

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

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

CHAPTER LXVIII

THE OLD CHIEF'S SERMON

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

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

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

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

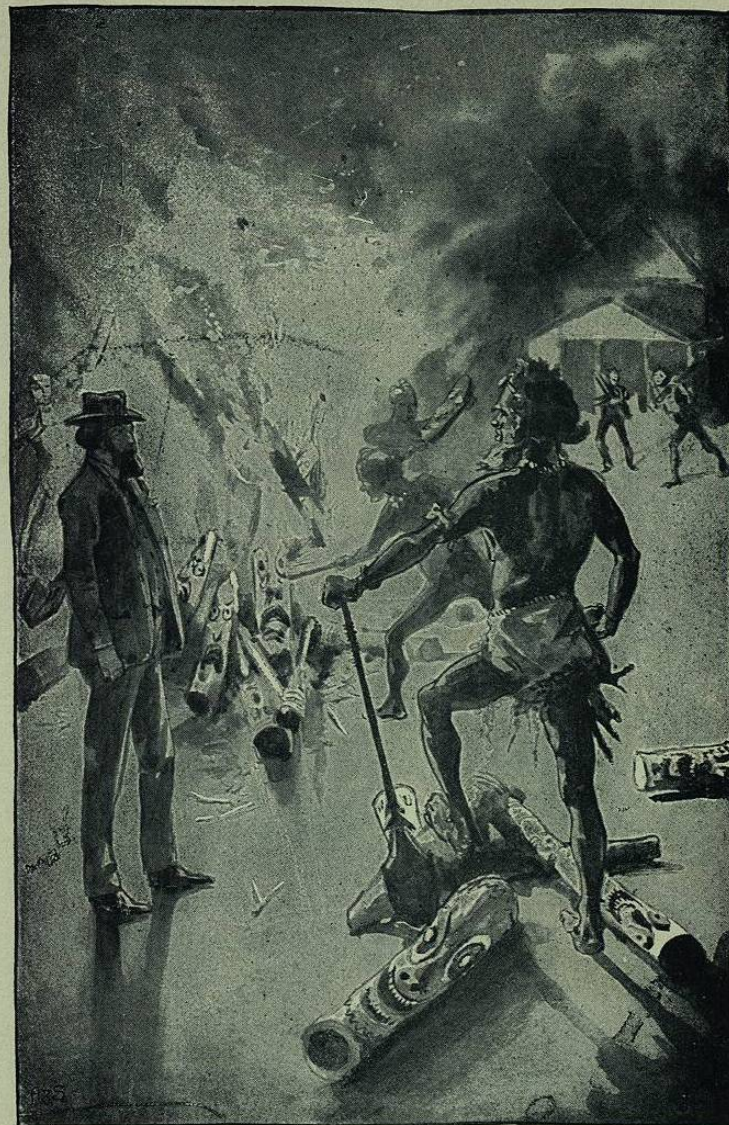
"Friends of Namakei, men and women and children of Aniwa, listen to my words! Since Missi came here he has talked many strange things we could not understand—things

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

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

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

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



BURNING THE IDOLS.

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. (Query: how many *white* Heathens are there?) The next step, and it was taken in a manner as if by some common consent that was not less surprising than joyful, was a form of Family Worship every morning and evening. Doubtless the prayers were often very queer, and mixed up with many remaining superstitious; 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.

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

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

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

"O Galilean, Thou hast conquered!"

CHAPTER LXIX

THE FIRST BOOK AND THE NEW EYES

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, Namakei exclaimed, "Make it speak to me, Missi! Let me hear it speak."

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

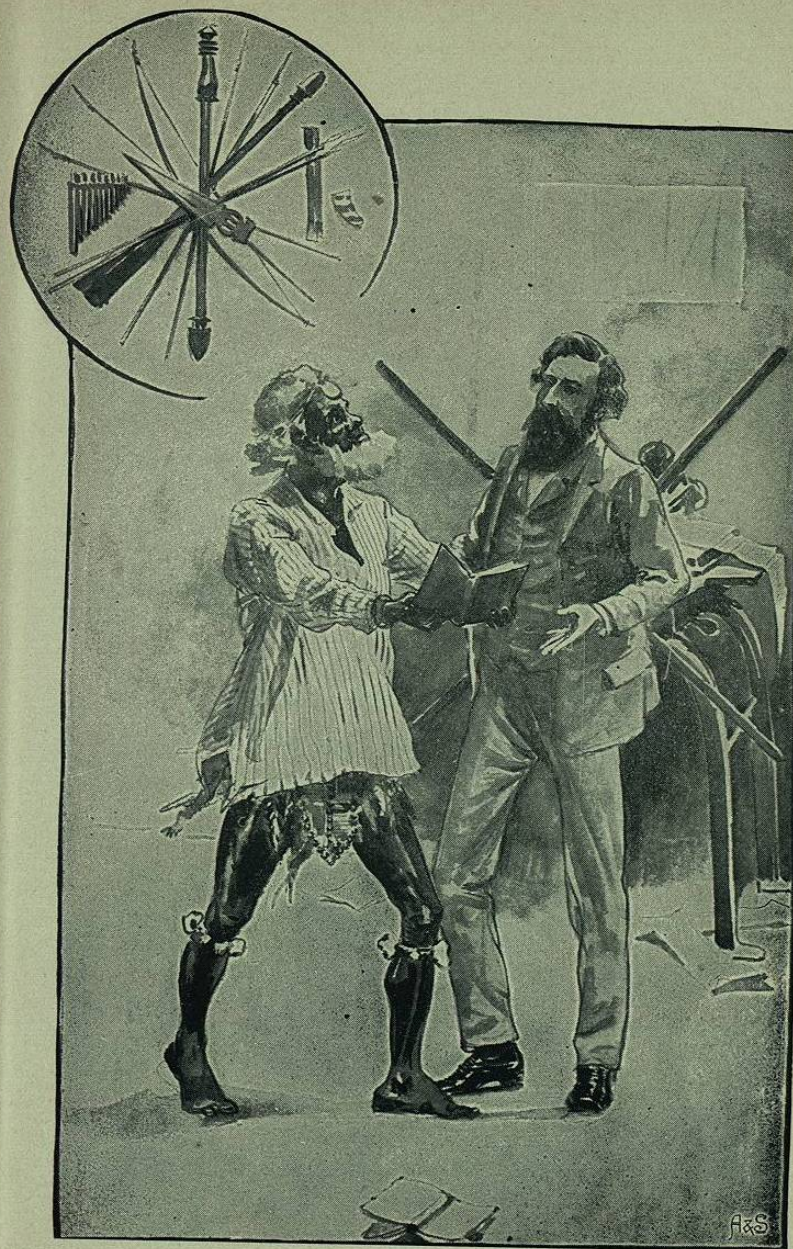
He grasped it hurriedly, turned it all round every way, pressed it to his bosom, and then, closing it with a look of great disappointment, handed it back to me, saying, "Missi, I cannot make it speak! It will never speak to me."

