

CHAPTER SIX

EVANGELICAL REVIVALS IN TASMANIA

to 1845

The first white settlements in Australia occurred in 1788 at Port Jackson in New South Wales. The people who came in the first fleet were mainly convicts overflowing from British prisons, and the military personnel required to be in charge of them. There were a lesser number of free settlers.

Van Diemen's Land, as Tasmania was then called, was claimed for the British Crown in 1803, and a decision was made to establish a satellite penal colony there. The "first fleet" of settlers arrived in the Derwent River, making a landing on 19th February, 1804. (1.) The personnel consisted of 100 male convicts and sixteen wives, 50 marines and seven wives, and a number of free settlers who had been brought to help form up the new establishment.

The spot where the landing was made was named Hobart Town, after Lord Hobart, who was then the Secretary of State for the colonies in London.

6. Revivals in Tasmania to 1845 Only three months elapsed before the first clash occurred with the local aborigines, many of whom were shot. The long series of such conflicts led eventually to the complete extermination of full-blood aborigines from Tasmania. Until 1821, very little of any effect was done to improve the spiritual condition of the convicts or settlers. An Anglican chaplain, the Rev Robert Knopwood, came with the first fleet. He was an older man, and was an English clergyman of the more traditional kind. He did not have a great deal of time to pursue his more spiritual work, because he acted also as a magistrate in the tiny colony, and had to provide at least some of his own food supply by working his own farm. John West says that "the gaiety of his disposition made him a general favourite", and this tended to provide an excuse for whatever professional qualities he lacked. By 1821, also, a Catholic priest was present. And the first Presbyterian minister to live in Hobart also arrived in 1823

West reports a story which indicates the low level of moral uplift which existed in the colony in those first years. "In the absence of clergymen, it was customary for the magistrates to conduct public worship, or where that was not possible, to assemble the prisoners and accompany the inspection with a few words of advice. The following is a discourse delivered by Captain Nairn, and by constant repetition was impressed upon the memory of the relator. Captain Nairn would stand and thus address the prisoners on a Sunday morning\;- "Now, my men, listen to me. I want you all to get on. I was once a poor man like you\; but I used to work perseveringly, and do things diligently and as such got taken notice of, until I became a captain of the 46th. Now, I want you to work perseveringly\; do things diligently, and that will make you comfortable\; and I will assist you, that you may have houses for yourselves, and rise up to be equal to me." West then comments, "It may be questioned if many sermons of greater pretensions, have not been less humane and effectual\; and this was often the sole substitute for public worship." (2.) More than half of the white population of Van Diemen's Land at that time was composed of the worst characters from British prisons.

In 1821, Mr. Knopwood retired, and was replaced after a short period by the Rev. William Bedford, who tried to take a stronger line on a number of the

local moral and spiritual issues and needs. He was more of a moral crusader, who used his influence with the Governor to force the many co-habiting couples to get married\; to cut down on the open widespread drunkenness and violence, to curb prostitution, and to encourage church attendance. He also visited the prisoners as much as he could, and brought the gospel to those who had been condemned to death.

Beginnings of the Wesleyan Work in Van Diemen's Land

The first revivals in Australia occurred amongst the Wesleyan Methodists, and, as a result, we will be paying special attention to them as we study the early revivals in this country.

The ships sailing from England to New South Wales at that time normally travelled around the Cape of Good Hope, and touched in at Hobart before making the six-day trip north to Sydney. The return trip to England was around Cape Horn. The first Wesleyan missionary to visit Hobart was the Rev. Benjamin Carvosso from the Cornwall area of England, who was appointed to the New South Wales Mission by the Conference of 1819. His ship arrived at Hobart on 25th April, 1820. Carvosso immediately called upon the civil authorities, and gained permission to preach in the street outside the Court House at four o'clock that afternoon. The Rev. Robert Knopwood also readily supported this proposal.

Carvosso described what happened in the following way. "With the help of Mrs C., I commenced the worship by singing a part of one of our hymns. I preached from Ephesians 5:14, and had a very orderly and attentive audience. As circumstances appeared so favourable, I ventured to publish again for the following evening, when nearly the same number attended and behaved well. The next morning being the Sabbath, I applied for permission to preach to the prisoners in the gaol. This was readily granted\; and being collected in an open space, to the number of about 150, after singing and prayer, I addressed them closely and affectionately from the parable of the prodigal son. The sight of so many persons in double irons was to me strange and truly affecting. They heard very quietly\; and, after preaching, I distributed among them many tracts, for which they were apparently thankful.

At 3 p.m., I preached again at the Court House to a much larger congregation than before\; and while they heard, the Word seemed to sink into their hearts. On the following evening I preached to them for the last time, when the company was much greater than ever. Some of them, we were informed, had been present on the spot, waiting for the commencement of the service, for more than an hour and a half. Many expressed their sorrow that I was not to remain with them." (3.) His ship left Hobart on the 4th May.

Carvosso wrote to the Wesleyan church head-quarters in London describing the great spiritual needs of the place, and something of the needs of the aborigines, as well. His letter was published in England, and provoked much interest and response. Carvosso's biography depended much on the information in his Journal, and most of what he wrote about these few days that he spent in Hobart related to the aborigines. (4.)

The Rev. Ralph Mansfield paid a similar short visit to Hobart on the 20th August, 1820, on his way to Sydney. The Governor fully supported Mansfield's desire to preach, granting him the use of the Court House for preaching, and a guard of constables to prevent disturbances. Mansfield advertised his meetings by spreading handbills, and he preached to crowded congregations. (5.)

Laymen have often taken a leading role in Methodism, and the honour of forming the first class meeting in Van Diemen's Land went to Corporal George Waddy, who had been converted in Sydney under the ministry of the Rev. Walter Lawry. Along with several other soldiers who had recently been converted, he was posted to Hobart. These men were full members of a Methodist class meeting

in Sydney, and so could start an extension of that class in Hobart. Waddy secured the agreement of a resident named Mr. Benjamin Nokes, to host a prayer meeting in his house in Collins Street on 29th October, 1820. Eight people attended. Official permission was soon gained for regular meetings to commence at a changed location. And with that, persecution by gangs of "rowdies" also began. But the membership grew, and that was the situation which existed to greet the next visiting minister.

The superintendent of the Wesleyan missionary work in the Pacific at that time was the Rev. Samuel Leigh. He arrived in Hobart on the 8th August, 1821, with a mission party, to analyse the situation, and to see what more could be done to promote the work of God. Although Leigh spent time in New South Wales, most of his missionary work was done in New Zealand. Because of the obvious need for a stronger leadership, the Rev. William Horton and his wife stayed in Hobart until a proper Conference appointment could be made. Leigh prepared a lengthy report for the denominational leaders in London, including reference to the aborigines, and emphasising the morally weak state of the colonial society.

The work progressed under the leadership of Mr. Horton, with attention beginning to be paid to the other settlements scattered around the island. The work was also strengthened by the arrival, from time to time, of mature lay leaders from England who were coming to settle. But the difficulties being faced were severe. Mr. Horton's letter to London, dated December 15th, 1821, contained a description of the moral condition of the people amongst whom he had to minister.

"Depravity, profaneness, adultery, drunkenness, backbiting, idleness, dishonesty, malice, quarrelling, misery\; every tongue had learned to swear, and, amongst the lower classes, every hand to steal. The houses were surrounded by fierce dogs, to guard them against nocturnal depredations." (6.)

Toward the end of 1822, the Rev. Nathaniel Turner was in Hobart for several months, with the intention of helping Mr. Horton to spread the work around the island, and the momentum of the work started to pick up. But very soon the Turners' found that they had to leave for New Zealand, which had been his original destination.

A census was taken in 1821, which showed these results. Population (white) 7,400. Sheep, 182,468. Cattle, 34,790. Horses, 550. Land under cultivation, 14,940 acres. Twenty-six vessels had arrived and sailed, and 20,000 bushels of grain had been exported to New South Wales. (7.)

The Rev. Ralph Mansfield

The Rev. Ralph Mansfield was appointed to take the place of William Horton, and arrived in Hobart Town on the 25th July, 1823. The first Quarterly Meeting to be held in Hobart Town was on April 12th, 1824. Mansfield reported that the meeting was harmonious and profitable. "We had much conversation on the means of promoting a revival of the work of God, and adopted the following resolutions:

1. We solemnly engage to give ourselves afresh to God.
2. At our noon-day closet prayer every Friday during the present quarter, we resolve to make special intercession with God for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit on ourselves, on our Society, and on our congregations.
3. Let us be more faithful in watching over each other with godly jealousy, and in affectionately exhorting, admonishing or comforting each other, as circumstances may require.
4. Let us pay particular attention to the regular members of our congregations, and endeavour by all prudent means to bring them to our Class meetings.

5. Convinced of the great good which frequently attends the distribution of religious tracts, we resolve to adopt this means of diffusing religious knowledge amongst the inhabitants of this town. The Minister and leaders were deputed to draw up a plan of operations, to be laid before a general meeting of the Society as early as they might find it convenient." (8.)

These resolutions give an indication of the spirit which flowed through the Methodist societies in those days, and the direction and purpose that they had.

A slow trickle of conversions occurred, including some of a very dramatic kind. And the missionary had to pay much attention to ministering to the convicts, especially those who were facing the death penalty, and were soon to be executed.

Macquarie Harbour

During 1821, Sergeant Waddy was transferred to Macquarie Harbour, which was a new penal institution on the rugged west coast of Tasmania, far from any civilised settlements. Like Port Arthur, it was a prison for repeat offenders and "incurable" criminals. It was a place of cruelty and despair, from which there was often no return.

The hatred and sense of hopelessness was such that prisoners would escape into the surrounding forest knowing that they faced starvation and exposure, and death if they were caught. In one instance at least, cannibalism occurred amongst a group of escapees, and only one survived.

Waddy did his best to start a Methodist society in this forbidding place, and some astonishing conversions began to occur, including a few of the worst criminals. But, after a year or two, he was expecting to be transferred to India, and he was very concerned that a mature leader could come to care for the little group, and establish a ministry to the convicts, and soldiers.

A local layman, Mr. John Hutchinson, was chosen to follow Waddy. (9.) But this did not last long, because in 1825 we find him helping to build a church in Launceston. (10.) Early in 1826 he was ordained in Sydney, and went to Tonga. (11.)

It was through the insistence of the Governor, Colonel (later Sir) George Arthur, that a proper Wesleyan appointment was finally made to Macquarie Harbour. Benjamin Carvosso tells us how this happened. His directions are wrong, however. Macquarie Harbour is west. Port Arthur is east.

"A Minister of religion was wanted for Macquarie Harbour, a place of sub-banishment, on the south-east (sic) and inaccessible side of the island, where were collected in the course of many years three or four hundred of the very worst of the convicts, - 'a hell on earth,' which no Gospel messenger had yet reached. The Lieutenant-Governor applied to me to assist him in procuring, through the Home Government, a Wesleyan Missionary for this place. I heartily approved of his humane and pious proposition to send the Gospel thither, but objected that it was rather out of our sphere, - being likely to involve much expense, with no prospect of forming a church. His Excellency replied, 'The extreme moral wretchedness of these men greatly distresses me\; and I am anxious to send them a Minister of religion. I have marked the character and efficiency of the Wesleyan ministry in different parts of the world, and am fully persuaded that a Minister from your body is the most fit instrument for this work. I will not burden your funds: I am now writing to Earl Bathurst, the Colonial Secretary, to recommend him to apply to your Committee in Hatton-Garden for a Missionary for Macquarie Harbour, and to pay his outfit and passage\; and when he comes here I will erect and furnish a house, and appoint him a salary. To obtain a Wesleyan Missionary for the poor unhappy men at that place, I shall regard as the most important act of my administration."

The Rev. William Schofield was duly sent out from England.

"On his arrival we immediately waited on the Governor: but the Rev. William Schofield, having but little information about the undertaking, and there being a general outcry against its dangers, privations and hopelessness, expressed a momentary hesitation. His Excellency said, 'As a soldier, I never could think of sending another where I would not go myself\; personal danger in the way of duty I would rather court than shun: and were I, Mr. Schofield, a Minister of the Gospel, I should rejoice, I should esteem it a peculiar honour, to go to this place, because it is such an enterprise of mercy\; for the men that are there are more sinful and miserable than you can find them elsewhere.'

My friend promptly went to his appointment\; became greatly esteemed by the Governor\; and the blessing of God on his pious and indefatigable labours rendered him so visibly useful to the wretched men, that it produced in the colony a strong impression in favour of the Wesleyan Mission." (12.) (Italics in the original.)

It was in 1827 that the Rev. William Schofield arrived from England to start work at Macquarie Harbour. His tearful, prayerful and loving concern had such an effect upon the hardened people at this place that a change came over the whole establishment. It is not clear how many conversions occurred. The number may not have been large. But, in a fairly short time, the whole tenor of the place was so altered by the power of the gospel, and of Christian love, that only seven prisoners had to be tried for misdemeanours during a whole year. Three only received corporal punishment, of which two were for fighting with each other, and the other was for conversing with a soldier.

About this time two Christian gentlemen named James Backhouse and George Washington Walker conducted their own survey of penal conditions throughout Tasmania, and visited many other parts of Australia. Backhouse was a Quaker philanthropist. He visited the settlement at Macquarie Harbour, enquiring into the social and spiritual condition of the convicts. His report included the following:-

"The labours of William Schofield, the first Missionary who became resident here were, through the Divine blessing, crowned with encouraging success. He found a difficulty in prevailing upon the men to cherish hope\; but when this was once effected, they began to lay hold of the offers of mercy through a crucified Redeemer\; and some remarkable changes of character ensued. On conversing with some of the reformed prisoners, they said that the change of heart they had undergone had altered the face of the settlement in their eyes\; it had ceased to wear the gloom by which it was formerly overcast. Two, to whom it had been so irksome as to tempt them to run away, said that they were now satisfied, and thankful they had been sent there. Others, who had been placed in a less laborious part of the establishment, because of their good conduct, were, at their own request, allowed to return to their old employments, which they preferred, on account of their being less exposed to temptation, saying they were less afraid of labour than of sin." (13.)

By 1832, when Schofield finally went on to New South Wales, the government decided that Macquarie Harbour was too remote and too difficult a location for a penal colony, and the prisoners were transferred to Port Arthur.

The Rev. Benjamin Carvosso

Back in Hobart Town, the Rev. Benjamin Carvosso had arrived on 13th May, 1825, to be in charge of the work in Van Diemen's Land. Carvosso was also a man who longed to see the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in his work for God. In his case this desire had been developed by his experience of three small periods of revival in England, in the Circuits where he had worked before he came to Australia.

At that time Cornwall was a land of revivals. Indeed, probably without exception, Methodist ministers and leaders throughout England earnestly wanted to see revivals. Some wanted it more than others, and Carvosso was one of these men.

Although Benjamin had not been converted until later in his youth, he had the example and companionship of his father, William Carvosso, a farmer, local preacher, and a class leader of renown, a saintly, praying man. The first revival he saw was in his home congregation of Ponsanooth, soon after Benjamin had started to preach. (14.) As the conversions multiplied, the existing class meetings increased in size, and several new ones were formed, one of which was placed under Benjamin's care.

When Carvosso entered the pastoral ministry he was almost overwhelmed with a sense of his own inadequacies for that kind of spiritual work. Regrettably, his Journal covering these early years of his ministry was later lost, but a later entry tells how God met his needs about half way through 1815. The encouragement of certain friends, and the "glorious death" of another friend, Richard Trewavas, led him to new efforts in prayer. "I was stirred up to plead, night and day, for a renewed evidence of perfect love\;\; and, glory be to God, on the 12th May I was again enabled to lay hold on the great salvation. From that day the enemies which so threatened my destruction I saw no more\;\; my soul became unspeakably happy in God, and I lived, and studied, and prayed, and preached, and conversed in the power of faith and love." (15.)

He was still very aware of his imperfections, but his work now became a continual source of enjoyment for him.

At the Conference of 1815 he was appointed to the Liskeard circuit. "Through the whole year, the Circuit was favoured with a gracious shower of blessing\;\; not less than a hundred and fifty persons were turned from the power of Satan unto God, many of whom maintained a consistent and godly character till the end of their lives." (16.)

Many conversions occurred as his work progressed. November, 19th, the following year, in his next Circuit, he preached at a place called Gunwen. "Toward the close of the sermon, when I began to invite hell-deserving sinners to partake of a free and present salvation, the Spirit of the Lord descended as a mighty rushing wind. The people sobbed and wept, and cried aloud. I never but once before witnessed such effect on the congregation while preaching. O Jesus. to thy name alone be the praise, for thou only canst save thy people from their sins."

The next day, from a circumstance which came to his knowledge just before he went into the pulpit, he was induced to change the subject of his discourse, and "Resolved to insist on the necessity of knowing our sinful and lost estate. Impressed with the importance of the subject, I began to speak under a powerful influence of the Spirit. I had scarcely been speaking three minutes, when a woman, who had not been accustomed to attend preaching, impressed with a sense of her woeful condition, fell down on her knees and shrieked for mercy. Another soon followed, and the service was interrupted. We then sung and prayed, and the Lord released the first, and turned her mourning into joy. I believe the Lord is working powerfully on the minds of many." (17.)

We noted earlier how Carvosso was the first Wesleyan missionary to preach in Hobart. He spent several years in New South Wales, and returned to Hobart in 1825. Soon he began to see some conversions as a result of his work, but not the deep moving of the Spirit that he was looking for.

A big celebration was organised on 19th September, 1825, to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of John Wesley's ordination as a Christian minister. Soon after that happening, Carvosso "appears to have received a richer baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the record of his personal experience becomes increasingly interesting." (18.)

His biographer then provides a number of quotations from Carvosso's Journal which show some of the inner workings and desires of his soul, and aspects of his prayer life.

"The earnest desires to do good expressed in the foregoing extracts, were not entirely fruitless. His heart did not yearn in vain over sinners perishing under the Divine wrath. The earnest appeals of the sermon were accompanied by the softening power of Divine grace. One and another were found coming to the classes already formed, and by the end of January, 1826, he saw so many evidences of relenting among the attendants on public worship, that he determined to try to raise a new class." (19.)

The Circuit work, therefore, seemed to progress well. But the most notable answers to prayer happened in a totally different area of his work, namely amongst the convicts, and especially amongst those who were condemned to death. Carvosso said, "Who could have expected to have seen all the concomitants of a glorious revival of religion, in a gaol in this country, among the desperadoes of England's first-born sons of crime.!"

Carvosso's biographer uses the number of executions in Hobart as an indicator of the type of society which existed in those days in Van Diemen's Land. (20.) "Perhaps nothing can more fully and fearfully shew (the vicious and criminal character of the population of Van Diemen's Land, at the time of Mr. Carvosso's residence among them) than the number of executions that took place." Often with the Anglican chaplain, Mr. Bedford, Carvosso went to visit the condemned. Up to twenty-three men might be executed at a time. He began to see many instances of powerful conversions, when only a few days or hours of life lay ahead of these men.

"When I stood in the midst of them, and beheld some prostrate on the floor, groaning for redemption in the Saviour\;; others on their knees, lifting up their voices aloud\;; others kneeling in secret corners, silently pouring out their hearts to God\;; and others walking about with joy depicted on their countenances, conversing of spiritual things, or helping their fellow-sufferers to trust in Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin\;; I could not help joining with the Rev. Mr. Bedford, in exclaiming, "What hath God wrought". One man, while standing "on the drop", and with "all the chilling apparatus of death about him, but who literally appeared in ecstatic raptures, caught hold of my hand and strained his pinioned body to bring it to his lips, and otherwise expressed his grateful affection for the attention paid him. Another, who had for several days been very happy, and now appeared to be lost in joy, on hearing the word "death" mentioned, instantly shouted aloud, "Death! This is not death, this is life." Indeed, while the eight who suffered yesterday stood on the drop together, their general appearance seemed to proclaim that death was swallowed up in victory." (21.)

"May 4th.- I attended this morning the execution of five men. One of them, at least, appeared to die penitent. His name was Thomas J....., a monster in wickedness. He committed the crime of murder, in three or four instances. On one occasion he and two others robbed a house, and took the whole family into the bush, that they might gratify their brutal appetite upon the mistress\;; they bound the servant and shot him, shot the husband and left him for dead, and coolly butchered an infant of five months old, from the mother's arms. Then they detained her for a night, sent her back in the morning a most pitiable object. After this, falling short of food, J..... murdered one of his inhuman companions, and he and the other subsisted on the body some days. For several weeks after he was brought into the gaol, he conducted himself in a most diabolical manner. About ten days before he suffered, he was smitten with an awful sense of his guilt and danger, and became gentle and teachable as a little child. He appeared to lay open his heart to God and man. The terror of his mind shook his body most fearfully\;; he wept abundantly, and shewed very encouraging marks of a broken and contrite spirit. Great earnestness and

sincerity appeared in his prayers. At the close, he expressed much gratitude for the instructions he had received and died professing a calm and settled hope in the mercy of God. The Rev. Mr. Bedford, who has attended great numbers in similar circumstances, and has been useful to many, says, he thinks him the most remarkable instance of the freeness and efficacy of Gospel grace that he ever met with." (22.)

Carvosso's biographer was impressed by one happening of this kind, because Carvosso had spent so much trouble to describe it all in his Journal as an example of the wonderful workings of Divine grace. Only part of it is reproduced. "Within the short space of six days, we have seen twenty-three of our fellow-creatures launched into the unchangeable state, for their crimes against human laws! How shocking, how appalling is the idea! Some of them, and not a few, according to their own acknowledgements, had gone to the greatest lengths in wickedness. Their habits were become depraved, deadly and desperate\;; and they declared it as their firm belief, that however long their lives might be spared, they should never be reformed. In this state we found them, like a wolf in a trap. When I first visited them, though they made no objection to being instructed, in almost every countenance I beheld something so forbidding and so indicative of radical wickedness of heart, that nothing but faith in the Divine power of the gospel could present sufficient motive to repeat our visits. But from that faith alone, we derived quite encouragement enough to proceed in our labour of love. While speaking of the love of Jesus and of a free salvation, I soon found a way was made for "Those humble contrite tears, which from repentance flow." They expressed gratitude for the attention paid them, and each visit was hailed with new pleasure. Often have I sat down among them, and read and explained and applied the word of God with peculiar delight and profit to my own soul. Frequently, views and language the most animating were given. When with their clanging chains they have turned around to prayer, and I have knelt down by them, compassion has touched my heart, and prayers and tears have been poured out in faith for them, and I have retired from their cell persuaded that God would snatch some of them from the jaws of death and hell. After a while, they began to take delight in singing and praying by themselves. At length, when I drew near to pray with them, my voice was drowned in their cries for mercy. I might rise from my knees, but they would continue prostrate, each one calling aloud for himself for mercy and salvation, till the cell has echoed with their cries, and presented the scene of a noisy revival. Sometimes, while I stood by, they would simultaneously burst forth into singing some appropriate hymn, then prostrate themselves on the floor in various directions and each one pour out his heart to God for himself, as if he had retired for prayer to a solitary mountain. It was astonishing how soon and how well they learned to sing hymns. In this exercise they greatly delighted, and toward the closing scene their singing was peculiarly animated: those expressive of lively faith, they could now relish. And I believe they often sung them with the spirit and the understanding also. When the love of God began to soften and elevate their hearts, their gratitude for spiritual assistance which they had received was abounding. And while I stood in the midst of these dying men, and have heard the simple effusions of their undisguised hearts, I have been not a little comforted, and encouraged to go forward in offering a Saviour to the chief of sinners. One said, "You were the means of first softening my hard heart\;" another, "While you were explaining the parable of the Prodigal Son, God first opened my eyes\;" another, "While you were relating such an anecdote, my heart was first struck\;" and many of them together, "What a blessed reward will you ministers have for coming to instruct us poor wretched sinners. Had it not been for you, we had died in our darkness and sin, and sunk into hell." The scores of hours he has spent among them, and the many disagreeable things he has encountered, the minister of Christ is amply rewarded for, by spending a few hours with them on the morning

of their execution. If we are permitted to judge of the state of the heart by external appearances, then a thorough and Divine change has passed on several of these men. They gave very scriptural evidence of repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." (23.)

Other most remarkable instances could be given in which the convicting and converting work was clearly of God, and the repentance and faith deeply sincere.

In his normal Circuit work, there seems to have been a steady stream of conversions throughout 1826, so much so that it is described as "showers of blessing". The biographer describes some of these happenings in detail, also.

Because of overwork, he had a period of bad health in the first half of 1827, which reduced to zero for a period what he was able to do, and this problem seems to have recurred, to a lesser degree, until he left Hobart early in 1830.

But still his soul thirsted after God, and he desired greatly to see revival power. Apart from all the instances in which these yearnings of his heart were answered through his work in Tasmania, his prayers were answered in two other ways, as well.

Firstly, a brief revival occurred in Hobart just after he left to return to England. (24.) This revival is referred to simply in passing by Nathaniel Turner's biographer (his son, the Rev. Josiah G. Turner.)

