ON HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN AUSTRALIA

by

W. ARNOLD LONG

ABORIGINES INLAND MISSION OF AUSTRALIA
ON HIGHWAYS and BYWAYS IN AUSTRALIA

An Account of Missionary Journeys with the L. W. LONG MEMORIAL VAN

With several poems written during those journeys by W. ARNOLD LONG Aborigines Inland Mission of Australia.

Foreword by Rev. Hugh Paton
Foreword

It is a pleasure and a privilege to commend “Highways and Byways” to the public, as it issues forth on its errand of love. It is a fine thing to see a young man carrying on the work so dear to his sainted father and his devoted mother.

Mr. W. A. Long has great gifts of his own. He has laid these unstintedly on the altar of sacrifice. I have had the opportunity of meeting him and of hearing him addressing meetings. I have been impressed by his sincerity, ability, and flaming fervour.

I admire wholeheartedly the magnificent service he is rendering to the dark-coloured folks of this great continent. You will be interested in the story he has to tell, and your prayers and good wishes will be drawn out for his work.

HUGH PATON.
A Note of Explanation

This little book is written primarily for the encouragement of those who, by prayer and sympathetic support, have shared with us the joys and sorrows, the victories and reverses involved in the great enterprise of evangelising the dark people of Australia.

They do not generally have the privilege and pleasure of actually seeing what God is doing in answer to their prayers, and with the gifts so lovingly and sacrificially given. With this in mind the writer has tried to set forth "What God hath wrought," as seen during the travels with the Van which is described in the first chapter.

It is recognised that the work with the Memorial Van is but a very small part of the work of the Mission as a whole. The ground-work of the temple which God is building for His Glory on this field is created, by God's grace, mainly through the incessant toiling of the Missionaries who most gladly spend and are spent in obscure and often difficult places, at personal cost, which is fully observed by the eye of God alone.

To some extent, however, this record will give a general glimpse of the field, though it has been impossible to cover the whole in so small a space. A number of journeys, including those since the return from the Northern Territory, have been entirely omitted and deputation work has been passed over without mention.

Only a few incidents have been given anything like a full description, the principal objects being to present a variety of aspects of the work and experiences encountered along the way of God's leading, rather than a connected account of the journeys referred to.

But what is so imperfectly recorded here will be seen one day in unclouded light, brought to a complete and glorious consummation for, however humble and insignificant this work as a whole may appear, it is the work of the infinitely great and glorious Lord Himself.

W.A.L.
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Dedicated at the Chapter House, Sydney, November 2, 1930. (Photo, Nov. 3)

Memorial Inscription (above driver's seat).

"This Van was provided by the friends of LEONARD WILLIAM LONG, for many years Co-director of the Aborigines Inland Mission of Australia, as a memorial of his devoted service to God and the dark people of Australia.

Born, 17th November, 1871; Died 28th December, 1928.

"They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel 12:3."
The Van and its Work

THE Van around which this narrative centres is a house on wheels as well as a means of transport, having a caravan body fitted with two "bunks," a wardrobe, cupboards and other conveniences.

It has been "a home away from home" in many parts of Australia and in greatly varying circumstances. On quite a number of occasions, in fact, it has been in creek-beds and bogs overnight, but this has made no difference to the sleep of its occupants, who have been able, after a good night's rest, to set about extricating it the following morning.

In the work among the dark folk of Australia this Van has been an invaluable means of travelling across country from place to place and, through its instrumentality, much that would otherwise have been impossible has been accomplished.

It is a 1930 Dodge, a 30-cwt. truck, and the body of it is dark green in colour, with gold lettering on both sides and on the back. The boomerang-shaped inscription of the name of the Mission makes it easily distinguishable from other vans, and even some of the uncivilised dark people in the interior have been intensely interested, tracing over the boomerang outlines with their fingers, though the actual word "boomerang" was unknown to them.

The Van was built as a memorial to Mr L. W. Long, who, on December 28, 1928, laid down his burdens and entered into rest, having laboured for twenty-three years in the work of establishing the Aborigines Inland Mission of Australia, as an agency for carrying the Gospel to the original inhabitants of this continent.

In the April issue of "Our Aim," 1929, it was announced by Mr. J. S. Cousin, Secretary, that:
"The Advisory and Missionary Councils of the A.I.M. have unanimously resolved that an opportunity shall be given to members and friends to contribute to a fund to perpetuate the memory of our late Director, Mr. L. W. Long.

"It was felt that the only acceptable form of memorial would be such as would definitely advance the cause our late brother had so much at heart, i.e., the broadcasting of the Gospel message amongst the Aborigines on our Stations, and in the regions beyond, in the shortest possible time.

"After much consideration it was decided to suggest that this objective would be best attained by inaugurating a fund for the purchase and maintenance of a motor van, to be known as the L. W. Long Memorial Van. . ."

The response was such that by November of that year £170/4/10 was reported to be in hand, and twelve months later the Van was completed, having cost £357. A great many people had, with loving hearts, given amounts that made up the whole, and the dark people themselves had had a share in it out of their scanty supplies. These must have been very precious gifts in the sight of God.

At the Sydney Annual Meetings, November 2, 1930, the Van was publicly dedicated to the service of God among the dark people of Australia, and several hundreds of people gathered around for this service. The following is taken from "Our Aim," November, 1930:

"Rev. A. L. Leeder, Secretary of the Russian Missionary Society, and a member of our Federal Council, conducted this beautiful service. He called on Mr. W. E. Cormack, Vice-president of the Council and Mr. Long's closest friend for thirty-five years, to present the Van to Mrs. Long on behalf of the donors present and the many others throughout Australia who contributed to the cost of the Van, which is to perpetuate the memory of one so greatly esteemed for the work's sake and loved for his own.
“Mr. Cormack gave one of the earliest instances of the late Director’s beginnings in the life of faith, when, as a young Christian, he began to work for the Lord in the slums of the city, and then told what no one else knew until that moment, how Mr. Long had, in the last year of his life, expressed the desire for a motor van to enable him to visit other stations more freely; and now, with Christ, his wish is fulfilled and others will take up the torch and carry on. Mr. Cormack then asked Mrs. Long to accept the Van for the work amongst the Aborigines.

“Mr. Leeder called on Mrs. Long to respond and, in doing so, she told that recently, when climbing the steep hills from Tingha to Guyra, the toils of her dear husband had been brought home to her—he had pioneered on his push-bike under almost impossible conditions and had suffered much to take the Gospel farther and farther out to the Aborigines. She told how graciously God had dealt with her when she dreaded the first sight of the Memorial Van, because it would be instead of him who had been so much to her and to the work, and now she had the son to take the father’s place, and the Van brought joy to her heart instead of sadness. She thanked one and all with deepest gratitude for the beautiful Van now presented to her.

“Mr. Leeder then led in the dedicatory prayer—such a prayer as was the true expression of the desires of every supporter of the Mission. We were lifted into the presence of God and had audience with Him and were answered, and we would henceforth expect the blessing of God upon the beautiful Memorial of that life—so selfless, so earnest, so useful, so radiant with the indwelling Christ, and that wherever the L.W. Long Memorial Van speeds with the Message of Light a trail of blessing will be left behind.”

Having been obtained and sent out by prayer, it
has been maintained on the field by the prayers of God's people ever since; and, through the ministry with the Van, many souls have been eternally saved and there has been blessing in many different ways.

The years that have passed since it was first sent out "into the highways and byways" have shown the wisdom of the choice of this particular motor truck, for it has withstood a severe battering on thousands of miles of very bad tracks, sometimes in wild, rocky country and under almost all conceivable conditions.

It has ploughed through innumerable creek-beds and rivers, bounced over tree-roots, rocks, gutters, and wash-outs. It has been driven for many miles vibrating "from stem to stern" over black-soil which has been chopped up in wet weather by cattle and baked by the sun in that condition. It has climbed over steep mountains—it has "charged" over ranges of sand-hills, and has been bogged in everything from sand to black-soil mud. Yet, in spite of the damage which at times has been unavoidable, the rear axles and differential and other major mechanical parts are serving almost as well as when they were new in 1930.

Most of the Missionaries have travelled in the Van, some for short stretches; some for long distances. It has carried loads to and from Convention gatherings, and at the Conventions has been useful in more ways than one. Numerous loads of luggage and furniture have been carried in it to various places on the field, and many times it has been stacked to the utmost of its capacity, right to the roof.

For example, a marquee which served as home and Church building for the Missionaries at Carowra Tank and Menindee, in Western N.S.W., was picked up and carried in the Van from Brisbane to Sydney and then, later, from Condobolin out to Carowra Tank. Returning from there to Sydney, a Chevrolet truck, which had been for a considerable time in disuse, was dismantled and stacked inside the Memorial Van—all but the bare chassis-frame—and carried over 500 miles to Sydney. Later it was re-assembled on another chassis
and transformed into the utility with which Mr. and Mrs. Thomas travel in the Gulf Country.

Quite a number of loads of firewood have been carried in the Van for Missionaries in various parts of the field, and a load of furniture for the Holiday Home for Missionaries at Davistown was taken up in the Van from Sydney.

We have even had small meetings—business meetings and prayer meetings—in it, and quite a number have found their way to Christ inside the Van. Once at midnight an old man came and knocked at the Van door. Having been convicted by the Spirit of God he came, trembling, to surrender to the Lord. At another time a would-be suicide was arrested by an unseen hand as he was about to take his own life, and he was turned and directed to the Van as he passed near it in the dead of night, and was delivered.

The Van has also been useful at times as an ambulance, for it has carried sick and injured people, both dark and white, to where proper help could be given.

Then, wherever it goes, the texts on its sides carry a message to those who read them. The motto on one side, “Our God is Able” (Dan. 3:17) has encouraged and strengthened many who are Christians, and the text on the other side: Our Message, “Christ died for our sins” (I Cor. 15:3), has at least borne a faithful witness to all who have seen it that the atoning death of Christ is the only way of approach to God for a world of sinners.

Between the Mission stations the Van has now become a powerful link with the hearts of the people so widely scattered, and the welcome it is accorded in almost every place bears its own testimony.

Yet we would like to have seen far more done than has been accomplished through its agency up to the present, and we earnestly pray that it will be used more effectively in the future than it has ever been before for the encouragement of God’s people and the ingathering of many who are as yet outside of His fold.
"Help in Time of Need"

THE phrase at the head of this chapter could be rendered in our every-day English: "HELP, IN THE NICK OF TIME."

So Dr. Campbell Morgan has written, commenting on Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

This describes what has been frequently the experience in the work with the Memorial Van. The means for keeping the Van running have been supplied in answer to prayer—that is the prayers of many intercessors both on the field and "behind the lines." Again and again supplies have run low and sometimes have run out altogether, but in measureless grace God has brought deliverance and often in the most unexpected ways.

One Sunday afternoon early in 1931, the Van was standing in the yard at Chatswood, packed ready for the road. I was due to leave the following morning, but the money for the first stage of the journey was not in hand. Twenty-six shillings more was needed when, that afternoon, a friend came to see me and looked over the Van. He knew nothing of the real position but, as he was leaving, remarked, "There's something over there you might like."

It was a pound-note and this was very acceptable indeed; but still about six shillings was needed to enable me to start on the journey. Within two hours of receiving this one-pound note two little girls brought a contribution of six shillings towards the Memorial Van expenses from the Chatswood Congregational Junior Christian Endeavourers.

More than six years have passed since then, unfolding, like the ever-changing seasons, fresh revelations of the marvellous grace and tender mercy of the God Who answers prayer.
On the human side it would be a story of grievous shortcomings and sins, both of omission and commission, but thank God, "His compassions fail not. They are new every morning. Great is Thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3: 22.)

No doubt it is true that the measure of what can be accomplished in Christian life and service is: "According to our faith" (Matthew 9: 29). But high over all, in shining letters, there is inscribed another—and shall I say greater—truth, for it is all "According to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1: 7).

The Memorial Van is now equipped with a specially made canvas which is rigged like a tent on one side of the Van, making a very convenient shelter from the weather and the roof has a movable section for ventilation, but this was not always so.

During the second summer of these journeys the heat was exceptionally severe and consistent. At Brewarrina the nights were often very oppressive, the temperature once being 112 degrees at nearly midnight. Myriads of sand-flies and mosquitoes invaded the surrounding country and through their attacks one big sheep station lost 50,000 lambs.

At this time, while not wishing for personal comfort, I had felt that it would be an advantage for the work's sake to have a tarpaulin to break the burning heat, and make the Van easier to live and work in. Right in the midst of that summer I received the money for the train fare to Katoomba, where also I had been invited to speak on the work among the dark people.

As the Convention was closing I still had not the means for obtaining a tarpaulin, or indeed for the train journey back. However, just at the end of the time there, an envelope was handed to me containing a cheque for ten pounds—sufficient not only for the needs of the hour but for the tarpaulin and for some other things that made the Van life much easier. Actually I had not prayed for these things. I did not feel at all free to do so, but so full of grace is the Lord of
the Harvest that He literally loads us with benefits (Psalm 68:19), for which often we do not make request and which we do not deserve.

At one time I was camped with a companion beside a river nearly two miles out of a western town. We experienced a week of almost constant rain and the flat country around soon became one great bog. We had come to the end of our financial resources and of our food supplies, when one day we walked into the town through the rain and enquired at the Post Office for mail. There was none, so, being “strangers in a strange land,” we had nothing else to do but to walk back again to the Van.

When we reached the Van we were wet and beginning to feel hungry. But we had not long been back, however, before we saw a horseman riding towards us through almost blinding rain. He opened a sack and pulled out a large parcel which, he said, the baker had given him for “those two chaps with the Mission Van.”

It was a parcel of bread, buns and cakes, and proved to be the forerunner of larger supplies with which shortly afterwards the God of all grace, met our needs. The baker had no idea as to how we lived and certainly had no knowledge just then of our position.

Looking back now over the short experience that has been mine on the Mission field one great feature of it all is the marvellous variety of ways in which God meets the needs of His children. If He does not send in abundant supplies He often makes what appears to be insufficient for the demands of the occasion to be sufficient for the next step and then when that is taken the needs are met from other sources.

On several occasions the Van has been driven till practically the last drop of petrol has been used in arriving at a place. This happened when journeying to Carowra Tank in the west of N.S.W., (see Providential Channels, page 66), at another time in the New England district and once in the Northern Territory.
The first time when such an incident occurred was when Mr. L. Buck, from Melbourne, came with me in the central-west of N.S.W. We were approaching the Bulgandramine Station and when we examined our pockets we found that all we had left was a half-penny! We calculated that we had just about enough petrol to take us to our destination or perhaps a little short of it.

"Hallelujah," exclaimed Mr. Buck, "I wish the Lord would land us out a hundred miles from nowhere with nothing at all so that we could see how He would deliver us!"

We arrived safely at Bulgandramine but after the Van was "parked" we found that the petrol tank was dry.

I have often thought of Mr. Buck’s words since then, when placed in the midst of difficult circumstances, and the inspiration of such a life lived in the atmosphere of God’s presence has been a source of encouragement and strength.

When driving some Missionaries to a railway station in the west, some time ago, a slight accident occurred which caused considerable delay. A section of the tail-shaft of the Van came adrift when we were travelling at considerable speed across the plains. The damage was repaired at a big garage in the town which we were approaching—several mechanics working on it for some hours.