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

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

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

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



"Make it speak to me, Missi."

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!"

CHAPTER LXX

A ROOF-TREE FOR JESUS

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

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

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

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 sugarcane 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. One hearty fellow fell from the roof-tree to the ground, and was badly stunned. But, jumping up, he shook himself, and saying—"I was working for Jehovah! He has saved me from being hurt"—he mounted the roof again and went on cheerily with his work.

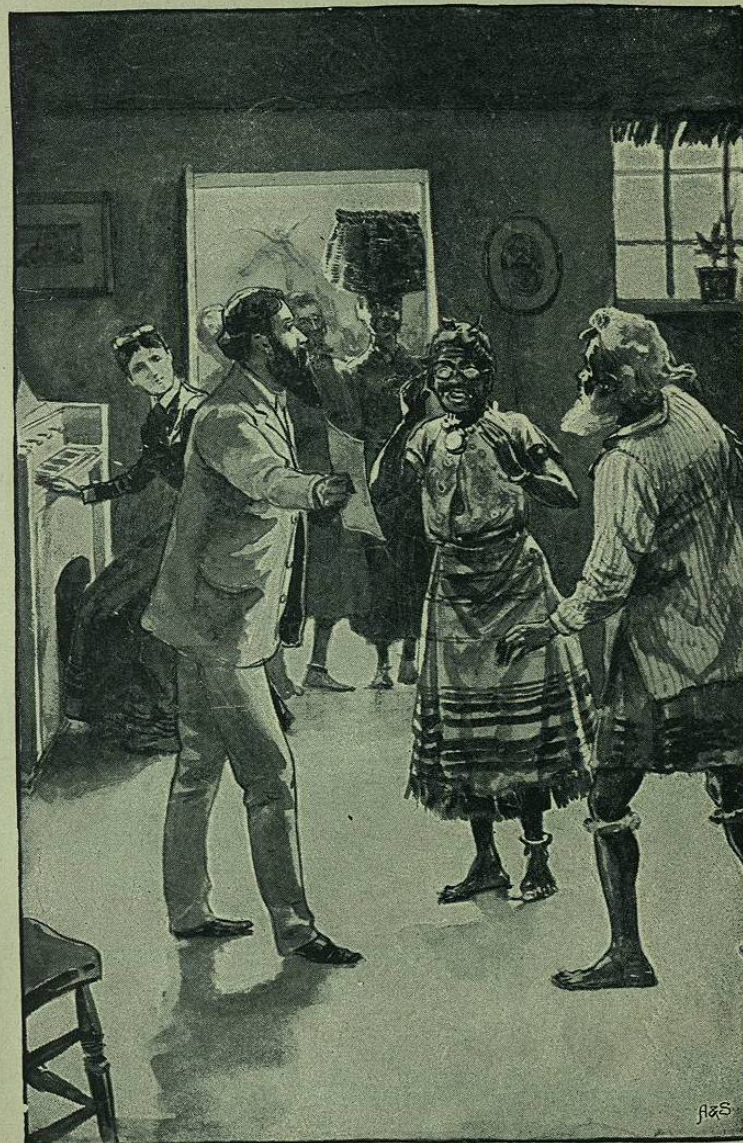
But our pride in this New Church soon met with a dreadful blow. That very season a terrific hurricane levelled it with the ground. After much wailing, the principal Chief, in a public Assembly, said, "Let us not weep, like boys over their broken bows and arrows! Let us be strong, and build a yet stronger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

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

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

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

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



"Yauwaki cried with delight, 'Oh, my new eyes! I have the sight of a little girl.'"

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

CHAPTER LXXI

"KNOCK THE TEVIL OUT!"

ONE of the last attempts ever made on my life resulted, by God's blessing, in great good to us all and to the work of the Lord. It was when Nourai, one of 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