

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

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 gray 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!"



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"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 child-like 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 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 daybreak 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 LXXVI

### 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-reading 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 Williang, 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 Williang, 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 carshot 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! John, the Teacher, then prayed; while the Heathen, in groups of wonder, but holding far aloof, had many strange ideas awakened 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 bye, 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 £2000 on the first *Dayspring*. Of that sum £1000 had been spent on chartering and maintaining the *Paragon*; so that we required an additional £2000 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, excellent Elders of the Presbyterian Church, 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 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 agoing 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 £1700 for the new ship. With the £1000 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 £3000 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

servicing 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.

## CHAPTER LXXVII

### THE GOSPEL IN LIVING CAPITALS

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 every one of this 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 a 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 where 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."

The Heathen were perfectly overawed. They manifestly looked upon these Christians as protected by some Invisible One! They listened for the first time to the story of the Gospel and of the Cross. We lived to see that Chief and all his tribe sitting in the School of Christ. And there is perhaps not an Island in these Southern Seas, amongst all those won for Christ, where similar acts of heroism on the part of Converts cannot be recited by every Missionary to the honour of our poor Natives and to the glory of their Saviour.

Larger and harder tests were sometimes laid upon their new faith. Once the war on Tanna drove about one hundred of them to seek refuge on Aniwa. Not so many years before, their lives would never have been thus entrusted to the inhabitants of another Cannibal Island. But the Christ-Spirit was abroad upon Aniwa. The refugees were kindly cared for, and in process of time were restored to their own lands by our Missionary ship the *Dayspring*. The Chiefs, however, and the Elders of the Church laid the new laws before them very clearly and decidedly. They would be helped and sheltered, but Aniwa was now under law to Christ, and if any of the Tannese broke the public rules as to moral conduct, or in any way disturbed the Worship of Jehovah, they would at once be expelled from the Island and sent back to Tanna. In all this, the Chief of the Tanna party, my old friend Nowar, strongly supported our Christian Chiefs. The Tannese behaved well, and many of them wore clothing and began to attend Church; and the heavy drain upon the poor resources of Aniwa was borne with a noble and Christian spirit, which greatly impressed the Tannese and commended the Gospel of Christ.

## CHAPTER LXXVIII

### THE DEATH OF NAMAKEI

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 soon becoming 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 amongst 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 slipt 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, 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 away 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 blood-stained 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."

## CHAPTER LXXIX

### CHRISTIANITY AND COCOA-NUTS

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