

EVANGELISM and REVIVALS in AUSTRALIA

1880 to 1914

(First Volume)

by

Robert Evans

with a Foreword by the Rev. Dr. Dean Drayton

(President of the Uniting Church in Australia. 2003 - 2006)

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FOREWORD

I was fortunate to be present at the launch of Robert Evans' first book in this series, *Early Evangelical Revivals in Australia* in 2001. But as the frontispiece declared this was a study of revivals and published materials from the settlement of Australia to 1880. The question inevitably followed, would the period from 1880 on be written up also? Robert was not sure.

Yet a life's work does not rest easily when it is unfinished. I am pleased that the call to continue did not abate. Robert has one of the best personal libraries of evangelical works in Australia, and undoubtedly the best compilation of evangelical histories published in Australia. Since 2000 he has been adding further perspective from accounts found in denominational church newspapers and magazines for the period from 1880 to 1914 available on microfilm from various libraries. And here is the first volume for this key thirty-five year period of the church's life bridging into the twentieth century. He attempts to 'paint the general parameters of the evangelistic scene' during this time, but in doing so hints at the possibility of a second volume to fill out the highlights presented here.

This book provides vital first-hand reports of what happened in many places throughout Australia. So much writing about the past is done in terms of stereotypes that tell more about the writer than what actually happened. It is not enough to describe the past generation in general terms as the last era of 'christendom,' contrasted with the new emerging forms of the church that are now appearing.

Each generation made new discoveries about the 'gospel,' that are quite particular and important to know, for the attitudes today are more cumulative of many generations than most are willing to acknowledge. Robert Evans' books provide the raw data illustrating quite important changes and developments in the evangelistic task from the early penal colonies on, especially, but not only, from the Methodist records.

Early Evangelical Revivals in Australia opened my eyes to the degree that the 'camp meeting' movement in America was so influential in the early days of the Methodist Church in this country. This present book shows how the emergence of the prophetic movement after the Civil War in America, the call for 'entire sanctification' in those looking back to Wesley and the continued development of the holiness movement, had their impact in Australia. The holiness movement, and the Pentecostal movement that grew out of it were well represented in this country. Indeed, Australian Christians had a decided impact in America and Great Britain during this time. Enough has been said to indicate that Robert has been an evangelical archaeologist uncovering much of what has been forgotten and bringing back to the fore of our minds elements that have vitally contributed to the shape of Christianity in Australia today.

From the time of Jonathan Edwards, in the 1740s, many church leaders believed that outpourings of the Holy Spirit occurred in answer to prayer, but that there were mysteries about the time, place and form of these happenings, which were linked to the mysterious, sovereign ways of God, largely viewed in terms of a Calvinist theology.

In the Nineteenth Century, a new view was put forward by Charles G. Finney, in his "Lectures on the Revival of Religion," in which preparing for a revival is like a farmer growing potatoes. One first prepares the ground, plants the seed, waters the field, and the harvest will follow. Preparation for the meeting begins and is undergirded with expectant individual and group prayer. Finney's more "man-centred" view was, and still is, very influential.

In more recent times, Dr. J. Edwin Orr, and many others, have shown that the facts of history do not support Finney's understanding of revival, and that there are more mysteries involved than Finney allowed for. For example, many revivals do not fit into the pattern that Finney described, including

a few in which he was himself involved. Dr. Orr taught that the main preparations for revival, insofar as revivals can be promoted by humans, are to pray much more, and to practice a deeper life of humility and holiness, and obedience to God.

The structure of this book *Evangelism and Revivals in Australia 1880 to 1914 (First Volume)* therefore provides an insight into the deepest convictions of Robert Evans. He takes his stand with Edwin Orr.

Evans begins the book with the ‘prayer union’ movement in Australia which grew under the impact of powerful feminine evangelists in the eighties and early nineties. He sees that this movement, and a growing holiness movement, provided the spiritual foundation for the revivals that followed in the late nineties and reached a flood tide in the first decade of the twentieth century. But by the beginning of the next decade there is a sense that the fire for ‘red hot evangelism,’ the revival fire to save souls, has somehow waned.

In his summary he writes that, “after 1912, this path, which had been so blessed by God in the past, was not followed any longer.” (page 314). Many ministers thought “that this style of mass evangelism had now passed its ‘use-by’ date, and should be scrapped.” (page 310). A professional educated ministry had begun to replace the lay-led class meetings. Those calling for a return to evangelism said, “...we are being over organised. Every year witnesses some addition to our machinery, and incidentally some further burden upon our circuits. But nothing is done to touch the root of the difficulty save a rather hurried talk on the work of God.” (page 311).

Robert does not deal directly with the issue of Biblical criticism that became such a divisive matter in this period, but gives a summary of what he believes its consequences were to be. “Higher Criticism” has led to the “sad, long term results of ...Modernist Theology and of subsequent Theological Liberalism... They have all created ‘Gospel messages’ which differed substantially from the Gospel that Martin Luther or John Wesley would have preached.” (page 276). But it also needs to be noted that the evangelism of this period was also heavily influenced by the gospel that Charles Finney had developed in the new democratic setting of the United States with its modified Calvinism and its ‘new measures,’ and by the Arminian theology of Nineteenth Century Methodism.

This is must reading for any student of evangelism in Australia. Robert provides us with the data of what happened in this transition time in Australia’s history. He believes the approach to revival outlined by Edwin Orr provides the best overview for the selection of the material and the sequence of the book. In most places he makes clear what is being reported from his own interpretation of what is happening. Students of evangelism will not all agree with Robert’s assessments, but they will value these accounts of powerful evangelical movements and occasions when people were moved by the power of the Holy Spirit. I pray that he may continue to have the time and energy to continue on with his research for there is much to tell after 1914 as well.

Rev. Dr. Dean Drayton

President of the Uniting Church in Australia

2003 - 2006.

INTRODUCTION

This book is a study of the history of evangelism and revivals within the Protestant evangelical scene in Australia between 1880 and 1914.

It builds upon an earlier publication by the present author entitled *Early Evangelical Revivals in Australia*, which sought to give many details about these spiritual movements in Australia up to the year 1880.

Definitions

Evangelism is man's effort to obey the command of Christ to spread the Gospel around the world, especially to make disciples, but also to teach the words of Christ, and to seek the transformation of society into a closer likeness to the Kingdom of God.

Revival is a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, as on the Day of Pentecost. It occurs in answer to prayer, and is not predictable according to human, psychological, social or physical laws. It is not under human control.

The Selection of Material for this Study

The selection of materials in this historical study has been governed by certain basic theological principles which are commonly recognisable by all sympathetic students of evangelical revival movements around the world.

Biblical passages such as Second Chronicles 7:14, as well as the records of history, would lead us to think that revival is most likely to occur in response to serious repentance, the pursuit of holiness, and prevailing prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

As a result, I have looked first for evidence of the growth of prayer amongst God's people, especially prayer for revival, and also growing concern that progress needed to be made in the pursuit of holiness.

Then I have looked at the ways that the prayers of the people for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit have been answered.

Finally, this has been followed by a passing look at some reflections by certain people of that time who thought that these great matters of concern were passing from the scene.

A subsequent study of the period after 1914 would be needed to see to what extent their fears were well grounded, or were fulfilled.

Historiography

Evangelism and revivals were matters of great concern to many Christians in Australia between 1880 and 1914. After the 1870s, for several decades, the Protestant denominations were all strongly evangelical in emphasis and practice, while denominations like the Church of England and Lutherans included strong evangelical wings.

Many of these denominations employed full-time evangelists, and many of the people prayed earnestly for revival. There also came into being non-denominational organisations which employed and supported evangelists, perhaps working in the poorer areas of the cities, or in country towns and scattered localities of all sizes.

The original events of evangelism and revivals in Australia between 1880 and 1914 are mostly recorded in denominational church newspapers, and in other magazines and newspapers which had

a special interest in these activities, but which were less attached to the denominations. A small number of biographies exist about important leaders, but many of even the best known preachers and leaders of this period have never been studied biographically in any detail. There are also a small number of miscellaneous publications and general personal papers which are relevant to the study of this period.

Through the middle decades of the Twentieth Century the details of this heritage in evangelism and revivals became largely forgotten by evangelicals in Australia. Generally, the historical writings by the denominational historians which were written during that later time did not make much, or any, reference to the evangelism and revivals which affected their churches, although there are a few happy exceptions.

The publications by church historical societies about more localised areas were mostly similarly devoid of reference to important evangelistic efforts or revivals in their areas. They were interested in other aspects of church life and history.

In 1972, Dr. David Bollen published *Protestantism and Social Reform in New South Wales: 1890 - 1910*. Though this is an excellent study in many ways, it did not pay much attention to evangelism or revivals as such, or reflect very much upon their contribution to the subject of social reform.

Particular attention was paid to evangelism and revivals for the first time by Dr. J. Edwin Orr, in his *Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas*, which was published in 1976. This book helped to create a renewed interest in Australia's heritage in evangelism and revivals.

(a.) Dr. Orr painted on a much wider canvass, covering the area from Hawaii and Tahiti to Madagascar, so his references to the story of evangelism and revivals in Australia were limited to relatively small parts of the book.

(b.) He had, himself, been involved in parts of the story from 1936 onwards. After he gained research degrees in history, over the years he travelled in many parts of the world, including Australia, and had opportunities to gather details about earlier events in many countries. Because of these two factors, he did not manage to spend a lot of time conducting major and details researches in Australia. As a result, he picked up many details about the story of these subjects here, but could easily have missed other significant factors which would have revealed a different balance or direction to our knowledge of what occurred. His 1976 book told a story in the light of what he had found. Now it is time to reexamine this story, to see if there were other factors which Dr. Orr missed, and to seek a better balance.

In 1980, another important little study was published by the Rev. Dr. Dean Drayton, entitled *Five Generations*. It was an interesting analysis of the changing evangelistic history of Methodism in South Australia between 1836 and 1977. Many valuable and interesting insights are provided.

Since Dr. Bollen's publication, several other professional social historians have written about aspects of religious life in Australia, including aspects of evangelicalism, and mentioning some of the revivals (For example, Broome, 1980 Phillips, 1981 Jackson, 1987). Richard Broome's book treats evangelism more fully than in the other cases.

Over recent decades, the Rev. Dr. Barry Chant has provided us increasingly with good details about the history of Pentecostalism in Australia, and Dr. Stuart Piggin's publications have also begun to appear.

In the last decade or so, the Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity was established, operating out of Robert Menzies College, Macquarie University, when Dr. Piggin became Master of the College (1990 to 2004). The C.S.A.C. produced several worthy collections of essays and academic papers in this overall area, going into good details in some instances.

After publishing several other relevant books, Dr. Piggin published *Evangelical Christianity in Australia - Spirit, word and world* (1996). This book provided the most thorough overview of evangelism and revivals in Australia to be published so far, offering many details, and a good range of generalised interpretive insights. It is expected that a joint project between Dr. Piggin and Professor Robert Linder about the history of evangelicalism in Australia will soon be published, which ought to go a good step further than the 1996 book.

There are also several historical Journals which publish research papers, some of which have contributed to our knowledge of evangelical history in Australia.

Comments

It should be emphasised here that these previous writings, especially the social histories, did not generally reproduce for today's generation of Christians a good range of details about the events and people of a hundred years ago regarding evangelism and revivals.

These studies are good at making generalised comments, and offering generalised interpretive insights, which can be quite valuable. The details of the story, however, often produce many other insights which also have a great importance of their own.

The Aims of this Book

The present volume seeks to redress this lack of original details by telling the story, largely from the original sources. It also seeks to inspire people to seek better evangelism, and more powerful revivals for the future in Australia. So it is a call to prayer. It also seeks to teach some of the lessons we can learn from the past. In several places, there is also an attempt to modify, widen and develop further, the insights which were provided for this story by Dr. J. Edwin Orr in his 1976 book.

My book is much more specifically interested in particular aspects of the 1880 - 1914 period, that is, **in the evangelism and revivals of the period**. In some cases, it features evangelists and church workers who have never been highlighted by an historian before, and brings to light many important news reports and articles from denominational papers of that period which would be totally unknown to the average Australian Christian.

But, in a book of this size, there is not enough room to do justice to the whole scenario. A second volume is therefore envisaged, which perhaps the author may be able to complete at some future time. The general parameters of the evangelical scene are set out here, along with some of the details. A second volume would allow this to be covered more adequately.

More explanation and research needs to be done upon the lives of the people studied here, as well as other people to whom insufficient attention is paid in this book, or who may not have been mentioned at all. Other aspects, also have not been treated well enough here, or have been overlooked, and these shortcomings need to be remedied. A great deal still needs to be done.

I am indebted to the Rev. Dr. Dean Drayton, the current President of the Uniting Church in Australia, and an expert in evangelism in his own right, for taking an interest in my research, for readily agreeing to write the Foreword, and for launching both this book, and the previous one.

Also, I am indebted to Mr. Travis McHarg, of Boronia, Victoria, for materials he collected from copies of *Southern Cross* at the State Library of Victoria. *Southern Cross* was edited for most of its existence by the Rev. Dr. W. H. Fitchett, and the issues are very important for insights into evangelicalism between 1875 and 1925, but they have not been microfilmed yet, so copies can only be seen in one or two locations, which may not be easy to reach. Travis also helped with encouragement and suggestions.

I thank Mr. Gordon Griffiths, of the South Seas Evangelical Mission, for allowing me to borrow

and photocopy the Mission's file copies of *Not in Vain*, up to 1905, in relation to the work of the Queensland Kanaka Mission. I thank the Bible College of Queensland for allowing me to see the minute books (up to 1930) of the Queensland Evangelistic Society, of which they are custodians.

At the Uniting Church's New South Wales Archives at Parramatta, I thank my friends in the Uniting Church Records and Historical Society for their encouragement and help, especially Mr. Daryl Lightfoot, the Librarian/Archivist, and for the access I have had to the Church's extensive archives. I currently enjoy the honour of being President of this Society. The Rev. Dr. Ian Breward, Archivist for the Victorian Synod of the Uniting Church, kindly loaned me a number of duplicate microfilms of the *Spectator*, belonging to their Archives. Otherwise, I have depended upon my private library, which includes many microfilms purchased from the State Libraries in Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart.

Lastly, but not least, I am indebted to son-in-law, Mr. Rob. McDonell, for computing expertise and help in many ways towards printing this book. Mr. Sam. Mollenhauer, of Lawson, N.S.W. has also helped me greatly in the production of this book, which has largely taken place downstairs in my home. I am sure they both look upon this work, as I do, that it is something dedicated to the glory of God, and to the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Robert Evans.

Hazelbrook. N.S.W.

August, 2005.

SECTION ONE

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS

FOR FUTURE SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

CHAPTER ONE

GROWTH OF THE PRAYER UNIONS

The purpose of the first section of this book is to look at the spiritual foundations which supported evangelical revivals in Australia, and to some extent in New Zealand, in the period between 1880 and the advent of the First World War in 1914. The study has been divided into several parts.

The period under review starts at 1880, because the author's previous publication entitled *Early Evangelical Revivals in Australia* attempted to portray the situation up to that date. 1914 has to be used as the cut-off point in this study for two reasons. Firstly, the First World War was such an event, and the years 1914 to 1918 were such a shattering period of time, that the War substantially altered almost everything, and this applied to a great many aspects of the religious life of Australia.

The second reason is that new ideas, such as Modernist and Liberal theology, and aspects of Biblical Criticism, were gaining such an influence in the Churches, which had, up to that time, been the main "Evangelical" bodies. As a result, these Churches were no longer the influence in favour of evangelism that they had been beforehand. Also, any interest in revival that might have existed before 1914 in these churches became seriously depleted or modified. With many individuals in these denominations, any interest in revival disappeared completely.

While a study of spiritual foundations is naturally the proper starting-point for any study of evangelism, or of evangelical revivals, it is also the most difficult part of such a study, because the more spiritual aspects of life are harder to trace, and historical evidence about them is usually much harder to find or to evaluate.

GROWTH OF THE PRAYER UNIONS

(a.) Historiography

The publication in 1976 by Dr. J. Edwin Orr of his *Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas* marked the appearance in recent years of what should now be seen as the traditional understanding of this subject.

He noted especially the formation in 1889 of a prayer group by the Australian Presbyterian evangelist, the Rev. John MacNeil, and looked upon this as the germinal event which, in the end, led to the notable revivals in Australia in the first decade of the Twentieth Century. He was repeating a view first expressed by Dr. Warren in 1903, in the *Missionary Review of the World*. (1.)

In this chapter, an extensive review and revision will be offered of this traditional view which had been based on Dr. Warren's 1903 article. A more extensive study of the religious newspapers reveals that there were many, and an increasing number, of Prayer Unions in Australia amongst evangelical Christians from 1883 onwards. It seems that Dr. Warren was not sufficiently aware of

what had happened in other parts of Australia.

In particular, Dr. Warren, and Dr. Orr after him, did not notice a very significant Prayer Union for a revival of holiness, formed in May, 1886, by the newly-formed Methodist Holiness Association in Sydney. The Prayer Union had been formed by this Association under the leadership of the Rev. W. G. Taylor, following the Holiness ministry in New South Wales of the American Holiness preacher and evangelist, Miss Leonard. The Prayer Union included all Association members. They all promised to pray daily for a revival of Scriptural holiness. The members included many leading ministers and laymen and women of various Evangelical denominations, especially amongst the Wesleyans. (2.)

He also made no reference to the work of Mrs. Margaret Hampson, or to the impact of the Christian Endeavour Movement. Although John MacNeil's Prayer Band was important, a better balance is required, and a wider perspective.

(b.) The last thirty years of the Nineteenth Century was the period of Prayer Unions. They multiplied, and served a range of purposes. But they appeared in force well before John MacNeil arranged his Prayer Band for the "big" revival. Often enough the Prayer Union was linked in some way to a revival which was then in progress.

The most notable Prayer Union in Australia started in London in 1876, and spread rapidly around the world. A brief historical comment about it appeared in *Truth and Progress* in 1880, when the South Australian Branch was being formed.

"In January, 1876, it was announced in *The Christian*, by the Rev. T. Richardson, of London, that a Bible and Prayer Union had been commenced, the simple object of which was that of reading through the Bible chapter by chapter, consecutively, one chapter daily, asking God's blessing upon the portion read, and that each member should pray for their fellow-members every Sunday morning. It was then asked that the Union might be increased to one thousand members. It will be seen that as far as numbers are concerned that petition has been 'far more abundantly' answered, as the Union numbered on the 1st of October [1879], 79,108. These members are found in many religious communities, and in many parts of the world. From the first the project has commended itself to us and we have desired to see it commenced in South Australia, but not being in possession of the list of daily chapters in advance we could not establish a branch here. We were very much pleased, therefore at the beginning of the year to see by a letter in the *Christian Colonist* that Mr. T. E. Powell was in possession of the necessary information and was prepared to issue cards and form a Branch of the Union. Since his letter appeared he has received several names and the Union is now in existence here, and fresh members are joining week by week. When understood, it is a project that, we feel convinced, will be warmly taken up by a great ma[n]y Christians." (3.)

The Rev. T. Richardson was minister at St. Benet's, Stepney. A Prayer Union had already existed in his church, but this new beginning, on 10th January, 1876, with 50 members, combined with an emphasis on Bible reading, spread rapidly.

Before long, prayer points were also being published in the *Methodist Journal*. Occasional gatherings of members also took place. By April, 1882, "the Bible and Prayer Union has extended beyond Great Britain and English-speaking countries (such as America, Canada and Australia), until there are distinct foreign branches in Athens, Ceylon, Germany, Geneva, Rome, Sweden, Smyrna, Syria, the South Sea Islands, and other parts." The branch in South Australia had an enrolled membership of 1,915. (4.)

In April, 1884, the membership world-wide was 200,520, and branches of the London Prayer Union existed in Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington, Brisbane, Hobart and Perth. In May, 1884, the membership in the South Australian Branch alone had blossomed to 4,725. (5.)

This increased steadily over the next five years to a membership of nearly 7,000 in South Australia alone.

(c.) These Prayer Unions served a number of purposes for their members, but praying for revival was certainly one of the major concerns that would have been prayed about many times, because many evangelical ministers used to hold the need for revival before the congregation, and many of the lay people had deep concerns to see widespread revival in their part of Australia.

The wide-ranging purposes of these Unions, is seen in an editorial which appeared in the *Methodist Journal* in 1884.

“Among modern agencies for the extension of the kingdom of Christ, a place of great importance must be assigned to the various organizations by which Christian people are banded together for Bible study and mutual prayer. These Unions differ very widely in their scope, character, constituency, and objects. The number of those who are formally enrolled range from the ‘two who agree’ to claim the promise made by Christ, to tens of thousands who from the ends of the earth join hands in earnest intercession. Some are temporary and specific - such as the week of prayer at the beginning of the year; and others permanent and general. Some are for prayer only; others include a specific portion of Scripture to be read each day, and a few include with devotion some practical work. In one case perhaps the Bible is read chapter after chapter from end to end; in another special portions are chosen bearing on particular topics, and yet others are much more elaborate in their programme.

There are denominational unions, undenominational, and what may be called professional, because their members belong to the same secular calling. This summary only suggests the wide diversity which prevails, and the vast numbers who are thus engaged in what must be of profit to themselves and benefit to the world.” (5.)

One person who was very prominent in the promotion of these Prayer Unions was the Church of England minister, the Rev. H. B. Macartney, Dean of Melbourne for many years. The following notice, published by the South Australian Baptists, indicates the width of the prayer concerns of Macartney, and many others.

“The Melbourne Prayer Union have issued a circular, signed on behalf of the Union by the Rev. H. B. Macartney and five other well-known Ministers of different denominations, inviting those who are looking for the speedy coming of Christ, to form themselves into praying bands in their various localities for the purpose of entreating the Lord not to delay His coming. The morning of the New year was celebrated by the Union by meeting together for this purpose. The occasion was found to be so peculiarly satisfying and blessed that the present appeal has resulted. The circular argues out the suggestion upon six grounds. It states first - That we are taught in the Old Testament to pray for the coming of Christ to reign over the House of Jacob. The passage adduced under this head is that of Isaiah lxii. 1-7. Secondly - We are taught both in the Old and in the New Testament to pray for the coming of Christ, to take away His waiting people. This part of the appeal is made to rest upon a combination of the two passages found in Zechariah xiv., and Revelation xix.; also upon the petition for the coming of the Kingdom as found in the Lord's prayer, and upon the response of the expectant Church, ‘Even so, come Lord Jesus.’ The third point in the circular is that a union of this kind must be infinitely pleasing to God the Holy Ghost. In the fourth place attention is called to a promise of peculiar blessing connected with the attitude into which such a union must inevitably throw those who join it. The blessing is found in Luke xvii. 7, as contrasted with Luke xii. 37. Fifthly, it is asserted that there is an exact correspondence between our position before the second coming of Christ and the position of Old Testament believers before His first coming. And sixthly, that there is an exact correspondence between our position before the [second] coming of Christ and the position of the disciples before the coming of the Holy Ghost. Upon these grounds the Union in

Melbourne make a fervent appeal for the formation of Branch Unions. Minister may join with minister, brother with brother, sister with sister, even where multitude cannot be got to join with multitude. Thus the appeal is made to Christians in their individual capacity. There are many among the membership of the various Churches who very fervently long and wait for the second coming of the Lord; but there is perhaps a still larger proportion whose minds are not in any quickened condition with respect to that hope. It is, therefore, a subject upon which individual Christians will take action along with those who are like-minded with themselves.” (6.)

Within a few weeks another of Macartney’s communications appeared, seeking union in private prayer for seven days, for “the entire Sanctification of the Sabbath Day” around the world. The previous year a similar appeal had been made on this matter. The appeal had been printed in nine languages in various countries, and 85,000 copies of the appeal had been produced. The state of Sabbath desecration is reflected in the concluding comment of this notice.

“...there are no nations more in need of prayer than Great Britain and Ireland. Hitherto, to a large extent, the principal asylums of Sabbath observance, they are now being assailed by anti-Sabbath associations and by the godless portion of the community; and though there is rest granted to the people generally from unnecessary labour, yet that rest is not taken advantage of by multitudes. The desire for worldly pleasure on that day is greatly on the increase, though abundant time is afforded during week days for recreation.” (7.)

(d.) From a spiritual point of view, the **value** of these prayer efforts was considered by many people to be great.

The secretary of the South Australian Prayer Union supplied prayer points most weeks for publication. The editor of the *Methodist Journal* said, “The touching requests for prayer and grateful notes of praise testify to the value set upon it.

Quite recently a question in the House of Commons elicited the fact that a ‘Civil Service Prayer Union’ has been established for several years, and that at present Mr. Blackwood, who holds the important position of Secretary of the Post-office, is its President. It was alleged as a ground of complaint that one of its objects was ‘to make intercession for the unconverted members of our own departments.’ The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was not a case in which the Treasury was called upon to interfere. Such a Union, and with such a standing subject for prayer, should be matter for devout thankfulness. This organization is only a type of numbers concerning which little is generally known. We believe there are hundreds by which the spirit of prayer is fostered and its exercise encouraged, of which those outside take no account. The Unions established by Mrs. Hampson may be cited as among the number, and their existence has led to the formation of many bearing a similar character.” (8.)

The editor mentioned that a Methodist Bible and Prayer Union had existed in England for many years, and he advocated the support of it through the Methodist Book Depots in the various capital cities in Australia.

(e.) Prayer for Revival

Lest anyone should think that praying for revival did not figure significantly in the prayers of the people, and would not have much attention paid to it by members of the Prayer Unions, the following editorial provides just one example, which could be duplicated many times over in the second half of the Nineteenth Century, where people were urged to pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured out upon the Churches, and upon its special efforts. It appeared under the heading - “The First Week of June.”

“It is opportune to call attention today to the resolution of last Conference, which recognising the honour God had put upon special means adopted last year to promote the revival of His work, recommended their repetition. The resolution suggested that such services associated with the methods previously employed should commence about the beginning of June. In some Circuits the time has been anticipated, and gracious responses to special prayers already cause abundant rejoicing. These instances prove the Divine willingness to hear, answer, and bless. Should the suggestion of the Conference be acted upon, the coming weeks will be times of more than ordinary unanimity and fervour of supplication. It will probably animate those who come boldly to the throne of grace when they remember that many of their brethren are doing likewise, and that some are mingling thanksgiving with entreaty. Intensity of desire and tenacity of faith will thus be promoted, confidence will strengthen into eager expectation, and we do not doubt that the fullness of the blessing will come. It is a coincidence that without intentional concerted action the New South Wales Conference fixed on the same time as our own as suitable for special and united prayer. The resolution which appears in the printed minutes, and most of which is perfectly applicable to ourselves, is as follows:- ‘The statistical returns relating to Church membership and Sunday-schools having been laid before the Conference, and the same having been discussed at great length, the Conference gratefully records the fact that during the year there has been a pleasing numerical increase, both in Church membership and Sunday-schools; also, that a healthy and progressive spirit still marks our Church’s work. At the same time it is painfully apparent both that more work and a greater variety of it might yet be done, and must be done, before all men are brought to a knowledge of God. With these facts before us, we hereby determine that during the present year we will endeavour more fully and more faithfully to “preach the Gospel to every creature.” We also agree that the first week in June be given to special prayer to God that in us and by us He may be pleased to revive and carry on His work.’ Two things are here resolved upon - more faithful preaching and consentaneous prayer. Accordingly, next week our brethren yonder will be on their knees and spreading forth their hands to heaven. Surely the blessing must come! The promise is, ‘If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done.’ There a whole Conference has agreed, and will plead the Divine declaration. We shall meet our fellow-workers in New South Wales and Queensland at the mercy-seat, and trust that the season of prayer will be the prelude to such a time of blessing as these lands have never yet enjoyed.” (9.)

As we saw, the Baptists had officially backed the South Australian Bible and Prayer Union since its beginning. In 1881, when it became clear that the lady evangelist, Mrs. Emilia Baeyertz, was coming back to South Australia, to conduct missions around the state at the earnest request of the South Australian Baptist Association, there was a clear call for people around the state to unite in prayer for the success of her work.

“Mrs. Baeyertz’s name will be remembered by many with much pleasure. Her visit here a few months ago was the source of much pleasure to many Christian friends, and her ministrations resulted in leading many souls to the Saviour. We are glad to be informed that Mrs. Baeyertz is again about to come to South Australia. We trust that she will be able to visit more extensively among the Churches than during her former stay. We are quite sure that she will receive a hearty and glad welcome from our country Churches; and a visit from her would tend to give new life to Christian work in the country, as it did in Adelaide upon the former occasion. We trust that the prayers of Christian friends will unitedly supplicate a blessing upon her ministrations in connection with the regular labours in the various Churches.” (10.)

(f.) As mentioned above, the lady evangelist, Margaret Hampson, did a great deal to launch, and to foster, Prayer Unions, some of which became very influential, and spread widely.

Mrs. Hampson’s career in mass evangelism began in 1881, when she was no longer a young

woman. By the middle of 1882, she began forming a Women's Prayer Union as a part of her normal mission routine. For example, at Ashburton such a Prayer Union was formed. "On the afternoon of May 11 [1882], Mrs. Hampson opened the mission by holding a meeting for females only, at which some 200 were present. After an affectionate address, the formation of a Women's Prayer Union was warmly advocated, and, as a result, a large number of names were handed in as members, and Mrs Medding was appointed as secretary of the Union." (11.)

When Mrs. Hampson conducted missions in Australia in 1883 and 1884 she usually used the first meeting of the series to form a Women's Prayer Union, and in certain instances formed one for younger women as well.

In Adelaide, for instance, "Her first service in the Flinders-street Baptist Lecture Hall showed her spirit and revealed one of the sources of her power. She is eminently a believer in the efficacy of prayer. The object of this meeting (which was for women only) was to organise bands of praying women for the purpose of mutual help. In her address she spoke of such a union having been entered into by three young mothers who felt the necessity of some such assistance. Since then thousands had followed their example, and the answers to prayer had been marvellous. She spoke of the blessed prospect of the world being through means of this kind belted by the zone of prayer. Whatever women could or could not do they could all pray. Many instances of direct responses to the appeals of praying women were given, and the good influence of the meeting was a happy promise of what might be expected during the approaching mission.

The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, and at the close of the meeting a considerable number of those present gave their names as members of the prayer union that was proposed. It may be hoped that the movement will spread, and prove both permanent and highly useful." (12.)

In Ballarat, she formed both kinds. "Mrs. Hampson began her mission in the above city on Thursday last, 3rd July, when she addressed about 1200 women in the Academy of Music. The chief object of this meeting was to form and inaugurate a Women's Prayer Union. The result of the gathering was eminently successful.

Last Friday afternoon, in the same building, Mrs. Hampson conducted a meeting for young women; the building was crowded, and the speaker was listened to with rapt attention." A Young Women's Prayer Union was formed after that meeting. (13.)

These Prayer Unions organised by Mrs. Hampson served a purpose similar to the old Methodist Class Meetings. Unlike the Prayer Unions mentioned in the previous section, which were too scattered to meet except on rare occasions, Margaret Hampson's Prayer Unions met every week, so the members received a great deal of spiritual support and encouragement from one another. But this was not the only benefit. In some cases, the poorer members of a Union might be supported with the supply of their material needs by other members.

In some cases, Men's Prayer Unions were organised alongside and parallel to the Women's Unions.

(g.) Perhaps the best word about the early stages of the Prayer Unions started by Mrs. Hampson was provided in the great overall coverage and summing-up published by Adelaide's *Methodist Journal*. It appeared under the sub-heading "The Prayer Unions".

"Apart from the effects it has produced in the conversion of sinners, and the quickening of believers, Mrs. Hampson's visit will leave a tangible and permanent result in the Prayer Unions she has established. She entered on this work in her very first meeting, and within a fortnight had completed the organisation of both branches. About 200 wives and mothers are enrolled in the Women's Prayer Union, and nearly as many young women are also banded together. The rules of these Unions are before us. They are simplicity itself. There is only one permanent official - a

Secretary - and the Presidents change constantly, so that there may be equality and complete union. There are standing requests for prayer, and other requests may be presented. To a considerable extent the central idea is an expansion of that of the class meeting - mutual fellowship and help. The second meeting Mrs. Hampson held for women was on Thursday, July 26, in the Town Hall. Perhaps 300 were present, to whom Mrs. Hampson spoke with great sweetness and force on the value of united prayer. Her incidents were, as usual, drawn from her own experience, and one in particular was interwoven with the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman. A Christian mother whose husband and six children burdened her soul came to Mrs Hampson for advice. Having prayed together, the Bible was opened to see what assurance it might furnish, when the sentence presented itself, 'and he answered her not a word.' This seemed startling, especially as it corresponded so closely with the case in hand. Continuing the gospel narrative, it was seen that the woman went down to the very abjectness of humility in her words, 'Truth. Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs,' &c. Grasping the response that was made, 'Be it unto them even as thou wilt,' and willing to be anything to obtain such a blessing, Mrs. Hampson's friend left her. The next time they met her face showed so much as to provoke the question, 'Which one?' Mrs. Hampson said she was never more sharply rebuked for little faith than by the reply, 'Husband and all.' This proved to be the case. Copying the example of the woman of Canaan, her friend had pleaded with God in the same submissive helplessness and confidence, with the result that first the wayward son, then the husband, and afterwards all the other children had come to the feet of Jesus, and were then happy in His love. At the close of the service several inquirers had their feet directed into the same way of peace.

The first regular prayer meeting of the Women's Prayer Union was held on Thursday, August 2, in the Pirie-street Lecture-hall, Mrs. Hampson presiding. For the present the meeting is to take place in the Y.M.C.A. room on Thursday afternoons, from 3 to 4 o'clock. The young women's meeting will be held in the same place on Tuesday afternoons; but these arrangements are open to modification as circumstances indicate. There can be no doubt that a force has been brought into operation which may prove of incalculable value. Branches will be formed wherever desirable, and it is possible they will spread all over the colony.

It may be useful to mention that the Secretary of the Women's Prayer Union is Mrs. Scrymgour, and the Secretary of the Young Women's Union is Miss Newlyn." (14.)

A more substantial study of the role played by Mrs. Hampson in the evangelism of the period, and of her role in the explosion of the Prayer Union movement, will appear in the next chapter.

(h.) In particular, the Prayer Unions formed by Mrs. Hampson in Ballarat and Bendigo multiplied, and they organised Conferences, Anniversary gatherings, and evangelistic efforts, which were widely supported.

By 1886, only two years after the Ballarat Women's Prayer Union was formed, the indefatigable Secretary of the Union, Mrs. Murray, had formed 19 branches of the Union around the city, including one in Sebastopol. "Many an earnest cry has gone up for 'our minister,' 'our dearly beloved Mrs. Hampson,' 'our children,' the young men and women of Ballarat, the unsaved among our relations, the drunkards; beside many special requests..." (15.)

The meetings ran from 3 to 4 o'clock, and included three or four hymns. Someone would read a Bible passage, and someone gave a short address. Prayer requests would be listed, and prayer offered. Every six weeks, one of the local ministers would give an address. The average attendance at the central meeting was between 150 and 200.

The fourth Anniversary (for example) was a combined affair with the other Prayer Unions - Men's, Women's and Girls, and was held in the main Lydiard Street Wesleyan Church. There were many

speakers, including Dean H. B. Macartney, the Revs. John G. Paton (the famous missionary), J. Tuckfield (Wesleyan), and half a dozen ministers from other denominations. (16.)

By 1891, there were 24 branches in Ballarat, and twelve others in Victorian provincial towns, such as Warrnambool, Maryborough, Horsham and Albury. There were many cottage prayer meetings, and some of these were held in the homes of unconverted people, and also as an outreach to the Chinese. The Anniversary that year was held in the great Alfred Hall, from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. 1,000 sat down to tea, and between 15 and 20 ministers took part in the programme. The overall attendance was large. (17.)

Sandhurst became better known as Bendigo after 1891. In this district there were also a number of branch Prayer Unions, some of which ran their own special efforts and Anniversaries.

In 1887, it was the Bendigo Prayer Union which invited Mrs. Emilia Baeyertz to lead an evangelistic mission in their city, for nine days commencing on Saturday, 23rd July. Conversions occurred, and the saints had their faith strengthened. (18.)

From all of the foregoing it can be seen that there was a widespread use of this particular kind of praying and prayer organisation. It provided a strong basis and context for the evangelism of the period. It contributed greatly to the quality of spiritual life of many people, and channelled the hopes of many for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Churches.

(i.) The Methodist Holiness Association

Although this Association will be studied more fully in another chapter, it needs to be noted here, and emphasised, that the Association came into being in May, 1886, through the organising ability of the Rev. W. G. Taylor, and with the support of a string of other Wesleyan ministers and leading lay people. For more than a year previously, the lady American Holiness preacher and evangelist Miss Isabella Leonard, had been preaching around the circuits in New South Wales. She had created a new interest in the Wesleyan doctrine and experience of Scriptural holiness, or entire sanctification. A notable spiritual movement occurred in Sydney, over the end of 1885, during which the idea was put forward to form this new Association, to nurture and develop this renewal of interest in holiness. The Wesleyans knew from their history that a revival of successful aggressive evangelism would be inevitably linked to an emphatic proclamation and practice of entire sanctification, as John Wesley had taught.

One of the objects of this Association was:- “The formation of a Union for daily prayer, that our churches may be blessed with a renewal of Scriptural holiness.” The membership of the Association grew steadily. Members included only people who testified to the enjoyment of entire sanctification, or who declared themselves “thoroughly believing the doctrine as set forth in our standards, and earnestly seeking its enjoyment.” So, every member of the Association was also a Prayer Union member.

Also, the Association began producing a monthly paper called *Glad Tidings*, to further the renewed interest in holiness, and to carry Gospel messages which might lead people to conversion. This paper rapidly achieved a circulation of 15,000 copies per month. (19.)

The influence of the Association grew and spread, and concern for the experience of entire sanctification became deeper. A greater effort was made to make the teaching clearer, and to make sure that misunderstandings of it could be avoided. Historians are able to see the following events which Association members would have thought were answers to their prayers.

(j.) John MacNeil's Prayer Band

Hannah MacNeil tells us that her husband, the Presbyterian evangelist, the Rev. John MacNeil, took charge of a struggling church in the Melbourne suburb of Abbotsford in 1889. As a result, he was not travelling around the country during that period as much as he normally did. He was able to become more involved with a group of other ministers in special prayer.

In referring to her husband's diaries, she writes, "He records, in August, the first of the weekly 'all-nights of prayer' which he attended. A little company of ministers, feeling sorely that in their own lives they had not experienced that richness of blessing which the Bible had led them to expect, and that, therefore, their ministry was not so fruitful as it might be, agreed to spend one night a week on their knees pleading for themselves, their congregations, and the Colony. The next thing was a 'Day of Prayer' in Melbourne, and in as many other places as could be induced to join." (20.)

The day of prayer was widely advertised amongst the Churches. Some people in Adelaide joined with the Melbourne action. It took place on the 3rd of October, 1889. While the Day of Prayer was open to everyone, the Prayer Band of which MacNeil spoke was limited to certain ministers.

Nine months later, MacNeil reported that "Ever since 14 August [1889] a band of men, not despairing, but hopeful, have been found waiting together on God in a certain room in Melbourne every Wednesday Night, from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., pleading in fervent, believing, importunate prayer for such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, for such an awakening, as will usher in a new era in the religious history of this land... Of course it is patent to all that the great revival, *the* definite blessing for which we have been crying has not yet been granted;... Many of our churches have been visited with times of refreshing,... In some of the churches not a week passes without cases of awakening and conversion." (21.)

MacNeil also mentioned a Thursday afternoon prayer meeting of the Melbourne Ministers' Prayer Union, which "still holds on its way."

But these were not the only groups praying for revival. Even before the "Day of Prayer" mentioned above, a letter in *Southern Cross* reported another meeting of this kind. "...feeling there is a widespread desire for a revival in our midst... there is an undenominational prayer meeting held on Saturday nights at the Y.M.C.A. rooms, Russell Street, to earnestly appeal for a divine blessing on the work of all ministers... missionaries, and Sunday School teachers. The meeting being entirely open, an earnest invitation is given to all Christians to attend." (22.)

MacNeil continued to report, over the next few years, very large gatherings for prayer in which he was involved. These were a continuation of the Day of Prayer plan, to which he gave the name the "league of prayer."

After MacNeil's untimely death, five years later, his widow received a message of sympathy from the Prayer Band, signed by all the members. This list, and the message, is reproduced in the back of Hannah MacNeil's biography of her husband. The list represents a "Who's who" of the main evangelical leaders in Melbourne in all the denominations at that time. (23.)

(k.) The rise of the Young People's Christian Endeavour Societies around Australia, provided an enormous boost to the Prayer Union Movement. The spread of these Societies began in 1888, and achieved momentum like a wild bush fire around the evangelical churches, especially through the six years to 1893, but also continuing through into the new century. Soon, there were hundreds of these Societies in total, affecting most of the denominations. The Wesleyans had the biggest number.

Each Young People's Society became a branch of a great Young People's Bible and Prayer Union.

This was supported in New South Wales at least, by the editor of the *Methodist*. The Wesleyans had changed the name of their denominational paper from the *Christian Advocate* to simply being called the *Methodist*, which served the minor Methodist denominations as well as the Wesleyans. Almost every week, part of a column in the *Methodist* listed the Bible passages to be used the next week by the Young People's Bible and Prayer Union, and might also provide a few notes. The Christian Endeavour Societies, however, were a hotbed of zealous evangelicalism at that time, keen to see conversions and revivals. They contributed strongly to the life of the churches.

(I.) In 1891, the Bible Christians in South Australia wrote a Constitution for their "Bible Christian Prayer and Evangelistic Union," which was more elaborate than had been developed by others. It provided a specific, spiritual and inspiring agenda for their Gospel work.

"1. Object - To promote more earnest and aggressive piety in our Churches.

2. To promote such evangelistic methods and services as shall be likely, with God's blessing, to issue in the conversion of souls; and further, to promote Bible reading, prayer meetings, and class or fellowship meetings.

3. To diffuse among our people right views concerning holiness and the great possibilities of a Christian life.

4. To engage in daily prayer for all the brethren in the ministry, and all Christian workers, and to devote half-an-hour on Saturday morning, say from 9.30 to 10, to special prayer for God's blessing upon the work of the following day.

5. To render such help to each other as may be practicable in the conducting of special evangelistic services.

6. To hold an annual public meeting on some evening during the Conference sessions for the promotion of the objects of the Union." (24.)

A General Secretary of the Union was to be elected for the whole State, with District secretaries also, who would report to the General Secretary. All Bible Christian ministers were members of the Union, and many of their lay people also became members.

This Constitution represents a good picture of the kind of spiritual work which the Bible Christians considered best throughout their history. Twenty-first Century churches would be much better off if something like this was taken seriously today.

Conclusion.

This resurgence in the prayer life in the evangelical churches in Australia provided a good spiritual basis for the success of the evangelism of the coming two decades, up until the First World War.

It was in answer to these prayers that the revivals which occurred during these years took place.

When R. A. Torrey came to visit Australia, it was not impossible to get 117,000 people to staff all the special cottage prayer meetings in and around Melbourne, in support of the evangelistic campaign. People around the world looked upon what happened there as a revival. But it had a widespread and proper spiritual basis in prayer, as we have seen.

CHAPTER TWO

MARGARET HAMPSON

AND THE PRAYER UNIONS

1881 TO 1885

PART ONE: NEW ZEALAND

Mrs. Margaret Hampson was one of the early female evangelists to work in New Zealand and Australia late in the Nineteenth Century. There were several lady evangelists in the Antipodes during these decades. These ladies enjoyed an excellent degree of success in winning souls for Christ, in promoting Christian holiness, and in raising the level of prayer in the life of the churches. The fact that they were females, working in an area which was normally dominated by men, did not seem to lessen their effectiveness in any way, and may even have had a positive effect.

The first lady evangelist to come to Australia was Miss Serena Thorne, a member of the famous Thorne family in Cornwall which figured so strongly in the early history of the Bible Christian denomination. After her arrival in South Australia, she married the Bible Christian minister, the Rev. Octavius Lake, and continued her evangelistic work with him in South Australia for many years.

The second lady of note in Australian evangelism was Mrs. Emilia Baeyertz, a converted Jewess. As a young girl, Mrs. Baeyertz migrated to Australia, and married a Christian man, much against the wishes of her family, and had two children, before her husband died. Her conversion to Christ occurred after his death. She eventually became a very effective evangelist in many parts of Australia for some years, and later in other countries. A modest biography of her life before about 1896 was published, which gives a fairly brief overview of her preaching career for nearly twenty years before that date. Good details of her evangelism in Australia exist in the denominational and evangelical newspapers of the period. So far as I am aware, no biography exists about Margaret Hampson, and we are almost entirely dependent upon information about her from the denominational and evangelical newspapers.

Mrs. Hampson was converted to Christ as a young girl in St. Jude's Church, Liverpool, England, when the incumbent minister was Dr. Hugh McNeile. McNeile was a widely respected, cultured and talented preacher. (1.)

She remained basically a member of the English Church throughout her life, although the evangelism of her later life was always non-denominational.

At twelve years of age she was teaching in a Church of England school. At fourteen she sang and spoke in cottage meetings amongst labouring people. She began amongst the women and girls, but

soon the men wanted to hear her as well. At seventeen years of age she preached for the first time in a church at Preston, and was soon singing solos for the famous evangelist, Mr. Reginald Radcliffe, in his Liverpool work. She married a successful business man, but both Mr. and Mrs. Hampson were heavily involved in visiting the homes of labouring people, and preaching in market places and parks, in parts of the city where there were no churches, often preaching to crowds of 400 or 500. In these unhealthy parts of the city, it would be Mr. and Mrs. Hampson who were called when some labourer was dying. Yet there were instances in their open-air work when mud and rocks were thrown, and Mrs. Hampson was one of the targets.

The Hampsons had twelve children, but eleven of them died before adulthood. Only one son survived, and married. In due course, Mr. Hampson died also. Several years after that, in middle age, and with indifferent health, Margaret Hampson pulled up her roots and migrated to Auckland, New Zealand, arriving during 1880. (2.)

David Hilliard said that she came to Auckland in order to follow her son and his wife, who had come to New Zealand doing Christian Work. (3.) While this reason may have been correct, I could not find other evidence to support this claim. Other reasons for the change were to rest, and to seek improvements to her health.

Her First Evangelism in New Zealand

She arrived in Auckland to commence this new phase of her life toward the end of 1880. By that time she was probably in her late forties or early fifties. However, there was a fire in her bones which would not be denied. Within a few months of her arrival, she was asked to speak at a series of special meetings “at the Thames, which resulted in a most extraordinary revival of the work of God. The services, which were held in the Academy of Music, Grahamstown, were commenced on Sunday evening Feb. 6.” [1881.]

It is not clear how much preparations were done before the meetings started. There may not have been much. Before the meetings started, “one or two meetings for prayer were held, at which special reference was made to the services about to be held, and the Divine blessing asked upon them.”

The special services were only intended to last for one week. In the end, two extra meetings were held in the open air - in a paddock next to the Wesleyan Church.

“Early morning meetings for prayer were held each day in the Congregational Church, Mary-street, and these were invariably well attended, large numbers going onto the adjoining vestry to seek for guidance and instruction in the heavenly way. A specialty of these morning meetings was the offering of special prayer for others at the request of friends and relatives, and it is believed it was by this means great good was done.

At the opening service on Sunday evening, long before the time announced for commencing it, the large building, capable of holding between 800 and 900 persons was crammed in every part, and numbers had to go away without getting near the doors. That the interest of her hearers was fully gained is manifested by the fact that at the subsequent meetings held each night during the following week the hall was always filled to overflowing. After each meeting an invitation was given to those who had been convinced of sin and were anxious to obtain peace, to repair into a room at the rear of the building which had been set apart for an enquiry room, while the Christian brethren were asked to remain behind and assist Mrs. Hampson in praying for them. Every evening numbers availed themselves of this privilege, and before leaving the hall found salvation through the blood of Christ.”

The service on Saturday evening, 12th Feb., was a testimony service. Everyone who had received a

blessing during the previous meetings was asked to testify about it. Scores stood up to take their turn at speaking. "The names of between 300 and 400 converts have been given the ministers of the various churches; but these will only represent a small proportion of those who received good during these services." Converts came from all classes of society, rank and profession.

The first of the two open-air services was held on Sunday 13th. In the field next to the Wesleyan Church, a platform was erected, from which Mrs. Hampson spoke. It was thought that between 2,000 and 3,000 people were present. Some climbed on to roofs of nearby houses to see and hear. The last service on the Monday night was similar.

Many people were astonished by the enormous impact of these meetings - perhaps an indicator of real revival in these circumstances. "That there has been a gracious outpouring of the spirit of God there can be no doubt, and an impulse has been given to religion such as has never been felt on the Thames before. Each church has received an addition to the number of its members, the number of those joining the Wesleyan Church being especially large. The people are now stirring themselves up to do greater things for the work of God, determined that as the fire has been lighted, the flame shall not be allowed to die out. It is very difficult to describe the extraordinary effect these services have had upon the public mind. Many who have been noted for the godlessness of their lives have been induced to give their hearts to God, and now take a delight in urging others to enter into the way of life." (4.)

The Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting for the Thames Circuit was held on March 28. The minister, the Rev. W. L. Watkin, reported that he had not had the time to speak to all of the converts who wanted to join the Wesleyan membership. Some of these, however, had joined one or other of the existing class meetings, and were to be received as full church members. Others were being received on trial for membership. But the increase in membership was considerable. The other denominations had also benefited from the special meetings. "Of those he had been able to visit he spoke in a very hopeful tone. It was evident the Spirit of God was moving in their hearts, and that they were endeavouring to lead a new life. During the quarter the congregations had improved, both in attendance and in the attention that is observed during the services." (5.)

Naturally, this revival, and the published report of it, produced a completely new situation for Margaret Hampson, totally different from what she had experienced before.

Immediately she began to get requests for her time and services in other parts of the colony of New Zealand. Her devotional life and personal relationship with God, linked to the care she had to take of her personal health, began to govern how much of this work she undertook, and how concentrated the activity was to be. Because of her non-denominational attitude toward this evangelism, it did not matter which denomination asked for her help, but she expected to have other churches involved as well.

At that time of her life, she was described as being of moderate stature, inclined to plumpness, and with "a comely face and pleasing expression. She by no means despises the attractions of a comely dress, and her religion is evidently a happy one." The expression of her face was said to indicate someone at peace with herself. That is, her face showed her complete trust in God, for every detail of her life, as well as for every aspect of success in her work. She rested in God for guidance in all matters, and depended upon God for the power of the Holy Spirit to make her work successful. The promises of God, and His faithfulness, were the source of her hope. She had an "admirable" voice for singing and speaking, and pronounced her words with such clarity that every word could be understood. In her addresses, she could argue well, and could use any object which happened to be nearby as a means of teaching spiritual lessons. She used stories and illustrations to great effect, many taken from her own experience. She spoke with great earnestness and sincerity. The use of her language, emotion, gestures, and the content of her sermons, all flowed together naturally, with the same "abandon" as if by a gifted actress. It was becoming clear that God had raised up a talented evangelist, definitely endued also with real spiritual power in answer to prayer.

For two years Margaret Hampson went to various centres around New Zealand, including towns of modest size, as well as the more populous centres. Several of these missions were reported briefly in the *New Zealand Wesleyan*. Four others were reported upon more extensively. Increasingly, her reputation as a talented and effective evangelist developed, and her name became more widely known. When it became known that she was to come to a locality for a mission, expectation became high that God's blessing would come.

The missions lasted for seven or ten days, and her timetable included adequate time for her to rest, to maintain the devotional side of her life, and for her to be involved to some degree in the main preparations for the mission. These missions developed a greater emphasis upon prayer than had been the case with other evangelistic efforts, although all the other missions clearly emphasised the role of prayer as the real basis of their success.

Christchurch

A ten-days' mission was planned to commence in Christchurch on Saturday, March 20, 1882. Although a basic committee had existed for several months, the main organisation for the mission was got together in the week before the mission started.

The first meeting on that Saturday was held in St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, with about 500 people present, and was for Christian workers. The address by Mrs. Hampson was divided into two parts. The first part was about the value of proper organisation for Christian work, and for unity in this work. Another hymn was sung, and she then spoke from Isaiah, chapter six, about the holiness of God, and our awareness of our sinfulness in the light of this holiness. The address concluded with a series of practical instructions for those who were to work in the enquiry room, and for Christians to do things to make others feel welcome at the meetings in the theatre.

On the Sunday evening, there was a large meeting in the Theatre Royal. After a sermon on Romans i: 16, about thirty people went into the enquiry room.

On Monday, Mrs. Hampson was not well. Also the theatre was not available for their use. There was a prayer meeting in the Congregational Church, followed in the evening by an interesting communion service in the schoolroom of the Durham Street Wesleyan Church.

On Tuesday, there was again a noon-day prayer meeting in the Congregational Church, with a large attendance. In the evening, the theatre was crowded, and Mrs Hampson preached from Isaiah 55, and from Luke ix: 10. - "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

On the Wednesday, there were three services in the theatre. About 300 attended from 12.30 to 1.30 p.m., to hear an address on Jacob wrestling with the angel. In the afternoon, there was a meeting for ladies only, with about 850 present, and a prayer union was formed, to be called the Christchurch Ladies' Prayer Union. About 240 joined initially. At the evening service, the theatre was full, and the address was on the new birth, based upon verses 7 and 14 of John, chapter 3.

On Thursday there were two services. At the evening service, a special effort was made to welcome people who had come some distance to the meeting. The theatre was not big enough to hold the crowd. The sermon was based upon Luke chapter 15, and John xiv: 6.

On Friday, there were again two services. At night, the theatre was again full, and the sermon was based upon the words "Wash, and be clean," from the Old Testament story of Naaman the leper.

On Saturday, apart from the usual mid-day prayer meeting, the evening service was a Praise service. After an address by Mrs. Hampson from First Peter i: 3 and following, several people in the congregation stood up and thanked God for their conversion during the mission.

On Sunday there were three services. At 8.30 a.m., about 700 were present for Mrs. Hampson's address. The service in the afternoon was for children. The theatre was crowded. Mrs. Hampson delivered a short address, and was assisted by the Presbyterian minister, the Rev. J. Elmslie, who said he had never before seen such a meeting of children in this colony.

In the evening, the theatre was packed, and hundreds could not gain admittance. Two or three ministers held overflow meetings outside the theatre. "Of course there were the usual interruptions incidental to such meetings - ladies carried out faint, glasses of water and bottles of smelling salts passed in all directions - but the power of God was upon the speaker, and the people were under a spell which could not be broken. The text was Psalm xxvii: 5, and 8. At the after-meeting the large stage was crowded with anxious enquirers."

On Monday evening, the address was on the words, "Behold! I stand at the door and knock."

On Tuesday there was the usual mid-day prayer meeting, and the evening meeting was for the converts. The converts gained early admittance to the theatre by handing in tickets giving their name, address, and church preference. The crowd was admitted a little later. The address was directed to the converts, based upon the text, Colossians ii: 6. At the close of the meeting, the message of total abstinence was presented, with many people signing the temperance pledge.

On Wednesday afternoon, a meeting was held in the Durham Street Wesleyan Church for the Christchurch Women's Prayer Union, which had been formed the previous week. The huge church was packed, and many more joined the Union.

The concluding service, on the Wednesday evening, was a Communion Service, held in St. Paul's Church, conducted by several of the local ministers, under the presidency of the Rev. J. Elmslie. "The communicants filled every seat on the floor of the church, and earnest onlookers occupied the gallery. This was a service long to be remembered."

A ministers' conference was held after the mission. They all spoke of the good done, of spiritual uplift, and of conversions. Between 500 and 600 had given in their names as having been converted during the mission. The published report of the mission expressed "unmingled pleasure" at the mission, and its results. In several churches, special services were held after the mission, and some more converts were gained who had been influenced by the earlier meetings. Other conversions occurred in some of the cottage prayer meetings. (6.)

Ashburton

The Ashburton people had heard news from other places of the "marvellous power which attended her preaching." In the previous weeks, Mrs. Hampson had led missions in towns to the south of Ashburton - Waimate, Oamaru and Timaru, as well as the one in Christchurch - and a committee was formed from among the various churches to see if she would preach in Ashburton also. They did not know when she might arrive, but noon-day and evening prayer meetings were commenced immediately.

When the date of her expected arrival was finally known, full scale preparations began to be made, from day to day, with meetings addressed by the various ministers. This not only raised the sense of expectation generally, but also produced a higher spiritual tone amongst those who longed for a Pentecostal blessing. A final meeting of the organising committee was held in the Wesleyan Church on Thursday, 4th May, 1882. The main mission meetings were to be held in the Town Hall.

Mrs. Hampson opened her mission on Thursday 11th, with a Women's meeting (200 present). At that meeting a Women's Prayer Union was formed, and a secretary appointed. A large number of names were handed in as members. The formation of such a Prayer Union at the beginning of a mission was a regular feature of Mrs. Hampson's work.

Noon-day prayer meetings were very interesting occasions, and prayer requests “came in by the score” A meeting for children only was held on the Sunday afternoon, and were addressed by two ministers and a layman, before Mrs. Hampson also spoke briefly.

“But it was at the evening meetings where the power was felt most, and where results were manifest. Night after night the Town-hall was filled as it never had been before, and the efforts of the stewards were taxed to the utmost to provide even standing accommodation for those who thronged to hear the Gospel preached, and who were spell-bound. On Saturday night, May 13, business in the township was nearly suspended, several shops being closed so that the employees might attend the meeting. There never has, however, been such a concourse of people in Ashburton as on that Sunday evening. The body of the hall, aisles, gallery, and ante-rooms were crowded to excess, while every inch of the stage, from which Mrs. Hampson spoke, was occupied by a crowd of eager listeners, who seemed to be afraid of losing one syllable which fell from her lips. Every evening the enquiry-room was filled to overflowing with anxious [people who were] seeking Christian counsel and prayers; and, from the converts’ tickets handed in, it is estimated that nearly 200 found the Saviour. Moreover, professing Christians, some of many years’ standing, have been quickened, and see the truth as they never saw it before, while God’s children have received an impetus to seek a loftier altitude of Christian excellence. Truly our eyes have beheld wondrous sights. A noticeable feature, and one which goes far to prove the genuineness of the work done during the mission, is the fact that prominent men of business - men of intelligence and thought, some of them not easily moved to any exhibition of feeling or emotion - were found, among others, who have been penitently seeking the Lord, and to-day are rejoicing in a sense of pardon.

At the last service Mrs. Hampson held here, at the conclusion of her address to the converts, she advanced the claims of total abstinence, and advised each Church to establish its own Christian Temperance Society. At that meeting nearly 500 signed the pledge, and the Churches have already taken the hint, and started temperance organisations for their members. It is intended to carry on evangelistic services in Ashburton for at least a month longer, and, although Mrs Hampson has left us, the work is still going on, believers are being strengthened, and sinners enquiring ‘What they must do to be saved.’” (7.)

All of the churches benefited from those converted. Five weeks later, the Ashburton Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting reported that they had received 46 people on trial for membership, and there were now 20 catechumens. “Fervent gratitude was expressed to Almighty God for the gracious influences experienced in the circuit during the quarter.” (8.)

Wanganui.

The following description of Mrs. Hampson’s mission in Wanganui was provided by the local Wesleyan minister, the Rev. W. J. Williams, who was one of the leading ministers of his denomination.

“A little more than twelve months ago Mrs. Hampson was invited to conduct an evangelistic mission in Wanganui, and, on the part of many, prayer has been offered without ceasing for the success of the mission ever since. It is this previous preparation of the way of the Lord in the hearts of His praying people that goes far to account for the very gratifying measure of success with which the recent mission has been crowned.

For six weeks previous to the commencement of the mission there was a daily prayer-meeting, held at noon, in the schoolroom of Trinity Wesleyan church; while two evenings in each week were set apart for the same purpose of special prayer. The noon meeting, on Saturday, October 28, was conducted by Mrs. Hampson, and her address, on Jacob wrestling with the Angel, was a fitting introduction to the services that were to follow. Those who for weeks and months had been asking

for "power from on high" for themselves, and for God's special agent in this mission, felt that, by that introductory service, they were drawn into the place of power, and that God Himself was putting His own seal upon the work that had been undertaken in His name. A united Communion service was held in Trinity Church on the Sunday morning following, and was conducted by the Rev. J. A. Taylor, President of the Conference, at that time on a visit to Wanganui. In the evening of the same day evangelistic services were commenced in the Princess Theatre, which was filled to overflowing. Mrs. Hampson preached from 'The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,' and, in response to her awakening appeals, nearly forty on that first evening found their way into the enquiry room. The mission, thus conspicuously begun, went on deepening in power and interest and blessing for the ten days during which it lasted. It is not needful to describe the order and method of Mrs. Hampson's services, which happily are now becoming well known throughout the whole of New Zealand. In Wanganui the weather was favourable, the arrangements made by the committee were most complete, and the theatre was crowded nightly with audiences which represented all sections of the community. Mrs. Hampson's addresses were characterised by a remarkably vivid and faithful setting forth of the need and importance of the Gospel, and, best of all, by a power which was effectual in leading hundreds of anxious ones to accept Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Her expositions of Bible truth at the noon meetings made those meetings such seasons of delight and profit as can never be forgotten. The service for testimony on the Saturday evening was one that calls for special notice. Experience meetings have not been popular in any section of the Church in Wanganui, not excepting even the Methodists; and that, in the presence of a theatre full of people, scores could be found getting to their feet and testifying, in rapid succession, what great things the Lord had done for them, was an indication of a marvellous change that led many who saw it to weep again for joy.

On the afternoon of the second Sunday the theatre was packed with children, who were addressed, first of all, by the Rev. W. J. Williams, and then, in a touching and appropriate manner, by Mrs. Hampson. Her address on Temperance was delivered on the second Monday evening, and with such effect that more than 300 took the pledge.

A farewell service was held on Nov. 8, when six hundred persons sat down to tea provided in the Drill-hall. In the meeting held afterwards in the theatre Mrs. Hampson was presented with an address, referring, in grateful terms, to the very enjoyable and successful mission that had just been brought to a close. There was also a second address, presented from the children, in which they placed on record their thanks for the memorable service which Mrs. Hampson had conducted for their special benefit. Both addresses were beautifully engrossed and illuminated by Mr. R. W. Pownall. Short speeches were delivered by the chairman, Mr. G. Carson, the Rev. W. J. Williams, and Messrs. Tucker and Calders. Mrs. Hampson replied in suitable terms, dwelling at length upon the necessity that the young converts should, without delay, identify themselves with some section of the Christian Church.

Thus was brought to a close a mission, which, for its effect upon the Wanganui public, will long be remembered. Never before, probably, have so many been brought together in this town to listen, night after night, to stirring Gospel appeals; and never before have God's people realised so abundantly the joy of harvest. At a recognition service, held in Trinity Wesleyan church the evening after the farewell service, more than one hundred names were read of those who, as a result of the mission, had signified their intention to join that branch of Christ's Church. Most of those who had given in their names were present at the service, and were cordially welcomed and recognised by the minister and congregation. The Presbyterian and Anglican churches, and the recently-formed Baptist church, have also had numerous additions to their membership.

"The mission has further borne fruit in the formation of a Women's Prayer Union, a Young Women's Prayer Union and a Young Men's Christian Association. The publicans of Wanganui complain of a serious falling off in their receipts from the sale of drink; the theatre, in Mrs. Hampson's absence, fails to have the drawing power it had of yore, and there is a sad wail from

managers and actors concerning a beggarly array of empty benches. On the other hand, the ordinary services of the churches are attended as they never have been previously, and ministers and people are rejoicing together in the experience of spiritual prosperity. It is impossible to withhold the prayer that Mrs. Hampson may be long spared and strengthened for the work for which she is so admirably qualified; and that every town in the colony may be favoured with such a visitation of grace as that which has, of late, been vouchsafed to Wanganui.” (9.)

PART TWO: AUSTRALIA

Margaret Hampson’s renown as an evangelist in mass meetings depended, therefore, upon these two years of evangelism in New Zealand, starting with the notable spiritual movement at the Thames. Her reputation grew as a result of a number of factors. One factor that was clearly visible was that she became recognised in that time as a very talented evangelistic preacher. Other factors were the wisdom with which she approached this work, and her dependence on prayer.

Her reputation also grew because a strange spiritual power so often attended her messages, which many Christians recognised as the naked converting power of the Holy Spirit given in answer to her faith and prayers, and the prayers of many others. In this sense, her missions provided an object lesson in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit clearly felt by everyone who was present. Her simple and real faith in the promises of Christ provided the basis for this exhibition of God’s power in her ministry. This was the main reason why those people who asked her to conduct a mission were so confident that blessing would come when she visited a place in order to preach.

Melbourne 1883

The invitation for her to conduct a mission in Melbourne, followed by ten days in Adelaide, in the middle of 1883, seemed mainly to be supported by Baptist people. The local organising committee in Victoria, however, was not denominational, according to her normal practice.

Before and during the mission in Melbourne, only three references to the mission appeared in the *Spectator and Methodist Chronicle*. The first was a letter from the organising committee, setting out the parameters of the mission, and inviting support. The other two references were single paragraphs. One referred to the break in the middle of the mission when Mrs. Hampson lost her voice, and the second referred to the close of the mission, and a comment upon its successes.

After the mission was over, the editor wrote and published a good quality article which surveyed her career and work, and the style of her evangelism. His previous lack of interest was alleged to be due to the fact that Mrs. Hampson had no widespread reputation as an evangelist when she arrived in Melbourne. She came unheralded, as opposed to the Rev. Dr. Alexander Somerville, and Mr. Henry Varley, who both had reputations in this area before they came here to conduct missions. (10.)

However, anyone with up-to-date knowledge about evangelists outside of Methodism at that time would have been aware of the newly formed reputation that Margaret Hampson had developed over the previous two years through her New Zealand work.

The local Melbourne newspapers gave Mrs. Hampson much better coverage, especially the *Telegraph*. Some details from this source, and also from the June 29 article in the *Spectator*, appeared in the *Methodist Journal*, to help prepare South Australians for her visit to their State.

(11.)

The Melbourne mission started late in the month of May, and with a break of one week in which committee members took charge of the meetings, Mrs. Hampson concluded the mission around the middle of June, 1883. In several instances, when such a break occurred, the mission would be extended by a week, so that Mrs. Hampson still preached the number of times that was planned at first. The main evening meetings were held in the Melbourne Town Hall, which was regularly crowded to excess. The day-time meetings were held in the Temperance Hall.

As she did everywhere she went, one of her major constructive actions was to start several Women's Prayer Unions. Over seven hundred people handed in their names as converts, and they strengthened many of the city's churches.

Adelaide 1883

This mission followed on soon after the mission in Melbourne.

The main meetings were held in the Adelaide Town Hall, but other meetings were held in the Flinders Street Baptist Complex and in the Pirie Street Wesleyan property. The Wesleyans in Adelaide supported this mission much more than appears to have happened in Melbourne. Indeed, over several weeks, the *Methodist Journal* published the best record that we have of any series of Margaret Hampson's meetings anywhere. The editor followed this up by re-publishing the reports of her meetings as a separate booklet. (12.)

The Opening Meeting

“Her first service [July 20] in the Flinders-street Baptist Lecture Hall showed her spirit and revealed one of the sources of her power. She is eminently a believer in the efficacy of prayer. The object of this meeting (which was for women only) was to organise bands of praying women for the purpose of mutual help. In her address she spoke of such a union having been entered into by three young mothers who felt the necessity of some such assistance. Since then thousands had followed their example, and the answers to prayer had been marvellous. She spoke of the blessed prospect of the world being through means of this kind belted by the zone of prayer. Whatever women could or could not do they could all pray. Many instances of direct responses to the appeals of praying women were given, and the good influence of the meeting was a happy promise of what might be expected during the approaching mission.

The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, and at the close of the meeting a considerable number of those present gave their names as members of the prayer union that was proposed. It may be hoped that the movement will spread, and prove both permanent and highly useful.” (13.)

This report was followed by similar details about the meeting for mission workers, on the Saturday night, which was held in the Pirie Street Lecture Hall. The mission proper started on the Sunday evening, 22nd July, and reports were included in this issue of the *Methodist Journal* for each meeting until the Wednesday evening meeting, and including the noon-day meetings.

Each evening meeting was covered in the next issue of the *Methodist Journal* up to the second Tuesday evening, again including the noon-day meetings. The meeting on this second Tuesday was the final call to unconverted people made as part of this mission outreach.

The issue for Saturday, August 10, provided firstly a *resume* of the mission. This was followed by a description of the final meeting on Wednesday evening, 1st August. The meeting took the form of a tea-meeting and a public meeting, held in the Town Hall and banquet room. Although careful

arrangements had been made, the crowd was so great that the plans became difficult to carry out. A few little incidents showed that the crowd was actually too large for safety if any accident had occurred. The description of this meeting was followed by an outline of the temperance address which was given by Mrs. Hampson in the second half of this final meeting. This temperance address was "justly" described as "one of the most remarkable ever delivered in Adelaide," because of the way it was based upon Mrs. Hampson's extensive experience in the slums of Liverpool. The *Methodist Journal* then provided reports about the Children's Meeting, the Prayer Unions, the two all-night prayer meetings, and a long list of Praise Notes was added. A detailed Valedictory was also published.

The editor also included, in his own column, an article entitled "After the Revival." The editor was not only referring to Mrs. Hampson's meetings, however, because a number of local revivals had occurred in various parts of South Australia that year.

Sydney 1883

The mission in Sydney commenced on Sunday evening, 16th September. The main evening meetings were held in the Exhibition Building in Prince Alfred Park, Surry Hills, which seated around 6,000 people. The daytime meetings were held in the Protestant Hall. A description of the opening meeting was published in the *Weekly Advocate*.

"The Exhibition Building in Prince Alfred Park has probably contained as great a multitude within its walls before, but never was there so orderly, devout, and solemn a gathering as took place there on Sunday evening last. The sight from the platform, of 6,000 people all engaged in the one service, and listening with eager interest to the words of life as they fell from the lips of the lady preacher, was one calculated to stir the soul, awaken the sympathies, and arouse the gratitude of all lovers of Christ. Great efforts had been made by the committee to improve the acoustic properties of the building, by hanging curtains from the galleries, running wires down the aisle and across the transepts, projecting the platform well into the building and covering it with a well-designed sounding-board and liberally laying the floor with sawdust, so as to deaden the sound of tramping feet. These efforts appeared to be entirely successful. So far as we could learn, even those sitting on the very outskirts of the crowd could hear distinctly every word the preacher said.

The service was announced to commence at 7.30, but at 7 p.m. Mr. W. H. M'Clelland took his place as conductor in front of the choir, who led in the singing of the hymns which were to be sung during the evening. This was not only a practice for the choir, but it familiarised the congregation with the tunes in which they were presently to join. At half-past 7, Mrs Hampson took her place on the platform. She is a lady of medium stature, stoutly built, and with a pleasing countenance, radiant with what Joseph Cook calls 'solar light.' She commenced the service by giving out the well-known words of the Old Hundredth - a hymn peculiarly appropriate to such a service and to be sung by so vast a crowd. Then the Rev. W. G. Taylor offered prayer, another hymn was sung, and Mrs Hampson read as her lesson Isaiah lv. Some very telling remarks were made on several verses as they were read, particularly on the second verse: 'Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?' &c; and worldlings, sceptics and freethinkers came in for some counsels, admonitions, and appeals, very tender in spirit and convincing by their logic and incisiveness. Another hymn followed, and a prayer by the preacher which seemed to carry all present into the presence-chamber of heaven, and then came the text and sermon. 1st Timothy i. 15, was the passage chosen; 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' Space will not permit of our giving a full report of an address of wonderful beauty, persuasiveness, and power, which was based upon this glorious old text, and which occupied over an hour in delivery. First taking up the word 'sinners,' the preacher showed how this term included all, and, specifying various classes, fastened home upon all the one great charge, and included all under the one same

condition, from which there was no escape. The Gospel was only good news for sinners, and if a man was not prepared to take the sinner's place, the preacher had no message of salvation for him. This point was beautifully illustrated and powerfully enforced. Then came the old, old story of the love of God and the work of Christ; and proofs were given of the faithfulness or truth of the saying, and its worthiness to be received with the whole mind and heart. Some of the preacher's sentences flashed like diamonds with the white, clear light of grace and truth, and her appeals were overpowering by their tenderness and force. One by one the various classes represented in the audience - wanderers, backsliders, formalists, hypocrites, and freethinkers - were dealt with, and there were but few present who could not feel that some or other of the preacher's words were applicable to them. The address, as a whole, was an appeal to the head as well as the heart; - there was something to stir the brain as well as the emotions; and any freethinkers who were present must have felt very uncomfortable as they listened to the merciless demolition of their flimsy structures, and the loving appeals to cultivate true manhood, and commence to live for something noble, by coming to the Saviour's feet. Mrs. Hampson speaks with wonderful fluency and vigour, possesses a voice of great flexibility and power, is exceedingly winsome in manner, at times rising to genuine eloquence, and throughout is intensely in earnest. She is evidently a woman of culture as well as of great spiritual power.

The address over, enquirers were invited into the enquiry room, and a large number availed themselves of the opportunity of obtaining help and counsel in the matter of deciding for Christ. Amongst them, we learn, were several interesting cases of professed freethinkers, who testified to salvation by faith before the meeting closed. Altogether, the service was a memorable one, that will not soon be forgotten." (14.)

The following Saturday was the first service specially for children.

"The view that met our gaze as we sat on the platform of the old Exhibition Building last Saturday afternoon was one never to be forgotten. Our soul was stirred to its innermost depths as the bonny faces and the sparkling eyes of from four to five thousand dear children were turned towards us, all eager - as night after night had been the older occupants of those same chairs - to see and listen to that honoured servant of the Lord, Mrs. Hampson. Behind and around them were crowded large numbers of older folk; whilst down from the gallery on every side of us a deep fringe of faces looked upon the interesting sight below. A choir of some eighty voices led the service of praise, five thousand slips containing the hymns to be sung having previously been distributed amongst the children. It is worth a long trudge to listen to 'We sing of the realms of the blest,' 'Shall we gather at the river,' and other hymns as simple, and as appropriate, warbled forth with a purity, a freshness, and a power such as one might seek for in vain outside such a gathering of juveniles. A stirring prayer of about a minute in length was offered by the Rev. Dr. Steel (Presbyterian). The lesson was read by the Rev. T. B. Tress (Episcopalian), the addresses being delivered by Revs W. G. Taylor (Wesleyan), J. Vaughan (Episcopalian), and Mrs. Hampson. Everything was short, lively, and to the point. Mr. Taylor spoke of a loving Saviour present all over the building; present to make every boy and girl happy; present to claim there and then the love of all in that great gathering. Mr. Vaughan dwelt upon the Bible as a book full of pictures about children, and in loving words urged the young people to 'open the door' of their hearts to admit of Jesus. Mrs. Hampson got right to the hearts of the dear little ones as only a mother can. With words of bursting love, uttered in tones of pleading earnestness, and with eyes overflowing again and again with tears, she besought the children to come to Jesus. And, thank God, come they did. It is all very well for Mr. Dry-as-dust, away off in yonder corner of the gallery, to shrug his shoulders, and, looking down upon the scene through his horn-rimmed spectacles, to deal out by the yard cynical criticisms on what is taking place before him. Had he gone, as did the writer, down into the enquiry-room at the close of the first meeting, and listened to the intelligent questions of those juvenile enquirers after truth; had he seen their earnestness, and listened to their prayers, he might have got his own old heart warmed up again. Whilst Mr. Tress, in the larger building, gave counsel to some 150 of the younger children

who stayed to the after-meeting, crowds of the older ones went into the enquiry-room, where ministers, city missionaries, and experienced Christians were gathered to give advice. The results of that gathering will never be known upon earth. Every care was taken to obtain the names and addresses of such as had professed to find Jesus. At this moment the writer has on his desk before him a precious record of two hundred and one young persons, of ages ranging between ten and eighteen, all of whom professed to receive good from that service. To God alone be all the glory. Doubtless, some will say that before long the most of them will be just where they were before the service; probably so, if Christians stand aloof from them, 'to watch,' as say some, 'to see whether the work be genuine or not.' But, thank God, not so if the Christians of Sydney look after them, nourishing the young life, and, putting on one side the critic's cap, seek with sympathetic tongue and prayerful heart to feed the tender lambs." (15.)

The services did not continue every night. There were several breaks, partly to protect Mrs. Hampson's voice and general health. The final meeting was on Monday, 15th October. The first part of this meeting was a testimony meeting, at which over 800 converts were recognised. This was followed directly by a strong address by Mrs. Hampson in favour of the Temperance movement, to which many people responded.

Perhaps the most interesting and instructive article that was published in the *Weekly Advocate* in relation to this mission was written by the Rev. Joseph H. Fletcher, who was the theological tutor in charge of training men for the Wesleyan ministry in Sydney at that time. Its main purpose was to give news and information about the mission to the great many readers of the *Advocate* who lived in the country, and who could not get to the meetings in Sydney. It is very difficult to do justice to Fletcher's article in a summary. He had his own interesting qualities as a writer and preacher.

After mentioning the difficulty that some people have with women preachers, Fletcher pointed out that "her audiences are composed very largely of men, and yet she has won from the Christian women of this city, old and young, cultured and ignorant, admiration and affection, wholly unsurpassed in this part of the world."

He enquired what great thing people might have gone out to see, when they went to hear Mrs. Hampson. It wasn't Dickens or Shakespeare, or anything high and mighty. It was simply "Mrs. Hampson, preacher of the Gospel." She was a powerful story-teller, yet her illustrations were very simple. But she had much personal experience in the seamy side of life, and also of personal grief. She hit very hard at scepticism and unbelief. She did not say anything new, yet she made the old doctrines shine with a new clarity. She managed to preach well to the men, but also included many womanly insights which a male preacher would never be able to introduce so well. Again there was a comparison made between Mrs. Hampson, with the results which flowed from her work, and that of other visiting preachers. This time Dr. Somerville and "California" Taylor were discussed.

Regarding the Testimony Meeting, Fletcher said:- "Of the depth and magnitude of Mrs. Hampson's work there was evidence in the Friday night meeting. Criticism itself must have felt awed as it saw the dense mass in the front of the platform of those who professed to have received Christ during the services at the Exhibition Building. But when they rose in tens and scores, at Mrs. Hampson's request, to confess in the fewest possible words the fact of their full surrender to Christ, and then join with their 'spiritual mother,' as she truly called herself, to sing the Doxology together, I should think there were few old Christians present who did not long to go down and take them by the hand and say, 'Thanks be to God!' The emotion was deep though the expression of it was quiet; but we may be sure that our old Methodist fathers, looking from their seats in glory, rejoiced, and longed to come and mingle with a scene that brought their own early joys and triumphs to mind."

Fletcher concluded with these words:- "No one could surpass Mrs. Hampson in the urgency of her demand to the converts to call at once on some Christian minister, and unite fully with some Christian Church. The neglect of this duty she affirmed to be, in her experience, the invariable antecedent of declension. And now it becomes a test of the spiritual state of the Churches, whether

they are able not only to gather in and nurture these hundreds of avowed disciples, but to continue the good work. For if the work be from the Holy Ghost rather than Mrs. Hampson - since the cause will remain after the instrument has left - we may hope that by other instruments the same Great Worker will be pleased still to bless and to save. All our earnest ministers have not excelled in evangelistic work; but those who did not, admired and sustained those who did. John Smith, who set Sheffield on fire with his seraphic zeal in winning souls, found a biographer in the scholarly Treffry; and a later edition of his life has a preface by Dr. Dixon, a man of profound and philosophic thought and, when roused, a mighty orator, but wholly unlike John Smith. We may be financiers or administrators, and useful in our way, but without great revivals we shall soon have no finances to administer, and no organisations with any *go* in them to be worth the steering. Earnest, successful revivalists blast the stones out of the quarry and give us hodmen and masons the material for our business. A Church without revivals is a noble family without heirs, an army without reserves, a garden without flowers, - an edifice, it may be, of stately proportions, in whose 'dim religious light' thousands worship with melodious orthodoxy; but its heroes are only marble effigies, and its saints are all in the painted windows." (16.)

