

an effort on behalf of the poor Indians, now that the Government has withdrawn from us its aid.

The Mission on Walpole Island has been in existence 18 years—having been opened in 1841. I was appointed to the Mission by the late Lord Metcalfe, on the 17th June, 1845, and have thus been connected with it during a period of nearly fourteen years. Two Missionaries preceded me, but these, owing to certain untoward circumstances, met with no success in converting the natives. In the summer of 1845 the Walpole Islanders were immersed in the degradation of barbarism. They worshipped and offered sacrifices to evil spirits, practised witchcraft, were polygamists. The waubannoo, the pagan dance, the tricks of the conjuror, were in full swing. With the exception of a few small patches of Indian corn, tilled very imperfectly, they paid no attention to the cultivation of the soil. They had no oxen, no cows. The hoe was the only farming implement they possessed. For food they depended mainly on hunting. They were exceedingly lazy and apathetic, and betook themselves to the chase only when impelled by hunger or some other necessity, and after obtaining the wished for venison, they would return to their wigwams, and as long as the supply lasted would enjoy themselves after their fashion, in feasting, in dancing, and in drinking the fire-water. They had no thought of the morrow, and cared for nothing but present enjoyment. They were indolent and most averse to labour, and might have been seen at any hour of the day stretched out on the grass, sleeping off the effects of a drunken debauch. They verified to the letter the old Indian motto, "It is better to walk than to run, it is better to stand than to walk, it is better to sit than to stand, it is better to lie than to sit."

It would indeed be difficult to conceive of a more dissipated, poor, miserable set of beings than those Islanders were in 1845. I will never forget the feeling of despondency which came over me during the first few months of my residence on the Island. Their reformation seemed impossible, and no small degree of faith was necessary to enable me to believe that any improvement could take place amongst so degraded and superstitious a people. But what seemed impossible to man was possible to God.