

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

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, Noural, 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 Aniwans 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. The offending villagers at length presented a large quantity of sugar-cane and food to us as a peace-offering; and we returned, praising God that the whole day's scolding had ended in talk, not blood. The result was every way most helpful. Our friends knew their strength and took courage. Our enemies were disheartened and afraid. We saw the balance growing heavier every day on the side of Jesus; and our souls blessed the Lord.

CHAPTER LXXII

THE CONVERSION OF YOUWILI

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 any one 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 some one 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."

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-groping 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.

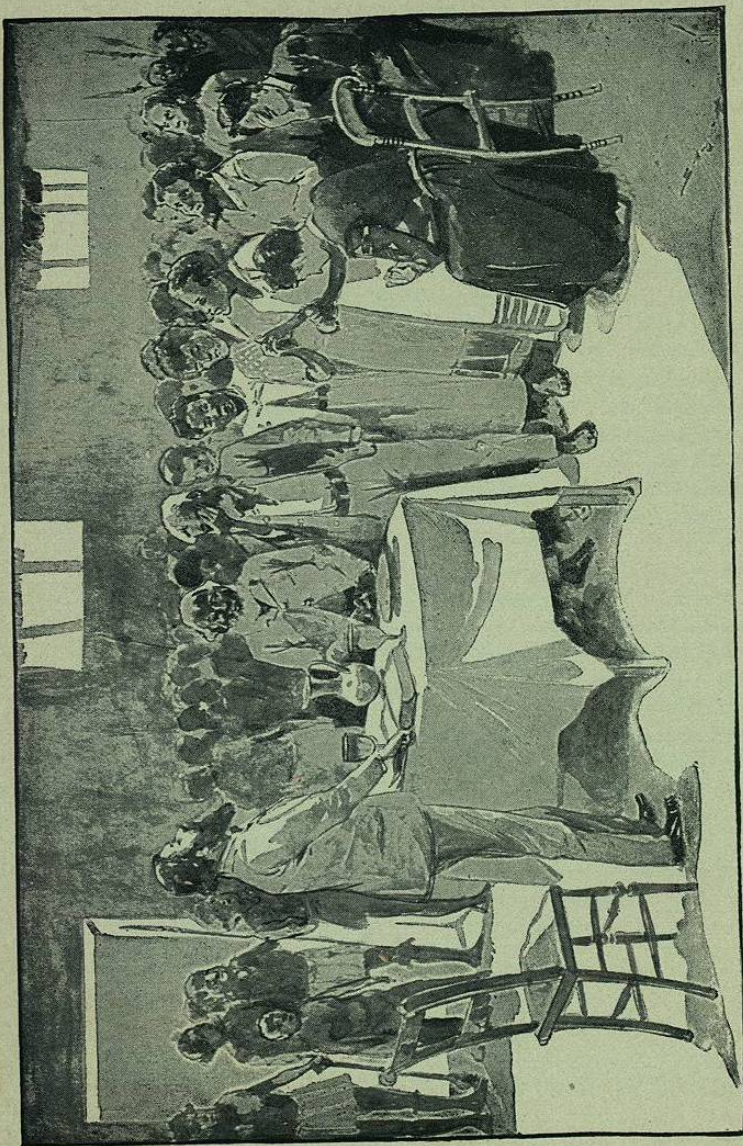
CHAPTER LXXIII

FIRST COMMUNION ON ANIWA

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 according to the Presbyterian usage. Two of them had also little children, and they were at the same time baptized, and received as the lambs of the flock. 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



OUR FIRST COMMUNION ON ANIWA.

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 the first time the Dorcas Street Sabbath School Teachers' gift from South Melbourne Presbyterian Church was put to use—a new Communion Service of silver. They gave it in faith that we would require it, and in such we received it. And now the day had come and gone! 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."

CHAPTER LXXIV

THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

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 to the reader 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. We follow the ordinary Presbyterian ritual; but in every Service I call upon an Elder or a Church Member to lead in one of the prayers, which they do with great alacrity and with much benefit to all concerned.

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

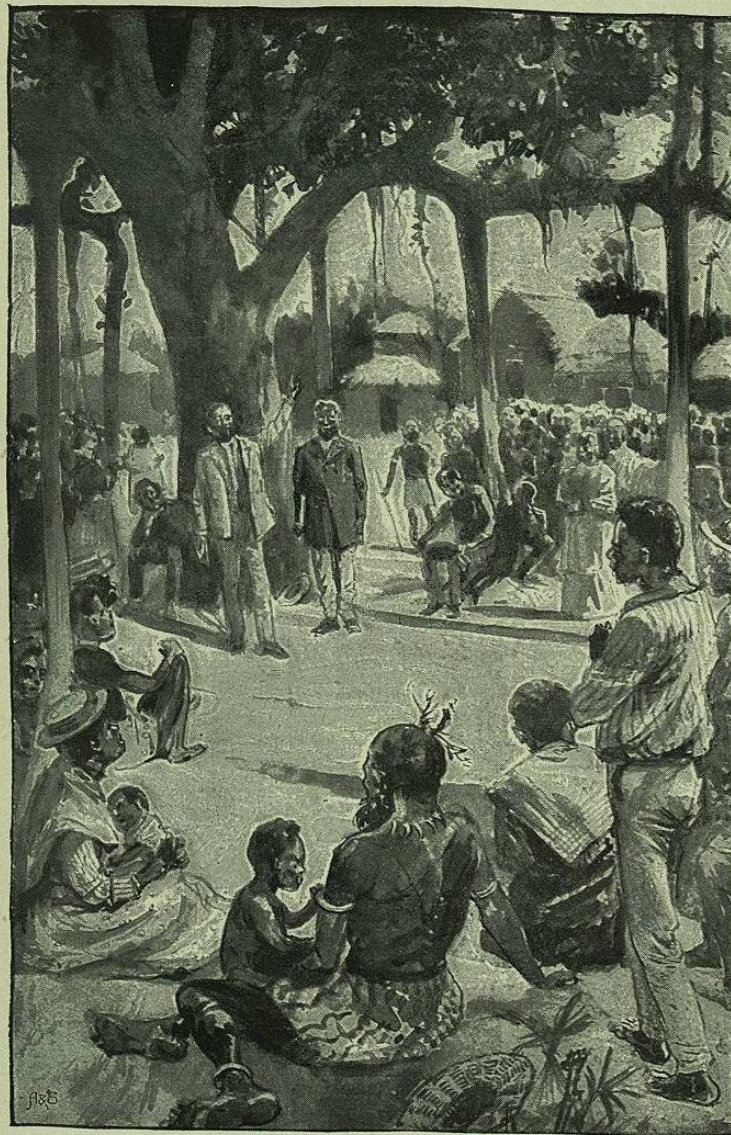
Members are drawn as the Lord opens up their way, the most of them attending two full years at least before being admitted to the Lord's Table. This discipline accounts for the fact that so very few of our baptized converts have ever fallen away—as few in proportion, I verily believe, as in Churches 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 in 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 week-day life less crowded or busy, though in different ways. At gray dawn on Monday, and every morning,



"The people assemble under the banyan tree for evening village prayers."—Page 250.

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 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, breadfruit, 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.

CHAPTER LXXV

THE ORPHANS AND THEIR BISCUITS

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