

God sent it to me, and I return it to God through you with great pleasure." I thanked her warmly, thinking it a pound, or five at the most; on opening it, after she was gone, it turned out to be £100. I felt bowed down in humble thankfulness, and pressed forward in the service of the Lord.

## CHAPTER LXXXVIII

## ENGLAND'S OPEN DOOR

THE time now arrived for my attempting something amongst the Presbyterians of England. But my heart sank within me; I was a stranger to all except Dr. Dykes, and the New Hebrides Mission had no special claims on them. Casting myself upon the Lord, I wrote to all the Presbyterian Ministers in and around London, enclosing my "Statement and Appeal," and asking a Service, with a retiring collection, or the surplus above the usual collection, on behalf of our Mission Ship. All declined, except two. I learned afterwards that the London Presbytery had resolved that no claim beyond their own Church was to be admitted into any of its pulpits for a period of months, under some special financial emergency. My dear friend, Dr. J. Hood Wilson, kindly wrote also to a number of them, on my behalf, but with a similar result; though at last other two Services were arranged for with a collection, and one without. Being required at London, in any case, in connection with the threatened Annexation of the New Hebrides by the French, I resolved to take these five Services by the way, and immediately return to Scotland, where engagements and opportunities were now pressed upon me, far more than I could overtake. But the Lord Himself opened before me a larger door, and more effectual, than any that I had tried in vain to open up for myself.

The Churches to which I had access did nobly indeed, and the Ministers treated me as a very brother. Dr. Dykes most affectionately supported my Appeal, and made himself recipient of donations that might be sent for our Mission Ship. Dr. Donald Fraser, and Messrs. Taylor and Mathieson, with their Congregations, generously contributed to the Fund. And so

did the Mission Church in Drury Lane—the excellent and consecrated Rev. W. B. Alexander, the pastor thereof, and his wife, becoming my devoted personal friends, and continuing to remember in their work-parties ever since the needs of the Natives on the New Hebrides. Others also, whom I cannot wait to specify, showed a warm interest in us and in our department of the Lord's work. But my heart had been foolishly set upon adding a large sum to the fund for the Mission Ship, and when only about £150 came from all the Churches in London to which I could get access, no doubt I was sensible of cherishing a little guilty disappointment. That was very unworthy in me, considering all my previous experiences; and God deserved to be trusted by me far differently, as the sequel will immediately show.

That widely-known and deeply-beloved servant of God, Mr. J. E. Mathieson, of the Mildmay Conference Hall, had invited me to address one of their annual meetings on behalf of Foreign Missions, and also to be his guest while the Conference lasted. Thereby I met and heard many godly and noble disciples of the Lord, whom I could not otherwise have reached though every Church I had asked in London had been freely opened to me. These devout and faithful and generous people, belonging to every branch of the Church of Christ, and drawn from every rank and class in society, from the humblest to the highest, were certainly amongst the most open-hearted and the most responsive of all whom I ever had the privilege to address. One felt there, in a higher degree than almost anywhere else, that every soul was on fire with love to Jesus and with genuine devotion to His Cause in every corner of the Earth. There it was a privilege and a gladness to speak; and though no collection was asked, or could be expected, my heart was uplifted and strengthened by these happy meetings, and by all that Heavenly intercourse.

But see how the Lord leads us by a way we know not! Next morning after my address, a gentleman who had heard me, the Hon. Ion Keith-Falconer, handed me a cheque from his father-in-law for £300, by far the largest single donation at that time towards our Mission Ship; and immediately thereafter I received from one of the Mildmay lady Missionaries £50, from a venerable friend of the founder £20, from "Friends at Mildmay" £30; and through my dear friend and

brother, Mr. Mathieson, many other donations were in due course forwarded to me.

My introduction, however, to the Conference at Mildmay did far more for me than even this; it opened up a series of drawing-room meetings in and around London, where I told the story of our Mission and preached the Gospel to many in the higher walks of life, and received most liberal support for the Mission Ship. It also brought me invitations from many quarters of England, to Churches, to Halls, and to County Houses and Mansions.

