in 1866 I was away once more to my loved Islands, this time as the first Missionary appointed and supported from Australia.

On 20th August we again reached Aneityum; and, having landed some of our friends, we sailed northwards, as far as Efaté, to let the new Missionaries see all the Islands open for occupation, and to bring them back to the annual meeting, where the permanent settlements would be finally agreed upon.

As we sailed from island to island in the *Dayspring* nothing could repress the wonder of natives.

“How is this?” they cried. “We slew or drove them all away! We plundered their houses and robbed them. Had we been so treated, nothing would have made us return. But they come back with a beautiful ship, and with more and more Missionaries. And is it to trade and to get money, like the other white men? No! no! But

to tell us of their Jehovah God and of His Son Jesus. If their God makes them do all that, we may well worship Him too."

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

I learned also that my faithful dog Clutha, entrusted to the care of a kindly native to be kept for my return, had, despite all coaxing, grown weary of heart amongst all these dark faces, and fallen asleep too, truly not unworthy of a grateful tear!

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

On our way to Aniwa, the *Dayspring* had to call at Tanna. By stress of weather we lay several days in Port Resolution. Nowar, the old chief, unstable but friendly, was determined to keep us there by force or by fraud. The captain told him that the council of the missionaries had forbidden him to land our boxes at Tanna.

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

The captain refused. "Then," persisted Nowar, "just point them out to us; you will have no further trouble; we will manage everything for Missi."

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

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

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

"I am not afraid," she calmly replied.

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER XXII

STARTING ON ANIWA

It may well be imagined how grieved and disappointed I was not to return at once to Tanna. But I found comfort in the fact that as Aniwa was so close to my old field of labour it might prove to be the God-appointed strategic base from which at least a flanking attack might be launched in the effort to win Tanna for Christ. It will be seen, as my story unveils, that, by various agencies, Aniwa had an honourable part in the ultimate capture of the citadel of heathendom then generally known as "Dark Tanna."

The island of Aniwa is one of the smaller islands of the New Hebrides group. It is everywhere girt round with a belt of coral reef, and the sea breaks thereon heavily, with thundering roar, and the white surf rolls in furious and far. But there are days of calm, when all the sea is glass, and the spray on the reef is only a fringe of silver.

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

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

When we landed, the natives received us kindly. They and the Aneityumese teachers led us to a temporary home, prepared for our abode. It was a large native

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

The Aniwan were not so violently dishonourable as the Tannese. But they had the knack of asking in a rather menacing manner whatever they coveted; and the tomahawk was sometimes swung to enforce an appeal. We strove to get along quietly and kindly until we knew their language—which was quite distinct from the languages of Tanna. Tanna has at least three different languages; and the astonishing multiplicity of languages in the New Hebrides has proved to be one of the greatest barriers to swift progress in the evangelisation of the natives of the group.

Sorrowful experience on Tanna had taught us to seek the site for our Aniwan house on the highest ground, and away from the malarial influences near the shore. There was one charming mound, covered with trees whose roots ran down into the crevices of coral, and from which Tanna and Erromanga are clearly seen. But there the natives, for some superstitious reason, forbade us to build, and we were constrained to take another rising ground somewhat nearer the shore. In the end, this turned out to be the very best site on the island for us, central and suitable every way. But we afterwards learned that perhaps superstition also led them to sell us this site, in the malicious hope that it would prove our ruin. The mounds on the top, which had to be cleared away, contained the bones

and refuse of their cannibal feasts for ages. None but their sacred men durst touch them; and the natives watched us hewing and digging, certain that their gods would strike us dead! That failing, their thoughts may probably have been turned to reflect that after all the Jehovah God was stronger than they.

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

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

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

The Mission House, as ultimately finished, had six rooms, surrounded by a veranda, which kept everything shaded and cool. Underneath two of the rooms a cellar was dug eight feet deep, and shelved all round for a store. In more than one terrific hurricane that cellar saved our lives—all crushing into it when trees and houses were being tossed like feathers on the wings of the wind. Altogether, the house at Aniwa has proved one of the healthiest

and most commodious of any that have been planted by Christian hands on the New Hebrides. In selecting site and in building "the good hand of our God was upon us for good."

Later on I built also two small Orphanages, almost as inevitably necessary as the Missionary's own house, because of the heathen custom of strangling widows. They stood in a line with the front of my own dwelling, one for girls, the other for boys, that we might have them constantly under our own eyes.

Every day after dinner we set the bell a-ringing—intimating, from our first arrival on Aniwa, readiness to give advice, or medicine to any who were sick. We spoke to them, so soon as we had learned a few words, about Jesus. The weak received a cup of tea and a piece of bread. The demand was sometimes great, especially when epidemics befell them. But some rather fled from us as the cause of their sickness, and sought refuge from our presence in remotest corners, or rushed off at our approach and concealed themselves in the bush.

Our learning the language on Aniwa was marked by similar incidents to those of Tanna, related in a preceding chapter; though a few natives could understand my Tannese, and that greatly helped me. One day a man, after carefully examining some article, turned to his neighbour and said, "Taha tinei?"

I inferred that he was asking, "What is this?" Pointing to another article, I repeated their words; they smiled at each other, and gave me its name.

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

It is surprising how much one can learn of any language, with these two short questions constantly on one's lips, and with people ready at every turn to answer—"What's this?" "What's your name?" Every word was at once written down, spelled phonetically and arranged in alphabetic order, and a note appended as to the circumstances in which it was used. By frequent comparison of these notes, and by careful daily imitation of all their sounds, we were able in a measure to understand each other before we had gone far in the house-building

operations, during which some of them were constantly beside me.

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

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

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

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

One day, while building the house, an old inland chief and his three sons came to see us. Everything was to them full of wonder. After returning home one of the sons fell sick, and the father at once blamed us and the worship, declaring that if the lad died we all should be murdered in revenge. By God's blessing, and by our careful nursing and suitable medicine, he recovered and was spared. The old chief superstitiously wheeled round almost to another extreme. He became not only friendly, but devoted to us. He attended the Sabbath services, and listened to the Aneityumese teachers, and to my first

attempts, partly in Tannese, translated by the orator Taia or the Chief Namakei, and explained in our hearing to the people in their mother tongue.

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

As the boat-landing was nearly three-quarters of a mile distant, and such a calamity recurring would be not only sorrowful in itself but perilous in the extreme for us all, I steeped my wits, and with such crude materials as were at hand, I manufactured not only a hand-barrow, but a wheel-barrow, for the pressing emergencies of the time. In due course, I procured a more orthodox hand-cart from the Colonies, and coaxed and bribed the natives to assist me in making a road for it.

Many and strange were the arts which I had to try to practise, such as handling the adze, the mysteries of tenon and mortise, and other feats of skill. If a native wanted a fish-hook, or a piece of red calico to bind his long whipcord hair, he would carry me a block of coral or fetch me a beam; but continuous daily toil seemed to him a mean existence. The women were tempted, by calico and beads for pay, to assist in preparing the sugar-cane leaf for thatch, gathering it in the plantations, and tying it over reeds four or six feet long with strips of bark of pandanus leaf, leaving a long fringe hanging over on one side.

The roof was firmly tied on and nailed; thereon were laid the reeds, fringed with sugar-cane leaf, row after row tied firmly to the wood; the ridge was bound down by cocoa-nut leaves, dexterously plaited from side to side, and skewered to the ridge pole with hard wooden pins; and over all, a fresh storm-roof was laid on yearly for the hurricane months, composed of folded cocoa-nut leaves, held down with planks of wood, and bound to the framework below—which, however, had to be removed

again in April to save the sugar-cane leaf from rotting beneath it. Thatching that is good may last from eight years to ten ; provided you were not caught in the sweep of the hurricane, before which trees went flying like straws, huts disappeared like autumn leaves, and your Mission House, if left standing at all, was probably swept bare alike of roof and thatch at a single stroke !

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

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

I will close this chapter with an incident which, though it came to our knowledge only years afterwards, closely bears upon our settlement on Aniwa. At first we had no idea why they so determinedly refused us one site, and

fixed us to another of their own choice. But after the old chief Namakei became a Christian, he one day addressed the Aniwan people in our hearing to this effect :

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

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

CHAPTER XXIII

REVENGE, HEATHEN PRACTICES AND HOPEFUL SIGNS

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

For eighty years long the earth was cut afresh year by year, so that the memory of the debt of revenge might not be forgotten on Aniwa. About this time the natives of Aneityum had, many of them, accepted the Gospel ; and, as always with these Christian converts, there was a strong desire for taking the good news to the heathen in other islands of the group. As a result two Christian natives of Aneityum volunteered to go to Aniwa. The chief had given a promise of protection ; but, after a time, it was discovered that the two evangelists belonged to the very tribe on Aneityum, and one of them to the very land, where, long ago, the Aniwans had been killed and eaten. It was at once resolved that the two men must die. But in order to make a show of not breaking their promise of protection, they conspired with two Tanna natives and an Aniwan chief, one of whose parents had belonged to Tanna, to waylay and kill the teachers. On a Sabbath afternoon the murderers rushed upon the defenceless teachers as they were returning from a service, and clubbed them, leaving both for dead.

One of them was dead, but the other, Navalak by name, was still breathing. The chief, Namaki, carried the wounded man to his village and nursed him, pleading with his people that the claims for revenge had been satisfied through the killing of one of the men. This was agreed to and presently Navalak was restored to his people on Aneityum, where he became a high chief and an honour to the church of God set up on that island.

For a time thereafter Aniwa was left without a standard bearer ; but Namakei sent his orator Taia to Aneityum to tell them that now revenge was satisfied, the cut in the earth filled up, and a cocoa-nut tree planted and flourishing where the blood of the teachers had been shed, and that no native from Aneityum would ever be injured by Aniwans. Further, he was to plead for more teachers, and to pledge his chief's word that they would be kindly received and protected—not that Aniwa had any special desire for the Gospel, but because they wanted friendly intercourse with Aneityum, where trading vessels called, and whence they might obtain mats, baskets, blankets, and iron tools. At length two Aneityumese again volunteered to go (Kangaru and Nelmai), and were located by the Missionaries, along with their families, on Aniwa, one with Namakei, and the other at the south end, to lift up the standard of a Christlike life among their heathen neighbours.

These two teachers and their wives were treated on Aniwa as little better than slaves, toiling in the service of their masters and living in constant fear of being murdered. Doubtless, however, the mighty contrast presented by the life, character, and disposition of these godly teachers was the sowing of the seed that bore fruit in other days.

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

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

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

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

our eyes, under the influence of the Gospel, into noble and beloved characters, and they and we loved each other exceedingly.

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

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

Our earlier Sabbath services were sad affairs. Every man came armed—indeed, every man slept with his weapons of war at his side—and bow and arrow, spear and tomahawk, club and musket, were always ready for action. On fair days we assembled under the banyan tree, on rainy days in a native hut partly built for the purpose. One or two seemed to listen, but the most lay about on their backs or sides, smoking, talking, sleeping! When we stopped the feast at the close, which the Aneityumese teacher had been forced to prepare before our coming, and for which they were always ready, the audiences at first went down to two or three; but these actually came to learn, and a better tone began immediately to pervade the service. We informed them that it was for their good that we taught them, and that they would get no "pay" for attending church or school, and the greater number departed in high dudgeon as very ill-used persons! Others, of a more commercial turn, came offering to sell their "idols," and when we would not purchase them, but urged them to give up and cast them away for love of

Jesus, they carried them off, saying they would have nothing to do with this new worship.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Following up this hint by many inquiries, then and afterwards, I found that they clearly associated man's troubles and sufferings somehow with the serpent. They worshipped the serpent as a spirit of evil, under the name of Matshiktshiki; that is to say, they lived in abject terror of his influence, and all their worship was directed towards propitiating his rage against men.

Their story of Creation, at least of the origin of their

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

Matshiktshiki placed men and women on Aniwa. On the southern end of the island there was a beautiful spring and a freshwater river, with rich lands all around the plantations. But the people would not do what Matshiktshiki wanted them; so he got angry, and split off the richer part of Aniwa, with the spring and river, and sailed with them across to Aneityum, leaving them there. To this day—strangely enough—the river there is called "the water of Aniwa" by the inhabitants of both islands; and it is the ambition of all Aniwans to visit Aneityum and drink of that spring and river, as they sigh to each other, "Alas, for the waters of Aniwa!"

Their picture of the Flood is equally grotesque. Far back, when the volcano now on Tanna was part of Aniwa, the rain fell and fell from day to day, and the sea rose till it threatened to cover everything. All were drowned except the few who climbed up on the volcano mountain. The sea had already put out the volcano at the southern end of Aniwa; and Matshiktshiki, who dwelt in the greater volcano, becoming afraid of the extinction of his big fire too, split it off from Aniwa with all the land on the south-eastern side, and sailed it across to Tanna on the top of the flood. There, by his mighty strength, he heaved the volcano to the top of a high mountain in Tanna, where it remains to this day. For, on the subsiding of the sea, he was unable to transfer his big fire to Aniwa; and so it was reduced to a very small island, without a volcano, and without a river, for the sins of the people long ago.

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

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

Wife-murder was also considered quite legitimate. In one of our inland villages dwelt a young couple, happy in every respect except that they had no children. The man, being a heathen, resolved to take home another wife, a widow with two children. This was naturally opposed by his young wife. And, without the slightest warning, while she sat plaiting a basket, he discharged a ball into her from his loaded musket. It crashed through her arm and lodged in her side. Everything was done that was in my power to save her life ; but on the tenth day tetanus came on, and she soon after passed away. The man appeared very attentive to her all the time ; but, being a heathen, he insisted that she had no right to oppose his wishes ! He was not in any way punished or disrespected by the people of his village, but went out and in amongst them as usual, and took home the other woman as his wife a few weeks thereafter. This second wife began to attend Church and School regularly with her children ; and at last her husband also came along with them, changing very manifestly from his sullen and savage former self. They have a large family ; and at length they were avowedly trying to train them all for the Lord Jesus, and they take their places meekly at the Lord's Table.

It would give a wonderful shock, I suppose, to many

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

CHAPTER XXIV

NELWANG'S ELOPEMENT ; AND INCIDENTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"That's surely very simple," I answered. "Every man knows how to go about that business, if he wants to be

honest ! Look out for your intended, find out if she loves you, and the rest will follow naturally—you will marry her."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

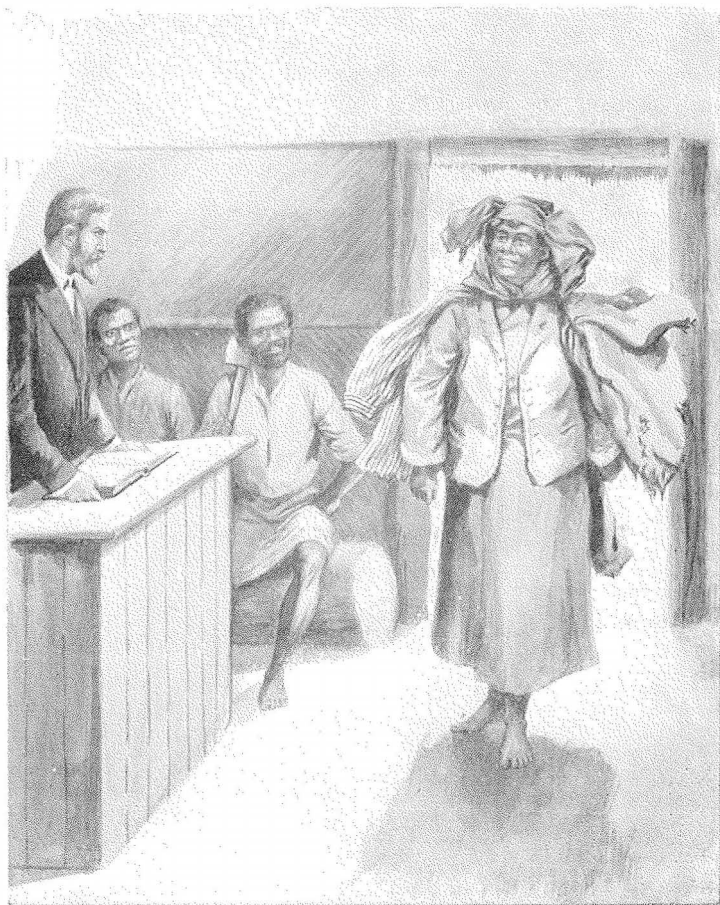
"All right!" I said. "Come to-morrow!" And, trembling with delight, he disappeared into the bush.

Thus strangely God provided us with wonderful assistance. Yakin soon learnt to wash and dress and clean everything, and Nelwang served me like a faithful disciple. They clung by us like our very shadow, partly through fear of attack, partly from affection; but as each of them could handle freely both musket and tomahawk, which, though laid aside, were never far away, it was not every enemy that cared to try issues with Nelwang and his bride. After a few weeks had thus passed by, and as both of them were really showing an interest in things pertaining to the Gospel, I urged them strongly to appear publicly at the Church on Sabbath, to show that they were determined to stand their ground together as true husband and wife.

and that the others must accept the position and become reconciled. Delay now could gain no purpose, and I wished the strife and uncertainty to be put to an end.

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

In a few seconds Yakin entered; and if Nelwang's bearing and appearance were rather inconsistent with the feeling of worship—what on earth was I to do when the figure and costume of Yakin began to reveal itself marching in? The first visible difference betwixt a heathen and a Christian is—that the Christian wears some clothing, the heathen wears none. Yakin had determined to show the extent of her Christianity by the amount of clothing she could carry upon her person. Being a chief's widow before she became Nelwang's bride, she had some idea of state occasions, and appeared dressed in every article of European apparel, mostly portions of male attire, that she could beg or borrow from about the premises! Her bridal gown was a man's drab-coloured great-coat, put on above her native grass skirts, and sweeping down to her heels, buttoned tight. Over this she had hung on a vest, and above that again, most amazing of all, she had superinduced a pair of men's trousers, planting the body of them on her neck and shoulders, and leaving her head and face looking out from between the legs—a leg from either side streaming over her bosom and dangling down absurdly in front! Fastened to one shoulder also there was a red shirt, and to the other a striped shirt, waving about her like wings as she sailed along. Around her head a red shirt had been



"SHE LOOKED LIKE A MOVING MONSTER LOADED WITH RAGS."

twisted like a turban, and her notions of art demanded that a sleeve thereof should hang aloft over each of her ears! She seemed to be a moving monster loaded with a mass of rags. The day was excessively hot, and the perspiration poured over her face in streams. She, too, sat as near to me as she could get on the women's side of the church. Nelwang looked at me and then at her, smiling quietly, as if to say, "You never saw, in all your white world, a bride so grandly dressed!"