Secondly, he was involved in a revival after he had returned to England, and had taken up his first appointment there. This occurred in Penzance in 1831. (25.)

Another aspect of Carvosso's life was his interest in books. He authored several books and pamphlets which attained a wide circulation, and influence, and strongly supported the establishing of the first public library in the Australian colonies, in Hobart. It sprang from a meeting in the new Argyle Street Chapel, in an effort to mark the Centenary of John Wesley's ordination, on September 19th, 1825. So, it was called the Wesleyan Library. The subjects included in the library were history, philosophy, science, morality and religion. There was no light fiction.

"Carvosso threw himself into this project with characteristic enthusiasm. He became the first librarian, presenting fifty of his own books to the library, collecting thirty pounds for the purchase of others, and advancing yet another twenty pounds from his own lean purse, prepared to take no small risk as to whether he would ever receive the sum back. He inaugurated an annual library sermon on the importance of sound reading. His interest in the institution continued after his return to England, whence he forwarded books. For many years the Wesleyan Library was a powerful factor among the best influences of Hobart life, but with the development of other libraries it gradually fell into disuse." (26.)

Carvosso left Hobart, and arrived in England on the 1st August, 1830. His period of missionary work was finished, and he returned to Circuit work in the homeland.

The Rev. Nathaniel Turner

The Rev. Nathaniel Turner arrived in Hobart to take up a new appointment there. He arrived on 24th November, 1831. This was unexpectedly late, because one of the Turners' children had died in Sydney a few weeks earlier, and had been buried in the same grave as the wife of the Rev. Samuel Leigh. This was Leigh's first wife, who fell victim to an epidemic which raged through New South Wales at that time.

Turner began to take stock of his new situation in Hobart, and the two most interesting features about the situation, as mentioned by the biographer,

were that "a gracious revival of religion had taken place some months before, and there was now a flourishing Sunday School." We are not told anything else about it. So, it seems to have been a small, localised movement.

Apart from the good things which Turner found, upon his arrival in Hobart, he also found a major spiritual problem. A part of the Hobart congregation had left the Wesleyan fellowship, feeling grieved against the denominational authorities because they thought one of Turner's predecessors had been badly treated. This refers to the Rev. John Hutchinson, who had gone to Tonga with the Rev. John Thomas. In Tonga he had a very difficult experience, living there before the Tongans had become Christians. He was temperamentally unsuited to ministerial work, and this had caused much of the problem. The disaffected people had believed Hutchinson's very one-sided account of himself, and of what had happened to him in Tonga. After some months this problem was overcome by Turner's conciliatory spirit, and by the manifest single-mindedness with which he approached his work.

The report by Backhouse and Walker gives us a picture of some aspects of penal life in Hobart at that time, and helps us appreciate the situation in which Turner had to conduct his ministry. "Convicts, on arrival in Hobart, were assigned as servants to the settlers, from whom they received, in return for their labour, lodging, food, and coarse clothing, but no money. If they committed offences during servitude, they were punished by imprisonment in the gaols or penitentiaries\;; by flogging\;; by being sent to labour in the public works in a road party, or in a chain gang\;; or lastly, by being re-transported, as it were, to a penal settlement. The chain gang was a step more severe than the road party, as the prisoners had to work in irons, and wear a most degrading costume, and were guarded by armed soldiers instead of convict overseers. From the wretched character of the huts provided for their lodging, the exposure and hard labour to which they were subjected, and their scanty fare, both these punishments were extremely severe. The penal settlement was reserved for the most hardened offenders." Details are then given about how terms of servitude were worked off, and eventual freedom obtained, if the behaviour had been good. It was possible for many of the prisoners to return, eventually, to a more normal life, and even to become prosperous in their new country. By that time there were about 13,000 convicts in Van Diemen's Land. Most of them were uneducated, though some did have some education. Even, "the courted ranks of fashion, and of exclusive social culture, had contributed not a few of the voyagers under the penal system."

In judging the results of this transportation and penal system, Backhouse and Walker expressed their Christian beliefs, and also expressed their beliefs that, by engineering certain changes in society, a marked moral improvement could be achieved. They said: "It would not appear that the prevention of crime is to be expected in any great degree from the dread of punishment, but rather from counteracting the causes which lead to the commission of crime. By extending the means of education, by discouraging the sale and use of ardent spirits, by removing juvenile thieves as well as older adepts, by stimulating magistrates to suppress houses of ill-fame, and to remove profligate women from the streets, by promoting a due observance of the Sabbath, by discountenancing every species of gaming, and by remedying those evils by which the labouring poor are oppressed in their wages, the principal avenues of vice would be closed, and the benefit would be incalculable in the prevention of crime."

They said that most prisoners dreaded being flogged, or being in road parties or chain gangs. But, once they had experienced it, there followed a marked deterioration of character. These punishments increased the prisoner's sense of desperation. It produced feelings for revenge against the authority that inflicted the punishment, and often produced a state of disbelief in future rewards and punishments. (27.) In this way, prisoners often came to believe

that there was no justice anywhere, and that there was no hope for them in the future.

On top of all that, the naval and military personnel who actually brought this penal system into effect upon the prisoners were often not of a moral character that could achieve a lifting of the standards and moral quality of the society, either.

By the time of Turner's arrival, the population of Hobart had risen to about 3,000.

Some of the details in Nathaniel Turner's biography show us the place which the deep concern for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit played in the Methodists' view of their work for God. An entry appears in the biography relating to a happening in 1832. "At the six o'clock prayer meeting on the quarterly fast day, the vestry was more than crowded, and the people had to go into the chapel. So at the noon-day service, several who had lately been brought from the very gate of destruction into Gospel liberty, gave up their employment for the day, and spent the whole of the forenoon in the schoolroom, in prayer and praise. On the Monday morning following, at six o'clock, a special prayer meeting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was held, and a blessed influence prevailed." (28.)

Mrs Turner wrote about another meeting around this time. "Our June quarterly visitation was, I believe, the best our society ever knew in this part of the world. Glory be to God! At our quarterly fast the power of the Spirit came down so that many were led to cry aloud for mercy. Several souls found peace with God. The spirit of prayer was given in an extraordinary degree. Such wrestling and pleading with God I never beheld in these regions. I could almost have believed myself carried back to one of our revival meetings in England, at one of which I remember nearly one hundred souls professed to have received forgiveness of their sins. Our people seem all on fire. At most of our prayer meetings, which are numerously attended, souls are crying out for mercy. At one meeting a man and his wife were kneeling side by side. The man was made happy, and immediately prayed aloud for his wife. She too found the Saviour." (29.)

By 1832, another minister had arrived in Van Diemen's Land, the Rev. John Allan Manton. The original intention was that he would replace William Schofield at Macquarie Harbour. Upon his arrival at Hobart, however, Nathaniel Turner and Manton embarked upon an evangelistic tour to the northern parts of the island, especially to the town of Launceston, which now had over a thousand inhabitants, and was the second largest settlement on the island. Very good indications of response to the preaching appeared in Launceston, and in the other places where they preached along the way.

Mr. Turner promised the people there that a minister would be sent as soon as one was available.

One of the local preachers, Mr. Leach, was employed to go touring through the country regions, and especially to Launceston. God greatly blessed this man's work, and many people were converted to Christ. But his health soon failed, and this placed greater strain on Nathaniel Turner to supply other preachers, or to go himself. However, a local preacher from England, a Mr. Stephenson, arrived in Launceston, and was a great help to Mr. Leach.

The Conference of 1834 appointed three ministers to the different parts of Tasmania. The Rev. Joseph Orton was appointed to the main position in Hobart; the Rev. William Butters was appointed to Port Arthur to follow The Rev. J. A. Manton, and the Rev. J. A. Manton was appointed to be in Launceston. In practice, however, Nathaniel Turner stayed a year longer in Hobart, as an arrangement of convenience for Mr. Orton, who would have had trouble, for family reasons, leaving New South Wales in time to take up his new position at the end of 1834. (30.)

Turner's biographer son tells us that there was almost no information in the Journals of either his father or his mother for 1834 or 1835. It was during this time, however, that their prayers for revival began to be answered more fully.

Consequently, all that the junior Turner was able to say about 1835 was:- "The Rev. Stephen Rabone ... arrived in August, and remained for some months. His pulpit labours were very acceptable to the church, and were greatly owned of God. His intercourse with Mr. Turner laid the foundation of a life-long warm friendship. The Melville Street chapel (Hobart) was ordinarily crowded on Sabbath evenings, and special efforts were put forth to secure a more copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Under the preaching on the first Sabbath evening in September many were awakened\; and at the prayer meeting eight or ten found peace with God. Throughout Van Diemen's Land there was a good work at that time. At Glenorchy, the darkness of many was turned to day. At New Norfolk, where for six months public worship had been held in the Court House, steps were taken to build a chapel. Mr. Butters wrote from Port Arthur that more than twenty had begun to seek salvation. At Launceston, Mr. Manton was meeting with encouraging success.

By personal conversation with the unconverted, Mr. Turner secured many triumphs in Christ. (Only one example is given.) One day he received a note from a stranger, a Mr. Struth, desiring a visit. On entering the sick room, Mr. Struth said to him, "I have sent for you, believing you will show me how my soul may be saved." He had known Mr. Turner by sight and by reputation only. He was a strong-minded Scotchman of religious connexions, but had forsaken the law of his mother, and had become the companion of infidels. God's light entered his mind with the instruction offered, and he was soon comforted and saved in Christ. By this case Mr. Turner was much cheered.

In December he closed his four years' term in Hobart Town, amid the tears and prayers of a united, prosperous church. The sorrow of parting was relieved by the consciousness that he had been owned of God, not merely in turning many to righteousness, but in permanently establishing Zion in various places. The influence of those four years' labour has been often acknowledged by his successors, as they have witnessed the beautiful exhibitions of Christian life on the part of many who were at that time taught by the Spirit of God, under his teaching and example." (31.)

About August, 1835, Turner reported to London that "the congregations in Hobart Town are truly delightful. The chapel is now beginning to assume a crowded appearance on the Sunday evening, and the morning congregation is fully double of what it used to be. The public prayer meetings are better attended than in any other place I saw... In the scattered district of Glenorchy, from eight to ten miles from Hobart Town, a most blessed work of divine grace is going on amongst the people." (32.)

Launceston and surrounding areas

In Launceston, a Methodist work had been commenced in 1825, but had to be abandoned. With the arrival of the Rev. J. A. Manton in 1832, a new start was made.

Two outstanding laymen, amongst many other people, had recently arrived in Launceston. Philip Oakden arrived around 1833, and joined the Methodist society. Henry Reed returned from England during 1834, "joined the society, and began a career of extraordinary zeal and usefulness...was popular as a preacher...and was most liberal in his contributions." (33.) Reed's story is told more fully in another chapter.

Manton moved to Launceston, and before long he could report that "a spirit of hearing the word of God prevails among the people to a degree never known before. They flock to the house of prayer, but many seek admittance in vain. Our temporary chapel is so small that, when the people are crowded in, it will not contain more than 300 persons...we, however, look forward with pleasure to the day when our commodious chapel, which is now erecting, will be open for the worship of God." (34.)

Dugan gives us the following information about this period. "The records of Manton's Launceston ministry show that the Methodist cause prospered exceedingly during the four years that he remained in the town. "Many of our members", say the records of 1836, "have been living in the enjoyment of entire sanctification, and there has been a gradual increase in our numbers. Recently the Lord has poured out His Spirit in a more glorious manner, and many have been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. We live in peace, we dwell together in unity. Our Sabbath School is in a most excellent state. During the year the number has increased from 60 to 130. The progress of the children has been truly pleasing, insomuch that at their recent examination they gave universal satisfaction." Manton was assisted by a fine staff of helpers. His first plan contained the names of no less than seven local preachers - Peter Jacobs, John Williams, George Goold, John Smith, John Tongs, Henry Reed and Isaac Sherwin. By their instrumentality the work was rapidly extended, soon embracing Perth, Longford, Westbury, Wesleydale, White Hills, Salem and The Forest. "The Forest", writes the Rev. G. T. Heyward, "was the resort of numerous splitters and sawyers, many of whom were living in profligacy. The local preachers penetrated these dark recesses, preaching in the bush huts, and had several trophies to divine grace as the result of their labours." (35.)

The Victorian Methodist leader and historian, the Rev. Dr. Sir Irving Benson, was very emphatic about this period in Launceston. "In all the records I have examined I have found no Methodist work more incandescent with the power of the Holy Spirit than the eighteen-thirties in Launceston, when 'the Lord added unto them daily those who were being saved.'" (36.)

Port Arthur

About 1,000 people lived at Port Arthur in 1834. Of these, only five were women, of whom one was a soldier's wife, and the others were wives of officers. An educated convict taught the children of the officers. Between 800 and 900 were felons who had been convicted several times. It was described as a place for "incorrigible offenders".

As mentioned, Butters became the second chaplain at Port Arthur, and the job was given to a Wesleyan (dissenting) minister, partly because Governor George Arthur had great faith in the Wesleyans because of the wonderful results at Macquarie Harbour. There was partly another reason, as later became evident. Port Arthur was not yet "respectable enough" for an Anglican clergyman to be appointed there. (37.)

Port Arthur was not as forbidding looking, or as depressing as Macquarie Harbour. The locality at Port Arthur was cheerful, and many of the surroundings were pleasant, but, the Commandant ruled with "a rod of iron", and the settlement was regarded by the prisoner-population throughout the colony with great dread. It was known to be a place of profound misery, where the vengeance of the law was carried to the utmost limit of human endurance. The discipline was strict, and the labour in some of the gangs was exhausting. The authorities tried to make the place terrible not only by what was inflicted, but also by what was taken away from the prisoners. For example, all luxuries such as tea, sugar and tobacco, were strictly prohibited. Hundreds of men were flogged, or

sentenced to solitary confinement on bread and water, or had their original sentences prolonged, for possessing only small amounts of tobacco.

But the punishments inflicted by the authorities were only a small part of the sufferings that the prisoners endured. The prisoners were their own worst tormentors. Their treachery and heartless cruelty to each other was appalling.

The chaplain was the only person at Port Arthur who thought that conversion and permanent reformation of character was a reasonable possibility. All others there thought such things were quite impossible.

Butters described his first Sunday at Port Arthur. "Early in the forenoon the prisoners were drawn up in front of the settlement, and examined by the Commandant to see that their hands and faces had been duly washed. and that their clothes and irons were in proper order. If anyone had a complaint to make, he was permitted to state his case, after which as many as could be crowded into the building then used as a place of worship, were marched thither\; those who were the most heavily ironed being placed in closest proximity to the preacher. Immediately in front of the pulpit was a small reading desk, in which was the clerk, an educated Scotchman, who had been twice or thrice transported\; and who, in consideration of his reading the responses, and rendering some other special services, received from the Government stores a very small weekly amount of tobacco. Before him were five or six hundred men, packed together as closely as possible\; some of whom were clad in the dark or yellow clothing peculiar to the prisoners of the colony\; others wore garments, one portion of which was black and the other yellow, to indicate the class of offenders to which they belonged\; while probably one half of the entire company was clothed in sheep skins, minus the wool. Some who had made attempts to escape, were, in addition to this, chained to logs of wood, which they had to take with them when they moved. The noise made by the clanking of the chains as the prisoners rose when we commenced worship, and when they changed their position during the service, produced a strange effect upon me at first." (38.)

There was a voluntary week-night lecture which was attended by about two or three hundred men. A school for prisoners was also held on four evenings per week. The Bible was regularly read to the prisoners in solitary confinement, "when the convicts would shed bitter tears and make many strange confessions." Butters visited the hospital two or three times per day.

Marvellous instances of conversion were witnessed amongst these men. One instance only will be mentioned. Butters said, "I knew a man whom no discipline could tame. He was flogged nearly to death, and kept on bread and water for weeks and months in solitary confinement. The official report on his case was "worse and worse", till he was induced to listen to the instructions of the Missionary. Eventually, he was enabled to believe in Christ for salvation. He received forgiveness, in which act of Divine sovereignty the power of sin was broken, especially over what had previously seemed to be an ungovernable temper. He became a pattern of Christian meekness, and, so far as I could judge, in every respect a consistent Christian. And that not for a few weeks or months only, but for years, until he was removed from the settlement for "good conduct"."

Apart from this main section of the penal colony there was a special section for boys. Butters said that "convict boys of the most depraved and abandoned character" were sent here from the hulks on the river Thames, and from the various other prisons in the British Isles. "There was no kind of wickedness of which they were not capable. Most of them had been incarcerated with elder offenders before they saw Van Diemen's Land\; and some of them had spent the greater portion of their lives in prisons, and gloried in being able to outdo in villany (sic) the most experienced of the felon population." (39.)

There were about 280 boys in this place, and a school was run for them by an educated convict, helped by others, and all under the supervision of the

chaplain. Butters conducted a service here each Sunday evening, and visited it many other times during the week.

Butters said, "By the great mercy of God the establishment was visited in 1835 by a gracious awakening. A boy on his knees asking for pardoning mercy, was a sight that many of them had never before witnessed. Within a short time more than forty of these youthful convicts were found crying for mercy\; they poured out their full hearts in floods of tears, refusing to be comforted till assured of God's forgiving love. When once enabled to trust in Christ for salvation, their joy was ecstatic. Of their own accord they formed themselves into a kind of class, and at once commenced to help each other. It was common for them, after the work of the day was done, to retire to a secluded spot by the water-side for prayer." (40.)

When Butters left, several of these youths went with him to Hobart, where they were assigned to settlers in the interior, or were apprenticed to tradesmen. "The testimony of those with whom those boys lived was everything that could be desired." (41.)

1836 to 1840

The Wesleyan work continued to develop steadily, as did the work of the other denominations, although for different reasons. The Anglican work developed because the migrants often came from England. The Presbyterian work developed largely because of a crusade begun by the Rev. Dr. John Dunmore Lang to get many Scottish people to come to Australia, and this influenced Tasmania. (42,)

The Rev. Joseph Orton took charge on 1st February, 1836. He was able to consolidate well on the basis of the spiritual work in progress, acquiring land and establishing chapels in various parts of the island. He had a special interest in the aborigines, and was especially pleased when two men arrived to work amongst the aborigines at Port Philip. Orton had also to superintend the new work amongst the settlers there. The area spreading out from Port Philip Bay was then called "Australia Felix".

In Launceston, 1838 saw Manton replaced by the Rev. William Simpson, who was described as a "forcible and eloquent preacher". "There has been a deepening of the work of grace in the hearts of the members," says the District report on his ministry, "and their growing attachment to the work of God has been evidenced by an increase in their liberality, the funds of the Circuit having been considerably augmented. The congregations are large and respectable, and often has the Word of God been quick and powerful. Many have been pricked to the heart, and some have been savingly converted." With Simpson there worked John Warren, who lived at Longford. The report said, "The residence of the second preacher at Longford has tended to raise the society from a languishing state and to excite in the minds of the members a desire to see the cause of God revive and extend." (43.)

In 1839, Nathaniel Turner was again appointed to Hobart, and in 1840 he moved to Launceston. Dugan describes the extent of Turner's work. "Turner's Apostolic zeal impelled him in every direction where settlement was to be found, and he was the earliest Methodist minister to visit the Nile district. He preached on the evening of his arrival, he preached before breakfast next morning, he preached again at ten and at one o'clock. "Glory to God!" he writes, "there is a powerful awakening amongst the dwellers in this romantic, secluded spot. Ten have resolved to meet in class, and I have resolved to help them all I can." (44.)

CHAPTER SEVEN

TASMANIAN REVIVALS

1845 to 1880

The years immediately following 1843 were very difficult for everyone in Tasmania, because it was a time when the local economy declined steeply. Many people left Tasmania for the other Australian colonies, including many of the church members.

Also, the British Methodist Missionary authorities in London took the decision that Australian churches and outreach activities should now support themselves financially, as well as making a good contribution to missionary work elsewhere, instead of continuing to depend on "home" funding. Methodists in the Launceston area had succeeded more than most in being financially independent, but they shouted long and loud that self-reliance was totally impractical, especially in view of the economic situation at that time. But, London authorities did not understand or feel such details about situations so many thousands of miles away, and the self-supporting programme went ahead. The result was that the Methodist preachers had to be even more self-sacrificing in the way they lived than would have been the case normally.

By 1850, prosperity began to return to northern Tasmania again, but this more normal situation did not last long, because gold was discovered in Victoria in 1851-2. Not only was there another mass exit from Tasmania, but the gold fever seemed to affect even those who stayed behind, creating a more materialistic mental attitude.

7. Tasmanian Revivals to 1880

The Rev. John Eggleston worked in Hobart from 1848 to 1850. Dugan says of this period:- "This devoted servant of God gave himself to the work of the Church with a zeal worthy of the great traditions established by his predecessors. There were frequent conversions, and constant and enduring increases in membership. Open air preaching was successful in attracting many of the most abandoned people into the fellowship of the Church. Considerable numbers of the elder scholars in the Sunday Schools were enlisted in

the ranks of active Christian workers. The large school hall was found too small to contain the eager worshippers who thronged to the Monday evening prayer meetings. A deeper tone of spirituality was awakened amongst the members of the Church, and many were stirred up to seek 'entire sanctification and the enjoyment of perfect love'. The life of the Church in Hobart at this time seems to have moved on Pentecostal heights of achievement and enthusiasm." (1.)

Since Nathaniel Turner had sought to re-establish Methodist work in Northern Tasmania, the locality of Ross had been very important. This was because of his friendship with Captain Samuel Horton, a brother of the Rev. William Horton. After some years of establishing himself as a farmer, Captain Horton was brought to seek God, as a result of a sickness which might have been life-threatening, and the timely witness of Turner. Horton's personality, and locality became very influential in Methodist affairs. He eventually helped establish Horton College, about four kilometres from Ross.

The town of Campbell Town was a larger settlement in the Midlands of Tasmania. A tiny chapel was built here, in 1839, which could only seat about eight people. This was replaced by a much better building in 1846, no doubt all as a result of the impact of the spiritual movement beginning in Manton's time in the area.

However, "Writing in 1848, the Rev. J. A. Manton declared, 'Our new chapel which was opened for Divine worship about eighteen months ago, is now filled on the Sabbath, and the attendance on the week night services has far exceeded my expectations.' Thus the following year a large gallery was erected across the back of the building. From the outside this chapel had a fine appearance, its style of architecture resembling that of the Ross Chapel, and an original etching by Hardie Wilson hangs in the National Gallery, Canberra." (2.)

In 1850, a revival movement broke out in Ross. "'The Lord poured out His Spirit' and the congregation increased so much that a gallery, with a quaint cedar staircase leading up to it, was erected across the back of the chapel to accommodate the extra people." (3.)

In 1850, also, a revival movement was reported in the town of Westbury, associated with the ministry of the Rev. Jabez B. Waterhouse. The first report from this new Circuit, made to the District Meeting in 1850, says that "The spirit of grace and supplication has rested on many\;\; some have found peace in believing, while others appear not far from the Kingdom of God." Within a year or two, however, the tenor of the area was affected greatly by the loss of many people who left for the new goldfields in Australia Felix (Victoria). (4.)

In 1855, Manton left circuit work to head up the new venture which became Horton College, to act mainly as a secondary school for boys. In 1859, he eventually left Tasmania for a similar kind of work in New South Wales. He had spent nearly twenty years in northern Tasmania, and had a very formative influence upon its spiritual life.

New areas of farming land were opening up north and west of Westbury, and some of the people who moved into that part of the country, doing basic pioneering work in what was, till then, trackless forest, had been affected by the Westbury revival. Efforts were soon made to form up new Circuits in this frontier area, and in 1855 two new Circuits were formed. One was based in Deloraine, and a minister was appointed. The other was called the Mersey Circuit. These two Circuits covered the whole area stretching out to the north-west corner of Tasmania. Several attempts were made to supply a minister for the Mersey Circuit, but the first actually to appear on the scene was the Rev. Thomas Angwin, who arrived there in 1858, making his base in Torquay (now called

East Devonport). Roads, if they existed at all, were extremely rough, and the only means of transport was by horse-back. Flooded rivers had often to be crossed, and mud in the forests could be dangerously deep. Congregations were small and very scattered. Sunday Schools existed, if someone could be found to be in charge of them.

The Circuit-riding minister-evangelist was designed for such a need, and they were well supported by local preachers who travelled many long and difficult miles to preach the gospel.

The Rev. Thomas Angwin, referred to above, and elsewhere in this chapter, must not be confused with the minister of the same name who figures in our New South Wales story, or with the Rev. Thomas B. Angwin, son of the N.S.W. minister, who became a Wesleyan minister some years later.

The 1859 Revival in Tasmania

The "Tasmanian Messenger" was one of the earliest monthly religious periodicals in Tasmania, being in circulation from 1859 to 1867. Thankfully, copies of this paper have survived. It was basically Congregationalist, but contained news items, covering a wide range, from all of the Protestant denominations in Tasmania.

