

Let Us Give Thanks

On this centennial occasion, of deepest import for the Church that so long has been our central sanctuary, richest in clustering recollections of holy worship and holy toil, but of deep interest also wherever our city's spreading life partakes of the blessing of such memories, let us give thanks. Let us hold in our hearts those stalwart, gracious souls whose joy it was to frequent and maintain the House of Prayer, to gather about its spiritual altar and to serve divine ideals. May the grace of true vision be granted to us, their grateful heirs, that the history we recall may be much more than the confused imprint of human feet, wayward and unsure, upon the changeful sands of time. Rather may we glimpse, for our wiser thinking, our clearer purpose, our more faithful and ardent service, the persistent signs of an accompanying Heavenly Presence. For all that has been worthy, for all that to-day is strong and glad, for every promise of growth toward fuller light, more valorous deed, and loftier aim, let us give thanks—to God.

Prefatory Note

FROM time to time, as certain appropriate anniversaries have been reached, parts of the story of Methodism in Auckland have been told. Mainly the history of Pitt Street Church and Circuit has thus been covered. To devote the major part of this further recital to ground so fully traversed before would be, in the writer's opinion, of less service than to deal with events not so generally known, perhaps not really known at all. Manifestly, a story of the whole centennial period, 1841-1941, would require a book of substantial size. So the practical question as to what to enlarge upon and even what to leave out has called for practical answer. To omit anything of importance would be regrettable. But much must be omitted and much given only slender reference. It would be pleasing to give place, for instance, to pen-sketches of many actors in the leading events, to describe the great part played by the laity of the Church, to travel widely out from the bounds of the city, to chat about obscure folk meriting more than casual mention, and particularly to do honour to other branches of the Methodist family than that alone in the field when Methodism first came to Auckland. Within inescapably severe limits of space and time, these pleasures must be foregone, no matter what disappointment is felt. It seems best to try to tell fully what has not been told before, to follow closely the main thread of Auckland's Methodist progress from the status of a distant outpost of missionary enterprise to that of head of an early Circuit, to rescue from obscurity the most fascinating phases of a critical past, and to do this with adequate care for historical authority. The outcome may be deemed a mere fragment, but it should not be chargeable with lack of perspective or lack of appreciation of what is being accomplished today. A steady back-ward look " across a hundred years " may, if rightly directed, gather inspiration for many a day to come; grateful thought about Tangiteroria and Auckland and James Buller may lead some to serve more devotedly the Auckland to which, by the path of duty, he helped to bring, long ago, the Kingdom of God.

Across a Hundred Years 1841-1941

Methodism in Auckland had a remarkable beginning. A tragic shipwreck, far to the north and on the opposite coast, had much to do with it. Part of the story is told by the Rev. James Buller in his valuable book, "*Forty Years in New Zealand*." As the chief actor in the events linking the wreck with the foundation of Auckland Methodism, he was uniquely qualified to tell this part of the tale.

In the preface to his book he says: "The reader will find nothing of the sensational." Yet, whatever he thought about that, few readers can have missed a hint of the sensational in his quiet statement, appended to a brief recital of particulars, "On account of circumstances connected with this shipwreck, I felt it my duty to go to Auckland." Why? He does not say; but, unless there happened something of far greater moment than is told in his brief chapter on "*The Sophia Pate*," sad though its recital of loss of life assuredly is, his hurrying off on this unusual journey is left without due explanation.

We know now much more than he told in this brief chapter of a book written in England, for a British public inquisitive about New Zealand, thirty-five years after this event. The sources of our adequate knowledge are contemporary records, including shipping lists and, particularly, the long letters written by Mr. Buller himself. Incidentally, these letters, written at the time with the express purpose of setting out facts for official cognisance, amend as well as amplify the slender account of the wreck he included in his book. One of these letters, dated from Tangiteroria, the headquarters of his Kaipara Circuit, on October 25, 1841, must at this point be drawn upon, the extant original letter being used to ensure strict reliability.

Dr. Richard Day, an eminent Wesleyan of Cork, had visited New Zealand about two and a-half years earlier and enjoyed mission hospitality at Hokianga. There he became deeply interested in the idea, then being developed by our missionaries, of establishing settlements of pious Wesleyan families in the vicinity of the stations. It was this, indeed, that prompted his voyage from Ireland. He made preliminary arrangements for the purchase of a block of land for this purpose from the chief Parore, at Kaihu, northward of Tangiteroria.



Dr. Richard Day

A REDUCED COMPANY.

The pioneer party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Salter and their ten children (Mr. Salter had long been an efficient class-leader and local preacher in Cork), Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson and their four children, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart and their two children (the Stuarts were relatives of Mr. Wilkinson), Mr. and Mrs. Stannard (the latter was a local preacher who eventually became an ordained minister attached to the mission, and in 1860-61 was in charge of Three Kings College, his earlier appointments including a year, 1848, as second assistant minister of the Auckland Circuit), and a servant, Stephen Ellis. All reached Port Phillip and then Port Jackson without serious delay or mishap.



HISTORIC COMMUNION VESSELS.

Inscribed: Presented to the Rev. David Cargill, A.M., by the ladies of Birmingham, for the use of the Wesleyan Missions in Polynesia.

They were compelled, however, to wait in Sydney until a vessel could be got to bring them across the Tasman. At length they were able to charter the Sophia Pate, described in the shipping lists as a brigantine; but before she was ready to sail Mrs. Wilkinson died in Sydney, and it had been decided to leave there, for a while, Mrs. Stannard and a son of the Salters.

With the reduced company the vessel made Auckland and proceeded to the Bay of Islands, where Mr. Stannard and Mr. Stuart started to walk across the island to Hokianga, their intention being to prepare for the reception of the others at Kaihu.

They found the walk unexpectedly long, and they did not reach the Northern Wairoa until the 6th of September—to learn that the *Sophia Pate* had become a total wreck when entering the Kaipara.

Mr. Buller's account of the distressing occurrence was written on the 25th of October, when the facts could be fully reviewed. They can best be understood from his own words:

FEW SURVIVORS.

"The main channel into the Kaipara Harbour is deep, spacious and clear, but its course is intricate, and requires very great care and judgment on the part of the navigator in his first approach to it. There is no complete chart or any competent pilot to be obtained. Captain Harrison, unfortunately, was a stranger to this port; he made choice of a wrong state of the tide, kept far too near the South Shore, and the vessel struck on a land spit on the afternoon of Tuesday, August 31. It is deeply to be regretted that the captain did not allow the long-boat to be launched when one of the sailors had loosed her from the fastenings for that purpose, for, it being then about low water, the passengers might have obtained the shore, which was very near to them. As the tide rose, the sea began to break over the ill-fated vessel, which was lying broadside on, with fearful violence; the long-boat, lying loose, was soon broken to pieces, and a small jolly-boat hanging to the davits was the only chance of escape row remaining.

"When the cabin became filled with water, the passengers, including the captain's wife and child and a Dr. Hughes, besides the party of friends from Cork, came on deck; but such was the violence of the broken waves—the vessel lying on her side, and no one being lashed—that the females were soon carried overboard, and, in the course of a few hours—an awful season of suspense hanging between life and death—all were buried in the angry billows, excepting the captain's infant and Mr. Wilkinson's eldest son, a lad about ten years of age. The captain and all the crew were saved and reached the shore in the jolly-boat, with the two children, when the sea had a little becalmed. They remained four days upon the beach and then proceeded up the river in quest of assistance to find their way to Auckland.

PAINFUL SEQUEL

"I received intelligence of this painful catastrophe at a very early hour on the following Tuesday morning, and immediately proceeded in the mission boat to the scene of the late calamity, about one hundred miles distant from this Station. On the way I fell in with our bereaved friends, Messrs. Stannard and Stuart, the little boy, the captain and the crew, all of whom, excepting the lad and two seamen, proceeded in the boats—the former for the purpose of seeking the bodies of their deceased friends and saving any of their property if possible, which, unfortunately, was uninsured; the latter on their way to Auckland. I deeply regret to add that the sequel showed that, painful as

the misfortune was, it had been rendered more painful by the conduct of the captain and crew of the vessel.

"We arrived at the beach on Thursday morning and, before Captain Harrison and his people proceeded in the boat to the Auckland Road, I walked with Mr. Stannard to the spot where the wreck lay. It was still lying entire within a short distance of low water mark—a sight of awful desolation. The bulk of the cargo remained in her, but deeply imbedded in the sand. Many large boxes, however, belonging to the passengers, had washed ashore, all of which appeared to have been violently opened and all the contents had disappeared. Two boats had been there before we could reach the spot, and we had reason to believe that they had taken away much of the property, but there were also circumstances which led to the conclusion that the survivors from the wreck must have first opened those boxes, particularly as we saw many large and well-packed bundles with them, and clothes on their persons which were known to have been taken out of some of them.

"One large box, bearing Mr. Salter's name, Mr. Stannard knew to have contained, among other valuable property, a silver tea-service and other articles of plate, and could not resist a conviction that the captain had opened this box. I therefore enquired of Captain Harrison for the plate, and he acknowledged having some such articles in his bundle, but refused to give them to Mr. Stannard, stating that nobody had authority to demand them, and he would take them to Sydney and give them to Mr. Salter's son. I then requested him to place them under my care, observing that I could save him the trouble of conveying them to Sydney. He at last, with evident reluctance, gave them up, withholding a dozen of the spoons, which he said belonged to him. He refused to know anything of the other articles, and would not allow any other bundle to be opened. I begged they would share the clothing they had taken with their distressed fellow sufferers, who were now utterly destitute, but they would not relinquish a shred.

QUEST FOR JUSTICE.

"We spent four days on the beach, sleeping on the sand underneath our boat sails, in the vain hope that the wreck might go to pieces and the property on board come ashore. In the meantime, the captain and people proceeded on their way in the boat which I lent to them. We interred three bodies, viz., Mrs. Stuart, Miss Salter and Miss Matilda Salter, which we found partially covered in the sand. So sad a funeral I never before witnessed, and I hope I never may again. It would have afforded a mournful satisfaction to convey their remains to the Mission Station and there inter them with Christian decency, but that was impracticable.