It seemed certain that the cost would be heavy and someone told me that I had taken the Van to the dearest place in the town. But I felt sure that we had been guided aright and prayed that the charge would not be excessive. We went away to a church meeting that night and afterwards I went down to get the Van, taking all the money we possessed at the time. It was two pounds five shillings and the bill could easily have been for a much greater amount. The garage proprietor said as he handed me the account, "I have cut it down to the minimum for you and charged the bare cost price for the work and material." I thanked him and fully be-
lieved what he said. The bill was for £2/4/9 and I came away with threepence change!

On another occasion when some friends were working on the Van in Sydney they asked me to go into the city to buy several mechanical parts. They did not know that I had just about half the money needed, but another friend who was in the motor-trade, went with me and using his own name, obtained a discount of fifty per cent!

On a large station in N.S.W., the dark folk had pressed me to tell them definitely when I would be leaving, so I fixed on a day during the following week though I had no exact schedule just then.

However, I worked out a programme accordingly, not knowing what they had in view. On the last night I found the church building crowded to overflowing. They had arranged a special farewell meeting and gave items and testimonies and then produced several gifts which touched my heart very much. But strange to say, I was there at this farewell meeting and had not the means to make the move to the next station! It seemed a very peculiar position to be in, but I asked God to banish all fears far from me and give me the faith to believe that when all ordinary avenues were closed He could bring help from some unexpected quarter. It was an unexpected deliverance indeed for the dark people themselves handed me a purse with nearly 30/- in it and the next morning the manager of the station presented me with a four gallon tin of petrol!

How wonderful is that grace which comes to the rescue when needful, like the lightnings's flash, and "IN THE NICK OF TIME."

"God is the refuge of His saints,
When storms of sharp distress invade,
Ere we can offer our complaints,
Behold Him present with His aid!"
The Overshadowing Wings

DOWN on the Murray River, at the Cummeragunja Station, a dear old dark lady was nearing the end of life’s pilgrimage. She was tired and weak, and her face was very wrinkled and withered, but there was no diminution of the life of the Spirit within. She loved to hear God’s Word, though her failing memory could no longer retain the sentences, and she delighted to have prayer offered by her bedside.

One day I read to her the Ninety-first Psalm and explained simply some of its beautiful promises. When we came to the verse, “He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust,” she grasped the fact that as a mother bird covers her little ones in the nest, so does the Eternal God cover and shelter with the wings of His protecting care the children of His love.

That thought gripped her mind and heart, and she wanted the text read again and again. On every subsequent visit she would ask—“What’s that verse about the wings and feathers?”—and once again she would listen enraptured to those words: “He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust.” This thought was a source of never-failing consolation and joy to her heart, and right on to the end of her earthly life she rested and gloried in the realisation of God’s overshadowing presence.

I, too, would like to bear a testimony to the fact that throughout all the experiences with the Memorial Van, there has been abundant evidence to prove that the Van and its occupants have been covered with the shadow of God’s wings, and, as Dr. Joseph Parker once said, “That shadow is stronger than a thousand shields.”

Though the journeys have involved travelling on many bad tracks, never yet has there been a breakdown beyond the reach of immediate help, or beyond
the possibility of repair on the way. It takes only a little thing at times to put a car completely out of action, and many such things have happened with the Van, but almost always at towns or places where they could receive proper attention and where whatever was needed could be obtained.

When driving down alone through a desolate part in the south of the Northern Territory, I met two people in a car, stranded on the track, which had been almost completely obliterated in places by recent rain. They had smashed a rear axle, and no other car or vehicle had been along that way during the five days in which they had been there. While talking with them I realised how I myself might easily have been in a similar plight but for the watchful care of our God, Who “neither slumbers nor sleeps.”

I was travelling through rough country in a four-hundred-miles stretch in which there was no township of any kind. Some distance farther on there could be seen a great expanse of country rolling away to the west, bounded by rugged and desolate hills. On the opposite horizon were ranges of hills also, where no human beings lived; and there was an overwhelming feeling of desolation about it all. There were no birds to break with their music the tremendous silence that brooded over the scene, and no animals anywhere apparent to enliven the death-like stillness.

The Van was not in the best of condition, and had had a rather severe gruelling on the journey. Just then a feeling of great loneliness crept over me, and disquieting thoughts took possession for a while. I had not been able to carry much in the way of food supplies and scarcely any mechanical parts for the Van; and anything might occur.

So it seemed for a few moments, but then a little lizard ran across the track and into the scrub nearby. As I watched the lizard some texts from God’s Word floated as it were before me: “Thou openest Thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.” (Ps. 145:16). “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings,
THE VAN

1. On a bush track.
2. Crossing a creek.
On a Queensland bush-track.

On the Bridge at Wilcannia.
and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:6-7).

"Ah yes," I thought. "If God can care for that little lizard away out in this desolate wilderness, how much more will He care for me?"

So the thoughts of doubt and fear vanished, giving place to a wonderful sense of the presence of the Eternal God, under Whose all-covering wings there is peace which cannot be disturbed.

* "Then, then I feel that He,
   Remembered or forgot,
The Lord is never far from me,
   Though I perceive Him not.
In darkness and in light,
   Hidden alike from view,
I sleep, I wake as in His sight,
   Who looks all nature through."

On another occasion it was necessary to travel alone from Broken Hill to Sydney, and the route followed was through Wilcannia and Cobar, to Nyngan, and thence on the main Highway to Sydney. At Broken Hill I had very much desired to obtain another tyre for the Van, as a blow-out had occurred more than two hundred miles back, leaving me without a spare tyre, while two, at least, of the tyres were weak.

But although the needs were supplied for the expenses of the journey, there was nothing in hand for a tyre, and there was no time to be lost just then. I could do nothing else but leave without one, and trust the Lord to see me safely through.

The road leaves the railway-line at Broken Hill, and there is a stretch of nearly 300 miles to the next rail-head at Cobar. On this part of the journey there is no town or township, except Wilcannia, on the Darling River. Before reaching Wilcannia I made the disturbing discovery that one tyre had developed a slight bulge and appeared likely to blow out at any time.

* Montgomery.
While driving along I was making some calculations about the journey, and found myself asking: "I wonder if that weak spot will hold out?" Then the answer came: "If there were no weak spot there would be nothing for God to cover!"

The very simplicity of the thought took me by surprise. Why, of course, not! Then why had I been doubting? Thus the fears and questionings were dispelled and did not return again.

After another two hundred miles or so had been left behind I was surprised to notice that a second tyre had developed a bigger bulge than the other, and looked very ugly. However, there was nothing else to be done but to commit it to the care of our Heavenly Father, and drive on. At last Sydney was reached. The two tyres had held out just long enough, and the next morning another discovery caused me to realise that there were other things that had not been reckoned on, but which had been taken into account in the Divine plan, for the battery had "died" overnight! It was of no further service, but had seen the journey through. Such instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely, for these are but typical of the continuous experience of the covering mercy of our unfailing God.

How often in little things, even more perhaps than in great matters, do we see and wonder at the greatness of God's loving care for us! "His tender mercies are over all His works." They are spread as a covering over all that comes within the ambit of His mighty work of Redemption in the midst of a hostile and sinful world.

If God has numbered the hairs of our heads, how much more has He noted the coins in our pockets, our personal weaknesses, the difficulties that confront us and dangers that threaten! And as we thread our way through the maze of circumstances from day to day, conscious of our own helplessness, the more that earthly aids fade away the more we may be conscious that we can never be removed from "under the shadow of His Wings."
GLORIOUS CERTAINTIES

I KNOW not how the Light of Life
Dawned on this heart of mine,
But KNOW that I, “from death to life”
Have crossed the border line,
And beams of that approaching Day
On all my pathway shine. 1 John 3, 14.

I KNOW that all the ways of life,
Though hard to understand,
Are but an index to reveal
The movements of God’s hand,
As “all things work together” by
Unerring wisdom planned. Romans 8, 28.

I KNOW that if this earthly tent
Shall crumble and decay,
I “have an house not made with hands”
In realms of endless day,
Where I shall dwell secure, when heaven
And earth shall pass away. 2 Corinthians 5, 1.

I KNOW that when my Lord, in
Flaming glory shall appear—
When I “shall see Him as He is”
And meet Him in the air,—
“From glory unto glory” changed,
I shall His likeness bear. 1 John 3, 2.

On earth I only “know in part”
And walk by faith alone,
But then, with perfect vision, I
Shall “KNOW as I am known,”
In golden light, within the veil,
To worship at the throne. 1 Corinthians 13, 12.

Yet “whom I have believed—I KNOW”
In Him I live and move,
Not having seen His face, but having
Felt His boundless love,
That thrills my soul and draws me on
His faithfulness to prove. 2 Timothy 1, 12.

I “KNOW Him”—yes, I know Him; but
I long to know Him more,
Press on to greater heights of love
Than I have known before—
Whate’er the price that I must pay
This side the heavenly shore—
Lord Jesus! Draw me closer to
Thyself for evermore. Philippians 3, 8-10.
Our Unerring Guide

After some months in the southern districts of New South Wales, the Van was turned in a north-westerly direction from Balranald to Menindee, a distance of approximately 220 miles. A dark man, whose home was at Menindee, accompanied me on that stretch of the journey, and we set out intending to drive right through on that day.

We left Balranald later than we had anticipated, and were delayed a little on the way. Night came on when we still had more than fifty miles to cover, and just then we branched off the main road, which in those parts is really only a wheel track, and a bad one at that. We took another course which leads to the Darling River about sixteen miles north of the Menindee township and eight miles north of the Aborigines’ Reserve. The country there is very uninviting, and there are sandy ridges to be crossed over.

The dark man who was with me acted as guide and undertook to take me by a shorter way on an old disused road, through one part of the country. It was harder to follow, however, at night than in the daytime, and before we could realise what was happening we were off our course and were floundering around in low, sandy hills, dodging rabbit burrows and dead timber and other obstacles. The dark man directed me for a considerable time, until at length I asked, “Are you sure we are going the right way?”

He laughed, and said, “You can’t lose me, Mr. Long!”

We continued twisting and turning on this “obstacle race” over the hills, and eventually came on to the old road again. This time we were able to keep on it until we came to a better track, though in places it was only faintly discernible by the headlights of the Van.

Our dark folk are wonderful guides and, in addition to their keen observation of everything in nature, they have that mysterious sixth sense of orientation which
enables them to find their way homeward in the darkest night and in country with which they are unfamiliar.

But we, as children of God, have always at hand an infallible Guide to Whom every turn of our way is known and Who sees the future as clearly as the present. The supplying of His children’s needs is not more wonderful than the Divine guidance which is available to us in all the circumstances of life.

Looking back on the journeys with the Memorial Van it is evident that over all the errors and failures on the human side, there has been spread a covering of heavenly guidance through the wonderful grace and “manifold wisdom of God.” This has been seen in things both small and great, both temporal and spiritual.

On one of the early journeys Mr. L. Buck, from Melbourne, travelled with me for a time. At one stage we were directed by a circuitous way, because of recent wet weather, to the next stopping place. We had not gone far when we came to a place where several ways met, and took the wrong turning—or, rather, a different one from the way we had intended to go.

The road was wet and in some places under water, so that our progress was rather slow, and by the evening we came to a house, where we made some enquiries. We were surprised to learn that we had come by a private road to this house, and by doing so had shortened our journey by nearly twenty-five miles! We were yet more surprised to find that the people in the house were Christians, and they invited us to stay there for the night. We had good fellowship together, and the next morning they insisted on giving us some petrol from their drums before we went on our way.

Those Christians who live in isolated country places greatly appreciate a visit from others of like mind, and we have, at various times, met quite a number of these scattered children of God in circumstances
that plainly reveal the touch of God’s hand over-ruling all things to guide us in His way and give us the wonderful surprises of His love.

Once when Mr. Taylor and I were on our way through Queensland to the Northern Territory, we pushed on for about two hours after dark to reach a little township for the night.

We seldom did any night travelling, for it is much easier to miss the way on bush roads at night than in the daytime, and it is so much easier to “strike camp” while there is still some light on the scene.

On this occasion, however, we each felt that we should go on to the township which, after sunset, was still over forty miles away. Personally, I had an “inkling” that God had someone whom He desired us to meet that night, and there were silent prayers for direction ascending all along the way.

When at length we arrived at the township we did not know if there were a creek or river nearby, or any suitable camping spot, so we called at one of the homes to make enquiries.

The lady of the house asked what we were, and on learning that we were Missionaries invited us to bring the Van into her yard for the night. She was quite excited, and gave us a very warm welcome and asked if we had had our tea. We replied that we had driven on in order to arrive there as early as possible, so had not yet stopped for tea, but had it with us. She commenced preparations at once, and before long we were sitting at the table by a warm fire (it was winter-time) enjoying a good meal.

This was a Christian home. The eldest son was away in another State training for God’s work, and we had a happy time with them. They did all in their power to make us comfortable, and we, too, were able to help them a little in the spiritual life, leaving a supply of literature behind and having a time together around God’s Throne before we went on our way again the following morning.

How good it is to be in the way of God’s leading!
His ways are infinitely better than the very best plans we could ever devise for ourselves!

When travelling alone in Queensland several years ago, one part of the journey was a stretch of nearly three hundred miles between two towns, and the cattle stations were few and far between.

Approximately half-way through this part of the country I began to realise that the track had been steadily swinging away from the direction which I should have been following.

I had not seen any other track turning off, so kept on until at length a small homestead came into view. There I learned that I was “miles out of the way.” They directed me by another way across the hills, and said that if I could follow some tracks, which were only faint impressions on the grass, I would come out eventually on to the “road,” which I had somehow missed.

But three bushmen had been the only ones to go that way before, and, after making a very steep ascent from the bed of a creek a mile or so out in the bush, I could no longer discern any marks which might serve to indicate the way the others had gone. So I turned back and doubled over the Van tracks and set out to find where I had previously missed the way.

When darkness came on I gave up the search for the night, having (as I afterwards found) already covered approximately sixty needless miles through having missed the way. I had been sick and unable to eat anything that day, and had begun to think that the task of finding the right way was becoming well-nigh impossible just then.

So I lay down to rest for the night, and arose early the next morning, but felt a little disheartened and almost disinclined to try to find the way. I had been watching the petrol supply, and could not afford to waste any more, for the nearest town must have been approximately 150 miles distant. The weather was still fine, but the clouds were gathering and the outlook altogether was not at all bright.
So I turned to the Word of God for a few moments before setting out again. It was with a thrill of delight that my eyes lighted on the text, “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye.” (Psalm 32:8.)

How blessed to have such a guide! In a very short time I discovered the turn-off which I had passed several times on the previous day. The grass had grown over it, so that it was rather easy to miss just at that point, and the photograph facing page 17 will show something of what the track was like just there. It was not far from the spot where the photograph was taken.

The rest of the journey was accomplished safely, and the petrol supply was sufficient to meet the requirements.

One thought deeply impressed itself on my mind through that experience. The Lord has said, “I will instruct thee and teach thee IN the way,” etc., and the inclusion of that word “IN” makes a great deal of difference.