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

The progress of God's work was most conspicuous in relation to wars and revenges among the natives. The two high chiefs, Namakei and Naswai, frequently declared, "We are the men of Christ now. We must not fight. We must put down murders and crimes among our people."

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

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

Another scheme had an excellent educative and religious influence. I tried to interest all the villagers, and to treat all the chiefs equally. In our early days, after getting

into my two-roomed house, I engaged the chief, or representative man of each district, to put up one or other of the many outhouses required at the station. One, along with his people, built the cook-house ; another, the store ; another, the banana and yam-house ; another, the washing-house ; another, the boys' and girls' house, the schoolhouse and the large shed, a kind of shelter where natives sat and talked when not at work about the premises. Of course these all were at first only native huts, of larger or smaller dimensions. But they were all built by contract for articles which they highly valued, such as axes, knives, yards of prints and calico, strings of beads, blankets, etc. They served our purpose for the time, and when another party, by contract also, had fenced around our premises, the Mission Station was really a beautiful, little, lively and orderly village, and in itself no bad emblem of Christian and civilised life. The payments, made to all irrespectively, but only for work duly done and according to reasonable bargain, distributed property and gifts amongst them on wholesome principles, and encouraged a well-conditioned rivalry which had many happy effects.

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

A few days thereafter, this brother also fell sick and suddenly died. The heathen party made much of these incidents, and some clamoured for our death in revenge, but most feared to murder us ; so they withdrew and lived apart from our friends, as far away as they could get. By and by, however, they set fire to a large district belonging to our supporters, burning cocoanut and bread-fruit trees and plantations. Still our people refused to fight, and kept near to protect us. Then all the leading men assembled to talk it over. Most were for peace, but some insisted upon burning our house and driving us away or killing us, that they might be left to live as they

had hitherto done. At last a Sacred Man, a chief who had been on Tanna when the *Curaçao* punished the murderers and robbers but protected the villages of the friendly natives there, stood up and spoke in our defence, and warned them what might happen; and other three, who had been under my instruction on Tanna, declared themselves to be the friends of Jehovah and of His Missionary. Finally, the Sacred Man rose again, and showed them rows of beautiful white shells strung round his left arm, saying:

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

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

The villagers were greatly alarmed. The chief's two sons came forth with every available man to meet us. That whole day was consumed in talking and speechifying, sometimes chanting their replies—the natives are all inveterate talkers! To me the day was utterly wearisome; but it had one redeeming feature—their rage found

vent in hours of palaver, instead of blows and blood. It ended in peace. The heathen were amazed at the number of Jehovah's friends; and they pledged themselves henceforth to leave the worship alone, and that every one who pleased might come to it unmolested. From this, worn out and weary, we returned, praising the Lord.

CHAPTER XXV

THE SINKING OF THE WELL

I MUST here record the story of the Sinking of the Well, which broke the back of heathenism on Aniwa. Being a flat coral island, with no hills to attract the clouds, rain is scarce there as compared with the adjoining mountainous islands; and even when it does fall heavily, with tropical profusion, it disappears, as said before, through the light soil and porous rock, and drains itself directly into the sea. The rainy season is from December to April, and then the disease most characteristic of all these regions is apt to prevail, viz. fever and ague.

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

Aniwa, having therefore no permanent supply of fresh water, in spring or stream or lake, and my own household also suffering sadly for lack of fresh water, I resolved by

the help of God to sink a well near the Mission premises, hoping that a wisdom higher than my own would guide me to the source of some blessed spring. Of the scientific conditions of such an experiment I was comparatively ignorant ; but I counted on having to dig through earth and coral above thirty feet, and my constant fear was that, owing to our being so near to the sea-shore, the water, if water I found, could only be salt water after all my toils ! Still, I resolved to sink that shaft in hope, and in faith that the Son of God would be glorified thereby.

One morning I said to the old chief and his fellow-chief, " I am going to sink a deep well down into the earth, to see if our God will send us fresh water up from below."

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

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

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

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

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

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

than with his pen, and when he's tired we'll persuade him to give it up."

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

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

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

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

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

Steeping my poor brains over the problem, I became an extemporised engineer. Two trees were searched for, with branches on opposite sides, capable of sustaining a cross tree betwixt them. I sank them on each side firmly into the ground, passed the beam across them over the centre of the shaft, fastened thereon a rude home-made pulley and block, passed a rope over the wheel, and swung my largest bucket to the end of it. Thus equipped, I began once more sinking away at the well, but at so great an angle that the sides might not again fall in. Not a native, however, would enter that hole, and I had to pick and dig away till I was utterly exhausted. But a native teacher, in whom I had confidence, took charge above, managing to hire them with axes, knives, etc., to seize the end of the rope and walk along the ground, pulling it till the bucket rose to the surface, and then he himself swung it aside, emptied it, and lowered it down again. I rang a little bell which I had with me, when the bucket was loaded, and that was the signal for my brave helpers to pull their rope. And thus I toiled on from day to day, my heart almost sinking sometimes with the sinking of the well, till we reached a depth of about thirty feet. And the phrase, "living water," "living water," kept chiming through my soul like music from God, as I dug and hammered away!

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

The chief said, "No, Missi; you will never see rain coming up from the earth on this island. We wonder what is to be the end of this mad work of yours. We expect daily, if you reach water, to see you drop through

into the sea, and the sharks will eat you! That will be the end of it; death to you, and danger to us all."

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

At the moment I knew I was risking much, and probably incurring sorrowful consequences, had no water been given; but I had faith that the Lord was leading me on, and I knew that I sought His glory, not my own.

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

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

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

Now, though every man there could climb the highest tree as swiftly and as fearlessly as a squirrel or an opossum,

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not one of them had courage to walk to the side and gaze down into that well. To them this was miraculous! But they were not without a resource that met the emergency. They agreed to take firm hold of each other by the hand, to place themselves in a long line, the foremost man to lean cautiously forward, gaze into the well, and then pass to the rear, and so on till all had seen "Jehovah's rain" far below. It was somewhat comical, yet far more pathetic, to stand by and watch their faces, as man after man peered down into the mystery, and then looked up at me in blank bewilderment! When all had seen it with their own very eyes, and were "weak with wonder," the old chief exclaimed:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I was thankful, indeed, to accept of the chief's assistance, now sorely needed, and I said, "You have seen it fall in once already. If it falls in again, it will conceal the rain from below which our God has given us. In order to preserve it for us and for our children in all time,

we must build it round and round with great coral blocks from the bottom to the very top. I will now clear it out, and prepare the foundation for this wall of coral. Let every man and woman carry from the shore the largest blocks they can bring. It is well worth all the toil thus to preserve our great Jehovah's gift !”

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

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

With all their will and heart they started on the job ; some carrying, some cutting and squaring the blocks, till the wall rose like magic, and a row of the hugest blocks laid round the top, bound all together, and formed the mouth of the well. Women, boys and all wished to have a hand in building it, and it remains to this day, a solid wall of masonry, the circle being thirty-four feet deep, eight feet wide at the top, and six at the bottom. I floored it over with wood above all, and fixed the windlass and bucket, and there it stands as one of the greatest material

blessings which the Lord has given to Aniwa. It rises and falls with the tide, though a third of a mile distant from the sea; and when, after using it, we tasted the pure fresh water on board the *Dayspring*, the latter seemed so insipid that I had to slip a little salt into my tea along with the sugar before I could enjoy it! All visitors are taken to see the well, as one of the wonders of Aniwa; and an Elder of the Native Church said to me, on a recent visit, "But for that water, during the last two years of drought, we would all have been dead!"

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

When the well was finished and neatly fenced in, the old chief said, "Missi, I think I could help you next Sabbath. Will you let me preach a sermon on the well?"

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

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

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

"Friends of Namakei, men and women and children of Aniwa, listen to my words! Since Missi came here he has talked many strange things we could not understand—things all too wonderful; and we said regarding many of them that they must be lies. White people might

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

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

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

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

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

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

One of the very first steps in Christian discipline to which they readily and almost unanimously took was the asking of God's blessing on every meal and praising the great Jehovah for their daily bread. Whosoever did not do so was regarded as a heathen. The next step, and it was taken in a manner as if by some common consent that was not less surprising than joyful, was a form of family worship every morning and evening. Doubtless the prayers were often very queer, and mixed up with many remaining superstitions; but they were prayers to the great Jehovah, the compassionate Father, the Invisible One—no longer to gods of stone!

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

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

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

In heathen days, by way of contrast, a brood of fowls or a litter of pigs would be carried in bags lest they should be stolen. Hence at church we had sometimes lively episodes, the chirruping of chicks, the squealing of piggies, and the barking of puppies, one gaily responding to the other, as we sang, or prayed, or preached the Gospel! Being glad, in those days, to see the natives there, even with all their belongings, we carefully refrained from finding fault; but the thread of devotion was sometimes apt to slip through one's fingers, especially when the conflict of the owner to silence a baby pig inspired the little wretch to

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drown everything in a long-sustained and high-pitched scream.

The natives found this state of things troublesome to themselves and disagreeable all round. They called a General Assembly, at which dishonesty was unanimously condemned and fines, etc., be instituted. The chiefs, no doubt, found this a long and difficult task, but they held at it under the inspiration of the Gospel, and prevailed. Even the trials and difficulties with which they met were overruled by God, in assisting them to form by the light of their own experience a simple code of social laws, fitted to repress the crimes there prevailing, and to encourage the virtues specially needing to be cultivated. Heathen worship was gradually extinguished; and, though no one was compelled to come to church, every person on Aniwa, without exception, became ere many years an avowed worshipper of Jehovah God. Again :

“O Galilean, Thou hast conquered!”

CHAPTER XXVI

FIRST BOOK, NEW EYES AND A NEW CHURCH

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

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

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

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

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

I said, "It does."

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

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

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

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

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

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

I walked out with him to the public village ground. There I drew A B C in large characters upon the dust, showed him the same letters in the book, and left him to compare them, and find out how many occurred on the first page. Fixing these in his mind, he came running to me, and said, "I have lifted up A B C. They are here in my head, and I will hold them fast. Give me other three."

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

One day I heard him read to a company with wonderful

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

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

Being myself as nearly as possible destitute of the power of singing, all my work would have been impaired and sadly hindered, and the joyous side of the worship and service of Jehovah could not have been presented to the natives, but for the gift bestowed by the Lord on my dear wife. She led our songs of praise, both in the family and in the church, and that was the first avenue by which the New Religion winged its way into the heart of cannibal and savage.

The old chief was particularly eager that this same aged lady, his wife Yauwaki, should be taught to read. But her sight was far gone. So, one day, he brought her to me, saying, "Missi, can you give my wife also a pair of new glass eyes like mine? She tries to learn, but she cannot see the letters. She tries to sew, but she pricks her finger, and throws away the needle, saying, 'The ways of the white people are not good!' If she could get a pair of glass eyes, she would be in a new world like Namakei." In my bundle I found a pair that suited her. She

was in positive terror about putting them on her face, but at last she cried with delight, "Oh, my new eyes! my new eyes! I have the sight of a little girl! Oh, my new eyes!"

Feeling that the time had come to interest them in building a new church, I laid the proposal before them, carefully explaining that for this work no one would be paid, that the church was for all the Islanders and for the worship alone, and that every one must build purely for the love of Jesus.

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

The church measured sixty-two feet by twenty-four. The wall was twelve feet high. The studs were of hard iron-wood, and were each, by tenon and mortise, fastened into six iron-wood trees forming the upper wall plates. All were not only nailed, but strongly tied together by sinnet-rope, so as to resist the hurricanes. The roof was supported by four huge iron-wood trees, and a fifth, of equally hard wood, sunk about eight feet into the ground, surrounded by building at the base, and forming massive pillars. There were two doorways and eight window spaces; the floor was laid with white coral, broken small, and covered with cocoa-nut tree leaf-mats, on which the people sat. I had a small platform, floored and surrounded with reeds; and Mrs. Paton had a seat enclosing the harmonium, also made of reeds, and in keeping. Great harmony prevailed all the time, and no mishap marred the work.

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

Days were spent in taking the iron-wood roof to pieces,

and saving everything that could be saved. The work was allocated equally amongst the villages, and a wholesome emulation was created.

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

Whenever the church was roofed in, we met in it for public worship. Coral was being got and burned, and preparations made for plastering the walls. The natives were sharp enough to notice that I was not putting up the bell; and suspicions arose that I kept it back in order to take it with me when I returned to Tanna. It was a beautiful church bell, cast and sent out by our dear friend, James Taylor, of Birkenhead. The Aniwans, therefore, gave me no rest till I agreed to have it hung on their new church. They found a large iron-wood tree near the shore, cut a road for half a mile through the bush, tied poles across it every few feet, and with shouts lifted it bodily on their shoulders—six men or so at each pole—and never set it down again till they reached the church; for as one party got exhausted, others were ready to rush in and relieve them at every stage of the journey. The two old chiefs, flourishing their tomahawks, went capering in front of all the rest, and led the song to which they marched, joyfully bearing their load. They dug a deep

hole, into which to sink it ; I squared the top and screwed on the bell ; then we raised the tree by ropes, letting it sink into the hole, and built it round eight feet deep with coral blocks and lime ; and there from its top swings and rings ever since the church bell of Aniwa.

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

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

In great perplexity, yet believing that my presence might prevent bloodshed, I allowed myself to be placed at their head. The old chief followed next, then a number of fiery young men ; then all the rest, single file, along the narrow path. At a sudden turn, as we neared their village, Nourai, who had attacked me the Sabbath day before, and his brother were seen lurking with their muskets ; but our young men made a rush in front, and they disappeared into the bush.

We took possession of the village public ground ; and the chief, the sacred man, and others soon assembled. A most characteristic native palaver followed. Speeches, endless speeches, were fired by them at each other. My friends declared, in every conceivable form of language and of graphic illustration, that they were resolved at any cost to defend me and the worship of Jehovah, and that they would as one man punish every attempt to injure me or take my life. The orator Taia, exclaimed, "You think that Missi is here alone, and that you can do with

him as you please! No! We are now all Missi's men. We will fight for him and his rather than see him injured. Every one that attacks him attacks us. That is finished to-day!"

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

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

The woman was a Malay, as all the Aniwan's were. Had a Papuan woman on Tanna or Erromanga dared such a thing, she would have been killed on the spot. But even on Aniwa, the unwonted spectacle of a wife beating her husband created uproarious amusement. At length I remonstrated, saying, "You had better stop now! You don't want to kill him, do you? You seem to have knocked 'the Tevil' pretty well out of him now! You see how he receives it all in silence, and repents of all his bad talk and bad conduct."

They exacted from him a solemn promise as to the making of no more diseases or hurricanes, and that he would live at peace with his neighbours.

CHAPTER XXVII

CHIEF YOUWILI CONVERTED, AND THE FIRST COMMUNION

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

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

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

I went at their head and removed it. It consisted simply of reeds stuck into the ground, with twigs and leaves and fibre tied to each in a peculiar way, in a circle round the Mission House. The natives had an extraordinary dread of violating the *taboo*, and believed that it meant death to the offender or to someone of his family. All present entered into a bond to punish on the spot any man who attempted to replace the *taboo*, or to revenge its removal. Thus a mortal blow was publicly struck at this most miserable superstition, which had caused bloodshed and misery untold.

One day thereafter, I was engaged in clearing away the bush around the Mission House, having purchased and paid for the land for the very purpose of opening it up, when suddenly Youwili appeared and menacingly forbade me to proceed. For the sake of peace I, for the time,

desisted. But he went straight to my fence, and with his tomahawk cut down the portion in front of our house, also some bananas planted there—the usual declaration of war, intimating that he only awaited his opportunity similarly to cut down me and mine. We saw the old chief and his men planting themselves here and there to guard us, and the natives prowling about armed and excited. On calling them, they explained the meaning of what Youwili had done, and that they were determined to protect us. I said, "This must not continue. Are you to permit one young fool to defy us all, and break up the Lord's work on Aniwa? If you cannot righteously punish him, I will shut myself up in my house and withdraw from all attempts to teach or help you, till the vessel comes, and then I can leave the island."

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

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

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

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

I answered, "No."

"Shall we bind him and beat him?"

"No."

"Shall we place him in a canoe, thrust him out to sea, and let him drown or escape as he may?"

"No! by no means."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Without waiting for a reply, he ordered the two boys to seize one rope, while he grasped the other, threw it over his shoulder and started off, pulling with the strength of

a horse. My heart rose in gratitude, and I wept with joy as I followed him. I knew that that yoke was but a symbol of the yoke of Christ, which Youwili with his change of heart was beginning to carry! Truly there is only one way of regeneration, being born again by the power of the Spirit of God, the new heart; but there are many ways of conversion, of outwardly turning to the Lord, of taking the actual first step that shows on whose side we are.

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

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

And this leads me to relate the story of our first communion on Aniwa. It was Sabbath, 24th October, 1869; and surely the Angels of God and the Church of the Redeemed in Glory were amongst the "great cloud of witnesses" who eagerly "peered" down upon the scene—when we sat around the Lord's Table and partook the memorials of His body and blood with those few souls rescued out of the heathen world. My communicants' class had occupied me now a considerable time. The conditions of attendance at this early stage were explicit, and had to be made very severe, and only twenty were admitted to the roll. At the final examination only twelve gave evidence of understanding what they were doing, and of having given their hearts to the service of the Lord Jesus. At their own urgent desire, and after every care in examining and instructing, they were solemnly dedicated in prayer to be baptized and admitted to the Holy Table. On that Lord's Day, after the usual opening service, I gave a short and careful exposition of the Ten Commandments and of the Way of Salvation according to the Gospel. The twelve candidates then stood up before

all the inhabitants there assembled, and, after a brief exhortation to them as converts, I put to them the two questions that follow, and each gave an affirmative reply, "Do you, in accordance with your profession of the Christian Faith, and your promises before God and the people, wish me now to baptize you?"