"With the return of the boat, one of the apprentice lads came back in her. From this lad, Mr. Wilkinson's orphan son, and one of the seamen who remained behind, we afterwards learnt that the captain and crew had taken away much valuable property in

their bundles, and also that Mr. Wilkinson would probably have been saved, but his hands were inhumanly beaten off by the captain as he held on by the jolly-boat, while she was hanging to the davits!

"It entered within the plan of my arrangements to visit Auckland, and within a short time, but I now felt it my duty, in order that the ends of justice might be answered. On our arrival there, we found that a very partial statement had been given by Captain Harrison to the Magistrates, but on the receipt of the information which we felt it our duty to lay before them, he and the crew were immediately arrested, and the seaman and apprentice at Kaipara were sent for to give their evidence. The evidence was examined before the Bench, and they (the captain and crew) were committed to take their trial before the Supreme Court to answer to the two charges of feloniously resisting Mr. Wilkinson when he was endeavouring to save his life and then feloniously plundering some property belonging to passengers on board the *Sophia Pate*. They therefore are now lying in the prison.

END OF AN ENTERPRISE.

"The bereaved survivors of the unfortunate party from Cork have borne the severe and overwhelming stroke with Christian magnanimity. Mr. Stannard would proceed to Sydney for Mrs. S. per first vessel. Mr. Stuart has obtained a suitable situation at Auckland, and the orphan lad has become a member of my family.

"In this painful manner has terminated an enterprise which seemed to promise much and lasting prosperity and happiness. How often, then, 'Our best concerted schemes are vain.' Our friends whose loss we mourn we have reasonable ground to hope have reached a better haven. Mr. Salter, we are told, when called to come up on deck, was found with his family and friends gathered round him, in the solemn attitude of prayer. They are now, we believe, before the Throne, while to their surviving relatives and friends God seems to say, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.'"

The wreck of the *Sophia Pate* may well, for the present purpose, end on that note of calmer sadness in Mr. Buller's thought of it, penned a few weeks after the terrible occurrence. Were its legal sequel fully traceable—really, it slips into early obscurity among the many moving accidents by flood and field of that adventurous time—this would matter little for our story.

Mr. Buller himself, of course, could not easily dismiss it. "The formidable Heads" comes less casually, from then on, into his description of the inner crossing athwart them, in canoe or small boat, as a necessary link in his southward journeying and northward return. Such a crossing could be truly formidable. Nervousness about it had induced John Hewgill Bumby, General Superintendent of the mission for a brief

period, to prefer facing a long canoe route from Motutapu to Whangarei when going homeward to headquarters, at Hokianga, on what was to prove his last sea venture.



Rev John Bumby

TO AUCKLAND.

James Buller himself had seen the barque *Aurora*, of Port Nicholson memories in his own life, smashed to matchwood on the very spot where the *Sophia Pate* came to grief only a few months afterwards; and more than once he had been compelled to wait in shelter before the turbulent tides thereabouts quietened. But enough now to have noted that, much more in anger than in sorrow, he posted off to Auckland to set British law in motion against recreant seamen unworthy of their high calling.

Likely enough, as he says, he would soon have paid a visit, in any event. The Tamaki Isthmus, long a virtual solitude after a succession of frenzies of fighting and cannibal feasting by tribes habitually at enmity, was not yet reoccupied by Maori homes, but Captain Hobson's choice of the Waitemata as the location of his capital, and the actual start of British settlement there, had begun to attract native visitors, curious to see how the pakeha made a kainga, and eager to indulge their adopted love of trade, especially with foodstuffs that the arriving pakeha had not yet opportunity to grow. Even those receiving none of the purchase-money given by the Government for tribal lands could hope to pick up many a crumb of the strangers' wealth by selling pigs for pork, or kumaras, or potatoes, or fish, or firewood, or their manual labour. In August of the following year Mr. Buller wrote of Auckland: "This is the great market for the natives from surrounding parts, and it is estimated that they draw at least £200 per week from this town."



COURT-HOUSE, EARLY QUEEN STREET.

The missionary point of view, however, was less concerned with such economic considerations than with the Maoris' moral and spiritual profit. Question 27 in the W.M.S. District Meeting order of business asked: "What towns, villages or plantations in the neighbourhood of each Station are not yet visited, and give the reasons why they are not, and whether the said reasons are satisfactory to the brethren of the District?" The term "neighbourhood" was manifestly elastic, but James Buller had a mind to stretch it.

His Kaipara Circuit was already large enough to employ fully even so sturdily industrious a toiler. Look at its area, round that great expanse of inland water: it might well have been called the Circuit of the Four Rivers—Wairoa, Oruawharo, Otamatea and Kaipara. Bishop Patteson, of Melanesia, once said he was a "missionary," not a "stationary," and Buller was of the stuff that made good Methodist "travelling preachers."

EVANGELISING ZEAL.

So, as he was nearest of the northern missionaries to the young capital, he had given thought to its call upon attention and effort. What had he written about this sudden journey to the region of Hobson's capital? "It entered within the plan of my arrangements to visit Auckland, and within a short time." The indignation aroused in him by the *Sophia Pate* episode had fired the train of his resolve, but this train had been laid by his evangelising zeal.

Once in Auckland, he made his presence felt by the Maori. Turn again to his account of that first visit: "There are no natives permanently resident in the town, but numbers are frequently resorting thither who need the watchful eye of an affectionate and faithful missionary. They are exposed there to great temptations, and the moral degeneracy of the natives consequent on the rapid influx of mixed Europeans is but too plainly marked. I was pained to see many of them falling into the sin of drunkenness, against which I embraced every opportunity to caution them." To be noted also is that on the morning after his arrival—it was a Sunday—he preached to a gathering of about eighty Maoris. It would have been utterly unlike him to give them second place. This service was not conducted in the town, nor at the distant tribal

centre of Pehiakura, near the southern head of Manukau Harbour, but at a temporary resort, about two miles outside the town limits, where seasonal planting was then being done. It may be reasonably conjectured that the site of this first Methodist service in the Auckland that was to spread across the isthmus was on the northern slope of Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill). Christian influence had already touched this tribe, thanks to native contacts, and under its splendid chief, baptised as Epiha Putini (Jabez Bunting), had developed an appreciation of the incoming religious observances.

That Sunday was to see more of his ardent Christian activity. His letter of October, so fully quoted already, tells of his immediate scrutiny of the infant town's facilities for public worship. Unlike many of his brethren, who then feared colonisation as an imperilling hindrance to their exercise of a cure of Maori souls—some of them were still voicing their regret decades afterwards—Mr. Buller was ill content with the sage compromise, "If there is to be colonisation, let it by all means be British." He saw in colonisation an opportunity as great as the challenge.

AN EYE FOR OPPORTUNITY.

Thus he looked at Auckland, on the day of that first arrival, with eyes keenly seeking doors of Christian service. Soon he was writing of facts observed: "At Auckland there is a mixed population of nearly two thousand souls, among whom the prevailing sins of new colonies are general. One clergyman, Rev. Mr. Churton, who is supported by the Government, officiates at present in a small raupo building, but about the sum of £500 has been subscribed toward the erection of a church. The Roman Catholics also have been making exertions to build a chapel and have collected about £200 for that purpose. There is yet no other denomination there, but I hope there will ere long be a Wesleyan chapel found at Auckland."

ROBUST MANHOOD.

This hope he was well qualified to promote. His mental gifts were of a high order—he had been brought to New Zealand by one of its earliest Wesleyan missionaries, Nathaniel Turner, as a tutor for his children, and had soon so proved his fitness for ordination that persuasion to join the staff of the mission was inevitable. His physical stamina was equal to all demands: it is still remembered that, on an important journey south, he walked most of the way from the far north to Port Nicholson, going through much difficult country in the centre of the island. He became scientifically conversant with the natural features of his adopted country, and to his habit of taking his maturing boys in turn with him on suitable pastoral tours must have been initially due the achievement of the second eldest in "Birds of New Zealand, by Sir Walter Buller." Well was it that the father of such lucky boys— getting thus so much education from him—should introduce Methodism to New Zealand's capital of that time. Of good

address, as well as good brain and heart, and the glow of young robust manhood—he was 29—Cornish withal, he was just the man to impress the town, agog with interest in his truly sensational errand.

By calendar deductions from even the few details he gives, it is possible to fix the date of the memorable Sunday begun with his Maori sermon. It was September the 19th. The wretched captain and the similarly guilty members of his crew had been in the town for some days, no doubt planning in leisure a defence of the loss of their ship and perhaps a "getaway" to Australia. They must have felt temporarily safe, for had not that tempestuous young parson suddenly relented enough to lend them a boat to help them on their way to Auckland? True, he had appeared in their wake, and rumour had it that he was busy about the wreck; yet he was soon engaged in the more usual tasks of his vocation. So why worry, after all?

As a matter of clear fact, Mr. Buller had lost no time on the way down, and as soon as this prized Sunday was over he would be largely occupied with bringing the miscreants to justice. Meanwhile, the opportunity to preach to Europeans gathered in the town must not be lost. With these incongruous things in mind, turn again to his letter.

"I was unavoidably detained there three Sundays, on each of which I held services with the natives who were in town, and in English. ... I met with a very gratifying reception with many of the settlers, among whom I preached to very good congregations twice or thrice every Sabbath—in the afternoons under a large shed, the first Sabbath evening in an auction room, and the succeeding Sabbaths in the evenings in the temporary church, the use of which was readily granted to me by the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, in the absence of His Excellency the Governor. The Sabbath morning I preached in a large store-room. I formed a class of five persons during the first week, and it numbered ten when I left. Many persons expressed a desire to contribute towards the erection of a Wesleyan Chapel in Auckland, and I am persuaded that little difficulty would be experienced in raising funds for the purpose of building a Chapel and Preacher's dwelling house; and land for that purpose, I presume, would be un-hesitatingly granted by the Government. I think that, were we prepared to occupy it as a Station, we should soon behold fruit both among the settlers and the natives.