When travelling through strange country, no matter what directions we have been given, if we are left to our own resources in following them, there is always the possibility of being lost. Apart from the fact that new tracks may be made, turning off in other directions, or that old ones may be obliterated by the weather or other causes, we ourselves may make mistakes, with perhaps disastrous consequences. But if we have with us one who knows the country and who, like the dark man already referred to, simply cannot be lost, then we have no need to fear, for every turn we have to make will be pointed out, and we will not be left in doubt for a moment.

So it is in the greater things of life, as we come to any place of perplexity “thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it.’” For our Heavenly Guide has said, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee: Lo, I am with thee alway, even unto the end of the world.”
NOT only is the Lord an ever-present Guide in the way, but He has also undertaken to open the way for us in places where no way exists. He is not only omniscient, knowing and seeing all things, but He is omnipotent, and His arm which parted the sea for the Children of Israel can make a way for us in any circumstances which may arise.

"Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters . . . I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." (Isaiah 43: 16,19.)

On the journey in 1936 to the Northern Territory, my companion, Mr. G. W. Taylor, and I had been repeatedly in difficulties in Queensland through wet weather, with the consequent flooding of creeks and rivers, and the bogs and "washouts" created along the way.

We had come through the worst of our troubles, and the weather seemed to have cleared and become more settled when we arrived at Winton and spent a few days there. The morning we were leaving, the sky was again heavily overcast, with light showery rain falling occasionally.

The weather forecast, received by wireless in the town, predicted rain, and by all appearances this would shortly be fulfilled.

We were aiming at driving right through to Cloncurry that day, a distance of approximately two hundred and fifty miles, chiefly through black-soil country. When discussing the situation both Mr. Taylor and I were strongly inclined to push on, regardless of the threatening weather, and trust that God, Who, we believed, was guiding, would also guard us from further trouble and hold back the rain.
Had we been caught in heavy storms, our plight would have been a bad one, and had the rain then been followed by a recurrence of wet weather, without sufficient interval for the country to dry up, we would have been in a serious position.

But we felt that the word of command was “Forward,” so we set out, and by about 1 o’clock had reached Kynuna, a little township one hundred miles north-west of Winton, and there we stopped to have lunch.

We had been watching during that one hundred miles’ drive a very peculiar thing. While the sky was heavily overcast there had always been light ahead, in the direction in which we were going. The clouds had been parted as by an unseen finger, and directly over our track there had been a thin line through the clouds all the way.

We had seen storms bursting at times on the northern side and in the south, but this division in the clouds continued in a north-westerly direction exactly over the way we were taking, and it was still stretching away ahead of us. Once or twice the rain that was falling on either side overlapped a little, and for several miles we passed through light rain, but not sufficient to cause any difficulty. Then the clouds parted again, and we continued on our way with dry ground underneath.

After lunch we pushed on again, and still into the evening that parting in the sky extended above our pathway. At length we left behind the black-soil country and began winding among the stony hills that surround Cloncurry. Before long the lights of that town came into view, and we “struck camp” for the night.

Throughout the day we had been praying that we should be brought through without further hindrance, and we had seen the answer to those prayers in a way that we could not have anticipated.

As we were driving along through the day there
came to mind some fears lest we should be caught in the storms that were threatening, but each time those thoughts arose the answers to them came in the form of several texts from the Word of God:

"Did I not say, 'When thou passest through the waters?'" the voice of God seemed to ask. "Did I not say to the disciples, 'Let us go over to the other side?'"

Through, through, through the waters! The words sounded in my mind again and again and again. What more assuring words could we wish for, yet how prone to doubts and fears is the human heart! How often we need the words of encouragement that God has given to His trembling children, "Fear not!"

Throughout the rest of this journey into the Northern Territory, and especially amid some rather trying experiences through which we passed, those texts, which gave assurance that God Himself would conduct us through in safety, were ever and anon coming to mind. In the midst of those experiences the verses on Page 30 were written.

Those who travel in the inland know how serious can be the consequences if they are overtaken by storms in bad country.

Not long after the Van had come down from the Northern Territory a mail-lorry was fearfully bogged for several weeks between Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, and those who travelled with it were living on a small cargo of eggs and biscuits carried for some of the storekeepers in the town. Almost innumerable stories could be told of such mishaps, and much more serious ones, caused through bad weather in the outback, and it is no wonder that the storm-clouds which cause little thought in cities and towns are regarded with dread by the travellers in the great open spaces.

Times out of number on the various journeys with the Memorial Van, and especially when travelling alone, the sky has been carefully scrutinised and some-
times with anxious thoughts. And, again and again, the words of one of William Cowper’s hymns have come to mind:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are big with mercy and will break
With blessings on your head."

How true are these words in all the varying experiences of the children of God! The storm-clouds of the sky are not so appalling to a lonely traveller as are the storms of the spiritual realm to the soul that seeks to press on the pilgrim way to the Celestial City. And how often do we expect God to work according to our ideas and bring deliverance in the way we think best!

In the springtime of 1934, when driving across to Ingham, a town on the coast of Queensland, 80 miles north of Townsville, a tyre had been damaged in rocky places on the mountains. Before leaving Townsville I had purposed obtaining another tyre, but although the money was supplied for the petrol and other incidentals of the journey, there was not sufficient for anything else. I had been praying that this need should be met, but the prayer was not answered—at least, not in the way that I had anticipated. But another thought came to mind: "If God does not supply the money, why not trust him to take you safely through without a spare tyre?"

This thought was new to me. It would be considered madness to attempt a long journey without a spare tyre, and especially in country such as I would be traversing. The route was through Charters Towers, thence through a long stretch (nearly 300 miles) of bush to Clermont and Emerald, and on a winding course south. In fact, it is the custom with many travellers to carry two spare tyres on such journeys.

Still, remembering that God has said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are My ways your ways,"
I set out, trusting God to take the Van through in safety.

For 2,000 miles the journey was continued southward, touching several Mission Stations on the way. There was a succession of difficulties of various kinds on this journey, but with the tyres there was not a moment's trouble, in spite of the fact that they were not in good condition.

In various ways all the other needs of the journey were met, and thus, not according to human ideas, but according to the thoughts that are higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth, the way through was opened, the way of the will of God, and that is the safest highway in the world.
"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee."

"THROUGH the wilderness" He led them, whom His arm did save
From the bondage of the tyrant, from the watery grave—
"THROUGH the waste and howling desert." THROUGH the trials sore,
As a mother bears her infant, so His own He bore.

Now the mighty King of glory, with His own right hand,
Leads His blood-bought children onward to the Promised land;—
THROUGH the floods and THROUGH the fire, THROUGH the trying hour,
Guiding by His matchless wisdom, guarding by His power.

THROUGH the days of blessed service, THROUGH the vale of tears,
On to the eternal ages, THROUGH the fleeting years,
THROUGH the rough and thorny pathway, up the mountain height;
"THROUGH the Valley of the shadow" into realms of light.

As of old into the tempest, spake the Prince of Peace:—
Calmed the fears of His disciples, bade the tumult cease,—
He shall bring us THROUGH in safety to the other shore,
Where the noise of troubled waters we shall hear no more.

Even now the floods that threaten cannot overwhelm
When, within the frailest vessel, Christ is at the helm;
Darkest clouds must all pass over, fiercest storms subside,—
Every night of raging tempest has its "other side."

Do the skies above thee darken—billows round thee roll?—
Stormy winds of fierce temptation beat upon thy soul?
Hear the words of our Redeemer—words forever true:
"Fear not; I the Lord am with thee—I will bring thee THROUGH."
The Response of Love

It has been frequently said that the dark people of Australia are ungrateful and unresponsive to those who try to work in their interests. If it were true altogether it would not be surprising in view of the past terrible wrongs suffered by these almost defenceless people at the hands of the white race, and in view of the contempt in which they are still held by a great many who imagine that the colour which is but skin-deep is an indication of the quality of the personality within.

But we hold that as a general rule this is not by any means true. In fact we feel that their response to genuine love and sympathy far exceeds that which is shown by the majority of white people. It is true that they are not all alike and that sin, which hardens human hearts everywhere against God and against the influence of His righteousness and love, has an awful blighting effect on their characters too.

But is it not a fact that wherever the Gospel is taken, those who hear and do not respond to its invitation, inevitably become hardened against it in the course of time? Indecision becomes indifference and indifference hardens into rebellion. This applies to every race and nation on earth and the dark people of this country are no exception to the rule.

But from a great many of their lives there has been a whole-hearted response to the call of Christ and they have rallied around His ambassadors with a great readiness to do all possible to help.

The first Mission station which the Memorial Van visited was Karuah, thirty miles north of Newcastle (N.S.W.).

This is an old established centre where the Word of God has been deeply entrenched for over thirty years. Before we moved on to other places the Christians held a little meeting among themselves and decided
to give us ten shillings out of some money which they had saved towards the expenses of painting their church building (See photograph on opposite page.)

They had built this little church twenty years previously and have maintained it in splendid order ever since.

Now, while suffering from the re-action of the worldwide trade depression, the men being able to obtain very little work, they insisted on giving nearly all the money they possessed to help us on the journey.

But God, Who watched the widow casting her all into His treasury, did not fail to note this loving sacrificial gift. The General Manager of Bergers Limited, paint manufacturers in Sydney, heard of this incident and gave them all the paint they required to renovate their church building, both inside and out.

Needless to say, they were full of rejoicing at this bountiful provision and expressed their gratitude both to the gentleman who thus interested himself in them, and to the Giver of every good and every perfect gift.

A similar incident happened recently at Walcha in the New England district. I had been showing lantern slides, both of the Life of Christ and of the work of the Mission in many places.

The Christians there were deeply impressed with the account of the carrying of the Gospel to those who, far out in the Northern Territory, have been sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. At the close of a meeting, just before we left Walcha, one of the people came forward to announce that they had decided to give towards the expenses of the Van, twenty-four shillings which they had saved over a considerable period, for the purchase of a gas-light for their church services! They wanted to help send the Gospel farther afield to their own people who had not had the same privileges which they enjoyed.

After the meeting various ones put small amounts into my hand. One little fellow gave me a penny, another said, "Mr. Long here's frippence for you."

How wonderful is such generosity, which holds noth-
ing back, but gladly gives all, that the work of the Lord may be helped forward!

What could not be done if God’s people everywhere were to give as these people do?

When on the journey to the Northern Territory, with the Memorial Van, a letter was received from the native church at Normanton, North Queensland, with thirty shillings enclosed towards the expenses of the journey.

The church members themselves were, eight years ago, living in the darkest night of ignorance and heathen superstition and now they were doing their best to help spread the glorious gospel message, which the Missionaries had brought to them.

They assured us of their prayers as we sought to carry that Gospel to those of their people who were in bondage still. Most of these Normanton dark folk are extremely poor. Some of them get no money at all and most of them handle only about two shillings a week usually, besides rations and some clothing.

They rarely enjoy anything which makes for comfort and pleasure in life. But they have found the fulness of joy in Christ and nothing is too much for them to do for Him.

In a western district of New South Wales one of the Christian men said to me one day, “I was thinking about the expense of the Van, and would like to help; I haven’t got any silver but there is a fox-skin and a bag of rabbit-skins at home. You can sell them and have the money for the Van if you like.”

I was taken by surprise and for a moment thought of refusing, for it seemed too much altogether to accept such a sacrificial gift. But as it had been offered from a heart full of love to the Lord I felt that I could not refuse, knowing that the Lord Himself accepts all such offerings and counts them as some of His choicest treasures.

A book could be written filled with such incidents, for the love of our dark people has been expressed in countless gifts and actions such as these.
On most of the stations the dark women have come themselves to offer to do our washing, and they have, times out of number, brought along things which they have cooked for their Missionaries. In many ways their thoughtfulness has meant more to us than we can ever tell.

Often the little children bring bundles of sticks to the Missionaries for lighting the fire, and cheer our hearts with presents of flowers and other things that reveal the warmth and simplicity of their love.

How much more must their beautiful and unaffected devotion delight the heart of the great Friend of the little children, "for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven!"

Early one morning on a New South Wales station there was a knock at the door of the Mission house in which, at that time, I was staying alone. Three tiny children had come along with mushrooms which they had gathered. One had a small sheet of bark carrying her contribution and her brother had his on a piece of an old kerosene tin. Some time later when I was leaving this station the father of these little ones arose very early in the morning to cook an emu-egg cake for me to take on the journey.

One day at Angledool, in the north-western district of New South Wales, an old blind women sent a little boy over to enquire if my companion and I would like a fish. We replied with thanks that we certainly would and later a Murray cod was sent over nicely cooked and on a clean plate. We learned afterwards that this old blind women had been fishing for half a day and had caught only one fish!

At the same place another, who had been working nearby, brought over a basket of groceries. I have known a dark woman in another part to drive fourteen miles by sulky to a town for the sole purpose of buying some presents to give in the same way.

Gifts of coloured coral from Palm Island; feather flowers from the southern district; boomerangs, spears
and numerous other things have been received—and who could refuse to accept any such offerings, or count them as anything else but treasures?

And these are not all of the ways in which loving appreciation is expressed. We have heard in many places the out-pouring of prayers of thanksgiving to God for sending them Missionaries who have left all to bring to them the unsearchable riches of Christ.

At a country town in New South Wales I had been working for some time among the dark folk scattered on several camps round about. Only one family lived in the town in a rented cottage—and that because of the father’s ill-health. To this home I had been invited to tea towards the close of the time there, but on arriving, I was greatly surprised to find the dark people from the camps there too.

“What have you done?” I asked the mother in the home. “Have you invited all these people to tea?”

“Yes,” she replied with a smile which mystified me.

“Well, you let me go and buy something in town, you can’t afford to provide for all these people.”

“Oh, yes, we’ve got plenty,” she said, leaving me still more puzzled.

Presently everyone went inside, and to my astonishment there were large tables nicely set and arrayed with small cakes, scones and similar things.

We sang “Be present at our table, Lord,” but before doing so the dark lady who had invited me there said “Mr. Long, I’d just like to explain why we asked you to come to-night. We have all felt such a difference in our homes since the Van came here,”—and she went on to tell in words that I have now forgotten, how that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound”—and that, “we all wanted to give you something, but we couldn’t because the men are all out of work and we didn’t have any money. So we said, ‘Well, we can cook, anyway,’ and all the women have cooked something and brought it along tonight.”
Then she closed on a note that has rung in my ears ever since—"It reminds us, too, of the time when we will be gathered at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:9).

As I looked around that little company of dark folk, feelings that could not be expressed surged through my heart. Here in poverty and obscurity the glory of God was shining and who would not give all they possessed to see such sights as this?

What if there are many thorns in the way and if many are indifferent to the call of God's love—still it is worth while to see the least of these, whom the Lord calls "My brethren," coming to lay their gifts of love at His feet.
Early Journeys

A Brief Review

The first Mission Stations visited with the Memorial Van were the oldest established centres of our work, Singleton and Karuah.

The latter is sixteen miles from the mouth of the Karuah River, which flows into Port Stephens, a little north of Newcastle. Away back in 1905 the wonderful story recorded in the pamphlet "A Corn of Wheat," was enacted, when a dark man walked across nearly 80 miles of country in a dying state to tell his own people the news of God's redeeming grace. Before he breathed his last on earth, the Spirit of God had breathed the breath of life eternal into the hearts of thirteen of the people of Karuah; and towards the close of 1906 a living church of God was formed in their midst.