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

Then, beginning with the old chief, the twelve came forward, and I baptized them one by one. Solemn prayer was then offered, and in the name of the Holy Trinity the Church of Christ on Aniwa was formally constituted. I addressed them on the words of the Holy Institution—1 Corinthians xi. 23—and then, after the prayer of Thanksgiving and Consecration, administered the Lord's Supper—the first time since the Island of Aniwa was heaved out of its coral depths! Mrs. M'Nair, my wife and myself, along with six Aneityumese teachers, communicated with the newly baptized twelve. And I think, if ever in all my earthly experience, on that day I might truly add the blessed words—"Jesus in the midst."

The whole service occupied nearly three hours. The Islanders looked on with a wonder whose unwonted silence was almost painful to bear. Many were led to inquire carefully about everything they saw, so new and strange. For three years we had toiled and prayed and taught for this. At the moment when I put the bread and wine into those dark hands, once stained with the blood of cannibalism, but now stretched out to receive and partake the emblems and seals of the Redeemer's love, I had a foretaste of the joy of Glory that well-nigh broke my heart to pieces. I shall never taste a deeper bliss till I gaze on the glorified face of Jesus Himself.

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

and go out to the heathen world and reap a joy like this—
“the joy of the Lord.”

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

Our life and work will reveal itself if I briefly outline a Sabbath Day on Aniwa. Breakfast is partaken of immediately after daylight. The church bell then rings, and ere it stops every worshipper is seated. The natives are guided in starting by the sunrise, and are forward from farthest corners at this early hour. The first service is over in about an hour ; there is an interval of twenty minutes ; the bell is again rung, and the second service begins.

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

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

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

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

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

Nor is our weekday life less crowded or busy, though in different ways. At grey dawn on Monday, and every morning, the *tavaka* (= the canoe drum) is struck in every village on Aniwa. The whole inhabitants turn in to the early school, which lasts about an hour and a half,

and then the natives are off to their plantations. Having partaken of breakfast, I then spend my forenoon in translating or printing, or visiting the sick, or whatever else is most urgent. About two o'clock the natives return from their work, bathe in the sea, and dine off cocoa-nut, bread-fruit, or anything else that comes handily in the way. At three o'clock the bell rings, and the afternoon school for the teachers and the more advanced learners then occupies my wife and myself for about an hour and a half. After this, the natives spend their time in fishing or lounging or preparing supper—which is, amongst them, always *the* meal of the day. Towards sundown the *tavaka* sounds again, and the day closes amid the echoes of village prayers from under their several banyan trees.

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

The habits of morning and evening family prayer and of grace at meat took a very wonderful hold upon the people, and became, as I have shown elsewhere, a distinctive badge of Christian *versus* heathen. This was strikingly manifested during a time of bitter scarcity that befell us. I heard a father, for instance, at his hut door, with his family around him, reverently blessing God for the food provided for them, and for all His mercies in Christ Jesus. Drawing near and conversing with them, I found that their meal consisted of fig leaves which they had gathered and cooked—a poor enough dish, but hunger makes a healthy appetite, and contentment is a grateful relish.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I said, "What did I promise you?"

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

"Forgot what?" inquired I.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The children's sharp eyes had read correctly. It was not the *Dayspring*. Our brave little ship, as I afterwards learned, had gone to wreck on 6th January, 1873; and this vessel was the *Paragon*, chartered to bring down our supplies. Alas! the wreck had gone by auction sale to a French slaving company, who cut a passage through the coral reef, and had the vessel again floating in the bay—elated at the prospect of employing our Mission Ship in the blood-stained *Kanaka*-traffic (= a mere euphemism for South Sea slavery)! Our souls sank in horror and concern. Many natives would unwittingly trust themselves to the *Dayspring*, and revenge would be taken on us, as was done on noble Bishop Patteson, when the deception was found out. What could be done? Nothing but to cry to God, which all the friends of our Mission did day and night, not without tears, as we thought of the possible degradation of our noble little ship! Listen! The French slavers, anchoring their prize in the bay, and greatly rejoicing, went ashore to celebrate the event. They drank and feasted and revelled. But that night a mighty storm arose, the old *Dayspring* dragged her anchor, and at day-break she was seen again on the reef, but this time with her back broken in two and for ever unfit for service, either fair or foul. Oh, white-winged Virgin, daughter of the waves, better for thee, as for thy human sisters, to die and pass away than to suffer pollution and live on in disgrace!

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE FINGER-POSTS OF GOD

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

In the circumstances of our baby Lena's death, every form of heart-rending tenderness seemed to meet. On Friday, 28th March, at 3 a.m., she came from God, and seemed to both of us the angel-child of all our flock. Alas, on Saturday I was seized with sciatica, so dreadful and agonising, that I had to be borne to my bed, and could not stir a limb any more than if my back had been broken. My dear wife struggled to attend to the baby, with such help as native girls could give; and I directed the teachers about the services in church next Sunday, the first time as yet that I had been unable to appear and lead them.

From the beds where we lay, my wife and I could hear each other's voices, and tried to console one another in our sorrowful and helpless state. On Tuesday, 1st April, the child was bright and vigorous; but the mother's strength had been overtaxed, and she fell back, fainting in her bed, when helping to dress the baby. Next morning, to our dismay, there were symptoms of wheezing and feverishness in the little darling. All due measures were at once taken to check these; and Willig, an experienced native, now having charge, kept everything warm and cosy. Before tea, when receiving a little food, Lena opened her dark blue eyes and gazed up peacefully and gladly in her mother's face. But immediately after tea, within less than an hour, when the nurse brought her and placed her in the mother's arms, the angel-soul fled away. Poor Willig, seeing the mother's pathetic look, and as if she herself had been guilty, fell on her knees and cried, "I knew it, Missi; I knew it! She gave two big sighs, and went! Awai, Missi, Awai!" When the mother called to me something about the child having "fainted," I was talking with Koris, but my heart guessed the worst. Alas, all means were seen to be vain! I could not rise, could not move, nor could the mother; but we prayed, in each other's hearing, and in the hearing of our blessed Lord, and He did not leave us without consolation. In such cases the heathen usually fly away in terror, but our teachers were faithful and obedient, and our little boys—Bob and Fred, six and four respectively—followed all our tearful directions. One of their small toy-boxes was readily given up to make the baby's coffin. Yawaci brought calico and dressed the precious body at the mother's instructions. I then offered a prayer to the dear Lord, whilst the mother clasped the coffin in her arms. The little grave, dug by the teachers in the Mission plot, was within earshot of where we lay, and there Bob and Fred, kneeling in their snow-white dresses, sang "There is a Happy Land" as their sister's dust was laid in the earth and in the arms of Jesus who is the Resurrection and the Life. God only can ever know how our hearts were torn by the pathos of that event, as we lay helpless, almost dying, and listened to our children's trembling voices! Johna, the teacher, then prayed; while the heathen, in groups of wonder, but holding far aloof, had many strange

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ideas wakened in their puzzled brains. The mother and I gave ourselves once more away to God, and to the service of our dear Lord Jesus, as we parted with our darling Lena; and when, by and by, we were raised up again and able to move about, often, often, did we find ourselves meeting together at that precious grave.

Being ordered to seek health by change and by higher medical aid, and if possible in the cooler air of New Zealand, we took the first opportunity and arrived at Sydney, anxious to start the new movement to secure the *Paragon* there, and then to go on to the sister colony. Being scarcely able to walk without the crutches, we called privately a preliminary meeting of friends for consultation and advice. The conditions were laid before them and discussed. The insurance company had paid £2,000 on the first *Dayspring*. Of that sum, £1,000 had been spent on chartering and maintaining the *Paragon*; so that we required an additional £2,000 to purchase her, according to Dr. Steel's bargain with the owners, besides a large sum for alterations and equipment for the Mission. The late Mr. Learmouth looked across to Mr. Goodlet, and said, "If you'll join me, we will at once secure this vessel for the Missionaries, that God's work may not suffer from the wreck of the *Dayspring*."

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

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

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

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

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

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

I arrived back in Sydney about the end of March. My health was wonderfully restored, and New Zealand had given me about £1,700 for the new ship. With the £1,000 of insurance money, and about £700 from New South Wales, and £400 from Victoria, besides the £500 for her support also from Victoria, we were able to pay back the £3,000 of purchase money, and about £800 for alterations and repairs, as well as equip and provision her to sail for her next year's work amongst the Islands free of debt. I said to our two good friends at Sydney:

"You took God and His work for your guarantee. He has soon relieved you from all responsibility. You have suffered no loss, and you have had the honour and privilege of serving your Lord. I envy you the joy you must feel in so using your wealth, and I pray God's double blessing on all your store."

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

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

A heathen has been all his days groping after peace of soul in dark superstition and degrading rites. You pour into his soul the light of Revelation. He learns that God is love, that God sent His Son to die for him, and that he is the heir of Life Eternal in and through Jesus Christ. By the blessed enlightenment of the Spirit of the Lord he believes all this. He passes into a third heaven of joy, and he burns to tell everyone of the Glad Tidings. Others see the change in his disposition, in his character, in his whole life and actions ; and amid such surroundings, every convert is a burning and shining light. Even whole populations are thus brought into the outer court of the Temple ; and islands, still heathen and cannibal, are positively eager for the Missionary to live amongst them, and would guard his life and property now in complete security, where a very few years ago everything would have been instantly sacrificed on touching their shores ! They are not Christianised, neither are they civilised, but the light has been kindled all around them, and though still only shining afar, they cannot but rejoice in its beams. But even when the path is not so smooth, nor any welcome awaiting them, native converts show amazing zeal. For instance, one of our chiefs, full of the Christ-kindled desire to seek and to save, sent a message to an inland chief, that he and four attendants would come on Sabbath and tell them the Gospel of Jehovah God. The reply came back sternly forbidding their visit, and threatening with death any Christian that approached their village. Our chief sent in response a loving message, telling them that Jehovah had taught the Christians to return good for evil, and that they would come unarmed to tell them the story of how the Son of God came into the world and died in order to bless and save His enemies. The heathen chief sent back a stern and prompt reply once more, " If you come, you will be killed."

On Sabbath morning, the Christian chief and his four

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

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

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

CHAPTER XXIX

DEATH OF NAMAKEI AND OTHER CHIEFS

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

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

It was this same child who, in the moment of our greatest peril, when the Mission House was once surrounded by savages who had resolved to murder us, managed in some incredible way to escape, and appeared, to our horror and amazement, dancing with glee amongst the armed warriors. He threw his arms around the neck of one after another,

and kissed them, to their great surprise—at last, he settled down like a bird upon the ringleader's knee, and therefrom prattled to them all, while we from within gazed on in speechless and helpless terror! He roundly scolded them for being "Naughty! Naughty!" The frowning faces began to relax into broad grins, another spirit came over them, and, one after another, they rapidly slipped away. The Council of Death was broken up; and we had a new illustration of the Lord's precious word, "A little Child shall lead them."

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

On the fourth or fifth day, however, he sent for me out of the Synod, and when I came to him, he said eagerly, "Missi, I am near to die! I have asked you to come and say farewell. Tell my daughter, my brother, and my

people to go on pleasing Jesus, and I will meet them again in the fair world."

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

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

Amidst many choking sobs, I tried to pray. At last he took my hand, pressed it to his heart, and said in a stronger and clearer tone, "O, my Missi, my dear Missi, I go before you, but I will meet you again in the Home of Jesus. Farewell!"

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

Naswai, the friend and companion of Namakei, was an inland chief. He had, as his followers, by far the largest number of men in any village on Aniwa. He had certainly a dignified bearing, and his wife Katua was quite a lady in look and manner as compared with all around her. She was the first woman on the island that adopted the clothes of civilisation, and she showed considerable

instinctive taste in the way she dressed herself in these. Her example was a kind of Gospel in its good influence on all the women; she was a real companion to her husband, and went with him almost everywhere.

Naswai was younger and more intelligent than Namakei, and in everything, except in translating the Scriptures, he was much more of a fellow-helper in the work of the Lord. For many years it was Naswai's special delight to carry my pulpit Bible from the Mission House to the Church every Sabbath morning, and to see that everything was in perfect order before the service began. He was also the teacher in his own village school, as well as an elder in the Church. His addresses were wonderfully happy in graphic illustrations, and his prayers were fervent and uplifting. Yet his people were the worst to manage on all the island, and the very last to embrace the Gospel.

He died when we were in the colonies on furlough in 1875; and his wife Katua very shortly pre-deceased him. His last counsels to his people made a great impression on them. They told us how he pleaded with them to love and serve the Lord Jesus, and how he assured them with his dying breath that he had been "a new creature" since he gave his heart to Christ, and that he was perfectly happy in going to be with his Saviour.

I must here recall one memorable example of Naswai's power and skill as a preacher. On one occasion the *Dayspring* brought a large deputation from Futuna to see for themselves the change which the Gospel had produced on Aniwa. On Sabbath, after the Missionaries had conducted the usual Public Worship, some of the leading Aniwas addressed the Futunese, and, amongst others, Naswai spoke to the following effect: "Men of Futuna, you come to see what the Gospel has done for Aniwa. It is Jehovah the living God that has made all this change. As heathens, we quarrelled, killed and ate each other. We had no peace and no joy in heart or house, in villages or in lands; but we now live as brethren and have happiness in all these things. When you go back to Futuna they will ask you, 'What is Christianity?' And you will have to reply, 'It is that which has changed the people of Aniwa.' But they will still say, 'What is it?' And you will answer, 'It is that which has given them clothing and blankets, knives and axes, fish-hooks and many other

people to go on pleasing Jesus, and I will meet them again in the fair world."

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

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Amidst many choking sobs, I tried to pray. At last he took my hand, pressed it to his heart, and said in a stronger and clearer tone, "O, my Missi, my dear Missi, I go before you, but I will meet you again in the Home of Jesus. Farewell!"

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

Naswai, the friend and companion of Namakei, was an inland chief. He had, as his followers, by far the largest number of men in any village on Aniwa. He had certainly a dignified bearing, and his wife Katua was quite a lady in look and manner as compared with all around her. She was the first woman on the island that adopted the clothes of civilisation, and she showed considerable

instinctive taste in the way she dressed herself in these. Her example was a kind of Gospel in its good influence on all the women ; she was a real companion to her husband, and went with him almost everywhere.

Naswai was younger and more intelligent than Namakei, and in everything, except in translating the Scriptures, he was much more of a fellow-helper in the work of the Lord. For many years it was Naswai's special delight to carry my pulpit Bible from the Mission House to the Church every Sabbath morning, and to see that everything was in perfect order before the service began. He was also the teacher in his own village school, as well as an elder in the Church. His addresses were wonderfully happy in graphic illustrations, and his prayers were fervent and uplifting. Yet his people were the worst to manage on all the island, and the very last to embrace the Gospel.

He died when we were in the colonies on furlough in 1875 ; and his wife Katua very shortly pre-deceased him. His last counsels to his people made a great impression on them. They told us how he pleaded with them to love and serve the Lord Jesus, and how he assured them with his dying breath that he had been " a new creature " since he gave his heart to Christ, and that he was perfectly happy in going to be with his Saviour.

I must here recall one memorable example of Naswai's power and skill as a preacher. On one occasion the *Dayspring* brought a large deputation from Futuna to see for themselves the change which the Gospel had produced on Aniwa. On Sabbath, after the Missionaries had conducted the usual Public Worship, some of the leading Aniwans addressed the Futunese, and, amongst others, Naswai spoke to the following effect : " Men of Futuna, you come to see what the Gospel has done for Aniwa. It is Jehovah the living God that has made all this change. As heathens, we quarrelled, killed and ate each other. We had no peace and no joy in heart or house, in villages or in lands ; but we now live as brethren and have happiness in all these things. When you go back to Futuna they will ask you, ' What is Christianity ? ' And you will have to reply, " It is that which has changed the people of Aniwa.' But they will still say, ' What is it ? ' And you will answer, " It is that which has given them clothing and blankets, knives and axes, fish-hooks and many other

useful things ; it is that which has led them to give up fighting, and to live together as friends.' But they will ask you, 'What is it like?' And you will have to tell them, alas, that you cannot explain it ; that you have only seen its workings, not itself, and that no one can tell what Christianity is but the man that loves Jesus, the Invisible Master, and walks with Him and tries to please Him. Now, you people of Futuna, you think that if you don't dance and sing and pray to your gods, you will have no crops. We once did so, too, sacrificing and doing much abomination to our gods for weeks before our planting season every year. But we saw our Missi only praying to the Invisible Jehovah, and planting his yams, and they grew fairer than ours. You are weak every year before your hard work begins in the fields, with your wild and bad conduct to please your gods. But we are strong for our work, for we pray to Jehovah, and He gives quiet rest instead of wild dancing, and makes up happy in our toils. Since we followed Missi's example, Jehovah has given us large and beautiful crops, and we now know that He gives us all our blessings."

Turning to me, he exclaimed, "Missi, have you the large yam we presented to you? Would you not think it well to send it back with these men of Futuna, to let their people see the yams which Jehovah grows for us in answer to prayer? Jehovah is the only God who can grow yams like that!"

Then, after a pause, he proceeded, "When you go back to Futuna, and they ask you, 'What is Christianity?' you will be like an inland chief of Erromanga, who once came down and saw a great feast on the shore. When he saw so much food and so many different kinds of it, he asked, 'What is this made of?' and was answered, 'Cocoa-nuts and yams.' 'And this?' 'Cocoa-nuts and bananas?' 'And this?' 'Cocoa-nuts and taro.' 'And this?' 'Cocoa-nuts and chestnuts,' etc., etc. The chief was immensely astonished at the host of dishes that could be prepared from the cocoa-nuts. On returning, he carried home a great load of them to his people, that they might see and taste the excellent food of the shore people. One day, all being assembled, he told them the wonders of that feast ; and, having roasted the cocoa-nuts, he took out the kernels, all charred and spoiled, and distributed them

amongst his people. They tasted the cocoa-nut, they began to chew it, and then spat it out, crying, 'Our own food is better than that!' The chief was confused, and only got laughed at for all his trouble. Was the fault in the cocoa-nuts? No; but they were spoiled in the cooking! So your attempts to explain Christianity will only spoil it. Tell them that a man must live as a Christian before he can show others what Christianity is."

