

# GLORIOUS GOSPEL TRIUMPHS

## **Preface**

I have long been urged to write the story of my life and work in Fiji and Australasia, but have shrank from doing so, lest it might seem to be inconsistent with Christian humility. But my brethren have pleaded another consideration that should have weight with me. They have said that the facts in my possession were not my own, and that if published they might help other workers, and bring glory to my blessed Lord. This greatly influenced me, for I only wish to live to glorify God, and do good to others. But, being still perplexed with doubts and fears, I have taken all to the Lord, and earnestly pleaded for light and guidance. A deep and painful sense of great unfaithfulness would keep me silent, and incline me to burn every record of the past; but, after much waiting up on God, I am now fully persuaded it is His will that I should publish this book, and I have consented to do so. I do not write of any righteousness of my own, or good that I have done in my own strength, for

I nothing have, I nothing am

But I write of my Saviour's love and power, and of the triumphs of His glorious Gospel that I have seen in my life and work.

J. W.  
Victoria, Kew,  
28<sup>th</sup> March 1899

## **Introductory Sketch**

By the Rev. W.H. Fitchett, B.A., LL.D.

The reader of this book loses much if he has not a personal knowledge – or, in default of that, a vivid mental picture – of its writer. Great as is the interest of the record here presented, the man is yet greater than the book. Throughout the seven Colonies of Australasia the name of JOHN WATSFORD is, in a sense, a household word, and there gathers about it a singular degree of love and reverence. John Watsford is venerated everywhere, and by men of all Churches, or of no Church, for his saintly piety, his fine record as a missionary and evangelist, his frank honesty, his transparent unselfishness, his utter devotion to the service of every good cause.

Mr Watsford would have been a man of mark in any calling. He has many of the qualities of an orator, and a natural faculty for leadership which is felt by everyone who comes within range of his influence. A fearless man, who speaks the truth and does the right in scorn of consequent; rich in a strong-fibred, clear-eyed common-sense, which sees the path to be trodden when subtler intellects often stumble and grope! A man of resolute convictions and exultant faith, with a capacity for generous and fiery anger against evil only too rare in these pallid days of half convictions about right and polite compromises with wrong!

But to the Methodist Churches of Australasia in particular, John Watsford is a sort of patriarch and saint. He is the one surviving representative of what may be called the "heroic age" of Wesleyan Missions in the Pacific. He has done every sort of work, filled every variety of office, and enjoyed every distinction the Methodist Church can

impose or confer upon its ministers. As a preacher and theologian, John Watsford does not, perhaps, belong to the “modern” school; and, though well read in general literature, and singularly versed in Scripture and in Methodist theology, he has no claims to be, in any wide sense, a scholar. But he represents and embodies all the best and most characteristic qualities of Methodism: its pity for men; its passion for conversions; its faith in a Divine Saviour and a personal redemption; its proclamation of the sanctifying offices of the Holy Ghost; its conception of religion as a present spiritual victory over sin, a creation of saintly character, here and now; its faith in the swift coming and assured triumph of the kingdom of God. And John Watsford has done, and still does, more perhaps than any other single figure to maintain these great and kindling conceptions in the Methodist Churches of Australasia.

As John Watsford stands in the pulpit he is a figure which would delight an artist – especially one of the great painters of what are called the “Ages of Faith,” whose saints and apostles still look down upon us from the frescoes of many a time-stained cathedral. The upright figure; the deep-set, kindly eyes; the head white with the snows of over seventy years; the flowing, snowy beard, as ample as that of Michael Angelo’s Moses. Many elements of natural grace and power give a charm to John Watsford’s preaching. His voice, in particular, has one note of tear-compelling pathos which sometimes melts, in a single sentence, his entire audience. But the true elements of force in John Watsford’s preaching, a sin his character and life, are all spiritual; the force of truth profoundly realised, exultantly believed, and proclaimed in the energy of the Holy Ghost.

That this is not merely an Australian estimate of an Australian minister, over-coloured by an unconscious bias, is shown by the following letter from the Rev. H. Price Hughes, M.A. Mr Watsford has paid only one visit to England, and Mr. Price Hughes kindly supplies the following vivid sketch of the impression Mr. Watsford left on English audiences:-

*October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1899.*

Dear Mr. Fitchett, - I am delighted to hear that the venerable Mr. Watsford’s “Autobiography” is about to be published, and that you are writing a brief prefatory sketch of his saintly career. I vividly remember his visit to this country many years ago, when I was appointed as his colleague in the great Autumnal Missionary Deputation to Leeds. We also stay at the same house, so that I saw him in private as well as heard him in public. His missionary speeches to those world-famous, crowded Leeds audiences were simply ideal missionary addresses. They came from his heart. They were full of the spontaneous eloquence of reality and deep emotion. They told the story of one of the most glorious pages in missionary annals. His great spiritual influence swept over those crowded audiences as the wind sweeps over a cornfield in the autumn. You could see the meeting surge in all directions, overwhelmed with emotion and Divine influence. I think I have never heard so effective a missionary speaker; and yet it was so simple and so devout. It was, in truth, the Power of God!

The same impression marked his private life. I was at the Leeds Anniversary again twelve months ago, in my official position as President. I stayed at the same house. I asked my host if he remembered Mr. Watsford’s visit. He uttered an exclamation of delight at the very mention of the name. “Of course! He could never forget that visit;” and he added that the great missionary did not say much about religion, but a religious influence seemed to flow from him in all directions. He had, in fact, that greatest of all gifts which the early Methodist preachers, amid all their shortcomings and infirmities, so richly enjoyed, namely, the unction of the Holy Ghost.

The painters of the Middle Ages tried to express the impression produced by saints, by giving them a nimbus, indicating in their rude way that there is some heavenly influence which radiates from those who live in Christ. Mr. Watsford had that unmistakable but undefinable characteristic of the true saints. And, indeed, the impression he produced on my mind on that occasion long ago, although my intercourse with him was so brief, lives in my memory as fresh and fragrant as ever. Once or twice since then he has favoured me with a letter, and one of my greatest consolations amid the burdens and perils of my work in London is to know that he prays for me. – Yours very sincerely,

H. Price Hughes.

John Watsford's Autobiography is published in the belief that thousands who read it will be conscious of the spiritual stimulus which streams out from the story of such a life; and that thus –perhaps in years to come, when the hand that wrote this tale of *Glorious Gospel Triumphs* has crumbled to dust – these great spiritual “triumphs” may be repeated in other lives, to the glory of God and to the spread of the kingdom of His Son.

W. H. Fitchett

O for a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer's praise,  
The glories of my God and King,  
The triumphs of His grace!

My gracious Master and my God, Assist me to proclaim,  
To spread through all the earth abroad  
The honours of Thy name.

## **Chapter I** **Australasia; New South Wales**

### **Early Days**

To be used by God in saving others we must ourselves be saved. To Abraham the Lord said, “I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing.” David prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me...then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” To Peter Jesus said, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Let me then first and briefly tell of my early days, and how the Lord Jesus sought and saved me.

I was born at Parramatta, New South Wales, Australia, on December 5, 1820. Parramatta is small and insignificant compared with other towns even in Australia, but as the place of my birth it is to me

A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.

It is about thirteen miles from Sydney, the capital of New South Wales. Its beautiful river, with villages and orange groves on the banks, has been much admired. In the days of my youth the Governor's country residence was there. The barracks were generally occupied by a large company of soldiers, who, while they did not improve the morality of the place, gave to it an air of life and activity. By the people of Sydney, however, it was regarded as dull and slow-going.

Methodism was no sooner introduced into Australia than it found its way to Parramatta, and the labours of God's servants were there crowned with success. The town has given to the Methodist Church some earnest workers, among whom I may mention Mrs Draper, the excellent wife of the Rev. D. J. Draper; Mrs. Cross, the wife and the devoted missionary to Tonga and Fiji; and the Rev. W. J. and Mrs. Webb, who long laboured in our Mission in Fiji. The Rev. J.G. Millard came from England when a lad, but he was converted in Parramatta, and was there received into the Christian ministry.

I was the third child in a family of twelve, - a large number for our very kind and, I fear, sometimes over-indulgent parents to care for. We were all sent early to the Wesleyan Sabbath School, and were never allowed to be absent from church, morning or evening, on the Sabbath day. My mother's father lived with us for many years. He had been a soldier, and was a stern old man. We children, however, could always reckon on his being on our side, and I think that he often encouraged us to rebel against our parents. Some grandfathers and grandmothers are very foolish, and, however wisely and well they may have brought up their own children, they are not to be trusted in the training of their grandchildren.

As a boy I had my share of troubles, accidents, and hairbreadth escapes. Playing one day with a number of other lads, I fell, and others fell on me, breaking my leg. This laid me up for more than six weeks, a great trial to an active boy. For about a month longer I had to go on crutches, but I was soon able to get along on my crutches almost as fast as I formerly could without them; and few boys dared to attack me then, for a crutch is a formidable weapon. I did not suffer any permanent injury from this accident. Indeed the bone was so well set that when the doctor and a friend of his met me one day in the street, and asked which leg had been broken, I had some difficulty in answering the question, and I thought from their hearty laughter that I had, after all, made a mistake.

Another time I was bathing with one of my brothers and another lad. As we were all standing on a slippery rock by the river's brink, this lad pushed my brother, and the two, holding on to each other, fell into the water, which at the edge of the rock was very deep. They sank together, for neither could swim. I plunged in after them. When I reached them, both had gone to the bottom. They laid hold of me and clung with a death-grip, and I had a fearful struggle to save myself and them. Grasping the sharp projecting points of the rock, I fought my way, inch by inch, with my precious burden until I came to the surface. I felt then that it was an awful time, and I have often since thought how terrible it would have been if I had found a grave beneath the waters, for I knew nothing of religion and was without God and without hope. But in that dread hour of peril He pitied and delivered me.

On another occasion I was in the fields with some boys when we found an old cigar. Putting it between two stones we ground it to power. We then set to work to see who could take most of the snuff we had thus made. I went far beyond my companions, and suffered for it. I was so sick that I could not stand, or even hold up my head, and the boys were compelled to carry me home. On their way, coming to the river, they determined to bathe. The tide was out, and boats were lying dry on the beach. They put me into one of the boats, went off, and soon forgot all about me whilst they

splashed and sported in the water. When they came back the tide had turned. The water, rapidly rising in the boat, had nearly covered me, for I had no power to move. Wet, weary, and faint, I was carried to my father's house. A long affliction followed. For months my life was despaired of, but at length God in His great mercy raised me up again.

One day I was standing in a narrow lane near a coach and four horses. The coachman, leaving the box, carelessly threw the reins on the backs of the horses, which in a moment were off. I ran for a wide gate near at hand. The horses running for the same, I was caught by one of the wheels of the coach and jammed against the gate-post. When the coach passed in I was thrown insensible on the ground. All thought that every bone in my body was broken, and that I was dead. Soon, however, I regained consciousness, and was lifted tenderly and carried into the nearest house. I was in an agony of pain, and yet I remember laughing at an accident that occurred. At the side of the house was a low fence that anyone could easily step over, and inside of it, at one end, was a large tub let into the ground and filled with water for the ducks. One of the neighbours, a funny old lady, came rushing in, and, forgetting all about the fence, fell over it into the duck tub. I heard the splash, followed by the cry, "Old Biddy's in the duck tub," and even in my intense suffering I could not help laughing at poor Biddy's misfortune, although at the same time I felt sorry for the old woman, whom we all liked. When the doctor examined me he found that no bone was broken, but that I was sadly bruised. It was feared that I should feel the effects all my life, but in six or seven months, through the goodness of God, I was as well as ever.

By Sabbath School days were days to be remembered. I am afraid that I gave my teachers much trouble, and I am sure that many of them never understood me. As a boy I was full of life and fun and mischief, though my heart was always easily touched. When cuffed and scolded, my proud spirit rebelled; but gentleness and love soon melted me. I remember that I once tore up a feather pillow that an old man used as a cushion in church. When the stewards found the feathers flying in all directions they vowed that they would punish the offender, intimating that they knew pretty well who he was. All their threats had no power to move me, but when I heard the old man say, "I would not have cared, only it was the pillow on which my dear old wife laid her head when she died," it almost broke my heart, and I was willing to suffer anything for the bad deed I had done.

At another time I was playing with a pet bird of my brother's while he was absent. Coming in, he blamed me for taking the bird out, and struck me a hard blow. Without a moment's thought I threw a small stone I had in my hand and killed the bird. My brother rushed at me and thrashed me severely, but I bore it all without offering any resistance. My sorrow for what I had done was so great that for many days I could not get over that trouble – the poor bird seemed ever before me.

In our Sabbath School was a teacher who soon lost his temper, and who sometimes boxed my ears in the presence of the other boys. He never managed me, and I was wicked enough to feel that I should like to strike back again. There was another teacher who, when I was at all wild, took me aside and always spoke so tenderly that I had soon to give in. Depend upon it, "love will bow down the stubborn neck" when nothing else will. Well would it be for the children, and well for ourselves, if we all

resolved, and in our homes and Sabbath Schools carried out of the resolution to act on the plan indicated in one of Charles Wesley's hymns –

We would persuade their hearts to obey;  
With mildest zeal proceed;  
And never take the harsher way  
When love will do the deed.

I have often thought that if the mighty power of love had been brought to bear more fully and more frequently upon me, I should have been won for Jesus long before I was.

Our Sabbath School Anniversaries were to all of us red-letter days. We did not then have a tea meeting in the evening and a public meeting after, but we had an all-day children's meeting. It was generally on the Monday. The morning from nine to one o'clock was devoted to singing, recitations, speeches, etc., and the afternoon to prizes, procession, and tea. People came from far and near to our festival, and it was a day of great rejoicing. I never did much in the singing, for, somehow or other, they had come to the conclusion that I was not great in that line. Our great poet has said –

The man that hath no music in his soul,  
Nor is not moved by concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils

He should have also told us that most men have more or less of music in them. If intense love of music is any indication of this, then I am sure I have. The difficulty with me is in getting it out. I have sometimes told my friends that when young I was spoiled as a singer in this way. They were singing in our church one of those outrageous tunes that go galloping along at a rapid rate, then come most suddenly to a full long stop, and then bound off again as fast as ever. I was singing away with all my might, when they came to one of those sudden stops, and, instead of stopping, I went on with a solo. The congregation turned and looked and laughed at me. I will not say that this drove all the music out of me, but, whatever of it I may have had, it sealed up in me for ever, and I have never been able to start a tune or sing since that hour. But though I had little to do with the singing, I was always brought to the front in recitations, and, whatever others thought of my performance, I had no doubt that in the opinion of my dear mother, and one of two elderly lady friends who were frequently present, it was as near perfection as anything could be. For some of the superintendents and teachers of our school I cherish the most affectionate remembrance. The names of Messrs. James Byrnes, R. Hunt, John Walker, R. Howell, and others, are still very dear to me.

We had then in Parramatta, as we have now in many places, some good men with strange peculiarities. One of these used to visit our school. He was asked sometimes to give out the closing hymn, and pray. We boys were always glad to see and hear the old man. There were two mistakes he generally made that we looked for. In giving out the hymn he put the page on the hymn, as "the thirteenth page on the twenty-sixth hymn," and in his prayer he often quoted Psalm cxxxix. 2, and always incorrectly, saying, "Thou knowest our downrising and our upsitting." This old man had a scolding wife, who greatly tried and persecuted him, but he was firm and immovable, ever faithful to his God. His wife died, and after some time he married another, a quiet, easy-going woman, the very opposite of the former wife, and, strange to say,

the old man now grew cold and careless in the service of God, and died at last under a cloud.

Another of these queer men is referred to in the Life of the Rev. D. J. Draper, by Rev. J. C. Symons. He had the idea that the Superintendent of our school was a bitter enemy of his, and he would pray the Lord to save him from his foe, and enable him to Bear the persecution raised against him; nearly always concluding with, "My dear brothers and sisters, never mind nothing what nobody says to you."

When a boy, I heard and knew most of the pioneer ministers of the Wesleyan Church in Australia, and my love and respect for them was very great. They were indeed earnest, hard-working, noble men. It was a great joy to me in early life to see and hear them, and now, in my old age, I delight to think of them still. The Rev. S. Leigh, the first Wesleyan minister in Australia, did a great work, and did it well. He left for England when I was eleven years old. The Rev. G. Erskine was one of Dr. Coke's missionaries to India. He was the first Chairman of the Australian District. We boys used to think him a stern old man. He would have order in church, and has startled us many a time by calling from the pulpit in his loud, gruff voice, "Drive that dog out of the chapel!" "Take that hat off the window-sill!"

The Rev. Walter Lawry, Mr. Leigh's first colleague, I knew better in after-years, when he was the General Superintendent of Missions. He was a popular preacher, full of wit and humour, and often said queer things in the pulpit. It is reported of him that once, when preaching, a child cried loud and long. Mr. Lawry bore it patiently for a while, and then, kindly addressing the mother, said, in a way with which no one could be offended, "My dear sister, it's like the toothache, there is only one cure for it, you must have it out." I heard him preach at the opening of York Street Church, Sydney. His text was Ezekiel xxxiv. 26. Speaking of "the holy hill," the stability and permanency of the Church, he referred to Popery and its sad work. "But," said he, "at the glorious Reformation, Protestantism arose in all its strength and smote the whore of Babylon in the mouth, and, I was going to say, knocked the teeth down her throat." The well-known Dr. Lang sat near me that morning, and he shook his sides more than once during the service. When I was in Surrey Hills Circuit, Sydney, Mr. Lawry was living near me, and I often saw him. When he had the first attack of paralysis, the effects of which clung to him to the end, I called at once to see him. I said to him, "Mr. Lawry, is it all right with your soul now?" Looking at me in his peculiar way, he replied, "Would you not think me a fool if I had not made that right?" Some six weeks after, when much better, though still very feeble, he insisted on going to church. When I had preached on the Conversion of Saul of Tarsus, he came from his pew near the door. Staggering up the aisle of the church, and standing inside the communion rail, he said, "God has raised me up from the gates of death to warn you once more." Then, while a wonderful influence rested on the people, he prayed them to be reconciled to God.

The Rev. W. Horton, another of the pioneers, left for England when I was about eight years old. I remember well the night when he preached his farewell sermon, and how I longed to hear it; but I had not that privilege, for a neighbour of ours wished also to hear it, and as his wife was too nervous to be left alone, I, an eight-year-old guard, was sent in to take care of her. Another of these first ministers was the Rev. Joseph Orton. He had been a missionary in the West Indies, and had suffered for Christ's

sake. He was the first Wesleyan minister who preached in Victoria. I remember how he used to preach at people in the congregation. I have heard him say, "I want ten of you, twenty of you, to come to Christ tonight. You men and women sitting on the last form there, and that soldier in the corner." But I remember him particularly as one of the ministers present at a Local Preachers' Meeting, where I, as a local preacher, was on my trial for laughing in the pulpit. The facts were these: I had often to preach at Liverpool, nine miles from Parramatta, and when appointed had to take someone with me to lead the singing. One Sunday I tried to secure the help of two or three, and failed. There was a new arrival amongst us who said he could sing, and I took him. I had a very solemn subject – the General Judgment- and had selected the most appropriate hymns. I gave out the first hymn, and my friend started the tune; but of all the singing I ever heard, that was about the worst. There were eight or ten tunes rolled into one. I bit my lip, choked down the laugh that tried hard to come, and got through the first verse. But when he began to sing the second, it was so outrageous that I could restrain myself no longer. I burst out laughing, and the congregation laughed with me, except one stern old Independent who worshipped with us, and who very probably had never laughed in his life. He wrote to the Rev. D. J. Draper, complaining of my levity, and the case was heard at the Local Preachers' Meeting. Mr. Draper was in the chair, and Mr. Orton sat by his side. After hearing the explanation, Mr. Draper said, "We had better go on to the next business;" and Mr. Orton said in solemn tones, "Don't do it again, brother." I promised that I never would if I could help it; and so ended that remarkable case.

Another of the first ministers was the Rev. N. Turner, at one time a missionary in Tonga, then in New Zealand, and afterwards stationed in Australia. He was an eminent Christian, and a thoroughly devoted minister of Christ. He had a powerful voice. It was said that when he preached in the open air he could be heard a mile away, but I think that was an exaggeration. Mr. Turner was always seeking to save souls, and in most of his services sinners were converted. I have known him compelled to stop in his sermon and come down from the pulpit to comfort penitents in great distress. Oh that we had more of that in our day! Mrs. Turner, who came with her husband from England in 1827, and who saw the wonderful changes that took place in this southern wild, lived for some years with her son-in-law, the Rev. John Harcourt, in Kew. She died at Kew, on October 10, 1893, in her ninety-fifth year.

I cannot speak very highly of most of the week-day schools I attended in my early life. There was generally plenty of cane, and little else. The teachers thought they could drive knowledge into children; in these days they have learned the better plan of drawing it out of them. Of one of the masters I have a very vivid recollection. He was a brutal tyrant, who delighted in severely flogging the boys for every trifling offence. When I was between ten and eleven years old, the King's School was established at Parramatta. Its first master was the Rev. R. Forrest, M.A., a clergyman of the Church of England, a gentleman of noble bearing, a thorough scholar, and a most successful teacher. This school at once took its place as one of the first Grammar Schools in Australia, and I am pleased to say that it has never lost its proud position. Gentlemen of the highest attainments have been at its head, and it has always had a large staff of thoroughly efficient teachers. The most popular and generally beloved of the staff in my day, and one to whom I delight to refer, was the Rev. W. Woolls, D.D., who died in Sydney, New South Wales.

To this school I was sent, my father saying to a friend, when he sent me, "That boy will one day be a missionary;" a prophecy which was certainly fulfilled. I remember my first examination in history at the King's School, and how lamentably I failed; but a kind word of encouragement from the Head Master stimulated me to plod on with the determination to succeed. I remained at the school as a pupil for six years, and was afterwards employed as one of the teachers under Mr. Forrest for two years.

While at "King's" I attended the Episcopalian church every Sunday afternoon. The well-known Rev. Samuel Marsden, then very old, was officiating. We boys got to know some of his sermons almost by heart, for he often repeated them, and there were two that we specially looked out for: "David and the ewe lamb" and "Onesimus." A grand old man was the first Colonial chaplain. He excited a great influence for good in those early days of our history, and was much respected by everybody. When his funeral sermon was preached the Methodist church was closed, and all went to the service at St. John's.

All the time I was at "King's" the Head Master was exceedingly kind to me, lending me books and helping me with my studies. I thank God that I was ever placed under his care. And yet I look back on my connection with that school, and my regular attendance at the Episcopalian church, with peculiar feelings. All this might have led to my entering the ministry of that Church. Trained in their school, and with the powerful influence of the Head Master in my favour, there would have been no difficulty in the way. But if that step had been taken, what a different course I should have travelled, and how different the story of my life! I do not know what my Episcopalian friends will think of me when I say that I thank God that step was not taken. Not because I do not recognise and value the good in the Anglican church, or do not respect her many able and devoted ministers, but simply because there is nothing to me like Methodism, - no Church in which I could have done more good. In my youth I was a great bigot. I really thought that there was very little religion outside of the Methodist Church. But I have long ago outlived all that. I have learned to know and rejoice in the great good in other Churches, and to love all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth. Yet still I bless God that I am a Methodist, for all I have and all I am I owe under God to Methodism.

### **Conversion**

In 1838 occurred the event of my life, for which I shall have to praise God "long as eternal ages roll." One evening, with one or two other young fellows, I went to the Methodist Church, Macquarie Street, Parramatta. The Rev. D. J. Draper was conducting a prayer-meeting. I had no serious thought; I went to mock rather than to pray. What was said or sung I do not know; all I know is that after a while a mighty power came upon me. The sins of my whole life pressed heavily on my soul. I trembled before God, and thought I should sink through the floor into hell. I tried to leave the church, but could not. No one came near me. After the service I left my companions at once and hurried away to my home. Someone followed me. I quickened my pace, but the faster I walked the faster he pursued, until, just as I was about to pass through my father's gate, a strong hand was laid upon me, and one who was a leader in the Church said to me, "My young friend, I've been thinking about

you and praying for you. I am going to commence a young men's class, and I thought I would invite you to join it. Others have tried to persuade me not to invite you, but I have been moved to follow you tonight and press you to come."

I could not speak a word, my heart was too full, for I felt that God had sent him. I tore myself away, and running into the house went at once to my room, and there poured out my heart to God and cried to Him for mercy. For hours I continued pleading, but no answer came. I was afraid to go to sleep lest I should wake up in hell before the morning. That night, and many a night after, I drew my little bed near the fireplace, and, setting the candlestick on the mantelpiece, read and read my precious Bible until I fell asleep.

It was our long vacation at "King's," and day after day I spent alone in my room reading the Bible, and praying to God to save me. I was the first to join the young men's class. There they showed me the way of salvation, and prayed for me; but no rest came to my troubled, burdened heart. For six long weeks I was in this distress and bondage, and my poor mother thought I was going out of my mind. One day – how well I remember it! – I went into an upper room, and falling on my knees cried, "O God, I cannot live another day like this. The load of sin is crushing me down into hell. Have mercy upon me, and pardon all my sin, for Jesus Christ's sake, who shed His blood for me." In a moment I saw all my sins laid on Jesus, and I laid hold of Him as my present Saviour. My chains fell off, and my burden rolled away. Glory be to God! The witness of the Holy Spirit was so clear and distinct, that I thought at the time God really spoke to me from heaven: "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." My joy was very great; it was "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Soon after my conversion the *Life of John Smith*, but the Rev. Richard Treffrey, Jun., was put in my hands. I thank God that I ever read that book. It showed me clearly that I must work for God, and that to work successfully I must be fully consecrated to God. I saw it to be my privilege to be sanctified wholly, and sought it with all my heart; and, trusting Jesus, proved that His blood cleanseth from all sin. Again and again in my life, through unfaithfulness, I have lost that great blessing, but the Holy Spirit has brought back my wandering spirit and restored my soul.

Baptized with the Holy Ghost, I had a great longing to bring others to Jesus. I began by distributing tracts. Procuring a large bundle, I set out on my mission, with the determination not to pass by one person, and with the thought that almost everyone would be converted to God. I had given away many tracts without any rebuff, when I came to an unfinished house, on the roof of which a man was shingling. Ascending the ladder I presented a tract, and asked the shingler to read it. Turning on me with fury he said, "Look you, young fellow, if you are not soon off I'll send you down quicker than you came up." I had to beat a hasty retreat, and a feeling of great discouragement came over me. But it did not last long. I was soon at work again, with an earnest desire to save souls from death.

I became a teacher in the Sabbath School, where I sought to win the young for Jesus.

In July 1839 I was received as a local preacher on trial. At that time we had a band of earnest local preachers in Parramatta. Labouring with these, I was much strengthened and blessed in my work.

One of the first persons brought to God as the fruit of my labours was a most interesting case. I was at the time studying hard with a view to the ministry. One day, after some hours reading, I went out for a walk as far as my mother's, for I was not then living at home. When I was about to return, my mother told me of a poor woman, living in a street I had to pass through, whose husband had taken to drink, sold every article of furniture in the house, and left her dying in a miserable state. How I prayed as I went along that God would open my way into that house to speak a word for Jesus to the dying woman! I was passing the gate when a woman, altogether unknown to me, but who must have known that I was a Methodist, called me and said, "There's a poor woman here who can't live very long, and no one has been to pray for her. Won't you come in?" I went in, and found her lying on a wretched bed in one corner of an unfurnished room. Kneeling down near her I asked her if it was well with her soul, and then she told me her sad, sad story. She was the child of praying parents, had been converted in a Sabbath school in the old land; was married to a godless man; lost her religion; came to this country with her husband; had been deserted by him, and was now dying without hope. I told her the "old, old story," prayed with her, and then did what I have attempted to do only once under similar circumstances – I tried to sing. It must have been something awful, quite as bad, I have no doubt, as that of my Liverpool friend who got me into trouble; but, heedless of everything save how to help the dying woman, I struck up –

Come to Jesus, just now!

He will save you, just now!

There was no need for me to sing any more, for as the tears rolled down her pale face, and her whole frame was shaken with emotion, she herself sung so sweetly –

I believe it, I believe it, I believe it, just now!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen!

She had hold of Jesus, the night of darkness was past, and the morning of joy had come. An hour or two later her happy spirit went to be "forever with the Lord." That was my first soul won; thank God, it was not the last.

### **Call to the Ministry**

In 1841 I was recommended to the British Conference as a candidate for the Wesleyan ministry, and was very soon afterwards sent out to supply for a minister who had to leave for South Australia.

The ministers of that day were the Rev. John McKenny, Chairman of the District, one of Dr. Coke's missionaries to India, a fine old gentleman, but almost worn out by his labours in India; the Rev. D. J. Draper, who did a great work in New South Wales, South Australia, and Victoria, and who died preaching Christ to his perishing fellow-voyagers on board the ill-fated *London*, which foundered in the Bay of Biscay; the Rev. F. Lewis, a Welshman, full of fire and love, who knew how to bring sinners to Christ, and to whom I owe a great deal; the Rev. G. Sweetman, a sweet man indeed, and one of the best preachers of the time; and the Rev. W. Schofield. The Rev. James Watkin, who wrote the appeal, *Pity Poor Fiji*, that thrilled thousands of hearts, and mine, was another. He was a missionary in the Friendly Islands, and afterward in New Zealand, but was then in Sydney. He was one of the first preachers, and far away the best platform speaker of the day. I was strongly drawn to Mr. Watkin, and

used to consider it one of y greatest privileges to be allowed to walk with him on a Sunday night to his home in Surrey Hills, though it gave me a long walk afterward to my lodgings at the other end of the city. The Rev. Samuel Wilkinson is the only one left of the ministers forming the District Meeting at which I was received. Though now getting very feeble, he is doing a good work among the soldiers and sailors of Sydney.

At that time there came among us the Rev. John Waterhouse, the General Superintendent of our Polynesian Missions. Mr. Waterhouse had the soul of a true missionary. He had just come from Tonga and Fiji, and preached to us on the Sunday from "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." I never saw a congregation melted as that was. Old and young, ministers and lay-men, wept like children. The sobbing of the people sometimes almost stopped the preacher in his sermon. The next day I was introduced to Mr. Waterhouse by Mr. McKenny, who asked, "Do you want a man for Fiji?" Laying hold of me, Mr. Waterhouse said, "I'm afraid he won't do; he's short of a rib, I think. Never mind, be ready when I come again." But he never came again. He died praying, "More missionaries, more missionaries!" and that prayer was answered.

I might tell of many laymen of that day who were earnest workers in our Church, and to whom Methodism is largely indebted. Brother Pidgeon, who laboured as a city missionary in Sydney, was the instrument of great good. He was always at work, and many from among the lowest and worst were brought to Christ through his efforts. Some of the local preachers and leaders in Sydney and Parramatta were men of great spiritual power, men who believed in prayer and fasting, and who did not depend upon a stranger coming now and then to hold special services and bring sinners to Christ. They believed in the Holy Ghost, and pleaded for His coming in connection with the ordinary services. As a result, there were "showers of blessing," glorious revivals, wonderful displays of the Holy Spirit's power in convincing and saving men. We used often to see a whole congregation broken down and unable to leave the church; and numbers, night after night, coming to the house of God and finding salvation, and this no matter who was conducting the service. A more particular account of some of the revivals with which I was at this time connected will not be uninteresting to the reader.

The first revival in Parramatta that I know of was in 1840. Religion had been in a low state. The minister of the Circuit was a good man, but old and nearly worn out. He was great opposed to noise, and marked the men who were very much in earnest. It was the custom then to call by name a few persons to pray in the prayer-meetings, and any who were at all noisy were never asked. Two of our excellent and devoted local preachers, who were always seeking to save souls, were placed on the list of persons not allowed to take part in the prayer-meetings. Very soon I was added to the number. One day the two brethren to whom I have referred said to me, "We are going specially to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the revival of God's work, and we want you to join us. This is our plan: Every morning and evening and at midday to spend some time in pleading with God to pour out His Spirit; to observe every Friday as a day of fasting and prayer; to sit together in the meetings, and, though not permitted to pray aloud, silently to plead for the coming of the Holy Ghost." I think they were a little afraid of me, as they gave me this caution: "Now mind, you must not say a word against our minister, or have any unkind feeling

toward him, because he does not allow us to take part in the meetings. He knows what he is doing, and has his own reasons for it. If we complain, or speak against him, the Lord will not hear our prayer.” We carried out our plan for one, two, three weeks, no one but God and ourselves knowing what we were doing. At the end of the fourth week, on Sunday evening, the Rev. William Walker preached a powerful sermon. After the service the people flocked to the prayer-meeting, till the schoolroom was filled. My two friends were there, one on each side of me, and I knew they had hold of God. We could hear sighs and suppressed sobs all around us. The old minister of the Circuit, who had conducted the meeting, was concluding with the benediction, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God” – here he stopped, and sobbed aloud. When he could speak he called out, “Brother Watsford, pray.” I prayed, and then my two friends prayed, and oh! the power of God that came upon the people, who were overwhelmed by it in every part of the room! And what a cry for mercy! It was heard by the passers-by in the street, some of whom came running in to see what was the matter, and were smitten down at the door in great distress. The clock of a neighbouring church struck twelve before we could leave the meeting. How many were saved I cannot tell. Day after day and week after week the work went on, and many were converted. Among them many young persons. Thank God when the children are saved. Some persons think and speak lightly of the conversion of the young, and, instead of doing all they can to help and guard them, are always expecting them to fall away. Many of the boys and girls converted in that revival at Parramatta are still members of the Methodist Church, and others are “around the throne of God in heaven.” I had a little trouble with the boys one Sunday. A friend had taken me in his buggy to Liverpool, where I preached in the open air. Just as we finished the service about sixteen of our boys ran on to the green. They had followed me all the way from Parramatta to be at the service. I had some difficulty in getting them home again, for most of them were wearied with the long journey of nine miles. I took a number of them into the buggy, and drove a mile or so, then put them down and bade them walk on as fast as they could while I went back for the others; thus driving backward and forward I got them all home at last. One of these boys was the President of the Victoria and Tasmania Conference some years ago.

In 1841 I went to assist the Rev. F. Lewis at Windsor, and we had a blessed revival there. In those days we did not so much arrange for special services or missions; we looked for God’s blessing in connection with the ordinary services. At one of the meetings the Holy Spirit came mightily upon us. We were compelled to continue the meetings night after night. Numbers flocked to them, and we had some remarkable cases of conversion. Among these were some of the best customers of the publicans, and no wonder that they cried out against us. One of them especially did all he could to annoy and persecute me in his little way. When I went down the street past his house he cried after me, “Amen! Hallelujah! Bless the Lord!” But he never injured me in the slightest degree. It was the best advertisement I could have. The people came to the meetings to see what was going on, and the power of God laid hold of many of them. One day as I was passing this publican’s house, he stood on one side of his door, and a little old shopkeeper, who lived opposite to him, stood on the other side. The shopkeeper was about as poor a specimen of humanity as could be found in the town. He was of very small stature, and, having lived in India many years, was wasted and worn, with a face shrivelled and sickly, more like old yellow parchment

than anything else. As soon as I came in sight, the publican gave me the usual salute, and when I had gone by he said to his companion, as we learned afterwards –

“Did you hear what that fellow said in his church on Sunday?”

“No,” was the reply; “what was it?”

“Why,” said the publican, “when he had finished his sermon and was going to hold a prayer-meeting, and old Tebbutt, who was at the church, was going out, he cried, ‘I say, old Tubbutt, if you don’t stop to the prayer-meeting you’ll be in hell before the morning.’”

Of course I never did anything of the kind, but the lie roused the old shopkeeper’s anger.

“Do you mean to tell me that he said that?” he snapped. “I’ll tell you what I’ll do. My wife has two seats in his church; she goes sometimes, but I never do; but I’ll go on Sunday morning and hear for myself, and if he says anything like that I’ll give him as good as he sends.”

On the next Sunday, to my astonishment, the old man was there, sitting right before me. In the middle of my sermon he jumped up as if he had been shot. His wife took hold of his coat and pulled him down again. None of us knew the meaning of his action then, but we learned it afterwards. He declared that I pointed at him and said, “See that miserable old sinner sitting there on a seat that might be occupied by a good man,” upon which he rose to reply that if he did occupy the seat his wife paid for it, when she pulled him back. After the service he walked up and down in front of the church waiting for me, and vowing that he would have his revenge for my exposure of him before the congregation. Some of the people, however, went to him, calmed him down and got him home. Poor old man, I could have taken him up under my arm, and walked away with him! In the afternoon I preached at a place three miles away, and to my surprise he was there. In the evening, when I commenced the service in Windsor Church, I saw him come in and take the first seat on the form nearest the door. Before the sermon was over he fell from his seat to the floor, and literally roared for mercy. After a hard struggle he was set at glorious liberty. For three or four months he went on his way rejoicing, and then died a most triumphant death. “Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?” His conversion caused no little stir in the town. The publican felt he had made a grand mistake, and I have no doubt that his master, with all his cunning and hellish wisdom, thought so too.

In the Sabbath School at Windsor we had a most blessed work. I was giving an address in the school one Sunday afternoon, when the children were greatly impressed. I closed the school, and asked those who wished to decide for Jesus to remain. Very few left. About seventy young persons, from eight to sixteen years old, gathered in great distress around the Superintendent of the school and myself, while we prayed for them. Many of them were soon rejoicing in Jesus. Two cases were particularly interesting. A little girl, seven or eight years of age, was weeping bitterly and praying to God to save her. Her mother, who was a teacher, was kneeling by her side and praying for her. Presently the dear child cried out, “O mother, I do believe; Jesus does save me.” The mother, doubting that her child understood what believing was, asked, “But what is believing, dear?” “O mother,” replied the little one, “believing is just seeing Jesus with your eyes shut.” Had not the Good Spirit opened the eyes of her heart so that by faith she saw Jesus and trusted Him? That child is now growing old, but she is still a member of the Church, and has been ever since that memorable hour when Jesus saved her.

The other case was this: My superintendent had two charming little girls, one about eight years old, the other six. They were always ready for play with me. If my study door was open, dear little Mary, the youngest child, would soon find her way in. She was not sent to the Sabbath School; but that afternoon, hearing the singing and praying, she got out of the parsonage yard, and found her way to the door of the schoolroom. I was kneeling at the time, praying for the children, when I felt someone come very close and kneel down by my side, but had no idea who it was. I closed my prayer and looked down. There was little Mary, with her hands put together, and praying most earnestly. I spoke to her about Jesus, and ever afterwards Mary would have it that she was converted that day, and I thoroughly believe she was. Nearly forty years later I visited England. A few days after landing I received a letter from a lady, urging me to go and see her as soon as I could. She signed her name, but added, "You will not know me by this name, but you will remember little Mary L----- you knew and loved as a child." I went to see my old playmate, and rejoiced with her as we talked over that never-forgotten day.

Castlereagh was a part of the Windsor Circuit, and there we had a good work. The whole neighbourhood at one time seemed moved by Divine power. A good brother lived there named John Lees, a grand man, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." To his house penitents in distress came from far and near, and many were born for glory there. Among others converted at that time was one who had been a great sinner. He was gloriously saved. Strange to say, his wife, who had suffered much from his sins, now became his persecutor. She would snatch the Bible from his hand and throw it out of the window, and do all she could to annoy him. One day he was reading the Bible, when his wife laid hold of it and threw it on the floor. He immediately rose and went into his garden. He had not been there long when one of his children came running to him and said, "Mother's crying so; come, father, and see her." He went into the house, and found his wife with the Bible in her hand, weeping bitterly. She had taken up the book to throw it out of the window, when a sentence caught her eye and pierced her heart like a sharp sword. The hand of God was on her. "Come away to John Lees," said her husband, and, taking a child under each arm, he led his wife without shawl or bonnet, crying as she went, to John Lees, and there, very soon, while prayer was being offered, the peace and blessing of God came into her soul.

The Lower Hawkesbury was another part of the Windsor Circuit where we had a good work. At one place, then called "Green's," when we went to prayer at the opening of the service, the power of God so came upon us that the people could not rise again from their knees for two or three hours. What a time it was! All seemed broken down; many were saved. One peculiarity about the place was that many who came to service there had to say all night, for they came from far. The people of the place gladly provided for all who came, and provisions had often to be made on a large scale.

These were true revivals. The fruit soon appeared in changed lives, in earnest work for Jesus, and in cheerful giving to His cause. What collections we used to have! At one of our missionary meetings at Castlereagh, Mrs. G----- brought in her missionary box. She had collected all the year, and had the silver changed for gold. When the box was at last opened, sovereign after sovereign rolled out, until we counted forty.

At one of our meetings Mr. Lewis and I had to stop the people in their giving. We positively refused to take any more.

## Chapter II

### Fiji

In 1843 there came from Fiji an earnest cry for help. A few years earlier the thrilling appeal by the Rev. James Watkin, *Pity Poor Fiji*, had greatly moved the heart of the Methodist Church. In 1835 a Mission was established in the group. Notwithstanding the ferocious character of the cannibals, some little progress had been made. But as one missionary had died, and another had been removed, help was urgently needed. The Rev. David Hazelwood and I were appointed to the Mission.

On February 8, 1844, my dear wife and I were married. For fifty-five years we have been toiling together in the work of the Lord. Lovingly and well has she helped and cared for me, and the children God has given us. On March 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Hazelwood, my wife, and I, left Sydney in the Missionary brigantine *Triton*. The Revs. J. M'Kenny, B. Hurst, F. Lewis, and many others, came on board to bid us farewell. The ship in which we sailed was famous for her pitching and rolling qualities. A captain who once came on board said, "I have never been on such a wretched old tub as this before." Our captain was a good sailor, but had little of the milk of human kindness. He found it difficult to understand how missionaries going to live among cannibals could be sea-sick. But he was a good Christian man, and often in stormy weather it comforted us to hear him as he walked the deck singing –

When passing through the watery deep  
I ask in faith His promised aid,  
The waves an awful distance keep,  
And shrink from my devoted head:  
Fearless their violence I dare;  
They cannot harm, for God is there.

We were one month on the voyage from Sydney to Tonga. It was Friday when we arrived. As soon as we anchored, one of the missionaries came on board. We had just sat down to dinner, and he was invited to join us, which he readily did. He was greatly enjoying the good things before him, not often seen in the islands, when the Rev. John Thomas, Chairman of the District, was announced. Soon the aged, pale-faced missionary appeared, and, after hearty greetings, was invited by the captain to dine with us. But, bowing and then shaking his head, he said, "No thank you, captain, this is our Quarterly Fast Day." The confusion of the missionary at the table may be imagined. Poor fellow, he seemed greatly distressed; and no wonder, since he well knew that what he had done would be regarded as a huge offence by his chairman, who practised weekly fasting all through life, and held the Quarterly Fast Day as a very sacred day indeed. We all, however, could readily forgive the brother, for we knew that in his joy at the arrival of new missionaries, and in the lower but quite natural joy of a table not seen every day in Tonga, he had forgotten everything else, fast day among the rest.

Dinner over, we were quickly on shore. Delighted with everything we saw, we made our way to the Mission House, where we were heartily welcomed by Mrs. Thomas. For more than three months we remained with Mr. and Mrs. Thomas. Their kindness to us we can never forget. Mr. Thomas had his peculiarities and eccentricities, but he was a good missionary, and it was no small privilege for two young men just entering

in their work to be under his training for a few months. Every morning at four o'clock we heard his flint and steel going, and, willing or unwilling, we had to turn out and accompany him to an appointment three or four miles from home. He never invited us to go, but simply told us over-night that *he* was going, and would call us. How I admired the old man striding along through the wet grass, and on reaching the appointed place commencing at once with all earnestness to preach the glorious gospel!

Just before we arrived in Tonga, a heavy blow had fallen on these devoted servants of God. Their only child had sickened and died while Mr. Thomas was on a visit to some of the distant islands. When he reached home his boy was in the grave. No trial more severe than this could have come to the parents, but the grace of God enabled them, while deeply sorrowing, to bow with perfect resignation to the Divine will. It was very affecting when, at a class-meeting, where all the brethren and sisters were gathered together, the Rev. S. Rabone, the brother of Mrs. Thomas, said to her, "Dear sister, it is well with thee, and well with thy husband;" and then, after a long pause, "and it is well with *the child*."

Mr. Thomas loved to tell of missionary work, and trials and success, and we loved to hear him. The old man's memory sometimes failed, and he told us the same tales over and over again; but they were good, and we never tired of listening to him. One thing we young fellows had to be careful of, not to say a word implying the shadow of disagreement with John Wesley's views. If we did, we caught it. I remember on one occasion when we were talking about grammar, Brother Hazelwood and I said that we thought John Wesley's grammars were all too brief, and were unfit for learners. Mr. Thomas was at us in a moment, and came down on us very severely. That two mere boys should dare to criticise the work of that great man was almost as bad as the unpardonable sin. Dear old John Thomas! We shall never forget him: we thank God that we ever met him. He has finished his course now. I was in the British Conference at Liverpool when his obituary record was read, and I was delighted to hear the many good testimonies concerning him. He is now before the throne of God, and a bright crown is that which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, has given him.

While in Tonga we had the great pleasure of often seeing King George. He was then in his prime – a fully consecrated Christian, and a zealous and successful local preacher. His people greatly loved him, and he had a wonderful influence over everybody. We were also greatly delighted at meeting many of the earnest local preachers and leaders, and in hearing their fervent prayers at the various meetings.

One of these brethren, Julius Naulivou, who went with us to Fiji, was one of the finest men I met in the South Seas. He was a chief of high rank, a very devoted Christian, and an eloquent and successful preacher of the Gospel. Mr. Thomas told us that at one of the missionary meetings he had spoken of the millions yet in darkness and in death. After the meeting Naulivou came to him and asked, "Why are not missionaries sent to preach the Gospel to those who are perishing without it?" Mr. Thomas replied, "Simply because the fathers at home have not money enough to send them." With the tears running down his face Naulivou said, "O Mr. Thomas, if my body were all one lump of gold you should have it all." On another occasion he was preaching to a large congregation, King George sitting near him. His subject was "The Gospel, the power of God to save." Referring to what it had done in Tonga, he said, "It found me

a poor benighted heathen, sunk in sin and misery; it brought me light, and lifted me up, and made me a man and a Christian. Who else has it saved?" In a moment the king was on his feet, crying, "Glory to God, it has saved me!" And then another and another rose, until scores were standing, and every man crying, "Glory to God, it has saved me!"

Julius Naulivou, as I have said, went with us to Fiji, but his work there was soon ended. He died a most triumphant death, and went to join the great company from Tonga who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

While in Tonga my dear wife was very ill, and for some days little hope was entertained of her recovery, but God in His great mercy heard our prayer, and raised her up again.

At the end of July we left Tonga, and in a few days were in Fiji. We first made the island of Lakemba, where the Rev. James Calvert was stationed. Mr. Calvert and his truly noble wife had then been six years in Fiji, and God had crowned their labours with success. Since then these faithful missionaries and their work have become known the wide world over. At Lakemba I left Mrs. Watsford with Mrs. Calvert until it should be decided what Station we should occupy. From Lakemba we proceeded to Somosomo, where the Revs. R. B. Lyth and t. Williams were labouring amid many discouragements and exposed to many dangers. Here I first saw that Fijian monster Tui-kilakila, who preferred human flesh to any other food. He was on the beach when we landed. When I was introduced to him he took me under his arm and carried me into his house. Being new in the mission-field, and having heard of this man, I did not altogether like my position, and was very glad when I was out of his clutches. He threw himself on his back on a mat, and when I presented him with a large iron pot he put it on his foot, and held it up for some time as high as his leg would reach. All that our missionaries suffered while living at Somosomo, where this savage was king, will never be known. Mr. Hunt has often told me how frequently they expected to be clubbed; how the king refused to allow them to shut their door when human bodies were being cooked in the oven just outside; and how they were tried and threatened by this fearful man.

When Commodore Wilkes of the United States Exploring Expedition visited Fiji he showed great kindness to the missionaries, and, pitying them in what he regarded as a wretched, perilous position, he offered to place one of his ships at their disposal to carry them away from Fiji. When told that they were unwilling to leave their post, that they had come to preach the Gospel to the savages around and could not now abandon them, he said, "Well, I can see no poetry in a life and work like this." No, but there was something better than poetry. The love of Christ constrained them, and for His sake they were willing to live, and, if necessary, die for the poor Fijians.

Some years after my first introduction to Tui-kilakila I was brought into close contact with him in Lakemba, where he was visiting. One of his principal men was very ill, and he sent for me to give him medicine and cure him. I told him that the man was dying, and that it was of no use giving him medicine. He insisted that I should do it. To satisfy him I put a little oil on the lips of the dying man, and went home. In half an hour or so the king sent for me again. When I arrived he pointed to the dead man, and, in a furious rage, cried, "There, you've killed him!" He had a large uplifted club

in his hand, which I thought he was going to use, so I merely said, "I told you, sir, that he was dying, and that it was of no use to give him medicine;" and I got out of his reach as soon as possible.

From Somosomo we sailed to Viwa, where I met that great missionary, the Rev. John Hunt. At the District Meeting immediately held, I was appointed to the Rewa Circuit; but as the war between Bau and Rewa was then raging, it was arranged that I should live at Viwa and visit Rewa as often as possible.

### Viwa

At the close of the District Meeting I left in the *Triton* for Lakemba, and brought Mrs. Watsford to Viwa; and now our Mission life fairly began. For some months we lived in the same house with Mr. Hunt, and had his valuable help in acquiring a knowledge of the language and of Mission work.

In learning the language I had one of the best native teachers to assist me, Noah, of whom I shall have more to say later on. I undertook to teach him English, while he taught me Fijian. And so, when he laughed at my mistakes, I gave him a difficult English sentence, and laughed at his blunders. He learned many words, and how to construct short sentences, but English was a great puzzle to him. He amused me one day when he came to tell us that someone in the yard had a sow and four young ones for sale. Slowly pronouncing each word, he said, "Here is man, want sell one big pig and four nice little boys." We found that the best way to learn the language was to go among the people with two questions, "What is this?" and "Who is this?" and to get hold of words and use them, no matter how many mistakes we made. Strange mistakes are indeed often made. Instead of blessing the people a missionary has sometimes, unawares, cursed them. One of my colleagues in prayer used the word *vuku* instead of *vuka*, and so, while intending to ask God to make them wise, he prayed that He would make them fly. The Fijian language is very fine, and there is no special difficulty in acquiring the knowledge of it. The many dialects puzzled us at first, but it was determined to adopt the Bau dialect, and translate all our books into that alone. This has greatly simplified the language, and the wisdom of doing it has been acknowledged by all.

In about five or six months I began to give my first addresses, and conduct services in Fijian, no doubt making many errors. There was a grammar by the Rev. David Cargill that was a great help to me. Since then a very superior grammar by the Rev. D. Hazelwood has been published, and is greatly admired, not by our own missionaries only, but by those of other Societies. Mr. Hazelwood gave us a Fijian dictionary, which is of great value. He also translated many of the books of the Old Testament. But he was not permitted to labour long in the work on which he had set his heart. His health failing, he had to remove to Sydney, where after a few years' suffering he died.

At Viwa some of the people had embraced Christianity, and among them their chief, Namosimalua. It was generally believed that he had done so because he thought it would protect him from his foes. He had been a desperately bad man, always engaged in some treacherous plot, and he was in constant dread of losing his life. As

a professing Christian he was, during my acquaintance with him, a great hypocrite. No one ever knew what he really meant. He was often concocting the most diabolical scheme when he seemed fair and pleasant. I have known him, when kneeling near me in church, cry most earnestly, "Glory! Glory!" and looking up I have seen the old fellow watching me with the only eye he had, to observe what effect his devotion had upon me. No one believed in him; the great wonder was how he had escaped the club so long.