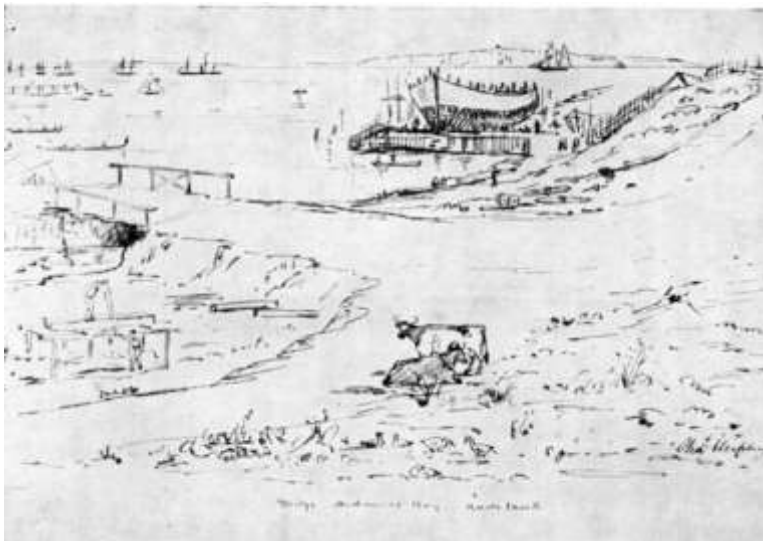
URGENCY OF PURPOSE.

"There are indeed many cogent reasons why Auckland should be placed on our list of Stations as soon as possible, but these will, no doubt, be more fully given in the minutes of our approaching Annual District Meeting. His Excellency returned from a visit to Port Nicholson and the Middle Island but a day or two before I left, and I was favoured with an opportunity of waiting upon him." Evidently he was feeling his way, with the people and Governor Hobson, towards the step he had so much in mind. The

District Meeting would eventually hear all that he had to report, and discharge its responsibility for decision.

At this point we must glance again at the brief account given in his "Forty Years in New Zealand," written, as to this experience, so long afterwards and from memory. "It was on a Saturday when we arrived. On the next day I preached to about eighty Maoris in the morning; and in the afternoon to a congregation of English, who met in a saw-pit in Mechanics' Bay. In the evening I had service in an auction-room. There still live in Auckland a few who remember those occasions. I stayed several weeks and preached every Sunday where I could find a place. I waited on His Excellency, Governor Hobson, who promised me an acre of land, in a good position, as a church site; and I took some steps towards the organising of a church, with the few members I found there."

Two things emerge from this brief reference to the auspicious day—the definite mention of a saw-pit in Mechanics' Bay as the location of the first service for Europeans, and the suggestion that the Governor's promise of a site was only, at that stage, in general terms. On the second it is only necessary to point out that Mr. Buller had met the Governor before, in Paihia (Bay of Islands), soon after Captain Hobson's arrival in New Zealand to initiate British sovereignty. This further intercourse would be less formal. On the question of the site of the first European service comment more detailed seems desirable.



MECHANICS' BAY, EARLY FIFTIES.

SITE OF A SERVICE.

Because for a hundred years this site has been unmarked and surface features on the low level there have been greatly modified by Nature and by man, casual dogmatism about the precise position has been made foolish. Within a narrow limit, however, it is possible to indicate, by using a variety of data, an approximate spot. It should be remembered that the shoreline of 1841 is now, chiefly by reason of considerable reclamation, far within the present beach. This shoreline ran where the southern roadside is now fronted by the Maori hostelry, which still exists between the steep slopes of Constitution Hill and Parnell Rise. As little or no timber of size grew then on or near the locality, the "saw-pit" was necessarily close to the water's edge, for means of conveyance of logs other than by rafting could not be used. The term "saw-pit" was conventional, not literally descriptive, since any deep hollow there would be too liable to frequent tide-flooding to permit efficient work. "Pit-sawn" is still a common synonym for "hand-sawn."

Major Charles Heaphy's sketch of Mechanics' Bay in the early fifties—he was one of Auckland's reliable locality-artists in that olden time—is valuable graphic witness to the pursuits in that area. It is reproduced on an earlier page. In examining it, there should be remembrance that a "saw-pit," in a heyday of timber-milling aid to the creation of the capital, would cover much ground and be roofed—not at all a bad place of daylight worship in the circumstances. Apparently, as Mr. Buller's wording suggests, this edifice was customarily used for certain religious assemblies.

OFFICIAL RECORDS.

How the missionary District Meeting dealt with Mr. Buller's recommendations is clearly chronicled in the original records, still in as good order as when they were officially entered in the minute-books. In December of 1841 this was the finding in the course of annual business, in answer to the prescribed question 34: "Are there any new Stations to be recommended to the Committee?"—the reference is to the controlling London body of the Wesleyan Missionary Society—"We deem it exceedingly desirable to have a Missionary at Auckland if the state of the funds would allow. See Bro. Buller's remarks on the subject from his late visit. In the meantime that attempts be made to get a chapel and to encourage the Society already established there. That the Chairman be requested to visit Auckland at an early opportunity, and wait on His Excellency to obtain a piece of land for a chapel."

Mr. Buller's "remarks" were in his annual report on the Kaipara Circuit. Stating that in the course of the year this Circuit had been extended to Auckland, he added that "a visit to this place" had led him to the following conclusions:—

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(1) The natives continually resorting to this town, where they are exposed to very many temptations, need and desire the watchful care of an affectionate missionary. Many of them are connected with our Society.

(2) The European residents would be found to welcome a Wesleyan missionary and to contribute to his support. A class is already formed.

(3) A chapel might be immediately raised by subscription. Many offered to subscribe. One actually paid me £2/2/-, and all with whom I conversed on the subject expressed it as their opinion that no difficulty would be found in raising sufficient funds.

(4) That it would be of importance to our other Stations to have a missionary here who might act as agent for letters, etc., etc. A point made in discussions at the time was the prospective advantage of having an additional port for the northern Stations.

SECURING THE FUTURE.

The next annual answer (1842) to the question was: "Auckland. The Metropolis of New Zealand. This town, where we have Societies of 13 Europeans and 150 Natives, has been visited twice during the past twelve months, but owing to its distance from the nearest Station we deem it absolutely necessary that a Missionary knowing the native language be stationed there for the preservation of our native Society resident in the neighbourhood, as well as numbers of our people from our various other Stations, north and south, who are continually resorting thither for the purpose of trading; and we most deeply feel that unless such provisions be made the consequences will be most painful. The Government has already granted an allotment of land, for extent and situation suitable for chapel and mission premises; £130 has been already subscribed, with the immediate prospect of realising at least £200 for the erection of a chapel, which will be forthwith commenced; and we earnestly recommend the appointment of Bro. Warren to the Station."

A SECOND VISIT.

Again a report by Mr. Buller on Kaipara Circuit had been the basis of pronouncement by the District Meeting. "Auckland. The metropolis of the Colony. I have paid two visits to this town and have received very great encouragement on both occasions. I feel truly sensible of the very great importance of this place as the head of a separate Circuit. It is full 200 miles from my residence, and there-fore cannot be often visited. On my last visit £120 was subscribed for the purpose of building a Chapel, etc. In order thereto a most eligible allotment of land was kindly granted by His Excellency the Governor. Members: Whites, 13; Natives, 150."



Rev J Warren

So Mr. Buller had been again to the budding "metropolis" in the interval. We have his own account of the second visit. It was without the excitement of the first. This time he was able, without distraction, to devote himself to a consolidating effort of church extension. The Maori influx was increasing, and, although the white settlers were not to receive until October the notable addition of immigrants by the first direct ships Jane Gifford and Duchess of Argyle, their number was growing. Auckland was surely developing, and he felt constrained "to meet the little Society there and take some steps in order to see to the erection of a chapel in that infant town."

He left Tangiteroria on July 5, 1842. Following his former route and engaging in an eager ministry of spiritual guidance and encouragement on the way, for this time he had no reason for hurry, he reached Auckland on the 12th. It was a delightful surprise "to meet with our highly valued friend Dr. Day from Cork, who with Mr. Stannard arrived here but a day or two ago," but alone he seized the earliest opportunity of furthering the chapel-building project.

For the information of the London Committee, he transcribed from his notebook a report of this purposeful activity. "Friday, July 15: It being the Governor's visiting day, I was honoured with a long interview with His Excellency, during which he made very honourable mention of our brethren in the Southern District whom he had met with in his late tour to the south, and, in answer to my request, on behalf of the Society, for a grant of land for a chapel, His Excellency expressed himself as most ready to meet our wishes and desired me at my convenience to accompany the

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Surveyor-General in order to the selection of a suitable site, which I had an opportunity of doing in the course of the day and wrote the following letter:—

Auckland,

July 15th, 1842.

To the Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

On behalf of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, I do myself the honour to solicit from His Excellency the Governor a grant of land conveniently situated in the town of Auckland, in order to provide for the spiritual wants of the members of our connexion, who are increasing in number, by the erection of a Chapel, for the accomplishment of which it is intended to make speedy arrangements.

I would further beg you to obtain His Excellency's permission for me to select allotment 27, section IV., as being an eligible site for the erection of the proposed place of worship.

I have the honour to be,

Sir, for the Wesleyan Missionary Society,

James Buller,

Wesleyan Minister, Kaipara.”

The wheels of State turned deliberately, surely, to Mr. Buller's great satisfaction. Eight days later he received from the Colonial Secretary, under instruction from the Governor, a letter intimating that the allotment mentioned would be "reserved for the site of a Wesleyan place of worship," and that a grant of the land would be issued as soon as the provisions of the relevant ordinance of the Legislative Council were complied with.

MAORI WORSHIP.

"Sunday, 17: Having received information that Jabez Bunting and his people were stopping at a temporary residence within two miles of the town, I repaired thither after an early breakfast and preached in a long shed to about 200 persons from I. John, i., 8, 9. I then returned in order to attend the Church service at the Courthouse, where I arrived in time to hear a sermon from Mr. Cole, one of the clergymen who have lately arrived with Bishop Selwyn. His text was St. Matthew, vii.15, 'Beware of false prophets.' I preached in the afternoon, in the same building, to an encouraging and attentive congregation, from St. Matthew, xxiii., 37, 38, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, etc.,' and in the evening I conducted a prayer meeting in a room which our little Society rents for the purpose of holding their meetings.

