

his name, was mightily pleased by this question from the pretty little girl, whom he now loved, though twenty years before he would probably have looked upon her as a nice spring chicken to be broiled for his breakfast.

I must tell you about him and his wonderful conversion. In the Pacific Ocean is a group of two hundred and fifty islands known as the Fijis. Two of them are as large as Long Island near New York. Between forty and fifty years ago some prisoners who had escaped from one of the British convict islands in the South Seas, landed among the Fijians, and by their wicked example made the people worse even than they had been before.

But not long after some faithful native Christians of the Tonga group of islands also landed in Fiji. These were missionaries of Christ as the white men had proved missionaries of Satan. Having been converted by English missionaries they felt impelled to carry the Gospel to other islands. And in spite of the wickedness of the white men whom they found there before them, they won many converts, and so prepared the way for the Wesleyan missionaries who were afterward sent to Fiji from England.

These missionaries were so successful that tens of thousands of converts have been won; and now Fiji is a Christian country. But during many years the horrid custom of cannibalism continued in many of the islands, and the chief of whom I am telling you was one of the worst of all. He had helped to eat scores and even hundreds of people. So fearful were the ravages of this custom that the chiefs not only baked their enemies taken in war, but whenever they thought it necessary, they sent out men to catch the innocent wherever they were found, and most frequently women and children.

If a chief received some distinguished guest he thought he must honor his arrival by a great feast; and his men were sent to some island to catch victims, just as a person in our country would go fishing. If a royal canoe was to be launched it was customary to tie the arms of a certain number of victims, and lay them down as rollers upon which to shove the boat into the water. After the agony of this process the victims were beaten to death with clubs and baked in a large oven and served for the feast.

The missionaries sometimes interfered to save the lives of victims thus condemned to death. On one occasion the wives of two missionaries whose husbands were

absent on a missionary tour saw preparations being made for a great feast on a neighboring island. They learned that a party of kidnappers had sprung upon fourteen innocent women who were fishing along the shore, that the oven was heated for baking them, and that a great multitude had already begun to celebrate the dances and other orgies connected with the feast.

Feeling that it was at great risk to their lives to interfere, they nevertheless resolved to try. Being rowed over to the island in a little boat they at once went to the house of the chief, where, surrounded by his principal men, he was already engaged in the terrible work. Unprotected as they were, they presented their earnest plea, not knowing but they too would be carried to the ovens. Five of the fourteen had already been put to death; but the chief, astonished at the courage and earnestness of the two ladies, for their sake spared the remaining nine, who at once fell at their feet overcome with glad surprise and gratitude.

Not far from the year 1860 King Thakombau became a Christian, and in 1874 he induced his fellow chiefs of other islands to unite with him in requesting the Queen of England to accept the government of Fiji. He had not only become a convert to Christianity, but he had become convinced that a strong Christian government would be better for his people.

So the British Government sent Sir Hercules Robinson, Governor of New South Wales, to Fiji to ratify the treaty. Upon the return of the governor to Sidney the old chief went with him; and it was in his house that his little granddaughter who had heard all about Thakombau's history, so prettily reminded him of his old habits. He was immensely pleased.

He did not appear to be at all sensitive but was ever glad to recognize the wonderful change which the Gospel had produced in his character. He is described as a man of remarkably fine appearance and of consistent Christian character. In all the history of Missions no other people have ever been so remarkably changed by the Christian faith as the Fijians.

### Dayspring Collection.

#### I. Barney's River.

Mary Bell Irving,	\$4 60
S. School, French River,	1 39
Marion Cavanagh,	4 60
Catherine Inglis,	3 90