Verani, the second chief, was a remarkable man in many ways. He was the king's adviser and greatest soldier. Some years before this a French vessel visited Fiji. The king determined to take the vessel and seize the property. For the dreadful work he employed Verani, and horribly he fulfilled his commission, murdering the captain and all the crew. From that time he was called Verani or Feranse, the nearest a Fijian can get to pronouncing "France." Though some of his people embraced Christianity, Verani had determined never to do so. But he wished to learn to read, and one of the teachers undertaking to teach him, he could soon read as well as any of them. One day, as he was reading Matthew xxvii., a teacher lying near him heard a loud sob, and, looking up, saw the tears running down Verani's face. Turning to the teacher, the chief asked, "Why did Jesus suffer all this?" "For you, sir," replied the teacher, "to save you." "Then," said Verani, "I am His. I'll give myself to Him." He resolved to embrace Christianity, but delayed, fearing Thakombau's wrath, and became greatly troubled about the matter. When he went to war, he told us, he trembled lest he should be killed and perish. At length he sent word to Thakombau that he intended to be a Christian. The king sent back a message that the day he did he would kill and eat him. Verani still hesitated, but the Spirit strove so powerfully with him that soon he could hold out no longer. He determined publicly to embrace Christianity on Good Friday. He sent to inform Thakombau of this, and added, "I fear you, but I fear the great God very much more. It will be a bad thing if you kill and eat me; but it will be very much worse if Jehovah casts me into hell. If you kill me, you will one day repent, for you will become a Christian, and then you'll be sorry that you killed Verani." Good Friday came, a day never to be forgotten by us. No one who has not been in Mission work can have an idea of our joy that day. We walked in procession to the church, and then Verani bowed in prayer, and called on the name of the Lord, while we, with hearts brimful of gladness, praised our God. Surely in the presence of angels in heaven there was joy over that one sinner repenting.

For some time before this a chief named Komai Boli, head of the Lasakan people, had been living under Verani's protection, having fled for his life from his own tribute. Some days before Good Friday they professed to be friendly towards him, and invited him to return. On the Thursday he had gone to drink *zangona* with them, as a sign of reconciliation, and that night they killed him. He had ten wives living at Viwa with him. When they heard of his death they went crying to Bau, desiring to be strangled that they might go with their husband; but the Lasakan people, intending to disgrace the chief, refused to strangle them. Verani was the only relative left who could do it, for none but a near relative could do the strangling work. They determined to return to him. He had just come from church, and Mr. Hunt and I were sitting with him in his house when the women entered. They pleaded as if for their lives that he would strangle them. Verani answered, "You're too late; a short time ago I would gladly have done it, but I'm a Christian now. Death is past, and Life has come. You must live." Poor wretched women, they went to their home, and cut and burned their

bodies in a frightful way, and wept and wailed night and day. It was painful to see them. We visited them frequently, and they promised that when the days of their mourning were ended they would embrace Christianity. And so they did. In after-days I often heard some of them tell how near to hell they were when the Lord in mercy saved them.

Verani gave up all his wives but one, to whom he was married in due form. After the usual term of probation he was received as a member of the Church, and baptized by the name Elijah. Very soon after his conversion the news came to Viwa that an American ship was wrecked at Ovalau, and that the heathen had gathered to kill the crew and seize the cargo. Verani's large canoe, the *Lagolevu*, was immediately launched, and with a good company of picked men he started for Ovalau, which he reached just in time to prevent the massacre and plunder. What a wonderful change had Christianity already made in this man! How good the fruit that so soon appeared! The enemies of Missions, if they will close their eyes against other things, surely must feel the force of this contrast. Here was a man, who, when a heathen, had cruelly murdered a French crew and taken their ship, but now, converted through the instrumentality of Christian Missions, he is the first to hasten to the rescue of shipwrecked men, and saves them from the ferocious savages who were ready to kill and devour them.

After Verani's baptism, Thakombau sent him a command to lead his men against his enemies. The chief came to the Mission House to know our mind, whether it was right for him to go to war or not. We were divided in opinion. One thought that he ought to obey the chief; the other two thought that he should not go, for Fijian warfare was such that no Christian man could engage in it. While we were debating the matter, with little hope of being of one mind, Verani came and said that the matter was settled, that he had prayed to the Lord to guide him, and had come to the conclusion that it was no right for him to go, and he was prepared to take the consequences. I think that the Lord did guide him in this matter, and saved him from much evil. The Fijians in their wars are cruel and bloodthirsty, they show no mercy to women and children, and many of the slain are cooked and eaten. Had Verani gone to war at Thakombau's command, I am persuaded it would have done much harm in many ways, - to himself, to Thakombau, and to the great work in which we were engaged. I think that Thakombau respected Verani all the more for having resolved to have nothing to do with their terrible wars. The change in Verani in this respect was very marked and very delightful. He had been a man of blood, and had acted a horrible part in war from his youth up; now he was a man of peace, resolved to have nothing more to do with the work of destruction.

When H.M.S. *Calypso*, under Captain North, came to Fiji, the captain determined to punish the people of a certain town where two white men had been killed. The vessel was going in the direction of my Station, and the captain kindly gave me a passage. Verani was on board as pilot: when we anchored opposite the town, shot and shell were thrown into the place for some hours, and then a party of marines and bluejackets were sent ashore to take and burn the town. Verani had given all the information the captain required, but when he was asked to land with the men and lead them to the town he refused. The captain pressed him to go, and asked why he refused. Verani replied, "I have been fighting and destroying men all my life, but I

am a Christian now, and I'll have no more to do with it." The captain was very angry, but Verani was immovable.

Shortly after his conversion, Verani began to preach, and was made a blessing to many. He was a true Christian, meek and humble, and doing all he could to win souls for Jesus. He was not spared many years to work for God. Hearing of war between two tribes at Ovalau, he went to them with the hope of making peace. But one of the parties, still cherishing an old grudge against him, when they had him in their town took their long delayed revenge, and he and a number of his faithful followers were slain. I never looked at Verani after he became a Christian, without praising God for the grace that had made such a wondrous change. The difficulty was to realise that this quiet, loving, humble man had ever been a cruel, ferocious cannibal. I often thought that if the enemies of our holy Christianity could have seen and known this man they could never again say anything against it; and if the members of our Church could have seen and known him they would do more than ever for our Missionary Society, so that many more might be made what he was.

Some time after Verani became a Christian, we heard that the old priest of Bau had declared that it was the will of the god that Verani and the Viewa people should be killed, and the missionaries driven away or killed. Again and again the report was brought to us. One day Thakombau, with a great number of warriors, all blackened, and armed as if for some dreadful work, came to Viwa. The news spread that we had all to die. Vatea, the wife of Namosimalua, went to Thakombau and presented *zangona*, but he kicked it away. He came to the Mission House while we were at dinner, and, calling me into my room, asked which was Mr. Hunt's room and which was mine. He said little, and soon left. Verani came over from his side of the town into a house near us, saying that if he had to die he should like to die near the missionaries. We and our wives met together, and, on our knees, praying to our Heavenly Father, waited to see the end. Thakombau and his men wandered about two hours, and then started for home. As they passed the house where Verani was, he ran out and, bending very low, asked to be allowed to carry the chief's club. It was handed to him, and he walked behind, carrying the club to the canoe, and then returned. All regarded it as a special interference of God on our behalf. Thakombau and his men said that something had tied their hands, and they could do nothing.

I learned at Viwa that to have the respect of the natives, and to be saved from endless trouble with them, I must be firm as well as kind. Some of our friends used to give them all they asked for, and allow them to do as they liked. This made many difficulties for those not willing to follow this course. One day two of the greatest chiefs next to the king came to my house, and wanted to examine my boxes. I did not think it well to allow this, and told them so. They answered, "The captains of vessels, and the white men, and some missionaries, allow us to look at everything in their boxes." I told them that such a thing would be regarded by us as very unbecoming in a chief. They said they would not be refused; they had come to see what was in my boxes, and were determined to do so. I replied that Queen Victoria was the greatest chief I knew in the world, and if she were to come into my house and insist on looking into my boxes I should have to tell her she should not; but Queen Victoria was too high a chief to wish any such thing, and as I had heard that were two great chiefs, I expected they would not do what was unbecoming a chief. They said, "All

right,” and soon went away. Those two men were ever afterwards among my best friends.

Viwa, during the first year of my residence there, was divided into two parties. Many had become professing Christians; but nearly as many remained heathen, and carried on their cruel, hellish practices. One day a heathen chief had gone out with his followers in canoes, and they came back dancing, blowing horns, and yelling fearfully. We knew that something terrible had been done. As the canoes approached the shore we hastened down to meet them, and found that there were eleven dead bodies on board, and one man badly wounded. These it was intended, as soon as the dancing and boasting at Viwa were over, to take to Bau; the wounded man to be roasted alive, as their cruel custom sometimes was. We went among the warriors as they danced and shouted and waved their clubs in the air, and, laying hold of the wounded man, led him through their midst to our house. It was wonderful that they permitted us to do this; but they expected to have no difficulty in securing him when their dance was over. When they then found that we would not give him up, they stormed and raved fearfully; but all in vain. We kept the poor fellow until night, and then got one of our Christian people to take him home in a small canoe.

There were many white men living in different parts of Fiji. A few were decent men, but generally they were a bad lot. One of them, who had been in the islands many years, had eight or ten native wives. When reproved by the missionary for his polygamy, he said, “Sir, I am compelled to have them. I travel as a trader all over Fiji, and am in constant danger; so I have brought one woman from one place, and one from another, and thus have my friends all over the islands, and feel pretty safe.” This man took Mr. Hunt in his schooner on one of his long visiting journeys, and Mr. Hunt fared very badly. The last day at sea, when coming home, a couple of fowls were killed for dinner, and seeing Mr. Hunt greatly enjoying them, the owner of the boat said to him, “Oh, I see, Mr. Hunt, that you like fowls. What a pity I did not know it before, that I might have given you plenty of them!” Most of these whites were as ignorant of religion as the heathen. Mr. Hunt told me that on one of his journeys he stayed a night with one of them who was known in Fiji as “Tom.” Talking in the evening, Tom told Mr. Hunt of an extraordinary cat he had, which never killed a mouse without bringing it and laying it at its master’s feet, crying “Mew.” Before retiring for the night, Mr. Hunt proposed prayer, and while he was praying the cat cried “Mew,” whereupon Tom called out, “There, Mr. Hunt, didn’t I tell you? See, here it is.”

When vessels carrying intoxicating liquors came to Fiji, there was much drinking and dissipation among these white men. A number of them lived at Viwa, and among them were some desperately bad fellows. One Sunday when a drink vessel was in the harbour ten or twelve of them came to our English service. One of the men interrupted the preacher, the Rev. James Calvert, declaring that something he had said was not true, whereupon another rose and challenged his companion to fight; a third, in trying to rise, fell on the floor, and we had a scene not often witnessed at a religious meeting. In the morning Mr. Calvert persuaded the men to give him the drink they still had, and he brought it to the Mission House. On the following day Mr. Calvert and others left Viwa in our Mission vessel for the District Meeting. The next day the white men came to me for the drink Mr. Calvert had got from them, and threatened to burn the house down if I did not give it up. Two of them, half drunk, came over, as

they said, to fight me. One became very violent, and I had to threaten to send for the chief before I could get rid of them. The next evening, as I was standing at my door, one of them, named Jackson, came out of the house opposite, and, putting himself in a fighting attitude, and swearing terribly, moved toward me. I made up my mind that if he troubled me much more I would send for the chief, who would deal effectively with him. On he came, boasting what he would do. When he was eight or ten years away I stepped forward and said, "Now, Jackson, if you are not off at once you'll be sorry for it." Thinking that I was going to "pitch into him," he ran home as fast as he could stagger along, and soon after sent me half a pit, with a message that he would publish an apology in all the newspapers of New York.

These men by their profligate lives did much evil among the natives. Some of them laboured to set the chiefs against us, but the chiefs had sense enough to see through them and to take no notice of what they said. Two of them once tried very hard to prejudice Thakombau against us, but having heard them through he replied, "Oh yes! they are false; you only are the true men. They came here and got Fiji women to be their wives; you brought your wives with you. They never have an English vessel calling to see them; yours comes every year. They have to get food as best they can from Fijians; you have property brought you to buy it with. Oh yes! they are false; you are the true men." After this irony he gave them a bit of his mind, until the fellows were glad to get away. And yet these men knew that they owed much to us, and in the time of danger they quickly fled to us for protection. One man, who had said hard things against Missions and missionaries, was on a vessel bound for California that was wrecked on the reef near one of the Leeward Islands of Fiji. All on board took to the boats, and were compelled to make for the shore. The natives ran down in great numbers to meet them, and the whites gave up all for lost, knowing well that many a sailor who had escaped the jaws of the hungry shark at sea had been devoured by the cruel cannibals on shore. The natives led them into their town, and put them in a large house. After a while food was brought, and a native with English cloth about him came in and asked a blessing. "Oh," said the enemy of Missions, "we are all right, we are among the missionary's people." To the despised and hated missionary he owed his life, and he had the manliness to come back and acknowledge it.

Some of these men were brought under the influence of the blessed Gospel, and were saved. We had one living near us at Viwa, an old sailor, known by everybody as "Old George," who had somewhere been injured by an explosion of gunpowder. He was a great sufferer, and only found relief when we gave him soothing medicines. The Saturday before he died he came to see us and to bid us "good-bye," for he said he knew the end was near, and he wanted to thank us all for our kindness to him. We thought that the old man was going wrong in his mind; but on Monday morning I heard crying in George's house, and, hastening down to inquire what it meant, I found that he had just passed away. I believe he got safely to heaven, for he was a converted man, and had been for some time waiting and watching for the coming of his Lord. In Tonga I met with another of these old sailors who was "a character." His vessel had been wrecked, and he and some others were cast away in an open boat. After many days of terrible suffering they reached Tonga. There, under the ministry of Mr. Thomas, "Jack," for so they called this man, was converted to God. I many times met in class with him, and his experience and prayers, all given in sailor language, were very original and very good. One day when calling at his house I noticed that rafters,

beams and posts were covered with marks of various kinds. I inquired into the meaning of it. "Why," said he, "you see I can't read or write much, and so when I get any great blessing from the Lord I put up a mark there. Do you see that cross? That I made when God pardoned all my sins. That circle I made when He raised me up from a great sickness." Thus he went on to explain all the marks I saw. He was anxious not to forget the goodness of God.

At Viwa I had a very large school. We generally had school for the children at nine o'clock in the morning, and for the adults at four o'clock in the afternoon. It was delightful to see the old men and women learning to read. We brought them spectacles, for which they were most thankful. "See," they said, "how good the Lord is! He gave us His word, and when our old eyes were worn out He gave us these glass eyes to see with." These "glass eyes" were among their most precious treasures, and were kept with peculiar care. Mr. Thomas told me once an amusing story of an old chief and his spectacles. The scented coconut-oil is largely used by the natives. They oil themselves, their clubs, spears, ornaments, indeed almost everything. One day this old chief, who greatly valued his spectacles, and made good use of them reading his Bible, came to Mr. Thomas complaining. "Mr. Thomas, my glass eyes are getting very bad. At first I could see so well with them, but they are now getting so dim that I can hardly see at all, and yet I have carefully attended to them, and have regularly oiled them morning and evening." Mr. Thomas sent for a little hot water, took the spectacles from the chief, washed them well, and, having wiped them dry and clean, handed them back to the old man, who, when he put them on and looked at his book through them, was delighted and astonished beyond measure. Of course Mr. Thomas pointed out to him the cause of the dimness, and the chief went home rejoicing, and determined that his "glass eyes" should have no more anointing.

Some of our people at Viwa, too old to learn to read, came to school and committed to memory what others read to them. One old woman could recite the greater part of our hymn-book of between forty and fifty hymns, pointing to each word as she repeated it, so that a stranger standing by would think that she could read very fluently, whereas she did not know a letter.

The children's school was most interesting. They learned to read and write as quickly and as well as children anywhere, and would pass an examination in natural history, geography, and Scripture history that would not be a disgrace to any of our elementary schools at home. I cannot sing, and therefore my wife had to teach them our English tunes, which they soon learned. We also used their own chants, some of which are very good. When I went to Fiji the second time I took with me a pair of pea-fowls. These the natives came miles to see. They were greatly excited and delighted when the peacock spread out his tail, and began to dance, as they called it. The proud bird got to know how greatly it pleased the people, and he was always ready to oblige them. I made a song on the peacock to be sung to one of their own tunes, and it became very popular, and was sung everywhere, sometimes when not at all appropriate.

Our schools were a great puzzle to those who were yet heathen. How a letter could make anyone know what we wanted they could not understand. I was sitting in my study one day when a great heathen chief, who had arrived in his canoe from a distant island, came in and handed me a letter from the teacher on that island. Missionaries

in Fiji had to buy pigs, and keep them as food for their households, for there were no butcher's shops, and there was neither beef nor mutton at that time in the islands. On the island from which this chief had come the Rev. J. Waterhouse had a number of pigs running on the teacher's grounds. On opening and reading the letter presented to me I said, "So you have been killing and eating one of Mr. Waterhouse's pigs." Amazed and confounded the chief replied, "What! Who told you that?" "Oh," I said, "this letter you brought tells me all about." "Well, well," he exclaimed, almost overwhelmed with astonishment, "that's a pretty thing, that I should bring that letter myself, and then it should go and tell all about me: I'll never carry another."

At Viwa, in 1846, we had the first revival in Fiji. Many of the people had become nominal Christians, but very few knew anything of the life and power of godliness. We missionaries felt deeply about this, and determined to pray in private, and to hold a special weekly meeting to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Associated with us in this was our excellent teacher, Noah, who had long known the saving grace of God. Week after week we pleaded, and God greatly blessed us. One Friday evening we were praying, and all rose from our knees convinced that God had heard and answered prayer. On Saturday afternoon we rang the bell, and the people flocked from every quarter to the house of prayer. The church was crowded when Mr. Hunt and I entered; we felt that God was present. There was deep feeling while we sang the first hymn. Then we went to prayer, and continued praying for four or five hours. The mighty power of God came in a remarkable manner upon the people, and there was a great cry for mercy from the hundreds bowed in deep distress. The floor of the church was wet with the tears of the penitents. When the wave of power first broke upon us, Noah jumped upon a form, and, his black face shining, cried, "This is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel, 'And it shall come to pass in all the last days that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.'"

The distress of some was very great, and so was the joy of others who were trusting in Jesus. One giant of a man who had been a fearful cannibal was in such an agony that four or five men had to hold him; but when he obtained the blessing of salvation he broke from them all, and bounded out of the church crying, "Let me go! My soul is on fire and my heart is burning; let me go!" and away he went to tell the news to his friends in the town, and to urge them to come to the church and be saved. As I was going about among the penitents I saw a young chief standing at one of the doors, surrounded by a group of wild young fellows. He was playing a Fijian musical instrument something like a Jew's harp. I thought of a boy whistling to keep his courage up, and resolved to keep my eye on this young man. Going around again I found that he had moved to another door, and was still playing away most energetically. When I went in that direction once more he was gone, and for some time I knew not where. Presently I noticed an unusual stir in the lower part of the church where a group of persons had gathered. Hastening thither I discovered my Jew's harpist on his knees crying to God to save him, and soon the blessing came. Oh, what a meeting that was! How many were saved I know not. Many left the church, and went to their homes weeping aloud, and all through that night there was distress all over the town. We could get no sleep, for again and again we were sent for to pray for some who refused to be comforted until Jesus came and saved them. Day after day the good work went on. The people were so affected that they neglected to prepare their food; nothing was thought of but salvation.

Some Christians are very anxious to have all men saved in a very quiet way, free from all excitement; but I think their view is very unreasonable, and certainly unscriptural. Some of whom we read in God's word were saved without much excitement, but others were greatly moved, and so it has always been and always will be. The Holy Spirit has linked together two cases of conversion in the Acts of the Apostles to teach us this. In the one case the heart of Lydia was gently opened so that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, and was saved; in the other case the soul of the Philippian jailer was mightily agitated. "He called for light, and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?'" and when he believed "he rejoiced greatly with all his house!" When these poor Fijians, lately fierce and cruel cannibals, were brought under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and saw their sins in all their vileness, who can wonder that they cried out in deep distress and anguish of spirit; or that when the peace and blessing of Heaven came down into their bleeding broken hearts, they rejoiced with joy unspeakable and irrepressible!

The news of the revival spread everywhere, and the natives came from far and near to see what they called "the fire of love from heaven." It exerted a blessed influence all through the islands, and it gave hope and faith to many Christians in pleading for the success of Mission work elsewhere. When I visited Rome in 1881 I told there the story of the first Fijian revival. After the service our Italian minister came to me and said, "You have six students hearing you, and they say if you want missionaries for Fiji they are willing to go." They begged me to tell of the revivals again. I did so, and they said, "That's what we want in Rome." Yes, and that's what we may have everywhere. The promise is one to us, and to our children, and to all that are afar off, and the prayer of faith shall secure its fulfilment.

When we could get away Mr. Hunt and I left in our large canoe for the out-stations, and everywhere we saw the grace of God, and were glad. The Christian natives with us, their hearts warm with their first love to Christ, witnessed for Him in every place. Many believed and turned to the Lord.

The Viwa Circuit at that time included Bau, the most important island in the group. It is about two miles from Viwa, is very small, not being more than two miles in circumference, and has a population of about one thousand. All the great chiefs in Fiji either reside or have come from there, and are recognised in nearly every part of the group. In the early part of my time the king of Bau was Tanoa, an old and feeble man. His son Thakombau - who was really king - was a great and powerful chief, and a cruel, blood-thirsty heathen. I very often preached in Bau in one of the king's houses, the use of which he readily granted; but he would not then hear of our building a church there. I had many conversations with Thakombau about Christianity, but he refused to become a Christian. Still he was greatly restrained, and the fear of our God was upon him; as it was, too, on the people generally. Even the crafty old priests felt it, and very soon in their prayers to the gods introduced the name "Jehovah - Jesus." I was once speaking to Thakombau, and telling him how the nations of old were spared until they filled up the measure of their iniquities, and then the wrath of God came upon them. Seizing a drinking-bowl near him, and handing it to me, he said, "Mr Watsford, show me how high my sins have reached." He seemed really alarmed for a time, but this fear soon passed off.

The heathen priests had a wonderful hold of the people, and were much feared by all. Thakombau, however, long before he embraced Christianity had nearly lost all faith in them, and sometimes treated them with great contempt. To all the heathen it is an important matter when the priest is possessed, as he professed to be, by their god. He is consulted in times of sickness, and when the chief is about to sail, or he is going to war, property, sometimes in large quantities, has to be taken to the priest before the god will enter into him. When the priest is satisfied with the contribution, he, having drunk freely of *zangona*, begins to tremble and shake. This increases in violence until he froths at the mouth, his veins stand out like whipcord on his brow, his eyes swell and protrude as if they would start from their sockets, and his whole body seems convulsed from head to foot. Now he is supposed to be possessed, and whatever he utters is regarded as the word – the will of the god. Thakombau continued to consult the priest even when he had lost nearly all confidence in him. One day he said to Mr. Calvert and me, “My priest is going to shake this evening, come and tell him that he is a liar and a deceiver.” We gladly went. It would probably have cost us our lives had we gone unprotected by the chief. When the other chiefs saw us they looked very angry, and the old priest was in no little degree confused. He, however, began his work, and when he was fairly warming to it, Thakombau touched us and whispered, “Now then.” We at once told the priest that he was deceiving the people. In a moment there was a great stir. Some of the chiefs looked as if they would like to strike us down; but we were protected. The old priest became more and more confused, and, finding that the thing would not go, he said, “I can’t go on while the missionaries are here;” and he gave it up.

On another occasion, when Thakombau was inquiring concerning the life of his daughter who was very ill, the old priest demanded more property. It was brought, and yet he asked for more. When more was brought, he still demanded, till Thakombau said, “What do you want?” Now the chief had two horses, which he had just bought from the captain of a vessel that had called there, and the priest coveted these. So he replied, “The two horses – bring the horses; I must have the horses.” Losing all patience, Thakombau said, “Look here; if you say another word about the horses I’ll go right away to Viwa and embrace Christianity, and where will you be then?” “Oh,” said the priest, “this is enough, quite enough; bring no more.”

The greatest heathen temple was at Bau. Just outside the temple was a large stone slab placed in an erect position. Those killed in war were carried to this temple and presented to the gods; but before this was done, the warriors laid hold of the arms and legs of the corpses and dashed their heads against the slab, which was generally covered with blood. The bodies were then distributed among the people, and cooked and eaten. During the two years I lived at Viwa, a very large number of the slain must have been carried to Bau, and there devoured, for scarcely a day passed without our hearing the death-drum beating. I have gone through Bau when the pigs were eating human flesh in the street.

During the whole of my residence in Fiji, war was raging all around us. The Fijians believed that women were made to work and men to fight. They kept the women pretty closely at work, while they were always fighting. Their original weapons of war were spears, clubs, bows and arrows, slings, etc. They knew nothing of pitched battles. Their mode of warfare was to attack their foes unawares, to catch them on the reef fishing, to get into a town while the inhabitants were sleeping, or to find someone

in the town to open the gates and let them in when the people knew nothing about it. After the white traders came among them, they purchased a large number of muskets, which took the place of their former weapons. Some of them were "dead shots," but the greater number, though firing at a large object, were more likely to miss than to hit. Firing into a great crowd they might kill some, but very frequently the balls went harmlessly over their heads. I once met a hundred or more men going away to war, each carrying his musket. I asked them to present arms and fire. Being willing to oblige, they did so, and I noticed that when they pulled the trigger the muzzles of the muskets rose so considerably that very little damage could be done to anyone by the volley. I have heard them tell the first musket in Fiji. It was bought from a trader from Tahiti. One of the king's soldiers was taught to load and fire, which he did with much trembling. They went to war, a large company following the man who carried the musket, but at a great distance, for they knew not yet what that weapon might do. When about two miles from the enemy the soldier loaded and fired, then threw down the musket, and the whole company ran away as fast as their legs would carry them. The general testimony of the natives was that since the introduction of muskets fewer were killed in war than formerly, because people kept at a respectful distance from them. Thakombau at one time thought of calling them all in. Said he, "When we fought with clubs and spears I could go right up to an enemy's fence, and, being a great chief, no one would think of killing me, but from these muskets the shots come whizzing out, and they never ask whether you are a great chief or a common man."

In the heathen Fijian wars the women and children were the greatest sufferers. The men when attacked could run away; but many of the women and children could not, and they were slain, for heathenism shows no mercy to the helpless. What a change Christianity makes even in war! One of the Fijian missionaries has told me that after Thakombau embraced Christianity he sent his soldiers to an inland town to demand the surrender of certain murderers. When the army approached the town the people fled, many of the mothers leaving the babies and little children by the wayside. Thakombau's soldiers found these, but instead of killing them, as formerly they would have done, they carried them safely to the town, where the mothers could get them again. A young heathen chief who was present was so impressed by this merciful spirit that he then and there became a Christian.

I cannot conclude the record of my life and work in Viwa without referring more fully to two with whom I was closely associated in Mission work there. One was the Fijian whom I have spoken of as my teacher, and as taking part in the great revival. Noah was in many respects one of the most remarkable men of my time. He knew his own language better than any other native, and was invaluable in the work of translating the New Testament, and for that precious work the Mission owes as much to him as to anyone except Mr. Hunt. He was a good preacher, and quite original; a little quaint, but very effective. Mr. Hunt and I once heard him preach a wonderful sermon on the conversion of the jailer of Philippi. It was impossible to help laughing and crying as we listened. His gesticulations were a little violent sometimes, his body swayed to and fro as he poured forth important truths, and at last the stool on which he was standing gave way, and he was landed on the floor. Noah stopped in a moment, saying, "I've done," and the sermon was ended. When we came out of the church Mr. Hunt said to me, "That sermon would not have disgraced Dr. Bunting." In one part, speaking of full salvation, the entire destruction of sin, Noah used an old and terrible

war-cry with great effect. The Fijian word for “to club” is *moku*, to club by knocking on the head is *saku*, but when the attacking party were full of wrath against their foes they uttered the fearful shout, “*Ai valu, saku vaka namara!*” which means to knock the top of the head off. Said Noah, “You must not *moku* sin only, but *ai valu, saku vaka namara!*” he shouted, thus conveying to the natives a truer idea of what he meant by the destruction of sin, than perhaps he could have done in any other way. The illustration came with much power to those who heard him, and moved them greatly. The strain on Noah in translating work was too much; his mind gave way, and he never recovered. I saw him many times afterwards when he was a complete wreck. When I saw people laughing at his strange doings, I thought that they little knew the great work the poor fellow had done. But the Master knows it all, and He never forgets.

The other to whom I must refer I is that greatly beloved servant of the Lord Jesus, the Rev. John Hunt. For two years I lived in the same house, or was his next-door neighbour. We studied together, met in the same class, and had daily intercourse with each other; and the more I saw of him, the more I loved him. He was a very holy man, so humble, so fully consecrated to God, and so earnest in his work. When he wrote his letters on Christian perfection, so widely known and so highly valued, he wrote his own life. I heard those letters delivered as lectures, and a specially powerful influence was on all who heard them. As a preacher I have never known his equal. His exposition of God’s word was so clear that in listening to him I felt greatly surprised that I had not before seen those truths that now appeared exceedingly plain and simple. His praying was indeed pleading with God. With mighty faith he laid hold of God’s promises, and wrestled until he prevailed. I shall never forget some seasons of prayer we had together, when the Lord very graciously revealed Himself to us. He was a diligent student. He always followed Mr. Wesley’s directions to his helpers: “never be unemployed; never be triflingly employed.” He was not continually studying; he had his times for walking, gardening, or other recreation. Often he would come to my study window, and, in his own cheerful manner, say, “Come away, come away; let’s have a run;” or, “Let us do a bit of gardening.” But when in his study he did his work with all his might. By hard labour he had acquired a good knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, which was invaluable to him in the work of translating. He was better acquainted with the Fijian language than any other missionary. As a translator all his brethren regarded him as their chief. His translations may have been improved, and may be still further corrected as the language is better known, but the value of his work will ever remain. In his home everyone admired him. A loving, attentive husband; a kind and happy father; meeting everyone with a smiling face and a pleasant word, - it was simply impossible to be dull and mopish when he was near. He had afflictions and trials, but the grace of God sustained him. While I lived with him I heard him every morning playing his little accordion, and singing with a glad, trusting heart to the tune “Pierpoint” –

Believing against hope  
We hang upon They grace,  
Through every lowering cloud look up  
And hope for better days.

His spirit was truly Christ-like: free from self and wrath and pride. Only once did I see his temper ruffled. A brother, who would have driven some persons wild, was arguing a question with Mr. Hunt, and his points were so indefensible and absurd, and he was so persistent in maintaining them, that Mr. Hunt spoke rather unadvisedly,

ridiculing the position taken by him. This aroused an angry spirit in the man, and he said such insulting and aggravating things that Mr. Hunt was thrown off his balance for a moment, and replied a little in the same way. When the matter ended, and his visitor had left the room, Mr. Hunt, trembling from head to foot, and with a face as pale as death, turned to me and said, "O brother, why did you not knock me down?" It was a sore trial to him, over which he mourned for many days.

Mr. Hunt was greatly beloved by all his brethren, by the Christian natives, and by many of the heathen. When he was ill, and it was feared that he would die, the distress of everyone was very great. I was at the special prayer-meeting held in Viwa to pray for his recovery, and I heard that wonderful prayer by Verani which has often been referred to. Telling the Lord what His servant had done, and was still doing, and how much needed to be done, he cried, "If someone must go, Lord, take me, but spare Thy servant. If one will not do, take ten; and if ten are not enough, take twenty: only spare Thy servant to do Thy work in Fiji." As the end drew near, Thakombau came to see the dying missionary, and was greatly affected. Well he might be, for Fiji was losing one of its best friends. Verani's prayer was not answered; Mr. Hunt died – died most triumphantly – died praying for Fiji, and his prayer has been answered, for today heathenism in Fiji is a thing of the past.

### **Ono**

At the District Meeting of 1846 I was appointed to labour in Lakemba with the Rev. James Calvert, the Rev. R. B. Lyth removing from Lakemba to Viwa. After the District Meeting we left in our Mission vessel, Mr. Lyth accompanying us. When two days out we were terribly beaten about by a heavy gale that lasted a whole week. For seven days we had nothing but the storm trysail set. On the weather moderating, the sea, however, being still very rough, we moved forward a little, and in the middle of the night were very nearly on a detached reef. It was the second mate's watch below, but he could not sleep. Feeling very uneasy, he went on deck, ran a little way up the rigging, and then raised the fearful cry, "Breakers ahead! Breakers ahead!" The ship was put about just in time to save us. The reef was so near that we could almost have thrown a biscuit on it. We all saw the good hand of our God in this deliverance, and praised His name. Getting better weather we tried to make Lakemba, but were baffled every time we made the attempt. At last we were driven down into the neighbourhood of Ono, one of our Mission stations under the charge of a Tongan native teacher. We determined to visit the station, and had no sooner landed than we clearly saw that the good Providence of God had brought us there. Everything was going wrong. The teacher had run, wild, and was introducing the most extravagant things among our people. Affairs were in such confusion that our great work here was in danger of being wrecked. We heard, too, that a French vessel had visited the place, and had left word that a Roman Catholic priest would be brought soon. In view of the whole case, Dr. Lyth and I concluded that it would be well for the native teacher to go and for me to remain for the year. So, getting such things as I could ashore in the boats, the teacher was sent on board. Soon the ship was sailing with a fair wind for Lakemba, and we were left on the last island of the group, far away from our brother and sister missionaries.

The chiefs gave me a good native house. There were no glass windows, or wooden doors and floors. The earth floor had on it a thick layer of dried cocoanut leaves, covered with clean mats; and mats were hung at the openings for windows and doors. In our own country we needed strong doors with bolts and bars, and well-fastened windows; here we did not need them. The natives could come in at any time if they wished; but we had no fear of them. We were kept well supplied all the year with native food, which was remarkably good in Ono. Yet we greatly felt the lack of bread, for of this we had none. In our hurried removal from the ship Mr. Lyth's barrels of flour, being more easy of access than mine, were brought ashore for us, and ours were left for him. Every pound of flour in the three barrels we had was bad. It was made from what farmers, I think, call grown wheat, and when water was poured on it it turned nearly black, and was almost as sticky as glue. Every ounce of it had to be thrown away. My wife being very ill, I tried my hand at making bread without flour. I mixed arrowroot and boiled yam together and baked it. This gave us a cake which while hot was fairly good, if not very digestible, but when cold was almost as heavy as lead. Some months after, when Mrs. Calvert sent us a small bag of flour, we thought it about the greatest treasure we could have received, and the bread made from it was a luxury indeed.

We had found the mosquitoes troublesome in other parts of Fiji; but nowhere were they so bad as in Ono. The hum of these insects on summer evenings, accompanied by the squealing of pigs tormented by them, was something dreadful. There was no getting away from them. In our own land they sting by night, but generally rest by day; at Ono they "never tired nor stopped to rest," or if one party retired another immediately took its place. Their work was incessant. The natives often dug holes in the sand on the beach and lay down, covering themselves all over except the nose and mouth. One circumstance will give some idea of what we suffered from these little pests. One evening, just as the lamps were lighted, a canoe arrived bringing a bundle of letters from our friends, from whom we had not heard for many months. But the difficulty was how to read them, for the mosquitoes were out in full force. The way we managed was this. Taking a letter in one hand and a lamp in the other, I walked the room as fast as I could, reading aloud as I walked, and my wife came after me with a mosquito whip thrashing away with all her might, and thus only could we beat our tormentors. One month they became so bad that we were glad to escape to a little island about a mile from Ono, on the edge of the reef and in the eye of the wind. There we built a booth and lived in picnic style for some time, free from the terrible mosquitoes.

Yet, notwithstanding the privations, discomforts, and annoyances we had to endure, we spent a delightful year in Ono. The natives had indeed been led into much wildness by the foolish teacher, and the Church needed careful watching and working; but we had little difficulty in getting things into proper order, for we had a loving and earnest people to deal with. All the inhabitants of Ono were professing Christians, and the great number were members of the Church. All except the sick and feeble regularly attended the Church services, and no member was absent from his class without sending to inform the leader of the reason. In every house there was family prayer. Praise and prayer were heard in every dwelling the first thing in the morning and the last at night. Only in three cases had I to reprove anyone for wrong-doing during the twelve months. We had no police, no jails, and yet I could have left any amount of gold outside my house all the year round without fear of losing a gain. The

Sabbath was a day the like of which I have never known elsewhere. Not a fire was lighted from one end of the island to the other. All the food was prepared and cooked on Saturday. At the dawn of the Sabbath the song of praise was heard in every quarter. Prayer-meetings were held as soon as day fairly began. At nine o'clock there was public service; then rest during the heat of the day; public service again in the afternoon at four o'clock, and all the evening singing and prayer in every home. It was indeed a day of rest and worship; a foretaste of the blessed Sabbath in the better land.

While I was in Ono they determined to build a new, larger, and better church in the principal town, and at once began to cut wood, plait sinnet, and in every way prepare for the work. When they began to build, the chiefs and most of the men were present a part of every day for weeks; some doing the building work, some preparing the food for the workers, and all at times joining in singing one of our soul-stirring hymns. I tried my hand at pulpit-making. I had not been much accustomed to handle the hammer and saw; but I did my best, and, after hitting my own nails sometimes instead of those I was driving into the wood, I succeeded in producing a good large box, capable of accommodating about half a dozen preachers at one time. The natives thought it a most extraordinary piece of furniture. The church was finished at last; and a beautiful church it was, its variegated sinnet work being especially admired.

First we had a week of special prayer for God's blessing on the opening services, and then came the never-to-be-forgotten opening day. At the grey dawn I entered the large church, which was crowded – many coming from far. Each person had on a new dress, made for the occasion, and each face was lit up with joy. I gave out the first hymn, and our excellent choir tried to sing, but failed. I said, "Try again;" and they tried, but again failed. "Ah," I said, "you can't sing today; your hearts are too full: let us pray." But the influence was so overwhelming that I could scarcely utter a word. We knelt there before the Lord for an hour or more, weeping out our thanks to Him. It reminded us of what we are told took place at the dedication of Solomon's temple, when the priests could not minister because of the glory. When at last I pronounced the benediction, the people went weeping to their homes. About nine o'clock we met again, and had a similar service. At one o'clock they sent for me to "ask a blessing," as they were about to distribute the large quantity of food they had prepared. I went and asked God's blessing, and then one, whose duty it was to divide out the food, stood up and said, "Take this to --- and this to ---." Here his voice began to tremble, and after a while he broke down altogether. Another and another tried, and failed; and at last the old chief came to me and said "We have been long preparing this food, but we don't want it today; let us go to the house of prayer." Away we went, and held a "fellowship meeting," the like of which I have never known. Eighty-six persons spoke, sometimes six being up at once. I closed the meeting again and again, but each time someone rose and said, "Oh, don't go until I've told you what Jesus has done for me." And oh, what clear, simple, blessed testimonies to the Saviour's power to save! It was indeed good to be there. I had never felt nearer heaven than I did that day. I lay down in the large pulpit I had made, and wept for joy. It was eight o'clock when at last I succeeded in closing the meeting, and then I left the communion rail crowded with our noble praying men, who were pleading with God for the salvation of all Fiji. That was one of the grandest days I have ever known; the remembrance of it fills my soul with joy even as I write.

It was a pleasant sight to see our Ono Christians gathered together on a Sunday to worship God; all of them clothed in neat, clean dresses. The Fijians while heathen go almost naked, both men and women; but when they embrace Christianity they at once begin to clothe themselves decently. The greater number wear their native-made cloth tied round the waist, and reaching below the knees, sometimes to the feet. Their cloth, made from the inner bark of the Chinese mulberry, is not very strong, and will not stand many showers of rain; yet it makes a good dress. But most seek to have some article of English clothing; the women wearing long or short pinafores with their native dress, and the men a fathom of two of print or calico, or native cloth, about the body, with a shirt, and, if they can get it, a waistcoat. They do not require very much clothing; anything like the amount we wear would be a burden to them. We expected our teachers to wear a cloth about the loins, and a shirt and vest if possible; but even this was most trying to some of them. I have seen a great fat local preacher coming to his appointment on a hot day with his waistcoat and shirt under his arm, and on arriving at the church go to the back and put them on. Then after conducting the service, all the while perspiring like an ox, he went again behind the church and off with shirt and vest as soon as possible.

In beginning to use English clothes some of the natives did not think it necessary or desirable to follow our custom. I have seen a big chief come into church with a lady's silk gown on. Of course it did not meet by a long way at the back, but what cared he for that? I remember on one occasion being thrown off my equilibrium, when in the pulpit, by the entrance of a new convert, who marched up the church with an old-fashioned swallow-tailed coat on, the large collar turned up, an old broken black hat stuck on the top of his great head-dress, and beside these nothing more than a narrow strip of native cloth about his loins. I have no doubt he thought that he was doing it in grand style. I have known a man who had a pretty good supply of clothes put them all on, some high day or holiday, and all the wrong way according to our ideas; the coat first, then the vest, and last of all the shirt. This was on the first days. We never wondered at anything we saw, for we had seen strange things in this line in our own highly civilised country.

While we were in Ono, a little girl was added to our family. Her mother and I were, as regards human help, all alone at her birth, no white friend nearer than a hundred miles, and we had a difficult case and a trying time, such as persons never placed in similar circumstances can have any idea of. But when in great difficulties, and knowing not how to act, we determined to trust in God, and, blessed be His name, He did not fail us. Our dear little girl was a great sufferer from the beginning, for a cruel nurse, who had been reprov'd for some offence, squeezed the child in her arms and so injured her that she never recovered. She lingered until we were exposed to the terrible hurricane at Nandi, of which there is some account in another chapter.

The Rev. Walter Lawry called Ono "a gem," and so it is. Nowhere have we seen the Gospel more gloriously triumph, and nowhere from the very first have we had a more prosperous Church, or a better class of native converts. I have often heard the people tell of the time when all Ono became Christian. About half of the people had embraced Christianity; but the other half were bitterly opposed to it, and determined to make the converts abandon it. The Christians were at last compelled to build a fence for their own protection, and there the heathen besieged them. Their food being all gone, they determined to rush out, and, if possible, break through the ranks of the

heathen, trusting in God to help and deliver them. When the gates were thrown open and they sallied forth, the heathen fled to a fortification in the mountains. The Christians followed and entered the fort close behind their enemies. But, instead of striking them down with club and spear, each one seized a heathen and pleaded with him to become a Christian at once, until he prevailed, and then they all went together to the large church and called upon the name of the Lord. Thus heathenism was stamped out in Ono.

Another case in which the Lord signally interposed on behalf of His Ono people has been related by others, but it is worth being told again. The chief's daughter had been promised in marriage to Tui-na-yau, king of Lakemba. He had many wives already, but was exceedingly anxious to secure this one, because Ono could give much property with her. When the people became Christians, and this girl and others were converted, she refused to go to Lakemba as the king's wife, and the people resolved to stand by her. Tui-na-yau threatened repeatedly, but all his threats were in vain. At last he prepared a large fleet and a great many fighting men to go to Ono. He intended to punish the inhabitants and bring the girl away by force. The fleet reached Vartoa, or Turtle Island, the nearest land to Ono. From thence he sent on two canoes with his messengers to tell the Ono people to give up the girl or prepare to die. Those canoes were never heard of afterwards. A few days later the king, thinking that his canoes had reached Ono, set sail thither with all his company, the wind being moderate and fair. The Ono people have often told me how they gathered on their high hill, watched the canoes approaching, and prayed to God to deliver them. When the Lakembans were a few miles from the entrance they saw a black cloud hurrying with fearful speed to meet them. Soon the squall struck the canoes and scattered them. Some sank at once, others drifted to leeward. Only one canoe reached Ono. The king's canoe was carried many miles away, and, eventually making his way from island to island, he reached Lakemba again. But he never forgot that squall. He used to say sometimes, "I can do with the little gods of Fiji, but that Great God of yours, I fear Him. He can send the wind after you, and you cannot escape Him."

In Ono I had a number of local preachers and young men training for our work, whom I met regularly every week for instruction. Some of these became valuable teachers in different parts of Fiji.

Like most of the South Sea Islanders, the natives of Ono were great in feast-making on special occasions. At the opening of a chapel, scores, sometimes hundreds, of pigs were killed and cooked, and large quantities of other food were prepared for the visitors. The officiating minister generally got "Benjamin's mess." I have had placed before me as my portion at one of these feasts, two large pigs, many fowls, scores of large yams, taro, bread-fruit, bananas, puddings, etc. And there is this peculiarity about their feasts, that you are expected in some way to appropriate all that is set before you. However, we never had much difficulty in arranging that. We generally, when travelling, had a good number of natives with us, and they quickly made rough baskets from the cocoanut leaf, and in these the surplus food was carried for our use as we journeyed along.

When I left Ono I felt almost as much as I did when I left home. The people had become very dear to me, and I glorified God in them.

## Nandi

In 1847 we had a visit from the General Superintendent of our Missions, the Rev. Walter Lawry, who presided at our District Meeting, and saw us settled in our new Stations. At that meeting I was appointed to open a new Station at Nandi. The Rev. W. Ford, just arrived from England, was sent as my colleague.

In the Fiji group there are many islands, the two largest being *Viti Levu* (Great Fiji) and *Vanna Levu* (Great Land). A new Station opened on Vanna Levu was Bua, where the Rev. T. Williams had to labour. About thirty miles farther up the coast was Nandi, where Brother Ford and I had to live and work for God.

We landed at Nandi on November 9<sup>th</sup>, and met our grand Tongan minister, of whom I shall have more to say farther on. We had but one house for the two Mission families. It was built on the banks of the river, among dense forests of mangrove. The heat was very oppressive, and the mosquitoes very numerous and lively.

We began our work with encouraging signs of success. At our Watch-night Service, on December 31<sup>st</sup>, we had a number of professing Christians in distress seeking salvation. Many of the heathen had embraced Christianity since our arrival, and many others promised to do so. But trouble and suffering soon came, as the following extracts from my diary will show:--

On Thursday, J. "13," 1848, we had a severe storm, and many houses were blown down; our house stood, but was greatly shaken.

*Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>.* – A day long to be remembered. All Saturday night the wind blew furiously. About 10 o'clock this morning the hurricane broke upon us. Our house, already much shaken, we knew must fall, and we therefore made all preparations for turning out. We wrapped the children in blankets, and gave them to the natives, and all stood near the door ready to rush out if the roof fell in. About noon the wall-plate broke, and one side of the roof fell down. The door was opened, and we attempted to rush out, but were beaten down by the wind and rain. Recovering ourselves, we made as fast as we could for our kitchen through the awful storm. On our way there the cry was raised that my little boy James was missing. This caused us for a few moments much anxiety and sorrow; but we were presently relieved, for we found him safe in the kitchen with some natives. The kitchen had been made strong, and now Joeli Bulu (the Tongan native minister) and others set to work to strengthen it still more, and we hoped that it would be proof against the hurricane. While Joeli and his few friends were doing all they could think of for us, someone suggested that we should send to the town for help. This Joeli strongly opposed, saying, "If they have not love enough in their hearts to come and help the missionaries without being sent for, we don't want them; I'll break my back, but I'll keep the house up;" and he pushed against the post as if he would defy the hurricane. But now a messenger came hurrying to say that the back floodwaters were coming down, and that the sea was being driven in by the furious storm, and soon all the land would be overflowed; we must escape at once or we should certainly perish. For a moment we knew not what to do. It seemed like running into the jaws of death to go out and face the tempest, and yet if we stayed or delayed we must be lost. Hesitating no longer, our arrangements were quickly made. The children were given to the natives; one strong

man was appointed to help Mrs. Ford, and another to help my wife. Joeli carried my dear little dying girl, who had been suffering for months, and was now rapidly sinking, and our we rushed into the howling storm. We could scarcely stand against the wind; the rain beat like shot in our faces; the water was sometimes breast high; the cocoanut trees were bending and breaking over us, and the nuts flying in every direction. It was an awful time as we hurried along to the town. There we found shelter for about an hour in a little house that stood when nearly all around it had been levelled to the ground. But the flood continuing to rise rapidly, we had to devise some plan for reaching the mountains, the road thither being now covered with water fathoms deep. Joeli gave me my suffering child, and he and others set to work to make a raft, which was readily done by tying together the bamboo rafters of the fallen houses. We then sent Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Watsford forward on the raft, Joeli and his comrades swimming and pushing it along, and, returning, the raft took Mr. Ford, myself, and our children. On our way my dear little girl ceased to moan, and became very cold. I thought that she was dead in my arms; but when we reached a house at the foot of the mountains she revived. The waters still rising, we sent on the children up the mountain, and were preparing to follow, with the prospect of being out all night, when we noticed that the flood had stayed. We waited a little longer to be certain, and then sent for the children, who, when brought back, were almost dead with cold. It was now nearly dark. We had been battling with the hurricane since 12 o'clock, and were all thoroughly soaked, very cold, and very hungry. Joeli soon had some food for us, for which we were very thankful. He also obtained somewhere a quantity of dry native cloth, and we slipped off our wet things and wrapped the native cloth about us. The storm was now abating; so, having had family prayer, we were about to lie down and try to sleep, when a report came that the heathen were gathering and intended to attack us. That was the way in heathen Fiji: any in trouble were supposed to be given up to them by the gods. They thought it, too, a good time to make an attack when they were likely to get something. But Joeli was equal to the occasion. Said he, "It is our work to guard the missionaries; let the heathen come, and we'll teach them a thing or two." He was a man of God, who felt he could "chase a thousand." The heathen never came. Oh, what a day has this been! In all how great has been the goodness of our God! Had the hurricane come at night, what must the consequences have been! How bravely have our dear wives borne up all through this trying day! How nobly has Joeli Bulu acted: what do we not owe to him! Glory be to God!

*Monday 17<sup>th</sup>.*—We have been trying to find some of our things today. What a wreck! Brother Ford's fine library is under the mud, the debris of the flood. Half of the roof had fallen against my bookshelf, keeping it up, and preventing many of the books from being wet. Sad havoc has been made with our groceries and furniture; everything seems more or less damaged. We have secured a small native house to live in. It is very damp, but it must do until we can get better.

*Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>.*—Today Brother T. Williams came from Bua to sympathise with us. Right glad are we to have him, with all his kindness, near us for a day or two.

*Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>.*—Very early this morning another child was added to Brother Ford's family. Dear Sister Ford, who behaved so nobly during the storm, and the little stranger, are doing well. Praise the Lord! My dear little girl is very low. Lord help us to be fully resigned to Thy will!

*Monday 31<sup>st</sup>.*—Our darling child died today. Dear little sufferer, all her pain and trouble are over! Her sufferings had drawn her closer to our hearts. We had watched over her, had prayed for her, had hoped and feared; but all is now over. Dear

as she was to us, we give her up to Him who calls her from us. Lord, strengthen and comfort and bless us in this time of sore bereavement. Now came the question where and how to bury our child. We were surrounded by cruel heathen, and we feared lest they should dig open the grave to get the coffin. They had done it before; they might do it again. Our Christian natives dug a very deep grave, and there we laid all that was mortal of our dear little girl. Then the grave was filled in, and a high heap of stones raised over it, thus making it as secure as possible. My dear wife is very poorly; constant waking and watching have much weakened her. We fear the effects of the hurricane are not yet over. A canoe that left here the day before the gale has been wrecked, and most on board perished. Among them were Abraham, one of our teachers, and other Christians.

*February 17<sup>th</sup>.*—Mr. and Mrs. Williams kindly invited my wife, who has been very ill, to go to Bua for a change. About 3.30 a.m. we started. A number of natives carried Mrs. Watsford in an easy-chair, and I walked or ran by their side. It was a trying journey; part of it through water up to our knees. By the time the sun rose we had done nearly half of our journey, having travelled more than fifteen miles. We rested at noon until the heat of the day was past, and then pressed on our way to Bua, which we reached about 5 o'clock, and were warmly welcomed by Brother and Sister Williams. I was very tired.

*Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>.*—Preached at Bua in Native "English," and had a good time.

*Monday 21<sup>st</sup>.*—Set off for Nandi. We walked over the mountains. The sun was very hot, and the road very bad; but we reached home before dark.

*Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.*—Brother Ford and I, neither of us first-class carpenters, had to set our wits and hands to work to build a stronger house that would be hurricane-proof. We had only poor tools and materials to work with; but with the help of the natives we put up what we think is a pretty decent house. We are of opinion, however, that we and the natives ought to remove to some better position.

*Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>.*—A letter from Bua informing me that my dear wife was very ill. I set off at once about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and by walking quickly, and running some parts of the way, I reached Bua a little after 9 o'clock at night. I was very thankful to find my wife somewhat better. Very tired; could not sleep.

*Friday 10<sup>th</sup>.*—Started for Nandi. After a smart walk I reached home about 5 p.m., and found Mrs. Ford very ill with inflammation of the throat.

*Friday 17<sup>th</sup>.*—I intended going for my wife today; but Mrs. Ford is dangerously ill with dysentery. We all feel poorly. I have had my hands and heart full lately.

*Monday 20<sup>th</sup>.*—Started for Bua, where I arrived about noon, and was thankful to find my wife pretty well.

*Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup>.*—We took our leave of our kind friends at Bua, and journeyed as far as Dama, where we rested for the night.

*Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>.*—Started before daylight, and reached Nandi in the afternoon. Glad to find Sister Ford still improving. On these journeys to and from Bua some of our teachers and local preachers generally accompanied me, and were pretty well tired out before we reached our destination. They have not much staying power. When I arrived at home today I found that a parcel of New Testaments had just come from Viwa. I at once determined to give one to Sampson, local preacher living with us, who had just come with us from Bua, and had gone to his house thoroughly wearied out. I took the book, and calling him, said, "Sampson, here is a New Testament for you which has just come." He needed no second call. Running and seizing the book

he pressed it to his heart, and literally danced for joy. No more valuable present could have been given to him.

*Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.*—My dear wife is very ill again. These repeated attacks are wearing her out. Lord help us! If it be Thy will, spare my wife's life that we may still labour for Thee where work is so much needed.

*Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup>.*—Another furious gale this evening.

*Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>.*—We have been up all night. It has been a fearful time. The terrible hurricane again beating upon us. Our house is standing; but it has been shaking over our heads. We knew not what to do. Neither Mrs. Ford nor my wife could move out of bed, and if we had to turn out into the storm we knew not what must be the consequences. We dreaded the rising flood. We cast our burdens on the Lord, and He sustained us. The tempest continuing to rage, the natives recommended to us to fly at once to a house on the hills, lest the flood waters should come down during the night. We prayed about the matter, and then determined to do so. We carried our wives to a bed laid on bamboos, and the natives conveyed them up into the mountain, we walked by their side. In the evening the storm abated; but we remained all night in the house to which we had fled. These are trying times. From January to April we have had one trouble after another. We men could endure it ourselves; but it what our wives and children suffer that makes us feel. But it is all right. "Our Father's hand prepares the cup, and what He wills is best." Glory be to His name, He has never left us.

*Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>.*—We hear today that a vessel was lost during the gale on Wednesday last, and that our beloved Brother Lyth, who was coming over to see Mrs. Watsford, had a very narrow escape.

After these afflictions we again pressed upon the natives the importance of removing to a healthier and safer position. There was a splendid site for a town on the coastline, and we proposed to go there. The scheme met with opposition at first from some of the natives; but at last they yielded, and we removed to the new site. We had hardly got settled there when our Christian natives were attacked by the heathen living near. They had entered the town, and were chasing and ill-treating our people. I hurried down among them pleading for peace, whereupon the leader of the heathen party, who was very angry at my interference, fell on one knee, and, pointing his musket at me, threatened to shoot me there and then. I stood still, looking him in the face, and dared him to fire. I told him that I knew he was doing wrong, and that I was their true friend. He lowered his musket in a moment, saying, "Ture, sir; so you are;" and the disturbance was over.

A little blind boy embraced Christianity at Nandi, and was baptized by the name of Seme (Shem). He learned to sing well, and had some skill in hymn-making. In many parts of Fiji he was known as the blind singing poet. I shall have more to say of him farther on.

Our work in Nandi had been greatly interrupted by the various troubles that came upon us, yet we had some measure of prosperity, and the word of the Lord grew and was multiplied. My wife continuing to suffer greatly, I had to remove her to Viwa to be near the Rev. R. B. Lyth, who was our medical adviser. I had to return to Nandi, as Brother Ford had not learned the language, and was not therefore in a position to carry on the Mission. This was a trying time to me; but the Lord was my helper. My colleague at Nandi was a good brother, and an eloquent preacher; but his coming to

the mission field was a mistake. He was too old to learn the language correctly, and his health was never good. The hot weather in England tried him; how then could he be expected to stand the heat of Fiji? He had a short but trying time on the islands, and I am sure was glad to get away from a work to which he was not at all equal. He returned to England, and was there appointed to some of the best Circuits, where he laboured successfully.

The native minister who laboured with us in Nandi, Joeli Bulu, was a grand man. He was a Tongan. When he first came to Fiji his wife was restless and dissatisfied, and longed to return to her own land and friends. Joeli tried to persuade her to settle down quietly to the work, and crush out the desire to return home; but all his pleading was in vain. "One day," said he, "I told my wife to come with me to the missionary; and she came. When we stood before the missionary I said, 'I came to Fiji to preach the Gospel, and try and save the people: my wife came with me, and I thought she would be willing to remain with me in the work; but she is now constantly begging me to go to Tonga again. I cannot go, for it would be running away from my work. The only thing that can be done is for my wife to go home and leave me here. I am come to ask you to send her home.' When I had said this my wife began to weep, and said, 'No, I will not go home without you; if you remain in Fiji, I stay; so let that end it;' and I never heard another word from her about the matter." Joeli was a thoroughly consistent Christian, and a capital preacher. He was a man to be fully trusted with the charge of any of our Mission stations, and was very successful in the great work of winning souls. Any missionary might be very thankful to have Joeli for his colleague.

At Nandi, my colleague, his wife and two children, and my wife and I and two children, lived in one house. Each family had a separate bedroom, and we had a common dining- and sitting-room. My good brother was a great preacher, and most carefully did he prepare every sermon he preached in English. After preparing them he had to commit them all to memory. This was rather an awkward affair in our house. It was sometimes very amusing to hear him, in the most retired spot he could find, muttering away by the hour to fix in his mind all he had written. His sermons always did us good, and I was prepared to testify that a memoriter preacher may be a powerful preacher, but still I was thankful that I was not one.

We had ourselves to help in many things to have them done at all, or done in our way. Among other things we had to kill and clean our own pigs. We might have got the natives to do this; but they would have done it in their own peculiar way, and we preferred to do it ourselves. Being strangers altogether to butcher's work, this was to us at first somewhat difficult and troublesome. In certain parts of the pig we found what we did not at all like, and, being ignorant of the anatomy of the pig, we came to the conclusion that it was diseased, and told our people to take it away, which they joyfully did. We killed pig after pig, and there were these little black threads, and our delighted natives had to carry them off. We wrote to the Rev. T. Williams, who was living about thirty miles from us, and told him of the discovery we had made of this disease in the pigs of Fiji. He wrote back a characteristic letter, telling us to please keep our discovery to ourselves, and not try to set him against pork; but at the same time asking for particulars. These we gave in our next letter, and we soon had a reply from him in which he ridiculed our discovery, and made sport of our simplicity and ignorance, informing us that these thread-like things that alarmed us so much were

found in all pigs. I need scarcely say that after that Nandi natives had less pork for dinner.

We tried our hands at many things. My brother missionary thought he could make with native fruit some jam that our wives would like. He made the jam, if such it could be called, but the difficulty was to get it out of the basin after it was made. We had at last to use a chisel and hammer in order to secure any portion of this great delicacy.

As a father, my colleague was very tender-hearted and indulgent, and it was a most difficult thing for him to correct a child. I used to tell him that his whipping would scarcely drive a fly away, and the whipping was generally followed by a sweatmeat, given to stop the crying. So Master Johnny knew very well how to get the lollypop; some wrong-doing, the softest touch of the hand as a punishment, after that the howling, and then the sweatmeat to heal the bruises. Getting Johnny to sleep at night was a laborious task. Tramp, tramp, up and down, for an hour or more, the father went, singing all the time. But the little rogue would soon be to yell if laid in his cot, and on and on still went the patient, long-during father. What was, I suppose, a labour of love to him, was a great trouble and vexation to us in the next room with only a reed partition between, for while getting his own boy to sleep he was most effectually keeping mine awake. I do not make any pretence to perfection in parental government and training; but from Mrs. Wesley, and Abbott's *Mother at Home*, I had learnt that it was possible to put a child to bed without all this trouble; that it is no use correcting a child if you let him have his revenge after by crying and bawling to his heart's content; and that correction must be repeated till the child gives in. It is Abbott, I think, who tells of a child that was whipped because she would not say "A," and was whipped again, and the third time, because she still refused to say the letter, but then the stubborn will gave way, and no more whipping was necessary. Mrs. Wesley says the child's will must be broken or conquered. Bushnell I think it is who says, "You might as well break a child's neck." But what Mrs. Wesley meant was that the child must be taught to obey, to yield to his father or mother. I have seen a father trying for hours to subdue the will of his child, and although correction was repeated the little stubborn thing held out; but at last the father's patience was rewarded, and to his unspeakable comfort the child gave way. That child needed very little correction after that. Poor trainer of children though I was myself, I resolved to try and help my brother in his work. I knew that it was almost as difficult coming between a man and his child as between a quarrelling husband and his wife; but I determined to run the risk. I cannot say that it was my brother's good only, or the good of his child, that I sought; it is very probably that there was a large amount of selfishness in it, for that business of getting the child to sleep every night had become an intolerable nuisance. Mustering courage, I said one day, "Brother, you have a good deal of trouble in getting your boy to sleep at night; I think I could put you in the way of doing it in a much shorter time." He asked what I would advise. I told him that I thought my recipe might wound his tender heart for the moment, but if he would only try it I was sure it would bring unspeakable relief to him and benefit to his boy. I did not tell him what a relief it would be to us. After some hesitation he agreed to try my plan. Night came, and the hour for Master Johnny to have his long, long walk; and I was at my post. "Now," I said, "put him into his cot." He did so. Johnny at once began to holloa at the top of his voice. "You must stop that," I said. "You must whip him, and do it really and thoroughly." Urged on by me the poor fellow did it, to

John's astonishment. Still the boy cried loudly. I said, "Now command him to cease crying." The father did so; but the son was deaf to all his father's commands. "You must whip him again; don't hesitate," I said; and he did so. Still Master Johnny kept up his music. I begged of the father not to give in; for his own sake, for his child's sake, to be firm. "You must whip him again," I said; and he did it. Very soon Johnny thought he had had enough, and was presently fast asleep. I was at the father's side at the right time the next night, and begged him to put Johnny into his cot at once. When he had done so the boy began to yell most furiously. I said, "My brother, you must whip him." It would have been much easier for the poor father to have taken twenty lashes himself; but he did what I told him. Johnny at once surrendered, and in a few moments was sound asleep. The next night there was no trouble; and what a relief for all of us!

### Lakemba

At the District Meeting in 1848 I was appointed to the Lakemba Circuit, with the Rev. John Malvern as my colleague. This was the first Station formed in Fiji, and a good work had been done there by the missionaries who preceded us. It was a very large Circuit. Many of the islands connected with it were twenty, thirty, sixty miles away, Ono being the most distant. On all these islands we had native teachers; but they had to be regularly visited by the missionaries. The chief of the Windward Island, who lived at Lakemba, was Tui-na-yau. "*Au Eglu*," Mr. Lawry called him, "rolling in fat." When I went to Lakemba he was still a heathen. The brethren before me had faithfully tried to lead him to embrace Christianity; but the old chief was immovable in his heathenism. He was a great *zangona* drinker; indeed, one of the worst I ever knew. He was never satisfied until quite stupefied by the drink. He used to say that he liked to drink *zangona* "till it made him to sailing all over the world – to England, to France, and everywhere;" in other words, until he was thoroughly intoxicated. He had often opposed the missionaries; but he was terribly afraid of the Great God, for he had again and again been compelled to acknowledge Jehovah's hand in upsetting his plans and thwarting his wicked designs. The Lord our God had sometimes interposed in a wonderful way on behalf of His Church and people, and taught the old king a lesson he could not forget. A very striking case occurred during my time in Lakemba. At a certain season the waters on these coasts are for miles covered with little worm-like things called *Balolo*. The natives know well the time of their coming. When a certain tree is in flower, and so many days after the full moon, the first fruits are found one morning, and the full harvest the next day. A few go out the first morning, and gather the little; all who can go the second day and bring in a rich supply, which serves for the day's feasting.

One Saturday afternoon our people from one of the towns came to me with their teacher, and said, "The king has given orders that we are all to launch our canoes tomorrow, Sunday, and go out for the *Balolo*; and we are come to ask what we are to do." "Well," I said, "what do you think you ought to do? We have taught you always to obey your chiefs when obeying them does not mean breaking God's law. You all know what day tomorrow is, and what the Lord our God says about it. What do you think you ought to do?" "OH," they said, "we know what we ought to do, and what we will do; but we thought we ought to come and inquire of you about it. Tomorrow is the Sabbath of the Lord our God, in which He has commanded us to do no work,

and we mean to obey Him. The consequences may be very serious; the chief will be very angry, and he may kill us for disobeying him; but we are prepared to bear all the consequences." Sunday morning came, and as we were going to the prayer-meeting the heathen were going for the *Balolo*. In an hour or so they returned with empty baskets. The *Balolo* had not come! Such a thing had never been heard of before. The king sent for me, and stormed dreadfully; said it was our doing, that we had influenced our God to keep the *Balolo* back, and that he would punish the Christians who had dared to disobey him. I reminded him that he had tried his strength against our God before, and had failed, and that he had better take care what he was doing now. After a while he was thoroughly subdued, and we heard no more about the matter.

In their simple faith in those days the Christian Fijians believed that God was connected with all the good, and the devil was connected with all the evil that came, and, looking to the Lord for help and direction in all matters, He sometimes wonderfully interposed on their behalf. Sailing in canoes, if overtaken by a storm and in danger, they went to their knees, confessed their sins, and prayed for deliverance; and when the deliverance came they acknowledged God's hand.

Many of the heathen, when they had in any way done wrong to the missionaries, and evil came upon them, regarded it as the punishment of their sin sent by the missionary's God, and were filled with fear. One day two heathens were on board a canoe with a number of Christians, when a violent storm came down upon them. The Christians were soon on their knees confessing and praying, and still the storm raged. After much tossing about, and narrowly escaping being wrecked, they reached the land. Then the heathen said, "You did not know that we were the cause of all that tempest, for the night before we left Lakemba we stole two of the missionary's ducks."

We had two Roman Catholic priests in Lakemba, both Frenchmen and Jesuits. Opposed as I am to the errors of popery, I could not but admire the zeal of these men. They ere landed on the island with little beside what they had on them. They had to do their own work, wash their own clothes, and live entirely on native food. And yet, with very little to encourage them, they remained at their post, doing their best to win the people over to their Church. Where popery gets into a place before the Bible it may succeed; but where God's word is read Rome finds it hard work to make proselytes. With a system that has many attractions for the natives, they plodded away most perseveringly; but with little success. They tried very hard to get on with the king; but, instead of being influenced, the old man had sometimes a little fun at their expense. One day he sent in a great hurry for Mr. Malvern and me. When we arrived at his house we found the two priests sitting with him. Addressing us, he said, "I have sent for you two to talk to you in the presence of these my priests. You are deceiving me; you have merely come to prepare the way for your ships of war to take my land. These my priests are true men; I can trust them." We understood the thing at once, and said but little; but the priests thought they had the king at last. They little knew the man they had to deal with.

At one of our country places there was a sick man whom the priests had been to see. Mr. Malvern and I called on him, and found a large cross on his breast. In answer to our inquiry if he wished to have it there, he said, "No, the priest would have me wear

it.” I advised him not to be led astray by priest or anyone, but to trust alone in Christ for salvation. Some few days after, we heard that both the priests had gone to see him again, and as he had been one of our people, and indeed was one still, we went to see what they were doing. On our way we met the two priests returning. Someone invented a story about my laying hold of the priests when we met, and throwing them into a water-hole – a story that just suited the natives, one they greatly relished and that was told for years. The truth is, we met the priests in a narrow path, turned aside to let them pass, and went on our way. When we reached the house we found the man with the cross about his neck. We had scarcely got seated before one of the priests came in and sat down. I asked the man if he had turned Roman Catholic. He said, “No.” “Do you want that cross about your neck?” “No, I do not.” “Then,” I said, “take it off and give it to the priest.” He was proceeding to do so when the priest came forward, and seizing the cross held it firmly on the man’s breast. I remonstrated with him; but he insisted that the man should wear it. I did not think it prudent to continue the conversation any farther, as the man was really ill, and, I saw, had no intention of yielding to the priest. We went outside, and there the priest and I had a long discussion before hundreds of people who had gathered together. I had a great advantage over the priest in that he could not pronounce the *th* so often occurring in Fijian. He pronounced the *th* as *d*, and some good Fijian words become very bad ones when *d* is substituted for *th*. This mistake he made so frequently that the people at last roared aloud, and he became so confused that he thought it best to end the discussion, and quickly retire. The natives said he “ran away”; but that was a Fijian’s way of putting it.

One day I was preaching in a place not far from the priests’ residence. In the middle of the service a shot was fired, and the ball struck the side of the place where I was preaching. I knew not where the shot came from, but the Tonganese living near maintained that it came from the house of the priests. I advised our people to take no notice of it, as it was impossible to tell who fired it. I was amused by a Tongan chief who had been much among white people, and on board ships, and had picked up many English words and sentences. He contended that the shot must have been fired by a lay-brother who was living with the priests, and said he to me, “Mr. Watsford, suppose you no have the grace of God in your heart, you knock that fellow down.”

In Lakemba, as indeed everywhere in Fiji, we had much to do in giving medicine to the sick. This was a very important part of a missionary’s work. In going to a new Mission, every missionary ought to have some instruction in medicine. The diseases most common in Fiji are dysentery, ophthalmia, and elephantiasis. They had doctors and medicines of their own, but preferred ours. Many of our missionaries had little knowledge of the healing art, but by careful study, and the use of simple remedies, they relieved much suffering, cured many, and did much good. Many a Fijian has come to us, saying, “I tried my own gods, and my own doctors and medicines, and they could do me no good; I came to you, and the first dose of your medicine relieved me, and now I mean to try your God.” In building our houses we generally arranged to have one room as a consulting-room or dispensary, with a window at the end where we could attend to the sick who came. In Lakemba I have had as many as thirty patients on a morning waiting for medicine, and sometimes as many more to visit in the town. We used large quantities of Epsom salts, castor oil, and such like drugs – capital medicines for the natives. The Fijians were very good for taking any medicine, however nauseous, and for submitting to any operation, however painful. I

have known them drink the most unpleasant mixtures, and smack their lips as if they had taken some delicious beverage. I have seen a Fijian doctor cutting away with a sharp shell at a poor fellow's back for half an hour or more, and the patient enduring it all without wincing. But they are desperately bad in following the doctor's prescription. I have given half a dozen pills to a sick man, with the direction to take on every night, expressing at the same time the hope that he would then be better. Wanting to sail on the morrow, he argued thus: "That missionary tells me that if I take one pill every night for six nights I shall very likely be better at the end of the week. Surely they will make me well tonight if I take them all at once;" and down they went, to the doctor's annoyance and the patient's injury.

Our work in the Lakemba Circuit was very heavy. We had many towns in Lakemba where we had teachers and a growing cause, and these needed constant care. Then we had to be very frequently from home on visits in our canoe to the many islands under our charge. But our work was very delightful, and the Lord was with us. My wife's health, however, was so bad, and she was so nearly worn out, that the brethren at the District Meeting thought I ought to go to Sydney, and, however unwilling to leave the work that I loved in Fiji, I was compelled to do so. When I had made all preparations for leaving, and my goods were on board our Mission vessel, I went to bid Tui-na-yau goodbye. Having made him a present, I said, "Sir, I am now leaving you. I have told you of Jesus, our blessed Saviour, and have tried to do you good; but you have refused to be a Christian. I shall probably never see you again till we meet at the bar of God." "Oh," he said, "so you are going, are you? How glad I am. You have been the torment of my life. I've had no peace while you have been here. I hope you'll never come back again." I was deeply wounded, and went away greatly grieved. An hour later, having sent Mrs. Watsford and our two children down to the boat, I was just getting away, when Tui-na-yau entered my gate dressed in his best, with a beautiful necklace about his neck. I thought, "He is just coming to tease me before I go, and I'll not let him;" so I hurried down the path. But when I came near him he stepped out quickly and laid hold of me, saying, "No, no, you are not going yet. I want to tell you I'm sorry for the nasty words I said. I had to say them to keep my mind quiet, for I was greatly troubled. I'm a bad man. I have greatly tried and wronged you; but I repent. I'm come to tell you that this very day I'll become a Christian. You go to your own land, and I'll go to the church, and bow to Jesus. And now," taking off his necklace and putting it on my neck, "let me put this on you as my love, and - one thing more - let me kiss you." Before I could say "yea" or "nay" he rubbed his great black nose against mine and wept like a child. No one can tell how I rejoiced that hour; and still great was my joy when, soon after my arrival in Sydney, I received letters informing me that Tui-na-yau had kept his word. I hope he lived and died a true Christian.

### CHAPTER III New South Wales (Now Queensland)

#### **Brisbane**

In 1850 I was for a short time in Sydney and Windsor, and then went to Brisbane, Queensland, which is now the capital of a most important and flourishing Colony, but was then a part of New South Wales, and generally known as Moreton Bay. The Rev. Wm. Moore, afterwards a missionary in Fiji, and the Rev. W. Lightbody, had been stationed at Moreton Bay before me, and had laboured earnestly, but our cause was only feeble. The principal church in Brisbane was small, and the congregation was not large. The parsonage was in a back lane. It was a house with two small rooms and a lean-to with two smaller rooms. But we had come from Fiji, and had learned to rough it a little, so we did very well in our new home. We had some earnest Church members, who greatly assisted in carrying on the Lord's work. There were three or four places outside Brisbane, where we had regular services. The most important was the German Station, where a number of excellent Germans lived. Some years before, they had come out as lay-missionaries. Most of them were now members of our Church, and some were local preachers. With their families they formed a good congregation. It was a pleasure to visit them.

During the year the Rev. J. G. Millan became my colleague, and was stationed at Ipswich. We did our best to extend the work of God, and the Lord blessed us. We paid occasional visits to the sheep stations, where we were heartily welcomed, and we had frequently a large number to hear the word.

It is cause for much rejoicing that, with the growth of Queensland, Methodism has made good progress. There are now many Circuits and a large number of ministers. A few years ago it was formed into a separate Conference, and last year union was consummated between the Methodist bodies there. The Brisbane of my day has grown into a large and fine city, and, instead of our little church, we have now one of the largest and most beautiful places of worship in the city.

I had a narrow escape from becoming a rich man while I was in Brisbane. I had just a little money, and my Circuit steward was very anxious that I should have an allotment of land where I might build a house, and live some future day when I became a supernumerary. A Government sale was about to take place. The steward came to me and begged to be allowed to purchase the land for me. I consented, and he went to the sale. When he returned he said, "I have secured an allotment for you, but it is not in Brisbane, but at Sandgate, which will one day become a favourite watering-place. I wanted to get a piece of land in the principal street in Brisbane for you. I might have obtained it for about £92, but I would not bid higher than £90 so I lost it." That piece of land, some few years after, was sold for thousands, and a bank was built upon it. Today it is worth a very large sum. There is no telling what might have happened had it become mine. Some men who have been faithful when poor, have sadly failed when they became rich; so it might have been with me.

Visiting Ipswich, I became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. H----- and their family. They had not been long out from the old country. Mrs. H----- was the daughter of a

deceased ex-President of the British Conference. She told me the story of her home. Said she: "We were eleven children, and all were converted at home except one brother. He left us, and under an assumed name went on to the stage, and lived a fast life. Every now and then he became very miserable and would return home. When our dear father saw him coming he would throw open the door and, lifting up his hands, cry, 'ere comes my poor prodigal!' After some days he would get very restless and soon leave again. As he went our father would stand at an open window upstairs, and watch him as far as the eye could reach, and then, falling on his knees, would earnestly cry, 'Lord, bless my poor prodigal!'" For years, when preaching in many lands, I have, without mentioning any names, referred to this case, asking sympathy for sorrowing parents, and prayer for prodigal sons. In 1892, when visiting Queensland, I inquired for Mrs. H-----, and was told that she was living in Brisbane, had heard of my coming, and was longing to see me. Early next morning I was at her house. We rejoiced greatly that we were permitted to meet again. Sitting down, I said, "Now, Mrs. H-----, I want you to tell me about your brothers and sisters." "Oh, sir," said she, "they are all in heaven, and I am expecting very soon to join them there." "Ah," I said, "but I want you to tell me about the poor prodigal for whom you and I used to pray." She said, "Twenty-five years ago he was converted, joined the Church, was married to a Christian lady, lived a consistent life, and eighteen years ago died a triumphant death. When he was dying, one of our ministers stood by his bedside and said to him, 'Mr. S-----, you will soon meet your dear father again.' With the tears rolling down his pale face, and with trembling lips, he said, 'Yes, I shall soon meet him again; and when he sees me coming he will lift up his hands and cry, 'Here comes my poor, poor prodigal, safe home at last.'" Glory be to God, parents' prayers are not in vain.

## CHAPTER IV

### **Fiji**

After remaining more than year in Brisbane, I received orders from the Missionary Committee in London to return at once to Fiji. At first I questioned whether or not I should obey the order, for my wife was still in a delicate state of health. I was certain if the Committee knew how ill she was, they would not press me to return. It seemed like taking her to her death. I did not see that God had called me to do that. Beside all this, I was pretty sure that the Committee had been urged to give this order, and that it was unfair and cruel. But my wife urged me to go. I went, and have never once regretted it. Had I refused to go, what my future course would have been no one can tell; but I am sure that in going to Fiji, and trusting the Lord to make all things work together for good, I did right. The Lord did care for us, and has cared for us ever since.

We left Queensland immediately for Sydney. The Rev. John Eggleston met us at the boat, and gave us a word of comfort and encouragement. The Rev. W. B. Boyce, while thinking that the Committee had made a great mistake, was glad that we were going to Fiji.

We at once took ship for Auckland, New Zealand, and arrived there in time to catch the *John Wesley*. We were glad to find new missionaries from England going with us to Fiji. After a few days at Auckland we set sail for Tonga. Our captain, who was new to these seas, was so nervous among the narrows and rocks in the entrance to the Tongatabu harbour that I had to get a Tonga, who had boarded us, to pilot us in, which he did safely. During the time we remained at Tonga, events occurred that can never be forgotten. The chiefs of an important and well-fortified town called Bea rebelled against King George, and some desperate fighting took place. There was great excitement, which reached its climax one night when a number of the king's best friends were shot. That was an awful night. The Rev. Mr. Webb, Chairman of the District, did what he could to put an end to the trouble; but all in vain. Night after night the firing was heard, and the sad news came of one and another having been killed. King George's men from various places were full of wrath, and loudly cried out for revenge for the murder of their friends. They wished at once to storm the fort and destroy all the people in it. But George held them back, saying, "Wait a while, and you shall have your revenge." He then gave orders for Bea to be surrounded. After some time the rebels were starved into submission. The three rebel chiefs were brought before the king as he sat among his friends in the meeting-ground, the soldiers standing round. Addressing the captive chiefs, George said, "You are bad men: you have done badly: you have shot my best friends; you deserve to die. But the religion of Jesus has taught me to forgive my bitterest enemies, and I forgive you. Go, live, and learn to be wiser, better men." Then turning to his soldiers he said, "That is your revenge." What a glorious testimony in favour of our holy religion, and the mighty power of Jesus to make his people kind and loving as He was!

Mr. Webb, who had been very anxious about the rebellion, and very active in seeking to check it, was taken ill in the midst of it, and nothing that was done could arrest the disease. He grew worse and worse, and speedily the end came. He died trusting fully

in Jesus, and triumphing over the last enemy. Mr. Webb was a valuable missionary, a man of a sweet and loving spirit, and greatly beloved by all. His death brought great sorrow to his brother missionaries, and to the people of his charge. For the bereaved widow and children we all felt most deeply.

### Viwa

Leaving Tonga we reached Fiji in safety, and, at the District Meeting held immediately after our arrival, I was appointed to the Viwa Circuit with Mr. Calvert, and was requested to revise the New Testament. My dear wife was very ill all the year: often, we thought, on the very brink of death. Once the end seemed very near. She was patiently waiting, fully resigned to God's will, and I was on my knees pleading with the Lord that, if it were consistent with His will, He would spare her life, when the answer came at the same time to both of us. She said, "The Lord is answering prayer; I shall not die, but live." From that moment she began to improve; but still continued feeble all year.

Complying with the request of my brethren, I began at once the work of revision. Assisted by one or two native teachers, I was at it day after day, from early dawn until late at night. As fast as I could supply Mr. Calvert with copy, he went on with the printing at our press, where we had a good staff of workers. Since the making and printing of the first excellent translation of the New Testament, the language had, of course, become somewhat better known, and the native teachers were more fully qualified to assist in the work of revision. Many alterations and corrections had therefore to be made; but great care was taken that this should be done only when, after thorough investigation, it was considered absolutely necessary by all. By hard toil day and night our work was completed in twelve months, and what is still known as "The Viwa Edition of the New Testament" was published. This was a cause of great rejoicing to the missionaries and our people, and it certainly gives me no little joy and satisfaction to know that that edition was then, and has been ever since, greatly valued by all.

Beside the revision of the New Testament, we had many other things to cheer and encourage us during the year. Our work was growing, a good number were converted, and the blessing of the Lord was richly granted in answer to prayer. Still we had many things to discourage and try us, and to make us mourn before God.

One cause of deep sorrow was the fall of Vatea the wife of Namosimalua, the chief of Viwa. Vatea had been truly converted some years before, and her case was a very delightful and interesting one. Often sorely tried and tempted, she remained faithful to God. Her influence over others was very great, and we often glorified God in her. But she fell, sadly fell. During the year she tried to destroy herself by throwing herself down the steep precipice in front of her husband's house, and it was a wonder that she was not killed on the spot. Her lapse gave us all great sorrow, and did immense harm. She continued in her fallen state for some years; but we are told, in an excellent memoir of her by the Rev. Joseph Waterhouse, that she deeply repented, lived for some years fully consecrated to Christ, and then died in the Lord.

Another terrible event of the year was the strangling of his widows on the death of Tanoa, the old king of Bau. The story of this fearful work has been more than once told by others; but as I was the only missionary present at the time, I may be allowed to tell it over again. As I wrote a full account of it at the time in my diary, I cannot do better, perhaps, than transcribe what I there wrote:--

*December 8, 1862.*—Tanoa, the old king of Bau, died today. He was a great and a bad man. He was at one time driven from his throne, and fled to Somosomo, and afterwards to Rewa. His son, Seru, now Thakombau, succeeded in driving the rebel chiefs from Bau and bringing back his father. Tanoa has had little to do at Bau for years; his son Thakombau being really king. He lived to an old age, and died a heathen. It is the custom in Fiji for one or more of the wives of a chief to be strangled when he dies, and it was supposed that many of Tanoa's wives would be strangled when his end came. For some years the missionaries have been labouring to prevent this. The captains of ships of war visiting Fiji have spoken strongly to Thakombau, and warned him of the evil of doing it. In November last, when Tanoa was getting weaker, we often presented whale's teeth to the king, according to Fijian custom, and begged him to spare the women; and we thought that we had some good hope of succeeding. In the latter end of November and beginning of December Tanoa was very low, and we almost daily saw the young chief, and pleaded hard for the lives of the women. On Sunday, December 5, Bro. Calvert and I saw the chief at Bau, and again interceded with him. On Monday 6<sup>th</sup> he came over to Viwa, and we had a long talk with him, and hoped that what we said had some influence on him. On Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> Mr. Calvert, who was greatly concerned about the matter, and had done very much to try and prevent the strangling, was compelled to leave for Ovalau. Soon after his departure I went in my canoe to Bau. When I reached the old king's house I was deeply affected to find most of the ladies of the town assembled, and all weeping. The ladies who were chosen to be strangled were pointed out to me. I spoke to them, and found some of them unwilling to die. But one spoke very lightly about it. I told her of the other world and warned her; but she said, "I'm going to jump into hell." I went to the large house, and there found Thakombau's wife superintending the making of the dresses for those who had to be strangled. I had some conversation with these, and then, with a bleeding heart, I went to seek the chief. I found him and others in the large open space making a sail. He asked me what I had come for. I said, "We cannot rest; we are feeling deeply about those who are to be strangled." He laughed at what I said, as did many others. I had a long talk with him, and promised to give him anything, or all we had, if he would spare the women. He said that if I were to take him a large ship it would not stop the strangling. One of the chiefs spoke very roughly to me. He said, "We strangled women and cooked and ate our enemies before the door of the missionary's house in Somosomo. What makes you so uneasy? Don't you get enough yam or taro, or do you want to eat human flesh?" I said to Thakombau, "I do not wonder at Ratu Mua thus insulting me; we expected it when we came to Fiji." "No, no," he replied; "you are right. It is right of you to warn us. You go, Mr. Watsford, and get the women to say that they wish to live, and they shall live." I went and spoke to them; but I might just as well have tried to hush the tempest into a calm, as to get those women to say that they wished to live. Having visited the old king, I returned to Viwa. In the evening I tried to get Verani to go with me to Bau, but he was poorly, and seemed afraid. Our printer, Mr. Martin, accompanied me, and we reached Bau about 9 o'clock. All in the town was as still as death. I went to the large house where old Tanoa was now lying. In the middle of the

house sat Thakombau. I went and sat down by his side. He seemed surprised and uneasy, and asked, "Why have you returned?" I replied, "I want to be present when your father dies, that I may try and prevent the strangling." He said, "It cannot be prevented; the women wish to die." I answered, "It rests entirely with you; you can prevent it if you wish." I again told him that he might have all we had if he would save the women. I remained for some time, and then, the old chief reviving a little, I left for Viwa, where we arrived, full of grief, about midnight.

This morning, Wednesday, Dec. 8, I sailed for Bau, accompanied by Mr. Martin. All was very still and quiet when we arrived. We went to the house of a friendly chief, who said to me, "Have you come from the large house?" "No," I said, "is the old chief worse?" He replied, "He is dead, and they are now strangling the ladies." I at once ran to the place, and at the door saw six biers for the dead bodies. As I entered the house they were strangling a Rewa lady. Sons and brothers or near relatives only can take part in the dreadful work. Four or five at each side were pulling the rope which was round the lady's neck. Her face was covered, a person standing behind pressed upon her head, and her arms were round a lady in front of her. Nothing was heard but the creaking of the rope as it tightened around the neck. There was no struggle, and after the rope had been held for about five minutes all was over. When the rope was taken off, Thakombau, holding it in his hands, turned to me and said, "Well now, you see we are strangling them: what about it?" As well as I could for weeping, I said, "Let no more die: spare the rest." He replied, "Only five have to die; but for you missionaries there would have been twenty-five." I pleaded hard for the lives of the three waiting to die; but all in vain. Thakombau said, "Are you not afraid to come here to interfere with our customs?" "No," I replied, "I am not afraid. I come because I love you, and I love these whom you are strangling." "Love," he said; "oh, we all love them: we are strangling them because we love them." While we were thus talking, the rope for the third victim was prepared, and soon another soul had gone to its doom. Two others waiting at the door were now called in. They entered, one of them as if going to a dance; their friends kissed them, and they were hurried into the presence of their Maker.

I was greatly surprised that there was no noise, no crying. All was as silent as death except when, now and then, someone expressed her admiration of the ladies' dresses, or the king spoke to me or I to him. I had expected to see the men awfully excited, but there was nothing of the kind. When the last of the five had been strangled, I thought it prudent to retire, as I could do no more. When going out I turned and tried to count the little fingers, placed on reeds over the door, which, according to the custom of the Fijians, had been just cut off the hands of babes and little children to show their love to the dead chief. But by heart sickened at the sight, and I hurried away to my boat with my soul crushed within me. Oh heathenism! Bloodthirsty, cruel heathenism! Doing thy dark and hellish deeds in the name of love! When shall thy murderous hand be stayed in Fiji? God of love, Lover of souls, speedily bring to an end all this evil. "Have respect unto Thy covenant, for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."

Amid all the dreadful things of today I cannot but think that it was no little thing that I, a lone missionary, could stand unharmed in the presence of that lion of a man, with all the ferocious savages around him, and command attention while I bore my testimony against their evil deeds. The chief, Thakombau, has acted very badly in this awful affair. He has been fully, frequently, faithfully warned, and he has done it

knowing it to be wrong, and after leading us to believe that he would try and prevent it. It all rested with him, and he might have forbidden it.

During the year we had a visit from H.M.S. ----, Captain -----. The "drinking" on board most of the ships of war that came to the islands was very bad, and in this respect Captain ----- was no exception to the almost general rule. He was very much annoyed because Mr. Calvert and I would not take wine with him. He professed to be a religious man, and when well under the influence of drink swore that he would have all Fiji converted. One evening, when he had drunk very freely, he called in his chaplain and would have him write out a prayer for the conversion of the Fijians. When it was finished he said, with an oath, "There, that will do it."

At the District Meeting my brethren were of one mind that my wife could not live in Fiji; and although I loved the work, and would gladly have lived and died in it, I was compelled again to leave the Mission. We had our trials and afflictions in Fiji, but God greatly blessed us there. Mr. Hunt used often to speak of Dr. Hannah's last words to him when he was leaving for Fiji: "Go, my brother, and God will bless you there more than He would have blessed you in England, for you will need His blessing more there." And so we found it. According to our day so was our strength. I greatly loved the Mission work; and if I were now a young man just beginning my work, I would say, "Here am I; send me to the mission field."

The missionaries in Fiji were a noble band of men, thinking little of privations and sufferings in their eagerness to win the heathen for Jesus. The work when I left was only in its infancy, but it was a good work. Our people were spiritually mere children, but a wonderful change had the grace of God wrought in them. No doubt many were Christians in name only, yet many were Christians in deed and in truth. "By their fruits ye shall know them," said Jesus; and if love to God's word and to prayer, if patience in suffering, if holiness in life and triumph in death, are sure signs of men being true Christians, then we had them in Fiji.

In Viwa we had one of the worst cases of leprosy that I ever met with in the islands. It made one's heart ache to look upon the sufferer, worn and wasted, parts of whose body had been eaten away by the terrible and incurable disease. But the afflicted man was a Christian. His name was Mesake (Meshach). In the days of their heathenism the Fijians would have made short work of his leprosy by putting the strangling-rope about his neck. But Christianity taught them better things. A hundred yards or so outside the town they built Mesake a small cottage, where he lived all alone. But every day they carried him his food, and he was never forgotten. I had the privilege, and it was a great one, of frequently kneeling at Mesake's door, and talking to him and praying for him; and I never went with the inquiry, "Well, Mesake, how are you today?" but he would answer, "It is well with me. Jesus is here, and I have no fear." The last time I went he said to me, "I have many friends in the town: they send me food, and come to see me, but none of them come in here. You, sir, you come and talk to me and pray for me, but you stop at the door. It is not well, it is not safe, for any to come inside. But Jesus is always here, and always blessing me, and I shall soon be with Him for ever." The day I left Fiji Mesake died, and went where there is no leprosy, and no separation and no sin for ever. I thought as I came away from Fiji, that that one glorious case was worth ten thousand times over all the money spent, and all the work done, and all the suffering endured in our Fijian Missions. Among those

whom I hope one day to meet before the throne of God in heaven is the once afflicted, suffering leper, Mesake.

## CHAPTER IX

### **My Trip to England**

In 1881, whether I would or not, the Conference determined that I should have a holiday. I was appointed a Representative to the British Conference, and one of the Delegates to the Ecumenical Conference to be held in London in September. I attended our General Conference held in Adelaide in May, gave the opening address, and left before the Conference closed. We sailed for England in the P. & O. steamship *Khedive*. Mr. S. G. King and Mr. James Warnock, of our Conference, and Mr. King's son, were of our party. We had a good ship, a good captain, favourable weather, and a pleasant voyage. An Episcopalian minister was on board, and, according to the rule of the P. & O. boats, he conducted service on the Sunday morning. But as many of the passengers wished me to preach, they, at my request, applied to the captain, and the saloon was arranged for an evening service. We had, however, a difficulty to begin with; for although we had Presbyterians, Baptists, Independents, and Methodists in the congregation, not one of them could start a tune. We applied to those who had played the harmonium and led the singing at the Episcopalian service, but they would have nothing to do with the dissenters. I went to the clergyman and reminded him that he had told me he was no bigot, and asked him to come and raise the tunes for us, and he promised to do so. Meeting at the appointed hour, we waited for the clergyman, but he came not. The purser then offered to lead the singing. During the singing of the first hymn the clergyman entered. At Galle a number of officers and others, including a few ladies, came on board. One of the ladies, when she saw me, said I reminded her of her father, and we became friends. She offered to play for us at our service, and with her help we got on nicely. We expected to find the Indian passengers full of pride, and anxious to keep all Australians at a respectful distance; but we were mistaken. Many of our Australians refused to join us in public worship; but many of those who came on board at Galle were regular attendants, and one, as I have stated, became our organist.

The drinking and gambling on the steamers is carried to a great length. Every day on our boat there was a shilling "sweep" in connection with the daily run of the vessel. Nearly all the young ladies were drawn into it by the example of the clergyman, who was one of the leaders in the movement. He was a young man, and I could speak freely to him. So one day, when he had won one or two pounds, I said to him, "You will, I hope, sir, pardon me for speaking to you; but, really, you are leading these young people into gambling. Your acting as you do has a powerful influence on them." He seemed at first annoyed at my speaking, but soon he turned to me and said, "Sir, if my own father were here, he'd say the very same to me. I thank you. I'll do it no more." And he kept his word.

I cannot say how delighted I was, notwithstanding the great heat, as we steamed up the Red Sea. At Suez we met, as all steamer passengers do, the donkeys and their drivers. One or two of our party were soon galloping away as fast as the donkeys could carry them. They tried hard to get me to ride, but could not succeed. We left the steamer here, and took train for Alexandria, where, after a very slow, sandy, and dusty journey, we arrived about six o'clock next morning. After a few hours' stay, during which we visited the bazaars, we took steamer for Brindisi. Our passage

across the Mediterranean was very interesting. At Brindisi landed passengers and mails, and in the evening left for Venice. The next day, Sunday, I preached in the morning at eleven o'clock. After the service we were all horrified to hear that we had smallpox on board. Arriving at Venice, we hoisted the yellow flag, but no one came near us. After waiting some time, our doctor and chief steward went in a boat to communicate with the authorities on shore. They soon returned with an officer wearing a red sash across his breast: we were in quarantine. There was now much commotion on board, everyone being greatly excited. We had in the steamer English, Americans, Germans, French, and others. When opportunity offered, the men of different nationalities sent to their consul begging him to intercede for us. All we could learn from the shore was that they had sent to Rome for instructions, and when these arrived they would communicate with us. To add to our troubles, we had no sooner come to anchor than the purser of the steamer informed us that we should be charged ten shillings a day for our board while we remained in quarantine. The second day, at three o'clock, a flag was hoisted on shore for an officer to go near to the station. He went, and soon returned with the joyful news that in half an hour the sick man would be removed, that the doctor would then examine passengers and crew, and if all were well we should, after the ship had been fumigated, be allowed to enter Venice. When the news came, a Jewish gentleman, who had been greatly annoyed by the detention, came to me and said, "Mr. Watsford, I think you have been praying about this." It told him I was glad to know that he had faith in the efficacy of prayer. In half an hour the doctor came, had the sick man removed, but hesitated himself to come on board. He gave orders for the second-class passengers and crew to stand in line on the main deck, and the saloon passengers on the poop. When all was ready he hurried in board, passed down the lines of those on the main deck, rushed on to the poop, took off his cap, bowed to us, and was over the side of the vessel as quickly as possible. Two men then came on board, each with a saucer in his hand, and something in it burning. They went to the fore part of the ship, then into the saloon, and away down to their boat as fast as the doctor had gone, and the fumigation of the steamer was complete. At once our anchor was up, and by seven o'clock we were in the great Canal.

There is no need to describe Venice with its wonderful sights, for this has been done scores of times. One or two things connected with our visit, however, I may mention. We had a very intelligent guide, who spoke English well. We went to St. Mark's, and, among other things, saw the relics – bones of saints, pieces of the cross of Calvary, and a bottle of blood from the crucified Saviour. We were greatly shocked when this was shown. I said to our guide, who was a Roman Catholic, "But you do not believe that, do you?" "Oh," he replied, "there is the pope's seal on it." "But, I said, "you surely do not believe that that is some of the Saviour's blood?" He shrugged his shoulders and, laughing, said, "All I know is that they tell us it is." He no more believed it than I did. When we went into the church of the Jesuits our guide spoke bitterly against them. He said, "This is their church, but they have gone to do their dirty work in England and America."

From Venice we travelled to Milan, and of course were filled with astonishment at its wonderful Cathedral, the costly crypt below, and the tomb and skeleton of the Cardinal St. Charles. We paid a visit to the old church where Leonardo da Vinci's great painting of the Last Supper is, and, notwithstanding all that the never-to-be-

believed Mark Twain has written, we were fascinated by the faces in the group before us.

From Milan we went to Como, steamed up the beautiful lake, crossed to Lake Lugano, then by coach to Lake Maggiore, on to Lucano, and thence by train to Biasca, where we had to rest on the Sabbath. This journey from Milan to Biasca was full of interest. We passed through a well-cultivated country, every available yard of which was utilised. All along our road, however, we had unmistakable proofs that we were in a land of superstition and gross darkness. Very frequently we passed small rooms by the wayside in which was the picture or image of some saint or other. These became ruder and ruder as we travelled on, till at last we came where there were boxes on high poles, something like pigeon-boxes, with a penny doll inside. The driver of the coach directed our attention to the first of these. Roman Catholic though he was, he could not help laughing at the blind superstition. We came to an old church where was a window with iron bars and no glass. There were about sixty human skulls in the window; and on a stone chest, with a hole in the top, an inscription praying the reader to give something for the release of these souls from purgatory.

On Sunday morning at Biasca, while my friends went to a Roman Catholic church, I set out in search of a Protestant place of worship, for I was told that there was one in the town. I had learned one or two Italian words that I thought would help me, and, using them freely, soon found myself standing before a very humble church, with a cottage at one end. I knocked at the door of the cottage, and a bright-eyed, intelligent looking Italian opened it. I looked at him, and he at me. I could not speak to him, nor he to me. At last, recognising each other as friends, we heartily shook hands, and he then put on his hat and beckoned me to follow him. He went into another street and knocked at a door, and a lady came; he said something to her, and she, turning to me, said, "You wish to speak to the minister, do you?" "Yes," I replied, "I do; and how glad I am to find someone who can speak to me in English. I have just come from Australia – from Victoria." "Have you?" she said; "why, I lived in Daylesford for eleven years." We were soon friends, and she went with us to the church. The pastor brought me a hymn-book, and tried to explain what it was. Some of the words being like the old Latin, I could just make out that if anyone is in the hands of Jesus he is all right; but I did not really know the hymn until they began to sing "Safe in the arms of Jesus." Then they sang "Shall we gather at the river?" The pastor preached an earnest sermon, if I may judge by the way the people listened. After preaching, he would have me say a few words, and the lady interpreted for me. In the evening my friends went with me. We had no sooner entered the church than a man came to us and said he had lived in Bendigo seven years, and was glad to see us. The service seemed to be a very good one. My friends and I had to speak, the Bendigo man interpreting. After the service we went towards our hotel, accompanied by the pastor and the interpreter. On our way the latter said, "I wish I was in Victoria again." "Why so?" we asked. "Oh," said he, "I've had no luck since I left. Some time ago my wife and I quarrelled, and she left me; and last week my son, living in the country, took the smallpox, and I had to bring him home, and nurse him all week." This last remark startled us a little. We had been quarantined because we had a case of smallpox on our steamer, and yet here we were shaking hands and walking with this nurse of a smallpox patient. We soon discovered that our mission to this man was ended, and hurried off to our hotel.

The next morning we were in our carriage early, and all day were climbing Mont St. Gothard. About seven o'clock we reached the hotel at the top. There we met travellers from many parts of the world. Next morning, soon after dawn, we were descending the mount on the other side; and the mountain peaks crowned with snow, the roaring torrents, the foaming waterfalls, the deep dark gorges, and the fearful precipices, filled us with awe and delight. At three o'clock in the afternoon we reached Lake Lucerne.

We went by train to the top of the Rhigi, ascending over five thousand feet in one hour: a very trying trip indeed to most people when they make it the first time. The car, which held about forty persons, was full, the great part being ladies. Few words were spoken by anyone: I was not myself inclined to talk much. Nearly all the way I was reading a little guide-book bought at the station, in one part of which it was stated that it was safer to travel in this train than in an ordinary one on level ground. I thought it might be so; but to find one's self safe at the station on the return trip was a considerable relief.

I left my companions at Lucerne, as I had to hurry on to be in time for the British Conference. Travelling by express from Lucerne to Paris, I was greatly amused with a Swiss. I said to him, "Why don't you people come to Australia? Here you have an acre or two at most to cultivate; there we could give you three hundred and twenty acres to begin with, for a very little." "Oh," said he, "who would go there? Our papers say that ten thousand die every year from snake-bite, and that a monster goes hopping about on its hind legs, sucking the heart's blood of all he can lay hold of." Our poor kangaroo, what a terrible creature they have made of him!

The day after I arrived in Paris was the 14<sup>th</sup> July, the National Fete Day. What a day it was! I spent the greater part of it on the top of omnibuses, riding in and out of the city in different directions, and seeing the wonderful sights. The people were excited, wild: there were processions, singing, dancing, shouting, everywhere. The illuminations at night were something never to be forgotten. I was staying in a *quiet* street in the city; but the noise all night was fearful. The men seemed to be raving mad, and the women madder than the men. Never shall I forget that night in Paris.

The next day I took train for Havre, and thence by steamer reached Southampton on the following morning.

I was in England, the land I had longed to see, and that I had ever thought of as the glory of all lands, where God is honoured, and from whence so many had gone forth to bless the world. By eleven o'clock I was in London. Having found my quarters in Charterhouse Square, I soon made my way to City Road Chapel. I knocked at the parsonage door, and told the minister who I was, and that I wished to see the chapel. He very kindly showed me everything. I will not attempt to describe my feelings as I walked through that Methodist Cathedral, and thought of Wesley and others who had preached the glorious Gospel there. I visited Mrs. Wesley's grave in Bunhill Fields Cemetary, and blessed God for that noble woman to whom Methodism and the world owes so much. I stood by the grave of our venerable founder, and, a stranger from the very ends of the earth, praised God with all my heart that Wesley was ever born, and that the grace of the Lord Jesus made him what he was, and enabled him to do his

glorious work. I afterward went to see the grave of Charles Wesley, who, a High Churchman to the last, was buried in consecrated<sup>1</sup> ground in Marylebone Churchyard. The gates were closed, but I looked through the iron railings, and thanked God for the bard of Methodism, who wrote the glorious hymns that, with God's blessing, have melted many a sinner's heart, have comforted many a mourner, have cheered and stimulated many a Christian, and have been death-songs of many a believed: thanked God fro him who wrote "O for a thousand tongues to sing," "O Thou who camest from above," "Jesu, Lover of my soul," and "Come, O Thou Traveller unknown."