The "Messenger" contained a modest amount of news about the major revivals overseas that were taking place about this time. It included only a very few reports of revivals, or of attempts at promoting revival, within Tasmania, in the 1859 - 1860 period.

One of these concerned the Primitive Methodists in Launceston. "The arrival of the Rev. Mr. Langham from England at Launceston some months ago, to officiate as the Missionary of the Primitive Methodists, was hailed with pleasure, and the anticipation of the friends have been agreeably realised. The rev. gentleman is an earnest, able and devoted servant of Christ, and appears to be a missionary in the apostolic sense of the word. He has been indefatigable in his visits to the several townships in the north, and has been instrumental in a brief period of forming societies and originating the building of places of worship for the use of the Primitive Methodists.

At Launceston itself a pleasing revival of religion has occurred, and on Sunday, 19th November (1859), a camp meeting was numerously attended, and the services were attended with pleasing results. The Sunday School and Temperance movements are important features in the operation of this useful community."
(5.)

Perhaps this Primitive Methodist work, however, should not be seen so much as a reaction to news about the 1859 revival overseas, so much as normal behaviour for the Primitive Methodists.

The "Tasmanian Messenger" did not contain any reports of revivals within Tasmania which seemed to be reactions to news from the revivals overseas. For that, we are dependent upon news from other published sources outside Tasmania

According to reports which surfaced on the mainland, Tasmania saw the first signs of the 1859 movement in June of that year. The report came from Westbury, and appeared in the "Wesleyan Chronicle."

"In the month of June last, the members of the Westbury Society were much drawn out in earnest prayer to God for the out-pouring of the Spirit upon the people of this neighbourhood. They had not rested long before the gracious influences of the Holy Ghost visited many hearts. Numbers were fully awakened to a sense of their appalling condition as sinners against God, and were led to seek redemption through the blood of Christ. An immediate increase in the attendance at the prayer meetings, and other means of grace was observable. On the 13th of June, at the Monday Evening Prayer Meeting, two middle-aged persons, one a wealthy Farmer, and the other a merchant's wife, obtained peace by

believing in Christ. The gracious work has ever since continued to extend itself until now we can count the goodly number of fifty-six souls who have entered upon 'the glorious liberty of the sons of God'. In the Deloraine part of the Circuit ten have been saved. Not a week has passed since the commencement of this delightful revival without some souls being 'added to the church.' The conversions have taken place chiefly among our wealthy farmers and their families. Oh! It has been a delightful, yet affecting, sight to see some of our fine Tasmanian yeomanry as penitents pleading for mercy - and not in vain. Some of them are now walking in the light of the Divine Countenance. Others who are still seeking mercy are in deep anguish of spirit, and will not be comforted until they have 'comfort Divine.' One, in particular, has spent many sleepless nights and days of sorrow and fasting, on account of his sins, which are to him an intolerable burden. It is hoped that his mourning will soon be turned into rejoicing. No extraordinary measures have been adopted to bring about this desired result. Only one prayer has been added to those formerly existing. There has been less excitement than I have ever been in a revival before. Our Cornish friends would scarcely think we had a revival at all. But the fruits -ah! these are the tests - are most satisfactory\;\; to God be all the glory. Our returns will shew a considerable increase\;\; but as some of the new converts were meeting in class before the revival, the increase will not be to the full amount of the number converted." (6.)

The following year, a little snippet appeared in the "Advocate" which added interesting details about the longer-term results of this revival in Westbury. The news had been culled from a private letter.

"Last year I wrote you a short account of the good work in this Circuit, (Westbury). I am happy to inform you that the greater part of those who were converted are still 'walking in the light of the Lord'. Our numbers rose from 72 full members to 117. In the midst of all the good conferred upon the Circuit by the Great Head of the Church last year, there was one spot which continued barren and dead. Now it is the most promising place in the Circuit, and bids fair to becoming a fruitful field." (7.)

Apparently, this movement was felt in a number of places around the island, through the following months. Eleven months later, (in 1861) the "Wesleyan Chronicle" had another snippet which referred to Tasmania.

"A gracious quickening has been experienced in several circuits in Tasmania. In Hobart Town a considerable number has been received on trial for membership, and also in Launceston, where God is blessing the labours of the Rev. Jas. Hutchison. Throughout the Mersey circuit the good work is rapidly progressing, and about sixty persons have professed peace with God. The hearts of both ministers and people are greatly cheered, and more abundant outpourings of the Spirit are expected." (8.)

The "Christian Advocate" also includes a note, early in 1861, about a revival which appeared in the Tasmanian town of Campbell Town.

"During the past six months we have been favoured with a gracious visitation of the Holy Spirit, resulting in the conversion of many from the error of their way. At our late District Meeting it was found that beside a good increase on the year, we had twenty-nine on trial in this place, most of whom have made full proof of the genuineness of (their confession of faith.) For some time previous to the movement, a spirit of earnest prayer, and enlarged expectation was apparent, and cottage prayer meetings held three or four nights in the week, were much blessed. The visits and labours of Mr Clifton, a missionary student at Horton College (the Wesleyan college in Tasmania)...were very opportune. Mr. C. aims at the heart and seldom misses, for our Great Master has honoured his faith and zeal by granting him marked success. It was found necessary to hold a week of special services, and several times all present were bowed down before the overwhelming power of saving grace. The prayers and praises of parents and children, grey-headed sinners, and Sunday

School scholars mingled delightfully together. Some who were converted had previously been very drunken and dissolute characters, and now their diligence and consistency are very gratifying."

The person writing the report to the "Advocate" hoped that all this was only the beginning of much more "abundant rain." (9.)

"Cook's Revival," 1861

The story of Cook's revival given here is presented such a way as also to provide a context for our analysis of the revivals that followed.

In one of his many fascinating stories about his ancestors, the Rev. Trevor Byard tells about a matriarchal figure in their family, Elizabeth Gilbert, who was born in Cornwall, October 12, 1814.

In 1836, she married Thomas Trebilcock, who was a devout and earnest Christian man. In 1843, they were induced to migrate to Van Diemen's Land, arriving in Launceston on 31st December of that year. They had sailed with six children in the 200 ton brig "Indian," with twenty other passengers and crew.

In 1852 came the great blow of the early death of her husband. At 38 years of age, she had ten children, all under the age of sixteen. They had been working a successful dairy farm near Launceston, but, with her husband newly dead, the farm was re-let to another tenant, over her head. She had notice to quit, and, from a human point of view, was in a very difficult situation.

She settled near Deloraine for a period, and then bought a farm near the entrance of the Forth River, on the north coast of Tasmania, next to some Canadian Methodist friends she had known at Deloraine. The family moved there in 1859. The land had to be cleared, a house built, and soon also a wooden chapel was built facing Bass Strait, called the Beach Chapel.

"This was no ordinary missioning of a new place, these families took their religion there with them and at once entered into the wealth of spiritual privileges they brought. True it was a rude sanctuary, true they had no minister, but they had the presence of the Great Head of the Church and the power of the Holy Spirit. There were wholehearted Christian men and women all around whose hearts God had touched, hence it became a Church at once. There were local preachers, class leaders, praying people\;\; the thing at once a live going concern ready for any demands, so no wonder the great revivals came in after years.

In 1861, under the administration of the Rev. R. O. Cook, there was a gracious visitation, and the widow's heart danced with joy as she saw all her children together with many others, savingly converted." Two sons became local preachers. Three daughters married ministers, and two others married local preachers who served the Church for many years. Several grandchildren engaged in full time Christian work. "For thus she magnified the grace of God\;\; for years she had sowed\;\; now reaping had come, or at least part of it." (10.)

Another author (Peter Mulligan) from whom Byard quotes said that "Cook's revival" was the first one to spread out from Beach Chapel, and was followed by another in 1865 - 1866, which we will consider later. "These were stirring times and it has been specially noted that in what was called Cooks' revival almost the entire number of all those converted continued steadfast in the faith to the end." (11.)

"California" Taylor's Visit to Tasmania, 1864

Taylor's autobiography uses several pages to give some anecdotal details about his time in Tasmania, but much of it is purely incidental. A good deal of this space is taken up telling the story of Henry Reed, whom Taylor met some

years later, but as a result of contacts made while he was in Launceston. Members of the Grubb family were among his converts, and these were friends of Reed, related to his first wife. In 1864, Reed was living near Tunbridge Wells, in England.

First references to the impending visit to Tasmania by California Taylor appeared in the August, September and October, 1863, issues of the "Tasmanian Messenger". These related briefly a few details about some of his meetings in Melbourne. The information was culled from the "Wesleyan Chronicle."

He actually arrived in Tasmania on 18th February, 1864.

"The Rev. W. Taylor, the famous Californian Methodist preacher, or evangelist, arrived by the S.S. Gothenburg on the 18th Feb., and preached in the Wesleyan Chapel (Launceston) on the following Sabbath to large congregations.

He also held services on every night during the week, excepting Saturday - the chapel being crowded on every occasion, and several persons, principally young persons, professing to an awakening. May the good impressions apparently produced prove of a permanent character.

On Sunday also, February 28th, the annual sermons for the Wesleyan Missionary Society were preached by Mr. Taylor, the usual public meeting being held on the following (Monday) evening." (12.)

Taylor's visit to Launceston lasted for three weeks, altogether. In his account of it, Taylor refers to a revival which had occurred there during the time when Nathaniel Turner was minister.

The next relevant detail in the "Messenger" told of the final meetings Taylor had in Launceston.

"The series of special religious services in connection with the Rev. W. Taylor's visit was brought to a close on the evening of Monday, the 7th of March, and was followed by a course of lectures delivered at the Mechanics' Institute, on 'Palestine', and 'St Paul and his Times'.

Not the least interesting of Mr. Taylor's gatherings was an experience meeting held on Sunday afternoon, March 6th, in the Patterson-street Wesleyan Chapel, and on which occasion over one hundred persons, principally converts under Mr. Taylor's ministry, recounting God's dealing with them.

The rev. gentleman's labors in Launceston have resulted, under the Divine blessing, in the commencement of a great and glorious work, especially amongst the young - a work for which, there is reason to believe, the minds of many have been gradually prepared.

Nor has this gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit been confined to the ranks of the previously unconverted\; on the contrary, and as a legitimate fruit of the work, many professing Christians of every denomination are thankful to acknowledge a quickening of the Divine life in them, leading them to renewed consecration to the service of their Heavenly Master, and more ardent goings-forth of the affections towards the 'Eden - above' and its glorious Ruler.

It is much to be deplored that whilst some of our ministers rejoice that such a revival is taking place in our midst, and are doing what they can to seal and extend the work of grace, there are others who cherish naught but bitterness towards Mr. Taylor and his work, and are doing what Bunyan's 'Christian' saw one representing Satan doing in the house of the Interpreter - casting water on the fire.

It is not necessary to enter now upon a defence of Mr. Taylor and his doings - 'By their fruit ye shall know them..' That there were noticeable in connection with the meetings held certain extravagancies (sic) which might have been advantageously dispensed with\; and that in some, perhaps in many, cases the impressions produced will prove evanescent, and the subjects of them slip back into their former state or something worse, form no argument against the genuineness of the movement as a whole." The article concluded by asserting that Taylor's work would result in "incalculable good." (13.)

From Launceston, Taylor travelled across country to Hobart Town, as it was then called.

"The Rev. Mr. Taylor, of California, commenced his labors at Melville-street Chapel, on the March 13th (sic), and has continued them with little intermission since. At the close of each preaching service many persons, youthful and adult, approach the Communion rail, where what was termed the penitent form was located, and being under strong religious impressions, were prayed with and counselled until many of them professed to obtain peace through believing in the Saviour.

On Good Friday, Mr. Taylor preached three times at New Norfolk, with similar cheering results. During the last week in March the reverend gentleman delivered his lectures on Palestine and St Paul to numerous audiences. Mr. Taylor is likely to remain a few days longer.

One very pleasing feature in Mr. Taylor's labors was the childrens' gatherings on Sunday afternoons when the reverend gentleman succeeded in keeping up the young people's attention to a remarkable degree." (14.)

The Wesleyan minister in Hobart for the previous three years had been the Rev. W. Lowe. He was due to move to his new appointment, in Launceston, in just a few weeks. Taylor was present at the annual meeting for all the Wesleyan Sunday schools in the Hobart Circuit, when a review was held, and presentations were made to Mr. Lowe, before he left the area.

"The anniversary of the Wesleyan Sabbath schools took place on Easter Sunday and Monday, March 27th and 28th. Sermons were preached on the Sunday morning and evening in the Melville-street chapel by the Rev. W. Taylor of California, also in the afternoon addressed and catechized the scholars. Suitably selected hymns were sung at each service. On Monday the children and teachers went into the Government Domain, and spent some time in healthful recreation returning to the school premises where they partook of their annual treat.

A tea-meeting for teachers and friends followed, and at 7 o'clock a public meeting was held in the chapel under the presidency of Mr. Alderman Barrett. The proceedings commenced by the singing of a hymn, when the Rev. W. Taylor offered prayer."

The chairman made some nice remarks to Mr. Lowe, and offered best wishes for his new appointment. The General Secretary's report followed, giving full details about each Sunday school in the circuit, including, among other details, the number of teachers, the number of scholars in each school, and the number of those older scholars who had professed conversion during the last twelve months.

More presentations were then made to Mr. Lowe, and finally, Taylor addressed the gathering, followed by the other minister in the circuit, the Rev. Spencer Williams.

Taylor also visited Longford, and preached in a number of the smaller towns, before returning to Victoria. (15.)

After the Rev. W. Lowe moved to Launceston, he apparently worked hard at following up the work that Taylor had done there, some weeks before.

"We rejoice to be able to state that the work of grace, which was commenced under the Divine blessing, during the visit of the Rev. W. Taylor, has been continued under the Rev. W. Lowe's ministry. Mr. Lowe seems to be eminently fitted to carry on such a work, and he has been the means of leading many to the Saviour." (16.)

The "Wesleyan Chronicle" simply recorded that Taylor's visit had been very successful\; that 600 people had professed conversion, and that many of them had been people linked to other denominations. (17.)

"A very gracious revival of religion has taken place in this circuit. A correspondent send us the following:- 'In this place wickedness mightily prevailed. Even the youths who had passed through our Sabbath-school were not only "walking in the counsel of the ungodly," but also "standing in the way of sinners, and sitting in the seat of the scornful." Our members were few, and most of the few in a state too much like lethargy.

Previous to the revival we felt "that God must soon visit this place in some way, either with an outpouring of his Spirit or in judgment." Praise the Lord, it has not been with the latter! We were favoured with the help of Mr. A. Miller of Horton College, late of Ballaarat, who spent his vacation here.

On June 18th, we, relying on divine help, invited seekers forward to a penitent form, that we might direct them to "the Lamb of God." Seventeen took up their cross, most of them returned to their homes, publican-like, justified, rejoicing in God. Truly the Lord had turned again the captivity of Zion, and many of us were like them that dream, for it was never seen on this like in Franklin before.

The next evening a similar number obtained a sense of sins forgiven. We have held very few extra meetings, but every Sabbath evening several have obtained the blessing. Praise the Lord, the work is still going on.

At Port Cygnet (a part of the circuit where we have had no members hitherto) we held a few revival services\; it pleased the Lord to bless them, and many precious souls found peace by believing in Jesus. On 9th ult. (July), the weeping and heart-felt sobbing was so great that the sermon in the afternoon could scarcely be proceeded with\; nor would the people leave for home till after dark.

The cases of conversion have generally be very clear\; some of all ages from twelve years old to sixty. We have been pleased and grateful to see the aged, who have so long sat under the sound of the gospel as hearers only, yielding to the Spirit, submitting to be saved by grace. It is also encouraging to see those who had outgrown our Sabbath-school, and had gone out into the world, brought to a saving knowledge of the truth.

Previous to this good work we had but one class in Franklin with thirteen members. Now we are compelled to divide into three classes, numbering in all about sixty. We have also established a class at Port Cygnet. These, with additions in other parts of the circuit, have much more than doubled our numbers during the last two months. The minister's Bible class is now numerously attended. It is interesting to meet weekly those who are thirsting for knowledge, and now that their souls are converted to God we hope that many of them will become labourers in the vineyard of the Lord. The whole circuit seems to be in a prosperous state\; believers are quickened, backsliders reclaimed, and others are brought out of nature's darkness into God's marvellous light. Never was there a revival where it was more apparent that the work was entirely the Lord's. He hath wrought the work, and to him be all the glory!" (18.)

A certain Mr. Miller candidated for the Wesleyan ministry in Tasmania at the end of that year. (19.) So, the Mr. Miller from Horton College who spent his holidays in the Franklin Circuit was probably a teacher, or a theological student, at the College.

Revival in the North and North-west of Tasmania, 1865 - 1866

This revival movement was quite extensive, and affected both the Wesleyans of the Mersey Circuit, and an Independent Church. Thankfully, there are two sources of information. Because the reports from the Independent Church were written and published at the time of the revival in the "Tasmanian Messenger", they will be presented here first. The Methodist description was written many years later, although it was written by the minister most directly involved.

The Independent Church at the Forth and Don

"The Independent Church under the pastoral care of the Rev. W. Mathison has experienced a glorious revival during the last few weeks. Previous to the time the friends of the church had much reason to deplore its drooping condition, its innate apathy, its spiritual depression.

A great deal it is true, had been done which betokened the goodwill and liberality of the inhabitants by the erection of neat chapels at the Forth and Don at a cost of some six hundred pounds. The attendance, too, at these sanctuaries was encouraging, particularly in the new and commodious chapel at the Forth. Yet no visible mark of the quickening spirit was apparent. The soul of the minister yearned for something more than cold observances and outward form.

We know that the prayer of faith is answered\; but how little do we know how and when the Spirit of the Almighty shall descend and impart its balmy influence around. The messenger may be sent from the ark many times in vain, and at the very moment when the waters of despondency are at their flood-tide fulness, and cover the soul with sorrow - when the watchings are weary, and the heart is sick with hope delayed, the dove will appear, bearing the olive branch of comfort, and exhibiting to the eye of faith the glorious realisation of God's promises.

A few devout members of the church met at the Don to lament before God the spiritual deadness that prevailed, and to implore a blessing on the preaching of the word. The prayer of faith was answered - answered in such a manner as to decide the minister that a series of special services were called for.

Accordingly, evening prayer meetings were commenced at the Don, and the first week gave evidence that the Holy Spirit was at work. For three weeks these meetings were continued with increasing results of a happy character. Numbers flocked from the Mersey, and places four, five or six miles distant, to hear the joyful sound of salvation. Men and women, whose lot it is to toil hard during the day, hastened to the house of prayer at considerable personal inconvenience. Many who were never before seen in the sanctuary were now its daily attendants. Stout men who never wept before, now mingled their tears with those of their wives and daughters, and the blasphemy of the sinner was turned to the prayer of the penitent. The visitation was general. From house to house, with rarely an exception, wherever the plague spot of sin and unbelief had hitherto dwelt, were tears of joy and sorrow shed - tears of sorrow for past blindness or corruption\; tears of joy for the discovery and application of a glorious antidote.

At the close of three weeks at the Don there were sixty-two applicants for church membership, and with eight evenings of special services at the Forth, there were two new members admitted, and sixteen new applicants.

But who can tell the good that will result to hundreds who may not choose to become united to the Independent Church? Who can tell how far into the future the arm of the Lord will extend this good work, or in what portion generations yet unborn will gather fruits from the garden now being planted by the faithful ministrations of the Rev. Walter Mathison?

Anniversary Services. On Sunday, the 3rd December (1865), the anniversary services in connection with the Independent Chapel, River Forth, were held. Sermons were preached in the morning and afternoon by the Rev. W. Law, of Launceston, and in the evening by the Rev. H. Walton of Longford. There was a large and attentive audience on each occasion, and the total collections amounted to eight pounds. (The Rev. W. H. Walton was a Primitive Methodist minister newly arrived in Tasmania.)

On the following Tuesday, a tea meeting was held at the same place, when about 300 persons were present\; the sale of tickets realised twenty-one pounds eight shillings. After tea, the Revs. Messrs. Mathison, Law and Walton, and Mr. Barker, addressed the meeting. Mr. Walton delivered a very stirring appeal to all Christians, urging the importance of sinking denominational prejudices, and uniting in the effort to advance Christ's kingdom. His remarks were doubtless responded to in the hearts of all present.

Letters were received from the Revs. Messrs. Smithies and Heyward, and C. Friend, Esq., expressing regret that they were unable to attend the meeting.

The Bishop of Tasmania preached in the Independent Chapel, River Forth, on Thursday morning, the 30th November, to a respectable and attentive audience. From the Forth, the bishop proceeded to the Leven, Emu Bay, and Table Cape." (20.)

Two months later, more information was available.

"We have received the following interesting communication from our correspondent at the above place (River Don., N.W. Coast.), and insert it with much pleasure.

'Since the last interesting communication forwarded by a Forth Correspondent I am happy to state that the work of the Lord still prospers in this place. On Friday evening, 5th January (1866), there were 55 admitted into the church, and on February 9th, eleven more, truly the little one has become a thousand and may the good Head of the Church keep and preserve them faithful unto the end.

On Sabbath, February 11th, the chapel (which has been closed for a few weeks for the purpose of being refurbished with new seats, lining, new pulpit, etc.) was re-opened, when two impressive sermons were preached by the esteemed pastor, the Rev. W. Mathison. There were large congregations, and collections were made in aid of the building fund.

The chapel has now cost upwards of four hundred pounds nearly all of which sum has been received in the district, and an harmonium has also been purchased and was used for the first time at the opening services.

The Lord has indeed heard the prayer of His believing children, and opened the windows of heaven and poured out a blessing.

The place appears too straight for us, and there are more applications for seats than can be supplied. O may it ever be so, and if it is found necessary to enlarge our borders I trust the Lord will put it in the hearts of His people to render some assistance. I am not in a position to speak of the work at the Forth, only to say that they also have been blessed.

May the Lord still carry on His glorious work and depend upon it if there is to be a revival of true religion, in any locality it must commence in the hearts of God's people, and as means are to be used in the economy of grace - when they are in earnest and wrestle like Jacob of old the Lord will delight to hear and answer their petitions.

May the time speedily come when no one shall have to say to his neighbour 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Him from the least to the greatest." (21.)

The final bit of information about events at the River Don appeared three months later.

"A public tea meeting in connection with the Independent Chapel took place on the 25th April, and was very successful as regards the object contemplated and the spirit that animated those present\; the good things were provided by the female members of the Church, and most abundant and varied, not forgetting the fruit of the season.

About 250 persons sat down to tea, and cheerfulness and good feeling showed on the countenance of all. After tea the company adjourned to the chapel, where the public meeting was held, and presided over by the Rev. W. Mathison, the respected minister of the place. The Building Fund account was

read by the Treasurer, shewing the gratifying statement that not only was the chapel out of debt, but a small surplus would remain for necessary incidental expenditure.

Appropriate addresses were delivered by Mr. Stokes, the Rev. G. Heywood (sic), Wesleyan minister, Mr. Ogilvie from Launceston, and the chairman, expressing thanks to those who assisted at the late bazaar, and in subscribing to the funds, in gratitude to God for the Christian feeling and earnestness that pervades the people generally. The work is the Lord's\; He it is that commenced it, has carried it on, and we trust will continue to do so, for the extension of His own kingdom, and conversion of immortal souls. Our Sunday School is in a very flourishing state\; there are 85 scholars on the books, and we trust the seed sown will in God's own time produce an abundant harvest to His glory." (22.)

The Revival in the Mersey Circuit

In 1864, the Rev. G. T. Heyward was sent to Launceston as a Circuit assistant. Probably, he arrived at the same time as the Rev. W. Lowe, just after the visit by Taylor, but this is not certain.. He would have seen, and been influenced by, the extended revival associated with the ministry of the Rev. W. Lowe, which we have already referred to. The following year he was appointed to the Mersey Circuit as a probationer. Here he saw an extensive revival throughout the Circuit.

The Mersey Circuit was normally very isolated from influences in the more settled areas. In these early days, travel to places along the coast often had to be by ship. Heyward had to travel along the coast by horse. Dugan records that "During the two years of his ministry in the Mersey Circuit this minister rode several thousands of miles over unbridged and roadless country along the rugged coastline from Torquay to Stanley." (23.)

There were already in the area a number of church leaders who were descendants of English Methodists (especially from Yorkshire) who had seen powerful Methodist revivals in years gone by. Here, in the Mersey, God poured out the same blessing upon the next generation, although removed by a great distance from the previous place of blessing.

Heyward's own account of this revival appeared in the denominational paper other thirty years later. After some years ministering in Tasmania, he moved to Melbourne, where he became an editor, and regular contributor to the various papers which followed the "Wesleyan Chronicle." In his old age, he returned to the story of this revival, which had exercised such an impact on his own life. He was naturally concerned lest the story of what God did should be lost to future generations. He also was aware that it would be misunderstood by many others who no longer looked kindly on things like revivals.