In the same issue, the editor provided his estimation of Mrs. Hampson's abilities as a preacher, and of the Pentecostal power of God which flowed through her sermons. He concluded with these words:-

"Mrs. Hampson's preaching may have been phenomenal, but it was greatly owned of God; and none can deny that it combined some of the highest elements of pulpit oratory. Everybody could understand it. It ran limpid as waters that sparkle in the sunshine; it possessed elements of emotional power that disarmed criticism, and it melted hearts as easily as fire melts iron, so that tears watered eyes that had been dry for many a long day. At the same time, the fires of enthusiastic Christian zeal were tempered with admirable sagacity, prudence and practical good sense." (17.)

Mrs. Hampson did not leave Sydney immediately. On the last Saturday in October, she performed the official act of laying the foundation stone of the new Y.M.C.A. building in Pitt and Bathurst Streets, Sydney, with about 5,000 people present. (18.)

1884

Tasmania

Mrs. Hampson came back to Australia in 1884 to conduct missions in Tasmania, and in certain major Victorian towns. One meeting only was held in Melbourne, in transit, and several meetings were held in Sydney, but no formal missions took place in the mainland capital cities.

Tasmanian Wesleyan newspapers before 1893 have not survived, so our only source of any substantial information about the two missions in Tasmania is the *Spectator*.

The first mission was held in Hobart. The bits of news which appeared mentioned the fact that several of the local sceptics were present at the mission night after night, and that many churches were expected to gain from the mission. In the end, 258 people handed in their names as converts.

A report on the Children's Service went as follows:-

"A Children's Service in connection with Mrs. Hampson's mission was held in the Melville-street Wesleyan Church on Saturday last. The church was crowded with children and their friends. It was a delightful sight to see so many youthful faces, a sweet sound to hear so many youthful voices

blending together in harmony. One of the circuit ministers opened the service; Rev. Mr. Bowe, Free Methodist, gave an address; and then Mrs. Hampson followed with a winning, pleading, simple, but telling address, for a number of scholars stood up as deciding for Jesus. The teachers of Chalmers' Presbyterian Church school must have been pleased to have seen so many of their children stand up nobly as desirous of receiving Jesus as their Saviour." (19.)

The Hobart Wesleyans continued special meetings for a week after Mrs. Hampson finished, although this meant that special services had been held for six weeks straight. Matthew Burnett had been preaching there immediately before Mrs. Hampson.

A much longer, and more thorough report about her mission in Launceston was published some weeks later. This report included the following:-

"Mrs. Hampson's mission in Launceston commenced on Sunday evening, 1st June, and closed on Wednesday evening, 11th June, and has been attended with very gracious results. She conducted her services every night in the Wesleyan Church, that being the largest building for the purpose in Launceston. A platform was erected in front of the pulpit, where, on one hand, she was supported by a combined choir, and on the other by the ministers of all the denominations, including Canon Brownrigg, of the Church of England.

Every night the church was crowded to its utmost capacity, but was found amply large enough to seat all who came, except on the last Sunday evening, when some scores of people had to be turned away. On that evening the Rev. H. Baker conducted the ordinary service, which commenced at half-past six o'clock, preaching to an audience that filled every part of the building. At the close of that service people came pouring in from the other churches, until every seat left vacant by about one hundred who retired and every available bit of standing or sitting room was occupied.

Her style and manner of preaching and work is so well known to many in Victoria that I need not descant upon it. She possesses a magnificent voice, with great fluency, freedom, and ease of delivery. Her sermons abound in powerful and pathetic appeals, pointed and telling incidents and illustrations, heart-searching applications of divine truth, and scathing denunciations of sin and unbelief. All this, combined with her thorough earnestness, strong conviction of the truth, and manifest sincerity, never fails to captivate her hearers, command their attention, convince their reason, and finally, to lead captive many strong men as well as tender women mourning to the foot of the cross. Hallelujah! Glory to Jesus!

She held mid-day meetings from twelve to one o'clock, at which she gave soul-refreshing expositions of God's Word. Requests for prayer were also sent in and read each day, and praise-notes rendered to Jesus our King for blessings experienced. On Sunday afternoon, the 8th inst., a children's service was held in the Wesleyan Church, to which all the various Sunday-schools in the town gathered their children. And it was a gathering! The building was closely packed with boys and girls in every part. Addresses of a most appropriate and interesting character were given by the Revs. H. Baker [Wesleyan], A. Bird (Baptist), W. Law (Independent), and Mrs. Hampson.

A Young Women's Prayer Union and a Mother's Prayer Union have also been formed, which, we trust, will result in much good. On Tuesday evening those who professed to have received Jesus gave in their names and the church they wished to attend, when they were placed in the front seats specially reserved for them, numbering in all a little over two hundred. Of these there were some attached to every church in the town, but the greater proportion expressed their desire to be connected with the Wesleyan Church.

Mrs. Hampson addressed them in a touching manner, urging them all to watchfulness, steadfastness, and the continuance of their faith in Christ. She especially besought them to get connected at once with some branch of the Christian Church. At the close they all walked past her, when she shook each of them by the hand, gave them a letter containing wise counsel from herself,

greeting the women with a holy kiss.

Wednesday evening being her last meeting, the church was again filled, although the night was wet and cold. A short time was allotted for testimony, when many rose, and, in a few words, spoke of blessing received. Some spoke of quickening and sanctifying grace experienced; others of comfort, light, and hope; and many of having entered into the new life.

At the close of the testimony-meeting Mrs. Hampson gave a most telling and thrilling address on gospel temperance. Her appeals were most powerful, based on incidents she herself had witnessed, and her earnest entreaties to all to abstain from the soul-destroying drink will never be forgotten. About 143 signed the pledge, and over 150 donned the little bit of blue. At this meeting, also, one of the leading Freethinkers of the town fully decided to be the Lord's, and gave in the names of himself, his wife, and family as desirous of joining the Wesleyan Church.

On Thursday morning farewell was taken of Mrs. Hampson by holding a united communion service, which was a blessed season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. This concluded the mission, for which we give praise and glory to God, and adore Him for the wondrous working of the Spirit of His grace." (20.)

ONE MEETING IN MELBOURNE

In July, 1884, Mrs. Hampson passed through Melbourne on her way to Ballarat. She held one meeting only in Melbourne, which was a special meeting with the ladies of the Melbourne and Suburban Prayer Unions to mark their first anniversary. The *Spectator* published a wonderful account of this meeting, written by one of the ladies who was present.

"MRS. HAMPSON with the GIRLS at the ASSEMBLY HALL.

Mrs. Hampson met the girls of the Melbourne and Suburban Prayer Unions in the Assembly Hall, Collins-street, on Friday afternoon last. The afternoon was damp, consequently the attendance was not as large as we had expected - about four hundred girls were present.

Mrs. Hampson's address was so full of interest and power, and did so much good to many, that it seems a pity other girls should not have the benefit, and it would be selfishness keeping it for ourselves alone.

After singing and prayer Mrs. Hampson said she was very weak that afternoon, and had risen from bed to come to the meeting, knowing any ill effects she might suffer from so doing would be more than balanced by the fresh supply of strength she would receive in answer to the girls' prayers for her afterwards.

As the union has just started upon its new year a review of past work and success was made. Many encouraging words were said by Mrs. Hampson: 'Dear girls, you little know what good you have done by your Prayer Union. I have received letters from time to time telling of work which is directly traced to your prayers - answers have been acknowledged to you, but many you have never heard of.' She then reminded us of the great power we girls have, especially with our fathers and brothers. If a brother wants something very much, and asked father for it, and received the reply, 'No,' how often does he come to his sister and say, 'Annie, I do want so and so, please coax father.' When girls get round their father and coax him, they can get anything they want (a boy will take 'no' for an answer, a girl will not). Did not Jesus know of this trait peculiar to women, when He

spoke that parable in Luke xviii.? The judge gave the widow what she wanted, not because he cared for her, nor because he feared God, but because she would not let him alone. You girls have a power your brothers do not possess, and can you not use that power in regard to your Heavenly Father?

‘But, dear girls, I know you have made mistakes this past year. No one has told me, but I know it by experience. Have you been at the meetings every time you had opportunity? Have you taken your part? If not, if you have been silent, you have gone away with a smaller blessing than you might have had. On the other hand, some of you have prayed too long, and thereby discouraged the timid girls, who cannot say more than one sentence aloud. Let your prayers be simple and short, without preface or concluding passages. Then, too, your little addresses have been sometimes too long. Never let them reach ten minutes, unless a visitor comes in whom you much wish to hear. This is a prayer union. Upwards of one hundred short prayers can be offered in half an hour. Think over this advice, and act on it this year.

‘Before leaving home this afternoon I asked my Father to give me a message for you, dear girls, and, opening my Bible, my eyes rested on Psalm xlv. It struck me this Psalm was peculiarly suited to such a prayer union, for the word “daughter” is so often mentioned in it. “The daughter of the King” - that is, of King Jesus - she is described in verse 13 - “She is all glorious within.” Notice, it is not her outward beauty that is mentioned, not the beauty which makes the looking-glass an attraction, but the beauty of a “meek and quiet spirit.” Oh, my dear girls, that is what we want - loveliness of character. But how can we get that meekness? Listen, “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Yoked with Christ, what does that mean? Why, simply this - so united to Him that we walk by His side, step by step.

“Her clothing is of wrought gold,” Gold, wrought gold, is often in the Old testament used as typical of Christ. The spiritual clothing of the Christian girl is of “wrought gold” - that is, Christ's righteousness, His free gift.

‘But what have we in verse 10: “Hearken, O daughter.” Dear girls, that is where so many of us fall into mistakes; we do not hearken. We are forgetful. Oh! how often do our mothers hear the confession, “I didn't think!” I think many of the imperfections of girlhood may be traced to this “want of thought.” “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear!” But mark, there is not only something which she is to remember, but also something she is to forget - namely, “Forget, also, thine own people, and thy father's house.”

‘What would you think of a girl after she was married if she went pining day after day, saying, “I had this and that in my father's house?” Would her husband not say, and rightly so, too, “Well, you had better go back; I wish you had remained there?” Would she not rather live in a tiny cottage with the one she loved than be the home-daughter again in her father's mansion? Would she not rather delight to husband her husband's little means, and ‘make the best of things’ in his home, than be dependent on her father once more? Yes, every true girl would. Is there not a similarity in our treatment of the Lord Jesus? Having given ourselves to Him, earthly things, which we have left behind, should not engage too much of our thoughts. If we become wholly the Lord's, verse 11 will describe our position - “Thy King shall greatly desire thy beauty.” Desired and loved by Jesus, our King.

‘Read in conjunction with this verse 14, first clause - “She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework.” My dear girls, have you ever taken in the beauty of that verse? - “brought unto the King,” “desired by Him,” “brought to the King as His bride in the heavenly Jerusalem,” “brought in raiment of needlework.” Needlework! we all know what that means; not that which is done in a short time, as a seam or a hem, but stitch by stitch, until the design has grown under our fingers. How clumsy we were when first we began to embroider flowers! How often we were inclined to give up in despair! How often we said, “I can't do it!” And yet, stitch after stitch, and how fascinating it grew. “I must finish that little piece before I go out!” “I wonder if I can get that leaf

done before bedtime,” &c.

‘What is the spiritual meaning of this ‘raiment of needlework’? You say “her clothing is of wrought gold.” So it is. But do you think that is the clothing we shall wear in heaven? No, dear girls, our bridal dress will be of our own needlework. Our Lord finds the materials for our heavenly *trousseau*, but we have to make them up. Jesus gives us the “robe of His righteousness” - *i.e.*, the “wrought gold” -but upon this our work has to be done; it is the only foundation. What shall we put on it? Hay, wood, stubble, which will not stand the test? Some have said to me, “I would be quite content to get just inside the gates of heaven.” Would you, dear girls? No, you would not. You would like to have your snow-white dress covered with your own needlework when you are brought to your Lord.

‘The spiritual meaning of this verse came home to me some years ago, when in a baronial hall in ---- shire. I was in a large room hung from ceiling to floor with tapestry. When I looked at the figures, life-size, I thought, “Is it possible this was done by women's fingers?” A corner was loose, and I turned it up. Yes, there were the knots and ugly ends we girls know so well. Hundreds of years ago mistresses and maids worked together at that tapestry when the masters were away at the wars, or on parliamentary business; and it lived all those years and taught me this lessons. “But,” you say, “What is this needlework?” “Work out your own salvation.” Every act done for Jesus, every prayer, every word spoken for Him is a stitch in that work; every tear shed, and every cross taken up for Jesus will be as pearls and gems for our dress.

‘You say, “It is too hard;” “I am always making mistakes.” What about the needlework? How we bungled at first; how much we had to undo! It is work which cannot be done all at once, but stitch by stitch. We may bungle, we are sure to do so at times (thank God, dear girls, that you see your imperfections), but by-and-by we shall see the other side of the needlework; now we see only the wrong side, with all its ugliness, its knots and ends, no beautiful design, but then all will be different. Will you, my dear girls, from this afternoon, this beginning of your new year, start on this “heavenly needlework?” I pray God that, if we never meet on earth again, when we clasp hands before the throne, that this little address (though spoken in weakness) may prove a little piece in my dress of needlework. May God grant it, Amen.’

A short season of prayer followed, in which Mrs. Hampson’s advice respecting short prayers was taken by all who joined in the service.

May our second year’s work and success far surpass our first.

ONE OF THE GIRLS. ” (21.)

THE OTHER MEETINGS

Ballarat, 1884

The mission in Ballarat started on Thursday evening, 3rd July, when Mrs. Hampson addressed about 1200 women in the Academy of Music. “The chief object of this meeting was to form and inaugurate a Women’s Prayer Union.” On the Friday afternoon there was a meeting for younger women to form their own Prayer Union. In the evening, there was the meeting for workers.

The mission to the unconverted started on the Sunday evening, again in the Academy of Music. This time, the noonday gatherings were prayer-meetings, and they commenced on the Monday. The main evening meetings soon moved to the enormous Alfred Hall. (22.)

During the second week of the mission, Mrs. Hampson's voice again gave out, and she was forced to rest. Her committee arranged for a substitute preacher, a Baptist evangelist, the Rev. J. S. Harrison, who preached each evening in various churches.

Mrs. Hampson resumed her preaching on the evening of Sunday, 19th, addressing a meeting of men only in the Academy of Music.

The Monday midday meeting was in the Academy of Music, with the evening meeting in the Alfred Hall. Tuesday was similar to Monday, with a great Temperance Demonstration occurring on the Wednesday. A farewell meeting was held on the Thursday, 23rd, July.

The local newspapers covered the meetings well. The *Ballarat Courier* reported as follows about the meetings on Saturday, July 12th.

“Mrs. Hampson's evangelistic mission continues its wonderful hold upon the attention of the people, and all her meetings are attended by crowded congregations. Mrs. Hampson was, unfortunately, so hoarse in the morning that she had to forego her intention to address the mid-day meeting. The services were, however, not postponed, but taken up by some of the friends of the mission present. In the afternoon Mrs. Hampson had recovered her voice sufficiently to be able to address the throngs of young ladies who crowded the Academy of Music.

The principal meeting, however, was the one held in the Alfred Hall at half-past seven. Long before the hour named the large hall was crowded, every seat and available standing place being taken up, and the building literally packed. The hall was unequal to the demands made upon its space, and hundreds of people were unable to gain admittance. Their eagerness to get in was so great that it was found necessary to close the doors in order to prevent the hall from becoming dangerously crowded and the entrances into it blocked.” A number of local ministers took part in the service. The text for her sermon was Revelation 3.20, “Lo, I stand at the door and knock,” and upon this she elaborated the most powerful and beautiful evangelistic exhortation ever heard in Ballarat. The clear gentle tones of her voice floated through the large hall, and over the hushed multitude, with the all-pervading quality of sunlight, bearing the most kindly admonitions, the most eloquent of affectionate appeals, and breathing the beneficent spirit of Christianity in every period.

Anyone who has once heard Mrs. Hampson will understand the indescribably attractive character of her addresses, and the eagerness with which people throng in thousands to listen to her, and take part in the services of her mission.” (23.)

Sandhurst. (Bendigo)

The Sandhurst mission was put off for several weeks to allow Mrs. Hampson to recover somewhat after the effort at Ballarat. It started on Wednesday, 20th August, with a service for young women in the Masonic Hall, and many of them joined the Women's Prayer Union. Thursday evening about 800 older women crowded the hall, and about 150 joined the Prayer Union.

“These preparatory meetings gave the gentler sex a sample of the power which this lady can wield over an audience, and whetted their appetite for the spiritual feasts which are now to follow.” The workers' meeting was held on the Saturday evening in the Forest Street Wesleyan Church.

The mission to the general public began on the Sunday evening, 24th August, in the Princess' Theatre. Two thousand people were present at this first public meeting. (24.)

The meetings of the first week were considered to be very successful. “Each night Mrs. Hampson's appeals seemed to grow in intense earnestness and power, till those who are already Christ's wondered how any unsaved soul could leave the building without seeking salvation.

The *Independent*, speaking of Thursday's address, said: 'We think it the best yet delivered. She held the closely-packed mass of human beings almost entranced by a flow of eloquence rarely equalled by the best orators of even the sterner sex.' All Mrs. Hampson's powers seemed called into requisition; voice, eyes, hand, all tend to deepen the solemnity of the message... But better than the eloquence and dramatic power, God's Spirit has been present, lifting believers nearer to their Master, bringing sinners to the feet of Jesus." (25.)

But, by the end of August, Mrs. Hampson's voice had given out again. She also had an accident, and injured her leg when alighting from a cab, and was forced to rest for several weeks.

The *Methodist Journal* in Adelaide reported that she had broken her leg. (26.) But the truth was that her injury was not so severe, because she was back preaching again by the middle of the month. When Margaret Hampson could not preach in Bendigo, her place was taken by the Rev. A. J. Clarke, who conducted missions for the Evangelisation Society of Victoria. The mission as a whole was considered to be very successful, and was concluded around the middle of September.

Geelong

Her final mission in Australia was of eight days' length, and occupied most of the last two weeks in September. It was interrupted briefly so that she could take one day of meetings in Ballarat.

One of the farewell meetings in Geelong was the only meeting to be reported upon fairly fully in the *Spectator*. It provides a good example of her wisdom as an evangelist; her liking for the homely touch, and some of the reasons why her evangelistic efforts were appreciated by lay-people and clergy alike. The basis of her simple faith in Christ, and of her wonderful spiritual power, is also seen.

"Mrs Hampson's Farewell Meeting in Geelong. (by a Lady.)

On Monday evening, 29th September, in the Mechanics' Institute, Geelong, Mrs. Hampson addressed an audience crowded to the doors, there not being standing room in any part of the building.

As previously announced, her remarks were particularly directed to those who, during her mission of the previous week, had been led to accept Jesus Christ the Lord as their Saviour. The front section of body of the hall having been reserved, was occupied by the converts, who, to the number of about two hundred, passed in front of Mrs. Hampson at the close of her impassioned address, each receiving her hearty congratulations, together with her parting letter and a card with six short rules for young Christians.

Young Christians! The sight is difficult to describe. Young Christians of both sexes, from twenty to seventy years of age and over. Boys and girls, young men and maidens, men and women in the prime of life, and mothers and fathers with the snow of winter settling kindly on their loving heads, each in their turn filing past to receive the farewell of the one who, by the Holy Spirit's aid, had so lifted up Jesus Christ the Lord that to them, at least, He had become the "chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely."

The apparent fruit is in itself most glorious. Rich have been the first fruits, but the great harvest is to come - we believe is coming quickly. Let all who read, pray earnestly that the good seed may speedily bring forth fruit. The "almost persuaded" may be counted by hundreds, and we believe that great numbers of them will, at no distant period, yield to the active agency of God's Spirit in their hearts, breaking down the barriers of sin and unbelief. His Word, thus faithfully spoken, shall not return unto Him void, but shall accomplish that whereunto He has sent it.

Mrs. Hampson took for her text Col. ii. 6 - 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.' Beloved converts, as ye have received Him. What does it mean to receive? - to accept, to admit, to welcome. Christ Jesus the Lord! How Paul loved to put the titles of our blessed Master thus together. The Christ of God, who throughout the eternal ages, was *with* and *in* the Father, and whom the Father sent unto His own, but they received Him not. But ye have received Him, and to you has been given the power to become the 'sons of God.' He is yours!

Jesus! What music in that name! His name shall be called Jesus, for He shall save from sin. I remember when on board a large steamer in mid-ocean, when the tempest raged and the cry had gone around, "We are going down!" as I went among the terrified men and women, with bowed heads and stifled sobs the cry would come from lip to lip, 'Jesus, save!' 'Jesus, have mercy!' 'Jesus! Jesus!' Oh! no name suggested such safety, pity, succour in the great peril, as that of Jesus the Saviour. Jesus belongs to you. He is yours, for you have received Him. Christ Jesus my Lord! 'Ye do call me Master and Lord,' saith the Saviour, and 'Ye do well, for so I am.' Children in the gospel, take Jesus in this character especially. Thy Lord! Not only Saviour, but Lord! The Lord! Let Him rule over you; bring your will into subjection to His. He is your Chief, to fight your battles for you, to lead and guide you into all truth.

Now we are justified in three ways - first, by blood, His blood judicially accepted by God the Father; secondly, by faith, the instrumental cause of my salvation, the hand by which I take; thirdly, by works, as we gather from the Epistle of James, by which I declare my faith.

Now, beloved, you have come as beggars to receive. From first to last we are recipients, and no matter what our state of grace, whether we be 'babes in Christ' or mature Christians, it is the same with us, for what hast thou that thou hast not received? When we received Jesus He becomes a reality! Don't forget that. No man can receive a shadow. Accepting Jesus makes Him a reality. You can't take Him away. Think how real Jesus is, and treat Him as if He were real. Everything in life - our hopes, prospects, feelings, - are unreal and passing. The undecaying, unchangeable, unalterable *fact* is Jesus Christ.

Now, if you present me with a gift, it becomes *mine*; no longer yours. You have no further right to it, no claim; it is mine. But if I take your gift and do not use it, roll it up carefully in lavender, and put it at the bottom of my box, what a disappointment it will be to you. Jesus must be used, not put in your wardrobes and taken out with your best coat or dress; not kept in your Bibles, and shut up in them every time the book is closed. Honour Jesus by using Him.

You need never be poor while Jesus is rich, ignorant while Jesus is wise, weak while Jesus is strong. As ye have received Him, walk ye in Him; your life is your walk. Your walk is more important than doctrine. The world may not read the Bible, but it will read you and me. Walking is action. Act out the light that God has put into your heart, and He will sanctify your every act.

Religion is designed to make you better wives, more attentive to the home duties, greeting the husband on his return from the fret and worry and weariness of daily duty with the brightest smile; better sons and daughters, more dutiful, more tractable, more amenable. Action begins at the heart. The little duties that seem so small, so unimportant, are those that claim our first attention. The servant girl said: 'My door-mats know that I have given my heart to God; I always sweep under them now.'

Cleanliness follows godliness. It is not talking, but acting; not standing still; not taking a step forward, then another back, or taking two steps over the same ground. Are we taking new steps every day? Or are we going now forward, now backward, never making any advancement or gaining ground?

Let us treat God as a *reality*, and go to Him for fresh supplies daily. How many of you live on old manna, as the Israelites did? Living on past experience. Instead of going for today's supply you are

living on yesterday's experience. Turn out the old manna from the cupboards! Treat your soul as you treat your body - rationally. The soul must be fed, or else the spiritual life will die. Fresh supplies every day must be had, must be used, kept at hand, taken to the battle with us. Ah! if there was more of the *daily gathering*, the present experience, we should not have so many of those stereotyped experiences in our class-meetings, some of those with whom we meet using the same form of expression that they did twenty years ago.

Again, walking is steadiness, not galloping till you are out of breath.

Life is described as a battle. So it is, and I could talk to you about the fight till each one of you would want to don the sword and rush forward to the conflict; but it is more than this - something more important. It is the *steady perseverance* in well doing. Some good people are very active when a revival of religion is being carried on. They run around at such a pace that they are in danger of getting palpitation of spiritual heart; but when the excitement has subsided they settle down into obscurity, and nobody sees or hears of them until another revival, when they again come to the front.

Save us from spasmodic Christianity! Some of you pastors know what I mean by the plodding Christian. He who goes persistently on, fine or foul weather, at his place in the prayer-meeting and the regular services, not to be discouraged from his duty by inconvenience. Ah! that old man or woman in the back corner. Always there. It cheers the heart of their pastor when often he is greatly discouraged.

Oh! beloved, be *steady, steady*. Do not try to build a twenty years' experience in a day. Do not try to build your house from the chimney-pots. It must be stone by stone. Steady! The Master went steady to Gethsemane and Calvary.

Have you ever seen a mother teaching her little one to walk? With what care she balances the little body and directs the uncertain little feet, while again and again she will say, 'Steady, steady, my pet,' till the little one itself will have learnt the word, and as it goes from chair to chair repeats the warning to itself. Walk as *slow* as you like, but do be *steady*. Now, we have only to take one step at a time. No more. We have nothing to do with tomorrow, nothing to do with the troubles of yesterday. One step at a time. Beloved, go with Jesus step by step. Never mind the long way. Do not look at your feet, but look at His face. Listen to what He will tell you, and then you will forget all about the length of the journey." (27.)

Conclusion.

She spoke at meetings twice in Sydney on her way back to her home in New Zealand, going after that to Honolulu for recuperation. So far as I am aware, she did not visit Australia again.

In this article, I have tried to make the original documents speak for themselves in such a way that today's readers can gain an appreciation of the life and work of Margaret Hampson.

CHAPTER THREE

CONVENTIONS FOR PROMOTING HOLINESS

(a.) Historiography

The traditional understanding of the history of Christian Conventions for the Promotion of Holiness in Australia has been dominated by the fame of the coming to Australia of the English Keswick speaker, the Rev. George Grubb, and by the continued influence of the various Keswick-style Conventions in Australia which exist and spread blessings until this day. This view of history has been strengthened by the two published accounts of Grubb's trips to New Zealand and Australia which were published within a year or two of his visits. I believe this traditional view has also been strengthened by the fact that Grubb was an Anglican. The Keswick setup in England was strongly Evangelical Anglican, and the Keswick-style Conventions in Australia have often been dominated by Low Church Anglicans, particularly in New South Wales. This view was even repeated uncritically by Dr. J. Edwin Orr.

I believe that this traditional view of the history of these events is considerably distorted, and needs to be given a much better balance. It ignores almost entirely the role played by most of the Wesleyan Methodists who were involved in this resurgence of interest in Holiness. It ignores especially the role played by the lady American Holiness preacher, Miss Isabella Leonard. The Wesleyans actually led the way in many respects. George Grubb, and the Keswick message, came later.

(b.) The Meaning of the Word, "Convention."

If the word "Convention" is used in a broad sense, then gatherings of Christians for special purposes, and over periods of several days, have been taking place, in one way or another, since the beginning of the history of the Church.

In more recent centuries, famously, the traditional Scottish Communion weekends were spiritual landmarks in the life of a Scottish Presbyterian Parish, and District. Also, John Wesley had called his itinerant Methodist preachers to meet in Conference from a fairly early stage in the history of the Methodist Societies in England.

In the United States of America, the rise of the Camp Meeting movement around 1800 had also marked a hugely important stage in the story of the evangelistic work of the Churches.

These earlier activities became modified into so-called "Protracted Meetings," and eventually into revivalistic mass evangelism campaigns, which marked the late Nineteenth Century.

If the word "Convention" is used in a stricter sense, then it was the Christian Benevolent Societies of the early Nineteenth Century which began to use the "Convention" method, of arranging meetings for several days to promote a particular cause. The Second Great Awakening in England and the United States spawned a number of organisations which promoted many worthy projects aimed at the Christian reformation of society. These organisations used gatherings of a style which

we now associate with “conventions” in order to promote their particular theme - to boost the enthusiasm of their followers, and to impress more people to embrace their cause. (1.)

This “convention” method was then taken over by the political parties in the United States, and it is still used today as a major feature of their activities. Who can escape hearing about the huge and expensive Democratic or Republican Party Conventions which are held in the U.S.A. shortly before each Presidential election? These conventions represent almost the peak of the campaign.

Christian organisations such as the Y.M.C.A. continued to use this format as a basic feature of the way they were organised, and when the Christian Endeavour Movement sprang to life in the early 1880s, Local, District, National and, eventually, World Conventions were organised, and were powerful tools in their hands.

So, the “Convention” method was by no means new when “Conventions for the Promotion of Holiness” began to appear in Evangelical Protestant circles in Australia, late in the Nineteenth Century.

(c.) The Purpose of These Conventions

If we now pay more attention to the **purpose** of the Convention - having special meetings for the promotion of holiness is also something which had been done for many years. It was early in the Nineteenth Century, when the “science” of revivals was just getting under way, that an evangelist would commence his campaign for several nights (or even longer) by addressing the Christians, and calling them to repent of their sins, and renew their full dedication to God. This would be done, not simply to get a better support from these Christians in support of the evangelist's work, and to get them to seek the lost. It was done because the leaders recognised that the power of the Holy Spirit would more readily flow through people who had confessed and repented of their sins, and who had therefore come into a “revived” spiritual state.

The principle was that the power of God to bring sinners to Christ flowed more freely through Christian people who practised a better quality of personal holiness. The Spirit of Prayer was given more fully to “revived” Christians. Their prayers were more readily answered. So the interests of the Kingdom of God were better served. This principle took another form in the Twentieth Century, when Dr. J. Edwin Orr, and others, expressed it - their goal was “the evangelisation of the world through the reviving of the Churches.”

Over the years, the various Australian Methodist Churches organised many “special services - for the revival of the work of God.” These efforts always began with special days or weeks of prayer, and with special sermons addresses to the Church members, calling upon them to stir up the old fire, sweep away the cob-webs, confess their sins and spiritual hindrances, renew their covenant with God, and work hard to save sinners. They usually would be called back to experience “perfect love,” or to practice “entire sanctification,” by an act of faith in Christ.

John Wesley had said that the Methodists would only be successful in their evangelism so long as they emphasised and practised entire sanctification, or Christian Perfection. His followers remembered this for many years, and by the end of the Nineteenth Century, the main Methodist evangelists still emphasised it. Entire Sanctification was a favourite theme of saints like John Hunt, and of evangelists like “California” Taylor, John Watsford and Thomas Cook. As the Twentieth Century developed, however, the emphasis changed.

Evangelicalism, generally, was moulded much more by Methodist doctrine and practice than any people from other denominations would like to admit, especially if they also professed to adhere to some form of Calvinism.

So, the purpose of organising Conventions for the promotion of holiness and Christian service was

by no means new in the late Nineteenth Century.

(d.) Sanctification by Faith

An important feature to remember about the message of Holiness that was being taught in all of these Conventions for the Promotion of Holiness was that the holiness was of a certain Protestant variety, wherein “Sanctification by faith in Jesus Christ” was being strongly emphasised, and was indeed portrayed as the only kind of Holiness that was truly Christian or Scriptural.

So, it did not involve the Rigorism of Mediaeval Catholic practices, or of Catholic Ascetic Monasticism. Nor did it teach that there were two grades of Christians. People became holy by renouncing their own sins, and their own efforts at practising holiness, and by placing their trust in the positive holiness achieved by someone else. Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross not only cleansed and purified the sinner, but made that person positively holy in God’s sight, with Christ’s holiness. Because we are redeemed, and now belong to Christ, and are a part of “His Body,” we share also in His holiness. The response that the sinner needed to make to this gracious act of God’s mercy, was to surrender himself entirely to be humbly obedient to the will of Christ for his life, primarily as it is revealed through the Scriptures, and in the way the Holy Spirit guides that individual’s private relationship with God. Obedience to the Scriptures was the cornerstone of this, as the leaders were well aware of the many ways people can deceive themselves in following impressions and feelings, believing these to be indicators from God. People can also be deceived through misunderstanding the meaning of the Scriptures.

True holiness, therefore, was seen as Christ’s holiness. We partake of it by belonging to Christ, and relying upon Him. This also has to produce actions in our lives which are consistent with this holiness. This will be seen in the fruits produced by Christ in the believer, or as the fruit of the Spirit (as described in John's Gospel, chapter 15, or in Galatians 5. 17-19.).

So far as the practice of self-denial was concerned, as mentioned, the Keswick teaching did not advocate any deliberate, systematic self denial after the fashion of the Rigorism of the Middle Ages. After a total surrender of one’s life to Christ, self-denial would occur when the call of Christ cut across our natural inclinations, or sinful practices, or where we might be called upon to give up our present calling in life in order to become a foreign missionary, or to serve others in some sacrificial way. In this sense, a great deal of self-denial was practiced by some people. But, holiness of life was to be experienced by faith in Jesus Christ, and by obediently serving the Gospel, and serving others. It was not achieved by imposing any plan of self-discipline or any form of legalism.

The Wesleyan doctrine of Entire Sanctification, or Christian Perfection, had long been criticised by many Christians, including those who misunderstood it, or who did not like the idea of some form of “perfection” in this life.

The specific Keswick teachings were also criticised by many other Christian groups who had their own approaches to the doctrine of sanctification. Perhaps one of the more serious critics was the well-known evangelical Bishop J. C. Ryle. In his book entitled “Holiness,” he set forth a somewhat different approach to the subject which embraced deliberate self-discipline and self-control as important parts of the process of learning to be holy.

(e.) The Fallacy of the “Mountain-top Experience.”

Another important feature to bear in mind is that, although these Conventions often made very positive contributions to the spiritual lives of those who attended, it was also easy for the blessing to evaporate if it was not supported well with a strong regimen of ongoing Christian fellowship and prayer.

Conventions to Promote Holiness and Service were by their nature occasional happenings, just as “special services to promote the revival of the work of God” had been. One of the curses of revivals was seen in the so-called believer who only turned up at church when something special was happening, when there was excitement, and the rest of the time was not to be seen, or did not pull his weight in the harder times.

So, the Convention was not a substitute for solid, steady Christian Fellowship, prayer, service, and Bible study. Nor was it a substitute for steadiness in Christian living.

In this way, the old Methodist Class Meeting was really the best form of organisation to have in order to support Christian growth in holiness. A weekly meeting, under mature leadership, where members had to be responsible to the group for their own Christian growth and development, where members were cared for, prayed for, nurtured, and encouraged to enter a life of entire sanctification, was really the ideal situation for Christians to grow in God. The results of the special meetings and Conventions could then be nurtured and guided. It was for this reason that John Wesley had said that Methodism would die if the Class Meeting became lost or was ignored. This is why, for most of the Nineteenth Century, membership in the Methodist churches was defined by belonging to a Class Meeting. If people moved to an area where there was no Class Meeting, and where one could not be started, then their membership lapsed. If members did not attend for some weeks, and had no solid reason for this absence, their names could be removed from the roll, until there was repentance, and fruit suited to such repentance.

The Prayer Unions organised by the lady evangelist, Mrs. Margaret Hampson, served a similar purpose, because the members of the Prayer Union met weekly, prayed together, and for each other. They worked for God together, and supported each other in other ways, as well. So, together they served God, and grew in the faith.

Again, the weekly Christian Endeavour Societies, in their early days especially, served this same purpose. The monthly Consecration Meeting, and the fact that members were expected to contribute at every weekly meeting, were important in producing good results in the lives of members. Naturally, the quality of leadership of these groups was also very important in achieving good results.

(f.) A Second Blessing?

There was little doubt that many people who came to the deeper experience of this kind of holiness came to it after their conversion to Christ. Their experience of the “New Birth” had happened some time before. The New Birth had produced a certain degree of impact in their lives, but, naturally enough, as time passed, they came to realise that there were greater privileges involved in belonging to Christ. At their New Birth they did not understand “Perfect Love,” nor did they know that by staying close to Christ it might be possible to avoid falling into temptation. By turning to Christ at the approach of temptation, or at the first awareness of the approach of any known sin, it might be possible for them to live from day to day without committing any known sins.

Commitment to living close to Christ in this way usually came to any person after their conversion, and therefore could easily be seen as a “second blessing.” There was argument, of course, about whether it should be seen essentially as a second blessing under all circumstances, and not able to be described in any other way, or whether this experience was simply working out something which was latent in the first New Birth experience, and thus was simply a matter of normal growth in the faith.

Also, John Wesley had continually said that “Perfect Love” was always achieved through a crisis experience, and was never achieved by slow personal spiritual growth. This view about how to achieve “Perfect Love” or “Entire Sanctification” through a crisis experience became widely

accepted as Methodist orthodoxy. A person should therefore be able to know whether they were experiencing Entire Sanctification or not. By living with Christ, it was the duty and privilege of every believer to live from day to day without committing any sin that they knew about.

The “Keswick” view, which we will consider later, also appreciated the value of crisis experiences, but tended to look upon learning to live close to Christ in this way as the result of growth over a period of time, which might perhaps include several smaller crises.

(g.) A New Movement, Born of the Spirit of God

Ever since the time of Wesley, Methodist preachers had called their people to practice Entire Sanctification, although the emphasis declined markedly as the Nineteenth Century went by.

Throughout the evangelical world, a resurgence of interest in holiness appeared in the late Nineteenth Century. Some of these strands and factors relating to teaching on holiness were brought together by the Providence of God, and given a new burst of spiritual life, through the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way, a new movement of great spiritual quality was born in Australia, which served the Churches in many ways, and which sent many people to the ends of the earth to serve Christ as missionaries. Indeed, this tradition still serves the Churches in these same ways, today. One of the tools used to promote this new interest in holiness was Christian Conventions.

THE WESLEYAN TRADITION

Ever since the days of John Wesley, the Methodists had recognised that proclaiming and practising the doctrine of Entire Sanctification was the key to their success. Repeatedly, in the Nineteenth Century, many of their ministers called the people back to this heritage.

(a.) Just before, and during, the American Civil War powerful revival movements had surged through the American Churches. During the Civil War, the Southern Armies had been strongly affected in this way, and Southern Methodists had contributed greatly to this. These revivals were strongly related to renewed interest in the doctrine of Holiness.

The War was devastating, especially in the South. The period of Reconstruction which followed, created a great many changes to the social structure, especially in the South. In this situation, spiritual decline is easy to occur, and undesirable emotional reactions can set in. Many American Methodists recognised signs of spiritual decline, and spoke up about it.

One sign of the decline was that, even at Camp Meetings, there arose noticeable opposition to the teaching of Entire Sanctification at these meetings.

Through the generosity of a lady from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and the enthusiasm of the Rev. W. B. Osborn, the well-known pastor-evangelist, the Rev. John Inskip, became leader of a drive to institute a programme of National Camp Meetings which would specifically promote the teaching and practice of Entire Sanctification. The first of these was held starting July 17, 1867, at the Camp Meeting site in Vineland, New Jersey. The meeting, lasting for over a week, was an overwhelming success. (2.)

Another National Camp Meeting of this kind occurred the next year, this time being held at Manheim, Pennsylvania. A third was held in 1869, at Round Lake, New York. Three were held in 1870, two in 1871, and six in 1872. In total, 52 National Camp Meetings were held by this organisation, with the series ending in August, 1883. The Rev. John S. Inskip led all except four of these Camp Meetings. (3.) This movement gave birth to a powerful spiritual impulse which has become known as the Holiness Movement in the United States. It has powerfully affected many denominations and vast numbers of individuals.

As time passed, state holiness organisations developed their own agendas, which were not always the same as the Methodist orthodoxy of the National Holiness Association. Inskip was a strong supporter of Methodist orthodoxy in holiness matters. Men like Bishop Matthew Simpson preached at early Holiness Camp Meetings. The state bodies conducted their own Camp Meetings to promote holiness, and in some instances developed certain peculiarities. Many of those who became part of the Holiness movement were not Methodists, but belonged to other denominations, large or small. So the Methodists cannot be blamed for all of the strange doctrines, or uncontrolled influences, which became a part of this movement. After all, democracy allows everyone to have their own religion, and to think for themselves.

By the 1890s, tensions had developed between certain aspects of the Holiness Movement and the Methodist hierarchy. Action was taken by the hierarchy, and many little Holiness denominations formed in reaction to the stand taken by the Methodist leaders. Some of the criticism of the Holiness Movement came from the Seminaries. Strange doctrines had appeared in some holiness groups, and these were attacked by the theologians.

Overall, and in the long term, this Methodist Holiness movement provided the groundwork, and a wide range of contributing influences, from which has sprung modern Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism has arguably been the most successful Christian spiritual movement of the Twentieth Century. So, the National Holiness Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church produced results far beyond anything that they had envisioned.

(b.) The Methodist Holiness Association in Australia

News about the Methodist Holiness Association's work in the U.S.A. would have travelled to overseas Methodist people through the circulation of the various American Methodist newspapers. Completely separate newspapers were produced in various parts of the country, because distances were so great, and travel so slow in those days. Although different, most of these papers were called the *Christian Advocate*. Bits of information from these sources appeared regularly in the Australian Methodist papers.

But the real power of the movement arrived in Australia in the form of visiting Methodist Holiness preachers from America.

The Revs. John Inskip and W. B. Osborn arrived in Melbourne early in 1881. Apart from the meetings in Melbourne, they visited Ballarat and Geelong, before going to Sydney. In each place they took part in special meetings to promote Entire Sanctification. The visit to Australia lasted for eight weeks only, and Inskip preached eighty sermons in that time. About 2,500 responded to his appeals, of whom about two-thirds were converts, and the others were seeking entire sanctification. (4.)

But the main visiting preacher was a lady. Miss Isabella S. Leonard arrived in Sydney on 16th February, 1884. She had gained a reputation of being honoured by God as a Holiness preacher and evangelist in the United States, before spending a few years preaching in Methodist circuits in southern England, and she carried written credentials which were impeccable. She conducted a series of special services in various Wesleyan circuits in New South Wales and Queensland, as she

was asked, directed at promoting the doctrine and experience of Entire Sanctification, although a good many conversions also occurred. She left Australia for India in December, 1886. Some of her activities were reported in the *Weekly Advocate*. According to the Rev. Joseph Woodhouse, it was largely through the instrumentality of this lady that “the revived interest taken in the subject of Christian holiness” was due. (5.)

In 1885, the Rev. W. G. Taylor began the steps which led to the formation of a Methodist Holiness Association in Sydney. It was properly born on 6th May, 1886, and Taylor was elected as the first President.

There had been a one-day Camp Meeting to promote Scriptural holiness held on the north side of Sydney Harbour, after a ferry trip, on the Prince of Wales' Birthday holiday. Over 1100 people were present, including many ministers, the college students, and many lay people. There were various speakers, including Miss Leonard. At the end of the day - “Some four penitent forms were filled with anxious seekers, some for pardon, but the most for entire sanctification. It was a time never to be forgotten. Here knelt a minister, there two students, and there again two or three leading laymen from different parts of the colony; side by side they knelt pleading for the blessing of a pure heart. How many came forward we know not, but many stood up and with flowing hearts spoke of the blessing they had received. We give all the glory to the Lord...

Several times during the day the suggestion was made by one and another, that a Holiness Convention should be held in our York-street church at an early date, one speaker urging that a two days' meeting should be arranged for. This, we believe, will be done. In the meantime, it was arranged that a special meeting be this week held in York-street for the promotion of holiness...” (6.)

This special meeting commenced on the evening of Wednesday, 11th November, and was followed by an all-day meeting on Thursday. After an introductory prayer time, the Primitive Methodist minister, the Rev. J. Blanksby, gave a “telling” address, which was followed by several testimonies. Then “Miss Leonard - a lady whom God is greatly honouring in this colony as a constant witnesser (sic) for and preacher of this great truth of Holiness - delivered an address full of Scriptural truth and of telling appeal; - an address to which the Holy Spirit at once gave His seal, in that a number of persons went forward as seekers of the blessing.

The whole meeting was a time of great power and blessing. During its progress it was decided to hold an all-day meeting on the following day for the further consideration of this great subject.” (7.)

This all-day meeting, on the Thursday, was chaired throughout by the Rev. James A. Nolan, who was President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference that year. He commenced the morning session by giving his own humble testimony to his interest in, and experience of, entire sanctification. He had been influenced by reading some of the writings of the American preacher, Phoebe Palmer. The morning session was taken up with more short addresses and testimonies.

The afternoon session also contained a number of addresses and testimonies. The Presbyterian minister, the Rev. John MacNeil, then at Waverley, had only heard about the meeting in the afternoon, but nevertheless came in immediately, and spoke his support. During the afternoon, questions had been written out by those present, and the President asked Miss Leonard to answer them, which, after prayer, she proceeded to do.

“The questions being concluded an invitation was given for persons enjoying or seeking holiness of heart, to gather for special prayer, when a number came forward, some of whom entered into perfect rest. The meeting closed with fervent praise for the manifest tokens of God's presence and power granted during the day, and an arrangement was made that another Holiness meeting should be held in the York-street Church on Saturday, 21st inst., at 2.30 p.m.”

Also, a United Methodist Three Days' Convention for the Spread of Scriptural Holiness was arranged for December 9 - 11, with a special sermon on the evening of the 8th. (8.)

A special Supplement of the *Weekly Advocate* was published containing a long and full report of the meetings on November 11 and 12.

The editor of the *Weekly Advocate* provided an editorial, the following week, about the Camp Meeting, and the two days of meetings on the 11th and 12th of November. Of these two days of meetings he said:- "This meeting proved to be so fruitful in blessing for the children of God that a very general desire was expressed that a movement should be organised on a larger scale." As a result, the Three Days' Convention was being organised, similar to the Southport Convention in England. "The President of the Conference... stated it as his belief that the revival which the Church needs at the present time is a revival of holiness, and we are quite sure that he is not alone in that opinion. It is pleasing to note the great interest which is being taken in these meetings by ministers and members of other Churches. All, or nearly all, the evangelical Churches have been represented at them, both by ministers and people, and we hope this will continue. A revival of holiness will prove an unspeakable blessing to all the Churches." (9.)

The three days' Convention, also in the York Street Church, was very well supported. Particular notice was taken of the fact that people attended from many country towns, even someone from as far away as Brewarrina. Letters of apology for not attending also came from all over the State, and even from Brisbane. Apart from the main speeches, and the question time, opportunities for anyone to speak stretched to four hours each day, and many men and women took the opportunity. The report published in the *Weekly Advocate* were called "jottings," because there was a plan by the organisers to publish a full report, with verbatim records of the main papers, in the form of a separate pamphlet. (10)

Later, the Rev. Joseph Woodhouse called this period of meetings a "revival." (11.)

The editor supported this interest in the January 9, 1886, issue of the *Weekly Advocate*, where an article on "Christian Perfection" by the English Methodist evangelist, the Rev. Thomas Cook, appeared, and also a column by the Rev. T. R. McMichael on "The Doctrine of Holiness."

By the month of May, 1886, the Methodist Holiness Association was formed in an effort to conserve and foster the results of the earlier meetings.

During the following year, the association met each month in Sydney. A two days' Convention was held in East Maitland in August. Another one day Convention was held in York Street in November, as the old building was prepared for demolition, and replacement. Special meetings for the promotion of holiness were held in Victoria and South Australia.

The pamphlet containing the full report covering the three days' Convention in November, 1885, was eventually published. 500 copies sold immediately. 1000 more copies were printed, and sold quickly. "Numerous testimonies have been received from readers of this report as to the profit derived from its perusal. It has helped to explain difficulties, remove objections, and assist not a few into the enjoyment of full salvation." (12.)

The most significant step taken by the new association, however, was to start publishing a magazine, entitled *Glad Tidings*. In May, 1887, Joseph Woodhouse reported as follows:-

"The most important work accomplished by the association has been the publication of *Glad Tidings*, a monthly paper 'devoted to recording and spreading the good news of a present, free, and full salvation.' The starting of this paper was a matter calling for careful and patient consideration. At the outset it was thought that an issue of 3000 would be a good venture, but so rapidly and liberally did the orders flow in that it was found necessary to make the first issue 10,000. For the first six months - to the end of 1886 - the average issue was 12,500 per month, and for the past four

months the issue has just bordered upon 15,000 per month. A noteworthy feature in connection with the working of the paper is the fact that editors and agents all do their work without remuneration. As a labour of love the editors prepare the matter for publication, and from the same motive the numerous agents in all the colonies push the sale of the paper. The financial results have been very satisfactory. From the first the paper has made a profit, and it is believed that when at the close of the year the accounts are made up there will be found a substantial balance to be devoted to evangelistic work in the various colonies. That the paper meets a decided need is evidenced by its being so largely in demand. From many quarters, and from members of other Churches, have come gratifying testimonies to the good it is the means of accomplishing in building up the Church of Christ, and in leading sinners to think upon their ways. The committee would urge renewed diligence in the pushing of this paper. Its cheapness makes it easy of circulation. Some have made it serve the purpose of tracts, and in its distribution have seen it prove a messenger of mercy to enquiring souls. There is ample scope for increasing, yea, for *doubling*, the present circulation.” (13.)

So, the two outstanding contributions made in Australia to this part of the story were made firstly by Miss Isabella Leonard, the lady American Holiness preacher and evangelist, and, secondly by the rise of Methodist Holiness Association in Sydney.

From these comments it can be seen that the Wesleyan contribution in Australia was very significant to the movement wherein Conventions were used for the Promotion of Holiness. The theology being preached was also clearly that of John Wesley. Furthermore, it occurred several years before the impact of the Keswick movement reached Australia in the form of the Rev. George Grubb.

The Southport Convention.

The Australian Methodists were generally more influenced by British Methodism than by the Methodist Episcopal Churches in the U.S.A. So it was not insignificant that they had the example of a Convention in England which was declared to be aimed at the promotion of holiness, according to the teachings of John Wesley.

In 1884, the Rev. W. H. Tindall organised a Convention specially to promote holiness, which became known as the Southport Convention for the Promotion of Holiness. People from many denominations came to it, although most of them were Methodists.

The Rev. W. G. Taylor had some correspondence about the second Southport Convention in June, 1885. It lasted for six days, and there were evangelistic meetings on the Sundays before and after. Taylor sent the following report to the editor of the *Weekly Advocate*.

“This grand gathering was arranged by the Rev. W. H. Tindall, the principal speakers being the Revs. Jas. Chalmers, M.A., Geo. Bowden, I. E. Page, J. C. Greaves, Thomas Cook, Thomas Champness, W. D. Sargeant, W. Middleton, J. G. Stuart, T. Waugh, W. Waters, and J. Hornabrook.

The Convention was, in the strict sense of the word, an experiment, and was in every particular a mighty success. From Monday morning till Saturday night crowds filled the large marquee. Four meetings were held daily, whilst the Sunday before and the Sunday after, special services were conducted by the Conference evangelists. One, writing of the Convention, thus speaks: ‘The attendance passed all expectation. Southport people of all Churches were present in large numbers, and they were joined by hundreds of visitors from many of the counties of England - Devonshire in the West, Kent in the South, Lincoln in the East, and Scotland in the North, contributed to this gathering of the Christian tribes. It is evident that the Convention met a felt want, and one can only hope that all who came have returned to their homes and to their spiritual spheres laden with blessing. It is possible that the Convention will develop into an annual gathering. If so, it may soon

be necessary to relieve the pressure of numbers by establishing a second Convention in another part of England.’

‘The testimony meeting which was held on Saturday evening was extraordinary. It was kept well in hand, and 94 persons spoke. Many professed the enjoyment of holiness, and no small number testified that they had found this grace during the Convention. There was very little wild fire. Men and women spoke with enthusiasm combined with good sense. Some of the testimonies were profoundly touching.’

As to the speakers, the same writer says: ‘There were some at the Convention who were anxious in regard to the putting off the doctrine of Christian holiness. It is very difficult to expound this doctrine so as to meet the various types of human nature. We listened with critical ears to the addresses which were given. Our hopes were realised, and our fears were not. The ministers who spoke approved themselves to our judgment workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They said little about our theology. They appealed directly to Holy Scripture. They brought out therefrom the mind of the Spirit with clearness, and they applied the truth to the consciences of the people with great power. Every speaker was free to take his own course. Every man fixed upon those portions of Scripture which had been most helpful to his own faith and life. The consequence was that we had a remarkable unity of testimony on the doctrine under consideration. The aim of every address seemed to be to lead God's people into the experience of perfect love. The only criticism which we are disposed to make is this, that our attention was directed almost exclusively to the purely experimental aspect of the great subject. Every man used his hammer to drive one nail. On future occasions it will be well to touch on related truths, and especially to show how the experience of “the second blessing” needs to be followed up by moral, social, and spiritual culture.’

The good resulting from such a Convention it is impossible to tabulate. The Holy Spirit was in all the meetings, and the fire there generated has since continued to burn, and is spreading throughout the counties of the Fatherland.

Why not equally glorious results in connection with our own Convention to be held next month? Let us pray much for this, and look for a great baptism of the Holy Spirit!” (14.)

In 1889, the following report about the Southport Convention appeared in the *Weekly Advocate*.

“The Southport Convention for the Promotion of Holiness is a gathering annually looked forward to by hundreds of the best of our people in England. - In point of attendance and spiritual power there have probably been no better sessions than those just concluded. The gatherings were large at all the meetings, and at the evening services the spacious Hall was sometimes uncomfortably packed. Christians of all denominations availed themselves of the help and blessing of the occasion, although of course the bulk of those present were Methodists. An early morning prayer-meeting, and service in the forenoon, afternoon, and evening, with exposition, testimony, and teaching, constituted the daily programme from Monday till Saturday. The Rev. W. H. Tindall, who originated the gatherings five years ago, again presided, and did so, we are told, with ‘rare self-effacement.’ The Convention was remarkable for the strength of its teaching. The addresses were full of beautiful Scriptural exegesis, and bore directly upon the doctrinal, experimental, and practical aspects of personal holiness unto the Lord. Waves of spiritual fervour and power seemed at times to pass over the congregation; and during the addresses, as well as the prayers, exclamations such as ‘Praise God!’ ‘Glory!’ and the like, were by no means uncommon. One vigorous brother's testimony was specially noteworthy. In 1839, fifty years ago, he was preaching the doctrine of full salvation. ‘I enjoyed it then,’ he said, ‘and I enjoy it now.’ The speaker was seventy-eight years of age last March; he had been sixty-four years a Methodist; sixty years a local preacher, and forty-five a teetotalter - a record by no means common or to be despised. What a blessed life that man's must have been!” (15.)

The Wesleyan Influence in Australia, 1891 and After

As we will see, the Keswick records about Australia tended to portray their work in the first Geelong Convention in 1891 as something entirely new in this part of the world. But that is quite a mistaken view, except in one way. That is, that the first Geelong Convention in 1891 was the first time that a specifically Keswick programme of teaching was used in Australia.

The Petersham Conference, 1891 and Onwards

One of the outstanding conventions for promoting holiness and Christian service was organised in Sydney by the Petersham and District Ministerial Association. It should be said that, in 1891, the Stanmore, Petersham, Ashfield area of Sydney was the upper-middle class area of the city. It was only later that the "North Shore" became the area for the more expensive homes. The Petersham churches were all flourishing, and became even more so with the impact of the Lewisham Revival in 1892.

The Petersham Conference was arranged for the 8th to the 10th September, 1891, which was a very short time **before** the first Geelong Convention. Twelve meetings were held on the afternoons and evenings of those days. There was an interdenominational list of speakers, with the Rev. David O'Donnell acting as President. The overall title was "Christian Service."

The subjects for the twelve meetings were:- Christian Service - What is it?; The Command to Serve; Christ, the Pattern of Service; Qualifications for Service - [1.] Conversion; [2.] Consecration; [3.] Power from on High; Branches of Service - [1.] The Foreign Field; [2.] In the Home; [3.] In the Church; [4.] In Business; The Need for Service, and "What Shall I do, Lord?"

These twelve services were followed by an evangelistic meeting on the Thursday evening. All of the meetings were held in the Petersham Town Hall. (16.)

These Petersham conventions were held annually for several decades. A Methodist report on the 1899 Conference went as follows:-

"For nine years in succession, the Petersham Annual Christian Conference has held on its way. The meetings of the week have indicated unabated interest in the gathering on the part both of the ministers of all the evangelical churches and the residents of the Western suburbs generally. On Monday the attendances were large - so much so that at the evening session there was scarcely standing room. The subject of the Conference this year was 'Christ's peace.' - a delightful and attractive theme; and the treatment of the various aspects of the topic by the various speakers was mainly on most helpful spiritual lines. The proceedings aptly closed with a splendid missionary meeting on Thursday evening. The Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly (the Rev. W. Dill-Macky) made an excellent chairman throughout the Conference." (17.)

The Rev. John Watsford - After His Retirement.

After the first Geelong Convention was held, and the Keswick tradition became fairly launched in Australia, what I have called the Wesleyan Tradition, and the Keswick Tradition tended to become somewhat mixed. They certainly had a great deal in common. Anglican and Baptist people perhaps tended to identify more with the Keswick side of things, partly because they did not want to identify too much with Wesleyan teaching. But, whether they liked it or not, they were influenced by John Wesley far more than they ever realised. Right from the beginning, some of the speakers and leaders in Keswick meetings were Methodists. But, they fitted in with the programmes and themes

which had been decided upon.

John Watsford retired from the “active” ministry at the Conference in February, 1891. His health was broken, and he had lost his voice. He had just celebrated his 70th birthday the previous December 5. It was not until the last few months of that year that he again felt that he could again do the sort of evangelistic work that he loved so much, and take part again in the many holiness meetings, such as he had taken part in before.

The decade which followed, apart from a few periods of poor health, provides an astonishing range of activities for an old man, including a good list of the Conventions for the Promotion of Holiness at which he took part. This list gives us a good insight into the breadth and popularity of this form of spiritual work at this time.

His first trip out was to attend the Geelong Convention. After all, he was a member of “The Band,” which included John MacNeil, and which had organised the Convention. Before the end of the year he took part in a Convention in the town of Colac, and a mission at Mortlake.

The year 1892 was filled with an astonishing range of activity. He took part with George Grubb in the Holiness Conventions in Sydney and Launceston. He took part in Holiness Conventions with the North Melbourne Baptists, with Archdeacon Langley in the Melbourne Convention, in a United Methodist Convention in Melbourne, in a Methodist Convention in Daylesford, another in South Melbourne, at Petersham, in N.S.W., as well as the second Geelong Convention, and a United Holiness Convention in Ballarat.

Apart from all that, he conducted evangelistic missions at Launceston; at several centres around Adelaide; at Ipswich in Queensland; at about eight places in Sydney and in country N.S.W., and several other places around Victoria. He said that everywhere he preached about the experience of Entire Sanctification, and about the fulness of the Holy Spirit. (18.)

This example of his work in 1892 serves to indicate the widespread nature of the Christian Convention movement to promote holiness at that time.

Another example is in what he did in 1897. Watsford was sick early in that year. The missions he shared in during 1897 were at Seymour, at Brunswick Street, and North Carlton. He helped lead in Holiness Conventions at Box Hill, Williamstown, Mount Erica, Richmond and Geelong. A Methodist Holiness Association was formed that year in Melbourne. (19.)

By that time, indeed, Conventions to Promote Holiness were becoming so common that they were appearing more regularly in country towns, and were being organised more widely by smaller Church bodies. When the Rev. James E. Carruthers became chairman of the Wesleyan Parramatta District, the District Synod moved to organise their own Conventions, which were held at places like Bowral, Camden and Penrith (then a small country town.). Synod members did the preaching themselves. These were not merely annual events, but happened more frequently. (20.)

The ministers of the Wesleyan Riverina District Synod organised a Holiness Convention at Wagga Wagga, and did the preaching. One subject was “Reverence.” Another was “Some Prominent Sins of Today.” A third topic was on “Revivals.” A fourth was on “Soul-Winning.” These topics were emphasised by another speaker. “The Rev. J. Walker spoke on the necessity in every church for revivals, and also for unceasing endeavours at soul-winning.” The Convention closed with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. (21.)

THE KESWICK TRADITION

American Visitors in England.

The Keswick Tradition began in England. It also began under the influence of visitors from the United States, who were part of the American Holiness Movement.

The English scene had been strongly influenced by a book published in 1859, entitled *The Higher Christian Life*, by the Rev. W. E. Boardman. This was one of the most widely influential books to be published which related to the subject of holiness. This book raised a good degree of interest in holiness in England.

From 1870 onwards, several books appeared by the American holiness preacher Robert Pearsall Smith, which increased interest in the subject. His wife also experienced sanctification by faith, and she wrote about her experiences. The Pearsall Smiths visited Europe in 1872. Before long, they were being asked to speak at drawing-room meetings, to invited audiences. They returned the following Spring, and by co-incidence, W. E. Boardman happened also to be there for the benefit of his health. They were asked to speak to group meetings of evangelical ministers and other Christian workers about the higher Christian Life.

One of the ministers whose life was transformed by these gatherings was Evan H. Hopkins. He wrote:- "The result was that very many of God's children both at home and abroad were brought to a deep sense of their need in the sphere of the practical life, and awakened to a more believing expectation that a truer and more triumphant life was possible. The spiritual uplifting that so many experienced as the result of a clear and definite setting forth of the believer's present privileges, and the possibilities of faith, produced a profound impression upon Christians generally. So sudden and striking were the transformations that took place in the experiences and life of some of God's most earnest workers that even those who regarded the movement with suspicion, were unable to gainsay the reality of the blessings that followed." (22.)

Conferences and Conventions Begin

This situation provided the basis for the first series of Conferences. The Broadlands Conference was held on a wealthy estate following some meetings at Cambridge. About 100 attended a six days' Conference, all by invitation. Robert Pearsall Smith was chairman. Many sins were faced, even doubtful things were considered, in making the fullest surrender to Christ that they could make.

The subjects of "The provisions in the indwelling Holy Ghost," "The exceeding great promises of the Word," "The separating power of the cross," "The risen Saviour," and "The life more abundantly," were then set before the audience in various aspects, and pressed upon the hearers as realities, to be grasped by faith, and held with unfaltering grasp... (23.)

The first major open Convention was held the next year at Oxford. Again, Robert Pearsall Smith was chairman and principal speaker. This was followed nine months later by the Brighton Convention, from May 29 to June 7, 1875.

It was after this that the main centre of the meetings moved to the northern village of Keswick, under the leadership of the local Church of England minister, the Rev. T. D. Harford-Battersby, with the help of his Quaker friend, Mr. Robert Wilson. For reasons that were not advertised, Robert Pearsall Smith, at the last moment, could not come to Keswick. So a line-up of speakers were arranged hurriedly. Thus was created an ongoing pattern of Conventions held annually at Keswick, and for many years featuring a certain pattern of teaching. The main strength of the gatherings was

in the fact that the speakers were chosen because they had their own experience of the “higher life,” and knew how to help others to enter into the same blessings.

Although the Keswick gatherings have become the best known of the holiness conventions in England, there were many others throughout England and Europe. Robert Pearsall Smith was featured at many of the European Conventions before he dropped out of this kind of work.

The teaching at Keswick Conventions followed a certain pattern, which is explained by Barabas in the following way:- “Since the Keswick Convention has a definite aim and purpose to accomplish in its meetings, it is to be expected that the subjects of the addresses will not be haphazardly chosen. The teaching given at the Convention has a beginning, middle and culmination, and follows a definite, progressive order. The teaching moves on, step by step, with definite results aimed at. It leads first to a negative step, the renunciation of all known sin, and then to a positive step, surrender to Christ for the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Since the cause of spiritual ill-health is always sin, whether known or unknown, on the first day of the Convention the searchlight of God’s Word is focused on sin, and an effort is made to bring the Christian to its immediate abandonment. On the second day the speakers consider the subject of God’s provision for sin, and it is taught that God through Christ has dealt with the whole problem of sin in so final a way that it need not be a continued source of trouble. The consecration of the Christian is the topic of the third day. On the fourth day the addresses are on the fulness of the Spirit. Christian service, including missionary responsibility, is the topic of the last day.

It must not be thought, however, that this is a mechanical, cast-iron pattern, allowing no flexibility or variation, for the general outline is never filled in twice alike. The order of Keswick teaching has been shaped, not by conscious design, but half-unconsciously and without deliberation; because it was observed that there are these successive stages of experience through which believers generally pass who enter into the Spirit-filled life. At the basis of the whole is the conviction that the average Christian life is lacking in real spiritual power, and the belief that God has made it possible for all Christians to live, in the power of Christ’s resurrection, a life of consistent victory and effective service.” (24.)

David Bebbington has emphasised the role of the Mildmay meetings in preparing the way for the other holiness Conventions at Oxford and Brighton, etc., which have been mentioned above. (25.)

The Keswick meetings gained a fairly strong Church of England backing, and had an influence amongst many university students. As a result, it tended to have an impact upon the more educated, and upon middle class and upper class people. So far as instruction in holiness was concerned, people lower down the English social structure tended to be served by other organisations, like the various Methodist Churches, and the Salvation Army.

The Visits of the Rev. George Grubb to Australia

The Keswick movement included a very strong appeal in support of missionary work. Missionary Day became a normal part of the agenda in 1888, and afterwards. But there was also an urge amongst the Keswick leaders to send missionaries to other parts of the world, not only to present the message of salvation, but also to present the challenge of a life of holiness to many other Christians in other lands. At the 1888 Convention the first gift was made specifically to help send out an overseas missionary from Keswick.

In this way, the Church of Ireland evangelist, the Rev. George Grubb, was eventually asked to make a tour to Ceylon, South India, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, in the name of the Convention. George Grubb was accompanied by Mr. E. C. Millard, and two other men. The record of the trip which was eventually published was compiled from letters written home by Millard and

Grubb. The first tour began on October 17, 1889, arriving in Colombo on 14th November. Grubb was in Melbourne from April 1 to 8, 1890, whereas Millard was in Sydney from April 3 to 18. Millard and his wife had been missionaries in China.

The missions in New Zealand were supported by the Church of England hierarchy and parishes, and these concluded when Grubb and his team left Napier, where their last meetings had been held, on June 14, 1890, returning to England through Honolulu and continental America, before making his trip to the Cape. (26.)

During the few days that George Grubb was in Melbourne, an invitation was given to him to return to Australia to conduct missions. It was signed by the Bishop of Melbourne, as well as by Dean Macartney, and several other ministers. The opportunity to return to Australia opened up early in 1891. This time leading a slightly larger group, George Grubb led a tour which lasted from April 3, 1891 to July 7, 1892.

Upon arrival, Grubb discovered three months of meetings had been arranged for him. This programme lasted from May 31 to early September. After an assorted list of preliminary meetings, Grubb led seven days' missions in the Anglican churches in Collingwood, East Kew, Geelong, Ballarat, the Gippsland area, North Fitzroy, South Melbourne, Caulfield, Elsternwick, and at the Melbourne Cathedral, concluding with a thanksgiving service in the Exhibition Building.

Following these missions, the First Geelong Convention, to be run along Keswick lines, had been arranged to take place. Grubb had been asked to chair the meetings. And, while there were other speakers, Grubb also spoke, more or less, at all the meetings.

Millard said that:- "As nothing of the same kind had ever been previously attempted in Australia, there were many inquiries as to its object." We have already seen that such a statement is only true in a very limited way. This was that the pattern used at Keswick was to be followed, although this pattern was not all that much different from what many others had done before.

Because explanations were asked for, Grubb wrote a letter which was spread far and wide. It was dated 27th August, 1891, and was written in the Rectory at Caulfield, where Dean H. B. Macartney lived. The letter read as follows:-

"My Dear Friends, - Many may be asking, What is this Convention at Geelong? Is it another mission? So I would like you to know that it is in no sense of the word a mission, but a gathering together of the Lord's people of all denominations, for the purpose of getting a deeper knowledge of the Spiritual Life, and of understanding practically what our Lord means by 'Life more abundant.' Many are earnestly seeking after the great blessing - i.e., 'The Promise of My Father,' which ensures a life of perpetual victory over sin, and of power to win souls to Christ, instead of one of constant defeat and failure, which is unfortunately the experience of many of the Lord's children. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, which our Lord speaks of as 'The Promise of My Father,' is therefore the subject that will be specially dealt with at the Geelong Convention, and all the Lord's dear children who are conscious of much spiritual weakness in the past are earnestly invited to 'come apart and rest awhile,' and find out the secret of a life 'hid with Christ in God.' The hastening of our Lord's Second Advent by the evangelisation of the world will also be spoken of, 'for this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.'

Yours in the Lord,

George C. Grubb.

'ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.' (Gal. ii. 28.)" (27.)

John Watsford referred to the meetings at Geelong as a “Pentecostal” time.

The visit by the Rev. George Grubb and his team to the colony of Victoria finished at the end of September, 1891.

His first mission in New South Wales was in the parish church of St. Barnabas’, Broadway, which started on October 1, through to 17th. The second mission was at St. Andrew’s Church, Summer Hill, and took in the rest of October. The first half of November was spent preaching at St. Peter’s Church in Wollongong. From 14th to 28th November, George Grubb was preaching at St. John’s Church, Parramatta. This was followed by a mission divided between St. Philip’s Church in the city, and the central Y.M.C.A. in Sydney. Then, a mission at Balmain, followed by a mission at Saint Andrew’s Cathedral and in the Town Hall.

The Sydney Convention on Holiness followed these missions, which went from 5th to 7th January, 1892.

“At these gatherings Christians of all denominations and from many districts were represented, while the addresses were given by clergy and ministers of every section of the Church. The Lord was present in Holy Ghost power, while the expectation of the people was so great that all the seats in the Centenary Hall, York Street, were occupied at least two hours before the advertised hour. The time was utilised for prayer on behalf of the speakers and for other objects, interspersed with hymns and songs of praise.” (28.)

The Keswick team caught the train from Sydney to Goulburn, the centre of another diocese, for another mission, and then proceeded to Melbourne, and to Launceston, arriving there on January 21, where another major Holiness Convention was held. The spiritual results were building up on two fronts. There were many individual people converted, or led into a deeper experience of New Testament Holiness. There were also good results in many young people offering themselves for missionary work.

“The blessing at this convention without doubt surpassed the previous ones held at Geelong and Sydney. The clear teaching given of FULL SALVATION was used as the means of showing many the cause of failure in the past, and the folly of asking God to *fill* with the Holy Ghost till He had been allowed to make empty by cleansing from all sin.” (29.)

Following the Launceston Convention, missions were conducted in St. John’s Church, Launceston, and then in the Church of England churches in Hobart, and then in Glenorchy. These events were concluded by the 3rd March.

A three-day trip by sea took the Grubb team to New Zealand, where they conducted missions until May 26. After that, a sea trip of about six weeks landed them back in England on July 9.

Evaluation

The Church of England churches in Australia, in more than one diocese, had, up to 1891, enjoyed twenty years of experience in seeing parochial missions being conducted in their local churches. These missions had been successful in raising up numbers of converts, who had strengthened the work of their churches.

George Grubb’s missions not only achieved a considerable number of additional conversions, but also challenged those already converted to enter into a deeper life of dedication to God, and into a better level of having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

People who made a commitment to enter foreign missionary service at first tended to be interested in working with the China Inland Mission, partly because Hudson Taylor had visited Australia a

short time beforehand, and perhaps also because Mr. E. C. Millard and his wife had been missionaries in China.

Another reason was the fact that the Church Missionary Society at that time did not have any organisation in Australia for accepting or training prospective missionaries. This was a shortcoming which the C.M.S. organisation quickly remedied. On the heels of the Grubb team came two leaders of the C.M.S., to sound out the situation in Australia, and to make use for their own work of the enthusiasm and interest which George Grubb's visit to Australia had created in foreign missionary service. (30.)

The Geelong Conventions helped to create a situation where major Conventions on the development of the Christian Life, and in promoting foreign missionary work became regular annual events. It was eventually the Conventions held at Upwey, and at Belgrave Heights, beginning in 1918, which developed and continued the Keswick traditions in Victoria. The major Conventions in Sydney went through an evolution, and eventually became based at Katoomba, in the Blue Mountains. The practice of having a convention at Katoomba did not begin until 1904, but this slowly developed, over a period of years, until the Katoomba Convention has now reached its Centenary, and has been a source and channel of blessing to thousands over the years. (31.)

Like most good things in the Christian world around 1900, the Christian Convention became the subject of analysis by the editor of the *Methodist*. The 1898 Sydney Convention had just been held in the Centenary Hall, York Street. Special speakers had visited, after the Geelong Convention, especially to take part here, sharing the platform with some of the local evangelical leaders. The fact that so many ordinary Christians attended, created a special situation. "...many earnest Christians from all the Churches, by their presence and devotion, have created an environment which was eminently favourable to the growth of spiritual life and power." The editor offered some reflections in this.

Firstly, he noted that it was a fairly new institution. It had, however, been well used by the Christian Endeavour Movement. "At the recent British [Wesleyan] Conference the President intimated that, during his Presidential year he intended to devote himself to the holding of Christian Conventions in various parts of the country as a more effective way of helping the cause of God than by ordinary visitation of the Churches." The editor thought this was a good thing, so long as unhelpful controversy was kept well away.

"Without being guilty of groundless pessimism we may safely say that Christians generally in these days do not enjoy that intensity of spiritual life which has marked some periods in the history of the Church, and that the want of spirituality in believers has greatly hindered the progress of Christian work in the world. And we may go a step further and say that the lack of tone discernible in the spiritual life of many is fairly attributable to the neglect and decay of Christian fellowship."

By this, the editor was implying that Methodism of ninety years before was noted for much higher qualities of spiritual life and power, which was attested to by the marvels of grace which happened then. These marvels were seen in the biographies of the Methodist saints and evangelists. This lack was now upon us through the decline of real fellowship because the Class Meeting had largely disappeared.

Christian Conventions provided a new atmosphere of fellowship which helped spiritual growth.

"We therefore welcome the belief that in the Christian Convention we have indications of the prevalence of a deep and deepening desire for the life of God in the soul, and that the Church is returning to its ancient method of stimulating that life - to the fellowship of saints. For, above all other qualifications, spirituality is essential to sainthood, and to the saint's work of spreading Scriptural holiness throughout the world."

The editor then raises the question as to whether Conventions are cost effective. Do they do enough

good in the Church and the world to make all the expense and effort worth while? Simply to say that it is good for Christian fellowship is not enough. The Biblical principle is that we are blessed by God in order to be a blessing.

“We take it, however, that the results aimed at by those who promote Christian conventions is the accretion and consecration of divine energy in believers for the purpose of expending that energy in the great work of lifting up a fallen world. It is undoubtedly good, through waiting upon God and through the fellowship of saints, to enjoy the sublime consciousness of being lifted up and purified... that the ultimate purpose and result of all this should be the uplifting and purification of the world. The Saviour said, ‘For this cause I sanctify Myself that they also may be sanctified through the truth.’ If this be the result of our Christian Conventions, and there is no reason why it should not, they will be an unspeakable blessing to the Church and to the world.” (32.)

One hundred years later, we are able to see how some of this blessing and service has become a reality, not simply in the period up until 1914, but right through to the present time.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GROWING THRUST FOR HOLINESS

Miss ISABELLA LEONARD

in NEW SOUTH WALES and QUEENSLAND

1884 to 1886

Methodist preachers in the Nineteenth Century, from all the different branches of Methodism, remembered the words of their founder, John Wesley, that Methodism had been raised up by God to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land, and also that their success in this effort, and in their evangelism generally, depended directly upon their bold proclamation and persistent practice of the doctrine of Entire Sanctification, or Perfect Love, or Christian Perfection. Their main fellowship meeting, the Class Meeting, was designed to promote the practice of this holiness, and preachers were repeatedly enjoined to use their best opportunities to preach about this Scriptural holiness boldly, and to call people everywhere to turn to Christ, and to claim for themselves the redemptive fact that “the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all our sin.”

They were then challenged to live, hour by hour, in this cleansed relationship with God, seeking continual obedience and strength in the face of every sign of temptation and sin. In this way, they were called to live in total dedication to God, through faith in the cleansing blood of Christ, hour by hour and day by day, without committing any known sin.

The other Protestant evangelical denominations had similar doctrines of sanctification, without the “perfectionist” element which existed in Methodism, although the other denominations might not have emphasised these teachings in the way many of the Methodist preachers did.

Through most of the Nineteenth Century in Australia, many Methodist preachers emphasized this teaching, but the call to renew the emphasis was a continual need. Spiritual decline was always almost a natural human tendency.

In our study of the spiritual factors which undergirded the revival movements in Australia between 1880 and 1914, we should expect to find a growing interest in Biblical teaching about holiness, and also in the desire of dedicated Christians to experience this holiness to a greater degree.

It is not always easy to discover direct historical evidences about spiritual matters such as this. These matters of the soul may not be written about, or leave behind them documentary evidence.

However, in this case, some evidences can be found. In looking for the roots of this renewed interest in holiness which, in fact, did appear at this time, we must turn our attention to the work of a lady American Holiness preacher and evangelist, Miss Isabella Leonard.

A final comment is needed regarding the available information about her ministry in Australia. So far as I could discover, almost the only information is contained in the letters and news reports about her which were published in the *Weekly Advocate*. Good reports appeared about some of her meetings, but many of her activities were not reported. Probably we do have just enough information, however, to understand Miss Leonard's spiritual life, her work, and the contribution she made to the Holiness Movement in Australia.

Because her ministry has not been studied before by historians, and the information is limited, many of the documents will be reproduced here in full.

Background

Miss Isabella Leonard had gained her credentials and experience preaching in the United States of America as part of the great, long-term, Methodist Holiness movement, through the middle decades of the Nineteenth Century. She came to believe that God had given her a special commission to preach the Wesleyan doctrine of Entire Sanctification, as a task over and above her task as an evangelist. If the Methodist Church, or any other Church, was to fulfil its evangelistic task, it must proclaim Entire Sanctification to all believers, as the foundation of the ongoing experience of the power of the Holy Spirit. That was the basic way for the Church of Jesus Christ to be successful in carrying out its Great Commission.

From what became evident during her time in Australia, Miss Leonard was profoundly a woman of prayer and faith in God. She was also at a very deep level a woman of obedience to the Scriptures. She acted only in a manner which she believed to be obedience to God, after she had taken the trouble to discover what it meant to be obedient. She did not act first, and then wonder afterwards if she had been obedient or not. She relied only upon God to place His seal upon her work. She did not look for any other success. She sought to be approved by God, and did not look for the accolades or approval of men.

Several years before her arrival in Sydney, she had gone to southern England, and preached the message of holiness in many of the Wesleyan circuits there.

Her Arrival in Sydney, February, 1884

She came to Sydney because she believed God was leading her to come and declare the holiness message. She believed God had a work for her to do in New South Wales. At that time, the New South Wales Wesleyan Conference also covered the circuits in Queensland, so, naturally, she saw her brief from God as covering this area, also. She would also only work with the ministers of the circuits, and at their request. It seems also that her financial support was based solely upon her trust in God to supply her needs, and not in any formal arrangements with circuits or any committee.

She arrived in Sydney in mid-February, after the Annual Conference was over, and thus was introduced to the Wesleyan ministers of Sydney at a district ministers' meeting early in March. A report from this meeting was published in the *Weekly Advocate*.

The report said firstly that Miss Leonard had arrived, "an honored servant of the Lord from America," and that she had been preaching in southern England. It listed also some of the written credentials and testimonials which she carried, from a list of outstanding leaders in America and England.

For example, "California" Taylor wrote, "The success of Miss Leonard in conjunction with our pastors, in soul-saving work for Jesus, and the entire sanctification of believers, has been very marked through a long series of years." Such a recommendation would have been readily accepted in Australia.

And there were other recommendations which were equally acceptable.

Then, her intention in coming to Australia was stated frankly. "It is Miss Leonard's wish to conduct meetings with special reference to the promotion of holiness, in connection with the ministers and people of the Methodist Church in these colonies. Her testimonials were read at a numerous-attended preachers' meeting held in the York-street church on Monday last, when several ministers were appointed to bid her welcome, and to wish her God-speed in her work. It is probable that she will visit one or two country circuits during the present month, and commence a mission in Sydney early in April. We commend her work to the hearty sympathy and earnest prayers of our people. Any of our ministers wishing to secure her services can obtain all information by writing to the Book Depot." (1.)