Lord Radstock got up a special meeting, inviting by private card a large number of his most influential friends; and there I met for the first time one whom I have since learned to regard as a very precious personal friend, Rev. Sholto D. C. Douglas, clergyman of the Church of England, who then, and afterwards at Douglas-Support in Scotland, not only most liberally supported our fund, but took me by the hand as a brother, and promoted my work by every means in his power.

The Earl and Countess of Tankerville also invited me to Chillingham Castle, and gave me an opportunity of addressing a great assembly there, then gathered together from all parts of the County. The British and Foreign Bible Society received me in a special meeting of the Directors; and I was able to tell them how all we, the Missionaries of these Islands whose language had never before been reduced to writing, looked to them, and leant upon them, and prayed for them and their work—without whom our Native Bibles never could have been published. After the meeting the Chairman gave me £5, and one of the Directors a cheque for £25 for our Mission Ship.

I was also invited to Leicester, and made the acquaintance of a godly and gifted servant of the Lord Jesus, the Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A. (now of London), whose books and booklets on the higher aspects of the Christian Life are read by tens of thousands, and have been fruitful of blessing. There I addressed great meetings of devoted workers in the Lord's vineyard; and the dear friend who was my host on that occasion, a Christian merchant, has since contributed £10 per annum for the support of a Native Teacher on the New Hebrides.

It was my privilege also to visit and address the Müller Orphanages at Bristol, and to see that saintly man of faith

and prayer moving about as a wise and loving father amongst the hundreds, even thousands, that look to him for their daily bread and for the bread of Life Eternal. At the close of my address, the venerable founder thanked me warmly and said, "Here are £50, which God has sent to me for your Mission."

I replied, saying, "Dear friend, how can I take it? I would rather give you £500 for your Orphans if I could, for I am sure you need it all!"

He replied, with sweetness and great dignity, "God provides for His own Orphans. This money cannot be used for them. I must send it after you by letter. It is the Lord's gift."

Often, as I have looked at the doings of men and Churches, and tried to bring all to the test as if in Christ's very presence, it has appeared to me that such work as Müller's and Barnardo's, and that of my own fellow-countryman, William Quarrier, must be peculiarly dear to the heart of our blessed Lord. And were He to visit this world again, and seek a place where His very Spirit had most fully wrought itself out into deeds, I fear that many of our so-called Churches would deserve to be passed by, and that His holy, tender, helpful, divinely-human love would find its most perfect reflex in these Orphan Homes. Still and for ever, amidst all changes of creed and of climate, this, *this* is "pure and undefiled Religion" before God and the Father!

But in this connection I must not omit to mention that the noble and world-famous servant of God, the Minister of the Tabernacle, invited me to a garden-party at his home, and asked me to address his students and other Christian workers. When I arrived I found a goodly company assembled under the shade of lovely trees, and felt the touch of that genial humour, so mighty a gift when sanctified, which has so often given wings to C. H. Spurgeon's words, when he saluted me as "The King of the Cannibals!" On my leaving, Mrs. Spurgeon presented me with her husband's *Treasury of David*, and also "£5 from the Lord's cows"—which I afterwards learned was part of the profits from certain cows kept by the good lady, and that everything produced thereby was dedicated to the work of the Lord. I praised God that He had privileged me to meet this extraordinarily endowed man, to whom the whole Christian World had been so specially indebted, and

who had consecrated all his gifts and opportunities to the proclamation of the pure and precious Gospel.

Of all my London associations, however, the deepest and the most imperishable is that which weaves itself around the Honourable Ion Keith-Falconer, who has already passed to what may truly be called a Martyr's crown. At that time I met him at his father-in-law's house at Trent; and on another occasion spent a whole day with him at the house of his noble mother, the Countess-Dowager of Kintore. His soul was then full of his projected Mission to the Arabs, being himself one of the most distinguished Orientalists of the day; and as we talked together, and exchanged experiences, I felt that never before had I visibly marked the fire of God, the holy passion to seek and to save the lost, burning more steadily or brightly on the altar of any human heart. The heroic founding of the Mission at Aden is already one of the precious annals of the Church of Christ. His young and devoted wife survives, to mourn indeed, but also to cherish his noble memory; and, with the aid of others, and under the banner of the Free Church of Scotland, to see the "Keith-Falconer Mission" rising up amidst the darkness of blood-stained Africa, as at once a harbour of refuge for the slave, and a beacon-light to those who are without God and without hope. The servant does his day's work, and passes on through the gates of sleep to the Happy Dawn; but the Divine Master lives and works and reigns, and by our death, as surely as by our life, His holy purposes shall be fulfilled.