Since then the lamp of witness has never gone out, and God has wrought a great work there through the years. A morning prayer meeting is conducted regularly from day to day and from year to year in the House of God, which, like the Mission House there also, was built by the people themselves. The reserve is in a beautiful spot, on the river bank, and faces thickly-timbered hills on the opposite side.

From childhood days I had, with the other members of our family, spent a good deal of time on the Karuah Reserve, and we were accustomed to thinking of the children there as our playmates. The welcome on this initial visit with the Memorial Van was as warm as it always is at Karuah.

The next stop was at Singleton, on the Hunter River, where the A.I.M. was founded on August 1, 1905, and where Miss Bagnall is the Missionary. There are not so many of our people there now—a great many who found Christ as their Saviour in the old
days have since crossed the Jordan and entered the House of Many Mansions. But Miss Bagnall has toiled on through the years, being the first Missionary accepted after the founding of the Mission. She is old and often weary now in the Lord’s work, but refuses to be discouraged, and has set a magnificent example of patience and love that will never let go, but which endures “steadfast unto the end.”

After visiting these centres we passed on to sound the Gospel message in several places where it was scarcely known, and returned to Sydney after being away a little over a month. This had been a good trial run for the Van and enabled us to see what we needed in it for the journeys. Mr. E. Donovan, of Chatswood, gave a month of very helpful service on this journey, and my mother travelled with us part of the way.

When passing through Newcastle on the way to Karuah, one who has been a staunch helper of our work for over 30 years, Mr. H. Riddel, remarked as we left his home, “Don’t forget, the boomerang (on the Van) means, ‘Round Australia to Victory!’” Those words have often rung in my ears with inspiring effect since that day.

Four Convention Gatherings

During the first twelve months the Memorial Van was present at four Conventions for Native Christians in N.S.W. in widely separated places. The first was at Wakool, near the Victorian border; the next at Goolagong in the central-west; then, several months later, at Tweed Heads, on the Queensland border; and again at Tingha, a little west of the New England Tablelands.

The first was a fine gathering in the southern district, organised by Miss Sutton, the Superintendent Missionary. We had come from the Upwey Conven-
tion, near Melbourne, to this one, so very different in size and circumstances, but none the less one which proved a time of real blessing.

One party of six girls, who were sisters, drove with their little brother in a waggonette nearly 100 miles to attend the Convention. Each night it was very cheering to see the camp fires of many such parties burning brightly in a big circle among the box trees on the plain, whereas ordinarily that particular spot had no inhabitants at all. One of a number who came out to surrender fully to Christ at that Convention, was drowned accidentally during flood-time at Moonah Cullah station, not long afterwards. It was a great comfort to know that he was safe in the Everlasting Arms. After Wakool, we visited Moonah Cullah and Yass Mission stations and several other places on the return to Sydney.

The next such convention was at Goolagong on the Lachlan River. At Cowra, the central station of the district, Mr. L. Buck arrived from Melbourne, to spend some weeks with me in the work with the Memorial Van, and that time of fellowship was a great blessing to me personally and to the people among whom we moved. As a later Convention at Goolagong is described at some length, I will not now stay to write of this one.

Afterward Mr. Buck and I went on through Trundle to Bulgandramine, a reserve in the bush on the Bogan River, five miles from the nearest township and some distance from Peak Hill, where the great evangelist Lionel Fletcher spent part of his youth. There is a Church Building and Mission House on this reserve, though just then there was no Missionary there, and we had a time of blessing in the work before passing on to other places.

After Mr. Buck had returned to Melbourne I continued in the district for a while, but a period of extremely wet weather made travelling in those parts impracticable, the Condobolin reserve being com-
pletely cut off by flood waters. So I returned to Sydney and drove up to Walcha, on the New England Mountains. The winter there was bitterly cold, and the Van was three times covered with snow, but the roads were good and easy to travel on in all weathers.

On the Walcha reserve there is a church building, which, like most others on our field, was built by the people themselves. No matter how intense was the cold, the attendance at the meetings was always good, and an early morning prayer meeting commenced at that time increased considerably in numbers. On the last morning before the Van finally left, nearly forty were present, and most of them prayed aloud.

From there several visits were made to other centres, the first being to Fingal Point, Tweed Heads, where Mr. and Mrs. Buckley had laboured for several years. My mother, who came by train from Sydney, travelled with me on the Van through Armidale, Tenterfield, and Casino, through the beautiful hilly country in the Nimbin-Uki-Murwillumbah district, to Fingal Point, where a very happy and profitable time was spent during the Convention days, which followed.

Mrs. Lily Kina, Native Missionary from Queensland, was a great personal force at this Convention, and the local Christians, with some from other places in the district, made a splendid foundation for the meetings.

On the return journey, when Miss McAulay accompanied us as far as Glen Innes, we found groups of dark folk at Mallanganee and Tabulam, on the Clarence River. They were talking the Native language at a great rate when we first saw them. Not understanding the true meaning of the term "missionary," they were rather shy and frightened at first, but were soon reassured, and listened to the message of the Gospel at a meeting arranged on the spot.

Since then we have been able to carry on Mission-
ary work there, and the next time the Van came it received an excited welcome. A fine old man, the "grandfather" in the camp, waited for two days previously on the road while a strong wind was blowing, to make sure of being there to extend a welcome.

Some time later we were at another Convention, 40 miles west of Guyra, in the tin-mining district, near Tingha. Mr. and Mrs. Harris were in charge of the work there, and Mr. Fred Barber, Native Missionary, had done powerful work throughout the district also. The seed fell on prepared soil, and not only were the Christians greatly blessed, but many souls were saved at this Convention.

There were many more who passed from death unto life in various places in the New England district before the Van returned to Sydney.

**Along the Queensland Border**

Some time after arriving home, we set out again for the field, and, crossing the Dividing Range, went out into the Central-Western District.

After visiting Cowra, Bulgandramine, and several other places, the Van stayed over a month at Warren. Over 100 dark people gathered to a Christmas tree there. So eager were the people to come to the meetings to hear the Word of God that, when the river was swollen by rains, those from one camp came through the river, dragging their children across in a tub, so that they could attend the meetings at the other camp as well as those held at their own. The camps were over a mile and a half apart.

Later I was joined by Mr. B. Brewster at Brewar-rina, and we worked among the dark people there for some time before going north to Dennawan, near the Culgoa River—where Miss Ginger had pioneered the work and persevered among many hardships and difficulties. After five weeks there, we went on to
Walgett, where Miss Acland was the Missionary, and then to Collarenebri and Angledool. The school building, made available by the kindness of the manager at the latter place, was packed for the Gospel meetings.

From Angledool we went along the border, through timbered country, to Mungindi, and then to Toomelah station, beyond Boomi. After a time in the work with the Missionaries there, we turned northwards and entered Queensland, passing through St. George on the way to Mitchell, on the Maranoa River.

The Missionaries at Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Froment, had been doing a fruitful spiritual work, and we were privileged to take part in special services, opening and dedicating the new church building which had been erected through their effort. My companion returned shortly afterwards to Sydney, and after six weeks in Mitchell the Van was turned eastward to the coast again. Being delayed more than had been anticipated, I left in the night-time, and after a short sleep at Roma, drove the rest of the way to Fingal Point, 387 miles, in a continuous run, in order to be present at the second Convention there, during the ministry of Mr. and Mrs. Buckley. We had a time of real blessing and refreshing at that Convention also.

Shortly afterward I returned to Sydney, travelling down the Pacific Highway along the coast, with the marquee, which afterward went to Carowra Tank and Menindee, inside the Van. This journey had occupied nine months in all.

Throughout the journeys briefly described here, while some grievous mistakes were made on the human side, experience, which is a good teacher, had only revealed on the Divine side, the faithfulness of the God who "delighteth in mercy."
Mystic Park—A Bethel in the Bush

ON the Victorian side of the Murray, not far from the little township of Mystic Park, there lived an old dark couple named Pepper. Their humble little home was in a peaceful and secluded spot among the trees and in that home there reigned the infinitely deeper peace of God's eternal and realised presence. From childhood days they had loved and served the Lord, having been brought up on the old Ebenezer Mission Station, established by the Lutheran Church.

Many years ago a brother of Archie Pepper, the one in this story, was the first trophy of grace won for Christ by those Missionaries, and the following is taken from an article written by Dr. A. T. Pierson:

"Nathaniel Pepper was the first of the Australian Aborigines to be brought to Christ after thirty-five years' patient seed sowing. The event was so striking that a public meeting, over which the Mayor presided, was called to give thanks."

A deep and wonderful work of grace had been going on through the years in the hearts of these two children of God, and to meet and have fellowship with them was an experience that can never be forgotten. When I had introduced myself the joy and warmth of the welcome received was almost unbounded. They brought me into a bough-shelter at the side of their humble dwelling, and the old lady said, "Isn't that wonderful! I was just praying for a Missionary to come, and now God has sent you!" I do not think that I have ever felt nearer Heaven than while conversing with these old dark saints.

"I often lie awake all night thinking about the Lord," said the old lady, her wrinkled face almost transfigured with the glory that shone from within. "I love to think of the time when we will come in and
sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the others, but most bestest of all will be when the Lord Himself comes round and visits us!” I thought of the words, “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and HE WILL DWELL WITH THEM, and they shall be His people.” (Rev. 21:3.)

A little later the old lady said, “Oh, Mr. Long, I must show you our little church; it’s only a poor place, but it is the best we could do, and you know I always think of it like this: Well, this is God’s House, and the Lord Himself is here!” We entered the little building, which was made chiefly of bush timber and scrap iron, but built as neatly as loving hands could build it. The inside walls were lined with hessian, and on those walls were some text-cards and pictures of scenes from the Scriptures. The furnishings were a table, an old couch, and some seats, while at one end was a fireplace to keep away the cold of winter. Yet this simple and humble little building was filled with the glory of the invisible Lord. It seemed to me that we were standing within the “precincts of the palace”—yes, and closer still, even in “the secret of His pavilion,” under the wings of God.

The Missionaries, Miss Sutton and her co-workers, visited Mystic Park as opportunity allowed, and the little “church” was kept ready for such occasions. Around this district are scattered some of the family—children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren—of the old couple, and when the Memorial Van arrived some of these gathered, to hear the Word of Life, on the afternoon of the Lord’s Day.

We sat down under the bough-shelter, and they commenced asking questions about spiritual things. So absorbing did the conversation become that the time for the meeting was long past before we realised it, and the shadows of evening reminded us that it was time to cease. At such times as this we realise something of the meaning of the words, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of . . . My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work.”
After a short interval of absence I returned and stayed for a few days again, and was able to hold some more meetings with them. One night, in calm and beautiful moonlight, a number of the dark folk had assembled to hear again the message of God’s redeeming love and to sing the songs of Zion. Nearby a drover and his assistant were camped, and they came and stood on the outskirts of the meeting that night. A dark couple sang a duet for us, the husband singing tenor. He was the brother of old Mrs. Pepper, and since then both he and his sister have gone to join their voices with the glorified throng before the Throne. The duet and, indeed, all the singing blended with the spoken word in the power and blessing of the Spirit of God.

When the meeting was over, the two white men came to express their appreciation. The younger man was deeply stirred, and during a conversation with him alone he said, “That hymn that those two dark people sang was the hymn that my mother sang just before she died.” I enquired about her and sympathised with him in his loss and sorrow.

“Home is never the same without a mother, is it?”

“No,” he said, with the bitter tears beginning to well up.

“There is no one that can take a mother’s place.”

“No.” After a brief pause I said, “Well, there is One Who can fill more than a mother’s place if you will let Him. That is the Lord Himself, and He has said, ‘As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you.’”

He turned away to hide the tears that would not be repressed, and after a few more words concerning the Way of Life we parted for the night. Next morning I went to say good-bye and left him some things to read, with a parting word about his soul’s salvation. I am sure that the Spirit of God had found a response to His pleadings in that aching heart.

Both on this visit and subsequently, some of the
dark folk, including several from other parts, acknowledged Christ as their Saviour. During that time also Christian people in the surrounding district commenced work among them, and Mr. and Mrs. L. Macnaughton joined hands with us as Associate Workers in service and fellowship that have been helpful and blessed.

Two and a half years later I was able to pay a visit there again. The old people came out to meet me with almost tottering steps, but the joyousness of the welcome seemed greater than ever. Their backs were a little more bowed with the increasing burden of years, and their hair a little more silvered, but the fountain of life within was springing up from the Spirit's inexhaustible fulness. The sunset days were brightening "unto the perfect day."

What an illustration this is of the text, "A hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness." (Proverbs 16:31.) How incomparably blessed to have a long life-time of walking with God! And now they have both entered in within the veil, for on the 6th July, 1937, Mrs. Pepper passed peacefully out into the land of which she loved to think, and was followed three weeks later by her husband.

Often at the remembrance of these old dark people my heart is filled both with joy and with a sense of shame. How few of us who profess to have the saving knowledge of Christ ever come to know Him in so intimate a way as this! How few ever enter into the constant experience that was theirs of "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Yet the Word of God clearly indicates that this should be—and thank God it may be—the normal experience of every one of us.

Would we learn their secret? Then we must learn it where they did, like Mary of old, in the attitude of a little child sitting at Jesus' feet, with the perfect "abandonment" of simple faith.
"THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE"

(Revelation 21:25)

No dark'ning shadows shall those realms invade
Where Christ is on the throne,
His radiant glories there can never fade:
The Lamb of God alone
Shall flood the heavens with resplendent light,
And while the ages roll, there shall be no more night.

Upon Mt. Zion's gleaming heights and towers
That Sun shall not go down;
The days shall not be measured there by hours—
Eternal years shall crown
The life that thrills in all the ransomed throng
Whose joy peals forth in everlasting song.

No shades of sin shall darken that abode
And grieve the Spirit there;
The lustre of the holiness of God
Shall cast its mantle fair
O'er all the shining hosts around the throne
Whose pure delight is in God's will alone.

The City gates shall not be shut by day
Against a lurking foe;
No fears of hidden dangers in the way
The ransomed ones shall know;
For evils that abound in nature's night
Can find no covert in eternal light.

No more by night shall weary sufferers lie
And toss in beds of pain,
While hours with leaden feet drag slowly by
Till morning comes again;
For soon shall dawn the long-awaited Day
When all "the former things shall pass away."

No dread of separation there is known;
We shall not say "Good-night;"
No aching heart shall ever weep alone
In all that land of light;
For death can never cast its awful gloom
Across the portals of the heav'nly Home.

Now in the darkness of the pilgrim way
The song of faith we sing,
But with unbounded rapture "in that Day"
Our eyes shall see the King!
The blessedness of trusting through the night
Exchanged for greater blessedness of sight.
In The Murray Valley

One hundred miles further up the Murray River from Mystic Park, a Convention for the southern district had been arranged at Barham. It was not a big gathering, for various things had occurred in the district militating against the attendance of many, but there were some good results from it nevertheless. Once there were Missionaries stationed at Barham, but a number of families had moved away, and it had been visited as an outpost from Moonah Cullah in recent years.

Some time after the Convention, in another part of the district, quite a number were sitting out in the open one night listening to the proclamation of the Gospel. Several there had been at the convention at Barham, including a fine young couple. The wife had made a stand for Christ among a number of others at the Gospel meeting at Barham, but the husband had not done so as yet.