On their return to Futuna they exhibited Jehovah's yam, given in answer to prayer and labour; they told what Christianity had done for Aniwa; but did not fail to qualify all their accounts with the story of the Erromangan chief and the cocoa-nuts.

The chief of next importance on Aniwa was Nerwa, a keen debater, all whose thoughts ran in the channels of logic. When I could speak a little of their language I visited and preached at his village; but the moment he discovered that the teaching about Jehovah was opposed to their heathen customs, he sternly forbade us. One day, during my address, he blossomed out into a full-fledged and pronounced agnostic (with as much reason at his back as the European type!), and angrily interrupted me:

"It's all lies you come here to teach us, and you call it worship! You say your Jehovah God dwells in Heaven. Who ever went up there to hear Him or see Him? You talk of Jehovah as if you had visited His Heaven. Why, you cannot climb even to the top of one of our cocoa-nut trees, though we can, and that with ease! In going up to the roof of your own Mission House you require the help of a ladder to carry you. And even if you could make your ladder higher than our highest cocoa-nut tree, on what would you lean its top? And when you get to its top, you can only climb down the other side and end where you began! The thing is impossible. You never saw that God; you never heard Him speak; don't come here with any of your white lies, or I'll send my spear through you."

He drove us from his village, and furiously threatened murder if we ever dared to return. But very shortly thereafter the Lord sent us a little orphan girl from Nerwa's village. She was very clever, and could soon both read and write, and told over all that we taught her. Her visits home, or at least amongst the villagers where her

home had been, her changed appearance and her childish talk, produced a very deep interest in us and in our work.

An orphan boy next was sent from that village to be kept and trained at the Mission House, and he, too, took back his little stories of how kind and good to him were Missi the man and Missi the woman. By this time chief and people alike were taking a lively interest in all that was transpiring. One day the chief's wife, a quiet and gentle woman, came to the worship and said, "Nerwa's opposition dies fast. The story of the orphans did it! He has allowed me to attend the church, and to get the Christian's book."

We gave her a book and a bit of clothing. She went home and told everything. Woman after woman followed her from that same village, and some of the men began to accompany them. The only thing in which they showed a real interest was the children singing the little hymns which I had translated into their own Aniwan tongue, and which my wife had taught them to sing very sweetly and joyfully. Nerwa at last got so interested that he came himself and sat within earshot, and drank in the joyful sound. In a short time he drew so near that he could hear our preaching, and then began openly and regularly to attend the church. His keen reasoning faculty was constantly at work. He weighed and compared everything he heard, and soon out-distanced nearly all of them in his grasp of the ideas of the Gospel. He put on clothing, joined our school, and professed himself a follower of the Lord Jesus. He eagerly set himself, with all his power, to bring in a neighbouring chief and his people, and constituted himself at once an energetic and very pronounced helper to the Missionary.

On the death of Naswai, Nerwa at once took his place in carrying my Bible to the church, and seeing that all the people were seated before the stopping of the bell. I have seen him clasping the Bible like a living thing to his breast, as if he would cry, "Oh, to have this treasure in my own words of Aniwa!"

When the Gospels of Matthew and Mark were at last printed in Aniwan, he studied them incessantly, and soon could read them freely. He became the teacher in his own village school, and delighted in instructing others. He was assisted by Ruwawa, whom he himself had drawn

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into the circle of Gospel influence; and at our next election these two friends were appointed elders of the church, and greatly sustained our hands in every good work on Aniwa.

After years of happy and useful service, the time came for Nerwa to die. He was then so greatly beloved that most of the inhabitants visited him during his long illness. He read a bit of the Gospels in his own Aniwan, and prayed with and for every visitor. He sang beautifully, and scarcely allowed anyone to leave his bedside without having a verse of one or other of his favourite hymns, "Happy Land," and "Nearer, my God, to Thee."

On my last visit to Nerwa, his strength had gone very low, but he drew me near his face, and whispered, "Missi, my Missi, I am glad to see you. You see that group of young men? They came to sympathise with me; but they have never once spoken the name of Jesus, though they have spoken about everything else! They could not have weakened me so, if they had spoken about Jesus! Read me the story of Jesus; pray for me to Jesus. No! stop, let us call them, and let me speak with them before I go."

I called them all around him, and he strained his dying strength and said, "After I am gone, let there be no bad talk, no heathen ways. Sing Jehovah's songs, and pray to Jesus, and bury me as a Christian. Take good care of my Missi, and help him all you can. I am dying happy and going to be with Jesus, and it was Missi that showed me this way. And who among you will take my place in the village school and in the church? Who amongst you all will stand up for Jesus?"

Many were shedding tears, but there was no reply; after which the dying chief proceeded, "Now let my last work on earth be this—we will read a chapter of the Book, verse about, and then I will pray for you all, and the Missi will pray for me, and God will let me go while the song is still sounding in my heart!"

At the close of this most touching exercise, we gathered the Christians who were near by close around, and sang very softly in Aniwan, "There is a Happy Land." As they sang, the old man grasped my hand, and tried hard to speak, but in vain. His head fell to one side, "the silver cord was loosed and the golden bowl was broken."

His great friend, Ruwawa the chief, had waited by Nerwa

like a brother till within a few days of the latter's death, when he also was smitten down apparently by the same disease. He was thought to be dying, and he resigned himself calmly into the hands of Christ. One Sabbath afternoon, sorely distressed for lack of air, he instructed his people to carry him from the village to a rising ground on one of his plantations. It was fallow; the fresh air would reach him; and all his friends could sit around him. They extemporised a rest—two posts stuck into the ground, slanting, sticks tied across them, then dried banana leaves spread on these and also as a cushion on the ground—and there sat Ruwawa, leaning back and breathing heavily. After the church services, I visited him, and found half the people of that side of the island sitting round him, in silence, in the open air. Ruwawa beckoned me, and I sat down before him. Though suffering sorely, his eye and face had the look of ecstasy.

"Missi," he said, "I could not breathe in my village; so I got them to carry me here, where there is room for all. They are silent and they weep, because they think I am dying. If it were God's will, I would like to live and to help you in His work. I am in the hands of our dear Lord. If He takes me, it is good; if He spares me, it is good! Pray, and tell our Saviour all about it."

I explained to the people that we would tell our Heavenly Father how anxious we all were to see Ruwawa given back to us strong and well to work for Jesus, and then leave all to His wise and holy disposal. I prayed, and the place became a very Bochim. When I left him, Ruwawa exclaimed, "Farewell, Missi; if I go first, I will welcome you to Glory; if I am spared, I will work with you for Jesus; so all is well!"

One of the young Christians followed me and said, "Missi, our hearts are very sore! If Ruwawa dies, we have no chief to take his place in the church, and it will be a heavy blow against Jehovah's worship on Aniwa."

I answered, "Let us each tell our God and Father all that we feel and all that we fear; and leave Ruwawa and our work in His holy hands."

We did so with earnest and unceasing cry. And when all hope had died out of every heart, the Lord began to answer us; the disease began to relax its hold, and the beloved chief was restored to health. As soon as he was

able, though still needing help, he found his way back to the church, and we all offered special thanksgiving to God. He indicated a desire to say a few words; and although still very weak, spoke with great pathos thus:

"Dear friends, God has given me back to you all. I rejoice thus to come here and praise the great Father, who made us all, and who knows how to make and keep us well. I want you all to work hard for Jesus, and to lose no opportunity of trying to do good and so to please Him. In my deep journey away near to the grave, it was the memory of what I had done in love to Jesus that made my heart sing. I am not afraid of pain—my dear Lord Jesus suffered far more for me, and teaches me how to bear it. I am not afraid of war or famine or death, or of the present or of the future; my dear Lord Jesus died for me, and in dying I shall live with Him in Glory. I fear and love my dear Lord Jesus, because He loved me and gave Himself for me."

Then he raised his right hand, and cried in a soft, full-hearted voice: "My own, my dear Lord Jesus!" and stood for a moment looking joyfully upward, as if gazing into his Saviour's face. When he sat down, there was a long hush, broken here and there by a smothered sob, and Ruwawa's words produced an impression that is remembered to this day.

In 1888, when I visited the islands, Ruwawa was still devoting himself heart and soul to the work of the Lord on Aniwa. Assisted by Koris, a teacher from Aneityum, and visited annually by our ever dear and faithful friends, Mr. and Mrs. Watt, from Tanna, the good Ruwawa carried forward all the work of God on Aniwa, along with others, in our absence as in our presence. The meetings, the communicants' class, the schools, and the church services are all regularly conducted and faithfully attended. "Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

CHAPTER XXX

LITSI, SORÉ, MUNGAW, NASI AND LAMU

LITSI, the only daughter of Namakei, had, both in her own career and in her connection with poor Mungaw, an almost unparalleled experience. She was entrusted to us when very young, and became a bright, clever, and attractive Christian girl. Many sought her hand, but she disdainfully replied, "I am Queen of my own island, and when I like I will ask a husband in marriage, as the great Queen Victoria did!"

Her first husband, however won, was undoubtedly the tallest and most handsome man on Aniwa; but he was a giddy fool, and, on his early death, she again returned to live with us at the Mission House. Her second marriage had everything to commend it, but it resulted in indescribable disaster. Mungaw, heir to a chief, had been trained with us, and gave every evidence of decided Christianity. They were married in the church, and lived in the greatest happiness. He was able and eloquent, and was first chosen as a deacon, then as an elder of the church, and finally as high chief of one half of the island. He showed the finest Christian spirit under many trying circumstances. Once, when working at the lime for the building of our church, two bad men, armed with muskets, sought his life for blowing the conch to assemble the workers. Hearing of the quarrel, I rushed to the scene, and heard him saying, "Don't call me coward, or think me afraid to die. If I died now, I would go to be with Jesus. But I am no longer a heathen: I am a Christian, and wish to treat you as a Christian should."

Two loaded muskets were levelled at him. I seized one in each of my hands, and held their muzzles aloft in air, so that, if discharged, the balls might pass over his head and mine; and thus I stood for some minutes pleading with them.

Others soon coming to the rescue, the men were disarmed; and, after much talk, they professed themselves ashamed, and promised better conduct for the future. Next day they sent a large present as a peace-offering to me, but I refused to receive it till they should first of all make peace with the young chief. They sent a larger present to him, praying him to receive it, and to forgive them. Mungaw brought a still larger present in exchange, laid it down at their feet in the public ground, shook hands with them graciously, and forgave them in presence of all the people. His constant saying was, "I am a Christian, and I must do the conduct of a Christian."

In one of my furloughs to Australia I took the young chief with me, in the hope of interesting the Sabbath schools and congregations by his eloquent addresses and noble personality. The late Dr. Cameron, of Melbourne, having heard him, as translated by me, publicly declared that Mungaw's appearance and speech in his church did more to show him the grand results of the Gospel amongst the heathen than all the missionary addresses he ever listened to or read.

Our lodging was in St. Kilda. My dear wife was suddenly seized with a dangerous illness on a visit to Taradale, and I was telegraphed for. Finding that I must remain with her, I got Mungaw booked for Melbourne, on the road for St. Kilda, in charge of a railway guard. Some white wretches, in the guise of gentlemen, offered to see him to the St. Kilda Station, assuring the guard that they were friends of mine, and interested in our mission. They took him, instead, to some den of infamy in Melbourne. On refusing to drink with them, he said they threw him down on a sofa, and poured drink or drugs into him till he was nearly dead. Having taken all his money (he had only two or three pounds, made up of little presents from various friends), they thrust him out to the street, with only one penny in his pocket.

On becoming conscious, he applied to a policeman, who either did not understand or would not interfere. Hearing an engine whistle, he followed the sound, and found his way to Spencer Street Station, where he proffered his penny for a ticket, all in vain. At last a sailor took pity on him, got him some food, and led him to the station for St. Kilda. There he stood for a whole day, offering his

penny for a ticket by every train, only to meet with refusal after refusal, till he broke down, and cried aloud in such English as desperation gave him :

" If me savvy road, me go. Me no savvy road, and stop here me die. My Missi Paton live at Kilda. Me want go Kilda. Me no more money. Bad fellow took all ! Send me Kilda."

Some gentle Samaritan gave him a ticket, and he reached our house at St. Kilda at last. There for above three weeks the poor creature lay in a sort of stupid doze. Food he could scarcely be induced to taste, and he only rose now and again for a drink of water. When my wife was able to be removed thither also, we found Mungaw dreadfully changed in appearance and in conduct. Twice thereafter I took him with me on mission work ; but, on medical advice, preparations were made for his immediate return to the islands. I entrusted him to the kind care of Captain Logan, who undertook to see him safely on board the *Dayspring*, then lying at Auckland. Mungaw was delighted, and we hoped everything from his return to his own land and people. After some little trouble, he was landed safely home on Aniwa. But his malady developed dangerous and violent symptoms, characterised by long periods of quiet and sleep, and then sudden paroxysms, in which he destroyed property, burned houses, and was a terror to all.

On our return he was greatly delighted ; but he complained bitterly that the white men " had spoiled his head," and that when it " burned hot " he did all these bad things, for which he was extremely sorry. He deliberately attempted my life, and most cruelly abused his dear and gentle wife ; and then, when the frenzy was over, he wept and lamented over it. Many a time he marched round and round our house with loaded musket and spear and tomahawk, while we had to keep doors and windows locked and barricaded ; then the paroxysm passed off, and he slept, long and deep, like a child. When he came to himself, he wept and said, " The white men spoiled my head ! I know not what I do. My head burns hot, and I am driven."

One day, in the church, he leapt up during worship with a loud yelling war-cry, rushed off through the Imrai to his own house, set fire to it, and danced around till

everything he possessed was burned to ashes. Nasi, a bad Tannese chief living on Aniwa, had a quarrel with Mungaw about a cask found at the shore, and threatened to shoot him. Others encouraged him to do so, as Mungaw was growing every day more and more destructive and violent. When any person became outrageous or insane on Aniwa, as they had neither asylum nor prison, they first of all held him fast and discharged a musket close to his ear; and then, if the shock did not bring him back to his senses, they tied him up for two days or so; and finally, if that did not restore him, they shot him dead. Thus the plan of Nasi was favoured by their own customs. One night, after family worship—for amidst all his madness, when clear moments came, he poured out his soul in faith and love to the Lord—he said, "Litsi, I am melting! My head burns. Let us go out and get cooled in the open air."

She warned him not to go, as she heard voices whispering under the veranda. He answered a little wildly, "I am not afraid to die. Life is a curse and burden. The white men spoiled my head. If there is a hope of dying, let me go quickly and die!"

As he crossed the door, a ball crashed through him, and he fell dead. We got the mother and her children away to the Mission House; and next morning they buried the remains of poor Mungaw under the floor of his own hut, and enclosed the whole place with a fence. It was a sorrowful close to so noble a career. I shed many a tear that I ever took him to Australia. What will God have to say to those white fiends who poisoned and maddened Mungaw?

After a while the good Queen Litsi was happily married again. She became possessed with a great desire to go as a missionary to the people and tribe of Nasi, the very man who had murdered her husband. She used to say, "Is there no missionary to go and teach Nasi's people? I weep and pray for them, that they too may come to know and love Jesus."

I answered, "Litsi, if I had only wept and prayed for you, but stayed at home in Scotland, would that have brought you to know and love Jesus as you do?"

"Certainly not," she replied.

"Now then," I proceeded, "would it not please Jesus, and be a grand and holy revenge, if you, the Christians of

Aniwa, could carry the Gospel to the very people of Tanna whose chief shot Mungaw ? ”

The idea took possession of her soul. She was never wearied talking and praying over it. When at length a Missionary was got for Nasi's people, Litsi and her new husband offered themselves at the head of a band of six or eight Aniwan Christians, and were engaged there to open up the way and assist, as teachers and helpers, the Missionary and his wife. There she and they have laboured ever since. They are “strong” for the worship. Her son is being trained up by his cousin, an elder of the church, to be “the good chief of Aniwa”; so she calls him in her prayers, as she cries on God to bless and watch over him, while she is serving the Lord in at once serving the Mission family and ministering to the natives in that foreign field.

Many years have now passed ; and when lately I visited that part of Tanna, Litsi ran to me, clasped my hand, kissed it with many sobs, and cried, “O my father ! God has blessed me to see you again. Is my mother, your dear wife, well ? And your children, my brothers and sisters ? My love to them all ! Oh, my heart clings to you ! ”

We had sweet conversation, and then she said more calmly, “My days here are hard. I might be happy and independent as Queen of my own Aniwa. But the heathen here are beginning to listen. The Missi sees them coming nearer to Jesus. And oh, what a reward when we shall hear them sing and pray to our dear Saviour ! The hope of that makes me strong for anything.”

Nasi, the Tanna-man, was a bad and dangerous character, though some readers may condone his putting an end to Mungaw in the terrible circumstances of our case. During a great illness that befell him, I ministered to him regularly, but no kindness seemed to move him. When about to leave Aniwa, I went specially to visit him. On parting I said, “Nasi, are you happy ? Have you ever been happy ? ”

He answered gloomily, “No ! Never.”

I said, “Would you like this dear little boy of yours to grow up like yourself, and lead the life you have lived ? ”

“No ! ” he replied warmly ; “I certainly would not.”

“Then,” I continued, “you must become a Christian, and give up all your heathen conduct, or he will just grow

up to quarrel and fight and murder as you have done ; and, O Nasi, he will curse you through all eternity for leading him to such a life and to such a doom ! ”

He was very much impressed, but made no response. After we had sailed, a band of our young native Christians held a consultation over the case of Nasi. They said, “ We know the burden and terror that Nasi has been to our dear Missi. We know that he has murdered several persons with his own hands, and has taken part in the murder of others. Let us unite in daily prayer that the Lord would open his heart and change his conduct, and teach him to love and follow what is good, and let us set ourselves to win Nasi for Christ, just as Missi tried to win us.”

So they began to show him every possible kindness, and one after another helped him in his daily tasks, embracing every opportunity of pleading with him to yield to Jesus and take the new path of life. At first he repelled them, and sullenly held aloof. But their prayers never ceased, and their patient affections continued to grow. At last, after long waiting, Nasi broke down, and cried to one of the teachers, “ I can oppose your Jesus no longer. If He can make you treat me like that, I yield myself to Him and to you. I want Him to change me too. I want a heart like that of Jesus.”