"Monday, 18: In the afternoon, according to promise, I went to Jabez Bunting's temporary settlement and spent the night with him and his people. At their stated residence, Pehiakura, they have lately erected a spacious and handsome chapel, with which the Governor, when on his late tour, was so much pleased that he has presented Jabez with a large folding-door and two sash-windows, ten feet high, for it.

"Tuesday, 19: In the evening, according to notice, a public meeting was held in the Court-house for the purpose of concerting measures for the erection of a Wesleyan Chapel. Dr. Day kindly occupied and very ably discharged the duties of the chair. The attendance was not large, but it was encouraging, and at the close of the meeting upwards of £75 was subscribed.

"Wednesday, 20: Received subscriptions in aid of the chapel to-day to the amount of nearly £50, and in the evening met the Society in their room.

PRACTICAL STEPS.

"Sunday, 24: Held service with the people at Jabez Bunting's place this morning. Preached from Philippians, iv., 6, 7. In the afternoon I preached in the Courthouse from II. Corinthians, iii., 18, 'But we all, with open face, etc.' I spent an agreeable and I trust profitable evening with some pious friends in conversation on the things belonging to our everlasting peace.

"Monday, July 25: At 7 p.m. we were under the necessity of plodding, in the dark, over the very muddy, hilly and slippery roads of Auckland to the Court-house, 'about 1 miles, where, according to advertisement, a public meeting was held for the purpose of nominating trustees for our proposed chapel—this mode being necessary according to the ordinance referred to in the Colonial Secretary's letter of the 23rd."

Mr. Buller does not record who were nominated. The first ascertained mention of their names occurs in the minutes of "the Annual District Meeting of the Northern Section of the New Zealand District," which opened on October 4, 1843. The entry is as follows: "The following persons are the trustees, viz., John Hobbs, Jas. Buller, Florence Gardiner, James Stone and John A. Langford. The tenure is a grant from the Crown of the site. The Government has approved of the trustees and granted formal pos-session of the land, but the trustees have not yet received the deed of conveyance from the Government. The number of trustees is regulated by Act-in-Council."

[" James Stone " is " Captain James Stone," the first of his baptismal names being apparently omitted on the mistaken assumption that it is a title of rank. "Florence Gardiner " is a grand-uncle of the Rev. M. A. Rugby Pratt, Connexional Secretary of the Methodist Church of N.Z.]

On the 28th of July Mr. Buller left Auckland with Dr. Day at 9 a.m., reached "the landing place" at the headwaters of the Waitemata by 2 p.m., walked across to the

upper reaches of the Kaipara River, and was soon on the expanse of the great western harbour, heading for home. He had appreciably advanced the prospect of establishing Methodism in Auckland, although nearly a year was still to elapse before the decision to build "forthwith" could be given effect. On July 2, 1843, however, the building was formally opened.

Before that date—on January 13, 1843, to be exact- Mr. Buller again wrote the Secretaries of the London Committee to press upon them the claims of Auckland. In this instance, he wrote from the town itself.

PLEA FOR SPEEDY ACTION.

"Having arrived here to attend to my duties in this, the extreme part of my Circuit, I cannot omit the opportunity of sending you a few lines. Of our state and prospects at Kaipara I wrote you at full length a short time since. Twelve days ago, I left my family for this place, and after calling at some of the native settlements on the way I arrived here on Saturday last, where I meet with everything calculated to give encouragement. Our two last District Meetings have recommended this station to your notice as the head of a Circuit, and I do earnestly hope that you will possess both the inclination and the ability to appoint a Preacher for this place at the next Conference. So greatly do we feel impressed with the desirableness of the immediate occupancy of this place that, rather than it should be delayed, we have recommended the temporary vacation of the Waima Station in order to supply it, should you not possess the means of sending a Preacher from England. But it is hardly necessary to observe that it would be far better to have a Missionary from the Mother Country than to disturb a prosperous and established Station. If it be not the intention of the Committee to continue our present arrangements, viz., the division of the District into North and South, but to revert it to its original position with one Chairman having jurisdiction over the whole, you will, I hope, pardon me for the expression of my humble opinion that Auckland would be the most eligible station for his residence; as, if you refer to any map of this country, you will perceive how central and commanding is its situation, besides which, the regular communication maintained between this and all other parts of the Colony would greatly facilitate him in corresponding with or visiting the other stations, both North and South. Nor is the circumstance of its being the seat of Government entirely to be overlooked with relation to a Chairman of the District.

HOPE OF LOCAL SUPPORT.

"I think I may say there is every reasonable prospect of a very prosperous interest in this place, both among the Europeans and natives. We have a small but increasing English Society here who would be immediately joined by many others were there a resident Minister in the town, and, as there are two Local Preachers, I have obtained for them the use of the Court-house on Sunday afternoons, when service, according to

our mode of worship, is stately held there. I had a very encouraging congregation on Sunday last. In the prospect of the appointment of a Preacher, the Local Government has acceded to my request and granted the spot of land for which I made application on my last visit. It is advantageously situated in the centre of the town and is large enough for Mission Premises, Chapel, Schools, etc. A brick foundation for a temporary chapel 40 feet by 25 has been laid on the site, and materials are in preparation for a wooden superstructure, and within six months from this time we hope to bring home the top-stone shouting (Grace, grace unto it.' There are several European villages rising up in the neighbourhood, where also encouraging openings are presented.

A NATIVE RESORT.

"But it is of great importance to our cause among the natives that we have a resident Preacher here. It is a general resort for them from all places, and, frequently, when I arrive at my distant out-stations I find nearly all the people absent on a visit to this place. It is also the case with respect to many of our Southern Stations, and even natives from Hokianga are often here. Here they are exposed to a variety of temptations and they have no place of worship to which they can have recourse, nor any person who will pay attention to their spiritual interests. Besides this, there is a great number of native settlements in the immediate neighbourhood where the natives claim connection with us. Jabez Bunting and his people are, at present, within two miles of the town, preparing for planting their crops in the ensuing season, and I held service with them on Sunday morning last. On my last visit I baptised more than 30 natives, and on this occasion I have administered that sacrament to two more adult natives. All these require the attentive care of a faithful missionary.

"Allow me, therefore, honoured Fathers, to urge on your immediate attention the recommendation of our last District Meeting, in behalf of this place and people, and do not let us suffer the pain and disappointment, and discouragement, of perceiving an omission of Auckland as the head of a new circuit in the Station-List of the next Conference. If you hesitate through merely pecuniary considerations, I would endeavour, in some degree, to meet an objection on that ground by observing that there is every probability of a considerable sum being very soon raised upon the spot towards the support of the Mission, if we only have a Brother here."

WAS THIS ENCROACHMENT?

In connection with the commencement of Methodist services in Auckland a point of peculiar interest arises. Was this not an encroachment upon a field of labour reserved for Anglican occupation, an agreement having been reached on a clear understanding that the Church Missionary Society should prosecute its work without Methodist competition on the East Coast and the Wesleyan Missionary Society have a

corresponding freedom on the West Coast? In other words, was not Mr. Buller breaking a solemn bond between the two Societies?

So much has been publicly advanced, now by this side, now by that, in assertion of perfidy, that it is good to be able to say a complete misapprehension of the facts is at the bottom of every such accusing word. There was a precise agreement as to boundaries. It was signed by the heads of the respective missions in this country, the Rev. Henry Williams and the Rev. Nathaniel Turner, at Mangungu, Hokianga, on the 18th of October, 1838, immediately following a conference between the Revs. Henry Williams, William Williams and Robert Maunsell, on the one side, and the Revs. Nathaniel Turner, John Hobbs, John Whiteley and William Woon, on the other. This conference had before it two letters of the highest authority, one officially expressing the mind of the C.M.S. Committee in London, the other similarly representing the W.M.S. Committee there. With full right, therefore, the responsible men on the field committed their organisations.

It may be said, in passing, that the relations between these organisations in New Zealand were generally amicable to a high degree. Marsden gave his blessing to his friend Leigh's founding of the Wesleyan mission on this side of the Tasman; Mr. and Mrs. Leigh were the invited guests of the oldest C.M.S. group of missionaries pending choice of the pioneer W.M.S. location; the choice of that location was made after shared journeying and consulting; then Anglican hands helped to erect the first dwellings in the new Station, and Marsden himself signed, as a witness, the deed of land-purchase from the local tribe.

This pleasant fraternity continued. There were, later, occasions of difference over certain localities, as both bands of agents extended their borders, and these occasions led eventually to the 1838 compact and its keeping.

It had two clauses, each of local bearing; one prescribed a Wesleyan boundary along the rivers Waikato and Waipa, with a short stretch of defined coast between the Waikato and Whaingaroa heads, the other defined an Anglican boundary where Bay of Islands (C.M.S.) and Hokianga (W.M.S.) spheres were in danger of collision. But certainly there was no East-West allotment of coasts. How, then, did any acrimony arise? From lack of knowledge on the part of some who, stirred to resentment on other grounds, carelessly followed malicious gossip about this undertaking and its alleged honouring in the breach.

MUTUAL GOODWILL.

A clear and full acquaintance with the actual placing of the Stations of the two Societies discovers the fact that the locations did not follow, as a whole, any East and West Coast division. Only an ill-informed mind could hold the current misconception of the position before October, 1838; and as for subsequent days there has still been so

large a measure of mutual goodwill that it seems a frank review of the facts as now better known would be enough to dispose for ever of the error in history and its echo in idle speech.

The whole of the facts make "another story," complete in detail, but here it may be enough to point to Mr. Buller's letters with reference to his experiences in early Auckland—on the East Coast—and note the entire absence of friction and the ready friendship. He rejoiced in an Auckland enjoyment of this same friendship in the course of his superintendency of the Auckland Circuit (1866-9). The second anniversary of Pitt Street Church, Mr. Buller wrote, was marked by "a unique and interesting gathering. Besides ministers of all other churches in the town, we were favoured with the attendance of several Episcopal clergymen: it was during the session of their General Synod. I had the honour of presiding, when Bishop Williams of Waiapu, Bishop Suter of Nelson, the Rev. Dr. Maunsell of St. Mary's, Dean Jacobs of Christchurch, Archdeacon Williams, and other ministers, gave earnest and fraternal addresses ... It was a very gratifying occasion. For once, at least, the spirit of exclusiveness was set aside. My invitation was accepted in the most brotherly manner. I only regret that such catholic comminglings are not more common. Why should they not be? Then should we give a practical comment on the words of the Psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

REPORTS TO LONDON.