Her Early Work in New South Wales - 1884

An early opportunity for her came when a Camp Meeting was arranged by the St. Leonards Circuit, to be held on Good Friday. Several other ministers from city circuits were also involved in this meeting. (2.) The minister of the circuit at that time was the Rev. James E. Carruthers, who was the only Wesleyan minister on the north side of the Harbour. His circuit covered the whole district from Manly to Hornsby, and everything in between. Carruthers became a strong supporter of Miss Leonard.

Mittagong

"We have lately been favoured with a visit from Miss Leonard, the lady evangelist from America. When she came to us we were already in the midst of a revival at Mittagong; when, for a fortnight previous, we had been marching the streets under a running fire of rotten eggs. It may be said in passing that however romantic rotten eggs and brickbats may appear in the history of early Methodism, we did not find them conducive to piety in the least degree. To tell the truth, we did not like them one bit. However, in our judgment, street preaching is so absolutely necessary that if we cannot have it without the eggs, then by all means give us both, rather than neither.

Miss Leonard's visit was most opportune. She spent a week at Mittagong, a week at Bowral, and four days at Kangaloon. It was at the latter place where she was most signally blessed. Large numbers attended, and the gospel 'came not in word only; but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance.' Miss Leonard came to advocate 'Holiness.' This she did 'in season and out of season.' With her this is the secret of all success in the Church of Christ. It is the all-important question. She is perfectly right. What higher proof of it could be given, of a practical character, than her success here as in other places? The moment the church began to seek holiness of heart, sinners began to seek mercy, and to find it.

While here, Miss Leonard so commended herself to many, that on the motion of Mr. White, seconded by Mr. Walsh, the Quarterly Meeting unanimously and heartily carried the following resolutions:- First, 'That this meeting expresses its gratitude to God for sending Miss Leonard to the Mittagong circuit, and for so blessing her work here.' Second, 'That this resolution be inserted in the *Weekly Advocate*.' Many in this circuit are thankful for Miss Leonard's visit, and there is an earnest desire that ere long she should give us a week at Robertson.

Miss Mosley, who accompanied Miss Leonard, had the misfortune to fall sick as soon as she came

to Bowral. Although recovered from that attack, she is in a delicate state of health. She has been a most welcome guest in many homes here. It would be safe to say that she has left a blessing in every house that has received her.” (3.)

Newtown Circuit

Another minister who became a strong supporter of Miss Leonard and her work was the Rev. James A. Nolan, who was stationed at Newtown, which was at that time one of the main circuits in Sydney. He also became President of the Conference in January, 1885. In April, 1884, Miss Leonard was asked to conduct a mission for a week in the Rockdale church, which was then an outlying preaching place in the Newtown Circuit.

In May, a mission was conducted in the main Newtown church. Nolan provided the published account of that campaign.

“A very successful series of revival services has been conducted at Newtown by Miss I. S. Leonard, lady evangelist from the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. The attendance at the services was quite remarkable. For several days the weather was very unsettled, and frequently the rain fell in torrents. The main street of Newtown was a study, especially if you had to cross it. It was scarcely a figure of speech to call it a sea of mud. But neither rain nor mud could keep the people at home. Night after night an altogether unexpected number of people came to the meetings. The attendance and interest increased to the last; and the results were such as to constrain us to say, over and over again, with deep thankfulness - ‘This is the finger of God.’ Many sinners have been converted; backsliders not a few have been reclaimed; children, by the half-score at a time, have testified to having found the Children's Friend; and conviction has been fastened on many hearts that are still seeking for rest and light.

But, better than all, a great number of God's people have sought and found, through faith in the finished work of Christ, salvation from all sin. As it is Miss Leonard's special mission to this country to awaken an interest in the subject of Scriptural Holiness, she very wisely confined herself mostly to this great theme. The old Methodist doctrine of Christian Perfection - the doctrine of Wesley's Notes and Sermons - was fully and clearly set forth; and, as in the days of our fathers, the result was a genuine and a very blessed revival. In the course of a ministry of four-and-twenty years, it has never been my privilege to witness such a glorious work of God. To God alone be all the praise. I have only to add, that in the Monday night prayer-meeting, following the services, notwithstanding the great attraction of Mr. Booth's [Temperance] meeting in the Exhibition Building, there were just five times the usual number of persons present.” (4.)

Miss Leonard's Open Letter to the Editor

Perhaps the best introduction of Miss Leonard to the Wesleyans of New South Wales and Queensland came in the form of an open letter she wrote, and which was published in the *Weekly Advocate*. Although somewhat wordy by later standards, it is worth reproducing in full.

“To Ministers and Members of the Wesleyan Church of New South Wales.

On this 15th day of April, I am reminded that it is just four months today since my leaving London for Australia, and two months tomorrow since my landing in Sydney. My coming - so contrary to all my desires and so unexpected to myself and friends - was so signally of God's appointing, that never for one moment, through the four months, have I thought to question His leading, but have only waited before Him that He might fulfil His promise, very clearly given: ‘I will be with thee,

and will shew thee what thou shalt do.’ And now today, while my heart has been going out to God in such earnest prayer for His blessing, I find my thought also turning toward the Church, with desire that *they unite with me* to ask and claim of God *a gracious awakening upon the subject of Christian holiness for Methodism of New South Wales*.

I ask this first, because I believe so fully, according to the Bible and Wesleyan standards, that God has for His people *in this life complete salvation* - not only from the guilt and power of sin, but from its pollution and inbeing; and further, that it is only when Christians have claimed this entire cleansing from all indwelling sin, that the full anointing of the Holy Spirit is given - under which anointing, the tongue is loosed to declare the wondrous blessing of God experienced in the soul, and to invite others, with earnest entreaty, to seek and find like precious salvation.

Looking abroad upon the Christian Church in the nineteenth century, this seems assuredly to be the *one need*. Among even the people to whom was committed this ‘grand depositum,’ it is to be feared that the many have, alas! been unfaithful to the trust, and, as a result of not going on to perfection, have grown lean in their souls - if, indeed, some have not lost their first love - so that today they are sadly among those having a form of godliness, but without the power, having ‘a name to live while they are dead.’

Again, I ask your earnest prayer in this direction because it seems the need of the Church, in order that the *general work of God may be advanced*. Is not the experience of Mr. Wesley, at this point, true now as when he wrote one of his preachers? ‘Where Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God, and consequently little addition to the Society, and little life in the members of it. Therefore, if Jacob Rowell is grown faint, and says but little about it, do *you* supply his lack of service. Speak, and spare not. Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. Till you press believers to expect full salvation *now*, you must not look for any revival.’ - Works, vol. 6, page 761.

While my heart is anxious for the conversion of sinners, I believe God has brought me here to press upon believers their *whole duty and privilege* - even entire consecration to His service and complete salvation from all sin. My one desire now is to know, *How* may this work be most surely carried forward? The response comes, that *only* in proportion as *this work is borne before God in earnest and prevailing prayer* will the result be realised.

Following the suggestion of the Holy Spirit, I believe, so clearly made to my mind, I now send out this Open Letter, with the request that a Prayer League be formed of such as will at least press this matter before God's throne. Hence may I ask *each minister and member* of the Church who is interested in the definite work of holiness, entire sanctification - whether personally in the enjoyment of the experience or not, and who will, as the Spirit prompts, ask of God to advance this work, by giving to His people, first of all, a *real* hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and the fulness of His sanctifying grace to those who truly seek it at His hands - *to write me to this effect*, even a line. This I desire, not that publicity may be given to the fact, but that *my own faith* may be strengthened, and that thus *together* we may claim of God the fulfilment of the promise: ‘Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.’

As I conclude this lengthy letter, may I once more ask you, my brother, my sister, in the Lord, to take this matter to God in prayer, asking for yourself the spirit of grace and supplication for a revival in the Church of Scriptural holiness, and then do not dismiss the subject from your mind until this request is granted. *Send your name, as a member of the Prayer League*, to the address below, and, while no trumpet shall herald the fact abroad, it will be known above, and we shall together be strengthened by this union in prayer and faith.

‘Now, unto Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be all the glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.’

Yours in Him,

Isabella S. Leonard.

Petersham, Sydney.” (5.)

Here, again, we see the organising of a Prayer League or Union for a special purpose. We can also see basic features of Miss Leonard’s spiritual life, including dependence upon God for guidance and power for service, as well as her humility in asking others to share in her work through their prayers.

Also, about this time, a letter of support came from Victoria - almost certainly from the Rev. John Watsford, although written as if to appear almost anonymous.

“(From an Aged Minister of Victoria.)

I am glad to hear that the Lord is blessing your labours in connection with the glorious work of holiness. This is just what the Church needs everywhere. Without it little will ever be done; with it we must have prosperity. All through my Christian life and ministry I have ever proved that as I have lived this and preached it, so has my success been. I am pressing it upon the members of my church now, and I am hoping soon to see blessed results. J.W.” (6.)

The Editor Responds

In “The Outlook” column, the Editor provided his own backing for Miss Leonard's work, and encouragement for both city and country circuits to make use of her ministry.

“The subject of holiness has been brought prominently before our people lately, especially in connection with special services conducted by the lady evangelist from the United States, Miss I. S. Leonard. On this doctrine the teaching of our church is clear and distinct. John Wesley believed in, experienced, and taught the privilege of entire sanctification. Many of the critics and theologians of his day fell out with him for his use of the term ‘perfection’; but as he found that word employed in Scripture to describe a state of Christian grace, he did not hesitate even to use it. One of the hopeful signs of the times is the revival of interest in this deeply important subject. Different churches employ different terms to describe it, just as one or other phase of the blessing is most clearly apprehended by them; but among all evangelical Christians, there is a feeling after a higher life and a moving towards a more complete participation in the benefits of redeeming grace. ‘Be ye holy!’ is a command that also indicates the possibility of Christians becoming holy, and that in a very real and precious sense. Cleansing from sin and deadness to self on the one hand prepares the way for all gracious affections and tempers, and for being filled with all the fulness of God on the other. ‘Purified unto the Lord, a people for His own possession,’ also produces the further effect of being ‘zealous for good works.’ According as Christians are ‘sanctified,’ they are also ‘meet for the Master’s service.’ The great need of the church today is fully consecrated members endued with the Holy Ghost, and made clean by His word dwelling in them. And why should not our members individually seek to attain to this? The duty is plain. The way is clear. The blessing is obtainable. A clean heart is promised, and the holy baptism is assured. ‘Faithful is He who hath called you, who also will do it.’ Will ministers and members unite to claim all the fulness of His grace, and to be, as Francis Ridley Havergal puts it, ‘Ever, only, all for Christ.’ (7.)

The Visit to Kiama

Perhaps through the influence of James Carruthers, who came from this part of the South Coast, Miss Leonard visited the Kiama Circuit, preaching for a week in Kiama, and for another week in Jamberoo. The Kiama report reflected also some other spiritual features of the work there. The most relevant part of the report went as follows:-

“The cause of God in connection with the Church in this circuit has not, for some time past been, in a more encouraging state than it appears to be at present. For Kiama itself, which has too long been noted for spiritual dullness, generally speaking, rather than for spiritual life and activity, the prayer meetings are well attended, the classes are almost overflowing, and the congregations, though not crowded, are usually good. In Jamberoo, ever since the revival services which were held nearly two years since, the church has been in a forward state; and in other parts of the circuit there are good signs of present and increasing life. Various causes seem, under Divine Providence, to have brought about this pleasant condition of things, so far as Kiama itself is concerned. In the first place there was the arrival in town of several earnest young men, having the fear of God and a desire to do some work for Him. These, along with others, have formed themselves into a Society which, in its constitution and rules, provides for the mental and spiritual improvement of its members; and seeks to find out also, some sphere of and opportunities for Christian work. Just outside the town of Kiama is one of the large blue-metal quarries, known as Bombo Point, where a large number of men and youths are engaged, and where the Sabbath has been a day for gambling and other sins. For some time past a number of the members of our M.C.A. [Mens’ Christian Association] have regularly visited these spiritual and social outcasts, and have distributed tracts, held prayer meetings, given Scripture readings and addresses, and in other ways have exerted a very wholesome influence in the midst of the great moral corruption. Then came the visit of Miss Leonard, which will be long remembered in those parts of the circuit, Kiama and Jamberoo, which she visited, and in each of which she conducted a week of Holiness meetings and services. During these meetings a goodly number of our best Christian workers were led to seek and to find Christian Holiness, and their description of their experience of this blessing, as contrasted with their experience of a justified state, is wonderfully clear and pleasing.” (8.)

1885

There were no other published reports about Miss Leonard's work during the rest of 1884, although there seems little doubt that she would have been kept busy enough, probably in country towns. Some people saw it all as a sign of lack of interest by city ministers and people. This apparent lack prompted the following complaint to the editor from a layman who lived in the country town of Goulburn.

“Dear Sir, - I have been surprised that the services of Miss Leonard, an American evangelist of some repute, have not been more frequently solicited by our several circuits about Sydney. Her particular mission is quite in accord with the grand object of our Church, ‘the spread of Scriptural holiness.’ Miss Leonard conducted with great success special services in our Goulburn church some few months since, and much lasting good has been the result. Her teaching on the doctrine of Holiness is plain and definite, and I am quite sure if her ministrations were taken more advantage of the important subject would engage the more earnest attention of the members of our Church. It was the preaching of this doctrine that gave Wesley and the early Methodist Church so much power; and the Salvation Army making it a prominent feature of their teaching, accounts in a great

measure for much of their spiritual power and success. I commend the matter to the ministers and officers of our churches about Sydney, and trust we shall shortly have gratifying reports in the Advocate of the outcome of Miss Leonard's mission.

Yours truly,

S. F. BLACKMORE.” (9.)

Only a scattering of reports were published in 1885, before the Camp Meeting, near the end of the year, when the impact of her work in New South Wales developed a much clearer focus and result.

Shoalhaven Circuit

This circuit was visited around the end of the year, and was reported upon briefly in January of 1885. This reference to her work was part of a much longer report from this circuit.

“Miss Leonard's services were attended by large congregations, and were blessed to a great many at Nowra, Broughton Creek, and Kangaroo Valley. Several were brought to God, while others professed to be led into the enjoyment of entire sanctification. Her work was characterised by an intelligent appreciation of Gospel truth, and the absence of excitement.” (10.)

Rockley and Dubbo

The Central West parts of New South Wales were visited several months later. News from the Rockley Circuit was published in the normal column of Circuit Intelligence.

“**Rockley Circuit.** In this circuit for some time past we have had the droppings of a shower, but lately, when Miss Leonard visited us at our request, down came the shower of God's blessing. At Rockley forty-five souls have been blessed with God's forgiving love. We held services here for a fortnight, and it was a time of power from on high. At Dennis Island the services were held for a week, resulting in the conversion of thirty-two souls to God; it was a week never to be forgotten. We then went to Caloola for a week, when twelve persons found peace with God. Miss Leonard conducted all the services, and was helped by all the workers in the circuit, the people coming from all parts. Such singing, praying, and earnest entreaties I think I never heard before. The number of souls professing to be saved is about ninety, seventy of who we reckon on trial; beside this, many of God's people have been ‘sanctified wholly,’ and are thus prepared for future work in the Master's service. To God be all the glory!” (11.)

The **Dubbo** report was more lengthy. The meetings started on May 24th, lasting for about eleven days, and spanning two Sundays. The number of professed conversions was 115, plus 30 Sunday scholars. About 45 of the converts belonged to other churches. They hoped that 55 would join the Wesleyans, with the church connection of 15 others unknown. The doctrine of entire sanctification was preached with “great faithfulness,” and the spiritual blessing to many church members as a result of this was greatly appreciated. (12.)

Morpeth, and Botany Bay

Another very interesting mission was conducted in the **Morpeth** Circuit, which in those days included such places as Raymond Terrace and Upper Hexham.

“Last December the Quarterly Meeting invited Miss Leonard to conduct special services, but the

way did not open till two months ago. The mission was carried on throughout the circuit, beginning at Morpeth, and was greatly blessed of God. As usual, Miss Leonard made prominent the doctrine of holiness, and a goodly number of our members professed to be entirely sanctified. About 190 persons presented themselves as seekers of forgiveness of sin, most of whom made confession with the mouth unto salvation. Of these some are exceedingly interesting cases, and a few remarkable ones. Some of the most unlikely persons have been reached, and gloriously saved, among them being the scoffer, the blasphemer, and the drunkard. As far as can be judged, the work is of a solid character, and has taken thorough hold of our congregations, it being a great delight to hear so many bright and willing testimonies to the power of the Lord to pardon and cleanse. This manifestation of God's glory is a great encouragement to us in the Christian life and service, and we would give to Him all the praise." (13.)

Shortly after this, Miss Leonard was back in Sydney, visiting the Newtown Circuit again, and a mission was held in another of the outlying churches, this time at **Botany Bay**.

"From the first the power of God was present to save. And each night, for a week, such scenes of Gospel triumph were witnessed as filled many hearts on earth with joy, and must have caused great joy in heaven among the angels of God. In a small community, and in a Church whose spiritual life was most unsatisfactory, more than fifty souls were brought to trust in Christ for salvation. Some of the cases of conversion were exceedingly interesting. In the prayer-meeting, in the class-meeting, and in many a home is heard 'the voice of rejoicing and salvation.' May God multiply amongst us such visitations of His love." (14.)

The President Speaks on Christian Holiness to All the Ministers and People

On the same page of the *Weekly Advocate* as the report about Botany Bay there appeared another letter from the Newtown Circuit - this time from the President of the Conference, the Rev. James A. Nolan. As mentioned, Nolan had supported Miss Leonard's work right from the beginning, in March and April the previous year, and now she had visited his circuit for the third time. As the District Meetings, and the Annual Conference approached, the President challenged all of the ministers and people on the question of Christian Holiness. Here was strategic spiritual leadership from the top.

"A WORD TO OUR METHODIST MINISTERS AND PEOPLE ON THE SUBJECT OF CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

MY DEAR BRETHREN, - The annual District Meetings are drawing near. Many matters of necessary business detail will be dealt with; but in each District Meeting there will be a conversation on the work of God. Ministers and stewards will take counsel together concerning the interests of the work that we all have so much at heart. In some of the Districts they will be cheered by glad tidings of revival; and in all the Districts they will devote themselves anew to the service of God. And they will, I am sure, go back to their circuits baptised anew for Christian service; and all our people will share in the blessing that God is waiting to pour out on the annual assemblies of His servants.

To the important topic mentioned at the head of this paper I would, with all respect and affection, invite the attention of our ministers and people. I do this on the ground that several communications have reached me, from far and near, on this subject. A deep and widespread interest has of late been awakened in this all-important theme. Some have entered into the perfect love and perfect rest that come with full trust in Jesus; and many more, tired out with their

wilderness wanderings, are longing for 'the Sabbath rest that remaineth for the people of God.'

All this agrees not only with the New Testament, but also with the teaching and experience of our fathers. And in all this there is surely unwonted grounds of hope for our Church. The revival that we need is a revival of holy living, and already in the older countries there are many signs of such a revival.

On both sides of the Atlantic holiness publications, and holiness conventions, and circuit meetings for the promotion of holiness, are an index of the growing interest that is being taken by our people in what has always been a characteristic doctrine of our Church. Such a revival of holiness will surely mean far more for Christian work, and far greater triumphs of Gospel truth than we have ever yet known.

It is true that in some quarters excesses and errors of teaching and of testimony have hindered the progress of the truth. But against these, we, as a Church, ought to be secure. Clearer and more careful statements of the New Testament doctrine of holiness can nowhere be found than in the doctrinal standards of our Church. Our fathers had a strong hold and a blessed experience of this truth of God. It glows in our Hymn-book; it is delineated in our Methodist biographies; and, thank God! there have never been wanting in our Church living witnesses of the power of Christ to save from all sin.

May the God of our fathers multiply such witnesses a hundred-fold! In this time of opportunity for our Church let us arise and possess our promised inheritance. What we want is by no means controversy, but an experimental knowledge of this highest privilege of the Christian life. It is our Lord's own word that 'if any man willeth to do His will he shall know of the teaching.' May God awaken in the hearts of our hundred and forty ministers, and in the hearts of our seven thousand Church members, such a hunger and thirst after righteousness as can only be satisfied with 'all the fulness of God.' We shall then see such displays of the saving power of God in all our circuits as those with which our fathers were so blessedly familiar. I earnestly hope that this matter may receive attention at our District Meetings, that it may form the theme of many a sermon, that it may often be spoken of in our meetings for Christian testimony, and that it may be exemplified everywhere in the daily life of our people!

JAMES A. NOLAN.

Newtown, October, 1885." (15.)

Evaluation of the First Phase of Miss Leonard's Ministry.

What we can perhaps view as the First Phase of Miss Leonard's ministry was bearing a considerable impact, not only upon the ministers with whom she had worked, but at the grass-roots level of the average Church membership in the circuits she had visited. Not only were those circuits buoyed through the conversions which had occurred. But there had come a renewed interest in the Methodist doctrine of Scriptural holiness, or Entire Sanctification, amongst the ministers and the rank and file members. Although published reports exist for only a percentage of the circuits that she visited, there had been others. She had also invested more time in the places that she visited, more than would have happened with most other visiting evangelists. For example, the Rockley Circuit received a month of her time. And, she visited the Newtown Circuit several times. Such investments of time would contribute to the impact that she had.

THE SECOND PHASE

Camp Meeting, Conventions, and the Methodist Holiness Association

This second phase began to develop toward the end of 1885. The impact of her ministry increased greatly with the formation of the Methodist Holiness Association.

Camp Meeting

The Rev. W. G. Taylor had become superintendent minister of the York Street Circuit in central Sydney. He was a keen exponent of the Methodist doctrine of Entire Sanctification. The Prince of Wales' Birthday was celebrated in New South Wales with a public holiday. This was used by Taylor, and the city ministers, with a Camp Meeting, attended by 1,100 or 1,200 people. The holiday was on Monday, November 9, 1885. A ferry was hired to shuttle back and forth, and carry people across the Harbour to a picnic site where the Camp Meeting took place. A large marquee was used for the meetings, which all occurred during the afternoon. Many leading ministers and laymen were present, including James Nolan. A police officer in uniform was also present, but had nothing to do except mingle with those at the meetings. Miss Leonard was one of the speakers.

“Several times during the day the suggestion was made by one and another, that a Holiness Convention should be held in our York-street church at an early date. One speaker urging that a two-days meeting should be arranged for. This, we believe, will be done. In the meantime, it was arranged that a special meeting be this week held in York-street for the promotion of holiness, a report of which we hope to furnish in our next issue.” (16.)

So, the immediate plan was to hold a meeting quickly for the promotion of holiness, and then other longer term plans would follow.

Conventions

The “quick” meeting took place two days later, in the York Street Church on Wednesday evening, November 11. The Rev. W. G. Taylor presided, and several other Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist ministers joined in.

The reporter noted that Taylor said:- “The deepening of the interest of our people throughout this colony on the subject of Entire Sanctification was one of the signs of the times, for which we might well thank God. Too long we had kept this great doctrine in the background, and the Church had suffered in consequence, both in its inner life and in its efforts to spread out throughout the country. Its was today as it had ever been, that in proportion as the doctrine of Holiness - the depositum of truth committed to the Methodist Church - was brought out to the front, our Church prospered. There had been a remarkable quickening of Christian life in America and England of late years, and in each case it was found to be closely associated with the prominent proclamation of this glorious truth - one which John Wesley preached with no uncertain voice, and which he had committed to us, his sons in the Gospel, and for withholding which from our people we and our people had suffered.

The Conventions on this subject held in connection with our Church in the Mother Country had resulted in great good, and he was full of hope that similar results would follow similar action in

Australia.”

At a later stage of the meeting, Taylor gave his own testimony about his experience of Entire Sanctification, which highlighted three periods in his life. He felt he could now truthfully say, “For me to live is Christ.”

One of the Primitive Methodist ministers spoke, many testimonies were given, and there was much time of prayer and praise. Finally, Miss Leonard also spoke - “full of Scriptural truth and telling appeal; - an address to which the Holy Spirit at once gave His seal, in that a number of persons went forward as seekers of the blessing. It was a time of weeping and of great joy...” (17.)

During this meeting, it was decided to hold another meeting the next day, again in the York Street church, to discuss the matter further.

The morning and afternoon sessions of this Thursday’s meeting were chaired by the President of the Conference, the Rev. J. A. Nolan. The morning session consisted of sharing, testimony, prayer and praise. After the opening devotional exercises, the President “expressed his thankfulness to God for the general awakening on the subject of Christian Holiness in the present day. He was glad that the camp meeting of Monday and the meeting of the previous evening had been held, for he believed they would tend to spread the knowledge and experience of the great doctrine they had met to consider. He was sure that the revival we needed was a revival of holiness.” The high point of the afternoon was a question time. During the afternoon, a number of questions were written out and handed in. The President asked Miss Leonard to answer. “Miss Leonard asked them to unite for a moment in silent prayer that she might have the help of the Spirit in this responsible work.”

A two-page Supplement to the *Weekly Advocate* was published, containing a full account of the dealing on both of these days, including the questions, and the answers given by Miss Leonard.

“The questions being concluded an invitation was given for persons enjoying or seeking holiness of heart, to gather for special prayer, when a number went forward, some of whom entered into perfect rest. The meeting closed with fervent praise for the manifest tokens of God's presence and power given during the day." Another Holiness meeting was arranged for the following Saturday. (18.)

A three-days Convention was organised at York Street early in December. The first session, on December 9, was again chaired by the President of the Conference, although the Convention was not officially a Wesleyan function. A number of papers were presented by different ministers and by certain lay people. There was a lot of discussion, including some contributions from ladies. There was much prayer and praise, and 60 or 70 testimonies. Much discussion also took place at meal times, and at other hours of the day and night. (19.)

Anniversary Day

Another, less formal “Holiness” gathering occurred all day on January 26, 1886, which was then called the Anniversary Day holiday. The morning session was again chaired by the President, and a number of speakers shared their thoughts. The afternoon and evening sessions were chaired by the Rev. W. G. Taylor, minister of the York Street church, where the meetings were held.

The evening session in particular was “the crowning meeting of the day, both for power and numbers.” After two ministers prayed, and another read the Scriptures, Taylor commented that the revival that was needed was one within the Church, because worldliness and unbelief amongst Christians were the greatest stumbling block.

He referred also to the origin and progress of the present holiness movement, and the wonderful progress and blessing attendant upon it.

“He was exceedingly thankful that their honoured father (Rev. George Muller) had so cheerfully

responded to their invitation to address them. He had no need to formally introduce him.

A hymn was very heartily sung, and the Rev. George Muller addressed the meeting from the words 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' (Heb. xii. 14.)."

A long outline of this sermon was then published by the reporter.

"After singing, Miss Leonard gave an address on Romans xii. 1 - 2, followed by an earnest exhortation to those who were seeking Holiness to come forward for it. A large number responded, and, as in the afternoon, the communion [rail] was crowded. Altogether, during the day some fifty publicly avowed themselves as enquirers, and many of them stepped into blessed enjoyment of this grace." (20.)

The Methodist Holiness Association

This association came into being towards the middle of that year, 1886.

The objects of the association were;-

"I. - To unite together those members of the various branches of the Methodist Church who have obtained the blessing of entire sanctification, for the purpose of strengthening each other's hands in God, and for associated effort for the purpose of making known throughout the land this great doctrine of Holy Writ.

II. - The members of this association must be clear in the experience of entire sanctification, constantly exemplifying the same by holy living and definite testimony; or thoroughly believing the doctrine as set forth in our standards, and earnestly seeking its enjoyment.

III. - The ends of the association to be sought for by the following, amongst other methods: (1.) The formation of a Union for daily prayer, that our churches may be blessed with a revival of Scriptural holiness. (2.) The holding of a monthly central holiness meeting in Sydney. (3.) The conducting of holiness conventions in those churches to which the association may be invited. (4.) The publication and spread of literature on the subject of holiness." (21.)

During his first annual report in 1887, the secretary of the Association, the Rev. Joseph Woodhouse, said that the most valuable contribution that the Association had made was to publish a monthly periodical, *Glad Tidings*, which had achieved an astonishing circulation during its first year.

He said, "The most important work accomplished by the association has been the publication of *Glad Tidings*, a monthly paper 'devoted to recording and spreading the good news of a present, free, and full salvation.' The starting of this paper was a matter calling for careful and patient consideration. At the outset it was thought that an issue of 3000 would be a good venture, but so rapidly and liberally did the orders flow in that it was found necessary to make the first issue 10,000. For the first six months - to the end of 1886 - the average issue was 12,500 per month, and for the past four months the issue has just bordered upon 15,000 per month. A noteworthy feature in connection with the working of the paper is the fact that editors and agents all do their work without remuneration. As a labour of love the editors prepare the matter for publication, and from the same motive the numerous agents in all the colonies push the sale of the paper. The financial results have been very satisfactory. From the first the paper has made a profit, and it is believed that when at the close of the year the accounts are made up there will be found a substantial balance to be devoted to evangelistic work in the various colonies. That the paper meets a decided need is evidenced by its being so largely in demand. From many quarters, and from members of other Churches, have come gratifying testimonies to the good it is the means of accomplishing in building up the Church of Christ, and in leading sinners to think upon their ways. The committee would

urge renewed diligence in the pushing of this paper. Its cheapness makes it easy of circulation. Some have made it serve the purpose of tracts, and in its distribution have seen it prove a messenger of mercy to enquiring souls. There is ample scope for increasing, yea, for *doubling*, the present circulation.” (22.)

This was another clear indication of the impact of this Holiness movement in New South Wales and beyond, and also was a clue to the impact it had on the subsequent spiritual movements in Australia over the next twenty years or more.

1886

During 1886, Miss Leonard continued her ministry in various New South Wales Wesleyan circuits, as she was asked, although not many of them were covered by published reports.

For example:- “Spring Hill Circuit.- In this circuit we have had ‘good times’ lately during the visit of Miss Leonard. Services were held at Cornish Settlement, Guyong, Fairfield, Spring Terrace, Millthorpe, and Spring Hill, and at each place the people were blessed. The old Methodist doctrines of ‘justification’ and of ‘entire sanctification,’ as blessings to be realized by *faith*, and therefore to be realized *now*, were clearly set before all for their acceptance, and many proved the truth of the Word of God and were ‘justified freely’ and ‘sanctified wholly’ through the ‘precious blood of Christ.’

The pressing invitations given night after night by the lady evangelist were accepted, and many are now rejoicing in the possession of the newly-found blessings. The books also disposed of have been made a great blessing, especially the ‘Memorial of Harriet Mosley.’ Some frustrated the grace of God; the loss is not only their’s, but the Church’s. May the recipients of blessing be faithful. To God be all the praise.” (23.)

The Quarterly Meeting reported 169 full members in the Spring Hill Circuit, with 35 on trial.

Queensland

By October of 1886, Miss Leonard was preaching in Queensland, only two reports from Brisbane about her work being published in the *Weekly Advocate*.

One of these reports related to the Ann Street Church in Brisbane, and was as follows:-

“A very successful revival mission has been conducted by the Rev. F. Duesbury and Miss Leonard. The Church life has been greatly quickened and deepened. Many who were following afar off have taken upon themselves anew the bonds of Christian discipleship. Many of God’s people have sought and found the supreme blessing of full salvation. Backsliders have been recovered. The life-course of many young people has been blessedly changed. Burdened and aching hearts have been filled with the joy of pardon; and a happy troop of children have come, as of old, to the children’s Friend and Saviour. Scenes of grace and glory have been witnessed in the old Valley church, such as have caused great joy on earth and ‘joy in heaven among the angels of God.’ To God be all the praise.” (24.)

Miss Leonard left Australia in December of 1886, for a period of ministry in South India.

CHAPTER FIVE

NOTABLE REVIVALS in VICTORIA and SOUTH AUSTRALIA

1881 to 1884.

There were many smaller and local revivals in Victoria and South Australia during these years, and many evangelists were also at work. The following details refer to the revival movements which appear to me to be the most significant and interesting.

BALLARAT, 1881.

“The Conversation on the Work of God” was always one of the most interesting parts of a Wesleyan Methodist Annual Conference. The “Conversation” always began with the Secretary of the Conference reading out the statistics for the past year, indicating whether there had been a growth in the full membership of the church or not, and showing where other aspects of the denomination's work were progressing.

Generally, if little or no progress had occurred in the previous twelve months, which occurred more often than any of them liked to admit, then the problems would be discussed, and a renewal of dedication to God would be called for. Normally, a special week of prayer would be called for, before the usual winter period of special evangelistic services. Sometimes, this need for prayer was accentuated.

In many of the later years of the Nineteenth Century, an incoming President of a Conference would announce the theme of his Presidential year, and in many cases the theme was - “a revival in every circuit.” In the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference, the same thing occurred several times. So, revivals were keenly sought by many of the ministers and laymen.

If there had been a notable revival in any of the circuits during the previous year, then the President of the Conference would call upon the minister from the circuit concerned to stand and tell the Conference what had happened.

The Victorian and Tasmanian Conference for 1882 was held over the end of January, and the beginning of February, and the “Conversation” surveyed the work done through most of 1881. The two previous years had seen a slight increase, followed by a slight decrease. 1881 had seen at least two very notable revivals, and an increase of nearly 500 full members for the year (about 4%), and with the great number of 2,140 on trial for membership. So, in 1882, when the Conversation on the Work of God was reached, and the statistics had been read, the President of the Conference, the Rev. J. G. Millard, asked the superintendent minister from Ballarat to stand and relate what God had done.

The Rev. John Cope (superintendent) and his colleague, the Rev. Alexander R. Edgar, had both

been appointed to Ballarat West Circuit at the previous Conference. The reporter's account of John Cope's speech went as follows:-

“...in speaking of the gracious revival of God's work in Ballarat, which had commenced shortly after the arrival of his colleague and himself in the circuit [mid-April, 1881], he did not wish for a moment to ignore the labours of those who had preceded them. He did not think he could ever forget the first service he conducted in Lydiard-street last April. The church was very full, and the power of God was resting upon the whole congregation, the like of which he had scarcely ever felt before. He felt then that other men had laboured, and he and his colleague were about to enter into the rewards of their labours. They had sown, and we were about to reap. He had no thought then of help from their American visitors, the Rev. and Mrs. Inskip and the Rev. and Mrs. Osborne. But just then they came to Ballarat and it was by a gracious arrangement of God's providence that they did come, though the work had been commenced before they arrived. The next night good was also done, and then the tidal wave of a great and gracious revival began to flow in upon them. In every place in the circuit, save one, the work of God spread and by-and-by, in that one place, souls were saved, and a considerable increase to their membership was recorded. They could not put in figures the work of grace they had witnessed in Ballarat. They could only say that, after carefully taking the names of those who had professed to receive good, they found that there were in all about 1,200 persons who had given their hearts to God. He did not mean to say that they had this number added to the membership of their own church. In one place the names of 110 persons were given in as professing conversion, of which number 75 belonged chiefly to the Presbyterian and Episcopalian churches. These were enjoined to connect themselves immediately to their own churches. The work had been so divided between self and colleague as to conserve the greatest spiritual and lasting results. For instance, the Rev. A. R. Edgar, his colleague, had gone from place to place, giving himself to evangelistic work, while he (the speaker) had devoted himself to other things, gathering the converts into classes, appointing leaders, and in other ways trying to conserve the results of the revival work. He would also like to say that throughout the whole of this work the ministers had been greatly assisted by the earnest, hearty co-operation of a number of young local preachers, whose hearts were filled with God's love, and by officers and members generally. It seemed as if the Lord had put it into the hearts of all to work and pray. In conclusion, he had but to say that while he went to Ballarat with his mind burdened with certain misgivings, he had been permitted to witness there what he had never witnessed before on a like scale.” (1.)

This speech was followed by another, by the Rev. W. A. Quick, who was then the superintendent minister of the Richmond circuit in Melbourne, where a smaller revival had occurred. This will be referred to later.

The Visit of John S. Inskip.

By considering the dates on which different aspects of the revival occurred, it would seem that the revival sprang only in part from spiritual conditions already existing in the circuit. It also sprang, probably more directly, from the impact of several American visitors, who all arrived in Ballarat in April, at, or immediately after, the time when the revival began, but without any planning by local ministers.

The famous American Methodist Holiness preacher, the Rev. John S. Inskip, his wife, and accompanied by the Rev. W. A. Gardner, arrived in Ballarat on 16th April, 1881, after having led a Holiness mission in Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. They were met by the ministers and leading laymen. Inskip preached in the Lydiard Street church on the Sunday morning, from the text “Create in me a clean heart, and renew in me a right spirit.” “The sermon was preached with great freedom and many were blest by it a good number of the more prominent members came forward to the altar and received a preparation for work.”

Mr. Gardner and Mrs. Inskip addressed the assembled Sunday School children in the afternoon. This Sunday School had a membership of about seven hundred, and filled the main body of the church. The galleries were also full.

At the evening service, an "immense assembly" was addressed by Inskip. "Many of the old members who had heard the grand old doctrine preached by the fathers, and had known by a former experience the joys of full salvation, came forward to renew their covenant and embrace it, and there were many interesting cases of those who were gloriously converted." With increasing power, morning and evening, the services were continued through the next week. The Thursday was especially a day of waiting on God for the endowment of power, with the evening service particularly in mind. "All felt, as the evening service commenced, an unusual solemnity come upon them. It rested upon the preacher in his manner and in the tones of his voice. At the close of the sermon on the text, 'Now is the accepted time,' there was a great rush to the altar from all parts of the church. Every part in and around the rail was occupied by seekers, and then seat after seat in front was filled. The people were crying to God for mercy in the galleries, and in all parts of the church. There was one scene which the writer will never forget. At the right of the altar an unsaved mourner was sitting, and near him knelt his brother, calling on God in great agony of soul to save him as the power increased in the service, the agony of this brother increased. Sitting by his side was his wife and two children and his sister. The Spirit of God had laid hold on the wife and the sister they were converted, and then they joined in the cry to God to save the husband and brother. The scene can never be conveyed on paper. After a long season of agonising prayer the mourner was finally brought to his knees, and there God saved him. What a shout went up from that little circle and immense congregation. At the same time, in the gallery, was a woman calling on God to save her and her children from hell. The hour for closing had long since passed, and that immense congregation was held gospel-bound. When the people moved from the house there was a quiet pressure of the hand - no demonstration, no loud talking the awful power of God filled the place. Great fulness of love and joy broke in upon many a poor heart that night. One great and noticeable feature was, all that came as seekers were clear conversions. No room when the power of God fills a place for spurious conversions or artificial revivals. By testimony in the next morning's meeting, many retired, but not to sleep all through the night. It did seem that many a heart would break for joy. The glory of God - that glory which excelleth - filled the place, from the beginning unto the end of that Thursday's services."

The Friday night service was marked by young men especially being converted. Many people could not get in, because of the size of the crowd.

There was no service on the Saturday. But it was on that day that another American visitor arrived who would play a role later in the revival, as well as visiting many other circuits. This was the Rev. W. B. Osborne and his wife.

"On Sunday morning, 24th April, the Rev. J. S. Inskip preached a sermon on 'Infidelity' to a large audience, filling every particle of space in the church. At the close, those who would that day give themselves to God were asked to lift the hand. Over threescore were raised the writer counted a dozen of these who were gray-headed men. In the afternoon Mrs. Inskip addressed an immense audience, old and young. Her subject was - 'The leper healed,' She also gave a portion of her experience. At the close of her remarks the altar was cleared, and from all parts of the house came many to find the Saviour. All over the house were young and old crying to God for salvation. Before half-past six in the evening the church was filled many hundreds went away for want of entrance, and an overflow-meeting was held with good results.

Mr. Inskip preached from Luke xv. 7. His theme was the joy in heaven among the angels over 'one sinner that repents.' At the close an opportunity for any who might wish to leave was given. Some did so, only to have the space filled by others. When the invitation was given, at once, and in a body, about thirty lads came forward, and were converted. Many older persons, among them a

widow, who had been a Roman Catholic, was gloriously saved.” (2.)

For the many who could not get into the church that Sunday night, there was an overflow meeting, addressed by the Rev, W. B. Osborne, and with good results. However, many had already left without realising that this provision had been organised.

By the Monday, the Inskip mission was over. There was a service of praise and thanksgiving at eleven o'clock in the morning, and a farewell service at night. But the revival had only just commenced. The Inskip meetings accounted for about 500 of the conversions resulting from the revival. (3.)

A few weeks later, a special Love-feast was held, in which a number of very interesting testimonies were heard. Over the following weeks, special meetings were organised at the other preaching centres in the Ballarat West circuit. These centres were Pleasant Street, Rubicon Street, Sebastopol, Black Lead, Buninyong and Garibaldi. The preaching in these services was largely done by the Rev. A. R. Edgar. The Rev. W. B. Osborne, however, also stayed in the area, and led some special meetings.

At the June Quarterly Meeting, Edgar asked to be relieved of his normal week-night commitments, so that he could pay more undivided attention to the special services. The Rev. Thomas Williams was a retired minister living in Ballarat, and he offered to take Edgar's week-night services for a period, an offer which was gladly accepted. Williams had been famous as a missionary in Fiji many years before, and was also a Past-President of the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference.

The pastoral report at this June Quarterly Meeting reported that there were 603 full members, but that there were 210 on trial for membership, and 158 catechumens. "...a most encouraging step in advance of the previous quarter, and one which led to an interesting and profitable conversation, prominent features in which were devout thankfulness and gratitude to Almighty God for His gracious visitation, the importance of looking after and thoroughly conserving the results already secured, and the necessity for further aggressive work being arranged for in several parts of the circuit yet unvisited." The decision was also taken to build a new church at Lydiard Street, which could better accommodate the crowds which were now attending. This new building, in due course, became the majestic structure which was the pride of Methodism in Ballarat for a century. (4.)

In order to show the wonderful fruits of this revival, when the Sunday school Anniversary was held later in the year "special thanksgiving was offered for the great work of grace that had taken place among the scholars, and on the following Sunday a most extraordinary gathering was held. Instead of the usual school session there was a fellowship meeting, when for two hours young men and women bore testimony to the power of God that had kept them steadfast. It was a time of wonderful blessing, and 'great grace rested upon all.'" (5.)

Ballarat East Circuit.

This circuit was affected also by the revival, but not so suddenly or so powerfully. By mid-June the following piece was published.

"Showers of Blessing. - It is surely not wrong to make known through the medium of the press that God is reviving His work in any part of His vineyard and yet the utmost caution is necessary, lest we should in this way exalt man and grieve the Spirit, for every true revival is 'neither by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.' For several weeks past we have had tokens of good in various parts of this circuit, and now at Barkly-street and Neil-street a very gracious work of grace is in progress. Many are being brought to Christ. God's people are giving themselves afresh to Him, and entering heartily into the work of leading souls to Christ. May God send upon us more and more the mighty power of the Spirit!" (6.)

By the end of June, at their Quarterly Meeting, the Rev. Thomas Adamson said that they had 403 full members, with 30 on trial for membership. He hoped that the spiritual movement which had begun amongst them would continue. (7.)

A contributing factor to the character of the revival in Ballarat lies in the fact that the population of 40,000 at that time, consisted of many from Wales and Cornwall, where warm-hearted Methodist revivals historically had such a great impact.

In speaking particularly of the work of the Rev. A. R. Edgar in Ballarat, including the two years of normal winter evangelism following the year of the revival, before Edgar left Ballarat for his next appointment, Palamountain summarised the results of the revival as follows:-

“...it was estimated that throughout the two circuits, for the revival spread to the Barkly Street Circuit as well, the converts equalled in number those gathered in on the day of Pentecost. The estimate was made by the saintly town missionary, Mr. Martin Hosking. Nor was this the only result.

Great numbers of these converts became workers in the church, as local preachers, class leaders, Sunday School teachers, etc. Others entered the ministry of the Church, among whom were the Brothers Jolly, James McBride, John Polkinghorne, James Smith, Samuel J. Hoban, Charles Hammer, Oliver Dowsing, Samuel C. Roberts (of the New South Wales Conference), John Proctor, and the writer. Charles Upham went to China, Miss Tinney to Papua, and Miss Crebbin to Central Australia, as missionaries.” (8.)

Statistics.

A final indicator about this revival is seen in the returns for late 1879, published in the Minutes of the Conference in January, 1880, compared with figures four years later.

In the Ballarat West Circuit, early in 1880, with 15 churches, full members numbered 550, with 11 on trial, 2,247 Sabbath scholars (average 1,507), under 228 teachers, with an average church attendance of 2,840 (total 4130).

After the revival, at the end of 1883, the full members numbered 867, with 80 still on trial, 2,510 Sabbath scholars, (average 1,659), under 256 teachers. The average Sunday attendance of worshippers was not given, but the total was 5,000.

In the Ballarat East Circuit, early in 1880, with 13 churches, there were 419 members, with 61 on trial, 1,415 Sabbath scholars (average 978), under 197 teachers. The average Sunday attendance of worshippers was 1,810 (totally 3,405).

After the revival, at the end of 1883, the full membership had risen to 572, with 12 on trial. The Sunday School had 1466 pupils (average 991), under 174 teachers. Again, the average of Sunday worshippers was not given, but the total was 4,230. (9.)

RICHMOND, 1881

At the Wesleyan Annual Conference in Melbourne, 1882, after the speech to the Conference by the Rev. John Cope about the revival at Ballarat, an address was given by the Rev. W. A. Quick, superintendent of the Richmond circuit. The reporter's account of Mr. Quick's speech is as follows:-

“The Rev. W. A. Quick spoke of a gracious revival which had cheered his heart, and that of his colleague, the Rev. W. H. Fitchett, B.A., in the Richmond Circuit. If the results of that revival were not so large as those shown in the returns for Ballarat, they were as large in proportion. At their Quarterly Meeting [July, 1881.] the conversation on the work of God had been entered into with great freedom and earnestness, and all the members and officials gave themselves over to God, and were determined to work with the ministers in promoting the work of God in the circuit. They then had several preparatory meetings, and brought before their members the necessity of prayer and consecration to God. When the circuit was ripe for unusual operations, special meetings were held, and in every place throughout the circuit they had fruit of their labour. The meetings had been blessed of God to both his colleague and himself, the officers and local preachers, and to all their congregations. He never knew of more cordial co-operation than that which they had been favoured with their local preachers, leaders and other officials, with the private members of society, had worked well with the circuit ministers. When the classes were met for tickets, they found there had been 166 added to their membership, and he believed a large number of these would stand firm in their allegiance to Christ. His honoured colleague had almost gone beyond himself in revival work during the holding of their special meetings.” (10.)

The main report about the revival which had been published earlier, closer to the time, had appeared in *The Spectator* early in October, 1881. After the preparatory work which was described above, the special meetings commenced in the Cremorne Street church, which boasted a small society, and a small congregation. The special meetings were well attended, and, marvellous to tell, there were many conversions.

The special services then moved to the central church in the circuit, at Church Street, Richmond. “The services were so signally successful here that they had to be carried on during a whole fortnight. Sometimes as many as twelve ‘seekers’ were at the ‘communion’ pleading for mercy, and one evening that number found peace.”

Other centres in the circuit demanded to have special services with such insistence that they had to begin holding them at Burwood before the Church Street services were over. This kind of duplication naturally placed much greater demands upon ministers and the teams of lay people. But the same good results occurred in both places.

The next centre to have special services was Mount Pleasant. The number of converts here was somehow greater than elsewhere. The quality of spiritual healing involved in the conversions was more marked and more noticeable.

While these meetings were still going on, the Woodhouse Grove congregation wanted their special services, so these also were commenced. After that, rain and dark nights stopped further activities temporarily.

At Hawthorn church, there had already been some success at winning converts to Christ in the normal services, and in the Sunday School, but the people wanted their share of special services. These meetings lasted for two weeks, and good success continued to the end.

As a result of the meetings, the Mount Pleasant church building had to be enlarged, and a new church was built at Cremorne Street.

The concluding comment was:- “It is not easy to ascertain results with exactness, but it is easy to overstate the numbers brought to God in a season of comparative excitement. Not less than two hundred persons have professed conversion, and about one hundred and fifty will be the gain to the societies in the circuit. Many causes have, by the divine blessing, led to this great success. There had been much preparatory prayer. The preaching that preceded each series of services was adapted to awaken attention to them. There has been every help given by local preachers, class-leaders, singers, and others - a noble band of workers, who, with commendable zeal, put themselves

alongside their ministers, and endured with them no little toil in the blessed work of saving souls.” (11.)

The 1883 WESLEYAN CONVERSATION

By the next Annual Conference the lines were becoming a little clearer of a much more widespread revival movement through parts of Victoria, but mainly in country areas.

When the time came for the “Conversation on the Work of God,” the Secretary of Conference read the statistics of church membership.

The full membership had grown over the twelve months from 12,596 to 13,754 - an increase of 1,158. Partly as a result of this, the number of people on trial for membership had fallen from 2,125 to 1,244.

According to the report in the *Spectator*, the President of the Conference (the Rev. E. I. Watkin) spoke to the effect that -

“...most of the increase during the year had been in country districts Melbourne Methodism was not as aggressive as it ought to be. Nearly all the increase in the Melbourne district was attributable to the increase in the Richmond Circuit, where the Rev. W. A. Quick had been labouring. Would the brethren from the country pray for Melbourne and its suburbs. They had difficulties in the city not known in the country. His prayer was that they might be visited with a gracious revival in Melbourne during the coming year. They needed more power from on high. Considering their great machinery, they had a right to expect more increase. If they continued a united, praying church the God of their fathers would bless them, and His work would revive on every hand. The Conference would especially like to hear brethren speak who represented circuits in which there had been revivals during the past year.

Mr. E. Holloway, at the call of the President, spoke of the gracious work of revival in the Durham Ox Circuit. It commenced at Canary Island, in that circuit, where there were at first three young persons under deep conviction of sin. They were set at liberty, and then the cry rose, ‘The whole island for Jesus.’ And so the work spread until over one hundred professed to have found peace through Christ. What had been seen there he felt sure could be witnessed elsewhere if they were only ready - ‘willing to lie at His feet,’ ready to do anything within their power for the Master. Why should they not have ten thousand as readily as a thousand? O that God might give a gracious revival in every church and circuit throughout the colony!

Rev. E. Taylor said that at the commencement of the work in the Durham Ox Circuit the minister, local preachers, class-leaders, and Sunday-school teachers met together, and consecrated themselves to the work of saving souls. It had been a grand and encouraging year. They had found that the ‘Recognition of Members’ service, prepared by the general Conference, and printed in the Minutes, had been a grand means of binding the new converts to the church. He had used the service without waiting for the usual period of probationship to expire, and had reason to believe that the result had been in every way beneficial.

The Ex-President (the Rev. J. G. Millard) felt that no Methodist minister should be satisfied unless he had ‘souls for his hire.’ He thanked God that Tasmania had been visited with a gracious outpouring of God's Spirit. In Launceston over one hundred had been gathered in at Lefroy, Campbell Town, Westbury, Hobart, and other places the work of God had been revived. He did not think that they should look so much for special agency - they might all, he felt sure, be soul-saving ministers of Christ. He was thankful for the increase but when he reflected upon the immense machinery of the Methodist Church, he thought they had a right to expect more.

Rev. D. A. Gilsenan spoke of the work of God in the Inglewood Circuit. They commenced revival services in a very small place the fire was there kindled, and about twenty were converted. Then other places were visited, and the work spread throughout the circuit. It had been a very encouraging year to him.

Rev. W. L. Blamires thought that while it was their privilege to expect conversions under the ordinary ministry of the Word, he still believed that special evangelists were often made the means for the bestowal of special and extraordinary blessings. He had much pleasure in referring to the visit of the Rev. Mr. Osborne and his estimable wife to Warrnambool. Their membership had been increased two-thirds during the year, mainly through the visit of these devoted servants of Christ. Some memorable scenes were witnessed in the Sunday-school, many of the young people being savingly converted. He thanked God for this revival and he also thanked God for the seed-sowing which had taken place under the ordinary ministry of the Word.

Rev. E. O. Knee rejoiced over the increase of members, but thought there was a danger of cultivating the emotional at the expense of real spirituality. He also referred to the necessity of enforcing upon our members the observance of the Lord's Supper.

Mr. Joseph Jennison spoke of revival work in the St. Arnaud Circuit. In one small society over thirty souls had been saved, and there had been a gracious work throughout the circuit. He gave several very interesting cases of conversion.

Rev. J. Shaw liked to look at the bright side of things, but still he thought it was only wise and right to look at the other side. There had been a decrease in more than twenty circuits, particularly in the Melbourne district. Something more than had been attempted should be done for city Methodism.

Rev. A. R. Edgar had had great cause for encouragement in his work in Ballarat. He believed about two hundred had been savingly converted.

Mr. S. G. King referred to several very interesting cases of conversion he had witnessed while visiting England recently. One incident narrated was connected with a service conducted the Rev. John Watsford in one of the old towns of England, when the communion-rail was crowded two or three times over. He then referred in favourable terms to the appointment of special evangelists.

Rev. Thos. Adamson, while rejoicing in a blessed work which had visited his Ballarat circuit, wanted to say something about what he had not been able to do. Much had been said about evangelistic work among the lapsed lower masses, but they must not forget their respectable and wealthy sinners. The Methodist ministry could not grapple with the work of reaching the masses with so many claims upon them. There was an insatiable demand for pastoral visitation, and what was called 'regular work,' a demand which absorbed their energies, and tied their hands very much. They ought to be loosed from many of these duties, so that they might be able to enter upon more aggressive work among the thousands of non-church-goers.

Rev. J. C. Symons agreed with much that had been said by the previous speaker. He referred to the mission work carried on in connection with Wesley Church. The congregations ought, more particularly in their large churches, to be more willing to listen to local preachers, so that the minister could be freed for evangelistic work outside among the masses who could not be brought into their churches.

Rev. R. Fitcher referred to the aggressive mission work carried on in connection with Wesley Church.

Rev. E. W. Nye believed in pastoral visitation, and thought it was most profitable to both ministers and people if rightly attended to.

Mr. H. Bristol of Dunolly, moved a resolution, notice of which had previously been given, bearing upon the relationship of baptised children to the church. He thought that additional facilities should

be afforded for the recognition of children as members, and not merely as catechumens.

Mr. Williams, also of Dunolly, seconded the resolution. The word catechumen simply meant 'a learner,' and he favoured the removal of every obstacle in the way of the recognition of converted children as junior members of the church.

Rev. George Daniel spoke of the importance of looking after the children, and attending to the pastoral work of the ministry.

The Secretary of the Conference proposed - 'That this Conference records its devout thanks to God for the spiritual prosperity which had attended the Methodist Church during the past year, and appoints a Sunday in May next for special thanksgiving and prayer throughout Victoria and Tasmania.'

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The session then closed." (12.)

The VICTORIAN BIBLE CHRISTIANS - 1883.

The Bible Christian District Meeting in Victoria met a few weeks after the Wesleyans. The Bible Christians in Victoria published a quarterly *Bible Christian Victorian Record*, but many issues of this publication have been lost, and are not preserved, though some of their reports appeared in the *Southern Cross*. This District Meeting appointed an evangelist, Mr. William Tremayne, initially for a period of twelve months through 1883, to work with the circuit ministers.

Appointing a special evangelist was unusual for the Bible Christian denomination, partly because they could not afford to pay for such luxuries, and partly because the local minister was always supposed to be an effective evangelist, and to preach at his own special meetings.

The year 1883 proved to be a blessed and very successful year for the Bible Christians in Victoria.

Mr. Tremayne worked with a small team called the Hallelujah Salvation Band led by a Mr. Bullas. For the first ten weeks, they worked steadily at the Bible Christian churches at Long Gully and California Hill, where a total of 144 people professed conversion. This was followed by a campaign at Castlemaine. Several other special efforts were also made at Castlemaine later in the year, so that the total of results in this part of the country was very encouraging for 1883.

There was also another Hallelujah Salvation Band, comprised of several local preachers in good standing, and led by a Mr. Savage. This group held meetings for some weeks at Clunes, Creswick and Allendale. An emphasis on Gospel Temperance began to be linked with this work, also. Regarding the meetings at Clunes, the report said, "Hundreds of precious souls have been brought to Jesus through their instrumentality." (13.)

Eight weeks of meetings at Creswick led by Mr. Savage's team, ended on 15th June. "During that time over 200 persons were converted, and some of them the worst of characters." 298 people signed the temperance pledge and joined the Blue Ribbon Army. Observers stated that there was little or no excitement in the meetings, and so thoroughly permanent results were expected. (14.)

At Maldon, "A glorious work is now going on in the Bible Christian Church, Maldon. Revival services were commenced here on the 29th July by Mr. W. Tremayne, assisted by the Rev. W. H. Hosken. The building has been crowded nightly. Strong men could be seen at the penitent form wrestling with God for pardon, and women advanced in years at the feet of Jesus, pleading for the forgiveness of their sins, and believing as Christ as their Saviour... Up to the 6th of August thirty-

six souls have professed conversion. Mr. Tremayne will leave Maldon on Friday for the Terricks Circuit, where he will labour for a fortnight.” (15.)

Special meetings followed also in Echuca.

The total of full church members in the Victorian Bible Christian denomination in the previous year, 1882, had been 1,466 members, which had been an increase of 213 members. This was a fairly healthy increase for a small denomination. For the year 1883, the figures which were quoted at the Annual Meeting in early 1884 revealed that the membership had increased by 734. This increase represented the result of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit for the Bible Christians. The 1882 figure was increased by fifty per cent within a year, or 1,000 in two years.

Although Mr. Tremayne was employed again by the Annual Meeting as an evangelist in the Victorian churches, the great increase of 1883 did not occur again. The increase for 1884 was 211.

1884, a GOOD YEAR for the WESLEYANS in VICTORIA.

In 1883, the Wesleyans reported a notable revival in the El Dorado district, which was a more remote part of the Wangaratta Circuit. Many conversions were reported, and a local Convention for promoting Christian commitment, and nurturing the converts, was held in the district, featuring some leading visiting speakers.

At their Conference in 1884, the Victorian and Tasmanian Wesleyans chose two young ministers to work as evangelists in their circuits. These men were the Revs. John Nall and Samuel Cuthbert. These two men had been working together in the Shepparton Circuit for two years, and had seen many conversions in their work. After their appointment as evangelists, they normally did not work together in the same mission, although it did happen sometimes. Through 1883, they conducted missions in many circuits and saw a great deal of success.

After commencing the new appointment at the beginning of April, John Nall did evangelistic work in Benalla, Wangaratta, Beechworth, Wandiligong and Bright, Albury, Frankston, Mornington, Stawell, Preston, Alphington, Geelong, including Chilwell and Drysdale, Coburg and Brunswick, and Creswick. His voice failed several times, and he had periods of rest.

After April 1, Samuel Cuthbert did his evangelism in Castlemaine, Fryerstown, Charlton, Conoor, Donald, St. Arnaud, Kyneton, the Geelong East circuit, Flemington, Brunswick, the Sandhurst area, Clunes, Maldon and Hotham.

The following report by the Rev. Spencer Williams, who was in charge of the Home Missions in Victoria, is one of many similar reports which might be quoted.

“The Rev. Mr. Nall concluded the fortnight’s mission in the Mornington Circuit, 1st August. The meetings right throughout the circuit were entered into most enthusiastically by the people, particularly so at Dromana where night after night the church was crowded. Between fifty and sixty persons professed conversion, some of the cases greatly delighting both minister and people. It is pleasing to learn that the work at Dromana still continues.

The Rev. Mr. Cuthbert has been labouring in the Kyneton Circuit with considerable success amid many discouraging circumstances. At Malmsbury, on Wednesday evening, the power of God came down upon the people, and they seemed spellbound. Several stood up, signifying their desire to find Christ. On Friday evening there was a breakdown at Kyneton. Penitents came forward as soon as the invitation was given, and some were crying aloud for mercy. Mr. Nall has begun a fortnight’s mission at Stawell and Mr. Cuthbert at Geelong East.” (16.)

In the Wandiligong and Bright Circuit, where John Nall had conducted a mission, the membership increased from 80 to 165, with 12 on trial, and 37 catechumens. They were also expecting a visit by the Rev. A. Clarke, who was an evangelist with the Evangelisation Society of Victoria. (17.)

Apart from these Wesleyan denominational evangelists, we need to remember that very successful missions were conducted in 1884 by Mrs. Margaret Hampson in Hobart, Launceston, Ballarat and Sandhurst, and by Mrs. Baeyertz in Stawell, as well as the normal activities of such organisations as the Evangelistic Society of Victoria, who employed evangelists to conduct such missions wherever asked.

Evangelistic Bands were organised in a number of Wesleyan circuits, and with considerable success. During 1884, the *Spectator* also carried a number of reports of revivals breaking out in Victorian and Tasmanian circuits through the ordinary work of the circuit minister and his helpers.

Revivals of some sort, which depended upon local means, were reported in St. Arnaud, Inglewood, Scottsdale (Tasmania), Bolwarra (Egerton Circuit), Port Melbourne, Ballarat East Circuit, Clear Lake Circuit, Spring Gully (Castlemaine Circuit), Ballarat West Circuit, Castlemaine, Daylesford, Brighton, Walhalla, Warrnambool, Narrabel, Blackwood, Warracknabeal and Avoca.

For example, at Daylesford:- “Three times a week the schoolroom there is crowded at services which are conducted by a band of workers formed from among the Church members, and which now numbers upwards of seventy. Persons crowd to these meetings who would not think of going to what are known as ordinary special services. Worldlings, freethinkers, Roman Catholics, and others have been seen there. Souls have been saved at every meeting yet held, and the number of inquirers shows no diminution. And, what is more, the fire is spreading all over the circuit, and such numbers of workers are being raised up that there is no strain of burden upon anyone in particular. The responsibility and work are divided, and the minister especially is not left to carry the burden alone.” (18.)

Samuel Cuthbert had conducted a mission in Castlemaine early in April. Some months later the circuit minister, the Rev. P. R. C. Ussher, reported that the circuit membership had **increased** by 154, with 22 others on trial. He then gave a long description of a remote part of the circuit called Spring Gully, where an old, unused mine had left a scattered and isolated community. But in this secluded place, rivers of living waters had begun to flow, without human help from outside.

“Just a year ago our little church there counted seven members. I sent a postcard asking them to hold a ‘week of prayer.’ I sent a prayer to God at the same time. Both reached their destinations. They have never stopped praying since. Their seven members have increased to forty-two, and still they come. Five decided for Christ last Sunday. They have had to raise that cry [“Excelsior”] many a Sunday night in their little chapel over lost souls that have been found, as ‘one by one, one by one’ they have been gathered into the fold. Many of these lively people are young, but they have a good guide in Mr. Wilkinson. It is the old story over again. We can prosper in any place if we have one good man to be the father of the concern. These wise people do not say, ‘We cannot do without the minister.’ They know that *they* need not look for an evangelist, so they say to themselves - ‘Spring Gully is open to the sky. If people cannot find their way in here easily, our prayers can always find their way out, and up to God, and though we cannot have *preaching* on Sunday nights we can always have a prayer-meeting, and a prayer-meeting, with the Lord Jesus present, is better than a whole Conference of ministers and the Master absent.’ They believe in prayer-meetings in the ‘Gully.’ The leader finds that the class leads itself. Nearly thirty spoke last Sunday morning. Not one missed fire. They rose one after another, like the little hammers inside a piano when the little fingers play the scales. They rose, not one here and there, but in regular succession. There was no waiting, no asking, and they put in a sandwich of lively sacred song between every three experiences.” (19.)

In Tasmania, evangelistic bands were organised in several places, and conversions occurred as a

result. Launceston and Hobart were also visited by Mrs. Hampson. Matthew Burnett was also widely active right through the island that year, and a number of places were visited by Mr. Glover representing the Gospel Temperance work.

For example, from Deloraine came this report:- “We are happy to report a gracious work at Blackmoor, near Dunorlan. At the morning service on Sunday, 12th October, several decided to serve God. During the following week several more were added to these, until now comparatively few in this little congregation are unconverted. This place is all alive for the Master, and it is most refreshing to hear the testimony borne both by old veterans and young converts as to the work of grace in their hearts.

Elsewhere in this circuit we are glad to note signs of the working of the Spirit.

God’s people have been stirred up to consecrate themselves afresh, and to pray and BELIEVE for great things.” (20.)

A Great Increase

At the following Conference, when the “Conversation on the Work of God” took place, the Secretary of the Conference read the statistics for the previous year, and announced that a total **increase** of full members in Victoria and Tasmania was 2595, with 1833 on trial. This represented an increase in full members of about seventeen percent.

The increase the previous year had been more normal - 480.

After a long and interesting discussion, the resolution was put:- “That the Conference records its devout thankfulness to God for the spiritual prosperity enjoyed by many of our churches during the past year, and appoints the week following the second Sabbath in May as a week of thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed wherever practicable in all our churches in Victoria and Tasmania.” (21.)

The Castlemaine and Sandhurst District alone had seen an increase of 1,054 members.

THE BURRA REVIVAL, 1881 - 1883.

This revival in South Australia was one of the most significant and interesting revivals in Australia in the period after 1880. This revival occurred at a time when the Burra district was experiencing rapid change, after the closure of the Burra Mine. Many people were leaving the district, which caused serious decline in strength for the churches. Many others were changing their means of livelihood from mining to agriculture. The changes, and loss of population, were causing a very noticeable degree of social decline and dislocation. Because of the strong mining history of this area, the main churches were the three Methodist denominations.

I have written a little about this revival in another place, where it was looked at it from the viewpoint of its place in the life and work of Matthew Burnett, the Yorkshire evangelist and Temperance reformer. (22.)

The following Primitive Methodist report presents the spiritual aspect:- “Considering the many removals from this Circuit to Terowie and other parts of the North, our congregations, societies and finances are in a far better position than might have been expected but with a constant drain upon

our members, nothing but a revival of God's work can prevent a decrease of membership and falling off of funds. We are looking and praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Our Chapel at KOORINGA is near completion, and we expect to re-open in about three weeks.

Our REDRUTH Chapel anniversary was held on the 2nd and 3rd May. Excellent sermons were preached by Mr. James Peters of Kent Town. The public tea was only moderately attended, but the chapel was packed at night to hear the beautiful Service of Song on 'Eva,' which was well given by the Redruth and Kooringa choirs..." (23.)

The membership of the Wesleyans was not so badly affected as were the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists. The Wesleyans were deeply concerned about the spiritual and social conditions in the surrounding areas, as agriculture slowly developed instead of mining. At their Quarterly Meeting on 27th June, 1881, the "number of members returned was 120, with 3 on trial." The minister, the Rev. James Bickford, and a local doctor, were to arrange for the visit of Mr. Matthew Burnett to the circuit "as soon as convenient," for one week of meetings in Kooringa, and one in Redruth. Then, "An earnest conversation ensued on the educational and religious destitution which prevailed outside the boundaries of the Kooringa Circuit. It was stated that in the Baldina Hundred it was shown by the recent census that there were 196 boys, girls, youths, for whom no educational advantages had been ever provided, many of whom could not even write their own names. In three or four of the Hundreds, besides Baldina, similar destitution prevailed." (24.)

Within a few weeks, visits had been made to several of these places within twenty or thirty miles of the Burra. The country was very rough in places, even too rough to ride a horse. In one place, Roberts Town, with a population of 100, no Methodist work of any kind was in progress, although there was a Lutheran church, which the Methodists were allowed to use to start a Sunday school. Baldry was also visited, about twelve miles from the Burra.

The coming of Matthew Burnett on October 9, 1881, and the start of his meetings in the Kooringa Wesleyan church, saw the start of the revival for which the people had prayed. It's main power continued for several months, although, for most of that time Burnett was not present. It then went on, more or less, for about two years, and rapidly transformed both the churches and the district.

Our main knowledge about what happened during Burnett's mission here comes from two letters he wrote to the editor of the *Methodist Journal*. Lest anyone should think Burnett's own account of the meetings was biased, another unknown correspondent also provided an excellent account of the mission, written on October 26, a few days after Burnett left.

"After a long period of spiritual drought, Burra has been visited with showers of blessing from above. Mr. Burnett came to us from Clare on the 8th inst., and commenced his mission in the Kooringa Chapel the following Sabbath evening by preaching from 1 Cor., ii. chap., 3, 4, 5, verses, to a large congregation. His power is certainly not in his natural abilities but through his strong faith in God, and the earnestness and sympathy he manifests for the salvation of the souls of his hearers, and those sunken low through vice and the curse of intemperance. The meetings were continued the remainder of the week, and the work commenced first by believers consecrating themselves afresh to the service of God, and then uniting daily in prayers for the salvation of sinners, and as united and faithful prayer is the means to draw down the Holy Spirit, our case was no exception, and we now have about one hundred and thirty souls who are feeling happy in a Saviour's love amongst them many of our young men and women from the Sabbath school. Sceptical persons may attribute much of this to excitement but never have we had less excitement and noise than at these meetings. The chapel was crowded every night, and not even those who came from curiosity, could help feeling awed in the presence of such manifestations of Divine power. Prayer meetings were held daily at half-past six o'clock a.m., and at twelve mid-day, at which members from the Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist churches united in pleading for the gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At a quarter to seven o'clock each evening Mr. Burnett

delivered a short address in the centre of the township and then with the crowd that there assembled proceeded to the chapel, and another address was given and the prayer meetings after attested to the great influence that was felt. Afternoon services for the young were held, and the gaol and hospital visited, also the 'Kooloona' station, where a temperance address was given to the shearers, and twenty-two took the pledge. The work of temperance was not forgotten, and at a large and enthusiastic meeting held on Saturday, the 15th, 250 pledges were taken at the Institute Hall, where Mr. Burnett delivered his lecture on 'Pictures from real life,' relating some remarkable instances of the reclaiming and conversion of several well-known characters in Victoria, viz., Dr. Mitchell, Yankee Bill, Dublin Sally, Little Johnny, Paul the pugilist, and several others. Some of these have now passed away, but their happy and triumphant deaths are an encouragement to those who have been reclaimed to persevere, and the same power that sustained these will keep them to the end.

Mr. Burnett left for Clarendon on Saturday last, and though he came to a people much prejudiced against him from evil reports that had been circulated, we parted, after ten days residence amongst us, from him with feelings of deep affection, and desire that he may be spared to return soon and continue his work amongst us. We are indebted to our Redruth friends for a second week, as the arrangement was for a fortnight between the two places, but the work was so great it seemed wrong to stop it by dividing the labourers.

May God bless and prosper Mr. Burnett still more in the great work is the united prayer of the people of Burra." (25.)

Burnett had promised the Redruth people that he would return on December 8, to give them a week of meetings, instead of the extra week that was given to Kooringa. In the mean time, the local ministers continued the special meetings for the six or seven weeks until December 8. A letter from the Rev. James Bickford explained some of these details, dated November 22.

"Dear Sirs, The seventh week of special religious services is now being held, and the Divine blessing is still with us. At the end of the third week, all who had publicly professed to have a desire to flee from the wrath to come, were invited to give in their names for membership in the particular church they might wish to join. Thank God a large number responded to the invitation. The Revs. J. Pearce (B.C.), M. Burt (P.M.), W. A. Bainger and I, conducted this somewhat crucial business. We used no persuasion, no coercion but left each candidate for membership to exercise his, or her, own Christian privilege and right. The result was most satisfactory, each Church having its just share and all rejoicing over the general success. In connection with our own body [Wesleyan], our increase has been so large that we have had to form four new classes, under the leadership of Mr. W. Holder, Mrs. Lane, sen., Mrs. Holder, and Miss Sleep. The class met by Miss Sleep, Mr. T. Drew and myself have had a pleasing increase of members. Mr. Bainger has formed a new class at Redruth. New classes have been formed in connection with the Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist Churches also.

Preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper, on the evening of the 20th instant, we held a united testimony meeting in our Church on the previous evening, which was largely attended. In a very blessed sense we had the presence of the 'Spirit of the Lord,' who gave 'liberty' of expression to young converts and old believers alike. The Lord's Supper was a season of hallowed consecration and of spiritual blessing.

Two valuable lessons have been learnt, by both ministers and people, at these delightful re-unions and earnest religious exercises. Such as that the different branches of the *one* Methodist Church can come *if they so will*, very near each other in fellowship and Christian work also that they may so co-operate in the spirit of their Lord and Master as to win many precious souls for Him, and that the true remedy for overcoming the unwillingness too often shown, by otherwise excellent persons, to Christian fellowship, as enjoined in the New Testament, is found in a revival of the Lord's work in their midst. Just, indeed, as conversion to God is an infallible cure for the plague of sceptical unbelief, so is a revival a cure for the coldness which keeps many a serious person out of the

fellowship of the Church.

The services were held alternately in the three Methodist sanctuaries in Kooringa. Addresses were given by the ministers in turn to the congregations with good effect.

I am, etc.,

Yours faithfully,

James Bickford.” (26.)

Matthew Burnett returned to Redruth as arranged, and began the new aspect of his campaign with an evening prayer meeting which seemed to change the course of events.

“Thursday night [15th December] of last week was solemnly set apart in prayer for special cases. Ministers, local preachers, leaders, and members of all the Methodist Churches were present. I cannot convey to your readers the indescribable power which was made manifest to God’s pleading Jacobs during that night of weeping and supplication. God heard our prayers, and as I sit here alone long after midnight I can recall case after case of persons who have been brought out of midnight darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel, in answer to the united prayers of God’s people offered during that memorable night.” (27.)

The Saturday night, 17th, saw his second major Temperance rally, with many more people signing the pledge and becoming part of the abstainers army, but, more importantly, there were 70 more conversions reported.

On his last Sunday, he addressed the children at Redruth in the afternoon, and had a rousing service at night with twenty more professions of conversion. The meeting on Monday evening seemed to him like a great struggle against the devil, before nine more people professed conversion.

At that stage, three hundred converts had been listed in the meetings at the Burra since Burnett arrived on October 9, and there had been 730 newly declared abstainers from alcoholic beverages. Burnett’s mission was almost over, and the local ministers decided, in the good old Methodist tradition, to continue the special meetings for another two weeks, leading these meetings themselves.

After his final address on the Thursday, 21st December, James Bickford had some final words.

“One feature of the work was the unanimity of feeling on the part of the ministers and laymen of all the churches. As Mr. Bickford remarked, he had not witnessed for fifty years anything more delightful. When the above meeting closed at 9.15 p.m. the entire congregation remained. I then proceeded to address some who for ten weeks have resisted the Spirit. Whilst I was beseeching the impenitent in the church to be at once reconciled to God, a little band of ministers and earnest laymen were wrestling with God in the vestry behind. No sooner was the invitation given to those who were seeking Jesus to come forward than six adults immediately responded and soon found peace through believing, after which shouts of holy triumph went up to heaven from hundreds of loving hearts as they sang, ‘My God is reconciled.’ After singing ‘Sweet by-and-by,’ we closed the meeting just as the clock pointed at 11.” (28.)

Before looking at the details of the later part of the revival, we need to note the methods which were used by Matthew Burnett. These are described briefly in one of his letters about this work at the Burra. He wrote:- “The same modes and methods which have proved so successful elsewhere have been adopted here, *i.e.*, public prayer meetings, singing bands, short printed addresses and prayers in the open air, and followed by an address in the Church. One speciality of the mission at Redruth has been the introduction of an American organ, which was placed on a large trolley also, the help of

the Aberdeen Brass Band.” (29.)

The Primitive Methodist Sources.

At April in the new year, the ministerial staff changed in two of the churches. The Rev. James Bickford left to start ministering at Port Adelaide, and also became President of the Conference. He was replaced by the Rev. Samuel Knight. The Primitive Methodist minister, the Rev. M. Burt, left, and he was replaced by the veteran Rev. J. G. Wright. It is due to a series of reports over the next year or so, sent in to the *Primitive Methodist Record*, by J. G. Wright, which has allowed us to know about many aspects of the later stages of this revival.

His first report, in October, 1882, began by saying:- “It gives me much pleasure to state that I found this Station in a very prosperous condition. Mr. Burt and his laymen had been working very successfully. At Iron Mine, Copperhouse, Redruth and Kooringa many souls have been led to the Saviour. Since my coming the laymen have labored heartily to carry on the work which has been begun. It is a great pleasure to meet with such laymen who will work side by side with their Minister and hold up his hands instead of fault finding. At all the places on our Station we have had a good number of souls made happy in Christ.” (30.)

A little before that, a Sunday School Anniversary was held at Iron Mine. The report included the comment - “This place has been much blessed during the year, the school has greatly increased, and so added to our membership.” The Kooringa Primitive Sunday School Anniversary had been held on October 1, where the sermons had been preached by two visitors, “the Revs. Pope and Knight.”

Wright reported jubilantly, “The tea was well attended, and finances are far above our expectations. The Lord has visited his people in this place and greatly blessed all the churches. We have never known the Burra to be in such a good spiritual condition as now. All the means of grace are well attended, class meetings loved, prayer meetings looked forward to, and preaching enjoyed. We are much indebted to our earnest laymen for our success. We are working in harmony.” (31.)

In the reports which followed, the Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Samuel Knight, was mentioned several times. Wright and Knight became great friends, and they worked together many times. Indeed, the effectiveness of this revival seems to have been greatly strengthened by the harmony between these two men.

As the end of 1882 approached, the leading Methodists in the Burra became aware that conversions were not occurring so often. So, they turned back to God for help, and their prayers were answered.

Wright said:- “We are thankful to the Lord for the continuation of His Holy Spirit in our midst. The work of conversion has not been so great of late, and some of our people cried unto the Lord for fresh manifestations of His saving power. Last Sabbath evening, three at Kooringa came forward and sought the Lord, and one at Iron Mine cried unto the Lord and found peace through faith in the blood of the Lamb. Now we can lift up our hearts in praise to Him who had heard the prayers of His people.” (32.)

Late in February, 1883, an enormous Camp Meeting was held, with an attendance of about 2,000 people. The local men preached, and at night a love-feast was held, when many testified.

In April, 1883, a Wesleyan evangelist, the Rev. G. Berry, visited the area and conducted special meetings, where a number of conversions occurred. This was followed shortly afterwards by a visit from Mrs. Emilia Baeyertz, who also conducted several weeks of special meetings, in which “many” people were converted.

The laymen still helped with special meetings every weekend, and with various week-night meetings, and repeatedly received Wright's praise for their harmonious and self-denying efforts.

Samuel Knight and John G. Wright used to go together visiting people in their homes, and attempting directly to win them for Christ. They had a great deal of success. Wright praised his Wesleyan friend. "The Rev. S. Knight is my very ideal of a true minister of Christ. He will go anywhere, do any lawful thing, to win a soul. He is as humble as a child, and bold as a lion. He will weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice. In him you find self-nothingness yet manly dignity. This week he called upon me and we went from house to house to seek souls of men. Never before have I personally witnessed such humble and earnest efforts to lead the poor sinner to Christ and happiness."

Wright became so enthusiastic about this method of soul-winning that he began to proclaim that it should be **the** method that everyone ought to use. He wrote pleading with his brother ministers to do much more of this kind of personal work, and almost wishing that he himself was young again so that he could do much more of it. We might reply that, in a time of revival it is easy to think that a particular method is the best. Before the revival, it was not so useful, and, when the revival was ended, the method again no longer had the great use it had during the revival. But Wright emphasised the thing of true great value. He said, "Let us all give our whole life to the *one* thing, *saving souls!*"

But, the underlying prayer ministry, upon which the revival depended fundamentally, was still very strong. He said that they were praying for the whole population to be converted. Why not? "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

"We are still receiving showers of blessings from the giver of all good in Kooringa, and other places. Mrs. Baeyertz is with us holding united services, and many, both old and young have been added to the churches. The old man of sixty and the lad of ten years are seen in tears seeking the Lord. What a grand sight are these! Nothing can equal them! No wonder angels rejoicing when souls are saved! How delightful too, it is to see laymen walking in harmony and love with their Ministers. My soul was never before so blest. Praise the Lord O my soul!" (33.)