He begins his account of the revival with a most interesting statement describing what he saw as the key elements in this revival movement.

He also acknowledges the role of Congregational ministers and lay people in those early days on the north coast of Tasmania.

He says that the revival period would be remembered as "a season when suddenly, and only half expected, the Things Unseen shone forth with such startling brilliance and energy as to quite overshadow and overpower the everyday toils and cares and ambitions of this little mortality. When, for a little while, it seemed as if things had come right at last! God, and truth, and righteousness first\; and Earth gotten into true second place and relation to these 'first things first'. When Divine Truths become the burning realities they really are: and ceased to be mere decent conventionalities\; and men trembled before them, and oh! it was so natural and instructive to talk of 'fleeing for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us in the Gospel.' Just

the very exact thought and words which fitted into that awakened time! Yes! We well remember the days of the years of the Most High. We will tell of them to our children, that they may learn to set their hope in God\; and pray and work and wait for similar and far more glorious visitations in store for them.

Long years, had good honest men toiled for God's Methodist and Congregational churches on N.W. Coast. B. Cocker and McClure\; Angwin and Cook\; Nye and Rooney - with the whole band of strong and hearty 'locals', had patiently sown the seed of the Kingdom ever since 1851. All these are Methodists. Still earlier, the Congregationalists had settled excellent evangelical ministers who worked most cordially with their Methodist brethren."

"Did they toil right on to 1865 - 6 without any joy of harvest? Indeed they did not. All along the years souls were awakened, and what these old spiritual philosophers used to call 'soundly converted'. There's music in that old phrase to some of us yet. Some of these converted bushmen afterwards became front-rank men in both these free churches. But the longing of all the earlier workers was for a general revival which would take up the whole coast line in its sweep. That longing was to some extent realised in 1865 - 6\; when from Circular Head to Sassafras - at least in the two churches mentioned - there was an almost universal and profound interest in religious matters.

From our Methodist stand-point, it seemed to come about in this wise. One Sunday the young preacher (that is, Heyward) rode back from 'Robin Hood's Well' (Sassafras, now) to Forth Beach for night service. One of the most fervent 'locals' met him. Holy excitement in his manner, and a trace of moisture in his bright Cornish eyes - 'It's come! The Revival's broke out.!' And then he swept on to tell of souls touched by the finger of God in class and prayer meetings of weeks past. "And now we must get to work this very night. There's so and so, and so and so, and lots of others under 'deep conviction' Now's our time to co-work with God. Dear Pastor, let's put down the nets tonight?" (24.)

The church building in which the meeting was held that night was a ramshackled tin shed with no architectural attractiveness about it.

The preacher had apparently already prepared his sermon, before he was aware of the new situation. He had felt led to preach from the text: "For Lo! thine enemies shall perish. O! Lord, for lo! thine enemies shall perish." The text frightened the preacher. And he trembled "from head to foot" as he "felt himself face to face with God, and men unreconciled to God". As he preached, he struggled to unburden his soul.

"Old men and maidens, young men and children, then and there trembled before God, and were ready to do anything to be at peace with him. Sermon ended, the whole seating became one 'penitent form'\; and truth compels one to admit, there ensued some little excitement, and what some poor little souls call 'confusion'. How could it be otherwise when souls are in agony? The unsaved to lay hold of a Saviour\; and the saved travailing in birth till Christ were formed in their hearts?" (25.)

The Holy Spirit so came upon the congregation that they were overcome with conviction of sin, and with awe at the presence and majesty of God.

Heyward describes the experience of one of the ladies in the congregation, a Methodist of long-standing, who had tried to walk with God\; to train up her large family in God's ways, and who was respected throughout the district as a sincere Christian. Heyward wrote:- "There she kneels, but stirred to the depths! She was in an agony of whispered pleading with her God. But a whisper cannot carry the rushing torrent of her soul's desire for long, and it overruns into the storm-channel of vehement prayer - 'Oh, my God, my Father, I have been an undutiful child. I am not worthy to be called Thy child. What a miserable life I have lived, all the while I have been conscious Thou wast my Father. Canst Thou possibly forgive all my wanderings and unfaithfulness? And in this awful hour I see, for the first time, that my unclean and treacherous heart has been at the bottom of all the mischief. Lord! Is it true? Can the blood of

Jesus Christ Thy Son cleanse even such a heart as this of mine? Something says in mine ears: "It can! It can!" I will, I do believe it can. Like another poor woman, I am healed of my desperate plague.' And there the prayer stopped\; and, strange to tell, the anguish vanished from every tone. Every misgiving left her mind, and the face fairly shone with the light that never was on sea or shore. And it kept on shining for many a long hard day afterwards. And it all took place in five or ten minutes." (26.)

On the other side of the chapel - "It's not far to turn\; perhaps seven or eight feet from where the Mother in Israel is now praising her God. It's a bright little maiden of about 14 or 15 summers this time. Nobody is saying a word to her. Everybody seems to have quite enough to do to plead his own cause with his God. Ah! That's how it works in every true Revival! She is utterly oblivious to her unquiet surroundings, and talking very low, but very fast, to someone who is evidently nearer to her than her girl companions at either elbow. No lynx ever had sharper ears than the over joyful preacher had for what was stirring that night. This was the substance of what he there and then heard, and the delicious music of it lingers in spite of intervening years. 'God, I am the worst girl I know - the very worst. But it says in the Bible that if anyone comes to Jesus He will in no wise cast him out. Oh! I do so want to come to Him - just this very minute. Oh, Jesus, don't cast me out, but take me to Thy heart. I can't go on living without knowing that Thou dost now do this great thing for me. Oh, do it just now.' The little maid's prayer snapp'd short off just at this point, too. Will you be shocked if I tell you the plain truth? That plaintive pleading ended abruptly in silvery laughter. ...the little maid grew to a fine, Christian woman, married a Methodist minister, did a brief day's work for God, and, too soon, reached the home over yonder." (27.)

Much of Heyward's account of the revival is written in the form of a reply to imaginary critics, who are portrayed as saying that such happenings were only for girls, for old ladies, for weak-minded parsons, and that it was all hysteria. So, he told the story of a powerfully-built Scottish highlander. "Hysteria! Had he ever heard the word? Most unlikely\; and most certainly he had never felt the touch of the evil thing - for this good reason:- there was not a particle of tinder in his whole makeup for this false fire to kindle in. What brought this strong, sane man into these exciting surroundings that memorable night? Just this:- he sat where for long years he had found rest and peace in the worship of his God and the communion of saints. But never before had (a) season like this astounded him. The deepest instincts of his renewed nature told that though God had usually spoken to him with the still, small voice, yet this time He had come near in the earthquake and the fire. And like the reasonable and true-hearted man that he was, he instantly set his face like a flint to understand and realise what new and deeper discoveries of Himself the Christ was about to favour him with. And he was not baffled and disappointed. Nobody ever is, who thus honestly and earnestly acts. This was the clear voice which rang in his ears:- 'My old disciple, know that I am able and anxious to dwell - that means to take up my permanent and uninterrupted abode - in the very core of thy heart. Up to this time in thy soul's history I have only been able, through thy ignorance and wilfulness, to pay thee occasional visits. Now, in this hour of visitation, it is my will to take full possession. How am I straightened till this is accomplished! And like as it ever was in My earthly life, so shall it be in the case of this sin-stained heart of thine. Where I come and abide every haunting demon will fly trembling out. My changeless love and power shall repeat these miracles in the case of a N. W. Coast farmer. All the lingering devils yet found lurking in every nook and cranny of thine inexpressibly treacherous heart, will, of their own terror, take flight at My victorious incoming. Canst thou not understand? And all I ask of thee, now thou hearest My voice, is just simply this:- Open thy soul's door, and let Me come in! If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.'

Such was the strength of this Divine "drawing" that the Scotchman's heart eagerly threw back the bolts of prejudice and diffidence. He then and there put himself by simple faith into the hands of Christ to enter and work His sanctifying will within him. Was he disappointed? Was it likely his case was going to be the first failure in the unbroken line of Christ's victories? Nay, indeed! It turned out just one more of the glorious triumphs of Christ. Christ, from that day onward, did permanently abide in his soul\; and in deepest humility, yet assured confidence, he, too, could say, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' And all the unprejudiced onlookers were constrained to say, 'It's true. It's true.'

Surely, surely, there was something beside Hysteria in it all! Let wise men judge." (28.)

This revival slowly spread to other centres in the Circuit, and its influence continued for some years. Wonderful "bush" evangelists were raised up - persistent, overflowing witnesses to Christ, who served God in this area, and later in many other places.

Barrington

In 1865, a little further inland from the coastal strip, a new farming area was opened up. This area became known as Barrington. A number of members of the Westbury congregation moved out there, in order to carve out for themselves a new home and life from the ancient forest. The Westbury minister "gave them instructions to meet together in prayer and class meetings, and appointed one of their number, John Coleman, to watch over their spiritual life. Between Barrington and the Mersey there was a stretch of wild and trackless forest. Nevertheless, when G. T. Heyward heard of the new settlement, he somehow found his way to these brave people... He discovered that Coleman was regarding his commission of spiritual oversight with the utmost seriousness, and held prayer and class-meetings twice on Sundays and once on week nights. Barrington was placed on the Mersey plan. Local preachers came to supply the services, their Sunday's work involving preaching three times and a tramp of twenty miles along the rough bush tracks." (29.)

Along the Coast

Because the journey out north-west, along the coast, was so difficult at that time, by 1865, the Mersey Circuit minister had not yet commenced to make the trip out more than part of the way.

News of the revival slowly spread out along the coast. One farmer at Circular Head was thirsty to experience God, for himself and for his community. "He was famished for spiritual fellowship and the sight of the soul-saving work of the Holy Spirit. He was grieved at heart for the dead formality or utter religious indifference around him." He felt as if a burden from God was laid upon him to bring the influences of the revival further out along the coast. The distance was ninety miles, and he travelled on foot. Half-way, he got a harvesting job to replenish his funds. "...eventually he arrived in Torquay chapel one Sunday night, unheralded and unknown. It was a night of the power of God... He stayed a week or so, enjoying the warmth and perfecting arrangements for a visit of the young Minister to Circular Head. He guaranteed all expenses, and a little over for the benefit of the Circuit, and then trudged back home satisfied."

After getting permission from his superiors, the probationer saddled his horse, ready to swim the Forth, Leven and Black rivers, and across the Inlet, climb the "Sisters", and swim other tidal rivers if he did not arrive at them at

low tide. A number of places would be visited in the area. The whole journey would take about three weeks. When he got to the Inlet, thankfully there was a ferry, in the form of a "Catamaran" powered by one man using stringy bark poles. This contraption saved the preacher, and the mailman with his bags, from getting wet, while three horses swam behind. (30.)

Even in later years, "scarcely anybody, excepting the Roman Priest, a very occasional 'commercial', the all-important 'mailman', and the Methodist Preacher, regularly made the journey." The mailman linked the scattered huts and settlements with the rest of humanity, and a magistrate was later based in Stanley.

In this way, the years 1865 and 1866 saw the spread of revival through the north-west of Tasmania, laying foundations for many years to come.

Westbury Circuit, 1872

"In common with the colony generally we are suffering in this circuit from the depression of the times. But, Westbury itself being so much dependent upon the through traffic, has suffered greatly by the railway besides. The consequence is, that nearly half of our Westbury congregation have had to remove to other districts, while those remaining have to struggle with discouragements and increaseing poverty. We hope, however, to see a reaction soon in things spiritual.

At Whitemore, a few miles from Westbury, we have had a gracious time. Our society there has been nearly doubled. At the earnest request of the office-bearers, special services were held, extending over three weeks. The Lord has greatly blessed the efforts put forth in the quickening of the church and the salvation of sinners. The special services were brought to a close on Monday, 19th August last, when a social tea-meeting was held, provided by a few members of the church, to which only the members and young converts were invited. Between 40 and 50 accepted the invitation, and several more would have been there but for sickness and domestic engagements. After tea, the company resolved themselves into a fellowship meeting, when cheering testimonies were borne to the power of divine grace. After the greater number had spoken, and the time not permitting any more, the remainder stood up at the invitation of the pastor, the Rev. Andrew Inglis, to testify thereby that their purpose was, God helping them, to be henceforth the servants of the Lord Jesus. Then, after two or three had prayed, the meeting broke up, and all returned to their homes refreshed in spirit\; no such meeting having ever been held before at Whitemore.

Special services will shortly be held in other parts of the circuit, and we hope to be able to chronicle still greater things." (31.)

Revival Amongst the Christian Brethren, 1873

Around 1872, the north-west of Tasmania was visited by two travelling evangelists from the Christian Brethren assemblies in England. They were William Brown, a Scotsman, and Edward Moyse, an Englishman. Moyse later saw many backwoods revivals in New Zealand. During 1873, and early in 1874, they had good success at Circular Head, and at Scottsdale, seeing about 450 professed conversions, and the commencement of several Assemblies to nurture these converts.

A Believers' Conference was held on 1st and 2nd January, 1873, at Wynyard, which was the first of its kind in these parts. In these Conference meetings, and in the general support teaching, the two evangelists were helped by an Irish Bible teacher and evangelist named Charles F. Perrin. Apart from the three

Brethren evangelists, the speakers included the Rev. Richard Smith (Anglican minister), the Rev. C. Sanders (Wesleyan minister), and Mr. George Shekleton, a layman of independent means, and the meetings were widely advertised. (32.)

About 200 people were present. There was an impressive sense of the presence of God, and of the unity of believers. Perrin wrote to his wife in Melbourne about this conference:- "The whole of the meetings have been characterized by the power and presence of God..... I never felt the power of God at the Dublin meetings, as I have here - you will understand how good they were." (33.)

Another conference was held at Table Cape in January, 1874. The impact of these conferences was felt far and wide for many years. Since then, Tasmania has been the Australian state with the strongest Brethren following, largely due to this revival, and the conferences which flowed from it.

After the 1874 conference, Brown, Perrin and Moyse continued their evangelism along the coast. At Scottsdale, the evangelists counted 56 families in the district. Conversions occurred in all but ten of the families. Later, he said that most of the adults in Scottsdale had been converted. (34.) An impact like that in a newly founded bush community does not represent a large number of converts, but, it does represent a high proportion of the community, and therefore creates its own strong flavour in the district.

During the winter of 1874, they continued to itinerate closer to civilisation, at the Leven and Forth rivers, but without the same encouraging successes. (35.)

Dugan's only comment about the influence of the Brethren was as follows. "A determined attempt to destroy the influence of Methodism was made by certain teachers of 'diverse and strange doctrines'. But the Rev. H. J. Lavers, then stationed in the Mersey Circuit, dealt with these teachings so effectively that the danger passed away." (36.)

By this time, the "Kentish", or Sheffield area, inland from Barrington, was being opened up into more settled farms, and August of 1874 saw Brown and Moyse move their activities into that part of the country. The only established churches were the Wesleyans, with three preaching places, including the strong centre in Barrington. The vast majority of the settlers had only very general church affiliations, but little or no active religious life.

These evangelists preached the simple, basic gospel message, and emphasised believers' baptism as the public sign of the new birth. Their meetings aroused a great deal of interest, and, indeed, excitement. "When quite a few people began to get converted the excitement became so great that they couldn't go about their normal work but went instead to urge others to believe. Many were young married couples, in their twenties and thirties, and some were teenagers and children. Within a month or so, over ninety people in the district had professed salvation, and the whole community was stirred.

Twenty-five converts were baptised in a creek on 18th October, 1874. "These baptised believers were eager learners. Filled with the joy of the Lord, they met regularly for Bible Study and instruction in Christian living. On Sunday mornings they met for worship, and services began in two places, Barrington and Kentish, while, with the preaching of the gospel continuing around the district, further people professed conversion." (37.) In a letter to friends, Perrin reported that nearly two hundred professions of conversion had occurred in the Kentish district by April, 1875. (38.)

On Christmas Day, and Boxing Day, 1874, Brown and Moyse held a Bible Conference on one of the farms, in the largest building in the area, a shearing shed called "Duggan's Barn". In this way they started a tradition of holding Bible conferences in the Sheffield area which went on for a hundred years.

One interesting expression of this revival is found in the number of Biblical names which were given to geographical features and villages in the Kentish area. This had already happened in several instances before the

revival. The names Gog, Magog and The Walls of Jerusalem appeared on earlier maps. But the converted farmers added over thirty other names with Biblical associations to features in their district. These included Paradise, Damascus Gate, Wailing Wall, Pool of Bethesda, Pool of Siloam, The Golden Gate, The Temple, Zion Hill, The Devil's Gate, Devil's Gullet, and many others. King Solomon's Caves were discovered and named after 1906. After 1954, the name of King Solomon's Jewels was given to a particularly beautiful group of small lakes, and the name of Mount Moriah was given to a mound on one end of the Wailing Wall. Many of these features, however, are only able to be visited and appreciated by bush-walkers. (39.)

Mersey Circuit, 1877

A string of four reports from this circuit appeared in the "Spectator," describing the results of special services at Northdown, Hamilton-on-Forth and Sassafras. The fourth report was from the quarterly meeting about the end of September. The ministers in the circuit at the time were Robert Brown (superintendent) and John Cowperthwaite (a probationer).

"The following report comes to us from the Mersey Circuit (Tasmania):- The future prospects promise well, for the Lord has been working wonderfully amongst the people for months past, and we are now having gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit. Here and there, indeed in almost every place throughout the circuit, there have been the 'droppings of the shower' - twos and threes converted promising yet greater results, earnestness of the coming power. Special services have been held at Northdown (Wesleyvale), and strong, quiet work has been done. Members have been quickened and revived, the church baptised with the spirit of truth and grace, and thus qualified for aggressive action; and about seventy souls converted. All ages are represented, from the stripling of fourteen to the hoary head of seventy. The most of the converts, however, are of the time of life which generally realises the grandest results to the church and the world - between seventeen and thirty. Grace and tact are now needed to make thorough steadfast workers and witnesses of them - real, earnest, praying Christians. May the Lord work this end. The crowded sacramental service last Sabbath was an occasion of deep and solemn rejoicing. The ministers are announced to commence special services at the Forth next week, if the superintendent's health is restored. Unfortunately the recent constant exposure to the weather, at nearly all hours of the day and night, had brought on something very like bronchitis in his case. The Rev. Mr. Cowperthwaite stands it well, as 'to the manner born.' The prayers of all who love the Lord and long for soul-saving are urgently asked of behalf of the work of this circuit.

We especially ask the prayers of not a few earnest praying Christians who, though now scattered widely over Victorian territory, yet, under God, owe their salvation to having once lived near the Forth." (40.) (emphases in the original.)

The second report referred to events at Hamilton-on-Forth.

"Special services have been held at Hamilton-on-Forth, and there has been blessed evidence given of the Lord's power to sanctify and save. The members of the society have been aroused to keener and deeper spiritual power and enjoyment. Their love to God and to each other has been largely increased. About 25 persons have been converted, nearly all of whom have been regular attendants upon the public services, and many of them are the children of our members.

The work has been remarkable for its quiet power and efficacy. It is beyond describing delightful to see so many persons, who have long been esteemed for their upright respectable manner of life, obtaining the 'one thing needful,' and hear their glad rejoicings in sins forgiven and the hope of heaven. There

is still a spirit of expectant faith and prayer throughout the whole circuit. The Holy Spirit is moving amongst the people\; separate cases of conversion are frequently occurring in retired out-of-the-way places. There is every promise of a yet mightier work.

After a week's rest, the ministers intend to continue the special services elsewhere." (41.)

This led to their third report, in which the workings of God at Sassafras appeared to them as even more of a surprise.

"Glory to God in the highest! Glory to God! Gratefully as the triumphs of grace in Northdown and Hamilton-on-Forth have been recorded, with even deeper thankfulness we tell of the glorious work of salvation now going on in Sassafras.

A little over a year ago our beautiful chapel in that place was opened. Its erection was a result of an amount of generous working and giving, such as has seldom been seen amongst a population so limited. Throughout the year the congregations have always been large, attentive and earnest. No place has memories more redolent of former glories and spiritual triumphs. But, alas for the change! From a very large and earnest membership it has dwindled down to a very small one of seven or eight, and despite so much that was encouraging there were great searchings of heart for Sassafras.

The case seemed almost hopeless. Lately, however, the members have been greatly revived, and their love to God and each other deepened. The class met regularly, and had meetings that cheered and strengthened. A week's services were held about two months ago, and six or seven joined the class.

On Monday, September 17th, another series of services were commenced, and continued during the week, with such encouraging results that the ministers resolved upon another week's stay, although there are other places in the circuit 'white unto harvest'. During the last week we have had mighty outpourings of the Holy Spirit, and a glorious work has been accomplished.

On Monday night the communion rail was filled with seekers after salvation, and on Wednesday night both it and the front pews were crowded with about thirty penitents. Up to the present time upwards of fifty have professed faith in Jesus. Many are still seeking, and the work is increasing in power and depth.

The results are beyond all expectation great, taking the population into consideration. Amongst the converts all ages are represented - from youth to old age. There are a fair proportion of young men amongst them who may yet be largely useful in the church. The services are still being held. O for greater things!" (42.)

Finally, the quarterly meeting report followed hard upon these events just described. "The quarterly meeting was held as usual in the Latrobe Chapel. There was a good attendance, and the spiritual and temporal prosperity with which the circuit has lately been favoured brought the members together with such grateful gladness that the meeting was a very happy one.

The returns showed 153 members with 91 on trial. The superintendent stated that between thirty and forty others recently converted would have been returned 'on trial,' but that they commenced meeting in class after the tickets had been renewed." Other matters of business were then discussed. (43.)

Launceston Circuit, 1877

The following description of revival occurred as part of a much longer report about church life in that town and circuit.

"In regard to our church work, I am happy to have to report a very encouraging revival in the Launceston Circuit. The programme recommended by the Conference Committee was taken as a guide in this effort.

The services of the preparation week were largely attended by the members of the church, and were heart-searching and gracious seasons. A spirit of prayer and expectation was awakened. During the mission week, the services were conducted by the ministers of the circuit, assisted by the local preachers and other friends. The congregations were large, considerable interest was awakened, and about sixty persons presented themselves as 'inquirers.'

The greater number of these were young persons, and almost all have joined the church. Besides this, the church atmosphere has been cleared of the dull, leaden clouds, and fogs, whose depressing influence had long been felt. The air has become oxygenised with thankfulness and hopefulness\; and breathing such vitalised air, the work of all is easier, and the results of that work are more likely to be larger and more satisfactory." (44.)

Longford Circuit, 1877

"During the past quarter this circuit has been visited with a blessed amount of renewing grace. At the June quarterly meeting it was resolved to hold special services throughout the circuit\; and in pursuance of that resolution the services were held.

We had no revival preacher - properly so called - to help us\; but using our local helpers, who are always ready for every good work, we entered upon the series of services depending upon the aid of the true revival Worker, the Holy Ghost. And the results have been very encouraging - an improved spiritual tone amongst the members, increased interest in the preached Word, and conversions amongst the young, the middle-aged, and the old.

We record twenty on trial for church membership, between thirty and forty Sabbath scholars as catechumens, and in those places where no such visible fruits have appeared an amount of good has been accomplished through the services that cannot be tabulated.. To God be all the praise!" (45.)

SPECIAL EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS

Up until the First World War, the main centres of Tasmania, and sometimes lesser places as well, were visited on a number of occasions by famous evangelists, and by other preachers who left their mark on the spiritual history of the island. The scope of this present book will only allow us to notice a few of the earliest such visitors. There were many others later in the Nineteenth Century, and early in the Twentieth Century.

Henry Varley

Varley was an English businessman who did a great deal of successful itinerant evangelism in many parts of the world, and lived for certain periods of his life in Australia. His first visit to Tasmania was in the summer of 1877. He visited Mr and Mrs Henry Reed, at Wesley Dale, near Launceston, to recover his strength after a lengthy preaching effort in Melbourne. His son, Henry, who wrote the biography of his father's life, said about this period... "Refreshed and invigorated, my father went on to conduct missions in Launceston and Hobart Town, the theatres and public houses of the latter place being depleted of their frequenters while the services were in progress. Four months he laboured in Tasmania, and the result, it was freely acknowledged, was such a revival of religion as the island had never known." (46.)

Varley conducted one meeting in the town of Latrobe, on 17th April, 1878, preaching from 2nd Corinthians 5:17. Then, because of his links with

Brethrenism, Varley accepted an invitation to preach in Kentishbury (Sheffield). But no building in the town was big enough, so they had to resort to Duggan's Barn once more. "Men, women and children, walked for miles across stump-pocked paddocks and bush tracks carrying lanterns to attend those mighty meetings. Under smoky lantern light, amidst hay and chaff, many were converted\; others received spiritual blessing..." (47.)