Yet again, recourse to Mr. Butler's letters to the secretaries of the responsible London Committee can be usefully enjoyed. In this instance the letter goes from the Rev. John Warren and himself jointly. Mr. Warren was the missionary at Waima, on the southern side of the Hokianga area, and so the next in distance from the new capital. Together with Mr. Buller and the Rev. John Hobbs, provisional Chairman of the New Zealand District after the tragic death of Mr. Bumby in 1840, Mr. Warren shared a visiting oversight of the Auckland extension of Kaipara Circuit.



A LAMENTABLE DEATH.

Here is what they illuminatingly wrote on July 6, 1843, after the opening of this "first Wesleyan Chapel in any European settlement of New Zealand":

"We cannot leave this town for our respective homes without addressing a few lines to you, to go by the first vessel which may sail. You have been apprised that we had obtained from the Local Government an eligible section of land for a chapel and that arrangements had been made for the erection of a neat weather-boarded chapel, 25 by 40 feet. We are happy to inform you that that building is now completed, and, having received notice of its being ready, we met here by appointment last week, Brother Warren proceeding hither by vessel from the Bay of Islands and Brother Buller in his boat from Kaipara.

AUSPICIOUS DAY.

"The chapel was opened for divine service on Sunday last. We regretted that our arrival late in the week did not admit of sufficient time for collecting a native congregation. Brother Warren preached in the morning from I. Corinthians, ii., 11, and in the evening from Isaiah, iii., 5, 'And with his stripes are we healed,' and Brother Buller, in the afternoon, from I. Chronicles, vii., 1. The congregations at each service were very good and remarkably attentive, and we believe that many felt it good to be there—they were seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and we think that we shall ever look back with pleasurable feelings on the day which opened the first Wesleyan Chapel in any European settlement of New Zealand.

"Our prospects here are very encouraging, and a wide and interesting field is open before us. It is matter of congratulation that our chapel is nearly free from debt. About £220 has been expended, and a vestry is to be added to it, which will cost £20 more. Upwards of £200 has been sub-scribed, and nearly all of it paid, and the collections at the opening services amounted to £10 14s 1½d, which was quite as much as we could fairly expect considering the present unprecedented commercial depression and public distress, many being almost in a state of starvation. We confidently expect, however, that the small debt will soon be liquidated.

EXPANSION.

"A large chapel will doubtless be necessary very soon after a preacher shall reside here, and then the present one will answer the valuable purpose of a schoolroom, etc. The little Society is increasing, and we believe there are many who are inclined to say of us, 'This people shall be my people and their God shall be my God.'

"We presume that a preacher will be appointed for this station at the ensuing Conference, and, as we are very impressed with a sense of the importance of this post, we have agreed to recommend, at our approaching District Meeting, that, until a preacher arrive or authority for the removal of Brother Warren, as recommended at

our last District Meeting, this place be supplied by alternate visits of a month or five weeks each. We attach importance to this locality not merely from its being the metropolis of the Colony and the centre of communication, not merely from our encouraging prospects among the European residents, but more particularly on account of the natives. You have already been informed that there are many in the neighbourhood who are connected with our Mission; others are constantly resorting hither from adjacent places; and there is actually no provision whatever for their spiritual instruction."

They proceeded to urge that "a preacher acquainted with the native language" should be sent. In the way of Mr. Warren's suggested removal from Waima to Auckland unexpected difficulties appeared, because of a sudden necessity to fill a gap in the group of Hokianga appointments. This was an early instance of the practical problems incident to any comprehensive "stationing" scheme. It raised the need to decide between competing claims, those of long-established, important "key" positions and those of new openings equally worthy and strategic. When this test was applied there could be no doubt of the desirability of giving Auckland an early appointment, and as to the nature of the appointment it was readily agreed that only "a man of parts" should be selected for it.

SUPPLYING THE NEED.

Mr. Buller himself, early in the year, had expressed to the London Committee his considered opinion that Auckland, likely to grow rapidly in size and already in process of becoming, particularly as the seat of government, a centre of more than local importance, should be deemed entitled to an outstanding English appointment. Thus, even in the same minds, there was a rivalry of thought. In the end, a practical solution was reached. Mr. Warren stayed at Waima; steps were taken to maintain a strong team at Hokianga, still the mission headquarters; and Auckland's progress was assured by the designation of the Rev. Walter Lawry, a proved administrator—he was then in England_ as General Superintendent, to reside in Auckland, in charge of the new Circuit as well as in directive control of the South Seas enterprise.

In 1817, he had been sent from England to Sydney, where he was to assist the Rev. Samuel Leigh. After four years there he went to Tonga as pioneer Wesleyan missionary, only to find little prospect of success. At the end of an adventurous year, he was directed to return to Sydney, and almost at once was deputed to visit England in order to advise the Mission Committee on the work of Methodism in New South Wales and generally in the South Seas. This led to his taking of Circuits in England for nineteen years; but New Zealand urgings for the sending again of a General Superintendent induced the Committee to select him for the post. He arrived in March, 1844.

Pending Mr. Lawry's arrival, the Rev. George Buttle, one of a reinforcement of six reaching this country in May, 1840, supplied the need in Auckland, so becoming the town's first resident Methodist minister. He was able to set in motion arrangements for Mr. Lawry's accession. With that the era of Auckland's eminence in New Zealand Methodism began. The humble status of an outpost of Kaipara gave place to that of head of a circuit. Thenceforth both sides of the local work, Maori and English, had appropriate attention, the former being almost entirely located at Pehiakura, where Epiha Putini's chieftainly influence had been so decisively constant a factor. The Rev. Henry H. Lawry, son of Walter Lawry—the son was 22 when he arrived with his father, then turned 50—spent five years as missionary at Pehiakura from 1850, after periods in Kaipara and at the Native Institution in Auckland. Finally, he was for seventeen years at Waima.



Rev.G.Buttle

CROWDED OUT.

Auckland itself was not destined to be the scene of much normal missionary work for the Maori. The isthmus never recovered from its native depopulation in pre-British days. Only on the outskirts of the town—save for occasional gatherings and visits at irregular intervals—has the Maori been more than a casual figure in its life: the hostelry, for so many years in proximity to the site of the famous saw-pit of sacred memory, is still a significant rendezvous, but its glory, such as it was, has departed. The growth of the stretching city, in whose early days the Maori found exciting attraction, crowded him out eventually, and even the special schools created for the benefit of his race, the Native Institution at Grafton Road under Thomas Buddle and the Three Kings College under Alexander Reid and his successors, could not

withstand the inevitable encroachments of pakeha life. In one respect alone has the whirligig of time brought in any of its boasted revenges. Auckland became and has remained the home of administrative oversight of our Maori Mission. If another compensating feature be sought, it will be found in the quiet efficiency of Kurahuna, Methodist residential school for Maori girls from many districts, at Onehunga, whither the old Mission House at Mangungu was brought, to serve as a parsonage, after the unhappy War of the North in the 'forties had done destructive ill to the historic headquarters of our work for the Maori people.



AUCKLAND IN 1844.

(1) Corner of Queen Street and Shortland Crescent. (2) Shortland Crescent (now Street). (3) Conry, solicitor. (4) Broadbent's store. (5) Cormack, watchmaker. (6) Nathan and Joseph. (7) High Street. (8) Commercial Hotel. (9) Commons' Store. (10) Mackenzie, druggist. (11) O'Connell Street. (12) Gibson and Mitchell (first brick building and the only one at this date except St. Paul's). (13) Brown and Campbell (the firm moved from their raupo whare to this new wooden building, June 2nd, 1841; originally only one storey; the street was filled in 8ft. in front when a second storey was built). (14) Theatre. (15) Lansford and Gardiner. (16) Scott's grocery shop. (17) Exchange Hotel (site now occupied by Bycroft Limited). (18) New Zealand Banking Company, (19) Royal Hotel (now Northern Club). (20) Porter's Lodge, Government House gate. (21) St. Paul's (opened by Bishop Selwyn, May 7, 1843). (22) Captain Tucker's house. (23) Captain Porter's store and house. (24) W. S. Grahame's home and store. (25) Victoria Hotel. (26) Williamson and Crummer's store. (27) Old Government Store (first wooden building erected in Auckland; afterwards The Market). (28) Acacia Cottage—Brown and Campbell's house: recently re-erected in Cornwall Park; oldest wooden building still existing; built June, 1843. (29) Mechanics' Institute. (30) Wesleyan Chapel, High Street (opened July 2nd, 1843). (31) Post Office Custom House. (32) New building, Queen Street (unoccupied). (33) Rich's store.



Rev T. Buddle

AUCKLAND IN PERIL.

That war, by the way, linked in a dramatic touch Tangiteroria and Auckland. John Hobbs, as many will remember, wrote then from Hokianga: "If we ever come out of this storm we may sing that the mercy of God endureth for ever." There that song would have been like matins at midnight. Only at Warren's Waima did the tribesmen hold out loyally against the storm; Buller on the Wairoa had reason to be sorely troubled. From Auckland, where much was known of what was brewing, he received a despatch telling him to make for the city and bring his family.

He took counsel with Tirarau, chief of the region, whose home was but a few moments away from the missionary's. "Don't move," Tirarau advised; "I'll defend you, if defence be needed." Buller stayed, and had reason to be glad. Auckland feared attack, and had basis all too good for the fear. A watch was kept for the expected fleet of war canoes. They did not come. Kawiti, who more than Heke was bent on slaughter and pillage, planned an assault by land, through Tirarau's territory, then along the foot of the Waitakeres and so in a dim dawn to the city, whose eyes were conning the sea. Emboldened by a run of successes, Kawiti's men were eager for this boldest of strokes, and he sent a mes-senger to his kinsman Tirarau with a letter—a typically Maori missive in its figurative wording, the purport of which was a request for Tirarau's consent to the plan.