In May, 1883, it is possible to see a statistical indicator of the effects of this revival. Samuel Knight reported to the Methodist Journal that the Wesleyan, the Primitive Methodist, and the Bible Christian memberships had all trebled over the previous eighteen months. Mr. Knight had a new junior colleague in 1883, the Rev. C. Hill, who had also been gathering in the harvest.

"Mrs Baeyertz and Mr. Berry have not laboured in vain, and since his arrival in the circuit, Mr. Hill has scarcely conducted a service on which the Master's seal has not been set. [Samuel Knight was too humble to mention the many he had won himself.] Kooringa steadily retains the revival fire, which has never flickered for sixteen months. During that time the workers have led some 800 inquirers to the cross. Many are residents elsewhere, many in neighbouring districts. Twelve months since, the Primitives numbered some 80 members, they now number 250 the Bible Christians have trebled the Wesleyans returned 120, now over 360. Hanson, Hallett, and other places have shared the blessing." (34.)

James Bickford, now President of the Conference, returned to Kooringa for a visit because the Sunday School had asked him to preach at their Anniversary. What joy he must have had at seeing the results of all the work. The Rev. G. Berry was also present, and stayed for another week of special meetings.

The revived Christians were also generous in their giving. The silver-tongued Dr. Kelynack visited the circuit as a deputation for foreign missions. The people gave four hundred pounds - a considerable figure in a declining economy, when people were still leaving the district, looking for work. Also, Samuel Knight had told the Conference, back in February, that the Kooringa circuit would pay the expenses of getting an additional minister out from England.

In August, 1883, the work was still progressing. Wright said:- "I am happy to say the work of the

Lord is still going on in this town. Not only have 500 been added to the churches in this neighbourhood the last two years, but many from both North and South have come to hear the Word and see the work of the Lord, and have gone home new creatures in Christ Jesus. On Sunday week a young man came from Roseworthy to see his mother's grave, at night he came to our church and was saved, and is gone back to tell others of the change. Praise the Lord! Last Sabbath our young men and women turned out into the streets and sang the praises of God. Our church was filled. One man who had long been living in sin, found peace through the blood. On the Monday he came and took the blue ribbon. We have many noble workers here. They are soldiers indeed fighting for our God.

Redruth too has been blessed with the Spirit of God. Last Sabbath an aged man came to the altar of prayer and found peace. There was shouting in the camp. Hallelujah! We have a brass band, torches, and excitement too, yet the *work* is not a mushroom growth, for two years it has been going on. Not a rush, then a lull, but gradually winter and summer. I am fully convinced now, that a revival may be continued, if the church will just keep at work and trust in the Lord. The churches here are always at work, every night, wet and dry." (35.)

The doctrines of full salvation, and of entire sanctification, were emphasised by the local men, as well as by the visiting evangelists, Mr. Berry and Mrs. Baeyertz.

Remaining indications suggest that the effectiveness declined somewhat after that, although the churches continued to be active, and have some success.

Strong features in this ongoing revival were the harmony and enthusiasm of the laymen the great relationship between Samuel Knight and John G. Wright, and the undivided dedication of the lay people and Ministers to their soul-winning work.

In the surviving Bible Christian papers, there is no reference to this revival.

THE BOWDEN REVIVAL, 1884.

This revival in South Australia was mentioned particularly by the Rev. Dr. Arnold Hunt, historian of Methodism in South Australia, in an address on South Australian revivals, given to the Uniting Church's Fellowship for Revival, at its meeting in South Australia about the time Dr. Hunt's major book was published. He intended it, along with a couple of other revivals, to be a typical example of what South Australian revivals had been like in the Nineteenth Century. Perhaps Dr. Hunt had more personal information about this revival. We can speculate that the revival might have impacted upon someone in his family tree, or he might have worshipped at the West Hindmarsh Church which, he said, grew out of the results of this revival. (36.)

What may, perhaps, have been the case, is that the revival started slowly in the Baptist Church the previous year, and worked slowly through the district, becoming more evident in the Methodist churches when they organised their special services the following autumn and winter. This, perhaps, would help to account for the impact upon the district as a whole that Dr. Hunt seemed to imply by his choice to feature this revival as a classic example.

Without doubt, there was a spiritual movement of some note in the Hindmarsh Baptist Church the previous year, which resulted in them building a new church. The foundation stone of the new church building was finally laid on the 17th June, 1884. The attraction of a new building like this would have helped the Baptist people even further. Signs of this spiritual movement in the Baptist Church during the middle part of 1883 can be seen in the following report:-

“Since Mr. W. R. Hiddlestone has taken the oversight of our church (which was in March, 1882),

great good has been done. The Lord has blest his efforts to the salvation of many souls. The total number received into church fellowship being 42. 26 by baptism 7 restored 4 by clearance and 5 by right hand of fellowship. There are others waiting membership. The interest in the work is greatly increasing. The services are all well attended, those on Lord's Day evenings being crowded on many occasions many having to stand. Increased earnestness being shown in the prayer meetings of which two are held on Lord's Day at 10 a.m. and 5.45 p.m. and another on Monday evenings a Bible class on Tuesday evening and a Bible lecture on Thursday evening, all of which are well attended. There are also meetings held on Sunday afternoon and Friday evenings in Brompton Park, in a large room kindly lent by Bro. Oxenham as the result of these meetings many have been brought from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God. Our Sunday School is also increasing in numbers, but several of the scholars have been brought into the Church and put on the Lord Jesus Christ by baptism. Indeed we feel the presence of the Lord is with us, and his smile upon us if we continue steadfast in prayer and supplication even greater blessings will come. We greatly feel the need of a larger building, in fact our Pastor has often felt inclined during the hot weather to preach under the open canopy of heaven. If funds would admit we would start about building a larger place of worship, as the effect of preaching in the close building we have at present is greatly affecting the health of our Pastor. However, we live in hopes, and believe that in His own good time our God will provide us with a more suitable place to worship Him in." (37.)

The Rev. R. Kelley, Bible Christian minister in the Bowden circuit in 1884, was not entirely without experience in revivals. He had been one of the Bible Christian ministers in Moonta in 1875, the year of the great Moonta revival. He had seen what happened there. During the month of May, 1884, Kelley reported that there were signs of an awakening. So, special services were arranged, commencing on Sunday, June 1. He preached in the morning on Psalm 85.6, "Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee." The people agreed that they would pray for a revival until their prayers were answered. They agreed about the need for a revival, and there seemed to be a gracious influence in the service. Circulars were printed to advertise the special meetings, and distributed around the district.

"...at once a great interest was awakened. In the afternoon of the first Sunday the teachers held a prayer meeting in the Sunday School, and there was a good congregation at night." The week-night meetings started with a short prayer meeting at 6.45. At 7 p.m., they marched through the principal streets, with a singing band. The weather for the first week was very good, and the band could be heard all over the district. There were a few conversions the first night of the special meetings, on Monday, June 2, and more conversions occurred nearly every night for three weeks.

"On Sunday afternoon, the 21st, we arranged for a meeting to receive the converts into the Church. This was a blessed service. Seventy persons spoke of the choice they had made, and of their intention to press forward. We gave seventy-five tickets of admittance on that afternoon, and the work was still going on." There were also some conversions at New Thebarton. (38.)

This was the only information about the revival which appeared in the *South Australian Bible Christian Magazine*. A fuller report was never published. The Magazine was published only quarterly at that time. However, the next issue was taken up largely with details about the life and death of the Rev. James Way, who was one of the founding ministers of the Bible Christian denomination in South Australia. This was a landmark event in their scheme of things. By the time another issue was published, three months still later, the story of the Bowden revival was no longer such news.

Kelley's special meetings may well have gone on for some time still, and it is likely there were many more conversions.

The Wesleyan Aspect of This Revival.

The spiritual movement, however, was not limited to the Bible Christians. This part of Adelaide was covered by the Wesleyan circuit centred on Brompton. The Wesleyan paper, the *Methodist Journal*, was published weekly. The first report of a revival in or near Brompton said that they also had seen signs of revival. "For several weeks past there has been a gracious quickening, and sinners have been led to Christ." The superintendent minister, the Rev. C. T. Newman, who had quite some experience as an evangelist, preached on "Entire Sanctification." A consecration meeting followed, and sixty members came forward seeking full salvation, besides which a number of people were converted. Professed conversions occurred also in the Sunday School. The special meetings continued, with conversions occurring each evening. (39.)

There were three churches or preaching places in the circuit. The special meetings went on for eight weeks altogether. After the eight weeks, they found that there had been 150 conversions, and many Christians had been much quickened in their spiritual lives. Similar methods were used to reach outsiders by both Wesleyans and Bible Christians. At Brompton, the services continued for four weeks, and about one hundred converts were counted.

Two weeks of meetings were then held at Gepp's Cross, which was then a scattered country locality with a small congregation. Many helpers from Brompton were needed to help the services to function. After the two weeks, twenty converts had made a Christian profession. The other place in the circuit was at Ovingham, where their church building was not suitable for the work they wanted to do, and was in some ways even counter-productive. There was little result during the first week of meetings. During the second week, there was a "breaking down," and by the end of the week, twenty-two persons had found peace with God.

"We are hoping to retain the ardour of service which has characterised the Church throughout these meetings, and have continued accessions to the number of those who are saved. To facilitate this, separate prayer meetings for young men and women have been started, a workers' band is in operation, junior Society and other classes have been formed, and the principle laid down that every Christian has a distinctive work to do for Christ, and will be held responsible for doing it with fidelity. Thank God there is a cheerful response, and to Him be all the glory."

SECTION TWO

ALLIED AND CONTRIBUTING

MOVEMENTS

CHAPTER SIX

THE CONTRIBUTION OF

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR MOVEMENT

TO AUSTRALIAN REVIVALS AND EVANGELISM

1883 - 1914

The first Christian Endeavour Society in Australia was formed on 5th June, 1883. It was nearly five years later, following the formation of the second Society in Australia, that the Christian Endeavour Movement really took off in this country, with the impact of a widespread revival, and it affected deeply many individuals, churches, denominations and localities.

PART ONE

The Commencement of the Movement

“The first Christian Endeavor Society was formed by Rev. Francis E. Clark D. D., in the Williston Congregational Church, Portland, Me., on February 2, 1881. Societies for young people had been in existence before that date, just as there had been Sunday-schools before the days of Robert Raikes, nevertheless, as Raikes is the father of the modern Sunday-school, so Dr. Clark is the father of the modern young people’s movement. Previous to his day young people's societies were isolated phenomena he organised a form which became universal. The Christian Endeavor society met a felt need in the church, and the character of the organisation made wide acceptance possible.”
(1.)

In 1881, Clark was a relatively young man, who felt greatly for the eternal salvation and spiritual well-being of the many young people in his congregation in Portland, Maine. He wanted to see them converted to Jesus Christ, and grow in the Christian life of faith, obedience and useful service, as well as in the fellowship of the local churches. Naturally enough, the church's activities were controlled by the leaders and older people, many of whom were saintly and mature Christians. It was their voices which were raised in the prayer meetings, and not those of the younger people.

Although some of the younger people might have professed conversion, they had not become used

to praying in public or taking any leading roles. So they sat back, and their voices were not heard. Whatever potential they had for the future of the church was not being developed. This had been realised as a problem in many churches for a long time, but no satisfactory solution had been found for it.

Finding a solution to this problem suddenly became urgent for the Rev. Francis Clark when a revival occurred amongst these young people in the Williston Church, and many of them professed that they had now experienced a new and living faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

The Williston Church already had a young people's group called the Mizpah Circle, which was mainly interested in missionary work. Soon after the revival, this group was to meet at the minister's house. Clark decided to set before this group a plan for a different kind of group which would have a much wider range of usefulness and application.

“In preparation for this meeting he wrote out a constitution defining the aims and workings of the proposed society. This constitution embodied all the features of [what is now] the well-known Christian Endeavor pledge. Some fifty young people signed the constitution when it was presented to them, and thus became charter members of the new society, the first signers of the Christian Endeavor pledge.

The stated aim was ‘to promote an earnest Christian life among the members, to increase their mutual acquaintance, and to make them more useful in the service of God.’ It provided for both active and associate members, and defined the work of the leading committees... It pledged the members to take some part, however slight, in every meeting of the society. It provided for a monthly experience meeting, later called consecration meeting, and made it the duty of members who could not attend this meeting to send a message of greeting. It called for a roll-call, and imposed on the lookout committee the task of noting the names of absent members, in order that the absent ones might be visited later.” (2.)

The age range of the members of this first Young People's Christian Endeavour Society was from about fifteen years of age to about thirty.

The Active Members Pledge, as used for many years, was:-

“Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise Him that I will strive to do whatever He would have me do, that I will make it the rule of my life to pray and read the Bible every day, to support the work and worship of my own Church in every possible way, and that, so far as I know how, throughout my whole life, I will endeavour to lead a Christian life.

As an Active Member, I promise to be true to all my duties, to be present at, and take some part, aside from singing, in every Christian Endeavour Meeting, unless hindered by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

If obliged to be absent from the monthly Consecration Meeting, I will, if possible, send at least a verse of Scripture to be read in response to my name at the roll-call.” (3.)

As time passed, there were also Intermediate and Junior pledges, which modified what the pledge required, to suit the younger ages of those taking part.

The first Young People's Christian Endeavour Society in Williston Congregational Church flourished. Francis Clark wrote an article entitled “How One Church Cares for Its Young People.” It was published in “The Congregationalist,” and in the “Sunday-School Times.” Eventually, it was

published also in many other papers.

The minister of the Congregational Church in Newburyport, Massachusetts, read the article in "The Congregationalist," and started a similar group in his church, in October, 1881. By New Years' Day, four other societies had been formed, in Rhode Island, Maine, Vermont and Ohio. Letters of enquiry poured in upon Francis Clark. To lighten the task of replying to these enquiries, he printed copies of the constitution, and also a few explanatory leaflets.

Initial Rapid Growth, and the Appearance of C. E. Conventions

From the beginning, Francis Clark used the method of holding Conventions to bring together C. E. members from various societies, to foster their fellowship. As time passed, he also organised C. E. Unions, which included a number of local societies into District, State and National Unions. Eventually, a World Union was established.

The first conference of this kind was held on June 2, 1882, in the Williston Church, Portland, with six societies represented, although others also existed. One was from Bath, about 35 miles from Portland. The others were all from Portland. The Union formed at this meeting was turned into a National Union three years later, and was called The United Society of Christian Endeavor. However, more localised Unions were also needed, and were soon organised.

The second conference was held on June 7, 1883, in the Second Parish Church, Portland. By that time, fifty-three societies were known to exist, with 2,630 members.

The third convention was held on October 22nd, 1884, in Lowell, Massachusetts. By that time there were 156 societies, with a membership of 6,414.

The fourth convention was held in Old Orchard, Maine, over two days - July 8 and 9, 1885. By that time, there were 253 societies known to exist, with a total membership of 14,892. The United Society, mentioned above, was organised at this meeting.

The conventions for 1886 and 1887 were both held at Saratoga Springs, in New York state. At the second of these meetings, the motto, "For Christ and the Church" was adopted, and 2,000 delegates attended the conference.

The convention for 1888 was held in Chicago, with more than 5,000 delegates present, from thirty-three states and territories of the U.S.A. The 1889 convention was held in Philadelphia, with 6,500 delegates attending. Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States, sent a message to that gathering.

The convention for 1890 was held in St. Louis, with more than 8,000 delegates in attendance. 1891 saw more than 14,000 gather in Minneapolis.

Junior societies had been organised in 1884, including children as young as seven or eight years of age. By 1891, 855 junior societies had been enrolled.

The convention for 1892 was held in New York city. It was attended by 35,000 delegates. Meetings of this size meant that Christian Endeavour conventions were becoming larger than almost any other kind of religious gathering. It was something new in the religious world. Great crowds of Endeavourers paraded down the streets, and the railways became blocked by the special trains bringing the delegates. So the Press became very interested in the events. Madison Square Garden seated 14,000 at that time, but proved totally inadequate. The Juniors had their first convention at these meetings, also.

In 1893, the convention was held in Montreal, outside the U.S.A. for the first time. Also, for the first time, two meetings of equal value were held at the same time. This tactic also proved a

success.

In 1894, the convention was held in Cleveland, at the height of a great railway strike. But the strikers let the convention-goers through. More than 20,000 came from outside the city, to be swelled by another 20,000 locals. Sixteen simultaneous meetings were held in local churches. A Junior rally was attended by 10,000. The state governor was William McKinley, who gave one of the addresses at the convention. Later, he became President of the U.S.A. Cleveland was the first city to decorate its streets in honour of the C.E. convention.

In 1895, the convention went to Boston, where 56,425 delegates registered. About one half came from outside Massachusetts. Two massive tents each seating 10,000 people were situated on the Boston Commons, and the churches were also used for meetings. 825 separate meetings were held altogether. 120 evangelistic meetings were held in various local sites, such as factories and stores. Normally, the number of people registered to attend these conventions was not as great as on this occasion. Robert Anderson's booklet supplies these statistics and details.

More Rapid Growth Overseas

The first Christian Endeavour society in China was organised in Foochow on 29th March, 1885. The first All-China convention was held in Shanghai on June 23rd - 25th, 1894.

In 1885 also, a society was formed amongst the Tamil-speaking people in Jaffna, in what is now called Sri Lanka. In India, the missionaries of all the denominations welcomed Christian Endeavour. This helped to solve one of the paramount problems of missionary work in India - namely, how to train an army of indigenous church workers. The Baptists used C. E. widely in their mission field in Burma.

A start was made with Christian Endeavour in South Africa in 1886, in Egypt in 1894, in Nigeria in 1897. Within a few years, the largest society in the world existed in the Congo.

August, 1887, saw the first society organised in Great Britain, in the town of Crewe. The first British National Convention was held in Crewe in 1891, with fifty delegates in attendance. A year later, 300 societies were known to exist, and 200 delegates came to the convention. In 1896, nearly 1,000 societies were enrolled, and a National Union was formed. "A dozen years after the formation of the first society a great Christian Endeavor World's Convention in London attracted crowds from all parts of the United Kingdom, Europe and America. Alexandra Palace, the City Temple, Spurgeon's church, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Exeter Hall and Westminster Chapel were all utilized to house the throngs." (4.)

A long story could be told about the arrival and development of C. E. in Turkey, New Zealand, Spain, Portugal, Japan, France, the Pacific Islands, Mexico, South and Central America, Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Austria, Hungary, Russia, the Balkans and Scandinavia.

As an example of the growth of Christian Endeavour in England, and also worldwide, the following article was printed in the Melbourne Wesleyan "Spectator" for August 3, 1894, quoting at length from the "British Weekly."

"The growth of this movement has been phenomenal. In thirteen years 31,500 societies have been registered in all parts of the world, with an aggregate membership approaching two millions. In England the advance has been correspondingly rapid. Introduced only in 1887 there are now 1,521 registered societies, and this number is increasing from twenty to thirty every week. The report given at the National Convention held at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on Whit-Monday stated that the present membership of British societies numbered 65,440, and during the past year no less than 3,878 active members of these societies had become members of the Church. The Church of Christ is expecting many great and good things from this movement. It will not be disappointed. A

generation of trained witnesses, and workers, and givers, is already on its way to victories that we cannot measure. We shall have, in a few years, a great host of Church members, graduates of our Christian Endeavour training school, who will exhibit such wise practical fidelity to the covenant vows as to double the efficiency of our Churches. The history of the movement is marvellous. Dying and dead churches are reviving under its efforts. The possibilities of its future are immeasurable.” (5.)

The tone of enthusiasm and triumph in this report may sound strange to us, but it does give some idea of the spirit that arose because of the very rapid growth of Christian Endeavour at that time, and from the way God seemed to be at work through it all.

Denominational C. E. Societies

From about 1890 onwards, certain denominations began to organise their own societies generally along C. E. lines, and the question arose as to what relation the organisational wing of Christian Endeavour should take to these kindred or similar societies.

There were several ways in which this matter was approached by different denominations.

- (a.) Many denominations simply adopted Christian Endeavour as their official Young People’s work. As a result, all of their youth work followed the Christian Endeavour style of organisation.
- (b.) The Methodists in Australia and Canada, and in some other places, adopted a slightly different tactic. This was to have their own Christian Endeavour organisation, but also to affiliate with the overall Christian Endeavour organisation and National Unions, etc.
- (c.) The Baptists in many places adopted a slightly different method again, which was to have a denominational youth work which could include C. E. groups alongside groups which followed some other style of organisation.

In any case, however, the Christian Endeavour Movement always took a stance in favour of supporting the local churches, and never set themselves up in opposition to, or in competition with, the local churches, or tried to mount activities apart from local church organisation. In this way, the good will of denominational leaders was maintained.

Other Kinds of C. E. Societies

Apart from societies based in congregations, there were societies for seniors, mothers' societies, the Floating Society for sailors, prison societies and army societies. The society for seniors, for example, in some places was used as a way of strengthening the mid-week prayer meeting. The prayer meeting would be taken over by older people who had been trained in the Christian Endeavour style of running a meeting. In this way, an extra dimension would be added to the church's normal prayer meeting, which would give the prayer-life of the church a new lease of life.

PART TWO

Christian Endeavour in Australia.

For many years, historians of Christian Endeavour believed that the first local society to be organised in Australia was formed in 1888, when, on February 6 that year, the Wharf Street Baptist Church in Brisbane established their society, to be followed very quickly by other groups in Sydney and Melbourne.

However, it has since come to light that a Christian Endeavour society was started in the Hope Street Church of Christ in Geelong, on June 5, 1883. The wife of the pastor of that church had close contact with people in eastern U.S.A., who were involved in one of the very early societies. In this way the pastor's wife got the idea for starting a women's Christian Endeavour society in Hope Street, Geelong, in 1883. So it became the first society formed outside the United States, and one of the very early societies to be formed anywhere.

Starting in 1888, however, after the Wharf Street group commenced, very rapid growth began in the number of Christian Endeavour societies in Australia, mainly in the eastern states.

In Victoria, for example, in 1891, there were 65 societies with 3,000 members. One year later, there were 205 societies with 8,000 members.

In New South Wales, in March, 1892, there were 19 societies with 856 members. By September of the same year there were 53 societies with 1,650 members. Twelve months later there were 148 societies with 4,400 members. And by September, 1894, there were 237 societies with 6,943 members.

In Tasmania, 41 societies existed in 1894, a number which rose to 111 societies by 1897, with 1,800 members.

The South Australian Convention in 1894 was reported upon very fully in the *Methodist Journal*. The following, from the Secretary's report at the Business Meeting, gives a good idea of the growth in that colony.

“At our first Convention in November, 1891, we reported 38 societies, with 500 members in 1892, 125 societies, with 3,000 members in 1893, 256 societies, with 6,500 members on June 30, this year, seven and a half months only, we report 324 societies, with 9,059 members, an increase of 68 societies and 2,559 members. (Applause.) These societies are divided among the denominations as follows: - Wesleyan, 109, with 3,086 members Bible Christian, 50 - 1,177 Baptist 50 - 1728 Primitive Methodist, 29 - 673 Congregational, 25 - 775 Presbyterian, 12 - 320 Church of Christ, 3 - 104 Friends, 1 - 13 Lutheran, 1 - 19 Native Mission 1 Interdenominational, 33 - 921 Unknown, 5 - 12. Twenty-six societies have not sent in statistics, and are not allowed for in these figures. Church members in societies number 4,150. Associate members that have become active, over 500. Many societies not filling in these particulars, we cannot give the exact numbers. Last year we reported seven District Unions the number has increased to 21.” (6.)

The Spirit of Revival

By 1893, there were clear indications in denominational papers showing the impact of the new movement, which was like a modest revival in many places. Many churches were quickened. A

great many of the younger generation were converted, and many were prepared for evangelism and leadership roles. The first three examples presented here come from Tasmania.

Early in 1893, an evangelistic Mission lasting two weeks was conducted in Hobart, at the Melville Street Wesleyan Church, led by the aged Rev. John Watsford - popularly called "Father Watsford." It was described as a period of Pentecostal blessings. The published report concluded with this comment. "Perhaps the most delightful feature of the mission was the spirit of prayer and zeal poured out on our Christian Endeavour. They sang for Jesus, pleaded with their young companions, sought and brought them to the meetings, and were filled with overflowing joy when they stepped into liberty. To God be all the praise!" (7.)

A little later, a district C.E. Union meeting was held in Hobart. "On Tuesday evening, March 28th, a union meeting was held in the Newtown Wesleyan schoolroom. About 400 members were present from the Baptist Melville-street, Davey-street, High-street and Newtown Wesleyan Davey-street and Memorial Congregational Presbyterian and Primitive Methodist Societies. The chair was occupied by Mr. W. M. Williams, the president of the union, who gave a short address, and welcomed the societies which had joined the union since its last gathering. Rev. W. R. Cunningham also gave a short address on 'Consecration,' one element of which - self-surrender - he selected as the basis of his remarks. Rev. C. Bunning also spoke. A large portion of the meeting was given to testimonies which were freely spoken. Texts and hymns were also given in concert by members of the societies. The gathering throughout was attended with much feeling and power, and must have a good effect upon the lives of our young people. Most of the societies from Hobart went out in four-horse drags and 'busses but, being a bright moonlight night, in returning to town they preferred to walk, which they did, singing favourite Endeavour hymns, such as 'Blessed Assurance,' 'Happy Day,' 'Jesus, I love Thee,' 'All the way long it is Jesus.'" (8.)

The "Spectator" for July 7, 1893, contained a report about the first anniversary of the C.E. Society at Hamilton-on-Forth, in northern Tasmania. "Twelve months ago we made a start with 17 members we close the year with 58, viz., 34 active and 24 associate members. Every Friday evening presents in our church a soul-stirring sight, when from 40 to 60 young men and women are gathered for praise, prayer and social converse. Our consecration meetings are blessed times, and are usually the best attended of all the meetings. One by one the young people are coming to the Saviour, joining the Society, and then, in many cases, becoming working members in the church. Sunday, June 4th, was a high day for us. The services were conducted by Rev. J. Stafford (president), at 3 o'clock, and at 7pm by the Christian Endeavour band. On Tuesday we had a tea meeting and public meeting we separated at the close more determined than ever to win this town and district for our Lord and Master." (9.)

In South Australia, when the Wesleyan Conference met late in February, the Christian Endeavour movement was discussed, and it was "vigorously eulogised." (10.)

In Victoria, an example came from the Barker's Road Wesleyan Church in the Hawthorn Circuit. "At this little church a good work has been going on in a quiet way for the past couple of months. Since the formation of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, we have been gathering in the young people in twos and threes, and a fine healthy tone has been prevalent. On Sunday, 2nd inst. [July], the Rev. H. Howard, and Mr. H. Berry and two daughters, came over to conduct an afternoon service in the Sunday-school. After a fine address from Mr. Howard we had the satisfaction of seeing some thirty or thirty-three of the scholars - senior and junior - bowing in penitence at the communion rail. Last Sunday, without any assistance, we gave an opportunity to others, and some sixteen more scholars gave their hearts to the Lord. The teachers are very thankful to God for these tokens of His favour..." (11.)

At the Wesleyan Conference in Victoria, in February - March, 1893, the movement was discussed at some length in that part of the Conference agenda called the "Conversation on the Work of God." "In a full house its splendid successes [were] told. Indeed that conversation was death to all adverse

criticism, and showed that the movement was of God. The story of the wonderful work of God in Hobart, in which the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour had played so important a part the testimony as to the widespread influences of the Yarra-street (Geelong) Society, concerning which Dr. Clark said, 'I know something of Christian Endeavour Societies, but if there is a better in the world I don't know it' the blessed work done in church and school in promoting attention, kindness, sympathy and spiritual life in a number of our circuits led to a universal feeling that the movement had justified its existence. One was just left to imagine the things that might have been said. Doubt and suspicion, however, found no expression, or they were dissolved by the glow of that conversation." (12.)

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour at Yarra Street Wesleyan Church in Geelong became a very notable group very quickly. At its start, in 1890, "the spirit of prophecy descended upon certain wisecracks in that neighbourhood, and they declared that in three years' time the society would have died out. What sort of prophetic spirit that must have been may be gathered from the facts of today [1893]. The three years are up, and the corpse appears to be in a very lively condition. Its membership has grown from 25 to 356, and it proves by the work it is doing that it is not yet 'cut off from the land of the living.'" (13.)

In 1894, at their fourth Anniversary, the Yarra Street Society reported that there was a total of 442 members in the Junior and Young People's societies, of which 217 were active members, and 225 were associate members. They held special Anniversary meetings, and printed a beautiful Report on their work for the year. This report stated that 7,747 visits had been paid, with 2,903 sprays of flowers and baskets of flowers given away. 503 meetings had been held, and 228 temperance pledges taken. The look-out committee visited ships in the port on Sunday mornings and left flowers and invitation cards. A sailor's social had attracted 80 sailors belonging to several nationalities. The literature committee had started publishing a printed account of the Sunday sermon and hymns which were taken to those who could not attend the worship. So the society was full of good works. (14.)

A very early district C. E. rally in Melbourne (1894) is reported as follows in the "Spectator." The Rev. David O'Donnell, mentioned in this report, had been a Wesleyan minister and evangelist for many years, and became one again later, but was a Congregational minister in Melbourne in 1894.

"A grand united rally of south suburban societies of all denominations, under the auspices of the Armadale Wesleyan Society, was held in the Armadale church on the 20th ult. [April] chairman, Rev J. deQ. Robin, who, in his opening remarks, gave hearty words of welcome to the visiting societies.

The Rev. David O'Donnell (Congregational) gave a masterly address on the 'Pledge.' Mr. O'Donnell has a knack of infusing life into meetings of this sort. His words of encouragement and help as he analysed the 'pledge' on this occasion will not soon be forgotten. Rev. E. T. Cox, our new Wesleyan minister, was very eloquent and full of humour in his address on 'Christian Perfection.' Sister Hannah, from Central Mission, in a clever little speech given in her own inimitable fashion, quite carried the meeting with her. Her words made a deep and lasting impression, and as she pathetically told of her work in the slums of Melbourne, many were moved to tears. Mr. Green (Prahran Congregational) was specially good in his address on 'Look-out Committee work.' Societies would do well to act on the hints that were given. The addresses were interspersed with solos and Endeavour hymns.

The meeting was very profitable and thoroughly enjoyable, and the various societies, as they dispersed to the different parts of the suburbs, went away more determined than ever to live nearer to God, and work more earnestly in their portion of His vineyard. The church was well filled and very tastefully decorated by the lady members of the room committee." (15.)

The Impact of Christian Endeavour in Australia

Within a few years, there were District Unions, Denominational Organisations, and State Unions of Christian Endeavour societies.

The far-reaching impact of this great movement within Australia can perhaps be gleaned from an editorial which appeared in the Sydney "Methodist," following the annual convention of the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union in 1898, under the simple heading "Christian Endeavour."

"During the past week some extraordinary meetings have been held in Sydney in connection with the annual Convention of the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Union. Every day, from Tuesday to Saturday, meetings of various kinds were held, and in many of the Churches on Sunday special reference was made to the Christian Endeavour movement. It is thought that the great meeting in Sydney town Hall on Friday night has never been surpassed, if equalled, by any meeting of the kind in Australia. The leaders of the Society in New South Wales are gratified and thankful for the splendid success of the Convention. All the Protestant Churches, except the Anglican, were well represented, and our own Church was, perhaps, more strongly in evidence than any other. So whilst the Convention was of great interest from the standpoint of general Christianity, it had a special interest from the standpoint of Methodism.

Like most great spiritual movements Christian Endeavour has been received with a prudent degree of caution. By some it was regarded as full of possibilities of evil, and many who did not openly criticise it felt some degree of anxiety lest it should grow into something outside of and independent of the Christian Churches. This feeling, however, has now largely disappeared, and the Churches are shaping their polities to take in and utilise this new spiritual force which, under Divine Providence, promises to impart new life and vigour to the cause of God. For it is not now doubted, if ever it was, by any observant and broadminded Christian that the Christian Endeavour movement is a great spiritual force. In a marvellously short time it has spread over nearly the whole Christian world, and it has linked thousands of Christians together in spiritual unity and service who, before they came under its influence, had apparently much less interest in spiritual things and much less energy in Christian work.

A special feature of Christian Endeavour is that it is a development of life and energy within existing Christian Churches. It is not an outside power intended to revolutionize and disintegrate the Church of God, but a power which has sprung up within it, in sympathy with its aims, and whose supreme desire is the promotion of its welfare. The very basal principles of Christian Endeavour are loyalty to Christ, and the expression of that loyalty in loving devotion to Him in and for His Church. And so long as it retains its present constitution and works along its present lines, it cannot fail to be a great power for good in the world. Another, and not the least important, benefit conferred by Christian Endeavour, is the new enthusiasm it has breathed into the hearts of believers, and especially into the hearts of our young people. It is not too much to say that new life and enterprise have been given to many a lethargic cause by Christian Endeavour Societies. No one can dispute the earnestness and self-denial which characterize this great Christian Society, or that it has got hold and retains its hold on the young people of our Churches. No attempt to reach the youth of our congregations has ever succeeded like the Christian Endeavour movement. It has helped to bring many to Christ, and multitudes who simply made a profession of Christianity it has set to work for the extension of Christ's Kingdom.

Then Christians of all classes will rejoice in the work of the Endeavour Society in breaking down the barriers that have too long fenced one Church off from another. There can be no doubt that the power of the Church has been considerably lessened by sectarian seclusiveness. There has been too little combination and concentration of effort in fighting the common enemy, and the result has been a less glorious record of spiritual achievement. This evil, it is to be hoped, will in future, be

remedied, and it bids fair to be remedied through the influence of Christian Endeavour. For, while this Society is essentially loyal in all its church relations, it is strongly cosmopolitan in its combinations for the furtherance of the common cause of Christianity. The recent Convention has supplied ample proof of this. For whilst each Church was definitely represented by the ministers and societies, the Convention, as a whole, represented a great Christian army united in its counsels, its sympathies, and its efforts. Christian Endeavour has evidently come to stay, to be an integral part of the Church life and work of the future, and under Divine Providence to be a great power for good in the world. It may take time and careful thought for the several churches to find a right place for Christian Endeavour Societies in their several polities, but it is absolutely necessary that this should be done, and the gain will be well worth the trouble.” (16.)

Christian Endeavour Rallies at the Methodist Conference

Although the Wesleyan Methodists in N.S.W. did not really set up their own separate C. E. organisation until the late 1890s, there had already developed the practice of holding a big denominational C. E. rally during the time of the Annual Conference meetings. A lengthy and enthusiastic report of this meeting would then be published in the “Methodist.”

In 1898, the C. E. rally was held in the Centenary Hall in York Street, on February 14th, which was a Friday evening. Many who were present, and who had also attended the other special meetings during the Annual Conference, believed that this rally was the best, so far as enthusiasm and deep spirituality was concerned. The report said that the “meeting was a fine indication of the vast power of recuperative energy imported into our church life by the Endeavour movement.”

The meeting was chaired by the Rev. W. G. Taylor. The president of the N.S.W. State Union, the Rev. W. M. Dill-Macky (Presbyterian) was given a place of honour.

The Rev. Joseph Woodhouse addressed the rally on the subject of “Christian Endeavour and Church Membership,” emphasising that C. E. members lived strongly in the spiritual tradition of the heroes of early Methodism.

After certain other parts of the programme, an address was given by Mr. F. E. McLean. M.L.A., on the subject of “How Christian Endeavourers may assist in the promotion of Christian Legislation.”

Having a roll-call had already become a traditional part of such meetings. Greetings came from various mission fields in the Pacific, from 32 different suburban societies, some country centres, and a few other places interstate and overseas.

Methodist C. E. rallies were always noted for their fervent singing, and the role of the C. E. Pledge was often emphasised, and explained in detail. (17.)

A Christian Endeavour Anniversary in a Country Town

The following quotation provides an insight into the contribution made by this Movement in a country church. Apart from the sudden death of the local minister, it is an example of what happened in a great many parts of Australia.

“The anniversary services in connection with the Parkes Christian Endeavour Society were held in the Wesleyan Church on Sunday 7th of May [1899]. The morning and evening services were conducted by the Rev. C. W. Graham who preached able sermons with reference to Endeavourers and their good work. The afternoon service was carried out on similar lines to the usual weekly [C.E.] meeting. It was conducted by Mrs Graham who gave an address on the topic, and five of the

members read papers to a large and appreciative congregation. A collection was taken up during the service, the proceeds of which were represented to the trust funds of the local church.

On the following Monday evening the annual social was held in the school-hall, which was like the church on the previous day, tastefully decorated for the occasion with flowers and greenery. A large programme of singing, etc., was gone through, two quartets rendered by members of the choir being worthy of special mention. Addresses were given by Rev. C. W. Graham, Mr. Jas. Graham, and the captain of the Salvation Army. The secretary of the Society submitted the annual report. He stated that the Society was in a flourishing condition. Refreshments were provided during the evening. At a meeting on Tuesday to arrange for the distribution of the proceeds it was almost unanimously decided to make a present of five pounds towards the erection of the new church at Cookamidgera.” (18.)

Strangely, on the previous page of the paper which carried the report of these meetings, the notice appeared of the sudden death of the Rev. C. W. Graham, on the 22nd May, from congestive heart failure, following a week of sudden illness from pneumonia. Some weeks later, the President of the Conference asked Mr. James Graham, a well-known lay evangelist, to act as pastor in Parkes for some months until another appointment of a minister could be made.

Lionel B. Fletcher - His Earlier Years

Lionel Fletcher was perhaps the greatest individual product of Australian Christian Endeavourism, and was also the Australian who contributed most to the Christian Endeavour Movement around the world.

He was born in West Maitland on May 22nd, 1877, the seventh son of a school teacher and his wife. All the men were preachers, and all were Methodists, until Lionel changed to become a Congregationalist. After a dramatic conversion experience in his late teens, he joined a Christian Endeavour society in western Sydney, where his leadership and preaching abilities had the opportunity to appear. It was in this situation that he had his first experiences of successful evangelism, and saw touches of revival.

“At the time of his conversion the [C. E.] movement was at the height of its power in Australia, a force to be reckoned with in the community. At Convention time trains would be packed with ‘Endeavourers’ with badges and flags proudly displayed, and the challenging motto, ‘For Christ and the Church,’ prominently arranged across the front of the engine.” (19.)

An Anglican friend took him to the Petersham Convention, which was an interdenominational district convention for growth in Christian holiness. He listened to an address by Archdeacon Tress about the necessity of the Spirit-filled life. “Lionel Fletcher decided then and there that he would claim that power as his Christian birthright, that if there was such supernatural power available to enable him to accomplish God's purposes he would not fall into the human error of attempting the task in his own strength if there was almighty power at his disposal he would lay hold of it and attempt, if need be, the impossible.”

He commenced a new C. E. group in the Marrickville Methodist Church, and a very keen group of Christian workers formed around him. His father ran the Sunday school. A special evangelistic day occurred involving the Sunday School pupils, and about seventy sought instruction about the way of salvation. Within a few months, many others responded to Lionel's message in neighbouring churches, and Sunday Schools, and many conversions occurred. (20.)

In his early twenties, around the year 1900, he sought to enter the Methodist ministry. But he had fallen in love with a wonderful Christian lady, and, as a Methodist probationer, he would not be allowed to marry her for four years. So, he married the girl, and became a Congregational minister.

As the years went by, he worked in several pastorates in New South Wales and South Australia. Then, for several years, up to 1915, he worked as an evangelist in South Australia, promoting Christian Endeavour wherever he could, as a solid method of nurturing converts. Later still, he held pastorates in Cardiff (Wales), and in Auckland (New Zealand), where central churches which had become almost derelict were transformed by his evangelistic fervour. Very large congregations developed before he left. He became vice-president of the World Union of Christian Endeavour, and held that position for many years. For periods of time he became a full-time evangelist for the Christian Endeavour Movement. At other times, he travelled to conduct evangelistic campaigns, and saw outstanding success in many churches and countries.

He retired to a quieter life-style as the Second World War began, and died in 1954, full of years, and having seen God's blessing in many places.

1902

The Eleventh Annual State Convention of the New South Wales Christian Endeavour Societies met on Friday, 29th September, 1902, in the Bathurst Street Baptist Church. During the course of the meeting, members were informed that, in New South Wales, there were now 183 Young Peoples' Societies, with 6,051 members, and, in addition there were 141 Junior Societies, with 5,187 members.

Already, Bible study materials used by Christian Endeavour groups were published each week in various of the denominational newspapers around the country, and this continued for some years to come. (21.)

1904

In late February, 1904, the N.S.W. Methodist Conference held its Christian Endeavour rally. The report which was published concerning this meeting shows the growing strength and impact of the C. E. movement in the churches.

A union of the four main Methodist bodies had occurred a little earlier. So the N.S.W. statistics represented the Wesleyan work, plus the societies which had belonged to the Primitive Methodist Churches in N.S.W. The main strength of the Bible Christian denomination had been in South Australia and Victoria.

There were 216 Methodist Young People's C. E. societies in N.S.W., which was an increase of 35 on the year, with 6,378 members - an increase of 1,825. Of these, 3,920 were church members.

There were also 112 Junior societies, which was an increase of 26, with 3,609 members - an increase of 747 members. Statistics fluctuated, and a few groups might not have lasted long.

On a world-wide basis, membership had grown from the original 50 members, when the first society had been formed in Williston, 23 years earlier. In 1904, the world total stood at three and a quarter million members.

At this February rally in Sydney, the two main addresses were given by the Rev. Benjamin Danks on "The Church of the Future," and by the Rev. P. J. Stephen on "Christian Endeavour - its Claims upon the Churches."

Stephen said, "The Society has passed through three stages of testing - 1st, it was ignored 2nd, it was criticised 3rd, it was praised. The Church now truly valued the Christian Endeavour movement. The Endeavourers had been taught their duties to the Church what should they now expect from the Church? What should a child expect from its mother? Everything it needs to make

it a strong adult. So the C. E. was born in the Church, lives in the Church, and is never going out of the Church. The C. E. movement looks for three things from the Church - 1st, sympathy from those in authority 2nd, a sphere, room to grow 3rd, guidance. The Church must direct this mighty force, so that the great forces of evil might depart before its palpitating life." (22.)

Dr. Clark's Second Visit

The founder of the Christian Endeavour movement, the Rev. Dr. Francis E. Clark, first visited Australia in 1892. At that stage, the movement was still in its infancy in Australia, although it was spreading rapidly.

In March, 1904, he arrived in Sydney as part of a world-wide tour, in preparation for the British National Convention in London, starting on May 21st. Upon his arrival in Sydney, the first welcome meeting was held in the Sydney Town Hall on the evening of Friday, 10th March, 1904. He was welcomed on behalf of 75,000 Endeavourers, Australia-wide. He spoke about the wide range of Endeavourers he had met in many parts of the world. This included reference to 2,000 Endeavourers in U.S.A. who met behind prison bars. But this statement was qualified by saying that "not one of them was an Endeavourer before they got there. Fellow Endeavourers had gone into the gaols and converted them, and now they had joined the Christian Endeavour Society."

The power of Christ in believers which makes them into 'the salt of the earth' was emphasised by Dr. Clark's meeting with President [Theodore] Roosevelt before he left on his trip. "The President, in referring to Christian Endeavour work, said he considered it far more important than fiscal legislation, far more important than matters to be considered by Congress, which was meeting that day."

There was a Junior rally with Dr. Clark on the Saturday afternoon a meeting with pastors on the Monday morning, and 'open parliament' in the Pitt Street Congregational Church on Monday afternoon, when many subjects were raised.

At the evening meeting in the Pitt Street Church, the Rev. W. G. Taylor compared the situation in N.S.W. when Dr. Clark had visited the first time - 53 societies with 1,650 members - with the present situation - 412 societies with 14,624 members. "The tide was coming in, and greater progress was being made each year." Dr. Clark spoke about "The Increase Campaign," calling for a ten percent increase in membership each year for the next ten years. He illustrated his talk with stories about places where rapid growth had occurred.

On the Tuesday morning, afternoon and evening, meetings were held in the Centenary hall, York Street. The evening theme was "Organise, Vitalise, Evangelise." Concluding meetings were held on Wednesday, before he left to visit other states of Australia. (23.)

1907 - 1910

The returns of the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Australasia, which then included New Zealand and Samoa, provide an interesting insight into the further development of the movement. These statistics included every aspect of the Church's life, and thus included figures for the C.E. societies and their members.

In 1907, the Methodists had 1,091 Young People's Societies, with 21,453 active members. By 1910, this figure had declined to 1,037 societies, with 20,295 active members. So, by that time, the strength of the Young People's aspect of the work was starting to decline. Whereas, the Junior work was still increasing. In 1907, there were 577 Junior Societies with 18,797 members. In 1910, the number of Junior Societies was 632, with 17,985 members. Statistics for Sunday Schools and

Bands of Hope were also provided. (24.)

The First World War, and Afterwards

The First World War had a profound effect on every aspect of life. The Christian Endeavour movement in Australia, however, had experienced its “hey-day” in the years before the War.

Statistics for the years 1933 - 1935 issued by the National C.E. Union (again including New Zealand and Samoa) showed that there were 3,667 societies of all descriptions, with 89,413 members. This figure is more useful, however, if it is broken down into state figures.

For example, in New South Wales, there were two Senior Societies with 25 members, and 276 Young Peoples' Societies, with 6,547 members. There were 185 Intermediate Societies, with 3,796 members, and 338 Junior Societies, with 10,046 members

In Victoria, there were nine Senior Societies with 170 members, and 516 Young Peoples' Societies, with 12,976 members. There were 288 Intermediate Societies, with 4,284 members, and 356 Junior Societies with 11,752 members.

In South Australia, there were five Senior Societies with 85 members, and 148 Young Peoples' Societies, with 2,813 members. There were 109 Intermediate Societies with 2,105 members, and 220 Junior Societies, with 5,967 members.

In Queensland, there were 4 Senior Societies with 94 members, and 205 Young Peoples' Societies with 3,935 members. There were 101 Intermediate Societies with 1,581 members, and 185 Junior Societies, with 4,417 members.

Western Australia had a total of 223 societies of all types, with 4,982 members.

Tasmania had a total of 130 societies, with 2,357 members. (25.)

Following the end of the First World War, the Christian Endeavour movement enjoyed fifty years of steady influence upon Christians in the Churches, declining after the Second World War, until the 1970s and later, when the influence of Christian Endeavour had largely disappeared.

Although there has not yet been published any truly definitive histories of the Christian Endeavour movement in Australia, there are several partial and much briefer books available. The amount of general historical material about the movement in these books is limited, and sometimes severely limited. In a few cases, these books simply repeated a small range of early facts which have already appeared in the others booklets. One or two of these booklets include a series of testimonies, mostly of more recent date, which describe the spiritual blessings which have come to many of the C.E. members through their involvement in the movement. Not only did conversions occur, but many people learned to take part in the meetings, and thus were prepared in C. E. meetings to serve God faithfully and well. Many people experiencing a calling from God into various aspects of Christian service through C. E. activities. The meetings also helped develop and enrich the ongoing spiritual lives of a great many individual Christians who maintained their contact with the movement over many years.

Conclusion

From a general survey of the material presented, we can see that the impact of Christian Endeavour developed very strongly in Australia through the decade of the 1890s, reaching a peak period of impact through the decade from 1900 to 1910. In those years, the C. E. movement in Australia made an enormous and valuable contribution to the spirit of revival which was abroad in the land.

Indeed, it would be hard to overestimate the value of the contribution this movement made to the spiritual life of the period, as expressed in the evangelical Protestant churches in Australia.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE SALVATION ARMY IN AUSTRALIA.

The Early Years

Viewed as a Chapter in the History of Revivals.

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the early years of the Salvation Army in Australia with a particular question in mind. To what extent, and in what ways, does the story of the Salvation Army in Australia form a chapter in the history of evangelical revivals in this country? As a result, this paper does not seek to present a full-orbed or balanced history of the Salvation Army movement as such. This is not the purpose in view. The overall aim, of which this paper is a part, is to discover and outline the thread of evangelical revivals in Australia. The early years of the Salvation Army in Australia form a chapter in this story. The aim here is to explore this part of the story.

The Early Years in England

The rise of William Booth to prominence as an effective evangelist in England occurred in the aftermath of the great 1859 revival which had affected so deeply many parts of the British Isles. He was not alone, of course. There were a number of other talented evangelists who arose to prominence around that time, and whose work was promoted by the impact of the revival. These included men like Richard Weaver, Reginald Radcliffe, Duncan Matheson, Hay McDowell Grant of Arndilly, Gordon Forlong, Lord Radstock, and a generation of others who came afterwards.

Booth had been converted in Wesleyan Methodism, and was a convinced follower of the more traditional emphases on Methodist evangelism and holiness teaching. He once described himself in the following way. "To me there was one God and John Wesley was his prophet." (1.)

Strangely, in the 1860s, and in the aftermath of the 1859 revival, the leaders of all the Methodist denominations were suspicious of revivalism outside of their normal circuit structures. Booth was eventually ordained as a minister of the much smaller Methodist New Connexion denomination, but the leaders of this church did not support the idea of having him as a connexional evangelist. When the Wesleyans had the opportunity to employ Booth as a full-time evangelist, they did not embrace the idea, either. The Primitive Methodists in England were even more rigid about such a principle.

So, William Booth was forced by circumstances, and by his sense of calling, to become a freelance worker, like the other evangelists listed above. On three occasions, like Abraham of old, he had to go out into the unknown, trusting God alone to guide him and to supply all of his needs. Booth had no other visible means of support.

When William Booth and Catherine Mumford were first married, his wife considered herself too

timid to preach. At that time, also, women preachers were often frowned upon. It was only as their circuit work developed in the early 1860s that Catherine decided she should conquer her timidity, and start preaching. Within a few years, she had developed into a powerful preacher, and an effective evangelist in her own right.

By what many have since viewed as providential leadings, including many very difficult circumstances, the Booths' work was eventually based in East London. This area of the city had become degraded and overcrowded, resulting in the most appalling scenes and conditions of filth, drunkenness and poverty. There were literally thousands of beer shops and outlets for alcoholic drinks in the East End. The basic work was a ceaseless round of evangelistic meetings wherever a meeting place could be arranged. There was a continual stream of conversions from amongst the poor and degraded. But the problem of keeping the converts, building them up to a life of dedication and holiness, and putting them to work for God, presented a major obstacle, which had defeated many others who had begun a similar kind of work.

In the very early years, Booth adopted a system which proved to be reasonably successful in overcoming this problem of establishing the converts. Especially at large meetings, prospective converts were required to come forward and publicly kneel at a penitent form. This was aimed at stopping people coming forward unless they were really serious. They would then be counselled in a back room, where redemption through Christ would be explained, plus some advice about the revolution which was required in their lives. They were then committed to making a public testimony, and would be put to work for Christ. In this way, Booth overcame the problem, and helped guarantee the success of his work.

Furthermore, Booth did not practice a counselling technique which was fairly common at that time. That was, that the penitent was told simply to believe the words of some Biblical text, and all would be well. His counselling was always stronger and sterner, and allowed more room for the witness of the Holy Spirit to come to the new Christian. (2.)

In 1865 and 1866, Booth made his first steps in setting up an organisation to carry out evangelistic work in London, using the open air, and a tent pitched in an old cemetery. The tent seated about 350 people. In a few months, the tent was destroyed by the weather. Other meetings places were used on a casual basis, as they were available. At last, an old wool store in Bethnal Green became available for their use at all times, and a better evangelistic routine became possible. It seated barely 120 people. The open air meetings were harassed by the police, by roughs, and by drunken mobs arranged by the local publicans. Booth said, "The Lord was with us and numbers of sinners were awakened in this humble place, some of whom are now labouring for the salvation of their fellow men." A Band of Hope for children was soon started, which grew to sixty or seventy. About fifty people signed the pledge. The publicans became infuriated. (3.) By the end of 1866, Booth had a team of sixty workers helping him.

In other parts of London, theatres, small halls and meeting places were used, but they often were not available for weekday meetings, either for strengthening the converts or for evangelism. By 1868, ten centres were in operation in East London. These kinds of locations were chosen deliberately because Booth knew that people who were not used to entering ordinary places of worship would have a great problem attending gatherings in such places. The only way to reach them was to hold his meetings in places where the ordinary slum dweller felt comfortable. (4.)

1869 was the year when the work grew wider than the East End of London. Catherine Booth had conducted a mission in Croydon in 1866. In 1869 she conducted another, which lasted for three months. She was asked to set up a branch of the London work in Croydon to help establish the many converts, and because social problems existed in that area also. Three other branches were also opened that year, and after that, the number grew steadily. (5.)

As the work grew, full-time staff began to be appointed, in addition to the staff of volunteers. 1875

provided a year for taking stock of the situation. Staffed work had by then been established at Whitechapel, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Poplar and Cubitt Town, Limehouse and Millwall, Canning Town, Stratford, Croydon, Stoke Newington and Tottenham, Hackney, Hastings, Wellingborough, Portsmouth, Plaistow, Kettering, Stockton, Middlesbro', Barking, Chatham, North Woolwich, Hammersmith, Soho and Cardiff. Work at several other places had either been closed, or had seceded from Booth's organisation. (6.)

Was This a Revival?

Insight into the answer to this question can be gained in two ways. The first is to look more closely into the nature of the work in individual cases. The second is to look at the overall growth.

(a.) For example, Catherine Booth was often away conducting missions in other places, but she still took a keen interest in her husband's work. In 1882, she described her experience regarding the early work in London ten years before. "My husband took the lead. I stood back, having, perhaps, less of the power of adaptation in my composition. I said, 'My dear, don't go too fast don't go ahead of the teaching of the Holy Ghost.' But I went and saw the marvellous results. I saw 20 - 30 - 50 of the biggest blackguards in London broken all to pieces on a single Sunday night - just as much broken down as the Jews were under Peter's sermon. I spoke to them and applied the tests of the Gospel, and I was bound to say, 'This is the finger of God!'" (7.)

Another example can be seen in the development of the work in Bradford. James Dowdle was leading this work. Noisy open air meetings were followed by a street march down to a dilapidated old theatre, where the main meetings took place. One of the preachers was Tillie Smith, sister of "Gipsy" Rodney Smith, who also worked there. William and Catherine Booth paid a flying visit to Bradford in August, 1877, and other places in the north. He wrote, "I have never witnessed more precious conversions, nor seen services that more blessedly indicated the possibilities of a great work than at Bradford." (8.)

More information about the work at Bradford comes from the Pentecostal leader Smith Wigglesworth, who as a young man was involved in this work, and who first met his wife, "Polly" (Mary Jane Featherstone), among the Bradford Salvation Army workers. Wigglesworth had been present at one of Tillie Smith's meetings when "Polly" was converted. In his biography of Wigglesworth, Frodsham says he, "...had been greatly attracted to the Army because of their splendid soul-saving ministry so he threw himself wholeheartedly into the work of the Salvationists. In it he found an outlet for the consuming passion for the unsaved, and he had a joyous satisfaction in watching the lives of many men and women change by the power of the Gospel. And then Polly's presence in the meetings was a great attraction to him! Her alertness and ability in the indoor services as well as in the open-air meetings appealed to him." (9.)

(b.) Regarding the overall growth of the movement in England in those early years, Sandall provides us with the following figures. In June, 1878, the Salvation Army had 50 Corps in the U.K. staffed by 88 officers. By Christmas that year, there were 81 Corps, staffed by 127 officers. By 1886, this had grown to 1,006 Corps, staffed by 2,260 officers, who led over 1,500,000 meetings during the year.

The first figures for overseas work appear against the year 1883, although they may refer to events which occurred some time earlier. The overseas figures for 1883 showed that there were 106 Corps led by 201 officers. By 1886, this had jumped to 743 Corps, led by 1,932 officers. (10.)

Naturally, there were also many disappointments, and some years when the expansion seemed to have stopped. Some places where the work was commenced had later to be closed because of lack of progress, and there were instances where the zeal to win conversions dried up.

These two lines of evidence, however, reveal that the early Salvation Army had proved to be a substantial work of God, which can safely be classified as a revival movement of significant proportions.

The EARLY YEARS in AUSTRALIA

The first meetings to be held in Australia under the name of the Salvation Army occurred in Adelaide in the second half of 1880. Edward Saunders and John Gore were both Christian Mission converts. Separately they had migrated to South Australia. They met by accident at a monster open-air rally led in the Botanical Gardens by Matthew Burnett, the Wesleyan temperance evangelist, and they decided to commence work together. The first officers sent from London arrived in Adelaide in February, 1881, and were met by 68 converts.

“In quick succession during 1882-83 Corps were formed at Norwood, Moonta, Moonta Mines, East Adelaide, Wallaroo, Kadina, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Kapunda, Gawler, North Adelaide and Riverton, and there were scores of conversions.” (11.)

Major James Barker arrived in Victoria in September, 1882 to be in charge of all the Australian work. He set up his base of operations in Melbourne, although he did not officially “open fire” there until the end of the year. Other officers “opened fire” in New South Wales in December, 1882. So, during the main part of 1883, work was being done by Army personnel in three of the Australian states. In the years which followed, the Salvation Army work in Victoria became stronger than in any of the other states.

To give an idea of the progress made at this very early stage of the story, Dale gives these comments about the so-called first anniversary gatherings in Melbourne.

“On New Year's Day, 1884, the long-remembered first Anniversary Celebration was held in Australia's largest hall at the Melbourne Exhibition Building. Commencing with a march-in of troops from the various centres, prayer and praise in the building and grounds continued practically all day. The night attendance totalled over eight thousand.

A band of forty players, under Staff Officer Jeremiah Eunson, led the congregational singing and ‘Fiddler Frank’ Veal conducted the Songsters.

Striking testimonies were given by notorious characters saved during the year. ‘Eighty-three had in this respect been ‘a year of wonders.’ When all who had professed Salvation through the Army message were asked to stand, a great company responded, and the building resounded with shouts of praise. It was announced that in the three Colonies occupied fifty-six corps had been opened, and there were one hundred and thirty-three Officers.” (12.)

Salvation Army work commenced in Tasmania late in 1883. Before there was time to build up a strong cause of helpers, the team was besieged by so many women wanting to change their way of life that a large “Rescue Home” had to be bought in Launceston to accommodate them.

In Queensland, the starting time was in June, 1885. The start in Brisbane had been difficult, but in Bundaberg four hundred people had come to the penitent form within the first eight months. The first barracks in Queensland were opened at Maryborough, where there had been three hundred conversions within the first nine weeks. (13.)

At Charters Towers, a Corps was opened in June, 1888. Persecution and interference persisted for a while, but this Corps also had its moments of glory, becoming for a while the largest corps in

Australia, with street marches of 1,000 people, and officers leading the march who were mounted on white horses. There had been strong support from many miners of Cornish descent in the area.

Following the discovery of gold in Western Australia, officers sailed from Melbourne for Fremantle on 10th December, 1891. Meetings commenced in Perth, followed very quickly by the establishment of new corps at Fremantle, Northam, York, Guildford and Bunbury. Six months later Army work had also commenced at Albany, Geraldton and Katanning, soon followed by a new work at Coolgardie.

The Army officers were welcomed in Western Australia. But almost everywhere else, as had happened often enough in England, there was persecution, by the roughs and larrikins (the Army officers called these the "skeleton army"), by the police, and by drunken mobs organised by the publicans. The degree of persecution varied from place to place. But, in Australia, it is generally true that the work was outstandingly successful, particularly while the persecution lasted. It was the leaders of the skeleton army who were likely to be amongst the first converts.

Barker did not have enough hours in a day to lead the work in Victoria, let alone pay attention to what went on in the other states. When Ballington Booth and Major Howard visited Australia in 1884, they discovered that many great victories had been won, but were appalled by some of the mistakes that had occurred. However, these were all flow-on results from the enormously rapid growth in so many places.

Ballington Booth also ran up against a feature of which he had no previous experience. Important people, civic leaders and wealthy sympathisers, attended his meetings, and took an interest in his work.

Their report back to headquarters about these factors led to the appointments of Booth and Howard as the new leaders of the work in the southern seas. By 1886, Howard was left in charge alone.

Explosive Growth in Australia in the First Decade

Indicators of the very rapid growth of the Salvation Army in Australia in these early years can be seen in a number of ways. Three examples will be given here.

In late August and early September of 1888, the churches in South Australia organised a "head-count," or miniature unofficial census, of everyone who attended church on a certain Sunday, listing these figures against the seating capacities of the church buildings. Outside of Adelaide, the count was made at an evening service. Nearer to Adelaide, the count was made late in August. The figures were published in district groups, and divided according to denominations.

The Roman Catholic figures were a little different, representing their constituency, and not the actual size of the congregation at Mass that day.

The most glaring example of Salvation Army growth came from the Kadina - Wallaroo area. Kadina had six churches, of which three were Methodist, but no Salvation Army Corp. The Wallaroo Mines area had four churches. The three Methodist churches had congregations which totalled 158 at the evening service on Sunday, 2nd September, in buildings that seated 1,320. Whereas the Salvation Army Corp had a congregation of 602 in a building that seated 700. The overall total represented 36% of the local population.

In Gawler, the Salvation Army had the largest congregation (350), followed by the Wesleyans (291). The total of church attenders in Gawler represented 40% of the local population.

In Kapunda, the Salvation Army congregation was third in size (170), behind the Roman Catholic constituency (230), and the Wesleyan congregation (173). Again, the overall total represented 40%

of the local population.

In the Burra area, there were six churches in Kooringa and two in Redruth. Five of these were Methodist. The Salvation Army congregation (95) was second in size to the Kooringa Wesleyans (160). The overall total represented 30% of the local population.

The figures for Adelaide and suburbs covered the area within three miles of the G.P.O., which was the size of the city at that time. There were six Salvation Army Corps in the Adelaide area. All together, the attendances at these Corps came fourth (1,746) behind the Wesleyans (3,226), Church of England (2,576) and Roman Catholics (2,227), and just in front of the Congregational churches of Adelaide (1,703). The population of Adelaide at that time was about 60,000, and 28% were at church on the day the count was made. The figures for Adelaide were given for each congregation in each denomination.

In the Port Adelaide and Glenelg areas, the Salvation Army had two Corps in 1888 with a total of 240 at the evening services. The Church of England services had 668 people present, and the Wesleyans had 581. Of a population of about 13,000 in the Port area, and in Glenelg, 24% attended the various churches. (14.)

It should be emphasised that, although there were a great many conversions in these early Salvation Army meetings, the Army grew also at the expense of the other churches, especially the Primitive Methodists, who generally served the same levels and stratas of society that the Salvation Army tried to reach most directly.

A second example indicating the great growth of the work in Australia is seen in the fact that, by 1891, the circulation of "The War Cry" in Australia was third highest in the world. (15.)

The third example comes from the census for 1891. This showed the sudden appearance of the Salvation Army in the official statistics. They represented 0.93 percent of the population. By the time of the census of 1901, the Army represented 0.82 percent of the growing population, which included 31,000 members. (16.)

Probably the high point in Australia had been reached by 1895. There were certainly many successes after that date, but other factors worked against further growth. Overall, in Australia, the Salvation Army did not grow numerically in the early decades of the Twentieth Century.

Perhaps the concluding comment we should make here is that the early years of the work of the Salvation Army in Australia showed much the same kind of Gospel power in changing the lives of individuals as was seen in England. So, in this country also, we saw a significant revival movement amongst the followers of William Booth.

Why Did The Revival Not Last Longer?

The theologian and the Bible student can speculate about this question. For example, the theologian can speculate that perhaps the sovereignty of God had chosen that the revival should decline for arbitrary reasons, or for other reasons that we might not yet understand.

But, usually, the historian can only point to possible causes, and wonder if, and to what extent, these causes might have been relevant.

For example, the historian can see that there were major problems with the entire leadership of the Salvation Army around 1890 and onwards. There were aspects of these problems which, in the light of Biblical teaching, could well provide a reason why the revival came to an end.

Much of the leadership of the Salvation Army had become somewhat like an oligarchy. Family members were given high leadership roles above what was given to many other possible Army

leaders. The younger generation of Booths were all very talented and very strong characters, like their parents. Perhaps the General thought he could trust them more than other leaders, or that they had better talents.

The American Salvationist leadership, under Ballington Booth, wanted a greater degree of local autonomy, because orders being issued from London were often inappropriate for the American situation. In England, by 1890, Herbert Booth was having similar tensions and personality clashes with his older brother Bramwell Booth, who was Chief of Staff in London. After his mother's death in 1890, Herbert asked for an overseas appointment in order to get away from such direct influence from his older brother. Herbert was too much like his father. He operated best as an autocrat. He was sent in 1891 to Canada to clean up a financial and organisational mess left by the previous leader.

Soon after, Ballington resigned from the Army, and set up another similar organisation in the United States. This created an effect like an enormous bombshell for the Army leadership. Herbert was sent from Canada in an effort to resolve the problem, but he agreed that the problem that had led to his brother's resignation existed, and would not go away.

In 1895, as General William Booth toured around his world-wide operations, he saw again these tensions between the junior members of his family who were leaders in several countries, and the central authority in London.

So, in 1895, Bramwell and the General organised a family "move-on" to other appointments, in order to fortify control from London HQ, and to limit the attachment of family members like Catherine (La Marechale) and Herbert to the national situations of their previous appointments.

This move created great animosity and acrimony between Booth family members. They objected to Bramwell's rising position of power. They thought some of the orders coming from London were totally unsuitable. But neither the General nor Bramwell were able to resolve this situation. It is very likely that they did not understand it. La Marechale was moved from France to Holland. After Herbert's four-year appointment in Canada, he was moved to Australia. Here, Herbert's problems continued, and grew greater. He seriously disliked being controlled from a distance by someone who did not know what was going on. Soon, Catherine resigned from the Army, and followed her husband into the Pentecostal movement. By 1902, Herbert had resigned, also, and, after a period of rest, had taken up freelance evangelism. (17.)

This issue is relevant to the question about the continuation of a revival movement, because such family animosity amongst the highest leadership of the movement would grieve the Holy Spirit, and seriously damage any hope of revival on a wide basis.

Other factors which would work against the continuation of any revival are, for example, the fact that the General, William Booth, was getting to be an old man, and was not in good health. It affected his personality, making him testy and abrasive far more than he had been previously. He tended to rub people up the wrong way. He also was accustomed to being an autocrat by that time, and he expected that his slightest wish would be treated by any officer as an absolute command.

Another factor working against the continuation of any revival is mentioned by Dr. Ford Ottman in his biography of Herbert Booth. He says that when Herbert resigned from the Army in 1902, he was ostracised by all the officers in the Salvation Army, by order from his brother, Bramwell, from HQ in London. They were apparently ordered to have nothing to do with him, not to work with him, not to help him in any way, or even speak to him. A classic example of this occurred in Melbourne, where an Army officer who knew Herbert well, and had been good friends in the past, crossed the road in order to avoid having to meet him, as he walked along the footpath.

The Army authorities tried to prevent Herbert having use of Salvation Army hymns and music that he had composed. They also tried to prevent Herbert having use of the famous lantern and moving

picture presentation that Herbert had helped to create, and had used so widely in Australia while he was Commandant there. As time passed, this presentation, and the evangelistic opportunities that it created, became the means whereby Herbert gained his livelihood.

When, at last, Herbert returned to England twelve years after he had left it, Bramwell resented his coming as an unpardonable intrusion, and continued attempts to “pull rank” upon his younger brother as the Chief of Staff, although Herbert was no longer an officer under Bramwell’s authority. (18.)

Conclusion

Although William Booth achieved enormously, and was hugely honoured, both in his later years, and at his funeral, by crowned heads, political leaders, and by millions of ordinary people, and although Bramwell Booth did a great work in many ways, there were these acrimonious personality clashes between the members of a family of very strong characters at the core of the Salvation Army’s leadership. Perhaps it is not a surprise that the revival came to an end when it did.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ROLE OF THE Y.M.C.A.

IN AUSTRALIAN EVANGELISM AND REVIVALS

The Young Men's Christian Association is a major example of one of the Nineteenth Century evangelical institutions which was boosted by the great 1857 Revival, and which played a very significant role in the general evangelical work for the next seventy years, including in the revivals of the early Twentieth Century.

It was founded in 1844 by a committee of twelve young men who all worked for the drapery firm of George Hitchcock and Co, Saint Paul's Churchyard, London.

The employees in these types of firms normally worked very long hours, and accommodation was provided on site for those employees who had moved into the city looking for work.

After his conversion, George Hitchcock became concerned for the spiritual, physical and intellectual benefit of his employees. He employed a local minister, the Rev. John Branch, as chaplain to lead family worship every morning, at which all of the employees were expected to be present, and he bore the expenses for educational lectures which were given for the benefit of the employees during the long winter nights. When the chaplain was absent, his place was taken by one of the employees, namely, by John C. Symons, George Williams, or one other person. Symons was a Wesleyan local preacher, and so did much of the relieving. Later, he came to Australia, and became an outstanding Wesleyan minister.

Hitchcock's employees appreciated their advantages, and discussed whether there were any ways of spreading these benefits. Mr. W. D. Owen, of Great Coram Street, was a trusted friend and adviser to Mr. Hitchcock, and suggested to one of the employees whether similar things might not be introduced into other places of work, as well. This is the germ from which the Y.M.C.A. sprang. A meeting was held, under the chairmanship of Owen, at 72 St. Paul's Churchyard, on June 6th, 1844. Fourteen young men were present at this meeting. From that meeting a committee was formed, rules were adopted, officers elected, and the society dated its institution from that meeting. Symons was the first secretary, wrote out the report of the first meeting, and drew up the initial rules, and the card of membership. (1.)

Before long, Symons had prepared a circular, bringing the new Association to the notice of other young men in London. Soon, a deputation from this committee visited other businesses, where other branches were established. Before a year had passed, a paid secretary was appointed, and wide-ranging educational and evangelistic opportunities began to be created.

In subsequent years, the Y.M.C.A. developed greatly in England, especially in the U.S.A., and to a lesser degree in many other countries. George Williams was later knighted for his role as one of the founders, and as the main gadfly of the movement over the years.

The Spiritual, Evangelistic Emphasis.

In the early decades of the Y.M.C.A., the spiritual side of the work received a heavy emphasis. It had been part of the original purpose. Whilst Y.M.C.A. work might include various aspects, it was first of all an organisation bent upon bringing other men to faith in Jesus Christ, and to a life of obedience and fulfilment in following Christ. It was an enterprise dedicated to evangelism. The evangelical basis of the movement is seen in the following statement from Hopkins, relating to the American scene.

“In 1851 the United States was still a nation composed largely of emigrants. Fifty years earlier its Christian population had been relatively the smallest of any so-called Christian country. The extraordinary religious needs of a continent whose population was in flux could be met only by drastic and heroic methods. Revivalism supplied that need: it was the adaptation of Christianity to the rapid colonization of the American West. As the Mississippi Valley began to fill the industrial revolution created new cities and a fresh form of evangelism manifested itself in them, as exemplified by Finney's Broadway Tabernacle in New York. The Y.M.C.A., it will be abundantly demonstrated in the chapters to follow, was one of the products of the successive waves of revivals that rolled over the continent from 1840 to 1900,...

The historic Protestant and evangelical insistence upon the 'now' as the time for salvation and hence for ethical action was at the heart of Finney's gospel and of Moody's after him.”

“Finney and Moody dwelt upon the universal features of the evangelical faith.” (2.)

The Y.M.C.A. operated on this same general basis, as seen in the following foundational statement, which was forged in 1855.

“The delegates of various Young Men's Christian Associations of Europe and America, assembled in conference at Paris [France], the 22nd of August, 1855, feeling that they are one in principle and in operation, recommend to their respective societies to recognize with them the unity existing among their Associations, and whilst preserving a complete independence as to their particular organisation and mode of action, to form a Confederation on the following fundamental principle, such principle to be regarded as the basis of admission of other Societies in future:-

The Young Men's Christian Associations seek to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His kingdom amongst young men.” (3.)

The American version of this statement used the word “doctrine” instead of the word “faith.” This statement was the basis of Y.M.C.A. work in the USA for the next hundred years.

It was also agreed in 1855 that any differences of opinion about matters not essential to the above foundational statement would not be allowed to break harmony between the Associations, and that members who travelled, and who visited other associations, would carry a certificate, which would be recognised everywhere.

As we shall see, the revival of 1857 had a major effect upon all the Associations, and, despite the ups and downs of future history, this helped to maintain a vital and active interest in evangelism in the Y.M.C.A. until well into the Twentieth Century.

The Great Revival of 1857

This revival had an enormous impact upon the Y.M.C.A. movement. Whole Associations, as well

as thousands of individual members were heavily involved in it, and the revival served to boost Y.M.C.A. membership, as well..

The traditional account of the commencement of this revival features the story of a lay missionary to the business houses of New York, Jeremiah Lanphier, who was employed by the Fulton Street Dutch Reformed Church. It was a time of economic collapse and turmoil. Dr. Edwin Orr discusses other signs of the start of the revival, from other parts of the country. (4.)

Hopkins gives a "Y.M.C.A." version of this story. Hopkins does not mention Lanphier by name. He says that a few members of the Y.M.C.A. had started a noon prayer meeting in September, 1856, following an idea that Richard C. McCormick had got from the London Association. These meetings were held in the consistory rooms of the Dutch Reformed Church on the corner of Fulton and William Streets, because this location was a very short walk from the business district. He describes how several members advertised these meeting early in 1857. The economic collapse occurred in August.

Lanphier's employment by the Church started in July, 1857. These prayer meetings started to expand rapidly, by the blessing of God, in September and October, 1857.

"The daily papers began publishing a column on the 'progress of the revival,' and of course put the news on the wires. The young men of the New York Y.M.C.A. opened another meeting in the Old John Street Church around the corner, then in a nearby Methodist Church. Twenty meetings were reported later, one hundred and fifty. A converted youth from Philadelphia went home to discuss the project with fellow members of the Y.M.C.A., and there began an outpouring of the revival spirit that overflowed the largest hall and ultimately spread to meetings, sponsored by the Y.M.C.A., in every church and firehouse in the city."

The Philadelphia Association published an eighty-page account of the movement in their city, entitled "Pentecost, or, the Work of God in Philadelphia, 1858," hoping that, by printing many thousands of copies, the revival movement would be helped to spread elsewhere.

This document describes how a union prayer meeting organised by some Y.M.C.A. members commenced late in 1857, with very modest numbers attending. The meeting then moved to a more central location in Dr. Jayne's Hall early in February, 1858, with numbers growing slowly. Suddenly, and for no obvious reason, during the week commencing Monday, March 8, attendance at the union prayer meeting in Dr. Jayne's Hall skyrocketed from 300 to 4,000, and other similar meetings began to appear in other parts of the city, often led by laymen.

One of these other meetings commenced in a hall in the northern part of the city on the Thursday of that week. At the Friday meeting 500 were present.

"The number of [written] requests on the table for prayer was so great, that the leader only looked at them with wonder, and did not pretend to read them. 'Doubtless,' he said, 'we all feel just in the same way for our unconverted friends and relatives. For my own part, I must ask you to pray for my children.' 'For my sons and a daughter,' said a second. 'For my father,' said a third. 'For my husband,' said a lady, with a tenderness and energy that thrilled through every soul and thus in less than three minutes, a hundred similar requests were presented throughout the whole room. Then, as with one accord, the entire congregation lifted up their voices and wept together. The place was indeed a BOCHIM, and of all the scenes that have been witnessed during the revival, perhaps there was none more perfectly characteristic and overwhelming. A few days after, at this same meeting, the people of God, as by a common impulse, rose to their feet, and there standing before the Lord, solemnly consecrated themselves afresh to his service. The history in detail of that single meeting, would constitute a volume in itself." (5.)

The prayer meetings led to personal evangelism, tract and literature distribution, evangelistic meetings, conversions occurring in many normal church services. Indeed, many conversions

occurred actually in the prayer meetings, or as a direct result of attending them. A rough estimate of the number of conversions which occurred in the city of Philadelphia alone during this revival was 10,000. One denomination received 3010 new members, another received 1800, another 1735, and another 1150.

“At the height of the fervor, in the spring of 1858, wrote a contemporary, ‘the public interest in religion was unprecedented. The entire nation seemed to be the scene of one vast revival.’” (6.)

The Y.M.C.A. Association in Chicago was resurrected, after a false start, following the efforts of young men to hold meetings for prayer, to further the impact of the revival in that city.

Two thousand people attended the daily meetings of the Cleveland Association. San Francisco and Charleston Associations held meetings in their rooms, and saw many hopeful conversions.

In many cities, such as Springfield and Cincinnati, the members worked hard to spread the effects of the revival. The Baltimore Association had five early morning prayer meetings with four later in the day.

In relation to this revival, the Y.M.C.A. members expanded their evangelistic efforts in these years of revival, and, as a result, the Y.M.C.A. movement as a whole in the USA grew enormously, just before the start of the American Civil War. The War, of course, challenged the movement, and many members paid a high price. The Christian Commission, which did such good spiritual and social work during the Civil War, learned some aspects of its work from the techniques used by the Y.M.C.A.

As a young man, after his conversion, D. L. Moody had been part of the Y.M.C.A. in Boston, almost from its first years. He worked in the U.S. Christian Commission during the Civil War, and worked widely with Y.M.C.A. members and activities in all of his evangelistic work throughout the rest of his life. And he was not alone, amongst the evangelists, in doing that. In many ways, Moody as a person, and his evangelism, both represented well what the Y.M.C.A. stood for, spiritually and socially, from its commencement, until the First World War had finished - a period of nearly eighty years.

In 1866, after the Civil War was over, Moody was elected as President of the Chicago Association, four years in a row. So the Association became the channel for his blossoming power as an evangelist, as a high-powered organiser, fund-raiser, and link between Christian work and rich philanthropists.

Moody not only promoted soul-saving evangelism through these Association networks, but also through Sunday School work in the same way. Conventions for Sunday School workers were important gatherings for him. It was during this period, before 1870, that Moody developed his techniques in evangelism, and the themes of his sermons, which he later used in much bigger campaigns. It was at Y.M.C.A. activities also that Moody first met Ira D. Sankey.

Another example of the impact of the 1859 revival, and of its effects upon the Y.M.C.A., this time in Scotland, is seen in a book entitled *Reminiscences of the Revival of '59 and the Sixties*, which was drawn up and published by the First Committee of the Y.M.C.A. in Aberdeen in 1910. It contained photographs of many of the outstanding preachers and leaders who figured in the Scottish aspect of the great revival, such as Reginald Radcliffe, Brownlow North, Hay McDowell Grant of Arndilly, Duncan Matheson, Richard Weaver, and the Duchess of Gordon. It contained reminiscences from a list of ministers, missionaries and laymen, still alive in the early Twentieth Century, including the Rev. Dr. Alexander Whyte, Principal of New College, Edinburgh, eulogising the great movement of the Spirit of God fifty years earlier, and describing some of their memories of it. The fact that it was a Y.M.C.A. Committee which produced the book shows the sympathy of the Committee members with the evangelistic message and spiritual emphasis which the great revival represented. The Association in Aberdeen had been formed in 1858, and the *Reminiscences*

helped to mark the Jubilee of the group. The book contained many testimonies from converts of the 1859 revival in Aberdeen and its nearby areas.

In 1950, Massey described the old emphasis in the following way:-

“In the early Associations the basic spiritual purpose found direct expression to the partial or full exclusion of other activities - Missions, street-corner meetings, evangelistic campaigns, Church meetings, Bible Classes, Sermon studies, Sunday gatherings, frequent prayer meetings and an interest in Foreign Missions. The General Secretary was an evangelist. The building a place for religious meetings.” (7.)

Although the quality of the evangelistic aspect of Y.M.C.A. work varied from place to place, and depended largely upon the personality and talents of the local leader, it was heavily emphasised for many years, sometimes to the exclusion of other aspects.

However, it would be a mistake to think that social impact was lacking generally, in the face of the emphasis on evangelism, during this period. One of the outstanding results of social concern by a member of the Y.M.C.A. is seen in the rise of the Red Cross Organisation, through the influence and efforts of Henri Dunant, an active member of the Y.M.C.A. in Geneva, leading also to the formation of the Geneva Convention, which has had such an influence ever since on the way that modern warfare is supposed to be conducted.

