

his good wife, especially as Mangaia is quite out of the track of European vessels, and is only visited by one once in the year, that being also the only time in which they ever see the face of a European, there being none residing upon the island but themselves and their little family. We can easily fancy how these lonely watchers look forward to the coming of the annual vessel, their only means of communication with the great civilised world, which seems so far beyond them; and how eagerly and joyfully every little present from the land of home is welcomed. The tinned, air-tight case, in which to pack the things, is usually supplied by our Young Men's Society, who gladly lend the young ladies a helping hand in this way, and among whom I trust there are several future missionaries. Certainly there are many earnest workers among them, and two, who have resolved specially to devote their lives to the service of God, have recently gone from among them to College, to prepare themselves for the work of the ministry.

H. D. ISACKE.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE KINGDOM.

I mean the kingdom or kingship over sin and self. You may not think it, but you *are* the veriest slave until you acquire the liberty or grace of the Gospel. Till then, you are loaded with the chains of sinful propensities, and led captive by the devil at his will. But there comes a moment in your history or experience when you wake up to see the depth of your degradation and ultimate fate. You are enabled also to realise, like some chrysalis buried in its cocoon, that you are capable of nobler, are capable of noblest, things. The buoyant air of heavenly liberty is inhaled; it inflates your spirit till you pant to soar above all earthly soul-food—husks to you now indeed—and to feed upon that which alone is satisfying, God. It is here the fight begins. This is the crisis which the enemy has dreaded all along. And while he had you in his power he spared no pains to make you firm and impregnable as a Gibraltar under the hurricane of the Holy Wind (Greek *puemu*), or the fiery assaults of God's battalions. The secret of his strength lay in keeping you asleep. That deeply-driven stake uprooted, all the city of your soul is laid bare to heaven's arms. God *has* wrenched that up, the drawbridge across the moat, and now He unfolds to your affrighted soul the position you are in. You sway and tremble like a twig in the night wind at the sight, and resolve to escape from such a degrading condition, from a country and master doomed to such black destruction. But your old master has certain objections, from reasons best known to himself and God, against your leaving his service. This makes him change his tune as much as his cracked bagpipes will allow. "Oh, you are not going to leave your pleasures in that way, are you? All your dear, merry companions. Think what delicious times you have had with them at the card-table, at the ball-room, at the theatre, at field sports, wine-parties. Remember what an easy time and pleasant you have had in being allowed all your own way, as far as mortal can have who is obliged to bend to circumstances which the arbitrary tyrant of heaven hangs round his neck. If you are intent on such a foolish course as to go over to the ranks of those miserable, moping, melancholy

beings who crawl through the world with His yoke on their blistered shoulders, and with nothing in the world to mitigate their misery except some holy starch to keep their heads up in the sanctified air they carry about with them, at least, do not do so just yet; you need not hurry, time enough yet for you. What! Still determined, then? Hlave at you, you wretch. Do you think for a moment that He will have your sin-poisoned, leprous carcase rotting in His house, filling His pure presence with the effluvia of hell? Ha, ha! I have beslimes you too thickly to admit one grain of hope of your being cleansed. Back with you. There is no hope for you. You superlative fool of fools, do you think to break those chains clasping your limbs? Just try to walk in the way that leads to God, deary. Do just try a step or two now. Ha, ha! down you go in all that filth and snake-slime. You are worse than ever. Cannot, unless those chains are off? Well, then, you will have to stay where you are for me. I will not help you off with them. Down you go again. Ha, ha! you had better stay where you are. You are only making yourself worse. You must give up."

Never, my brother, here is my hand, never give up. I can sympathise with you. I shudder as I look back on that awful duel, but the shudder changes into a tremble of delight as again I go over in my memory the thrilling moment when my chains fell off, and I was lifted into liberty. Let the awful alternative of eternal death nerve you for the fight. Drink deeply of the well of hope close beside your languishing soul in the wilderness. "He is able to save to the uttermost." Now take the sword of the Spirit, which is the infallible Word of God. Let it be glued to your hand by conviction engendered by firm faith in its truth. Hurl back the foe on its keen point. Meet his blandishments and persuasions by, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit"; his insinuations that the service of God is misery and melancholy, with, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light"; his attempt to induce you to procrastinate, with, "Flee from the wrath to come," for, "The Son of Man cometh as a thief in the night"; his fierce asseverations that you are too black, by "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin"; his taunts on your helplessness, with, "He came to seek and to save that which was lost," and when He hath found it, He *layeth it on His shoulders.*" Oh that last sword-thrust is an excellent one! It is enough to make you do just what you must do in the end—drop, chains and all, into the outstretched arms of Jesus, and the kingdom is *won.*—OLD JACOB GOODWILL, your humble servant.

CONSECRATION HYMN.

Lord, I would be wholly Thine,
 Thou didst give Thyself for me;
 Sin and wrath were only mine,
 Thou didst let them fall on Thee.
 From myself, O Jesus, save,
 Seal me Thine, and all I have.
 Lord, I would be wholly Thine,
 Thou didst purchase me with blood;
 Make this feeble frame Thy shrine—
 Temple of the living God.
 From myself, O Jesus, save,
 Seal me Thine, and all I have.