Tirarau was no saint, but he liked and respected Buller, and to him he took the letter. Thus the answer, in accordance with Maori manners on so vital a matter, tarried a little. Buller counselled refusal, as a duty and a politic action; also he sent off' at once

a warning to the city authorities. Next day, he says, he had the satisfaction of writing, at Tirarau's dictation, a reply firmly though courteously declining co-operation. So the evil scheme was foiled. Now Tangiteroria is no more a missionary site, but it has a monument to the brave days of old, and Auckland owes it a centennial pilgrimage, at least in grateful thought.

MEAGRE MEMORIALS.

The city's own memorials of that far-away contact of missionary zeal, old as the dayspring of Christendom, are meagre in number and bulk. No longer can the consecrated saw-pit be found, and even Mechanics' Bay has lost all semblance of itself. Of the buildings then housing rapt worshippers scarce a trace remains. The last of the series of High Street Churches—“chapels” accords best with the unpretentious language of that time—is with us yet, but its face has been shamelessly lifted and it bears to-day no sure token of its history before being put to other and poorer uses. Even as a magistrates' court, although this change may be condoned when it reminds, by reversal, of the assembly of congregations in a Queen Street court-house and the accommodation of ruling elders in a dock, it suffered lowering of status in supersession of the Gospel by the Law. To have gazed musingly upon the tiny Maori chapel overlooking the harbor shore would have been worthwhile: alas! it vanished in flames.



A Recent View of Mechanics Bay

In Pitt Street Church are two old-fashioned memorial tablets, those in honour of the Rev. J. H. Bumby and the Rev. John Skevington, that were transferred from High Street. These help to carry the mind across the century. The wall-brasses unveiled in this less-ancient House of God exercise, in most instances, a like ministry. Documents, too, survive to tell a tale of great pith and moment. Pitt Street Church itself, dating from 1866, takes us three-quarters of the way back to the beginning.

To tell something of "Pitt Street's" arising and achieving is essential to instructive taking of the backward look. Remarkably, Mr. Buller was associated with this later building of an Auckland Methodist place of worship. He came to take the chief pastorate—"superintendency" is the formal word—of the chief Auckland circuit just after the resolve to build had been ratified by the letting of a contract, and saw the building take shape. Did he sometimes think of the kindred experience nearly twenty-five years before? No doubt he did, and would probably muse often upon comparisons and contrasts suggested by the experience.

THE INFANT CIRCUIT.

Walter Lawry's coming to Auckland introduced an interesting company of ministers. He had ten years of local supremacy—the limit of three years did not apply to missionary appointments—and as associates he had Thomas Buddle (nine years), William Kirk (one year), George Stannard (one year), and Henry H. Lawry (two years). In his first year he was alone; in his second he was joined by Mr. Buddle; thereafter, until 1850, the circuit "team" was four; for 1850-1853 it reverted to Mr. Lawry and Mr. Buddle. When reviewing these details, the fact that the Native Institution, situated where Trinity College now stands, was associated with the circuit, should be recalled; Mr. Buddle was in charge. Less widely known, probably, is the similar association of the Auckland Wesleyan College, long afterwards to become "Prince Albert." The selection of ministers as college principals within the circuit bounds meant a measure of auxiliary pastoral service, justifying at least occasional recognition in chronological lists of circuit appointments, but as this practice was not unbroken it made posterity's knowledge uncertain. Nevertheless, two facts of historical and spiritual value peep out of the Auckland details just read: the infancy of the new circuit was being rapidly outgrown, and the missionary zest so vitally contributing to its birth continued to live in its heart. The men were all of missionary dedication and training.

That phase was to pass. The concentration on European work in accordance with the multiplying settlement of the colony gave of necessity a changing emphasis to preaching and to planning. Auckland knew this, felt it, served it. Yet its Methodism kept, as all Christian activity of any worthy and influential sort will keep, living touch, according to opportunity, with missionary truths and tasks.



OLD QUEEN STREET: HIGH STREET CHURCH AND WESLEYAN COLLEGE.

In 1854 Mr. Buller came to Auckland as Mr. Lawry's successor. He was to have his first responsible acquaintance with a European circuit. Other experiences of the kind were immediately ahead of him, for he stayed but a year before John Whiteley, the martyr of Pukearuhe, Taranaki, in 1869, also undertook European work in Auckland. Names less well known to-day follow: 1856-7, R. B. Lyth and J. H. Fletcher; 1858, Isaac Harding; 1859, Isaac Harding and J. Moorhouse; 1860, Isaac Harding; 1861, Thomas Buddle, Isaac Harding and William Rowse; 1862-4, Thomas Buddle and John Warren.



FIRST HIGH STREET CHURCH.



WESLEYAN COLLEGE AND PITT STREET CHURCH

BAD TIMES AND GOOD.

In that last period occurred the initiation of a project that was being forced by circumstances upon practical attention—the departure from High Street for Pitt Street. This was no sudden, violent wrench, but a gradual withdrawal marked by natural reluctance. At least a few of the High Street congregation must have been glad of time in which to adjust themselves to the impending change.

In these early 'sixties it became evident that the High Street Church was destined, before many years, to reach the end of its remarkable career. Twenty years, in the life of a city in the making amid favourable circumstances—especially the first twenty years—amount to really a long time. Auckland had participated in the bad times as well as the good that had been a common experience in North Island settlement. New Zealand's first decade after the establishment of British law had been a chequered one. It is abundantly right to praise the courage of the pioneers; it showed brightly against the trials they had to encounter, as scattered units or fraternal companies. But even the highest courage cannot remove, altogether and at once, the social and economic factors that make "hard times."

The very year that saw the first church built in High Street ushered in a period to which the term "depression" could have been truthfully applied, save that the people most concerned would have scorned to use it. Even the outbreak of the perilous War in the North could do no more than check enterprise. Life was endangered, but it was not damped. So with economic threat: this could compel adjustment of wants but not loss of the joy of life.



HIGH STREET CHURCH: THE LAST PHASE

SETTING THEIR SAILS.

If those sturdy immigrants ever thought of "the fraction of life" as John Stuart Mill was just then musing on it—as always capable of increase by reducing the denominator of wants as well as by expanding the numerator of acquisitions—they would look at privations with calm. They made no futile efforts to ignore or defy circumstances; they strove to adapt themselves, did gaily without things that didn't seriously matter, were proudly content with make-shifts; in a word, they conquered circumstances by out-flanking them.

That is the philosophy of the saw-pit place of worship, the raupo church and the court-house service. It was exemplified in the simple building depicted as the first church of Auckland Methodism, the earliest "High Street" sketched (so Dr. Morley tells) by H. H. Lawry. It was unpretentious. Another, larger and less impermanent, had soon to be built there, also with a strictly utilitarian motive, for increase of population and a spreading desire to attend made this imperative.

So the story goes. In 1841, an idea; in 1842, a settled purpose; in 1843, an achievement; in 1844, a large congregation fully organised, fit to greet the new General Superintendent as peculiarly his own; in 1847, an edifice still more spacious. However, the development of the city could destroy as well as create, and the High Street success helped to bring its own end: the time had come for Auckland Methodists hopefully to consider the numerator of life's fraction.

MOVING OUT.

The region of High Street was becoming congested with commercial and professional premises; homes had to be found afield; and a prolonging of this movement was to be expected. So a site, deemed adequate for an indefinite future, was purchased at the corner of Karangahape Road and Pitt Street; away out of town, where Karangahape Road was, not long before, a mere track along a ridge thick with fern and manuka.

But there was life in old High Street yet; the days of remembered revival in 1847, when Mr. Buddle and Mr. Kirk rejoiced in a gracious ingathering, were being followed by an aftermath rich enough to be called another harvest. For some years (beyond the building of "Pitt Street" on the purchased site) "High Street" continued to flourish. Nevertheless, the inevitable departure was looming, and the existence of two Wesleyan "down-town" churches came to an end in 1874 with the closing of the older.

Perusal of the first minute-book of the " Trustees of Wesleyan Church property, Pitt Street and Karangahape Road," yields an inspiring picture of great endeavour and great achievement. Not that there were no misgivings, no difficulties, no setbacks. These were neither few nor unimportant. But their resolute facing and overcoming make the achievement all the more splendid.

There was already a second Wesleyan public building in Auckland at the time; it had been put upon a comparatively small section in Hobson Street, on the western side toward the upper end, and was itself comparatively small, 50 feet by 25. Its placing there, for use as a Sunday School, was an earlier pledge of moving out with the expansion of the "metropolis." In this building the trustees of the new site met for their first meeting, on the 2nd of December, 1864.

WAYS AND MEANS.

With a plan of the site before them, these trustees resolved then and there to have the new church erected facing Pitt Street. There was prescience in this decision, although it appears from a unanimous rejection, soon after-wards, of a suggestion to build business premises on some of the land facing Karangahape Road, that the foresight had more to do with the best location of the church than with any hope to make profitable use of the other frontage. Part of the Pitt Street frontage was subsequently sold; but the trustees' first search for requisite funds was made by the familiar road of canvassing for subscriptions. Promises and cash donations were soon forthcoming, yet it has to be said that redemption of some of the promises took, in the view of the trustees, an unconscionable time. Auckland, about this time, was hard hit by the exodus to the Thames, where rich gold-finds were glittering.

TEUTENBERG HEADS.

To the authorisation of the architect "to go to an additional expense of £1000 (one thousand pounds) in his design, including fittings, the object being principally to improve the front," is due a quiet ornateness in that elevation very satisfying to the eye. The fully Gothic treatment of the inset doorways, the prolonging of their drip-stones horizontally right across the facade—a drip-stone, it may be necessary to interject, is a moulding above door or window, to throw off the rain—the decorative work in the windows, the spacing of the added but-tresses, are all features whose absence would have diminished the appeal of the building. Strength and beauty are together set in the upward glance of the approaching worshipper. But how many, among even regular attendants, have noticed the Teutenberg heads? There are twenty of them: four on the finial, four on each tourelle crowning the twin main buttresses, and eight in traditional positions at drip-stone ends. Teutenberg was a renowned Auckland craftsman in stone when Pitt Street Church was built. He decorated the Supreme Court, erected at the same time, with notable gargoyles, and many heads, including those of men famous in English law. The present generation of Aucklanders will remember his work on the front of the old Shortland Street Post Office; when that building was lately demolished there was keen competition for possession of the heads—they were given an august home in the new Law Library at the Supreme Court.