“In the year 1859, the young Swiss businessman Henri Dunant followed the French Emperor Napoleon III to North Italy, hoping to arrange business contracts. Unwittingly he found himself a spectator at the bloody battle of Solferino, fought between the French and the Austrians. Dunant was an expert in both business and evangelism and maintaining family interests.

Dunant was horrified by the suffering of the wounded and dying on the battlefield. He helped as best he could in the days that followed, noting the sincere if unskilled efforts of local people to alleviate their suffering. He wrote *A Memory of Solferino* and published it in 1862, sending it to statesmen and leaders throughout Europe. As a result, a Geneva Convention was held in 1864 and from its findings and decisions came the Red Cross Movement.

Not everyone [who might have been] expected to help proved willing. Some of the military leaders resented the intrusion of civilians on the battlefield. To Henri Dunant’s sorrow, even Florence Nightingale withheld her support, saying that the succor of the wounded in war was the business of government. But there was enough support forthcoming to speed the Red Cross on its mission of mercy and it spread throughout the world, by no means an evangelical agency but an evangelical idea whose time had come.”

Dunant strongly cultivated contacts between the Geneva Y.M.C.A., and leaders of many of the other European and American Associations, and thus was involved also in the formation of the World Alliance of Y.M.C.A.s, in the years leading up to, and culminating in, the Paris Convention in 1855. (8.)

Another great example of the contribution made to American sporting, social and cultural life by the Y.M.C.A. is seen in the invention of the game of basketball, as a sport to be played indoors, in a gymnasium, during the winter months in the U.S.A..

The women’s equivalent, the Young Women’s Christian Association, or Y.W.C.A., started some years after the men’s organisation, but shared the same strong evangelistic and social emphases.

The Y.M.C.A. in AUSTRALIA

Y.M.C.A.s began to be formed in Australia in the later 1850s, in an increasingly wide range of places, by people who came to this country who had been influenced by Associations mainly in England.

In the next forty years a large number of them were started, struggled to survive, and, in many cases, folded up, especially when the people who had been the enthusiastic early leaders moved on. There was always a struggle financially, and usually a struggle to exist with inadequate facilities.

In Australia, it was mainly the Associations in the capital cities which managed to build up larger memberships, did better financially, and managed to build or otherwise obtain buildings which were adequate to house their growing range of programmes. However, the Associations in a small number of provincial towns also managed to survive through to the end of the Nineteenth Century.

Even in central Melbourne, an Association commenced, struggled for a few years, collapsed, and then was restarted in a more adequate way. It became perhaps the strongest unit of this kind in the country through this period.

From the beginning, there were also other aims in Y.M.C.A. work, apart from the evangelistic drive. The first group in 1844 wanted, and received, an educational input, and proper accommodation and working conditions for workers was also a part of their agenda. Other social, cultural and sporting aspects appeared from place to place and time to time.

As an example of the strong evangelistic emphasis seen in these earlier days, the *Wesleyan Spectator* in Melbourne, for August 3rd, 1894, reports the following story under the heading of "Joyful News," which was normally used to head reports of revivals, or of especially successful evangelism.

"Miss S. C. Booth, hon. sec. of the Melbourne Young Women's Christian Association, while on a visit to the Wimmera district, has been conducting special mission services at Warracknabeal. The services commenced on Sunday, July 15th, at the Wesleyan Church, and were exceedingly well attended, notwithstanding the somewhat boisterous weather. Large congregations gathered, night after night, to listen to the lady preacher. After meetings were held every night, and the spiritual results have been most encouraging. Quite a large number of young people, and some older in years, came forward boldly to show that they intended to give up all for Christ. At the special request of some of the friends Miss Booth consented to remain four days longer than she had intended, in order to give some of the friends, who were specially anxious for the meetings to be continued, an opportunity to bring their unconverted relatives and acquaintances to the meetings. One lady, in particular, brought her children every night, a distance of six miles needless to say they were all converted, and also a number of young friends whom the lady continued to bring with her while the meetings were being held. This is the kind of faith that is needed by Christians. The mission concluded on the 29th inst. [July]." (9.)

John J. Virgo

John J. Virgo was an outstanding example of a leader in the middle period, from 1890 to 1910, who continued this evangelistic emphasis, but who also placed a strong emphasis upon each of the four aspects of Y.M.C.A. work. Such was the regard for his leadership and organisational abilities that, after about 1910, he took over the leadership of the central London Y.M.C.A., and stayed there until his death about 1940. Unlike most other men of his kind, more information about his life and work is available, because he wrote an autobiography. His life was so full and varied that this book is largely inadequate, but it gives good glimpses into the main aspects of his life and work. His

autobiography includes a range of snippets, including comments about his dealings and friendships with the Australian singer, Peter Dawson, and the famous English cricketer, Dr. W. G. Grace.

He was born in Glenelg, South Australia. He was talented both in sport and music, had an attractive personality, and became a strong leader and organizer. He was converted to a full commitment to Christ, in a process which, at a certain point, involved the preaching of the Jewish evangelist, Mrs Baeyertz, who was preaching in South Australia in the early 1880s. In time, he became secretary of the Adelaide Y.M.C. Association for fourteen years, up until late 1900. He developed a wide range of activities, sporting, cultural, social and educational, and the membership built up substantially. This included his leading of a Y.M.C.A. cricket team which played against the M.C.C., when the Englishmen first came to Australia to regain the ashes.

Early in this period, and with the help of Dr. Harry Grattan Guinness, he started holding evangelistic meetings in the Theatre Royal in Adelaide, each Sunday night after the hour when the churches closed their services. Many converts resulted from these meetings, including some who later went into full time service of one kind or another. Virgo discovered his abilities as a preacher, as well as using his known talent as a music leader and singer. By the time he left Adelaide, "there were ninety male workers, representative of a dozen denominations and forty-five churches, exerting the most earnest endeavours, and it could be claimed that of these no fewer than half had been 'won' at the theatre meetings." (10.)

For 1901 and 1902 he served as Travelling Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. for Australia and New Zealand, trying to build up the work nationwide. During 1902, he worked as organiser and music leader for the great simultaneous mission in Melbourne involving Torrey and Alexander, especially linked as music leader with the American preacher W. Edgar Geil, and relieving Charles M. Alexander at some of the meetings.

In 1903 he moved to Sydney to head up the Y.M.C.A. work there. Again he oversaw the development of a wide range of activities, highlighting the four aspects of Y.M.C.A. work. During this time, the membership of the Sydney "Y" built up to 1,500. A new building for their work was opened in Pitt Street in 1908, and briefly he was also National Secretary.

In 1911, he moved to London to take charge of the Central Association, and was leader of this until he retired on 17th April, 1925. His work also had a world-wide aspect, as he was asked to travel internationally many times, only narrowly missing being on the "Titanic," and circling the world several times.

By 1939, he reported that there were 10,000 branches of the Y.M.C.A., in thirty-two countries, and with two million members. It was an organisation with limitless possibilities.

Its More "Modern" Role

While individual branches of the work appeared and disappeared in many places, the work of the Y.M.C.A. has increased over the years since Virgo's time. By the end of the Twentieth Century, there were 10,000 Associations in 106 countries, with 32,000,000 members and participants.

The Y.M.C.A had, however, through this period, changed its character somewhat. By the time of the Second World War, it was Christian in a much more general way, and its possibilities for evangelism were much more diluted.

By 1950, Massey said, "The old methods have given place to new methods which are less specialised or obvious. In some Associations the regular Bible Class and Prayer meeting remain but in most have disappeared. Now Bible reading, prayer, exposition and discussion are a normal part of club programme with other features.

Today the general secretary is rather a Christian leader and the Y.M.C.A. building a training and practice centre where youth is trained in Christian ideals and service to be better fitted to take Christian principles and example into the Church, politics, social, industry or other avenues of normal living.” (11.)

This trend has developed even further since 1950, so that the Y.M.C.A. is even more secular.

So, after a long period when the Y.M.C.A. played a marked evangelistic role, its place in society became more social, educational and indirect, as did many of the other products of the 1859 revival, and the earlier revivals, such as many of the educational institutions which the churches founded.

But in the period up to the First World War, it played a very marked evangelistic role, which affected strongly the churches of the whole evangelical world, including those in Australia.

SECTION THREE

REVIVALS and EVANGELISM

1880 to 1914

CHAPTER NINE

MATTHEW BURNETT in SOUTH AUSTRALIA

1880 to 1882

Matthew Burnett was the premier temperance evangelist in the story of Australian evangelicalism, giving the best twenty five years of his active ministry to these southern countries.

It is almost certainly true that he saw more people profess conversion to Jesus Christ, as a result of his meetings, than did any other evangelist in Australian history, apart from Dr. Billy Graham. If we allow for the fact that a good percentage of those who responded to Dr. Graham's appeals were making a renewed dedication of themselves to God, as opposed to a first-time decision, then Matthew Burnett may have been the most successful evangelist in Australian history.

As a temperance advocate, he saw more people sign the pledge, and take on the blue, than anyone else.

Burnett was born in Yorkshire in 1839. His teenage years were marked by wild living and drunken behaviour. His conversion to Christ resulted from the persistent prayers of a lady, Sarah Gibson, five years older than he. "A reckless youth, hastening to early ruin, engaged her compassionate concern. She sought to save him.... For twelve months she pleaded without ceasing for this, until, being in an agony, she prayed more earnestly, and in the climax of her mighty intercession, cried, 'Lord, let me die rather than his soul be lost.'"

The Lord "gave her a distinct assurance that he had heard her concerning this thing also, and that his soul too" should be part of her crown in the day of the Lord Jesus. At the same time, "the sin-convincing Spirit arrested the youthful profligate, and wrought strangely on his heart." That very evening he sought God's mercy, "stricken and penitent, with strong crying and tears, at the altar of prayer." (1.) This conversion occurred in 1857 at Scarborough.

The Period Before 1880

In due course, Matthew and Sarah were married, and in 1863 migrated to Australia, coming to live in the Melbourne suburb of Prahran.

Burnett's evangelistic preaching career began soon after this, around various churches in Melbourne, and soon spreading into country areas of Victoria.

He had good success as an evangelist, bearing in mind that this period was still in the afterglow of the 1859 revival, which had affected many of the churches in Victoria, especially the Wesleyan churches to which Matthew and Sarah belonged. Burnett also possessed a certain personal magnetism which helped him hold his audiences. He had no real trouble getting or holding an

audience.

As time passed, he developed a technique in reaching people outside the churches, especially the poorer social classes. He found that these people would come to hear preaching if a certain element of entertainment was included. So, over a period of time, he developed the use of street marches, brass bands, torch-light processions, open-air preaching and big choirs, to attract people to the main meeting-house. This technique was a fore-runner of the methods used by the Salvation Army, although they did not arrive in Australia for another twenty years.

He had an enormous capacity for work, and regularly astonished the ministers with whom he worked with the amount of work he did, and with his prayers.

Up until 1871, he had the strong prayer support of his wife. She stayed at home looking after their growing family, although she did not enjoy good health. Matthew was away from home for months at a time preaching. In 1871, Sarah died soon after the birth of a child.

During this first part of his career as an evangelist he had enjoyed seeing a number of notable local revivals, as well as many other efforts when the signs of revival had not been so evident.

For a little over two years, around 1873, Matthew returned to England. During this time, he observed some of the evangelism conducted by Moody and Sankey in the "old country," and met many of the leaders in the temperance movement. On his return trip to Australia, he was stranded in Gibraltar for some weeks, and did some evangelism amongst the soldiers and sailors there.

His Temperance Work

It should be noted that drunkenness was a far greater problem in Australian society at that time than it has been in more recent times. This comment does not imply that the problem today is not very serious indeed. It was much worse in the early Nineteenth Century.

From these early stages of his career as an evangelist Burnett had spent at least one meeting per week (usually Saturday evening) trying to reach that section of the community affected most of all by the abuse of alcohol. As a result, there had been some astonishing conversions from amongst alcoholics, including some of the most noted victims of drunkenness in the community.

At this stage of his career, he used to evangelise for about ten months of the year, from late February until Christmas, or perhaps shortly before that. During this time, he worked so hard that he would be physically exhausted by the end of the year. He would then return home for the hottest months of January and February, perhaps travelling to Tasmania or New Zealand for a short break.

His Evangelism

In the earlier years, he could spend several months working in one circuit, preaching for a period in each church of the circuit, regardless of how small it might be. He did not follow the practice of most other evangelists who only preached in the large churches, where they could reach big congregations every time they preached.

Consequently, a visit by Burnett could revolutionise a small congregation, dramatically increasing the membership. Congregations which were already large could also be dramatically increased, especially if signs of revival appeared, as happened on a number of occasions.

He also preached in all of the circuits around Victoria, wherever he was invited, including some of the more remote places.

In the period up to 1879, he saw many thousands of conversions, as a result of his work.

In the second half of the decade of the 1870s, he moved his home to Geelong, to what he called his "Yorkshire Cottage." This may have co-incided with his second marriage, although it is not clear when he married again.

After his return to Australia around the end of 1874, Burnett had started evangelising again following his previous methods. But a new arrangement was developed around the middle of 1875 when he was appointed as a kind of "evangelist at large" under the auspices of the newly formed Home Missions Department of the Victorian Wesleyan Conference. This gave more of an official backing and sanction for his work, which he had not possessed beforehand. The plan was inaugurated by the Rev. John Watsford, who had taken charge of this new Department, and who evangelised all around Victoria as well.

He spent much time preaching in the inner suburbs of Melbourne, at Wesley Church in Lonsdale Street, and in various churches which were part of the great Brunswick Street Circuit. He also spent many months preaching in remote parts of Victoria, such as in the Gippsland district, and north toward the Murray River. These areas were then almost frontier areas.

As mentioned, he saw local revivals occur in many places, some details of which usually appeared in the "Wesleyan Chronicle," or in its successor, the "Spectator," although a few of the revivals were not reported, and are therefore largely lost to posterity. The revivals which were referred to in the Wesleyan papers up to 1879 are described in my book "Early Evangelical Revivals in Australia."

At the end of October, 1879, the arrangement between Burnett and the Home Mission Department came to an end, and he began to prepare to move to South Australia.

South Australia, 1880 - 1882. A Summary

Burnett started work in South Australia in March, **1880**, and preached in the Adelaide circuits until the middle of October, conducting lengthy campaigns in many of the churches. After that, he spent a short time in Moonta, and then went for varying lengths of time to Port Adelaide, Crystal Brook, Port Pirie, Laura, Port Augusta, Quorn, Beautiful Valley and Melrose, finishing for the year a few days before Christmas. This journey he called his "northern tour."

In **1881**, he began at the end of February at Jamestown. The Presbyterian evangelist, John MacNeil, was also in Jamestown at the same time. During March, Burnett took three weeks off work, and made a quick trip to Victoria to meet the visiting Methodist holiness preacher, John S. Inskip. He then returned to Jamestown, and re-visited a few of the towns he had visited briefly in November, operating for several weeks out of Laura. Amongst these were Terowie, Yarrowie and Orroroo, Stone-hut (near Laura), Gumbowie, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Melrose and Quorn, arriving at Moonta Mines about the end of July.

After that, he operated in and around Moonta until the end of September. A revival movement had begun under one of the Wesleyan ministers just before Burnett arrived. Despite problems in the area of spiritual warfare, he achieved a good work, especially amongst the children.

From Moonta, Burnett went to Clare, and then to Kooringa for most of October. A notable revival occurred at Kooringa in which Burnett had a share, which transformed the members roll in that circuit.

From there he went to the Clarendon Circuit, and visited Prospect Hill, Kangarilla and Coromandel

Valley. A transformation also occurred in the members roll in the Clarendon Circuit.

By mid-November he had moved on to Yankallila, Normanville, Finnis Vale, Harcourt, back to Port Adelaide and Archer Street, finishing the year with quick visits to North Rhine, Redruth, Aberdeen and Kooringa again. 1881 was one of the very good years in South Australian Methodism.

In **1882**, Burnett travelled south. From mid-February he visited Port Elliott and Victor Harbour, followed by Penola, Border Town, Narracoorte and Kingston, returning by April to Victor Harbour, and then to a place called Aboriginal Station, followed by Point Macleay, Lucindale, Mount Gambier and Port MacDonnell.

From there he turned more towards the Adelaide area, calling at Willunga, Aldinga, Noarlunga and the MacLaren Flat district, in the Willunga Circuit, followed by visits to many scattered villages in the Clarendon Circuit, such as Meadows, Kangarilla, Coromandel Valley and Clarendon itself.

This was followed by a period in the lower Yorke Peninsula, spending time in Minlaton, Yorketown, Maitland and Edithburgh. There were also brief visits to the Kapunda area, and to Kooringa again.

Over the end of 1882, and the start of **1883**, Burnett missioned on Kangaroo Island, where no Wesleyan work had been established at that stage. This led to the commencement of home mission work on the island.

Final farewells were said to Burnett by the South Australians in March of 1883, when he prepared to go to Western Australia for the rest of that year.

BURNETT'S WORK in 1880

After glancing at this summary of events, we will now look in more detail at the work Burnett did in each of those years.

The first serious campaign by Burnett in Adelaide centred around the Pirie Street Church, which was the central church of Wesleyanism in South Australia.

There were some huge meetings, especially linked to the temperance side of the activities, and chaired by some well-known public figures. When this campaign closed, about the end of May, it was noted that 118 people had expressed a desire to join the Pirie Street church during the meetings. (Other converts joined churches elsewhere.) The number of people who signed the pledge was very considerable. So we can begin to see that the temperance side of the work was becoming more pronounced than the evangelistic aspect, at least in some of his campaigns. In Victoria, the emphasis had been more clearly on the evangelistic aspect.

By early June, Burnett was preaching in the Archer Street church. There were 36 professed converts on one of the Sunday evenings. By the end of the second week of meetings, 69 converts had been counted. Attendances were very good.

This mission closed after four weeks and three days of meetings, but was then extended for another week after July 9. The total number of converts counted by the ministers was 180, of whom 100 joined the Archer Street church, a few joined other Methodist churches. The rest belonged to other denominations. Burnett commented about the converts that, "many of these are persons who have not entered a place of worship for years, but a great change has come over them, and we find them

with us every night; this is indeed a very encouraging feature, and we give God the glory.” (2.)

Burnett also held some meetings at Brompton and Hindmarsh, reporting 88 converts or backsliders restored, and 700 - 800 who signed the pledge. (3.)

By mid-August, Burnett began preaching in the Norwood church. The minister of the Kent Town and Norwood Circuit was the Rev. D. O'Donnell, who was by now an experienced and effective evangelist. He had been conducting special evangelistic services in several of the churches in his circuit, and Burnett had added his contribution, as well. On October 1, O'Donnell reported "showers of blessing" in his work. At Athelstone, scores had been converted in meetings combined with the Primitive Methodists. At Campbelltown, 20 people joined the church who had been influenced by Burnett's meetings at Pirie Street. At Payneham, two new classes were formed, and 55 were received into the church. At Magill, similar scenes occurred. Then, at Norwood, there were fifty converts flowing from Burnett's meetings of whom forty joined the Norwood church. At the time that O'Donnell wrote his letter, he was preaching at special meetings at Ashton, and Burnett was preaching at the main Kent Town church. (4.)

This issue of the *Methodist Journal* also contained a report from the Pirie Street Quarterly Meeting, saying that the Pirie Street membership now totalled 530, which was up by ten, and that 78 were on trial for membership. There had been 22 people moving out of the district. (5.)

The following week saw a report from the Archer Street Circuit Quarterly Meeting, that their membership now totalled 429 members, which was an increase of 26, and with 107 others on trial for membership. (6.)

After being at Kent Town, Burnett travelled overland to the Moonta Mines for nearly two weeks, but was back at Port Adelaide by October 23rd, where he saw converts every night. In the two weeks he spent at Port Adelaide, there were over 100 "seekers after salvation." 1,000 signed the pledge. (7.)

A few months later, it was reported that there were 63 people on trial for membership at Port Adelaide, at least in part as a result of Burnett's meetings. (8.)

From there, Burnett embarked upon a tour north, calling at Crystal Brook and Port Pirie. Although he said he was worn out, and there was opposition and persecution at Port Pirie, he saw 25 converts, and 115 signed the pledge, in a very brief visit. He then travelled on the Laura, Quorn, Melrose and Port Augusta. At the Port he was offered free accommodation at the hotel, if he would hold his meetings on vacant land next to the Pub. The publican apparently thought such a plan would be good for his business. Instead, the Institute Hall was crowded.

He preached in Port Augusta for eight days, ending on December 19. 277 people signed the pledge, and there were 20 seekers after salvation. As part of this effort, he preached in the local prison to 19 prisoners, of whom 15 signed the pledge. (9.)

Altogether, on the northern tour, 1,000 people signed the pledge, and Burnett promised to return.

The visit to Laura only lasted one day, and the visits to Quorn, Beautiful Valley and Melrose were not much longer. He finished on December 22nd, and left for his holidays, until March.

Matthew Burnett started his preaching for the year on February 26, at Jamestown, and stayed there

for "three Sabbaths." On the first Saturday, there were 14 converts, and 40 signed the pledge. After two weeks there were 20 converts, and 272 signed the pledge.

As mentioned previously, the Presbyterian evangelist, John MacNeil was also in town at that time.

About mid-March, he left on a 19-day trip into Victoria to meet John Inskip. On the way he spent four days in Mount Gambier, and held some meetings, where there were some converts, and about 200 signed the pledge. After the trip, Burnett returned to Jamestown for another two weeks of meetings, ending on April 8, in which there were another 20 conversions and another 132 people signed the pledge. (10.)

The main information about the many spots he visited after he left Jamestown relate to the temperance work. He spent two weeks in Laura. There could also have been some converts, which are not mentioned in the reports. At Gumbowie, for example, he preached for seven days, saw 30 converts and 135 people signed the pledge.

The issue of the "Methodist Journal" for June 10, contained a letter by "an observer" of Burnett's work in the north. He said that he was initially prejudiced by bad reports he had heard of the work. He attended a meeting that Burnett held at Wirrabarra. There was a large attendance, including many of the leading citizens. A song was sung from Sankey's book. The address lasted over an hour. Burnett's zeal, earnestness and enthusiasm convinced everyone, and many responded to the appeal. The next day he accompanied Burnett to Baroota, where there was a mid-day meeting yielding 13 pledges. At 7.30pm there was a meeting at which all types and religions were present. The address lasted for two hours, to which rapt attention was given. 68 people signed the pledge, including some of the leading citizens. At mid-day the next day, there was a meeting at Telowie, which yielded 20 more pledges. (11.)

That letter gave a sample for the pace at which he travelled out in these remote areas at that time. There would often be a report which said that there were also converts each night, such as at Port Augusta.

His comment about the time he spent in Melrose, from 4th June to 17th, stated that there was a general awakening throughout the district. He visited places like Booleroo, Willowie, Pinda, Amyton and Wilmington, which had probably never been visited by a famous evangelist ever before.

The final tally for the five months that Burnett spent "in the north," provided by the secretaries of the temperance organisations, was that 4,334 people signed pledges. Converts in the more remote areas might have had a harder time to survive, because the nearest minister of any church might have been some miles distant.

Revival at Moonta Mines

Late in July, Burnett went to Moonta Mines, and found that a revival was already in progress. Although he was not present at the start of the revival, Burnett has given us an account of its commencement, provided by one of the ladies concerned, who was a member of one of the class meetings at Yelta. It is stories like this which show us the key to the real power of Methodism.

"Twelve months ago we had two classes at Yelta. In my class we were reduced down to five members, and our leader proposed we should amalgamate with the other class. Four out of five said no, we would pray to God daily to quicken us, and save souls; and in a short time instead of five we had fourteen, and now, praise the Lord for it, since the Lord sent us a revival we have five classes." (12.)

One of the ministers, the Rev. R. M. Hunter, provides another description.

“The fact that God has graciously poured out His Holy Spirit upon us in the Moonta Circuit is now widely known, but as many persons have expressed a desire to know some particulars of the origin and progress of the work, I am constrained to yield to their request.

Previous to the first visible results in the conversion of sinners, there had been clear tokens of God’s presence in the increased attendance at the prayer meetings and the fervor of the prayers. Faith and desire were being intensified and high expectations of a revival were joyfully indulged. The first real break-down occurred at Yelta on Sunday evening, June 19, when after a sermon from one of our esteemed Local Preachers, Bro. Opie, eleven young persons sought and found the Saviour.

The brethren held prayer meetings during the week with some success, and the week following we commenced special services. There was nothing unusual in the methods.

House to house visitation, plain statements of saving truth with earnest prayers, and lively suitable singing were the only means adopted.

The meetings were continued for four weeks, with the following results. Over 100 persons professed to find peace with God, 75 of these are above 15 years of age, and half of these are heads of families.

There were some seasons of remarkable power; chief among these was one night when during the singing of the first hymn, a man came forward and throwing himself down at the penitent form, began to cry for mercy. Preaching was not needed that night, for soon we were busy with fourteen penitents, who sought and found the Saviour ere the meeting closed.

Before the close of the work at Yelta, special services were held at Cross Roads. During the fortnight of their continuance, several, chiefly adults, were brought to God.

On Sunday, July 17, Mr. Burnett began his work at Moonta Mines, of which you have been fully informed from time to time. Contrary to expectation the work was hard, and at first with little result. Seldom has Bro. Burnett required all his energy and indomitable perseverance, more than at the Mines. The results have amply repaid the toil. At the close of the month's labour on last Friday night, there was a very general request that Mr. Burnett should continue to labour at the Mines for another fortnight. This has been arranged, and after a brief visit to Wallaroo and Snowtown, he will return.

Simultaneous with the commencement of the work at the Moonta Mines, the good work began at the [Moonta] Township. From the first it was evident that it was of God and not of man. Our people went to work with a will.

Printed lists of the services were distributed to every house in Moonta and the neighbourhood, and a warm personal invitation was given to many to attend. The services were continued for four weeks. The full results can only be approximately stated. Over 100 have sought and found Christ, of these more than half are adults. In these services the enquiry room was adopted in preference to the penitent form, as the best method of dealing with seekers, and found to answer admirably.

The best possible arrangements have been made to gather into church membership and to keep the souls God has given us, and every true lover of the Redeemer’s Kingdom will join in the prayer, that these means may prove eminently successful.” (13.)

The reference in the above description to the difficulties of Burnett’s first week of meetings at the Mines seems to be because he spent the first week calling the people to a new level of dedication and repentance. During that week, from July 17 to 24, only a few conversions occurred. Three

prayer meetings were held each day. One was at noon. One for mothers in the afternoon, and one at six o'clock. Then a brass band went out to encourage people to attend a great evening meeting.

On Sunday, July 24, Burnett addressed the children of the Sunday School. This Wesleyan Sunday School at the Mines was probably the largest in South Australia, with over five hundred children. The superintendent of the School was Captain Hancock, the owner of the Mine, and he led a staff of 85 teachers.

Burnett said, "After the address a number of scholars gave their hearts to the Saviour. So impressed was I that God intended to bless the lambs of His flock, that I arranged to have two afternoon meetings for them. Crowds of the young people attended, and many of them gave their hearts to Jesus. At the urgent appeal of the children the meetings were continued up to Friday of last week, and instead of diminishing in numbers or interest, they increased to such an extent that the old church would not contain the hundreds who desired to attend. This week they are held in the body of the church. [The Mines church seated well over a thousand.] The form the work has taken resembles more than anything I have heard of, the revival in Yarra-Street, Geelong, in 1872, when for weeks the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Sabbath School, and this day large numbers of intelligent young men and women are thanking God for their early choice of the Saviour."

During the second week of meetings, the rivers of salvation reached out to many adults, including many who were not part of the church. Many women were converted at the afternoon meetings.

In this situation, Burnett used the Saturday evening meetings for evangelistic purposes, rather than for temperance causes. The first of these, on 23rd, "we held an old-fashioned prayer and band meeting. 500 were present. It reminded me of some of the Yorkshire meetings." This would have been like a very large class meeting, where personal testimony and prayer would have been paramount.

On the third Monday, the second half of the mission was started with "two whole days for special prayer that a general Pentecostal awakening may come to all the churches in this great centre of population." (14.)

On the Friday night, at the end of the fourth week, Burnett gave a lecture in aid of the Circuit Fund. A prayer meeting was held after the lecture when there were eleven more converts. About 1,000 people signed the pledge during the last week of meetings.

After Burnett returned to Moonta, following his short visit to Wallaroo and Snowtown, he found that the revival had spread to East Moonta, and that 60 conversions had occurred there.

However, at the start of this second part of his campaign at Moonta Mines, he said, "we had to contend for four nights with the powers of darkness. Then we called upon God in our all-day meetings for prayer, and He came to our help, and again the clouds were dispersed, and the glory of God shone around us. Precious souls sought and found the Saviour, and angels and men rejoiced together." The first three days of the following week were set apart as whole days of prayer, and the mission closed on the Thursday. Burnett had to leave for the Mintaro church in the Clare circuit, for a week, and then to Clare for three weeks.

On that last Thursday, many people took the opportunity to share their testimonies about their conversion to Christ. The final figure of those who signed the pledge at Moonta was 2,012. There had been hundreds of conversions.

The Mission at Clare

The mission at Clare was noteworthy because there occurred an open form of persecution directed at Burnett by those in favour of the liquor industries.

Burnett describes it himself in a letter. "The first week's mission at Clare proved successful, despite the fact that a few rotten eggs and stones were thrown at us in the streets, also a little chaffing and cross firing from one of the local publicans. All the meetings were well sustained. The evening meetings gradually increased. God was with us, and blessed His own work, and souls were nightly brought to Jesus. You will see from the very excellent report in the *Northern Argus* of today that our first Saturday night meeting at the Town Hall was a little more lively than usual. God helped us and we had a signal victory. 78 signed the pledge. My programme is full up to the time we leave Clare. I expect that a great work will yet be accomplished here. Will God's people continue to remember the mission daily in their prayers." (15.)

At the Saturday meeting, hecklers from the local Pubs had interrupted Burnett's temperance address, as well as the addresses of the other speakers.

Burnett also had an accident at Clare, being thrown out of a buggy as he was being driven through a country location. He was badly shaken, but otherwise unharmed. The roads were very bad.

Kooringa and the Burra

From Clare, Burnett went to Kooringa. The minister was the Rev. James Bickford, a very senior and experienced man. Burnett preached there from the 9th of October to the 22nd. A powerful revival occurred at the Burra. There were 130 converts, and 413 had signed the pledge by the time Burnett left. James Bickford decided to continue the special meetings himself, and these went on right through November, for six more weeks. At the end of that time, there had been 300 conversions. Bickford took most of these people into church membership. The number of members in the circuit increased by two hundred percent - three times what it had been a year earlier.

Between October 22 and the end of the year, amidst all his work in other centres, Burnett still returned to Kooringa twice to help with the work. (16.)

In his *Autobiography*, under the date of November 14th, 1881, Bickford says, "We inaugurated special services at the Burra, by holding morning and mid-day prayer meetings, and services in the evening. The Revs Pearce and Burt joined us in these hallowed exercises. Mr. Matthew Burnett came to our assistance, and a great work of God followed. For miles outside the Burra the saving power was felt. With these services on hand, and the care and work of the Circuit to look after, I became prostrate and had to stand aside.

Dec. 23rd. Mr. and Mrs. Burnett left the Burra for Port Elliott, for rest and rustication. They have left a large blessing behind them." (17.)

Clarendon Circuit

After October 22nd, Burnett went to the Clarendon Circuit, probably for two weeks or a little less, but with the time divided between several churches around the circuit.

Some services were held at Kangarilla, and there were 20 converts. At Clarendon itself there were fifty converts. At what was then a tiny country spot called Coromandel Valley there were 150 converts, including children.

A number of new class meetings were formed in different parts of the circuit. After the March Quarterly Meeting, a report about an increase in membership was published. A letter from Burnett about the Clarendon situation, along with a report on many other places he visited after that, was published several months later, and prompted an editorial comment.

“Among other places where spiritual prosperity has been recently enjoyed in abundant measure is the Clarendon Circuit. In that circuit there is no large centre of population, but there has been a good work in almost every part of it. Mr. Burnett’s account of his campaign there, which appears in another column, will be read with interest. Though lengthy, it is a compact record of a series of successes.

We have been favoured with a sight of a private letter from the minister, Rev. P. C. Thomas, in which he speaks of new classes having been formed in different places, and the further progress of the work. He expects the membership of the Circuit to be raised fifty per cent.” (18.)

Burnett’s letter was actually printed the following week (14th July, 1882.). It summarised a tour through the whole area of country a little south of Adelaide, and included a visit of six days to the township of Clarendon in June of 1882.

The Last Part of 1881

He was in Yankallila by November 7th, and preached there, with brief visits of only one day to other places in the circuit. For instance, one day spent in Finnis Vale yielded 14 converts.

He left Yankallila on 12th November for North Adelaide (the Archer Street Circuit), where he preached for three weeks, up to December 2nd. This was followed by a brief visit to the Port Adelaide Circuit, before he made a quick trip north, including visits to Redruth, Aberdeen and Kooringa.

In a letter dated December 27th, Burnett reported that during 1881 he had delivered 500 addresses, seen 8,000 people sign the pledge, and there had been over a thousand conversions. (19.)

1882

Matthew Burnett seems to have spent all of the summer vacation at Port Elliott, and went for six days to Victor Harbour, commencing on February 18. But he seems to have stayed there until early March. It was said, a “good work” had commenced. He spent ten days in Victoria, and returned by the middle of the month to Penola, Border Town and Narracoorte, for a few days in each place. He spent seven days in Kingston. At one of his temperance meetings a chemical attack took place. Someone threw a quantity of bisulphide of carbon on the floor, and it almost cleared the house. (20.)

By the beginning of April he was back in Victor Harbour, but he paid short visits to an aboriginal settlement, to Point Macleay and Lucindale. He stayed in Mount Gambier and Port MacDonnell until the 1st of May.

On this whole tour of the south-east of the state, he reported 1,442 pledges signed, and he held farewell meetings for that part of the country.

He commenced work at Willunga by mid-May, visiting several places in that circuit, including Noarlunga, Morphett Vale, MacLaren Vale, MacLaren Flat and Aldinga. Then he crossed over into the Clarendon Circuit, where he had such success the previous year. He visited many little places

in this circuit, such as Kangarilla, Cherry Gardens, Reynella and The Meadows, spending a month in the area, with six days in the village of Clarendon, reporting converts at every meeting.

By mid-August he had left for a tour of the southern half of the Yorke Peninsula. He spent over two weeks in the Minlaton area, reporting fifty conversions, one week in Yorketown, and then a week in Edithburgh. At this last place, thirty converts were reported.

In one week spent in Maitland, eighty converts were counted. Burnett left on Friday for the next appointment in Dowlingville, but Mrs Burnett stayed at Maitland for an extra few days and saw ten more converted. The week that followed, he worked in other parts of the Maitland circuit.

From here, he travelled through Moonta to Port Wakefield, Mintaro and Balaclava. In early October he was in Houghton, Glen Ewin, Morgan, and was welcomed to Kapunda by a committee representing the temperance organisations of the area. The Baptists in Kapunda also made him welcome, but the Wesleyans did not invite either him, or Mrs Baeyertz, to preach in their church. Mrs Baeyertz had been in Kapunda preaching a short time previously. Burnett reported 70 conversions in Kapunda.

In the second half of October, he was in the Koolunga and Yacka Circuits. The reaction of these people was that, if he had stayed longer, there would have been a large ingathering.

He began preaching in the Bible Christian Church in Auburn on 12th November, for a week, and there were about fifty conversions in that time. Eventually, 87 converts were reported in Auburn, and lest people should say that Burnett was inflating these figures, it was emphasised that the local ministers had provided these figures. That is, in fact, what had happened with all the figures of converts and pledges.

From there, he spent three days in Saddleworth, and a number of conversions were reported there.

In the last few weeks of the year Burnett held farewell meetings in a number of places, including some in Adelaide, Angaston, North Rhine, Truro and Riverton. Mrs Baeyertz had also preached in Riverton a few months earlier, seeing 160 conversions there.

The very end of the year saw him missioning on Kangaroo Island, where no Wesleyan work was in progress at all. He was enthusiastic about the results he saw there, and steps were taken to commence a home mission work on the island, in order to capitalise upon what Burnett had achieved.

Review of the Work at Moonta, Kooringa and Clarendon

A later report, in October 1883, from the Moonta quarterly meeting showed that the membership of the Circuit had increased by 244 over a three year period. (21.)

Later information about the situation at Kooringa appeared in May, 1883. After Burnett's visit, the Rev. G. Berry of Unley had a week of special meetings. Then Mrs Baeyertz missioned in the area. The two Wesleyan ministers who replaced Bickford and his colleague also had converts at many of their services. The overall results were that the district saw 800 inquirers who professed conversion in a sixteen month period. In a twelve-month period, the membership of the Primitive Methodist cause rose from 50 to 250, while the Bible Christian membership trebled, and the Wesleyan membership rose from 120 to 360. The other denominations would have benefited similarly. Neighbouring villages also felt the blessing. So, it was a wonderful period in that district. (22.)

The veteran Primitive Methodist minister, the Rev. J. G. Wright, reported to his people that he had never seen the Burra (their Kooringa Station) so prosperous spiritually as it was at that time. There had been many conversions, a very large intake of new members, all their members worked

together harmoniously to capitalise on the situation, and they were in a good position financially. (23.)

The report from the Clarendon Circuit Quarterly Meeting, as 1883 began, was that there were now 289 full members in the circuit, which was an increase of 21 for the quarter, with six on trial, and with 46 children in class meetings of their own. (24.)

The South Australian Wesleyan Conference of 1883

The Wesleyan Conference in Adelaide, in January, 1883, rejoiced at the advances which had been made in the previous year or two. During that part of the Conference programme which was called "the Conversation on the Work of God," the following motion was moved, and adopted. "This Conference expresses its devout gratitude to Almighty God for the large increase he has graciously given to this Church during the past year, and especially the honour God has been pleased to put upon the special means adopted to promote the revival of His work. The Conference again recommends to the circuits the adoption of special services throughout the whole colony, and suggests that such services associated with the methods adopted in previous years, or otherwise, should commence about the beginning of June of the year 1883."

This motion covered the work done by Burnett, as well as by others.

When it was moved that the Conference thank Matthew Burnett specifically for all his efforts over the previous three years, some of the members of the Conference were not so generous. Some of them did not like, and did not believe in, the methods which Burnett had used.

Some of the criticism by members of the Conference naturally rotated around the evaporation of Burnett's apparent results in places, and claims that he fudged the published figures. These criticisms had followed him for years. Some of them also did not want to be associated with any possibility that Burnett might use such a motion by the Conference to advertise or aggrandise his work before others.

The reply offered by his friends, and also in the editorial of the paper, was that the evaporation often occurred through lack of sufficient care for the seekers by local people. Also, in South Australia, at least, Burnett had only published figures which had been supplied to him by local secretaries, and by local ministers, who had taken much care in preparing the figures. This fact was emphasised in his defence.

It is probable that the motion of appreciation to Burnett would have been passed by the Conference if it had been voted upon, but it would not have been unanimous. So, eventually, the motion was not put to a vote. (25.) The final farewells to Matthew Burnett took place in Adelaide in March, as he was preparing to go to Western Australia for the remainder of the year.

CHAPTER TEN

GOSPEL TEMPERANCE EVANGELISM.

Matthew Burnett in New Zealand, 1885 - 1886,
and New South Wales, 1887 - 1889.

The term “Gospel Temperance Evangelism” was used widely to apply to a special kind of evangelism which occurred widely in Australia and New Zealand between 1880 and the First World War, and in many other parts of the world, and which included very specific calls for Christians to practice teetotalism, as a vital part of the social responsibility of the Christian life.

Abuse in the use of alcoholic drinks had been an absolute major social problem in the early years of white settlement in Australia, and in New Zealand, just as it had been, for example, for many periods in the history of the United States of America. So much was this a feature of American history between 1790 and 1840 that W. J. Rorabaugh entitled his history of that period, “The Alcoholic Republic.”

For some years, in early Australia, rum was used as currency. Through the mid-Nineteenth Century, statistics about arrests for drunkenness and disorderly behaviour in Victoria reveal an appalling situation of alcohol abuse. (1.) Some other states would also have had the same problem.

Revival movements in various parts of the world helped to develop action against social evils of various kinds, and this included temperance societies, amongst a wide range of other groups aimed at reforming society. Evangelicalism generally helped to encourage this movement. Good Templar Lodges, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, were examples of the forms taken to combat the power of the publicans.

While it was not necessary for a temperance supporter to be a “born again” Christian, evangelism helped to drive the temperance reforms. Temperance, or even total abstinence, became almost a badge of the born again believer in many churches. Especially was this so in the Methodist Churches, and also in the Salvation Army after its arrival in the south, in 1880.

When Did Evangelism Become Temperance Evangelism?

Nearly all the evangelists called people to turn from the abuse of alcohol to a life of sobriety, as a part of the way the new birth would find expression in their lives. They also called for efforts in aid of the transformation of society.

From the earliest years of his ministry in Victoria, Matthew Burnett tried to reach the masses with

the message of temperance, both because it was a natural part of evangelism, but also because in his late teens he had been rescued from drunken behaviour himself, through the Gospel, and through the power of prayer.

He finished his period of work in Victoria at the end of 1879. By that time, substantial temperance organisations existed throughout Australia, encouraged by many of the churches. By that time, also, several evangelists were in action in Australia who seemed to preach the message of temperance more strongly than they preached the Gospel. By this is meant that their main aim was directed toward alcohol abuse, and all the social problems linked to that issue. The Gospel was also preached, but it tended to provide the context for the temperance message, and to be the servant of the temperance message, rather than to be the main theme. The Gospel was used as a means to help people escape the social abyss of alcohol-related degradation.

A transition of emphasis is noticeable in the ministry of Matthew Burnett, as the years passed. In the Victorian years, his main emphasis was on directly evangelical preaching, with efforts in support of temperance providing a strong sideline to his work. In this period, there were many conversions through his preaching, some of which related to the temperance message, but many did not. A number of notable local revivals took place in Victoria through his ministry up to 1879. (2.)

He worked in South Australia from 1880 to 1882. In this period, his emphasis was more strongly on the temperance message. In many places where he went, the temperance message predominated, and the evangelistic thrust played a minor role. However, there were still several localities where the evangelistic message played the major role, and, in several instances, revivals of considerable power took place, with many conversions occurring. It should be said, however, that these revivals did not occur so often as had occurred in the first decade of his work in Victoria. (3.)

In 1883, he spent more than half of the year in parts of Western Australia. From reports of this work which appeared in the South Australian Wesleyan papers, a high proportion of the meetings were in support of the temperance message. Only a few were evangelical in their major emphasis. In Perth, for example, while the ministers all supported Burnett's meetings, they also conducted evangelistic meetings in the Town Hall, at the same time as the temperance meetings, in order to emphasise the role that the Gospel should play in healing people of their sins, and solving their problems with alcohol.

Wesleyan ministers in Western Australia at that time were appointed by the South Australian Conference, and naturally these ministers sent any reports for publication back to Adelaide.

The year 1884 Burnett spent in Tasmania. The Wesleyan papers in the island state for 1884 have not survived, so we cannot now consult them. What little information is available about Burnett's work in Tasmania through other sources, seems to highlight only the temperance aspect of his work, although it is probable that he did preach a direct evangelistic message when he thought the occasion required it.

This same kind of emphasis on temperance is seen right through the remaining years that Burnett spent in these southern lands. The Gospel would have been preached at every meeting, more or less. Sometimes the Gospel provided the major theme, and did not simply play a servant role. Yet there do not seem to have been any significant revivals associated with his work during these remaining years.

In Tasmania, however, Burnett's extraordinary success was seen again. The *New Zealand Wesleyan* tells us that, despite the fact that Tasmania had just previously been missioned by a team of two leading temperance evangelists, Mr. R. T. Booth, and Mr. Glover, yet Burnett was able to get 14,000 people to sign the pledge, during his nine months of work. (4.)

PART ONE

Matthew Burnett in New Zealand - 1885 - 1886

For the year **1885**, Matthew Burnett and his wife arrived in Invercargill late in March, and commencing his work early in April. He conducted Gospel Temperance missions of varying lengths in all the cities, towns and villages of Otago and Southland, and in all of Canterbury except in Christchurch, finishing in the town of Lyttleton, in late December that year. Some of these activities were reported upon in the *New Zealand Methodist*.

For this work, he always sought the support of the Protestant and Church of England ministers, and all of the Temperance organisations in any district. In Otago and Southland especially, he made sure that he got the support of the Presbyterian clergy. By that stage in his life, he had a considerable reputation, so he always managed to have the support he wanted. As happened in Australia, the major temperance meetings were chaired by leading secular dignitaries.

The same features of his preaching, personality, and style of work, were noted in the New Zealand reports, as had previously appeared in Australian accounts of his work.

He had an enormous capacity for work, and for public speaking, which would have ruined the health of many another person. He depended entirely upon God for the results of his work, and continually requested the prayers of God's people in support of what he did. He was a dramatic and charismatic preacher, who was able to hold large audiences throughout long addresses without difficulty, and his ability to tell stories in a graphic manner was a feature of his sermons.

An editorial report on his work, after the nine months from April to December, stated that 12,000 people had signed the temperance pledge, and 14,000 people had donned the blue ribbon, thus joining the Temperance army. 850 family cards had been distributed. "When every allowance is made for inevitable shrinkage in connection with the foregoing figures there will remain a substantial gain to the cause of national sobriety and moral progress, for which we are constrained most devoutly to give thanks to Almighty God." (5.)

The editor noted, and approved of, the obvious difference between Burnett and many other evangelists, whether they were peddlers of the temperance message or not, that he did not restrict himself to the major centres of population, where the best audiences could be found for each sermon. He believed in contacting and helping people everywhere. People in sparsely populated areas had souls to be saved, and problems with alcohol, just like people in the cities.

Converts to Christ resulting from the application of the Gospel to the temperance message, or from directly evangelistic appeals, would have come from the various supporting churches. Thus there would not have been major accessions of new members to any one denomination in particular, as a result of his work. As mentioned, no revivals occurred through Burnett's work, although several local revivals did occur in Wesleyan churches in South Island, that year, through the work of other evangelists who were emphasising the Gospel as an end in itself.

Perhaps the most astonishing thing about the results of his work was the high number of people who newly signed the pledge, and donned the blue. Effort was made by the temperance secretaries to distinguish between those newly signing, and those who had made commitments beforehand to total abstinence.

Just as had happened in Tasmania in the previous year, temperance workers of one kind or another

had been through many of these areas before Burnett arrived. As a result, many people had already joined the “blue army.” For example, in some of these cases, ordinary “blue ribbon army” people had already been through the district seeking recruits for temperance. In other cases, noted temperance evangelists had been through a district preaching their message. In other cases again, Burnett went where no such preachers or workers had been before. Whether it was virgin territory, or whether the district had been thoroughly missioned beforehand, Burnett was able to achieve a very high result.

A part of one of the published reports might suffice, to indicate the nature of this work in 1885.

“Mr. Matthew Burnett, the Yorkshire evangelist and temperance advocate, recently held a five days’ temperance mission here in Temuka and its neighbourhood. On Sabbath, October 4, he occupied the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church in the morning, addressed a large gathering of Sunday-school children and their friends in the afternoon, and in the Wesleyan Church he proclaimed the Gospel in the evening.

The campaign proper began on Monday, when Mr. Burnett proceeded to Waitohi, and there spoke to a good audience on some of the remarkable people he had been the means of rescuing from drunkenness. That country district had been well worked in the interest of the ‘Blue Ribbon Army,’ but sixteen new pledges were taken. The following day the lecturer went to Winchester. In temperance affairs this was quite new ground. Seventy-five pledges were taken that evening. On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Mr. Burnett addressed large gatherings in the Volunteer Hall, Temuka, and, singular to say, each evening thirty-one took the pledge. Two other meetings on Friday, one for mothers, wives and daughters, the other for children, yielded forty-eight signatures.

The total number of pledges taken was, therefore, two hundred and thirty-two; a splendid achievement considering that about seven hundred had been already enrolled by the ‘Blue Ribbon Army’ in the neighbourhood.

As a speaker, Mr. Matthew Burnett has a style of his own; clear, graphic, dramatic, and eloquent: combined with wonderful tact, the product of great experience and good common sense. He has striven to reach every small township and outlying district as well as the larger centres of population, and with scarcely a single exception, has succeeded in doing so....”

“If Mr. Burnett keeps on as he has begun, he will undoubtedly leave a grand mark in this young and enterprising colony, as a social reformer and efficient temperance advocate....” (6.)

Burnett’s work for **1886** commenced on Thursday, February 18th, with a six-day mission in Central Christchurch. The usual avalanche of meetings were all “Gospel Temperance” in emphasis, except for one. This was the service on Sunday evening in the enormous Methodist cathedral in Durham Street, Christchurch. The sermon was a powerful evangelistic appeal, based on the text, “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, but lose his own soul.” It was described as follows:-

“Mr. Matthew Burnett preached in this church on Sunday evening to a very large and deeply impressed congregation. Taking for his text Mark viii.36, he pressed the solemn question home with great power. It was not a temperance lecture, but a stirring evangelistic address to which the people listened. Intemperance, social impurity, and gambling were referred to among the evils of the day, and the various remedial measures noticed; but the main strength of the preacher was devoted to the vital theme, present salvation from all and every sin through the blood of Christ.

The one regret felt was that the Christchurch Mission could not have started with such a service. It would have commanded a sympathy and co-operation on the part of the churches that would have

enabled the work to carry all before it.

The prayer meeting that followed will be long and gratefully remembered. The communion rail was filled with suppliants, most of whom were Christians, but all athirst for a higher life. Others went as penitents into the vestries, where they found the Saviour. This service providentially followed a remarkable movement that had just arisen in the church. On Thursday evening the Sunday-school teachers of Durham-street met together for tea and a consecration service. The power of the Lord was present to heal, and doubtless many then stepped into full salvation. A similar experience has been witnessed in the class-meetings, which have lately been blessed in an unwonted degree.” (7.)

This six-day effort was followed by a week preaching in various suburbs of Christchurch, before a three-day return visit to Lyttleton was made; a one-day return visit to Rangiora, and then a huge Thursday evening farewell meeting in the Durham Street Church.

At one stage during the later part of this time in the Christchurch area, Burnett had an accident getting into the bath, and gashed his leg badly. This cramped his style of preaching quite seriously in the last few meetings. His trip to the West Coast was actually delayed a few days in order to give him a chance to rest his leg. But, he travelled to the West Coast settlements, and had to preach seated on a chair, with his leg up on a stool. He visited the West Coast for eight weeks in all.

It rained almost incessantly, which was nothing unusual for that part of the world. The report came back, however, that the meetings had been large and successful.

“Scarcely anywhere, we should say, in so short a time, has Mr. Burnett made such a large number of converts to the pledge of total abstinence. And the variety of the converts is as striking as their number. Mr. Burnett has secured as trophies representatives of both Houses of Parliament; about half a dozen ministers, and over two thousand of the rank and file, including a publican and all the members of his family. He has had as chairmen at his meetings two of the West Coast members, who, ‘in another place,’ have been most hostile to all legislation in the interests of Temperance, and both of whom, we believe, are prominently associated with the liquor-traffic. The way Mr. Burnett gets around such men is one of the curiosities of social science; and as Mr. Burnett argues, if ‘you can once get them in the chair at a Temperance meeting, it does them no harm to listen to a good straight talk upon a subject concerning which, as a rule, they are wonderfully ill-informed.’”

The writer of the report could not resist having a gentle dig at the West Coast people, implying that they really had not heard Burnett preach properly, because he could not move around the platform as he delivered his lectures.

“We regret to find that Mr. Burnett has had to prosecute his work in great pain, owing to the wound in his leg. His lectures for the most part have been delivered sitting down. Just fancy Matthew Burnett doing ‘Yankee Bill,’ or ‘the old doctor,’ cooped up in a chair and his leg on a footstool! It is almost like Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out. We can assure our West Coast friends that they have not yet seen and heard Mr. Burnett in his glory; and we trust that they may yet have the opportunity of listening to him when he will not have to apologise in the fashion reported of a temporarily disabled pulpiteer: ‘We must dispense, on this occasion, with our usual action.’” (8.)

By the end of the eight weeks, Burnett had visited every town and settlement on the coast, and a total of 3,100 pledges had been signed, which was an average of about 400 per week. He admitted that this exceeded his expectations by 100 a week. After the eight weeks, the weather was such that no steamer could reach a port, upon which he could have embarked, so he travelled overland to Nelson, which took over twenty-four hours of travelling.

He arrived in Nelson on Sunday evening, and began his mission on Tuesday, 25th May, under the usual auspices of the Temperance bodies. In several days, 222 signed the pledge, and Burnett moved on to Richmond, and then to Blenheim. From Blenheim, he visited the Maori Pah and

Marlborough town.

From there, he crossed to the Wellington district, holding short missions in The Hutt, Masterton and Wairarapa. In due course, he arrived in Wellington itself, and conducted an eleven-day mission, which ended on August 6th. The weather was bad for the whole period. Burnett had said that he wanted to see one thousand people sign the pledge in this period. He was disappointed on this occasion. Only 650 signed.

“Mr. Burnett was introduced to Sir George Grey, who entered warmly into his intention of visiting the Maories, and promised to write at once to King Tawhiao, to inform him of his coming, and to prepare his people for the visit. He also said he would furnish Mr. Burnett with a letter of introduction and commendation to the Natives all through the Island, so that his way is made plain.” (9.)

In fact, the Maori King had “donned the blue” ribbon during a visit to England, a short time earlier. And he continued to wear it. This was apparently in part linked to the King's great grief, resulting from the death of his eldest son. (10.)

From Wellington, he worked his way through several localities to Palmerston North, including visits to Rangitikei, Manawatu and Wanganui. After seven days in Palmerston North, he visited Foxton, Feilding, Makino and Awharua. The Foxton meetings had been arranged by the Good Templars. At one evening meeting, “95 signed the pledge. Among them was a Maori Chief, who assured Mr. Burnett that all his tribe would follow his example.” (11.)

At Feilding, “the Mayor donned the blue,” and 265 pledges resulted from two days’ work. He then turned back to Woodville, and went up to Hawkes Bay, Napier and Gisborne.

Burnett Among the Maoris.

Great meetings occurred with the Maoris in this area, as well as in some other localities. A record of the meetings with the Maoris near Gisborne was provided by the Rev. Rainsford Bavin, who was one of the leading Wesleyan ministers in New Zealand at that time.

“On Monday afternoon, Sept. 27, Mr. Burnett addressed the native students at the college, Gisborne, Rev. Jennings acting as interpreter. On Tuesday afternoon, in company with the Rev. Wills, Mr. Burnett visited Whato, and addressed a large meeting of natives in the Runanga house, Mr. Gannon, of Gisborne, acting as interpreter; the chief and thirty-two of his people signed.

On Wednesday afternoon, through the courtesy of Judge Williams, a meeting was held in the Native Land Court; Paoroa Paru (chief) who presided, welcomed Mr. Burnett among his people, as did the Rev. R. Te Ahiau, three of the students, and H. Tamahan, native assessor for the Wairarapa. The Resident Magistrate, J. Booth, Esq., kindly interpreted.

Tamahan stated, in 1883, during a visit paid to Greytown, his home, he was induced to give up drinking; he had spent hundreds of pounds in drink. Blocks of land had gone. Addressing Mr. Burnett, he said, ‘Friend, you are welcome. I will help you.’ Mr. Burnett subsequently appointed Tamahan his deputy for the whole Wairarapa district. Two other young chiefs from a distance spoke. The first said: ‘I was a slave to drink; I have cast off that taskmaster. I am glad that the Native Minister is supporting Mr. Burnett in his work. Last year a pamphlet was published by him (“Life for the Maoris”), which did good. I hope this work will spread among my people living up at East Cape. May God protect you until you return to your home.’ Another chief spoke as follows: ‘You are welcome! You bring life and health to the Maoris suffering from the disease of drunkenness. Your going about is not a hidden matter; the first who came was our great Master,

Jesus Christ. When His Father saw that this world was suffering through sin, He sent His Son. You said that this great evil (drunkenness) was afflicting multitudes of your fellow-men - Europeans and Maoris. You go about like your great Master, trying to save them. No man can do this work in his own strength.'

Major Porter, who distinguished himself in connection with the Maori war, sought permission to speak a few words. The gallant Major's address aroused the greatest enthusiasm, being delivered in their own language. He said, 'I have been associated with you many years, and have at least 300 representing the various tribes on this East Coast under my supervision.' The Major then spoke of the ravages drink had made among them - multitudes he had known in his official capacity. He referred to Popata, the young man lately found drowned on the Wainui beach, who was on that day in his (Major Porter's) office intoxicated and asking for money to procure more drink. Another young man lately told him that his tattered trousers represented four acres of land, and that there were eight more in his stomach. (Laughter and cheers). After referring to Mr. Burnett's disinterested labours among the European and native race, Major Porter stated that as an example to others he intended that night to take the pledge. (Great cheering from the Europeans and Maoris).

After Mr. Burnett's address Paoru Paru (chairman) rose. He said: 'This good thing has been brought to us - the blue ribbon. Matui Pianata has sunk into our hearts.' The chief then donned the blue ribbon, and his wife followed; also upwards of 70 others, including all the students at the Native College and their wives.

A powerful chief from a distance asked Mr. Burnett to visit him and his people; they would all don the blue ribbon. Mr. Burnett appointed Major Porter his deputy to introduce the blue ribbon in districts which he cannot possibly visit.

On Saturday afternoon a large meeting was held at Tarere. O Wi Pere, M.H.R., was elected chairman, Mr. Baker interpreted. The following is a brief outline of Wi Pere's address:- 'Drink has been the curse of the Maoris. The Government was responsible for a great deal; they licensed houses where men could get drink. After men drunk the Government punished them for it. He (the chairman) thought "Matui Pianata" (Mr. Burnett), should get up a petition and take it to the Governor and to the Government, and get them to shut the public-houses. He had suffered himself in the past from drink. In one year he spent 1,600 pounds. His land was going from him. He worked hard, paid his debts, and got back his money. This blue ribbon was a good thing for the Maoris.'

After Mr. Burnett's address, Wi Pere introduced twenty of the elders to sign, also the young chief, and twenty-five others, among them the widow of the founder of Poverty Bay. Wi Pere requested Mr. Burnett to leave him 200 cards and the ribbons; he would shortly summon a large meeting of natives and Europeans, and take the blue ribbon himself. (Great cheering). Mr. Burnett at once appointed Wi Pere his deputy to carry on the work. A visiting chief, who was present with many of his people, said he would wait until Major Porter went to his place, and then they would all take the blue ribbon.

After the meeting, Mr. Burnett and his friends from Gisborne joined the natives in their evening repast, and reached Gisborne in time to address two other European meetings." (12.)

Burnett's Final Meetings in New Zealand.

From these meetings, Burnett arrived in Auckland, in time to start a Mission lasting for two weeks, commencing on October 4. The meetings were held under the auspices of the Gospel Temperance Union.

Auckland was a temperance stronghold, having been missioned for this purpose by all the visiting

temperance preachers, as well as by normal visiting evangelists. The city boasted 500 members of the Rechabites, and 500 members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The Good Templars were strong, and in the previous three years the Blue Ribbon Army had been very active in getting people to sign the pledge. They had signed up 10,000 people in that time. Earlier in 1886, Messrs Booth and Noble had preached the temperance message in Auckland, getting 600 new pledges.

Burnett spent two weeks lecturing around Auckland, and got another 650 pledges.

During five days spent at Thames, the response was such that the organisers expected 700 pledges to be signed by the close of the meetings.

He toured through the rest of the northern area of the North Island, visiting briefly the Lake district (158 pledges), Tauranga (200, including 70 Maoris), a day was spent in each of Otahuhu, Pukekohe and Ngaruawahia. Four days were spent in Hamilton, and eleven days in Cambridge, Te Awamutu and King Country, before returning for two days to Auckland for his farewell meetings. The dates of those two days were November 29 and 30. It was announced there that 10,200 pledges had been signed as a result of his year's work around New Zealand in 1886. (13.)

From Auckland, Burnett travelled overland to Wellington, spending five days in Taranaki, two in Patea, and one in Wanganui. A special meeting with the Maoris was held at Foxton on the 9th December. He preached his last sermon in New Zealand in the Wesleyan church in Wellington before embarking for Tasmania. The ship stopped briefly at several places, enabling Burnett to meet his friends and hold short meetings in Lyttleton, Dunedin and in Invercargill. The last of these meetings was held on December 17.

The report about the final meeting in Dunedin emphasised another difference between Burnett's work and that of some other visiting evangelists - a matter which had been written about at some length in the Wesleyan papers earlier in his tour. The chairman of the meeting, Mr. J. A. D. Adams, "referred to his own knowledge of the good resulting from Mr. Burnett's labours. ...and he thought the higher of Mr. Burnett when contrasted with some others with whom the principal question was how much money they could take away from us."

It had been freely acknowledged by local leaders that Burnett had not been paid properly while he was in New Zealand. They thought this did not do any credit to those who supported his work. But, on the other hand, Burnett had not made an issue of the matter. (14.)

P A R T T W O

Three Years' Work in New South Wales and Queensland

Apart from his usual summer holidays in January and February, Matthew Burnett worked throughout New South Wales and Queensland for three years, following the same pattern as we have seen in New Zealand. After that time, he returned to England.

Although he remained substantially aligned with the Wesleyan Methodists, and sometimes with the Presbyterians, he usually worked for these years under the umbrella of the various Temperance organisations in each place he visited, and promoted the Temperance message. As a result, there was no special effort to seek conversions as the primary goal, or to build up church membership. There would have been some conversions resulting, but this was not the primary aim.

1887

Before Burnett arrived in New South Wales, the Wesleyan minister, the Rev. T. R. McMichael, advertised for contact with any Wesleyan ministers who wanted Burnett to visit their churches. (15.)

It is sometimes difficult to know exactly the order of places where he went, because no reports about many of the places where he preached were sent in or published in the "Weekly Advocate." Other reports were sent in and published out of the chronological order in which the meetings took place, and do not give sufficient information about the dates of the meetings.

He commenced for the year 1887 in April in Wagga Wagga, and then proceeded to Junee and Junee Junction, Cootamundra, Gundagai, Tumut, Adelong, Deniliquin and Hay, from where he returned to Wagga and Junee Junction for farewell meetings.

He then visited the Temora gold-fields, Harden and Murrumburrah. He was in Yass for the first visit on Friday, 10th June, and then went to the Gunning district. (16.)

After a return visit to Yass, he had a five-days mission in Young. A letter from Burnett dated June 21st, and posted in Young, said that his daughter living in Bendigo was ill, and he was making a brief break of his tour to visit her. He hoped to be back in Young to preach the following weekend.

Regarding the spiritual aspect of his work, Burnett says in this letter, "At no period of my life in these Southern lands did I realize more sensibly than I do now how utterly dependent I am on God's power for the smallest measure of success. On Sabbath evening last, before preaching for my friend, Mr. Hutchinson, in our church at Young, I had such an overwhelming sense of God's presence as to render it difficult for me to preach as the service advanced. The great Master-spirit seized hold of the people. One man who heard me preach in Yorkshire 27 years ago, but who had turned his back on God and Methodism for many years, came to our church, was awakened, and I believe soundly converted. Several others found Christ. Oh, that the Jubilee year of our beloved Sovereign the Queen may be remembered by thousands in New South Wales as the year of their spiritual birth! My heart is sad, and my spirit sinks within me, when I contemplate, as I am daily forced to do, the hundreds, yea the thousands of our fellow-colonists who are living without hope and without God in the world. Is there not, dear Sirs, urgent need why all Zion's watchmen in every part of this great territory should at once sound the alarm bell on the top of every watchtower? Would God that a week could be solemnly set apart in every city, suburban and country circuit for deep humiliation, heart-searching, and fervent, continuous prayer, that the mantle of John and Charles Wesley, Fletcher, Whitfield, and many of the early pioneers of this colony, might fall upon ministers and people." (17.)

From Forbes came the following report, sent in by one of the locals:- "Mr. Matthew Burnett closed a most successful six-days' Gospel temperance mission at Forbes, on Monday, the 11th [July], in which the Mayor, Police Magistrate, Archdeacon Dunstan, and ministers of all denominations took part. Three hundred were invested with the blue ribbon badge, including several aborigines. On Tuesday morning he arrived in Parkes, and was met outside the township by the Mayor and other gentlemen with buggies. Remains here over 19th, will conduct three evangelistic meetings, and visit Mudgee from 22nd to 25th, and thence to Cobar. The united prayers of God's people are earnestly solicited." (18.)

The Nymagee Circuit.

The reference to Mudgee in the letter quoted above was a mistake, the result of a simple confusion. After leaving Parkes, Burnett went west to the town of Nymagee.

Today, the village of Nymagee is a tiny, totally unremarkable place, almost lost in the vast western plains of New South Wales. It is one hundred kilometres south-east of Cobar, and about one hundred and thirty kilometres west of Tottenham. In 1887, however, the mining town of Nymagee was the head of a Wesleyan circuit, with its own minister and horse.

The lay missionary, Mr. James Graham, commenced an evangelistic mission in Nymagee shortly before Burnett's visit. There were no obvious results, so far as conversions were concerned, but it was a deepening experience for many, and provided a great precursor to what followed.

Burnett started a five-day crusade in Nymagee on Saturday, 22nd July. He was met half a mile from town by the Good Templars, and by the children of the Band of Hope, who marched in file to the hall where the meetings were to take place. The circuit horse, "Nigger," had a reputation for playing up. The assembling of people to meet Burnett prompted the horse to go on strike, refusing to pull the minister's buggy into town, carrying the great visitor. So the buggy was pulled into town by a number of the men who met him, while the two horses were led in unburdened.

"The success of Mr. Burnett's mission far surpasses our most sanguine expectations. On the first night he was listened to by no less than 260 people, and of that number seventy-eight took the pledge and donned the 'blue.' Sunday was a day unparalleled in Nymagee. Mr. Burnett preached both morning and evening in the Wesleyan church, and in the afternoon delivered an address to parents, teachers, scholars and young people. The night service was preceded by an open-air demonstration. The church was more than packed, it was crowded out. Mr. Burnett preached from the 'Parable of the Prodigal Son,' and during the prayer meeting that followed, several showed signs of awakening, and one 'prodigal' returned back to the great Father.

The temperance aspect of the mission was most fruitful, some 270 having signed the pledge and put on the blue ribbon. The outcome of this will be an increase to the Good Templars, and a starting of a new scheme to work with Good Templary on more aggressive lines. In the church we shall organise two classes, add to our Sunday school staff, and in other ways, I trust, be greatly benefited by the visit of the 'social reformer.'" (19.)

Similar results followed at Cobar, Bourke and Nyngan, before Burnett came east to Dubbo.

At Cobar, a certain man happened to be passing through town, and was present at the Sunday evening service. He had professed conversion eighteen years earlier in Sandhurst, at one of Burnett's services there. Two years before being in Cobar he had lost his faith, during specially difficult times. But, Burnett's sermon on the Parable of the Prodigal Son produced a transformation in him. (20.)

In Dubbo, on Sunday, 4th September, "The evening service was held in the Wesleyan church. A number could not gain admittance to the building. The after-service will be a memorable one for some. A number sought and found salvation, and a large congregation seemed unwilling to retire after a three hours service." (21.)

From Dubbo he went to Wellington and Coonamble, and then back to Orange, and other central western centres.

Very little detail was published about Burnett's schedule in the first half of 1888, but he was working in Wollongong and Kiama before the middle of the year. In Wollongong, over 400 signed the pledge, and over 500 donned the blue. Meetings in Mount Keira, Mount Kembla and Bulli are specially mentioned, with large numbers attending. In Kiama the audience was "spell-bound" by his lecture on "Father Mathew," and "His lectures were listened to with marked attention, and his utterances were frequently applauded." (22.)

A major campaign was mounted in the city of Newcastle, and in some of the main suburbs, in July and early August. The Temperance Column reported that it was one of the most successful that Burnett had experienced in the colonies. "...during his short visit here he has been instrumental in converting 760 persons to temperance, that being the number who had taken the pledge." They expected that between 2,000 and 3,000 would sign the pledge before Burnett left the district. (23.)

Missions in Wallsend and Plattsburgh followed, and the rest of the year was spent working up to Gunnedah and Tamworth. He would have got further, but family health problems in Victoria, and his own poor health, prompted the early commencement of his summer break, with a promise that he would return to Armidale in the new year.

1889

Toward the end of April, 1889, Burnett commenced the promised temperance mission in Armidale. Most of the visits he made to the various places after that were very short, and the comment was made that if he could have stayed longer so much more could have been achieved. However, for the length of time he stayed in any one place, the results were remarkable.

His visit to Inverell, for example, lasted for three evenings. The mission "deepened in its interest and influence each night, and his last address on 'Central pictures from real life in Australia,' will not soon be forgotten for its touching and powerful sketches of colonial experience, and for the fervid utterances of the speaker as he pleaded on behalf of humanity and God in the interests of strong temperance principles. He added to his role of 24,730 pledges taken in this colony 309 more by his earnest and brief labour in Inverell. In Tingha also, amongst a large number who signed the pledge were about twenty-four Chinese, for whose benefit steps were taken to form the first Chinese Good Templar Lodge in the colony." (24.)

From Inverell and many smaller towns and villages around that area, Burnett came down towards the coast, visiting Casino and Lismore, and towns in the Clarence valley.

The Mission in and around Sydney.

Although some preparatory meetings had been held in Sydney, Burnett was welcomed to the city on Monday, 24th June, 1889, for a surprisingly short campaign, although his supporters hoped it would be a fitting climax to his whole ministry in Australia for the previous twenty-five years. He was welcomed by an evening torch-light procession, moving up parts of George Street, Bathurst Street, Park Street and Pitt Street, accompanied by leading ministers (Wesleyan especially), a parliamentarian, and leading laymen representing the Good Templars, the Rechabites and the Blue Ribbon Gospel Army. There were three bands, one was Wesleyan, and the other two were Salvation Army. The actual welcoming meeting was held in the York Street Centenary Hall, and people from the full range of temperance bodies, and all of the churches interested in the temperance cause, shared in the welcome.

Descriptions of the first few meetings only, and of the final meeting, were published in the “Weekly Advocate.”

The mission in Sydney concluded on Monday, 22nd July, with a great Women's Christian Temperance Union gathering, which filled the main parts of the York Street Centenary Hall, but not some of the galleries. The mission was pronounced to have been a great success, and that all of the expenses had been covered.

The various temperance bodies had, at times, become involved in political issues regarding the sale and use of alcoholic drinks. Sometimes Burnett's campaigns in a particular place co-incided with preparations for such a political effort, and helped in the cause. The temperance people in Sydney were well aware of this.

“We have before said, and the assertion needs to be daily emphasized, that the temperance cause has reached a stage in its history when its advocates must push its interests at the polls and in the Legislature of the country, and in doing this they have a fair prospect of diminishing the ravages of the drink demon, although they may not be able immediately to administer a *coup de grace*. The temperance question has become essentially a political question. That, however, does not imply that it ceases to be a moral question, or that there is no longer any need for appealing to men on moral and religious grounds to become total abstainers. There is still need for workers of Mr. Burnett's type. The very slow progress temperance reform makes as a political measure is sufficient proof that even the Christian public of this country, to say nothing of those who are not included in that designation, is still largely ignorant of its awful responsibility to God for the toleration of this curse. When once Christian men and women awake to the far-reaching effects of the drink traffic, and arrive at the godly conclusion that its suppression is a question which towers in significance above land laws or fiscal policies, they will no longer dilly-dally with a curse which impoverishes and brutalises its many victims.” (25.)

So the temperance people knew very well the political potential of the work of a man like Matthew Burnett.

The Queensland Campaign.

Details of Burnett's meetings in Queensland were not published, and the only information that we have about them comes from a fairly short final analysis which was published late in November of 1889.

It tells us that he visited all of the chief towns of Queensland, from Cooktown in the north, to Warwick in the south. He spoke, on the average, fifteen or sixteen times every week. 5150 people signed the total abstinence pledge for the first time, 9,000 people donned the blue ribbon and thus joined the blue ribbon army. The W. C. T. U. gained 200 members. Those who joined the movement included the mayors of Rockhampton and Gympie.

There was, as usual, a farewell meeting. It was held in Brisbane, and was chaired by Sir Charles Lilley, Chief Justice of the colony, and was supported by the Bishop of Brisbane. The bishops of North Queensland, and of Toowoomba, had also supported the effort.

“This tour closes twenty-six and a half years of temperance work in all the Australian colonies, the results of which have been that 177,500 have taken the pledge and 150,000 the blue ribbon.” (26.)

Burnett planned to rest the following year, and to pay another visit to England.

Conclusion

From the foregoing it can be seen that abuse of alcohol was an enormous social problem at that time. Special efforts were made by leading social reformers like Matthew Burnett to meet this issue, and do something about it. And a great army of ordinary people were also mobilised.

In New Zealand, elections were held regularly to appoint local Licensing Boards to control the selling of liquor, and contests took place for control of these bodies by the liquor interests, and by temperance people. Related matters were also debated in Parliament, from time to time. The work of Burnett and others had a considerable impact on these political activities.

The social and political impact of this kind of evangelism can be seen from the following piece of news, which eventually found its way into the Wesleyan papers in South Australia. "Sir Robert Stout, speaking at Dunedin, said that while in 1865 the amount spent in intoxicants [in New Zealand] was nearly twenty pounds per head of the population, in 1886 it was only three pounds and nineteen shillings. This might be attributed in part to the circumstance that people had not so much to spend. But he believed that great credit was due to the temperance people for this result. The Premier of New Zealand said also 'What a good thing it would be if the two million pounds spent yearly in drink and tobacco was saved.'" (27.)

Other similar matters arose in the Australian political scene.

The evangelistic content of the "Gospel Temperance" message was always real, and always present to some degree at least, but concentration on the social issue of alcohol abuse tended to make the evangelistic message into a servant of social change, and perhaps of social engineering.

There were many other people who thought that the evangelistic message should have been preeminent, that better quality results would have flowed in that way, and that the message of social change should flow more naturally from the Biblical message of the new birth, as had happened in major revival movements in previous generations. (28.)

There can be little doubt that, in the second half of the Nineteenth Century, the appearance of local revival movements in the churches flowed from this second attitude, and not from the first. This is shown in the results which flowed from Matthew Burnett's ministry, over many years, and as it passed through its differing stages and evolution.

It is also clear that talented preachers and lecturers, like Matthew Burnett, believed themselves to be called by God to concentrate on the social issue in the way that they did. Clearly, they had a great deal of impact, and had good support from many people who believed strongly in what they were doing. Many individual lives were changed for the better, as a result. The main opposition to Burnett's work came, after all, from vested liquor interests, and not from other Christians. He was strongly supported, also, by many of the leading citizens of the nation.

To a substantial degree, Matthew Burnett already had a track record which supported the validity of his message and his work, because, over the years, many of his converts continued to come from the ranks of hopeless alcoholics, and from the dregs of society. Indeed, his temperance lectures contained some of the stories of these people, told over and over again to different audiences, with great dramatic power and effect, and creating great enthusiasm. These converts were not only testimony to "Gospel Temperance," but to the power of Jesus Christ to save and change the most hopeless of sinners.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

DAVID O'DONNELL

AUSTRALIAN WESLEYAN EVANGELIST

"Good pastors are moderately plentiful, but good evangelists are rare."

- William Allen.

Like many other Methodist preachers in Australia in the second half of the Nineteenth Century, the Rev. David O'Donnell was born in London. In his case, the year was 1845. He arrived in South Australia in 1852.

At the time of the visit of the American evangelist, "California" Taylor, David O'Donnell was a member of the senior class in the Sunday School in the Lydiard Street Wesleyan Church, Ballarat. Already the force of his character was evident which lifted him above the average. He became convicted of his need of a personal knowledge of God, as a result of Taylor's preaching. The leading member of the senior Sunday School class at that time was the youthful W. H. Fitchett, who had the joy of leading all of the members of the class to surrender their lives to God, and to receive the Spirit.

Perhaps because of this link with the work of "California" Taylor, it is not surprising that David O'Donnell's evangelistic work was so much like that of the American evangelist.

He joined the Church, and quickly became involved in the local temperance movement. Under the lead of Matthew Burnett, O'Donnell's abilities as a public speaker were given opportunity. Burnett spent much of 1868 preaching in the various churches in the Geelong Circuit, and apparently brought the young protege with him. In this circuit, O'Donnell had good success as a soul-winner. This led to him becoming a candidate for the ministry. (1.)

He was received "on trial" at the Australasian Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in January, 1869, and was sent immediately to a Circuit, in the Castlemaine and Sandhurst District in Victoria. The Circuit was then called the Heathcote and Spring Creek Diggings.

There was controversy at that time in Victoria about ministerial education. Quarterly and District Meetings would recommend candidates for the ministry to the Conference, urging the Conference to train them well before appointing them to a Circuit. In those years, the plea would often be ignored by the Conference, and the untrained candidate would be thrust into a Circuit immediately. The probationers would be examined each year at their District meetings. (2.)

In later life, O'Donnell was a strong supporter of proper ministerial education, partly because he had none himself, apart from what he could pick in the midst of circuit life.

Immediately, O'Donnell's abilities as an evangelist became apparent, and conversions multiplied in his new circuit. After only three months, a revival was reported to be in progress at the Spring Creek diggings. Also, a Sunday School was held there, with 150 scholars, and an average attendance of 100.

Like most goldfields, the population in this area fluctuated greatly, depending on the season (that is - upon the availability of water for gold seeking), upon the degree of success being enjoyed, and upon what other goldfields had been newly discovered. The Episcopal and Presbyterian ministers were forced to leave the area because the population suddenly declined, and the Roman Catholic church building had been blown down in a gale, but the Wesleyan work was flourishing. (3.)

This appointment lasted for only one year, and O'Donnell began a two-year term in the Sandhurst Circuit, preaching in various churches around the town of Bendigo, and working with several experienced senior ministers. Revival fires had often burned in this area. This was followed by two years in the Daylesford Circuit, working with the Rev. James S. H. Royce. At the end of this period he was ordained.

In 1874, the Australasian Conference was divided into several more local Conferences, under the overall umbrella of a General Conference, and O'Donnell belonged to the Conference which covered Victoria and Tasmania. That year, after his ordination, he was appointed to the Avoca Circuit for another two-year period, which was then the normal length of time that a Wesleyan minister stayed in an appointment.

His Transfer to South Australia

In 1874, there had been concern that the new Conferences should not forget the overall picture of the Wesleyan church in Australia, and become too parochial in their interests. So the regulations for the General Conference stated that two ministers from each Conference should be transferred to another Conference each time the General Conference met, every three years, unless a change had been made in the interim.

On the strength of these regulations, in 1876, O'Donnell was transferred to the South Australian Conference, and began a two-year appointment in a Circuit based in the country town of Clare.

When the Northern District Meeting was held in October, and the roll of ministers was called... "The Chairman (Rev. T. Lloyd), introduced the Rev. D. O'Donnell of Clare, to the meeting, as having recently arrived from Victoria, and assured him of the pleasure it gave them, to welcome him as an earnest and successful worker.

Mr. O'Donnell in reply said he felt deeply the kind manner in which the chairman had introduced him to the meeting. The reception he had met with from the ministers since his arrival in the colony had been of such a hearty character, that although a complete stranger to most of them, he felt quite at home amongst them. He had every necessary comfort in his circuit, had had some measure of success there during the past six months, was happy in his work, and hoped to make South Australia his home." (4.)

As an example of his success, the previous month had seen Church Anniversary services at Penworthan, one of O'Donnell's smaller country centres. "Services were held on Sunday and Monday, September 24th and 25th. Two sermons were preached on the Sabbath by the minister of the circuit, the Rev. D. O'Donnell, to large congregations, that in the evening crowded the chapel to its utmost capacity. A glorious influence rested upon the people, and at the prayer meeting, held after the service, nine penitents sought and professed to obtain pardon of their sins." (5.)