This was the third place at which I had met them, and on this occasion they joined in singing, with two others:

"Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart,
Draw me, my Saviour, so precious Thou art."

It was a beautiful quartette, and was fulfilled before long in the hearts and lives of the singers. The young man made his surrender to Christ in that meeting, and a third had made a stand also. The next morning the fourth came to the Van to bring something over, but it was evident that there was a deeper motive that brought her there. She had been for years a backslider, though I had not known that she had ever come to Christ. The Word of God had gone forth and the unseen Spirit had been graciously at work; but as she listened to the message of invitation she thought that she had wandered away too far for God to ever take her back again. That
NATIVE CHRISTIANS

2. Native Missionaries Gathered at Cowra.
Mr. Alec Russell, the first Native Missionary of our Mission, had a notable ministry for four years at this station; and among others who laboured there was Mr. Harry Ashmore, a great Native Worker. He was helped by Mr. Lindsay Grant, a young Native Missionary, who has worked in various places.

Just before I arrived there, a memorial service was held for Mr. Ashmore, whose recent death had been a shock to all. The people of Cummeragunja gathered under a great pine tree to pay their tribute to the one whose ministry had made so deep an impression in their midst. It was under that pine tree that Mr. Ashmore had held his first meeting after his arrival there, and that spot seemed consecrated ground because of the memories associated with it.

The Memorial Van has been a number of times on the Cummeragunja Reserve, once for a period of two months.

After the visit referred to in this chapter, I went on to Moonah Cullah station, on the Edwards River, 25 miles from Deniliquin. There is a church building and mission house on the reserve, and the work has been established for many years. At this time preparations were being made for a Convention at Goolagong, and it seemed to be "in the air" that something far above the usual was in store. The Van was on its way north when this visit was paid to Moonah Cullah station for about 10 days.
An Easter Convention

After leaving Moonah Cullah the next stop was at Darlington Point, on the Murrumbidgee River, where, in beautiful weather, we had an "unofficial" Convention ourselves. A small contingent from Cummeragunja had arrived ahead of me, and it was with a thrill of real pleasure that we met at this stage of the journey to Goolagong. With the native Pastor and his little flock we had some very blessed meetings before separating again, and some more souls were born into the kingdom of God.

Passing through lovely bushlands and one of the finest wheat-belts in the world, I went on to Cowra and Goolagong, where Miss Lightbody, the district Superintendent of our work, had arranged the Convention that we little thought would be her last.

Several years previously Miss Lightbody had organised the first such Convention for Native Christians ever held in Australia, and now the Lord gave His servant a time of unprecedented joy and blessing, before He took her to join the greater company of the ransomed above.

For the rest I shall transcribe an account written within a few days after the Convention was over, and while its glow was still fresh in our hearts:

("Our Aim," May, 1933)—

For a considerable time previously a spirit of excitement and joyful expectation spread far and wide through the districts affected. Four weeks before Easter two little parties set out in horse-drawn vehicles from the southernmost extremity of the field (Cummeragunja, on the River Murray), on a journey of over 330 miles. At Darlington Point, about 100 miles farther north, on the way to Goolagong, there was quite a little
"gathering of the clans," and the anticipation of the Convention stirred and gripped everybody, although most of them were unable to go.

Far away at Bulgandramine Station, the Native Helper received several letters by one mail, all in reference to the convention. His friends gathered around to hear the news, but until he finished reading they heard only delighted Hallelujahs, for he was reading how the Native Workers from the south were on their way.

The Convention Eve

On the Thursday night before Good Friday the Goolagong reserve was a wonderful sight to behold. The whole place was astir and humming with excitement, as party after party arrived from various places, and at intervals through the night the air was ringing with the songs of Zion.

Camp fires were burning brightly in all directions, and the night was calm and exhilarating. Altogether, it was a memorable night for all privileged to be there, and proved to be the herald of a wonderful Convention. The reserve itself is a lovely green stretch on the southern bank of the Lachlan River and is surrounded with trees. In the centre stands the structure which forms a most appropriate rallying point for the convention. It has a massive frame of bush timber, and was covered on the roof and around the "weather end" with freshly cut boughs from many trees.

The weather was perfect throughout, and everything seemed to blend together in harmony of purpose to make those Easter days, according to the testimony of many, a taste of Heaven on earth.

"Fellowship in the Gospel"

There is a wonderful bond of fellowship existing between the Christians all over the field. As they read
of the others in various parts, it strengthens and stimulates their faith and binds them together more closely as time goes on.

But to meet face to face those who, many miles away, have fought in the same great cause, experiencing similar trials and difficulties and glorying in the triumphs of the Gospel, is an experience that cannot adequately be described. It fills one and all with “joy unspeakable and full of glory,” and in after-days leaves memories which on every awakening bring new life and new strength to the heart.

There was not a jarring note to mar the beauty of that fellowship. Everywhere, people moved about amongst the others with shining faces. Around the camp fires after the meetings little circles often stood or sat till well on into the night, talking of the One around Whom the whole Convention gathered and centred.

One night, when the Missionaries were all in bed, a couple of the men brought another to the Van, having dealt with him about his soul’s salvation. I dressed hastily, and joined them in commending him to God as he surrendered his life to Him. But I had not been long in bed before they brought another such “recruit.”

This time I accompanied them back to the fire, around which a number from various places had gathered. It seemed too good a night in every way to go to sleep, so for a while we talked on.

Then it was discovered that one of the circle had not yet made the great decision, and it was not long before he was brought to do so. To see afterwards the warmth of love expressed towards him as each one welcomed him into the “family of God” was a great sight indeed. Soon afterwards I returned to the Van, but the others continued around the camp fire till long after midnight.
The Open-Air Gathering

On the Easter Sunday afternoon, in the township of Goolagong, there was seen a picture that, to some people, must have appeared very strange indeed. At the main street corner, with shops on one side of the road and a park on the other, stood a very big ring of the dark Christians who had gathered to the Convention. They were there to sound forth the Gospel to the white people, many of whom had come to witness a cricket match at the park! Before long a good number gathered around, and besides the preaching of the Gospel by a number of the people, several items—duets, quartettes, and a choir piece, “All Hail, Immanuel”—were rendered, the various parts blending in a beautiful harmony.

Could the Christian Church throughout Australia look on such a sight, what mingled feelings it would bring to many hearts! What a spectacle! The dark people fearlessly and ably preaching the Gospel to the white people! In God’s Kingdom there will be some very great surprises.

The Baptismal Service

Whatever baptism, in the various modes used for its application, means to others, it means one thing and one alone to our dark people. It is a public declaration that the candidates have made a complete cut from the world and are dead to all its sins and pleasures. It show forth symbolically that they are identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and have set their faces towards the city in the heavens. And there is so much for them to break away from, so much to leave behind.

Fourteen of those who came to Goolagong were greatly desirous of being baptised, and the best place available for such a service was the river. A suitable place was chosen, the candidates prepared, and they stood together on the water’s edge.
It was a beautiful sight. The river, with its over-arching trees as the scene for such a service took our minds back to the ministry of John by the River Jordan. Looking up from the water, the audience were arrayed “tier on tier” up the steep bank to the top, where they stood silhouetted against the sky. One could almost see the “great cloud of witnesses” above them looking down from the battlements of Heaven.

Following on this was the Communion service, conducted, in as able and beautiful a manner as anyone could wish to see, by the Native Pastor from Cummeragunja, assisted by other Native workers.

There were many other features of this Convention which cannot be described here, but this one was perhaps the holiest hour of all, when God seemed to breathe the calm of Heaven over the whole, and that bush structure was transformed into a Bethel.

“Growing Up Into Him” (Eph. 4:15)

There is but one thing more that I will indicate now. As we looked around the faces in those congregations one fact was very apparent and uplifting—it was the great growth that had been quietly going on all around. Many who were there had once been in sin, and what a change was evidenced! But, still more, we had seen in them the beginnings of the life which had been expanding into “life more abundantly.” In wisdom and knowledge, in power and love, they had increased with the increase of God. Testimonies were brighter, humbler, and stronger, and came from lives enriched by the dominion of the Holy Spirit.

From this Convention two more were added to the list of Native Workers, and all the Christians went out with new strength and a new vision to their places in the battle once again.

So the Convention is finished, the people scattered, and the place nearly empty once again. But in an-
other sense it will never be finished. The Kingdom of God has had a notable advance in this field, and we are confident that, should the Lord tarry, the fresh impetus received from this Convention will carry God’s people in various districts on to greater triumphs through the year. And the vision of the gathering that is now past gives us a glimpse of a gathering that is in the future, and towards which all our work is tending. From all directions our dark folk have set out for that radiant goal, and every day brings us nearer. Ours is a peerless opportunity; let us take fresh courage and strength to scatter far and wide the incorruptible seed.

For truth is the truth for ever,
And the hidden seeds shall rise
When the sheaves are brought home with shouting,
To the Garner of Paradise.
In South-Eastern Queensland

After the Goolagong Convention the Van was for some time at Bulgandramine, before crossing over to Condobolin in the centre of the State. After several weeks there I passed on to work at Euabalong, a little township further down the Lachlan River, and from there went out to Mount Hope and through a big stretch of mallee scrub to Roto and Trida, turning north from the latter place for forty miles to the Carowra Tank station. Something of this journey is told in “Providential Channels,” pages 65-69.

Leaving Carowra Tank some weeks later I returned to Sydney, passing through Hillston, Lake Cargelligo, and Euabalong.

On the next journey my mother travelled on the Van with me through the New England Tablelands and across to Tweed Heads for another Convention gathering, which was held at the Mission station there. Then we went on through Brisbane to Cherbourg (Barambah), 180 miles further north, for the first Convention for Native Christians held in Queensland.

It was a great gathering, preceded by a volume of expectant prayer, which was abundantly answered. Not only were the Christians greatly blessed, but a large number surrendered to Christ, and backsliders were restored. The husband of Mrs. Lily Kina was among the trophies of grace that night. He had been the subject of many prayers, and afterwards became a deacon of the church and a strength to many before God called him Home.

Simultaneously with the Convention an outbreak of measles occurred on the Settlement, and for three months it was not possible to use the hall for services or to have any of the children in attendance at meetings. This meant that many of the parents had to stay home also, and we had to use a large bough shelter for our services.
But these restrictions proved a blessing in disguise. We were able to have most of the Christians at the meetings in a calm and peaceful atmosphere, and their growth in grace through those months was very noticeable. When the restrictions were lifted we faced the full work again with a completely reorganised church, which had been greatly strengthened in numbers and in spiritual life and power.

My mother had returned to Sydney after the Convention, and Miss Campbell, whose holidays were well overdue, went away for a while, my sister and I carrying on the work there. Then later Miss Campbell was transferred to Cowra (N.S.W.) to become the Superintendent of the central-west, taking up the work which Miss Lightbody had laid down in death.

On the night when Miss Campbell was farewelled, the hall was thronged with several hundreds of our dark people, who came to pay their tribute of love to one who for so many years had spent herself for them and for her Lord. It was indeed a memorable night to all who were present.

It was a considerable time before another missionary could come to Cherbourg, so altogether the Van was there for six months. During that period the church membership of baptised believers increased from 47 to 105. We had 30 dark Sunday School teachers, an increase of 23, the Sunday School being divided into two departments; Christian Endeavour Societies were formed, with a total membership of 200; cottage meetings were held regularly and systematically by the deacons and native workers, so that every part of that Settlement, with its population of 1100, came under the sound of the Word of God.

All this had been made possible chiefly by the toils and prayers of the Missionaries, who for thirteen years previously had put a tremendous lot into the work there, sparing nothing that the Word of God might be deeply rooted in the midst of that station,
where awful sin and darkness had once reigned with undisputed sway.

"Herein is that saying true: One soweth and another reapeth."

But no work ever reaches a place of final establishment on earth. It must be always moving forward or else it soon drops back. If it is not advancing to fresh victories it goes down in defeat.

During that time we were able to pay two visits to Gayndah, 80 miles away, and had happy and profitable times with the workers and people there.

At Cherbourg, in that six months we went with weeping mourners to the graveside at least sixteen times, and in every case felt quite confident in saying that we were laying them to rest in "sure and certain hope of the resurrection unto life eternal."

These are but a few of a great and ever-increasing number who from many parts of Australia have entered in "through the gates into the city."

"Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple . . . they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more . . . for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Rev. 7:15-17.)
A MUTUAL WAITING

"Therefore will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you ... blessed are all they that wait for Him." Isaiah 30:18.

God waits, His tender mercies to bestow
On all His sons who wait on Him below.
They wait on God to do what He requires;
He waits on them to give them their desires.
As servants waiting at their master's hand,
Alert to hear and follow each command,
God's servants wait upon their Heav'nly Lord
To catch each guiding glance and spoken word,
While for the tasks of every passing hour
He gives with each command enabling power.
Amid the stress and toil of common life,
In trying hours and in the fiercest strife,
They rest each moment in the secret place
And draw supplies of all-sufficient grace.
How blessed to abide within the tower
Of God's encircling, everlasting power!
At peace, with wild unrest on every hand;
At home, yet strangers in a foreign land;
As weak, yet strong with God's exhaustless might;
Defenceless, yet victorious in the fight;
Despised, defamed and to the world unknown,
Yet sitting with the King upon His throne;
There as the Bride of God's eternal Son,
Sharing the love of the Beloved One;
With shadowing wings and feathers spread above;
Beneath—the arms of everlasting love.
Within the haven of that perfect rest
All who will enter are forever blest;
The emptied vessel here is more than filled,
While fears and doubts in Jesus' love are stilled;
The weakest ones are in His strength made strong
And saddened hearts are quickened into song.
What are our needs? Come, let us bring them now,
And hasten, at the throne of grace to bow,
To spread them there before the waiting Lord
And claim fulfilment of the promised word.
From boundless store our need shall be supplied,
And we shall be forever satisfied.
A Journey into the Gulf Country

AFTER leaving Cherbourg, the opportunity arose for spending a little time at Tweed Heads, and several other centres in the North-east of N.S.W., besides visiting the dark people on Stradbrooke Island, and the lepers on Peel Island, off the coast of Southern Queensland. The latter visit was made with Mr. E. Buckley, now in charge of the work on Palm Island.

A little later Mr. K. Bowen came by train to Casino to “join forces” with me in a journey to Normanton, in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

After some necessary preparations in Brisbane, chiefly mechanical work on the Van, we set out in a westerly direction, crossing the Toll-Bar Range near Toowoomba and turning north at Dalby. Some distance farther on from Jandowae we entered into thick bush and some rather rough country before arriving at a little place called Hawkwood. In the distance we saw some dark folk waving and were surprised to find quite a number from Cherbourg station there. We stayed the night and had a very happy though brief time with them.

Pushing on from there we passed through the tiny townships of Camboon and Banana and then swung across for 40 miles to Baralaba, on the Dawson River. About thirty miles further on through the bush we came to the home of the Woorabinda Missionaries at Perch Creek, and there we stayed for three weeks before going on to Normanton.

Woorabinda is a Government Settlement with approximately 600 dark people living on it and it is on the Mimosa Creek, 40 miles from the railway line. The work of our Mission had been a very hard battle in this place, but God had given His blessing and both a material and a spiritual House of God had been built in the midst.