Thomas Spurgeon

Thomas was the younger of twin sons, born on September 20th, 1856, to the famous London preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and to his wife, Susannah. Having completed an apprenticeship as an engraver, Thomas left London for the sake of his health, and migrated to Melbourne, a little before his 21st birthday, intending to set himself up to practise his profession.

The fame of his father in this southern land was such, however, that Thomas, by force of pressing invitation, instantly became an itinerant evangelist, travelling far and wide to many parts of Australia. Part of his time, in 1878, was spent in Tasmania. Basically, the firm establishment of Baptist work in Tasmania is largely due to the time Spurgeon spent there. Before he came, there were only two Baptist churches in the whole island. His evangelism, with the support of Henry Reed, and several others, laid the foundations for the future, so far as the Baptist denomination was concerned. (48.)

Fullerton's claim that only two Baptist churches existed in Tasmania when Spurgeon's visit took place is, however, debatable. For example, for many years, a Particular Baptist minister, the Rev. Henry Dowling, had preached in many places, mainly through northern and central Tasmania. He was linked to chapels in Launceston and Deloraine, and possibly others, elsewhere. He had been ordained in 1814, and had been pastor of a church in Colchester, U.K., until 1834, when he came to Tasmania. He died in Tasmania in 1869. (49.)

CHAPTER EIGHT

EARLY WESLEYAN METHODIST REVIVALS

in VICTORIA to 1870

The Wesleyan Methodist Church made its beginnings in Victoria, or "Australia Felix", as it was called at first, at a very early stage in the history of the colony. The first Methodist service was conducted in Melbourne in 1835. It took place in a mud hut before a congregation of about six people, at a time when there were only two huts existing where the city now stands. It was conducted by Mr. Henry Reed. Reed came across from Tasmania for a short period because of his concern for the welfare of the aborigines whom he expected to find. The first Methodist minister to visit the new settlement was the Rev. Joseph Orton, who arrived in 1836 on a similar mission.

From these raw beginnings, the colony, and the churches of all denominations grew, as new settlers arrived. By 1851, Victoria was separated off from New South Wales, becoming a colony in its own right. Apart from people practising the normal pursuits of gaining a livelihood in a "new" land which offered so many prospects, in due course, also, gold was discovered inland from Melbourne, and the rush of people seeking wealth, caused the population to grow at an enormous rate.

8. Early Revivals in Victoria to 1870

The First Revivals

Short visits were paid to the budding township of Melbourne during the late 1830s by several ministers from Van Diemen's Land. Joseph Orton paid his second visit to the settlement in April and May, 1839. The local leaders had agitated the Superintendent (the Rev. John McKenny) to supply Melbourne with a minister. After several unexpected changes to his plans, Orton volunteered to move to Melbourne, arriving on Saturday, October 3rd, 1840. The first Quarterly Meeting was held in the minister's residence in Russell Street on Friday, January 28th, 1841. The first circuit stewards were appointed.

At the end of 1841, the Rev. Samuel Wilkinson arrived, and was the minister for one year. The first Quarterly Meeting which he chaired showed 107 full members. The second such Meeting showed 162 members, with 11 on trial. First steps were made to begin Methodist work in the Geelong area. Progress in this period was "quiet and steady."

The next minister was the Rev. William Schofield, who held his first Quarterly Meeting on 24th January, 1843. It was toward the end of Schofield's time in Melbourne that the first revival occurred.

Historians Blamires and Smith wrote:- "A notable and widespread revival of religion occurred in this minister's time." After noting that Methodism was a child of revival, and had flourished everywhere because of revivals, they explained:- "A soldier, named Rudkin, one in a detachment of troops then stationed in Melbourne, was a leading instrument in this revival. He was a man of prayer, and, therefore, a man of power. A flame of fire himself, he kindled the holy fire of religious love and enthusiasm in others. Although labouring in a private station, and sustaining no public office, he was of eminent use in leading sinners to Christ\; and in increasing the interest in experimental godliness in both soldiers and civilians."

The Quarterly Meeting in January, 1846, which was held about four months after Schofield left Melbourne, showed the results of this revival. The full members now numbered 360, with 9 on trial. (1.)

One of the very early settlements was at Richmond. Blamires and Smith have this comment. "In 1848 - 50 Mr. John Turnbull with the hearty help of Mr. John Bailey, now of South Yarra, held cottage prayer meetings, and founded a small Sunday school and Library, until a small brick building was erected in Brougham-street, off Church-street, and going down to the Richmond Flat. One who came over from Prahran to this place in 1848, describes the people as 'very social and homely, the Church crowded, and the services delightful: it seemed like one prolonged revival.' Mr. Watchorn (from South Melbourne) also remarks that 'though we seldom had the itinerant Ministers in Little Richmond, yet the Master was there, for His Spirit often descended with power.'" (2.)

After gold had been found in several districts, by the early 1850s, the population of the Bendigo area reached a little over 30,000. Those who were most successful at mining in this area were either Cornish people, who had experience at mining, or ex-convicts, who had been taught by the British Government how to use picks and shovels. Both classes of people were physically ready for the strenuous work required for winning the gold. The Bendigo area required dry mining procedures, but some water was still needed even for this. So, the population rose and fell according to the yearly rainfall pattern. Any new discovery of gold in some other district would lead to a new rush., This could cause a greater part of the population in a district suddenly to disappear. So, if even a large community existed in a certain place, very little of it might exist three months later.

The White Hills, Sandhurst Circuit, 1853

The first revivals outside of Melbourne occurred in 1853, in the Bendigo district, at a place called the White Hills. Remarkably, a considerable amount of information has come to us about this revival, far more than we have about many other revivals which might have been more powerful or far-reaching in their effects. Blamires was a minister in Victoria at, or soon after, the time of this revival, and knew many of the people who were involved. Also, the Bendigo gold-fields were visited by the Rev. Robert Young soon after the revival had reached its peak. Young toured the Wesleyan work in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific islands, as a one-man deputation from the English Wesleyan Conference, and he wrote an extensive account of many aspects of his long journey. Trevor Byard's book is also relevant.

The circuit at first was called the Mount Alexander Circuit, when the first ministers were appointed there in 1852. The Revs J. C. Symons and Joshua Chapman had to work this whole area as best they could, and they were followed in 1853 by the Revs Thomas Raston and William Currey. A few years later, the

circuit was re-named the Sandhurst Circuit. It covered a large area, and the ministers had mostly to live in tents, like everybody else. Any spiritual development or regular preaching depended almost entirely on the quality of laymen available in the gold-fields. Most who came were naturally consumed by desires for material gain, and many Christians amongst them had backslidden from their Christian commitment because of this.

One of these laymen, James Jeffrey, had come across from South Australia looking for gold. He was one of those strange Cornish personalities, with a certain charisma as a preacher, somewhat after the mould of the famous Billy Bray. It was this man who started witnessing in the White Hills area, and became the leader of the first Class Meeting there. Blamires and Smith described him as:- "a comic character, he was a sort of Barnabas, 'full of the Holy Ghost and of faith'. He never forgot what he was before the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, came to him\; and having experienced both bondage and liberty, he boldly avowed, 'No book is like the Bible,' with a freedom and heartiness, and often with such quaintness that smiles and tears would commingle." (3.) During the winter of 1853, Jeffrey threw himself into the work of preaching the Gospel. A number of other notable local preachers helped him, and were leaders in their own right. The Lord blessed the efforts of these men, and a revival movement developed.

At Christmas, Raston gave the following description to Robert Young. "About six months ago, there was a great revival of religion at White Hills: some hundreds were converted to God. The work...was carried on entirely by the lay members, there being then no minister in the place. During the last four months there have been many additions to the Society, and many signal conversions to God: many have become members who had previously belonged to no branch of the Church of Christ. Not a week passes without conversions to God." Young said that he "heard many express their thankfulness for having come to the gold-fields, - that it was here they obtained the 'pearl of great price', more to be valued than all the gold in the universe." (4.)

"The usual concomitants of a revival were there\; more fervent and believing prayer, greater spiritual power in the services, a more active piety in the members, their religious life and sensibilities greatly quickened and intensified, and exultant joy over the sanctification of believers and the conversion of sinners." (5.) Raston arrived in August, in time to foster the work so well begun.

Revivals taking place on a gold-field will have characteristics which probably will not appear in a normal society. This is reflected in several of the other comments that Thomas Raston made to Robert Young. For example:-

"Question: As many of the members of the Wesleyan church have emigrated to this region, have they generally been found faithful?

Answer: Whether many members of the Wesleyan church have emigrated to this region, the gold-field, I do not know, nor have I any means of knowing. With but few exceptions, the whole of our members in the Sandhurst Circuit are from the neighbouring colonies, and from other parts of Victoria, and not direct from England. Of their deep and fervent piety, their fine Christian principle, and their zeal for the cause of God, I have the highest opinion, and no case of defection has occurred in the last four months. That there are many other persons on the diggings who have been members of our church in various parts of the world, may be readily conjectured\; but, if so, they are not now joined to us. Many present their credentials of membership in Melbourne: what reception they there meet with is not for me to affirm, or whether they maintain their integrity." (6.)

The Methodists had very large and attentive congregations at White Hills during the revival, although only a small percentage of these congregations became members of Class Meetings. In this way, the impact of a revival would be far greater than is indicated simply by the number of Methodist members. To be

a fully accredited Methodist member one had to be a member of a Class Meeting. The peak of Methodist membership at White Hills was in October, 1853, when there were 200 accredited members. This had fallen to sixty by the end of the year, because many people left the diggings during the summer months. Also, the people who lived and worked on a diggings could migrate to another location within a few days, or even hours, if they heard rumours or news about a good find of gold being made at the other place.

Also, many of the gold diggers left the field when they had made some money finding gold, and they would try to establish themselves in a more settled form of life farming, or they would return home. Many diggers were only on a field for twelve weeks before they left, depending on how successful they were. For example, James Jeffrey only stayed at White Hills for a few months.

One of the local preachers, Mr. Fizelle, stayed at White Hills for many years. He described one of the events in this revival as follows:- "It was at White Hills that I saw the first 'Cornish conversion', in the person of Aaron Cole. A tall, strongly-built man, smitten by the Word of God, he came forward in the meeting and fell flat on the gravel floor, as if he had been shot. He groaned through the disquietitude of his soul, but soon found Divine peace, and then jumped up and leaped over seats, and kissed and shouted, so as to frighten some of us who had never seen it after this fashion. It reminded me of the Psalmist's word, 'O clap your hands all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph.'" In giving this incident, Blamires says that the story was not meant to describe what happened in every instance of conversion, but it happened often enough "amongst the excitable and demonstrable Cornishmen." (7.)

Bendigo became a city, when the government surveyed, subdivided and sold the land, a few years later. A few other centres also were surveyed and became communities. But many of the diggings simply disappeared when the gold-seekers left. A small number of the converts of this revival stayed in the area, and became the future leaders of the Bendigo and district churches. But the other converts moved to other places, and bore their witness there.

Sandhurst Circuit, 1857

As mentioned elsewhere, the "Wesleyan Chronicle" began circulation in Melbourne in 1857. A letter from the Sandhurst Circuit appeared in the issue of the "Chronicle" for September, 1857. This was just before the American revival of 1857 first appeared.

"Some few weeks since, a number of our members in the several societies of the Circuit, resolved to spend a portion of time every day, in special supplication to the Most High for the outpouring of his Spirit upon our church, and for the conversion of sinners around us. Again and again was the Divine promise uttered, 'If my people who are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land.' And God was not unmindful. An increased spirit of devotion was soon manifest in our assemblies, and awakened sinners were heard inquiring 'What must I do to be saved?' Some instances of a most pleasing character have been witnessed. At the close of a Love-feast in one of our smaller chapels an individual arose, and implored the united prayers of all present on behalf of himself and wife, who were in great penitential distress\; a prayer meeting was immediately commenced, and in a short time six individuals obtained the knowledge of salvation. It is rather remarkable that of eighty who have received 'peace with God' not more than four or five are under twenty-five years of age\; and that nearly one half of the whole number are persons who in their native land were connected with the church, but had backslidden from God." (8.)

Blamires and Smith indicate that a major factor in this revival was the impact of the preaching of the Rev. Joseph Dare, who followed Raston as minister in the Bendigo area. Dare was, throughout his ministry, an exceptionally powerful and gifted preacher. At the time of this revival he was young, and was able to exercise his full talents. The eighty converts were gathered in over a short period of time, during the early part of Dare's ministry there. As we saw, the figure of "eighty" was quoted in September, 1857. Dare finished his term in this Circuit in 1860. (9.)

Avoca Circuit

Parts of the Castlemaine Circuit experienced some better times in 1857, up to 1859.

One part of the Castlemaine Circuit was sectioned off, as the gold rush progressed, and became known as the Avoca Circuit. In 1858, the name was changed to the Carisbrook Circuit. In 1861, the name was changed again to the Maryborough and Amherst Circuit. Other divisions and changes occurred later.

Preaching took place in a number of locations in this field. For example, In 1855, a tent was used at Fiery Creek, for preaching, amongst 20,000 diggers. Mr. Dyson says:- "There was an abundance of open and shameless sin committed with impunity, but we were not molested in our work." Several of the ministers who worked in this area became disheartened, and thought of resigning, because of an overpowering sense of sinfulness in the neighbourhood, the scattered nature of the diggings, and the rough accommodation that the ministers had to endure.

One of the ministers, Mr. Woodall, "was known as an earnest, fervid preacher." Although he enjoyed much success in winning people to Christ, over the years, he felt the depression while he worked this area, also. But, soon the situation changed somewhat, and the work of God experienced a degree of prosperity.

In 1857, six new church buildings were opened, in different parts of the Circuit. One of these was at Amherst. The opening of this Church signalled a period of spiritual prosperity, and the number of accredited members rose from 15 in 1857 to 68 in January, 1859. The building had to be extended, and Amherst became the principal place in the Circuit. Remember that the congregations, generally, would have been much larger than the number of accredited members, who were like a small dedicated core. (10.)

The 1859 Revival

This is an important period of the story of revivals in many parts of the world. During the middle of the Twentieth Century, most Christians in Australia either were never told, or forgot, that any major revivals had ever occurred in Australia. But the historians of the period had no doubt about it.

"The tide of Revival mercy, which in 1858 spread with such a swift progress over the United States of America, which was attended by many unwonted phenomena in Ireland in the following year, and which beneficially affected the religious life of England and most Protestant countries of Europe, visited also these southern shores. It came in lessened energy, yet in that which carried spiritual health and salvation over the Churches of the land." (11.)

Even some of the more recent historians have noted it. "The revival of religion, which was kindled in America in 1858 and leapt across to Britain and several other European countries, spread also to Australia. In Victoria the work of grace broke out in the Circuits - which is always the healthiest and most abiding form of revival." (12.)

How strange, then, that the belief should have existed in many evangelical circles in Australia, through the 1950s, and for several decades around that time, that no revivals of any note had ever taken place in this country!

So far as the record of revivals in this present book is concerned, details about the revivals in 1859 and 1860 have been put into a special chapter dealing with those two years, and the reader is referred to that part of the book.

Daylesford, 1861

For some years before 1861, Methodist ministers from Castlemaine visited Franklinford and Yandoit. Around 1859, visits began to be made to Spring Creek (now called Hepburn). In those days, the area was called the Jim Crow diggings.

"At this time, Daylesford, distant some four miles from Spring Creek, was not touched by Methodist agency, although a few Methodists were living there. The place had an unenviable notoriety for lawless proceedings, some of the 'tar and feathering' kind. Drinking, gambling, profanity, reckless living, largely held sway. The Rev. John Harcourt paid a preliminary visit to the place in 1860, holding service in the Court House, and gathering together the few Wesleyans that were in hearty sympathy with the Lord's cause. This led to the appointment of the Rev. Samuel Knight in the same year, although his Conferential appointment was in 1861. There could not have been a more suitable man sent. In the fire and ardour of his youthful zeal he laboured with all his might, soon a congregation was gathered, the revival power which was abroad in the colony, came in signal force upon this place, and very shortly moral revolution and spiritual regeneration took place in multitudes." (13.)

By the end of 1861, the congregations comprised hundreds of people, and membership of the Class Meetings were approaching the hundred mark. Conversions multiplied in the surrounding areas. The minister who followed Knight built churches to accommodate the crowds, but, before the debts on the new buildings had been paid, a collapse occurred in the mining industry, and many of the people had to leave the district to find work elsewhere. As a result, the period of revival was followed by a period of struggle to pay off debts.

Geelong, 1862

Probably what is called "Newton" here is the same church which was called "Newtown" some years later when Matthew Burnett was working in this circuit.

The "Wesleyan Chronicle" for May 29, 1862, provides some information about a local revival in the Newton Church, in the Geelong Circuit. The third anniversary of this church was to be celebrated on May 11. The anniversary meetings, however, were held during a series of protracted meetings.

"This church during the last three weeks has been blest with a gracious visitation from on high. Services have been held every evening, and prayer-meetings at half-past six in the morning. These services have been numerous attended, and about fifty conversions have already occurred. Of these, several are aged men over sixty years, while others are young men rising into life, and who, we trust, will become blessings to the church of God. The expectations of God's people are high, their united prayer still is 'O Lord, revive thy work.' The little cloud increaseth still. The heavens are big with rain.

The anniversary meetings were held over two days. On the Sunday, the local ministers preached, and one visiting minister. These were the Revs Joseph Albiston and Francis Neale. The visitor was the Rev. Joseph Dare. On the Monday, there was the usual tea meeting, which was followed (as usual) by a number of speeches, which provided the entertainment to mark the occasion. On

this occasion, however, the speeches all centred around the theme of the revival, which they considered was presently active in their midst. One of the protracted meetings was to follow the tea meeting and speeches.

The speeches after the tea meeting were described as follows:- "In his opening address the Chairman (John Lowe Esq.) related incidents of revivals he had witnessed in England and in New South Wales. Mr. G. T. Wilson read the financial report, from which it appeared that including the erection of a new bell, the ventilation of the church, fencing and other outlays during the year, the debt remaining was nearly five hundred pounds. The Rev. F. Neale was then called upon, who spoke at some length about the work of God in Newcastle, which he had witnessed just previous to his leaving England, under the labours of Dr. and Mrs Palmer. The Rev. J. Albiston spoke of the signs which usually preceded revivals - like the cloud which the prophet saw betokening a great rain - and of the existence of those signs in the Geelong Circuit. Rev. F. Tuckfield followed, and referred particularly to the nature of a true revival of religion, and of the means to be employed for its promotion, Mr. T. B. Hunt gave some interesting descriptions of revival scenes he had witnessed in Sydney and Parramatta, and the Rev. Joseph Dare spoke of revivals as being the result of the use of appropriate means, which God never fails to accept and honour, and after referring to those which had occurred in America, Ireland, etc., concluded by urging all to co-operate in efforts to promote this glorious work. The whole of the speeches were of a spiritual and interesting character. The collections amounted to one hundred and two pounds." (14.)

When we try to "read between the lines" with accounts of revivals such as this one, and the other Victorian revivals up to this point, we can, perhaps, recognise that (a.) there might well be some conversions, from time to time, in the normal process of Circuit work. Also, (b.) there might well be special efforts, protracted meetings, and special prayer, which would happen normally, and would not be classed as "revivals".

There were, however, certain precursors or indicators which could show that a revival might be approaching. These might be (a.) a new or deeper prayer concern for effectiveness in their outreach, or for deeper experiences of entire sanctification. (b.) There might also be indications that a greater concern about salvation was abroad in society. This would be shown by an increase in the number of enquirers coming to ask the minister or leaders about getting right with God, and the depth of conviction of sin that these enquirers were experiencing.

From what small amounts of historical evidence has come down to us, it seems that the period from 1859 onwards, for several years, showed surges of this deeper spiritual life. It did not occur everywhere, or all of the time. Some places missed out on it, more or less. Other places had more than one experience of it.

But those places which did see revival events, could not control it, or predict when it might happen, despite the fact of Dare's belief that God always honoured the use of suitable means. Joseph Dare was certainly not alone, amongst the Methodists in Victoria, in believing that revival came from God whenever we made use of the proper means. His preaching abilities perhaps meant that he saw good results more regularly than others.

But, the appearance of the more powerful revival happenings do not seem to have followed such predictable paths as that. Nor did the revival events happen every time suitable efforts were made to achieve them.

The First Melbourne Circuit for this tiny denomination was based in George Street, Fitzroy. The minister at this time was the Rev. T. A. Bayley. He wrote:-

"....we have been favoured with gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit. On Sunday, August 16th, we commenced a series of Revival Services in George Street Chapel. I preached on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday\;; the Rev. George Standing, of the Third Melbourne Circuit, on Wednesday, Mrs. Thomas on Thursday, and Mr. Michael (a Wesleyan local preacher), on Friday. On Saturday we held a Band Meeting. All these services were well attended, and were accompanied by much holy influence. Beyond my own expectation, and far above that of most of our friends, was the measure of success. One of the first who went to the Communion rail as a penitent, on Sunday evening, was my third son {John Henry}, and he was followed by nine or ten others. Nearly all of them found peace. On the following evening about ten more came to the Communion, and throughout the week. Our friends laboured hard in these meetings, and found themselves amply repaid for their toil. (He goes on to mention some of these helpers, and what they did.)

On the following Sunday, August 23rd, I preached again\;; we had six or seven penitents, and on Monday....Mrs. Thomas (supplied) for me.... and (there were) ten or twelve penitents. On Tuesday and Thursday we held our Class meetings. On the whole sixty or more professed to have found peace at these services." Some of these converts would have belonged to other denominations. (15.)

Tarnagulla and Dunolly, 1864

Two local preachers, Mr. Jonathan Falder, and Mr. Pybus, seem to be the ones through whose efforts the first Wesleyan Church in Tarnagulla was formed. The first preaching took place in September, 1858, and a Class was formed a few days later. A local building was fitted up as a church, and services were commenced in it. This Mr. Pybus is described as "a popular and eloquent expounder of Scripture." At that time, he lived in this area.

The work in Tarnagulla prospered, and a new church was opened in March, 1859. The work in Dunolly also prospered, and, by 1863, it had become the main centre of the Circuit. The number of accredited members had steadily built up to 200, with large congregations. In 1864, the Rev. Edward King became the minister, and "a work of grace spread through many portions of the Circuit." Another seventy members were added to the rolls within a year. (16.)

"California" Taylor and Matthew Burnett

These two evangelists made a considerable contribution to the scene in Victoria, especially amongst the Wesleyan Methodists.

Taylor was in Victoria for the second half of 1863, and also early in 1864. He visited many of the Methodist Circuits which existed at that time, and conducted missions in them, ranging in length from a few days to three weeks. The effectiveness of his work was boosted by the impact of the 1859 revival around the country just a few years before. His visits to many of the circuits seemed to co-incide with growing earnest desire for a greater outreach amongst many of the church leaders.

His work, and that of Matthew Burnett, helped to re-inforce a trend which was then becoming increasingly evident. This trend was that, when people became concerned about the church's lack of impact in converting the world to Christ, and its lack of ability to transform society, the holding of a series of special meetings was looked upon as the natural way of obtaining the blessing of God in

doing something to solve these problems. Up until this time, concerned believers would be more likely to pray for, and expect, God to do something to overcome these problems through the normal activities and outreach of the circuit.

Matthew Burnett migrated to Australia in 1863, and began his evangelistic work soon afterwards. He worked around a number of areas of Victoria until 1872.

Because of the importance of the work of these two men, other chapters, and sections of chapters, have been set aside in this book to deal with their work, and the reader is referred to those chapters.

For the year 1865, no revivals are recorded in the "Wesleyan Chronicle" as happening in Victoria, although two are referred to in Tasmania.

Sandhurst Circuit, 1866

In September, 1866, after reporting about normal activities in several centres in this circuit, the circuit report says:- "During the past quarter, special religious services have been held in this circuit to promote a revival of the work of God. We are thankful to record that the most cheering results have followed the earnest prayer and faith of God's people. The congregations which attended these protracted services, both in town and country, were very large, and evinced the deepest interest in the addresses and devotional exercises of each evening.

Numbers have been deeply convinced of sin, and with true contrition and living faith in a crucified Saviour, have sought and obtained the favour of God. In Forest-street, Eaglehawk, California Hill, White Hills, and Long Gully, the 'soul converting power' has been eminently felt, while other places in the circuit have been favoured with evident tokens of the Divine presence. While these meetings have been singularly rich in spiritual influence, they have not been marked with any great animal excitement, nor has success depended upon the presence or co-operation of any special human agent.

In many cases the good work has reached all the members of a family, young and old having been brought to God. In the quarterly visitation of the classes, the ministers of the circuit report upwards of a hundred new members to be received on trial. We earnestly pray that the cloud of the Divine presence may still overshadow our Zion." (17.)

Beechworth Circuit. 1867

First notice of this revival appeared in the February issue of the "Chronicle", with the promise that more information was soon to follow. "We have received intelligence of a very gracious revival of the work of God in the Beechworth circuit. At Osborne Flat, Lower Yackandandah, and Beechworth nearly sixty souls are reported as having found peace and joy in believing. Special meetings are being still continued. Full particulars will appear in our next." (18.)