He rubbed off the ugly thickly-daubed paint from his face ; he cut off his long heathen hair ; he went to the sea and bathed, washing himself clean ; and then he came to the Christians and dressed himself in a shirt and a kilt. The next step was to get a book—his was the translation of the Gospel according to St. John. He eagerly listened to every one that would read bits of it aloud to him, and his soul seemed to drink in the new ideas at every pore. He attended the church and the school most regularly, and could in a very short time read the Gospel for himself. The elders of the church took special pains in instructing him, and after due preparation he was admitted to the Lord’s Table—my brother missionary from Tanna baptizing and receiving him. Imagine my joy on learning all this regarding one who had sullenly resisted my appeals for many years, and how my soul praised the Lord who is “ mighty to save ” !

During a recent visit to Aniwa, in 1886, God’s almighty

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compassion was further revealed to me, when I found that Nasi the murderer was now a Scripture reader, and able to comment in a wonderful and interesting manner on what he read to the people! On arriving at the island, after my tour in Great Britain (1884-85), all the inhabitants of Aniwa seemed to be assembled at the boat-landing to welcome me, except Nasi. He was away fishing at a distance, and had been sent for, but had not yet arrived. On the way to the Mission House, he came rushing to meet me. He grasped my hand, and kissed it, and burst into tears. I said, "Nasi, do I now at last meet you as a Christian?"

He warmly answered, "Yes, Missi; I now worship and serve the only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Bless God, I am a Christian at last!"

My soul went out with the silent cry, "Oh, that the men at home who discuss and doubt about conversion, and the new heart, and the power of Jesus to change and save, could but look on Nasi, and spell out the simple lesson—He that created us at first by His power can create us anew by His love!"

My first Sabbath on Aniwa, after this tour in Great Britain and the Colonies, gave me a blessed surprise. Before daybreak I lay awake thinking of all my experiences on that island, and wondering whether the church had fallen off in my four years' absence, when suddenly the voice of song broke on my ears! It was scarcely full dawn, yet I jumped up and called to a man that was passing, "Have I slept in? Is it already church time? Or why are the people met so early?"

He was one of their leaders, and gravely replied, "Missi, since you left we have found it very hard to live near to God! So the chief and the teachers and a few others meet when daylight comes in every Sabbath morning, and spend the first hour of every Lord's Day in prayer and praise. They are met to pray for you now, that God may help you in your preaching, and that all hearts may bear fruit to the glory of Jesus this day."

I returned to my room, and felt wonderfully "prepared" myself. It would be an easy and a blessed thing to lead such a congregation into the presence of the Lord! They were there already.

On that day every person on Aniwa seemed to be at

church, except the bedridden and the sick. At the close of the services the elders informed me that they had kept up all the meetings during my absence, and had also conducted the communicants' class, and they presented to me a considerable number of candidates for membership. After careful examination, I set apart nine boys and girls, about twelve or thirteen years of age, and advised them to wait for at least another year or so, that their knowledge and habits might be matured. They had answered every question, indeed, and were eager to be baptized and admitted; but I feared for their youth, lest they should fall away and bring disgrace on the church. One of them, with very earnest eyes, looked at me and said, "We have been taught that whosoever believeth is to be baptized. We do most heartily believe in Jesus, and try to please Jesus."

I answered, "Hold on for another year, and then our way will be clear."

But he persisted, "Some of us may not be living then; and you may not be here. We long to be baptized by you, our own Missi, and to take our place among the servants of Jesus."

After much conversation I agreed to baptize them, and they agreed to refrain from going to the Lord's Table for a year, that all the church might by that time have knowledge and proof of their consistent Christian life, though so young in years. This discipline, I thought, would be good for them; and the Lord might use it as a precedent for guidance in future days.

Of other ten adults at this time admitted, one was specially noteworthy. She was about twenty-five, and the elders objected because her marriage had not been according to the Christian usage on Aniwa. She left us, weeping deeply. I was writing late at night in the cool evening air, as was my wont in that oppressive tropical clime, and a knock was heard at my door. I called out, "*Akai era?*" (Who is there?)

A voice softly answered, "Missi, it is Lamu. Oh, do speak with me!"

This was the rejected candidate, and I at once opened the door.

"Oh, Missi," she began, "I cannot sleep, I cannot eat; my soul is in pain. Am I to be shut out from Jesus?"

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Some of those at the Lord's Table committed murder. They repented, and have been saved. My heart is very bad; yet I never did any of those crimes of heathenism; and I know that it is my joy to try and please my Saviour Jesus. How is it that I only am to be shut out from Jesus?"

I tried all I could to guide and console her, and she listened to all very eagerly. Then she looked up at me and said, "Missi, you and the elders may think it right to keep me back from showing my love to Jesus at the Lord's Table; but I know here in my heart that Jesus has received me; and if I were dying now, I know that Jesus would take me to Glory and present me to the Father."

Her look and manner thrilled me. I promised to see the elders and submit her appeal. But Lamu appeared and pled her own cause before them with convincing effect. She was baptized and admitted along with other nine. And that Communion Day will be long remembered by many souls on Aniwa.

It has often struck me, when relating these events, to press this question on the many young people, the highly privileged white brothers and sisters of Lamu, Did you ever lose one hour of sleep or a single meal in thinking of your soul, your God, the claims of Jesus, and your eternal destiny?

And when I saw the diligence and fidelity of these poor Aniwan elders, teaching and ministering during all those years, my soul has cried aloud to God, Oh, what could not the Church accomplish if the educated and gifted elders and others in Christian lands would set themselves thus to work for Jesus, to teach the ignorant, to protect the tempted, and to rescue the fallen!

CHAPTER XXXI

ROUND THE WORLD AGAIN FOR A SHIP

THE steady advance of the work in the planting of Mission stations along the shores of the wild islands to the north of the New Hebrides gave me intense satisfaction and joy, but at the same time it involved me in fresh and unexpected responsibilities. In 1884 it became increasingly evident that our little sailing vessel, the *Dayspring*, was incapable of fulfilling the developing requirements of the missionaries. The dreaded perils that accrue to a small sailing ship, alike from deadly calms and from treacherous gales, to say nothing of the tide rips between some of the islands, forced upon us all the necessity for a steam vessel—or at least a sailing vessel with steam auxiliary power.

As the need became more and more felt, action was imperative, and I was called upon once more to embark on a fresh effort to secure the means—at least £6,000—for building a larger ship for the equipment of our Island Mission.

So clear was the call that there was but one answer, and placing myself in my dear Lord's hands for whatever service He might command, I set out on another difficult venture of faith.

Naturally, my thoughts and my steps were first directed towards my own Scotland which had so nobly stood sponsor to the work in the past. Not that I could expect to appeal to the churches, as such, but that Scotland had sent out many of the heroic pioneers who had wrought and lived and died for the salvation of the cannibals of our far-off islands, and I felt that in Scotland, if anywhere, there would surely be a responsive chord that perhaps I might be instrumental in striking in the hearts of some at least of my own countrymen.

To Edinburgh, therefore, I made my way, and almost immediately I was granted opportunity to address the

congregations and Sabbath schools. Letters of introduction gave me access also to the homes of many influential people; and on more than one occasion I happened to present my letters when ministers were away or unable to take the Sabbath services and so had emergency chances of occupying pulpits. The Lord was manifestly opening up my way, and I began to feel confident that I was acting in accordance with His will.

Next I directed my steps towards Ireland, and at the outset the warmth of heart of these the most lovable people on earth set my heart aglow with fresh hope. But love and affluence are not always united, and I was sometimes put into a quandary by the expressions of business men. "Trade is dull," they would say, "and our ordinary church people have more than enough to do for themselves; how, then, can you ever expect to raise as much as £6,000? It can never be accomplished." In answer I replied, "I will tell my story. I will set forth the claims of the Lord Jesus on the people. I will get collections where I can, and I will go on to the utmost limit of my strength, in the faith that the Lord will send me the means for His service. If He does not so send it, I shall expect that He will send me grace to be reconciled to the disappointment, and I shall go back to my work without my ship."

Often I had to witness the incredulous smile at my simple faith, and sometimes to listen to the blunt and emphatic retort, "You'll never succeed! Money cannot be got in that unbusiness-like way."

And yet from the small gifts of those who loved Him God sent me away from Ireland with £600 in support of my scheme.

Back again to Scotland, this time to Glasgow, in a further effort. I printed a little statement and appeal, and fresh gifts began to flow in—mainly in small sums—with occasionally a big gift of £50 or £100. At Perth a memorable instance occurred which greatly heartened me. An American gentleman introduced himself to me. He carried on a large and flourishing business, but only in order that he might devote *the whole profits* to the direct service of God and His cause among men! (He had made a competence for himself and his family, though only in the prime of life.) He gave me the largest single cheque with which the Lord had yet cheered me.

At Dundee a strange experience befell me. I was asked to close a meeting with prayer, but when I began to pronounce the benediction I could only *think* in the native language of my own Aniwa, and after a painful silence I had to finish with a simple "Amen." I sat down wet with perspiration, and, of course, expected that no one would trouble to come later on in the day to listen to a dumb Missionary, and yet the next meeting was crowded and I had great freedom and a splendid response in gifts.

So I went on my way; and day by day the encouragement overcame weak faith, and I began rejoicingly to croon over the old saying that "difficulties are only made to be vanquished." My ship now began to loom large in my visions and prayers.

But, so far, England was to me an almost unknown land. I found myself in London as a stranger. I had been called to the great metropolis in connection with the threatened annexation of the New Hebrides by the French, and intended to find my way back to Scotland directly my task in that direction was finished. But God willed otherwise. One friend after another came to my aid, and gradually opportunities were offered for me to plead the cause of our heathen islanders, and to seek help for the ship that was so vital to the maintenance of the work among them. Mildmay welcomed me; and Christian men of outstanding influence such as the Hon. Ion Keith Falconer, Lord Radstock, James Mathieson, Viscount Tankerville, and F. B. Meyer gave me their support; and soon I began to feel that England as much as Scotland was my country—for there, as in Scotland, I found hearts open and influences at work for promoting the great cause of the extension of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

My last week had come, and I was in the midst of preparations for departure, when amongst the letters delivered to me was one to this effect:

Restitution money which never now can be returned to its owner. Since my conversion I have laboured hard to save it. I now make my only possible amends by returning it to God through you. Pray for me and mine, and may God bless you in your work!

I rather startled my brother and his wife at our breakfast table by shouting out in unwontedly excited tones, "Hal-

lelujah! The Lord has done it! Hallelujah!" But my tones softened down into intense reverence, and my words broke at last into tears, when I found that this, the second largest subscription ever received by me, came from a converted tradesman who had consecrated his all to the Lord Jesus, and whose whole leisure was now centred upon seeking to bless and save those of his own rank and class, amongst whom he had spent his early and unconverted days. Jesus said unto him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

CHAPTER XXXII

BACK TO AUSTRALIA AND THE ISLANDS

ON the 28th of October, 1885, I set my face again to the Pacific. My mission to Britain was to raise £6,000 in order to provide a steam auxiliary mission ship, for the enlarged and constantly enlarging requirements of the New Hebrides. I spent exactly eighteen months away; and when I returned to Melbourne I was enabled to hand over no less a sum than £9,000! And all this had been forwarded to me, as the free-will offerings of the Lord's stewards, in the manner illustrated by the preceding pages. "Behold! what God hath wrought!"

Of this sum £6,000 are set apart to build or acquire the new mission ship. The remainder to be used for the maintenance and equipment of additional missionaries. It has been the dream of my life to see one Missionary at least, with trained native teachers, planted on every island of the New Hebrides, and then I could lie down and whisper gladly, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace!"

Having thus accomplished my task, I set sail again for the New Hebrides. The whole inhabitants of Aniwa were there to welcome me, and my procession to the old mission house was more like the triumphal march of a conqueror than that of a humble Missionary. Everything had been kept in beautiful and perfect order. Every service of the church was fully sustained by the native teachers, the elders, and the occasional visit, once or twice, of an ordained Missionary from one of the other islands. Aniwa, like Aneityum, is a *Christian* land. Jesus has taken possession never again to quit those shores. GLORY, GLORY TO HIS BLESSED NAME!

And now came a fresh and perplexing experience. I had secured the needed sum for the new ship, but it was objected by the Mission Board in Australia that the cost

of running a steam auxiliary vessel would amount to fully £1,000 a year more than it had cost to maintain the sailing ship, and that such a large additional sum could not be raised among the friends and supporters of the Mission in Australia.

It happened that a shipping company had been newly formed, and in view of the deadlock over the sum required for the maintenance of the steam auxiliary vessel, a temporary compromise of subsidising the trading vessels of this new company to carry mission goods to the island stations was arranged. This postponement was to me a very keen disappointment, in view of the success of the strenuous campaign in Britain; but, like many a difficulty that had beset my path in the past, I was perforce obliged to submit in the meantime—though it had been my life purpose “never to own beat” in any course that to my conscience and heart seemed to be the leading of my Lord.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND A WORLD TOUR

IN this brief chapter let another speak for the Missionary in recording a fresh development that more than fulfilled his hopes for the permanent development of the Mission and ultimately gave him his ship.

One of the pioneer Missionaries says of the New Hebrides Mission that "one chapter after another of its history has developed as God in His providence has opened up the way. That He has originated movements and raised up agencies in such ways as clearly to demonstrate that the work has been His own." Let the reader, following this short chapter, see fresh proof of this leading of God.

When the Missionary was in Britain conducting his mission-ship campaign his youngest brother, Dr. James Paton, of Glasgow, after long persuasion, prevailed upon him to write his Autobiography, assuring him of his assistance in editing the volume, and arguing that its publication might be the means in God's providence of advancing the cause that the Missionary had so much at heart. His pleading prevailed. The book was published, and was received with acclamation by the Christian public. All unexpectedly, for the book was in no sense intended as an appeal, readers began to send their gifts for the development of the work; and prayer and gifts together made John G. Paton grow young again as his beloved islands became the centre of world missionary interest.

The book further led to the formation of "The John G. Paton Mission Fund"—a voluntary organisation spontaneously started which was to become one of the principal pillars upon which the future of the work was destined of God to rest.

At this juncture there arose in the New Hebrides fresh cause for anxiety. The Kanaka traffic—a systematic and organised method of securing ("decoying"

is the truer word) natives from the islands to work in the sugar plantations of Queensland, Fiji and New Caledonia—which had been under a ban because of the scandal of its evil deeds—was revived; and a further menace to the natives was being vigorously pushed by traders in the group—in the sale of strong drink and firearms.

Britain, to her everlasting credit, had stipulated that traders sailing under her flag should not be permitted to sell grog or firearms; but France was openly abetting the evil, and American traders were taking some part in the evil system. Sir Arthur Gordon, the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, advised that the only hope of stopping the evil would be to send deputies to try and arouse the Christian conscience of America on the subject. This advice was accepted, and instantly the choice of an advocate fell on John G. Paton, now a veteran of sixty-eight years. Thus he was once more called upon to undertake the task of a world voyage for the emancipation of his beloved islanders.

No sooner did the call come than the Missionary was away across the Pacific to San Francisco. In his previous visit to Britain he had difficulty at first in finding open doors for his message, but to his amazement the publication of his life story had so drawn attention to the mission that this time, in America, as well as in Britain, he found doors wide open, and invitations poured in from every quarter. Not only so, but influential citizens who had become interested through his book introduced him to the highest in the land; and President Harrison, and afterwards President Cleveland, invited him to the White House, and became deeply interested in his world effort to stop slave raiding and the grog and firearms traffic.

It was inevitable, of course, that in his addresses he should refer to his pioneer years among the cannibals. A question was put to him in a public meeting whether the natives were eager for Missionaries. In reply he related the following incident:—

“When I went to the cannibal island of Ambrim—in the north of the New Hebrides—three years ago, we saw natives on shore all lying under arms. We hesitated to land, and whenever we approached them they would rush to the shore and draw up their canoes. For hours they acted

in that way. At last two men came off in canoes, with shaking and trembling limbs, and one called :

“ ‘ You missionary ? ’

“ ‘ Yes ; I am a missionary . ’

“ ‘ You true missionary ? ’

“ ‘ Yes . ’

“ ‘ You no got revolver ? ’ I bared my body and showed I had none.

“ ‘ You no come steal boys or woman ? ’

“ ‘ No ; we come to tell you about God . ’

“ Then he cried, “ Me savvy you ! You true missionary ! You brought Missi Gordon who come here long, long ago ! ’

“ I said, ‘ Yes ’ ; and with one rush the two men came in their canoes, and leaped into our boat, and one called ashore, ‘ Missi ! Missi ! Missi ! ’ and something else that we did not understand.

“ Soon the cry was taken up along the shore of the island, you heard it echoed everywhere, ‘ Missionary, Missionary ! ’ The people then piled up their rifles and crowded together as we came near the shore. When we got there they rushed in, and took our boat up on to the beach.

“ As soon as I got out, I saw a painted, forbidding-looking savage making at me. I kept my eye on him, for I did not know what he was after. He seized me by the arm, and began in broken English :

“ ‘ Me die for missionary ! Me die for missionary ! Me no got a missionary ! Me no got a missionary ! Me die for missionary ! ’

“ I said, ‘ We cannot give you a missionary . ’

“ ‘ Do, do, do ! ’ he said, looking at the young men with us.

“ I said they were for another island. He replied, ‘ You stop ‘long o’ me. Me die, me die, me want missionary teach-a me . ’

“ When we went to the boat he said, ‘ When you come with missionary ? ’

“ I said, ‘ We cannot for a year ! ’

“ ‘ Oh,’ he said, ‘ me want missionary ; me die for missionary ; not say year ! ’

“ As we left the island, crowds caught at me to keep me back, and the last sight that I had was that of the

old chief sitting there on the beach, silent and despairing ; and his plea is still ringing in my heart. The anxiety of the heathen lies at the feet of Jesus, that is my one consoling thought, and He will answer their need."

The object of the American Deputation was not fully gained, owing to diplomatic difficulties with other countries—notably France—who refused to prohibit trade by their nationals in liquor and firearms. Nevertheless, the Christian conscience of America was aroused on the subject, and forces were there set in motion towards the repression of injustice to the islanders.