On my first Sunday in London I walked to Spurgeon's church. I had been introduced to one of his deacons on Saturday, and he told me he would be waiting for me at the door ten minutes before the time of service. I found him there when I arrived, and he took me to his pew in the middle of the church. Mr. Spurgeon preached from, "By grace are ye saved," a simple, gospel, soul-stirring sermon. After service the deacons kindly invited me to see Mr. Spurgeon. The hall was filled with persons waiting to see him, but being with the deacons I had an early interview. When my name was announced, Mr. Spurgeon rose to meet me, saying, "God bless you, my brother! You are from Australia: have you seen my Tom there?" – referring to one of his sons. I had a few moments of interesting conversation with this noble man, and then left with the opinion I had long formed greatly strengthened, that he was one of the grandest, if not the greatest, of the preachers of the Gospel in the world today. In the afternoon I went to St. Paul's, expecting to hear Canon Liddon; but he did not preach. I heard, however, a good sermon from Canon Goodman. The intoning of the service I was not particularly pleased with, and was greatly disgusted with the conduct of many of the people, who, when the anthem was finished, rose and left the Cathedral. They had gone for the music only. In the evening I went to Dr. Parker's church, and heard one of his lectures on Ingersoll. To a stranger Dr. Parker seems very pompous and stiff. I heard him again on a Thursday, when my friend the Rev. Thomas Williams was with me. The sermon was full of Gospel truth, and did us all good. After the service Mr. Williams and I went into the vestry to see the Doctor. How different he was there – so genial and kind. He gave each of us his lectures on Ingersoll, and talked very freely about the work of God in out land. At the close of the interview he said, "Now, brethren, what do you really want? Do you wish me to go and take an appointment for you in Melbourne?" We told him that we hoped he would visit us soon, and that whenever he came we would all give him a hearty welcome.

On Tuesday I left London for Liverpool, where the British Conference was being held. I arrived about six o'clock, and immediately drove to Brunswick Chapel, where I found a great many ministers walking in the chapel yard. I inquired of two or three where I could see the Secretary of Conference or the Rev. John Kilner. They all told me that it was the Open Session of Conference, that the Representatives of the Affiliated Conferences were speaking, and that it would not be possible to see either of the gentlemen I had named. Presently I saw a minister hurrying across the lyard. Thinking him to be one of whom I had often heard, and whose portrait I had seen, I called out, "Mr. Rowe!" and he stopped. I went to him and said, "You are the Rev. G. S. Rowe. I don't know you, and you don't know me: I have never seen you before, nor you me; but I think I can make you know me very quickly. You wrote John Hunt's Life: I was John Hunt's colleague; my name is Watsford." Seizing my hand,

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<sup>1</sup> As he supposed. In reality it was not "consecrated." – ED.

and shaking it very heartily, eh said, "Oh, bless you, I know you. What can I do for you?" "Show me the Secretary of Conference or Dr. Kilner," I said. "Come along," he replied, and in a minute or two I was introduced to Dr. Kilner, who said to me, "What are you doing here? You should be on the platform: you have to speak tonight." In about ten minutes I was on the platform, surrounded by ministers of whom I had long heard, with Dr. Osborn in the chair, whose name had been for many years very familiar to me. I had to speak. The audience, which crowded the church, gave me a warm welcome, and seemed to feel as I told them of our work in Australia. After the meeting, when I was leaving the church, I saw a man in the crowd pressing toward me. When near enough he laid hold of my hand with both of his, and cried, "Bless you, Mr. Watsford! I was the first man converted in Ballarat when you came to that Circuit." No honour that the Church or the world could confer on me could equal the honour of being instrumental in saving a soul from death.

I attended the Conference frequently, and was glad to meet Dr. Osborn, William Arthur, Dr. Pope, Benjamin Gregory, and others. Accustomed for many years to read of mighty men in the Conference, I expected to find a much stronger platform. But the days of Bunting, Newton, Lessey, and others have gone, and there are men in the body of the Conference with equal influence to most on the platform. I was surprised once or twice at the ruling of the President, and was told that it was respect for the father who was in the chair that made the brethren submit to what they would not have allowed in any other man. A beautiful obituary of Dr. Punshon, prepared by Dr. Gregory, was read, but its effect on the Conference was much weakened by a very inopportune discussion on the length of obituaries.

From the Conference I went to London, to the gathering of delegates from Young Men's Christian Associations in all parts of the world. I was thankful for the opportunity of hearing Lord Shaftesbury, Dr. Cuyler, and other eminent men.

During my stay in England I visited Derby two or three times. An old friend of mine from South Australia, Mr. Corlett, was living there, and was at the time a leader and steward in the Circuit. At the Sabbath School in Derby I gave an address, and many of the young people felt deeply. In the evening I preached, and many sought the Lord. I also spoke at a very enthusiastic missionary meeting. The Rev. William Griffiths, well known in the Wesleyan Reform movement, was on the platform. When I sat down he came to me and warmly shook my hand, saying, "I'd rather shake hands with you, my brother, than with any of the crowned heads of Europe." I was greatly delighted with the charming scenery around Derby. Our visit to Dovedale and Chatsworth was a great treat.

At Wednesbury I spent a week or more with my friend Mr. Holloway. On the Sunday morning I preached on Entire Sanctification. After the service some came into the vestry, greatly concerned about the blessing, and fully consecrated themselves to God. At the evening service many were penitently seeking mercy, and some were made very happy. On the Monday we had a glorious missionary meeting. Everything about Wednesbury was full of interest to me. I went over the ground where Wesley had been so cruelly persecuted, and where the seed sown in tears has brought forth a hundredfold. One evening I heard a Primitive Methodist preaching to a great crowd in the street. In his address he said, "There was a time when if a man preached in the street he would be laid hold of by a policeman; but it would take a good lot of

policemen to manage us tonight. Then he would have been led off, and shut up in the lock-up; but it would take a large lock-up to hold all of us that would have to go tonight.”

When I arrived in England two letters were delivered to me at the Mission House. One was from a lady friend of ours in Australia, who, a few years before, had gone home to Scotland. She said that she would soon be in Glasgow, and hoped to see me there. The other was from my old friend Captain Williams, of London. He was a great favourite with us all in Sydney, where he often came in his famous ships *La Hogue*, *Light of the Age*, *Parramatta*. He used to stay most of his time when ashore in my Circuit, and glorious meetings we have had together. He told me in his letter that he was very unwell, and had been advised by his doctor to go to Scotland, and was then at Dunoon. In concluding his letter he wrote, “I want to see you as soon as you can come. You’ll find enclosed a cheque for your expenses here and back.” Who could refuse so kind an invitation? I set off as soon as possible, and spent a few pleasant days with my old friend and his excellent family. I then left for Glasgow, hoping to see Miss Fraser, our Australia friend, there. I had written to her to leave her address at the Wesleyan minister’s house in John Street, and I would find her out. Arriving at Glasgow by train, I walked the platform for a time, not knowing where to go. At last I went up to a minister on the platform, and inquired if he could direct me to the Wesleyan minister’s house in John Street. “Yes,” he said, “I can; but you’ll not find it.” “Oh yes,” I said, “I can; if you’ll only start me in the right direction.” “No, no; you can’t find it,” he repeated; “wait a while till I leave my bag in the parcel-room, and I’ll go with you.” I strongly protested against this; but he was determined to help me. On the way we discovered that I knew some of his intimate friends in Australia. This drew us closer to each other, and he never left me until he landed me at the door of the Wesleyan parsonage. I shall never meet him again on earth, but I shall never forget his kindness; and I hope to meet him in the better land. From the Wesleyan minister I obtained the address of my friend Miss Fraser, and made my way to the West End, to a Mr. Lockhead, a civil engineer, living in that neighbourhood. From Mr. Lockhead I learned that Miss Fraser had gone to Edinburgh. I was going away when Mr. Lockhead said, “Where are you staying?” “At the Temperance Hotel,” I replied. “Oh,” said he, “wait and take tea with us, and my wife, who will then be home, will show you where you can get good lodgings near at hand.” I waited till Mrs. Lockhead returned, and had tea with them. After tea I said, “Now, Mrs. Lockhead, will you kindly show me where these good lodgings are?” She replied, “Sir, my husband and I both very much wish you to stay with us tonight, and we can talk about the lodgings in the morning.” I stayed that night, and in the morning again asked Mrs. Lockhead to show me the lodgings. She said, “Sir, we have made up our minds that you must stay with us while you remain in Glasgow.” And with them I had to stay; and if I had been their own brother, just come home, they could not have treated me with greater kindness. All the family were members of Dr. Arnot’s church, and active workers there.

On Sunday morning we had a very early breakfast, and then walked to the Evangelistic Hall, where about two thousand from the slums and lanes of the city were met for a free breakfast. It was a wonderful and touching sight. The breakfast was served without any confusion, and most ravenously the poor wretches devoured it. After breakfast there was a religious service. A very excellent address was given by Mrs. Baxter, wife of the Rev. Mr. Baxter, the prophet of Napoleonic destiny. It

made my heart ache to look upon the faces before me; but greatly I rejoiced that Christian men and women were seeking to save the outcasts. I attended Church service twice, and in the evening spoke to a great crowd in the Mission Hall, where much good is done. Glasgow is a wicked place, but it has many earnest workers. Before leaving the city I had an operation performed on one of my eyes, for the removal of a growth which had been troubling me.

From Glasgow I travelled to Edinburgh, and there found my friend. I ran about the beautiful city for a day or two, seeing the wonderful sights; but having a good deal of pain in my eye I hurried off to London, where I saw a doctor, and in a short time was much relieved. I had the pleasure of staying some days with my old friends Mr. and Mrs. T. G. Waterhouse, in their charming home at New Barnet. Their kindness to me in many ways was very great. Here I met some of our most distinguished ministers, including the Rev. W. L. Watkinson, who was then stationed at New Barnet. I heard him one Thursday evening preach a capital sermon from “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” I wrote the following brief outline of it immediately after: - Introduction. Comprehensive character of the text – “If it be possible”; “as much as lieth in you”; “all men.” The subject is, Keep the peace. 1. In the Church. From the first there have been dissensions. 2. In the family. There is often discord – at marriages: reunions often breed discords: at funerals – they divide dead men’s money and old friendships. 3. In the city: called a hive of bees, often a nest of wasps. Rivalries, jealousies, quarrels – “If it be possible.” A specimen of the morality taught by the Gospel: no impossibilities, no transcendentalism that no one can reach. It is not always possible: to be at peace with some, means (1) giving up our intelligence: if not think as they do, no peace; (2) neglect of duty; (3) denying God; (4) being at war with everyone else: some will be at peace with us, the better to fight the rest. But mark fulness of admonition – “as much as lieth in you.” Study to be quiet. Do your best. 1. Guard against *spirit* of discord: that is, (1) spirit of selfishness; (2) intolerance, bigotry; (3) ambition: some lunatics think they ought to rule the world: many not in a lunatic asylum ought to be; (4) unkindness. 2. Guard against occasion of discord. Springs from small things. Great fires in West from two crooked branches rubbing against each other: so in the Church. 3. Do not perpetuate quarrels. If there is a spark, do not run and blow on it; put your foot on it. In the South Seas they hang up something in the house to remind them of the quarrel and stimulate to revenge; so we hang up things in our hearts against the day of reckoning. Do not take this for your model. The Greeks, when they had a grand victory, built a trophy in wood, that it might soon decay and the quarrel be forgotten. If we would learn this virtue, or any virtue, we must look at Christ; have Him in our heart and in our midst. The apostles were men of very different natures, but with Christ in the midst they agreed. So if Christ is in the city, family, church – there will be peace.

I was invited to preach in City Road Chapel, and was the guest of the Rev. R. M. Spoor, the Superintendent of the Circuit. I cannot say how deeply I felt while staying for a day or two in the house where Wesley lived and died. On the Saturday evening I attended the prayer-meeting. Sixty or seventy persons were present, and some lively sisters among them. I was at the Sunday morning prayer-meeting with about fifty others, and we had a good time. At eleven o’clock I preached to a large congregation on Entire Sanctification (1 Thess. V. 23), the glorious subject on which Wesley and others had often spoken in that building. In the evening I preached on “What shall I do with Jesus?” The church was well filled, and the power of the Lord was present to

heal. I afterwards assisted in administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to about three hundred communicants. We had in the evening congregation a good number of American and Canadian ministers.

A few Sundays after, I took part in the reopening of Hinde Street Chapel. The Rev. W. Arthur preached in the morning a good comforting sermon from "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh on me." I preached in the evening, and had many seeking mercy at the prayer-meeting which followed. After the service a young man came into the vestry, and introduced himself as the son of one of our friends in South Australia. When passing through South Australia I heard of his being in London, studying as an architect, and I hoped to meet him. He said that he lived in another part of London far from City Road, but on the Sunday I preached there he had all that day a strong impression on his mind urging him to attend the service in City Road Chapel in the evening. So he went. He did not recognise me, but in telling an anecdote I had to mention my name, and he was then delighted to learn that I was the preacher. He was very glad to meet me and to hear of his friends, whom I had seen just before leaving.

The Ecumenical Conference commenced in City Road Chapel on Wednesday, Sept. 7. The attendance of delegates was large, and each body had its own special place in the church. The galleries were well filled. Bishop Simpson's opening sermon was very good, but not equal to many he has preached. The Representatives who addressed the Conference spoke well. More than half the members of Conference, however, had gone before Dr. Douglas finished his speech. I had been asked to speak, but there was no time. I need not give any account of the work of this Conference: that has been fully done by others. Only to one or two matters will I refer. The great thing in this assembly that was most pleasing to me was the meeting together of so many members of the different Methodist Churches. Among those present was the Rev. W. Griffiths in the same Conference with Dr. Osborn. I hoped and prayed that this Convention might help to bring about the union of the Methodist bodies, when Wesleyan, New Connexion, Primitive, United Free, and Bible Christian, and all similar distinctions shall be done away, and there shall be one united Methodist Church the wide world over. Preaching the same doctrines, and with almost the same discipline, it is a burning shame that we should be divided as we are. In the divisions of the past we all have some share of the blame, and we should now be willing to forget the irritation, and hard words, and unkind deeds of the past, in order that a real scandal before the world may for ever cease. To me it seems that the great hindrances are merely financial, and I sincerely hope the day will soon come when we shall be thoroughly determined that neither these nor any other difficulties shall prevent our becoming one United Church.

Our American brethren did very much of the speaking. Some of the coloured ministers spoke frequently. The only time that the Conference was really roused was while a minister of the African race was giving his address on what the Gospel of Christ had done for his nation. Referring to slavery in America, he said, "For a long time there was a simple misunderstanding between the two nations as to their relation the one to the other," etc. Coming from one of the deeply injured race, this stirred the heart of the Conference to its very depths. The brethren rose and faced the speaker, and cheer after cheer followed. But the bell rang, and time was up. "Go on! Go on!" shouted the ministers; "Go on, Price!" "No, he won't go on," said the chairman, old

Bishop Peck. "You have made a law, and you must abide by it." Forgetting the respect due to the chair, some of the more excited delegates cried, "Go on, Price!" "He has too much sense to go on," said the unmoved chairman, and Price was down in a moment.

During the whole of the time that the Conference was sitting, and long before, the public heart was deeply touched by the suffering and precarious condition of President Garfield of the United States. The first line in the morning papers on which the eyes of hundreds of thousands rested was the cablegram from America reporting the President's state. What a terrible fight for life was that; what feverish excitement took hold of all as we read of it; and what tender sympathy there was for the noble wife who watched day and night by the side of the President's bed! When the sad news came at last that all was over, it seemed as if everyone in England had lost a friend. A great genuine heartfelt sorrow spread over the land.

After the Conference I spent some days sight-seeing in London. Of course I went to the Parliament Houses, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, the Museum, the National Gallery, Hampton Court, the Tower, etc., but I need not dwell on these. I ran down into Kent to Faversham to see my friend Mr. B. Berry, and he drove me to Brighton to see his father, a grand old Methodist, who has for many years done good work for our Church. I also visited Canterbury Cathedral and heard some good singing.

Being appointed one of the Missionary deputation to Leeds, I left London and ran to York, where I had the great pleasure of meeting again with my old Fijian friends and fellow-missionaries, the Rev. R. B. and Mrs. Lyth. After two or three days' stay with them I went on to Leeds, where I was kindly entertained by Mr. James Stocks, of Chapeltown. Mr. Stocks, thinking I would like to hear Mr. Gladstone, who was then in Leeds, had procured tickets for a monster meeting which was to be held. There was great excitement in the town, and the crowd in the hall was very large and full of enthusiasm. There were said to be many thousands in the building, and the whole mass was moved together one way or the other. We were in a gallery strongly barricaded off from other parts of the building. As the swaying multitude sang "Rule Britannia" with all their might, I said to Mr. Stocks, "That surging crowd will be on us before long." "No, no," he said; "we are safe." Before long, however, the barriers gave way under the heavy pressure, and the crowd came rushing against us. I thought I should be crushed to death. It was of no use speaking, for no one would listen. I was not far from the staircase, and as two or three ladies fainted and had to be lifted out, I followed them just as Mr. Gladstone appeared on the scene. I had longed to hear him, but I could not stand that pressure. It was, according to the reports in the morning papers, a grand speech that the wonderful old man made, and I was sorry I had not heard it.

I preached on Sunday in Oxford Place Chapel at eleven o'clock, and in St. Peter's at night. The chapels in Leeds are very large, but not the congregations. Methodism was once the religion of Leeds, but it is not today.<sup>2</sup> The Church of England has wonderfully revived and prospered here during the last few years. After the service at St. Peter's I went to Brunswick Chapel and assisted the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes at the prayer-meeting. There were many penitents. On Monday I attended the Breakfast

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<sup>2</sup> This was in 1881. Great changes for the better have happened since then. Old chapels have been filled and new chapels built. – Ed.

Meeting at Headingley College. Dr. Osborn was in the chair. It was a grand meeting: a very hallowed feeling rested on us. About £900 was given to the Missionary cause. In the evening I spoke at the public meeting in Brunswick Chapel, the other speakers being the Rev. J. Albrighton, Dr. Kilner, and H. P. Hughes. The church was crowded, and the meeting very enthusiastic. On the Tuesday evening we had another great meeting at Oxford Place. On the Wednesday we had a great gathering at the breakfast in the Town Hall, and a most successful meeting after. There is the true missionary spirit at Leeds. The kindness of the friends to me was very great.

Leaving Leeds, I went to Horncastle to see Mrs. Watson, sister of the Rev. J. Williams. The next day I went on to Newton-on-Trent, where I had the very great pleasure of meeting Mrs. Hunt again. We rejoiced and wept together. And now I was for some time running about visiting relatives of my friends in Australia. All were delighted to see me, and to hear of their loved ones at the other side of the world. After some of the meetings that I attended, I had to answer many inquiries about friends in Australia. I was sometimes amused to find that I was expected to know everyone in all Australasia, no matter where they resided. I was asked by one, "Do you know my brother, sir?" "Where does he live?" "In Dunedin, sir," was the reply. Of course I had to tell him, much to his disappointment, that Dunedin was very far away from my home, and that I did not know his brother.

I visited Dr. Stephenson's Children's Homes, and was greatly pleased. At Red Hill I spent a glorious Sabbath with Mr. Duncan. I preached in the morning on Entire Sanctification, and we had a good time. In the evening we had many penitents. I went to Blackheath to see the Rev. J. Chapman, brother of the Rev. B. Chapman, our beloved Missionary Secretary in Australia, of whose death I received news from home three days after this visit. I stayed a few days at Croydon with my dear friends Captain and Mrs. Williams. While there I visited the Ladies' School, one of the best in England. There were over three hundred happy girls in the school, for whose instruction no male teachers were employed except for music. I was making inquiries at the time for a head master for our Ladies' College in Melbourne. The Lady Principal of this school gave me all information about their system, which she thought the best in the world. She was amused at our idea of a head master being required.

Two or three times I was sent for at the last moment by the Mission House secretaries to supply for Dr. Kilner, who could not go where he was announced. At these places I found the attendance only small. Indeed, as Dr. Kilner told me, except when they have returned missionaries, and extra means are used to draw the people, the congregations are generally poor at the missionary meetings, and we cannot wonder at that. We have all along been training the people to expect something new and exciting, and we have not been able to meet the increasing demand. What is new and exciting one year becomes stale and commonplace the next, and so the attendance at the meetings falls off, and the missionary cause suffers.<sup>3</sup>

November fogs were coming. It was time for me to be off. Having made all arrangements, on November 2<sup>nd</sup> I crossed the Channel, leaving the grand old land with a deep sense of the continued kindness of all the friends. Almost everywhere "Australia" gained admission for me, and secured for me kindly recognition and

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<sup>3</sup> In this respect, also, there have been changes for the better since 1881. – Ed.

friendly help. I ascertained that many knew very little of our country. At one meeting I was introduced as “a brother from the other world.” I told the people not to be alarmed, for I had flesh and bones as they had. But, indeed, to some I might have come from another world, for they knew little or nothing about Australia. I was travelling one day in a railway carriage with a number of passengers, and told them something about Victoria and our doings there. A lady sitting near me asked, “How long, sir, have you been in England?” “Only three months,” I said. “Only three months!” she exclaimed. “Why, you speak English well.”

Methodism in England is very much the same as in Australia. In the cities many of the large churches are poorly attended. As people prosper in the world they move into the suburbs, and we do not draw others to fill their places. The class meetings are badly attended, as with us. There is no denying the fact that Methodism today is not doing the great work our fathers did: going out after the masses of the unsaved, among the lowest and the worst, and seeking to bring them to the Saviour. We are building grand churches, and gathering very respectable congregations; many of our Funds are flourishing, and we are becoming a great financial society. We have evangelists who are doing a good work, but too frequently all the soul-saving work is left to them. We are becoming, as the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse says, “dreadfully respectable, and our respectability is killing us.” Since I was in England, what is known as “The Forward Movement” has been commenced, and in one or two places in Australia we are doing a little on the same lines. But “The Forward Movement” shows our weakness and deadness. The need of forward movement among us is where we have been lagging behind or have come to a standstill. I thank God for this movement; but I am afraid it may be only something outside, that will leave the regular church work to go in the old rut, and with the same barrenness of results. What we want is a great movement in all our Circuits in connection with the usual means of grace – ministers and officers and members of the Church all baptized with the Holy Spirit, all living the Christlike life, and all labouring to win souls for Jesus. Then would God, our own God, bless us, and Methodism today would be stronger and more successful than ever it was in the past.

My English friends will, no doubt, impute it to prejudice or ignorance when I say that three of us, who travelled together through Italy, Switzerland, France, and Great Britain, came to the conclusion that there was no country we had seen where there was the same amount of real civil and religious liberty as we had in Australia. To me the great religious Establishment in England, overshadowing all, was anything but pleasant; and the quiet way in which this was submitted to, and in many cases approved of, was simply unaccountable. I cannot refer to particulars, but may just mention the Marriage Act. How degrading to all outside of the Established Church are the conditions imposed upon them by this Act.

The caste feeling in England and the extremes of wealth and poverty strike a stranger very painfully. One of my friends took me to Rotten Row, and we sat there for two hours looking at the display. Then we went into a part of London where poverty and wretchedness are found, and saw what filled us with shame and sorrow. This state of things is not what God intended, and it cannot last. God grant the evil may be corrected in some mild and righteous way; for if not, it may one day be corrected, as in other lands, with deeds of cruelty and blood the thought of which makes one shudder. Carlyle says, “A lie may prosper for a while, but it will turn round at the last

and smite the liar down.” That is true of any wrong, as the history of the world testifies. England is highly favoured, and is a Queen among the nations. She has had, and has today, some of the noblest and the best on the face of God’s earth, and most earnestly I pray that her glory may never depart; that the evils existing in her may be all removed; and that by her wise legislation and her religious and philanthropic enterprises she may ever have God’s richest blessing, securing for her peace and prosperity at home, and making her a blessing to the world.

Leaving England and crossing the Channel, I took train for Paris, where I remained a week. The Electric Exhibition was then being held, and I spent a day examining its curiosities. Seeing some people hurrying towards one part of the building, I went with them, and was soon standing in line waiting to go somewhere, but where I did not know, for, as I cannot speak French, I could not question anyone. Patiently waiting, I was at last allowed, with about a dozen others, to enter a room; and as everyone ran and seized the cords hanging in different parts and placed the instruments at the end to their ears, I did the same. Soon I heard the most exquisite music, and then the most charming singing. Speaking of this afterwards to our minister, the Rev. W. Gibson, I learned that through the telephone I had been listening to a performance at the Grand Opera. But I did it unintentionally and ignorantly, without any of the condemnation many a professing Christian has felt after having been to the Opera House.

The evening I arrived in Paris, after getting my things nicely in my room, I had to go out and buy soap. On the Continent they give you no soap in your bedroom: why, it is impossible to say. In England and wherever English people are, they take it for granted that you use soap, and it is provided for you; but you have to buy for yourself in France and Italy. It is a reflection on the continental people: a stranger might think that among them cleanliness was not considered a virtue.

The Rev. W. Gibson kindly secured me a capital guide. He was the caretaker of our church in Paris. With his valuable help I saw most of the sights. One of the most beautiful is the Tomb of Napoleon at the Invalides, and one of the wildest is the Bourse. Approaching the latter, I heard the noise at a distance. Outside, there was a large crowd constantly on the move, and all talking very loudly: inside, it was a perfect Babel. I never heard such shouting and screaming before. A man might think that he was in Bedlam, or that another revolution had begun; and yet all were doing business one with another. I went into the gallery and looked on the surging, bellowing mass, and thought I had never seen business men so much like raving madmen. I visited Versailles, the luxury, waste, and wantonness of which had so much to do in bringing about the terrible Revolution. What pictures are there, nearly all historical, and all representing the glory of France! Among the many pictures of battles, there was none of Waterloo! Very much of the glory of the palace is now gone; but one cannot look upon the palaces built by the Kings of France for their mistresses, at a cost of millions, without thinking that the patient endurance of the people must have been very great, and that the terrible blow that fell at last was what might well have been expected.

One evening I went with Mr. Gibson to a meeting in a part of the city where the workmen live. There were sixty or seventy persons present, most of them women in white bonnets. It was a kind of fellowship meeting. They would have me say a few

words, Mr. Gibson interpreting. After the meeting everyone came forward to shake hands.

I was anxious to see Mr. M'All's work in Paris. He was a minister in England, who went to Paris for a holiday. While there he and his wife distributed tracts among the people in one of the worst parts of Paris, and told them the old, simple, glorious Gospel of Jesus crucified, and salvation by faith in Him. The people were deeply impressed with what they heard, and begged Mr. M'All to give up his church in England and live and labour among them: he did so. When I visited Paris he had been a few years at his great work, and his success had been wonderful. In Paris alone he had twenty-three preaching-places, where services were regularly held by himself and others. I went to one of the meetings. About one hundred and fifty persons were present, nearly all men; many of them in their working dress, some with their sleeves tucked up. They listened most attentively, at times clapping, then laughing, and then cheering. After the sermon was ended, it was freely criticised. I had to speak to them for a short time.

On Sunday I preached in our church to about seventy persons, English and American. At four o'clock I went to hear Pastor Bersier. His fine large church was crowded, the aisles being filled. Everyone was very attentive. A lady friend of Mr. Gibson, who was with me, said it was a grand sermon. Bersier is a man like Luther in appearance, is clean-shaved, and parts his hair in the middle. He had the reputation of being the most eloquent man in Paris. He was in earnest, sometimes greatly so, and had complete control of his hearers. In the evening I went with Mr. Gibson to hear a remarkable man preach to a large company of doctors, lawyers, and others of the educated class. His history was a wonder. He was a Roman Catholic, a barrister, and editor of a Republican paper. He came into contact with a good Protestant minister, and got light: but was not converted. He wrote a pamphlet, *Protestantism Solving all our Difficulties*, which was scattered all over France. One day, he says, he had been studying the Apostles' Creed. He retired to rest, and as he slept dreamed that he saw the Creed before him, and read it, and when he came to "I believe in the Holy Ghost," light from heaven came, and he saw the way of salvation, believed, and was saved. Filled with joy, he awoke. "And now," he added, "as wide awake as I am now, I went over the Creed, and when I came to 'I believe in the Holy Ghost,' what had been a dream became a reality. I cast myself on Jesus as my Saviour, and He saved me then and there." He at once gave up his paper and his profession, and has been ever since preaching the Gospel. He is a fine-looking man, with a large head, and is an eloquent speaker. On the Sunday evening I heard him he read a paper on the Life of Christ. When he had finished, the audience cheered, and cried "Good, good!" I wanted to hear Père Hyacinth, but could not. He is not exerting much influence for good. He draws a great crowd by his eloquence, but he is neither one thing nor the other. Papists hate him; Protestants have little faith in him, and cannot work with him. There are many who admire this liberal spirit, as it is called; but what does it ever accomplish?

Paris is a beautiful city, but its wickedness is very great. The very shop-windows bear testimony to its impurity and lewdness. The love of pleasure everywhere, the desecration of the Sabbath, and unblushing immorality, stamp it as one of the most profligate cities of our day. But, thank God, it is not all evil. There are in it devoted

men who are earnestly praying and labouring for its good – the little leaven that we hope and pray may, with God’s blessing, soon leaven the whole lump.

On Monday, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>, I left Paris by express, travelled all day, and rested at night at Aix-les-Bains. The latter part of our journey was very slow and the stoppages long – very different from the express trains in England, and the fares much higher. I left in the morning by express, and reached Turin in the evening at six o’clock. It is a wonderful journey through Mont Cenis: the scenery all along is very grand and romantic. We were a little over twenty minutes passing through the tunnel. I left Turin at 9.15 a.m. on the following day, and arrived at Florence at 9.20 p.m. The Rev. Mr. Foster was at the station to meet me, and kindly invited me to stay at his house. Mrs. Foster gave me a hearty welcome, and Mr. Foster did all he could to show me Florence. We admired the beautiful Cathedral with its magnificent tower, and wonderful baptistery, the door of which is so splendid that Michael Angelo said it would do for the door or Paradise. Here we saw a baptism. The priest made the sign of the cross over the child’s head and breast, put salt into its mouth, rubbed oil on its neck and breast, and plentifully poured water on its, all to exorcise the devil. The child was only a few days old. We visited St. Croce, where are monuments to Dante, Michael Angelo, Macchiavelli, and Galileo, and where the three last are buried. We went through the house of the famous Angelo, and saw many of his unfinished works and rough sketches, and the little study in which he wrought. In St. Mark’s we saw the cell of Savonarola, his beads, writing-desk, and books. We also saw the little chapel where he took the sacrament before he went out to die, and then the place where the martyr was burned to death. He was a great and good man, not with all the light that some had, but still to be reckoned among the first Reformers. While I was in Florence they were putting up a large statue of him in the great hall: Leo the Tenth at one end, and Savonarola at the other. We saw the houses of Dante, Macchiavelli, Galileo, and Mrs. Browning. We visited the picture galleries, where are some of the finest pictures in the world by Raphael, Murillo, Titian, and others. In the hall of Niobe are thirteen figures, discovered in Rome in 1563, and brought to Florence in 1775. These are very fine. At the Academy of Arts we saw Angelo’s “David,” a splendid piece of sculpture. We also visited the Medicean Chapel, the new sacristy of which was built by Angelo, and where are some of his greatest works. There is a statue of Julian de Medici, and under it two others, “Day” and “Night.” On the other side is a stature of Lorenzo de Medici, and “Twilight” and “Dawn of Day.” Florence is a beautiful city. I shall never forget my visit there.

On Friday, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, leaving Florence by express at 7.45 a.m., we arrived in Rome at 6.5 p.m. The Rev. Mr. Piggott was waiting for me. Leaving my baggage at the hotel where I intended to stay, we had a pleasant drive to Mont Pincio, from which we had a fine view of the city and of a lovely sunset. In the morning Mr. Piggott kindly went with me to see the lions: St. Peter’s, the Vatican, the Coliseum, the Catacombs, the Forum, the Palace of the Caesars, and many other places of historic interest in old Rome. I had the pleasure of meeting the ministers of most of the Protestant Churches in Rome, and conversing with them about their important work. I had an interview with grand old Gavazzi, who reminded me very much of the late Dr. Cairns, of Melbourne, in his strong way of putting things. He warmed up as he spoke of his long battle against popery, and of his hopes of the final overthrow of that terrible power. He said he intended some day to visit Australia. To his name, which he wrote in my text-book, he added his motto, “For God and my country.” As long as I live I

shall be thankful for my introduction to that noble man, who so long battled for the truth, and gave popery many a heavy blow. We want more Gavazzis in the world. I had also the privilege of meeting Count Campello, one of the Canons of St. Peter's, who had just come out of the Romish Church. This step involved the sacrifice of much on his part, and caused no little stir in the Church. I was greatly pleased with my interview with him. He talked very freely, and expressed the hope that many more would soon be brought out of the darkness in which they had so long lived. He spoke of the difficulties and dangers that would beset his path, and asked me to pray for him that God would give him grace to be faithful. He wrote in my textbook, "Count Henry of Campello, late Canon of St. Peter's in the Vatican, now converted to the Gospel. May Christ by His grace be my comfort unto death."

On Sunday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>, I attended service in the Episcopalian church in the morning, and heard a fairly good sermon badly delivered. The text was Isa. lviii. 13. I have said the sermon was fairly good, but a rendering of a passage was given that seemed to me supremely ridiculous. Referring to the clause "not speaking our own words," the preacher said that whatever else it meant, he thought it meant "not using our own words in prayer, but the form of prayer prescribed by the Church." In the evening I went with Mr. Piggott to the soldiers' service. About sixty were present. I gave a short address. One of our Italian converts has given himself entirely to this work, and has done a vast amount of good. At the service in the church I gave an address on the work of God in Fiji, Mr. Piggott interpreting. After the service a number wanted to hear more; so we went into Mr. Piggott's large upper room, and they kept me till near eleven o'clock talking to them of our Fiji Mission. When I told them of our first revival, and how it came, they wished me to tell it to them over again, and then said, "That is what we want in Rome." When we closed at last, they all begged that I would speak to them again on Monday evening. This we arranged to do, and we had a good gathering and a blessed time. Some of the young students were full of Fiji, offering to go if we needed missionaries there.

Mr. Piggott is a grand man, and is doing a great work in Rome. So are the ministers of the other Churches. There are eight branches of the Protestant Church here, and, of course, the Romish Church makes as much as possible out of this. It would have been far better if all the Protestant denominations had agreed to have only one Church there. But from all I saw and heard, most of the Protestant ministers and people are wonderfully united in heart, and, without clashing, are labouring together to bring the poor deluded Romanists to the light, and God is blessing their labours. I cannot give particulars of other Churches, but I can of our own. When I was there we had in Italy three English and twenty-six Italian ministers. Some of these were formerly Roman Catholic priests. The Rev. F. Sciarelli, who was with Mr. Piggott, was a brother beloved, and a faithful minister of Christ. I saw much of him during my stay in Rome, and thanked God for giving us such a man. The Rev. S. Raghianti had been one of the most popular preachers among the priests. The Rev. C. Tollis was formerly Professor of Philosophy in an Italian college. On day when Sciarelli and I visited the sacred stairs up which Luther climbed on his knees, and up which we saw a poor old fellow wearily struggling, a priest sat at a table near the door receiving donations of the faithful before they started on their painful journey up the stairs. Pointing to him, Sciarelli said, "That is where Tollis sat; that is what he did before he became a Protestant."

When I was in Italy we had there 1377 members, with 251 on trial and 2495 hearers. This may appear small; but we must remember where these trophies were won, and the difficulties that had to be encountered. Popery has destroyed or blinded conscience in Italy: the poor Italian is in gross darkness, and everything is done to keep him there and to exclude the light. The priests are not at all respected; but they are regarded as the medium for the communication of grace, and popery with all its mummerly and superstition has an awful hold of the people. We look on the work done by our Church as the promise of the greater work to follow. In fifty years what changes have taken place in Rome itself! I rejoiced greatly that I had the great honour and glorious privilege of reaching the Gospel "to those at Rome also"; but if I had attempted anything of the kind a few years before, I should not have lived to tell the tale. During the last fifty years the pope has lost his temporal power, and Italy is free. What will be done in the next fifty years, who can tell? Let us hope and pray that the pope may lose his spiritual power, and that the galling chains of error that now bind the Italian people may be broken off for ever.

I left Rome humbled and sorrowful, and yet glad and rejoicing. Humbled and sorrowful before of the wretched, perishing condition of this fair country, with the curse of popery upon it; but rejoicing because the cloud, though "little as a human hand," had surely risen upon Italy, and would grow and spread, and pour down showers of blessing that would bring a change like life from the dead.

From Rome I went by express to Naples. The Rev. T. W. S. Jones met me at the station and took me to an hotel. The kindness of the brethren in Italy to me was very great. I had only two or three days to spare, so I made the most of the time, visiting from early dawn till late at night. I first went to Pompeii, and saw the wonders there. It must have been a fine city, and there is no doubt that it was a very wicked one. Proofs of this are still to be seen among the ruins in the rooms that are under lock and key and not opened to the general public. As Vesuvius was in action I intended going up the mountain, but heavy rain prevented me. I spent some time in the Museum, examining especially the works from Pompeii. I spoke to the people one evening on our work in Fiji, and the next evening had the pleasure of meeting a number of English people at Mr. Jones' house. The Bay of Naples is, as everyone knows, exceedingly beautiful; but I wrote in my journal, "Naples is a dirty city," and I have heard the testimony of many who have visited it since I was there, confirming the truth of my statement. As I drove down the street at four o'clock in the morning, wine-shops were still open, and good many persons were in them.

By the five o'clock train in the morning I left for Brindisi, arriving there at 6.30 p.m. The next afternoon I went on board the *Tanjore* for Alexandria. Among the passengers were two Presbyterian missionaries for India, and eight young ladies connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, who were going to the Rev. William Taylor's mission work in India. We had prayer together every day. Our passage across the Mediterranean was smooth and pleasant. We reached Alexandria at ten o'clock on the 24<sup>th</sup>. After a drive through the dirty town we started by train for Suez. When we arrived there we found that our steamer, *The Pekin*, was detained in the Canal, so, our company being large, we had to "rough it" for the night; eleven or twelve of us sleeping in one room, on the table or under it.

On the 26<sup>th</sup>, our steamer having arrived, we started from Suez. We had two Episcopalian ministers on board, and they preached on Sunday. Our passage down the Red Sea was very pleasant, the heat not being at all oppressive. We called at Aden and took in water. This port had been closed some time before, as Asiatic cholera was raging there. It had now been open again for a month. Some of us were ill after we left Aden. I was very poorly all the way to Galle, suffering from a very violent attack of English cholera. Some of the passengers advised me to remain at Galle, as they thought I could not live if I went on in the ship. I determined to see the doctor of *The Surat*, the steamer in which we had now to embark, and do what he thought best. Very ill and weak, I went on board *The Surat* and saw the doctor. He said, "No, no; you go on with us. You'll die if you remain here." The captain and all the passengers were very kind. I had a cabin on deck all to myself, and I had a steward who attended to me as if he felt it to be a pleasure to do so. I soon began to get better. When able to sit up of an evening, the captain sent to me one afternoon, requesting me, if I felt strong enough, to read the funeral service at the burial of a gentleman who had just died. I consented; and at eleven o'clock the next morning we gathered at the steamer's side, where all the necessary preparations had been made, and I read the service. It was a solemn time. Nearly all the male passengers were present, and there were few dry eyes when the body was lowered into the surging sea. I was now able to conduct service every Sunday morning, and had always a large and attentive congregation. As usual, there was much gambling and drinking on board. Some of the young men were very bad. One of them, the son of an English general, behaved so wildly and drank so freely that they had to confine him for a time. There were fancy-dress balls and Christy Minstrel entertainments during the voyage, and they tried very hard to get me to join in these, but I firmly refused. I would not patronise these things on shore: why should I on board? Some thought I was too stiff, and that it would give people the idea that religion was a gloomy, straight-laced thing; but I could not help that. I found in the end that the passengers respected me none the less for being firm, while their opinion of others was not improved by their giving way and being willing to meet them in these amusements. It is often said, "'o know a man, you must live with him; "but I thought, "'o know a man, you must sail with him;" and I prayed God to help me to do the right on sea as well as on land.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December, very early on a misty morning, we sighted Australia, and the joyous feelings of my heart found expression in the following: -

#### LINES WRITTEN ON FIRST SEEING AUSTRALIA ON MY RETURN FROM EUROPE

I caught the first glimpse in the grey of the morning,  
As I walked the ship's deck on her watery way;  
I saw the bald cliffs, all stripped of adorning,  
For a white misty veil all over them lay.

I had come from the lands of classical story,  
Whose deeds, all enrolled in the annals of fame,  
Have thrown around some the bright halo of glory,  
And others involved in destruction and shame.

No words can express with what thrilling emotion  
My spirit was moved as I journeyed along,  
As I thought of the true and their earnest devotion,

And saw the sad work of oppression and wrong:

But nothing had stirred the depths of my being  
Like this magical glimpse of Australia's shore:  
Enraptured I gazed, the dim outline just seeing,  
Till my spirit was melted as never before.

Here, here was my home, to me ever dearer  
Than all the rich treasures this world can bestow,  
Where the light and the joy of heaven come nearer,  
And earth's purest fountains incessantly flow.

Here loved ones in sweetest affection are dwelling,  
Where the blessings of love abundantly fall.  
O land of my home! All others excelling,  
I love thee, I prize thee, far better than all.

Arriving in Melbourne, I was thankful to meet my wife and children again, and to find all well. The Lord had watched over us, and blessed us, and we praised His holy name.

## CHAPTER V New South Wales

### **Sydney: Surrey Hills**

We left Fiji in our Mission vessel, having on board with us Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Williams and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Peter Turner. We had a fairly good passage to Auckland, and thence to Sydney, where I learned that I had been appointed to the Surrey Hills Circuit – the best Circuit, certainly, in the city. I had a warm welcome from the officers and members of the churches in the Circuit. I was also received with great kindness by the ministers of the District residing in Sydney, most of whom have since entered into rest. The Rev. W. B. Boyce was Chairman of the District. I remember how kind he was to me, and how, whenever I was sailing, he would come and offer to do my work. I loved to hear him preach and speak, and it was a rich treat to have a long conversation with him. He was, undoubtedly, one of the best-read men in Australia. Sometimes he said quaint things that one never forgot. I remember hearing him give a remarkable “charge” to a number of young men at their ordination. Among other things he said, “Keep to your work in your own Circuit. Methodism has not been made by ‘wandering stars’ running about from one Circuit to another, preaching great sermons, but my men who have plodded away, working for Christ in their own Circuits. Depend upon it, if *you* go out of your Circuit, the devil will not. He never pairs off with any Methodist preacher.” The last time I had the pleasure of conversing with him, after some excellent remarks about Methodist preachers and the Stationing Committee, he said, “We often make great mistakes here; we ought to do as the rabbit-sellers do: put a big one and a little one together.”

Another of the Sydney ministers of that time was John Eggleston, “a good man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,” through whose instrumentality many were converted to God. Another was Stephen Robine, a “brother beloved,” and a “faithful minister of Jesus Christ.” There were also B. Chapman, afterwards Secretary of our Foreign Missions; H. H. Gaud, Benjamin Hurst, Joseph Oram, and others. I trembled as I thought of these men, among whom I had come to labour; but I ever found them true brethren, and always felt it an honour and pleasure to be associated with them.

I had for some time to assist at the missionary meetings in various Circuits, and was delighted, now that I was removed from the mission field, to be able in some humble way to help the work. The meetings of that year were most enthusiastic and successful, owing in great measure to the advocacy of an excellent native teacher whom I had brought with me from Fiji. His name was Tevita (David). He was a Bau chief of some rank, and stood six feet three inches high. When a heathen, with his mop-like head of hair, his long beard and painted face, he was a fearful-looking fellow. He was frequently at the Mission House before he embraced Christianity, and was very friendly. At length leaving Bau, he came to reside at Viwa, and became a Christian. He soon learned to read well, and was in time made a class-leader and local preacher. He first met in my class, and for some time we had to hear his confessions of terrible things done while a heathen. One day he told us that the sin which was heaviest on his conscience was his having, when on a visit to Lakemba, stolen a frying-pain out of the missionary’s kitchen. David was a diligent student of God’s word, and had a gift in prayer. It was part of his prayer that Walter Lawry

quotes in his first journal: "Lord, if our sins were tired on our backs we could unloose them; but they are on our souls, Lord, and Thou alone canst take them away." When I was leaving Fiji David was very anxious to come with me. I brought him, and good service did he render to our Missions. On our passage from Auckland to Sydney, not in our Mission vessel but in another ship, David found his way to the sailors, who were playing cards, a game which he had never seen before. Telling me of it afterward, he said that he had seen the sailors at their worship, and could not understand their way of using their strange-looking books, throwing them down and taking them up again. When near Sydney we had a violent hail-storm, the first David had seen, and it considerably alarmed him, his idea of throwing stones being associated with anger on the part of someone. When we reached Sydney, and were on our way to our home, he lingered in the streets, watching the horses, until, at last, turning to me he said, "I see now the secret of your superiority to us as a people. If we want water, we have to go and carry it; if wood or food, we ourselves must go and bring it; but here the horses do everything. If we want to get along quickly, we have to run; but here your horses run for you. Horses everywhere, doing everything: no wonder you do well!"

The people in Sydney took great interest in the chief, and treated him well. They gave him a complete outfit of good clothes, and would have him wear a high white "bell-topper," although David said it was "lifting him up to the moon." They would also have him wear a pair of strong boots, to which he, at first, greatly objected, as he said he should never learn to walk in them. Rigged out in his new suit, he started for our house; but before long he began to flag, and at last sat down on the kerb-stone, pulled off his boots, and for the remainder of the way carried them under his arms. Going with me one night to a missionary meeting where he had to speak, he lagged behind. After a while he came in. When he began, his speech told us that he had frightened a sister outside. Said he, "She asked me, as I suppose, where the church was, and I answered her in Fijian, and she ran for her life. I really believe she thought I was old Satan himself." At the missionary meeting he was very popular, and was remarkably good in his collection speeches. On one occasion he said, "We want more missionaries, and therefore we want more money in order to get them, and we want you to give it. Don't tell me you have not got it, for this is the land of gold. You dig it up out of the earth. You may not have it all with you, but you have it at home. And now that the collection is to be made, if you have not enough with you, I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll just sit down and wait till you go home and get some more." David felt the cold in Sydney very much. He would go into my kitchen and crouch over the fire, saying, "I'll never get warm again." Poor fellow! We were very glad when an opportunity offered of getting him back to his own sunny land.

We had a good work in the Surrey Hills Circuit. Our congregations were large, our local preachers and teachers were earnest workers, and the power of the Lord was present with us to save. Were I to begin to mention the names of brethren who zealously laboured with us, I know not where I should end. While I was in the Circuit some excellent ministers came to us from England, among whom were Dr. Kelynack, late President of Newington College, and W. Clarke, now an ex-President of the New South Wales Conference.

In 1855 our first Australasian Conference was held in Sydney, Mr. W. B. Boyce being President. It was a most important event in the history of our Church in the Southern

World, and in the comparison of our “statistical returns” is one of our prominent and fixed starting-points. The following table will therefore be interesting: - Forty-seven ministers and preachers on trial were present at this first Conference in 1855; of this number thirty-seven are dead, and only three are now in Circuit work.

Among many blessed cases of conversion in the Surrey Hills Circuit was that of a whole family. The gentleman at the head of the family had taken my place when I entered the ministry, and had always been interested in me. When I came to this Circuit he was about returning with his family to England. He attended our church, and he and his wife and daughters were led to the Saviour. I remember very distinctly the morning when I prayed with them all in distress in their home, and when they were enabled to rejoice in Jesus. They have been members of our church ever since.

Another case that I was deeply interested in was that of a dying backslider, who found mercy at the last. I was leaving one of our churches on a Sunday evening when someone said to me, “Will you please come, sir, and see a dying woman?” I at once went with him, and was led to the house. When I entered the sickroom, I saw a pale, emaciated woman sitting on her bed. The moment she noticed me she began to cry bitterly, and as soon as she could speak she said, most touchingly, “You’ve come to see a child of many prayers.” I sat down by her bedside, and besought her to be calm, and to tell me the cause of her deep distress. She said, “Sir, my father was a class-leader in the old country; he is now in heaven. One night, when a girl, I knelt at the communion rail in Great Queen Street Chapel, London, and there obtained mercy. For a while I went on my way happy in God, but did not wholly break away from young friends who were without religion. They had great influence, and led me wrong. One night I went to a dance with them, and my peace was gone. I then gave up my profession of religion, and ran into worldly pleasures; and here I am today, dying without hope.” I told her of Jesus, of His wondrous love, and His mighty power to save. She replied that she knew how great was His love and saving power, but she had despised them, and they were not for her. I quoted one promise after another, but she turned them all against herself. “I’m only feeling now because I know I’m dying,” she said; “I’d have no thought at all about it but for that.” Then I told her of the prodigal who only came back when he was perishing with hunger. I visited her very frequently, and so did Mrs. Turner, wife of Rev. N. Turner. Her state was very distressing: despair seemed fully to have laid hold of her. One morning, nearly a month after my first visit, I called to see her. When I entered the room, what a change I saw! Her face was shining with the light of gladness. She cried out, “You have come to see a happy woman today.” When I sat down she thus told me of the change: “Yesterday afternoon Mrs. Turner, when talking to me, quoted that well-known verse, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ After she had gone I was thinking over my sins, and they seemed so many and so heavy, like twenty tons of lead upon my soul, when the blessed passage Mrs. Turner had talked about came to my mind, and I said, ‘Lord, I am indeed heavy laden: this burden is crushing me down.’ Then I seemed to be sinking into hell beneath my load, and I cried, ‘Lord, save me! Jesus, I do come to Thee.’ In a moment my burden was all gone, and my soul was filled with joy. Oh, it was joy unspeakable! Glory, glory be to God!” She continued in this happy and rejoicing frame of mind until the end came. Two or three days after she found the Saviour I read the funeral service at her grave, and as I stood there I thought, “Oh, what encouragement here for praying

parents!” Plead on, ye sorrowing fathers and mothers! Plead on. Your prayer may long remain unanswered, the loved one may be removed to the end of the earth, but plead on, for prayer can reach him there, and our God is faithful who hath promised.

### Goulburn

At the end of three years, in 1857, I was removed to the Goulburn Circuit. We travelled to our new home one hundred and twenty miles in a large covered wagon. It was a long, weary journey of five days; but there was a warm welcome when we got there. Goulburn is a beautiful town, the climate is remarkably bracing, and in our Church were warm-hearted Christian men and women. The Circuit was very large: what was one Circuit then is a large District now. It had four ministers at that time. Dr. Kelynack lived at Braidwood, sixty miles from the centre; Mr. J. W. Dowson at Gunning, twenty-five miles away; Mr. C. Creed at Yass, sixty miles distance; and I resided in Goulburn. We had no railways, and Methodist preachers had not reached the age of buggies. We had to do all our journeys on horseback, and long tiring journeys we had. Dr. Kelynack had always to come sixty miles to the Quarterly Meeting; if held at Gunning, he had to travel eighty-five miles. Our District Meeting was held in Sydney, four days’ journey there and back. In our Circuit work, one round once a quarter took quite a fortnight. We had to have good horses, and we had to take good care of them, or the work would soon have broken them down. We had one wonderful horse in the Circuit – well bred and full of life. No matter what bit was used, when he came to one of the extensive plains he would run away and take a made gallop. Dr. Kelynack, who used him last, had one or two narrow escapes. On one occasion, when we were out together, the Doctor got off to take down slip-rails. Remounting, he found himself on the wrong side; but thinking it needles to go to the other side, he threw himself into the saddle. The horse, however, had too much mettle in him for that; and away he went, bucking with all his might until the Doctor came off, falling within an inch or two of an ugly stump. Fortunately, nothing worse befell than the dislocation of a big toe and a bad shaking. Another time the Doctor, going to the District Meeting, had just passed a cart filled with stones for repairing the road, when the cart was tilted and the stones rattled out. Instantly the horse bounded forward, and, putting his head between his knees, gave a fearful plunge, came down on his head, and broke his neck. The Doctor was thrown violently to the ground and bruised severely.

We had a blessed work of grace in the Goulburn Circuit. I remember well the evening when the power of God came mightily on the people. The first to come forward to the penitent-form was the Chief Constable. As he came, a local preacher, known everywhere as “Tom Brown,” who was helping me, called out, “Who won’t follow the Chief Constable to Jesus?” Many did follow. The work went on for many days, and not a few were converted. At one meeting, a woman who was in great distress was filled with joy unspeakable as soon as she cast herself upon Christ. For some time she remained on her knees praising God; then she got up and sat down on a chair, and clapping her hands, while the tears rolled down her face, cried, “Oh, I never thought it was like this. Glory be to God!” For an hour or more she sat there repeating the same words. One evening I knelt with three lads near me, who were all earnestly seeking Jesus, and soon found Him. One was my own son, now a minister of our Church in Melbourne, and another was the Rev. George Lane, a minister who

has done a grand work in our Church, and who was President of the New South Wales Conference a few years ago.