The March issue contained an interesting note about the situation at Osborne, and a very long report about Beechworth. The Beechworth minister was the Rev. Andrew Inglis. He visited Osborne on December 16th, 1866, for the Sunday School anniversary, and preached twice. The tea-meeting on the Monday night had to be cancelled because of a flood, but a "pic-nic" was held instead.

"The recitations given by the children were very excellent..... But that which we delight most of all to record is the Divine power which attended the preached word on the occasion, and which led to high expectations at the next visit of the superintendent of the circuit. On the 31st Dec., he preached again

in the evening, and at the prayer-meeting which followed, five persons came forward as seekers after salvation, two of whom found it that night. Special meetings were held for several nights, with the happiest results. The class which commenced here about eighteen months ago with two members from the township, now numbers twenty-three, most of the converts being heads of families. Many more are anxious about their salvation, and as soon as the appointed minister comes to Yackandandah, and gives them that attention which they cannot possibly receive from so distant a place as Beechworth, there will be considerable accession to the church at Osborne.

As a further proof of the good accomplished in this locality, two of the three public-houses have been closed since we opened our church here." (19.)

At Beechworth itself, "a few earnest souls" had, for some time, been praying for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in view of what they saw as spiritual barrenness in the district. Congregations were generally good, and attentive to the preaching, but there was no evident depth of conviction, and of thirst for God among the people. As a result, regular members of the congregation became more indifferent, and ceased to have any urgency in praying for God's blessing.

At a quarterly meeting of the Sunday School teachers and committee, late in 1866, the question was asked, as usual, "Have any of the teachers seen any signs of good?" They all felt "the sad truth, that not one of the elder scholars was converted to God."

There was already a weekly prayer meeting in the congregation. (Meetings of this kind normally took place after church on Sunday evening, but in this circuit the weekly meeting was on Monday evening.) It was decided that, once a month, this prayer meeting would pay special attention to the Sunday School. Two weeks after the first of these special prayer meetings, the Rev. Andrew Inglis addressed the School, and invited the older students to attend the next special prayer meeting.

On that Sunday evening, 3rd February, 1867, he preached from Proverbs 8:17 - "They that seek me early shall find me."

"A goodly number of the elder scholars were present, besides other young men and women not connected with the school. They were all invited to remain to the prayer-meeting at the close of the service. Many remained, but the prayers lacked expectation, no demonstration was called for. It was felt that the time was not come. The blessing tarried through our want of faith. The meeting was closed with an earnest appeal to all concerned to come to the prayer-meeting on the Monday evening, to resolve to come openly forward as inquirers after Jesus. On the Monday evening, instead of the usual fifteen or twenty at the prayer-meeting, the church was nearly half-full. The Rev. Andrew Inglis gave a short address. Presently a young man from one aisle, and a young woman from the other, moved towards the communion rails. These were followed by about thirty more. Then there was such a scene - a scene over which angels rejoiced. We could do nothing for a while. It was a perfect 'Bochim'. There was apparent confusion\; but the Spirit of God was moving upon the troubled hearts, and before the meeting was closed at ten o'clock, two young men of the respective ages of sixteen and twenty had found peace and joy in believing."

There followed a week of special services. At the close of the Tuesday evening service, "there was a solemn pause, then such a rush to the communion rails as we never before witnessed. In less time than we can write it, there were between thirty and forty penitents bowed around the communion and front seats: and by ten o'clock, twelve had professed a saving change."

At the end of the Wednesday service, "eighteen more entered into liberty." On Thursday, those professing conversion were asked, as a group, to declare their assurance of salvation by singing a certain hymn together. Those who felt uncertain returned to the communion rail. Six people professed conversion that night. Four others followed on Friday night, making forty-two during the week.

On Sunday, a local preacher, Mr. Wilkinson of Yackandandah, preached twice, and led the prayer meeting. Andrew Inglis preached again during the next week, and "every night anxious souls came forward, and a goodly number were made happy."

No special services were held during the third week, in order to allow the classes to meet. The fourth week was set aside as a special week of prayer. On one night of this fourth week, a love-feast was held at which thirty-eight testified to God's grace in their lives, of whom eighteen were new converts. Some present on that night also sought salvation.

During the meetings in the weeks described, more than sixty people made a profession of faith in Christ, of whom, eighty percent were fourteen years of age or more. Only five or six were younger than twelve.

When the next quarterly meeting of the Sunday School teachers and committee was held, on 8th March, and the question was asked, "Have any of the teachers seen any signs of good?", it was recorded that, during the quarter, forty of the scholars and five of the teachers had been converted to God. "That includes several who had returned to the school, who formerly thought themselves too wise to be there. We have been thus particular in stating the progress of this gracious revival for the encouragement of the churches, and the glory of God. One marked feature in the whole movement was the quiet order of the proceedings. We confess to a liking to a little healthy excitement at such times\; but in this revival the most fastidious in such matters would have found no cause to complain. For our own part, we shall always endeavour to follow the leadings of the Spirit, whether He comes with the 'still small voice' or like the 'rushing mighty wind.'" (20.)

This revival occurred within a few weeks of the minister moving to Tasmania, to take up another appointment. The circuit quarterly meeting, held on March 26th, reported that fifty-eight people were now on trial for membership, and some other converts had gone elsewhere. During the farewell meetings held to say good-bye to Mr. and Mrs Inglis, many of the converts stood and testified about their faith in Christ. (21.)

Berwick Circuit, 1867

The Rev. James W. Tuckfield was sent to this circuit in 1867, as a probationer. No sooner had he arrived than he began his favourite activity, organising a series of special services, and preaching throughout.

Keysborough was one of the centres in this circuit, and shared particularly in a revival which occurred in June, 1867. It was "favoured with an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Special services were commenced by our minister, the Rev. James W. Tuckfield, on the 9th June and were continued for nearly a fortnight\; about twenty persons have been converted to God, and the whole church revived and blessed. It is a real, spiritual work. The power of the Holy Spirit was felt at each service - indeed, at times, so powerful was the influence, that it seemed impossible for any present to continue longer in sin....."

Among the most interesting features in this revival are:- the absence of animal excitement\; and that night after night the new converts, and even penitents, publicly engaged in prayer. (22.)

When Tuckfield was an old man (in 1901), he was interviewed by W. P. Renfree, who was preparing a history of Methodism in the area. By that time the Circuit had become the Dandenong Circuit. Tuckfield provided information which was used as the basis for the following.

"Hastings, then called Western Port, was in Mr. Tuckfield's time within the boundaries of the circuit, but our Church had held no services there. It was in that day a fishing village.... Mr. Tuckfield rode over to spy out the

land, and forthwith made arrangements for beginning Methodist services. He secured a building and held the first service on December 8th, 1867. Between 50 and 60 persons were present, and they told him they hoped he would be able to 'take it up'. So he put Western Port on his plan.

As his manner was, he lost no time in arranging for special services at the place - a fortnight of them. They were a great success from the very beginning, and all the way through to the end. The building was crammed at every service, and many of the people stood at the open door and window.

At the first service, Mr. Tuckfield set out his 'penitent form', and explained its use to the hearers, who were mostly fishermen. 'Ha! Ha!' laughed a young fellow out at the window. 'Ha! Ha! Who do you think is going up there?' But he stood at the open window too long. An invisible shaft came through, and pierced his heart. At the very next meeting he was the first to go up, and others went after him. There were twenty-three conversions.

One remarkably encouraging case occurred - that of the late Mr. Patterson, an intelligent man, tall, and of fine physique. He attended the services, and one night about the middle of the series, he came forward, his wife, an excellent Christian woman, leading him by the arm. They both knelt down, and he earnestly prayed for light. Presently he arose: and, turning to face the audience, he said, 'Friends, you have known me for many years. You know what manner of man I have been among you. Now I want to tell you all that I never knew what experimental religion is until tonight. I came forward here to give myself to God, and I have found Him. Now I know what real religion is, and I pray that you all may also know.' He soon became a local preacher, and went to and fro proclaiming the loving Saviour he had found. He served our Church in various offices, was one of our lay representatives to Conference, and did the Master's work with all diligence until he heard the call that took him, not from us, but beyond our sight.

During the revival time aforesaid, the Rev. J. W. Tuckfield stayed with Mr. Patterson and spent the days visiting from house to house, and 'button-holing' people in the streets. The whole neighbourhood was mightily stirred up. Groups of people would be seen standing at the house-doors, and somebody would call out, 'Come over here, Mr. Tuckfield, we want you here.' He found in all these cases that people were seeking the Lord - at all events, they wanted to seek Him. So Mr. Tuckfield gladly went with them into the houses, and held little revival services there. It was a blessed time."

One of the Christian fishermen noticed a ship-mate under conviction of sin, because he saw the tears streaming down his face as he bent his back to the oars. This was because he could recognise from his own experience the heart and thoughts which produced the tears. So they pulled in their oars, and had a prayer meeting in the boat. That night, the penitent came forward, with his wife and daughter, and all three were converted.

This new convert, named Brown, "wrote to his friends in the old country telling them of the great blessing that had come upon them, and upon all the place, and he gave Mr. Tuckfield a copy of the letter. The series of meetings was closed by a special Sacramental service, which was indeed a blessed time. On the morrow, when Mr. Patterson gripped the minister's hand, bidding him good-bye, he broke down in the midst of his loving words. They had a good cry together, and were all the better for it."

The following year, 1868, Tuckfield brought his bride to Berwick, and the people arranged a great feast to welcome her, and to celebrate her coming. "Her husband, however, after three weeks of comparatively quiet residence at home, went off for a month's round of special services, and continued, more or less on that disturbing line, throughout the after years." (23.)

"A very gracious work has been experienced for some time in this circuit and continues. We are not able to state the exact number brought to God. It must now be large. The Spirit of the Lord is still working and special meetings, which have been held now for six weeks, are well attended. A deep sense of the value and importance of religion pervades the place. The faith of the church has taken hold of the promises of God, and greater results are yet expected. Great need is felt of increased accommodation at Clunes. The number of full members reported at the quarterly meeting was 328, with many on trial." The minister, the Rev. J. Mewton did not enjoy good health, and was having to move for that reason. (24.)

The next month, Mr William Price wrote to the editor, and provided a fuller account, as Mr. Mewton was absent. His explanation is as follows:- "It is well known that Clunes has been one of the places blessed with the labours of Mr. Matthew Burnett. He continued here for four months, during which time the Great Head of the Church was pleased to give abundant blessing - blessing rich and full. Believers were built up, and sanctified\; large accessions were made to our numbers, nearly all of whom 'continue to this day', and a marked moral revolution was effected in the town at large, the savour of which labours continue with and upon the Clunes Church still.

For twelve months after Mr. Burnett's visit, the church had a great struggle to maintain the vantage ground she had won. She was favoured with scarcely any additions\; but for the last six months the Lord has smiled upon us, and very many have been added to the church.

At the last quarterly meeting, the number of members in the Clunes Society was returned as 256, with 40 on trial, and since then we have had additions every week\; so that at Clunes, we have the almost unparalleled case of a congregation of some 450, of whom above 300 are members meeting in class."

Much prayer was being offered for the life, and health, of the minister. He was greatly loved by the people. The parsonage had been enlarged, and the minister's stipend raised to 300 pounds. Strenuous efforts were being made to pay off the debt on the church itself. Mr. Thomas Pybus had preached for them on the weekend of October 20, in aid of the Trust Fund. (25.)

St. Arnaud, 1867

A little revival in this town, during 1867, is recorded in the biography of the Rev. A. R. Edgar, as it provided one of the stepping stones in his overall conversion experience. It is not recorded in the "Chronicle." This may well be a clue showing that many other such movements have not left any written records behind them.

The Methodist Church was the first church to operate in St Arnaud, with ministry supplied from Avoca. By 1867, Anglican confirmation classes were being held there, which Edgar attended. While he had been friends with the previous Wesleyan minister, the new minister in 1867 was Richard Fitcher, who was then entering the ministry. He is described as "a fine type of evangelist, and, under his ministry, a gracious revival of religion had taken place." Edgar was then in his teens, and, on his way home from a confirmation class, he and some friends peeped through the keyhole of the Wesleyan church, to see what was happening at one of the revival meetings. He saw several people kneeling at the communion rail as penitents.

"The whole thing seemed to him ridiculous, and, turning to his companions, he said, 'Anyone with half a grain of sense would never make such a fool of himself.' As soon as he had uttered the words something within him said, 'You will have to do it yourself.'

He could not shake off this conviction, so, after several days of spiritual conflict, he went to one of the meetings. Mr. Fitcher came to where he was sitting and urged him to make his peace with God.

'Cannot I find peace without going forward and kneeling at that rail?' he asked.

The missionary said, 'I do not say that you cannot find peace where you are, but if that is what is holding you back from God, I doubt whether you will.'

'If I go forward, will I find peace?' he asked.

'If you go forward and seek the Lord earnestly with all your heart, my soul for yours, you will find Him.'

'Then I will go.' and young Alexander went forward and found peace.

The full assurance of God's pardoning mercy, or, as we should say, the witness of the Holy Spirit, did not come until some time after, when, as he tells us, in the month of June, 1869, he sought and found salvation. The one experience refers to his first decision in the prayer meeting to serve God, the other to the realisation of God's pardoning love in Christ Jesus, two years later." (26.)

Lydiard Street, Ballarat. 1868 - 1869

April, 1868, saw the Rev. John Watsford and his family move to Ballarat from Adelaide. As one would expect, this inaugurated a period of very successful evangelism, through the normal church and circuit activities. The following year, however, there began to appear even more unmistakable signs of revival in the Ballarat churches.

When Watsford arrived, the Ballarat Wesleyan Circuit was very large and unwieldy. It contained no less than forty preaching places, and there were so many class meetings that the ministers needed two months to visit them all, and to distribute the membership tickets. This was supposed to happen quarterly. Along with all the church anniversaries, and Sunday school anniversaries, there were enough tea-meetings to satisfy anyone. One of the first things Watsford did to relieve this situation somewhat was to have the circuit divided. Although this caused much pain to those who strongly opposed this move, the members were generally spiritual enough, and dedicated to soul-winning enough, for the members not to allow such matters to get in the way, for too long, and hamper the real business of preaching the Gospel, and of bringing sinners to God.

Watsford published some quotes from his personal journal to illustrate the soul-saving work that was done in Ballarat during 1868.

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

April 26. - Preached at Scotchman's at 11. Addressed Sunday School at 3. Denham Lead at night; three penitents

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

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

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

May, 24. - Golden Point - class for tickets at 8; preached at 11. West Park in afternoon. Neil Street in evening: six professed to come to Christ. Lord's Supper.

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

July, 12. - Neil Street, morning\;\; Lydiard Street, evening: thirteen penitents." (27.)

The "Wesleyan Chronicle" contained a very short report of the breathings of revival in 1869.

Expectations of revival were sensed in Ballarat's central circuit in June, 1869. The ministers met with a few of the prayer leaders to discuss the state of the Church, and the need of revival. They "all pledged themselves more earnestly to plead with God for the outpouring of His Spirit. On the following Sunday evening, the power of God came down on the congregation in Lydiard-street, and the communion-rail was crowded with penitents. Every night since then we have held special services, and many have been saved. In every part of the circuit the work is reviving. God is pouring water upon the thirsty, and we are waiting, and longing, and praying that the floods may come down upon the dry ground." (28.)

Watsford's own account seems to be that the deepening spiritual growth in the Circuit was very much due to the great emphasis he placed upon preaching about Entire Sanctification as an immediate experience.

"I preached frequently to Christians on Entire Sanctification, and the duty of individual effort to save souls. I preached to sinners on instant surrender, and present salvation by faith alone in Jesus. Many of the members of the church gave themselves wholly to the Lord, and began to work earnestly for Him, and sinners were pricked to the heart, and converted to God." (29.)

But the first visible evidences of the revival in 1869 appeared at the Easter Camp Meeting. Watsford said, "About 1500 persons were present, and a gracious influence was on us all day. At the service that followed at Lydiard Street in the evening the power of God came upon the people, and many were seeking mercy, eleven of whom professed to obtain peace with God."

However, it was some weeks after this that the movement was felt in a more ongoing way. Watsford's personal journal is again quoted, at even greater length, showing, for example, that on June 20, there were fifteen penitents at Lydiard Street at the night service. At the prayer-meeting on June 25, fifty men responded in search of full surrender. On June 27th, eight or ten penitents gathered at the after-service prayer-meeting. June 28 was a day of personal spiritual conflict and victory for Watsford. June 29th saw six more converts. On June 30th, the Quarterly Meeting was held, after which was a preaching service at which eight or ten decided for Christ. Three more converts on July 3, and twelve anxious enquirers on July 4th. Three more on July 5th. On July 6th, at the midday prayer-meeting, one more was saved, and six more at the evening service at Buninyong. Eight more converts on July 7th. On 8th, there were eight or ten seeking Entire Sanctification, plus three or four converts. On July 9th, five or six more in distress, some saved. Five more on Sunday, July 11th.

"Then followed entries telling of three at one meeting seeking God, six at another, nine at another, and so for many days. Some of those brought in at this time are now earnest workers in the Church." (30.)

Heathcote Circuit, 1869

An oblique reference is made in this same issue of the "Chronicle" to a revival in this circuit, related to the ministry of the Rev. David O'Donnell. Although O'Donnell preached twice in the Spring Creek Diggings on May 23rd, 1869, he could not attend the other anniversary meetings because of his need to be present in other parts of the circuit where a revival movement was in process. (31.)

A report published in March, 1870, indicated that the size of the population at the gold-diggings in the area of Graytown (which had been called Spring Creek the previous year) had fluctuated wildly over the previous year. Although the Episcopal and Presbyterian ministers had to leave because of these fluctuations, and the Roman Catholic church had been blown down in a gale, the Methodists had seen so many conversions that they had cleared their church debt, and still had a good congregation, despite all the comings and goings. (32.) Apparently the revival had affected a wide area in this district.

Castlemaine, 1869

"This circuit has been visited with a gracious revival during the last month. At Chewton, where special services have been held, the church has been crowded every night\; believers have been greatly quickened, and upwards of forty souls have been brought to God. At Harcourt, last Sunday, after the evening service, nine or ten were crying for mercy, and amongst them were strong men that had resisted the strivings of the Spirit for years. On the same day, in the afternoon, at Muckleford, several were weeping and crying aloud for the salvation of God. A great spirit of religious earnestness and inquiry is awakened throughout the circuit, and the ordinary services are attended by large and devout congregations. 'O Lord, revive Thy work.'" (33.)

Avoca Circuit, 1870

This revival may well be linked to the revival at St Arnaud, which was mentioned earlier. The first anniversary of the Natte Yallock Church building was held in the second half of May, 1870. "When our church was opened by our present minister a year ago, there was not one Methodist to stand by him. Now he may rejoice in at least 40 who glory in being identified as members with the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The work of grace has been gradual and sure." A number of the converts belonged to other denominations, and returned to their own churches. "The number of professed conversions for the year in this place has been variously estimated from 60 to 80. 'All praise to our redeeming Lord!'" (34.)

West Melbourne, 1870

"It will be gratifying to our people to hear that at this place the Lord has been pleased to revive His work. Special services were held for one week by Mr. Wallace, who has gone to India with the Rev. William Taylor. After his departure the meetings were continued for another week, and during the various gatherings forty-five persons professed to find peace with God. Two new classes have been formed. The Sunday School is quite renewed. A Band of Hope and Juvenile Missionary Society have been formed in connection with the school. Our people are strong in hope for yet better days." (35.)

Tarnagulla Circuit, 1870

In this circuit, special services were organised in their various centres, over a period of two months. These resulted "in the conversion of many souls, in the extension of our borders, and in the removal of our financial difficulties." (36.)

Ararat and Pleasant Creek Circuit, 1870

The report from this circuit which bore tidings of the revival was even more long-winded and full of old-fashioned spiritual jargon than normal. It seems that special efforts were concentrated at Moyston, Ararat and Stawell for one month each. Each of these efforts began with a period of special prayer.

"These services were commenced at Moyston about three months ago by a week of special prayer for the benefit of the Church. An unusual influence at once rested upon the people. This week of prayer was followed by 'special services' in the church." Numbers of people were convicted of sin, and of their need to know God better. Some older members had lost their sense of assurance, or needed to have their devotion to God re-vitalised. God met many of them with a deeper work of grace in their lives.

"At Ararat, also, God has greatly blessed His people, and the same means have produced the same results. Here, also, the church was invited to a week of 'special prayer - united prayer'. And from the first a most animating influence rested upon the Church, the influence that sets all hearts in motion, consecrates every tongue, and inspires holy zeal for God." About twenty professed conversions occurred in the special services which followed the week of prayer. "One new class has been formed, and the old ones greatly increased. Our congregation has also improved, and the week-night services more than doubled in number."

Stawell was the main centre of the circuit. "Commencing with a week of prayer for the Church, services were held night after night for five weeks\;\; and notwithstanding during the whole of the time the weather was most unfavourable, yet the attendance was remarkable, indicating that a powerful influence rested upon the people. Lukewarm professors...were aroused, backsliders reclaimed, and sinners saved. In some cases parents were seen rejoicing over the conversion of their children, in others converted wives over their husbands, and converted husbands over their wives. As other important results of the work, religion is a general topic of conversation, not jestingly, but seriously\;\; prayer meetings and class meetings are more fully prized\;\; and the whole Church has been quickened."

The burden of this work was carried by the circuit minister and his team of local preachers. Noon-day prayer-meetings were held regularly, as a normal part of these efforts, and these were often times when the presence and majesty of God was sensed in a more powerful way. Sometimes, God's presence was felt so that praying aloud, in the normal way, was not possible, but only outbursts of praise and adoration. These prayer meetings were often, also, the occasion when conversions occurred. (37.)

CHAPTER NINE

THE 1859 REVIVAL IN VICTORIA.

Introductory comments about the 1859 revival have been made at the beginning of the chapter dealing with this movement in New South Wales. The impact of these overseas revivals, however, was probably felt equally in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania.

Certainly, there was a pronounced impact upon Victoria, which we will now consider.

Warrnambool and Portland, 1858

In due course, the "Wesleyan Chronicle" published a good deal of information about the American Revival. This prompted much private and combined prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that would be as deep, and as far-reaching, as the movement in the U.S.A..

The first recorded sign of revival in Victoria, is noted in the issue for August, 1858.

On Sunday, 23rd May, 1858, the Warrnambool Wesleyans had gathered to open a new church building which would seat 350 people. As their worship proceeded, they became unusually aware of the presence of God.

9. The 1859 Revival in Victoria

"The Rev. Mr. Richards from Portland, preached three times on this interesting day. The building was filled with attentive hearers. The Rev. Mr. Dalrymple in conjunction with the elders of the Presbyterian church, had closed the Scotch kirk to manifest their friendly feeling, and were present. The text in the morning was 2 Cor. 8:9. In the evening he preached from the words of Paul 'Though he be not far from every one of us.' A solemn sense of the Divine presence pervaded the sanctuary." This was followed by a prayer meeting, which was a common practice among the Methodists in those days. "The power of the Lord was present. One young woman who had long been penitently struggling

with unbelief, was enabled to see by faith that her sins were laid upon the Son of God, and to rejoice because her name was written in the Lamb's book of life. Another person, the wife of one of our members, was enabled to trust in Jesus as a present Saviour and to rejoice with joy unspeakable. A lad about twelve years of age was weeping, and when addressed by one of the ministers present as to the cause of his tears, replied, 'Oh, sir, I am so happy, for God has, for Christ's sake, pardoned my sins.' Several others were with tears and sobs pleading with the Friend of sinners for the manifestation of his pardoning love. God appeared in his glory - and the cloud of his presence filled and hallowed the sanctuary now dedicated to him." This same

influence was again evident the following Sunday.

This report is followed by one from the Portland Circuit. "The cause of Christ in this place is prospering. We have been favoured of late with seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and feel constrained to acknowledge that 'the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' In answer to the supplications of his people God has poured upon us his Spirit from on high and given success to his preached word. Our chapel has alternately resounded with the cries of the penitents and the songs of rejoicing believers. Backsliding professors have been quickened, and returning with weeping and supplications, have had restored to them the joys of salvation\; whilst members of the congregation who have long halted between two opinions have at length arrived at the wise and happy conclusion - 'The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.' ...we have not as yet realised that general revival of the work of God for which we have been pleading. Will not our brethren and friends in other circuits unite with us in our earnest importunate supplication 'O Lord, revive thy work.'" (1.)

In February, 1859, a note from the Carisbrook Circuit was published, to say that "Tokens of Divine approval have been numerous, and oft repeated." Many conversions had occurred, and the membership was growing, although the whole period was a time of movement and unrest. (2.)