## CHAPTER LXXXIX

### FAREWELL SCENES

ON returning to Scotland, every day was crowded with engagements for the weeks that remained, and almost every mail brought me contributions from all conceivable corners of the land. My heart was set upon taking out two or three Missionaries with me to claim more and still more of the Islands for Christ; and with that view I had addressed Divinity Students at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. Again and again, by

conversation and correspondence, consecrated young men were just on the point of volunteering; but again and again the larger and better known fields of labour turned the scale, and they finally decided for China or Africa or India. Deeply disappointed at this, and thinking that God directed us to look to our own Australia alone for Missionaries for the New Hebrides, I resolved to return, and took steps towards securing a passage by the Orient Line to Melbourne. But just then two able and devoted students, Messrs. Morton and Leggatt, offered themselves as Missionaries for our Islands; and shortly thereafter a third, Mr. Landells, also an excellent man; and all, being on the eve of their Licence as preachers, were approved of, accepted, and set to special preparations for the Mission field, particularly in acquiring practical medical knowledge.

On this turn of affairs I managed to have my passage delayed for six weeks, and resolved to cast myself on the Lord that He might enable me in that time to raise at least £500, in order to furnish the necessary outfit and equipment for three new Mission Stations, and to pay the passage money of the Missionaries and their wives, that there might be no difficulty on this score amongst the Foreign Mission Committees on the other side. And then the idea came forcibly, and for a little unmanned me, that it was wrong in me to speak of these limits as to time and money in my prayers to God. But I reflected, again, how it was for the Lord's own glory alone in the salvation of the Heathen, and for no personal aims of mine; and so I fell back on His promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name," and believingly asked it in His Name, and for His praise and service alone. I think it due to my Lord, and for the encouragement of all His servants, that I should briefly outline what occurred in answer to these prayers.

Having gone to the centre of one of the great shipbuilding districts of Scotland, and held a series of meetings, and raised a sum of about £55 only after nine services and many Sabbath School collecting cards, my heart was beginning to sink, as I did not think my health would stand another six weeks of incessant strain; when, at the close of my last meeting in a Free Church, an Elder and his wife entered the vestry and said, "We are deeply interested in you and in all

your work and plans. You say that you have asked £500 more. We gave you the first £100 at the Dundee Conference; and it is a joy to us to give you this £100 too, towards the making up of your final sum. We pray that you may speedily realise your wish, and that God's richest blessing may ever rest upon your head."

Another week passed by, and at the close of it a lady called upon me, and, after delightful conversation about the Mission, said, "How near are you to the sum required?" I explained to her what is recorded above, and she continued, "I gave you one little piece of paper at the beginning of your efforts. I have prayed for you every day since. God has prospered me, and this is one of the happiest moments of my life, when I am now able to give you another little bit of paper."

So saying, she put into my hand £100. I protested, "You are surely too generous. Can you afford a second £100?"

She replied to this effect, and very joyfully, as one who had genuine gladness in the deed, "My Lord has been very kind to me, in my health and in my business. My wants are simple, and are safe in His hands. I wait not till death forces me, but give back whatever I am able to the Lord now, and hope to live to see much blessing thereby through you in the conversion of the Heathen."