One of the twenty heads carved in stone on the front of the Pitt Street Methodist Church, Auckland. It is on the left of the large central window, at the foot of its drip-stone.



Another of the carved heads on the front of the Church, in a corresponding- position on the right of the window.

These two are understood to be Charles Wesley and his brother John.

Skilful photography has facilitated the reproduction, in this booklet, of the two chief "Pitt Street" heads, those of John and Charles Wesley. They have had seventy-five years of sunshine and storm, but appear to have stood all severities of weather with true Methodist fortitude, though complete escape from injury would have been too much to expect.

RESOURCES TAXED.

To pay for the site and to erect the church taxed resources heavily. It was soon realised that the nature of the ground, added to the considerable slope from the street, necessitated heavy expense for foundations. The architect had to advise that the cost of labour for this initial work would be very high. The mortgaging of the site could not be expected to carry the building costs. Even when the original design was cut down by shortening the building, an outlay of approximately £11,000 was found to be involved. But the trustees battled on.

At one stage, actually after the building was erected, a proposal to seek subscriptions outside Auckland was seriously made. The trustees decided upon an appeal to "the members and friends of the Methodist Churches in New Zealand" for sympathy and liberality. They frankly asked for help "to retain the building for its present use." Upon the widest possible footing they based their plea. "They feel no impropriety," said the circular to be sent broadcast, "in making their application a general one. It is manifestly the duty of all Methodists in Auckland to do what they can in maintaining a place of worship of such acknowledged importance, the loss of which would be seriously felt by the common cause of Christ, and by this denomination especially. The outlying districts have heretofore received much valuable aid from Auckland, and it is fitting that, in this extremity, they should afford their help. This, indeed, is necessary, that they may again be assisted from Auckland, for if the cause be weakened in the centre the extremities must suffer."

Old "High Street" had become a dispensary of financial succour to weaker causes. Now, when its circumstances were so greatly changing with the alteration in city conditions, it could not be expected to continue in the role of Lady Bountiful; "Pitt Street" could reasonably expect to be, first, understudy, and afterwards successor, only if the help so critically required were forthcoming in the meantime. But such an appeal to other Circuits was fatally frowned upon.

The burden of debt, a very heavy one for that time, especially as attempts to raise a loan at a lower rate of interest than 10 per cent. were unwelcome in the money market, was enormous; yet, except for one brief interlude of dismay, the trustees still held on.

In 1879 the debt was still £4000, and the annual charge for interest £274. In spite of this, galleries had been erected—corbels to assist in carrying them had been originally inserted in the brick walls—without adding to the debt. Incidentally, these were found

to have improved the acoustic properties of the church—a relief after experiments with sounding-boards above the pulpit. Also, a schoolroom—it was later known as Wesley Hall—had been built; it cost £1,250. The substitution of a two-storey parsonage of wood for the single-storey house of brick on the site when it was bought, involved the outlay of a further £700; and the same year saw the purchase of a new pipe-organ (£570) and the completion of the galleries along three sides of the church (£800). The prospect of the £4000 total debt evidently created little fear. Courage was justified. Under the leadership of the Rev. William Morley, who in 1879 had become superintendent minister, a scheme to liquidate the debt in three years was launched; before he left the circuit the amount was raised. It was a wholly praiseworthy effort: no bazaar or sale of work was organised, and no appeal of any kind was made outside New Zealand Methodism; while the scheme was in progress the usual revenue of the church increased.

PROFITABLE OUTLAY.

Prior to the Conference of 1887 the building was lengthened by 49 feet upstairs and down; then were added classrooms and “church parlour.” The outlay was £2,580, half of this sum being raised.

Next came the shops scheme (1904). Karangahape Road had become a business centre inferior only to Queen Street. So the parsonage was thereafter to be found in Hopetoun Street, and a fine block of shops was erected. Other changes were made, and soon, instead of being financially embarrassed, the trust became able to assist the development of Methodism elsewhere in the city and beyond.

In 1911 the electro-pneumatic organ was installed, structural improvements in the interior of the church were made, and beautiful windows (memorials to Messrs. R. Arthur, J. Craig, J. Hosking, J. L. Wilson, W. S. Wilson and G. Garrett) were erected. The scheme, which entailed a total expenditure of £2859, was carried through without increasing the trust liability.

BICENTENARY HALL.

The latest of Pitt Street building achievements—let no one speak of it as “the last”—was the erection of the Wesley Bicentenary Hall, a tribute to the glorious influence of John Wesley's profoundest moment of spiritual birth. The contract, for £17,425, was let in the bicentennial year, 1938; the foundation stone was laid on January 28, 1939; on February 3, 1940, the building was officially opened; since then it has inspiringly proved its worth. Of three full floors, each amply lofty, and with convenient basement accommodation, it was designed for utility, as its architectural lines and inner structure indicate, but in due dignity of appearance it accords well with good canons of contemporary taste. Its modernity, in choice of building materials, provision of serviceable lighting and ventilation, aptness of all requisite fittings, it embodies the

spirit of its purpose—a church centre for youth. A main auditorium, seating 330, gives opportunity for the screening of films and the holding of various assemblies, but in all respects full articulation with the soulful ministry of the church has been contemplated. This is being maintained. Altogether, this forward step in organisation, so well initiated and served by the trustees, is calculated to mean progress in every good word and work.



Mr W.S.Wilson



Mr.F.Gardiner

**In worth and work an outstanding
pioneer of Auckland Methodism**



REV. ERU TE TUHI

To recount so impressive a financial achievement is to do more than emphasise a fortunate turn in the tide; it serves to validate the courage in adversity that had proved the deep interest of the trustees and congregation in the mission of the church, an interest that could not be daunted when the outlook was dark. After all, though bricks and mortar are not the Church of the Living God, care and sacrifice for the sanctuary give evidence of the depth of regard in which its sacred purpose is held.

CARE FOR EDUCATION.

To be noted in any but the most inadequate story of Methodism in Auckland is the place given in the city and its environs to educational institutions. The Rev. Walter Lawry was never tired of advocating the value of these to the Church and to missions particularly. Within a month of his arrival in Auckland he addressed a public meeting on the question. After his speech certain resolutions were unanimously carried. The first and second of these were:

"1. That it appears to this meeting very desirable to instruct a selected number of the natives of New Zealand in our language, with a view to their having access to

the stores of English literature, and also to their becoming more efficient teachers of their countrymen in matters of religion and civilisation—to be called the Wesleyan Native Institution.

2. That as the vicinity of Auckland is deemed the most eligible locality for the commencement of such an institution, an early application shall be made to the Colonial Government for a suitable piece of land and also that application be made for the appropriation of a fair and equitable proportion of the funds arising from native reserves." Other resolutions set afoot methods of furthering these objects. The deep interest of Governor Fitz-Roy was enlisted, and a grant in perpetuity was made of land at the corner of Grafton and Carlton Gore Roads, where the Rev. Thomas Buddle resided with young men from Hokianga, Kaipara, Pehiakura, Whaingaroa and Kawhia. The Institution was formally opened in 1845.



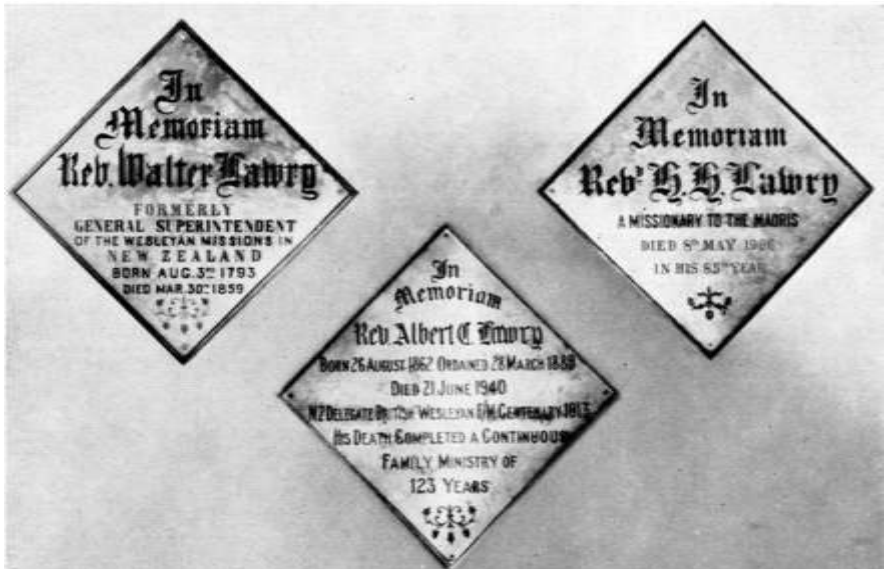
PITT STREET CHURCH AND WESLEY HALL, 1900

In the same year a further grant of land was made at Three Kings, with a view to work of larger scope, industrial as well as mental, moral and spiritual. Sir George Grey, as Governor, laid the foundation stone of the first buildings there on April 6th, 1848. His interest in this venture was long sustained and highly practical. It was to "Three Kings" that the Rev. Alexander Reid came as first Principal, leaving London at the end of 1848. His distinguished career in New Zealand Methodism was as notable in preaching to European congregations as in his principalship. He left an indelible mark upon this country.

Mr. Lawry's insistent agitation for the founding of a school in New Zealand at which, especially, the children of missionaries in the South Seas could be educated away

from prejudicial conditions in the islands, resulted in the creation of yet another educational institution in Auckland, to the control of which the Rev. J. H. Fletcher came. It served a useful purpose for a number of years. The missionaries themselves combined in its financial maintenance as at first a private venture.

Thus a cardinal motive in all the work of the Church was wisely active. There was studious care for "generations following." The conception of a Christian soldiery ever on the march toward beneficent conquest had valiant expression in policy and practice. A conviction deepens, as earlier chapters of our unfinished, still unfolding story are scanned, that the backward look is occasionally essential for the forward step. "The name of hope is remembrance."