It was the policy of the Annual Conferences to encourage all the circuits to conduct evangelistic campaigns for a week or more in June or July, preceded by a week of special prayer. Often these

meetings would also be preceded by a special challenge to the church members to live a holier and more dedicated life. As a result, it was not uncommon for signs of revival to appear during these special efforts.

In 1877, O'Donnell was asked to lead the two weeks of mission in the main church in Adelaide - the great Wesleyan church in Pirie Street. The first week was hard going, with little obvious signs of success. "The week of services at Pirie-street have been increasingly interesting night by night, and at each after-meeting there have been evidences of the Divine presence. The mission preacher, the Rev. D. O'Donnell, has worked arduously, and with faithful plainness of speech but while numbers seem to have taken pleasure in hearing, few have submitted to God in proportion to the numbers in attendance." There had been better results, however, at the special services which had been organised in neighbouring circuits - at Port Adelaide, Kent Town and at Willunga. (6.)

The second week of meetings at Pirie Street saw a greater response. The meetings were said to be "remarkably successful." But the comment was added that "a fortnight is scarcely long enough to warm through such a mass of partially-chilled material as the city church represents." (7.)

During the week following the mission, a special service was held by the two ministers at the Pirie-Street church for the Sunday School children, at which eighty professed conversion.

During August, the Rev. John Watsford arrived to lead more mission meetings at Pirie Street. He had been a minister there some years before. The impact of all these special efforts mounted slowly.

By mid-September, the news report read - "The gracious revival in this circuit has produced gratifying results, in the large number of members who have joined the various classes, increased congregations, and general quickening of the Church. It has not been confined to the central church, but is still proceeding in some of the country places. During the past fortnight, at one of them, between thirty and forty persons have given themselves to God. Other places around are catching the gracious influence, and high hopes are cherished for further prosperity." (8.)

There was good support for David O'Donnell's efforts, during the first stage of this movement. "The plan adopted of inviting a mission preacher has proved itself a judicious one, and we strongly think, after watching the services throughout, that if Conference could induce the Rev. D. O'Donnell to give at least twelve months to the work of evangelisation - united if advisable with Home Mission advocacy, and directed by a select committee, that great good would be accomplished. Mr. O'Donnell does service which would be straining to most men, with comparative ease to himself, and his services are pitched in a natural key that is likely to give permanency to the results. Such agencies are now recognised as in the order of God and nature, and the sooner we make provision regularly and systematically for this class of agency, the better." (9.)

By 1878, the regulations governing the appointment of ministers were changed so that a normal Circuit appointment would last for three years, instead of two.

So O'Donnell's next appointment was to one of the major Adelaide circuits - Kent Town and Norwood - and lasted for three years, from April 1878 to April 1881. The Rev. Samuel Knight was the superintendent minister, and lived at Kent Town. David O'Donnell lived at Norwood. The third minister (the Rev. H. H. Teague) lived at Payneham. Teague was a probationer in 1878 and 1879, was ordained at the Conference in January, 1880, and remained at Payneham for the third year before he moved to the country. All three ministers moved in April, 1881.

During the last year in this circuit, O'Donnell conducted several series of special evangelistic meetings in the smaller churches in the circuit. At Athelstone, the Wesleyans combined their efforts with the Primitive Methodists, and there were scores of conversions. The report said that "showers of blessing" had descended upon them.

But the nature of the work varied from one church to the next. At Campbelltown, the spiritual life was already very active, and the temperature was raised further through meetings which Matthew Burnett had been leading at the Pirie Street church in central Adelaide. Twenty converts joined the Campbelltown church.

O'Donnell then led special meetings at Payneham, and fifty-five were received into church membership. Similar scenes occurred when he moved the special services to Magill. A new class was formed to nurture some of the converts.

By this time, Matthew Burnett was conducting his own special meetings, of both temperance and evangelistic emphasis, in the Norwood church. Fifty people indicated concern about their salvation at these meetings, and forty were received into church membership. The congregation increased in size by 100, and 80 new pew sittings were rented.

Burnett's meetings then moved to the main church in Kent Town, while O'Donnell continued his special meetings in the Ashton centre. (10.)

The Kent Town and Norwood Circuit Quarterly Meeting followed this very quickly. As well as those converts already received into membership, there were 126 on trial for membership. (11.)

At the end of April, 1881, O'Donnell began work as minister of the Draper Memorial Church in Adelaide, which was a part of the Pirie Street Circuit.

Like many other preachers who were in demand for special occasions and evangelistic work, O'Donnell was soon out visiting other places. Early July found him at Port Augusta, preaching at the opening of a renovated church building. But by late October, signs of revival were appearing in his own congregation.

At a quarterly social gathering, "Rev. D. O'Donnell pastor, reported great prosperity during the past quarter, and hopeful signs for the future. The congregation had grown, and was still increasing - twenty-two sittings had been applied for during the past fortnight. The membership had been greatly increased, as a result of a gracious revival with which God had favoured us during the quarter. The Wednesday evening service was well attended, the congregation averaging 120. A class for young ladies had been established and now numbered 30 members. A theological class had also been formed for young men. Mr. O'Donnell earnestly exhorted all present to continue in prayer and labour for the prosperity of Christ's Church and the salvation of men." (12.)

Despite the emphasis placed upon special services and evangelistic missions at this period of the Church's history, in the hope of seeing the revival of the work of God, and of achieving evangelistic goals, many Methodists still considered that a revival in the normal circuit work, led by the local minister, was a better way to go, if it could be done.

For example, the *Christian Advocate* (American) was quoted in the *Methodist Journal* as follows:- "The record of genuine revivals in the regular pastoral work is more encouraging than accounts of the success of special movements, however amazing in their incidents and numbers. The former is a sure test and exponent of the vitality of the Church, and gives the best ground to hope that converts will be assimilated by the body of Christ." (13.)

July, 1882, saw revivals occurring in several circuits. (14.) While many of these good results were achieved by the local pastors, the most notable results were linked to special services. Of these, the main impact came from the work of the temperance evangelist, Matthew Burnett, who was reaching the end of three years' of very effective work in South Australia. Other evangelists, however, had also been at work, such as the Presbyterian minister, John MacNeil, Mrs Hampson and the convert from Judaism, Mrs Emilia Baeyertz. (15.)

By October, 1882, a large increase of Wesleyan church members in South Australia was being celebrated. The editor of the *Methodist Journal* claimed that the total membership had increased by

931 over two years, in 1881 and 1882, which represented an increase of twenty-five percent. 1882 alone had seen an increase of seventeen percent. "To God be ALL the glory. Let all the people say Amen." An increase had occurred in almost all of the circuits. (16.)

By May, 1883, the South Australian Wesleyan Methodists were being affected by the golden glow of news that revival was occurring "at home," that is, in England. The President of the British Conference was quoted as saying he thought that conversions were taking place at about 1,000 per week in the British circuits. (17.) The editor of the South Australian *Methodist Journal* sought to prepare people for the month of June, when special efforts were usually to be made, and noted that some signs of blessing were already in process. (18.)

David O'Donnell had a share in this movement. During May, he had called his people to meet with him each Saturday night, in order to pray for the revival of God's work. At first, the response was poor, but interest increased. Soon, a large testimony meeting was called, which turned into a prayer meeting, and this marked the beginning of special evangelistic services. (19.)

By the end of the month, seventy-seven new members had been enrolled at the Draper Memorial Church. "God is still blessing us, and the revival of His work progresses. Every night the congregations are large, and at every service sinners have been converted. In spite of the inclement weather we have sustained the *outdoor* work - singing and speaking in the streets - by which means we have reached many persons who will not enter the church." Good spiritual interest was also reported from Norwood and Gawler. (20.)

In June, the main efforts transferred from Draper Memorial to the Pirie Street Church. Despite this, some special meetings continued during the week nights at Draper Memorial, and conversions continued to occur, and more people were publicly received as church members. These meetings continued also through July.

The Pirie Street Circuit, of which the Draper Memorial Church was a part, had also centres at several other places around the city, including Unley. The circuit was in turn a part of the "Southern District," which included all the circuits in the Adelaide area and to the south-east. When the Southern District membership figures were returned in October, there were 3,462 full members in the Wesleyan churches, with 510 on trial. This was an increase of 449 full members on the previous year, with 267 extra on trial for membership. Those attending public worship in this District totalled 22,955, which was an increase of 802

For the whole state, the Wesleyan full membership increased in 1883 by just over one thousand (1026), with 644 extra people on trial for membership in three of the four Districts (the figure for one district was not available) This represented an increase in full membership alone of about fifteen percent. So these years were good ones, indeed. The heavy emphasis on evangelism was paying dividends. (21.)

The growth, however, was not just skin deep. The Prayer Unions were also growing steadily, which can usually be taken as a sign of real and widespread spiritual growth.

In April, 1884 O'Donnell moved from Draper Memorial to the Glenelg Circuit. During the period at Glenelg, he took a health trip back to England for some months. These years at Glenelg were to be the last ones he would spend in a normal three-year Wesleyan circuit appointment.

Conference Evangelist for One Year

At the Conference in January 1887, the Rev. Samuel Knight did what he had done before, but on the previous occasions his effort had not succeeded. He moved that the Conference appoint a full-time evangelist. Other denominations had done this, but, the Methodist denominations had held back. This was probably because there was an expectation from the early days of Methodism that

the local minister would be an evangelist in the local scene, and that he was the best person to do it. For this reason, a full-time person was not needed. On this occasion, however, his motion was carried.

Late in the Conference agenda, David O'Donnell was appointed to this work, which he would start by mid-April, when all the ministerial changes took place. There was no clear plan about how the evangelist would be paid, or his sundry expenses covered. But the Rev. R. M. Hunter, senior minister at Pirie Street, was appointed as secretary of the committee which would be in charge of O'Donnell's work. In due course, a lay person was chosen as treasurer. Several appeals were made for financial support, especially to senior ministers around the state.

O'Donnell had a clear sense that this was a call from God to do this work.

As a final special effort in the Glenelg circuit before he left, he arranged a Convention on Holiness, to run over several days. The speakers were the Rev. T. E. Thomas, Miss Green (from the Adelaide Central Methodist Mission), the Rev Silas Mead, and O'Donnell himself.

His first mission commenced on April 17th, and lasted for 14 days in the Gawler Circuit, and was followed by one week in Templars Circuit where he visited several smaller centres. O'Donnell came to think that spreading himself for one or two meetings in a number of centres in a circuit did not allow a psychological impact to build up anywhere, and was not the most effective way to conduct his work. He preferred to stay in one centre for the period of the mission. The week at Templars was followed by missions at Angaston and Kapunda. He used methods somewhat like Matthew Burnett, with street parades and open-air preaching. By the end of May, he reported that, in six weeks, there had been 227 professed conversions. He reported that he needed someone to act as song leader, and also a supply of literature to further his work, but these were not available. He wanted people to pray that the centre of attention would be Christ, and not the evangelist.

On June 4th, he commenced a mission at Clare, until 17th. This was followed by a crisis experience of some kind which took him out of the work until the beginning of July. By the end of July, he was working at Moonta Mines church. A mission at Kadina started on August 7, followed by a visit to the Maitland circuit. A convention for Christian workers was held as part of the preparation for the Maitland mission. In seven days there were 63 seekers. Then came a visit to Port Wakefield circuit, where there were seventy penitents in five days, after which he returned home for a rest. By this time, he said that there had been 827 penitents, as a result of his work.

The next missions were at Whitwarta, followed by a visit to the Jamestown circuit, and to Laura. At Whitwarta, there were 29 more converts after O'Donnell left the area.

By this time, the October Quarterly Meetings were coming around. At Clare, the minister announced that there were now 205 full members, with 46 on trial, and with 112 catechumens. The Kadina Quarterly Meeting was told that they had 190 full members, with 36 on trial, and with 25 catechumens. Eight members had left the district.

The Port Wakefield Circuit reported that they had 130 full members, with 93 on trial. "The great revival which God has graciously given us was the subject of interesting conversation. Truly, 'God hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' A resolution was passed expressive of gratitude to Almighty God for the divine blessing upon the evangelistic services recently held, after which the brethren sang 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'" But the circuit still had serious financial problems. (22.)

Six months later, at the April Quarterly Meeting, 1888, the Port Wakefield circuit had 190 members with 29 on trial. (23.)

While some of these features looked very good, and produced much rejoicing, the economic situation was declining, especially in the city of Adelaide, and was affecting some other parts of the

life of the state. Church membership was not growing like it had a few years before. Numbers of people were having to leave their homes in order to find work. Hundreds of empty tenement buildings existed in the city.

There were signs of revival in the Willunga circuit, following a visit by the Rev. C. T. Newman. Good signs appeared in other circuits. Membership increased in the Northern and Middle Districts, but declined in Adelaide.

O'Donnell started a mission in Quorn on October 16th, and some good things were achieved. A letter appeared in the *Methodist Journal* deploring what was described as boasting about numbers, and protesting "against inducing infant children to go to the 'penitent form.'" So, not everyone supported the work of the evangelist. (24.) The Quorn leaders, however, reported that 35 people had joined the classes, and others were converted after the evangelist left town.

"The spirit of prayer still rests upon us, and there are others for whom we are praying, and whom we expect to be before long 'partakers of like precious faith.' God has sent us a great blessing may we by His grace prepare our hearts for a still greater. One thing which has taken place here, and which here as everywhere else will ensure permanence to this spiritual work, is that certain elder members of the Church have received the sanctifying baptism of the Holy Ghost." (25.)

This was followed by a week's mission in Port Pirie, starting on October 29. By this stage, O'Donnell reported that there had been over 1,000 converts, so far. 93 were under ten years of age. 363 were aged between ten and fifteen years. 570 were over sixteen. How many were true converts? God only knew.

Before the Annual Conference started in mid-January, there were missions at Terowie, in Broken Hill, and in the Adelaide suburb of Parkside. The Terowie circuit reported that their membership had increased by 59 during the quarter, largely through the impact of the mission. This was an increase of fifty percent.

At the Conference, the report was made on the scale of O'Donnell's work during the year, but that the financial arrangements had been inadequate. He had preached 222 times, given 29 other addresses, and 63 Bible readings. 1,120 people had presented themselves as penitents, or whom 613 were over the age of sixteen years. The recommendation of the Rev. R. M. Hunter was that an evangelist should be appointed again, but not on the present financial basis.

Kadina, and Resignation

As the Conference progressed, O'Donnell began to realise that he was not going to be re-appointed as the evangelist for another year. The reason for this is not clear. So, he applied to be transferred back to Victoria, at the next General Conference, which was due to occur in a few months, and he was stationed at Kadina until that move should occur.

At the end of the Conference, a younger minister, the Rev. George W. Kendrew, was appointed to be the evangelist. Kendrew's young wife of twelve months had just died, and he was newly ordained.

In the six weeks which remained until he took up his new appointment, O'Donnell conducted missions in the south-east of the state. These began with ten days at Narracoorte, two weeks at Mount Gambier, and five days at Kingston. The finale was a week's mission on the subject of "Holiness," which took place in the central Pirie Street Church, and a few days in Silverton.

In his valedictory letter to the *Methodist Journal*, O'Donnell said he had conducted missions in 25 places, preached 270 times, given 50 addresses and 78 Bible readings. He had dealt personally with 1,235 penitents, and he had gained five pounds in weight. (26.)

When he finished the evangelising, the Committee still owed O'Donnell forty pounds, as the income had not been sufficient. (27.)

In Kendrew's first year, he spent slightly more time in the more populous areas of the state, and this may have helped the financial situation for him. O'Donnell had spent a great deal of his time in remote parts of the state, and this may have affected the monetary aspect. Kendrew had good success in his evangelism.

Before O'Donnell arrived in the Kadina and Wallaroo circuit, there were 210 members, with 40 catechumens, although 15 members had moved from the area in the previous few months. (28.)

During the season for special services, in the winter, O'Donnell conducted his own services in Wallaroo. Twenty-two converts were reported.

By the time of the October Quarterly Meeting, the full membership was down to 182, as there had been 20 removals and two deaths, but there were 42 people on trial for membership. (29.)

The General Conference had taken place during the month of May, and, instead of being transferred to the Victorian Conference, as he had requested, and as he was entitled to expect, the Conference transferred him to the New Zealand Conference. The General Conference was the final authority in Australian Wesleyanism. O'Donnell felt that for personal and family reasons, he could not move to New Zealand, and thus could not accept this appointment. As a result, he was advised by friends that had no other option but to resign from the Wesleyan ministry. His resignation went to the South Australian President of the Conference in early December. Quite a furore took place in the newspapers, and extensive debate occurred about the wisdom and the necessity of what had happened.

The Rev. Alexander R. Edgar was also summarily removed from Victoria to New Zealand at this General Conference, but he never went, and never had to resign. His wife's health was the reason.

O'Donnell's resignation took effect at the end of the year.

By mid-January he preached for a call to a Congregational Church at Malvern in Melbourne. They called him, and he accepted. He remained minister of this church, and thus was a part of the Congregational ministry, for six years.

A Congregational Minister for Six Years

Although living for this period in a settled situation, and with better tenure on his position, David O'Donnell was still very active in a wide range of activities. For example, in January, 1890, he was back in Adelaide for a month, supplying the pulpit at the Stow Church. May and June of that year saw him conducting missions again. One was in the Melbourne suburb of Carlton. Of this mission, the Rev. William Allen wrote,

"I have been in the thick of a mission - and a glorious mission too. We have had some beautiful cases of turning to the Lord. As much of God and as little of man in the process as you could imagine. The Rev. D. O'Donnell, who conducted the mission, is a noble fellow. It is a shame he should be shut up in one church. If I were wealthy I would 'plank the dollars' to pay him a handsome salary that he might do nothing but evangelize. Good pastors are moderately plentiful, but good evangelists are rare." (30.) In October of that year, he led another mission, this time in Kew.

The Rev. William Allen, mentioned above, moved to the Sydney suburb of Petersham soon after that. By June, 1891, the Petersham Congregational Church invited O'Donnell to lead a mission there. "Mr. O'Donnell came among us on Saturday, 13th June, holding his first meeting on that

date, and continuing until Tuesday, 22nd June. In all, 19 meetings were held. Of these, 10 were evangelistic, one being a special service for children, held on the last Sunday of his visit, and one - the last of the mission - being specially for young men), one (the opening meeting) was for workers, one was a fellowship and testimony meeting (held the Saturday before the mission closed) the other seven were Bible-readings. The subjects of the Bible-readings (in order as given) were as follows:- Forgiveness of Sin, Holiness, Being Kept, Abiding in Christ, Freedom from Care, Our Relations to the Lord, and Power from on High.”

There followed a long and enthusiastic report on the mission, mentioning that about 100 people had been dealt with in the enquiry room, of whom twenty came from other churches. A Christian Endeavour Society was to be used as follow up for the younger people, and to prepare people for full membership. (31.)

In September, he was back in Petersham again to act as President of the first Petersham Christian Conference, held in the Petersham Town Hall, and organised by the local Ministerial Association. It was held over three days, from Tuesday, 8th September, to Thursday 10th. (32.) This event became the forerunner of other Conventions for the development of the spiritual life, held at Petersham for many years, and copied in many other places. It did not entirely follow the Keswick line of the first Geelong Convention, led by the Rev. George Grubb, which had been held just about the same time, but was similar to it in some ways.

Also in 1891 he conducted a mission for the Wesleyans at Fitzroy, and in early 1892 visited Brisbane for the same purpose. Other short-term supply ministries were also performed.

By 1893, there began to be rumours that he was planning to return to the Wesleyan denomination, but these rumours were strongly denied. It was in fact in January, 1895, that he finally resigned from the pastorate of the Malvern Congregational Church, and re-applied to the Wesleyans, but to be classified as “Without Pastoral Charge,” in order to be available as an evangelist, wherever he was asked, and the change actually occurred in April of that year. (33.)

His Return to Methodism and Itinerant Evangelism

Whilst he was not immediately appointed as the Conference Evangelist for the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference, he did hold this position for a period after a few years.

Initially, after leaving the Congregational pastorate, O'Donnell's postal address was care of the Post Office, Hobart, but he was leading missions in Victoria again before long. In the *Spectator*, the large heading “Joyful News” was used to indicate a story about revival in one of the Victorian circuits, or of an episode of evangelism which had a more than average degree of interest. This heading introduced a report about a mission which O'Donnell had conducted in the Ballarat West Circuit.

“We are rejoicing over a very gracious visitation of God in this circuit. Rev. C. Tregear commenced a mission at Rubicon-street with blessed results. Believers were quickened and blessed, and about forty unconverted were led to decision during the second week. Rev. D. O'Donnell then followed up the work for a fortnight, when over a hundred more were brought to God. Our brother, too, did a splendid work in leading many of the workers into receiving the fulness of the Spirit. This is a favourite theme of Mr. O'Donnell's, and never have we heard this precious truth so clearly and forcibly put as by him.

Members here are rejoicing in a new and glorious experience, and the church at Rubicon-street has never been so effective for service as at present. On Sunday week Rev. C. Tregear gave trial tickets to about seventy new members. The work goes on. At the service last night, conducted by Mr. Coltman, two young men found God. Rev. D. O'Donnell has been labouring during the past week

at Lydiard-street. Souls have been saved, and the church too has been wonderfully quickened. At last night's service six seekers came for pardon, and a number out for the blessing of sanctification. Rev. C. Tregear has been, during the past week, conducting a mission at Magpie. There too God has blessed believers and saved souls. At last night's service nine were seeking salvation, and the whole place is moved. All over the circuit there are signs of a general revival, and we are already thanking God for the great work He is about to do for us.

Bro. O'Donnell's afternoon Bible Readings have been wonderfully blessed to believers, and have been full of rich Gospel teaching and power. Two half nights of prayer also have been magnificent meetings. The glory came down and filled the place." (34.)

Despite the fact that he had resigned from the Wesleyan ministry because he did not want to move to New Zealand, during this later period of his life, he spent a good deal of time in that part of the world. For example, he evangelised in New Zealand solidly from October, 1896, to the end of 1897. Again he was in New Zealand for three months leading up to the middle of May, 1901.

After these efforts in New Zealand, we see an example of his work in Richmond, Victoria, in the following report:- "For ten days the Town Hall was filled, sometimes crowded by an eager throng, who listened with rapt attention to the powerful addresses and solemn warnings and loving appeals of the Rev. David O'Donnell. Every evening saw some seeking and accepting the Lord Jesus, as offered to them for salvation. At the close a great company testified to having received definite blessing from God through the services. The Protestant ministers of all denominations in the city assisted in the work. Rev. W. Y. Blackwell, M.A., with bands of open-air workers, nightly endeavoured to draw the careless to the Lord. In this they had the help of two Salvation Army bands. Interesting and memorable services were held in three different centres for the children, who were winsomely addressed by Messrs E. Shelley, J. Varley, and A. Dimond. A series of Bible readings were conducted by Mr. O'Donnell in the Wesleyan Church, which helped many, and were much enjoyed.

A meeting for men only, youths under 17 being excluded, filled the hall on Sabbath afternoon, and many vowed they would keep themselves pure in the grace of God.

So manifestly did God own the work that various special services were begun to carry on the movement to win Richmond for Christ. To God be the glory." (35.)

November, 1901, was the time chosen for an enormous Simultaneous Mission throughout the suburbs of Sydney, and what were then outlying country towns like Hornsby, Hurstville and Liverpool. Missions were organised in about fifty different localities. As part of this team effort, O'Donnell led the mission in the Randwick area. The *Spectator* carried this brief report about it:- "The 'Daily Telegraph' states 'that the Rev. David O'Donnell worked successfully at Randwick in connection with the Sydney and Suburban "Simultaneous Mission." The attendance at the services was large, and that the efforts of Mr. O'Donnell and his large band of energetic workers bore fruit was proved by the number of persons who sought advice at the close of each meeting.'" (36.)

The N.S.W. Tent Missions

Perhaps the most effective part of his ministry came when he was an older man, in the form of the N.S.W. Tent Missions, which followed closely upon the heels of the Sydney and Suburbs Simultaneous Mission.

The aim of the Tent Missions was to have an evangelistic mission in every centre in country N.S.W. with a population of over two hundred. The missions began early in January, 1902, in Nowra, in the Illawarra district of the South Coast of N.S.W., followed by a series of missions in the various centres north towards Sydney. The first mission was led by Mr. Robert Robertson, who was an

evangelist linked to the Evangelisation Society of Victoria. The second mission was commenced while the first one was still in progress, and was led by David O'Donnell. Both teams also included an open-air preacher/song leader, and a manager/helper. These two teams conducted missions in eighteen centres within three months. 2,635 people were dealt with for conversion in the enquiry rooms, 1,000 of whom claimed a link to Methodism.

Many of the missions in this series were outstandingly successful. The number of conversions were such, in some centres, that a considerable impact was made on the tone of society in these areas. At Wollongong, for example, 357 converts were listed, Bulli-Woonona 292, Mount Keira 214, Albion Park 198, Balgownie 183, Corrimal 318, Helensburgh 236. Right from that time, and by many people since, the events of these missions have been seen as outbreaks of revival and Pentecostal power as directly as anything we have seen in Australian religious history. (37.)

There was then a break for a month, because all of the evangelists were required to be involved in the Simultaneous Mission around Melbourne, and in parts of Victoria, which reached a climax in the great meetings in the Exhibition Building led by the American evangelists Reuben. A. Torrey and Charles M. Alexander.

No sooner were these meetings over than O'Donnell returned to New South Wales in order to take up a part of the Tent Mission programme again. He commenced a series of missions in the Hunter valley. Several missions took place around Maitland, and there was outstanding success in Singleton. This mission probably lasted for ten days or two weeks duration..

“It is doubtful whether ever in the religious history of this State there has been such a wonderful record as that which reaches us from Singleton. In the days of the past there have been some wonderful instances of the wondrous converting power of God, but surely the story that comes from Singleton is amongst the most marvellous. Out of a population of 3,000 no less than 568, over one sixth of the total, entered the enquiry room.” The first week alone saw 370 of these enquiries. The meetings had started on June 8th. (38.)

Another of O'Donnell's missions in this series was in the town of Quirindi. At this mission there had been 207 enquirers. (39.)

In 1903, O'Donnell returned to the task in N.S.W. He started with a mission in Katoomba, and then moved west and north to Wallerawang, Mudgee and Rylstone. He then came back to the city for a prolonged mission at Balmain, which was in turn followed by a series of missions in the Saint George district of southern Sydney.

Statistics show clearly that these very early years of the Twentieth Century were marvellous years of growth for the evangelical churches in Australia, in absolute numbers, in proportion to the growth of the population, and in the impact that the churches had on society as a whole.

Concluding Years

By this time, David O'Donnell was no longer a young man. He continued to work in itinerant evangelism as long as he could. For some years he conducted a Mission Church in Launceston, and in his declining years used to conduct Sunday evening services in the Olympia Theatre in Melbourne, "where many striking conversions occurred."

In an "In Memoriam," the Rev. Joseph Nicholson made these comments about the more spiritual side of David O'Donnell's life. "His Bible readings were profoundly spiritual, and helpful to Christians, and his Gospel appeals to the unconverted were most pointed and powerful, and brought many to decision... While Mr. O'Donnell's natural gifts of speech were of a superior order, he nevertheless, relied most absolutely on the power of the Divine Spirit, as applied to a God-given message, for effecting the reconciliation of men to God. He did not labour in vain."

“While somewhat conservative in theological views - asking often for the ‘old paths’ - he was not insensible to the theological throbbings of modern days, but of deliberate purpose, concentrated on the great fundamental verities of ruin by sin and redemption by Jesus Christ, as the true method of solving the woes of the world today.”

“He was smitten with partial paralysis in the midst of his work. In my last interview, while retaining consciousness, he expressed confident trust in God thankfulness for large opportunities for preaching Christ, and some hope of doing so again. But his work was done, and he went home on June 21st, 1914, in the seventieth year of his age, and the forty-fifth of his ministry.” (40.)

He was buried in the Box Hill cemetery. The preacher at the church was the Rev. Dr W. H. Fitchett, who had led him to the Lord many years before. O’Donnell was a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, “and much people was added unto the Lord.”

Also at the graveside was another of the great Methodist leaders of that day, the Rev. Dr. Edwin I. Watkin. His summing up of the work of an evangelist, like David O’Donnell, was to quote from Daniel 12:3. “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, for ever and ever.” (41.)

His Place in the Evolution of Evangelism in Australia

Many people have noted that subsequent evangelism in Australia for some decades had been influenced deeply, indeed moulded, by the ministry of “California” Taylor, who visited Australia around 1865, and again around 1869. David O’Donnell's ministry certainly is a good example of the truth of this judgment. The evangelism of all of the Protestant churches in the period when O’Donnell was alive, was really Methodist evangelism writ large. It was the heyday of evangelicalism in Australia.

It is also an example of the evolutionary trends by which “revivalism” became dominant in Australian evangelism, instead of the older emphasis on “revival.” He tried hard to maintain the better spiritual qualities of the “revival” tradition in the more “modern” era of mass evangelism, and he succeeded well at it.

Today, in an era when the mainline denominations seem to be in decline, the message of David O’Donnell, and others like him, need to be heard again. Intense evangelism, the Spirit-filled life of holiness and service, and the outpouring of the Spirit in answer to earnest prayer, will save the Church today, as it did in the past.

Today we have forgotten the wise words of the Rev. William Allen, Congregational minister. “Good pastors are moderately plentiful, but good evangelists are rare.” The Lord said, “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will thrust forth labourers into His harvest, for the harvest is great, but the labourers are few.”

CHAPTER TWELVE

METHODIST EVANGELISM IN NEW SOUTH WALES

1901 to 1904

In November, 1901, there was organised a wide sweeping Simultaneous Mission in Sydney and suburbs. This was followed immediately by two years of United Tent Missions to country areas of New South Wales, which proved to be one of the most significant evangelistic efforts, and series of little revivals, in Australian church history.

The concept of the Simultaneous Mission was based upon one which had occurred in London over the turn of the century, which had been considered by many to be very successful. A number of localised mission efforts would be held in various suburbs around a major city, at the same time, each led by a minister with some experience in mass evangelism, or by a professional evangelist. This effort would reach a climax in a centralised campaign at a central location led by a well-known professional evangelist.

A smaller Simultaneous Mission had happened in Queensland, over a period of three months, earlier in 1901, which had been based in the Presbyterian churches in and around Brisbane, and in other parts of Queensland. The line-up of preachers had been organised by Andrew Stewart, and included the Rev James Lyall, the Rev. D. C. Davidson, Messrs. Hugh Paton and J. C. Sloan, and the wealthy American layman, W. Edgar Geil.

The Sydney Simultaneous Mission involved all of the Protestant denominations. They worked together, providing a wide range of preachers for the various mission centres, although Lyall, Davidson and Geil were also present. At 81 years of age, the Rev. John Watsford led the Mission in the Lewisham - Dulwich Hill area. The editor of *The Methodist* was very enthusiastic about the Mission in Sydney at the end of 1901.

“The proceedings of Monday last brought to a close one of the most remarkable series of meetings ever held in the Southern Hemisphere. There have been evangelistic campaigns in Sydney that have attracted large congregations for a week or more to one given centre - as, for instance, the missions with which the names of Dr. Somerville, Mrs Hampson, and John McNeill are associated. But those missions stood alone, and the crowded audience represented to a large extent the centre and circumference of the movement. In the great effort just closed there were between 40 and 50 centres of activity, including several large and crowded tents within the city proper, and extending to all the suburbs as far as Parramatta, Hurstville and Hornsby.

That the results have justified the faith and enterprise of the promoters of the mission is now abundantly manifest. An effort on a smaller scale could not have stirred the enthusiasm of the Christian Churches or struck the attention of the community generally. Wisdom is justified of her children, and courage in Christian enterprise is a quality that in itself goes far to ensure success.”
(1.)

In the final analysis, the leaders said 4,500 enquirers after salvation were listed from all the Mission centres. This figure did **not** include “a large number of children who were specially dealt with at children's services.” (2.)

NEWCASTLE

The Rev. James Lyall followed his time in Sydney with a mission in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Newcastle. The Methodists in Newcastle were planning a series of tent missions in the Newcastle district as part of their Inaugural Celebrations. In order to avoid clashing with Lyall's mission, the Methodists began their series at Wallsend. They obtained the tent which had been used in the Eastern Suburbs Simultaneous Mission a few months earlier, seating 800 people, and with standing room for 200 or 300 more. The tent was pitched near the tram terminus in Wallsend, and was lit by an acetylene gas plant. A small part of the space in the huge tent was sectioned off for use as an enquiry room. The first missionary was the Rev. Rainsford Bavin. After the first week, the tent was moved ready for the Rev. W. Woolls Rutledge to commence a one week campaign at Lambton. The Rev. J. W. Holden then led a campaign at Adamstown for another week. The campaign in Newcastle itself was then led by James Lyall. Open-air meetings were a regular part of these tent missions, including one in Newcastle when the talented Presbyterian minister from St. Andrew's, the Rev. James Crookston, “made a very stirring appeal to the passers-by to decide for Christ.” The whole campaign was over by mid-February, before the start of the N.S.W. Methodist Conference. (3.)

THE N.S.W. TENT MISSIONS

The success of the Sydney Simultaneous Mission prompted the thought in certain of the Methodist leaders that something should be done for country towns.

Also, they had marked the new century by launching a special appeal for 50,000 guineas to finance the expansion of their work. Ebenezer Vickery wanted to see something more directly spiritual done to mark the new century, such as, to win 50,000 souls. So, while remaining anonymous, he guaranteed the necessary financial backing to have tent missions conducted in every country town in New South Wales with a population over 200. In the end, this cost him a great deal of money.

The Tent Missions, which were under the control of the central committee operating Mr. Vickery's plan for him, were all called **United** Tent Missions. This was because the other local Protestant denominations were always welcome to be a full part of any of these missions, wherever they took place.

The first of these missions was to be in Nowra, on the South Coast, and was led by Mr. Robert Robertson, who had been an evangelist with the Evangelisation Society of Victoria for some years. A tent seating 600 was fitted up with seats, lighting, hymnbooks, and auxiliary tents, under the control of a manager, Mr. S. E. Vickery. Mr. H. D. Gilbert came on loan from the C.M.M.'s Seaman's Mission as the open-air preacher. A local Methodist minister would act as organising secretary, and other denominations would also be involved, if they chose to be.

No sooner had this first mission started, early in January, 1902, than it became clear more than one

team would be needed to cover the coastal strip up to the edge of Sydney within three months. By April, all the evangelists would be needed to staff an even greater Simultaneous Mission which was being planned for Melbourne. So a second team was organised quickly, led by the Rev. David O'Donnell, a senior Methodist evangelist from Victoria.

By the first week in April, a series of eighteen missions had been conducted, in places as far north as Helensburgh. The number of professed conversions during these missions was 2,635, of which nearly 1,000 claimed a link to Methodism. The places where the main impact was felt were Wollongong, Bulli, Albion Park, Corrimal, Mount Kiera, Balgownie and Helensburgh. The power of the Holy Spirit was believed to be especially evident in these meetings, creating the belief that a revival of considerable power had occurred. Scenes reminiscent of past revivals were seen.

This estimate of the situation was highlighted by the report of the Illawarra Tent Mission published in the Wollongong *Presbyterian Record*:-

“The United Tent Mission, which is now drawing to a close in this district, has been an epoch-making event. The tabulated returns... show that upwards of 2000 souls have been moved by it to come into the Enquiry Room and seek further light or surrender themselves wholly to Christ... The parable of the sower speaks of those who receive the Word with joy, but presently wither away because they have no root, and some too are choked with thorns. It would be a distinct mistake, therefore, to suppose that the whole of the results will remain. We should rather be prepared frankly to look for and expect a certain falling away when the testing time presently comes. But with all due allowances the most cautious must be constrained to admit that there is much solid grain in the harvest. If we take our church as a sample we have with us all the evidences of a permanent revival. The real test of spiritual life we take to be the Lord's table. No less a number than 52 of our people have come forward at our recent communion. Such an unprecedented increase of membership is due to something more than passing excitement. Then our fellowship associations, our open-air service, our crowded congregations all point in the same direction - to an unmistakable revival in our midst. Similar results are manifest also in every other church in the district. Nor are we confined to the church and its atmosphere for evidence. ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ Pleasing testimonies have been forthcoming from business men as to the marked improvement in their accounts since the mission. Miners testify to the changes in the mines, and in every walk of life there seems to be general agreement that the mission has wrought a good work. When we leave these general lines and note individual cases the same conclusion is strengthened. We can all point to lives that show manifest proofs of change and about whose conversion there is no room for doubt. The mission will now pass from our midst, but we have a confident expectation that its fruits will remain, and that ministers and church-workers generally in this district will have abiding cause to bless God for the wondrous things He hath wrought by this means.” (4.)

The end of the Illawarra Mission was marked by a three-days Convention on the Christian Life, which was held in Wollongong on Monday to Wednesday, 7th to 9th April.

As mentioned, the evangelists spent the rest of April in Victoria taking part in a giant Simultaneous Mission, involving campaigns in scores of localities, and culminating in two weeks of meetings in Melbourne's Exhibition Building, under the leadership of the American evangelists Reuben A. Torrey and Charles M. Alexander.

THE SECOND STAGE OF THE TENT MISSIONS IN 1902

Both Robertson and O'Donnell returned to New South Wales early in May to take up again the programme of Tent Mission campaigns. The names of the assistants in these teams varied from time to time, and it is not always easy to keep track of these changes. Information about the itineraries of these men has come largely from a careful perusal of many issues of *The Methodist*, and from James Colwell's famous *Illustrated History of Methodism*.

Robert Robertson began a series of missions in the town of Gunnedah, with Mr. J. Allison as the open-air preacher, although he was replaced by Mr. James Graham later on. Mr. S. E. Vickery was the tent manager. The series included Narrabri, Moree, Inverell, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, before he descended to the North Coast and led very successful missions at Casino, Coraki, Woodburn, Ballina, Lismore, Clunes, Newrybar, Alstonville, Byron Bay and Murwillumbah. On his way home, Robertson led missions at Milton, Nelligen, Bateman's Bay and Braidwood, on the South Coast, before going home for Christmas.

By June, David O'Donnell commenced a series of missions in the Hunter Valley. West Maitland was first, followed by a mission at Singleton which was outstandingly successful. This was followed by Muswellbrook and Scone, Murrurundi, Quirindi, East Maitland, and a Simultaneous Mission in Newcastle. From there he went to Sydney, to a longer mission in the densely populated suburb of Waterloo. Mr. J. Allison joined this team briefly at Muswellbrook, before returning to the Robertson team, and later joining the Gilbert, Allison and Walker team.

Later in June, a third team was sent out, led by William H. Scurr, who was also an evangelist with the Evangelisation Society of Victoria. The tent manager was a Mr. Sandow. Scurr was always called "Rev.," although he was not ordained by the Victorian Methodists until several years after. Their new tent and equipment was dedicated for its special use at a mission in the Sydney suburb of Tempe Park, St. Peter's, before heading north. W. H. Scurr led missions in Taree, Jones' Island, Port Macquarie, Wauchope and Kempsey. The Kempsey mission was outstandingly successful. He was sick from overwork, and had to rest. So the Gladstone mission was delayed, and was ultimately taken by another evangelist. Scurr then went on to Bellingen, Grafton, Ulmarra and Brushgrove, and Maclean, before he returned to Sydney.

Later in 1902, another team was formed, and a tent was used which belonged to the Central Methodist Mission. This team was led by Mr. H. D. Gilbert, with help from Mr. J. Allison and Mr. A. E. Walker. These three generally shared the preaching tasks, so Gilbert did not preach every night. Their first mission was at Raymond Terrace, then Dungog. Actually, they visited Dungog twice within nine months, and saw great success. The second occurred in mid-1903. Like most of these missions, the two Dungog missions were organised by the local Methodist minister, the Rev. Robert Mowbray, whose early years of ministry had been with the Primitive Methodists. The team then went to conduct a mission in Adamstown late in 1902.

Later still in 1902, yet another tent was commissioned, with a team led by the Rev. E. H. Shanks, with Mr. Wynn as tent manager. This team went to Gladstone, on the mid-North Coast, and then went to the far South Coast to commence a tour of southern New South Wales. The towns of Eden and Pambula were missioned by them late in 1902, before a string of southern inland places were visited in 1903.

Amongst all these comings and goings in Tent Mission work, a major Mission had occurred in Sydney in August, 1902. A Mission took place for several weeks, led by the visiting American evangelists, Reuben A. Torrey and Charles M. Alexander. The main evangelistic meetings were held in the Sydney Town Hall, and the lesser meetings, such as the prayer meetings and Bible

readings for Christians, were held in the Centenary Hall, York Street, or in the Pitt Street Congregational Church.

The Melbourne Mission in April had produced a nation-wide impact. The Sydney Mission in August was not a Simultaneous Mission like the one in Melbourne, nor did these evangelists conduct missions in other N.S.W. centres. The impact of the Sydney meetings developed slowly, but became very widespread, not only on the Christians of Sydney, but on the whole community. It helped the subject of religion, and the need of personal salvation, to be talked about openly by many people, and there were about 4,000 professed conversions as a result.

THE TENT MISSIONS IN 1903

In 1903, the various United Tent Mission teams worked in different parts of New South Wales until Easter, when they returned to Sydney for a Convention in the Sydney Town Hall. At this meeting, a full report was given showing what had happened in the United Tent Missions so far. The Report included the facts that 12,651 people had passed through the enquiry rooms during 1902 in the United Tent Missions, and that between January, 1903, and April that year, a further 4,723 people had also responded, making a total in progress of about 17,000. (5.)

At the start of the year, 1903, Robert Robertson's team consisted of Mr. S. E. Vickery as tent manager, but now with Mr. W. Arnold as the open-air preacher, and they were quickly joined by James Graham. The year started at Araluen, followed by missions at Moruya, Tilba, Central Tilba, Carunna, Narooma, Nerrigundah, Cobargo, Bermagui, Merimbula, and Bega. Some of these missions were shorter than others, because they were in very small and scattered settlements. Here we also saw the first signs of Robertson's son joining in the work. After the gathering in the Sydney Town Hall in early April, mentioned above, Robert Robertson led a longer mission at Waterloo, not to be confused with the one that David O'Donnell led there late in 1902. Then the Robertson team travelled west to Bathurst, Orange, Wellington, Bodangora and Dubbo.

The Rev. E. H. Shanks began the year accompanied by Mr. Wynn, but soon Mr. Wynn joined David O'Donnell, and he was replaced as Mr. Shanks's helper by Mr. W. Arnold. They started at Bombala, then Nimitybelle, (as it was then spelled), Cooma, Yass, Gunning, Queanbeyan, Crookwell, Collector and Moss Vale.

Starting early in March, David O'Donnell teamed with Mr. J. Wynn. They started at Katoomba, then Lithgow, Wallerawang, Mudgee and Rylstone. O'Donnell then became leader of a prolonged mission at Balmain West which was very successful. The Helping Hand Mission centre was established as a long-term result of this effort. He then was involved in conducting missions at St. Leonards, Chatswood, Botany, Rockdale, and other centres around Sydney, often accompanied by Mr. Hoskins as soloist.

Mr. W. H. Scurr, with Messrs. Sandow and Crew as helpers, started the year at Goulburn, then Gundagai, Harden and Murrumburrah, Young, and other places, taking time also to visit the work at Balmain. Very few reports of his later work that year were published in *The Methodist*, but he conducted Tent Missions in a number of places, such as Wagga Wagga, Tumut, Cootamundra, Corowa and Albury.

Messrs. Gilbert, Allison and Walker teamed up again, although Allison left before long. They began the year with a mission to St. Albans, then Wallsend, West Wallsend, Branxton and Greta, Paterson, Stroud, Dungog and then Merewether. Apart from the second mission at Dungog, already mentioned, this team also conducted a second mission at Merewether, because the first one was so

successful. After the visit to Balmain, they went west to hold missions in Grenfell, Cowra and Temora, among other places.

If all the work being done by these teams was not enough, apart from all the expense of financing this whole project, Ebenezer Vickery imported an English evangelist from London, to add to the work. This was Mr. John T. Leafe, a young man about 30 years of age, who came with very strong recommendations from evangelical authorities in England, and from the evangelist, Gipsy Rodney Smith. He arrived early in March, 1903, just in time to be introduced on the floor of the Methodist Conference. He stayed in Australia for two years, before returning to London.

The first United Tent Mission in which he was involved was at Lower Portland in the Hawkesbury district, with J. Allison as helper. Then came missions at Wilberforce, Windsor, Richmond and Ryde. In these missions he had the help of W. Arnold as open-air preacher, and J. Allison and J. Black as tent managers. After the events at Balmain West, John Leafe then went on a tour into the Far West of New South Wales, holding mission meetings in Cobar, Wilcannia, White Cliffs, Cambelago, Nyngan and Bourke. Arnold and Black accompanied him on this tour.

He then returned to mount a prolonged effort in Prince Alfred Park, Surrey Hills, where he had five helpers - two open-air preachers (Arnold and Black), a soloist (Hoskins), and two tent managers (Stacey and Christian), plus the co-operation of a number of local ministers of various denominations.

OTHER EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS

The preachers and assistants listed above were the main people who were part of the Tent Mission operation.

There were, of course, many other missions going on, organised by local ministers, which were not a part of the Tent Mission programme. For example, early in 1902, the Rev. John Watsford led a mission at Wesley Church, Chippendale. Just over one hundred people went into the enquiry room. The Rev. W. G. Taylor was also a leader of a Simultaneous Mission in the city of Tamworth, in which between 300 and 400 enquirers were dealt with. A united mission was held in Bowral which involved all of the Protestant churches in the town. It was led by the noted Anglican clergyman, the Rev. R. B. S. Hammond, assisted by Mr. Mathers of the City Mission. The Rev. Joseph Woodhouse led meetings in Crookwell, in his own circuit, seeing more than fifty conversions, and experiencing some signs of revival. (6.)

Occasionally, extra help was needed in a Tent Mission, and this would be provided by another suitable minister. For example, in the early stages of the Illawarra Mission, the Rev. W. G. Taylor came to lend help in one of the situations. Also the Rev. Rainsford Bavin had to help out with some of the meetings in Stockton.

At other times, an entire Tent Mission would be taken by a different missionary. For example, the United Tent Mission to be held in Penrith was planned to be led by the Rev. W. Y. Blackwell. But his health failed, and the mission was delayed. It was finally the Rev. Joseph Woodhouse who led the meetings for the first week, before he had to return home. The Rev. W. G. Taylor took the meetings for several more days, but he became unwell, and the final meetings were taken by the Rev. B. Dinning (local minister) and others. In this mission, 219 people passed through the enquiry room, including 99 children. (7.)

Previously, the Rev. W. Y. Blackwell had led the United Tent Mission at Granville. The mission

started earlier than anticipated, and as a result the preparation was not good. The meetings started poorly, but gathered momentum, until the final meetings were great occasions. A total of 425 people, young and old, sought salvation. (8.)

1904

Officially, the United Tent Missions campaign was over at the end of 1903. Although no definitive final statistics were ever assembled or published, the number of people who passed through the various enquiry tents must have been around 25,000. This, however, would not have covered all of the conversions which occurred, because many conversions occurred at home, at other locations, or after the tent had been removed. In some instances, there were so many people in the enquiry tent at once that the secretaries could not keep track of them all, and for this reason some enquirers were not recorded.

The other side, which is even harder to quantify, is to know how many fell away soon after the meetings, for one reason or another.

Two of the tents were purchased by the Victorian Methodist Home Missions Committee for their own use, alongside one they already owned.

The retiring President of the Conference in New South Wales (the Rev. Rainsford Bavin) suggested that something should be done in N.S.W. to continue the good work, or to find some way to finance and operate one or two Connexional Evangelists again, to work with circuit ministers.

The London evangelist, Mr. John T. Leafe, remained in Australia for another fifteen months, perhaps being retained by Mr. Vickery, and conducting missions very effectively. Missions of his that were reported upon included one in Merewether, while another was held in the William Street Circuit in Sydney, with the assistance of Mr. Gilbert as open-air preacher, and the Central Methodist Mission Band. He also held a mission in the Centenary Hall, York Street, directed particularly at the business men of Sydney. The published report about this mission to the men of Sydney included:-

“No less than five open-air services were held on Sunday in the streets and parks of the city. The city is being flooded with literature announcing the mass meetings addressed by Mr. Leafe. Large numbers of business men have been attracted by the plain talks at the mid-day services. The mission has been eminently successful in reaching the man in the street. They sat in the main body of the hall, each man brought in and chaperoned by some kindly worker. The preacher gripped them from beginning to end, with clear, logical argument bristling with points. It is interesting to note that this great evangelistic mission is associated with the strenuous financial effort of the C.M.M. Surely this is as it ought to be. With the spiritual flood-tide of a strong revival, there must be a mighty impulse in the practical direction of raising the financial resources of this Mission.” (9.)

Apart from a number of other missions for which no report was ever published, Mr. Leafe later conducted missions on Norfolk Island, and in Fiji, before returning to England in March, 1905.

Robert Robertson came back into the State as well. He conducted a successful United Tent Mission at Hillgrove. Another was held at Tingha, in the Inverell circuit. The Tingha mission followed one in Tamworth, which was not reported upon.

“A very gracious revival has occurred at the Tingha end of the Inverell Circuit in connection with a visit of Mr. R. Robertson, the well-known tent missionary, who was accompanied by his son and Mr. James Graham. The party drove through from Tamworth, where they had been holding a series of tent missions, opening in Tingha on Sunday, June 5th. From the outset great blessing attended the meetings, the church being overcrowded at night on the first Sunday, and a number of people

indicating their desire to become converted, several of whom were found kneeling at the form cleared for that purpose in the after-meeting. It was delightful to see this old-fashioned method of dealing with anxious souls in free and successful exercise. The plan was followed throughout the mission. When the church was crowded out the missionary took the local hall, which was furnished with additional seats from the church and S. A. Barracks. The officer in charge of the S. A. work in Tingha gave hearty co-operation throughout. Every night numbers of folk stood up to signify their anxiety for salvation, and each night a number of those so indicating their desire to be saved found their way to the front and were dealt with. In all fifty-seven persons professed conversion, and numbers of others stood up at the final meeting of the mission to signify their intention of giving themselves to the Lord. We have felt that much blessing has been received by all through the advent of this mission at Tingha, and all who participated in the blessing wish the brethren God-speed in their further travels.” (10.)

W. H. Scurr, and his off-sider, Mr. Crew, also re-visited some of the towns where they had held campaigns previously. For example:-

“Since the visit of the United Tent Mission to Wagga in June last, the friends of the Rev. Mr. Scurr in that town must be numbered by many scores, and qualified enthusiastic.

When it became known, therefore, that he was disengaged, and purposed passing through Wagga *en route* for Sydney, it was urgently pressed upon him that he should stay awhile and conduct services in the various churches. Mr. Scurr kindly consented, and, accompanied by his late lieutenant in the Tent, Mr. Crew, commenced a series of evangelistic services in the Methodist Church, Salvation Army Barracks and Presbyterian Church, at which latter he officiated all Sabbath for the Rev. Charles Bell, who was incapacitated by serious illness. As a result of this mission, there were several conversions and a general amount of good to the Christians in Wagga, many of whom would be delighted to have Mr. Scurr settle in this town, if that were possible.” (11.)

Early in 1904, Mr. W. Arnold sailed to the Bega area to hold a series of evangelistic missions, about six months after the original United Tent Mission visit. These missions started at Candelo on January 24, followed by a short visit of three days to Village Settlement, which was about three miles from Bega. He held his first meeting in Bega on February 7, in Pambula on February 21, and the mission finished at Merimbula on March 1.

“Altogether about 100, young and old, professed to receive Christ during this series of Travelling Missions.” Only three of these conversions took place in Bega itself. However, the Bega Tent Mission, six months earlier, had been very successful, and since that time, the local minister had been making periodic calls for conversion in his ordinary services, with good success. The published account of these meetings led by Mr. Arnold offered an explanation of the fact that only three converts were made at Bega. It was a result of all the previous successful evangelising there. The congregation appeared to be all converted and sanctified, and therefore was not really in need of a visiting evangelist. (12.)

Historians, who were not present, and who lived many years later, might add another possible explanation - that although the congregation was all converted and sanctified, they had also gone to sleep. If they did not need the evangelist for themselves, a mission lasting two weeks provided a great opportunity for the congregation to pray for, and evangelise amongst their friends, and apparently this did not happen very much on that occasion. Whether the Bega people were asleep on that occasion, or not, this issue of being asleep will be mentioned again later.

THE PATTERN OF THE TENT MISSIONS

In one sense the missions were all different. Yet in another way they were very similar. Despite the first comment, there seems to be much repetition in the reports which describe these events.

Good preparations involved a series of combined prayer meetings, and hopefully some cottage prayer meetings also. An organising secretary would handle whatever local help was needed, and all advertising, and all co-operation between the churches. The site for the Tent, and for open-air meetings, would be chosen, and whatever permissions needed would be sought.

The general pattern for a ten days' mission was that it started on Saturday evening with a meeting for the local Christians, and mission workers.

The first Sunday saw evangelistic services in the morning and evening, often replacing church services in several of the local denominations. Sometimes there would be an arrangement for the Sunday offerings in the Tent services to be used to re-imburse the churches for the offerings they lost by having their people attend the Tent meetings. A Sunday afternoon meeting would be for children. All Sunday Schools would combine for this, and the missionary would use a simple talk to call upon the children directly to turn to Christ and seek their salvation.

Prayer meetings would be held every morning, and often at other times. Afternoon Bible readings would be held each week day, to emphasise the themes of holiness and dedication, and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Evangelistic meetings would be held in the tent each evening, preceded by an open-air meeting at a central location. Other open-air meetings might be held at suitable times. On the main Saturday evening, a meeting "for men only" would be held, at which matters of social behaviour, including sexual ethics, would be emphasised, and the men would be challenged to sign a "Purity Pledge." These men's meetings were always very popular, and in some instances the addresses had to be repeated by popular demand. There might also be a Temperance meeting at some stage, encouraging people to sign the Temperance pledge. Usually, at the end of each meeting, people would be called upon to decide for Christ, to seek salvation through Christ, or to make a full surrender. Usually the missionaries, or local clergy, would do the counselling in the enquiry tent. Local ministers would also provide secretaries to keep a tally of what was happening, to maintain some quality control, and to refer on enquirers to their respective ministers.

Final meetings could be used to strengthen the converts, as well as pointing them to practices which would help them to persevere in their new faith and obedience. A ten-day mission might normally close on the second Tuesday, leaving adequate time to dismantle and remove the tent, and set it up at its next location. Naturally, there were considerable variations on this routine, but it gives an idea of what normally happened.

SOME OF THE BETTER EXAMPLES

Corrimal. Missions had already been held in the towns surrounding Corrimal, and expectation was high. Christians had been praying for a "time of the coming of the Lord." Many in the population were miners, so some of them had a heritage based in the old Methodist revivals in Cornwall, Yorkshire or Wales. There was a high proportion of nominal Methodists in the population.

The tent seated 1,000, but over 1,400 were present one Sunday night. The audience expressed their

fervour, and it was easy to preach to such a congregation. “They were, indeed, heavenly times. Christians left the respectable and modest part of their religion at home or somewhere else, and shouted like ranters of old. And there was something to shout about. It was not sentiment or excitement, it was religious fervour, a people glorifying God. We had ten days here, and it was fully ten days too short. We had 313 seekers after Christ, and a host of Christians who sought and found the power of the Holy Ghost.” The converts included people of all kinds, and the revival affected various stratas of society. The language in the mines became purified. Debtors paid their bills. Fractured relationships were mended. The churches overflowed. The Corrimal Methodist Church was suddenly far too small. (13.)

Helensburgh. This mission was quite different. It was also a mining town, with a population of 1,400. The social life was determined by the drinking club and the dancing saloon, and there was not one resident minister in town, and the churches were not strong. While some helpers in the mission were local Methodists, David O'Donnell had to import other helpers from further south, including the Bulli Methodist minister, the Rev. W. G. Willard. The team worked very hard, visiting, offering invitations to the meetings and distributing tracts. In the end, 234 people passed through the enquiry room -a monumental result for a difficult place. (14.)

Singleton. “For eight weeks before the arrival of the missionary and the tent, weekly united prayer meetings were held in rotation in the Church of England schoolroom and S. Singleton Mission Hall, the Presbyterian Church, Wesleyan Church and Salvation Army Barracks. In addition to this there were cottage prayer meetings every night in the week (except Saturday) in different houses in Singleton and outlying places, such as at Baroona and Rix Creek. At these meetings the children of God of every branch of the Church of God met night after night at one common mercy seat. Thus God was honoured and all hearts were lifted up and emboldened to ask great things of God, and expect great things from Him. In addition to this the two papers of the town had advertisements in every issue, besides paragraphs telling of what was being done.” Large signs were set up, and large-scale visiting was arranged. “Thus prayer and work went hand in hand.” The afternoon Bible readings were characterised by “much fervour and solid teaching of the word, emphasising the necessity of holiness and the fulness of the Spirit for all God's children.” At the evening Gospel meetings, the tent was filled from the first night.

Early morning prayer meetings were held in the tent, at 7 o'clock, every morning of the mission. Often 150 and 200 would attend, despite the bitterly cold weather. On one occasion, 350 came to the early prayer meeting..

Of those who passed through the enquiry room, there were 370 in the first week. The total for the whole ten-day's mission was 568, including children. But many other conversions occurred at home, and in the streets or shops. “...some of the best cases of conversion being the result of button-holing and personal efforts.”

The population of the town and district was less than 3,000. So, twenty percent of the population expressed their desire for salvation, apart from all those who were already saved, and were members of the churches.

David O'Donnell described this ten day's mission as the most remarkable revival he had ever seen. Understandably, the transforming impact upon the town was considerable. (15.)

One long-term result of this revival was the founding of the Aborigines Inland Mission, a few years later.

Kempsey. The main report on the mission at Kempsey was written by the local Methodist minister, the Rev. William Pearson, who was also the Organising Secretary. In this case, the Presbyterians, Methodists and Salvation Army people worked together. Cottage prayer meetings were held some weeks in advance, and a special week of prayer occurred just before the mission. An extensive visiting programme was organised and carried out. A 60 voice choir was conducted by one of the ministers, which led a praise service before each evening meeting. This mission was extended to be sixteen days long. There were four meetings on the first day (Sunday), including the early prayer meeting. Mr. W. H. Scurr's sermons were long, an hour or more, but the people were attentive, and the interest increased and deepened. The Bible readings were rich spiritual experiences, were well attended, and were held in the Presbyterian Church. Many Christians were quickened wonderfully in their devotion to God. 138 men took the Purity Pledge. 92 people entered the enquiry room on the evening of the third Sunday. The overall total was 379 who were counselled, mostly adults and young people. And this, despite some problems with the Missioner's health. These converts divided up as follows:- "English Church 61, Presbyterian 104, Methodist 184, Salvation Army 24, Roman Catholic 4, no church 2." (16.)

Casino. Robert Robertson probably had a tent somewhat smaller than a few of the others. "The seating capacity was taxed to its utmost throughout the entire Mission. Mr. Robertson, the missioner, describes this mission as one of the most successful in his 25 years as an evangelist. Two hundred and seventy-five persons found peace in the enquiry-rooms - numbers of others were saved in their homes, bringing the total up to over 300." "Mr. Robertson's addresses were simple, yet powerful expositions of truth. The mission has created a new era in church work. Filled churches in place of empty seats, a progressive movement to extent Christ's kingdom, and more consecrated zeal in the work are noticeable results of the Mission. The Presbyterian Church is to inaugurate a Church fellowship and a Christian Endeavour Society. Our converts are to be received into the Church next Sunday." (17.)

Balmain and Waterloo. Two prolonged United Tent Missions were mounted in heavily populated areas of Sydney. One was at Waterloo. We have seen references to the campaigns in that suburb led by O'Donnell late in 1902, and by Robertson in 1903. Hundreds of conversions occurred.

In Balmain, a tent was used in a good location, led by David O'Donnell, and several hundreds of conversions took place. But O'Donnell realised that these converts did not represent the type of citizen they all really wanted to reach. So he suggested that the tent be moved to a nearby location called "Devil's Corner," where numbers of unsavoury characters assembled. O'Donnell had to leave, to conduct missions elsewhere. So, Samuel and John Barrett ran a campaign in the tent in this new location for nine weeks, and nearly five hundred conversions were made, despite efforts to persecute them, and to destroy the tent..

Ebenezer Vickery realised quickly that a new type of building was needed to help these converts to grow in their faith, and in Christian usefulness, and to win many more for Christ. So, land was bought, and the Helping Hand Mission was built. The Balmain College Hall was used for a few weeks until the new building was complete. It was a big occasion when the new complex was officially opened for their use. The Barrett brothers continued in charge for a year longer, before the Mission became part of the Central Methodist Mission's sphere of operations.

Many people were saved from their sins, were helped to rise above a bad life-style, and out of very unsatisfactory conditions. (18.)

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Statistics for Methodist membership, and related figures, were gathered around the end of each year, and were circulated at the Conference in February. They were published soon after in the Minutes of Conference. At the Conference in 1902, a union occurred between the various sections of Methodism in Australia. So, to obtain the membership figures in New South Wales for this Conference in 1902, it is necessary to add together the figures of the Wesleyans, the Primitive Methodists, and the small number of members of the United Methodist Free Church. The Bible Christians were strong in South Australia, and to a lesser degree in Victoria, so their contribution did not affect figures for New South Wales.

This little exercise shows that the total membership for Methodists at the United Conference in February, 1902, in New South Wales, was 13,768 full members, with 620 on trial for membership, and a total constituency of adherents of 99,969. This represented a slight increase (less than 500 full members) above the total for February, 1901.

The figures for the Conference in February, 1903, had been gathered late in 1902, and so would show the impact of the evangelism to a modest degree, but not yet the whole impact. These showed a full membership of 14,880, with 1,453 on trial for membership. So the full membership had grown by 1,112, or about eight percent.

The more pertinent figures are those for February, 1904, which would have been gathered near the end of 1903. These showed a full membership of 16,032, with 1,068 on trial for membership, and a constituency of 105,599. This reveals 1,799 new full members in the 12 months, which is an increase of about twelve percent.

The figures published in February, 1905, which were gathered late in 1904, showed a full membership of 17,131, with 915 on trial for membership. Although the percentage increase is smaller, it still represents 1,560 new full members.

The figures published in 1906, for the end of 1905, perhaps come back to what had been normal previously. Full members were 17,648, with 770 on trial for membership. Only 516 of these were new members. This was the kind of slow growth which had been experienced, with some exceptions, for several decades.

The leap from 13,768 full members in February, 1902 to 17,648 in February, 1906, represents some of the best growth seen in Methodist history in Australia.

EVALUATION OF EVANGELISM IN THIS PERIOD

The years 1901 to 1904 in the history of Methodism in New South Wales, must be seen as part of a fluctuating movement of revival in the Protestant Churches generally in Australia, from about 1880 to 1914. It is what marks this period as the hey-day of evangelicalism in Australia. The revival was, I believe, best described as a kind of spiritual ground swell, which was not always easy to recognise, unless it burst forth under the guise of some more noticeable, organised mass evangelistic effort. It formed a kind of answer to the many prayers of many people over the previous 25 years.

From about 1880, onwards, it is possible to see slow and steady signs of growth in the prayer life of the churches, and to see an increased interest by many Christians in personal holiness, and spiritual

effectiveness. In answer to these many prayers and deep desires, touches of revival appeared, here and there, varying from State to State; varying from denomination to denomination, sometimes appearing for a year or two, and then not being evident for a while, to reappear later. So, despite there being spasmodic touches of revival, there were still periods of some years when many people thought revival in the church was not happening.

The revival, when it did appear, could also be very patchy. It might appear in certain places, but not in others. We have seen examples of that in the story of the United Tent Missions, as they went from place to place, and also in what came after.

Revival probably always varies from person to person. In a place where some degree of revival was being experienced, there could still be many people who were spiritually lukewarm, or whose interest in evangelism was not deep enough to make them do anything which was at all sacrificial. So, there might be a degree of revival, side by side with many Christians who were living “at ease in Zion.”

Often enough, the touches of revival would embody themselves within some more organised and obvious evangelistic effort. As a result, it was easy for a less critical person to think that the mass evangelism was actually the revival. The revival, however, is not the same as the mass evangelism. Revival is not to be confused with Revivalism. In fact, the revival consisted in the ground swell of spiritual life which gave power and effectiveness to the mass evangelism, or other form of outreach. At other times, the evangelism would normally be less effective, or might be completely ineffective, although the same degree of human effort and ingenuity might have been applied to it, as at better times.

The Methodists were not the only ones whose membership grew in this period. The Presbyterian membership in New South Wales also grew in a most interesting way during this time, although the pattern of this growth was slightly different.

Some Examples

An editorial published in *The Methodist* in December, 1902, reminded the readers that Methodism was born in a revival, and that all through the most vigorous parts of the history of Methodism, the revival spirit in Methodism has been intense at those times. The editor believed that the recent series of evangelistic events were a witness to this fact. There had been the Sydney Simultaneous Mission of 1901 with its considerable impact, followed by the United Tent Missions in country areas.

“Methodists must remember that their vocation is not to run a merely social or financial institution but to ‘spread scriptural holiness.’ When we as a Church settle down to financial prosperity and social respectability we shall find that our *raison d’etre* as a separate Church has gone. What brought Methodism into being, and what has led to its growth and prosperity was the passion for soul-saving, and if she losses that she will soon find decay instead of growth”.

While this passion will express itself in many and changing ways, yet “it is impossible to conceive of a church vigorously alive and yet not burning with desire for the salvation of souls.” The editor quoted the Scriptures - “The Bible says, ‘Woe to them that are at ease in Zion,’ and declares that they shall be the first to go into captivity, and in this the prophet may be regarded as speaking for all time. Unquestionably the tendency to ease and self-satisfaction has made itself apparent in our Churches, and whilst we are not prepared to say that the glory has departed, at the same time there is no denying that the old time zeal for the conversion of the people is not manifest in aggressiveness as it once was in the Methodist Church.” (19.)

So the editor was not only standing for evangelism to be the essential backbone and substance of

the church's life, but he emphasised that **determined aggression** is also vitally important in the way it is done.

A similar issue was raised in a long and impassioned letter from the Tent Missioner, W. H. Scurr, which was published in *The Methodist* about fifteen months later. It expressed his astonishment and pain, and that of the other Missioners, and some of the ministers he had spoken to, at the lack of willingness on the part of many church members to make efforts to save souls, which would cost them any discomfort. Many members were “glad in a comfortable way to see the Kingdom of God spread,” but “constant, self-sacrificing zeal for Christ,” and consuming concern for the blood-bought souls of the teeming crowds did not concern them enough to go out of their comfortable way. Scurr considered the situation to be “shameful” and “an unspeakably sad and injurious state of things.” The cure of this lukewarmness is the first and greatest need of the Church. He called for a special prayer campaign against it. (20.)

An editorial was written during the Conference of 1902, concerning what might be discussed at the annual “Conversation on the Work of God.” The editor pointed out that, although many aspects of the church’s life might look prosperous, there were other aspects which ought to provide us all with serious concern. The two examples he used were the declining numbers of Sunday School scholars, and the beginnings of decline in the Young People’s Christian Endeavour numbers, and the declining percentage of Y.P.C.E. members who were also full church members. (21.) The results of the Tent Missions campaign would have helped to solve these two problems, at least for a while. But the problems reappeared soon enough.

Another problem which was discussed often enough was the decline of congregations in cities, and the increasing middle-class nature of Methodist congregations. Men like Ebenezer Vickery were also well aware of the social decay that plagued cities. In some instances, attempts were made to use aggressive evangelism to make an impression on these problems, with some interesting results in this period. We see examples in the continued attempts of men like John Watsford to evangelise in places like Chippendale and Newtown. The Tent evangelism in Balmain, which led up to the formation of the Helping Hand Mission, was another very interesting experiment in this area. In a way, this evangelism was very successful. There were many converts, and each of these changed lives would have wrought some degree of improvement on the personal level, as well as in the society. (22.)

So, the revival brought many blessings. The history of evangelism between 1901 and 1904 in New South Wales Methodism showed some very interesting efforts, by Ebenezer Vickery and others, to overcome the impact of sin in personal lives, and to provide answers to some of Sydney’s deep social problems.

But much, very much remained to be done. There were still many serious problems that the Church, and society, were trying to face. The depths and complexities of these social problems often were not properly understood.

The revival was not as thoroughgoing as many people would have wished. There were not enough conversions. Lukewarmness amongst Church members was such an attractive path to follow. Intensity and determined aggression in evangelism easily becomes blunted, and few people really like it, or the cost it brings.

For even the most ardent Christian, it is always a temptation to forget the true source of spiritual power. Power belongs to God. “All authority” belongs to Jesus Christ, which is exercised in answer to earnest prayer. It is very easy to rely upon hard work alone, or even, hard work, organisation, research and good ideas (plus a little prayer), to extend the Kingdom, rather than upon earnest prayer and hard work. It has always been very easy to transmute evangelism into a work of the flesh.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

EVANGELISM AND REVIVAL IN QUEENSLAND.

1878 - 1915

The first visiting evangelist to come to Queensland was the Rev. William Taylor, an American Methodist, otherwise known as "California Taylor." He was in Brisbane very briefly in December, 1864, and then more extensively in 1869. Queensland had in those years a very small population of people with European ancestry.

The last few decades of the century saw a long and illustrious procession of evangelists, and other significant preachers, visiting many parts of Australia. For reasons which will not be discussed here, most of the attention of these preachers was paid to New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania, and especially to Victoria.

Thomas Spurgeon

One who paid a visit to Queensland in mid-1878 was the very youthful Baptist preacher, Thomas Spurgeon. This visit did not last long, but he always wrote very long letters back to his parents in London.

"In a letter begun at Brisbane on August 16th he says: 'Who would have expected to see George Coulson, our old coachman, his wife and family, at Ipswich? O how pleased they were to be sure. Such delight! Talk. Talk. The very sight of him stirred up old memories, and in course of conversation forgotten incidents came fresh to mind. Coulson told me several times that he was surprised I was the one to be preaching and travelling, and was incessant in enquiries after Master Charles [this Charles was Thomas' twin brother]. I told him that it was evident I had turned out better than anticipated, and in admitting that he explained that the reasons why he expected my brother to be such a prodigy was because "there was always such a deal of mischief in Master Charles."'" (1.) Thomas' father, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, was very famous throughout the Protestant Christian community in Australia, and this opened the way for Thomas to preach. He had come to Australia for his health, and to practise his trade as an engraver.

George Muller

Another well-known visitor to Queensland was the Brethren leader, George Muller, arriving in July, 1886. The only details about this, in his wife's account of his missionary tours, are as follows:

"...after remaining there (in Sydney) for more than a month, on the morning of July 14th we embarked on board the steamship 'Barcoo', sailed for Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, at 2 p.m.; and, landing there at 9 a.m. on the morning of the 16th, after a short voyage of 500 miles only from Sydney, went to the Imperial Hotel, where we remained until August 10th. At Brisbane,

including two services for the Germans in their own language, Mr Muller held seventeen meetings altogether, at the different churches, chapels and halls, which that city contains, where he generally had large congregations of attentive hearers. On the afternoon of July 19th we took a long drive through Brisbane and the neighbourhood, walked frequently during our stay in the city in the Botanical Gardens, and rather enjoyed the climate of Queensland, which is considerably warmer than that of Sydney.

Our visit to Brisbane, however, having come to a close, on the morning of August 10th we embarked on the Steamship 'Dacca', a large vessel belonging to the British India Steam Navigation Company, and sailed at noon. After calling at Rockhampton, Bowen, Mackay, Townsville, Port Douglas and Cooktown - we passed Cape Flattery, and touched at Thursday Island....." before sailing through the Indonesian islands to Java. (2.)

Muller was very widely respected for his Bristol orphanage work, and his example of faith and trust in God. He was also looked up to as a leader among the members of the Open Brethren Assemblies.

Thomas Cook

When he visited Australia, Cook was the officially appointed evangelist of the British Methodist Conference, and had a long record of successful work. He arrived in Brisbane on Friday, 31st May, 1895. The first Mission was held in the Albert Street Church.

The meetings resulted in 469 people being dealt with in the enquiry rooms. Such missions usually finished with a special meeting for the converts. Cook said it was good to see "so many young men and women, but with many of mature age scattered among them" making a definite commitment to the Lord at this meeting. "Ministers and people praised God together for the harvest gathered from fields in which they had sown with tearful eyes." (3.)

Brisbane at that time had a population of about 100,000. The Mission lasted for ten days. The Ipswich Mission was a little shorter, but seemed to embody more of the spirit of revival than the Mission in Brisbane.

"At Ipswich the first Sunday morning service was one of the most solemn and impressive of the whole series. Many who were afterwards converted spoke of that service as the time when they were awakened to a sense of their need. Nearly a hundred of all ages sought counsel in the enquiry rooms that first Sabbath. As the week advanced the meetings were increasingly full of unction and power. Christians came from far and near, to hear the glad evangel of a full salvation. The closing service exceeded all others in numbers and seekers." (4.)

330 professions of conversion were reported in Ipswich, although there were a number of other conversions which occurred in the aftermath of the meetings.

The other Missions that Cook led in Queensland were in Rockhampton, Charters Towers and Townsville. "The appalling religious indifference which prevails there was a new experience. Not more than twenty per cent. of the population ever attend a place of worship. Sports and secular concerts are often held on the Sabbath. Religion is scouted, by the great majority, as only fit for a puritanical age. We found small memberships in the churches, but little prestige or social status, and much discouragement amongst ministers and godly folk. For the first few days our hearers and converts were nearly all women. Do what we would, we could not secure the presence of the sterner sex until the meeting for men only, which, in each town, not only brought an accession of power, but seemed to turn the tide in our favour. Afterwards the men came, not only to the meetings, but to the Saviour, and a new religious instinct was, for the time, created. By those who know Queensland and the other colonies best, the seven hundred seekers over whom we rejoiced in

these three towns, was considered a more remarkable work of God than anything we had previously reported. The figures by no means represent the extent of blessing vouchsafed; and we left the churches full of new life and hope.” (5.)

John MacNeil

This Scottish-born evangelist spent his short ministry almost entirely in Australia, most of the time making his base in Melbourne. He was a Presbyterian minister, usually working as an official representative of the Church in Victoria.

He visited Queensland on two occasions. The first time was from the 30th September, 1895. He conducted missions in central churches in Brisbane, followed by shorter missions in Mowbrayton, Toowong, Maryborough, Toowoomba and Killarney.

The second visit was for a longer period, and emphasised northern Queensland. He left home in Victoria on 3rd June, 1896, travelling by train to Sydney, and then by boat north. He was in the Cooktown and Port Douglas area through the middle of June, preaching also in Mareeba, Cairns, Townsville and was in Charters Towers on 4th July. He was preaching in Mackay on July 22, and in Kanaka territory at Walkerston on 27th, although he preached in the white churches. He was in Rockhampton on 30th, and in Mount Morgan on 11th August. He returned to Rockhampton, and was in Bundaberg on 18th, returning to Brisbane by 24th August.

While he was preparing to travel home to Victoria, he collapsed and died whilst picking up a repaired bag from a Brisbane shop. He was in his forty-second year.

From his letters sent home during the trip, he seemed very positive about the spiritual impact of his meetings in northern Queensland, and, like Thomas Cook, appreciated the relatively unevangelised nature of much of the outback parts of the state. (6.)

Henry Varley

Varley was a British businessman who had links with the Open Brethren, but who evangelised widely with Christians of many theological shapes. For a number of years he lived in Melbourne.

Strangely, he did not make a serious evangelistic visit to Queensland until he was around seventy years of age, in 1905. This was a year of revival in many places, but Varley was disappointed with his campaign in Brisbane. The Brisbane mission followed a good tour of Tasmania, and a much more successful mission in Sydney. The only reference to the Brisbane mission in his biography is as follows.

“Later in the year he broke fresh ground in Brisbane. His work achieved only a moderate success. ‘The mass of the population in Queensland,’ he wrote, ‘have their portion in this world, and they appear well satisfied with it.’ But he found compensation for his disappointment in the discovery that a gentleman, one of two brothers, the Messrs Young, both of them earnest Christians, had been led to Christ by his ministry in Australia more than a quarter of a century before. They were now the proprietors of an extensive sugar-plantation at Fairymead, some three hundred miles north of Brisbane, with a great number of Kanakas in their employ. Directly owing to the efforts and the influenced of these two gentlemen, hundreds of them had become sincere Christians. Thus, with profound joy, my father learned that one life into which he had been permitted to bring the saving power of the Gospel had in its turn passed on the blessing to many more.” (7.)

THE AUSTRALIAN REVIVAL AROUND 1902

The context for the work of the evangelists who are described here is that a groundswell of revival was in progress throughout many parts of Australia and New Zealand around this time.

Several notable evangelists were at work in Queensland just after the turn of the century, and their work was influenced strongly by this underlying spiritual impetus.

Andrew Stewart's Team of Evangelists.

The year 1899 saw Mr. Andrew Stewart and his wife in England looking for a team of evangelists to work in Queensland's Presbyterian churches.

In due course, he secured the services of six men to form this team. One of these evangelists was the Rev. James Lyall. Lyall said that, as the party proceeded up the east coast of Australia toward Brisbane, they found many Christians thirsting for revival, but concerned because spiritual life seemed cold, and not many conversions were taking place. The plan which had been used in the Great London Simultaneous Mission appealed to many of the people that Lyall met, and they were hoping that something along this line could be done in Australia to re-invigorate spiritual life in the churches.

The preparations that Lyall describes are only those which he experienced, and do not show much of what preparedness for revival already existed. He said: "Immediately on our arrival in Brisbane, we found that Mr. and Mrs. Stewart, who had preceded the rest of us to Brisbane, had taken a house in a small quiet seaside place about twenty miles from the city, for the purpose of retreat and prayer. We all felt this to be the great need, so with Brisbane ministers and workers for nearly a week we waited before God, pleading our weakness, pleading the need and refusing to go forth until assured of victory. These were days of deep heart-searching, and there came to all of us a revelation of our weakness and the entrenched strength of the enemy such as we never had before." (8.)

A special conference was held on the Saturday prior to the commencement of the Mission, in the Wickham Terrace Church, which he described as the largest and most important church in the city. At this gathering, "all the newly-arrived workers took part in the service. There was no excitement, no noise, no hallelujahs, but a deep, quiet, expectant spirit, the kind of a quiet that precedes the lightning's flash, the thunders roar, and the rain's deluge. It was felt that a good start had been made, and that the Presbyterian Churches of Brisbane were interested. On the Sunday, in seven churches in different parts of the city, the long-expected Mission commenced - a Mission that lasted fully three months - that moved Brisbane at its centre and touched every suburb. After the first two weeks the Mission ceased to be a Presbyterian Mission, and became a simultaneous movement of all the evangelical churches of the city." (9.)

Several of the visiting workers went north and west to areas away from Brisbane, while Mr. and Mrs. Stewart, the Rev. D. C. Davidson, from Chicago, and the Rev. James Lyall remained in Brisbane for almost the whole of the three month period, working not only in central locations, but throughout the suburbs.

Daily prayer meetings for revival were held in Brisbane at both 11am and 1pm. Lyall says that "perhaps never did people or ministers in any city pray more earnestly for revival than did the ministers and people of Brisbane." The prayer, however, was for revival throughout the whole of Australasia.

"The first two weeks found the ground dry and parched, and there was little or no response to the gospel appeal; daily reports were well nigh discouraging, but at last the breath from heaven came

and the revival broke out. In one of the suburbs where Mr. Davidson was labouring large numbers were brought to Christ. He passed on to another with the same result, and in a few weeks hundreds were dealt with. My own field was first in Fortitude Valley, a thickly-settled working-class district.

During the month there was a blessed ingathering, notably of young men. In one family alone, six sons, fine stalwart Highlanders, came to Christ. On the last Sunday of the Mission it was found that there were only a few in the whole of the Presbyterian Church Sunday School that had not settled the great question. The minister testified that there was scarcely a house in connection with the congregation in which there had not been at least one member of the family who had experienced a work of grace.