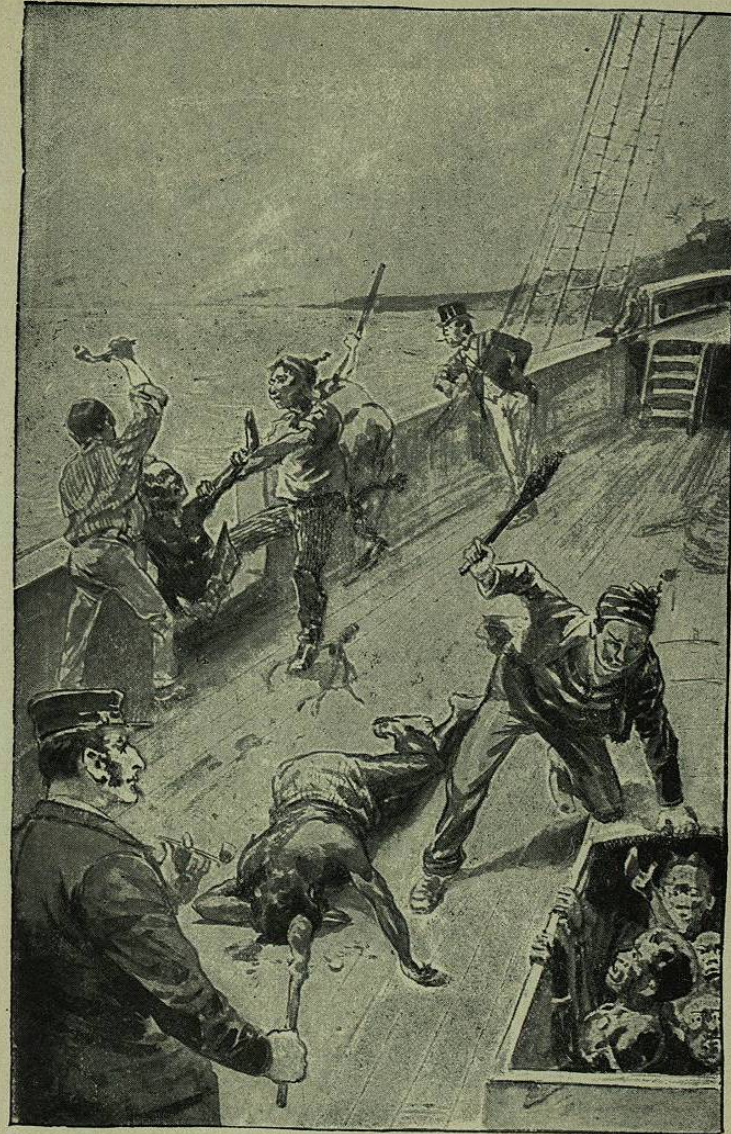
My last week had come, and I was in the midst of preparations for departure, when amongst the letters delivered to me was one to this effect:

"Restitution money which never now can be returned to its owner. Since my Conversion I have laboured hard to save it. I now make my only possible amends by returning it to God through you. Pray for me and mine, and may God bless you in your work!" I rather startled my brother and his wife at our breakfast table by shouting out in unwontedly excited tones,—*"Hallelujah! The Lord has done it! Hallelujah!"* But my tones softened down into intense reverence, and my words broke at last into tears, when I found that this, the second largest subscription ever received by me (£1000, by one friend, have since been given to the "John G. Paton Mission Fund"), came from a converted tradesman who had consecrated his all to the Lord Jesus,

and whose whole leisure was now centred upon seeking to bless and save those of his own rank and class, amongst whom he had spent his early and unconverted days. Jesus said unto him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

Bidding farewell to dear old Glasgow, so closely intertwined with all my earlier and later experiences, I started for London, accompanied by my brother James. We were sitting at breakfast at Mrs. Mathieson's table, Mildmay, when a telegram was put into my hands announcing a "thank-offering" from Lord and Lady Polwarth, received since our departure from Glasgow. The Lord had now literally exceeded my prayers. With other gifts, repeated again by friends at Mildmay, the special fund for outfit and travelling expenses for new Missionaries had risen above the £500, and now approached £650.

In a Farewell Meeting at Mildmay the Lord's servants, being assembled in great numbers from all quarters of London, dedicated me and my work very solemnly to God, amid songs of praise and many prayers and touching "last" words. And when at length Mr. Mathieson, intimating that I must go, as another company of Christian workers were elsewhere waiting also to say Good-bye, suggested that the whole audience should stand up, and, instead of hand-shaking, quietly breathe their benedictory Farewell as I passed from the platform down through their great Hall, a perfect flood of emotion overwhelmed me. I never felt a humbler man, nor more anxious to hide my head in the dust, than when all these noble, gifted, and beloved followers of Jesus Christ, and consecrated workers in His service, stood up and with one heart said, "God speed" and "God bless you," as I passed on through the Hall. To one who had striven and suffered less, or who less appreciated how little we can do for others compared with what Jesus had done for us, this scene might have ministered to spiritual pride; but long ere I reached the door of that Hall, my soul was already prostrated at the feet of my Lord in sorrow and in shame that I had done so little for Him, and I bowed my head and could have gladly bowed my knees to cry, "Not unto us, Lord, not unto us!"