Still bent on saving the black man from the white man's greed, he voyaged from America to Britain—only to find that his path was to be no easy way. Advocates of the Kanaka traffic saw the danger of allowing this propaganda against their schemes to pass unnoticed, and they had preceded him and set to work to dog his footsteps. Wherever he took up the cudgels against the system his foes were present—distributing literature favourable to the traffic at his meetings and doing all possible to thwart his purpose. Such tactics—had they only known it—were the very means of strengthening the Missionary's resolution. Opposition was ever as fuel to the fire of his zeal. Natives of these same black races had persistently tried to take his life, and yet his soul blazed in wrath against wrongs done to them, and for his part there could be no cessation in this warfare against wrong. A leading journal in London referred to "the marvellous energy of the veteran Missionary as a signal proof of the mastering passion which inspired him."

By this time his Autobiography had—to his amazement—made him famous. Applications for meetings poured in from every quarter. Crowds flocked to hear him, and influential people competed for the privilege of offering him hospitality. No lionising, however, had the smallest effect upon his humility. "I'm only a poor Missionary," was the expression often upon his lips. There was no mistaking the sincerity of the sentiment, and poor and rich alike held him in deepest regard.

The writer was with him in many of his journeys, and well remembers how, when driven to or from meetings in the carriage of influential people, he never failed to lift his hat to the coachman with a smile and a "Thank you,

dear sir, for your kindness in driving me. Good-bye." Even the London cabman got this word of appreciation, in addition to his fare, and gaped in astonishment.

Once, after a big meeting in Manchester, a bevy of clergymen were talking to him, and he was overheard to say that he had been Ordained by a bishop. The remark attracted instant attention—for he was a Presbyterian! In response to the request for an explanation he replied, "Bishop Selwyn laid his hands on my head at my dear wife's grave in the midst of my loneliness on Tanna, and solemnly consecrated me to God. I therefore claim that I have been Ordained by a Bishop of your Church to the service of God. But," he added, "in the New Hebrides we do not know one another as Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, etc., but as brethren in one common cause under one Master."

In proposing a vote of thanks to the Missionary after his address to the students of his old university at Glasgow, Professor Story brought down the house by saying, "Had I been a cannibal, one look at Dr. Paton's benignant and noble face would have made me a vegetarian to the end of my days." It was to these very students that Dr. Paton gave the deeply interesting account of how he found out the equivalent for the word "faith" in the language of his island of Aniwa.

"For a long time," he said, "no equivalent could be found, and my work of Bible translation was paralysed for the want of so fundamental and oft-recurring a term. The natives apparently regarded the verb 'to hear' as equivalent to 'to believe.' I would ask a native whether he believed a certain statement, and his reply would be, should he credit the statement, 'Yes, I heard it,' but should he disbelieve it he would answer, 'No, I did not hear it,' meaning, not that his ears had failed to catch the words, but that he did not regard them as true. This definition of faith was obviously insufficient. I prayed continually that God would supply the missing link, and spared no effort in interrogating the most intelligent native pundits, but all in vain, none caught the hidden meaning of the word.

"One day I was in the Mission House anxiously pondering. I sat on an ordinary kitchen chair, my feet resting on the floor. Just then an intelligent native woman

entered the room, and the thought flashed through my mind to ask the all-absorbing question yet once again, if possible in a new light.

"Was I not resting on the chair? Would that attitude lend itself to the discovery?"

"I said, 'What am I doing now?'"

"'Koikae ana, Misi.' 'You're sitting down, Missi,' the native replied."

"Then I drew up my feet and placed them upon the bar of the chair just above the floor, and leaning back in an attitude of repose, asked, 'What am I doing now?'"

"'Fakarongrongo, Misi.' 'You are leaning *wholly*, Missi,' or 'You have lifted yourself from every other support.'"

"'That's it!' I shouted, with an exultant cry; and a sense of holy joy awed me, as I realised that my prayer had been so fully answered."

"To 'lean on' Jesus wholly and only is surely the true meaning of appropriating or saving faith. And now '*Fakarongrongo Iesu ea anea mouri*' ('Leaning on Jesus unto eternal life,' or 'for all the things of eternal life') is the happy experience of those Christian islanders, as it is of all who thus cast themselves unreservedly on the Saviour of the world for salvation."

Professor Gairdner stated that this illustration from the little island of Aniwa was particularly interesting, inasmuch as he had never heard anything that came nearer to the exact significance of the meaning underlying the Hebrew word for faith. It appeared to him very wonderful that so perfect an illustration should be discovered in the language of one of the smallest islands in the Pacific, amongst, perhaps, the smallest tribe of people in the world.

At this time the constant strain of travelling and speaking was beginning to tell upon his health. A doctor with whom he stayed discovered, after some skilful probing, that the Missionary was suffering from constant sleeplessness, and urged that, to avoid a breakdown, there must be a temporary cessation of work. But it was in vain. He was as the deaf adder. Ignoring all admonitions to slacken the pace, he resolutely refused to forgo any engagements. "Cancel nothing," he wrote to his brother. "I'll work on, trusting to Him who has promised 'as thy

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days so shall thy strength be,' and He has never failed me yet." And so the days and weeks sped on without a moment's cessation of activity, until the time came to turn his face again towards the Pacific. On the 10th of August, 1894, he left Tilbury and sped away, to begin afresh his absorbing life work for and among the natives of his beloved New Hebrides.

CHAPTER XXXIV

A NEW "DAYSRING" DEATH OF THE KANAKA TRAFFIC

IT is not to be wondered at that in the course of his meetings, and in the homes that he visited, the missionary could not refrain from referring to the postponed Mission Ship scheme—expressing the conviction that a ship was of vital importance to the work, and the hope that the means for its maintenance might yet be forthcoming. Attracted by his devotion, gifts and promises began to pour in from all quarters; so that, when he left for Australia, money sufficient for building a larger ship, and the promise of an additional sum per annum for her upkeep—backed by the efforts of the Home Committee—were in his cherished and delighted possession.

On reaching Melbourne his first act was to urge the Australian Committee—now that the financial difficulties had been removed—to agree to the building and commissioning of the new *Dayspring* Mission Ship. Before long agreement was reached, and a cable sent to proceed with the scheme. No time was lost in Britain. Experienced advice was available, and soon the vessel was on the stocks of a Clyde shipbuilding yard. On the 19th of August, 1895, the *Dayspring* was launched; and subsequently she visited Greenock, Ayr, Belfast, Douglas (Isle of Man) and Liverpool, where crowds flocked to see her. The voyage via the Cape of Good Hope was accomplished without mishap, and on the 21st of December, 1895 (sixteen months only after the Missionary left Britain with his promise of annual support) the *Dayspring* entered the mouth of the Yarra and was safely berthed at Melbourne, to his intense joy. His ceaseless prayers and labours had at length accomplished the difficult enterprise.

It is interesting to turn for a few moments to events that were happening in the islands during the Missionary's

absence on the other side of the world. In 1894 Mrs. Paton returned to the islands to see their Missionary son, the Rev. Fred J. Paton, stationed on the island of Malekula, in the northern part of the Group, and to visit and hearten the natives of their own island of Aniwa.

Her letters to the Missionary give a refreshing glimpse of the conditions and passing events in the islands at that time. When she reached Aniwa the natives recognised their Missionary's wife, and shouts of "Ta Missi-finé" passed from lip to lip. Native women flung their arms about her neck and wept for joy. But "Missitané" (Dr. Paton) had not come, and questions poured in as to the cause of his absence. The natives were working at the erection of a new church, and the evidences of their consistent Christian life were most encouraging. The visit was but brief, as the boat was bound for the northern islands, where the rest of the time was to be spent on the heathen island of Malekula. Here the conditions were by no means as hopeful as on Aniwa. The Mission had only comparatively recently been commenced on Malekula, and the natives were still cannibals.

Seeing the desperate condition of the natives, Mrs. Paton remarks: "One requires a specific reason—a Divine Command—to live in heathenism. Since I came there have been three murders, the last of which I cannot get over. The victim was a native woman who had long been ill. Her husband got tired of the bother of keeping her, so he buried her alive! Weak though she was, she fought hard to keep above ground, till the chief gave her a blow on the head to kill her before her face was smothered."

By way of comment on the hateful Kanaka traffic, one of the natives described to Mrs. Paton how, in his youth, he was stolen away from the islands. "White man tell me come look at big ship and he give me things. Then when I want jump back in my canoe, he push it away and hold me firm. Then he get up anchor and go away. Oh, I cry, cry, cry *plenty*, but he tell me to dry up or he would *shot* me. I cry, for I no want him to shot me, but my heart break for my mother all the time, and I no can help myself—he got me."

But the traffic was doomed—as all evil is. Not that the end came as a direct result of the Missionary's fervent

appeals and fearless denunciation. A political movement for a "white Australia" arose, and soon became the settled policy of the Australian people. Such a policy, of course, involved the cessation of all imported black labour and necessitated the removal of all the Islanders back to their homes. So ended the conflict which had been waged with such persistent energy to ensure justice to the black races. But, sad to say, some abuses still continue—in the deception practised on the natives to secure them for plantation work in French New Caledonia and in islands other than their own.

CHAPTER XXXV

REV. FRANK PATON—MISSIONARY TO TANNA

AND now let us follow the Missionary in a new venture, that absorbed the extraordinary energy of his advancing years. Dr. Paton never forgot Tanna. He had been driven away by the savage natives of that island after years of suffering, but concern for their salvation always lay heavy upon his heart, and he confided to friends in England that if he could not get a Missionary for the west coast of Tanna he intended to go himself among these cannibals, and, if possible, lay the foundation of God's work there. Tanna, the scene of his first baptism of fire, was still his first love, and that dogged spirit of his never yielded. Tanna must be conquered for God.

Early in 1896, shortly before his seventy-first birthday, the Missionary sailed again for his beloved New Hebrides. He went straight to Tanna and landed on the west coast. "I have been ashore," he wrote, "and talked with a big chief and some other natives, and they are going to consult with the surrounding chiefs and see if all are agreed to have a Missionary. Two of the tribes are at war, and only a few days before I landed they had killed and feasted on a man and two women."

From Tanna he returned to Aniwa, and his delight at being again with his own natives—now steadfast and devoted Christians—was refreshing to witness. Some had gone over to Tanna as evangelists, and some were boats' crews setting a good example by their simple Christian lives. One boat's crew refused to work on the Sabbath, and gave as their reason that God's Book forbids work on the Sabbath. "We fear God," they said, "and will not work for you on the Lord's Day." They were told that if they refused to work like others on board they would get no food. The answer came quickly, "We can live without food for a day, and we will not work."

A pathetic instance of the hold that the idea of Sabbath-keeping had upon the native mind came to light just here. In connection with his pioneer work on Tanna twenty years or so before, Dr. Paton had paid a visit to a fierce cannibal tribe in the interior. Subsequently another Missionary was working on the east coast of the island, and two old chiefs living in the interior heard of him and made their way through the bush—a toilsome and risky journey. Mr. Gray was surprised at the two strange old men. Their appearance was such as to excite curiosity and awaken keen interest. They were strangers from a dark cannibal tribe. The surprise, however, was not in this, but in the fact that each of them was wearing a very old, threadbare and dilapidated shirt! Heathen, as the Missionary knew to his sorrow, despise clothing of any sort, so that Mr. Gray's interest was thoroughly aroused by the appearance of the strange visitors. Asked their errand, they at once disclosed in eager tones that they had come to seek a Missionary, or at least a native teacher, to go with them into the interior and teach them and their people about "the Jehovah-Jesus God."

"But," said Mr. Gray, "how do you know about Jehovah?"

"Oh," they said, "don't you see we are Christians? Don't you see we have shirts on—that we wear the clothing of the Christians?"

"How did you get them, and when, and where?" came quickly from the now thoroughly aroused Missionary.

"Well," they said, "long, long ago the Missi that lived on this island came to our district and told us about the Jehovah-Jesus God; and when he left he gave us these shirts, and told us we should worship Jehovah and give up war; and he said we should not work on the Sabbath, but should wear our shirts. And ever since we have put on our shirts every Sabbath and had worship and told our young men not to work."

"But how do you worship?" inquired Mr. Gray.

"Oh, we put on our shirts and we sit round with the young men and say we won't work, and when they get tired, and we don't know what to do, we tell them to hold on, and we say how happy we shall be when someone comes to tell us about the Jehovah-Jesus God."

Thus, for twenty years, a faint glimmer of light had

been maintained in the hearts of those poor heathen who had so longed for the knowledge of the True and Living God.

The old chiefs' prayer was about to be answered. Circumstances of intense interest, showing in a wonderful way the Hand of God, had followed the building of the *Dayspring*. She sailed for the islands, and her arrival was the signal for wild delight on the part of the natives. Everywhere they crowded to see her. They felt that they had a real interest in the vessel. She was their very own.

But it was not only the ship that aroused enthusiasm. Her passengers were none other than Dr. Paton, accompanied by his son, the Rev. Frank Paton, M.A., who had volunteered as Missionary for the west coast of Tanna, to be supported by the British organisation—the John G. Paton Mission Fund—now so strongly established as to be able to undertake responsibility for the development of the mission to islands and tribes not yet reached.

In May the *Dayspring* arrived off Tanna, and after a hurried visit to Port Resolution, the scene of so many tragic events, she sailed for the west coast. At five o'clock in the evening, what was known as the Fijian anchorage was reached. After some careful boating a little sandy bay was found which could be reached through a narrow opening in the reef. Soon John G. Paton found his feet again treading the soil of Tanna. The party greeted the trader who lived near the boat-landing, and then turned to find the natives. They had not far to search, for there, a short distance away, fastening their eyes upon them, stood a small company of fiercely painted savages, armed to the teeth.

Carefully, a conference was suggested and agreed to. The next morning savages squatted on the sand with their guns about them, and the momentous talk began. Would they receive a Missionary or not? Hearts were lifted to God in that moment of anxiety, pleading that He would soften the hearts of those who, humanly speaking, were to decide whether Christ's Gospel should come to save them, or whether they should be left in their savagery and misery.

Hope and fear alternated as the talk proceeded. The chief of the savages maintained a dignified and independent attitude, and resented any attempt at undue pressure, but ultimately, to the intense delight of Dr. Paton, the savages

agreed to receive the son of the white-haired Missionary to live amongst them and tell them of his father's God.

Writing on the 18th of June following, the Missionary says: "To me the work of the two and a half days spent this week on Tanna has been of the most intense and absorbing interest. After the savages had agreed to permit Frank and his wife to land, we unshipped the wood and began clearing the ground for the house. The Tannese were more gracious than I expected, and the trader and his wife living there, Mr. and Mrs. Worthington, were very kind.

"The natives are the same nude, painted savages that I have all along known on Tanna; women wear grass skirts, or aprons, and many girls of seven or eight years of age nothing. Sad indeed is it to see a noble race so extremely degraded. The trader told us that a few days before we landed, in a quarrel about a woman, two women were shot and two children murdered, and it is not long since they killed three persons and feasted on their bodies, near his house. But I do hope the Lord's day to favour poor Tanna is near now.

"Frank and his party live in tents till they can erect a house. Mr. Mackenzie, the carpenter from the *Dayspring*, has been engaged for about two months to help them. He is a good Christian, deeply interested in our work, and will be a great help for the first two months to the young people.

"The humane Commander of Her Majesty's Ship *Royalist* was passing Tanna, and seeing the *Dayspring* at anchor landing the material for the house, he came to anchor just as the *Dayspring* was leaving. The natives had been threatening the life of the trader, and boasted that no man-of-war could call on this side of Tanna. This providential call will do good. The Commander is going to call again on his return voyage in about a month, and may let the natives see some demonstration, and warn them against taking lives. We feel grateful for his kind call in the circumstances.

"I praise the Lord for having another son and his highly accomplished young wife so hopefully settled in our mission. May they and all our young Missionaries have great success, and many converts for their hire in the service of our dear Lord Jesus."

CHAPTER XXXVI

WRECK OF THE "DAYSRING"

BUT once again troubles and anxieties were to follow close upon the heels of joy. The fourth voyage of the *Dayspring* was made in the teeth of a strong northerly wind. Subsequently a north-east wind blew so severely that no headway could be made, and the vessel was off the coast of New Caledonia, just at the entrance to the Grande Passe, a channel between twenty and thirty miles wide. Suddenly a terrific shock was experienced, though no reef was charted at the point. The *Dayspring* had evidently struck a reef, or a sunken coral patch! All hands instantly turned out in the effort to save the vessel. From 2.30 to 7 o'clock in the morning she was grinding on the jagged coral. At last the force of the waves drove her off the reef, and the water poured into the great holes aft that had been knocked in the bottom of the vessel. The sea was soon awash over the main deck, and the boats had to be manned. They had scarcely cleared away, when they saw the little vessel founder and disappear for ever, carrying all the cargo, besides food for all the stations, furniture, and other possessions, and medicines.

A total, irreparable wreck; all engulfed, but the lives of the crew. The captain had charge of one boat and the first mate of the other. After an adventurous journey and many privations both boats safely reached Australia. Not a man was lost. But, alas, for the hopes, the gifts, and the sacrifices! Alas, for the years of toil and labour that had produced the vessel so dear to the New Hebrides! That little boat took more than its cargo into the mysterious depths of the ocean. Never perhaps will it all be fully understood here, but the sad event no doubt serves as a further test of faith and trust in the All Wise God Who gave and took away.

The occurrence, so unexpected, so sudden, so lamentable,

spread a deep gloom over the Mission, and wrung the hearts of lovers and helpers of the work. To the aged Missionary the event was wrapped in deep mystery. It was a terrible shock, and his letters revealed something of his heart's grief.

But the indomitable spirit still remained, and it was not long before he began scheming afresh for the building of yet another ship. At this time, however, Australian interests in the islands were concerned with the commercial success of a service of trading steamers, and though many were in favour of Dr. Paton's scheme for another *Dayspring*, the majority felt that it would be the better policy to pay an annual subsidy to the shipping company for services to the Mission. The *Dayspring* project, therefore, remained in abeyance; and finally—though much that happened subsequently showed that the aged Missionary's views were correct—the Mission ship project had to be abandoned.