On the last Sunday of the Valley Mission we launched out into the deep and took the great Exhibition Building seating nearly three thousand people, and so great was the interest aroused that the building was practically filled. From the Valley, I went to the heart of the city for a Central Mission, the leading city churches combining. For a month we stormed the city's centre, and then passed on to another large suburb called Paddington. On the Sundays all through this period lasting nearly two months we had afternoon gatherings in the Centennial Hall. Very large numbers of Christians assembled from every part of the city to these services, and also a splendid proportion of unsaved. Many date their new life from these Sunday afternoon services. On Saturday nights the public houses, gaming rooms and brothels were all visited and urgent invitations given to the Sunday services. Many came to hear the message, and some accepted it as the message of life and hope to them.

Mr. and Mrs. Stewart were everywhere helping with their gracious ministry of sympathy and prayer and song.

We cannot tabulate results, but we know of many hundreds who made the great decision. *There was hardly a shop or warehouse or office in the city where someone had not professed conversion. Hundreds had also surrendered themselves to be filled with the Holy Spirit.*

The work was not confined to the city. The river began to overflow its banks. Tidings began to come in from outlying districts that the blessing was spreading. On rail and on coach travellers were telling the news of the religious awakening. Some of the Missioners had gone into the country with the message until Ipswich, Laidly, Gympie, Bundaberg, etc., were all touched.

Since then other workers have arrived in that field, and for the last three years there has been continuous movement in Queensland. The Rev. D. C. Davidson has had revival times in the far north. Mr. Hugh Paton, one of Scotland's choice evangelists, has had fruitful tent campaigns in Brisbane, and has travelled to the Gulf of Carpentaria, 2,000 miles north, with the gospel message, and has also visited Thursday Island. Mr. J. C. Sloan has done valiant work in some of the hardest fields among the mining population." (10.)

Lyall himself led the campaign in Ipswich, which at that time had a population of about 15,000 people. This campaign lasted for five weeks.

The three months of this Simultaneous Mission in Queensland ended late in 1901, and was followed immediately by an extensive Simultaneous Mission in Sydney and its suburbs, through the month of November, 1901. Lyall took part in some of these meetings, as did a visiting American evangelist named William Edgar Geil. Geil was on an extensive tour in support of foreign missionary work throughout the Pacific. After the Sydney Mission, Geil went north to Thursday Island and New Guinea. In April of 1902 he had agreed to take a part in the great Torrey and Alexander Mission in Melbourne.

W. Edgar Geil's Unexpected Visit to Queensland.

Upon his return from New Guinea, Geil expected to catch a boat from Cooktown to the Philippine Islands, before arriving in Melbourne. However, the boat had left Sydney four days early, and consequently had already gone when he arrived in Cooktown. Unexpectedly, he had to fill in two weeks in Queensland before the next boat was available. This new connection would not be in Cooktown, but in Townsville, so Geil travelled down the coast.

It was in Townsville that Geil found a copy of a letter dated over a hundred years, on 29th August, 1799, and written by the Rev. Richard Johnson, chaplain with the first fleet in Sydney. It concerned a certain Samuel Clode, a missionary, who had been murdered in Sydney by a soldier who owed him money. Geil thought this murder was the first instance of the violent death of a Christian missionary in the Pacific.

Geil describes his time in Queensland as follows:- “When the pastors of Townsville heard of my presence in the city they united their forces and a special series of meetings was conducted. The first evangelistic service proved that the Wesleyan Church was too small for the crowds who desired to attend. The Presbyterian building was next used, but that also would not accommodate the crowds, so a committee of businessmen leased the School of Arts, and finally the theatre. Scores professed conversion in these meetings, and arrangements were made to vigorously work on for three months or until an evangelist they expect to assist them should arrive. This was all while I waited; then I found by wiring, two days still remained before I could get the steamer. These were spent at the gold-mining centre, Charters Towers. I gave one service the first day, and there was demand for three meetings the next, which were conducted in the Wesleyan Church No.1, which was the largest church building in the city. The Lord gave us favor with the people. There were scores of converts, and among them some prominent in society and business. At the last service a man and his wife and four sons professed conversion, one not knowing that the others were doing so. This was all done while I waited. The pastors in both cities appreciated the help greatly, and the fact that they were not permitted to remunerate me in any way for the work done, helped, I think, my influence with the mass of the people. Then there being still further delay, I was asked to deliver an address on my independent observation of missions, in the Presbyterian Church in Townsville. For one solid hour I spoke to a packed house, and it was said that no such mission service had ever been held in the history of the city. I am thankful for the break in the journey, and consider it was the will of God that I should miss the ship and get in the blessed work in Queensland.” (11.)

The Queensland Evangelistic Society

One of the long-term effects to flow from the Simultaneous Mission in Queensland, and from the visit of Andrew Stewart's team of evangelists, was the formation in 1905 of the Queensland Evangelistic Society.

The first meeting, held on 3rd March, at which the Society was formed, was chaired by Hugh Paton, and Andrew Stewart spoke in favour of the project. A similar organisation existed in Scotland, and this was used as a model. As the meeting progressed, office bearers were elected, and a decision was made to publish a paper, called *The Queensland Evangelist*.

Paton remained closely linked with this Society. Usually he was a vice-president. He spent a good deal of time itinerating and evangelising around Queensland, but also served as pastor of a church on occasions. This continued until 1926, when he moved to Sydney to become pastor of St Stephen's in Macquarie Street.

Throughout the early decades of the Society especially, a prayer meeting in support of the work was held in Brisbane every Saturday night.

The Society tried to employ or subsidise evangelists, especially to visit outlying areas of the state. A. E. Forbes was an early evangelist, before he went to train at Glasgow Bible Institute. Later, he worked in other countries. Several men were brought out from Scotland to work as evangelists. One of these was a Mr McOmish. The Society also employed some local people. One of these was W. L. Jarvis, who worked as an evangelist for several years after 1919.

Members of the Society were also heavily involved in the visits by overseas evangelists, such as Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman and Charles M. Alexander, Dr. J. Q. A. Henry, who visited in 1911 and in 1914, and the Rev. W. P. Nicholson, who made his first visit in 1910.

During the 1920s, they were involved in several prophetic conferences. The first of these occurred in March, 1919, and featured the American speaker Dr. A. C. Gaebelein. The Society also developed support for certain overseas mission organisations, one of which was the Japan Evangelistic Band, led by Dr. Paget Wilkes. George T. B. Davis visited several times, promoting the work of the Pocket Testament League, which had been founded by Mrs Alexander while she was still only a teenager.

The Baptist preacher, Dr F. B. Meyer, visited in 1925, and Gipsy Smith came in 1926. The range of activities of the Society in those days was very extensive.

Details of these activities are found in the Society's Annual Reports. Files of these reports, and the minutes of meetings, are stored in the library of the Bible College of Queensland.

THE KANAKA REVIVAL

The Queensland Kanaka Mission had commenced in 1886 in the Bundaberg area, seeking to minister to Pacific Islanders who had been brought to Australia as indentured labourers in the sugar cane fields. Because the islanders were dark-skinned, and were used to the great humidity, it was thought that they would be more suited to labouring work in Queensland than Europeans. Serious efforts were made to avoid the practise of kidnapping in order to obtain the workers, and any signs of slavery in relation to their living and working conditions. While many came of their own free will, many others came because they had been kidnapped, or were induced by promises they did not understand, and this practise became known as "black-birding."

When the first call was made for Christians to support this work, the first financial gift came from George Muller, who happened to be in Sydney at that time.

Following much prayer, and earnest work, a steady stream of converts were baptised, until 1906, when the indentured labour scheme was closed down, and the islanders were returned to their homes. Over 5,000 Kanakas were baptised upon profession of their faith in this period. The continued success of the work attracted much attention, and visitors came from far and near to see what God was doing. Over a period of time, these visitors included Hudson Taylor, Mrs Howard Taylor, other C.I.M. workers, and visiting evangelists W. Edgar Geil, Dr. Harry Grattan Guinness and Mr. Hugh Paton.

During 1905 and early in 1906, signs of a revival appeared in this work.

It seems that the revival first appeared in the form of a marked increase in the spirit of prayer amongst the islander Christians. It commenced in the Hapsburg plantation, in what was known as the Isis district in northern Queensland, in the period before Easter, 1905. The Annual Report describes it this way:- "The outstanding feature of the year's work has been the spirit of prayer

amongst a number of the Boys, and their growth in grace in consequence.

The increase of prayer began some time ago, when a number of the Boys joined the Cycle of Prayer for World Wide Revival. They were, with one or two exceptions, in the habit of spending much of their spare time in making gardens. One Boy even bought a lamp that he might be able to work before daylight, and so have a lot done before going to work in the fields. At night, on their return, they either went to look at their gardens or else played cricket; so that prayer and the reading of God's Word were still much neglected.

One night the whistle was blown for school, but only two came, both teachers, Charley Pentecost and Jimmie Tongoa, faithful Christians. Charley said, 'Never mind, Jimmie, you teach me, and then we pray. I believe God is going to work here through this meeting.' So they prayed. [Surnames probably represent the names of the islands from which they originally came.]

How did the answer come? The Christians became convicted of their deadness. It was not a case of open backsliding - just lack of appetite for spiritual things, and no zeal for God's work. A Christian Boy mournfully said, 'Altogether Christian too sleepy, they no work for God, they only have meeting when missionary come.' Feeling their great need of quickening, they began having prayer meetings amongst themselves. One of the teacher Boys who had been in Melbourne during the time of the Simultaneous Mission [1902] and had attended some of the cottage prayer meetings, began going from humpy to humpy holding meetings in like manner. But this was resented, one Boy saying, 'I think you cross along me, that is why you come to pray along my house.' Prayer meetings were held at 5 a.m. on Sundays, and three times these meetings were begun and discontinued for lack of interest; but the faithful held on; then prayer meetings followed the week-night classes.

At first these were dry and heavy, and only a few persevered, but gradually one and another joined the band. A few weeks later, at a prayer meeting at the Mission house, God's Spirit so fell upon the six or eight present, that one after another fell on their knees and poured out their souls to God, laughing and crying for very joy! Several now began to ask God to search them and help them lay aside every weight. They also asked Him to wake them early for prayer. How things changed! Before, all slept till the get-up bell rang, and it was time for breakfast, or else got up to dig in their gardens. Now God wakened them morning by morning before light to hold a prayer meeting, and from many houses might be heard singing and prayer. Again, in the dinner hour, as soon as their meal was finished, they had a season of prayer. One of the leaders of this revival of prayer, having finished his time, left the district several weeks ago, and the taunt was made, 'Oh now you lose Thomas Sandwich, everything will go down,' but increased prayer still keeps the fires burning." (12.)

Florence Young wrote "I shall never forget my visit to Hapsberg at Easter that year. I had taken Mr. and Mrs. Gates [new workers on their way to Geraldton] to see the work at the Isis.

It was Sunday evening; a full and happy day had been spent at the mission hall. In the evening the workers went to different classes, and now we stood at the door of a large grass house on Hapsberg plantation. Within, a bright light lit up the faces of twenty-five men, gathered for the evening meeting. Mats on the earthen floor, and a neat cloth and bunch of flowers on the table gave an air of comfort; but these were hardly noticed, for a strange sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit laid hold of us. As we entered the room we were conscious of an atmosphere literally charged with divine power. We had come by the Boys' request, to give a lesson on the Lord's Second Coming, the closing one of a series, but so strong was the sense of the presence of God that one could only let go everything in utter abandonment to the control of the Holy Spirit. An hour followed of intense prayer, then, while still on our knees, God's message came. Another hour was spent in the eager reception of the lesson, and in appropriating prayer. There was such a keen appetite for prayer that before closing we asked if some of the Boys would like to spend the following day, a holiday, in waiting upon God. The suggestion was eagerly adopted.

We met on Easter Monday at 10 a.m. in the same little grass house - four missionaries and thirteen South Sea Islanders. For half an hour the enemy made a desperate attempt to block our access into the Holiest, but praise God, he was defeated, and great liberty was given. The hours passed rapidly, and with a short interval at mid-day, we continued in prayer until 4 p.m.

One dear Boy, bubbling over with gladness prayed: 'O Lord, we thank Thee we no get Master's letter before. Suppose we hear about holiday in time for train on Saturday, might we been go along Bundaberg, then we lose-'im this *beautiful* day. The burden of prayer throughout the day was for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It was prayer such as we had never heard from Boys in all the years of our work amongst them - literally praying in the Holy Spirit.

Such prayer must prevail. No human teaching can produce it. God was working; and thank God this prayer continued. One Boy wrote that the Lord had been wakening him sometimes at three, and sometimes at four o'clock in the morning for prayer. Another Boy told with joy how three of them, after the ordinary meeting, remained in prayer all night, till 3 a.m.

The blessing at the Isis soon spread." (13.)

The Report from Cairns said: "The key-word for the latter part of the year is 'Revival'. We hear of floods of blessing in other lands, and 'a sound of abundance of rain' is in our midst. When we were on furlough in Ballarat, we were crying to God to revive the work in Cairns, and the Lord granted our request, for there was a distinct awakening during our absence, in fact many testified that from the beginning of the present year they have been quickened." (14.)

The missionary at Burdekin reported: "We are happy and thankful to report that the Master's blessing is continuing with us, and He is manifesting His power. Not only are the classes increasing in regard to attendance, but at almost every class souls are turning to the Lord. Each month brings increase of blessing, and special prayer for outsiders to come to school has been answered; the schools are too small and are being enlarged. There is a spirit of prayer and expectancy everywhere. Seaforth advises twenty-two men at class, which means more than last week, so prayers of many months are being answered. The powers of darkness are strong, but our Captain knows no defeat. Oh, may we live in intercession! We feel it is only as we wait upon God that we can have victory, not in despairing cries, but in cries borne of the knowledge of the great opportunities and need, our own impotence, and God's almighty power! We rejoice at seeing the walls of Jericho beginning to crumble, and we are preparing for the shout of victory." (15.)

From Herbert River came the report: "'O Lord revive Thy work,' is the cry everywhere. Here in Queensland God has blessed! It is a joy to go from Bundaberg to Mosman and see in every station what God hath wrought. But revival means more than blessing; the Boys are learning this, and we hear the cry, 'O Lord bend us to prayer; bend us to Thy power; bend us by Thy Holy Spirit.' The question is, are we willing to be bent, made pliable to Him in every detail and corner of our lives? It will cost, yes, it will cost more than we at present know, but with our eyes on Calvary, shall we not gladly pay the price, and for His sake go forward?"

Revival means first surrender. The Lord has shown us that, if He is to work amongst us mightily, His children must be right with Him, surrender all; doubtful things must be laid aside and Christ followed fully.

A young teacher, Joseph, whom I have for some years looked upon as a good, faithful teacher, and a great help in open-air meetings, suddenly some months ago received a special anointing of power. There were conversions in the class he was teaching, and much blessing all around. One day I questioned him as to the secret of the blessing. He said -

'When I came here I found this place where I work very hard; then I begin to pray, and I start school in my house. I pray for one man, and God bring him to me; then for another, and another until my house was full; we have to build a school house. [There were some drunkards and

gamblers amongst them.] Then they come to school and we have good meeting, plenty singing, and they like lesson along Bible; but one thing I see them go out from school and they not saved. I run about along other class and preach in other place, but I not win man for Jesus. One thing spoil my blessing - my pipe. Plenty time God speak to me about this thing, but I say, "This not sin, what for I want to leave it?" When I come home at night I want to read my Bible, but then I want smoke; when I smoke I no more want to read my Bible.

One night after I take meeting I go home and cry and cry along my house, "O Lord what's the matter, I can't win these men for Jesus? Suppose my fault and something wrong with me." And God speak to me again and show me - *my pipe*. That time I throw it away, and oh, big joy and blessing come into my heart, and I no more want to smoke!" (16.)

The next report from the main base at Fairymead said; "Christmas 1905 to Easter 1906, was a time of spiritual refreshment at Fairymead, and prayer became deep and fervent." Special meetings were held over the new year, which led on to much blessing in the following weeks. Thomas Sandwich had been present during this time. His prayer burden increased.

"For two months an intense spirit of prayer prevailed, real expectancy of revival, and then came an element of resistance and check. Someone has well remarked, 'Satan is evidently fighting for every inch. Is the Lord allowing reverses in the campaign to show that victory is not to be easily won? More and more we see that in this battle we must advance on our knees.'"

A visiting evangelist, Mr. Forbes, came to the Bundaberg area around that time, and the fruit from his meetings gained some benefit from the spiritual uplift amongst the Kanakas. Amongst the twenty-seven men converted in these meetings was a leading farmer, who took a bold stand for Christ. Old sores were healed, and much other blessing followed.

"These times of refreshing [amongst the Kanakas] led to the outgoing of the Band of New Hebrides Teachers, who have gone to Malayta. It must be remembered that they have gone to a strange land and to a people speaking a strange tongue. Their lives are in greater danger than are those of the European Missionaries...." (17.)

Commencing in 1904, the work of the Mission was being established in the Solomon Islands, and much help in this was being gained from dedicated Kanakas who returned to the Islands, and helped to establish these new stations, either in their home areas, or working as missionaries in other parts. However, not all of the returning Islanders came from places where a Mission station was being set up. Efforts by these more isolated Christians to maintain their faith was much more difficult, because they were opposed by the full force of their traditional religions upon their return home. Their isolation became a very telling factor.

The Queensland Kanaka Mission worked in five main areas of sugar cane farming, working also amongst the aborigines and Indians when opportunity arose. The one exception was in the Mackay area, where a Presbyterian missionary was settled. The Q. K. M. workers did not work in competition with him, but visited, offering friendly encouragement.

The 1906 Report from Herbert River reflects the new zeal and power in the lives of the Christian Kanakas. "The Boys are very eager for news of the Revival, and nothing moves them so much as some fresh account of the work of the Spirit of God. At Ingham there was real power, the Lord searching many hearts, and much prayer at the close. Joseph Pentecost utterly breaking down and sobbing, unable to pray; others much moved....

Two outstanding features of this past year have been -

First, - A deeper spirit of prayer. 'O Lord, give us fire from heaven. We hear the cry of our people along South Sea, but we must have Thy fire burning in our hearts before we go home. Lord, send us the fire.' Again, another prayed, 'Lord, let us company (share) with Thee on Thy cross. Thou

hast gone all the way to Calvary for us, oh let us go all the way with Thee.’ Then prayer for the missionaries and teachers in Queensland and in the Islands, name after name brought before the Lord...

Second, - A boldness in testimony. One Saturday night our open air meeting was interrupted by a white man under the influence of drink. Every time the name of the Lord was spoken, he cried out, ‘You're wrong, it's not Jesus, it's God.’ At last one young Christian turned to the man, ‘Yes, you say you believe in God, but might you never leave your sin, might you all same one lame man outside the Beautiful Gate of the temple. Peter say to him “In the Name of Jesus...rise up and walk.” No other name, my friend, only in this Name there is power, power, so we rise from our sins and walk in new life - in the Name of Jesus.’ The words repeated went home in the power of the Spirit, and the adversary was silenced.” (18.)

The Kanaka Revival seems, therefore, to have been, in part, an aspect of the world-wide revival which appeared in many places around the world. In another sense, it involved only a modest number of people, and a modest number of conversions, although at a greater rate than previous years. In another sense, it was felt more in some of the Q.K.M. stations than in others. In another way, it was a part of God's preparation for the transfer of the Mission's work from Queensland to an even more difficult field, in the Solomon Islands, providing a good number of strong, mature, native Christians for this new work. The 1905 Report especially contains several testimonies from Kanaka Christians which illustrate this last point, and show the depth of devotion to Christ in the lives of men who were soon to return as evangelists to their own people, or to other nearby islands.

One comment needs to be made concerning the sources of information about this movement. The main source which is most readily available is Florence Young's autobiography, *Pearls from the Pacific*, which was published in London nearly twenty years after the revival took place. To a large degree, however, this book merely reproduces some of the material which had previously been published in the Mission's Annual Report, which also served as the Mission's magazine. These Reports were the main publications of the Mission, although a few other titles appeared earlier, which do not bear on the period of the revival itself. The Annual Reports for 1905 and 1906 provide the fullest available published information. A search of private correspondence would probably be the only other way to improve our picture of this revival.

An overall perspective is provided by Miss Young's book, and also by Dr J. Graham Miller's volumes on the history of the Presbyterian Church in Vanuatu.

Other Major American Evangelists

Torrey and Alexander did not visit Queensland at all in 1902. Alexander was in Australia on other occasions over the next few years with a team of his own, but did not visit the northern state.

Chapman and Alexander visited Brisbane very briefly while they were voyaging to Melbourne, and met the Queensland organising committees. They were in Brisbane on 17th April, 1909, leaving for Sydney on 19th.

Their mission in Brisbane started on 1st July, 1909. The meetings did not last many days, however, as they arrived in Adelaide by train from Brisbane on 16th July. When they left Australia, a few weeks later, the ship called at Townsville, on the way to the Orient.

The evangelists came to Australia for a much longer period in 1912 and 1913. Their visit to Queensland commenced with a Mission in Brisbane from 5th to 19th September, 1912. This was followed by briefer visits to Gladstone, Townsville, Charters Towers, Mackay and Toowoomba. The overall period of this visit lasted well into October.

The biographies of both Chapman and Alexander contain almost no details of the events during

these visits, except that several photographs taken in Queensland were published in Alexander's biography. (19.)

Conclusion.

The Wesleyan Methodists in Queensland all had a strong emphasis on evangelism from their earliest days. John Watsford was one of the ministers who spent a year in Brisbane in those very early years. The visits of California Taylor developed this practice. Other Wesleyan ministers continued this emphasis, including W. G. Taylor in the 1870s.

However, a widespread increase in intercessory prayer for revival, seen in many parts of Australia after 1880, and the impact of holiness teaching of Wesleyan, Brethren and Keswick kinds, provided a situation where the spirit of revival could be felt, especially during evangelistic efforts.

This deepening of the spiritual lives of many believers, of many denominations, helped to account for the surge of successful evangelism, and the church growth, which took place through the early years of the Twentieth Century in Queensland.

A certain tradition of itinerant evangelism was also carried on, for several decades after that, by inter-denominational evangelists such as those supported by the Queensland Evangelistic Society, by Methodist lay evangelists such as Mr. James Graham, and by Baptist and Brethren preachers who were either freelance, or who were supported by a stronger assembly.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

TORREY AND ALEXANDER IN AUSTRALIA,

1902

THE EVENTS OF THE MISSION

Although the evangelistic campaigns conducted by the Rev. R. A. Torrey, with the help of his song-leader, Mr. Charles M. Alexander, and an army of supporters, in the year 1902, constituted one of the great landmarks in Australian evangelism, in recent decades the details of this story were largely forgotten in Australia, until the publication in 1976 of *Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas*, by Dr. J. Edwin Orr.

For decades through the Twentieth Century, many ordinary Christians of various denominations, regularly used *Alexander's Hymn Book Number Three* in their church worship and in their evangelism, and they knew vaguely that its popularity arose from the visit of Alexander to Australia many years before. But any knowledge about the details of this visit were hard to find. Dr. Orr's publication produced a renewed interest in many aspects of Australian evangelism, including the story of Torrey's mission.

When Dr. Edwin Orr described the events leading to the start of this mission, he relied mainly for information upon an article written by Dr. W. Warren, which had been published in the *Missionary Review of the World*, in March, 1903.

Before writing this article, Dr. Warren had been a practising physician in Melbourne for twenty years. Both he and his wife had been very active in several areas of Christian activity, and he had a grasp of the scope of Christian work, in Victoria at least. The background to the visit by Torrey and Alexander, according to Dr. Warren, consisted of a number of factors listed by him:-

1. About twenty years earlier, an Evangelisation Society had been formed in Victoria, similar to one in England.
2. For some years, evangelists like the late Rev. John MacNeil had been preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, both in their own denomination, and outside.
3. The Y.M.C.A. had been playing a strong and varied evangelistic role.
4. In the Y.M.C.A. rooms in Melbourne, the "Bible and Prayer Union" met on a monthly basis.
5. Out of all this grew an annual convention, held each August.
6. In 1889, John MacNeil and four other ministers formed "The Band of Prayer," which continued meeting for eighteen years every Saturday afternoon for two hours, praying for the "Great Revival."

They persisted in praying, frequently spending whole nights in waiting upon God.

7. In 1891, the Rev. George Grubb and his party visited Australia, and there were widespread results.

8. The August convention was soon transmuted into the first Geelong Convention, in September 1891, designed after the model of Keswick. This, and others like it, became annual events. MacNeil was the tireless secretary of the Geelong Convention until his death.

9. The Geelong Convention not only boosted interest in the Keswick teaching on holiness, but also gave a great boost to missionary work generally, and to cottage missionary prayer meetings. From these developed many home circles of prayer. Mrs Warren started thirty of them herself.

10. Before the turn of the Century, an Australian Evangelization Society was formed, and an inter-colonial petition was drawn up, and widely signed, inviting D. L. Moody to visit Australia. Moody's doctors forbade him to make the long sea trip, and, in any case, by the end of the Nineteenth Century, Moody was dead.

11. Dr. Warren was part of the deputation which was commissioned to obtain the services of a suitable evangelist for the Society. In due course, they approached the Rev. R. A. Torrey, who had become Principal of Moody's Chicago Bible Institute, and pastor of Moody's Church.

12. Warren saw the ultimate visit to Australia by Torrey and Alexander, and the revival which flowed from it, as the fulfilment of all these preparatory steps. By 1903, however, Warren was living in London. (1.)

Is This Portrayal of the Preparations Adequate?

The answer to this question is probably that Dr. Warren's description of what led up to the mission is adequate, so far as the city of Melbourne is concerned.

Perhaps it is not adequate in that it does not place sufficient value on what was happening in the other states of Australia.

In one sense, the drive to get Moody to visit Australia, or to invite Torrey and Alexander, came mainly from Melbourne. While Societies for Evangelisation existed in other states, the Australian Evangelisation Society was largely driven by men from Victoria. The invitation to Torrey, in the end, was primarily to lead an evangelistic campaign in Victoria, and anything he might do in the other states would be an extra blessing. They hoped he would do some evangelising in other states, but that was not so intensely the primary aim of the invitation.

On the other hand, the revival movement of the period was not solely a product of Torrey's meetings in the way implied by what Warren says. Many preparations for the revivals of the period occurred in other states. Other forces and activities were at work in the other states which contributed markedly to the revival impact of this period. The resurgence of prayer was not specially Victorian, nor was the evangelistic thrust mainly Victorian. Revivals occurred in other states both before and after the visit of Torrey, and these all made significant contributions to the whole picture.

There is also a possible historical question about whether John MacNeil was the actual mainspring and inspiration of "The Band of Prayer," as Dr. Warren implies.

Rev. Reuben Archer Torrey

He was born in Hoboken, New Jersey, on 28th January, 1856, and was called “Archie” by his friends. His parents were devout people, and especially his mother who was a praying woman. He studied at Yale University, with the aim of studying law, and making a great success of himself. But, after enjoying himself as a student for several years, he professed conversion in his final undergraduate year, and then entered the Divinity School. A logical thinker, he was taught some of the Modernist theories of doubt about the Bible at Yale, but he worked his way slowly through them, finally deciding to commit himself to the inerrancy of the Bible, although he still could not understand the way through some of the problems. He adopted the policy expressed in John 7: 17, that if a person was willing to do the will of God, then God would make His way plain through the situation or intellectual problem, whatever it might be. So Torrey committed himself to what he believed to be the will of God, and relied upon God to solve the intellectual problems that he could not himself solve at that stage.

During his time in the Yale Divinity School, the town of New Haven was visited by D. L. Moody. President Porter announced to the students that they should approach the occasion with “unusual expectancy and respect,” because Moody was “the greatest evangelist of our time.” Several of the young theologians decided to attend the town meetings, thinking that their presence, and their intellectual superiority, might somehow help the uneducated Moody.

They asked Moody to show them how to lead someone to Christ. He answered gruffly, indicating a few Bible verses, and then told them to get on with the task.

An attractive young lady was standing near whom Torrey had known several years previously before his conversion, when he had been a keen ballroom dancer. Torrey testified to her, and after struggling with her questions and objections for two hours, finally led her to make a surrender to Jesus Christ. Several years later she became Mrs. Torrey.

Torrey was ordained as a Congregational minister, and became the minister in the village of Garrettsville, Ohio. He became very impressed with the writings of Charles G. Finney about revival, and he tried to carry out what Finney said. After struggling to overcome initial problems in the church, special prayer meetings, and evangelistic meetings were arranged. Before very long, a revival movement began to spread slowly through the town, and continued after the meetings had finished. The great number of conversions made a substantial difference to all three churches in the town, and also to the community as a whole.

A friend paid the way for him to study for two years in Germany. The same intellectual problems of doubts about the Bible arose there. Again, he was able to work through some of the difficulties. Again he chose to embrace what he saw as the will of God, which included the hypothesis that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, confident that God would help him through the problems he could not solve at that time.

Because he had studied in Germany, many people thought he must have obtained a doctorate. Everybody began to address him as “Doctor” Torrey. This happened for the entire time he was in Australia. He got tired of explaining to everybody, again and again, that he did not have such a degree, and gave up doing it. So the practice of addressing him as “Doctor” continued. Many years later, he accepted an honorary doctorate from Wheaton College, after most of his evangelistic career was over. (3.)

After the time in Germany, he worked for some years in Minneapolis, where many more of his growth experiences took place. Following that, Moody asked him to be Principal of the Bible Institute, and to be pastor of the Chicago Avenue Church, both of which Moody had founded.

Charles M. Alexander

Alexander was born in a log house in the hills of Tennessee in 1867. Both his parents were devout people. His mother sang well, and his father was a talented musician. At age sixteen, he heard Moody and Sankey at a meeting in Knoxville. He started conducting choirs at Maryville University where he was a student, and was strongly affected by the writings of Charles G. Finney. He attended Moody's Bible Institute, and this was followed by eight years of work as song-leader for the evangelist Milan B. Williams.

In 1901, Williams decided that he needed a long holiday, but Alexander did not feel this need, and wanted to continue in soul-saving work. It was at this point in his life that Torrey asked Alexander to join him in Melbourne for the evangelistic campaigns that were being planned.

Alexander arrived in Australia alone and partly unexpected. The organising committee had been expecting him to be a soloist only. They had arranged for the Melbourne Y.M.C.A. secretary, J. J. Virgo, to be choir leader. But when Virgo discovered what experience Alexander had in all these areas, he withdrew in favour of the American visitor.

The great meetings in the Melbourne Exhibition Building provided the opportunity for Alexander's God-given talents to be revealed as never before. Soon after arriving in Melbourne, he published a booklet called "Alexander's Revival Songs," and before long they were being sung everywhere with great enthusiasm. The impact of these hymns spread through the country like a whirlwind. "The Glory Song," especially was an instant outstanding success, far and wide. It was sung in shops and factories, ground out from hand-organs, whistled on the streets, hummed in trains and trams, and became a universal favourite. The words and music were printed in a large number of publications, including Melbourne's *Punch*. One writer declared that the song "set Australia on fire." (4.)

Alexander had a wonderful, attractive, friendly personality, and an infectious smile. Williamson describes Alexander's impact as follows:- "The Mission hymns took hold of the people all through the city; the melodies were being hummed, sung or whistled as Mr. Alexander's irresistible personality impressed itself upon all who came within the scope of his influence. His magnetic conducting, deep spirituality and whole-souled devotion to his work were such as to compel admiration and love." (5.)

The Melbourne Simultaneous Mission.

The chairman of the Melbourne Mission was the Rev. S. Pearce Carey, who was so ill throughout the Mission that he could only attend the first preliminary meeting, and the concluding meeting. He commented that the campaign as a whole was to be a time of unity and co-operation in preaching Christ, which gave intense satisfaction, as 2,000 representatives of the churches gathered to prepare for the Mission.

The prayer preparations for the campaign were very extensive. Torrey had organised the prayer support of 5,000 people in the United States, by personally signed letters, before he had set out on his journey. In Melbourne itself, many regular prayer meetings had been organised, but cottage prayer meetings rose to the astonishing total of 16,800 meetings attended by 117,000 people.

There were 214 congregations involved in the Mission, with 700 people involved in local organising committees. There were 2,000 choir members altogether. Each night of the main part of the Mission, the choir numbered 1,200 in the Exhibition Building. 2,500 personal workers enlisted for counselling purposes.

The Mission meetings lasted for four weeks. For the first two weeks, about fifty missionaries conducted campaigns in locations all around the city. It involved using thirty large tents, and the largest halls available. Tents were used in Ascot Vale, Albert Park, Brunswick, Carlton, Clifton Hill, Essendon, Fitzroy North, Hawthorn West, Kew, Kensington, (Moray Place) South Melbourne, (Spencer Street) Melbourne West, (Dryburgh Street) North Melbourne, Prince of Wales' Park, (Coppin Street) Richmond, (Balmain Street) South Richmond, (Ross Street) North Richmond, South Yarra, and Williamstown. Halls of various kinds were used in Armadale, Brighton, Box Hill, Camberwell, Canterbury, Collingwood, Elsternwick, Fairfield Park, Fitzroy, Footscray, Hawthorn, Malvern, Melbourne Town Hall, Melbourne East, Moonee Ponds, Northcote, Port Melbourne, Preston, St. Kilda, Surrey Hills, and Toorak. (6.)

For the second half, the meetings were held in the Melbourne Town Hall, during the day, and at the huge Exhibition Building in the evenings. The Town Hall seated about 3,000, and was regularly packed, two or three times a day. The Exhibition Building seated about 8,000, but sometimes crowds of up to 15,000 people assembled in and around it. The American lay evangelist, Mr. W. Edgar Geil, preached on occasions, to relieve the pressure on R. A. Torrey.

After the series in Melbourne was completed, it was estimated that 8,600 converts had been counselled in the enquiry rooms, at the different venues. (7.)

The impact of any evangelistic effort, of course, depends ultimately upon the creative touch of the Holy Spirit upon the lives of people, both those who were present at the meetings, and upon many other people scattered around the country who may hear about the work of God in one way or another. The impact created by these meetings in Melbourne, in this way, was unprecedented. It reached to the four corners of the country, and far beyond.

Furthermore, evangelicals around the world heard about what marvellous things God had done in Australia. This had two effects. It created a desire for information, and spread encouragement, in other Christians. For instance, Pandita Ramabai sent one of her daughters to Australia to find out about the revival there, and this led to a revival in her work in India a few years later. (8.)

It also created a demand for the services of these two American evangelists in other parts of Australia, and in other parts of the world.

Other Victorian Towns

The first Mission after Melbourne was in the small country town of **Warrnambool**. It commenced on the afternoon of Sunday, 11th May. Alexander missed the train, and Torrey had to lead the first meeting on his own. Torrey apologised to the congregation for Alexander's temporary absence, and said the people could not be as sorry as he was, for they had never heard him sing. This Mission lasted for ten days. One day during the meetings was set aside as a day of fasting and prayer, as often happened in America, when some of the places of business closed for the day. The town's population was about 7,000, but people came from far and near to attend the meetings.

Following this, the evangelists went to **Geelong**. Many eminent evangelists had worked in Geelong, and there were many very strong churches. The Mission was held in a large tent, situated in Johnstone Park. For seven weeks cottage prayer meetings had been held, and every house in the district was visited with invitations to the meetings. The Mission started on Saturday, 24th May, and finished on Friday, 30th May.

Mission meetings began in **Ballarat** on Sunday, 1st June, and the meetings were held in the Alfred Hall. The meetings closed on the following Friday, although Torrey returned later.

At **Bendigo**, as in other places, other missionaries had been leading evangelistic meetings before Torrey and Alexander arrived. The preliminary meetings, led by W. Edgar Geil and Bishop

Langley, finished on the Saturday, 7th June, and Torrey's first meeting took place on Sunday, 8th. The meetings in Bendigo went through to Friday, 13th June.

Maryborough was visited next by the Americans. It was not a large town, but the crowds rolled out in great numbers, with about 600 people professing conversion.

This was followed by a Mission of three days at **Terang**. The first meeting was on Tuesday, 24th June. About 1,200 attended the first meeting, with many other country towns being represented. (10.)

Tasmania

About a month was spent in the Island State. The first of these Missions was in **Launceston**, which lasted for nearly two weeks. The main meetings in this series were held in the Albert Hall. Preparations had proceeded steadily for some weeks before the Mission started. But the plans became upset close to the time, when W. Edgar Geil notified that he could not come to lead the preliminary meetings. The afternoon meetings had about 750 to 900 attending, with 1,200 to 2,500 attending at night. Very large meetings took place on the two Sundays, 29th June and 6th July. But the best day came very close to the end of the Mission. This was the day of fasting and prayer, which was held on Wednesday, 9th July. This day, and the two days following, provided the climax of the spiritual power which flowed through these meetings.

The Mission in **Hobart** went from Sunday 13th July through to Friday 25th July. Even at that time, Hobart was the centre of a great gambling operation.

The Rev. D. C. Davidson, Presbyterian missionary from Chicago, conducted two weeks of evangelism in Hobart before Torrey arrived. Davidson commenced on May 11.

The July meetings were held in three locations;- The Melville Street Methodist Church, which seated 2,300; the Theatre Royal which seated 1,400, and the Hobart Town Hall. During the twelve days of the Mission about 2,000 persons professed conversion in Hobart. This represented a powerful evangelistic impact on southern Tasmania generally, and the township of Hobart in particular. Conversions continued to occur after the main meetings finished.

One of the Tasmanian organisers said, "These figures very inadequately set forth the blessed result of this year's work, and convey a very imperfect idea of the spiritual impulses given to many lives and transformations wrought in many churches by the visit of Dr. Torrey and Mr. Alexander." (11.)

Ballarat Again

Torrey and Alexander arrived in Ballarat by train on the Saturday night, 26th July, with the first meetings being on the Sunday. There had been so many converts during the first visit some weeks earlier, and so much quickening of the Christians in the different Churches, that the second shorter visit was eagerly awaited. The meetings were very crowded. Wednesday was the day of prayer and fasting, with a service which started at 10 a.m., lasted for two hours, and with 600 present in the Dana Street Lecture Hall. This was followed by three more meetings that day. Friday, 1st August, was the final day of the second Mission in Ballarat.

The Mission in Sydney

The Mission in Sydney was planned to run from August 5 to 17, but was extended for a few more days.

The local organising committee, as well as the editor of *The Methodist*, were very confident that this Mission would be wonderfully successful, like the others in Victoria had already been.

“In view of the marvellous success of the Melbourne Mission, and of the subsequent missions in the provinces of Victoria, a time of unexampled interest and blessing may be looked forward to in connection with the visit of the American missionaries. Mr. Alexander's gifts as a musical organiser are said to be almost unique; and Dr. Torrey's power as a teacher and evangelist is a matter of world-wide fame.” (12.)

273 clergymen were written to, asking them to call for earnest, persistent prayer from their people, so that the coming meetings might be surrounded by praying bands.

The evangelists arrived in Sydney by train on August 5. The little party now included the talented young pianist, Robert Harkness, son of the Mayor of Bendigo, who had been converted just a few weeks before. The main meetings were held in the Sydney Town Hall, which seated over 3,000 people. The other lesser meetings were held in the Centenary Hall, York Street, in the Pitt Street Congregational Church. The meeting with ministers was held in the Y.M.C.A. Hall.

The impact of the Mission grew as the days passed. The content of the sermons and addresses were reported extensively in *The Methodist*, and in many other places.

After it was over, the impact was described as follows:-

“Last week we spoke of the rising tide of interest in the Torrey-Alexander Mission. This week we have to chronicle the fact that never before has the city of Sydney been so laid hold of as it has been in connection with the later meetings of the great campaign. On Sunday last, the Town Hall was packed to its utmost capacity with men only at three o'clock, and at night [8.30 p.m.] several thousands of people had to be turned away, unable to find even standing room. This was the case also on Monday and succeeding evenings. To meet the extraordinary situation, overflow meetings were improvised, and earnest addresses have been given to the outside thousands by local ministers of evangelistic gifts. The mid-day meetings for business men, and the afternoon Bible readings have all been times of wonderful interest and power. It has been a sight to be remembered to see the Centenary Hall crowded from floor to ceiling at mid-day, and if possible even more so in the afternoon.

As an evangelist Dr. Torrey undoubtedly stands alone among all of his order who have hitherto visited Australia. This may be said without disparagement to any of that noble line. Dr. Torrey would have made a splendid barrister. As a reasoner he is clear and concise, proving his points to a demonstration as he proceeds, and clinching the argument with an appeal that is all the more effective, because it is addressed to the intelligence and conscience rather than to the emotions. For profound scholarship and for intimate acquaintance with the Word of God, Dr. Torrey probably holds a front rank place amongst the religious teachers of the world to-day; and it has been little short of an education to listen to his addresses on such great themes as ‘The Bible, the Word of God;’ ‘Prayer;’ ‘Did Jesus rise from the dead?’ and ‘The Holy Spirit.’ We shall be disappointed if his visit does not give a permanent uplift to Bible study and church life throughout the whole State.” (13.)

One of the more interesting meetings during the longer Missions in the larger centres was called “The Question Box.” In Sydney, for example, two of the mid-day meetings were given to the Question Box. The Box was placed at the door of the meeting for a week before the day when the questions were to be answered. Several hundred written questions were put into the box, and Torrey would answer those ones which he thought were most important. Quite a number of these questions were about the destructive Higher Criticism of the Bible emanating from Germany which had been coming into English-speaking countries like a flood. Torrey knew from his own researches how many of these criticisms had been subsequently debunked, and what questionable

foundations many of the criticisms were based upon. Because he had been in Germany for two years, and could speak the language, he also knew that many of the men who had launched these criticisms were not pious or prayerful Christian men at all, but were simply academics the quality of whose lives were no different from unconverted people, or were positively destructive to any Christian witness. Torrey was able to use this knowledge to excellent effect in answering these questions. (14.)

Missions in New Zealand

Because only one month was available for missions in New Zealand, it was decided to hold missions in only three of the main centres of population.

The evangelists arrived in **Wellington** on August 28th. The afternoon Bible readings were held in St. John's Presbyterian Church, with the evening meetings being held in the Skating Rink, which seated between 2,000 and 3,000 people.

Although Wellington had the reputation of being an evangelist's graveyard, there was a good degree of success during the meetings. The success became even more evident after the main meetings were over. The tally of conversions continued to mount, and reached the thousand mark after Torrey left. Many of the young men who professed conversion joined in establishing a new Y. M. C. A. in the city, as a vehicle for their evangelistic zeal and social impact.

They arrived in **Christchurch** on September 7 for a ten days' mission. All the meetings were held in the Canterbury Hall complex. Advertising was very wide, and the impact of the meetings became greater as time passed, as was normal. On the second Sunday night, about 10,000 people gathered around the complex. 3,500 were in the main hall. 500 were in a side hall, and 6,000 were out in the street. These extra meetings were addressed by local ministers, and by a lady evangelist Sister Elinor. Charles Alexander departed from his normal practice and sang a solo in the open air.

On the final two nights, the evening meeting was divided into two, with a 6.45 meeting for ladies, and 8.15 meeting for men. Even with this plan, the seating in the hall was severely taxed.

On these last two nights also, Alexander met behind the stage with two hundred of the male workers, encouraging them to speak to people who appeared concerned about their relationship with God. This tactic proved very effective as the Mission ended.

On the last night in Christchurch, the secretary of the local Freethought Association was converted. (15.)

The train trip to **Dunedin** featured several short services of 15 minutes length at wayside townships. The best halls in Dunedin were unavailable, so there was another crisis of accommodation. There were conflicting reports about the numbers of people who professed conversion in Dunedin. Very little response occurred to the appeals for people to make a first decision for Christ during the first week of meetings. A special late-night prayer meeting was suddenly called, to be led by the young Robert Harkness, who had only been converted a few months before. This meeting became a time of confession and restitution, as well as prayer.

The full results of that meeting did not become evident so clearly in the last few days of Torrey's meetings. But the local committee called upon the Rev. James Lyall to come and conduct more special meetings, as they believed that the best results were only just beginning to appear. Lyall conducted several longer missions around the Otago district with very good success. Other parts of the South Island were also visited. He was also involved in the setting up of a Convention to promote the higher Christian Life at Queenstown. (16.)

After travelling to Invercargill, the members of Torrey's party left New Zealand, and Australia, for

the Indian sub-continent.

PART TWO

Some LESSONS OBSERVED, and PERHAPS LEARNED

The Rev. W. G. Taylor was the chairman of the Sydney Committee which oversaw the preparations and the running of the Torrey-Alexander visit to this city. Several points in his published comments about the Mission are of special importance.

“During the past twenty-five years we have had many evangelists of world-wide repute in Sydney, from the time when, in 1875, Dr. Somerville visited us, onwards to Mrs. Hampson, John McNeill, Gipsy Smith, Thomas Cook, C. H. Yatman, and others. They all had their excellencies and - their defects. Probably the best work done in this State by a travelling evangelist, and that which most nearly approximated to that of R. A. Torrey, was the wonderful work of California Taylor, as far back as the sixties, the fruits of which, in cultured, consecrated Christians, are still to be found in all parts of Australia.

But none of these made an impression upon this city equal to that of the recently-completed Mission. From start to finish the Holy Ghost has been at work amongst all sorts and conditions of the people. The tabulated statements prepared by the secretaries in no sense reveal the best result of the Mission. Living as I do in the midst of the work, I have been in a position to form an accurate judgment of the value of the work done. For solidity and real grip, for depth and real spiritual power, I have known no work like unto this. As superintendent of the Central Methodist Mission, it has been given me, for some years past, to luxuriate in a rich garnering of souls, the fruit of the toils of a consecrated staff. But I have never witnessed such Pentecostal scenes as those of the past month.

Previous to the Mission, prayer-meetings were held in all directions; expectations ran high, because of the glowing reports that reached us from the south. At first the work seemed to hang fire, and I am free to admit that members of the Committee felt anxious. The turn of the tide came with that Pentecostal all day of fasting and prayer.. It was well that it should be so. Too frequently, in connection with similar movements, we have placed our dependence upon the missionary. Dr. Torrey made us feel that he and Alexander were nothing, the Holy Ghost was everything. Hence the results which followed!

Who can forecast the good that must result from those two Monday mornings with the Sydney ministers? Three hundred men, called to the ministry, anxious to be taught, brought face to face with the vast problem of soul-winning! Dr. Torrey spoke to us like one inspired, and I believe the result will be a policy of vigorous aggression in very many of the churches represented in those memorable gatherings.

There were nights during the last week when not far short of 10,000 people clamoured for entrance into the hall. After packing from 5,000 to 6,000 within the great building, four large rooms were filled with overflow meetings, and two great open-air services were conducted outside. We have never known Sydney so moved. The better class newspapers helped the work by their daily reports; other prints, of a lower type, helped quite as much by the extravagantly overdrawn lampoons that

filled columns of every issue. In all directions the devil had a busy time of it, but only succeeded in overreaching himself, and aiding the work.

By far the best work of the Mission was done outside the meetings. From every quarter we learn of persons unable to sleep for disquietude of soul, professional and business men seeking the Lord in their homes, young men being won by Christian companions, and the like.

I venture to express the belief that the finest and most permanent results of this holy apostolic work will gather around the following points:- (1) A deeper desire to understand the inner teachings of the Word of God; (2) A more Scriptural conception of the importance of personal work; (3) The reorganising of congregations on the lines of up-to-date aggressive evangelism; (4) A deeper welding of the sacred ties that bind together the various Evangelical Churches; (5) A stronger faith in the mighty power of intercessory prayer. Personally, I humbly think I am a stronger and a better man to-day - ay! and more sanguine as to the future - because of this Torrey and Alexander Mission."

The Secretary of the Organising Committee in Sydney was a layman, and this perhaps provides the reason for some of his comments about ministers.

"It took God nearly a week to destroy our faith in Torrey and Alexander. While the lesson was being learned, many loudly expressed disappointment. We began to look up, and the blessing came; and the Mission has left us with less faith in men and methods, and more faith in God."

"Many missionaries have ably exhorted us to live exalted Christian lives. Dr. Torrey came, and gave us a foundation on which to base such lives. He laid foundations so deep, so broad and so solid, that only many days after will the full results be seen."

"It was a happy combination of immense strength (Torrey) and Sunbeam brightness (Alexander). And most of us are perplexed to know which helped us most."

"The Mission once again demonstrated the immense value of personal work, and also proved that the ministers are not doing their duty, having failed to 'perfect the saints unto the work of ministering' (Eph. iv. 12, R.V.) This was evident by the small number of Christians who showed themselves able to lead an anxious soul into the light."

"All opposition to methods and seemingly unnecessary expense was simply borne down by Alexander's smile. He had his own way, or as much of it as is good for any man to have; and all were pleased with the astounding results that were brought about by the singing."

"Never was better advice given than that by Alexander to the meeting of workers:- 'When you see a horse taking a load up a hill start kicking, you know he is not pulling. Keep your criticism till the end, or it will [not] help your helping power.'"

"The general impression left with us is that the Bible is the Word of God, and if not the only, certainly the best, weapon to use under all circumstances. Christ is a living reality, and to deny this is only to make it evident that you have never repented or received Him. The Holy Ghost is a Person, not an influence; and wants us, and will only use us on His own terms. Prayer real, continued prayer, is the one need of both church and individual Christian."

"Much failure on the part of the clergy is explained by one, who pointed out that they most likely wear their trousers out in the wrong place. They should 'go' at the knee - not higher up on the other side." (17.)

The particular points I want to emphasise here from these quotations are:-

Firstly, there is an obvious tendency for Christians to rely upon the human person of the evangelist

to bring the blessing with him. Both chairman and secretary emphasised this point. And the best blessing did not come until the leaders especially turned away from the human instrument, and more clearly depended upon God. The same thing happened to an even more marked degree in Dunedin. The main blessings did not come even after the special prayer meeting. The blessings did not come until after Torrey left the city, and James Lyall came instead.

Secondly, there is the place of personal work in open personal evangelism, and in the counselling work in the enquiry rooms. This is to be compared with the widespread inability of average Christians to know how to lead a person to thorough commitment to Christ, and to the experience of the new birth.

Thirdly, there is the obvious role of prayer by large numbers of ordinary Christians in the preparatory stages of the main Missions.

Fourthly, Torrey had emphasised the inspiration and fundamental importance of the Scriptures. His "Ten Reasons Why I Believe the Bible to be the Word of God" were used as both instruction to Christians, and also as material for public evangelistic campaign meetings. Some of his addresses appeared, on the surface, to look more like lectures than evangelistic appeals, although they were well laced with illustrations which made their points very effectively.

This was the hey-day of Evangelicalism in Australia, when the positive values of evangelicalism were being felt to the greatest degree, and mass evangelism efforts were accepted less critically than later on. By 1913, when Chapman and Alexander left Australia for the last time, the peak of this feature in Australian history had just passed, and decline was setting in, at least so far as the Methodists were concerned.

Overview of the Mission Tour.

The overall impact of the visit by Torrey and Alexander to Australia in 1902 was widely considered to constitute a revival of major proportions. This was not only because the total number of professed conversions was estimated at about twenty thousand. It was also because the local church leaders considered that the visit had brought a new surge of enthusiasm, activity, and quality of spiritual life, to the Australian churches on a very widespread basis.

Within a year or two, Torrey and Alexander led major campaigns in Great Britain. The reports of the wonderful successes of the Australian campaign laid the foundations for all the support they received for conducting this much greater effort in the United Kingdom, and later, when they returned to the United States.

The way their evangelism was described by quite a few people at the time in such a way as to portray this Australian evangelistic effort as the core of the revival. Some saw it as the substance of the revival.

There is no doubt that Torrey's campaign was a very important feature of the world-wide revivals of this period, and helped people overseas to recognise that a revival had indeed occurred in Australia. In this sense, Torrey's campaign was a vehicle used by God to bring new spiritual life to the Australian scene, in answer to many prayers. It is more accurate, however, to see that the Australian Revival was a much wider thing, including the work of many others, over a period of two decades or more, and supported by the widespread praying of many thousands of Australians, many of whom were members of the various Prayer Unions and Prayer Bands which existed around the country.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

R. A. TORREY

and the GERMAN HIGHER CRITICISM

Definitions

For our purposes here, Higher Criticism of the Bible is defined as an analysis about who wrote books of the Bible, and/or how, when or where they were written.

This needs to be distinguished from Lower Criticism of the Bible, which relates to analyses about particular verses or smaller passages in the Bible.

Motives for the German Higher Criticism

The German Higher Critical approaches to the Bible, and related modifications of the various credal beliefs in Christian theology which were formed around the same time, were all a part of attempts by many scholars to bring Protestant Christian thinking into a better relationship with the major rationalist philosophies of the German "Enlightenment." The main philosophies of the "Enlightenment" had been thought out by men of outstanding ability, such men as Immanuel Kant and Georg W. F. Hegel, but there were many other philosophers whose reputation was not so great. The so-called Enlightenment was an outstanding period in German literature and philosophy. The philosophical systems which arose in this period had a powerful effect on the German people, and their impact has lasted ever since in a number of ways. It was natural that there should be efforts to re-state Christian theology in terms of one or other of these philosophical systems, or to modify Christian theology so that it fitted in a more compatible manner with the new ideas which appeared so convincing to many people.

Other Lutheran Strands and Skepticism

Lutheranism in Germany at that time included many strands, some of which were more formal, and other strands were much more evangelical in emphasis.

Amongst the more strongly evangelical influences within Lutheranism in Germany were those which arose from the impact of the great Moravian revival of 1727. This had affected certain areas of the country more than others, and certain institutions of learning had been impacted by the revival.

In such a flowering of literature and philosophy, German thought on the Bible, and on Christianity, went through a long and complicated evolution, with many facets and side issues being involved, through the late 18th Century, and right through the 19th Century.

Some of the philosophies were very skeptical about the possibility of our knowing anything about God, or knowing about the accuracy of ancient historical documents, like the New Testament. The skepticism was not only grown in Germany, but was also imported from certain English and French philosophers, like David Hume, Rousseau and Voltaire. These philosophies tended to undermine ideas that life was worthwhile; that we could know what was right or wrong; that we could know true beauty, or that the world was valuable.

Many of the German Lutheran philosophers and theologians tried to develop viewpoints which avoided this large-scale skepticism. They wanted to establish that life had meaning, and the world was a worthwhile place. So they had, first, to lay out a system of philosophical ideas which would hopefully be convincing, and which would allow a good quality of civilization. Then they would perhaps be in a position to use insights from Christian theology to establish what we could know about God, the message of salvation, and of knowing what was right and wrong. In this way the evangelical message could progress, and Christian thinking could contribute to the quality of life in their part of the world.

The great difficulty in re-stating the Christian message in order to make it fit in better with a new philosophy is that the real guts and heart of the Gospel may be lost in the process, and people may finish up being given a different Gospel, which is not a true one. Such a message would prove largely useless in an evangelical revival, or any major evangelistic effort, and would provide soul-balm and peace with God for declining numbers of people. In this way, the new ideas would cause Christian denominations, and individual churches, to die slowly.

German Higher Criticism, therefore, was a part of this process of adapting the Gospel to fit in with a new set of philosophical ideas from the Enlightenment.

Torrey's Two Years in Germany.

A friend offered to loan Torrey enough money, to be repaid over a long period, so that he could study the Bible in Germany. He went to Germany with his wife, Clara, and their little daughter, deliberately to benefit from certain great and famous teachers.

His first year in Germany was spent at the University of Leipzig, studying mainly under Professor Franz Delitzsch, who was an outstanding Hebrew scholar; a leading expert on Old Testament Criticism, and co-author of the famous *Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament*. The old professor took a special interest in Torrey. The other teachers at Leipzig were Ernst Luthardt, who was an authority on Dogmatics, and F. A. Kahnis, a Church Historian.

These three teachers were all followers of a reasonably conservative and evangelical school of theology which had been developed at the University of Erlangen, and thus it was called the Erlangen Theology. The aim of this theology was to make a synthesis between the Lutheran Confessions and the new learning. It was "to teach the old truth in a new garb." The key concept was called "Holy History." God's revelation comes to us through His actions in history. God is known by His acts, - by what He does. Scripture is the record of these actions. "The certainty of all the important truths of Christianity [are based] upon the experience of regeneration." (1.)

The men in the Erlangen school of theology undoubtedly viewed themselves as earnestly orthodox Lutherans. In many ways it was indeed an orthodox theology of the Reformation, although the "Scripture Only" principle from the Reformation had been weakened somewhat. Because the theology ultimately rested upon experience, it tended to create a situation where experience rather than Scripture would be the final court of appeal and arbiter, in coming to know God's revelation of Himself.

For his second year in Germany, the little family moved to the village of Erlangen. Professor

Delitzsch wrote letters of introduction, and Torrey came under the supervision of Professor F. H. R. Frank, who was Rector of the University, and had been the founder of the Erlangen school of theology. He was one of the leading thinkers of his day.

The Erlangen theology, therefore, accepted a degree of the Biblical Literary Criticism of the day, although not the extreme skeptical versions which might be found elsewhere, with their negative and destructive attitudes toward the Bible.

It was a great experience for Torrey, to mingle with and learn from these outstanding scholars. But, as the year progressed, he began to wonder whether the basic principles of the Erlangen theology were correct after all. Was it right to accept even the degree of Biblical Criticism which was accepted there? Was the emphasis on experience correct in the way they described?

Torrey decided to turn back again to the authority of the Bible. He could not answer some of the Critical attacks on the old way of seeing the Bible. But he decided to assume that it was inspired by God, and inerrant, and trust in God to help him through the future. It was really a return to the Reformation principle of "Scripture Only." He returned again to John 7:17. He chose to do what he saw as God's will for his life, and to rely upon God to guide him, and make the path forward clear, intellectually, and in every other way.

In a sense, this kind of decision was an expression of the teaching of the Erlangen school, although it led Torrey to rely upon the Bible as the judge of all human experience in a far more thoroughgoing way than the Erlangen men would have done.

After the second year, Torrey decided to return to the United States, without taking a post-graduate degree. Clara was pregnant again, and he felt uncertain about the financial aspect of remaining in Germany for another year as a student. But he had learned many things in that period. Some of these factors were reflected in the answers he gave to questions during the evangelistic campaigns.

The Question Box

The published reports of the special "Question Box" meetings during the Sydney campaign, and especially of the "Question Box" in the meeting with ministers, provide us with great insights into Torrey's experiences with the German Higher Criticism.

The published reports seem to be verbatim, but may have been shortened. Torrey read out the question, and then gave his answer. One of these questions was:-

"Is it admitted that the theology of the so-called Pauline Epistles represents a development of thought subsequent to the death of Paul?"

No first-class Bible critic will admit anything of the kind. There is a school of criticism that holds this position, but it has been utterly discredited. Friends, I studied in the land where these theories are made - in Germany. (Laughter.) There were two young fellows in a theological seminary, and one of them was going to write a thesis for his professor. 'What are you going to write on?' said his friend. 'Going to write on the Authorship of Luke, and prove that Luke didn't write it.' (Laughter.) 'Why,' his friend said, 'don't you believe that Luke wrote it?' 'I haven't a doubt,' he said, 'but there would be nothing original about proving he did write it. I will get more commendation from the professor for proving he didn't.' (Laughter.) Now, that is a fact, and that is how these theories are made.

When I went to Germany, I thought I would join a *verein* - that is, a club - to hear a certain course of theological lectures by a professor. 'Would it be necessary to drink beer to become a member?' I asked. 'Oh, yes,' they told me. 'How much would I have to take?' I asked. 'Oh, we don't drink as much as the duelling *vereins*; you would only need to take about three quarts of an evening!' I

didn't join. (Laughter.)

Yes, gentlemen, these theories of higher criticism are worked out over the beer mug, and by brains dimmed by tobacco smoke. I didn't get my conceptions of truth from these sources, if you please. (Applause.) Many of the so-called higher critics are utterly godless men - I mean in Germany. As regards the Pauline Epistles, there was a man named Ferdinand Baur, who founded a school, which held that some of the Pauline Epistles were not written by Paul; but he is utterly discredited in Germany today. Some time back a friend of mine, who was in Germany, went into the lecture-room, and found just three men there. He asked an explanation of an able man of his school. 'Tubingen,' was the reply (passed out). They tried their destructive schemes on the New Testament, but were badly whipped, and laughed off the stage. Now they are trying the same thing on the Old Testament - and with the same results. Their theories are fast being worked out by their own advocates to a *reductio ad absurdum*." (2.)

Ferdinand Baur taught for many years at the University of Tubingen. He was the son of a Lutheran Pastor. He was an outstanding academic, with a prodigious output of literary and academic work, and he preached regularly every Sunday morning until old age. (3.)

Perhaps Torrey knew something about Baur's personal devotional life, or possible lack of one, which prompted his negative remark about Baur.

Torrey's Four Reasons

Torrey went on, in answering this question, to give four reasons against the Higher Criticism.

"Now, friends, I will tell you why I do not believe the Higher Criticism.

1. Because its origin is wrong. Jean Astruc, an immoral Jesuit, was the father of it.
2. Because of its advocates. I have never known a really godly man support it. Who knows a higher critic that is a man of prayer - a soul winner, absolutely surrendered to God, and baptised with the Holy Ghost? (A Unitarian: 'Oh, nonsense!')
3. Because of its influence. It is making infidels, emptying churches, paralysing soul-winning activity, and depleting the treasury of the Lord. The higher critics are doing the devil's work.
4. Because of its literary methods. The methods of the higher critics are the same methods that have been rejected by every other branch of literary criticism. They were formerly employed in Homeric criticism. You know that it was clearly proved that the city of Troy, of Homer's 'Iliad,' had never existed; and just then Schliemann unkindly went and uncovered the actual Troy! (Laughter.) It was very unkind and thoughtless of Schliemann, after Professor Fisk had gone to all the trouble of proving that Troy never existed. (Continued laughter.) Researches and discoveries in Bible lands are constantly discrediting the conclusions of the higher critics. They once claimed that Daniel must be unhistoric, because such a person as Belshazzar was unknown to history; but, to their dismay, an inscription was unearthed with the name of Belsharruzur upon it. The higher critics seek to reconstruct history - not from the records, but from their inner consciousness." (4.)

A number of comments could be made about parts of this quotation. The second point was extensively enlarged upon on another occasion.

Torrey and George Adam Smith.

Amongst the questions sent in to the Ministerial Question-Box on Monday was one which read:-
“You said the other day that no Godly man supported the Higher Criticism. What about George Adam Smith?”

“Brethren, I do not like to answer personal questions,” replied Dr. Torrey, “but, since this has been asked, let me say right here that I met Professor George Adam Smith personally, and had a personal talk with him on this very question. Professor Smith was in Northfield, and, by invitation, I met him at Mr. Moody's house.

‘Professor Smith,’ I said, ‘you teach that the 110th Psalm is not Messianic, and that it was not written by David at all, but by some unknown man of that period. If that be true, one of two things must also be true - it is certain, either that Jesus Christ knew it was not by David, and did not refer to Himself, in which case, in building His argument for His Divinity upon it, He deliberately pulled the wool over the eyes of those to whom he spoke, or else He did not know it, in which case He built an argument for His Divinity upon a mistake. In either case, what are you going to do with the Divinity of Christ?’

‘I do not build my faith in His Divinity on the 110th Psalm.’ he replied.

‘Neither do I,’ I said, ‘but, having found out that He is Divine, I must maintain that He knows what He is talking about when He built an argument for His Divinity on this 110th Psalm.’

Professor Smith undermined faith in the historicity of the story of Abraham and other Old Testament stories, and yet, gentlemen, he went into the pulpit on the Sunday morning before the conversation I referred to at Northfield Church, and preached on Gideon without breathing a suspicion that it was not history. You, gentlemen, may call that ‘Reverent Higher Criticism;’ I call it dishonesty. I do not care whether it is George Adam Smith, or who it is - it is dishonesty.

Now, the men of that school maintain that the Bible is full of false statements, and yet it is the ‘Word of God.’ Wellhausen is reported to have said, ‘I knew the Old Testament was a fraud, but I have never dreamt, as these Scotch fellows do, of making God a party to the fraud.’ Wellhausen is an acknowledged infidel. The three great leaders of the Higher Criticism were infidels, and I don't care to get my knowledge of theology from such a source. Brethren, in the first place there is nothing new in their alleged discoveries. In spite of all their talk about the ‘new views,’ there is scarcely anything in their theories that is not contained in Tom Paine's scurrilous ‘Age of Reason.’

Professor Osgood, who is a Hebrew scholar, indeed stood on the floor of the Baptist Congress at Detroit, Michigan, to speak on the Higher Criticism. ‘Before discussing the question,’ he said, ‘I would like to read what I conceive to be the few positions that are taken up by the Higher destructive critics.’

He went to work, and read off these positions, one after the other. ‘Now, gentlemen,’ he said, to the supporters of the Higher Criticism, ‘is that a fair statement of the position?’ ‘Yes,’ they said. ‘Well, gentlemen,’ he replied, ‘I have been reading verbatim from Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*.’ (Loud laughter.)

Gentlemen, if you are dabbling in that sort of thing, you do not know what you are doing. I used to be a Higher Critic myself once. When Robertson Smith's book came out, I welcomed it; in fact, I wrote a little book on the subject myself. I thank God I did not publish it; I had not thought the thing through. Years ago, a dear brother spoke to me on the subject in our lecture-room. He was a splendid man, though not an expert in Biblical study. He is now connected with one of our theological seminaries. He said to me, ‘Mr. Torrey, I do not know about these things. Men tell me that it is a purely literary question, and doesn't affect the authority of the Bible.’ I said to him, ‘Don't you let them stuff that nonsense down your throat; they are pulling the wool over your eyes. The next thing, they will be applying these very principles - which are now confined to the Old Testament - to the New Testament criticism - to the Gospels, and the life of Christ.’ He could

hardly believe that. But, gentlemen, what do we find in the last copy of the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*? We find done that very thing which we predicted ten years ago.” (5.)

Again, many comments could be made arising from this quotation. However, I will only make two comments, which arise from points numbered 3 and 4 in Torrey's “Four Reasons.”

Regarding Reason number 3, Torrey was able to foresee the sad, long term results of Higher Criticism, and also of Modernist Theology, and of subsequent Theological Liberalism which arose after Modernism. All of these movements have had similar agendas, as attempts to respond to new ideas in the world. They have all created “Gospel messages” which differed substantially from the Gospel that Martin Luther or John Wesley would have preached. The effects of these movements on the denominations which embraced them have been a slow process of decay and death. The churches in the world today which are actually growing are all of the more directly conservative kind, which avoided these agendas of compromise with the world. So, Torrey’s prophecies have been, and are being, fulfilled.

This is true regardless of what we might believe about Torrey’s later substantial contribution to the formation of early American Fundamentalism, and all that ultimately flowed from it.

Regarding Reason number 4, Torrey implied directly that the literary methods used by the Biblical Critics were totally unsuitable, and had already been rejected as unreliable in other literary disciplines.

These arguments remind me of the devastating criticisms made by Professor C. S. Lewis against the way that the Anglican theologian Alec Vidler handled passages in the Gospels, and the way in which many Anglican clergy doubted or denied many of the traditional doctrines of the Church, and of the Creeds. Lewis said that these scholars believed they could recognise tiny details in Biblical passages which they thought supported their theological doubts and Critical theories. Whereas, in fact, they failed to recognise major factors about these same passages, and failed to recognise serious mistakes in their reasoning, which would destroy their theories. Lewis thought that many of their literary views were supremely questionable, inept, and inappropriate. It was no wonder, he said, that many ordinary people did not recognise as Christianity the doctrines of doubt which the clergy believed.

C. S. Lewis’s views appeared in a brief paper entitled *Fern Seed and Elephants*. The fern seed represented the tiny literary clues (although wrongly understood and imaginary) which the clergy thought they could see in the Bible. The elephants were the major factors of overwhelming importance that they failed to see.

Actually, there were **four main points** that C. S. Lewis made about the German style of literary criticism of the New Testament, most of which, he said, also applied to the more “modern” styles of theology as well.

The **first** was that these literary critics used certain words and terms to describe what they believed about the Gospel stories, but that their use of these words and terms betrayed that they really did not know what these words meant. For example, Alec Vidler had claimed that the story of the marriage in Cana of Galilee, in John's Gospel, chapter two, was not a miracle but a parable. Lewis's view was that such a comment showed that Vidler had no idea what a parable was, because the story of the miracle at Cana was totally unlike any other parable in the whole of literature.

The **second** of his complaints was that all these "modern" reasonings about the New Testament seemed to imply the belief that Jesus had been systematically and totally misunderstood from His own day, for two thousand years, until the advent of these modern scholars. They alone had succeeded in regaining a proper understanding of Him, although they lived in a totally different

culture and situation, and did not normally speak His language. The world-view in Jesus's day was totally different from any used today. Yet, they alone had succeeded in understanding Him. Lewis thought that such an opinion was so unlikely to be correct that it should be rejected out of hand.

The **third** complaint was that the New Testament critics assumed that miracles do not occur. Miracles are unscientific, and therefore impossible. So, apparent miracles in the New Testament have to be understood some other way. However, if anything is at all clear, the New Testament is based upon the idea that miracles DO happen. So, attempting to understand the New Testament on the basis of the view that miracles cannot happen is almost certain to be incorrect.

The **fourth** and most serious complaint was that the New Testament critics tried to re-construct the genesis of a text or book. As Torrey said, this was a process which had been totally rejected in being applied to other literature. So it was a mistake to apply it to the Bible. Lewis said that he had seen the futility of this process himself, because he had joined with a friend in writing a book. Many critics had tried to apportion which part of the book was written by which author. The critics wrote with apparent authority and confidence, but Lewis knew that they were all wrong. So, they could not get it right with a text written by someone they knew, who lived in their own day, shared their own cultural background, and spoke their own language. In re-constructing the genesis of an ancient text, after thousands of years had passed, the critics would have even less chance of getting it right. Indeed, it would be impossible. (6.)

The reasons which Lewis produced showed clearly that the Anglican New Testament Critics made major blunders in their research. Lewis's criticisms are very destructive. The same reasons apply to many other Critical theories which have been produced elsewhere, and to much modernist and liberal theology. Torrey's comments about the German Higher Criticism were not written out properly, as Lewis's views were, and were given in a totally different situation. But I believe that Torrey's views are generally similar to those expressed by the Cambridge Professor sixty years later, and deserve to have better attention paid to them than has happened.

After all, having done post-graduate studies in Germany, and also having been a top-line evangelist with many years of outstanding success, he has earned a right to speak, and to be heard.

Indeed, R. A. Torrey was challenged on that exact point at one of the Question Box meetings. He was asked,

“Have you ever seen the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*?”

“I have.”

“Are you a higher authority than Dr. Cheyne, its editor?”

“If I were not, I would never speak again on these subjects. (Laughter.) You ought to read the article in the *British Weekly* about him. He is a higher critic gone mad. I am glad he has published it, because it is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole business.” (7.)

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

CHAPMAN AND ALEXANDER IN AUSTRALASIA

1906 to 1912

Alexander's Career from 1902 to 1909.

Following the campaigns of the Rev. Reuben A. Torrey and Mr. Charles M. Alexander in Australia and New Zealand, which ended in September, 1902, the touring party spent a short time in India preaching the Gospel. From there they arrived in England, and were met by a large and enthusiastic group of evangelical leaders.

Three weeks of meetings for Christians were held in the Mildmay Conference Hall in North London, where Christians were encouraged to fresh zeal in soul-winning, and in expecting a large number of conversions. At the end of these meetings, there was a prophecy made regarding the great evangelistic work which they were later to accomplish in London.

After the Mildmay meetings, however, the Americans were invited to Edinburgh for four weeks of evangelism, but the hall which had been chosen for the meetings was totally inadequate to accommodate the crowds which came.

This marked the beginning of a campaign through some of the provincial cities of Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and England "which was without precedent since the great work of Moody and Sankey in 1873-'75. Wherever they went - to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee in Scotland; to Dublin and Belfast in Ireland; to Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham in England - the largest halls were unable to accommodate the thousands who daily thronged to hear them.

The success of the evangelists' work was due to their faith in God, their dependence upon the Holy Spirit for results, their zeal in soul-winning, and last, but not least, to the organisation of thousands of 'Prayer Circles' throughout the United Kingdom to implore God for a world-wide spiritual awakening, and to pray for the work of Dr. Torrey and Mr. Alexander" (1.) To this should also be added the many thousands of praying friends in Australia and the United States who took a prayerful and dedicated interest in the need for widespread revival, and in the work of these evangelists.

In July and August of 1903, the two Americans paid a quick visit to the United States, to speak at several Convention gatherings, especially in Chicago.

In September, 1903, they were back in England. Their first Mission was a four weeks' campaign in Liverpool, which was the most successful of their campaigns in this country up to that time. About 5,000 professions of conversion were recorded. They continued to conduct Missions in various provincial cities, in some cases returning to cities they had been to earlier. In one instance, a return four weeks' campaign was held in Birmingham in January, 1904. This was the most successful of all the campaigns in provincial cities. 8,000 people professed conversion during these meetings.

During the Birmingham campaign, Alexander met Miss Helen Cadbury through their mutual interest in soul-saving work. Helen was a member of a very wealthy family of Quakers in that area. They were married the following July, 1904, in the Quakers' meeting house in Birmingham, using the very simple Quaker rites, and they made their home in that district. By that time, Alexander was also a wealthy man, having benefited from the profits of the many hymnbooks and song books that he produced, and which were sold through the Mission meetings. These books rapidly became very popular all around the world, and had an enormous circulation.

“The city of Birmingham turned out en masse to see the wedding procession. It is said that on only two previous occasions in the city's history - one of which was the death of the bride's father [Mr. Richard Cadbury] - had such throngs assembled to witness any public event. The streets were so packed with eager and interested spectators that it was with difficulty that the procession moved through the surging masses.

When the meeting house was reached, the ceremony proceeded with considerable periods of silence as is customary. As the Spirit moved them two or three persons arose and gave a brief message, or led in prayer, the bride and bridegroom making their simple declaration near the beginning of the meeting.” (2.)

The honeymoon of six weeks was spent in the United States. Except for one week which was spent at the old Alexander home in Tennessee, the whole period of the honeymoon was spent speaking at large meetings, where descriptions were given of what God was doing in England through the previous eighteen months. He also assisted in a meeting in Torrey's Church, and at the Bible Institute, in Chicago, and helped Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman in revival meetings in St. Louis.

After the Alexanders returned to the work in England, they shared in a campaign in Bolton. At one of the meetings in Bolton, the district was trawled for drunkards and outcastes, who helped to fill the large hall. They were addressed by Torrey, and also by the Rev. W. S. Jacoby, assistant minister of the Moody Church in Chicago, who was an alcoholic, saved through conversion to Christ. He told his story. The following night, mission workers were encouraged to tell their stories, including Mrs. Alexander.

The Bolton campaign was followed by a one month campaign of Cardiff, and then by a return campaign in Liverpool which lasted for three months. The Liverpool mission choir numbered 3,658 members. The hall was the second biggest in England, seating 12,500, but even that could not hold some of the crowds. At the closing meeting, 35,000 tried to gain admittance. The city was honeycombed with prayer cells, and personal work was done in all kinds of places. Revival hymns were sung and whistled in the streets, and even by the milkman, in one instance. Over 7,000 conversions were recorded during the campaign. (3.)

The largest campaign, however, was held in London, and lasted for five months, from February to June, 1905. It was held in the Royal Albert Hall, and cost 85,000 pounds. The number of professed conversions was around 17,000. On the first night of the campaign, the night after the “Welcome Meeting,” eleven thousand gathered in the Hall, but with another ten thousand outside, unable to gain admittance.

The hymn “Tell Mother I'll Be There,” had an enormous impact almost everywhere in these campaigns. In the revivals in the middle period of the Nineteenth Century, a greater proportion of women had been amongst the converts. Many of these, naturally, became mothers, and prayed much for their husbands and children. On their deathbeds, they commonly would ask their children to promise that they would meet them in heaven. The evangelists could appeal to these sacred promises, and they provided a powerful impulse toward conversion on many occasions.

During the last three months of the London campaign, the location was moved from the Royal Albert Hall to two iron and glass structures, in South London, and the other in the Strand.

“The keynote of the work in South London was the intense enthusiasm with which hundreds of Christian people engaged in personal work in soul winning.” This was a feature, not only of adults, but also of many of the children who attended the huge meetings arranged specially for them.

After being absent again in the U.S.A. for July and August, Alexander returned to England for the final three campaigns of this overall evangelistic effort. These three campaigns, commencing in September, 1905, were held in Sheffield, Plymouth and Oxford.

The Sheffield crusade lasted for four months, was held in a hall which seated about 5,000 people. About 3,500 people professed conversion during these meetings. This mission naturally had an interesting impact upon the working class people of this district.

The Plymouth area served many army and navy personnel and dock workers. The meetings were held in a hall seating 6,000. Many of these men attended the meetings, often wearing their brightly coloured red or blue uniforms. Many of them made commitments to Christ, and enthusiastically sought to win others to Christ. About 3,700 conversions were listed in these meetings. Some of the converts came from among the worst characters in the district.

The mission at Oxford lasted for only two weeks, but 800 professed conversions occurred in that time. Some weeks before, Alexander had gone alone, by invitation, to visit the Christian Union at Cambridge University for a few days, and had urged his hearers to make a full surrender of themselves to Christ, and to be strongly involved in personal evangelism.

A series of “Farewell” meetings were held in different places as Torrey and Alexander prepared to leave England for a series of campaigns in the U.S.A. and Canada. The first of these American campaigns was in Toronto, Canada. This was followed by a campaign in Philadelphia which lasted for three months. This again was followed by a campaign in Atlanta lasting for one month, in May, 1906. A campaign was then commenced in Ottawa, Canada, but Alexander left the team soon after this Mission commenced, at the end of June, 1906, after about six months of work in America.

Mrs Alexander had been too ill to take part in the American Missions, and had stayed behind at their home in Birmingham. It was at this point that Charles Alexander left the campaign work to stay with his wife. After a period of slow improving, Mrs. Alexander was given medical advice to take a very long sea voyage.

They left London on November 23, 1906, and arrived in Hong Kong on December 29. They visited a special friend at a place called Pakhoi, in China, about 400 miles from Hong Kong, where there was a C.M.S. hospital. It included a small printing shop run by some lepers. They spent two months in China, during which time Alexander was thrown from a horse and hurt. They then made for Australia, via the Philippines.

The ship arrived in Sydney, and they went by train to Melbourne. There were huge meetings and choir practices at Melbourne, Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo. Robert Harkness had been travelling with the group. There was also a meeting in Sydney, on their return, to join the ship. The stay in Australia had lasted for four weeks. The return trip to England was through the United States. (4.)

Following her conversion at the age of twelve years, Helen Cadbury had founded a group at her school that they called their “Pocket Testament League.” After several years of marriage, around the end of 1907, she heard her husband talking to George T. B. Davis about the need for a simple plan to help new Christians to read the Bible systematically and regularly. Helen explained to the men what she had done at school, and this became the beginning of a new organisation for Bible reading called by the girlhood name of “The Pocket Testament League.” Davis became one of the key promoters of this plan, and Alexander used it extensively in the campaigns he had with Dr. Chapman.

After some more quiet months at home, at the start of 1908, Charles Alexander left to join Dr.

Chapman in some campaign meetings in New Haven. After much prayer for guidance, he made a definite decision to join in the work with Dr. Chapman, who was soon to lead a major campaign in Philadelphia. He hurried home, to tidy up his affairs, and bring his wife back to the U.S.A., to join in the new team effort. The two men had felt drawn to one another from the first time they had met back in 1900. (5.)

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman

John Wilbur Chapman was born on 17th June, 1859 in Richmond, Indiana. He was converted in his Sunday School class at the Grace Methodist Episcopal Church in Richmond, although, as time passed, he was not really sure of his salvation. Despite this, he became a member of the local Presbyterian Church. His mother died when he was only about nine years old. His father opposed the idea of his son entering the ministry, taking the view that the ministry would condemn his son to a life of thankless poverty. The father wanted something better for his son.