THE KANAKA TRAFFIC, No. 2.

"The natives came off to barter fruits for tobacco, but on reaching up their hands for trade, they were pulled aboard."

## CHAPTER XC

## WELCOME TO VICTORIA AND ANIWA

ON the 28th October 1885 I sailed for Melbourne, and in due course safely arrived there by the goodness of God. The Church and people of my own beloved Victoria gave me a right joyful welcome, and in public assembly presented me with a testimonial, which I shrank from receiving, but which all the same was the highly-prized expression of their confidence and esteem.

During my absence at the Islands, to which I immediately proceeded, they unanimously elected me Moderator of their Supreme Court, and called me back to fill that highest Chair of honour in the Presbyterian Church. God is my witness how very little any or all of these things in themselves ever have been coveted by me; but how, when they have come in my way, I have embraced them with a single desire thereby to promote the Church's interest in that Cause to which my whole life and all my opportunities are consecrated—the Conversion of the Heathen World.

My Mission to Britain was to raise £6000, in order to enable the Australian Churches to provide a Steam Auxiliary Mission Ship, for the enlarged and constantly enlarging requirements of the New Hebrides. I spent exactly eighteen months at home; and when I returned, I was enabled to hand over to the Church that had commissioned and authorised me no less a sum than £9000. And all this had been forwarded to me, as the free-will offerings of the Lord's stewards, in the manner illustrated by the preceding pages. "Behold! what God hath wrought!"

Of this sum £6000 are set apart to build or acquire the new Mission Ship. The remainder is added to what we call our Number II. Fund, for the maintenance and equipment of additional Missionaries. It has been the dream of my life to see one Missionary at least, with trained Native Teachers, planted on every Island of the New Hebrides, and then I could lie down and whisper gladly, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace!"

As to the new Mission Ship, unexpected delay has arisen.

There are differences of opinion about the best way of carrying out the proposal. There must be an understanding betwixt New South Wales and Victoria and the other Colonies, as to the additional annual expenditure. And the perplexity as to the wisest course has deepened, since the Colonial Government began to run Mail Ships regularly from Australia to Fiji, willing on certain terms of subsidy to call at one or other harbour in the New Hebrides. Meantime, let all friends who are interested in us and our work understand—that the money so generously entrusted to me has been safely handed over to my own Victorian Church, and is deposited at good interest in the bank, to be spent at their discretion in due time, when all details are settled, and, as nearly as possible in the altered circumstances, exclusively for the purposes for which it was asked and bestowed.

To me personally, this delay is confessedly a keen and deep disappointment. But the special work laid upon me has, however, been accomplished. The Colonial Churches have now all the responsibility of the further steps. In this, as in many a harder trouble of my chequered life, I calmly roll all my burden upon the Lord. I await with quietness and confidence His wise disposal of events. His hand is on the helm; and whither He steers us, all shall be well.

But let me not close this chapter, till I have struck another and a Diviner note. I have been to the Islands again, since my return from Britain. The whole inhabitants of Aniwa were there to welcome me, and my procession to the old Mission House was more like the triumphal march of a Conqueror than that of a humble Missionary. Everything was kept in beautiful and perfect order. Every Service of the Church, as previously described in this book, was fully sustained by the Native Teachers, the Elders, and the occasional visit, once or twice a year, of an ordained Missionary from one of the other Islands. Aniwa, like Aneityum, is a *Christian* land. Jesus has taken possession, never again to quit those shores. GLORY, GLORY TO HIS BLESSED NAME!

My Home has since been at Melbourne. My life-work now (1892), and probably during the remainder of my active

days, will be to visit and address the Congregations and Sabbath Schools of the Presbyterian Churches of Australasia, telling them, as in this book, the story of my experiences, and inspiring the Christian people of these Colonies to support the New Hebrides Mission, and to claim all these Islands for the Lord Jesus Christ.