Twice at lantern meetings most of the people on
Woorabinda assembled, making it necessary for us to hold the second such meeting in the open, as no building there could accommodate the people.

The night before we left, the prayers which had been so earnestly ascending, were answered in a remarkable way. Several Christians came out on their own accord to confess and put away hindering sins, while about twenty others made their surrender to Christ. We have since seen that this was not an evanescent experience but an abiding work of grace—the result of patient toil and believing prayer.

During the time at Perch Creek sufficient money had come to hand for the journey to Normanton—a stretch of 1,000 miles between the two centres of missionary work. We had had abundant supply for the needs of the journey to that point and now, as we desired to move on, the way was opened with a greater provision still. But in more ways than this it was evident that God was intervening on our behalf.

Four times on this journey we noticed tyre weaknesses when we were not looking for them. In each case, had we driven much further both tyres and tube would probably have been ruined. The weight of the Van when running, especially on rough places, would have caused some damage quickly if a tyre had gone flat.

The first stretch was through bush for forty miles to the railway line which runs through the Central-west of Queensland from Rockhampton on the Coast; then we followed the line to the terminus at Winton, 500 miles further west. The country is thickly timbered and rather hilly for the first 150 miles or so. Along this line, near a township called Bogantungan, the Drummond Range lies across the way. Just there it is steep and extremely rough for travelling by motor. After this we passed through what is known as “the desert” near the little town of Alpha. At Barcaldine the country changes entirely and “the Downs” open out and roll away into the West.

At Longreach we stayed for a week-end and enjoyed
the fellowship of the Methodist minister, who extended a cordial welcome to us. Turning north from Kynuna, 100 miles further west, we passed through Julia Creek, the last township before Normanton.

The distance between these two places is 250 miles. We spent one night at a cattle station some distance beyond Julia Creek and set out again in the morning. We found it necessary to go by a more winding course and arrived in Normanton that night, driving the last 40 miles or so in brilliant moonlight.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas, the Missionaries in this far-away centre, had had little touch with other Christians since they had gone there four years previously and it was a late hour before we retired to rest that night.

We spent several happy weeks together in the work of God there before parting again.

Normanton is on an ironstone ridge, surrounded by bush, and the Norman River, with its crocodiles and alligators, is not far from the town. The dark people, who live in three widely separated camps were, only a few years previously, in the darkest night of heathen superstition and lived in pitiful circumstances, yet in those few years since the Gospel light had first sent its healing rays among them how wonderful a work of grace had been accomplished!

Without any word from the Missionaries, the little hovels in which they had lived were soon replaced with better huts, and later quite respectable little dwellings were built with what material they could gather. The people came clean and nicely dressed to the services, and the response to their Missionaries was beautiful to see. And why all this outward change? It was simply the outward expression of the far greater inward transformation when the love of God had found an entry there.

No one had seemed to care for their souls, and being regarded by most whom they met as mere animals, they lived more or less like animals. But now they knew that they were precious in the sight of God, and, hearing his loving call, they arose and came to Him and began to walk in newness of life.
THREE MODES OF TRANSPORT

A party on the way to a Convention.
A little family homeward bound after a Convention.
A camel-drawn buggy in Central Australia.
SCENES AT DARLINGTON POINT
(Murrumbidgee River)

Convention Group.
In a canoe on the river.
A Christian couple.
One Lord's Day we held a baptismal service there, when four more of their number who had been living the Christian life were baptised among the water lilies in a great rock-pool, with nearly all their people around. Afterwards many of them gathered at the Lord's Table, and it was a thrilling sight to see these children of the King worshipping Him in beautiful simplicity and sincerity.

Those who think that the dark people of Australia are incapable of taking in the deep things of God would do well to ponder the words of the Lord Jesus:

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes."

One day we went with a funeral procession to the graveside, one of the big dark men carrying the coffin of a little child in his arms. Instead of the awful wails which characterise heathen funerals, where no ray of hope penetrates the gloom, hymns of triumph were sung by all who assembled.

The graves were marked by pieces of wood, chiefly in the shape of crosses, with the names of those who were buried there. Mr. Thomas pointed to one after another and said, "This one died a Christian;" "She died a believer," and so on. There were many who had been laid to rest there who are among the great multitude which no man can number before the throne of God:

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe from corroding care,
Safe from the world's temptations,
Sin cannot harm them there."

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas came away with me in the Van to go to Sydney for a time of rest after their labours amid the extremely trying conditions at Normanton, while Mr. Bowen remained to fill the gap in their absence.

Crossing over the base of the Peninsula we passed through some extremely rough country on either side of the Burdekin River, and climbed the mountains...
West of Ingham before descending to the East coast. It had been a journey of nearly 600 miles to Ingham, and the next stretch was southward to Townsville, a city of 31,000 inhabitants.

After spending two or three days with Rev. B. Hohnke, who had previously been a great help to our work far away in the south at Cherbourg, we went by launch for forty miles over the blue waters that lie within the Great Barrier Reef. The cocoanut palms and the tropical scenery of the islands there were a wonderful treat after the inland country, and we greatly enjoyed this time on the coast. But we were seeking the scenery which holds the gaze of the great cloud of witnesses in Heaven, for we were able to spend some days on the great Settlement of Palm Island, and enter into the work of God there. Our Native Pastor and his wife, Dan and Lena Kyle, had done wonderful service for God there, and we met the Native workers and deacons one afternoon for a discussion of the work and for united prayer.

We enjoyed the hospitality of the schoolmaster and his wife, Christian workers whom God had greatly used to strengthen the work when we were unable to have missionaries there for a considerable period.

A great work of God had been done in the past on Palm Island, and we could hardly bear to leave the people there. When the time of departure came we were loaded with many presents, including coloured coral and some of the people’s handiwork.

Oh, how great is the opportunity for service! Everywhere the fields are white unto harvest, and not only are labourers needed on all sides, but ever-fresh accessions of spiritual power, greater and more burning zeal for Christ, that we may compel men and women to come to Him.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas returned to Sydney by train, while I set out southwards with the Van, touching various stations and camps on the way through Queensland and New South Wales, and arrived home again after an absence of fifteen months.
A Convention on the Murrumbidgee

In the western districts of New South Wales there are many beautiful scenes beside the creeks and rivers and in the bush.

Even where the surrounding districts are for the most part unattractive, there are to be found some delightful spots where grand old trees stand like soldiers guarding the peacefulness and adding to the irresistible charm which the Australian bush holds for those whose lives are spent within its vast empire.

It was at one such place on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River that a Convention for Native Christians was held at Easter time, 1936.

The scenes shown in the photographs opposite page 65 reveal something of the surroundings at Darlington Point, where this gathering took place. During those days the spiritual atmosphere had in it a breath of the everlasting spring-time of "the land where the roses never fade."

In January, 1931, the Memorial Van paid its first visit to this centre and the contrast was great between the conditions existing then and those in evidence five years later.

No Missionary had come to live there until, early in 1932, God laid His hand on the one of His choice, sending him to become the shepherd of a little flock which has since been gathered together there.

Mr. Bobbie Peters, now the Native Pastor of the Darlington Point A.I.M. Church, was for many years a helpless drunkard until he yielded to the One Who is able to save to the uttermost the weakest of the weak, and the lowest of the low. A little more than a year afterwards, at a Convention at Moonah Cullah Station in the south, he offered to go forward as a worker amongst his own people, and the Lord, Who chooses the weak things to confound the mighty, sent him to Darlington Point to labour there.
Mr. Harry Ashmore, a veteran native Missionary, who has since entered into his reward, accompanied him and stayed for the first three months to help "prepare the way of the Lord" where sin had long held sway.

Now a little company who had "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" were gathered around God's servant and it was our privilege to form them into a living church of God with Mr. Bobbie Peters as the Native Pastor.

Some contingents of dark folk had come from the south—from Cummeragunja and Moonah Cullah—and there were parties from several other places, besides ten Missionaries. During one afternoon and night we had with us, also, a party of friends from Griffith. Under the leadership of Pastor McEwen, they had done much to encourage the dark Christians though their visits meant a journey of twenty-two miles each way.

A large bough-shelter had been built with seats of bush timber and other preparations had been made by the Darlington Point people for the comfort of their visitors, to whom they extended the warmest of welcomes.

The police constable who had done all in his power to help the people in the past also encouraged them in these preparations, and it may not be out of place here to say that while some of the police force, like members of all other human organisations, have been far from helpful yet many have been exceedingly kind and sympathetic and this is a fact which we should remember with gratitude.

It had been my privilege on several occasions to spend a little time in the work there with Mr. Peters and thus to witness the steady growth of that work as it increased in numbers and in power.

For a while one of the Christian women from Cummeragunja, Mrs. C. Muir, came over to help in the work and a splendid Women's Meeting and Sunday School took shape under her very able leadership.

On the first occasion when I met Mr. Peters at the
scene of his labours, the sight of him coming slowly over the hillside, leaning on his walking stick, was one which left an indelible impression on my mind. I could not help thinking of the words in 2 Corinthians 4: 7.—"We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us."

When, on the Lord’s day morning of that Easter time, the little band who had been through the waters of baptism, stood together to be constituted, or shall I say confirmed outwardly, as a church of God, what a sight it presented!

Here was a group of our dark folk who had come out into the marvellous light and liberty of the Gospel of Christ. Their leader was deformed physically and often weak and sick. Their two deacons were a remarkable combination—an old full-blooded Aboriginal with hair as white as snow and another who had been blind since his infancy! Then there was a very old dark lady, with skin withered and wrinkled by the passing of time, but eager to serve the Lord with all her failing powers. A young woman, who had been converted through the ministry of Mr. Peters, was the Sunday School Superintendent and Organist, and at this Convention she was publicly set apart as a Native Worker of the A.I.M. Among the number, too, there was a young girl giving her life in its brightest hours to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ and teaching in the Sunday School.

The blind man was also a Sunday School Teacher. We asked them how he managed, as he could not read.

They said: "Oh, he gets someone to read him the lesson at the beginning of the week; then he goes away and 'studies' it and comes and teaches it to them on Sunday."

At a meeting there on Mother’s Day, nearly a year previously, when there was a splendid attendance, everyone wearing white flowers, this blind man stood up and sang without hesitation every verse of the hymn, "I never can forget the day, I heard my mother kindly say," etc. His mother, Jennie Swift, had been a beautiful
singer, and many years ago went to England with the pioneers of Maloga, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Matthews. (See page 49.) There she sang before many audiences and was presented to the Queen.

During the first visit to Darlington Point in the Memorial Van, a gentleman told me that “we could not possibly do anything with those people!”

How often have we heard such words as those! Scarcely ever have missionaries gone to any new centre without being told the same well-worn story. Perhaps if we went out as the representatives of a merely human organisation it would be true; but we go out like David “in the Name of the Lord of Hosts,” and “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” (Genesis 18:14).

While the gentleman referred to was speaking, the Van was standing “broadside on,” with the motto of the Mission shining in golden letters in the sunlight—“OUR GOD IS ABLE.”

This gave the answer to the speaker, who repeatedly looked across at the Van as he brought out arguments against the possibility of any spiritual work being done there.

Three years afterwards, the local policeman (who has since gone elsewhere) invited me to have a talk with him at the police station. He said that, while he was not a religious man, he had to admit that a marvellous change had taken place since the two native workers had first entered in to begin God’s work there. He instanced one dark man, who had been a notorious drunkard and user of bad language, and told of how the men on the sheep stations round about could not now use bad language in his presence. This man happened to be away when the little living church was formed, but he has been a tower of strength to Mr. Peters in the work, ever since his conversion.

So God had given His answer, using in the greatness of His majesty perhaps the humblest and weakest instrument that He could find, “that no flesh should glory in His presence.”
Entering the Northern Territory

FOR a considerable time it had been in my mind to attempt to penetrate further out with the Memorial Van to reach the dark people in the far-west of Queensland and some, at least, of those scattered in the southern and central districts of the Northern Territory.

There are missionaries of the C.M.S. and Methodist Missions doing noble work in the north and north-east (Arnhem Land), but in the larger portion of the Northern Territory, stretching to the South Australian border, there is only one Mission Station established—that is, the Hermannsburg or Finke River Station (Lutheran), 80 miles west of Alice Springs in the south.

The Northern Territory is a vast area of country, 523,620 square miles in extent, as compared with the combined area of New South Wales and Victoria—397,316 square miles.

Two-thirds of its population is aboriginal, there being approximately 18,000 aborigines and 8000 others, chiefly Europeans.

The Northern Territory is administered by officers of the Federal Government, and their administration offices are in Darwin, in the north; and there is a police force numbering forty in all.

Some of the world's largest cattle stations are in this part of Australia, and there are aborigines on most of them. On some there are large camps, numbering up to one hundred, and even more. Besides these, there are many who roam the countryside in their primitive state, but the dark pall of heathendom, which has enveloped them through the ages of spiritual bondage, is no more dense and awful than that which still abides on the hearts and minds of those who live under the influence of the white people on the cattle stations.
of South Australia, but our plans were frustrated by a lengthy period of broken weather.

We had not reached the little old township of Thar-gomindah before torrents of rain overtook us and forced us to spend a week-end in the bush. There we lit a tremendous fire of dead gidgee-wood, and waited until the weather had settled sufficiently for us to go on to Thargomindah.

Mr. Taylor had once, before his conversion, tramped through these places, and had seen the aborigines on the Nocatunga Station, further west. Flooded rivers, however, made it impossible for us to get there, so we turned northwards to Eromanga, a tiny outback township.

This stretch of one hundred and eight miles took us over three days of strenuous effort and driving, for the track, which is scarcely used nowadays, was through extremely bad country, ploughed through with almost innumerable creeks. We were bogged again and again, and where the country was not boggy it was often rough and rocky, so that our commencement in Queensland was far from promising.

But it was not until we had gone a day’s journey further north that our troubles from bogs were over, though we were followed by threatening weather and intermittent rain for some weeks afterwards.

In this stretch the handle of our hard-working shovel broke, and Mr. Taylor and I agreed at once that it must have been the sign that it would no longer be needed! This proved a true prediction, for, apart from one very small bog afterwards, we were spared any further troubles in this way.

Turning westward to Windorah, beyond Cooper’s Creek, we were again overtaken by heavy rain, and our way to the west was barred once more by flood waters. So we waited at Windorah until the country around had dried sufficiently to enable us to turn north and slightly north-east, and we went through the black-soil country
to Longreach, and on to Winton one hundred and twenty miles west.

After further delay at each of these places, we were enabled to pass on to Cloncurry, where we spent a weekend on the way. We climbed a nearby peak, to view the great panorama of mountainous country which extends to the horizon in every direction from that point. There we had a season of prayer together, and felt as though the Lord had given us a glimpse by faith of a still greater expanse of country which we were to enter into at His bidding.

We had read the promise given to the Children of Israel—"Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours" (Deuteronomy 11:24), and we felt that this was given to us in a peculiar way, to be spiritually applicable to the places to which we felt sure the God of Israel was leading us.

But, as the Children of Israel were not to obtain victory without conflict, so in this matter it meant a series of conflicts, too, though in a very different sense.

