

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

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

## CHAPTER LXIII

### TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

WHAT a suggestive tradition of the Fall came to me in one of those early days on Aniwa! Upon our leaving the hut and removing to our new house, it was 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 for 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 where Dr. Inglis has since built his beautiful Mission Station. To this day, the river there is called "the water of Aniwa" by the inhabitants of both Islands; and it is the ambition of all Aniwans to visit 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 *hekoau*. They call it Teapolo, and women or children scream wildly at the sight of one.

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 any one could interfere to save. And a Savage, in anger with his wife, snatched her baby from her arms, hid himself in the bush till night, and returned without the child, refusing to give any explanation, except that he was dead and buried. Praise be to God, these three murderers of their own children were by and bye touched with the story of Jesus, became members of the Church, and each adopted little orphan children, towards whom they continued to show the most tender affection and care.

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



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

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

## CHAPTER LXIV

### NELWANG'S ELOPEMENT

SOME most absurd and preposterous experiences were forced upon us by the habits and notions of the people. Amongst these I recall very vividly the story of Nelwang's elopement with his bride. I had begun, in spare hours, to lay the foundation of two additional rooms for our house, and felt rather uneasy to see a well-known Savage hanging around every day with his tomahawk, and eagerly watching me at work. He had killed a man, before our arrival on Aniwa; and had also 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 circumstances, how would you act?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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!

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

"I must not," he replied, "tell you yet. We are hid. We have lived on 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 Jesus and His Gospel, I urged them strongly to appear publicly at the Church on Sabbath, to show that they were determined to stand their ground together as true husband and wife, and that the others must accept the position and become reconciled. Delay now could gain no purpose, and I wished the strife and uncertainty to be put to an end.

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

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



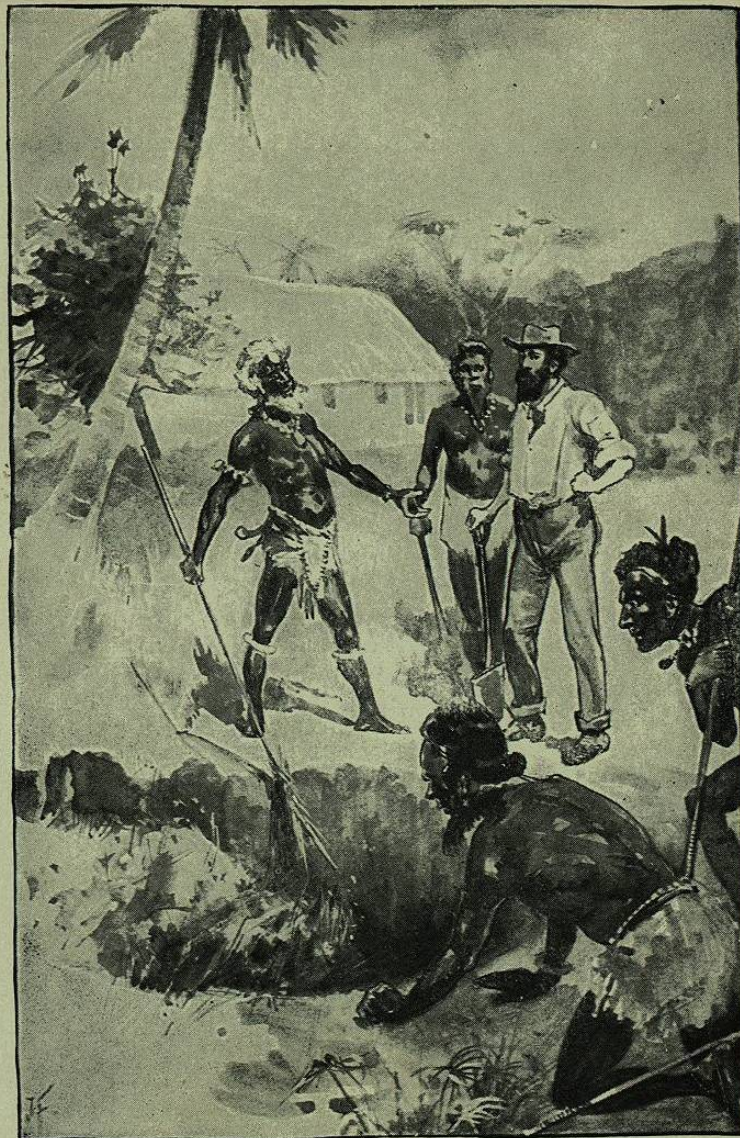
wang's bride, she had some idea of state occasions, and appeared dressed in every article of European apparel, mostly portions of male attire, that she could beg or borrow from about the premises! Her bridal gown was a man's drab-coloured great-coat, put on above her Native grass skirts, and sweeping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

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

#### CHAPTER LXV

##### THE CHRIST-SPIRIT AT WORK

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



"Will you not give it up now?"



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

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

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

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



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

A few days thereafter, this brother also fell sick and suddenly died. The Heathen party made much of these incidents, and some clamoured for our death in revenge, but most feared to murder us; so they withdrew and lived apart from our friends, as far away as they could get. By and by, however, they set fire to a large district belonging to our supporters, burning cocoa-nut and breadfruit trees and plantations. Still our people refused to fight, and kept near to protect us. Then all the leading men assembled to talk it over. Most were for peace, but some insisted upon burning our house and driving us away or killing us, that they might be left to live as they had hitherto done. At last a Sacred Man, a Chief who had been on Tanna when the *Curacoa* 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. For this, worn out and weary, we returned, praising the Lord.

## CHAPTER LXVI

### THE SINKING OF THE WELL

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