By 1899 he had revised and seen through the press the whole New Testament in the language of Aniwa. Three hundred and twenty closely printed pages of a strange language acquired by him without assistance from any literature; for before his arrival on Aniwa the language of the people was unknown and had never been reduced to a written form.

In the rush of his ceaseless wanderings this great task had been accomplished. In trains—steady paper on the back of his hand, at junctions waiting for connections, in station waiting-rooms; late into the night and long before dawn, in houses where he was guest—often after two or three meetings—he never lost an instant. The manuscript went by post from all sorts of outlying villages, and the proofs came back and were read and checked in the same tireless journeyings. Such had been his lifelong habit. This is how the Aniwan New Testament was produced.

And then he sailed in triumph to Aniwa, carrying with him those humble boxes—packed with jewels rarer than the diamonds of kings—containing The Word that will Never Die.

In March this letter came from him from Aniwa :

“ My intense desire to visit my dear converts once more, and give to each able to read (and all above infancy can

read) the New Testament, had been granted, and I am again on Aniwa.

"We reached the west coast of Tanna in the afternoon of Saturday. We had very little time ashore owing to a sudden hurricane; but at our first service two hundred and twenty decently dressed natives were present, whom I addressed, interpreted by an eloquent Tanna Christian chief. Each audience was very attentive. The people have the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Mark translated and printed, and after worship groups of them were reading and teaching one another to read.

"What a contrast to the nude, painted savages carrying loaded rifles whom we met when, two and a half years ago, we left my son Frank and his wife among them. This time we did not see a naked man or woman, nor one carrying a rifle, except one powerfully built tall old chief.

"It seems as if God's time has come to give the light and joys of the Gospel to Tanna, after a resistance of fifty years, which proves that the Gospel is the Power of God unto salvation to all who believe, of every colour and country.

"When we reached Aniwa a great sea was breaking high in roaring foam all over that side of the island. There is no landing-place elsewhere, and I was informed that it was impossible for a boat to go on shore. In vain I pleaded that I would risk it and guide the boat in. The opinion was that it could not be done, and I had to submit. The captain said it is the worst and most dangerous landing in the group. Judge of our disappointment when the ship had to turn back.

"I had my choice to go round the Group in the steamer, and to be landed on her return, or to be put ashore on the east coast of Tanna. The latter alternative I accepted in the hope of somehow getting over from there to Aniwa. The steamer landed us at Port Resolution, and the next morning there was a fair wind and we sailed across to Aniwa.

"What a welcome we got! On the Sabbath we had a service of thanksgiving preceding the great event of the distribution of the complete New Testament. No one can realise my overflowing joy as I presented to each a copy of that Book, the Divine teachings of which had raised them

from their former savagery. They were intensely delighted with their prize. For this they had prayed and wrought for many years to pay for the printing and binding, and I had been privileged to translate and to see the great work completed, and now I am here gladly reading and trying to help them to understand the Epistles and portions that are new to them. We study together three or four chapters (in Romans) each week. I have long had an intense desire to be spared to give this Blessed Book to my people, and now I hope by the Holy Spirit's sanctifying power it will increase their love and devotion to Jesus and His work.

"My daughter Minnie, who is with me, has a school every morning with thirty-four little children, and in the evening another class of about seventy, teaching them to sing hymns. I have a class of big boys and girls to teach writing, and reading the Scriptures, etc., and I am occupied with the translation of new hymns."

Mr. Frank Paton went over from West Tanna to visit his father on Aniwa.

"One of the most hopeful features of the work in Aniwa," Mr. Frank Paton said, "is the number of bright, intelligent children. And they are so eager to learn. To see the delight of the Aniwas at getting the whole New Testament in their own tongue, and my father's overflowing joy as he went from village to village, followed always by a crowd of happy children, and to watch the growing spirit of earnestness among the people, was surely a reward worth all the toil of the long years past."

On the Communion Sunday on Aniwa, Lomai, a Christian chief of Tanna, gave an address of which the following is a condensed account:

"Our joy is great to-day, as we meet in God's House and around the Holy Feast of Jesus.

"Long ago Dr. Paton, the aged, was a young man and lived in Scotland. The light came into his heart, and he said within himself, 'I must not hide this light, I must let it shine!' And so he left his own land and brought the light of Jesus to Aniwa. Aniwa was then a dark land, but now it is full of light. Men and women of Aniwa, don't hide your light, let it shine. There is a dark land across the sea there (Tanna); take the light of Jesus there, and let it shine till that land is full of light like your

own. This is what Jesus told us to do, let our light shine."

And Aniwa was surely bearing its share in the conquest of Tanna by sending its best and bravest teachers to help, by life and word, at lonely and dangerous out-stations, to lead the savages to God. In the year 1899 no less than five teachers and their wives volunteered for Tanna.

CHAPTER XXXVII

ROUND THE WORLD AGAIN—AT 76

BEFORE the close of the year 1899 the Missionary was called upon to undertake another world tour. He was then seventy-six years old, but prompt obedience to any clear leading of God was the fundamental basis of his life. In these journeyings through the United States and Canada his pleas for the prohibition of the sale of firearms and strong drink to the natives of the New Hebrides were listened to with deep sympathy, and there came many gifts for the extension of the work. In spite of the long railway journeys and the crowded engagements, he was usually up at five in the morning attending to his correspondence. Often and often his hosts appealed to him to spare himself, but all in vain. "I will just work till I drop," was his determined reply.

It was during this tour that an attempt was made by the savages of Tanna to kill his son Frank. Happily the bullet missed its mark. Then there came news of the death on Aniwa of his little grandson, child of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Paton. These anxieties, added to the rush of work, at length began to tell. The ominous news came that a breakdown seemed inevitable.

Iron will and resolution notwithstanding, the body that had been so long driven to its last ounce of strength, and whose warnings of pain, weakness, and weariness had been so persistently set aside and denied, at last broke down. He still dragged himself on to platforms and into trains, and sat in pain and agony; but the trouble could no longer be hidden or ignored. Medical aid had to be called, and an imperative demand followed to cancel everything or fatal results would immediately follow. There must be rest. Scores of affectionate and loving welcomes, and offers of tender nursing came to him from Canadian friends. But no, he had resolved that if he had to rest he would

rest on board ship, where he *could not* work. He would go to the coast and book straight to his own beloved Scotland. He had to be almost carried into the train, and the long agony of that last journey was all but the end. However, he did get on board ship and lay down to rest—after sending a hasty note to Glasgow that he was coming “home” invalided. The letter announcing this breakdown arrived only two days before the vessel was due at Greenock, and the anxiety of those two days can better be imagined than described. Would he survive or should we hear that, like Judson his great forerunner, the sea had covered him and he had gone to God?

At Greenock, long before the hour of arrival, his youngest brother was pacing up and down the quay, peering into the distance, waiting and anxious. At last the vessel came slowly into sight.

A slower step and a form bowed with age and fatigue told the inevitable tale that life must ultimately yield. The terrible sufferings in Canada had left their mark. But in a few days threats, persuasion, orders, were all ignored. “I will be no loafer. If I cannot work, I will go off to the Islands where I can live and die among my Oiwanis!” was the determined resolve.

And so commenced the last tour in the homeland. The interest was as intense as during the previous visit, but those who knew him best could not fail to mark the Missionary’s declining strength, though the iron will still drove the frail body with relentless pressure.

The political horizon was then becoming overcast with clouds, and questions affecting the future of the Islands were adding their weight to his daily burden. The French were undoubtedly actively engaged in securing, by every means, the lands of the natives of the New Hebrides.

French settlers were being granted free passages to the Islands in steamers highly subsidised by the French Government—and the French centres of activity were the two largest harbours in the group, each sufficient for the whole navy of France.

The galling point in all this was the fact that France had done practically nothing towards the pacification of the erstwhile cannibal islanders. That change had been brought about through the efforts of British men and women, who had carried the Gospel and their lives in

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their hands, for a period of over sixty years, and at an enormous expenditure of money.

A further burden was the anxious news from Tanna of the severe illness of Mr. Frank Paton. Private information had come which led to the fear that the work in the tropics of the Missionary's third son was over. The constant fever appeared to have affected the vital organs, and a specialist in Melbourne, after an examination of the most searching character, had expressed the view that to go back permanently to the humid climate of Tanna would be slowly to sink and die!

Such were the burdens that weighed on the mind of the aged Apostle as he held on to his "one thing I do."

At length the time came to say farewell. Meetings were arranged in London to give an opportunity to friends of the Mission to take personal leave of the Missionary. His farewell message was full of melting tenderness. He brooded with intense feeling over the crowning joy of his life, almost within sight, in the planting of a Missionary on every island of the New Hebrides. Britain and America had united in holy bonds to help him accomplish this prayer of his heart.

As always, he gave the place of honour to the Churches of Canada and Scotland, the originators of the Mission. Nor did he omit to extol the splendid tenacity and courage of the Churches of Australia, upon whom the main responsibility for the Mission had so long rested. Yet the peculiar circumstances and difficulties of the Mission—among isolated islands, and polyglot, savage, fever-stricken natives—seemed to render necessary some special assistance; and God had marvellously created the British Fund, instituted without the Missionary's knowledge, and called by the originators after his name.

To this Fund, to its Honorary Committee, and to the friends who had gathered around it, he confidently left the future maintenance of their part of the Mission.

And so his face was turned for the last time to the Pacific.

On the 31st July he reached Melbourne.

In April, 1902, came the glad news that America had decided to prohibit traders flying the Stars and Stripes from selling strong drink and firearms in the New Hebrides. The main object of his two visits to the States was thus secured, and his heart rose to God in adoring praise.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

BACK TO THE ISLANDS AGAIN, AND YET AGAIN

IN the same month the Missionary sailed for his loved Islands. His joy knew no bounds, and he seemed young again at the thought of going among his spiritual children.

Of his landing at Aniwa he wrote :

“ No person could conceive what were my mingled feelings of joy and anxiety as we approached the shore. All the natives, young and old, were at the boat-landing, and when, from the rocks, they saw Mrs. Paton and me in the boat, three ringing cheers of great joy arose, and they ran to greet us, many of them in tears.

“ Our great thanksgiving service in the church was an inspiration. To hear once again, in the soft musical tongue of that little island, the hymns of God, and sentences of heart gladness for our return, to listen to their pleading for the Divine blessing, and for more spiritual power and consecration and fruit to His glory, was like the benediction of Heaven.

“ In our absence the native teachers have worked faithfully. Every child above infancy can read the New Testament fluently. We gave out the new hymn-book (of 153 hymns) and the new Catechism, which I had had translated and got printed and bound in Melbourne. Their contribution of arrowroot in payment amounted to £54 sterling.”

In January, 1903, another letter came from Aniwa to the friends in Great Britain :

“ As I write tears will suffuse my eyes at the thought of all the help and labour of love that you and others give so ungrudgingly to our beloved Mission. The Lord reward and bless you all.

“ . . . There is much to encourage us on these islands. Schools and teachers well organised, and the foundation

laid for a blessed work in the conversion of the remaining heathen.

"The converts have built Christian villages in which they live. All are clothed. To these villages they welcome all new converts, teach them, and help to protect them; and if they resolve to remain, all unite and assist in building a new house for them, observing straight street lines. Such cottages are a great contrast to the heathen hovels. They are homes of happiness. No day begins or ends without praise and prayer—a daily object-lesson to the heathen of the joy and peace that come through Christ.

"Since we have been back again on Aniwa. Mrs. Paton has had serious turns of weakness, and for her sake we go up to Australia some time this month. Were it not for her, I would risk all with Jesus and remain on Aniwa. I have had a severe turn of lumbago, but am better of that now. Of course I am not fit for continued exertion as I used to be. I get more and more feeble on my legs, and sometimes my memory fails me, but I hope yet to be spared for the blessed work, if the Lord will. . . ."

Later in 1903 the Missionary again bade farewell to Aniwa. The farewell always wrung his heart. The whole population gathered to weep and to wave their last good-byes. In those simple islanders' hearts the aged Missionary was enthroned as the embodiment of all that is good. To him they looked up as their Father in God. And to Mrs. Paton equally, the women clung, as the one white woman who had dared to live amid the savagery of their heathen days, and who had won their hearts and purified their lives.

Though she kept the thought as a secret of her heart, there is little doubt that Mrs. Paton knew that day, that this farewell would be the last, and that she would never again look on the little island that for so many years had been the home of her children and her first love.

On the 24th of May, 1904, the Missionary was eighty years of age. It was practically the eve of a fresh departure for the Group, and there was something intensely touching and pathetic in the sight of the brave old man, with his heart set upon his converts, again facing the discomforts of a voyage and a period of residence on Aniwa. There was not only the voyage, but the landing, with its con-

comitant of open boats, engineered through narrow passages in the reefs, often involving a plunge through boiling surf, and a somewhat unceremonious dumping on the shore of the harbourless islands, such as Aniwa.

Further, there was, on Aniwa, little really to attract, except the natives, who were his children in God, and, therefore, his chief joy. The Rev. Fred Paton, the Missionary of Malekula, who was on Aniwa in January, 1904, gives the following picture of the conditions :

“ I am writing,” he says, “ from the old spot where I was born. Someone, speaking of mosquitoes on his own island, said they were bad, but added, ‘ Thank God, not as bad as on Aniwa ! ’ This is the worst spot for mosquitoes, both day and night, that I ever knew. The dear old thatch of the home of our childhood affords a nice damp breeding-place, and the cedar and other trees have so overgrown the place that the very natives cannot sleep at night for mosquitoes. I am writing under a curtain, and two little black children have obligingly crawled under it, and are killing off as many mosquitoes as they can catch.

“ An Aniwan humorously described the mosquitoes of Aniwa. Calling to another black man, he said, ‘ Hey, mate, suppose you and me *kaikai* (eat), you and me full up, we feel good. But that fellow mosquito he *kaikai* all the time,’ and he pointed to two huge mosquitoes that had fastened on to him vigorously sucking his blood.

“ Owing to successive droughts the yams have been destroyed. Only an occasional bread-fruit is ripe, and the Aniwans are eating roots, nuts, and anything that will barely sustain life. A Malekulan native told me that they were eating what he should give to the pigs.

“ The rain pours into the old house through the thatch, and the place is dark, damp and dismal. I quite understand my mother being ill here, and I am surprised that the damp old place did not kill her.”

So uninviting a picture shows that the aged Missionary evidently did not go to Aniwa on account of its comforts, but solely because his spiritual children were there, and his love for them was such that he regarded discomforts, to others intolerable, simply as not worth a moment's consideration or a word of comment.

Turn to the other side—the people of Aniwa.

“Though they are in rags,” Mr. Fred Paton said, “the rags are clean, and on Sabbaths they are cleanly and well dressed. Their Sabbath clothes are kept in their houses with great care.

“In school all but the youngest can read. One Sabbath a little girl stuck at the name of Melchizedek, but they read two chapters in Hebrews without a mistake.

“One-tenth of the people are absent on ‘Foreign Service,’ acting as teachers, etc. Practically Aniwa has sent out a tenth of its population as Foreign Missionaries.

“The people see very little of outsiders, as the island has no proper landing-place, but though naturally stolid, they are cheerful. They are warm-hearted, and they were sorely grieved that they had no native food to offer me when I landed. In the English class they were far smarter than the Malekulans. The Aniwans pay for their own teachers, as well as their Bibles and other school-books. Considering all this, and especially the mosquitoes, they can stand scrutiny as a Christian island. On the whole, I am rather proud of being born an Aniwani.”

It was to this little island, with all its discomforts and drawbacks, but with its God-loving people, that the aged Missionary's heart ever turned with deepest longing, and his days there were to his spirit as days of Heaven on earth.

He spent just over two months in the Group, some days of which were passed at the Mission Station of his son on Malekula, where he baptized thirteen new church members.

The Aniwans were delighted beyond measure in the return of their “own Missi,” and loaded him with every kindness of which their hearts and means were capable. All too soon, however, the call of duty and family necessitated his departure, and once more he had to say farewell.

His last letter from Aniwan is dated June, 1904. He had just concluded a visit to some of the other Mission Stations, notably West Tanna. The hospital there and other evidences of the steady inroad that was being made on the inveterate heathenism of Tanna greatly encouraged him.

"It was," he said, "a feast of real joy to see that my long-cherished prayer may yet be fulfilled—'the New Hebrides with its every island, tribe, and native for Jesus and His Glory.' We now occupy twenty-five of its thirty islands, and have 17,000 natives avowedly serving Jesus as their God and Saviour; of these 330 are consecrated to the work as teachers and evangelists.

"I was at Nguna on a Sabbath morning, and had the privilege of addressing an audience of 600 Christian natives in a church built by the Rev. Peter Milne, their veteran Missionary. What a marvellous work God has enabled him to do on and around Nguna!"

Mr. Fred Paton went with his father to Aniwa. He wrote that the medical missionaries warned his father that he ought not to risk a visit to Aniwa:

"My father was assured that with rest and care he might prolong his life a year or two more. He exclaimed, in surprise, what would he do with the extra years' rest after a strenuous life till past eighty? As a matter of fact, he has had very little sleep at night since landing on Aniwa, and has never taken rest during the day, and yet, wonderful to relate, he is far stronger than when he landed. When tired with letter-writing, or consulting with natives, he takes what he calls a little rest. This means chopping trees, building up stone walls that the pigs break down, etc. As a matter of fact, pigs are the only things on Aniwa that have no respect for Dr. Paton, and in return he has no love for the pigs.

"The Communion on Aniwa was beautiful. Clean, neat natives, and every adult on the island but two church members. Of these two exclusives, one is eighty years old and cannot attend school, but has daily worship night and morning in his own house, and the other is a kindly old Christian, who only hesitates to join because of his age, and because he is shy of public appearance at his baptism. At the same time he proves his Christianity in the fact that for twenty years he has cared for the orphans of his village.

"The natives simply fly to help my father up and down steps and over rough roads, and in nearly every way show their love for him.

"Every night except Saturdays we have singing of Sankey's hymns.

"It is surprising how eagerly they come for singing. We announced that there would be no singing last night, but they turned up from the farthest villages, and when asked if they had heard the announcement of no singing, said, 'Oh, yes, but we are just walking about.' Of course we had singing.