Shortly afterward we were delayed by an accident with a part of the mechanism of the Van, and were held up at the township of Duchess for four weeks. We sent particulars to Brisbane by telegraph, but twice in succession the wrong parts were sent by rail. (We were still close to the railway line.) Then when the correct parts came, after three weeks of waiting, a scalding accident that same night delayed us another week. But the people of the township were wonderfully kind and helpful during this time.

We preached the Word of Life among them and held Sunday School for their children, to whom we gave Bibles and literature.

At last we were able to proceed to Mt. Isa, the mining town, and there had some mechanical work done before leaving on the next stretch of five hundred miles to Tennant Creek. Celebrations had been planned at the latter place by the white residents, in view of the fact that the first £100,000 worth of gold
had been taken from the mines in that comparatively newly discovered field.

It had been arranged for uncivilised aborigines to be sent for from away out in the west, in order to have a combined corroboree for the entertainment of the white people.

We were endeavouring to reach there during that week-end, and at last, after so many delays, the way opened, and we drove speedily through.

For one hundred miles to Camooweal the country gradually changed from rough hills to level ground, and from thick bush to open plain.

Camooweal is a little township eleven miles from the border of the Northern Territory.

On opening the border-gate, we passed through the longest fence in the world and entered into the country which was to us indeed a Land of Promise.

We could almost see written on the ground before us the words: "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours," and felt sure that some day in the not far distant future all the land that we should cover would be lit with the light of the Gospel for the dark people who lived there.

From the border westward the country rolls out in vast expanses of seemingly endless, undulating plains.

The cattle stations are far apart, and the "last lap" from Rockhampton Downs to Tennant Creek is over one hundred miles without a house or an inhabitant. From Anthony's Lagoon to Newcastle Waters, on the route across that way from Camooweal, there is a similarly empty stretch one hundred and seventy-five miles in length.

When we had gone one hundred miles over the border we found that we had broken five leaves of a front spring, and we had not been able to bring any spare ones with us.

Just then, however, we were within sight of a tiny,
isolated place named Rankine River, and there we were able to collect some old springs and take from them sufficient leaves to make up a whole spring again. The people there had a Dodge truck, and thus the leaves were suitable to use without having to go to much trouble.

How typical of the ways of God's providence that this did not happen far away from any place on the plains or in some lonely part of the bush!

The next night we arrived at Tennant Creek, having met a number of dark folk on the way and having noted where the largest camps were on the cattle stations.

The last thirty miles or so were through stony and ridgy country, with a good deal of scrub and bush. Just after sunset we swung into the route that runs beside the Overland Telegraph line, and fifteen miles further south the headlights of the Van revealed the old buildings of the Telegraph Station, and there we found a suitable spot to make our camp for the night.

After joining in praise and thanksgiving to God, Who had brought us through in safety, we retired to rest and enjoyed a good night's sleep.
A Chapter for Boys and Girls

MR. TAYLOR and I had gone out to Tennant Creek near the middle of the Northern Territory to find where the dark people were living and to take the Gospel to them as far as we could.

We had been a long time on the way, because of a lot of troubles that we did not expect but at last were able to drive right through and just as night was coming on we camped beside a big water hole a part of what is known as Tennant Creek.

Early next morning we heard a boyish voice calling out: "Abidgerra!"

Then we heard various sentences in the musical aboriginal language as several little boys ventured nearer to inspect the Van.

Afterwards we learned that "Abidgerra" means "Come along," in the dialect of the Warramunga tribe, who belong to the Tennant Creek district.

After so long on the journey without being able to do any real Missionary work it was a treat to be among dark people once again and it seemed almost too good to be true that we were walking about in the heart of the Northern Territory!

Beside the creek, which is seven miles north of the mining town, there are many wattle trees, and these with gum saplings growing out of the creek-banks make a pretty scene in the midst of wind-swept and desolate-looking country. We saw a number of camels in this district and one day a team of 28 camels came along the road there.

Over the top of a little hill, not far from where we were camped, the Tennant Creek people were living and we visited them and soon began to make friends. They could all speak some English, but another tribe who had come in from the west were quite uncivilised and
could not understand a word of our speech.

We had to speak by signs and through interpreters to them. Soon we had quite a lot of visitors at the Van. The little boys, who are called "Karnoo" in the Warramunga language, became great friends of ours, but we saw that they, like many of the older people, had picked up some of the evil habits of the white people without any of the good things of the Christian life. The little girls, too, were friendly but shyer than the boys. They are called "Tchoora." One of the boys from the western tribe had his hair done up like sticks all over his head, while one of the old men had his tied up with some sort of twine.

We showed them a lot of photographs and Bible pictures with which they were very pleased. They were very interested in the boomerangs on the Van, too. The word for boomerang there is "kyen" while in another part it is called "kullee."

When we brought out the organ and began to sing to them they were greatly surprised and began peering underneath to find out where the music came from! We heard one boy describing it to others afterwards with many excited words. He pointed to the organ and made a loud "B-r-r-r-r-r-r" sound!

Mr. Taylor, who is our Missionary away up north at Darwin, came all the way from England some years ago and as he is a long way away now, I can tell you something about him and if he hears of it I am sure he will not mind.

These dark folk who come in from the west had never seen red hair before and they were very much interested in Mr. Taylor because he had red hair, or "18 carat gold" as the great preacher, Spurgeon, laughingly said once of a deacon who declared that his hair was golden.

When Mr. Taylor was playing the organ one of the old men slipped quietly behind him and ran his fingers
lightly through his hair—to make sure that it was real hair, I suppose!

We saw some very interesting things at the camp of the Tennant Creek people. They have large scoops for sifting out and cleaning seed gathered from a wild plant. When it is ready they pound it up into flour on big flat stones, then cook it in the wooden scoops in the ashes.

They still use the old-time weapons for killing kangaroos and emus and other birds and animals, but these are becoming rather scarce in the districts around there now. Spinifex grass grows thickly around the camp and this is spikey and hard to walk through.

One day several of the little boys, who run about without any clothing, asked us for the loan of some matches to light a fire.

When we asked what the fire was for they said: “To cook some lizards.”

“Do you eat lizards?”

“Yes,” they said, and one little fellow brought from behind his back a bunch of lizards which he was holding by their tails!

These little boys could speak some English. They taught us some of their words and we taught them some of ours. It was lovely to hear them pronouncing in their own quaint way the words, “Bible” and “God” and “Jesus.”

Now Mr. Weston, who has since settled there to be the Missionary in that district, says that they have learned to speak English much better and they are learning to read and write too.

They loved to see the Bible pictures and, one day, when coming through there some months after the first visit, I was sitting on a chair surrounded by quite a number of little black boys who were eagerly looking at these pictures and listening to the stories of Jesus. They pressed all around me and forgot everything else for a while as they heard the stories that we know so well.
These little chaps loved to bathe in the water holes nearby and could swim very well. One day they found a piece of soap on the bank and one little boy soaped his mate's hair till it was a mass of snowy whiteness like a great big ice-cream!

We showed the lantern pictures to the dark people on the camp and, the second night, when the Life of Christ pictures were shown, there was quite a large gathering of the people from both tribes.

The old warriors from the western, uncivilised tribe brought their weapons along and sat on them throughout the meeting.

The people put up two large poles on a flat place at their camp and we tied the sheet on these poles. They were very excited about the pictures of the Son of God Who came to be born as a baby, and to do such wonderful works of power and loving-kindness.

They were very much touched by the sufferings of Jesus on the cross for them, and were quite thrilled to see the pictures of Him rising again from the grave by His own great power, so that He could give life to all who come to Him.

While the pictures were being shown, some of those who could understand simple English were translating our words to the others in their own language.

It is lovely to know that now we have four Missionaries out in the Northern Territory, but we hope to have many more yet to send out to tell these people of a Saviour's love.

There are hundreds of dark girls and boys on the mission-stations growing up under the influence of the Word of God, but still we want to keep pressing on until all those who are still in heathen darkness will hear the good news of the gospel.

Will you pray for these dark people and the little girls and boys out there too, and ask God if He will show you some way of helping to send out the Light of the World among them?
Journeying North

The mining township of Tennant Creek, which has sprung up in the last three years or so, is practically on the same latitude as Townsville, in North Queensland.

Seven or eight miles north of the town, both the dark people’s present camp and the old Telegraph Station are situated, close to the creek, which is the only water supply in the district.

The dark people there are the remnants of what was once a great tribe, known as the “Warramunga” people. It soon became apparent to us that, while they had been blighted with the white man’s evils, they were in complete ignorance of the saving message of the Gospel.

A visiting tribe from the Wave Hill district, further west, were in an uncivilised condition altogether, and to these we had to speak by signs and through interpreters.

After spending a little time there, we felt sure that this would be a very good centre from which to work throughout the districts stretching away to every point of the compass, and we prayed that before long a missionary would be able to settle there.

After doing what we could to introduce the Gospel and to help them to understand the nature of missionary work, we felt that we should move on further north. But we were in a rather perplexing position.

Our needs had been supplied in some wonderful ways for every stage of the journey up till then. But here we had received nothing, and our purses were nearly empty. Then we found that the next place where petrol could be obtained was at Newcastle Waters, nearly 180 miles north. Incidentally, the price
Railway bridge over the Darwin River.

Coconut Avenue at Darwin.

White Ant beds.

SCENES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.
THE VAN IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.

On the plains in the North-east.

At the Centre of the Continent (close to Central Mt. Stuart).

At Newcastle Waters.
there was 4/4 per gallon, and off the main routes it is much dearer.

We had far more petrol left over from our journey from Mt. Isa than we had anticipated, most of that stretch being across flat country. It dawned on us that this might be God’s way of meeting the need for the next step forward, and we calculated that with a good average of petrol consumption we could just about reach Newcastle Waters.

So we set out one morning, and, though the travelling was rougher than we anticipated, we arrived safely there in the evening with just a little petrol left. Newcastle Waters is really a cattle station, but there are two little stores, a Post Office, and an old hotel, besides several houses.

It is also an air-mail stop, and, although it is a tiny isolated place, so far away from Sydney, a letter posted early on the Sunday morning was in Sydney on the Tuesday morning, and the answer came back early on the Thursday afternoon of the same week. It seemed strange to see the big four-engined Quantas ’planes circling overhead and landing nearby. We had often seen them at the Queensland towns, but it was much more of a contrast with the surrounding conditions out in places such as this.

There is quite a lake of water not far away, and the bush in the surrounding district is fairly thick. On the western side there is a great area of some of the wildest country in Australia, with no white people living in it and no roads through it, but there are native people who come in from those parts to Newcastle Waters, where there is a permanent camp of approximately seventy aborigines. Their numbers swell at times to a much greater figure.

For a little over a week we stayed at this place, camped in a surprisingly pleasant spot beside a small waterhole. (See photograph on opposite page.)

Without having planned this journey north, we were halted twice on the way at the very places
where God saw the greatest need for missionary work then and in the future.

At Newcastle Waters and Katherine, over two hundred and eighty miles further north, we were delayed through lack of sufficient money to meet the travelling expenses, until needs were met in God’s time and way. Though there are many dark people scattered about these parts, the two largest camps were at the places where we were delayed in this way!

Now a Missionary, Mr. R. Peaker, has gone to live at Newcastle Waters and Mr. Taylor has been able to spend some time since at Katherine. We had wanted to drive straight through to Darwin to have all the time possible in the north before the wet season began, but “known unto God are all His works from the beginning,” and His way proved to be the best.

We journey north through Daly Waters to Birdum, the terminus of the narrow-gauge railway-line, which extends a little over three hundred miles south from Darwin.

On the way we crossed the Elsey River, made famous by the writings of Mrs. Aeneas Gunn. The country around seems to be scarcely any more populated now than it was in the days when Mrs. Gunn lived in the “Never-Never.”

Passing on through Mataranka and the rugged hills around Marranboy we came to Katherine, which was, until recent years, the railway terminus. The bush in these parts is strangely different from that in New South Wales or Queensland—the trees being tall and thin, the foliage as well as the branches having the appearance of being “dragged upwards by the kurr” as we remarked at the time.

At Katherine there were numbers of dark people about and these we found to be in two camps about two miles apart. When they learned what we were they welcomed us and we commenced work among them.

Most of them had not known what a Missionary was
until then, though there were two or three who had been
on Mission stations in Arnheim Land.

There was a "rain-maker" among them and we saw
other evidences of heathen darkness. The two old
kings shown in one of the pictures opposite page 88
were great friends and sat together at each meeting
earnestly listening to every word of the message
of redeeming love. They were introduced to us as
"Number 1 King" and "Number 2 King."

An old bushman who had pronounced these people
hopeless as far as our work was concerned, was present
at a Sunday evening meeting.

Others had come in from the surrounding district,
and about sixty men, besides women and children, were
spread out in the moonlight listening to "the old, old
story." That story seemed to hold a greater charm for
us the more frequently we sought to tell it in its majes-
tic simplicity. Oh, how great a privilege is ours to be
entrusted with such a Gospel and with such a task! The
angels of God who bow and serve before His eternal
throne have not so great and glorious a mission as we
who are ambassadors for Christ in a sin-stricken world.

After that Sunday night meeting was over the old
bushman confessed himself amazed at what he had seen
and heard. He had not thought anything like that to be
possible. But what might have been said if regular
work had been done there? Mr. Taylor has been able
to spend some time there since then and said that the
welcome was warmer than ever. He said that "dear old
Number 2 King" laughed with delight when he saw him
and nearly fell over trying to get to him quickly!

For well over a hundred miles north of Katherine the
country is extremely rough and rocky. We had the
spare tyre dragged from its place underneath the Van
without becoming aware of it for a while. We found it
two miles back and were thankful that we did so, for
shortly afterwards one of our best tyres blew out in a
very rough part of the country.
Arriving at Adelaide River we spent a night there before pushing on to Darwin the next day, September 3rd, 1936.

About forty miles further on, the track runs alongside the beautiful Darwin River, a photograph of which is shown opposite page 80.

After driving on for another two hours or so we came on to the first bitumen road that we had seen for a long time. A few minutes later the blue waters of the harbour of Darwin presented a most welcome sight—for at last after a long series of obstructions and difficulties which cannot now be recounted, we had reached the goal for which we had set out.

Before long we were encamped at a beautiful spot three miles out of Darwin, at Fanny Bay, and had a great sandy beach almost entirely to ourselves for two months before the Van was turned southward again. We fixed our camp under some big shady trees and whatever else happened we certainly had a convenient and comfortable "headquarters."
DARWIN is about half-way between the Tropic of Capricorn and the Equator, being roughly 350 miles further north than Cairns on the Queensland coast and faces the Timor Sea, a part of the Indian Ocean. It is a town of two thousand inhabitants of whom at least half are a great mixture of nationalities. It is said that when the loco workshops were in operation employees from no less than thirty different races were engaged and the variety among the people in the town is still greater.

We felt that if our work in future days should expand into various parts of the Northern Territory it would be advantageous from many points of view to have a Missionary stationed here at the capital of this great area of country. The Administrative Offices are in Darwin; it is the sea-port and rail-head and centre of aviation for the Northern Territory. The hospital, to which many dark people are brought, is in Darwin; the Leprosarium is not far away; the gaol is at Fanny Bay and has in it thirty dark prisoners on an average.

There is a compound for Aborigines also and a great many pass through from outlying districts. Then there are several camps in the bush about three miles out of the town and to these we were the first to go with the Word of Life.