A lad came to our meetings who had a good mother, but whose father was a cruel, bad man. Through his mother's intercession the boy was allowed to come to the church; but his father told him that if he was ever out later than eight o'clock at night he would punish him severely. The first night the lad came with others to the penitent-form, but we noticed that at five minutes to eight o'clock he hurried out. So he did the next night and the next. On the following evening, however, his distress was so great that clock and everything else were forgotten. Eight o'clock passed, nine o'clock came, and soon after he found Jesus, and went home rejoicing. True to his threat, his father severely flogged him, and ordered him to his room. But the lad could not go to sleep. He knew that one heart in the house would be made glad by knowing what God had done for him, and so he gently called "Mother!" His mother was soon in the room; and the dear boy, throwing his arms around her neck, said, "Oh, mother, I could not go to sleep without telling you that God has pardoned all my sins, and saved my soul." Then mother and son rejoiced together.

Many of the boys became very earnest in trying to bring others to Jesus. They held a prayer-meeting every Sunday afternoon in my hay-loft, and induced many of the lads from the school to attend. It was delightful to hear those who had been converted pleading for the others. In the great day I have no doubt it will be known that some were born of God in that hay-loft of mine.

Among the helpers were my colleagues. Dr. Kelynack afterwards won honours, and in all Australia was respected for his great pulpit powers, and as president of Newington College; but he was never great than as I knew him pointing sinners to Christ in that Goulburn revival. Then we had Mr. William Davies, Mrs. Hurst Caldwell, and many others.

I have already spoken of "Tom Brown," who was respected all through the district. He was a big, powerful man, and in England had been a prize-fighter. Soon after his conversion he came to Australia, and for some years had a hard struggle, on a little farm at Camden, to get bread for himself and family. He removed to Jerriwa Creek, about thirty miles from Goulburn. There God prospered him on his farm, and made him a great blessing to the people. Jerriwa Creek was one of the worst places in the district, full of cattle-stealers. Tom went among them – a holy man, exerting a powerful influence, and preaching Jesus. The change that came over the place in a short time was wonderful. Cattle-stealers were converted and became honest men. A church of seventy members was formed, and a good brick place of worship was erected. It was indeed a pleasure to labour among the people, and the good work was chiefly the result of Tom Brown's labours. He was the hardest-working local preacher I have ever known. Sometimes he would travel forty miles home on the Saturday, preach at three different places on the Sunday, and then travel forty miles home on the Monday. He wore a green shade over one eye that had been turned a little aside. The occasion was as follows. He had a distant appointment. Not feeling well, he did not go to it. On his way to his own church on the Sunday he fell, and a small stick ran into one eye, and turned the ball round a little. When the doctor saw it he said that a slight operation was necessary, and then the eye would be all right. But Tom said, "No, I'll leave it as it is: it was the first appointment I ever missed, and I'll

carry the mark of it to my grave.” Tom Brown was a diamond in the rough. His sermons and speeches were always good, and he was very popular and very useful. When he first began to preach he could not read very correctly, and sometimes called things by strange names; but no one complained or was offended; everyone was glad to hear him. At one of our missionary meetings he was speaking of the Hottentots, and called them “Hopnitops,” and this was reported in the papers. At the next meeting in the same place Tom referred to the same subject, but in doing so said, “Now, you reporters there, don’t you go and put it ‘Hopnitops’ tonight, but Hottentots; that’s the right way to speak the word.” He then spoke of the triumphs of Gospel the wide world over, and said, “Oh, Mr. Chairman, how delightful it would be to go to Africa and the West Indies, and New Zealand and Fiji, and see what God has done there. I shall never be able to do that. But I tell you I’m going to the better land to meet them all there, and join with them in singing ‘Hallelujah to the Lamb.’” Tom was always seeking to save souls, and at nearly every service he had some seeking salvation. He had extraordinary power in prayer. I have seen him kneel down near a form crowded with penitents, and before his prayer was ended nearly all were rejoicing.

While stationed at Goulburn I went one year to our District Meeting in Sydney, and was appointed to preach in Bourke Street Church on the Sunday evening. The praying men had been pleading with God for the outpouring of the Spirit, and they did not plead in vain. The church was crowded, and the mighty power of God came upon the people. Fifty persons professed to find Christ that night, and many others were in distress. It was announced that I would preach the following evening. To a congregation which packed the building I preached from “Quench not the Spirit.” What a time we had! The whole assembly was mightily moved, the power was overwhelming; many fell to the floor in an agony, and there was a loud cry for mercy. The police came rushing in to see what was the matter; but there was nothing for them to do. It was impossible to tell how many penitents came forward; there must have been over two hundred. The large schoolroom was completely filled with anxious inquirers. How many were saved I cannot say, but the number must have been very large. We announced that a prayer-meeting would be held the next morning at seven o’clock, but long before that hour there were scores at the door in great distress. In the evening I preached the “District Sermon” at York Street Church, and we had a glorious time. It had been arranged to have the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, but that had to be delayed for an hour or more as so many persons were in great trouble, and we had to pray for them. The next evening I conducted a meeting in the Y.M.C.A. room. People were there from all the Churches, and we had a blessed meeting. At its close I said to Mr. Cuthbertson, and Independent minister, “I am sorry that so many of our Methodists prayed, leaving no time for members of other Churches.” He replied, “Oh, we do not think whether we are Independents or Methodists with this glorious power on us.” I had to return to my Circuit next day; but I have often thought that I did wrong to go. Had we all united and gone fully into the work, we might have had thousands and tens of thousands saved.

My three years at Goulburn ended, and we had to leave our kind friends. This is one of the trials of the itinerant system. Some feel it very keenly. We shall never forget Goulburn.

## Maitland

In 1860 I was appointed to Maitland. During two years in this extensive Circuit we had frequent times of revival. We had a large staff of local preachers, and needed them, for the preaching-places were many, and some of them far away. The local preachers in this Circuit were indeed worthy of double honour. What would Methodism have been without her local preachers, and what a crippled, dwarfed Church we should be today if we had not their help!

In the Circuit we had an Annual Camp Meeting, which was attended by large numbers, and at which there was always great spiritual power. We took care to choose a suitable place, that could be conveniently reached from the different parts of the circuit. As complete arrangements for the meeting were made as possible. At one of these gatherings we had more than fifty converted to God. And it was not the good done at the camp meeting only that must be considered, but our people were quickened and blessed, and went to the different parts of the Circuit carrying the flame with them. We have never, in my opinion, used these Camp Meetings as we should have done: it would have been well if we had followed our American brethren, and arranged for these annual gatherings wherever practicable.

In the congregation of our principal church was a medical gentleman, who, though not a member, was a regular hearer, and a cheerful giver to the funds of the church. We had much sickness in our family at this time, and the doctor was exceedingly attentive. When the time for my removal was near at hand, one of our Circuit stewards, without saying a word to me, went to the doctor and said, "You have been attending Mr. Watsford's family now for two years, and we have had no account from you." "What do you mean?" replied the doctor. "What have you to do with Mr. Watsford's account?" "Oh," said the steward, "we pay the doctor's bills." "Do you? I did not know that. I'll let you have the account today; and look, I'll give half the amount myself." Meeting me the day after, he said, "I did not know the Quarterly Meeting had to pay your medical bill. I thought you had to pay it yourself, and you would never have had one from me. The steward has been to me for it, and I have promised to send it today, deducting half the amount as my share. And now I want you to go to the stationer's, and get anything you would like to the amount of the account the Quarterly Meeting has to pay." "No, no, doctor," I said; "I can't think of doing that." "Well," said he, "all right." The next day there came from the stationer's a beautiful *escritoire*, and a kind note from the doctor.

With the Chairman of the District I attended, in 1862, the Conference held that year in Adelaide, South Australia, and was appointed to South Adelaide, Mr. Butters being removed to Melbourne. My Chairman was greatly annoyed with the Conference for taking me away from New South Wales, and urged me to object to the appointment, as my District and Circuit had no thought of my being removed. But I could not do this. I always had a great dread of having anything to do with my own appointment. I had never accepted an invitation, being determined that the Lord should choose my inheritance for me. I believe that He could and would influence the Conference to do His will in my case, and I therefore could take no action in the matter. All through my life I have done this, and the Lord has guided me. I have never had to complain of being sent to an unsuitable Circuit. If I had chosen and fought for myself, it might have been very different.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **South Australia**

#### **Adelaide South**

I felt very much in leaving New South Wales. But, fully believing that the Lord had sent me to South Australia, I went in His name. We had a rough voyage by steamer to Melbourne, where we arrived about two o'clock on Sunday morning.

In going to South Australia I had not only to follow a great and successful ministry, but, having been appointed Chairman of the District, a heavier responsibility was laid upon me than I had ever borne before; but the Lord was my helper. The principal church in the Circuit, in Pirie Street, is a fine building that will accommodate about one thousand three hundred people. We had it crowded Sunday after Sunday, and the Lord heard prayer, and in a very remarkable manner poured out His Spirit. We had soon to carry on our meetings night after night for weeks together, and every night sinners were converted. Our midday prayer-meeting was continued for six months: sometimes as many as one hundred and fifty and two hundred were present, and each meeting was a time of great power. The local preachers, leaders, and Sabbath-school teachers were all baptized with the Holy Spirit, and heartily entered into the work. It was delightful to see our local preachers going out in different directions on a Sunday morning, all full of love for souls, and longing to bring them to Jesus.

Some of the cases of conversion were very striking. A young man, a stone-cutter, was brought under deep conviction of sin, and came to the meetings in great distress night after night, but could not find comfort. He was indeed heavy laden. It affected his health; he was pale, wasted, and sorrowful. We tried in every way to show him the simple plan of salvation, and, many a time, we unitedly prayed for him; but his trouble remained. One Sunday afternoon, as I was returning from an appointment, a local preacher being in my buggy with me, about a mile from Adelaide we saw someone coming toward us. As he drew near I said, "Why, that is P-----; where can he be going?" When he was near enough for me to see his face distinctly, I said, "Depend upon it, 'P----- is saved; look at his face.'" There was no mistaking that; all the sadness and despair were gone. His face now shone with a brightness that told of joy. Soon he cried, "Glory be to God! I'm saved! I'm saved! I could not wait. I had to hurry out to tell you."

One fine young fellow was convinced of sin at one of our meetings, and soon found the Saviour. A few weeks after, he sickened and died. His sufferings at the last were very great, but his faith was firm, and his end most triumphant. After his death, entries like the following were found in his diary: - "Last night I dreamed that I was in heaven; and so real did it seem, that when I awoke I felt the wall of my room to make sure that I was still on earth." "It is hard to die so young, and so many perishing around me." The day he died his leader called to see him. He was in great pain, and the cold sweat of death was pouring from every part of his body. As soon as he saw his leader he said, "There, Mr. C-----; don't you see Him? There is Jesus waiting to receive me. Glory! Glory to His name!" "He that believeth on Me," said Jesus, "shall not see death." Whatever else that may mean, it was true here that this young man in

an agony of suffering did not see death, but Jesus – Jesus waiting to receive him. How true to His own word of promise, “I will come again and receive you.”

At one of our meetings, where an overwhelming power was on us, and many ere set at liberty and rose to witness for Jesus, a bit, strong man, who had just found Christ, stood in the gallery waiting for an opportunity of bearing his testimony to the power of Christ to save; but as often as he tried to speak, another spoke before him. At last he cried out, “Oh, do let me speak, or I shall burst.” A rough way of putting it; but clearly showing how the man longed to tell what Jesus had done for him.

I was preaching one evening in Pirie Street Church on “The lost sheep found,” to a very large congregation that seemed greatly moved under the word. When speaking of the finding of the lost sheep, and the joy of the shepherd and his friends, I gave an imaginary case; A young man, well and religiously trained, left his home in England for Australia during the days of the gold fever. When leaving home his pious mother gave him a small Bible, begging him to read a portion of it every day, and to remember that she was praying for him. With many good resolutions he left England, and arrived in Australia. Here the influence of home and early training, and a mother’s holy life and earnest prayers, held him fast for a while, and he went to the house of God, and tried to do right. But he fell among bad companions; and when a young man does that, the Lord pity him, for his danger is very great. Soon they led him to the theatre, the ballroom, the public-house, the gambling table. Down, lower and lower, he fell, with many a lash from conscience, and many a feeble effort to stop in his downward course, until he was a complete wreck. His money gone, dismissed from his situation, without a friend, for his companions had forsaken him, he determined, as many had done before him, to leave the city and go far away into the bush, and find, if possible, some employment there. Weary, worn and footsore, he reached a station many miles from the city, where he was engaged as a shepherd. Out with his flock one day, he was sitting in the afternoon on a log, with his faithful dog at his feet. As he sat there all alone, better thoughts came. The old home rose before him, and his good and holy mother, and the lessons she had taught him, and the prayers she had offered. As he sat thinking, his heart was deeply moved. The hot tears fell fast. The sun was sinking to the west, and it was time for his return. Collecting his sheep, he made for the station. Folding his flock, he went into the hut and took from his little bag all that was left of his home outfit – the Bible that his mother gave him. He opened the precious volume and read the fifteenth chapter in the Gospel by St. Luke, and as he read, subdued and bathed in tears, he said, “I will arise and go to my father;” and there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over that sinner repenting. – After the service we held a prayer-meeting in the large hall, which was packed. A wonderful influence rested on the people, and yet no one moved. I called upon them to decide at once, and not resist the Holy Ghost, but something held them fast. I cried to God for help, and, again addressing the people, said, “I am sent not to *invite* you to come to Christ merely, but to *bring* you in, to compel you to come in, and in God’s name I would do it.” Then I pleaded with them to come, and fifteen or twenty came from their seats to the penitent-form in great distress, and many of them soon found the Saviour. Among those who came was a withered man with a book in his hand. Coming right up to me, he said, “Sir, I’m the shepherd that you told the people about, and that’s the Bible my mother gave me; and I could take you to the gum tree, far away in the bush, at the foot of which I knelt

when God pardoned my sins.” The shepherd’s tale touched many a heart that night. We had a glorious time, and it was with great difficulty we closed the meeting.

Among those converted were many young men. No sooner were they saved than they began to seek others. One band of twelve were distinguished by their earnest zeal for Christ. By distributing tracts, inviting others to God’s house, and speaking to people about their souls, they were made a great blessing. Twelve or fifteen years after the revival, this band met again in Adelaide. They were not all present. One or two had removed to other lands, and two or three were in heaven; but the rest were still faithful to God. They sent me a telegram the day they met, and I greatly rejoiced with them.

The work was not confined to our meetings. Many in their homes, and at their business, were arrested and began to seek God. One evening about eight o’clock a young man came running to my house, and said, “Come away, sir, and see my brother and his wife; they have been on the floor all night crying for mercy.” I ran with him, and found them in great trouble. I pointed out to them the simple plan of salvation by faith in Jesus, urged them then and there to accept Christ, and then went to prayer. Their sorrow was soon turned to joy. One afternoon a man well known in the city, a coachbuilder, rushing into my yard without his hat, cried, “Oh, Mr. Watsford, come and pray for me, a poor, guilty, wretched sinner.” Nor was the work confined to the city, but spread into the suburbs, where many were added to the Lord.

In this as in most revivals there were some whose goodness was as the morning cloud and the early dew: it passed away. But this, surely, cannot be, as some affirm, a strong objection against revivals. Many who are brought to God in a quiet way, without excitement, fall away also; so that the objection, if it has any force, can be used as well against this kind of conversion. Many, again, in affliction begin to weep and pray, and are great concerned about their souls’ salvation; but when the crisis is past, and health is returning, they forget the vows made in trouble, and “rise to sin anew.” We had a very painful case of this nature in Adelaide. The doctors had said that there was no hope, and the sick man, knowing he was altogether unprepared to die, was filled with fear. He begged his friends to send for me. With our city missionary I visited him. We were encouraged to hope that he was sincerely seeking the Lord. Day after day we visited him; and most glad was he to see us, and most heartily he seemed to join in our prayers. One day we were told that we could not see him. We asked the reason. Was he worse? Had the doctors forbidden us? No, but he was better: the doctor had said the danger was past, and he did not want us now. No doubt there are other cases like that; but everyone knows that many who have been brought under conviction in affliction, when death seemed to star them in the face, have, when raised up again, lived holy, consecrated lives, and have had to say, “It was good for me that I was afflicted.” So in revivals, while many backslide, many stand fast. I venture to say that if we went through our Church today, we should find that the majority of our members were converted in revivals. “What is the chaff to the wheat?” No doubt great care is necessary in times of revival to guard against mere excitement, - to watch, and firmly, yet very tenderly, suppress all mere wildfire; but at the same time members of the Church, however much they may desire what is quiet and orderly, must be careful lest, in speaking against and opposing revivals, in connection with which there is some excitement, they should be found “fighting against God.”

In Adelaide I commenced a Mutual Improvement Association for young men. It was a great success. We had at one time as many as one hundred and fifty members. Such societies need great care in forming and carrying them on. They should always be under the presidency of the minister, or someone kind and firm and wise, lest they become mere frothy entertainments, more theatrical than Christian. We carefully guarded the Association here, and were preserved from evil. Beside our usual weekly meetings we had a quarterly social gathering, but this was never made public. It was confined to the members and their friends, each member having the privilege of introducing one or two. Persons offered to purchase tickets at a good price for admission to our meetings; but we stood firm to our rule. For the meetings of this Association, and for our Sabbath School, we felt our need of a large hall. We called our friends together, and subscriptions came in so freely that the trustees at once built the hall behind Pirie Street Church.

The sale of hymn-books and other Wesleyan publications had been thus far entirely in the hands of the Chairman of the District, who ordered from England, and supplied the brethren as they needed. I thought the time had come to do something more. I recommended the establishment of a Book Room. This was agreed to, and a Book Room on a small scale was at once opened. It did well from the beginning, and has continued to grow and improve, and is today a great help to our Church in South Australia.

Sydney, Victoria, and Tasmania had each its college, but South Australia had none. Everyone felt that one was greatly needed. I put the case fully to some who were deeply interested in our work, and, formidable though the undertaking appeared, we determined, after careful consideration, to secure a college. At a meeting when the Hon. John Colton, Mr. Thomas Waterhouse, Mr. G. W. Cotton, and others were present, we resolved to purchase a suitable piece of ground. We then had a public breakfast at which about three hundred persons were present, and the sum of £2700 was subscribed towards the college. His Royal Highness Prince Alfred was expected in a short time to arrive in Adelaide. We waited on His Excellency the Governor, Sir D. Daly, and begged him to use his influence on our behalf, and request the Prince to lay the foundation-stone, and allow the college to be called by his name, Prince Alfred College. This the Governor readily promised to do. When the Prince arrived, his consent was obtained. No sooner was this known than it stirred up some of the bigots of Adelaide, who regarded it as a scandal that a Prince of the Royal House of England should lay the foundation-stone of any building to be erected by those whom they were pleased to call dissenters. A letter filling one or two sheets of foolscap was written to the Prince, giving reasons why he should not lay the stone. When we waited again upon the Governor, he told us of this letter, and said, "When His Royal Highness showed it to me, I told him to put it in the fire. And now," he added, "let me say that I did not intend myself to be present at the ceremony, but I have resolved, since that letter came, that I will be there, and I'll tell them why I am there. You know what Church I belong to, and you know the priest may not like my going; but I mean to go, for all that." Sir D. Daly was a member of the Roman Catholic Church, but he hated bigotry with all his heart. He said to me on that occasion, "My greatest friend in Canada was a Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Dr. Ryerson. Depend upon it, if I saw him on the outside of the crowd on the day of meeting, I should soon be down

and have his hand.”” In the evening I had the honour of dining at the Government House with Prince Alfred.

The laying of the foundation-stone was a great even. Thousands gathered to see it. The arrangements were complete. A gold trowel suitably inscribed and a loyal address were presented to the Prince; the Governor spoke earnestly and well; and though to many of us it was a trying day, everything passed off in the most successful manner.

Through the zeal and liberality of the gentlemen I have named, and of others, Prince Alfred College has been completed. From the first the college was prosperous, and it is now regarded as one of the first education establishments in Australia. For some time a minister resided in the college as President, but it was thought that the Institution might well be left under the care of the Head Master, the President being non-resident. This plan has worked admirably, and has been a great saving in the expenses of the college. The present Head Master, Mr. Chapple, is deservedly popular, and has had great success in his work.

My brother ministers in South Australia were earnest men, and greatly honoured of God in carrying on His work. Some of the young men “taken out” in that Colony are now among the first ministers of the Colonies in which they reside. One who died while I was in Adelaide, Brother Colwell, was a superior man. We all looked to him as one destined to do good work for God. But God’s thoughts are not as our thoughts. After a brief ministry he was called home to God. His last words were, “I have full and perfect confidence in Jesus.”

In many of the country Circuits the work of God prospered, and many were brought to the Saviour. I once went to Callington, a mining town, to preach anniversary sermons. On the Sunday evening the power of God came upon the people; many cried aloud for mercy, and we could not leave the church until a late hour. All that week we had to keep the church open all day. The miners came up from the pit, and straight away to the church, just as they were, and crowded the communion rail. It was a sight to see them, with the tears running down their unwashed faces, as they cried mightily to God to save them. The miners said it was a regular Cornish revival. At one of the meetings Tonkin, the leader of the choir, stood in the middle of the church, hard and rebellious, determined not to yield. His wife and daughter were at the communion rail. Soon they found the Saviour, and just as they did so someone shouted, “Tom Tonkin’s down.” Away ran wife and daughter, and many others, and gathered around the now humbled penitent, pleading with God for his salvation. His distress was great, but at length the peace of God came to his mourning heart, and there was great joy – father, mother, and daughter praising God, and all rejoicing with them. That was a glorious week – one I shall never forget.

### **Adelaide North**

At the end of three years I was appointed to Adelaide North. This was in some respects a different Circuit, but we found a kind, earnest, willing people. Keeping constantly before us the great end of the Gospel ministry, - the conversion of sinners, - the Lord blessed our united labours. We had difficulties, and knew what it was,

sometimes, to be discouraged; but the hand of the Lord was with us, and our souls were often cheered by hearing the prayer of the penitent and the song of the saved.

We had a glorious Camp Meeting in this Circuit, which was very largely attended. The brethren Knight and Simpson, who had just arrived in South Australia, took part in the services, and a blessed influence accompanied the word, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. At a service in our Archer Street Church many were seeking mercy. We had to carry on our meetings for some weeks, and many were brought to God. A woman came one evening and was evidently under conviction, but she sat all the time, and was determined not to yield. When spoken to she always said, "No, I cannot give up my friends." I visited her at her home, and urged her to give up whatever the Holy Spirit showed her to be in the way of her salvation. She said she knew that if saved she must come out from her ungodly companions, and she could not do it. One evening she came to the meeting, and, falling on her knees, cried to God for mercy. Now that the full surrender was made, it was not long before mercy came, and then she cried, "Jesus is better than friends: Jesus is better than friends. Glory to His name."

A draper, at one of our Sunday evening services, was powerfully wrought upon, but he hurried out after the service, afraid to stay to the prayer-meeting. "If I did," said he, "I should be compelled to yield." But the good Spirit follows him, powerfully striving with him. He came at last to one of our week evening services, and was soon at the penitent-form. After a hard struggle he was saved, and made unspeakably happy. He left the meeting clapping his hands, and looking up as he went along, unconcerned about everything around him. So absorbed was he in the one matter of his salvation that he actually passed through a flock of sheep, without noticing them, until he ran against the shepherd, who rated him soundly for dividing his flock.

I commenced a working-men's meeting in the school-room of North Adelaide Church. Our object was to bring the working-men nearer, and induce them to altogether abandon the drink. We need to do something, for the working-men are drifting father and farther from us, or we from them, and drink is ruining so many. We had generally a large attendance on Saturday evening, and we hope much good was done.

In South Australia I had the privilege of labouring for a season with that great and good man, the Rev. William Taylor, now Bishop Taylor of Africa, who was in my opinion the grandest evangelist that ever visited Australia. Everyone was struck with his common-sense. His way of putting the truth was forcible. What many would expand into a paragraph or a chapter, he would compress into a short sentence that it was difficult indeed to forget. No one knew better how to deal with all sorts and conditions of men. The power of the word as it fell from his lips few could resist. I once took an Adelaide physician, a German, to hear him, and the doctor was greatly interested. After the sermon he said to me, "What is the secret of that man's power? It is not the sermon; I have heard hundreds better. It is not the singing, for I think I could sing as well myself. What is it?" I am afraid the doctor knew little of the power from on high – it was that which made Bishop Taylor what he was.

My first introduction to Mr. Taylor and his work nearly upset me. He was holding a service at Pirie Street Church, and I was preaching at North Adelaide. After my

service I hurried over to Pirie Street, and found the church full, and the communion rail crowded with penitents. I went and knelt near to Mr. Taylor, inside the communion rail. Just then a very broad-brogued Scotchman, with head thrown back and voice pitched high, was praying in an unknown tongue. It was impossible for anyone but a Scotchman to understand much of what he said. This was bringing a coldness on the meeting, and Mr. Taylor felt it. Leaning over toward me, and nudging me with his elbow, he said, "Isn't that about as good as a tune from a cross-cut saw?" When the Scotchman finished, and before I had recovered from the shock I had received, Mr. Taylor nudged me again, saying, "Thank God, that job is over." This seemed to me so irreverent that it took me some little time to get over it; but I learned to know the man better afterward. I had a long talk with him one day about the secret of his success. He said, "I took to the Spirit. He teaches me. I get my message direct from Him. I go to the meeting expecting the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, and He never fails me."

The influence Mr. Taylor had over most men was very great. A gentleman in Adelaide of large fortune, but who never gave much to any object, was induced, under Mr. Taylor's powerful preaching, to stand up in church before the whole congregation and express his determination to be the Lord's. He became one of the most liberal givers the Church in South Australia has ever had. Among his hearers one day were some who contended that it was not necessary to join any Church. Mr. Taylor said to them, "Look here, my friends, if I am better than the Church, the Church wants me, and if the Church is better than I am, I want the Church; so, any way, I'm in." A Baptist, very unwisely, as ministers of his own Church would say, once introduced the question of immersion among the new converts, quoting the passage, "Buried with Him in baptism," etc. When Mr. Taylor heard it he said, "Well, brother, if you will have that in that way, you must take it altogether, and you know He was three days and nights in the grave. What do you say to that? I tell you, if you have the whole thing you'll come up as dead as a salted herring."

There are thousands in Australia today who were converted under Mr. Taylor's ministry, and many of our ministers speak of him as their spiritual father.

One of my little girls died in Adelaide. She was a dear child. Although very young, she had given her heart to Jesus, and was His true disciple. In her affliction it was touching to see how she thought of and cared for her mother, who was well-nigh worn out with watching and nursing. When the end was near I said to her, "Now, dear, you must think of Jesus." "Oh," she replied, "I am always thinking of Him."

At the Melbourne Conference in 1868 I was appointed to the Ballarat Circuit, Victoria. I closed my ministry in South Australia in March 1868. I felt very much in leaving, for all had been so kind to me, and I had made many dear friends. Methodism in South Australia is very strong, and full of life. In no part of the world are there more loyal and devoted Methodists.

## CHAPTER VII

### Victory

#### **Ballarat**

In April 1868 I began my work at Ballarat, my excellent colleagues being Rev. G. Daniel, D. Duncan, R. M. Hunter, and S. Williams. This place had long been famous as a goldfield. The yield there had perhaps been large, more uniform, and for a longer period, than in any other part of Victory. But there have been times when richer mines than usual have been opened, and the mining interest has wonderfully revived. Miners from all parts have rushed into the district, the excitement has been great, and everything has seemed prosperous. Such a time the preceding year had been, when what was known as the Webster-street rush had taken place. But now there was a lull; the excitement was dying out; mines from which great things were expected had failed or, being soon worked out, were abandoned; many were leaving the district; and things were settling down into their former condition. It was under these circumstances that I began my work in Ballarat. On my arrival in the Circuit by train, between ten and eleven o'clock at night, Messrs. James Oddie and George Smith, the Circuit stewards, with many of the members, were at the station to give us a warm welcome. The services in the old Lydiard Street Church the first Sunday I was in the Circuit I shall not soon forget. The crowded church, the splendid singing, the hearty responses in prayer, the attention of the congregation, the deep feeling, and the numbers that rallied round me in the after-meeting, when we pleaded with God for penitents seeking mercy, made me feel that I was among a people ready and willing to do God's work. With such helpers we must succeed. Four or five fully decided for Jesus that night, and week after week others were saved.

A few extracts from my diary will give some idea of the soul-saving work in Ballarat at this time.

1868, *April 19.* – Preached at Wendouree morning and afternoon. Good time. At Lydiard Street at night: five or six persons in distress. The showers are beginning to fall.

*April 26.* – Preached at Scotchman's at 11. Addressed Sabbath School at 3. Denham Lead at night; three penitents.

*Monday, 27.* – Prayer-meeting at Lydiard Street. Great crowd. Gave an address on Church work. A blessed meeting: four or five seeking God.

*May 3.* – Preached at Buninyong morning and afternoon. Much power. Evening at Pleasant Street: many could not get into the church: three decided for Christ.

*May 17.* – Gave tickets at Pleasant Street to one class at 8 o'clock; to another at 9. Preached at Baptist Church at 11; at Pleasant Street at 3. Evening at Lydiard Street: church crowded: five penitents.

*May 24.* – Golden Point – class for tickets at 1; preached at 11. West Park in afternoon. Neil Street in evening: six professed to come to Christ. Lord's Supper.

*June 1.* – Lydiard Street – prayer-meeting: crowded, great power; members greatly blessed: three seeking Christ.

*July 12.* – Neil Street, morning; Lydiard Street, evening: thirteen penitents.

I preached frequently to Christians on Entire Sanctification, and the duty of individual effort to save souls. I preached to sinners on instant surrender, and present salvation by faith alone in Jesus. Many of the members of the church gave themselves wholly to the Lord, and began to work earnestly for Him, and sinners were pricked to the heart, and converted to God.

When I went to Ballarat, I was greatly troubled by beggars calling at all hours and seeking relief. Now I have always had difficulty in dealing with such cases. In some you see at once that it would be wrong to give money. A wretched-looking fellow, the worse for drink, one day asked for money. I refused. He pressed me hard for sixpence, but I told him plainly that I would not give him a farthing. He then began to storm, and when I at last closed the door he struck it several hard blows, and cried out, "I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll go and turn Roman Catholic." Such as these one can readily refuse to help; but it is not so easy in the case of others. I may have sometimes refused to give when help was greatly needed; but I know I have been taken in scores of times. Some I have met with who would deceive the most discerning. I remember one who came to me late one evening, and said he had come from Sydney, and had been compelled to walk all the way, and to sleep out at night. He was an educated man, and was seeking employment as a teacher. I never heard a more straightforward tale in my life. I pitied the poor fellow, gave him his tea, and was so taken with him that I told him I would ask my wife to make him up a bed for the night. To this, however, he objected. He had, he said, been sleeping anywhere during the previous week, and would not sleep in my house. He was greatly obliged for my kindness; but all he wanted of me was to try and find some employment for him. With the promise to call in the morning, he was about to leave, when I offered him money for his bed and breakfast. He refused to take any for a long time, and I had almost to force him to accept five shillings. The next morning I waited, expecting every moment to see him, but he came not. At last I went out to try and hear something of him. As I was passing a public-house I saw him standing at the counter drinking. Soon after, he left and went to a confectioner's, and returned with a small package which he gave to a little girl in the public-house. He then came out and stood at the door. I went to a member of our church, who was in his shop close by, and said to him, 'Do you see that man standing at the public-house door there?' "Yes," said he, "I do; the rascal has imposed upon me in quite a clever style. For a long time he refused to let me help him; but at last he took what I offered, and I have found out that he is a regular swindler." I called in two policemen, and told them the story. They took their place behind some chests of tea, and I sent for the man. When he entered the store I said, "You are a bad man to be deceiving me and others, and obtaining money as you have done." He began to storm furiously; but the police came out, laid hold of him, and marched him off to the lock-up. The next morning the police magistrate wished me to press the case against him; but I begged that he might be let off with a warning and an order to clear out of the town. This the magistrate did, threatening that if he were not out of the town in one hour he would have him up as a vagrant and punish him severely. He was out of the town within the hour; but before he left he called on the Episcopalian minister, and in his clever way got five shillings out of him.

Many cases like this I have had, and I felt that there was a danger of my being so disgusted that I would be unwilling to relieve any case. I therefore tried in every way to find out whether help was needed or not, before refusing. I sent some to our poor-

stewards, who knew most people, to obtain a note from them assuring me that the applicants were all right; but this was a roundabout way. At last, providentially I believe, I found out how to test beggars at your door. One evening at dusk a man came to me and begged for help. I heard his story, and then said to him, "Now look here; I've often been taken in, and I don't like it. I know nothing of you; but I know the sergeant at the detective office near here. You just wait till I put on my hat, and I'll go with you, and if he says you are all right, I'll help you." I went for my hat, but when I returned the beggar was gone. "Oh! oh!" I said, "this is too good to be forgotten. I'll try this again." How many beggars have mysteriously vanished from my door while I have gone for my hat, I cannot tell.

Very much is said in our day about "Faith Healing." I believe as firmly as anyone that, according to the promise in James v. 15, "the prayer of faith shall save the sick;" but I do not believe that the prayer of faith can always be presented to God for the sick. Or why should Paul have left Trophimus sick at Miletus? And why was not Timothy healed? And why should any Christian die? I believe that in prayer every Christian should seek to be, and may be, guided by the Holy Spirit – Romans viii. 26 is clear on this point. Taught what is God's will concerning the sick, the prayer of faith may or may not be offered. I have been sent for to visit the sick, and have prayed for the Holy Spirit to guide me in prayer, and have not been able to pray for the person's recovery. It has seemed as if I could exercise no faith. In other cases I have gone when all appeared hopeless, and, taught by the Spirit, have prayed in faith, and the Lord has heard and answered. We had a very remarkable case of this kind at Ballarat. One day four ladies, all members of our congregation, were walking down the street, when a horse ran away with the cab. The ladies ran in different directions – one for a grocer's shop at the street corner, in front of which was a post. There a wheel of the cab caught her, crushed her against the post, and threw her bleeding and insensible into the gutter. She was carried into the parlour of a chemist's shop close by, and one of the ladies sprang into a cab and drove away to tell me. I left with her at once. On the way she told me all about the accident. At the chemist's door I found Mr. John Little, one of our leaders, and we went into the house together. Meanwhile they had brought in the first doctor that could be found: he was a Roman Catholic. When we entered the room the doctor was standing by the side of the couch, with his hand on the lady's pulse. I went to him and said, "How is it, doctor?" "In ten minutes," said he, "she will be dead." "Is there no hope at all?" I asked. "None," he replied. The internal haemorrhage is something fearful; nearly every rib in her body is broken; nothing can save her; she is dying now." I turned to my friend Mr. Little and said, "Let us pray;" and it came to me like a revelation from heaven, "Pray that her life may be spared." I prayed and prayed, and my friend prayed, until the doctor came to us and said, "It is of no use praying; that woman cannot live." "Doctor," I replied, "we must pray, our only hope is in God." We prayed on and on, for an hour or more, and still she lived. The doctor then left for a short time. When he returned he called me into the next room and said, "Mr. Watsford, it is really of no use praying that she may live, for she cannot: it is only the excitement of your prayers that is keeping her alive." I replied, "Doctor, you say there is no hope; but nothing is impossible to God: we must pray." And we did. Hour after hour passed, and still she lived. The morning came, and she was yet alive. In a few days they bound up the broken ribs, and carried her to her own home. She lived for years after, frail and feeble, but able to get about. Some years later I was preaching at Ballarat, and she was one of my hearers. After the service I hastened down to speak to her and said,

“Mrs. R-----, you are a living miracle.” “Yes, indeed I am,” she replied. “The Lord heard prayer that night.” The doctor never forgot that patient. I think he was a little annoyed at first that the woman lived, when he had declared that she would surely die; but after a while he forgave us all. He soon after left the district; but he remembered Mrs. R-----. Coming one day by train from Echuca, when we stopped at Rochester station I saw someone on the platform looking earnestly at me. Presently he came to the window of my carriage and said, “Good-day, Mr. Watsford.” “Good-day, doctor,” I replied. “Oh,” said he, “how is that Mrs. R----- getting on?” I told him that she was doing very well. “I tell you, Mr. Watsford,” he said, “by all the laws of medicine and surgery, that woman ought to have died.” A year or two after, I was waiting for a coach on the North-Eastern line, when the doctor came up, and, after friendly greetings, asked, “How is Mrs. R-----?” I said, “Oh, she’s pretty well.” “Mr. Watsford,” said he, “you did more that night by prayer than all the holy water in the world would have done.” Some years later still, at the time of the Sydney Exhibition, I was invited to Sydney to preach at the reopening of Surrey Hills Church. On the following Monday, as Dr. Kelynack and I were walking through the Exhibition, I saw a gentleman on the opposite side looking very steadfastly at me. He came over. “The Rev. John Watsford, I presume?” “You are right, sir; but I do not recognise you.” “I will make you remember me in one moment. How is Mrs. R-----?” “Oh, I know you now, doctor,” I said. He had never forgotten that night. He had then learned the power of prayer.

The Ballarat Circuit, when I went to it, was by far the largest in Victoria. We had forty places on the plan. Giving quarterly tickets was no light work. Many of the classes met at 7 o’clock and 8 o’clock on a Sunday morning, and we had to leave home very early to be in time when they were in the country places. I took us two months to visit all the classes. We were busy in one work or another every night in the week. About thirty places, each with Church and Sabbath School Anniversaries, gave us tea-meetings enough to satisfy anyone. I have in my diary the following entry: -

*Tuesday, November 24, 1868.* – Through a mistake made by the friends at Cardigan, who fixed on the wrong evening, I had nothing to do tonight – certainly something new in this Circuit.

It had long been thought desirable that the Circuit should be divided; but there was such strong opposition on the part of some that everyone seemed afraid to move in the matter. Some strongly advised me not to attempt the division; but I saw it was the right thing to do. Those opposed did their best to prevent it. When the question came before our Quarterly Meeting there were about one hundred and fifty persons present; a fact which I turned to account, saying that no other argument was needed to prove the necessity of dividing the Circuit. There was strong feeling in the meeting. Hard things were said; but the motion to divide was carried. There was soreness for a time; but our friends had too much good sense to keep up the irritation, and were too wise not to see that the division was for the good of both Circuits.

The Ballarat Lydiard Street Sabbath School has been well reported of by all who have known it. The Senior Superintendent of my day, Mr. J. A. Doane, was a most successful officer, and was greatly respected by teachers and children. His successors, the Hon. James Campbell, Messrs. Proctor, Coltman, Robinson, Muley, and others, have also been efficient superintendents, and have done good for the

school. In the upper school were about three hundred young men and women – a grand sight, I often thought. The spirit of the school was excellent. If anyone behaved badly, the whole school felt it. Someone once wrote a bad anonymous letter to one of the officials. The school determined to find out the offender. When he was discovered, they insisted on his expulsion unless he withdrew everything and made an ample apology. In travelling from one end of Victoria to the other when connected with our Home Missions, often, after a service, a young man has come to me and said, “I am a Ballarat Sunday School lad.” It was an honour to have been connected with that school.

While in this Circuit I stood by the bed of many a dying Christian and heard their last testimony. Some gave it quietly, calmly, confidently, and then “fell asleep”; and some triumphantly, shouting almost to the last the praises of their blessed Lord. One dear old leader, Mr. Waterhouse, who had served his God for many years, had a glorious end. Looking up at the last, as if he saw the heavens opened and the glorious company waiting for him, he turned to his wife and, reaching out his left hand, said, “Take my hand.” Then, waving the other on high, he cried, “I’m coming, I’m coming,” and passed to the glory-land. A dear little girl who loved the Saviour, when very ill and suffering greatly, said to me, “Do you think it will be long before Jesus comes for me?” The day she died she suddenly cried out, “Oh, now He has come. Quick, father, mother, kiss me! Goodbye, now come Jesus.” And in a moment she was gone.

We sometimes help a camp meeting at Ballarat, and the results were, generally, very good. We had one on Good Friday, March 26, 1869. About 1500 persons were present, and a gracious influence was on us all day. At the service that followed in Lydiard Street in the evening the power of God came upon the people, and many were seeking mercy, eleven of whom professed to obtain peace with God. Some weeks after, we had a blessed work, as a few extracts from my diary will show: -

*June 20.* – Tickets to class at 8 o’clock. Preached at Denham Lead at 11; Lydiard Street at night. Very wet. Blessed time. About fifteen penitents seeking Jesus, many of whom could rejoice in Him as their Saviour before the meeting closed. Glory be go God! Jesus, ride one!

*June 25.* – Met praying men; warned them against mere excitement. A good company in the church. Spoke on full salvation necessary to usefulness. Invited those who were determined to consecrate themselves fully to God to come forward. About fifty came, and, I believe, made the full surrender. Glory be to God! One poor backslider was restored. One person who had come twelve or fifteen miles to the meeting was in great distress.

*June 27.* – Lydiard Street in the morning: blessed time. Sabbath School in afternoon. Wendouree at night. Went to Lydiard Street afterward: there were eight or ten penitents.

*June 28* – Had great conflict last night. This morning felt weary and low. In my study, instead of reading the chapter in order, I opened my Bible, and before me were the words, “Fear not, O Jacob, My servant; and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground” (Isa. xlv. 2, 3). Glory be to God! I will trust in Him and fear not. I do not believe in doing what some do, going to the Bible and casually opening it, and, without looking, putting the finger on some passage, and taking it as God’s special

word or promise. I have known some do this, and, not satisfied with the passage they put their finger on, try again and again till they found something that they approved of. But I do believe that God sometimes cheers, encourages, or guides His servants by directing their attention to some portion of His word, and I am sure it was so in this case. I had no sooner read the verses than there was a ring at my door, and a letter was handed to me from one of our local preachers informing me that they were had a great stir at Miner's Rest last night. Soon after, I went into the town, and one of our friends from Alfredton told me they had a break-down there last night. Praise the Lord!

*June 29.* – Preached at Lydiard Street. Six professed to find peace.

*June 30.* – Our Quarterly Meeting. Preached at Pleasant Street in the evening. Eight or ten decided for Jesus.

*July 3.* – Fellowship Meeting. Glorious time. Three or four professed to believe for a clean heart. Glory be to God: that is what we want. Three penitents.

*July 4.* – Lydiard Street, morning. Power of the Lord present to heal. Addressed Sabbath School in the afternoon. Pleasant Street at night. Twelve anxious ones: several obtained mercy. A good but eccentric man interrupted us. He was disturbing us so much that I at last told him that if he did not tone down I must put him out. "Bless you," he said, "I'll let you do anything you like with me." Well, what could we do with such a man? And yet it is very trying that God's work is injured when one like this brother carries on so extravagantly.

*July 5.* – Wet evening: three seeking the Lord.

*July 6.* – Midday prayer-meeting: time of power. One saved. Preached at Buninyong in the evening. Six came to Jesus.

*July 7.* – Midday prayer-meeting: blessed time. Preached at Lydiard Street in the evening. Eight or ten seeking the Lord, most of whom could rejoice before the meeting closed.

*July 8.* – Great power at midday prayer-meeting. Preached at Benevolent Asylum at 3; Sebastopol at 7. Eight or ten members of church seeking entire satisfaction: a backslider restored: three or four penitents.

*July 9.* – Preached at Lydiard Street. Five or six in distress: some saved.

*July 11.* – Preached at Sebastopol at 11. On the way my horse fell, but, thank God, I was only shaken a little. Love-feast at Lydiard Street at 3. Glorious time. Preached in the evening. Much power; great resistance; powers of darkness struggling. Five persons were seeking mercy.

Then follow entries telling of three at one meeting seeking God, six at another, nine at another, and so for many days. Some of those brought in at this time are now earnest workers in the Church.

While stationed at Ballarat we had two or three very destructive floods. One especially, in October 1869, was very severe. The water was so high that boats were plying in Bridge Street. Much property was destroyed, and more greatly damaged. At the great Northern Junction mine the waters poured down till the mine was completely flooded. Many of the miners had come to the surface, but seven or eight poor fellows were still below. Very little hope could be entertained of these being saved; but some thought they might possibly fight their way into some "jump-up," where the water would not reach them, and where they would have sufficient air to last some hours. If so, they might be saved, provided they could be speedily reached. The miners set to work to pump out the water. They toiled on for many weary hours,

till at last the cry rang out at "The Corner" in Ballarat, thrilling every heart, and filling the town with rejoicing, "Seven men saved!" Another poor fellow was rescued some hours after. The men suffered greatly for want of fresh air, but when brought up they soon recovered. On the following Sunday we had a thanksgiving service in Lydiard Street Church. There was an immense crowd. Numbers who could not get into the church stayed about the doors all the service time. At the close we sang "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," to the old tune. It was singing to be remembered.

The miners have heavy work, and are exposed to many dangers. Many are suddenly hurried into eternity, while many, through breathing impure air, lose their health and suffer for life. Most of the miners are Cornish men. However bad the times may be, they have a decent suit of clothes for Sunday, and anything but a scanty or ill-supplied table. Many of them are Christian men, and you may generally reckon on their presence at the class, the prayer-meeting, and wherever souls are to be won for Christ. Some of them are among our most successful workers. Among these was Jimmy Jeffrey, of whom so interesting a record is found in the Jubilee volume of Victorian Methodism by Rev. W. L. Blamires and J. B. Smith. I had Jimmy with me at many meetings, and the people were always delighted to hear him. He was a thoroughly good man, everyone had full confidence in him, and his quaint remarks in their own dialect told immensely upon the people. Once he quoted, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," and said, "Ah! That was well, David, well for you, the great king; but for a poor sinner like me, I'd rather stand at the door up to my knees in snow, and listen through the key-hole, than dwell in the tents of wickedness." In a meeting at Mount Pleasant another Cornish brother preceded Jimmy, and addressed the chairman as "Mr. Cheerman." When Jimmy came on he said, "Mr. Chairman, before I begin to make a speech I want to set old Father S-----, who preceded me, right. I am really surprised that an old man like him should make such a mistake in grammar as he did. Why, Father S-----, it's not 'cheerman' at all; its chairman. Now don't forget that. But some of you will be beginning to say, Who is this that is setting everybody to rights? What great scholar is he? Why, bless you, I'm Jimmy Jeffrey." Then he rattled away in true Cornish dialect till the people were almost convulsed with laughter. He closed thus: "Now you know who I am, and where I came from – Cornwall, blessed Cornwall! Who wouldn't go back to again get one-and-sixpence a week for himself and family to live on?" I was with Jimmy once at a Church Anniversary tea-meeting at Sebastopol. Before the public meeting began I said I hoped we should have a good time, with as little nonsense as possible. While one or two speakers were addressing the meeting, some rude boys were throwing lozenges at persons in the church. I more than once called attention to it, but it still went on. Jimmy, in speaking, said something that made the people laugh heartily. Annoyed at the conduct of the boys, which was becoming worse, I rose and said, "Really, Mr. Chairman, this is too bad." Jimmy staggered back as if he had been struck, and looked unutterable things, till I added, "If those boys who are throwing lozenges do not desist, I shall ask you to request the trustees to put them out." Then Jimmy heaved a deep sigh, and said, "Oh, what a relief! I thought he was coming down on me."

At the Conference held in Adelaide in 1870 I was nominated as the President for the next year. The British Conference sustained this nomination, and so I had to take the chair at the Conference of 1871, which was held in Hobart, Tasmania. It was a trying time to me; but the Lord helped me. I have always rejoiced to see how the fathers and

brethren show all respect to whoever is placed in the chair, and I deeply felt their great kindness to me; but I was very glad when the Conference was over. People have thought that I know nothing of being nervous; but if they had only known what I have felt and suffered sometimes, they would have changed their opinion.

### **Melbourne: Brunswick Street**

My next Circuit was Melbourne (Brunswick Street). In April 1871 I began my work in this large and important Circuit. I bless God that in answer to prayer the soul-converting power was with the word, and many were saved. A few extracts from my journal will best show this.

My colleagues were Rev. J. Eggleston, Joseph Nicholson, and Thomas Adamson.

*April 13, 1871.* – As some repairs were going on in the church, I preached in the schoolroom, which would not hold the people who came to the service. Many went away, and many had to stand in the porch and the aisle all the time. My subject was “Entire Sanctification.” A powerful, hallowed influence was on the congregation, and many seemed to be hungering and thirsting for the great blessing. Glory be to God! This is what the Church needs: there can be no true, permanent revival without it: with it God’s work must prosper, and sinners be saved.

*Sunday, 16.* – Preached at Northcote at 11. Addressed the Sabbath School at 3. Preached at Sackville Street at 7. Eight or ten persons were seeking Jesus, some of whom were enabled to rejoice in Him.

*April 18.* – Commence my visiting work. Called on twenty-one families in the afternoon. Preached at Sackville Street at 7.30. Three persons in distress.

My plan for visiting has been something like this: On going into a Circuit, assisted by stewards, leaders, and local preachers, I have called on all the members and hearers I could find. I then carefully prepared my visiting-book. My days for visiting were generally from Tuesday to Friday, and sometimes Monday. I did not spend a long time in any house, five or ten minutes at most, and I carefully guarded against mere idle talk on general subjects. I sometimes read a portion of God’s word, and always prayed. I could now and then, as the last entry in my diary shows, make as many as twenty and more visits in an afternoon; but the average number was fourteen or fifteen. I always looked upon this as one of the most important parts of my work. Little can be done in our Church without it. After fifty years’ experience I have come to the conclusion that, as a rule, our ministers, whatever their abilities as preachers, will never greatly succeed in Circuit work if they do not systematically visit the people. To me it seems impossible for any minister to know the spiritual state of his hearers, and what they need, if he neglects this work; and I am sure that, however greatly many may admire and praise the preacher, they will receive little benefit from his ministry if he is not a faithful pastor. Some good men shrink from this work, and they suffer thereby. I would urge two things upon all young men entering the ranks of the ministry.

1. Be determined, by God’s help, to attend to this work. It may be a little difficult at first, but pray about it, and fight earnestly against any disinclination to engage in it, and very soon it will become easy and delightful, and will tell powerfully on

your own piety, and upon every part of your work. It has been a great blessing to me, and a real means of grace. It have greatly enjoyed my intercourse with our people in their homes, and in it I have found matter for my sermons that I could never find in books.

2. Do it thoroughly and systematically. Let "all sorts and conditions of men" be included in your pastoral visitation. The sick and the sorrowful must have your first and careful attention. The rich who are prospering in the world need your faithful care as a pastor, and the poor must never be forgotten. It will be a burning shame if you attend the garden or evening parties of the rich, and leave them out of your real visitation work, and it will be a greater shame if you leave the poor altogether, or almost, uncared for. I know you can never satisfy some people in this part of your work, but let it never be truthfully said by anyone, "Our minister can attend football and cricket matches, and garden and evening parties, but he can find no time to visit his people."

*April 23.* – Preached at Coburg at 11. Addressed Sabbath School in the afternoon. Preached to a great crowd in Brunswick Street at 7. Fifteen persons seeking mercy, and many found it.

*April 24.* – Prayer-meeting. Brunswick Street. Eight or nine penitents.

*April 27.* – Preached again at Brunswick Street on Entire Sanctification. The schoolroom was filled, and many were in the church, and some outside at the door. There was a blessed feeling. Many were praying, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." It was difficult to close the meeting: some professed to enter into the glorious liberty.

Similar entries are found in my diary week after week for some time. The members of the Church were consecrating themselves fully to God and working for Him, and He greatly blessed us and saved souls. And so must it ever be. If entire sanctification is not preached, and the members of the Church are living without it, but little will be done in leading sinner to Christ. But if this great blessing is urged upon the attention of God's people, and they press into the enjoyment of it, the world outside must feel the influence, and sinners will be arrested and converted. A revival of holiness in the Church means an awakening among the unsaved.