123 YEARS MINISTRY



EARLIER MINISTERS

Rev .J.Buller
Rev.W.Kirk
Rev.E.Best

Rev.C.W.Rigg
Rev.W.Morley
Rev.J.Berry

Rev.A.Reid
Rev.H.Bull
Rev.S.F.Prior

Church, New Zealand.

--AUCKLAND (PITT STREET) CIRCUIT

JULY.		PREACHERS.	Plan
2	9		Leaders.
D'w'sb'yrrn Reid 75	Reid c Dewsbury c	A. REID, Parsonage, Pitt Street H. R. DEWSBURY, Parsonage, Ponsonby Road	Mr. Wykes.....
Reid Reid P	Dewsbury Reid	J. HOBBS, Biersford Street I. WARREN, Park House, Ponsonby D. Olphert, Mount Albert R. Wykes, Oxford Street, Newton K. Jessop, Ponsonby	Monday. Rev. Dewsbury Mrs. Woodham
McDow'llr. Newbold T	Hulbert c Field c	J. S. L. COX, Waterview, Whan J. ROSSER, Edwin Street, Newton G. GANSON, Waiokomiti W. Beaumont, Collingwood Street G. Pearson, Karangahape Road	Tuesday. Mrs. T. A. White Mr. Rosser..... Mr. Caradus..... Mr. Buchanan..... Mr. Marshall.....
Buddle 75 D'w'sbury T	Dewsbury c Spence c	H. FIELD, Pompahe-terrace, Ponsonby K. MARKHAM, Liverpool Street K. J. SOUSTER, Norfolk Street, Ponsonby J. GIBSON, Union Street	Wednesday. Mr. Wakery..... Mr. Astley..... Mr. Castle..... Mr. Gibson.....
D'w'sbury P	Dewsbury	F. NURRI, Victoria Quadrant S. BUCHANAN, Ponsonby Road W. CLIFTON, Newton Road S. HALBERT, Canada Street, Newton	Thursday. Ms. Spinal (Caretaker) Mrs. Heron..... Rev. A. Reid..... Mr. Hanson..... Mr. Harris..... Mr. Gittos..... Mr. Wilson..... Mr. Olphert.....
Watkin c Clifton c	Olphert c Buchanan c	J. SHACKLEFORD, Ponsonby Road G. HARRIS, Grey Street W. W. SIMON, Hobson Street T. BARTLE, Hobson Street	Sunday. Mrs. Schnackenberg
Reid c Jessop c	White c Marshall c	ON TRIAL T. W. NEWBOLD, Spring St., Ponsonby W. C. W. McDOWELL, Emily Place.	
Marshall	Dewsbury	S. W. BAKER, Symonds Street	
Watkin c	Marshall c	FROM WESLEY COLLEGE, THREE KINGS	
Jessop g		REV. W. J. WATKIN, Principal J. J. MATHER, Student G. T. MARSHALL, Student.	
Markham T	Souster T	FROM GRAFTON ROAD AND NORTH SHORE CIRCUITS.	
Newbold	Marshall	W. C. OLIVER, Grafton Road W. G. PARSONSON, Farnell J. WALLIS, Carleton Road T. BUDDELE, Grafton Road H. H. LAWRY, Carleton Road J. WHEWELL, Remuera G. W. T. SPENCE, Devonport W. Hogg, Newmarket W. BURTON, Kyber Pass F. A. White, Carleton Road J. Foster, Remuera A. C. IAWRY, Carleton Gore T. Wallis, Carleton Road.	B—Sacrament of 1 S—Sacrament of 11 LM—Leaders' Mes QM—Quarterly M C—Collection for t F—Collection for 1
Harris	Gibson		
Mather			

FROM A PREACHERS' PLAN, 1882

Across a Hundred Years by A.B.Chappell



PITT STREET CHURCH TRUSTEES, 1898

Back Row:

W.White, J.Manson, G.Knight W.Gunson, W.D.Buttle J.W.Shackelford, W.Parkinson ,T.Caley

Centre Row:

P.Crowe, T.McMaster, J.Hosking, Rev.W.J.Williams, T.Buddle, G.Winstone, R.Peak

Front Row:

J.Rosser, H.Booth, T.W.Jones



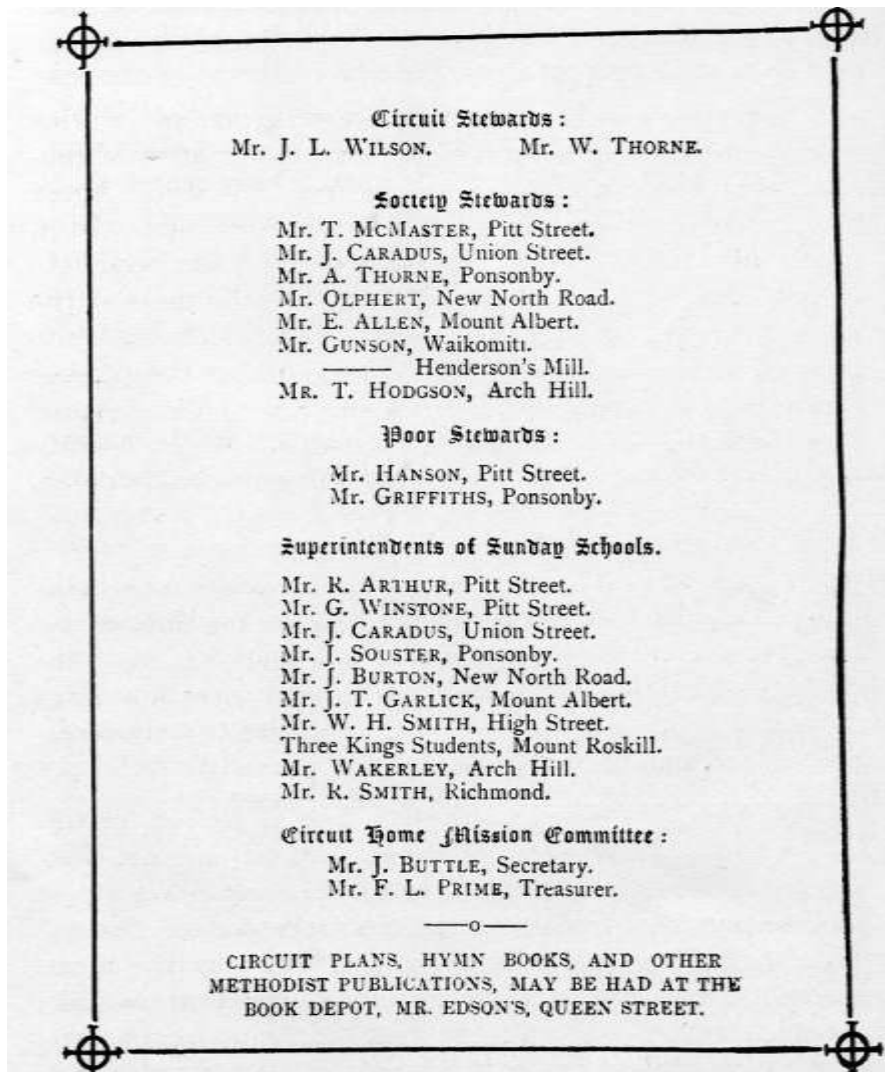
PITT STREET TRUSTEES, 1941

Back Row: G.H.Boyce, O.S.West, A.E.Freeman, J.Knowles

Middle Row: J.W.McElwain, W.C.H.Elliott, F.G.Steinert, C.W.Payne, A.Y.Richardson

Front Row: H.S.Crowe, J.W.Shakelford, Rev.E.T.Olds, H.B.Halstead, J.Stanton

Insets: G.C.Riddell, K.J.Rosser



FROM A PREACHING PLAN 1882



PITT STREET CHURCH AND BICENTENARY HALL, 1941



PITT STREET CHURCH: RECENT IMPROVEMENTS.



LATER MINISTERS

Rev.W.J.Williams

Rev.C.H.Garland

Rev.J.A.Luxford

Rev.W.Ready

Rev.C.H.Laws

Rev.P.N.Knight

Rev.L.B.Dalby

Rev.W.Walker

Rev.E.T.Olds

PITT STREET CHURCH

Succession of Ministers

1866 - 1869 REV. JAMES BULLER
1870 - 1872 REV. CHARLES W. RIGG
1873 - 1875 REV. ALEXANDER REID
1876 - 1878 REV. WILLIAM KIRK
1879 - 1881 REV. WILLIAM MORLEY
1882 - 1884 REV. ALEXANDER REID
1885 - 1887 REV. HENRY BULL
1888 - 1890 REV. EDWARD BEST
1891 - 1892 REV. JOSEPH BERRY
1893 - 1895 REV. SAMUEL F. PRIOR
1896 - 1900 REV. WILLIAM J. WILLIAMS
1901 - 1905 REV. CHARLES H. GARLAND
1906 - 1908 REV. JOHN A. LUXFORD
1909 - 1913 REV. WILLIAM READY
1914 - 1919 REV. CHARLES H. LAWS, B.A.
1920 - 1925 REV. P. N. KNIGHT, B.A.
1926 - 1928 REV. LEONARD B. DALBY
1929 - 1934 REV. WILLIAM WALKER
1935 REV. E. THOMAS OLDS

Acknowledgments

The Auckland Centenary Committee, through the writer, expresses its thanks to those lending valuable assistance in the production of this booklet. The Trustees of Pitt Street Church have taken a practical interest in it by financially sponsoring the publication, and the Rev. E. T. Olds, Superintendent Minister of the Auckland Central Circuit, has proved a constant source of encouragement and a perfect business manager. The Rev. M. A. Rugby Pratt, F. R. Hist. S., Connexional Secretary, has supplied notes of certain facts within his knowledge and sent speedily on request material for several portrait illustrations. Mr. J. W. Shackelford, veteran local preacher and church official of Auckland, has been kindly helpful. Special acknowledgment is due to Mr. J. D. Richardson, of Epsom, for courteously allowing access to his unique collection of historical photographs and for copies desired. Mr. John Barr, Chief Librarian for the City, has with similar kindness permitted use of important pictorial exhibits in the Old Colonists' Museum. The printers, the special photographer, everybody concerned, have been all that could be wished.