The First Indications of a Widespread Movement

Prayer for revival was widespread, and so were the answers to those prayers, as is evident from the following report. After commenting on what was happening in this regard all around the world, the writer says:-

"It will cheer the hearts of our people to hear that in Australia God is sending upon many parts of his heritage 'showers of blessing'. We heard not long since of the gracious work in Sydney, and now we have to speak of revivals and numerous conversions in Victoria. Let us record and speak of them 'to the praise of the glory of Divine grace,' and let the people of God be encouraged to persevere in mighty prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon every part of our Zion, and upon all the churches of our adopted land.

In many circuits where no remarkable display of saving power has occurred, the hearts of ministers and people are cheered by gracious tokens. What the Rev. Geo. Daniel writes of Creswick is true of other places. 'I am thankful to inform you,' he says, 'that in connections with the Society there are indications of good. A few have been added, a good deal of interest and

attention has been excited, many and fervent prayers are offered, and we fully expect a copious shower.' In the Ballarat Circuit the blessed work is progressing still more decidedly. The Rev. James Bickford writes:- 'We have a great Revival going on in this circuit. Between forty and fifty persons have been converted at Mount Pleasant during the last week, and the work is going on in other places about here.' Praise the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." (3.)

The Brighton Circuit

The most extensive account of revival in Victoria at this time came from the Brighton Circuit. This is possibly because the revival was most powerful here, but that is not certain. The accounts which appeared in the "Chronicle" began with a sad story of what parts of the circuit were like before the revival began.

The Superintendent minister of this circuit, the Rev. Edward King, wrote to the editor."...I forward to you a short account of the Revival of the work of God with which this circuit has been favoured, and for which to Father, Son and Holy Ghost be endless praise.

I will only just refer to the fact (too well known, alas,) that the church at Great Brighton had been for a long time past in a fearful state of disunion and spiritual declension. Every lover of Zion trembled for the ark of God. In such circumstances a Revival of the work of God seemed impossible, and it was only here and there that a worshipper on Carmel's top descried the rising cloud, and heard the sound of abundance of rain.

At this juncture, certain steps were taken to promote peace and good will\; and as a further remedial measure it was determined to hold a circuit Love-feast. Accordingly, on 22nd May (1859), upwards of 150 persons assembled in the Church, Great Brighton. After partaking of tea, provided by the liberality of a few friends, the spiritual exercises of the evening commenced. Many delightful testimonies were given to the power of Divine grace to convert and save, to comfort in sorrow, guide in perplexity, and succour in the hour of temptation. One brother declared that even then by faith he had realised the virtue of a Saviour's blood to cleanse from all unrighteousness. About 9 o'clock in the evening we gave ourselves to prayer, and soon the cry of distressed souls broke upon the ear, and the sighing of the contrite suppliant came before the Lord, even into His holy temple. It is said that nine souls that evening found peace with God, and others retired from the sanctuary sorrowing after a godly sort.

Since then, special services have been held daily, and in most of them we have seen the power and glory of God in His sanctuary.

One evening, about thirty penitents left their pews, and in the presence of God and His people sought mercy.

On another occasion, several of our oldest and best members sought and found the blessing of perfect love. And here I would remark that a most pleasing feature of this revival has been the deepening of the work of God. There are few, if any, amongst us who have not been quickened into warmer and more vigorous spiritual life. God has poured water upon the thirsty, as well as floods upon the dry ground....

Children of the Sabbath School and of the Church, from the ages of eight years and upwards, have found peace and joy through believing in the Son of God. Their conversion, too, has been distinctly marked as in the case of adults. They offered unto God the sacrifices of a broken and contrite spirit, and received pardon, and holiness, and heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. How affecting to witness tender childhood weeping for sin, as they knelt by the side of those who in advanced age were groaning for redemption. How delightful to

see young men and maidens, old men and children, together praising the name of the Lord, who hath his dwelling place in Zion.

How have we rejoiced in spirit to witness a wife's conversion, long the burden of a husband's prayer, - a wife receiving her husband raised to life again who had long dwelt in spiritual death, - children brought to an acquaintance with their father's God, - parents dearly beloved and longed for by their pious children, born out of due time.

The good work is spreading throughout the circuit. At Little Brighton and Moorabin, sinners have been converted to God, and believers have found purity of heart.I must not omit to mention that we have had a prayer meeting at 1 o'clock daily, during the last fortnight, which has been well attended, and in which we have had much of the Lord's gracious presence. The spirit of grace and supplication has been largely poured forth, and our Jacobs have become prevailing Israels. The fruit of the Spirit - which is love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, appears.

To our President, (the Rev. Daniel J. Draper) and the other ministers who have kindly helped us in these services, we owe a debt of gratitude, and pray that God - even our own God - may give them His blessing, and abundantly enrich their portions of the vineyard with the fertilizing powers of grace." (4.)

In the next month's issue of the "Chronicle", a summary of news was given by the editor about happenings in other parts of Melbourne. This was followed by a longer letter from a person named William Cox Curry, in the Brighton Circuit, which gave further information about happenings there. About one hundred conversions had occurred in the Brighton Circuit during the three weeks of special meetings in various parts of the Circuit. Special services had been held in a number of places around Melbourne. In some places Love-feasts had been held, during the intervening few weeks.

The summary of events said:- "We are thankful to report that the gracious work to which we referred in our last number is still progressing. God has answered the prayer of His people, and has 'revived them again.' In the Melbourne West Circuit, the special services which have been held in Wesley Church have been marked by the conversion of souls, and the fellowship and love-feast occasions have been seasons of unusual interest and profit. The old and the young, recent converts and aged disciples, were alike prompt to declare the 'works of the Lord with rejoicing.' In Melbourne East Circuit an extensive and copious 'shower of blessing' has been vouchsafed: Brunswick Street chapel, especially, has been the scene of conversions to God. The work has extended to Brunswick, Richmond, Little Eltham, and other places. It is believed that in the various places in and around the city, not fewer than 200 persons have professed faith in Christ during these services. Castlemaine Circuit is similarly blessed." (5.)

The historians of early Victorian Methodism, Blamires and Smith, were both ministers during the revival period. (The Rev. W. L. Blamires was working in the Castlemaine Circuit.) They provide their own account of events, and highlight other aspects. Their account begins with the events at Brighton. And they point out that the revival influence spread through Melbourne, and to many other parts of the colony.

1859 was a period of mass exodus of men to Otago, New Zealand, seeking gold. Many churches were threatened with being left empty. But, despite this, widespread revival strengthened the churches.

"The rising cloud of blessing appeared at a lovefeast held at Great Brighton, on May 22nd, 1859. The sorrow for sin shown by numbers expressed itself in tears and prayers for mercy. The Sanctuary became a Bochim, a place of weeping. Nine persons professed that night to have their mourning turned into joy, by the sweet assurance of God's reconciling love, and others went to their homes "sorrowing after a godly sort", and seeking the conscious salvation of Christ. Then special services were held daily, and private devotions increased

in intensity and power, so that soon there was "a sound of abundance of rain". The work went on amazingly, affecting all classes, the tender child and the aged sire, the educated man and the unlettered peasant. Answers to prayer were swift or immediate in a wife's conversion, a husband's decision and prayerfulness, and in whole families brought to love and serve God. "Showers of blessing" came on devout worshippers, and on most of the congregations in this Circuit."

The superintendent minister, the Rev. E. King, issued a glowing report, insisting that the saints had to speak their praise of God, although many might think them mad. The historians, in turn, insist that this minister is by temperament placid, calm and even, courteous and kindly, not given to rant, nor favouring unseemly extravagances in public worship. A layman, Mr Henry Baker, "was a leading and active instrument in this revival, a man filled with perfect love, a burning flame."

"The President of the Conference and other ministers, came to the help of the Circuit preachers, so that the good work spread to Little Brighton, Moorabin, and the other adjacent places. The results of this religious revival were peace and goodwill where brethren had been at strife\\; the greatly quickened piety of professed disciples of Christ\\; the spirit of praise, prayer, love, self-denial, benevolence, triumphant in them\\; scores of careless, hardened sinners brought to seek the everlasting welfare of their own souls and of their families and acquaintances\\; many trained in godly families taking the important steps of religious decision and surrender to Christ\\; between one and two hundred new members added to the Churches\\; and the fruit of good living thereafter manifesting the genuineness and power of the work." (6.)

The Melbourne Circuits shared in the blessing. In Wesley Church many conversions took place. Dr. J. Edwin Orr quotes from Watkin's "Jubilee of Wesley Church," that the new church had been opened in 1858, with a seating capacity of 1700, but the church was seldom more than half filled. When a steady stream of conversions started to come, it was not long before a change began to appear, and by 1860 the church was crowded regularly.

A careful perusal of E. I. Watkin's book, however, reveals that it says nothing about the revival, as such, and does not support the idea that the church seating 1700 people was crowded regularly. Watkin says that evening congregations averaged 800 to 900 when D. J. Draper was minister (1861 to 1863), and that the church was densely packed for the Sunday when Dr. F. J. Jobson preached, during his visit to Melbourne. Jobson was a one-man deputation from the British Wesleyan Conference at that time, and was in Australia for a few months from December, 1860 to March, 1861. Watkin says that, at no stage were more than one-third of the seats in Wesley Church rented, and that the number of full members was highest after "California" Taylor's first visit, and was 260 members. (7.)

At the Brunswick Street Church "a great ingathering of converts was reported, and scenes of Pentecostal power were witnessed. Brunswick, Richmond, and other places near, were similarly favoured, in more or less degree, so that it was computed that in the city and suburbs 200 persons had recently professed that faith in Christ which bringeth personal salvation. The Castlemaine and Sandhurst Circuits were the scenes of like revival movements and power." (8.)

Orr also mentions that the Victorian Baptists shared in the revival, as well. He says, "In only ten years, the congregations increased from 7 to 27, while a couple of hundred new members were welcomed annually." (9.) The denomination was tiny, just before the revival. Orr's source of information was Wilkin's history of the Baptist denomination's first hundred years in Victoria.

It must be said, however, that Wilkin does not make any direct, or even indirect reference to the 1859 revival, as such. Although he records the commencement of a number of new congregations in the early 1860's, and the enlargement of others, the new churches were often in places where the revival

had been several years beforehand. By 1862, the Collins Street Baptist Church had been extended, and then had 424 members, and 267 scholars in the Sunday School. So, while the Baptists were not the main ones to promote the revival, the denomination was certainly strengthened by it.

The Presbyterian Assembly officially praised God for news of the revival overseas, and prayed for similar movements here. (10.)

Ballarat

"The Quarterly Meeting of this Circuit was held in Wesley Church, Lydiard Street, on Wednesday, 8th October. (1859). There was a large attendance of officers. The affairs of the Circuit were carefully reviewed. The ordinary income was in advance of the previous quarter, and this was supplemented by subscriptions from several attached friends. The stewards were thus enabled to reduce a large debt which had arisen from the appointment of a second married minister at the last Conference. The quarterly returns shewed an increase of 105 full members, and 113 on trial. When this delightful result was announced, the meeting rose and sang the doxology with thankful hearts. It was remarked that the attendance upon all the means of grace had of late greatly increased, and that an unction and power manifestly from on high continued to rest upon our various services."

There was more lengthy business, through the rest of the day, discussing what could be done to preach the Gospel in nearby gold fields which supported a large population, but without a resident minister. Finally, an evening service was held, in which "an excellent sermon was delivered by one of our local brethren on the doctrine of entire sanctification. After sermon a short prayer meeting was held, in which the Lord baptised the assembled church with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Verily our hearts melted like wax before God.\\; the cleansing blood was affresh applied, and the brethren separated under the firm conviction that the Most High was about to accomplish a still greater work among us." (11.)

Geelong

By Christmas, 1859, "The Revival" carried two short pieces to announce that big prayer meetings had started in Geelong. Because of the transport time-lapse, the letters would have been written several months earlier.

"The Rev. A. J. Campbell, late of Melrose, who has recently settled at Geelong, mentions in a letter just received, that a union prayer-meeting had been commenced there. On the first occasion 1000 persons were present, and the second was nearly as well attended. A general seriousness seems to have taken possession of the people." (12.)

A week later, the second letter appeared in "The Revival", and it had been taken from the Dublin Daily Express for December 17.

A letter from "a pious lady now in Australia, to a gentleman, a relative in this county (Westmeath)," addressed from Geelong, and dated 14th October, 1859, "gives the following particulars of the Revivals and Revival meetings now going on that distant portion of the British empire." The writer states:- "We have Revival prayer meetings here (Geelong), which are held weekly in the large hall of the Mechanics' Institute, in which all denominations of Christians, not excepting the Roman Catholics, many of whom attend, take a deep interest. The spacious hall is generally filled. These meetings originated with the society known as 'The Sabbath Observance Society', which has been quietly but effectually exerting its beneficial influence for some years past.... A devout

and serious feeling manifests itself in the conduct of many who would, some weeks ago, have made a mockery of everything savouring of religion." (13.)

About a month later, "The Revival" carried some more news about Geelong, this time culled from a Sydney paper called "The Christian Pleader", dated November 12, 1859.

"Symptoms of Revival. The prayer-meeting held weekly at the Mechanics' Institute maintains its interest. The meeting last Wednesday (Nov. 9th) was full to overflowing, and was characterised by deep solemnity. The Bishop of Melbourne occupied the chair. The chairman, after giving out a hymn from a printed selection prepared expressly for these meetings, read Acts 2:23 - 33, offered a short prayer, and addressed the assembly. Another hymn was sung, and prayer offered by the Rev. Mr. Sayers. A few verses were then read from Romans 5, and the Rev. J. C. M'Michael addressed the meeting. This was followed by two minutes of impressive silence for heart prayer on the subject of the address. Mr. Rex then gave audible expression to the feelings of those present by a prayer of about five minutes: another hymn was sung, the Rev. J. Toit prayed, and the meeting concluded with a hymn and the benediction. The whole occupied one hour and twenty minutes. It was felt to be a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and of pleasant union one with another." (14.)

Golden Square

Two weeks later there appeared a letter from a certain Henry Hooper, of Golden Square, Bendigo, dated November 14, 1859. Hooper was originally a miner from Cornwall. The letter was relayed through a former employer of his, who testified to his reliability.

"I greatly rejoice in what is going on in America, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and some parts of England. All souls are precious. I do and will rejoice, wheresoever, and by whomsoever, they are brought to Jesus Christ my Lord. I am thankful to inform you that the Lord has not left us without witness on this gold field. We have been holding religious services for several weeks past. I have found great pleasure, after the labour of the day, to assemble with the people in God's house, to preach and hear his word, and to engage in united prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, and the salvation of precious souls. Thank God, He heard us from his holy hill of Zion. About 100 have been brought to God in about three months in this district\; and similar results have crowned the labours of his servants in other places. To God be all the praise. You will not only delight my heart, but serve the cause of our blessed Lord, by sending me 'The Revival' every month, which will furnish me with facts that will be useful." (15.)

Drysdale

The Drysdale area was at that time listed in the Methodist ministerial appointments under the name of the Tuckfield Circuit. It was named after the Rev. Francis Tuckfield who had pioneered work amongst aborigines on a large area of land in that district between 1838 and 1848. Ten years of sacrifice. Benjamin Hurst helped him briefly at the beginning. The nomadic habits of the aborigines, however, led to the demise of the work.

According to Blamires and Smith, the revival in Drysdale arose partly after reports of the American revival created a desire for a similar blessing. "The immense gatherings in Geelong for public prayer, strengthened our hopes and desires concerning it." Further expectation was prompted in Drysdale by one particular powerful conversion in which a man was deeply convinced of sin, and

soon experienced forgiveness and liberation. This produced a remarkable change in the man's life, and a strong impression on those in his circle.

As a result of all this, local prayer meetings were re-commenced, after being defunct. One young lady expressed deep concern about her need for God. A local preacher came down from Geelong to lead the worship that Sunday. "God made His own word that night as a hammer", and when people were given the opportunity of coming to the front of the meeting, this lady was among the first to come. "She became the first-fruits of this gracious revival." Other members of her family were also converted. Among the church members were a number of women whose husbands were not converted. All of these women saw their husbands surrender to God. In other cases, both husband and wife professed conversion, or other family members turned to God. Prayer meetings were now held in the chapel night after night, and penitents "flocked to the seat set apart for them." The work also spread to the other local denominations.

The report continued, "In reading the accounts of the Irish Revival, as given by ministers and laymen who have laboured in it, and comparing them with the work that has been going on here, we are struck by the similarity in all points, except the physical prostrations, of which we have seen none. But the same impressions are made upon the minds of the people under conviction here as there\;; as great a variety in the manner in which penitents have sought and obtained mercy is evinced, some crying aloud, others in a subdued tone, and others, without a tear being shed or many expressions being uttered, lifting up their hearts to God\;; and the effect has been strikingly diversified - peace has been experienced by all, but some have risen from their knees with calm assurance in their visage, others with an inexpressible serenity, others with an abounding joy, and others under an overpowering sense of gratitude. The places, also, where peace has been obtained, and the circumstances under which, are equally various\;; the majority, as might be expected, have found peace in the house of God, where they have earnestly sought it. But conversions have not been confined to the sanctuary: liberty by some has been found on the road, in the garden, the field, the house and the closet. It has been experienced in the day, when the heart has been lifted up in prayer amidst worldly employment\;; and in the night, when all around has been (h)ushed to rest." (16.) "The Revival" also has a report about this revival from the same source as the report given above.

The Victorian historians also note that the Rev. Joseph Dare was the minister in Geelong at that time.

The "Wesleyan Chronicle" carried a belated account of the Drysdale revival in the issue for February, 1860. This report said, in part, that the Drysdale area "has been visited with a gracious revival of God's work within the last two months, during which many have obtained peace with God, and are now rejoicing in the liberty from sin which the Gospel effects. Two, and four, and even as many as nine, have received the spirit of adoption during one service. Our church every Sabbath is crowded, the hearers are attentive, and the spirit pervading the people hallowed and devout. Many doubtless come to witness a work the like of which has not been seen on the Indented Heads before, and though sceptical as to its genuineness, are compelled to acknowledge that the moral aspect of the neighbourhood is astonishingly changed.

Groups of men and boys once congregated in different parts of the township on the Sabbath, seeking their own pleasure and doing their own works, are seen now at the hour of prayer wending their way to the sanctuary and forming a part of its assembly. Homes that were the seat of strife and discomfort, have now become the abodes of peace and happiness, and praise and prayer are now happily substituted for angry feelings and wrathful words. But whilst many are looking on with doubt and fear, many who at first disbelieved and even spoke against it, have, through the mercy and grace of God, confessed their sin, found mercy, and are now able from experience to say:-

What we have felt and seen
With confidence we tell
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible.

The experience of each one who has obtained mercy is beautifully simple and clear. The compunction of sin, the misery of the soul whilst in an awakened state, the apprehension of Christ as their Saviour, and the peace immediately resulting from this act of appropriating faith, whilst expressed in a variety of words and figures, are uttered with such uniformity...which bespeak it as the operation of the same work in all.

The effects also, such as the knowledge of forgiveness, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, delight in prayer, appreciation of the word of God, love to all, and an earnest desire for the conversion of all, go to prove that it is substantially the same kind of work as took place during the first age of Christianity, the records of which we have in the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles." (17.)

A longer statement about the Drysdale work appeared in the March issue of the "Chronicle", discussing how, with the benefit of aftersight, what signs of the approaching revival might have been distinguished in the churches of the area in the months before the revival actually began. It also shared more detailed accounts of some of the happenings in the revival meetings. Comments are made about the influence of this revival on other local denominations, and on similarities between spiritual experiences of this revival with what they had read about happenings in the revival in Northern Ireland. (18.)

Castlemaine

Blamires and Smith indicate that the Castlemaine Circuit experienced a number of revivals during this period, from 1857 to 1860. (19.)

Blamires himself was present in the Circuit for some of the time, at least, and said he could remember the enjoyment of the meetings when he saw numbers of men converted who later became leaders in the Methodist denomination in various places. The area became richly endowed with men who had good preaching talents, some of whom could help when the junior minister in the Circuit (the Rev. Thomas Raston.) was laid aside through ill-health. Because Blamires knew the people, he spends several pages of his book mentioning the names of quite a number of these converts, and makes comments about them. Campbell's Creek became the strongest congregation in the Circuit.

"Here was the congregation as to strength of numbers, and fervour of piety, standing first in the Circuit. Several interesting Revivals occurred there, winter after winter, so that the membership was greatly augmented. One later on, in Mr. Dubourg's pastorate, was very notable for its power and permanence."

(Dubourg's pastorate was between 1866 and 1869.)

In the 1858 - 1860 period, the number of accredited members rose from 335 to 455, which included 58 at Maldon. The number of churches in the Circuit rose from ten to eighteen.

With reference to Maldon, Blamires and Smith make a comment which applies generally to many places in Victoria. "Meanwhile, in this year of grace, so memorable for the extensive revivals of religion throughout Victoria, a great ingathering of persons to the fold of Christ had taken place, and many converts had experienced a saving change in their hearts. The Minister wrote, 'There has not been much visible excitement, but the power of the Lord has been present to wound and to heal. The Holy Spirit's power had accompanied the preached word, and the varied agencies and services in use had been so blessed that it was computed that over fifty persons had received the end of their faith, the

conscious salvation of the Lord Jesus, and were added to the Church.' Like the Church in the Biblical record, after Pentecost, the Maldon Christians walked in the fear of the Lord, and the Lord added to their numbers. (20.)

Awakening Amongst Some Aborigines in Victoria

Soon afterwards, there appeared a report of awakening amongst a group of aborigines in Victoria. The article in the "Advocate" is a verbatim quotation from the English "Wesleyan Missionary Magazine", and not direct from any source in Victoria. (21.) Despite earnest effort by a few, and indifference by many others, missionary work amongst aborigines continued to be very expensive, and very disheartening. This was caused largely by the enormous cultural gap between the aborigines and the whites, and which was a completely different kind of gap from what had existed between Pacific Island and Maori cannibals and the white missionaries. So, any kind of progress in gospel work amongst the aborigines was very noteworthy.

The letter was dated April, 19th, 1860. "You may have heard of the awakening begun among the aborigines of this Colony, through the instrumentality of two Moravian missionaries. Some months ago they commenced a station\; but, as it was found to be one of their most expensive and difficult settlements, it was resolved that these two Missionaries be recalled and sent to some other country, and this settlement be abandoned. In the meanwhile, however, the work had commenced. One Sabbath morning in January last, one of the Missionaries went to the blacks to gather them for worship as usual\; but, strange to say, not one of them came. Such a decided refusal had never once been given before, and the poor Missionary returned to his place quite disconsolate. That same evening, after he had spent the day in prayer by himself, the work was begun\; for, while he was mourning over the thing before God, he heard, to his great surprise, the sound of devotion near him\; and, going out, he found that a settler, a pious man, five miles off, had had it strongly impressed upon his mind to go and pay a visit to that encampment. On arriving he was able, after much persuasion, to prevail on four young men to come out with him for devotional exercises\; and it was the sound of this which the Missionary now heard. From that evening, first the youths, and then others, became awakened, till the thing has gone on and increased\; and now efforts are being made by the different denominations in Melbourne to defray the whole cost of sustaining this Mission without any expense to the Moravians. The whole story is so wonderful, and so different from what one would be led, humanly speaking, to expect, that one cannot help exclaiming, "What God Hath Wrought.""

Dr. J. Edwin Orr mentions other details. The Moravian Mission to the tribes in the Mallee area of Victoria gained momentum. A missionary named F. A. Hagenauer that year founded a mission station named "Ebenezer." (22.)

In 1886, Hagenauer wrote a report on the long-term results of this revival upon the aboriginal converts, claiming that many of those who were converted in 1860 maintained their Christian witness very well throughout their lives, and were a credit to their Christian profession. (23.)

Missionary work was also being done amongst the Chinese, who had come to Australia to find gold. Though this work had some success, it was not classed as part of the revival movement. (24.)

CHAPTER TEN

"CALIFORNIA" TAYLOR in VICTORIA

William Taylor was born in 1821 to devout Presbyterian parents who lived in Rockbridge County, Virginia. His subsequent opinion of his parents' religion, during his early childhood, was that, although they were steady Presbyterians, they had the form of religion, and lived upright lives, but did not know anything about its converting power.

He first learned the joy of the forgiveness of sins when he was only six years of age, through his own reading of the New Testament, and the witness of a negro servant girl. But, after some months, he fell into a deep sense of despair which continued until he was nineteen, although he had become actively involved in church life. His despair seems to have been based in attempts to be a Christian by his own efforts.

When Taylor was twelve years old, his parents had conversion experiences at Methodist camp meetings, much to the embarrassment of the Presbyterian elders. Soon they became members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His father became a lay evangelist, and spent much time travelling and preaching, and supporting many camp meetings. He developed great diligence and stamina in dealing with convicted people at the mourners' bench.

At last, Taylor's sense of despair was broken, at a district camp meeting, and he immediately began the work of evangelistic preaching and counselling. He trained for the Methodist ministry, and spent his first period of seven years working in the Baltimore Conference.