I found in Brunswick Street a large number of old members, some of them leaders and local preachers, who had been consistent Christians and earnest workers for many years. Dear old fathers Wills and Hutcheon, the former a most successful class leader of many years' standing; the latter a hard-working and acceptable local preacher. Both finished their course and entered into the joy of their Lord while I was in the Circuit. Here also we had a large number of young people, members of our Church, who were willing to work; but many of them made, I think, a great mistake in working on what are called non-sectarian lines outside the Church. There is danger in holding the reins too tightly in the case of young men. They ought to be encouraged to work for God, and a good deal of liberty should be given them in their method of working; but it is most desirable that they should work on Church lines, otherwise much of the fruit of their labours will certainly not be fathered in, and they themselves may suffer loss. There is something very attractive in the idea of non-sectarian work; but experience teaches me that the best and most permanent work is in connection with the Churches. We can live at peace with members of other denominations, sincerely respect and love them, and occasionally help them in their services, and at

the same time do the work of God in our own Church. One of the things that has sometimes tried and annoyed me has been to hear persons who have left us say that they did so because there was no work in our Church for them to do. If they meant that they were not put up to address large congregations, or that they were not made leaders in important Church work, that may be true; and it seems very clear that whatever opinion they had of themselves, no one else thought that they were equal to anything of the kind. But if they meant that their hands were tied, or that there was no sphere of labour open to them, then I am at a loss to understand them. It has always been the glory of our Church that we have a place and a work for every man. We do not make all preachers of leaders; but I have never known an earnest, humble, devoted young man in the Methodist Church, with anything in him, who has not been soon noticed by ministers and leaders, and something given him to do. The fact is, such persons will soon find something to do, whether anyone notices them or not; and being faithful in the least, they will soon have more to do.

In 1871 I had, as President, to visit the Beechworth District, and hold a kind of District Meeting there. Those were the days of coaches. We started from Melbourne at 12 o'clock on a Tuesday. The roads were dreadfully bad in some places, and in others there was no road, for we were off the track, threading our way through the bush. During the night we were sadly shaken and knocked about. We reached Beechworth on Wednesday afternoon at 3 o'clock. I need scarcely say that I was very tired. In the evening I heard one of the probationers preach. The next morning I heard another probationer, who began the service with the hymn, "Bid me of men beware, and to my ways take heed," etc. Then I met the stewards, and heard the reports from the various Circuits. In the evening I preached on "Full Salvation." On Friday morning, at 7 o'clock, I heard another probationer. During the day I met the ministers, and examined the young men on trial. On the Sunday I preached at Beechworth, addressed the Sabbath School, and preached again. One young woman in great distress found the Saviour. That week I travelled many miles to El Dorado, Yackandandah, and Albury, preaching and lecturing at each place. On the following Sunday I preached twice at Albury and once at Wodonga. In the evening, at Albury, we had many penitents. On the Tuesday I left Wahgunyah by steamer for Echuca, which we reached on Friday. The trip down the river was a very trying one, stopping every night, as we did, to take in wool. At one place, where we stopped for an hour or two at noon, the passengers went ashore. Coming back, we had to step a short distance from the river's bank to the steamer. I led the way; but, just as I reached out my foot, the bank gave way under me, and I went down into the river up to my waist in water. I had hold of the rail of the steamer, and was soon up again, nothing the worse for my wetting. The next week a sensational paragraph appeared in one of the country papers that the President of the Australasian Wesleyan Conference had a narrow escape of being drowned, that he fell from the steamer into the river, and had to battle for his life, but being an expert swimmer he reached the shore in safety. This was copied into other papers in New South Wales, and alarmed some of my friends.

In 1872 we had souls saved in many places in the Circuit; sometimes we had showers of blessing, as extracts from my diary, similar to those quoted elsewhere, would show.

Among others saved at this time was a fine young man who was ill when I first visited him. He became very anxious about his soul. About a week before he died he was enabled to trust in Jesus as his Saviour. He calmly rested on Him till the end came.

He was very happy at the last. Another was a publican who at first was dark and unconcerned. After many visits he began to feel and pray. Some time before he died, when I had prayed with him one morning, as I rose from my knees he said, "What a load has been lifted from my mind! Jesus only: no other. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.'"

In looking over my diary for the year 1873 I find the usual entries referring to visiting, preaching, lecturing, attending tea-meetings, and so forth. There are also frequent records of conversions; but we had no great awakening in the Circuit. In the month of May a week of special services, according to Conference appointment, was held; but while there were a few conversions, there was no great breaking down among the people. I have all along had my doubts whether it is desirable to hold these special services, unless we are forced to do so. There has been too much of going on in a cold dead way all through the year, till the time comes for holding revival missions; then some stir is made, a little house-to-house visitation is done, hand-bills are circulated, a revivalist, if possible, is secured for a week or fortnight, special services are held, believers are quickened, and a few sinners converted; but very soon things revert to their former state, and at the end of the year the Circuit is as it was. Better, far better, to raise the Church. When this is accomplished, the other will follow.

The Sunday School at Brunswick Street was large and successful. The Superintendents, Messrs. Stranger and Swan, had great influence over the young people. The conversion of the young was ever kept in view. Many in this school have been saved, and are in various places doing God's work. Some are missionaries in the islands, others are ministers at home, while many are doing good service as local preachers, leaders, and Sabbath-school teachers.

The Brunswick Street Circuit at that time was rich in pious and useful men who had done good work for the Methodist Church. Besides those already mentioned were Messrs. Lowe, Barrett, Bennetts, Galagher, Wimble, Newman, Nicol, Marsden, Overend, John, and many others. No layman did more for his Church, as trustee, leader, and local preacher, or served the Connexion better on its various Committees, than Mr. Edward John. A thorough Methodist, a consistent Christian, a man of sound judgment, and always at his post, he worked well for his Circuit and for the whole Church.

We had then in the Circuit a Methodist of the old school, one of the oldest colonists, who was known everywhere as Tommy Trotman. He was converted under the ministry of the Rev. N. Turner. It was a treat to hear Tommy in his class or in his home, for he told his experience in no stiff stereotyped form, was quite an original character, and his quaint remarks amused as well as profited those who heard him. He was never afraid to give a hearty "Amen," "Bless the Lord," in the house of prayer. His responses, however, sometimes confused a nervous preacher. He was well acquainted with our hymn-book, although he did not always quote quite correctly. If the preacher began a verse known to Tommy, he would take up the two last lines and repeat them aloud to the congregation before the preacher had time to do so. After one of our Conferences, when there had been much discussion on the Class Meeting question, I was giving some account of the Conference to our people, and, referring to the Class Meeting, said, "If we ever give up the Class Meeting" – before I could get any farther, Tommy cried out, "We're done for, man." I liked to hear him

tell his tales of the first days in Victoria. He did not fully believe in the conversion of his wife, who was as singular a person as her husband. When I have asked her about the state of her soul, the old man would break in with, "Mind now thee don't make any mistake about it. It's no use to say you be converted if you are not." He very often had something to tell of his conflict with the powers of darkness, and how through Christ he conquered. One day he said, "The old man came to me last night and said, 'Tommy, it's no use thee praying any more: God will not hear thy prayer;' and I said to 'im, 'Thee 'rt a liar, devil, thee 'rt a liar;' and I fell down on my knees and prayed, and God gave me the victory." One morning he said to me, "Oh, man, I've been to the gate of heaven last night; the door-keeper let me just peep in, and my! but it was beautiful. I asked him to let me in, but he said, 'Not yet; you must wait a while.'" Then, looking at me most earnestly, he added, "Eh, man, we must be clean to get in there." One day he told me that he had seen a vision of the Judgment Day. He said, "I saw the Father, and the Son, and the Son had a long spy-glass with which He looked everyone through as he came to the bar. All the world was there, and they went in one after another; and when He had looked them through, some were admitted into the city, and some were cast out. My turn came at last, and I went in, trembling all over. As soon as I entered, some said, 'Oh, turn him out: he's no good;' but when they were turning me out the Son said, 'Wait a bit, till I see through him.' He looked and looked at me through the spy-glass ever so long, and then He shook His head, and looked again, and at last He said, 'I have found a little bit of love down at the very bottom of his heart. Let him in!' – and I tell you I was glad."

A strange circumstance occurred this year. A gentleman living in the country, who had known religion, lost his reason, and was confined in the Yarra Bend Asylum. His wife, who was greatly distressed, went often to see him, and requested my colleague, who knew him, to visit him. This he did until he left the Circuit, and I then engaged to call and see him occasionally. He was taken ill, and I asked the doctor if he got worse and was likely to die, to send for me. One night, about 12 o'clock, there was a loud knock at my door. When I inquired who was there, I was told that Mr. A. B. was very ill and appeared to be dying. I put my horse in the buggy and, taking the messenger with me, hastened to the Asylum. Arriving there, we went to the hospital, and the messenger left me, going through the back door and saying he would open the front door for me. Soon he returned, and said that Mr. A. B. was dead and had been removed to the dead-house. I returned home, and the next day made some arrangements for the funeral. On Saturday night the messenger came again to say that a mistake had been made: that it was the person next to Mr. A. B. who had died, and that he, though very low, was still alive. On Sunday morning I called to see him. When I went into the hospital, and sat down by the side of his bed, he was very calm and collected. I said, "Mr. A. B., you are now near the end: are you looking to Jesus?" "Oh yes," he replied, "only to Jesus;" and the tears rolled down his pale face. Very soon after this he began to talk wildly, and in a few hours he was dead. Was not this lucid interval given in great mercy to comfort the sorrowing friends? Certainly it did comfort them greatly.

At our Conference of 1874 at Ballarat we had, as usual, much difficulty with "the stations." The Circuits objection to some of our ministers, and it is difficult to know where to send them. Many brethren are pained year after year, and it seems to me wonderful how they can stand it. We allow Circuits to give invitations, and very often the invitation given and accepted is set aside, and a minister is sent to the Circuit

that the people not only did not want, but were very anxious should not be sent. I think that while invitations are allowed they should be respect, not in the case of some ministers or Circuits, but of all, and nothing but dire necessity should set them aside. I also think that after the second reading of "the stations" only a most urgent matter should lead to any alteration. To me it has always been painful to hear ministers pleading for better Circuits than those given them, and more painful still to hear protests from a Circuit against a good man of whom it knew little, because it wanted one of whom it knew less, simply because some official heard him preach when he had a remarkably good time, or some special friends of his had said that he was just the man for the Circuit. We certainly need something to save us, if possible, from the heart-burnings and irritation from which we now so often suffer. Some contend that we the presence of lay-representatives on the Stationing Committee would do this; but I think that this would not only help us, but greatly increase the difficulty.

### South Melbourne

Having been appointed to the Emerald Hill, now South Melbourne, Circuit, I commenced my work there in April 1874. Knowing how much depended on my being fully given up to God and endued with power, I consecrated myself wholly to the Lord, praying that the last remains of self might be destroyed and that I might in every way glorify him. I met the local preachers, leaders, and other earnest workers in my study to talk about God's work and pray for His blessing. At once I began to preach on Entire Sanctification as the present privilege of every Christian. Assisted by the leaders, I visited all our people, and urged them to give themselves fully to God, to begin to work for Him, and to plead for the outpouring of the Spirit. I had found these means succeed elsewhere, and I believed they would succeed here. Very soon we had a move among the people, and the "showers of blessing" began to fall. In my diary I find the following entries: -

*May 4.* – Large gathering at the prayer-meeting. Much power. God will bless us.

*May 5.* – Schoolroom crowded at meeting this evening. Many under conviction: one found the Saviour. Our people are pleading and looking for great things.

*May 6.* – Very wet. About one hundred at the prayer-meeting. Many anxious: some fine young men among them. After the meeting, one young man came to my house in great distress.

*May 7.* – Blessed meeting. Other young men seeking. The young man who came to my house last night has found peace. Tonight he brought another wish him, who has decided for God. Glory be to God, the work is spreading.

*May 8.* – Large meeting. Many seeking the Lord: four or five professed to find the Saviour.

*May 10.* – Preached at Sandridge at 11. Met teachers at 4. Emerald Hill at night. Large congregation. Five or six penitents.

*May 11.* – At evening meeting, great resistance: powers of darkness opposing. Our praying men pleaded in faith, and God gave us the victory. Three obtained mercy: many others seeking.

*May 12.* – Took breakfast with ministers of the different Churches at Dr. MacDonald's. We had some most interesting and stimulating conversation in the

work of God. At our evening meeting there was again great resistance. It seemed as if all hell were there fighting against us. We had a great struggle. We must have more power.

*May 13.* – Evening meeting: blessed time. Many present. Eight seeking mercy: some obtained the blessing.

*May 14.* – Held meeting for young people. Large attendance. Many anxious: some enabled to rejoice in God.

*May 15.* – Crowded meeting. Many seeking.

*May 17.* – Preached at Sandridge at 11. Great power: people weeping all over the church. I closed the service and held a prayer-meeting. More than half of the congregation remained, many in great distress. I addressed the Sabbath School in the afternoon. Between twelve and twenty young people professed to decide for Jesus. In the evening at Emerald Hill we had a great crowd, and many seekers among them.

These entries may seem to some very monotonous, but to me this was a blessed monotony. The Lord had clearly showed me that my work was to save souls, and He led me by His Spirit to labour and look for this, and I rejoiced and praised His holy name that I could record, what to me was about everything else, this salvation of perishing men. During the year we had conversions at many places; but had we been more in earnest, had we pleaded more, and more fully trusted God, we should have seen greater things.

At Emerald Hill I had frequent intercourse with the ministers of other Churches, who were greatly concerned for the prosperity of God's work. We frequently had united meetings, and God greatly blessed us.

The Sabbath School here, under the superintendence of Mr. Bee, was a large and prosperous one.

My colleague, the Rev. H. Catford, who had been very ill for some time, died at the beginning of the year 1874. He was a good man, and a useful minister of Jesus Christ. Although he suffered so much for many months, when the end at last came he quietly fell asleep and passed away without a struggle.

## CHAPTER VIII Home Missions

### Victoria

At the Conference held in Melbourne in 1874 I was appointed General Secretary of our Home Missionary Society. During the year I had prepared a plan for such a society in Victoria. Our Church was in a peculiar position. State aid to religion had been given to four Churches – the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Wesleyan. The money received by the Wesleyans had enabled us to build churches, help dependent Circuits, and extend our work. But an Act to abolish State aid to religion had been passed, and this was the last year of our receiving any grant. At this time, also, the lands of the Colony were widely thrown open for selection, and thousands of persons were rushing to take up land. Among them were many of our own people. From most of our Circuits, leaders, local preachers, and members were flocking to the new areas. We all felt that something must be done, or we, as a Church, should be placed in financial difficulties, and our people in the back blocks would be neglected, and be lost to us. After much thought and frequent consultation with many ministers, and with the assistance of valuable suggestions from some of them, especially from the President of the Victoria and Tasmania Conference for the year – the Rev. John Cope – and the Rev. H. Bath, I prepared the plan for the Home Missionary Society. It was submitted to the various District Meetings, and approved by them, and sent on to the Conference, where it was unanimously adopted. One of the provisions in the plan was that a minister should be set apart to superintend the work of the Society. I thought, when preparing the scheme, that our greatly beloved and popular brother Joseph Dare, who was returning from a visit to England, would be the very man for the work, and that in his hands, with God's blessing, it would be a great success. It was found, however, that Dr. Dare's health, which had been failing, had not improved by rest and change, and the Conference urged me to undertake the work. I clearly saw all that was involved in such an appointment: that I should have to leave Circuit work, in which I delighted; that I should have to travel the greater part of the year, - and I loved my home, where I had many children to care for; and that it would be placing a heavy burden on my wife. I therefore hesitated for some time to accept the position; but as the Conference continued to urge me, I was afraid that I might be fighting against God by refusing, and I consented to do my best.

For eight years, year by year, I was appointed General Secretary. I travelled thousands of miles annually, preaching, lecturing, holding revival services, meeting committees, visiting Circuits and Mission stations, and in every way directing and helping the work. God's good hand was upon us, and He made the work to grow and prosper. Our friends gave cheerfully and liberally to the cause, new stations were opened, missionaries sent out, congregations gathered, and sinners converted.

It was necessary that we should raise at least £2000 the first year, in order that our poor Circuits should not suffer, and that our work should be extended. The selectors going on the land had to build their houses, clear, fence, and sow the land, and when this was done few had much money left. Theirs was a hard life at the beginning, and when one bad season after another came they were greatly pinched and tried. With a little help from the Loan Fund they built their own churches. These, of course, were

in no case grand or costly. Some were made of bark only, or logs, or slats, and some of sun-dried bricks. But, poor as they were, they cost money. So the selectors had little to give toward the support of the missionaries; though what little they could do, they did cheerfully. We were therefore compelled to look elsewhere for help. The appeal made to our people in the various Circuits was nobly responded to, and the £2000 we needed was given.

Soon after our Home Missions were commenced I travelled among the new selectors, and found them anxious to have missionaries among them. These were sent as soon as possible. On the new stations churches were built about seven miles apart, and were well attended. On the Sunday people came many miles to the house of God. Those who had to take part in the Sabbath School in the afternoon brought their dinners with them, for the distance would not permit their returning home. A cry for help came to us from many parts of the Colony, and our difficulty was to supply the new stations that were opening up. To send young ministers there was impossible, for we could have no hope of these stations being able to take married men at the end of four years. After careful consideration, we recommended that some of our excellent local preachers should be employed in this work. It was thought that after a while those so employed would contend that they had a right to enter the regular ministry, and so we should have very little difficulty on this ground. We soon found a number of valuable men ready to engage in this work, and right well have they served the Church, some of them for many years. Among the first were Mr. Dounes, Mr. Henry Clarkson, J.P., and Mr. John Lees, all noble workers for God. Mr. Dounes' first station was Benalla, which is now a Circuit. He was afterwards received into our ministry, but his course was soon ended. He laboured hard and successfully, and died in the Lord. Mr. Clarkson was employed in the Home Missions for many years, and did a good work on many stations. Mr. John Lees, after some years of earnest toil, retired from the mission field. Some of the young men who have gone out as Home Missionaries have done so well that they have been received as ministers of our Church. I have never anywhere seen a better class of workers than we have had in this Mission; always at work, travelling long distances, preaching and visiting, and in every way seeking to save the lost. What was said by one who went to labour in one of our hardest stations, "I determined to give every man a chance of being saved," has been the resolve of most of them, and well have they carried it out. Wherever they have heard of a sinner they have been after him.

The Home Missionary Society has been a blessing to our whole Church. The new selectors have been supplied with the means of grace, and the local preachers and teachers removed into the bush have found new fields of labour. Through the weekly report, which I published in the *Spectator*, our people generally were deeply interested in the work, prayed for its success, gave towards its support, and were greatly benefited themselves.

Many thought that I should have more to do with financial matters than anything else; but I determined from the first that, God helping me, I would ever keep before me my great work of saving souls, and not only by all means seek myself to save some, but induce as many others as possible to do the same. I thank God that He gave me grace to do this, and made His work to prosper. I generally arranged beforehand to have in every Circuit a holiness meeting on Saturday evening, when I pressed upon our people the necessity of full consecration, and showed that it was their glorious

privilege to be sanctified wholly, now, by faith in Jesus. I preached twice on the Sunday, addressed the Sabbath School in the afternoon, and always had a prayer-meeting at the close of the evening service. At many of these meetings souls were saved. Some extracts from my journal will show this.

*June 27, 1875.* – Preached at Creswick at 11. Drove to Clunes and preached at 6.30. Great crowd and powerful feeling. Many seeking the Lord: some before the meeting closed could rejoice, knowing their sins forgiven.

*July 4.* – Preached at Lydiard Street, Ballarat, at 11. Addressed Sabbath School at 3. Preached again at 6.30. Many penitents; some saved.

*July 11.* – Preached at St. Kilda at 11. Addressed Sunday School at Hotham at 3. Preached at 6.30. Six or eight anxious about their souls; some of them enabled to trust in Jesus and rejoice in Him.

*July 18.* – Preached at Kangaroo Flat at 11. One saved. Addressed Sabbath School at Golden Square at 3. Many of the young people feeling deeply. Preached at 6.30. Five or six decided for God.

*July 25.* – Preached at Eaglehawk at 11. Much power. Addressed Forest Street Sunday School at 3. Preached at 6.30. Three persons in distress.

*August 1.* – Campbell's Creek at 11. Two penitents. Castlemaine Sabbath School at 3. Preached at 6.30. Six or seven persons crying for mercy, some of whom found the Saviour.

*August 15.* – Preached at Echuca at 11. At the Sabbath School in the afternoon we had a great breaking down among the children. Preached at 7. Many in trouble, most of whom professed to find peace.

*August 22.* – Preached at Daylesford at 11. Spoke to the children in the Sabbath School at 3. Preached at 6.30. Many seeking the Lord.

*Sept. 12.* – Preached at Koroit at 11. At Warrnambool at 6.30. Nine or ten penitents, many of whom could rejoice in the Lord before the meeting ended.

*Sept. 19.* – Preached at Portland at 11. In the afternoon many of the young people in the school were deeply feeling. At the service at 6.30 a good number decided for Jesus.

*Sept. 26.* – Hamilton at 11 and 6.30. Sabbath School at 3. At the evening service six or seven were anxiously seeking mercy, and not in vain.

*Oct. 10.* – Preached at Albury at 11, 3, and 6.30. There was a great breaking down among the people, young and old, in the afternoon and evening, and many professed to find Christ.

*Oct. 17.* – Bright at 11. Wandiligong at 6.30. The power of the Lord present to heal several who were seeking God.

*Oct. 24.* – Beechworth at 11, 3, and 6.30. Many in distress at the evening service, some of whom could soon rejoice in sins forgiven.

During this year we opened Missions at Benalla, North London, East Charlton, and other places.

In 1876 we appointed a missionary, Mr. Coles, to labour in the back slums of the city, and for two or three months I worked with him. We visited all the houses in the lanes off Little Bourke Street, and other vile places, and preached the Gospel in the open air among the poor wretched inhabitants of these districts. We were in the midst of evil in its most disgusting forms, but we rarely found any to speak rudely to us, for the people generally recognised us as their true friends. One day we went into a

miserable den, where were many vile women and a number of wretched-looking, rowdy young fellows. We gave them tracts, and told them "the old, old story." While we were thus engaged a young man came and stood at the door. We gave him a tract headed "Is it well with you?" He took it, and, reading the title, said, "Why, yes; it is better with me than it was last Sunday." One of the women said, "You were in jail last Sunday." "Yes, you wretch," he replied; "you put me there." The next Sunday morning we were at the principal lock-up, seeing the prisoners there. I was talking to a man who seemed almost distracted. Walking up and down his cell he cried, "I have a good business, as good a wife as any man alive, and here I've been drinking heavily, have disgraced myself and others, and am now shut up here." While I was saying a word to the poor fellow I heard someone tapping at the window of a cell some distance from us. As the knocking continued I went over and, looking into the cell, saw the young man whom we had met on the previous Sunday. "You don't look very happy today, my friend," I said. "No," he replied; "I'm in for it now. I was run in last night for garrotting. I want you to help me: nobody else will. Go to the first house in Little Leichardt Street, and tell the girls living there that I am here, and I want them to get a lawyer for me, will you?" I promised him we would; and having said a few words to him exhorting him to repent, we went and called at the house he had named. There we found three young women – two of them sisters – one very young with a pleasant face. She told us that she had not been long away from her mother's home. We talked to them till the youngest wept bitterly. We urged her to go with us to "The Home," and the other girls pressed her very much to go. She said she could not go then, but would on the morrow. When we called in the morning she was not to be found. When these poor, wretched girls get into these terrible dens the hold upon them is strong indeed, and it is very difficult to get them away.

In this city work we visited all the large lodging-houses. In them we found hundreds of men suffering from the previous night's debauch, and in a most deplorable condition. Coming out of one of these houses one Sunday afternoon, we saw a great crowd on the wharf not far away. Mr. Cook, an earnest worker for years among the lowest and the worst, was with us. We went to the crowd and found an infidel standing on a block with a Bible in his hand, about which he was saying the most shocking things. I said to my friends, "You go among the people and distribute tracts, and I will wait here and see if I can get a good opportunity to say a word." Presently the infidel saw me and began at once to attack ministers of religion, and to direct attention to me. I got a little nearer to him, and then cried out, "My friends, will you allow me to say a word?" "By all means," they shouted; "clear the way! make a ring! hear him!" I jumped on the block where the other man had been standing, and addressed the crowd. They listened most attentively while I told them my experience, how long I had tried religion, and what it had done for me. I told them the story of my mission to Fiji, and how the presence and blessing of the Lord Jesus had sustained and comforted me in sorrow, in danger, and in the face of death. They again and again urged me to go on, and when I had finished gave me a hearty cheer. The previous speaker then got up with the intention of replying to my remarks; but the people cried out, "You're an infidel! Shut up! Lie down!" and they would not hear him. I met this man soon after, and he invited me to go to their hall and read a paper that should be open to criticism. Again and again we met, and he continued to press his invitation. One day he said, "Well, you have not come to see us. You are, I am afraid, like all the rest: you call us poor lost sheep, and yet you never come after us to bring us back to the fold." "Mr. P-----," I said, "if ever I come among you I shall not

think that I am coming among poor lost sheep, but among a pack of ravenous wolves." The fact is, no one going to these places can expect to get fair play, and I have come to the conclusion that public discussion with such men is altogether useless.

Our work this year extended, and new stations were opened at Alexandra, Elmore, Rupanyup, Kyabram, Mount Hope, and Kerang, and the country about Barnawatha. Other places were crying out for missionaries, and we hope to be able soon to send them. At the close of the year Mr. Matthew Bennett was engaged by the Committee as a General Missionary, and he laboured with a good measure of success for some time.

The greater part of the year I was travelling, preaching, holding meetings, and visiting the new stations, and the places beyond, where selectors were settling. Thank God, I not only saw the general work prospering, but the word of the Lord was with power, and a good number believed and turned to the Lord, as my diary shows.

In December I visited the Dromana district, where there had been a remarkable work of grace. A Mr. Shand, a farmer living here, was made an instrument of good to many. The power of God came upon the people all over the district, and in their homes and at their work many were convinced of sin and converted to God. I visited many families, and saw "the grace of God, and was glad." I remained four days, preaching at different places, and directing those who were earnestly seeking salvation. I had made it a rule not to hold late meetings anywhere; but at the last meeting at Dromana I could not get away till eleven o'clock, and then had to travel sixteen miles through a dark forest to Hastings, where I arrived about three o'clock in the morning. After a few hours' sleep I preached to the fishermen at seven o'clock, and then left by coach for home.

My work during the year 1877 was very similar to that of the last. We opened new stations at Traralgon, Shepparton, Numurkah, etc. etc. I visited the Riverina district, and preached at Howlong at the opening of a new church. There is a fearful state of things generally in the small towns of the backwood districts. The intemperance that prevails is simply terrible. Men who have been working for a few months receive their cheque and make for the nearest public-house, where they "melt it down," as it is called; and it does not take long to do that. I met with a case in Howlong that is like a good many others. On Saturday a decently-dressed man came into the town and entered the public-house just opposite to where I was staying. They said he had a cheque for £25 in his pocket. Before long we could hear him making a great noise, as he was brought under the influence of the drink. As the drink went in the wit went out, and as the wit went out the clothes went off, and soon he was to be seen in the road without hat, or coat, or vest, or boots, or socks, inviting every passer-by to go in and have a drink. Till late at night we heard him. All Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday he was at it. I was leaving early on Wednesday morning. While waiting for my horse, between five and six o'clock, I saw the poor wretch raving round the public-house and crying out for drink. He had reached the end of his cheque on the previous night. They had put him in an outhouse, giving him a bottle of brandy, which he had drunk during the night; and now here he was, with his stomach all on fire, pleading most piteously for drink. Oh the cursed drink! How it is destroying men, body and soul, all around us!

There are hundreds of these wretched wanderers to be found in the bush. They are called tramps, swagmen, sundowners, etc., and are said to be on "the Wallaby track." Generally they have run a sad course in the city, and, wrecked and ruined, have made their way into the bush districts. They are easily known, for they all dress alike. With dirty moleskin trousers, blue or grey "jumper," billy-cock hat, worn-out boots, a swag on the back, and a billy in hand, there is no mistaking them. Many of them are men of little education; but often one meets with those who have received a first-class education, and now and then with a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge. Many have been neglected all their life long; but some are the children of godly parents. They work for a few weeks at shearing or harvest time, and then are away to knock their cheque as soon as possible. I have often seen them lying under a gum tree, or wearily trudging along the road, or taking their scanty meal by the wayside, and my heart has ached for them. In most cases the accursed drink has been the cause of all their misery. One who knew them well has written a short poem descriptive of them, and this has become very popular among temperance people. Some have credited me with the authorship, but I have not that honour. The verses were given to me by my son, the Rev. J. J. Watsford, who received them from the author, Mr. Potts, a young surveyor in Albury, New South Wales. The poem is entitled "The Wallaby Track" – a phrase everywhere well known in Australia. As the Wallaby is constantly on the move in the bush, never knows where he may stray, gets his food where he can, and sleeps anywhere, so it is with these poor wanderers.

#### THE WALLABY TRACK

My old cowhide boots are all patchy and worn  
My trousers are ragged, my jumper is torn;  
My billy-cock hat is an object forlorn;  
My hair is unkempt, and my beard is unshorn:  
And why is it so? In this fair land of gold,  
Whose green swelling bosom hides riches untold,  
Why should I e'er suffer from hunger or cold?  
Why don't I grow rich as I know I grow old?  
I'll tell you – Because with the swag at my back  
I go roaming about on "the Wallaby track."

When first I arrived here, long, long years ago,  
My feelings were manly, my heart all aglow;  
But now hope's bright flame in my breast has burned low,  
For I've no one to care for, and nowhere to go.  
As I sit by my fire in the cool morning air,  
And break my night's fast on the swagman's rough fare,  
I think of the riches in which I've no share,  
I think of life's joys that to me are so rare,  
Then with billy in hand, and the swag at my back,  
I wander away on "the Wallaby track."

Like the white yeasty froth on the ocean wave's comb,  
On the waters of life I'm merely the foam,  
As useless as it through the country I roam,  
Without one single spot I can think of as home.  
I know that by some my life is called free;  
But in all of Australia, broad though it be,  
There's no one ingle-side where a seat's kept for me,  
Not one face that grows brighter my presence to see,  
As weary and worn, with my swag at my back,

I come trudging along on "the Wallaby track,"

They call me sundowner; but what's in a name,  
Unless there's attached to it some honest fame?

'Tis little I care now, for life's weary game  
Has crushed my ambition and weakened my frame.

What matters it now that in youth I could gaze  
On the future made joyous through hope's golden haze,  
Since nought's left but regret for my past erring ways,

No prospect in view but to finish my days,  
With the sky overhead, and the earth at my back,  
In some out-of-way spot on "the Wallaby track"?

O you young men who dwell in this fair southern clime,

Draw a moral from this; take warning in time:

If you're fast in your youth, you'll be old in your prime;

If you cling to the worldly, you'll miss the sublime;

If your evenings are spent in some flash music-hall,

If you go to the *demi-monde* fancy-dress ball,

If you drink, and play billiards, and gamble, you'll fall

Into debt, into crime; you'll be shoved to the wall,

And, last scene of all, with your swag at your back,

Die a mendicant's death on "the Wallaby track."

This year I visited the Warragul district, known as Brandy Creek. Some of our friends had selected in this wild district. The Rev. J. C. Symons had visited one part of it some time before, and had held a service. There was no part of the Colony where I had been to be compared with this. The forest trees were very high, and the tall hazel scrub so dense that there was no getting through it. When one got off the main road there were only narrow tracks cut through the scrub, and along these everything had to be carried on pack-horses. This, I thought, will be a grand country when cleared; but it will ruin many in attempting to clear it, and then some others will come in and reap the benefit. Clearing is trying work: the scrub has to be cut down, and then there is a burning off. It is a grand sight when these fires are raging in the forest. During my visit I stayed with our friends Mr. and Mrs. Copeland, who have one or two selections here. One would have thought that it would have been very trying to them to leave their beautiful home in Melbourne and go away into the bush, where there were hardships and difficulties to which they had been strangers; but I found them happy and contented, and working away to change the wilderness into a fruitful field, and gather again the comforts of home around them.

Having to travel early by coach, I had to stay at the inn from which it started; and here I had painful experience of the fact that Warragul abounds, or did abound, in fleas. I had been told before I came to expect to see a few, but had no idea they were as numerous as I found them. I arrived at the inn rather late. All the rooms being engaged, I accepted the offer of a sofa-bed in the dining-room. Just after I retired another traveller came, and was given a shake-down in another corner of the dining-room. I was not asleep when he came, neither was there any likelihood of sleep; but I kept as quiet as I could. The stranger prepared for bed, blew out the candle, and lay down. Very soon he began to turn and rub, and turn and rub again, till at last he cried out, "I say, friend, are you asleep?" "No," I said; "what's the matter?" "Oh," he replied, "I'm afraid there are a few fleas here; don't you feel them?" "A few!" I said; "why, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of them." Well, those little bloodsuckers introduced us strangers to each other, and we rubbed and talked till we heard the hour

summoning us to be ready for the coach, when we speedily rose, shook ourselves thoroughly, and in half an hour had left at least the greater part of our tormentors behind us.

In different parts of the country our work greatly prospered this year, and new openings presented themselves on every hand. We still kept the soul-saving work in the first place. Sowing in tears, we reaped in joy. I must give a few extracts from my diary to show this.

*May 13.* – Preached at Kangaroo Flat at 11. Addressed the children at Golden Square Sabbath School at 3, and preached at 6.30. A time of great power. Many were convicted of sin. The communion rail was again and again crowded with penitents. Many professed to find the Saviour. Glory be to God! I noticed one man sitting in the church all the time of the meeting, intently watching me as I went among those in distress. At last I went to him and said, “My friend, are not you thinking of praying to God to save you?” “Oh,” he said, “I understand it all; you are not going to influence me; it’s all mesmerism.”

*May 14.* – We held a penitent meeting at Golden Square at 6 o’clock, when some were seeking the Lord. We began our Home Missionary meeting at 7, but had go to prayer and plead for those in distress. Before we closed, a good number obtained the blessing of pardon.

*May 15.* – I held a Home Missionary meeting at Kangaroo Flat, and then went to Golden Square, where Brother Harkness was conducting the meeting with some twenty persons seeking God. Many were enabled to rejoice in the knowledge of sins forgiven. Brother Spencer Williams had been very anxious about the work here, where he had earnestly laboured; now his joy was very great.

*July 16.* – Had a glorious meeting at Golden Square: twenty-two persons professed to find peace.

In July I went to Adelaide to speak at a meeting to be held for the purpose of securing funds for building another wing to the College. My old friends gave me a hearty welcome.

*July 27.* – I attended a breakfast meeting in Adelaide. About 400 persons present: Chief Justice Way, the Acting Governor, in the chair. Among the speakers were the Chief Secretary, the Commissioner of Public Works, and the Commissioner of Crown Lands. There was great enthusiasm. The sum of £1730 was raised, thereby securing £3460 from our truly generous friend Mr. J. G. Waterhouse. The meeting was continued for four hours, and there was no flagging in the interest to the very last.

*Sunday, July 29.* – I preached at Kent Town, morning and evening, and addressed the Sabbath School at 3. In the evening we had seven or eight penitents. During the week I lectured three times, visited many of my old friends, and met a number of them at evening parties.

*August 5.* – I preached at Archer Street at 11, and gave an address in the school at 3. In the evening I preached at Pirie Street to a great crowd. Many were penitently seeking God.

Returning to Victory, I visited the Western District, and on –

*August 19.* – I preached at Koroit at 11. Five or six in distress. At Dennington at 3. Three or four decided for Jesus. At Warrnambool at 7. Six or seven came to Christ. Glory be to God! O God, carry on Thy work!

During the week missionary meetings were held at Warrnambool, Koroit, and Belfast. At a holiness meeting at Belfast we had a glorious time: many were seeking the Lord.

*August 26.* – Portland all day. In the afternoon and evening many were crying for mercy. A good number blessed.

*August 27 and 28.* – Preached at Portland in the evening. Again rejoicing over penitents coming o Jesus and finding peace.

*August 29.* – Home Missionary meeting. Three decided for Christ. This has been a blessed week at Portland. To God be all glory!

*September 23.* – Preached at Colac twice. Gave address to Sabbath School at 3, when many of the young people were in distress. At the service in the evening there was a great breaking down. A good number found peace with God.

On the following Monday and Tuesday I preached to large congregations. On the first evening we had eight penitents at the communion rail, and on the second about fourteen. Many of these were enabled to rejoice in Jesus.

Among other places I visited this year were Durham Ox and Kerang, where our missionary was working hard with a good measure of success. I stayed at night at Tragowell Station. As I was sitting in the verandah about nine o'clock the next morning, a large brown snake came from under the room where I had slept. I watched him, and he watched me pretty closely. When he was some yards from the verandah I seized a hoe lying in the garden, and struck at him; but the rotten handle broke. The snake then turned on me, and was about to spring, when I struck him on the back with a piece of the broken handle, and he fell, and I quickly despatched him. The brown snake is very venomous. I was glad that during the night I was ignorant of his sleeping-place.

The year 1877 was a good year: a year of many, many mercies. Praise the Lord!

The year following we sent Home Missionaries to Warragul, Poowong, Clear Lakes, and other stations. At the last-named place there was a blessed work in connection with the labours of our missionary, Mr. G. Lee. About forty-eight professed to have found peace, and forty of them joined our Church.

In February I visited the South Gippsland district, and preached on the Sunday in a new church which had just been built at Poowong. Everything, of course, was rather rough. There were seventy or eighty people present, and only one house to be seen. The friends had brought a small harmonium, and we had good singing and a blessed service altogether. On the Monday we had a tea-meeting, and raised over £36 for the church. The meeting had to be held early in the afternoon to allow the people to get home, for there was no travelling at night. I had never been in a place where locomotion was so difficult. When I left in the morning I rode a pack-horse, and made five miles in two hours. Frequently I had somehow to get over or round a large tree that blocked the path. All the way I was in danger, unless very cautious, of

sharing the fate of Absalom among the overhanging branches. When we got into somewhat clearer country, and had to hurry on to catch the train, I was driven in a buggy at the extraordinary speed of twenty miles in nine hours!

The General Conference was held this year in Sydney. The President of the General Conference had then for the first time to be elected. To my great surprise, the requisite absolute majority of votes was in my favour, and I had to take the chair. I had no expectation of this, and I felt the great honour conferred upon me. I went to the platform with fear and trembling, praying God to help me. My address was very short, for I had, of course, nothing prepared. It was a most important Conference. The Rev. Gervase Smith, D.D., representative of the British Conference, was present. The great question before us was the class-meeting test of membership. We had an able debate, which lasted for two days. The brethren voted the right way, and left the Class Meeting untouched. My position during the debate was peculiar. I had very strong views on the subject, and had fully prepared for the discussion; but, being in the chair, I had to hold my peace. It was an exercise in self-repression that has been useful to me, I hope, ever since. On Sunday morning I preached at Bourke Street Church, in my old Circuit, and, blessed be God! I had the unspeakable pleasure of pointing several penitents to the Lord Jesus.

To all in my own home one great event of the year was the marriage of my second daughter, Emma, to the Rev. B. Danks, a missionary to New Britain. She was fully given up to God, and had the true missionary spirit. Though she was going to an unhealthy climate to labour among a savage people, we could wholly devote her to the work, and believed God would bless her and her husband.

As usual, I travelled the greater part of the year, preaching and giving addresses. By God's good providence I was preserved from all evil. Once I was in great danger. When about to start on one of my journeys I noticed that the driver of the coach was under the influence of drink. I got up on the "box" and sat by his side. Going down a steep hill, soon after starting, the horses turned off the road, and ran over a narrow bridge in the direction of a fearful precipice. Snatching the reins from the hands of the driver, and putting out all my strength, I succeeded in stopping the horses on the very brink of the terrible fall. It was a narrow escape indeed. This delayed us so long that I could not keep my appointment at Clunes that evening, the only appointment I have missed.

All through the year I saw at various places the grace of God in the conversion of sinners, and with a heart truly thankful I blessed His holy name.

While the Conference of 1879 was in session, the Rev. John Eggleston died. He was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, and many people through his ministry were added to the Lord. In Tasmania, South Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria, his labours had been greatly blessed, and he was much beloved by all, both ministers and laymen. For some years he had been a great sufferer. The partial, and at the last the almost complete, loss of his sight was a great affliction; but he was ever resigned to God's will. We hoped that he would be spared for many years; but the good Lord ordered it otherwise. When the coffin was carried into the church and placed on the platform, surrounded by the "fathers" of our Church, it was a time of

weeping. We all felt that we had lost a brother beloved; yet we all knew that for him to die was gain.

My work this year was very similar to that of former years, both in what I did, and, thank God, to some extent in the success with which He was pleased to crown my labours. The Home Mission continued to flourish and extend, and the power of God was frequently displayed in convicting and converting sinners. To one case I would specially refer. I had retired to my room one evening, when the following telegram was placed in my hand: - "Take first train in morning and come to Queenscliffe; my son is dying and wants to see you. - E. B." I said to my wife, "I cannot make out from whom this has come. I cannot remember ever meeting a lady of this name." We thought I might be for some other minister in Fitzroy (the suburb of Melbourne in which I was then living). At last I said, "Never mind; it's from some poor mother whose boy is dying: I'll go." I was in Queenscliffe next morning by ten o'clock. It was all right; they were waiting for me. I went to the house, and then learned that the mother was a widow; that the son was a graduate of Melbourne University; that he had been ill for some time and had come to Queenscliffe seeking health, and that on the previous day two doctors from Melbourne had pronounced his case hopeless, and had told him that he must die in a few days. When he heard this he woke up to the tremendous fact that he was not prepared to die, and he became greatly alarmed. When the mother met me she said, "He has often heard you preach, and is longing to see you: come in." As I entered the room the poor fellow stretched out his bony arms towards me and cried, "Oh, Mr. Watsford, is there no one that can lift me out of this?" I sat down by the side of his bed and told him of Jesus, mighty to save. Then I prayed; but no blessing came. I went into the next room, and the lady of the house said to me, "Oh, sir, I have seen many die, but never one like this. It would almost have broken your heart to have heard him last night crying, 'I have a father in heaven, and a mother going to heaven; but I am going to hell.'" Returning to the dying young man I told him of the many precious promises that just met his case, and urged him to cast himself at once upon Jesus, his loving Saviour, who had said that He would give him rest if he only came to Him. He was now getting very weak, and death was drawing near, and yet there was no hope. I repeated two lines of a well-known hymn

—  
A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
Into Thy hands I fall.

He closed his eyes, was silent for a time, and then said earnestly, "Quote those lines again." I did so, very slowly. When I had finished the first line, "A guilty, weak, and helpless worm," he cried, "That is what I am. I am all that. Go on." I added, "Into Thy hands I fall." "Oh! may I?" he said; "may I now?" I exhorted him to do so. He was quiet for a moment, and then said, "Repeat them again." I did so, and he joined me, and I believe that while he said the words he cast himself into the arms of Jesus. He was now calm and quiet, and soon the end came. Jesus can save to the uttermost; but oh, how foolish it is to leave the work of salvation to the last hours of life!

Early in the year 1880 the Rev. Joseph Dare died. He was, perhaps, the most popular Methodist preacher in Australia, and certainly one of the most successful in winning souls to Christ. Young and old, laymen and ministers, all respected and loved him. In every Circuit in South Australia and Victoria where he laboured, the work prospered, and many were saved. He had a long affliction. That terrible disease diabetes had hold of him, and he could find no cure. He visited England and consulted some of the

most eminent physicians. He returned no better, but rather worse. For some months before his death I saw him once or twice a week. He was sometimes depressed and low; but, looking to Jesus, he could sing his favourite lines –

Thy mighty Name salvation is,  
And lifts my happy soul above.

He mourned that he had not more fully given himself to the work of saving souls, and that he had ever allowed anything to turn him aside for a moment from this. His confidence in Jesus was very strong at the last. He entered into rest on Easter Sunday, a day ever joyful to him. I preached his funeral sermon in Brunswick Church, from Phil. I. 21. The church was crowded, and all sorrowed for the loss we had sustained.

I was much among the new selectors this year, and was thankful to find that our Missions were growing and prospering everywhere. A grand work had been accomplished in the newly selected parts of our Colony, for which we praised the name of the Lord. I could give extracts from my diary referring to spiritual and financial success, but they would be only a repetition of what I have given before. I will, however, record one interesting case of conversion that gave me great joy. I was preaching one Sunday evening, and many were powerfully wrought upon. I invited all anxious about their souls to meet me in the schoolroom. Among others who came were some young men. There was a long form in front of me. I said, “Now, any of you who will decide for Jesus tonight, come and kneel here.” Five or six came; but seeing others in distress, I said, “There is mercy for every one of you; will not some others of you come?” A fine young fellow started from his seat, saying, “If there’s mercy for everyone, I’ll come;” and he came forward. I explained to them as clearly as I could the simple plan of salvation by faith in Jesus, and exhorted them to trust Him now. While I prayed, some laid hold of the Saviour and rejoiced in Him; but the young man referred to went away burdened and heavy laden. I arranged to meet the penitents again on the Tuesday evening. Coming that evening to the church, I found my young friend waiting near the door, his face shining with joy. “Oh,” I said, “there is no need to ask if you have found the Lord.” “Praise God!” he said, “I obtained mercy while kneeling in my room this morning, and I was just in time for the mail.” “For the mail?” I repeated. “What in the world had the mail to do with your finding mercy?” “Oh,” he replied, “I was just in time to write to my dear old father, and tell him that all his prayers were answered at last, and that Jesus had saved me.” Many a time since then have I thought of that letter, and the joyful news it told. I have fancied an aged couple sitting in their cosy room in some part of England, and talking, as the old folks will, about the children. “Ah,” says the old man, “we have much cause, mother, to praise God for our children, converted and working in the Church; but poor Joseph, away in that far-off land, Australia: he went from us unsaved, yet our prayers will follow him.” Just then there is a sharp knocking at the door, and the old man himself goes to open it, and soon returns with a letter in his hand. “See, mother, see,” he says; “we were just talking about Joseph, and here is a letter from him.” Opening the letter, he asks, “What can the lad mean by writing these few lines only?” Then he reads, “Dear father, the mail is closing. I’ve just time to tell you that all your prayers are answered at last, for Jesus has saved me.” “Glory! Glory! Glory!” Oh what a time for that father and mother! Late on into the night they are still reading that letter, over and over again, or are on their knees crying, “Glory, glory, glory be to God!” Thank God, we have had many of these children of many prayers from the old land saved in Australia. Some of the most touching letters I have ever received have been from sorrowing fathers and mothers in England, begging me to try and find their poor

prodigal; and I have had the happiness of leading some of these to the blessed Saviour. A man once said to me, "I was the only one of the family unsaved. When I was leaving home my dear old father fairly broke down, and cried, 'Oh, Samuel, Samuel, shall I have to say Amen in the Great Day to the damnation of one of my children?'" That word never left him; he was brought to repentance, and died well.

In 1881 there was a break in my work during my visit to England; but on my return in 1882 I was again hard at it, preaching as usual every Sunday, holding missionary meetings during the week, and very often lecturing to large audiences on my trip to Europe and back. During my absence the Rev. S. Williams had superintended the work, and on my return I found all going on well and prospering. Thank God, this year also I saw the converting grace of God, and was glad.

## **CHAPTER X**

### **Victoria**

#### **Melbourne: Brunswick Street**

At the Conference of 1883 I asked to be relieved from the Home Mission work and appointed to a Circuit. The constant travelling began to tell on me. I thought some younger man could do the work better, and I had a great longing to be again at Circuit work. Believing it to be God's will, I made the request, which was granted, and I was appointed to the Brunswick Street Circuit for the second time. The Rev. S. Williams was appointed my successor in the Home Missions, and for three years did good service as its General Secretary. He was then made President of the Ladies' College at Launceston, Tasmania, and the Rev. G. S. Bickford was elected General Secretary of the Home Missionary Society. Few men could be so suitable for the position as Mr. Bickford, and under his care the work has greatly flourished.

Our Home Missionary Society – perhaps the most important institution of our Church in Victoria – was commenced at a time when there was a good deal of interest in our Church, and when much discussion was going on in the public papers on various parts of our policy. When the Home Missions were brought under the notice of our people, and they began to see that a great work of vast importance had to be done, debating was soon brought to an end, and all set to work in downright earnest to spread the Gospel through the land, and give the ordinances of religion to the scattered thousands on the new selections. But for the Home Mission many of the outlying districts would have been left to be supplied by others. Now from north to south and from east to west of Victoria there are very few places where there are not Methodist ministrations. But for the Home Missions our poorer Circuits must have been greatly crippled and hindered. Indeed it is questionable whether some of them could have been continued for any length of time: four or five had to be given up as Circuits and placed on the Home Mission Fund. The city work undertaken by the Missions has been of vast importance, and is every year becoming more so. The whole of the results of this Society can never be fully known on earth. With it commenced a new era in our Church, and it is today perhaps more full of life and power and promise, and more popular with all our people, than anything else in the Methodist Church. To God be all the glory!

I entered on my work in the Brunswick Street Circuit in April 1883, and remained the full term of three years; but I was not as strong to labour as during my first term in this Circuit. The preaching work I could still do, but the walking wearied me. I tried to do the same amount of visiting as before; but it was with great difficulty, and very often with no little suffering. I think I was all this time leaning as near or nearer to God. I longed to bring sinners to Christ, and I believe I aimed at this alone; but I did not see the same results as when I was first here. Other churches had been built, many of the people had removed into the suburbs, and the congregation in Brunswick Street was very small compared with what it had been. Many of the young men were working outside the Church. They did not regularly attend our ordinary services, but wished to have meetings of their own and work in their own way. Thus the Church was much divided, and no Church in such a state can ever prosper. Yet we had some blessed meetings, at which believers were quickened and sinners converted.

Frequently on a Sunday evening, instead of holding the regular service. I invited some of the local preachers and leaders to assist me. We had brief addresses, plenty of lively singing, and many short prayers. Generally we had good results. In my own house I also held frequent meetings for conversation on holiness and the work of God. These were times of special refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Sometimes the Spirit came upon us in overwhelming power: this was generally followed by a blessed work on the next Sabbath. I had valuable colleagues, who worked earnestly and well. These were Rev. E. Nye, P. R. C. Ussher, R. Fitcher, and Thomas Grove. I thank God that in every Circuit I had been associated with most devoted men, and we laboured together in great peace and love.

Our General Conference in November 1884 was held in Christchurch, New Zealand. We from Victoria and South Australia were a large company in one of the New Zealand steamers, the captain of which we found to be a truly Christ man. Before we discovered this, one of our laymen was very anxious to speak to the captain about his soul. He got into conversation with him, and gradually approached religious subjects. Thinking to draw the captain out, he made some remark about the Bible, when the captain came nearer to him and, laying a hand on his shoulder, said, "My friend, you must be born again; and till you are, you will never know anything about that matter." Our layman was surprised and greatly delighted, and came to tell us how he had gone to warn the captain, and the captain had warned him. I had many a conversation with the captain after this, and was greatly pleased to find one in his position so fully devoted to God.

At one of the ports of call a large number of passengers came on board, and I was surprised that our cabin, with accommodation for four, was left to me and another. I afterwards learned that my companion had most effectually used me in a remarkable way in order to keep the cabin to ourselves. Shrugging his shoulders and tapping his head, he said to the purser, "See the old gentleman yonder who is in the cabin with me! He's very quiet now, but I hope none of the passengers will come in any way into conflict with him." A word to the ignorant as well as to the wise is often sufficient. The purser jumped at once to the conclusion that I was gone in my mind, and that he had better keep others clear of me; and so we two had the cabin to ourselves. Had I known of this at the time I should have tried to put things right, though perhaps my attempts to prove to the purser that I was sane might have only confirmed him in the conclusion to which he had come.

New Zealand is a charming country. It has a delightful climate, exceedingly fertile soil, and scenery equal to anything in any part of the world. Dunedin is a fine city, and Christchurch, with its green lawns and hedges, its blackbirds, larks, and thrushes, is as like a lovely English town as anything can be.