"My father has had a happy time on Aniwa and renewed his youth. I caught him lifting forty-pound weight boxes. Then he was seen eyeing the roof with a few bits of old tin. He thinks that the old house would do even yet with a new roof and new flooring, and perhaps a new wall or two. I love the old home where I was born, but it has stood forty years nearly of hurricane, every room leaks, the foundations are going, and the house will soon have to follow."

Like himself, the natives were fully conscious that at the Missionary's advanced age every visit might in all probability turn out to be the last. This time they gazed upon him with deep reverence and devotion as they bade him farewell, weeping most of all that they might see his face no more.

The return to Australia meant a return to the rush and turmoil of tours here and there, taking meetings with a view to infusing Missionary interest in the hearts of those who, absorbed in the ever-present needs of their churches, were apt to forget the islands where the heathen, sunk in darkness, were living out their poor existence without the knowledge of God.

His most absorbing passion was to fan the little sparks into a flame of passion for the ingathering of souls. For this he left the quiet of the islands, and the delightful work of teaching and developing the spiritual life of the natives, and again returned to the towns and cities of civilisation.

It was evident, however, by the halting step and constant signs of weariness and pain, that his tours in the interest of the beloved New Hebrides were drawing towards a close. Again and again the Committee urged him to take rest, but to him inactivity was almost worse than death. His constant practice of ceaseless work had become a habit which held him as with a vice, and nothing, and no one, could induce him to rest. Even when he had intervals between various tours, he spent every moment

from the earliest dawn till quite late into the night poring over his letters and translations.

The medical advisers, however, were dead against his going back again alone to Aniwa. Every one urged that it would be impossible to allow him to stay by himself on that little island—with an ocean journey between him and the nearest medical aid. And so he toiled on, in spite of the pain and weariness. All who knew him and met him wondered at the indomitable courage that enabled him thus, at the end of his long and magnificent life, to conquer his bodily infirmities and press on almost with the toilful eagerness of a young, strong man.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE PASSING OF MRS. PATON

MRS. PATON'S health was gradually failing, but none dreamed that the calm, strong face was veiling a growing intensity of pain. The end came with startling suddenness, and on May 16th, 1905, the brave and gifted partner of the Missionary's life departed to be with Christ. The long agony of pain had been so bravely borne that even her children saw only a mother's smiling face. But there had been partial glimpses of the approaching end, for sometimes, when she thought them asleep, they had heard strong crying and tears as she pleaded with her Saviour to take away the agony which was greater than she could bear. Yet, in the morning, the face was brave and calm again, and because they could not speak of that which they had overheard, the memory of it burned the deeper into their souls, and their reverence for their mother became a part of their very being.

Life was infinitely lonelier now for the aged Missionary. Close on the heels of the death of Mrs. Paton came the news from the New Hebrides of the sudden death of the wife of his second son, the Rev. Fred J. Paton, Missionary of Pangkumu, Malekula Island.

About this time an accident nearly cost the Missionary his life. He was being driven from Cope Cope to Donald behind a powerful, timid young horse. The way lay along the side of the railway. The minister who was driving him had just turned to cross the line, when the shriek of an engine's whistle warned him that a train was rushing down upon them. Knowing his horse's fear of trains, Mr. Shallberg sprang out of the buggy and ran to its head, seizing the reins with both hands and endeavouring to control the plunging of the terrified animal. But with a wild bound the horse literally lifted his master off his feet, upsetting the buggy, and throwing Dr. Paton heavily on to

his head. The Missionary lay there motionless. The driver of the train, seeing the accident, stopped, and with the guard ran to the place, feeling sure that the Missionary was dead.

Mr. Shallberg, who had escaped as by a miracle, also came to the scene, and he and the train officials lifted the still body into the train. As they did so the Missionary revived. The train proceeded to Donald, and medical assistance was immediately obtained. Wonderful to relate, it was found that no bones were broken. There were cuts and bruises, but no more; and the Missionary believed that God was still sparing his life to work a little longer for his beloved islanders.

No one dreamt that there would be a meeting that night, but he refused to cancel it. When his friend pleaded with him not to think of such a thing, the characteristic reply was, "What have I been spared for if it is not to use every remaining opportunity to plead for the perishing heathen?"—and so he had his way. To the amazement of the congregation, they beheld, being helped up into the pulpit, a white-haired man with his head swathed in bandages. Reaching there, he held on for support, and poured out his heart in earnest and thrilling appeal for the Islanders of the Seas for whom he lived, and in whose cause his spared life was yet further consecrated to God. The collection showed how deeply the listeners were touched.

The following day, in spite of the orders and warnings of the medical men, the Missionary drove on to Watchem, the next place to which he was planned, and preached there three times on the Sunday.

Every loving care and tenderness was lavished upon him by his friends, but from the effects of this last accident he never fully recovered. Still, holding on bravely—always praying that he might be permitted of God to work till the last—he buoyed others up with hopefulness, as, for instance, in his letter to the friends in Britain at this time, in which he said: "I feel greatly recovered, as if God were going to spare me a little longer for His work. No doubt we are all immortal till the Lord's work allotted to each of us is done. What a blessing that our lives are in the Loving Hands of God."

A later letter reveals the same iron tenacity of purpose:

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" I can assure you that, even at my weakest, I find happiness in working, in the hope of bringing some to accept Jesus and His Salvation. Happy, indeed, could I never be resting anywhere. I have always prayed that I might not be a retired Missionary, but might be permitted of God to work till the very end."

There was still in his heart the old longing to return to the islands; and ceaselessly he pleaded with the Committee in Melbourne to allow him to sail for Aniwa once more.

Early in 1906 his letters refer to his health :

" Though I yet suffer a good deal of pain from the accident, I am slowly recovering. I had hoped to be by this time back again on the islands helping my dear people, but I am detained here against my will for the present in the work of deepening interest in Foreign Missions, but it is weary work indeed compared with the delight of being in the islands."

A little later in 1906, with even greater fervency, he pleaded to be allowed to return to the New Hebrides; but the medical advisers definitely and unanimously decided against it, and, in spite of all his pleading, his wish was not granted.

He wrote home on the subject :

" The Committee and medical men here have again refused to allow me to return to the islands. I am exceedingly grieved at this, but I fear I must submit. They say I am too old and frail to be allowed to go alone, and yet the evidence of my strength is that I can still address a meeting daily, and three on every Sabbath, but I shall still keep agitating until they let me go!

" It grieves me not to go now, however, as I know how sadly it will disappoint my dear Aniwan's who expect to see me by the June vessel."

On the 30th of November he was at Drouin, the first parish of his eldest son. Mr. Macdonald writes of that visit :

" I had to help him with some effort up the pulpit steps, for his weakness was very noticeable. As he prayed his voice was very weak and very low. His address, however,

was that of one in full mental vigour, and profoundly conscious of his special Mission. As he went on and sank himself in his theme, mind seemed to master matter—though he was in bad pain at the time—his voice grew in power, in volume and distinctness, and it seemed as if the years had dropped off him. It was a magnificent witness to the way in which love to Christ and His children can triumph over weakness and pain. He was driven to Warragul during the afternoon, and we felt that we had seen him for the last time."

At Warragul Dr. Paton became very ill. A doctor was called in, and ordered immediate and absolute rest. But after a day's rest, that indomitable will once more conquered bodily weakness, and in defiance of the doctor's orders, he set out, in pouring rain, for the next parish of Neerim, of which his second son, Fred, had been Home Missionary in his student days.

The journey to Neerim brought on the pain worse than ever, and he was so ill when he arrived that the student in charge tried to dissuade him from attempting to preach. But he felt he had a message to deliver, and refused to give in. A great congregation assembled, and they were deeply touched to see the aged Missionary in such pain and weakness, and yet so determined not to be conquered by it. He was helped with difficulty into the pulpit, and again as he warmed to his subject he seemed to shed his weakness, and something of his old vigour returned.

In the afternoon he was driven six miles to Neerim South. By the time he arrived there he was in such a distressed condition that they urged him not to preach. But the vision of "the perishing heathen" would not let him rest, and so, for the last time, the brave veteran was almost lifted into the pulpit. From sheer weakness and pain he supported himself at first, but once more as he began to plead for the heathen, the consuming passion of his life completely mastered his bodily weakness, and for over three-quarters of an hour he held the people spell-bound by his graphic descriptions and searching appeal. It was his last message, delivered in the church where two of his sons had ministered in former days; and the whole circumstances made a profound and indelible impression upon the congregation.

CHAPTER XL

THE HOME CALL

THE day after the Missionary returned from Neerim he had recovered somewhat, and took an unusually active part in the discussions of a Missionary Committee. His son left him on the Wednesday evening without any apprehension of immediate danger. By the same day's mail Dr. Paton posted what proved to be the last letter he ever wrote, to his beloved friend A. K. Langridge. It is here given as showing his indomitable spirit to the end :

" I had a long letter written to you, but I cannot find it. I write this to say I feel considerably better. After three weeks' incessant work, and often travelling from 15 to 20 miles by buggies and not getting to bed till between 1 and 2 a.m., and up and away again next morning for other meetings, I broke down, as when last in Canada. For one day only I felt so pained and weak that I could not rise, but had to send for a doctor. After careful examination, he told me he could do nothing for me but advise and order me to give up work, and rest. This I was forced to do for one day, but the next day I had a long drive to the train, then a run of some three or four hours by train, followed by a seven miles' drive. Next day I experienced very much pain internally, but I addressed two large congregations, one a great crowded one. I have been since keeping better, but not strong or free from pain by night or day.

" In great haste,

" Your loving,

JOHN G. PATON."

At the foot of the letter was the significant P.S. :

" The post is about to close."

Three days later the Missionary became so ill that the doctor was called in, and ordered him at once to bed. This time he was too weak to disobey. The pain was overmastering.

On the 27th of December, there came a terrible cable from Scotland, announcing the sudden death of the Missionary's youngest brother and lifelong helper—the Rev. Dr. James Paton, of Glasgow. Few brothers loved one another so intensely, and with such absolute devotion to each other's interests; and to few brothers has it been given to bear so noble and self-sacrificing a part in the extension of the Kingdom of their Beloved Lord.

Very gradually and gently his son Frank broke to his father the dread news. The first shock of the message absolutely stunned him. He could not believe that God had really called away his younger brother in the very zenith of his power and usefulness. Apart altogether from the other great tasks which he had so splendidly organised, he felt that the New Hebrides Mission could not spare such an able and self-sacrificing worker. Then came other thoughts which brought rest to his troubled heart: "Dear Langridge is still alive, and the Lord will raise up other workers," and so he cast it all upon Christ, and a great peace filled his soul. He felt that soon he, too, would join his brother in the presence of his Lord. His one great sorrow now was for the lonely, broken-hearted widow of his brother James, with her hallowed memories of thirty-six years of married life.

From this time, all the roots which bound his great heart to earth were visibly loosened. The love first of his Lord, then of his sainted wife, and now of his departed brother, drew him irresistibly upward. It was only when he thought of his Aniwhans that he longed for strength to be up and doing once more.

As the specialist examined him, the Missionary asked a question that, better than anything, showed the bent of his mind:

"Do you think I will be well enough to go to the New Hebrides in January, Doctor?"

Dr. Maudsley looked up with a startled smile, and said: "I think we had better get you up first, before we talk about the New Hebrides."

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A few days later his medical son, Dr. J. Scott Paton, arrived from New South Wales.

At the end of ten days Dr. Paton's medical son was reluctantly compelled to return. He was sorely missed in the sick-room, and it was a heart-breaking sorrow to him that he could not remain to the end. The two sons Frank and John were now the only members of the family who could be with their father, and they shared the nursing between them, with the devoted help of the friends in whose house he was lying.

It soon became apparent that the Missionary was rapidly sinking. At times he suffered intensely, but his mind was clear and active almost to the last. Occasionally he became delirious, and all his wanderings were connected with the Islands and the Mission. At such times he was greatly troubled about the French, and longed to get up and go to the help of his beloved natives. But as a rule he was quite conscious, and it was characteristic of him that as long as he could possibly bear the pain he refused the morphia, lest it should cloud his mind.

Even when he was weakest, his heart never doubted for a moment, and whenever anyone came to see him he rejoiced to tell them how unclouded was the peace within, and how intensely real and comforting he found the promises of God's Word. He often used to say, "With me there is not a shadow or a cloud, all is perfect peace and joy in believing."

It was a holy privilege to be present when some aged minister, bowed under an almost equal weight of years, came to talk and pray with him. If anyone spoke of past achievements as a theme of comfort it only pained him, but when some old white-haired saint spoke to him of the Sinner's Refuge, the look of pain melted into an indescribable glow of tenderness and love as he murmured, "Precious Jesus." It was in the Crucified Saviour that his heart rested in such unutterable peace.

Many ministers and friends came from far and near to see him, and their visits cheered him. He was always vexed when anyone was allowed to go away without a brief look into the sick-room. When he was reminded that his pain and weakness were too great to allow him to see visitors, he would say:

"Oh, but it was so kind of them to come, and I

would just like to shake hands. It will not do me any harm."

On the morning of the 25th of January, the Missionary thought he was dying. He asked his son Frank to come nearer, and then poured out his heart in fervent prayer for all his children and their children, pleading that all might be gathered home to the Glory, "not one wanting." It was a patriarchal benediction, more precious than the wealth of the whole world.

On Sunday evening the patient became unconscious, and it was soon apparent that the end was drawing near. The watchers beside the bed bore him up in silent prayer. The final struggle was distressing, and it was hard to see one suffer for whom they would gladly have borne any pain.

Just after one o'clock on Monday, the 28th of January, 1907, John G. Paton passed away.

In a moment, as if by the Invisible Hand of the Great Father Himself, the lines of pain were smoothed out and a look of heavenly peace suffused the pale features. He had seen his "Precious Jesus," and the afterglow of that glorious vision was reflected in his face. The watchers felt that they were on holy ground, and a great tenderness and awe filled their souls, as they stood at the brink and beheld.

The next afternoon a few personal friends gathered in the house for a private service before the remains were removed to the Kew Presbyterian Church, where the public service was to be held. The funeral procession then wended its way from Canterbury to Kew.

A walk of five minutes from the church, and the cemetery was reached. Here but a few weeks ago Dr. Rainy had been laid to rest. The service at the grave was most impressive. Dr. Cairns announced that he had received a telegram from the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth deeply regretting his inability to be present, and expressing of his profound admiration for Dr. Paton.

So on the sunny slope of the Boroondara cemetery, with the bright blue Australian sky overhead, there was laid to rest the body of the most Venerable and Beloved Missionary of the Southern Hemisphere. It was not the time for mourning. He had done his work, and done it well. His Master had called him to his rest. There he

lies till the Great Day, when, perfected, his Lord will present him in the Triumph, with his beloved children from the sunny isles of the sea, and he will say, "Here am I, and the children Thou gavest me."

Farewell, holy and beautiful life—reflection of the lowly Saviour. Child of the Covenant; brave and faithful servant of God, Farewell.

APPENDIX

THE JOHN G. PATON MISSION, NEW HEBRIDES

As will have appeared from the Final Chapters of the Story of Dr. John G. Paton's Life (1923 Edition), one of the outstanding fruits of his life of devotion to the New Hebrides is the spontaneous organisation that has gathered about his name and personality—known as THE JOHN G. PATON MISSION—New Hebrides.

The object and aim of this Mission has been, and is, to strive for the fulfilment of the aged Missionary's prayer that every Island of the New Hebrides may be completely evangelised.

The Mission is the outcome of love and admiration ; it is carried on by a Committee of Laymen who were close personal friends of Dr. John G. Paton. To its members he communicated his longings for the extension of the work, and to their trust he committed the Mission when he was called to his Reward.

For thirty-eight years they have endeavoured to fulfil their trust, giving freely of their time and effort as a labour of love ; and with such manifest tokens of the blessing of God that they are now entirely responsible for maintaining in the group FIVE FULLY-EQUIPPED MISSION STATIONS, each Station having a trained and educated European Missionary and his wife in charge.

At one of these Mission Stations there is established a properly equipped MISSION HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARY.

Further, the Committee undertake the maintenance of Two ASSISTANT MISSIONARIES, one of whom acts as TECHNICAL INSTRUCTOR at the NATIVE TEACHERS' TRAINING INSTITUTION ; and one attends to the repairs of the various buildings, etc., belonging to the Mission, and assists, in that capacity, in developing the industrial side of the lives of the Native Converts.

A Mission carried on amidst a group of Islands, subject to calms as well as rough seas, requires swift and reliable means of communication ; and the Committee have therefore supplied each of the five Missionaries with a motor-boat—with boat-house, etc.—all of which have to be maintained and kept in repair.

The Home Base of the John G. Paton Mission is in Britain. The organisation includes the publication of a little magazine called *Quarterly Jottings from the New Hebrides*; and the prosecution of its work is assisted by means of Lantern Lectures of special and thrilling interest, which are given where desired.

The Mission seeks, through the distribution of *Quarterly Jottings* and other literature on the work, to develop interest; and in this effort the Committee are privileged in having the voluntary help of many Local Hon. Secretaries, scattered throughout the United Kingdom and in Canada and the United States. By these means, without undue cost or effort in publicity, the Mission is endeavouring to continue and consolidate the work of God in the Group, in accordance with the desire of the Beloved Missionary whose name it bears.

The Mission provides opportunity for interested friends to maintain beds in the Hospital; to take shares in the upkeep of Mission Stations and Out-Stations in the bush; and to support Native Teachers. It supplies cocoanut collecting boxes (brought from the Islands) where desired, as well as collecting cards.

Copies of *Quarterly Jottings* are sent regularly, free of cost, to all friends and subscribers; and full information is gladly given by any of the Hon. Secretaries whose names and addresses are here given:

A. K. LANGRIDGE,
Hon. Organising Secretary,
 "Aniwa,"
 Colchester,
 Essex.

WM. WATSON,
Hon. Secretary and Treasurer for Ireland,
 Rosslyn, Knock,
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Miss A. D. MACLEOD,
Hon. Secretary for Scotland,
 10, Leslie Road, Pollokshields,
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J. W. DOUGLAS,
Hon. Treasurer and Solicitor,
 136, Wellington Street,
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Hon. Secretary for the United States:

SAMUEL R. BOGGS,
 Model Mills Company,
 Kensington Avenue, and Ontario,
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