10. "California" Taylor in Victoria

Then he was appointed to be a pioneer missionary in California, just at the time when the gold rush was at its peak. Many who went to California with the urge to get very rich quickly became broken and derelict, trapped by sin, or by disastrous social conditions. Many of them died there. A few became rich, but many had to return to where they came from much poorer. Taylor preached in the streets of San Francisco, and began efforts to help as many of the needy as he could. San Francisco was a city of tents in 1850, although Taylor had built his own house. The winter that year was very severe, and many

got sick and died. But he did what he could, and saw many conversions. After seven years work, the main building which housed his operations was burned down, leaving large debts. An approaching economic collapse caused these debts to sky-rocket. He began to write books in an effort to feed himself, and his family, and to repay the debts. He returned to New York for a few years, preaching as an evangelist, without charge, during the early years of the great revival. And he oversaw the publication of his book "Seven Years Street Preaching in San Francisco", which made him well known over a wide area.

During 1858 to 1860, he undertook several evangelistic projects in the eastern states, and in Canada. Then, in 1862, sensing a call from God to undertake world-wide evangelisation, he embarked for England, and Europe, planning to visit the Holy Land, and then travel on to Australia. For several years he did not see his wife or children, as they moved back to their home in California.

In Melbourne

Taylor commenced his Australian work in June, 1863. It should be remembered that June, July and August are the main months of winter in the southern hemisphere, and the weather in Melbourne played an adverse role on many occasions.

There are two accounts of the commencement of Taylor's work in Victoria. In the Ridpath edition of Taylor's Autobiography, Taylor said he began work in the Victorian churches in early May, 1863. He said that he arrived in Melbourne on a Thursday, and was introduced to the Rev. Daniel Draper, minister at the Wesley Church, later that day. He started preaching in Draper's church the following Sunday. Draper wanted to put off the main part of Taylor's mission in his church for another week, because Draper had pressing matters in the coming week. But Taylor replied that he could not afford to lose a week, seeing that he had not seen his wife and family for such a long time, and he would start in another circuit if Draper could not fit him in. Draper, however, insisted on Taylor starting in the Central church, and the Mission commenced that Sunday. (1.)

Eric Clancy, Irving Benson, and Blamires and Smith all say that the start of Taylor's ministry in Victoria was on 16th June. Clancy alone of these writers mentions his source, which was the Moore edition of Taylor's "Autobiography". One of the sources of information closest to the time comes from the Rev. Daniel J. Draper, who left a note, dated 11th July, 1863, in which he says Taylor arrived in Melbourne on 16th June. (2.) June 16 was a Tuesday.

The "Wesleyan Chronicle" for 14th July, 1863, has the following report from Wesley Church in the First Melbourne Circuit. "During the past three weeks this church has been favoured with a gracious visitation from on high. For some time past, the establishment of special services for the promotion of the work of God had been contemplated, and the timely arrival, by the last mail steamer, of the Rev. Wm Taylor, from San Francisco, was hailed as a most favourable circumstance for the accomplishment of their purpose. Special services were commenced on Sabbath, June 21, and have been continued without intermission since that time. The Rev. Mr. Taylor has preached twice on each Sabbath and every evening of the week, and has been assisted in the after services by the ministers and office-bearers of the circuit, who have entered heartily into the

work. The sermons of the rev. gentleman have been eminently clear, pointed, and heart-searching, and his appeals have found a response in many hearts. Numbers of persons of all ages, from the child to the grey-headed sinner, have presented themselves at the altar, night after night, as seekers of Divine mercy...."

(3.)

Reports on Taylor's meetings probably were not all written immediately, so the reports did not appear in the "Chronicle" in the same order in which the meetings actually occurred. After the three weeks of meetings held in the Wesley Church in Lonsdale Street, meetings were started in St Kilda on 12th July, in the Brighton Circuit on 19th July, in the Brunswick Street church in Fitzroy on 26th, and in the suburb of Brunswick on 5th August, which was a Wednesday. Taylor then moved his work to Geelong on August 9. (4.)

In several of these circuits, special services were continued by the local ministers after Taylor left, and in other instances, special meetings were held in places which Taylor never visited, perhaps with signs of revival appearing, as well.

Wesley Church extended its meetings for a week after Taylor left. "The revival services to which reference was made in our last issue were continued until July 19. Large congregations attended every evening\; and during the last week sixty-five persons, making during the entire services about one hundred and seventy persons, professed to find peace with God. On Sabbath, July 19, a love-feast was held in the church, at which more than 500 persons were present. It was by far the largest ever held in the city. At the close of the love-feast an invitation was given to any who were seeking mercy to come forward to the communion rail\; it was at once crowded with penitent souls, sixteen of whom obtained salvation before the close of the service. 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory.'" (5.)

This same issue of the "Chronicle" contained a short report on Taylor's meetings at the Brunswick Street church. This report said that "we can now number upwards of three hundred persons, of all ages, as professing to find peace with God in this most blessed revival."

The office of the paper had also heard that the meetings in the Brighton Circuit had continued for several weeks after Taylor had left, that "great numbers" had professed conversion, while all had been quickened and edified, and a fuller report was expected.. It specifically mentioned that a report about the meetings in St Kilda had not arrived.

The "Chronicle" which was issued on September 4 contained reports from both St Kilda and Brighton.

There was also news that Taylor had started a week of meetings on September 1 in the Emerald Hill church, which had only been opened a few weeks beforehand, and which was then part of the First Circuit, including Wesley Church.

Two other churches in this circuit had also begun their own special services, without the benefit of Taylor's efforts. In North Melbourne, "Special services have been held during the past month, in connection with which the congregations have been large, and very many have sought and professed to find redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of their sins." In Sandridge, "Special services for the revival of religion were commenced here on Sunday, August 16th, and have been continued for a fortnight by the ministers of the circuit. The congregations have been large, a feeling of great earnestness has been exhibited, and very many have been led to the Saviour." (6.)

The St Kilda church was part of the Third Circuit. Their report said that eighty-seven had joined classes for church membership. Twenty-six of the older Sunday School children were also being prepared for membership in a catechumens' class. Many of the other people who were converted at the meetings were from other places, and other denominations. This impact on other places and other

churches was a feature in all the centres in Melbourne where Taylor preached, as well as in some other churches.

Another centre in this Third Circuit was experiencing some revival, although Taylor had not been there. At Prahran, "A gracious influence for some months has been resting upon the congregation worshipping here, leading to an unprecedented earnestness in the minds of the official and older members for the triumph of the preached gospel. This feeling found vent in the establishment of a Sabbath evening prayer-meeting half-an-hour before the public service, specially held with that view."

Special services were organised. Local ministers provided the preaching over the next fortnight. There had not been enough time since the meetings finished to assess the impact, but a large number of converts was expected. (7.)

The Brighton Circuit provided a lengthy report about Taylor's meetings in the main church, although the time he spent in this circuit was shorter than normal. About seventy people handed in their names as having been converted to Christ. The main comment, however, was about the special combined meeting that Taylor had conducted for the children from the various Sunday Schools.

The ministers of this circuit conducted their own mission at one of the other churches in this area. From August 3 to 26, meetings were held at Moorabin most nights. "On several occasions these services were as the gate of heaven to those who attended them. Not fewer than ninety-five persons professed to obtain the pardon of their sins, of whom sixty-nine were above the age of fourteen years. Several of our members have obtained the second blessing. All are living in the exercise of 'brotherly love', and our fervent prayer is that this evidence of the soundness of the work may continue." (8.)

The Williamstown Circuit was another which Taylor did not visit, but which reported blessing.

"We are rejoicing in the Lord because this church shares in the revival power with which the circuits of Melbourne and the vicinity have been lately blessed. Special services have been held during four weeks, and have been attended with very gracious influences and results. The commencement of the revival, no doubt, dates back some weeks or months, during which a revived piety and an increase of the spirit of prayer have been manifest in the church members. This was followed by signs of Divine favour in a few conversions. The power of God has, however, been displayed in a more significant and palpable manner during the few weeks past: conversions have been numerous\;; believers have reached a higher state of grace\;; unity, spirituality, and Christian love prevail amongst us.

With those who were witnesses of the work many incidents of the revival will long have a grateful freshness in the heart's memory. Many were the occasions when relatives were rejoicing over the conversion of a husband, a wife, or child\;; or a glad church witnessed the answer to prayer in the first outbursts of praise on the part of new converts. Most of the families of the congregation have afforded some one or more members who have been won to Christ's service. In some instances whole families or households are now happy in the possession of the love of God." Again, there were converts belonging to other denominations.

A notable sign of revival was seen in that the most remarkable meetings in the whole series were two prayer meetings "held in the school on two successive Sabbath afternoons. At the first, it is believed that two gentlemen who are teachers received the Holy Spirit's witness of their adoption\;; and in the second, there was scarcely one, adult or child, that was not weeping, because of either spiritual sorrow or joy.

As usual in such works of grace, persons formerly irreligious or profane, and those who were outwardly moral\;; backsliders, and those who had never known experimental godliness, are now sharing in one common joy, which they have

gained through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ." Over sixty adults professed conversion, and about thirty children. This movement also produced a marked impact on the town generally. (9.)

The report from the Geelong Circuit said that Taylor preached there from Sunday, 9th August through to Friday, 21st. On the second Sunday, he began preaching at other centres in the circuit, at Chilwell, Newtown and Yarra Street. On every occasion, "the people of God were favoured with glorious manifestations of his converting power." Twenty, thirty, or sometimes forty penitents came forward each night. Not all of these would have professed to have experienced conversion immediately, although many would have, and some would have been Christians seeking entire sanctification.

The report said that meetings were continuing, after Taylor left, with more conversions taking place, and with much expectation and prayer evident.

Country Circuits

In country circuits, also, reports came in about revivals, before Taylor started his country itinerary, and in places to which he never went.

The Maldon Circuit reported revival scenes at both Maldon and Eaglehawk. "For several weeks special services have been held in the Maldon and Eaglehawk churches, and a gracious revival of the work of God has taken place. There has not been much visible excitement, but the power of the Lord has been present to wound and to heal\; a spirit of earnest prayer and intercession has been given, and the Holy Spirit has evidently accompanied the work preached." The preaching was all done by the minister, and the local preachers.

"The class-leaders and several active members have laboured ably and successfully\; the whole church has been of one accord, and we now rejoice over fifty persons who have, during these services, received 'the end of their faith - even the salvation of their souls' - and have been added as members of our Zion. The prayers of God's people, the sighing of the contrite, and the thanksgiving and the rejoicing of the new-born soul are still ascending. Surely God is in the midst of her." (10.)

The Tarnagulla Circuit also reported on special services. "We are engaged with special services at present in many parts of the circuit, and a good work is going on. Numbers of our members are seeking, and some have found the blessing of entire holiness, and all are impressed with the necessity of a closer walk with God. At Tarnagulla, Dunolly, Korong, Kingower and Inglewood, the Lord is greatly blessing us. At Kingower, a few nights since, about forty came to the penitent form\; some for a clean heart, others for pardon. At Inglewood last evening (26th August), six found peace with God, and others were seeking. The good work continues. To God be all the glory." (11.)

In his Autobiography, Taylor says that when he left Melbourne for tours in the country, he went first to Castlemaine, then Sandhurst and Golden Square, and that they had a blessed time in all the mining towns, up to Echuca, on the Murray River. He returned south, and made another tour to Kyneton and Kilmore, and then by stage coach up to Beechworth and Albury. Again, he returned south, and went to Ballarat, followed by Creswick and Clunes, then Scarsdale, from which he visited Maryborough. From Scarsdale he was taken by Mr. James Oddie of Ballarat, in his carriage and two, taking two days to get to Hamilton. Then he preached in Portland, Belfast, Warrnambool, and other western towns, before returning to Melbourne, and crossing to Tasmania. (12.) After he returned from Tasmania, and before going on to New South Wales, he visited a very few places in Victoria briefly.

The "Wesleyan Chronicle" contained reports on only a few of these country places. Taylor's Autobiography contains some anecdotes, but nothing comprehensive about his work in country areas.

For example, Taylor arrived in the Sandhurst Circuit in time to take part in opening a new church building. It was the Forest Street church. This took place on Sunday, September 20, 1863. "The minister officiating was the Rev. W. Taylor, of California. The interest of the occasion, combined with the great popularity of the preacher, drew great crowds, so that long before the hour of commencing arrived, the church was full, and soon after the commencement, every available space for either sitting or standing was taken possession of. The preacher, in his usual homely but telling style, arrested the attention of his audience for about an hour on each occasion, and some of his thrilling appeals elicited audible responses from his hearers.

Many of those present were evidently brought to see their own likeness in the pictures so graphically sketched, and in the evening nearly a score of anxious ones surrounded the communion rail as earnest seekers of Divine mercy. During the week the services have been continued, and already about fifty persons have made a public profession of repentance, and sought connection with the church." (13.)

The Rev. Joseph Dare preached on the following weekend. Dare was the most popular and most powerful of the Victorian preachers at the time. Blamires and Smith said, "This dedication was eminently signalized by what Methodists love best and crave most, - the crowning blessing on their work and worship - the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers. It was computed that nearly one hundred persons, broken-hearted on account of their past transgressions, found the healing and saving mercy of God during the eight or ten days of special services. From this time the Sandhurst congregation increased, until it became the largest in the Wesleyan Circuit, and is believed to be at the present the most numerous Protestant congregation in the Bendigo district." (14.)

By the middle of October he was preaching at Black Lead, in the Ballarat Circuit. (15.)

Taylor's Autobiography contains several anecdotes from several weeks he spent in the Ballarat area.

On 1st November, he preached in the Creswick Circuit, until the following Friday. On the Friday afternoon, he preached in the Lake Learmonth Presbyterian Church. Between forty and fifty professed conversion on these days. On Sunday, 8th, he preached in Clunes, and for the next few days, including at Coghill's Creek on the Tuesday afternoon. Between seventy and eighty professed conversion in Clunes. On 12th and 13th, he gave his famous lecture on "St Paul and his Times." at Clunes and Creswick, respectively. (16.)

On 15th November, he preached in the open air at Scarsdale to a crowd estimated at one thousand. (17.)

On 27th December, however, he was preaching in the St Kilda church again, so the country tour was over by that time. (18.)

In the second half of January, 1864, the Annual Conference was held, and Taylor was invited to attend. On Friday, 22nd, he was welcomed, and addressed the Conference.

Eric Clancy says that, after the Conference, Taylor was not well for a period, and spent that time writing a series of articles on the training and disciplining of children, and on bringing them to the place of commitment to Jesus Christ. These articles were published in the "Wesleyan Chronicle." (19.)

On his brief return to Victoria, after his time in Tasmania, one of his activities was to preach for a week in Kilmore. The weather was bad, but there were thirty professions of conversion. The person writing the report was dubious about some of these, and some belonged to other denominations, but others were converted for whom many prayers had been offered. Perhaps even more interesting were the developments which took place in centres nearby. Many people came from Merriang to the Kilmore meetings, and carried back the enthusiasm with them. At Merriang, there had been expectation of revival for

some time. Special meetings were held, and some conversions occurred. Apparently, special meetings were also held at Mickleham, although in that place "the society has been all but dead", and several conversions were reported.

(20.) This report makes no reference to Taylor having been in Kilmore beforehand, so it is possible that he made a mistake in including Kilmore in the first list of places he visited on his country tours.

Also, in May, 1864, Taylor paid a second visit to the Sandhurst Circuit. During that visit, he officiated at the opening of the newly renovated church at Golden Square, and followed that by a week of special meetings. Blamires and Smith say that "The house of prayer was again the spiritual birth-place of precious souls." The authors praised the quality of Christian living and leadership which came from the Golden Square church over the years. (21.)

By the middle of June, Taylor was hard at work in Sydney.

Taylor's Second Tour of Australia

Taylor was in Victoria again in 1869. There is almost no reference to this visit in his Autobiography, and the "Chronicle" makes reference only to a few of his meetings during this tour. Very little information is available about it.

The second tour seems to have been almost as successful as the first, so far as the number of conversions were concerned, and Taylor went into some places even more remote than the ones he visited on the first tour. However, it is evident that the second tour did not make the impact on Australia generally as was made the first time.

One series of meetings that received a brief report was his mission in Wesley Church, Melbourne.

"From 19th of September to the 1st (October) the Rev. W. Taylor preached in Wesley Church to overflowing congregations. Each day, also, except Saturdays, he held a mid-day service for the special benefit of the church (i.e. to raise funds). In all these services Mr Taylor was assisted by the circuit ministers, also by the Revs. J. Eggleston, G. Daniel, and T. F. Bird, and by many devoted lay brethren. On the afternoon of the 26th ult. an open-air service was held at the Home, Rathdown-street, when upwards of 3000 persons were addressed by Mr. Taylor on the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The interest which this service created was very great. Several conversions to God have been witnessed during these services. The people of God have been revived, and additional working power has been secured to both ministers and people. To God be all the praise! (22.)

Earlier, Taylor had preached at the Prahran Sunday School Anniversary services, on Sunday, 5th September, to immense congregations. (23.)

After preaching and lecturing in Wesley Church a few days beforehand, Taylor finally left Australia on 17th, July, 1870, accompanied by Mr. Wallis (or Wallace), a blind local preacher from Tasmania. (24.)

Comments about the character of his work

His work in Australia during this first visit occurred in the afterglow of the 1859 revival, insofar as that had been experienced in Australia. This appears to have aided the impact of his work greatly on this first visit, in a way which did not apply on his second visit some years later.

Also, there seemed to be a spirit of prayer abroad in many parts of the country around the time of Taylor's arrival, and his arrival came as a kind of answer to this desire. As a result, a deeper work of the Spirit of God appeared, not only in Taylor's meetings, but in many other places as well.

Like most evangelists, Taylor was a great story-teller, and his autobiography abounds with stories of his experiences all around the world. His account of his time in Australia is no exception. Unlike his work in California, India and South Africa, his work in Australia is not described in a separate publication.

He preached free of charge in every Circuit he visited. Many times he gave lectures to raise money for local building projects, or to eliminate local debts. His personal income, including part of his travelling expenses, and maintenance for his distant family, came entirely from the sale of his books, which were sold widely. An agent in each of the states of Australia also helped sell the books. Funds to help wipe out the debts resulting from the San Francisco fire were solicited at the final meeting only of each mission, and other gifts were not accepted. All other monies were handled and spent locally. (25.)

Taylor describes the pattern of his work as follows:- "We usually spent but one week in a church, but two or three in large centers, and but a day or two in many of the smaller ones. Our regular order of service was to preach on Sabbath morning to the church, the body of believers\;\; in the afternoon to children, and at night aimed directly at the awakening and salvation of sinners. With those preliminaries we counted on a crowded altar of seekers and the salvation of a good portion of them on the first night, and worked specially on that line till Tuesday or Wednesday night. On Thursday night I preached to the church specially on the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification to God, and invited all believers present who were not living in that experience to come to the sacramental altar, where they were in the habit of renewing their oaths of allegiance to God, and under the clear light then shining upon them to make their consecration complete, and receive and trust the Lord Jesus for full salvation. Many thus had their loyalty, faith and trust perfected.

In addition to the believers who were sanctified wholly, we usually had also on the same night a number of sinners saved. On Friday night we had a grand rally along the line to complete the harvest of the week. Saturday was a day for rest and for travelling to another field of service. It was quite common to take up one day in the week for our tea meeting and a special effort to raise funds to pay off their church debts. I took opportunity on all such occasions to speak concerning God's law of the tithe." (26.)

In this way, Taylor visited almost all of the Methodist Circuits and churches which then existed in Australia, reaping a harvest wherever he went. Other denominations received some of the blessing, but most of the converts were, or became, Methodists. Sometimes, the meetings gave a general spiritual boost to the whole tone of the work throughout the district, in all of the denominations.

Evaluation by those who were present

The Rev. Daniel J. Draper describes what happened when Taylor began his work. He "preached on Sunday in Wesley church, morning and evening. A series of revival services was then commenced, and very considerable interest was excited among the people. On each evening during the week a large congregation attended, and many came forward in the prayer meetings which were held after preaching, requesting to be prayed for and taught to accept the Lord Jesus. Many found peace, and a deepening work of God was experienced in many of the church members. On Sunday, June 28th, Mr. Taylor's labours were continued, and in the evening about forty-eight or fifty persons were in distress, some fifteen of whom professed to find peace with God through faith in Christ. The congregations were excellent\;\; that in the evening very large. On Monday evening there were at least forty persons around the 'altar of prayer'. Several

most interesting cases of conversion occurred. On Tuesday evening the congregation was still larger, and very many were in distress, some of whom obtained Divine consolation." (27.) Draper's account continues in a similar vein through the next week. A good number of the converts enrolled as members of class meetings, openly desiring to become full members of the church.

A few months later, in a letter to a friend, Draper wrote, "In Wesley church, St Kilda, Brunswick Street, Brighton, etc., the whole aspect of things is changed as it regards the number of persons meeting in class. It is indeed wonderful. You know I am not wild, but a sober-sided sort of man\; therefore when I say that my judgment has thoroughly coincided with the work in its mode and spirit, you will understand me. At present our churches are like a field which the Lord hath blessed. We can only work in guiding and establishing those who have been 'brought in', trusting that a large proportion of them, at least, will be saved to the Church, and become established Christians and Methodists." (28.)

Symons says that Draper, and other ministers, including Symons himself, along with Christian leaders who stayed for a prolonged period in the areas where Taylor had preached, were able to study the long-term results of Taylor's missions. So far as they could tell, the number of the converts who persevered in the Church, and contributed largely to the work of God, over a long period, did not represent a high proportion of those who at first professed conversion. Nevertheless, there was a good list of men who subsequently became Methodist ministers, and who attributed the time of their conversion, or their deepened commitment, to Taylor's meetings. (29.)

Blamires and Smith tell us:- "The Revival work proceeded in many places around Melbourne not visited by Mr. Taylor. Such was the spirit of religious enquiry and awakening that was abroad, that it made but little difference who was the preacher that conducted the service. Almost everyone was blessed in his ministry of the word, to the conversion of sinners, and saw immediate fruit of his labours. Prahran, Moorabin and Williamstown were places that Mr. Taylor did not visit\; but there also extensive Revivals took place. In the latter town incidents occurred which illustrate the mental phenomena, the spiritual struggles, the petty persecutions, the spiritual upraising and life which take place in a Revival." (30.)

Blamires and Smith give many instances of this. For example:- "A boatman had been a drinker, and occasional gambler. A fortnight before the special services he began, under a deep conviction of personal sin, to seek to the mercy of the Lord. He was the first to come forward (to) the place of prayer when the invitation was given one Monday night. On the following night he was made happy in the conscious favour and love of God. When asked to give testimony of God's work, he fell on his knees in the sight of all present, and thanked God for His pardoning mercy. His prayer at the time was remarkable for simplicity, fervour, and even fluency, considering that it was the first public prayer that he had made. He afterwards endured much petty persecution."

They conclude, "Similar accounts of Revival work and spiritual success in other Circuits could be multiplied. The sowing and the reaping came together in many places\; but in others a longer time elapsed between the reaping and the planting God gave the increase. The offerings of praise, for his servants rejoice together, were a chorus taken up by many voices, an ode common to the whole church. It is not asserted that all the blossom of these revivals has been followed by ripe fruit in every instance where the bud and bloom seemed so promising, but a glorious harvest has been gathered. Do critics of the movement aver that some fell away, that some kept not their vows and pledges, that a low state of piety followed in others, that worldliness crept in to alloy the pure gold of religion, that some deteriorating elements came to mar the work? We admit that, in some degree, as, alas, too true..... (But,) despite some drawbacks, the glorious result, on the whole, has been an immense gain in

accessions to Messiah's Kingdom, a steady advancement in the cause of Scriptural holiness, and a wider exemplification of practical piety. Methodism is wonderfully the better for these revivals. They have raised members to a higher standard of piety, and led them to a life of greater usefulness." (31.)

Benson makes the point that Taylor's style of evangelism had a moulding influence on the evangelists who worked in the Australian churches through until the end of the century. He quotes Joseph Nicholson as follows:- "Taylor's great contribution to the religious life of Methodism in Australia consisted not only in the thousands of converts gathered under his direct ministry, and the subsequent labours of many of the converts, but the spirit of evangelism that was created. The labours of David O'Donnell, Matthew Burnett, John MacNeil and other Australian workers, and the hearty, sympathetic co-operation given to Messrs Inskip, Torrey, Chapman and Henry, of America, were all traceable to the evangelistic seed implanted by that prince of evangelists - California Taylor." (32.)

Finally, these historians of Methodism in Victoria point to the statistics of the period, which show that membership in Methodist churches rose, between 1859 and 1864, from 3194 to 8088, and this great increase was due largely to the revivals which occurred throughout that period. The greatest single increase occurred in the final year. (33.)

These years, from 1859 onwards, represented "seven years of plenty" for the Methodist Church.