Our Conference was a very pleasant one: the friends were full of kindness; the services were marked by great power; and although questions of the greatest importance, concerning which there was much division of opinion, came before us, the spirit and temper of the Conference was remarkably good. Our dearly beloved brother, Rev. J. H. Fletcher, was President, and did his work well. At our love-feast, which was a glorious meeting, he said, "Now, brethren, we are going to have a good time: some of you will be so happy that you will shout aloud; when I am very happy I am very quiet." Then he told us of a remarkable answer to prayer in his own life. He

and Mrs. Fletcher were in a small vessel off the coast of New Zealand. It was stormy weather, and a gale was blowing them toward the rocky shore. The captain at last became greatly alarmed, and told Mr. Fletcher that they were in great danger, and must certainly be wrecked. Mr. Fletcher went below and pleaded with God; and the Lord heard his prayer, and gave him a sweet assurance that He would deliver them. He then went on deck and told the captain that God had heard his prayer, and would save them. The captain did not see how it could be, for they were fast drifting on to the shore; but at once the gale began to moderate, and presently the wind veered round, and very soon they were out of danger. Mr. Fletcher was a man of excellent spirit. He was modest and retiring, but he exerted a powerful influence for good on both ministers and laymen. He was a preacher of no mean order. His sermons were clear expositions of God's word, full of light and beauty. As President of Newington College in New South Wales he did a great work, which will continue to bear blessed fruit in our Church. He died at Stunmore in 1890. He had a long and painful affliction; but the grace of God was sufficient for him. A month or so before he died I saw him two or three times, and always found him calmly resting in the arms of his loving Saviour.

At the General Conference I was appointed, in connection with the Rev. F. Langham and W. T. Rabon, a deputation to Tonga, Friendly Islands, to inquire into the sad state of things there, and to report to the Annual Conferences. For some years we had had trouble in Tonga. It had now reached a crisis, and must in some way be dealt with. I was also appointed with the Rev. W. Kelynack, D.D., a deputation to Fiji in 1885, the year of their Jubilee Celebration.

After the Conference, and before I left New Zealand, I heard the painful news that my eldest son, the Rev. J. J. Watsford, had had a bad attack of haemorrhage from the lungs, and was in a very critical state. On my return to Melbourne I found him very ill at Mrs. Holloway's, Coburg. For some days he seemed to hang on the very brink of death, but God graciously heard prayer and raised him up.

Early in 1885 news reached us that there had been a secession from our Church in Tonga that what was called the "Free Church" had been formed; that the greater part of our people had, at the king's command, joined this Church; and that our minister, the Rev. Jabez Watkin, had left with them, and was at the head of the Free Church. The President of the General Conference and the Tongan Committee in Sydney urged the deputation to leave for Tonga as soon as possible. We accordingly made all haste to arrange for our Circuit work, and to go on our important mission. On Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, I left home by express for Sydney. There the Rev. J. Rabone and I met the Tongan Committee. While waiting a few days for the steamer I had the great pleasure of seeing some of my old friends. I was glad to have a long talk with the Rev. W. B. Boyve, who still delighted me in conversation. I went to see my dear friend the Rev. James Watkin, who was fast nearing the end of life. He was very feeble, very humble, and resting solely on the great atoning work of Jesus.

On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Mr. Rabone and I left for Fiji. The President of the General Conference and many of the brethren accompanied us to the ship, and commended us to the grace of God. We had a pleasant voyage, fair winds and smooth seas, for which I was devoutly thankful, for I am as poor a sailor, perhaps, as ever went to sea. We arrived at New Caledonia on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>, and remained there two days. New

Caledonia is a French convict settlement. Its principal town is Noumea, at which we called. There were then in the island nine thousand convicts and about two thousand five hundred free whites. The number of the native population I could not ascertain. From all I could hear and see, the morality of Noumea was very low: every third or fourth house in some of the streets is a drinking-shop, and the social evil prevails to an alarming extent. Some time before our visit five hundred young female convicts were sent here from France, with the idea of their becoming the wives of the prisoners at the expiration of their sentences. These were kept in an establishment some distance away. When the time is near at hand for the liberation of any male prisoner, he is allowed to go to the prison for females and choose a wife, and when he is released they are married. It may be there are some good cases, but the universal testimony is that generally they are very bad. The wife in many cases leaves her husband and goes to live a vile life in Noumea, and in others she is kept by her husband and used as a prostitute to make money for him. From all I could learn, the convicts who conduct themselves properly, and have not been guilty of great crimes, are treated well; but the discipline in other cases is very severe. There is an excellent band of music in Noumea, composed of thirty-two performers, all convicts, and each one side to be an artist. Their leader was once a celebrated conductor in Paris. Twice a week they play high-class music, and all Noumea turn out to hear it. While I was delighted with their performance I was greatly pained to see such gifted men in such a degraded and wretched position. Some of the residents at Noumea are Protestants, but there is no place of worship in the town except the Roman Catholic.

We left New Caledonia on Friday 17<sup>th</sup>, and on Monday at noon were at the wharf at Suva, Fiji. The Rev. F. Langham,<sup>1</sup> the excellent Chairman of the Fiji District, was there to receive us, and gave us a hearty welcome.

We had some difficulty in arranging for getting to Tonga. One plan after another was suggested; but we were at last shut up to chartering a small steamer which was expected to arrive in a few days. We had to pay a large sum for this; but it was absolutely necessary, as we should otherwise have been unable to reach Tonga for a month or more. While waiting for the steamer we rested at the Rev. A. J. Webb's in Levuka. On Sunday I preached in English to a full church, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. Six or seven persons were seeking the Lord. On Monday 27<sup>th</sup> we started for Tonga. Until we left the Fiji group we had rather a roundabout voyage, having to call at Bua and Vuda. On Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> we passed out of the Lakemba barrier reef, and with a fair wind and a very smooth sea we reached Tonga on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, early in the morning.

I do not intend to refer to all that was said and done in connection with our deputation work in Tonga. I will give briefly the leading facts only. We found that the secession had really taken place; that the "Free Church" had been formed; that the majority of the people had at the king's command joined that Church; that three or four thousand remained truth and faithful to us, determined to suffer anything rather than leave the Wesleyan Church; that while the Rev. J. B. Watkin was called the Head of the Free Church, he was so in name only, Mr. Shirley Baker, formerly a minister in our Church and now Premier of Tonga, being supreme both in Church and State; that our people had been bitterly and cruelly persecuted, and were placed under many disabilities; and

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<sup>1</sup> Now in London engaged in revision work. – Ed.

that Mr. Baker was determined to have his own way, and consent to peace on his own terms only. There could be no mistake about these things. We brought many cases of persecution before Mr. Baker; and while he tried to explain away his connection with them, he could not deny them. We came to the conclusion that our minister in Tonga, the Rev. J. Moulton, may have erred, and in our opinion did err, in some things, yet, considering the trying and perplexing circumstances in which he was placed, and the man he had to deal with, we thought that few men would have done better than he had done.

After carefully looking at all the facts of the case, repeatedly interviewing Rev. J. Moulton and the chiefs and people with us, and Mr. Baker, Mr. Watkin, and the chiefs with them, we unanimously agreed to propose four things, which we were prepared to recommend to Conferences: -

1. That the Tonga District now connected with the N. S. Wales Conference be transferred to the Victoria and Tasmania Conference.
2. That the Rev. J. Moulton be removed and appointed to a Circuit in N. S. Wales
3. That the Rev. J. B. Watkin be allowed to withdraw his resignation, that he be appointed to a Circuit in connection with one of the Australian Conferences, and that he suffer no disability on account of anything that has taken place.
4. That the most efficient men that can be found be sent to work in the Tonga District.

These were read to Mr. Moulton, and he at once expressed his agreement with them. They were then read to Mr. Baker and Mr. Watkin; but Mr. Baker objected to the third. He contended that Mr. Moulton should be removed, and Mr. Watkin remain, "and then after some time," he said, "I and Mr. Watkin may bring the two Churches together again." To this we felt that we could on no account consent. We then told Mr. Baker that we should go to Vavau to see the king. Soon after, he sent a request to be allowed to go to Vavau in our steamer. We knew that he was determined that we should not see the king alone, but we granted his request. When we arrived at Vavau Mr. Baker at once landed, and sent us word that the king would see us at seven o'clock. We reached the king's house about twenty minutes to seven, but he would hold no conversation with us till Mr. Baker came. Poor old man! he seemed afraid to speak a word in Mr. Baker's absence. When Mr. Baker came, we told the king of our proposals, and begged him, for his own sake, for Tonga's sake, for Christ's sake, to let us have peace. He, too, objected to our third proposal, saying, "Take away Mr. Moulton! take away Mr. Moulton!" We then repeatedly urged him to promise us that our people should not be persecuted, but he would give us no answer. Greatly pained, we bade the king good-night and left, deeply feeling how great a change had come over King George.

We visited Haabai and saw David Tonga and his wife and the king's daughter, who were all called afterward to suffer for Christ's sake.

We returned to Tonga on Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, and spent the day in a last effort to induce Mr. Baker to prevent any farther persecution; but all we said and did was in vain. We told him that he had loosed a power that he would not be able to restrain,

and the terrible consequences would one day come upon himself. He laughed at our warning, and we left him.

On Friday morning we left Tonga, having failed, so far as we could see, to accomplish anything, except obtaining full and accurate information of the true state of things there. This we gave in our Report, which was very carefully prepared, and unanimously approved by the members of the deputation. That Report was presented to all the Conferences, and we were thanked for our labours. But in some of the Conferences a few doubted, and did not look very favourably on our Report. They to a great extent held with Mr. Baker and Mr. Watkin, condemned the action of the Sydney Conference, questioned the reality of any persecution worth the name, and were prepared to come to some arrangement that would be satisfactory to Mr. Baker. We of the deputation were prepared to wait the end, knowing that we had gone to Tonga with the firm resolve to be impartial and true, and to do all for the glory of God, fully believing that it would be seen by all at last that we were guided aright. What has since transpired has confirmed all that we said in our Report. His Excellency Sir C. Mitchell, then Governor of Fiji and Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the South Seas, visited Tonga with the Judge of Fiji, and, after carefully inquiring into the persecution, said there was quite enough to justify him in removing Mr. Baker from Tonga. He, however, allowed him to remain, on the promise of the king and Mr. Baker to put an end to the persecution. A deputation from the Sydney Conference was sent, but they could do nothing. At our General Conference held in Melbourne in 1886 the Rev. J. Moulton expressed his willingness to leave Tonga if the Conference thought that would help to bring about peace; and it was then resolved that Mr. Moulton should remove, and that the Rev. G. Brown should go to Tonga as our Commissioner and endeavour to heal the breach. Mr. Brown, who had always been regarded as Mr. Baker's friend, and to some extent his advocate, went on his mission, and did his very best to conciliate and to promote peace. His Report still more seriously inculpated Mr. Baker than any that had gone before. At last, Mr. Baker having written certain letters reflecting on the British Government, His Excellency Sir John Thurston, Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner, who had succeeded Sir C. Mitchell, went to Tonga, and at the request of a number of influential chiefs, most, if not all, members of the Free Church, ordered Mr. Baker to leave the islands. Since Mr. Baker's removal everything has been changed: the exiles have returned home; the prisoners have been released; liberty to worship as the people wish has been allowed; the king became most friendly; and although the results of Mr. Baker's evil work will be felt for years, there is now hope of peace and prosperity.

Our work in Tonga being so far ended, we returned to Fiji, where I remained a fortnight, visiting the scenes of my former labours, and rejoicing over the glorious work done in these islands. We arrived at Levuka at noon on Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. I preached in English in the evening. The church was crowded, and some were anxious about their souls. On the Monday we proceeded to Bau, where, having to wait some days for the steamer, we prepared our Report.

No words can describe what I felt on this visit to Fiji. Forty-one years had gone since I first came to the islands. Then I was a young man, just beginning my work; now I was an old man, with my work nearly finished. Then Fiji was dark, cruel, cannibal – heathen Fiji; now not a heathen could be found in the land. The change was indeed

marvellous in our eyes – a change from darkness to light, from death to life. Very many of those living when I first came had gone; those remaining, who remembered me, came rejoicing to see me, and said the most complimentary things they could think of: “What a great chief he is!” “Look at him, how straight he is, how strong!” “See his teeth!” said an old lady, “not one has fallen.” They little knew what the dentist had done for me. Then they clapped their hands and shouted, “Oh, how old he must be! It is such a long time since he first came to Fiji: he must be more than a hundred years old.” How glad they were to see me, and how glad I was to see them, and the grace of God in them.

I called at Rewa and saw Rev. W. Bromilow and his devoted wife. An old chief, who remembered me, called at the mission house, and when he saw me cried out, “Oh yes, I remember him; this is the strong missionary that threw the priest into the water-hole.” Whatever else he had forgotten, he still clung to that absurd story that I have referred to elsewhere. I went to Viwa, where I began my Mission work, and saw the graves of John Hunt, Joeli Bulu, and others. When I landed at Bau my heart was full to overflowing. I thought of the scenes I had witnessed and the chiefs I had known. I thought of the great heathen temple where the dead bodies of the slain were brought, and of the huge stone slab in front of it, against which the heads of the dead were dashed before being presented to the gods. I thought of the terrible Thakombau, that man of blood, whom I had often warned to flee from the wrath to come. And I asked, “Where is the temple now?” The answer was, “It is gone; and in its place, yonder, stands that stone Wesleyan church.” “Where is the slab that used to be nearly always covered with blood?” “Come away,” said the missionary, “and I’ll show it to you;” and he led me up the church, and, pointing to the stone baptismal font near the pulpit, said, “There it is.” “And where is Thakombau?” “Come and see his grave,” said Mr. Langham. We went, and, leaning on the fence and looking down on that well-kept grave, I cannot tell how deeply I felt as Mr. Langham said to me, “If ever a man was converted, Thakombau was; and if ever one died a triumphant death, he did.” The story of his death has been told before; it can do no harm if I tell it again as I heard it from the lips of the missionary. In a Fijian chief’s house the sleeping-place is at the end, which is raised a foot or two, and covered with beautiful mats, and hidden from view by a large piece of native cloth suspended as a screen. Behind that screen Thakombau lay for many days waiting for death. “I very often stood at the other side of the screen,” said the missionary, “when the chief had no idea that I was near, and I heard him talking to Jesus, and praying for help and blessing. When he was dying I was there, and heard him cry, ‘Now, Jesus, now is your time to help: no one else can. I’m in the valley and shadow of death; Jesus, hold me fast!’ Then, triumphantly, ‘Who shall separate me from the love of Christ?’ and soon after, the happy spirit of this once terrible cannibal passed away, to be ‘for ever with the Lord.’” Oh the grace, the power of Christ to save!

They would have me conduct a service in their large church at Bau. I had not preached in Fijian for more than thirty years, so I promised to say a few words if Mr. Langham would interpret for me. I gave our the first hymn, and prayed very briefly, and then announced my text, “Lovest thou Me?” (John xxi. 17). Mr. Langham Said, “Say a few words first in Fijian; it will please them so very much.” “I’ll try,” I replied, “but I am afraid I shall soon break down.” I began, and went on and on, the old language coming to me almost as fresh as ever, till, the Lord helping me, I finished the sermon without Langham’s help. Probably I made many mistakes; but

the whole thing seemed wonderful to me. I had particularly noticed how well the natives sang, and I was struck with the interesting, beaming face of the leader, who seemed a host in himself. After the service I asked Mr. Langham, "Who is the leader of the choir?" "Oh!" said he, "don't you know him? Why, that is old blind Shem of Nandi. You'll soon hear of him, for he has been talking much of your coming, and longing to see you." I had not been long seated in the mission house before I saw Shem carefully finding his way along. When he reached the door he asked someone to lead him near to me, and, sitting down at my feet, he clasped my knees and cried, "Oh, my father! my father!" You may be sure I greatly rejoiced to meet him again after so many years. I visited the Native Institution at Navuloa, which is under the care of Rev. W. W. Lindsay, and I was delighted to meet seventy or eighty students there, all neatly dressed and earnest in their work. They were in the midst of their examination. Some of their papers were sent to me, and they were remarkably good. I also received letters from many of them, and I am sure these would compare favourably with any letters from the higher schools in our own land.

Altogether, this visit to Fiji was one of the great events of my life. I saw the grace of God and was glad. I remembered when we sowed in tears, and I could now rejoice with the reapers of an abundant harvest. I thought of the devoted men who had fallen on the field, and of those still living by compelled to retire, worn out in the work. The first missionaries with whom I laboured were good, self-denying men, and those who followed them, Morse, Waterhouse, White, Wilson, Royce, Carey, Nettleton, Wilson, Webb, and others, were worthy successors of such noble leaders. The late Chairman of the District, Rev. F. Langham, who was in Fiji more than thirty years, is a true apostle. He has been made a great blessing to this important mission. The Rev. Walter Lawry used to say, "A faithful Fijian missionary will have a great reward." That, no doubt, is true; but I say, "A faithful Fijian missionary has in the work itself a great reward." I bless God that ever I was sent as a missionary to Fiji. When I came back, an old Christian lady said to me, "Why, it has made a man of you!" Whatever I am I owe it, under God to a great extent, to my having been a Fijian missionary. If I were a young man again, no Colonial Circuit would keep me for a single moment. I would say, "Here am I, send me to the poor dying heathen." I wonder that we have not to put the restraining hand upon our young men in their eagerness to go to the mission field.

On July 15<sup>th</sup> we left Bau for Suva, calling at Navuloa and Rewa. From Rewa to Suva we had a rough voyage. On our way we found a boat capsized, and the owners struggling in the water. We sailed to them, and our crew of Fijians set to work to help those in distress. After some time they got the boat right, collected all the scattered things, and sent the thankful boatmen on their course again. In the days of heathenism, how differently would they have acted! They would have looked upon the shipwrecked as their lawful prey, and would have made short work with them. But the Gospel has changed the lion into a lamb, has made these once ferocious cannibals kind and compassionate Christians.

#### Jubilee of Wesleyan Church in Victoria

The year 1886 was the Jubilee year of the Wesleyan Church in Victoria. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1836, the Rev. Joseph Orton preached for the first time in Victoria, and a Church

was then formed. Wonderful have been the changes since then. The success which has attended the labours of our Church should call forth loudest songs of praise. Our statistics for the year 1886 showed that we had 480 churches, 123 schoolhouses, 82 parsonages, 109 ministers, 33 home missionaries, 16,095 Church members, 751 local preachers, 4691 Sabbath School teachers, 40,459 Sabbath School scholars, 2 colleges, and 97,114 attendants on public worship. The population of Victoria this year was over one million, so that ten per cent of the population were Wesleyans. The cost of our buildings amounted to £530,000, the value of land to £122,000. The accommodation provided in our churches was 112,899, or one in every nine of the people. The Lord had done great things for us, whereof we were glad.

At the Conference of 1886 it was resolved to celebrate the Jubilee, and that a Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund should be raised, the objects of the Fund to be: (1) The reduction and removal of existing debts on church, parsonage, and school properties; (2) The raising of funds for the new college affiliated to the Melbourne University, now called Queen's College; (3) The raising of an amount to be funded in aid of necessitous local preachers, the interest accruing from such amount to be administered by the Local Preachers' Aid Association. I was set apart as General Secretary of the Fund, and a large Committee was appointed to carry out the resolutions of the Conference.

As soon as possible after Conference we met to make all necessary arrangements. Papers were prepared and circulated among all our people, fully explaining the Jubilee movement, and pointing out the objects to any or all of which subscribers might direct their donations to be applied. Meetings were held with the representatives of Sabbath Schools, and with the choirs of the Wesleyan Churches, and arrangements made for a great gathering of the children, and for a grand united choir to conduct the singing at all Jubilee meetings. We informed Circuit Committees of all that was being done, and I visited as many Circuits as possible before Jubilee day, giving in public meetings full information of all the plans adopted by the General Committee, and urging the Methodist people to enter heartily into the movement. These meetings were so thoroughly successful and encouraging, that on my report to the Committee they were prepared to go into the matter on a large scale.

The week before Jubilee day, special services for praise, prayer, and testimony were held in every Circuit in Victoria. These were seasons of great power and blessing. The services in Melbourne were very successful. At the meeting in Wesley Church for young men and young women there were over two thousand present, and we had a blessed time. It was a glorious sight to see nearly two thousand young men and young women stand up to testify fully to the Lord Jesus. The holiness meeting, also in Wesley Church, was one that will not soon be forgotten. The large church was crowded, and many testified to the power of Christ to save from all sin.

On Jubilee Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, appropriate sermons were preached in all Wesleyan churches, and golden offerings presented. All the collections were good: some were very large. Silver offerings were also presented by the young people in the Sabbath Schools. The whole of the collections for the day amounted to nearly £4000. Some persons were so anxious to present their gifts of gold, that having no gold coin to give they offered gold ornaments instead. In the plates were found gold locketts and chains, gold earrings, gold and diamond rings.

I preached the Jubilee Sermon in Wesley Church on Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. The text was Psalm cl. 6, "Praise ye the Lord." I felt a good deal in standing before the great crowd that filled the church; but the Lord helped me, and a blessed, thankful spirit rested on the congregation.

Jubilee day, Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, was a glorious day indeed – one of the brightest and best our Church has ever known, the influence of which will be felt for many a day to come. The meetings were held in the Exhibition Building; and it was well that the Committee had the courage to secure this, for no other building in Melbourne could possibly have accommodated the crowds that attended. About 1500 were at the breakfast, and about 4000 at tea. The meeting after breakfast, and that after tea, when six or seven thousand were present, were most enthusiastic. They were times of great rejoicing: fervent songs of praise ascended to heaven for the great things God had done. Nor did the people praise God with the lip only, for there was hearty, cheerful liberality. Promises from £1 to £1000 were quickly announced, one after another, till the total reached £18,000, making with the collections on Sunday £22,000 – a willing offering to our God for all His mercies to us and to our Church. I stood on the platform for about two hours without a break, reading out subscriptions. I never in all my life knew such cheerful giving. A gentleman from America, who had travelled round the world, said to me at the close of the meeting, "'ve been the wide world over; I have attended Jubilee meetings in America and Canada; but I assure you I never saw anything like this before. I never saw the money pour in as it has done today."

On Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup>, a very successful and interesting service, called "An Evening with the Wesleys," was held in Wesley Church. Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup>, was the "Children's Day." From all the Wesleyan Sabbath Schools in Melbourne and the suburbs the young people came, to the number of eight or ten thousand, wearing their Jubilee medals, and all full of joy. It was a pleasing, cheering sight when, with thousands of their parents and friends, they gathered in the Exhibition Building, all so glad and happy, and all heartily joining in the sweet songs of praise. As merry a lot of children as ever met together.

After the Jubilee week I visited, with the deputations that had been appointed, the other Circuits, and held meetings in them, and in nearly every place there was the same enthusiasm as at our meetings in Melbourne. The amount promised to the Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund was £40,000. Of this amount more than £35,000 has been received. If the Conference had resolved that subscriptions might be applied to Circuit local objects, a very much larger sum would have been raised; but we think the best plan was adopted. The benefit of this Fund to our Church is immense. The Loan Fund formed for the relief of then existing church debts will continue its work until all are paid off, and will then be amalgamated with our regular Loan Fund that is doing such great service to our Church. The amount given to the Affiliated College has enabled us to build Queen's College, which has been a great success. But for the help from the Jubilee Fund, the building of this College would have been long delayed. The sum invested for local preachers in distressed circumstances will be a help and a blessing to many a good man who has worked on well for the Church. But the money received has not been the only or chief good arising from this Jubilee celebration. The review of God's dealings with us as a Church has called forth the gratitude and increased the faith of our people, and has, we believe, drawn closer to us

our young people, who have rejoiced that they were connected with a Church so honoured of God, and so successful in His work.

### **Brighton and Richmond**

At the Conference of 1887 I was appointed to the Brighton Circuit, having for my colleague the Rev. J. B. Smith. Here I was among a kind and loving people, and I had the pleasure of having near me my old friends, the Rev. W. A. Quick and W. L. Binks. Driving in my buggy to and from my appointments on dark nights was very trying to me, for my sight at night was very bad, and I was sometimes in danger of being thrown over an embankment. I had no idea, however, when I went to the Conference of 1888, that I should be removed, and I was not a little surprised when I was appointed to the Richmond Circuit. I regarded this appointment as from the Lord, and went to Richmond with all confidence that He would bless me there. The Richmond Circuit had just been divided – the Hawthorn District, which was the wealthy part of the Circuit, being formed into a new Circuit. It was thought by some of the Richmond people who had opposed the division, that the Richmond Circuit, notwithstanding an annual grant from Hawthorn, was now too weak to support two ministers, and that we should have difficulties. The Rev. William Shaw, who had just been received into our ranks from the Methodist New Connexion Church, was my colleague, and well and most earnestly did he labour. Very soon we had unmistakable prosperity. The finances of the Circuit so improved that we were able to employ a Home Missionary at Cremorne Street. We formed bands for house-to-house visitation, for outdoor preaching, and for the care of strangers who visited our churches. Many of the members began to work well, and we had blessed results. When I had laboured here about eighteen months I had a very severe affliction. I had attended the District Meeting in the morning, and had told by brethren that I was watching and waiting, looking out for my Lord, for I knew not but that He might soon and suddenly come. In the afternoon I visited the sick in my Circuit. On returning home I felt very weary. In the evening we had a large and interesting meeting at our Bible Class. After this, one of our ministers was waiting to consult me on a most important business connected with his Circuit. While talking with him I felt very ill, and as soon as he had gone was completely prostrated. I thought the end was near; but I was calmly resting on Jesus. The doctor pronounced my case a bad one, the liver, pleura, and lungs being affected. He said to me, “The Lord can bring you through it, and you must look to Him.” I felt I could fully and cheerfully leave myself in the hands of my loving Father. What I was most concerned about was that I should glorify Him in the fire, and not say a single word of murmuring or complaining. I bless Him that He gave me all the grace I needed. Just opposite my bed was a text of Scripture that gave me day after day great comfort: “As they day, so shall thy strength be.” I seemed to hear my Lord saying to me, “If I gave you a pound or ten pounds to bear, and I gave you strength sufficient for that you would not sink beneath the load, and so if I give you a hundredweight or even a ton to bear, and I give you sufficient strength to bear that, is not that enough?” And I could say, “Yes, my Lord, quite enough.” So I proved it. Let me here say, “Put up these texts about your house: they’ll speak some day.” Another text, sent to me by my daughter, who was lying very ill in an adjoining room, was made a great blessing to me: “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” What more could I need? Oh, what rest was here! I now felt how precious Jesus was: how He alone was all in all to

me: no hope, no rest, no peace, no life apart from Jesus. One of my dear brethren who came to see me said, "You have a good record of fifty years' work done for Jesus;" but I turned away in a moment from that, and felt, "I have a good record of fifty years and more of the forbearance and love of my blessed Lord." I could go nowhere but where the saintly Wesley had to go at last, and cry, "I the chief of sinners am; but Jesus died for me." Of the first ten days I do not remember very much; but I remember the goodness of my God, and how He blessed me. For every pain He poured in a balm of heavenly sweetness. Generally in my former afflictions I had turned completely against food—it was nauseous to me; now, when the doctor told Mrs. Watsford that so much depended upon my taking food very frequently, everything given to me was so delicious that it seemed as if I had not before tasted anything so nice. The washing of my hands and face seemed like bathing in Paradise.

Just opposite our house was a stone-mason's yard, where they made a great noise hammering and chiseling the hard granite. The stewards of the Circuit tried to get them to moderate the noise, if possible. They said they would do what they could, but their work must be done. The doctor thought it would greatly disturb and injure me; but I left it in the Lord's hands, and He either put a little extra wax in my ears, or gave me what the doctor called "catarrh of the tubes of the ears," so that the hammering of the stone-masons gave me very little trouble. My wife brought our beautiful little canary to my window to let me hear his sweet song; but though they said he was singing nearly all the day, I only heard a faint sound once. "What a pity you cannot hear him sing," they said; "it is so sweet and delightful." "Ay," I said; "so, no doubt, it is; but only think, I can scarcely hear the stone-masons: is not that a blessing?" The stewards of our church and all the friends were extremely kind, doing all that could be done for me. Nor they alone. All my ministerial brethren, and ministers and members of other Churches, were full of sympathy and love. Special prayer was made to God for me in the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, and Methodist churches, and our friends in Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales were all praying to God to raise me up again. All this deeply moved me, and I know it was in answer to prayer that I was brought back from the very gates of death. I remember well one night when I knew that prayer was answered, and that I was to live. A feeling of disappointment tried to rise, that when so near home I should have to go back again; but God saved me from this, and enabled me to say, "Thy will be done!"

For three nights when my complaint was at its worst I had a peculiar and wonderful experience. Every night from the close of day to the dawn I had a glorious vision of the redeemed. The world of spirits was before me, and among the multitude that no man could number I saw many whom I had known and loved on earth: not in shining robes, but just as I had known them on earth, only with the "solar light," as Joseph Cook calls it, on every face. They looked on me and smiled. The whole night the scene was before me. I slept very little, only at short intervals, and awaking, there were the redeemed before me. It was no dream: what was it? Speaking of it to one of our ministers, he said, "Why, Paul says we are 'compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses,' and those nights the veil was drawn aside and you saw them." A Presbyterian minister to whom I spoke about the matter, said, "You realised then what Paul says, 'We are come to the church of the first-born,' etc. Though we generally see them not, it is a fact, and God may sometimes permit His servants to see them."

In about six weeks I was allowed to sit up, and in about two months the doctor permitted me to go to church in the morning, when I publicly returned thanks to God for His mercy to me. Not till the end of March could I take any service. Before the Conference I saw the members of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, and released them from the invitation they had given me to remain in the Circuit another year. They unanimously pressed me to stay with them, promising to do all they could to help me. At last I agreed to do so if they Conference would send a young minister to help me. At the Conference I received a hearty welcome from my brethren, and the proposal to send a young minister to assist me was at once agreed to, and the Rev. T. Collins was appointed.

I had not intended to go to the General Conference in Sydney; but all thought that the change would do me good, and I went. The very day I arrived in Sydney the prevailing influenza seized me, and during the whole of Conference I had it very severely.

The most important question at the General Conference was the "class-meeting text of membership." We had a long debate. The Conference was nearly equally divided; and it seemed as if we could not hold together as we were, or if we did not separate at once we should be a divided Church, and as such could not long stand. We carried a resolution by a small majority affirming that the class meeting should remain a test of membership, and then about four o'clock the various amendments proposed were went to a Committee for consideration. During the day I had shown to the different parties into which the Conference was divided, what seemed to me the best solution of the difficulty. I had been a good deal distressed about the matter for some days, and had earnestly prayed to God to direct us. The scheme I proposed seemed to open to me as if from the Lord. All to whom I showed it thought that nothing had been proposed would so well meet the case. When we went into Committee I was requested to read my proposals to the meeting. Very soon, with a few verbal alterations and a preamble added, it was unanimously agreed to. At seven o'clock we went into Conference, and our report was read and most favourably received. The next morning it was adopted, only one voting against it. The two principal points in the scheme were: 1. That meeting in class should mean meeting in the regular weekly class, or in a meeting held once a month for fellowship and testimony. 2. That a roll-book be kept in each Circuit, and that no name be added to the roll or removed from it by the minister if the Leaders' Meeting object.

Soon after the settlement of the Class Meeting question I returned to Melbourne. Mr. Collins was now in the Circuit with me, working very earnestly and successfully; but the health of my excellent colleague, Rev. H. Brownell, failed, and he had at last to give up his work. This made it very heavy for me. I was altogether unequal to the full work of a Circuit; but I struggled on, very often suffering what no one knew, till in the end I was forced to give in, and allow others to do the work for me. Of course the Circuit suffered too, and this to me was a great trial. The Rev. Dr. Danue, an Independent minister, very kindly helped me in my distress, very frequently taking part, or the whole, of my work on the Sunday.

At one of the last services I conducted in the Richmond Circuit we had a most interesting case of decision for Christ that greatly delighted me. A very fine, intelligent, moral young man, of an old Methodist family, was a regular hearer in our

church, but a hearer only. As he afterwards told me, he was fast drifting into all manner of worldly pleasure and amusement. The theatre and opera-house were becoming very attractive. He looked upon religion as a restraint, a bondage, and believed that the only pleasure was to be found in "the world." He thought the preacher was too often and too strongly pressing the necessity of decision for Christ. On the first Sunday evening in the year 1891 I preached from the words, "Your reasonable service." I longed to see results, and had gone to the church expecting the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Covenant service was held after the first service, and I was glad to see this young man remain. We had a good time; the Lord was very near. I administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper after this, and had given the bread and wine, as I thought, to all who were willing to partake of them, and had announced the closing hymn, when, all alone, this young man walked up to the communion rail and knelt down. I could see that he was under deep emotion: his hands were clasped and his head bent low. In a moment I understood what was going on. I had no need to ask him a word: the hour of decision, I knew, had come. Waiting a while, I approached him and gave him the bread and wine. We then sang; but he still knelt in earnest prayer. At the close of the service he seemed unable to speak, but his pressure or my hand said more than words. I bade him "goodnight," and only added, "Come to our testimony meeting on Wednesday evening." He said, "I will." On the Wednesday evening I was too ill to attend the meeting, but I learned that the first to speak after the meeting was opened was my young friend. He rose and said, "It would be mean of me if I did not rise and tell what the good Lord has done for me." Then he told of his decision for Christ on Sunday evening. He referred, as he did another time when I heard him, to the idea he had entertained that it would be a great loss, and very hard, to give up worldly amusement and pleasure; but, said he, "Christ has more than made up all that to me." The Church greatly rejoiced and praised God for this conversion, and his friends at home were filled with joy. One who had often prayed for him told me that he went home on the Sunday evening, and, meeting her at the door, cried, "Oh, it's done now; I have decided for Jesus." And, said she, "What a blessed change in him!" A week or two after his conversion he wrote to be praising God for what He had done for him, and enclosing £5, which he wished given to what I thought most needed help. If this young man is faithful, he will be a great blessing.

## CHAPTER XI

### **A Supernumerary**

At the Conference of 1891 I requested to be made a Supernumerary. The request was granted, and I retired from active Circuit work.

For fifty years and more I had been strong to labour; now I was broken down and frail, scarcely able to do anything. I once thought it would be very hard to be like this, but I have found that the grace of God is sufficient. I have heard Him saying to me, "Rest a while, and then I shall show thee what thou shalt do." Beyond this I have not been able to see a step; and I have not cared to see. I have trusted Him, and He has not failed me. I have had many a conflict, but He has given me the victory.

From April to September I was kept quietly resting on the Lord, and waiting patiently for Him. Then He began to lead me in a plain path, and to make me see clearly what my future work should be. I saw more fully than I had ever done the great need of a revival of holiness in the Church, and was deeply convinced that, while earnestly seeking to rescue the perishing, my special work was "to spread scriptural holiness through the land." Then came abundant blessing to my soul, and strength to my body; and the way opened before me to labour again for my blessed Lord.

It was a day not to be forgotten, when, after six months' silence, I was able once more to preach the glorious Gospel. The Lord helped me, and the word was with power. I administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and had sweet communion with my blessed Lord. After the sermon a lady came to me and said with deep feeling, "I came to church tonight without Christ, but He is in my heart now." I had preached from Rev. iii. 20.

For some months the Rev. G. Grubb, a minister of the Church of England, had been holding services in the Colonies, with blessed results. He was now in Victoria, and had spoken with great power at the Christian United Convention. It was arranged that the ministers of the various Churches should meet him in the Y.M.C.A. hall. A large number were present, and Mr. Grubb gave an address that did us all much good. He is a man full of the Holy Ghost, and God has greatly used him.

For ten years and more a band of ministers of the Church of England, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist Churches have met every week to pray for the full baptism of the Holy Spirit for themselves and for all ministers, officers, and members of the Churches. These meetings have been wonderful times of refreshing and blessing. The Lord has been in the midst of us, and has heard and answered prayer. It was determined by the band to hold a Holiness Convention in Geelong, and ask Mr. Grubb to preside. He consented. The Convention was held in the large hall of the Mechanics' Institute. People came to it from all parts of Victoria, and from the neighbouring Colonies. It was continued for four days, with services at 7 a.m., 10.30, 3, and 7.30. From beginning to end the blessing of God was on us, the Holy Spirit spake with power by those who gave addresses, and the results were blessed indeed. The hall was too small to accommodate the crowds who came, not to hear eloquent addresses or exquisite music, but to hear of Pentecostal Christianity, and how it may

be ours. Large overflow meetings were held in the Presbyterian church, close at hand. The missionary meeting in connection with the Convention was one of the most extraordinary I have ever attended. A few of us told the story of our work, and the audience was moved and melted in a wonderful manner. After a few minutes in silent prayer, the President said, "In England, at our Conventions, any of our friends who feel so inclined give subscriptions for Missionary Societies; if anyone is moved so to do, he can bring forward his gift." At once, without another word, one after another came bringing silver, gold, notes, cheques, watches, chains, rings, bracelets, and other pieces of jewellery, and laid them on the table. Of this remarkable meeting *The Christian Colonist* said; "There was no excitement, no hysterics, no rushing from seats and clapping of hands. The Holy Spirit just laid on the people's hearts an intense yearning for the heathen, and gave the world a practical illustration of Apostolic Christianity. It was estimated that the value of the offerings was £1000. After the meeting, forty young men and young women testified to the promoters of the Convention their readiness to go wherever the Lord wished them to go; and ministers who have been in the same churches for many years stood up and said, 'Lord, if Thou dost want me out of my church, here am I, ready to go.'"

During the remainder of the year I preached at many places, held a Convention at Colac, and special services at Mortlake. At every place the Lord was with me, and the word was in demonstration of the Spirit and in power. When my work in any place was done I felt weary, but when any new Mission had to be entered upon, strength was given to me according to my day.

During this year the Rev. Thomas Williams died. He was with me in Fiji, and was a most devoted missionary. He was sometimes misunderstood. He spoke right out what he thought, and by some who did not know him was thought to be harsh and irritable; but a more tender-hearted man, and one more ready to help any in distress, it would be difficult to find. On July 4<sup>th</sup> I heard of the death of Mrs. Hunt, the noble wife of one of the grandest missionaries that ever went among the heathen. These two deaths reminded me of my early days in Mission work, and of one fact that has moved me greatly. In 1844, and till three years after, there were fourteen of us in the Fiji Mission – seven missionaries and our wives. Of the fourteen, my wife and I are the only two now living. My wife was then considered the weakest, and the most unlikely to live long, of the whole party, and yet she is likely to outlive us all.

In October the President of our Conference, the Rev. A. Rigg, died. He was the son of a well-known minister of the English Conference, the Rev. John Rigg, and was a good, thoughtful preacher.

I commenced the year 1892 by attending an All-day Holiness Convention held at St. Matthew's, Prahrau, the Rev. Mr. Blackett, the incumbent, presiding. It was a glorious day. I spoke on being filled with the Spirit. In the evening I presided at a holiness meeting in our Conference Hall. We had a large gathering and a good time – a good number seeking the fulness of salvation.

This was a year of much work and great blessing. I can only refer to some few things. There is no need to do more, as the methods employed and the results obtained were generally the same. I would rather be silent. I only write these things that my Lord may be glorified, for the work is only His.

On the way to the Sydney Convention I stayed at Albury on a Sunday and Monday, and preached and visited the Sunday School, and the Lord blessed us.

Our Convention in Sydney was presided over by Mr. Grubb, whose addresses were very powerful. The large Centenary Hall was packed every day. We had, some evenings, at an early hour to shut the outer gates to keep the crowds back. Overflow meetings were held in large rooms below the Hall. The Convention lasted four days, three services being held each day. The Lord gave me strength to speak at four meetings, and to conduct an evangelistic service at the close, when we had about eighty persons seeking mercy. During the next few days I preached at King William Street Church and the Centenary Hall two or three times, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. At the Convention one of the speakers, a minister, said, "I one Sunday preached on the letter to the Church of Laodicea, speaking of lukewarmness, its guilt and danger. I retired to rest at night, thinking I had faithfully delivered God's message to the people. In the morning I awoke about five o'clock with a strange feeling on me. I seemed to hear a voice saying, 'Get up and go to your study and pray.' I did so, and had no sooner fallen on my knees than my sermon of the previous evening appeared before me, and I seemed to hear a voice saying, 'Thou art the man! Thou art the man!' I was convicted of lukewarmness. I acknowledged my sin, and prayed for forgiveness. And the Lord blessed and healed me." Since then that brother has been a flame of fire, and has been greatly used by God.

During my stay in Sydney the President invited the ministers to meet me. A good many came, and we had a deeply interesting and profitable talk on Entire Sanctification. It was arranged to hold a Ministers' Weekly Prayer-meeting.

### **Australia and Tasmania**

At the end of January we held a Convention in Launceston. The Rev. G. Grubb was again our President. We held our first meeting in the Hall of the Mechanics' Institute, but we were crowded out. The next three days we met in the Albert Hall, which will accommodate 2500 people, and we had it packed. The Holy Spirit applied the word spoken with great power. At one evening meeting, among many others seeking to be filled with the Spirit, were forty or fifty ministers of different Churches. There was a wonderful influence on all as these servants of God stood up as an expression of their earnest desire. On the platform were some two or three hundred persons, principally young men and maidens. I never saw such shining faces before. I went to one young lady, who seemed to be filled to overflowing, and said, "The Lord is greatly blessing you, my sister." She gave a strange but very striking reply. Said she, "Oh yes! Glory be to God, He is – I've got out of the frying-pan into the fire," using this old saw as it never was used before.

Before the commencement of the Convention I had preached in our church in Patterson Street and at the Memorial Church. When it had closed, they pressed me to hold a week's Mission at Patterson Street. I thought it only right to consult Mr. Grubb, as he was conducting a Mission in an Episcopalian church near at hand. When I spoke to him he said, "Go on, and you can pray for us, and we will pray for you."

I commenced my Mission on Sunday, when I preached twice, and then conducted service every evening during the week. At every meeting we had a large gathering, and blessed results. But the crowning day was the following Sunday. The senior scholars in these two large schools were brought together in Patterson Street. After speaking to them on decision for Christ, I asked them to kneel down and, while we were in silent prayer, settle the question whether they would give themselves to Jesus. After a while I said, "Now, any who have determined really to do so, get up and very quietly go into the vestry; the rest keep on your knees." Soon one came to me saying, "Do not send any more into the vestry: it is too crowded already." Then they gathered in one part of the church or another, little groups with their teachers in the midst directing them to Jesus, and praying for them. It was a glorious sight – one I shall never forget.

We had a united thanksgiving meeting in the Albert Hall. Mr. Grubb presided, and many praised the Lord for what He had done for them. After the meeting I had to bid dear Mr. Grubb farewell, for he was going his way, and I mine. I thank God that I had had the pleasure of meeting and hearing him.

I must record how kind my dear friend Rev. G. T. Heyward was to me and my wife during our stay with him. He and I had many a blessed hour together at the Throne of Grace. We had an old-fashioned Band-meeting every day, kindly but faithfully telling each other of our faults, and praying that we might be anointed with fresh oil.

Our Conference this year in Melbourne was a time of real blessing. Before going into the pulpit to give the charge to the newly ordained minister, a telegram from Rev. G. Grubb, then at New Zealand, was put into my hands. It was: "Acts x. 44. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on them." He and his party were praying for us. The day following, great grace rested on us during the conversation on the work of God; and in the evening we had an overwhelming time. Many were out praying to be fully cleansed from sin, and a good number of our ministers received a fuller baptism of the Spirit. The following day a young minister came to me and said, "I did not get the blessing last night, and I cannot go to my Circuit without it." It was not long before the answer to his prayer was given.

I had engaged to conduct a ten days' Mission at Ipswich, Queensland. On my way I preached at Sydney, Maitland, Armadale, Warwick, and Toowoomba. At Ipswich I gave a Bible reading every afternoon, and preached every evening to large congregations. One evening the Salvation Army gave up their meeting and came in large numbers to ours. At every meeting we had anxious inquirers – some burdened ones seeking mercy, and others, believers, desiring to be filled with the Spirit.

After the Mission at Ipswich I went on to Brisbane, and preached in several churches, and saw the grace of God and was glad. The kindness of one gentleman here I cannot but refer to. He is the son of a dear friend of mine, my Circuit steward when I was in Surrey Hills, Sydney. He invited me to lunch, and after lunch sent me in his carriage to my appointment. Before I left he put in my hands a cheque for £50, saying, "We may not meet again; will you accept this for old acquaintance' sake?" I prized the gift for its money value, but much more for the love and kindness that prompted it. This gentleman's brother in Sydney has more than once sent me a substantial cheque since

I became a Supernumerary. I would like also here to record that a gentleman in South Australia well known for his liberality sent to me, through one of our ministers when I became a Supernumerary, to say that he had settled £25 a year on me. This has been regularly sent. He died two years ago, but his widow has kindly sent it since. And not to me only, but to other Supernumeraries.

Returning from Queensland to Sydney, I preached at Surrey Hills, and had the large communion rail crowded with anxious inquirers. The next evening I conducted service at Bermond, and we had a Pentecostal season. There was a general breaking down – the whole congregation seemed moved. On my way to Melbourne I called at Goulburn and preached in the evening, and then by express started for home, where I arrived next day at noon, thankful to find all well, and praising God for all His goodness to me. He had given me strength of body, and had kept me in perfect peace. I had during the month travelled two thousand four hundred miles by rail, had visited thirteen Circuits, and had sometimes three services – always two – in a day. But my strength never failed. I went to bed and slept as sound as a top, and rose in the morning almost as fresh as a lark. In every service He has blessed me, and hundreds have come out seeking pardon or purity. All glory be to God alone. I preached everywhere on being filled with the Spirit. The Churches need the Pentecostal baptism: then we shall have the Pentecost, holy living, simplicity, power, success, and, perhaps, persecution. May our day of Pentecost soon fully come on all Australasia!

After some days' rest I assisted at a Convention in the Baptist church at North Melbourne. There was a great move among God's people. The vestry was filled with seekers. Then I had a week's Mission in Geelong, where we had a blessed week of grace.

In the United Holiness Convention at Ballarat I presided, and ministers of various Churches took part. The morning prayer-meeting at seven o'clock was a glorious service. Between two and three hundred were present, and showers of blessing fell. At one of the evening meets among the saved were two Roman Catholics. The carpenter who erected the platform was an unconverted man when he put it up; when he took it down he was rejoicing in Christ his Saviour. A teacher sent up a request for prayer that all his class might be saved; and the prayer was answered, for the next Sunday all his scholars decided for Jesus.

The Convention over at Ballarat, I left for Portland. At that time our minister in Portland was one of our most scholarly men. Some of my friends feared that he would have little or no sympathy with my teaching and work. On the Sunday I preached twice and gave an address in the Sabbath school. In the evening, after endeavouring to explain what Entire Sanctification really meant, and showing the way to obtain it, I urged all to go to their knees and answer God's question, "O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?" We remained in silent prayer for two or three minutes. Then I said, "If any will say 'Here and now I will be, Lord,' just come quietly out and kneel at the communion rail." Someone came very slowly. When I looked to see who it was, how great was my joy to find it was the minister. Others soon followed, till the rail was crowded. The following day the minister said to me, "Ah, I see clearly now the mistake we have been making. We have urged sinners there and then to yield and accept Christ for pardon; but we have preached

Entire Sanctification, and there left it without pressing believers to surrender at once and be fully saved.” During the remaining days of my Mission at Portland the weather was wet and stormy; nevertheless the attendance was good, and sinners were converted and believers baptized with the Spirit.

Returning to Ballarat I preached to a large congregation in the evening, and had the joy of leading penitents to Jesus. Such a blessed influence rested upon us that it was difficult to close the service. At the prayer-meeting the following morning a young woman sought and found mercy who was the last of five working in the same room at a factory: the others were saved during the Convention.

In July I commenced a Mission in Pirie Street Church, Adelaide, giving Bible readings every afternoon, and preaching every evening during the week. Then I conducted a seven days’ Mission in Archer Street Church, North Adelaide, and another week’s Mission in Norwood and Kent Town. At the close we had a thanksgiving meeting in Pirie Street Church. There was a large gathering, and very many rose to testify of good received. To God be all the glory. I bless His holy name for His love and mercy to me. I had conducted thirty-six services, with after-meetings for seekers, and the Lord had given me strength according to my day. I rejoiced greatly to meet my dear Adelaide friends again.

During my visit I went with Sir John and Lady Colton to visit the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Brighton, and I was greatly interested in their method of teaching. One touching case I heard of. A fine little fellow was brought into the Institution, and made great progress, especially in reading from the lips. After some time he went home for a holiday, and running into the house he said, “Mother! Mother!” The poor mother fainted. She had never heard, and never expected to hear, a word from his lips.

We arranged to hold an Annual United Methodist Convention in Melbourne for the promotion of holiness. Our meetings for three days were held in Wesley Church. We had large congregations and great blessing. Ministers and laymen of the different Methodist Churches took part.

In August I spoke at the Christian Convention in Melbourne, at which Archdeacon Langley presided, and then left by express for Sydney, where I had been invited to preside at a United Convention in the Town Hall at Petersham. The Hall was crowded at every service, and I met many inquirers in the mayor’s room, which was placed at our disposal. It was very delightful at this Convention to hear so many ministers of different denominations earnestly speaking on holiness.

At the close of the Convention I went to Newtown, Sydney, to conduct a Mission for a week, and we had a glorious time. Many of the boys and girls decided for Jesus. Some think lightly of the conversion of children; but I cannot, for I am so often meeting earnest workers in the Church, some of them ministers, whom I have seen kneeling at a penitent-form when they were very young. At one of our meetings we had a large number of young men saved. Some cases were very touching. Two mothers were deeply distressed about their sons, and had no idea that they were in the church. But when a number of young men at the communion rail rose to praise God for His forgiving love, to the mothers’ astonishment and joy they saw their sons

among them, and ran to embrace them. One young fellow, the son of a praying mother, tried to leave the church, and had reached the porch when the Lord stopped him. He returned to the church, and sought and obtained mercy.

From Newtown I went to Surrey Hills, my old Sydney Circuit, where God had greatly blessed me. For some time the state of things here was very low. The present minister, the Rev. W. Austin, had been earnestly working, and had pleaded with God for the revival of His work. I gave Bible readings in the afternoons, and preached every evening during the week. We had no great stir. Not a few were converted, and many of God's people baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Before leaving for Melbourne I visited Parramatta and preached in my native town, and had the joy of pointing some seekers to Jesus. On the morrow I went to see the King's School, where I was educated, and the Rev. Dr. Harris, the Head Master, gave me a hearty welcome.

Feeling the need of a little rest, I remained quietly at home for some days, praising the Lord for strength and grace in the past, and pleading with Him to prepare me for further and greater work for Him. He had wonderfully helped and blessed me, so far. While engaged in His work I was, by His help, quite equal to it; when I closed my Mission I felt wearied till the time for labour came again, and then the needed strength was given. Praise His name! I feel more and more the need of much Bible reading, and of being often alone with God. We generally get the power for service, and the anointing with fresh oil, in private.

In September I presided at a Methodist Convention in Daylesford. The brethren, Rev. S. Knight and W. Williams, accompanied me. They both spoke with great power. Brother Knight had met with a great trial in the loss of his highly gifted daughter, but it had been fully sanctified. What a wonderful change has taken place in Brother Williams since he received the Pentecostal baptism! He was always regarded as a great preacher, but he was cold and had little unction. Now he is a flame of fire, and all he says tells powerfully upon his hearers. Some of the local preachers at Daylesford were blessed at the Convention as never before.

Our Annual United Christian Convention at Geelong was held in September. The attendance this year was larger, and a blessed sanctifying influence was in us from beginning to end. The Communion service on Friday morning was indeed a season of refreshing. There were some seven hundred communicants. No one can tell the amount of good this Geelong Convention is doing. People come from far and near, and they carry away the holy fire, and are made a blessing in their own Churches. Christians holding different views are here brought together, and made to feel that they are all one in Christ.

After the Convention I remained to conduct services at our Yarra Street Church on Sunday and Monday. What days those were! How great the power of the Holy Ghost on the people! On Sunday evening forty or more were in the inquiry-room, many of them fine young men.