We were cordially welcomed by the Government Officials in Darwin, and soon met some Christian people who were very helpful to us.

The Methodist Minister and Foreign Missionary, Rev. L. N. Kentish, B.A., B.D., was at Mitchell, Queensland, some years ago and was a great help to our first Missionary there. We greatly appreciated the fellowship with this servant of God and Mr. Taylor, who was appointed as our first Missionary in the Northern Territory, has been able to work in co-operation with Mr. Kentish there. The latter had been doing all in his
power to reach the native population but maintaining the work of God in such a cosmopolitan town is a very complex and difficult task.

We are confident that Mr. Taylor’s work will expand to many other parts southward and westward as time goes on. Already at Darwin itself a little living church has been formed and there is a growing band of dark Christians there. This is the best centre from which to work out to these other districts.

Shortly after our arrival in Darwin, Mr. C. L. Weston, from North Queensland, was appointed to become the resident Missionary at Tennant Creek and a month or so later he left Townsville by steamer and came “over the top” of Australia to Darwin. Thus for a little while we were quite a strong force in the work there!

But we did not spend any more time there than we could help. The boat, on which Mr. Weston came, also brought some parts for the Van and we overhauled it, doing all we could to ensure a safe trip through to the south.

But for some weeks previously the tropical wet season had been threatening to begin in earnest, and we had been warned that we had left it rather late to travel now.

Storm clouds were constantly working up. Throughout one night the sky was ablaze with lightning almost incessantly, and several storms had burst at Darwin and still more had broken inland.

However, we could do nothing else, so we left as soon as the way opened and travelled “between the storms” until we were in a safer zone.

Four inches at one point had just sufficiently dried to allow us to pass through and we were pursued by storms as we journeyed southwards to Tennant Creek.

Here the children came running out to greet us and the adults stood waving as they saw the Van approaching.

We were now six hundred and fifty miles south of Darwin and had come through without accident though several spring leaves were broken. For a fortnight we
worked together preparing a rough dwelling or camp for Mr. Weston, getting the Van ready for the rest of the journey and doing Missionary work among the people at the camp.

As the result of enquiries made then, we have been able to obtain permission for the building of a house nearby and our first Mission House in the Northern Territory has been erected not far from the spot where Mr. Taylor and I first camped, after crossing the border and entering in.

Thus the promise had begun to be fulfilled: "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours."

It was not easy to leave Mr. Weston and the newly begun work in the Northern Territory but other duties called and it was needful to set out again for home. It may be a sacrifice to leave home for the Mission field but once any true missionary has gone out at God's command it is much harder to leave the Mission field even if only for a little while.

Early one afternoon in December we parted, Mr. Weston to toil on alone amid trying conditions for some time before anyone else could be sent to his help, while before me was a journey of two thousand five hundred miles alone, yet not alone.

I had not gone far out of Tennant Creek before discovering a young man who had been lying injured in a little truck for some hours by the wayside—so putting him aboard the Van I drove back to the town for medical attention.

That night I stopped beside a well in a solitary place, and arose before sunrise in the morning to continue the journey, arriving at Alice Springs in the evening after travelling nearly 280 miles during the day.

Here I had the privilege of meeting Rev. H. Griffiths, the Methodist Inland Missionary, who with his wife is doing a fine work in "the largest parish in the world," and was also able to have a helpful conversation with the Pastor in charge of the Hermannsburg, or Finke River Mission Station.
While at Alice Springs I was greeted by what was described as the worst dust storm for forty years, and fervently hoped that it would continue to hold the record for another forty years, for the roar was deafening and the pall of darkness over everything was like Egyptian night.

It was not possible to follow the line down to Oodnadatta, the next township (350 miles direct) as the notorious Depot Sandhills are invariably much steeper on the northern side, the wind blowing most frequently that way. This chain of sandhills is about twenty miles long, and very little traffic passes over them from the south and practically none from the north. So I had to go by a long detour on the western side, swinging out between parts of the Macdonnell Ranges, then crossing many creeks and river-beds, including the Finke and Palmer Rivers; driving through long stretches of mulga scrub, often crossing stony ridges and rocky places and sometimes ploughing through heavy sand for miles and pulling over sand-hills.

The last hundred miles of the track around into Oodnadatta was a much easier stage—fairly good for a bush track. Arriving on a Saturday evening, I called on the Missionaries of another Missionary Society, and accepted their invitation to spend Sunday there, and appreciated the fellowship with them in their work for God. We had a lantern lecture at night on the Life of Christ.

The following morning I pushed on again, but after about twenty-eight miles was caught badly in a creek-bed. It was much worse than it appeared and I spent most of the day in efforts to extricate the Van and succeeded towards evening.

Next morning, further difficulties were encountered and overcome, but at about mid-day I was once again caught—this time when trying to pass through a chain of sandhills.

After spending the afternoon in practically fruitless labour, and I might mention that matting and canvas etc. were frequently used besides other devices, I
(a) *Three Little Playmates — Tennant Creek.*

(b) *Two Old Kings.*
(a) Two old men at Tennant Creek.

(b) Visitors from the West — members of an uncivilised tribe.
FIELD MAP OF
ABORIGINES INLAND
MISSION
of Australia

NORTHERN
TERRITORY

QUEENSLAND

WESTERN
AUSTRALIA

SOUTH
AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH
WALES

GREAT
AUSTRALIAN BIGHT
walked to the "home" of a railway gang, whose chief business it is to clear the moving sand off the train line—and at times it has been buried twelve feet deep!

I was rather astonished to find a bright Christian in that railway gang, and enjoyed the fellowship with him.

Fortunately, or providentially, they were not for away and after the weekly passenger train had gone through next morning, they came down in force and helped me out, for which I was very thankful.

Shortly after this, another belt of sandhills obstructed the way, but I was enabled to get through without further difficulty.

Nearly 290 miles south of Oodnadatta, Maree came into view, and then the bulk of the road troubles were behind.

But it was not till close to Hawker—243 miles further south—that formed roads began to appear. Forty miles further on I came out on to splendid roads which seemed rather like a dream at first—and the last 200 miles to Adelaide were "smooth sailing"; the Van was running well.

A warm welcome awaited me at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Deacon, friends in Adelaide, whose kindness and hospitality during a stay of several days were very refreshing, as I had been extremely tired.

After a "clean-up" and a little work on the Van, I left for Ballarat via the Duke's Highway (through Bordertown and Nhill) and drove there (400 miles) in a day and a half despite some mechanical troubles on the road.

It was a delight to meet friends there who had stood staunchly behind the work of the Mission for many years.

The next stop was Melbourne and passing along the Hume Highway to Albury and Gundagai, I turned aside to spend a couple of days with the workers at Cowra before crossing the Blue Mountains on the final run home.
Even to the last stages of this journey, as in the entire pilgrimage to heaven, there could be no relaxation of faith. At Alice Springs I received a substantial gift from a friend in New South Wales and this came just at the time of need. At Adelaide three pounds came also from New South Wales, and this was sufficient to see me through to Ballarat with very little petrol left over and a few pence change. I arose early in the morning to pray for deliverance and the needs were met by gifts there after I had started preparations for leaving.

The friends there had no idea of my position but "all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do" and He supplied the need.

How often do we have to say like David of old— "I was brought low and He helped me."

There is a sore depth of meaning in that first clause, "I was brought low" but how blessed to be able to add the rest "and He helped me!"

But after all, these things are only a means to an end and the end in this case—at least the chief end—is that the dark people of Australia might come to know the grace of Him "Who, though He was rich yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich."

Standing alone at almost the exact centre of the Continent—in the great silence that broods over those mighty expanses—I thought again of that promise, "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours."

Ah yes, and it shall be fulfilled if we by faith "go in and possess the land."

We have seen the seeker after gold conduct expeditions into wild and un-inhabited regions to obtain treasure that perishes but how few will stop at nothing or go anywhere for the treasure that endures for evermore.

We have seen the advocates of poisonous doctrine going forth to almost every place where Europeans
have gone to live in this country, and the Jehovah’s Witnesses have over 1,400 travelling in Australia. They will “compass sea and land to make one proselyte” and then “make him two-fold more a child of hell than themselves” (Matt. 23: 15), but what zeal do we show to spread the truth of God and pluck souls as brands from the burning?

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES!"

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES!" Oh, ye saints of the Lord! 'Tis Jesus Who utters this challenging word. "LIFT UP YOUR EYES" over mountain and plain, Where broad fields are waving with fair, ripened grain.

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES" from the comforts of home, Around us are souls who despairingly roam, In blindness they grope for the way of the Lord— In hunger and thirst, crave the life-giving word.

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES" from the things that surround, From pressure of business and cares that abound, Rare jewels lie waste, that forever may shine, In Christ’s diadem with His glory divine.

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES" lest the world’s dazzling beams Of pleasures that fade like the fleeting of dreams, Shall blind you to joys that alone can endure, And treasure in Heaven, forever secure.

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES" lest they droop in the way, And sleep through the hours of the fast-fading day; The trump of the Lord sounds this call to His own To share in His toils ere He reigns from His throne.

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES," higher still, lift them now, Where coronets wait for the conqueror's brow, Shall WE hear "Well done" from the lips of our Lord, Or suffer the loss of the priceless reward?
The Great Proclamation

The phrase, "Highways and Byways," does not actually occur in the Scriptures, but its equivalent is to be found in the words, "Highways and hedges" (Luke 14: 23).

In the parable recorded in that chapter, those who were honoured with the invitation of a rich man to attend a great feast which he had prepared especially for them, proffered paltry excuses for non-acceptance of this gracious offer. "Then the master of the house being angry" did not tell his servants to keep on indefinitely trying to persuade the same people to come, but ordered a new line of action. They were to "go out quickly" to others who would normally be regarded as beyond the possibility of being invited to such a feast and at such a house.

When the poor and afflicted from the city streets were brought in the servants were ordered to "Go out into the highways and hedges"—that is to the roads and fields of the country, to bring in all who could be found there, that the feast might be fully attended and the house filled with guests.

The lessons of this story are clear and plain to all who read the Word of God. But how slow are we for the most part to apply its teaching!

The world is full of perishing souls; teeming millions who are dying daily without hearing those words of blessed invitation: "Come for all things are now ready."

Here in this wonderful land of ours there are the remnants of a poor and dying people, whose spiritual and eternal welfare depends chiefly on the attitude of the children of God who live within its coasts.

It is estimated that there were approximately a million and three-quarters of Australia’s native race
living when the white people first came here. Now the number has fallen to less than eighty thousand, and there is no need to comment on the causes of this appalling decline.

The fine Tasmanian natives were completely annihilated and now there are only about five hundred dark people left in Victoria while the rest are thinly scattered over the continent.

What a wonderful field we would have had for the proclamation of the Gospel had this awful destruction been averted!

Now it is necessary to travel over vast areas of country to minister to a mere handful of people. But still the task is not accomplished, for two-thirds at least of the present number have not yet heard the only message of hope that peals out from heaven’s portals above the groans of a dying world.

What can we say to these facts? Only that the problem and privilege of bringing these people to Christ have never yet been taken seriously by the Church of God as a whole in this land.

If those, who are in a position to do so, would rise up and throw their strength and resources into the project, we should soon have the whole task accomplished, at least to the point of knowing that every dark soul had had the opportunity of hearing the message of peace and salvation.

Certainly there is now a greatly increased interest in the dark people, and Missionary work amongst them is increasing too, but this is due chiefly to the toils and prayers of the few who in the past have endured much in order that, among these benighted people, the Lord might “see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.”

May I appeal, in all humility, to the reader now? Is there anything more that you may do towards the salvation of Australia’s Aborigines?

What has been done in the past has been through individuals who have yielded themselves entirely to
God for the working out of His purpose in this part of His great harvest field.

In the hands that multiplied the loaves and fishes everything counts. Every prayer that can be uttered, every ounce of support that can be given, all adds to the aggregate of power that is enabling the work to be done. But may I come to another and more delicate point still? Every life that can be yielded up to Christ to serve Him wholly among the dark folk of this land makes a still greater addition to the forces operating for their salvation and will bring joy and “exceeding great reward” to the one who thus goes forward at the Lord’s command.

Perhaps these words may be read by some who have the best of life before them, and are faced with the great alternatives of self-pleasing and self-sacrifice for others and “for Christ’s sake and the Gospel’s.” We would not dare to call a soul into the Lord’s service; but the Lord Himself has said to all who owe their eternal salvation to His dying love,

“Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.”

My dear brother or sister, are you willing to lay down on the altar the life that is not your own, for it is bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus?

We have been saved to serve. “This is not our rest.” The eternal ages are rolling on. The great opportunities of life are swiftly passing. There is no time to be lost for souls are dying and the great enemy is not idle.

“Go out quickly,” is the command to all the servants of the King. And if we shut our ears to all other voices that we may hear the voice “that speaketh from heaven” —if we “go out” into the dark and difficult places of earth at His bidding—it will be only “yet a little while” until we shall hear that same voice saying: “Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”
Aborigines Inland Mission
of Australia

The Aborigines Inland Mission was founded in 1905 in Singleton, N.S.W. The work now extends over a great area of country in Eastern Australia and the Northern Territory, embracing well over 11,000 Aborigines in its spiritual care.

It has 110 workers—50 Missionaries, 22 Associate Missionaries, and 38 Native Workers—operating in 41 centres and many outposts. Up to the present time over 6000 souls have been added to the Lord through the ministry of the A.I.M.

The work is strictly evangelistic in character, no industrial work being undertaken. The Missionaries' time and strength and all the resources of the Mission are concentrated on the task of evangelising the original inhabitants of Australia, and of building up the converts in the faith.

The work is supported by voluntary contributions from God's people, given in answer to prayer. No salaries are paid, or any promise of remuneration given, the Missionaries going forth to live lives of dependence on God alone. The Mission seeks to faithfully distribute towards their needs as funds allow.

The management of the work on the field is in the hands of the Director and Field Council, the latter consisting of senior Missionaries of long and varied experience.

The Mission is interdenominational, and accepts suitable candidates who have absolute faith in the Deity of the Three Persons of the Trinity, and in the full inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures.

Applications should be made to the Director or Secretary, by whom also general information regarding the work will be readily given.

Communications may be addressed to:
A.I.M. OFFICE,
242 Pitt Street, SYDNEY.
A.I.M. Publications

The A.I.M. publishes two monthly magazines—"Our Aim," 2/- per annum, giving reports of the work and up-to-date news from the field; "The Australian Evangel," containing Gospel messages and other features, with contributions from the Aborigines themselves, is circulated among the coloured people on our stations and in many isolated places.

"Providential Channels," by (Mrs.) Retta Long, Founder and Director of the Aborigines Inland Mission. True stories of miraculous deliverances in times of great pressure and urgent need; answers to prayer which have already proved a means of encouragement and blessing to many readers. Price 2/-, postage paid.

"In the Way of His Steps," by the same author. A brief history of the A.I.M., with illustrations. The title is taken from Psalm 85:13. Price 1/-, postage paid.

"The Aboriginal as a Subject of the Kingdom of God." Price 3d.


"True Stories of Australian Aborigines." A series of nine stories. 6d per dozen.

Postcard Pictures from the Field may also be obtained, 9d per dozen.