\* \* \*

Reader, in your life, as in mine, one *last* Chapter still awaits us. By His grace, who has sustained me from childhood till now, I would work out that Chapter, and live through these closing scenes. With this book still open before you, I implore you to go alone before your blessed Saviour, and pledge yourself so to live, and so to die, in the service and fellowship of the Lord Jesus, that you and I, who have companied with each other through these pages, may meet again and renew our happy intercourse in our FATHER'S HOUSE.

#### CHAPTER XCI

TILL 1897

(By the Editor)

THE "Good News from Tanna" has grown better and still better. Mr. Gillies, a devoted young minister, is on his way to be colleague to Mr. Watt. Mr. Thomson Macmillan, a man of fine culture and of earnest spirit, has taken up the station left vacant by the retiral of Mr. Gray. And Mr. Frank H. L. Paton, whom we call one of "our own" Missionaries, because the first supported by the *John G. Paton Mission Fund*, has entered upon his pioneering work on the West Coast of Tanna, amidst uncommon tokens of blessing. Our hopes beat high, that what has been called "the hardest field in Heathendom" is at last on the point of being won for Jesus.

The *Dayspring*, referred to in preceding pages, was built in

1895, and was presented to the Mission as a free gift from the friends at home, at a cost of £7000. She made several voyages with great acceptance, and was swiftly endearing herself to all, when, alas, during her fourth journey, she struck on an uncharted reef near New Caledonia, and became a total wreck. Thank God, all on board were saved, but the Missionaries suffered heavy loss, and the Mission was again bereft of its Gospel Ship. Friends at home have once more offered generous help; and if the Synod on the Islands, and the Churches associated, still desire it as essential for the spiritual interests of the Mission, another *Dayspring* will soon be floating in and out amongst the New Hebrides, as the messenger and symbol of the Christ of Purity and Temperance and Peace.

John G. Paton has spent the years from 1892 till now, as indicated by himself at the close of Chapter XC. The great episode of his visit to the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Toronto has since intervened. Following thereon came his tours through Canada and the United States; and, finally, his memorable addresses, in almost every important town in Great Britain and Ireland, during 1892-94. He still toils on incessantly, visiting throughout the Colonies, corresponding with friends in all quarters of the world, and lecturing wherever he can find an open door, to promote by every means in his power the interests of the New Hebrides Mission,—the one absorbing passion of his life. Melbourne is his home; but his soul lives and moves and has its being amongst his beloved Islanders. Let all, then, who love the man, or care for his work, ponder carefully the Scheme outlined in the *Appendix* that follows, and unite with us in thereby helping to accomplish the purpose of his life, to the praise of the Saviour of the World.

## APPENDIX

### "THE JOHN G. PATON MISSION FUND"

THE interest created in the New Hebrides Mission, through the labours of the venerable Missionary, Dr. John G. Paton, has probably found no more practical expression and permanent memorial than in "The John G. Paton Mission Fund," a special organisation through which the freewill offerings of God's people, in every quarter of the globe, have flowed to cheer the heart of His servant in forwarding the fulfilment of his prayer for the conversion of these South Sea Islands to Christ.

To my dear friend, A. K. Langridge of Southend, belongs the honour, under God, of organising and developing this Fund, by a scheme of Lectures, with Illustrations, vividly setting forth the story of the Mission, by editing *Quarterly Jottings*, etc., etc. To him, whose enthusiasm and devotion thought out and arranged the whole of these plans, to the excellent artist, Mr. Frank Weeks, who reduced his ideas to realistic pictures for Lantern Slides, and to the many friends who have generously responded to our appeals—I wish in my brother's name and in my own to convey our sincere and heartfelt thanks.

At the present time (1897) this Fund, through its Honorary Office-Bearers in Britain, receives contributions and is responsible for the following objects:—

- (1) For the support of Native Teachers, converts from Cannibalism, at a cost of £6 a year each. About fifty Teachers are already allocated, and the list is increased as contributions are received and Teachers are available.
- The Rev. Fred. J. Paton, Dr. Paton's second son,