One young fellow left the church while I was preaching, because, as he said, I pointed at him and spoke about what he had done. He said he would not be insulted; so he left

and went home to bed. When another young man, who slept in the same room with him, went home and told him of what had been done, he jumped from his bed, and fell on his knees and cried for mercy, and the Lord saved him.

Dr. Clarke, of America, the founder of the Christian Endeavour Movement, visited Melbourne and held meetings here, some of which I attended. There is much enthusiasm about the movement. The young people seem to be going into it with all their heart. I hope it will last. The one thing I fear about it is, lest the pledge of consecration be taken for conversion. We must guard this well.

I attended and took part in the meetings of the Centenary of the Baptist Missionary Society at Melbourne and Geelong. Thank God for the missionary spirit that has come upon the Churches during the last hundred years. We may mourn that more is not being done now for the perishing heathen, but we must not forget what has been done. The Baptist Church had the first Missionary Society; but it must not be forgotten that though the Wesleyan Church had no separate society, it had Missions in the West Indies long before any society was founded. We need today the Pentecostal baptism of the Spirit on all our Churches. Then we should have all the missionaries we require – missionaries full of the Holy Ghost, and fully equipped for their work. Then we should have all the money we need for the work. We have too little of God and faith in Him, in our money arrangements; as if He had sent us to do the work, and left us to find the necessary supplies. We must look to Him, and trust Him more fully.

During the remainder of the year I presided at a United Holiness Convention at South Melbourne, conducted special services at Maryborough, and preached occasionally in the churches of Melbourne.

1893. My working days are drawing near to the end, and I feel that in what I have to do there must be concentration. I wish to be, and God helping me I will try to be, a man of one work. I desire always to be able to say, "This one thing I do" – "that I may by all means save some." Where I stand, everything else seems poor and trifling compared to this. I thoroughly believe that to have a great revival, when many shall be brought to God, we must have a revived Church; and in order to this we must have a revived ministry – a ministry full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. I therefore, God helping, seek to help my brother ministers and to lead them into the fulness of blessing. A good many persons, and ministers of different Churches among them, call on me for conversation on being filled with the Spirit. In all my Missions I preach to believers in the morning on Entire Sanctification, and address the unsaved in the evening. In the after-meetings I deal with both classes. My work is generally on the same lines: very monotonous it may be to some, but I know I am doing the will of God, and I can do no other. It is not necessary, therefore, for me to give details of my work: I only record what I believe may help others and glorify God.

On New Year's Day I again took part in a Holiness Convention in St. Matthew's schoolroom, Prahran. It was a bright and joyful day. I thank God that so many ministers of the Church of England in Victoria are in earnest about this holiness of heart and life; they are doing a great work, and God is blessing them. I rejoice that so many of us, forgetting the smaller matters wherein we differ, can meet together so frequently for the promotion of higher spiritual life in the Church. A full baptism of

the Spirit, such as they received at Pentecost, would make us all of one heart and soul. May the good Lord speedily give us that Pentecostal baptism!

Had a long conversation with a captain of the Salvation Army on their methods and results. What a strange and wonderful movement this Salvation Army is! I have never been able to see with them in many things, for I believe if we all had the fully Pentecostal baptism of the Spirit we should not need big drums. And yet they are in downright earnest; they hold saving truth, fully believe in entire sanctification and witnessing for Jesus, and are ever seeking to save souls. I am afraid that General Booth's social schemes may interfere with their soul-saving work.

I passed through Launceston, Tasmania, preaching and holding holiness meetings for a few days on my way to Hobart, where I held a ten days' Mission. I gave them a great baptism of the Spirit, and all through the services they worked well and earnestly. Day after day I gave Bible readings on holiness in the afternoon to a good company of Christian people, and preached in the evening to large congregations. It was thought that there would be some difficulty in getting either sinners or believers to come out to the communion rail or the inquiry-room, but with the power of the Holy Spirit on them there was no difficulty at all. They came in numbers seeking pardon or purity, and found what they sought. My dear friend the Rev. G. T. Heyward was with me, and greatly assisted in carrying on the Mission. At the end of the time fixed they pressed me to continue with them a few days longer, and we had showers of blessing.

I advised the workers, as I generally do, to have each one a prayer-list with the names of two or three persons on it, for whose conversion they should especially pray. Some few I found had, without any consultation with each other, entered on their lists the names of four young men who were generally standing and smoking at the corner of the street near the church. Two of these young fellows were sons of godly parents. One night the whole four came to the church door and looked over the screen at what was going on. The next night they came in and sat on the first form, no one saying a word to them. The third night they came again, when some of the workers got down near them. While I was speaking, the leader of the party got up and hurried up the aisle to the communion rail, where he knelt, praying for mercy. After the meeting we found the other three standing at the gate. I said to them, "So we have got your leader, and we must have you." "No fear," they said, and we left them. The next night they were there again, and another was saved. After I left Hobart, the minister, Mr. Tuckfield, wrote me, "You will be glad to hear that we have another of the young men, and we expect soon to have the fourth." Glory be to God!

I commenced a Mission at Newtown on the following Sunday, with Bible readings on the afternoon and public service in the evenings. At every evening service we had a good number in the inquiry-room, but the work was not like that at Hobart.

At our Conference this year we resolved to have the conversation on the work of God in the afternoon, and a holiness meeting in the evening. Some thought that meetings of this kind interfered with the business for which we came together; but surely of all our business this is the greatest. This will not only not hinder but greatly help all other business. What a blessed opportunity it is, when so many ministers and laymen are gathered together, for seeking and obtaining a fuller baptism of the Holy Spirit! If

more were done in this way, I firmly believe we should not only have greater success in our spiritual work, but should have less financial difficulties to grapple with when we meet in Conference. The Pentecostal baptism of the Spirit will meet our case, and nothing else will.

In May I preached in Dr. Bevan's church the annual sermon of the London Missionary Society. This Society has done good work for the Master in many parts of the world. When a young man I had the privilege of hearing that great missionary, John Williams,<sup>1</sup> whose labours in the South Seas were crowned with glorious success.

A United Missionary Conference was held for four days in Melbourne. Ministers of the different Churches gave addresses. I had the pleasure of taking part. The speech of the Dean of Melbourne was very good. He was then an old man, being more than ninety years of age. In his address he said, "It is not so long ago that I became greatly interested in Missions – only about sixty or seventy years!" The Dean did a good work in Victoria, and was beloved by all.

I was requested by the United Ministerial Association at Bendigo to conduct a Convention there. It was largely attended. The word spoke by many ministers of various Churches was with great power, and from beginning to end the blessing of our God was upon us. When the Convention closed I commenced special services in our Wesleyan Church, Forrest Street, which were continued for eight days, and the Lord greatly blessed us.

The day I commenced the work in Bendigo a gentleman drove me in his buggy to my appointment. As we rode along I spoke to him about his soul. He told me he was not a Christian, and had never been converted. I told him I would put him down on my prayer-list, and ask others to pray for him. He came to the services, and seemed sometimes to feel deeply. One evening, when I had preached on Resisting the Spirit, he was greatly moved, but did not fully yield. The next morning his wife, who is a good woman, came to the parsonage and said to me, "I wish you would go down and see my husband; he is very miserable; he has been awake the greater part of the night, in great distress." I said, "All right; I will write and ask him to come and see me here: that will be better than my going to the shop." I wrote, and he came. We knelt together in the study and prayed till the peace of God came into his broken heart. Saved himself, he began to pray for his brother. The minister of the church wrote me that one morning, about two o'clock, the gentleman referred to heard a loud knocking at his window, and, inquiring who was there, the reply came from his brother, "It is I; I have been seeking the mercy of God, and He has heard my prayer and pardoned all my sins; and I could not wait till morning: I must come at once to tell you. Glory be to God."

This was a sad year for Victoria. For two or three years we had what was called the "Land Boom." On every hand syndicates were formed for buying and selling land. Blocks that used to be sold at per acre were cut up into small allotments and sold at per foot, and for a great price. A block of land that could have been purchased before the boom for from five to seven thousand pounds, was then sold for ten thousand, and in not more than a month afterwards for twenty thousand. Syndicates made a net

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<sup>1</sup> The martyr of Erromanga. – Ed.

profit from one sale of forty or fifty thousand pounds, and then purchased what amounted to hundreds of thousands. The people were wild, mad. Anyone standing quietly by and free from the mania could not fail to see that it must end in disaster. And so it did. The bubble burst, and we are now reaping the bitter fruit of our folly. Banks and building societies closed, and went into liquidation or reconstruction. Syndicates became insolvent, and men reputed to be wealthy became bankrupt. Fraud and wrong-doing in connection with the speculations of the last few years came to light. Some evil-doers were punished, but many escaped. The innocent suffered with the guilty. Aged persons and widows who had laid by a little for a rainy day lost all. Many ministers of religion were drawn into the speculations, and painfully suffered for it. Funds of the Churches were seriously affected, and salaries of ministers considerably reduced. Under the most favourable circumstances it will be years before the Colony can recover. And all has come because of so wildly making haste to be rich, and forgetting the Lord our God.

From August 11<sup>th</sup> to Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> I was working in Sydney. I held a Mission in the large Centenary Hall. Every afternoon at three I gave a Bible reading on holiness to about three hundred or more persons, and after every service had members of different Churches anxiously inquiring about the truth. In the evening I preached to the unsaved, and many came forward penitently seeking God, and desiring that prayer should be made for them. I do not care to give numbers; but they told me that about two hundred were in the inquiry-room seeking purity, and one hundred and thirty adults and fifty or sixty young people seeking salvation. All glory to the ever-blessed Lord. The Sunday following I began a week's Mission at Newtown, and the week after I was at Balmain. At both places the Lord made bare His holy arm and saved sinners, and sanctified believers wholly. At Balmain I preached on the Sunday evening in the Town Hall, which was packed, and there was a great break down; fifty or more came out, some in great distress. While I was preaching, a strong sailor rose and said, "I came here tonight to get what you are speaking about, and I will not leave till I get it." He went to his knees and remained praying till the end of the sermon, when some spoke to him and prayed for him, and soon he rejoiced in God his Saviour.

Our Convention at Geelong this year was again glorious. We could not find room for the people. Between three and four hundred attended the morning prayer-meeting at seven o'clock. The requests for prayer were so many that it was difficult to read them all. At the Communion service at seven o'clock in the morning we had quite eight hundred people. At some of our meetings a save of glory seemed to roll over the audience, and from all parts of the building came shouts of "Hallelujah!" "Glory be to God!" In connection with the Bible readings there was great power. Every speaker was directed and assisted by the Holy Spirit in a wonderful way. Names and sects and parties were forgotten: we were all brethren in the Lord.

My last Mission this year was at St. Arnaud. Thank God, I did not labour in vain; but I did not see the results I expected. I think we ought always to look for results; but if we do not see all we desire, we may be humbled before God and cry for more power, but we must never be discouraged.

This year dear old Mrs. Turner, widow of the late well-known Rev. Nathaniel Turner, died, aged 95. She had been with her husband in all his work in New Zealand, Tonga, and Australia.

This year also died the Rev. John Harcourt, Mrs. Turner's son-in-law. He was one of the pioneer workers in South Australia and Victoria. When he became a Supernumerary he went to reside at Kew, and there he worked hard and raised a prosperous church. He preached on the Sunday morning, was at the prayer-meeting on Monday evening, was seized with violent pain on Wednesday, and after a few hours of severe suffering, relief came, and he entered into rest.

At the beginning of the year 1894 I had a Mission at Devonport, Tasmania, and at every service had a large attendance. The power of the Lord was present to save. We had many earnestly seeking His forgiving love and sanctifying grace.

Devonport is divided into two parts by the river Mersey. It is a very beautiful place. There were then not more than about 1100 inhabitants in the town itself, and yet it had two Anglican churches, two Roman Catholic, two Wesleyan, one Baptist, and one Independent. The Plymouth Brethren, the Disciples, and the Salvation Army, had also places of worship there, and the Presbyterians were sending a minister. Oh these divisions! What a hindrance to the true prosperity of Christ's cause! After a few days' rest I commenced a ten days' Mission at Launceston, and the Lord greatly blessed us.

February 8<sup>th</sup> was our golden-wedding day, it being just fifty years since my wife and I were joined together in holy wedlock. We praised the Lord together for all His love and mercy to us. My wife has done me good, and not evil, all our wedded life. Thou frequently a great sufferer, she has so helped and cared for me, and so relieved me, that I have been able to do work for my blessed Master which otherwise I could not have done. We thanked God that so many of our children were saved, and for the blessed hope that He will save them all. We had our children and grandchildren with us all day, and they presented us with an address and a plate with fifty sovereigns on it. The Lord bless them all.

In the evening the Rev. W. H. Fitchett and Mr. Henry Berry kindly invited many friends to meet us at tea in the Kew Church schoolroom. After tea a meeting was held in the church, the President of the Conference presiding. We spent a pleasant evening together, telling of the goodness and faithfulness of our God.

At our Conference this year the Rev. St. T. Withington was elected President. The most important question before us was Methodist Union. We were greatly divided in our views; but after long discussion it was resolved to send on the scheme before us to the General Conference.

Our General Conference was held in Adelaide: the Rev. W. Morley was elected President. We had many important questions before us, but greater interest was felt in that of Methodist Union than in any other. The Rev. W. H. Fitchett proposed a resolution affirming the desirability of Union, and giving permission to each Conference to consummate a Union on a basis submitted to the General Conference and approved. The Rev. James Haslam proposed an amendment against Union at present. After a long discussion the amendment was lost, and the resolution carried, the voting being: for the amendment 34, against 96; for the resolution 101, against 14.

During the debate there was a little feeling, but on the whole the temper of the Conference was good.

During the year I conducted Missions at Armadale, Balaclava, Bairnsdale, Carlton, Kyabram, Kyneton, Waverley, Charlton, and Wesley Church, Melbourne. At some places the results were not great, but at others they were glorious indeed. At Carlton nearly all the young men in the senior class of the Sunday School decided for Jesus. They were from about 18 to 23 years of age, and will, if faithful, be made a power in that church.

Several ministers of our Church died this year. The Rev. J. T. Shaw, who was for a time a missionary in Tonga, was then stationed in New Zealand, and had for the last few years reside in Victoria, but had not been able to do Circuit work. The Rev. J. C. Symons, one of the pioneers in South Australia and Victoria. He laboured hard and successfully at the time of the gold discovery. He had much to do with the legislation in our Conference, and did good work for the Church in many ways. We shall miss him much. The Rev. Spencer Williams, who was the son of a Welsh Methodist minister. He was a brother greatly beloved by us all.

At Kew we have a Ministerial Association, composed of Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Independent, and Methodist ministers, who meet once a month for the study of God's word. We have proved how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, and in our fellowship the Lord has greatly blessed us.

The Rev. John M'Neill from London visited the Colonies this year, and conducted many meetings in Melbourne, which were attended by great crowds. His way of presenting the truth was very striking and soul-stirring. Although he did little in the way of bringing people to instant decision, and seldom invited any into the inquiry-room, which he thought was overdone, I am persuaded that many must have received light and blessing.

We were all glad to welcome the Rev. Thomas Cook among us, and greatly rejoiced in the success of his Mission. He preached with great power to large congregations, and under his ministry believers were led into the fulness of blessing, and sinners converted to God. Some thought Mr. Cook did not lay stress enough on Repentance, others thought that more care should have been taken in the admission of persons into the inquiry-room for the purpose of directing penitents, while others complain that so many of those reported to be converted speedily fell away. But, whatever there may be in all this, I think all must have felt that in Mr. Cook we had a man of God, endued with power from on high. I believe that if we want to find the true cause of the backsliding of so many, we must look nearer home. We shall find it, to a great extent at last, in the unpreparedness of the Church to nurse and care for the new converts. In my opinion, the socials and entertainments so common in the Church in these days are eating the life out of our spirituality, are keeping back the showers of blessing, and are taking from us many lately converted who might have been consistent and useful members of the Church. We want a revival of holiness in the Church; then sinners shall be converted, we shall less frequently have to mourn over backsliding, and we shall have an army of workers raised up.

During the year I had frequently to rest, and was sometimes very poorly. But the Lord was with me, and taught me lessons I needed to learn, and prepared me for future work.

In the very hot weather at the beginning of 1895 I was not able to do much. Preaching in the Melbourne churches, and doing what I could to assist my brethren, I often felt "weary in the work, but never weary of it." As the weather got cooler I was able again to undertake my usual work. In different parts of the year I presided at Conventions or had Missions at Albert Park, Brunswick Street, Preston, Kerang, Mildura, Brunswick, and Footscray, on the same lines and with about the same results. One evening, at Footscray, I preached from Isaiah xlv. 3 in connection with Acts ii. 4. A wonderful power was on us. Some fifty or sixty of God's people were in downright earnest seeking to be filled with the Spirit. It was a glorious time of emptying and filling.

At Mildura we had a blessed work. One afternoon while the minister of the Circuit, Rev. A. E. Albeiton, and I were praying in his study for the outpouring of the Spirit at our evening's meeting, the Lord heard and answered our prayer, blessing us both and giving us the assurance that He would show forth His power in the evening. Blessed be His name, He did. We had a large congregation and some interesting cases of conversion. A lame man on crutches had come night after night, but he thought there was no mercy for him. On that Thursday evening he was deeply convicted of sin, put aside his crutches, fell on the floor, and cried to God for mercy. After some time, in great distress, he said to me, "Jesus Christ told His disciples to forgive seventy times seven. Do you think He would tell a man to do what He would not do Himself? No, no; I believe He is willing to forgive. He does forgive. Glory to His holy name!" And he rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

The same evening a retired State school teacher, his wife and her mother, were among the penitents. He was a backslider and had a hard struggle, for he feared he had sinned away the day of grace. I directed his attention to the comforting words of Jesus: "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." He laid hold of this, and the blessing came to him, and soon after to his wife and mother-in-law.

In the Mildura school on the Sunday afternoon we had a good work among the young people. When I began to speak, one of the girls in the senior class hurried out, saying to someone when outside, "They are not going to have me converted." She was the first to rise at the evening meeting to signify her decision for Christ. The day following I was visiting a few people, and, while inquiring where one lived, a sweet little girl about ten years old came up and said to me, "Mr. Watsford, are you looking for my mother's house?" I replied, "I do not know who your mother is. I am trying to find where Mrs. Semmens lives." "Oh, I know," she said; "I'll show you." On our way she said, "Oh, I am so glad you came to Mildura. I gave my heart to Jesus on Sunday, and (pointing to a little one who was with her) my sister here did too; and I have been telling this bigger girl who is with us all about it, and she says she'll come next Sunday and give her heart to Jesus." On the following Sunday my little friend was there, and with her was her older companion, who did as she had promised.

Our United Holiness Convention at Wesley Church, Melbourne, this year was a time of special blessing. The weather was stormy, but the people came out well. One

result of the Convention was the establishment of a weekly prayer-meeting in which all the Methodist Churches take part. This meeting has been made a great blessing to many.

Our Annual United Christian Convention was equal to those held before. It has become a great institution, and is doing immense good.

I am sometimes grieved to find how little is known, even by many Methodist people, of Entire Sanctification. One hundred and fifty years ago Mr. Wesley said we were raised up spread Scriptural Holiness through the land. We have it in our catechisms, our hymns, our biographies, our creed; every Methodist minister every year declares that he believes and preaches this doctrine; and yet to many of our people it is a strange thing. After preaching on the subject in one of our largest churches in another Colony, coming from the church I found a few persons together discussing some question. As I passed them a lady slipped aside and said, "Mr. Watsford, you have been bringing strange things to our ears."

Our Conference was held this year at Hobart, Tasmania. The Rev. W. H. Fitchett was elected President. I could not attend. The President was very strongly in favour of Union, and he arranged for public meetings for bringing the matter before our people. The meeting in Melbourne was presided over by the Lieutenant-Governor of South Australia, Chief Justice Way, and was very enthusiastic. He and the Adelaide friends pressed me to go to Adelaide to speak at some meetings there. Being much concerned about Union, I went and with the President attended meetings in Adelaide, Rooronga, and Moonta. We found our own people generally in favour of Union. But some were much and conscientiously opposed to it. At the close of our Union work I had a Mission for a week at Norwood, and then returned to Melbourne.

I have had the frequent pleasure of assisting my brethren of other Churches in their great work. I was greatly delighted with the work being done by a medical gentleman in a mission hall, where he preaches every Sabbath day. His anniversary meeting was what all anniversary meetings should be: a time of great power and abundant blessing.

On Christmas Day we had our usual family gathering at my son's house in Balwyn. There were thirty of us present. If the other members of our family who could not attend had been present, we should have numbered forty. We spent a pleasant day together, all, I trust, thankful to God for His great goodness to us.

I had the great pleasure of giving an address to the University students at Queen's College. They were a fine lot of young fellows, principally medical students. They had formed a society for mutual help. Most of them had consecrated themselves to Foreign Mission work, and hoped at the end of the University course, or soon after, to go into the mission field. The Lord bless them!

In December another of our devoted ministers, the Rev. W. P. Wells, ceased to labour and entered into rest. He was a most conscientious and faithful Methodist preacher, a man of sound judgment, and a wise and careful superintendent. He was greatly sustained and blessed in his affliction. It was a means of grace to visit him.

In January 1896 I conducted a Mission at Launceston, Tasmania. The time arranged for it was not the best, but the Lord was with us. My dear friend Rev. G. T. Heyward, with whom I stayed, was exceeding kind to me and my wife. He and I had some blessed times at the Throne of Grace. One evening Mr. Heyward invited all the old folks in the neighbourhood to tea to meet us, and we had a delightful meeting. There were eight present whose united ages amounted five hundred and seventy-three years. Two out of the eight had held their golden wedding. It was very pleasant to talk to the old people. They went home full of gladness.

After closing our work at Patterson Street, Launceston, Mr. Heyward accompanied me to Lillydale, about thirteen miles from Launceston, where I had another Mission with blessed results.

At our Conference in February the great question again was Methodist Union. There was a strong opposition. The debate on the subject was very good. Many spoke well, but the Lord gave Rev. C. Lancaster a message that told powerfully upon everyone. There was great enthusiasm during its delivery. In the end it was unanimously agreed that the question should be submitted to our Church courts and people, and that if the vote were generally in favour of Union, it should be consummated in 1902. We sang "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

This year I conducted special services at Gipps Street, Collingwood, Albert Park, South Melbourne, and Horsham. I visited many Sabbath Schools and saw a good work among the young. I greatly rejoice when the children are saved. I know many of them fall away, but this I think is because there is not sufficient care in nursing them. I urge them in every church to form the young converts into catechism classes, with the most suitable leaders that can be found. If this were done, as it often has been, we should not lose many of them.

I preside at United Christian Conventions at Richmond, Geelong, and Ballarat. Ministers of different Churches gave earnest addresses, and the blessing from the Lord came abundantly upon us all. At our Convention at Ballarat a minister who was not greatly in favour of such services came to our meetings. At a tea-meeting to which all ministers were invited he said, "I was rather prejudiced against these Conventions; but I went to the meetings and heard the testimonies of these brethren, and I am bound to believe them. I am now prepared to join my brethren in this city in a weekly meeting for prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

In June a friend of mine, a good work in the Church, Mr. Howell, was taken very ill. One evening I called at his house. The doctor said there was no hope; the end was very near. When I retired to rest at night I felt in good health. About 4.30 in the morning I awoke feeling very unwell. When I rose a cold perspiration broke out all over me, and I thought the hand of death was on me. I knew that my blessed Saviour was with me, and the thought that passed through my mind was, "How surprised Mr. Howell will be when he gets to heaven to find me there before him." Soon after, in a moment, I fell on the floor perfectly unconscious. When I regained consciousness I found that my wife and daughter and son had lifted me on to the bed. The doctor came and said it was a narrow escape. I had to keep to my bed for a week or more, and then remain very quiet. But in a month I was all right again, and able to go on with my blessed work.

In October our beloved brother, Rev. John M'Neil, who had been holding a Mission in Brisbane, died very suddenly. He was a grand man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and was greatly used by the Lord in saving souls. He was a member of our band, and was very dear to us all.

During the year the Rev. G. Daniel died. He had been to a missionary meeting at Preston, and was returning home when the call unexpectedly and suddenly came. He was found dead in the railway carriage. Fifty years ago I met him, a young earnest missionary in the Friendly Islands, where he did good work.

My friends and fellow-workers are fast passing away, and I am reminded that at any moment the end may come; I would be found watching and waiting, looking out for the coming of my Lord, and at the same time earnestly engaged in His glorious work.

In the year 1897 I was often laid aside by sickness. Still the blessed Lord gave me work to do, and strength to do it. I conducted Missions at Seymour, Brunswick Street, and North Carlton, and assisted at special services in Wesleyan and other Churches. Our Mission at Seymour was a very blessed one. We had some interesting cases of conversion, and some of the Church members were filled with the Spirit. Some parlour meetings we held were means of grace. At one of these meetings a woman was converted. She went home and induced her husband to come to the meeting at night, and he was converted. The next day she brought a friend of hers to the parlour meeting, and she too was saved. The whole Church was quickened and brought into a good way to work for the Lord Jesus. A week or so after I returned home I received a cheering letter from Mrs. Williams, the minister's wife, telling of a blessed work there on Sunday. She wrote; "A woman who was at the service the previous Sunday, and who, when she went home, said, 'They nearly had me,' was this Sunday converted; and a man who, when you pressed him to yield and be saved, said, 'No, not now,' was greatly moved, and fell on the floor crying for mercy."

In our Mission at Brunswick Street I spoke in the Sabbath School in the afternoon, and there was a great move among the young people. About forty, many of them bright, intelligent lads and maidens, went into the inquiry-room for prayer. At one of our meetings especially the power of the Holy Spirit was on us in a remarkable measure. The seekers came out till the large communion rail, the first form, and the side seats were crowded. It was a glorious victory.

Our Mission at North Carlton was also a most successful one: not so very much in the conversion of sinners as in the uplifting of believers, and their being endued with power for future service. Our Bible readings were made a great blessing. At two such meetings, after studying God's word we went to prayer, and floods of blessing came. It was sometimes just as much as we could bear. We forgot all time, and just gave ourselves up to praising God and rejoicing in Him. Two months after the Mission I received seven letters from working members of the Church, in which they said that during the Mission they had entered into the fulness of blessing in Christ, and that the anointing they then received was abiding with them. Glory be to God for this. I feel more and more that I must spend my last few days in urging Christians to be filled with the Spirit; and I praise God that in doing this I see sinners brought to Christ.

I conducted Conventions, or took part in them, at Box Hill, Williamstown, Mount Erica, Richmond, and Geelong, and at all we saw the grace of God and rejoiced.

At our Conference the question of Methodist Union was again before us. The vote of the Church courts and people had been taken, and there was an overwhelming majority in favour of Union. After this and the compact made at the previous Conference, it was thought there would not be much opposition. But in this we were mistaken. It was contended by some that a vote of about three to one did not show that or people were generally in favour of Union; and by others that the papers placed before the members of our Church were not such as would lead them to vote intelligently. A long discussion followed, and when the vote was taken there were thirteen short of the number required – two-thirds of those present – and so the resolution in favour of Union was not carried. When the numbers were announced, a dead silence fell upon the Conference. All felt that what had been done could not rest there, and many trembled for the consequences. Many of the representatives left the Conference, and those who remained seemed unable to do any business.

When the result was known outside, many angry things were said, and some unwise courses were proposed. Many of us earnestly pleaded with our people to wait patiently, showing them that an unwise step would injure the cause they wished to help, and weakened the hands of those who were seeking to carry it on. After a while things became quieter, and all were willing to wait till the September Quarterly Meetings, when resolutions were passed protesting against the action of Conference, and pleading for the consummation of Union in 1902. At most of the District Synods resolutions were also passed in favour of Union in 1902. All looked forward with confidence to the next Conference.

I read *The Life of Peter Mackenzie*, a wonderful man in his way. As I read, I thought what a pity it was to take a man from the work of saving souls, for which God had so eminently qualified him, and set him apart<sup>2</sup> for raising money for trust debts. In the former part of the book we have accounts of sinners converted, and in the latter part of collections made. The biographer's idea about men getting too old to do soul-saving work cannot be correct. The Holy Spirit can save by the old as well as by the young.

While resting I spent some time at one of our water-places, where I did some little work. At these places ministers complain that professing Christians coming there do things which they would never think of doing at home, and so injure Christ's cause. Many think they can neglect the house of God and wander about seeking pleasure on the Lord's day.

We formed this year a Holiness Association, with some good men of the different Methodist Churches on the Committee, believing that we can do more in this way to spread Scriptural Holiness through the land. The Lord is already blessing us in our work, and He will bless us yet more abundantly if we are earnest. Some have objected to such associations as if it were establishing a kind of caste in the Church.

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<sup>2</sup> Mr. Mackenzie was not set apart by the Conference. He had already become a popular occasional preacher and lecturer when he asked permission to become a supernumerary on his own resources. Otherwise, Mr. Watsford is quite right. – Ed.

But is thoroughly Wesleyan, we think. Mr. Wesley not only had Classes and Bands, but he had the Select Bands which he often met, and to which he looked for help in his great mission. Everyone must admit that the doctrine of Entire Sanctification is not now preached as Wesley directed: constantly, explicitly, earnestly, to be obtained by faith, and therefore to be obtained now. A revival of earnest teaching of this great doctrine would be the uplifting of our Church, and would bring a marked prosperity in every department of our work.

Again in the year 1898 I was often afflicted. The ever-gnawing rheumatism had hold of me. I have walked a good many miles in my day, and it took a good deal to tire me, for the Lord gave me strength. In Fiji I have walked thirty miles in a day without much weariness. But my walking days seemed to be over. I manage easily to get about when I am carried, but walking a short distance tires me now. But I thank God that at those times when I cannot travel far I can do work near at hand. I delight to help my brethren, and I have the great pleasure of taking part frequently in services held by other denominations.

During the year I was reminded that the end is nearing. The four oldest ministers in our Church at the commencement of the year were Rev. R. C. Flockart, W. A. Quick, Dr. Waugh, and myself. Mr. Flockart died in January. He was a bright, cheerful brother. He seemed never to look at the dark side of things for long. Naturally he was of a merry heart, but grace made him what he was. He suffered much at last, but in his pain he was always praising God. His nurse said, "After a night of agony he was still praising God."

Dr. Waugh died in November. For some years he did good work in our best Circuits. He then became President of Wesley College, where he served our Church faithfully and well for many years. A good number of our ministers were under his care at Wesley College, and they thanked God that they were so highly favoured. He was greatly respected by our own ministers and laymen and by the members of other Churches.

My dear old friend the Rev. W. A. Quick and I are the only two of the four left, "and we are to the margin come, and we expect to die;" but the Lord may keep us here a few days longer to work for Him. We can leave all that to Him, and say, "Thy will be done, whether it be for health or sickness, toil or rest, life or death."

I conducted Missions and evangelistic services at Port Melbourne, Surrey Hills, North Richmond, Cremorne Street, and other places. At North Richmond and Cremorne Street we had a blessed work. Our minister there, the Rev. James Gault, was downright earnest, and God used him very much.

I presided at or took part in Conventions at Wesley Church, Melbourne, Albert Park, Brighton, and Richmond. At the Convention at Wesley Church we received great blessing at our Interval Meetings, where many were witnesses for Jesus. At our closing meeting the large church was filled with young men and young women, and when I asked those who had decided for God to stand up, it was delightful to see what hundreds of them rose.

The members of our United Band had a quiet time together for four days in Geelong. We read God's word, and called upon Him for more abundant blessing for ourselves and for the whole Church. By thus waiting on God we renewed our strength.

Victoria and all Australia suffered a great loss this year by the removal of the Rev. H. B. Macartney, who went from us to join the staff at the Bible Society's house in London. Mr. Mcartney was a power in the land. We shall all miss him; Victoria can ill afford to lose such men.

At our Conference the great question of Methodist Union was again before us. The Federal Council, which all along has done its work admirably, presented its report; resolutions from District Synods and Quarterly Meetings were read; and a discussion, not very long, followed. A resolution approving of Union in 1902 was moved, and an amendment for further delay till 1905. The amendment was lost, 57 voting for, 178 against. Those who were opposed then went in a body beyond the bar of the Conference, and the resolution was put and carried without a dissentient voice. The brethren who had retired then returned, and we were all delighted with the spirit manifested by them. The minister who had taken the leading part of the opposition said, "Now we no longer know Unionist or Non-Unionist: we must all be one." Thank God that the question is so far settled.

A few days after the resolution in favour of Union was carried we had a meeting of all the Methodist Conferences. Chief Justice Way, of South Australia, who has taken so deep an interest in the question and has done much to promote Union, was present, and gave an excellent address. At this meeting it was resolved to consummate the Union in January 1902, and hold the first Conference in March of the same year. The meeting was marked by a loving and brotherly spirit.

As I have done for some years past, I spent Good Friday with our Baptist friends at an all-day meeting in their church in Fitzroy. It was a solemn and a glorious time.

I conducted a memorial service in Brunswick Street Church for Mr. Joseph Lowe, who, with his four brothers, came to Australia more than fifty years ago. They were all members and earnest workers in our Church. One of the brothers and two of the sons entered our ministry, and many others of the children are among our most valued members and workers. The father and mother followed the sons some years after. As a family they were a precious gift to us from England. Joseph was the last of the five. When he was dying he said, "Dear mother will soon now have us all around her in heaven."

My dear wife was very afflicted this year and suffered greatly. I had arranged to attend a Convention in Sydney in October, and, in connection with the Rev. D. O'Donnell, hold a Mission there immediately after the Convention. But my wife's illness seemed as if it would prevent me from carrying out my engagement. All through August and September she was very low. Once or twice our children were summoned, and stood around her bed thinking the end had come. But toward the end of September the Lord heard our prayer, and her health so greatly improved that the doctor said I might safely go to Sydney.

The Convention Sydney, presided over by Rev. D. O'Donnell, was a very remarkable one. Ministers of the Anglican, Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, and Methodist Churches, and a staff officer of the Salvation Army, took part. The attendance was good, and many received light and blessing. One evening we invited the ministers of the city to tea, and after tea held a meeting, at which much was said of our need of the baptism of the Spirit. Before we closed, another meeting was arranged for. At that it was agreed to hold a United Prayer Meeting every Friday morning. I had the very great pleasure of conducting the first on the following Friday. The Lord was in our midst and blessed us.

The Convention over, Brother O'Donnell and I commenced a ten days' Mission in our large Centenary Hall. At the service on Sunday evenings the Hall was packed, but the attendance at other services was not as large as we desired and expected. Still we had a good gathering, and the power of the Spirit was wonderfully with the word. The great number of those present each night were men, and many of them young men. There were many anxious inquirers, some of them most interesting cases.

One evening I preached on Instant Salvation, first addressing the unsaved and urging them to yield at once. I then spoke to believers, and pleaded with them for full surrender and receiving Christ as their Sanctification now. I then called upon all who were willing to do so to stand up. While a mighty power rested on us about seventy rose. I said to Brother O'Donnell, "You carry on here and help those who are seeking mercy; I will go into the large committee room and meet those who desire to be filled with the Spirit." As I went I invited those who had stood up to follow me, and they came in such numbers that many had to stand all the time, for there was no room for kneeling. And oh, what a time we had! I could only say, "The day of Pentecost has fully come." All were earnestly seeking the fulness of the Spirit, and they did not seek in vain. All the members of the Central Mission received the baptism. One brother who had been fond of a little jewellery was praying for some time, and, the answer not coming, he took off some trinkets he had and placed them on the table, and soon after was rejoicing in God. After some time we rose and together returned into the Hall, joining the party there, and loud and long our praises went up to God for this Pentecostal baptism. Writing of it some time after, our dear brother Rev. W. G. Taylor, the successful minister of the Central Mission, said, "That Tuesday night will never be forgotten." My beloved brother O'Donnell had to leave for New Zealand, where he had arranged to conduct Missions in three or four places, but I felt I could, with the Lord's help, labour on a little longer, and so I offered to go on with Brother Taylor for another week; and we did so, and every day had blessed results.

The last Sunday I preached in the morning in the Centenary Hall, and at night I conducted the service at Bourke Street, Surrey Hills, where we had a great breaking down.

One Sunday during my visit to Sydney I preached at the church of my dear friend Rev. Rainsford Bavin, and rejoiced over sinners repenting. At the prayer-meeting in the morning a young lady came to me and said, "You knew my great-grandfather, sir." "Did I," I replied; "who was he, pray?" "The Rev. W. Walker," she said. "Oh," I said, "I did indeed know him; he was a dear friend of mine, to whom I owed very much for his wonderful teaching of God's truth." When I was in the pulpit at the morning service a letter was brought to me containing a request from a Mr. Johnstone

to baptize his child, “the great-grandson of the Rev. W. Cross, of Fiji.” I cannot tell how pleased I was to baptize that boy, although the dear little fellow cried out lustily all the service.

I greatly admired the spirit and work of the Rev. W. G. Taylor at the Central Mission, and I had the pleasure of staying a week in his happy home.

While conducting the Mission, my daughter, the wife of the Rev. B. Danks, carefully looked after me and helped me in many ways.

I thank God for all His goodness to me during the Mission in Sydney. The work is wholly His, and I give all the glory to Him alone.

## CHAPTER XII

### **Conclusion**

In writing these pages and reviewing the past, what cause have I seen for praising and blessing the name of the Lord, and for humbling myself to the dust under His mighty hand! I bless God that I can say –

From sin, and grief, and fear, and shame,  
I hide me, Jesus, in Thy name

But oh, what a sinner I have been! How often I have rebelled against Him, and grieved His Holy Spirit. In many a conflict with the powers of evil I have been overcome, and brought into darkness and condemnation. Again and again, years ago, I felt that I was unfit to be in the ministry, and have more than once determined to resign. I had written my resignation once and was on my way to post the letter, but the good hand of God held me back. Among the things that hindered and injured me for many years was tobacco-smoking. My conscience often troubled me about it, and I gave it up for a time, but was soon at it again. I never could smoke as some do, but I felt it was fast making me a slave. I began to look upon it as an unclean thing, and felt it was doing me harm. I praise and bless the Lord Jesus for saving me from it, about thirty-five years ago. Oh, what a blessed deliverance that was! How I have rejoiced over it many times since; and when I have gone along the street and seen boys, hardly out of their knickerbockers, with pipes or cigars in their mouths; when I have travelled in railway trains and seen men who were smoking; and when I have been in the house of God, and someone has come in smelling so strongly of tobacco as to make it very unpleasant, especially for ladies, I have wondered how I could ever have been a smoker.

I bless God that He has kept me to the great work of saving souls. If ever my piety has declined and I have lost my hold of God, then I have neglected this; but whenever my own heart has been fully right with God, then to save souls from death I have felt to be my great life-work. I have always believed, and still believe, that Mr. Wesley was right when he said, “Observe, it is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this and that society, but to save as many souls as you can.” I have heard some in these days dispute this, and say that Mr. Wesley’s own conduct was not according to this teaching. But surely such persons misunderstand Mr. Wesley. It is true he cared for the poor, supplying their wants, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and giving medicine to the sick; he founded schools for the orphan and the poor; he cared for this and that society; but he did all with the great object before him of saving men. It is possible to do a great deal of other work without having the great work in view; and it is possible to do much, and in all never to lose sight of it. Mr. Wesley never meant that his preachers were not to preach sermons, or care for the societies, but that they should do all with the great purpose in view, and not make these things themselves the end. Here now, in my old age, with my work nearly ended, I see the importance of this more than ever. “The ultimate design of the Gospel ministry,” says John Angel James, “is the conversion of sinners to God.” We should use “all means,” as Paul did, that we may “save some,” and nothing less than this should ever satisfy those who are called to save souls from death.

As to methods, we all admit that whatever may be used, all will be in vain without the Holy Spirit. New and strange methods without the Spirit may for a while seem to succeed, may draw crowds, and create some excitement, but, like the morning cloud and the early dew, their effect will quickly pass away. The cry of our day is for something new and more demonstrative. Ours is the age of big drums and brass bands. Although I have never used these means, yet if they are kept in their proper place, and the Spirit is looked to for all success, I have no objection to them. But the danger is of making these everything, and expecting no results without them. My reading and my own experience teach me that if a minister will preach Entire Sanctification, and in his pastoral visitation and in the various meetings will urge members of the Church to seek this; if he will gather the more earnest together for conversation on the work of God and for prayer, and thus secure a revival of holiness in the church; and he will then preach the great truths calculated to convert and save sinners; and if the members of the Church will begin earnestly to work, inviting the people to the house of prayer, and speaking to them about their souls, there will soon be true prosperity, and many will be brought to Jesus. We are always in danger of leaving the Holy Spirit out. In our religious life how little is really known of the personal "indwelling of the Holy Ghost," and how little of being "filled with the Spirit." In our work how often we grieve the Holy Spirit by trusting in our plans and arrangements, or by our want of faith in His presence and power because of the absence of some man or means or methods. Only let the ministers and members of the Church be filled with the Spirit, and, whatever methods may be used, the power of the Lord will be present to heal, and sinners will be converted to God.

I thank God for the Methodist Church, for my connection with it, and for what it has done for me and for the world. I praise God for raising up our honoured Founder; for the succession of noble men who have been faithful to the high trust committed to them; for our Missions, Home and Foreign; for the great multitude saved in heaven, and the goodly company on their way thither; for our Church's triumphs in the past, and for what she is doing today. We may well say, "The Lord hath done great things for us," and we may well be glad and bless His holy name. But there are some things that are hindering us in our work now, and that will, if allowed to continue and grow, one day rob us of our power and glory as a Church. May I, with all charity, but at the same time with all fidelity, refer to a few of these things.

1. Our ministers have too much work of a kind that diverts their attention from the all-important work of saving souls. What a blessing it would be to our Church if they could be relieved from so much of table-serving, and so be able to give themselves more fully to what is their great business. In many Churches the minister has to be connected with all business arrangements in the interests of the Church. Then we are becoming a great financial corporation, and have so many committees, on which our ministers have to sit devising ways and means for carrying on the work, that many have little time, and sometimes little heart, for doing work that cannot be neglected if the cause of God is to prosper.
2. We rely too much on special services and special agents. If the Church is cold and dead, special services may be the very thing for securing a revival of religion. If God should pour out His Spirit at some service, let meetings be held night after night, and all done that can be done to carry on the blessed work. But to hold these special services at some given time every year, and

have a little stir, and a few conversions, and then let the Church run down into its former cold and feeble state till the time for special services comes round again, is in the end to weaken, if not destroy, the Church. Some are forever looking out for a new Evangelist, without whom they think little can be done. They never think of praying for a blessing on their own minister's labours, but to pray for the stranger they will get up in the early morning or meet at the midnight hour. I have no doubt that this is the cause of the little real prosperity in some Circuits. There are no doubt some men who are peculiarly fitted for revival work, and when God sends them to us we ought to be thankful; but He can use any instrumentality. If the Church is only right, He will make the weak to be as David, and David as an angel of the Lord.

3. The growing worldliness of the Church is a great hindrance to our success. The desire today seems to be for less prayer an exposition of the word of God, and for more amusement, more entertainments in the church. Look at our Monday evening prayer-meetings, and our week evening services! In most places very few attend; in some these meetings have had to be given up altogether. Let it be announced that an entertainment will be given, and people will flock to it; but to call to prayer there will be little or not response. If it be true that the Monday evening prayer-meeting is the barometer of the Church's piety, then we need to be humbled and alarmed. I have heard it said over and over again, that we, by neglecting to provide amusement for our young people, have been driving them elsewhere to seek it. This charge cannot be made against all, for in some places there has been more than enough of amusement to satisfy even the most "advanced." But are there more of our young people converted where the Church is catering most for their amusement, and is their piety of a higher order? I am fully convinced, from all that I have seen, that the provision of so much amusement in the Church for the young is giving them such a love and relish for it as sends them where they can get it of a higher class than the Church can give. I do not advocate a dull, long-faced, strait-laced religion. I would have frequent social meetings for the members of the Church, where conversation, recitations, and music, with praise and prayer, shall all contribute to make a cheerful and happy gathering; but I dread the light, frothy, semi-theatrical meetings which are too common in our day, and which are, in my opinion, doing immense mischief among the young.
4. Our theology, so scriptural and clear, we have firmly held for many years. Whatever agitation there has been at any time in our Church, it has not been about our creed. The different bodies that have gone out from us have taken the grand old doctrines with them. For years scarcely a whisper was heard of any weakness here. From first to last our ministers were believed to be sound in the faith. But is it so today? I fear not. The question we ask every year of every minister is, "Does he believe and preach our doctrines?" It is not enough that he preach them: he must believe them. It is not sufficient that he believe them: he must preach them. Each minister has to answer that question for himself. Now and then we hear a brother honestly answer in the negative, and he must bear the consequences. But it is sometimes to be feared that the question is answered with some mental reservation. That the punishment of the wicked will be strictly and literally eternal is the doctrine of the Wesleyan Church; but some have for years had their doubts about this, and consequently

do not, and cannot, preach it as they should. This is known and yet allowed, and so is doing great harm in many ways.

5. The scriptural doctrine of Entire Sanctification is emphatically the doctrine of the Methodist Church, and Mr. Wesley declares over and over again that its success at first was in connection with the frequent preaching of the doctrine, and its enjoyment by many of our people. In our day it is not so frequently preached, and very seldom urged as something now to be obtained by faith. In our class meetings very little is said about it; and how few profess to enjoy it! Outside the Methodist Churches there is very much said about holiness; but I have heard much that is very hazy and indefinite. The doctrine of two natures is widely held: that we can never be made clean in ourselves, but that a new Christlike nature is brought in, covering over our corrupt, polluted nature like a covering of snow on a filthy heap; that our old nature is never changed, but remains till death; and that a constant struggle goes on between the old and the new natures until the end comes.

I was once invited to take part in a holiness meeting, and was requested to speak on "Salvation from all sin." I gave our Methodist view, which is, I firmly believe, the scriptural one. When I had finished, a good old minister, who did not see with me at all, rose and said, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," and sat down again. No sooner had he taken his seat than another rose and said, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," and he sat down. Then a brother in the middle of the hall rose and said, with deep feeling, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Not another word was said on the subject. It seems to me that there is no appeal from that. It either means what it says, or it does not. If it does not, we make God a liar; but if it does, then there is deliverance from *all* sin. I heard a brother who was pleading hard for indwelling sin use some strange illustrations. He told us of his lawn, and the weeds that troubled him, and how he pulled them up, and did all he could to destroy them, and yet, when the spring came round, every year they were as bad as ever. "So," said he, "it is with us. The corrupt nature is there, and it will come up." As if all lawns were as bad as his, and as if God could do His work no better than he could. God's work is perfect: when He cleanses, there is cleanness; when He pulls up the weeds, He does it effectually; and He says, "I will cleanse you," and "Ye shall be clean." The brother then spoke of crucifying the flesh. "Our old nature," said he, "is to be crucified with Christ. You know crucifixion is a long, lingering death; therefore this means that our corrupt nature is to be nailed to the cross, and kept there, writhing, struggling, dying, all the days of our life." A strange crucifixion! That terrible mode of punishment generally did its work in two or three days. Jesus was crucified, dead, and buried in a few hours; and we are to be not only crucified, but dead and buried with him. Another illustration was this: "Think that you are living in India. One evening, at dusk, a great tiger comes into your house, and hides beneath the sofa, and goes to sleep. There is that fearful monster; fast asleep, it is true, but still there. Move softly; go about the house on tip-toe; speak in whispers; for if you once arouse him there will be dreadful work. That is like indwelling sin. It is there: sleeping now, perhaps, but still there. Now, whatever you do, be careful; do not for the world wake that slumbering evil, or the

consequences will be sad indeed.” I thought when I heard that, Who could rest a moment with a tiger in his room? If I were the owner of that house I would soon say, “Go about the house on tip-toe, and speak with bated breath, indeed! No, no; that wretch shall not live another hour in this house. Where is my rifle?” I would make short work with that Bengal tiger.

While there is much that is very misty and uncertain among some others, I am afraid that many in our own Church are very imperfectly informed on this great subject, and make many mistakes about it. There are very many who think of it as something to be attained unto, not obtained; some state into which we have to grow, confounding purity with maturity, cleansing with growth. Whereas there is all the difference between the two: the one being something removed, the other something added; the one before the other, and necessary to it. I was once talking to a good man, a leader of our Church, on this most important subject, and he said to me, “I could just as soon believe that my son could go to Wesley College tomorrow not knowing a figure in arithmetic, and come home at night a complete mathematician, as that a man can become a perfectly matured Christian in a single day.” I said to him, “My brother, you are confounding things that differ: you are speaking of one thing; I of another. If your son were to go to Wesley College tomorrow and were put into ‘simple addition,’ and all the year, and at the end of two or three years, he were in simple addition still, what would you say?” “Why,” he replied, I should say there was something wrong with the boy or the master, or both.” “That,” I said, ‘is just what I am trying to make you see: that this indwelling sin is hindering our growth, keeping us for years mere babes in Christ, and that this hindering thing must be removed, and will be the moment we are willing to let the Lord do it and we have faith in Him.’”

If it be true, as Mr. Wesley repeatedly said, that we as a people were raised up to spread scriptural holiness through the land, and if, as few will deny, our success as a Church has been in proportion as we have answered this great design, then any decline or departure from this is a most serious matter, and must, if it continue, injuriously affect our prosperity in the future.

6. Another danger than threatens us is connected with our polity. There seems every now and then to come on some members of our Conference a great desire for new legislation – for altering the existing laws and regulations of our Church. I do not plead for holding to Church forms when they are in the way of Church progress. I believe in the wise and careful adaptation of our system to meet peculiar circumstances, but without touching those great principles which lie at the foundation of our Church, which are, we believe, in thorough accord with the Sacred Scripture, have had the approval of the greatest men our Church has ever known, and have done so much to make Methodism what it is today.

The Class Meeting question<sup>1</sup> has been discussed over and over again during the last ten or fifteen years, and we were becoming thoroughly divided as a Church. At the General Conference of 1891 the legislation on the Class Meeting seemed to give general satisfaction. The monthly meeting for

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<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that the allusions in this paragraph are to Australasian Methodism. The argument, however, is not without its significance for English Methodism. – Ed.

fellowship, oversight, and testimony then arranged for has been very successful in some Circuits where it has been properly worked, and will, we have no doubt, have like results in all if our ministers will work it. But just there is the danger. The want of discipline and careful attention in connection with our weekly class meetings has had much to do with causing the necessity for any new legislation, and we fear lest by neglect in the future this attempt to meet the case should also fail. One thing is certain: love for the Class Meeting or Christian fellowship is sadly decreasing among us. Very many who are reckoned as members seldom, if ever, attend Class. Some have been allowed to remain in the Church for years without once going to Class, and some of these are office-bearers, and have been sent as delegates to our Conferences; all of which is against our laws. No surer way could be found to damage and ruin our Church than to allow all discipline to be set at nought, and our laws and regulations broken with impunity. The loss of love for Christian fellowship is a serious matter: it means loss of spirituality. Let there be a revival of religion, and there is no need then to press people to go to Class. They delight to meet together to speak good of the name of the Lord. A gentleman who has to do with large financial matters in Melbourne said to me one day, "Whatever some may say, it is not any objection we have to the Class Meeting that keeps us back, but our being immersed in business affairs and wholly given to them." I believe with Dr. Gregory, "That the year which should witness the sacrifice of the Society-structure of our Church in favour of sounding statistics, and of officials who are strangers to the deeper fellowship of our Church, would indicate to future historians the chronological point when the great tidal flow of revival began to recede."

And now I have done, and I would close praising my blessed Lord for all His love and mercy to me in the past; for sparing me to this my seventy-ninth year; and for still employing me in His glorious work. For the future I can fully trust Him: He will do all things well. If it be His will that my life and work shall soon be ended, I will praise Him, for I know that then

I shall behold His face,  
I shall His power adore,  
And sing the wonders of His grace  
For evermore.

If it seem good to Him to keep me here a little longer, that He may use me in winning a few more souls for Jesus, I will bless His holy name, for

'Tis worth living for this,  
To administer bliss  
And salvation in Jesus' name.