In 1877, he enrolled for one year at Oberlin College. In 1878 he transferred to Lake Forest College, where he became best friends with a youth named B. Fay Mills - who would some years later have a spectacular though short career as an evangelist. "Fay" and "Bill" became great chums, and remained so for many years. During 1878, his father died, and this cleared the way for him to enter the ministry. During this year, the two friends attended a meeting in Chicago addressed by D. L. Moody. Chapman answered the appeal, and learned from Moody himself how to be sure he was saved.

In September, 1879, he entered Lane Theological Seminary for three years. In 1881 he was licensed to preach by the Whitewater Presbytery, in order to fill pulpits during holidays. He graduated on 14th May, 1882, and a few days later married his childhood sweetheart, Irene Steddom.

His first call was to a situation where he gave half time to each of two congregations, at Liberty, Indiana, and College Corner, Ohio. At the beginning of 1883 he was called to the Schuylerville Dutch Reformed Church. In May, 1885, he became pastor of the First Reformed Church of Albany, New York. Mills had been pastor of nearby Congregational churches during this time, and helped to arrange the Schuylerville appointment.

In 1886, the Chapmans had a baby daughter, but, in a few weeks, his wife was dead, and the heart-broken father was left to care for the little baby.

Some of the older and more staid members of the Albany church made life difficult for the young preacher, and D. L. Moody gave Chapman some advice about how to handle the situation wisely.

A strange revival had occurred in Albany ten years earlier, when Dr. Rufus Clark had been minister of the First Reformed Church. The English evangelist, Henry Moorhouse, had been preaching in town for a number of nights, without any apparent success. Three women, Mrs Clark (the minister's wife), Mrs Kirk and Mrs Strain, met daily in the Dutch Church to pray. In answer to their prayers, there was a wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and literally thousands of conversions occurred, strengthening considerably all the churches in the city, and neighbourhood.

By the time Chapman resigned from that pastorate, in 1890, he had married Agnes Strain, second daughter of the Mrs Strain, mentioned above.

He became pastor of the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and the church grew rapidly. In 1892 he was released for freelance evangelism until 1896, when he resumed the pastorate at Bethany. In 1899, he became pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church in New York, but it only lasted for two years. In 1901, the General Assembly appointed him to a full-time position in evangelism. Some of the campaigns he became involved in were strongly linked to the Presbyterian denomination, while others were not. The most successful missions in this period in which he was

involved were the great Simultaneous Mission in Boston, early in 1909, and the lengthy missions in Australia and New Zealand. (6.)

He was elected as Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly in May 1916 for twelve months. By the end of 1917, there were surgical problems which led eventually to his death on Christmas Day, 1918. His funeral was held at the Fourth Presbyterian Church, New York, where his last pastorate had been.

Chapman and Alexander Together

In the few years after being appointed Corresponding Secretary of the General Assembly's new Evangelism group in 1901, Chapman slowly developed his own version of the Simultaneous Mission plan which had been used to such good effect in London and Australia around the turn of the Century, and in the year or two after that.

During 1908, after Alexander joined the team, only two simultaneous missions were held. The campaign in Philadelphia was one.

"In the Philadelphia campaign from March 12th to April 19th, 1908, the city was divided into forty-seven districts, with more than fifty evangelists and Gospel-singers as leaders. About three hundred churches united. Noonday gatherings for business men and women were held each day in the Garrick Theatre, and meetings for men only on Sunday afternoons. In addition to the simultaneous church services at night, other meetings through the daytime were held in factories, in public-houses, prisons, and in the open air, wherever a crowd could be gathered. There were five thousand singers in the district choirs; five thousand personal workers; two thousand ushers; one thousand volunteer 'door-bell ringers' for house-to-house visitation, and two hundred and fifty district leaders.

Occasionally the Academy of Music was taken for an 'Old-folks Meeting,' or other special gatherings. One afternoon the Pocket Testament League was officially launched there, following a private gathering at the Lincoln Hotel, where the League had been first presented to the co-operating evangelists, and unanimously adopted by them as an integral part of their work. Two great Gospel Song Services were also held in the Academy of Music, under the direction of Charles Alexander, assisted by all the song leaders and a choir of over one thousand voices drawn from the district choirs." (7.)

The hymn "He will hold me fast" was specially written by Robert Harkness for the Philadelphia mission. It captivated many of the people, and was used by God to speak very strongly to some in deep need. One woman, on her way to commit suicide, was radically changed after hearing it, as she walked past the theatre where it was being sung. It was sung and whistled in the street.

Much later in the year, there was another simultaneous mission, this time in Norfolk, Virginia. But their lives were filled with many activities, much of it quite significant from an evangelistic viewpoint. The final mission for the year was held in Burlington, Vermont.

Despite Chapman's genius for organisation, and his extended plans for simultaneous missions, he was slowly persuaded to use a different pattern in his evangelism.

"By degrees Dr. Chapman was persuaded to abandon the simultaneous plan in favour of a large central party, with specialists to undertake prison and rescue work, the training of personal workers, and the Pocket Testament League." (8.)

Although the first big campaign in 1909, held in Boston, was of the "simultaneous" kind, it was this

other, modified plan which was eventually used in Australia.

The First Tour of Australia - 1909

The evangelistic party sailed from Vancouver for Australia on March 26, called briefly at Honolulu and Suva, and arrived in Brisbane on April 17. The ship reached Sydney on April, 19.

“From this date, the mission party, laboured for four months without a single day’s break, except for the necessary journeyings from place to place. In each of the two chief centres of the Commonwealth, Sydney and Melbourne, a full month was spent; in Brisbane two weeks; in Adelaide ten days; Ballarat had a week, and Bendigo four days. Single meetings were held, in passing, at Castlemaine, Albury and Moss Vale, while a couple of extra days were given to Melbourne and to Sydney for farewell meetings.” (9.)

Brief conferences were held with local committees in Brisbane and Sydney, before the group travelled by train to Melbourne for the first mission.

The touring party was much bigger than the group which had come with Torrey in 1902. In 1909, Robert Harkness was returning to his homeland. Mr. and Mrs. Alexander had both been in Australia before. The others were all arriving for the first time. Mr. Ernest Naftzger was the soloist for the main meetings, Mr. and Mrs. Norton had charge of the personal workers, and Mr. and Mrs. Asher came to reach the poor and outcasts, and to visit the prisons. Dr. Chapman brought his two youngest children, Agnes and Hamilton. There were two secretaries, Miss Breckenridge and Mr. E. H. Bookmyer. Mr. George T. B. Davis was promoter of the Pocket Testament League, and was accompanied by “his sweet old mother.” There were two other evangelists and two song-leaders to address smaller meetings which might run at the same time as the main meetings. These were the Rev. Dr. Ford C. Ottman of Boston, and the young Irish evangelist, Mr. W. P. Nicholson, plus the musicians Mr. Frank Dickson and Mr. J. Raymond Hemminger.

In Melbourne, for the first two weeks, the Town Hall was filled noon and night, and the King’s Theatre, and other halls and churches were also used frequently. For the last two weeks, the Exhibition Building was used at nights, and occasionally in the afternoon. Saturday was usually the rest day, but on one of these, “Alexander’s Night” in the Exhibition Building, was a song session which lasted for three hours.

The Sydney meetings were held in the Town Hall again. Its seating capacity was totally inadequate. “It was not unusual for four or five churches in the near neighbourhood to be filled as well with eager crowds, and it was a sign of the true working of the Holy Spirit, that out of these throngs of disappointed people, unable to get into the Town Hall meeting, there were large numbers of decisions for Christ.” Night after night, members of the mission party assisted the Sydney ministers in leading these overflow services.

The farewell meetings were tumultuous, including strange scenes at Central Railway Station, and the team moved by train to Brisbane.

“Brisbane has also an Exhibition Building, a little way out from the centre of the town, and here again wonderful scenes of enthusiasm in the cause of Christ were witnessed, many taking their stand for Him.”

A long train journey took most of the team back to Sydney, and then to Melbourne, where brief meetings took place, and reports were given. Then the team went to Adelaide for ten days. W. P.

Nicholson led a mission in Geelong. And Chapman spent a few days in Ballarat and Bendigo. The total time for the visit was four and a half months. After a train trip back to Sydney, the team left by ship for China and Japan, calling very briefly in Brisbane, Townsville and at Thursday Island.

The wife of the Governor-General, the Countess of Dudley, had been involved in some of the meetings in Sydney, even picking a few of the hymns. When the ship called briefly in Brisbane, on the way north, a special meeting was held in the Albert Street Methodist Church. During the singing, Alexander recognised certain singing voices in the audience. Lady Dudley and Dame Nellie Melba were sitting together, towards the back of the Church. The Countess insisted on carrying Alexander and his wife off to Government House for a hurried luncheon, and a private meeting. There, “in the privacy of her boudoir, she told Mrs. Alexander of the blessing that had come to her heart through the meetings in Sydney, especially through the songs.” (10.)

The main organising committee impressed upon Dr. Chapman that the meetings on this tour had barely scratched the surface of what was possible, and that a better overall result would follow if a longer visit could be made in two or three years' time.

An Evaluation of the Situation in 1909

“The spiritual life of Australia was at flood tide just at this time. The results of the Torrey-Alexander Mission seven years earlier had made themselves felt, and a fresh quickening had been brought by the short visit of Charles Alexander in 1907. The world-wide ebb of spirituality, which has caused multitudes to drift out into the sea of indifference and unbelief in the last few years [that is, at the end of the First World War], had hardly set in as yet, and throughout the four months of the Missions of 1909 such marvellous scenes were witnessed, and such widespread interest awakened in the things of God, that it was truly a time of Pentecost for the whole Commonwealth.” (11.)

This evaluation was written by the widowed Mrs. Alexander, and her helper, the Rev. J. K. Maclean. It provides a fair picture of spiritual life in Australia in the sense that it “was at flood tide just at that time.” The quotation, however, acknowledges only the contribution to this situation by certain visiting people from overseas, and does not recognise contributions to the revival by anyone else, or from any other source. Apart from that, the comments about the American influence are correct.

September, 1909 to March, 1912

After visiting several places in the Orient, the main team members arrived back in Vancouver on November 26th, 1909.

The early part of 1910 was taken up with four campaigns, in the “simultaneous” style, in Bangor, and in Portland, Maine, and then in Dayton, and in Columbus, Ohio. It was while in Columbus, that Dr. Wilbur Chapman was married, for the third time. His bride was a lady he had first met in Providence, Rhode Island, when he was conducting a campaign in that area some years before.

In May, 1910, Chapman’s team led a longer mission in Cardiff, Wales. The northern summer months were spent in various sundry activities, and the month of October saw them gather for a major “simultaneous” mission in the “windy” city of Chicago. The year closed with a short mission in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

1911 commenced with another major mission in the Canadian city of Toronto. This was followed by one month in the Welsh city of Swansea, and then a few days spent in Belfast, Leeds and Birmingham. This was followed by a shorter mission in the English town of Shrewsbury.

A visitor from India appeared in the congregation at Shrewsbury. He did not appear significant in any way. But this was the famous American missionary, John Hyde, better known as "Praying Hyde." He was on his way home to America, and, having a few days before the ship sailed, and hearing that a fellow countryman was preaching in Shrewsbury, Hyde went to hear him. Alexander took him home to Birmingham, but Hyde's chronic illness (high blood pressure) caught up with him, and he was bed-ridden for some days, and missed the boat.

Alexander had a quiet summer at home with his wife and her family. In the autumn months there were four campaigns in Northern Ireland. The first was a five weeks campaign in Belfast, then ten days in Bangor, ten days more in Londonderry, and a week in Dunkalk. (12.)

The Second Chapman-Alexander Tour in Australasia 1912 - 1913

The Alexanders left Birmingham on February 6th, 1912, for Australia. On the way, various other team members were connected with, and eventually the ship arrived in Adelaide. The ship was 48 hours late arriving, being delayed because of a hurricane when approaching Australia. So the only way that the party could get to the monster welcoming gathering in the Exhibition Building in Melbourne was for them to get off the ship at Adelaide, and a special express train took them to Melbourne. This meeting was on March 11. The train arrived in Melbourne after the meeting was due to start, and the crowd waited with some expectation. But, with the first sign of Dr. Chapman appearing at the side of the stage, followed by Alexander, the choir stood and burst into the Doxology

The timetable of meetings which was worked out at that stage was as follows. Climate considerations meant that the campaign would commence in Dunedin for one month. Then would come the mission in Melbourne, followed by Adelaide, and then with five shorter missions in smaller towns in South Australia.

July 13 to August 6 would be spent in Sydney, followed by one week in each of three smaller towns in New South Wales.

September would see the start of two and a half weeks in Brisbane, followed by one week in Townsville, eight days in Charters Towers, a week in Mackay, and a few days in Toowoomba.

October 24 to November 12 would see a short mission of a few days in Albury, and two weeks in Ballarat. This would leave six weeks in the year, which would allow four weeks to be spent in Western Australia, with one week travelling each way.

January, 1913, would be spent quietly, especially in view of the expected summer heat. The end of January would allow a short mission in Geelong. Then, three days would be given to "farewell" meetings in Melbourne.

After that would come three months spent in New Zealand. Only a few days would be spent in Dunedin, because of the longer mission held there earlier. A few days would be spent in Queenstown, and in Timaru. Major missions would occur in Christchurch and Wellington. A few days of holiday in the Rotorua area would lead to the final mission in Auckland, which would end on May 10, 1913. (13.)

The long campaign went largely according to this plan.

The Adelaide campaign started with a problem situation. It was held in the Adelaide Exhibition Building, commencing on May 18. Ernest Naftzger, the soloist was ill, and so was Dr. Chapman.

So the mission started, being led by Alexander, with the help of the Rev. Henry Howard (a Methodist minister), Mr. McLaughlin from Belfast (one of the team members), and Dr. Warren, now back in Melbourne. Nearly 1,000 people registered as converts during the three weeks of the Adelaide campaign. An unusual result of this mission was efforts by various people to found a new Bible College in Adelaide, which was to be called the Chapman - Alexander Bible Institute. Generous gifts were made to get it going. Within five years, 253 students had trained there for full time Christian service, despite the many problems arising from the coming of the First World War.

The other towns in which missions were conducted during the South Australian phase of the work were in Broken Hill, Port Pirie and Mount Gambier.

In the New South Wales part of the campaign, shorter missions were also held in Goulburn, Bathurst, Newcastle, Maitland and Armidale.

When the team was to leave for Western Australia, Mrs. Alexander was very ill. Her husband returned from the west ten days early, to be near her side. He took her to a private hospital, where a serious operation was performed on December 16.

Through January, the Chapmans went for a holiday to Mole Creek in Tasmania, and other team members went in other directions for a holiday. Alexander stayed in Melbourne, and used the opportunity not only to support his wife, but also to assemble a special male choir, and to rehearse with them a number of pieces he would include in a special song book for male choirs, soon to be published.

When the team eventually left for New Zealand, Mrs. Alexander stayed behind to help further in recovering her strength, and joined her husband later in Wellington.

On the exact date, the team left Auckland on May 10, 1913, for Vancouver, via Suva and Honolulu. (14.)

Without trying to trace in detail the future activities of Charles M. Alexander, he died at his Birmingham home on October 16, 1920, and he is buried in the Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, next to the father-in-law he may never have met - Mr. Richard Cadbury.

The headstone on his grave carries four lines from "The Glory Song," which he composed for the first Australian campaign with R. A. Torrey, and which very quickly became popular like a hit tune. It was the first of many of his hymns, and of the hymns written by others, which became famous through these missions in which he was involved. These hymns performed a powerful ministry for untold thousands of ordinary people in Australia, and for other untold thousands around the world.

Evaluation of the Work of Chapman and Alexander in Australia

Charles M. Alexander's personality, and his musical ability and ministry, had an enormous impact on the whole Australian Christian community. It is probably impossible to over-estimate the force of this impact, or to over-value its spiritual worth for Australian Christians, especially in his own generation, but also in those which followed for the next forty years after his death. Australian Christians of that time had a special affection for him. It would also be impossible to discover, this side of eternity, how many souls he won for Christ, by writing hymns and songs, by singing, by preaching, or by his personal evangelism. How many others have been successful in their personal witnessing for Christ because Alexander encouraged them to start? He figured very largely in the spiritual revivals of this period in Australia. His influence was felt strongly in evangelical work in Australia for many years to follow.

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman had two major aims in his evangelistic work here. Naturally he wanted to win as many people for Christ, and for the Churches, that he could. That was the first aim.

The second aim was to contribute in as many ways as he could to the future healthy spiritual foundations of the Churches. This was done by trying to improve the spiritual lives of the homes of church-goers; to challenge people to consider entering full time Christian service; to encourage people to know the Bible better; to encourage everyone to do personal evangelism; to emphasise the place and value of effective prayer, and to highlight the need for the power of the Holy Spirit in Christian service.

A much longer campaign also had the value that many more ordinary Christians could be reached than in having meetings only in large centres, and that a wider range of people could be challenged to respond to the Gospel.

In all of these things, Dr. Chapman achieved a good deal of success. Different aspects of this success are seen in the following selection of documents.

TWO DOCUMENTS

A. The first document was written for, and first appeared in the *Southern Cross*, and was reprinted at length in *The Methodist*. It describes a meeting in Hawthorn Town Hall, Melbourne, which was a part of the Victorian Simultaneous Mission, which culminated in the great meetings in the Exhibition Building.

“A Suburban Mission.

Yes, but it was a suburban mission under extraordinary circumstances. The weather conditions, indeed, were anything but favourable. A thin drizzling rain fell softly and insidiously through the darkness, but neither thin rain nor heavy rain would have kept back the crowds from this meeting. It was in the Hawthorn Town Hall. Dr. Chapman and Mr. Alexander were to be present. It was their one night in the suburb. Besides, three centres were abandoning their own meetings on this night, that everybody who wished might have the opportunity of hearing the evangelists. Apparently everybody wished. It was like trying to put a quart into a pint pot. The meeting was to begin at eight. At a few minutes past seven the hall was comfortably filled, and under the gaslight at the entrance a continuous procession of umbrellas was passing. Long before eight the place was thronged.

An Unfortunate Word.

It was probably spoken in mistake, but it was unfortunate. A gentleman speaking from the platform suggests that in the interval of waiting, we might sing for our “entertainment.” We have not come for entertainment. Something far other is in our mind.

Dr. Chapman as Song Leader.

True he didn't sing a solo, but he led the singing. And he didn't imitate Mr. Alexander, as, alas, some conductors are tempted to do. But he did lead the singing. And he did it simply, naturally, and with some degree of success. The Doctor arrived early. It was only a quarter to eight. He at once assumed command. And through two hymns he conducted the song service. They were good

hymns: "All hail the power of Jesu's Name," and "Jesus! What a Friend of Sinners." The singing, however, has in it no particular fervour. The missionary lets the audience down lightly with "Well, I've often heard louder, but very rarely sweeter." While yet we are standing the Doctor reads the lesson. It is the 32nd Psalm, and then he prays, "Help us to speak as in Thy presence, and to listen as for eternity." It is in the atmosphere of that sentence the meeting now is, and continues to be.

A Welcome Arrival.

It is that of the rest of the Mission Party, Mr. Alexander forging on in front. Only a moment later, so it seems, a clear, far-carrying, songful voice, with an unmistakably spiritual note in it, is compelling the hearing of everyone. It is Mr. Naftzger singing "As far as the West is removed from the East He banished my sins." At the wave of Mr. Alexander's hands the audience joins in - perhaps plunges in would be better - the chorus. The audience appears a bit aghast at its own enthusiasm; the next hymn is sung with restraint. Mr. Alexander is quick to detect it. "Don't sing as if you were afraid of wearing it out. You can never wear that chorus out." It is "I am Coming, Lord; Coming now to Thee." "Now, again! Don't sing it just with your mouths; let your hearts go with it." The audience obeys. The tone is recovered. Now with energy, and now with a strangely moving softness, the chorus is repeated. It is not so much a song for human ears as a cry to an unseen Saviour - "I am coming, Lord."

The Missioner's Theme.

It springs directly from the text. Dr. Chapman's themes always do. This may not strike you on the instant every time. But if you consider, you will find it unvaryingly true. And the text? It is this: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The theme is prayer, and not prayer in any loose or general sense, but the prayer of the text. The opening sentences are quiet and personal. This is part of Dr. Chapman's genius. You are made to feel, not that you are just listening to a sermon being preached, but that you yourself are being spoken to. "What are you to do when your prayers are not being answered?" That sets you thinking. "Get alone with God, and cry 'Search me and try me.'" That appeals to your conscience. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." That prepares you for the theme. You want to hear of this kind of power.

A Study in Emphasis.

That is how Dr. Chapman gets at the heart of this text. Effectual - fervent - righteous - availeth. In turn the words are emphasised. His way of saying them in a measure interprets them. But there is more than emphasis. There is exposition. He fastens on the word "fervent." Now he is saying in tones that grow deeper and fuller - zealous, powerful, consuming, agonising. The word unfolds before your mind. You look into its depths. You know, as by an instinct of the soul, the kind of praying that is meant.

A Statement of Conviction.

This preacher is a man of deep convictions. Not otherwise would he be the man of power he assuredly is. When he says "I am convinced," a note of authority runs in his speech. That is what he is saying now concerning the fervent prayer of the righteous. Of what is he convinced? He is convinced that prayer is the supreme need of the Church. "Preaching is powerful, singing is great, but the need of the praying of this text is supreme." He is convinced, too, that prayer is the most

moving power upon the world. "Such a spirit of prayer always moves the unconverted; it stirs the world." He is convinced, again, that prayer is the mightiest method of personal service. "A soul thus burdened generally gets its desire."

A Mode of Argument.

It is not the employment of the processes of logic. Dr. Chapman does not underrate that, nor is he unskilled at it. But it is another method of argument he is employing to-night. It is the logic of experience, the appeal of fact, the power of illustration. Does the Church need prayer? He tells of a mission that was fruitless until one man prayed. "If my prayer is not answered, I will die." He tells of John Knox - "Give me Scotland or I die." He tells of Jonathan Edwards. Not only does he tell of him, he pictures him. We see him standing in his pulpit with the manuscript close to his dim-seeing eyes. We see him holding the tallow dip close to the written page. We see the congregation. We hear the cries of penitent men and women. Before that sermon Jonathan Edwards had agonised in prayer: "O God, save New England. Save this community; speak through me." Does this spirit of prayer move the unconverted? He tells of an incident in his own early ministry. He drove twenty miles to speak to a man about his soul. The man met him with indifference and insult. Ten years afterwards in a mission the man told how that visit had led him to Christ. He tells of Channing and the tragic days of his boyhood. Does fervent prayer make for power in service? He tells - and who that heard can ever forget it? - of a minister in an evangelistic meeting pleading with men to come forward. "Is there not one more?" One more comes. The minister springs from the platform, he is in the aisle. His arms are about the young man. He is saying, "My son! O my son!" Afterwards the minister declared "I should have died if he had not come." These are Dr. Chapman's arguments to-night. And they have told. The audience is "listening as for eternity."

A Break.

Yes, a decided break. The address has moved into a new realm. The speaker's voice is different. It is tenderer. It is full of gracious appeal. He is standing with arms outstretched. "You fathers and mothers, if you are not Christians, why not begin now? It will mean a happy home life. You young men, why not begin now? It will mean a beautiful life." Then a note almost of anguish passes into the words, "It will be an awful thing[s] if for you Christ has died in vain, if the Bible has been given in vain, if all this singing is in vain and all this pleading is in vain, and you should be *lost*." The word goes shudderingly into the ears of the listening people.

An Appeal and a Response.

Again the voice is gentle and persuasive: "Do you want to be prayed for? Is there anyone you wish prayer to be offered for? Stand, and in two words let us know. Say them - 'My husband,' 'My wife,' 'My boy,' 'My class,' 'My church,' 'Myself.'" Swiftly the people rise. Quietly they say the two words that come from their hearts. Fathers rise, mothers rise, old people rise, young people rise, a woman with her babe in her arms rises. O those two-worded prayers; how much they mean! "Let us bow our heads." It is the voice of the evangelist.

"Now, while we are bowed, are there any unconverted who want to be prayed for?" The only sound that breaks the stillness is Dr. Chapman's saying, "Another, another, another." There are many. In the midst of the quiet, Mr. Harkness prays. And all these longings of soul are lifted up to God.

An After-Meeting and a New Singer.

The after-meeting was conducted by Mr. Alexander. Dr. Chapman had left to speak at the overflow meeting. It was a half-hour mainly of personal work. Many were spoken to. Many decided. Some came forward to be prayed with. A man who was converted at the Mission three years ago gave his testimony from the platform. It was a simple word and a word of power. And Mrs. Harkness sang. She was to us the new singer. Her sweet contributions were amongst the ministries of the Holy Spirit. Many must have been helped to decision whilst she sang simply and earnestly, and searchingly too, "While Jesus Whispers to You, Come, Sinner, Come." When the meeting closed, the people moved away slowly, even reluctantly. The last sound that came down to the great front door was that of Mr. Alexander's voice praying with the choir. This man of song is also a man of prayer. (15.)

B. This second document has a similar source in the *Southern Cross*, and was also published at length in *The Methodist*. It describes the special HOME NIGHT in the Melbourne Exhibition Building.

HOME NIGHT in MELBOURNE

Triumph on Earth and Rejoicing in Heaven.

The name is attractive. If this Mission can do anything that will make for the betterment of home life amongst us, it will serve the community in the way it most needs. It is in the home we are failing.

A Special Door, and Some Doors Not Special.

The south door of the Exhibition presents the most picturesque scene. It has been reserved for admission of families. Long before seven o'clock little family groups are passing beneath the wide-spanning archway. Fathers and mothers, with their lads and lasses holding on to their hands, half-skipping with the energy of youth and the excitement of the hour, approach the door with quickening steps. In the midst of them a widow in her mourning garb moves on with two young children clinging to her side. God of the fatherless, less her and hers this night. At the doors not special, eager crowds are waiting. Some are beseeching vainly to gain entrance into the choir gallery. From the entrances to the stairways leading to the balconies impatient throngs stretch far back. As the doors are opened in succession, the clatter of the hurrying feet is as the repeated rolling of thunder. Some ladies in one of the side passages have succeeded, after some effort, in opening a door. They smile at their unexpected success. Alas, it is a door that leads outside! Their faces carry a different look.

An Ideal Congregation.

The middle area presents a different aspect from that which it has shown at any other gathering of the Mission. At times it has been filled with ladies, and the scene has been varied and charming. At other times it has been occupied by men, and the appearance has been sombre and impressive. But tonight it is taken up by family groups. Parents and children are sitting in little companies. It is

an ideal congregation. It is what every church should have. O for family worship, for families worshipping in the congregations. The platform is crowded with ministers. There are of every church. If one could read their thoughts he would perhaps find that they are longing that, in proportionate extent, such a sight as is now before them could be regularly looked upon from their own pulpits. A congregation of families.

A Brief Prayer, a Distant Choir, and Some Youthful Singers.

The prayer is of exactly four sentences. It is offered by Mr. Alexander. "Our Father, bless this song-service; bless the Doctor as he preaches; bless the people as they listen; bless the personal workers as they do their work. Amen." The distant choir is made up of the people away beyond the dome. Everybody - for the conductor has insisted upon "Everybody - not every other body" - has been singing "He will hold me fast." And now those folk in the dim distance are to sing it by themselves. The song come towards us like an unusually distant echo, so far off is this choir. The next verse comes differently. It is sung by a youthful band all around us. At Mr. Alexander's command, all the boys and girls under eighteen are on their feet. There is a great company of them. Their fresh, clear voices are flung into the song with fine abandonment. Unannounced the choir breaks in with "Safe in the Arms of Jesus." All souls are strangely stirred.

A Deepening Influence.

We felt it come. It came when Dr. Chapman stood in his rostrum, with his little Bible in his hand. It came in the words he spoke, and in the way he spoke them. "This service is very special. This service this evening is the one service in all the Mission for which we are always praying, and for which we have the deepest concern. Every father pray for me, every mother pray for me." The words are spoken slowly and solemnly. Something great is in the speaker's mind and heart. The short lesson from Ephesians vi. is devoutly read. The Doctor prays: "Make this meeting memorable. May we touch the Church of the next fifty years by what is done tonight." It is a great prayer. It will be answered more greatly than, perhaps, even he expects. We shall see. From this time on, the singing is different. It has in it a new spiritual note. We are in a holier atmosphere. There is no applause now. The fathers and mothers together sing "Pass me not, O gentle Saviour. Hear my humble cry," Many voices falter. It is more of a prayer than a song.

A Broken Family-Circle.

That is the theme. Its mention arrests us. The missionary reads two texts. They are from the ends of the Bible. Gen. xlv. 8 and Rev. vii. 4. Both are concerned with the names of Israel's tribes. In the difference between the two lists the Doctor has found his message. The latter list has one name missing. It is the missing name that burdens the heart and gives urgency and power to his message. With the exposition we have not here to do. It was striking enough. But it is about that one word "missing" that the whole address turns. We are made to think of the pathos and tragedy of a broken family circle. We are reminded of the influence of home, the lights and shadows of home, and of the One who alone can keep the home. "God - our God - our father's God, He is in the hope of every home." The words are spoken deliberately and in rising tones. Somehow they convey the emptiness and the fearfulness of a Godless home, as well as the safety and the gladness of the home where God is known and loved. Then we are given to see how sin marks and breaks the home. Was there ever a missionary who could say this word "sin" with a more terrific emphasis than this man? Sin, Sin, the folly, the wickedness, the horror of it, all gather into his mode of saying it. How many are missing through sin! "Would you know how to hold your children? Let every father be true; let the home be surrounded with holy influences." If heaven's roll call of your home

were made tonight, would your name be missing? “Father, would it be yours? Mother, would it be yours? Would it be the name of your children? Missing! Missing!” The word has in it a tone almost of anguish. “If my boys were not saved, I think I would cable under the sea to them tonight, ‘Turn you, turn ye, for why will ye die?’ Is the missing name yours? Then, in God's name, come home now! For an unbroken family-circle I plead tonight. The only one that can hold is Jesus.”

A Clear Voice in the Silence, and a Woman's Prayer.

The silence is absolute. It is a hush of God. This vast company is bowed in prayer. Not a human sound is heard. For the space of a minute or more there is nothing to be heard but the dull hum of the electric light. One with his eyes closed might imagine himself to be alone. Then that one clear voice through the silence, pleading, pleading: “If you are coming home to God, stand up! Stand! Stand! Stand!” There is a rustle of many feet. A second voice sounds out distinctly. It is a woman's. It is Mrs. Alexander praying. “Lord Jesus, we know Thou art here. We feel Thy presence. It is a foretaste of the time when we shall see Thy face. Bless and save these people!”

A Succession of Appeals and a Thrilling Scene.

“Let everybody lift their heads! Now be perfectly still Listen! Listen! Fathers and mothers who would like to dedicate their households to God - rise.” A great number stand. “Every man who hasn't family worship in his home, and now wishes to be guided aright, put up your hand.” It would be hard to count the hands. Dr. Chapman's eyes glisten. and his voice quivers. “Here is a movement that might well make Melbourne better.”

Boys for the Ministry.

The next appeal is to boys - to boys over twelve. “Those who will say, ‘I want my life to count for Christ.’ If God should call you to the ministry, if He should lay His hand on you and call you to preach, would you listen? Would you heed? Would you respond?” “He called me when I was poor and motherless. If He should call you, would you answer?” Who that saw will ever forget what followed? Everywhere the lads rise. “Come down into the aisle and I will pray with you..” They press forward. The choir sings softly, “There are angels hovering round.” Dr. Chapman has gone to the lower platform. He is in the midst of the lads. “If ever you are called to preach, let nothing stand between you and your work.” The boys remain standing in the aisles. The missionary's appeal is now to the girls - to girls over fifteen. “If God calls you to any service at home or abroad, will you do it?” They rise in even larger numbers than the boys. “How many fathers and mothers are here whose boys and girls are standing?” The parents rise. There are many. “If God should call these, will you help them?” There are glad cries of “Yes. Yes.” Let us pray. Dr. Fitchett utters our prayer. “Lord, Thy hand is upon us. It is a loving hand. It is a consecrating hand. Glorify Thou Thyself in these young lives.” Dr. Chapman speaks to the lads again. At his word they stand with right hand uplifted. “If God calls me, I will obey. If that is so, say, ‘I will.’” Steadily and earnestly the voices ring out, “I will.” “Again!” “I will.” It is a pledge of loyalty to Christ.

Recruits for the Kingdom.

It is hither the boys have come. In long procession they have passed from the great meeting. The ministers have come, too. The boys have ranged themselves in a semi-circle many lines deep. The ministers face them. And Dr. Chapman is here, with tears upon his face. A few moments are spent

in prayer. Then the missionary asks the ministers to state the age when they were called to the ministry. The ages vary, reaching down so low as twelve, and eight, and seven. Then some relate how they were called. It is an illustration of the diversity of the operations in the ministry of the Holy Ghost. Then the Doctor talks directly and affectionately to the lads. Some of them are ministers' sons, and their fathers are here. The missionary asks whether any of the preachers have a special word for the boys. A few speak briefly. And the climax comes when a missionary on furlough makes a plea for the heathen world. His voice is broken; but it carries the cry of a faithful heart. It is Christ's larger call through honoured lips. The lads repeat the promises they have already made. They fill in cards showing their desired Church connection. Then they pass in single line before the evangelist, and each receives a Worker's New Testament. Two hundred and four boys is the actual count. "it is the greatest sight of the sort that I have ever looked upon. I have never seen anything to equal it." says Dr. Chapman, in a voice that trembles with very happiness. In another room over 400 girls have signed their vows of service unto God. Surely this Exhibition Building is one of the heavenliest, holiest places in all the world to-night! (16.)

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

PROPHETIC SIGNS OF DECLINE? 1912

There are always signs of decline in all of the Christian Churches. There are always weaknesses in our work for God. Even in the strongest periods of a Church's history, there are weaknesses. If we have insight enough to recognise signs of decline, we can work and pray to overcome them. This happens many, many times.

On other occasions, signs of decline become visible which are prophetic about the future. The signs point to factors which subsequent historians would recognise as the beginnings of disastrous features in the story of a Church. It is often extremely difficult to recognise these disastrous signs when they first appear in such a way as to set them apart from the other signs of decline which we will manage to overcome, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Even as the Chapman-Alexander Mission was progressing with some degree of triumph through Australia, several articles were published in the *Methodist*, written by different people, which pointed toward serious signs of decline..

FELLOWSHIP and EVANGELISM

During the N.S.W. Annual Conference in February, 1912, the Ex-President of the Conference made the following statement under the heading of "Fellowship and Evangelism," in his Official Address to the Conference upon the year past, which had, of course, been his presidential year. The Ex-President was the Rev. Dr. W. E. Bromilow. The date, February, 1912, indicates that it was written and spoken about a month before Chapman and Alexander arrived in Australia for their longer Mission.

"At the last Conference special resolutions were passed urging the members of our Church to attend Class or Fellowship Meetings, and at the same time attention was called to the need of a revival of the spirit of evangelism. The Conference Pastoral Letter asked for more devotion to the old-fashioned, God-honoured means of grace, and especially the Prayer Meeting. What is the Methodist Church without these three - Prayer, Fellowship, and Aggressive Evangelism?"

During the year, in many Churches there has been an increase in the attendances at the meetings for Fellowship, and there have been encouraging signs of blessing. The Conference Evangelist's appointment has been thoroughly justified by the results of the Missions held. We have had the 'droppings' not only in the Missions conducted by the evangelist, but in the ordinary services of the Church. But, oh! for the showers of blessing! Why cannot we have them during this Conference?

It is said that these are different times, that circumstances have changed, that we need advanced and

respectable methods, that education and evangelism are not compatible, that knowledge takes away belief in the efficacy of prayer, that culture does not agree with Fellowship. Is that so? I very much fear, that instead of education, and knowledge, and culture, killing evangelism and prayer and fellowship, it is fashion and pleasure and pride - in a word, conformity to the world, which is the enemy to the three great characteristics of our Church. Our existence as a Church depends on spiritual power. We never have sought and I hope we never shall seek, political power; but do we desire the influence and prestige and power of worldliness? The Methodist Church has no mission in the world which has not for its ultimate object the saving of souls and the upbuilding of the Church of Christ. Let us not be content unless we have conversions in our Churches as well as in our Mission halls, in our ordinary services as well as during Evangelistic Missions; conversions which are not measured by the law of averages, and not confined to certain ages, or conditions, or environment. Conversion is a psychological fact, acknowledged by high medical authorities as having been proved by scientific enquiry. But it is more than a psychological fact. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. The words of the Saviour are ever true, 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.'

We are making preparations for the visit of the honoured evangelists - Dr. Chapman and Mr. Alexander. Many who were converted at the last Mission are to be seen today in our churches, and no doubt much enthusiasm will be manifested. The cry of fanaticism will no doubt be raised, even by those who form queues at operatic performances, and by those who often pass the night in dancing and mirth. Enthusiasm in the one case is simply good taste, high-class appreciation, or real life - but in religious life all enthusiasm is mad-brained folly! But why need we care about the opinions of the world? It is our part to do God's work and save souls.

At the same time, it is not wise or right that we should depend upon the visits of Evangelists for the upbuilding of the Church of Christ. The Evangelist of modern times gathers in the harvest to the accompaniment of soul-stirring music, but without the regular, earnest work of the preacher and the pastor there will be no upbuilding of the Church. Every preacher a winner of souls in his own pulpit, every Church member doing his utmost by prayer and individual effort to promote a constant revival, to gather in such as are being saved, this is the ideal Church-life. Let us, however, be careful not to restrict our acknowledgement of the work of the Holy Spirit. Souls are saved not only at the penitent form, and in the enquiry room, but in the pew, by the wayside, in the home." (1.)

Comments

There are several things to note in this passage.

The first is to consider the two comments:- "What is the Methodist Church without these three - Prayer, Fellowship, and Aggressive Evangelism?" and "The Methodist Church has no mission in the world which has not for its ultimate object the saving of souls and the upbuilding of the Church of Christ." These comments emphasise what Dr. Bromilow considered to be the essence of Methodism.

Methodism was basically a soul-saving Church, which gained its driving power from the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. An aspect of this was that Methodism was sent to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land. Any other aims were very secondary.

The second comment points to what he feared had become of the Methodist Church. He referred to the claim that - because times have changed, because circumstances have changed, advanced and respectable methods are needed. It was claimed that education and evangelism are not compatible, that knowledge takes away belief in the efficacy of prayer, that culture does not agree with Fellowship.

These claims, he thought, sounded like there was a danger of conformity to the world. Methodists would now get their agenda from the world, and the world would determine what course of action was now to be acceptable in preaching the Gospel. Instead of education, knowledge and culture killing evangelism, prayer and fellowship, it was fashion, pleasure and pride that was killing it.

The other fear mentioned was that Methodists would get to rely too much upon the professional evangelist, and that wide sections of the Methodist Church would get out of the habit of doing the evangelism themselves. His desire that there should be conversions under all different circumstances in the life of the Church, and not just in June, when the missions were held, and when the weather was better, was also important.

THE DECLINE of the CHURCH BIRTHRATE

Unlike the Melbourne *Spectator*, the editor of the *Methodist* in New South Wales used to write some of the editorial material, but he would also include editorial statements, and other editorial articles, which had been written by a range of other senior ministers. We will look at several examples of these articles.

The Rev. Matthew Maddern was President of the Methodist Holiness Association in New South Wales. His editorial, under the heading, "The Decline of the Church Birthrate" appeared in May, 1912, about three months after Dr. Bromilow's Official Address.

"The new science of eugenics seeks to arrest the declining birth-rate, and to improve the quality of the children that are born.

Race suicide is a national calamity, because it threatens the existence of the people which make the nation. The highest of all privileges is to be born, and the richest legacy to be given to a child is to be well born.

In the spiritual realm the fact must always be deplored when abnormal conditions prevail, and an arrest is placed upon conversions. This is the normal law of Church Life - 'The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved.'

Conversions were intended to be constant and regular. The normal and healthy birth-rate was to be sustained. The perfection of the sufferings of the Captain of our Salvation as an ultimate end was 'the bringing of sons to glory.' For this purpose 'He tasted death for every man.'

Arrested growth of any kind can only be explained by the operation of certain hindering conditions.

In the membership returns of the last New South Wales Conference an increase of 603 members was reported from the circuits of the State proper, 59 from Tonga District, and 344 from our island missions.

We are thankful for such results, but are they quite satisfactory and adequate? An expert in figures, we fear, would consider this result of a year's work surprisingly small, in view of the men and machinery employed, and the large sum of money expended.

After making due allowance for the hampering and inevitable conditions which are always more or less operative against the success in our home and foreign mission work, is there, honestly speaking, much room for complacency and congratulation left at the increase of membership

reported?

It is a good thing to face the facts of the case, at the risk even of being charged with taking a pessimistic view of things.

It is feared by many that Methodism is in great danger of declining as a soul-saving Church, if indeed, the steep descent has not already commenced. The evidence is too strong to be resisted or explained away that its old evangelism is largely a spent force. There is now in our churches, with a few notable exceptions, little or no expectation of seeing men and women converted to God, and little direct or well-concerted effort to secure such a result. Not that there is not plenty of activity of a certain kind, and strenuous enough at that.

Routine and administration fill up a big space in the programme, and commands constant and expert attention. Money, time and energy enough are spent in perfecting our mechanism, and churches are being built at a rate that suggests phenomenal progress of a material kind. We have been planning for some time past to bring our ministry up to a higher educational standard, and with this end in view we have put on foot the Theological Institution and Affiliated College schemes.

In saying this there is not the slightest breath of disapproval against having a well-trained ministry. There are signs of material prosperity of which we may well be proud if we do not make too much of them and too little of the spiritual forces which should accompany them. And this is the vital point to settle - Is our spirituality keeping pace with our materiality? A number of engines on the railway tracks is an imposing sight, but of what use are they without the steam to propel them?

It is an inspiring thing to look at the electric plant in the Ultimo power-house, but it is in itself so much dead lumber unless the dynamos are connected with the stream of trams which are to carry their living freight to all parts of Sydney and its suburbs. In the same way we have the complex and imposing mechanism of church organisation, and all we need is the dynamic of power from on high to turn out the results for which it is primarily designed.

The late Principal Fairbairn stated a short time before his death that while on a holiday tour he had an opportunity of listening to many sermons, and what struck him painfully was that so few of them had the distinctively evangelistic note. We have heard it said again and again how few are the sermons preached from which unconverted hearers can learn the way to the Cross.

If there is any truth in these statements, can we wonder at the dearth of conversions? If texts are Browningised or Tennysonised is it to be expected that any poor sin-sick soul hungering for the message of Christ will cry out under such preaching. 'What must I do to be saved.?'

There is a delusive way of appraising results when the work of the Church is under review. Schedule figures do not interpret everything. It is not quite correct to say that the Church is a big business affair. A commercial man can tell from the results of his stock-taking and the state of his bank-book whether his business is sound. We have no such prompt way of estimating spiritual results. The great Master can judge, but we cannot, for the simple reason that we are part of the stock or trade material of the concern to be sized up, and no one ever heard of the stock overhauling itself and presenting a balance-sheet. When all this is said there is some truth in the putting of the case that the Church should look for results which prove in an unmistakable way that it is doing its proper work. It should be known whether it is effective in bringing men to Christ, and whether these people are brought into the close fellowship of the Church provided for them. It should be known whether its people are a holy people differentiated from the frivolous, worldly people who are too half-hearted and selfish to follow Christ fully. It ought to be known whether its young converts are so enthused with love for Christ and so inflamed with a passion to bring others to Him that the most enticing material prospects of life are not enticing enough to lure them from the higher service.

We have 187 circuits within the bounds of our Conference, manned by 191 European and 70 native

ministers in full connexion, with 100 ministers on trial. We have in addition a staff of local preachers and lay agents far exceeding these in number, and we return, roughly speaking, an increase of one thousand members. Are the results commensurate with the labour employed? Is the rate of conversions keeping pace with the growth of the population, and our own adherents? We think not. Can anyone show us that it is otherwise?"

Comments

Maddern knew that conversions in the Methodist Church were only occurring spasmodically. He thought that this was not normal Christianity. The normal thing was as the Scriptures describe - "The Lord added daily whom He was saving." So, this lack of regularity was a sign of decline in the Methodist Church. Associated with this was the fact that the Church's birthrate was falling.

He pointed to the belief held by some people that the Methodist Church had already begun on the steep slide of decline as a serious soul-saving Church. The evidence clearly seen was now beginning to support such a view.

Finally, he pointed to the number of circuits that existed, the size of the Church's manpower situation, and the amount of money that was spent on Church activities. Then he said that the Church's work was not cost-effective. The number of converts being won for Christ, even when there was a "good" increase, was too small for anyone to be able to say that it was a reasonable or efficient return for all the effort and expense.

All of these points are valid, and are indicators of decline.

This is so, despite the fact that the final point had been true almost every year since the Methodist Church had started in Australia. So, even when growth had occurred, it still was not really good enough, for the glory of God.

ARE WE BACKSLIDING?

Later in the year, two more articles of this kind appeared within a few weeks. The first was by the Rev. W. G. Taylor, superintendent of the Central Methodist Mission in Sydney, and an effective evangelist in his own right. The article was provoked by a situation earlier in the week which Taylor had thought was very embarrassing, not for himself, but for the Methodist Church that he loved so much.

"It is with a feeling akin to shame that I looked out upon an array of empty tables at Sargent's Cafe the other day. The occasion was an important one. Mr. Ebenezer Vickery, the Honorary Treasurer of the Connexional Evangelistic Committee, anxious to help the operations of that department of our work, and desirous of securing the sympathy therewith of our leading laymen, inviting a large number of them to join him, and the Committee, at a luncheon, called at a slack hour of the day, in the centre of the city. Not a dozen of our Methodist laymen responded. No wonder that the Treasurer felt discouraged, and led to express his grief at the lack of interest in this Committee's operations shown by the very men who, in Conference assembled had voted for the establishment of this new department of our work.

One could have wished that every minister, and every official member of our Church could but

have listened to the address of the Connexional Evangelist (Mr. Walker), given at the luncheon table. Such a record reflects the greatest honour, alike upon the missionary, and upon the cause he represents. The Church ought to be proud that so blessed and so remarkable a work is being carried on amongst us. But what are the facts? The time, surely, has come for plain speaking. Realising, as I do, the responsibility of thus writing, I hesitate not to say that this work has never had a fair deal. The Church Sustentation Society has thus far not given it a penny. The circuits - with exceptions that are few and far between - have practically done nothing. The monied men of our great Church have never taken the matter seriously. The missionaries have, on more than one occasion, had to go without their allowances for weeks at a time, because the coffers were empty, and but for the generous support of Mr. Vickery, Mr. Winn, and one or two others, the Committee would long since have been bankrupt. To-day the Treasurer shows a debit balance on the past six months work alone of about 120 pounds.

Is it not about time that we ceased speaking of ourselves as the leading Evangelistic Church of New South Wales? Evangelical we are. In doctrine, in theory that is true. But as a Church, to a lamentable degree, we have ceased to be evangelistic. It wounds me to the quick to see other sections of the Church going to the front, and leaving us in the rear. Let me remind the readers of "The Methodist" that under the regime of Archbishop Wright, five special missionaries are now at work in this State in connection with the Anglican Church. They are going all over the country, holding revival missions - with their Sankey's hymns, their inquiry rooms, and their conversions. A Bishop of the Church himself is doing this work, and doing it in a remarkable fashion, in his own diocese; going all over his district conducting ten days' missions, and seeing people being converted in large numbers. A well-known clergyman of the Anglican Church assures me that it is the evangelistic ministers of that Communion who are filling their churches, and, furthermore, that recently there has been a remarkable awakening of aggressively spiritual fervour, especially throughout the Sydney diocese. It is well known what the Presbyterians are doing in this same direction. The wealthy men of that Church are furnishing ample funds for the carrying on of a continuous evangelistic propaganda that is having a marked effect upon the inner life of that rapidly growing Church.

The Baptists are to-day, probably, for their numbers, the leading Evangelical Church of the country. Let any who doubt this but read the official address of the newly-elected Chairman of the Baptist Union, and his questionings will be answered. Mr. Tinsley's own Church is one of the most evangelistic, and hence, one of the most successful Churches in Australia.

And what is our own great Methodist Church doing? **We are playing at Evangelism.** Scarcely anywhere are we taking this work seriously. Our Conference Evangelists often go into a circuit and find that scarcely any previous preparation has been made to secure adequate results. No money spent; few, if any, preparatory meetings held. Sometimes the ministers are practically indifferent, and many of the leading officials simply not in it.

The fact is, our Church, so far as old-fashioned, red-hot evangelism is concerned, is gradually, silently, slipping into the rear. I had a startling concrete illustration of this in a statement voluntarily made to me only this week by a very devoted minister of our own Church. Said he: "In our suburb the Anglicans are red-hot; the Church full to overflowing; after-meetings and conversions almost every Sunday. The Presbyterians are alive up to the hilt. The Baptists are aiming at conversions, and getting them, but our Church is just as dead as dead can be."

Were this an isolated case I should not quote it. But, alas, it represents the true state of things in other districts. Our Church is gradually becoming highly 'respectable' and self-satisfied, and conventional and cold. The prayer meeting has, in many places, simply gone; the class meeting has followed; the week-night service is non est. **Why is this? Because our old-time evangelistic fervour has died out.**

Mark my words. There is an anxious, worrying time ahead of us - as a connexion - if we do not

honestly face facts as they are, and be willing to do again our first works. The spirit that has crept into our Church clearly indicates - to me at all events - that, on present lines, we are sowing to the wind, and are going to reap the whirlwind. Other Churches are beating us with our neglected weapons. And we must either be content to take a back seat or bestir ourselves to again get on to the lines that gave us our existence as a Church, and that alone, of all the forces that operate in a Church's life, will ever mean to Methodism the keeping of its pride of place and power. Which alternative shall we accept?

In the meanwhile, I beg of our laymen to come to the help of the Evangelistic Committee, and do something to heal the soreness that was created by the failure of last Tuesday evening, and to make it possible for it to honestly carry out the work for which it was called into being." (3.)

Comments

In a sense, the article was primarily directed at the more wealthy Methodists who had been invited to Ebenezer Vickery's luncheon, but who did not turn up. However, it is also generalised to apply to all Methodists. It is a sign that Methodists had begun to lose, or had lost already, the fire in the bones which drives people in their evangelistic urge. Taylor pointed out that the wealthy people, the Quarterly Meetings around the State, and the Sustentation Fund, had not supported financially the work of the Conference Evangelist. Because the fund had been empty so often, the Evangelist had not been paid on many occasions.

By comparison with the recent efforts in evangelism by Anglicans, Presbyterians and Baptists in New South Wales, the Methodists had no right to think of themselves as the primary evangelistic denomination any more. This hurt Taylor's sense of pride about his Church. Hardly anyone amongst the Methodists was taking evangelism seriously, he said.

Towards the end of the article, the blame is directed by Taylor mostly at his fellow ministers. It would seem to be inexcusable for the Conference Evangelist to come to a circuit (no doubt he had been asked to come), and to find that little or no preparations had been made, no advertising, no prayer, no training of counsellors, and for the evangelist to get the impression that the minister did not really want him to be there at all. This was one of the early signs of something which appeared much more widely at a later time, that some of the ministers did not really believe in the value of what the evangelist was doing. Anyway, they were too busy doing other things apparently more important.

Not only did some of the ministers come to think that this style of mass evangelism had now passed its "used-by" date, and should be scrapped. Some of the ministers were beginning to have such a different theology from what had been universal amongst Methodists for a century, that they did not believe in "red-hot evangelism" any more. Certainly, they would never do any of it themselves.

Taylor said that Methodist evangelistic fervour had died out.

He knew what this would lead to. Particularly a denomination like the Methodist Church would die a slow death, and would eventually disappear from the scene, if there was no major emphasis on aggressive evangelism. The Anglicans could probably survive as long as there were English people around. The Presbyterians could survive as long as there was a strong enough Scottish tradition. The Roman Catholics could survive in Australia so long as there was a strong Irish tradition, or enough people from parts of Mediterranean Europe. But the Methodists never had such a basis for survival, and it is probably good that this was so. Cornwall was not enough. So the Methodist Church had to keep on evangelising in a major way, or it would die.

Taylor foresaw this in 1912. We can see that, at the end of the Twentieth Century, it has literally come true.

When Taylor wrote, the death process had apparently commenced. By the time of his death (1934), the passion for aggressive evangelism in the Methodist Church in Australia was very largely dead, although not entirely so. By the time the Uniting Church was inaugurated, in 1977, aggressive Methodist evangelism was indeed dead. Evangelism generally had been relegated to the office of a consultant. By the end of the century, the Methodist Church in Australia had ceased to exist.

The Uniting Church in Australia is a different type of Church from the Methodist Church. Whatever there is left remaining of the Methodist tradition in the Uniting Church is hardly visible. It may be a cherished memory for some, but it does not support much in the line of aggressive evangelism or revival.

THE PERILS OF METHODISM

The Rev. James W. Dains was one of the younger ministers who, at the time of writing this article, was appointed to the Gladstone Circuit on the Mid-North Coast of New South Wales. His editorial article appeared just a few weeks after the article by W. G. Taylor.

“It is readily admitted by most that Methodism was raised up of God for a special purpose, during one of the darkest centuries of British history; and that it fulfilled its mission in reclaiming Britain from shameless infidelity, to a clearer conception of the truth as it is in Jesus. But when we say that, does it explain the reason for our existence? If Methodism were merely a piece of machinery, fashioned to achieve an immediate end, to bring about local results, it might reasonably have said at the close of Wesley's life, ‘It is finished,’ and have softly subsided again into the then awakened bosom of the Mother Church. But it is more than machinery, and when we speak of the ‘distinctive features of Methodism,’ we mean more than the peculiarities of its organisation.

The ‘distinctive features’ of a person, mean more than the peculiarities of his dress, the cut of his coat, or the style of his hat, more even than the colour of his eyes, or the shape of his nose. They are the index of something deeper, something beneath the skin, something that has created a character, and an expression of that character in the face.

And so the marks of Methodism are not in its external organisation, but rather in its internal and vital principles. Her distinctive marks are her passionate and peculiar re-affirmation of spiritual and scriptural truth. And so it is safe to prophesy that while Methodism preserves a burning zeal for souls, and loyalty to her best traditions, the hurrying centuries will never write wrinkles of decrepitude on her brow. Machinery is often ‘scrapped,’ but Truth - never.

Our greatest work lies ahead of us, and with an allegiance to the truths of our revival days and our simple and comprehensive creed, we may see greater things in the days to come.

But, for the present, statistics are not at all complimentary. It is time our Church fairly and squarely faced the situation. We have been too long soothing our connexional nerves with the opiates of flimsy excuses. We cannot be accused of indifference to the problem, but it is significant that every effort to reclaim lost territory and to stimulate aggressive endeavour during the past decade has been of a mechanical kind. It is not the machinery of Methodism that is at fault, it is her dynamics; not her organisation, but her life and power.

Our peril is that we are being over-organised. Every year witnesses some addition to our machinery, and incidentally some further burden upon our circuits. But nothing is done to touch the

root of the difficulty save a rather hurried talk on the work of God, which lifts us for a season into the realm of higher resolves and closer dependence on God. But it is insufficient.

We have not solved the problem by adding wheels and cylinders to our plant; we have rather accentuated the difficulty, for it means an extra pressure on the driving force of an already over-worked constitution. No body, however highly organised, can compensate for spiritual inertia, and a reaction of disaster must sooner or later come upon the most effective machinery.

Superintendents of circuits are frequently embarrassed by the flood of printed matter which pours into their circuits containing appeals for financial help, special requests for sermons on this and that, as 'per legislation of Conference.' Auxiliary branches of connexional funds, missions, etc., with their special claims. All these, together with Sunday School Department and Conference evangelist fund, make the supreme task of preaching largely ineffective, because a minister is becoming more and more a man of affairs, and less and less sanctified to the preaching of the Word for the sake of souls.

Another peril is that our laymen are not fulfilling their part in 'serving at tables,' while the minister gives his time to the ministry of the Word and prayer. In many places, most of the business devolves upon the minister to such an extent, that special efforts, collections, subscriptions, etc., crowd out these seasons of meditation so necessary if one is to be the ambassador of God. When shall we have a set-apart ministry? The more this truth is pondered the clearer does it become that this is a vital question when grappling with the times of to-day. It is time Methodism ceased trying to solve the problem by mechanical devices. It is a spiritual difficulty and spiritual remedies alone will give a solution.

If some candid friend were to take us on one side and tell us faithfully some uncomfortable truths, perhaps he would say, 'Our Church members are too worldly and our preaching is only second rate,' in the sense that it lacks spiritual passion and saving force; that kind of preaching which does not give one much 'to chew on.' And if one did, methinks it would not be all false to fact.

One of the distinctive features of Methodism was that members had the 'experience,' and a place where that experience could be related for common good, and where they could 'speak oft one to another.' Now it would seem that there is neither experience nor place to tell it. No one will plead for a re-instatement of obsolete methods, but it has yet to be proven that the class meeting was ineffective, and certainly the lack of this or some other substitute is seriously affecting the life of our Church. It is poor statesmanship to abandon a means of grace such as the class meeting, without adopting some other means serving better purposes.

Another peril is the lost art of Bible study and prayer among Church members. Men to-day cannot talk about Jesus as did our fathers, when it is necessary, they almost need an introduction to Him afresh.

No mechanical contrivance will suffice to remedy this loss. The only remedy is a mighty revival. And it must begin with our preachers. We shall have to alter our objective in preaching, and also our style. The men who fashioned our Church were preachers of the Bible, and they translated living experience into passionate testimony. It was not the frigid iteration of soulless theories, but a burning message of scriptural truth. We must preach more of the Bible, and more expository sermons. Bible study and exegesis ought to form a much greater part of our students' curriculum. Our ministers should be taught the Bible. Much preaching lacks force because the Word is more a part of the accoutrements than the fighting weapon. 'The Word of God is powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.' If preachers, preach the Bible, he congregations will read their Bibles.

Preaching to save is the need of the age. It is a waste of time to preach anything else but the Gospel from every point of view. Nothing draws men and holds them like the message of Jesus; nothing subdues hearts like Calvary; nothing saves like the Gospel of reconciliation. To our knees in

humiliation and prayer, is the only effectual way of solving our problems. A separateness from the world and a personal consecration to God through Jesus Christ on the part of the whole Church, will supply the imperative of successful service.” (4.)

Comments

An obvious aspect of this article is the comment that, over the last ten years, the Methodist Church has tried to solve all of its problems by tinkering with its organisation, rather than by seeking a spiritual solution.

No doubt, some of the difficulties were of an organisational kind, and could be solved that way.

But Dains believed that the deepest problems were of a spiritual kind, and should have been handled differently. The Church should have turned to God, and sought a new enduement of the Holy Spirit's power and blessing.

The problem of being over-organised, of crowding the minister's work schedule so tightly that he had no time to pray, the forgetting of Bible study and prayer, etc., had been problems for a long time. Good fellowship, and appreciation of “experience” no doubt was lost with the demise of the Class Meeting, and with the decline of the Christian Endeavour's Consecration Meeting. There was nothing to take the place of these good things.

The last two paragraphs are a call for the Methodist people to turn to God, for there to be “a mighty revival.” This was the call which had been issued in John Wesley's own time, and repeatedly in Nineteenth Century Methodism, and their prayers had been answered, many times. Indeed, this happened so often that the witness of the past is a message of condemnation for Twentieth Century Methodists. **But, after 1912, this path**, which had been so blessed by God in the past, **was not followed any longer**. The rejection of this path, of growth by means of revival and the power of the Holy Spirit, represented a denial of essential Methodist features, and a failure of spiritual character.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

A QUICK GLANCE AT SOME STATISTICS

The overall policy in this chapter is to look at the growth of each of the Protestant evangelical denominations (or partly evangelical), insofar as meaningful figures are available, firstly at total figures for Australia, and then secondly for each denomination in each colony or state of Australia. This is followed by several interesting snapshots.

AUSTRALIA AS A WHOLE.

The population of Australia was 2,250,194 in 1881, remembering that the Census for many years did not include the indigenous Aborigine people. By 1921 this had grown to 5,435,734, at a steady rate. So, the population in 1881 had doubled by about the year 1912, and had multiplied by three by about the year 1935.

If we represent the population in 1881 by the figure of 100, the population in 1921 would be represented by the figure 241. (100/241.)

The Church of England.

The following figures for the various churches do not include the Northern Territory, or islands such as Norfolk Island.

Figures for those people declaring an association with Church of England are only available indicating very general and nominal links with that Church, and not figures which show thoroughgoing commitment and regular attendance.

In 1881 (1891 in Tasmania), the number declaring at least nominal links with the Church of England in the main colonies of Australia was 881,175.

By 1921, this figure had risen to 2,370,480. (100/269.)

Baptist Churches.

General nominal affiliation with the Baptist Churches in 1881 (1891 in Tasmania) was 50,326. This nominal association had grown to 105,668 in 1921. (100/210.)

The census questions varied in their ability to cater for the smaller denominations. Full Baptist membership in the 1881 Census, for Victoria and South Australia only was given as 6,554. By 1921, full membership for all states except Western Australia was given as 23,716.

Christian Brethren.

General nominal affiliation with the Christian Brethren assemblies in the 1881 Census (1891 in Tasmania) was 1,099. This rose to 12,022 in 1921. (100/1,093)

Churches of Christ.

General nominal affiliation with the Churches of Christ in Australia in the 1881 Census (1891 in Tasmania) was 7,602. This had risen to 54,567 in 1921. In the early censuses, some of the smaller denominations may not have been listed separately. (100/718.)

Full membership in 1881 in Victoria and South Australia only was 3,770. By 1921 the full membership in all states was 25,098.

Congregational Churches.

General nominal affiliation with the Congregational Churches in 1881 (1891 in Tasmania) was 54,641. By 1921 this had risen to 74,493. (100/136)

Full membership in the 1881 Census in all states except Western Australia was 10,334. By 1921 the full membership was 19,168.

Methodist Churches.

The figures in the various censuses varied from year to year, and from state to state, in the way they included the lesser Methodist denominations, such as the Primitive Methodists and the Bible Christians. Despite this factor, people associating nominally with the Methodists in the census of 1881 (1891 in Tasmania) numbered 276,552. By 1921 this had risen to 631,993. (100/228.)

Full membership of the various Methodist Churches which could be separated out in the 1881 Census was given as 35,259. By 1921 this had risen to 112,122.

Presbyterian Churches.

In the 1881 Census (1891 in Tasmania) the number of people associating nominally with the Presbyterian churches numbered 256,422. By the 1921 Census this number had grown to 636,446. (100/248.)

In the 1881 Census for New South Wales and South Australia, full membership in the Presbyterian Churches was listed as 6,682. By 1921, the full membership for all states was listed as 77,273.

Although the number of nominal Presbyterians was slightly greater in 1921 than the number of nominal Methodists, the degree of commitment amongst the Presbyterians as a whole was not so great, and this was a factor for many years.

The **Salvation Army** did not appear on the scene as a separate activity in Australia until after the 1881 Census, and in many states the members of the Army were not listed separately until the 1930s.

STATE BY STATE (Full Membership)

New South Wales

In 1891, the Baptist Union full membership totalled 1,860. By 1921 the total had risen to 5,918.

In 1886, the Churches of Christ full membership was 683. By 1921 this had risen to 3,434.

In 1881, the Congregational Churches of New South Wales full membership totalled 2,768. By 1921 this had risen to 5,250.

In 1881 the Wesleyan Methodists had 5,760 full members, and the Primitive Methodists in New South Wales had 1,300 members. Following the Union of Methodist denominations in 1902, by 1921 the full Methodist membership was 29,954. The best growth period was around 1902 - 1904, linked to the Tent Missions and other evangelism, shown in the "Snapshots" section.

Presbyterian full membership in 1881 was 5,399. By 1921 this had grown to 24,997. A remarkable growth occurred around 1890, which the historian C. A. White said was due to an influx of Presbyterian ministers newly arriving from Scotland to commence new churches, thus tapping into the large number of nominal Presbyterians scattered around the country. (1.) See also the "Snapshots" section.

In New South Wales, Salvation Army membership in 1896 was 4,978. By 1921 the membership was 5,150.

Victoria

In 1881, Baptist Union full membership was 3,893. By 1921 this had climbed steadily to 7,492.

In 1881, the Churches of Christ full membership was about 2,500. By 1921 this had risen to 10,293.

Full membership in the Congregational Churches in Victoria in 1881 was 3,538. By 1921 this had risen to 4,783. This was the high point of Congregational membership in Victoria, which declined slowly thereafter.

In 1881, the Wesleyan Methodist full membership was 11,122. The Bible Christians numbered 1,207. The number of Primitive Methodists or United Methodist Free Churches in Victoria at that time did not appear separately in the Census. In 1921, the combined Methodist full membership was 37,452.

Of special note was that the Bible Christians in Victoria grew rapidly from 1891 until the Union in 1902. Their figure of members in 1901 was 7,759. I have not yet tried to discover the reason for this rapid growth, and it is possible that Bible Christian records may not have survived enough to reveal the story of this growth.

Presbyterian Churches in Victoria in 1886 had a membership of 15,876. By 1921 this had risen to 35,223.

Salvation Army statistics did not appear separately in the Census until 1931, when they had 7,480 members.

Queensland

Full membership in the Baptist Churches in Queensland in 1906 was 2,797. The figure for 1921 was 3,466.

Churches of Christ membership in 1886 was 376. By 1921 the membership had risen to 1,665.

The Congregational membership in 1881 in Queensland was 963. By 1921 the membership had risen to 2,287.

Wesleyan Methodist full membership in 1881 was 953. The newly formed Bible Christians' Mission in Queensland had only 39 members at that time, but this number grew rapidly for the next 15 years. By 1921, the combined total of full members had reached 11,249.

The Presbyterian membership in 1891 was 3,809. By 1921 this had risen to 9,666.

Salvation Army membership in Queensland in 1921 was 2,310.

South Australia

Baptist Association figures for South Australia in 1881 showed 2,661 baptised members. By 1921 this had risen to 5,446.

Churches of Christ baptised membership in 1881 was 1,270. By 1921 this had risen to 6,961.

The Congregational Churches in South Australia in 1881 had 2,165 members. By 1921 this figure was 4,243. It fluctuated around that figure for a decade or more, and then slowly declined.

South Australia has been called a "Paradise of Dissent," and was a stronghold of Methodism for many years. In 1881, the Wesleyan Methodists had 5,231 full members, and the Bible Christians and Primitive Methodists had a combined membership of 4,758. By 1921, the combined membership was 23,020.

Presbyterian membership in 1881 was 1,283. By 1921 it was 3,240.

Salvation Army membership in 1931 was 2,718.

Tasmania

Baptist Union figures in Tasmania for 1906 showed 920 members. By 1921 this had risen to 1,394.

Churches of Christ membership in 1891 was 250. By 1921 it was 898.

Congregationalist members in 1883 were 900. By 1921 there were 1,019.

Wesleyan Methodists in 1891 numbered 2,093 full members, and Primitive Methodists numbered 620. By 1921 they totalled 5,301.

In 1901, the Presbyterian full membership in Tasmania was 1,670. By 1921 it was 1,961.

By 1931 the Salvation Army numbered 863 members in Tasmania.

The Christian Brethren were also stronger in Tasmania than any other state of Australia, as a proportion of the population.

Western Australia

Baptist members in 1901 numbered 578. In 1916 they numbered 1,245.

Churches of Christ members in 1901 numbered 620, and by 1921 were 1,847.

In 1901, Congregationalists totalled 1,162, and by 1921 numbered 1,586.

Wesleyan Methodists in Western Australia operated from Adelaide, and in 1901 numbered 2,176. By 1921 this figure had risen to 5,246.

Presbyterian members in 1901 were 1,023. By 1921 they numbered 2,186.

In 1931 the Salvation Army in Western Australia numbered 1,443 members. (2.)

INTERESTING SNAPSHOTS

1. Australian Methodist Conferences of 1894. by the Rev. W. F. James.

Wesleyan Methodist:-

The total figures for the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand are:-
- 1,675 churches, 529 ministers, 2512 local preachers, 49,689 members, 137,099 Sunday scholars, 337,702 adherents; value of property, 2,016,156 pounds, debt, 608,601 pounds.

The members increased last year 1,737.

In the missions: - 1,040 churches, 114 ministers, 2,280 local preachers, 34,478 members, 46,001 scholars, 121,169 adherents.

The members increased last year, 747 members.

Total increase for the year - 2,484.

for the last four years - 10,854

an average of 2,713 a year.

Primitive Methodist:-

462 churches, 179 ministers, 88 local preachers, 12,619 members, 32,776 scholars, 55,589 adherents; value of property, 298,830 pounds; debt, 93,621 pounds.

Increase of members for the year 88.

for four years 945.

average of 236 per year.

Bible Christians:-

278 churches, 95 ministers, 403 local preachers, 6,790 members, 14,699 scholars, 32,078 adherents; value of property, 163,700 pounds, , debt 63,665 pounds.

Increase of members for the year, 314,

for four years, 1,088

average for each year 272.

United Methodist Free Churches:-

97 churches, 50 ministers, 109 local preachers, 3,320 members, 7,56 scholars, 14,940 adherents; value of property, 60,813 pounds, debt, 20,136 pounds.

Totals for Minor Methodism

837 churches, 315 ministers, 1,400 local preachers, 22,729 members, 55,031 scholars, 102,607 adherents. Value of property 522,333 pounds, debt, 177,422. pounds.

Increase of members for the year, 4042.

for four years, 2,033.

average of 508 per year.

Combined Methodism for Australasia

3,552 churches,

958 ministers,

6,192 local preachers,

106,896 members,

238,131 scholars,

558,478 adherents.

Omitting mission property

2,538,489 pounds worth of property

debt 786, 023. pounds.

The Bible Christian denomination is twice the size of the United Methodist Free Churches. (UMFC.)

Primitive Methodism is twice the size of the Bible Christian denomination.

The total of minor Methodism is 40% the size of the Wesleyan Methodist denomination in Australia, NZ and Tas.

In the quadrennium the membership of Australasian Methodism increased 12,886, an average of 3,222 a year.

The Rev. W. F. James hoped that if this could be achieved without union, what more could be achieved with union. (3.)

2. Some New South Wales Presbyterian Figures

Figures published by the Rev. C. A. White, and which were referred to in a previous section (1.), showed that in 1889 the number of Presbyterian Ministerial Charges in New South Wales was 70, with 5,101 communicants, 15,578 adherents, 7,505 Sunday scholars, and property value of 23,608 pounds.

Because of an influx of ministers from Scotland, in 1893 there were 144 charges, 9,751 communicants, 30,778 adherents, 14,996 Sunday scholars, and property value of 52,208 pounds.

The figures from 1900 through to 1916 reflect a peak period of expansion resulting more directly from evangelism. In this period in New South Wales, the membership rose from 12,427 to 22,179 (nearly 10,000.)

The peak years are best seen in a column which lists the number of people who were received as full church members for the first time, that is, they were received into membership probably upon confession of their faith, and not by transfer from some other church or locality.

After several years when the number of such new members was about 850 per year, in 1902 the number was 1,433; in 1903 the number was 1411, and a peak of 1,625 in 1909, with 1398 in 1910. (4.)

3. Some New South Wales Methodist Figures

Figures published by the New South Wales Methodist Conference show clearly the impact of the Tent Missions, and other evangelistic efforts, upon their membership figures.

At the start of the year 1900, the Wesleyan Methodist Church in New South Wales had 11,089 members, with 579 on trial.

At the start of 1901, the membership was 11,299, with 569 on trial. These represented more average figures for a year's work and growth.

At the end of 1901, the various Methodist denominations joined in a Union, and became known as "The Methodist Church of Australasia." To this Union, the Wesleyan Methodists contributed 11,759 members, with 564 on trial. The Primitive Methodists contributed 1,737 members with 53 on trial. The United Methodist Free Churches contributed 272 members, with three on trial. The total became 13,768 members, with 620 on trial, for the early months of 1902.

For the start of 1903, the membership was 14,880, with 1,453 on trial.

For the start of 1904, the membership was 16,032, with 1,268 on trial.

After that, the trend became more normal, with 1905 starting out with 17,131 members, with 915 on trial.

For 1910, there were 20,452 members, with 967 on trial.

However, the Church grew steadily each year through the next decade and a half until the figures for 1921 appeared in the Census for that year. (5.)

CHAPTER NINETEEN

A BRIEF EVALUATION for VOLUME ONE

1880 - 1914

At the start of this book it was stated that the principle which guided the selection of material for this historical study was the one which is understood by all sympathetic students of evangelical revivals, namely, that repentance, and earnest seeking after God, provide the spiritual foundations upon which revivals of the work of God are built.

The records of evangelical work in Australia reveal many aspects of this spiritual work. A good degree of revival, apparently by the power of the Holy Spirit, appears in the evangelistic work of the Churches, from time to time, in the period under review.

In this first volume, these aspects of the work of the Churches have been traced as well as I could, and I hope that this can be continued and expanded in a second volume at a later time.

Evangelism and revivals are two related areas of interest in the Protestant denominations of Australia during the period from 1880 to 1914.

There has been no intention here to imply that these two areas are the only areas of Church History which are worth studying, or that they are the most important areas of Church History. These years represented the hey-day of evangelicalism in Australia so far. Overall, these years saw the best growth in the evangelical churches. These years also saw the influence of the evangelical churches upon the whole society and culture of Australia at a high point. Tracing the strength of the prayer-life of the Churches is not an easy task, as such more private matters tend to go unreported, as part of the internal life of the soul. Here, the growth of the prayer unions, and the work of Mrs. Margaret Hampson are both used as tools, paths or methods, to obtain an understanding of the health or otherwise of the prayer-life of the Churches which might undergird evangelistic work, and express the desire for revival. Perhaps other methods or personalities might have been highlighted instead.

Growth in holiness can be a similarly difficult matter to trace, and for the same reasons. Here, examining the Wesleyan situation, and the rise of the Keswick movement, and the visit of Miss Isabella Leonard, have been used as the tools or methods of studying this aspect of the spiritual life of the Churches. No doubt other methods or personalities might have been used instead.

But the ongoing spiritual vibrancy of the Churches can also be seen in many of the localised revivals which broke out here and there. Certain examples of this have been provided in Chapter Five, but other examples might have been used instead. Some of these will hopefully appear in the proposed second volume.

In both cases, however, a serious attempt has been made to improve upon the account of these matters which was provided for us by Dr. J. Edwin Orr in 1976. So, the historiography regarding these subjects has been noticed, and improvements suggested.

Perhaps the most noticeable social impact was seen in the whole Temperance Movement; in the local-choice voting, its impact upon controlling the number of liquor outlets in a given district, and the closing hours of the pubs.

But the evangelism produced many strong churches in cities and country towns throughout the land, which provided a strong army of worshippers and workers for many years to come. Naturally, this had many other less obvious effects upon society and culture.

The “Prophetic Signs of Decline in 1912?” are included simply to indicate the kind of criticisms, and attempts at prophetic insights, which were published at the time.

The author believes that some of these insights contain a good deal of truth, which became evident during the decades which followed.

Naturally, more research needs still to be done in exploring these prophetic claims, at least in so far as Australia is concerned.

Despite this need for research, however, much of the truth of these prophetic insights have already been demonstrated well enough by recent American and British historians, who have looked at what happened in the U.S.A., and in Great Britain, during the same general period.

For example, the various Modernist and Liberal theologies in the United States progressed, produced their fruit, and began to decline. They drew forth Professor H. Richard Niebuhr’s famous adage;- “A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.” (1.)

This sort of theology had sold out to the world. A different “Gospel” was being preached, which did not have sufficient converting power in it to transform the world by any other means than by psychology and sociology.

This did not imply that Evangelical theology did not have any problems; did not make many mistakes, or did not get many things out of proportion. But destructive Biblical Criticism, theological Modernism and Liberalism made many other serious mistakes, and produced a great deal of spiritual barrenness and questionable fruit. Recent outstanding American historians have drawn attention to some of these factors, which creates a subject far greater than can be dealt with here. (2.)

The United States and Australia - some thoughts

The situation in the United States between the end of the Civil War and 1914 saw an enormous growth in the memberships of the evangelical churches, especially in the various Methodist and Baptist bodies. Solid work in local congregations, and the widespread impact of revivalistic evangelism, including the impact of books like the “Revival Lectures” by Charles G. Finney, helped to produce this result. The Methodist Holiness Movement, and semi-associated regional organisations, provided an important aspect of this.

The overall effect upon the nation was that Protestant revivalistic religion became almost the undeclared religion of the nation. The “American Way of Life” became deeply affected in many ways by Christian morality, beliefs and expectations. The percentage of people who went to church regularly on Sundays became surprisingly high, although this varied from one part of the country to another. Sunday sermons became front page news.

But there were other sides to this picture. The revivalism of the period had a number of inner weaknesses. There also arose the so-called “New Theology” of pulpit orators like Henry Ward Beecher and Phillips Brooks, tended to portray the “American Way of Life” as the same as

Christianity, so that the difference between the world and the Gospel became blurred, and lost. The same effect was hastened by the Social Gospel, Higher Biblical Criticism and Modernist Theology, although the protagonists of these beliefs had other intentions. Of course, many other factors were involved as well as these.

This Christianised “American Way of Life” became secularised, and was soon thought of as possible without practising the Church-related foundations and conversion experience which had created it originally.

After the First World War especially, the size of these mainline evangelical denominations ceased to grow. It was the many smaller denominations which had sprung from the Holiness Movement which were growing. And this scenario persisted generally through the Twentieth Century.

In Australia, the growth of Methodism started later than in the United States, and did not “take off” in the same spectacular way as it did in late Nineteenth Century America. The one possible exception was in South Australia, where the Methodist Church grew until it included twenty-five percent of the population in the early Twentieth Century.

So there were at least some slight signs in the 1880 - 1914 period that perhaps the Methodist Church in Australia might increase rapidly, and convert a substantial proportion of the population, as had happened in parts of the U.S.A.

But the factors which weakened the spiritual foundations; which promoted secularisation, and which blurred the distinction between the Church and the world, were also at work in Australia before 1914, and more strongly afterwards.

The Baptists in Australia never contributed to the conversion of Australians in anything like the way the Baptists did in the U.S.A. Even today, the denomination in Australia is still relatively small.

The end result is that the proportion of the population of Australia which goes to church regularly is still quite small compared to the situation today in the U.S.A., and the evangelical impact upon society is similarly restricted, by comparison.

Great Britain and Australia some thoughts

On the other hand, the period from 1792 in Great Britain saw revival movements and effective evangelism substantially affecting the country, producing strong churches, a church-going tradition in many places, and a substantial impact by “serious-minded” people especially in the army and the public service.

It was this situation which provided the immigrants which built the early Australian evangelical churches and denominations in the Nineteenth Century, as well as in some other countries.

Substantial migration weakened the spiritual foundations in England. The many forces which produced the secularisation, already referred to, and those which prompted preachers to gloss over the differences between the Church and the world, along with the deleterious impact of the two world wars, helped slowly to destroy the impact of evangelicalism in Britain during the Twentieth Century. The loss of evangelistic thrust, and the absence of widespread revival, also contributed to reducing greatly the number of church-going people in Britain as a proportion of the population. A similar situation of decline exists in Australia today, and has done now for many years.

The evangelical churches in Great Britain and Australia have both suffered negatively from a number of factors, and these have not been counter-balanced or out-weighed by sufficient effective evangelism, or by widespread revivals, as happened in the Nineteenth Century, and up to 1914.

Whether or not we blame the Methodists and Baptists of Australia for not achieving here what they achieved in the United States, it is certainly the case that the hey-day of evangelicalism in Australia did not achieve as much as many people would have liked to see. There were not enough conversions to achieve a situation where a much higher proportion of the population professed to be “born again,” and went the church regularly. This task still faces us today, and is yet to be achieved.

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