The Story of Australia's Revival.

BY R. A. TORREY, IN S. S. TIMES.

The great work of God in Australia and New Zealand that began in 1902 and is still going on was but another illustration of God's readiness to answer prayer, and his willingness to use the most unlikely instruments if they are put at his disposal.

About twelve years ago, a small company of godly men, ministers of different denominations in Australia, became burdened regarding the religious condition of that colony, and began to meet together for prayer. Sometimes they would spend a large share of the night in prayer. At one of these meetings, John MacNeill, the author of "The Spirit-Filled Life," cried out to God for a "big revival," and before concluding his prayer expressed his conviction that the "big revival" was coming. The expression "the big revival" became a watchword among them, but it was years before they saw its realization. John MacNeill had departed to be with Christ; Mr. MacCartney, of the Anglican Church, had moved away from Austrailia; Allan Webb, of the Baptist Church, died on his knees in the midst of the revival, after having taken part in one of the great meetings the day before.

Away around on the other side of the earth, in Chicago, God had raised up others to pray for a world-wide revival. Utterly unconscious of what was going on in Australia, three or four hundred people met every Saturday night from nine to ten o'clock in the lecture room of the Moody Bible Institute to pray God for a mighty outpouring of his Spirit in all lands. After these meetings had been going on a few weeks, people would come to the two men who had some sort of leadership in them, and say, "Do you see any signs of the world-wide revival?" and they would reply, "No, nothing definite." Then they would ask, "When is it coming?" and they would reply, "We don't know." "How long do you intend to keep on praying?" "Till it comes."

After these meetings had been going on for some time, the two leaders in them and a small group of trusted friends would meet at the close of the meeting, ten o'clock at night, and pray far on into the morning of the next day. After two or three years, at one of these late meetings the Spirit of God one night suddenly moved the writer of this article to pray that God would send him around the world to preach the gospel, and win men to Christ in great numbers in China, Japan, Australia, India, and other lands. When that prayer, which he was distinctly conscious was not his own, was over, he had the firmest confidence that he was to go around the world preaching the Gospel, but how or when it was to be brought about he did not know. He seemed to be anchored for life in Chicago with the Moody Institute, and the Chicago Avenue Church was upon his hands.

Not many weeks from this two strangers appeared in the lecture room of the Bible Institute, attending the lectures regularly day by day. At the close of one of the lectures they came to him and asked a private interview. They stated that, in leaving Australia, they had been commissioned by the Australasian Evangelization Society to look through England and America for a man to come and conduct evangelistic services throughout Australia, and that they had both picked upon him, and that he must come. He replied that he could not see any possibility of doing so, with his many responsibilities; but one of them expressed the utmost confidence that he was coming anyhow, and asked him to let him know just as soon as he decided. This was in January or February of 1901. During the spring and summer the way began to open up so that it seemed possible to go. An urgent letter came the last part of September asking a cablegram at once. Going alone with God in St. Louis, it became clear to him that he ought to go, and a cablegram was immediately despatched to Australia, saying that he was coming. Others who had gone alone with God told him afterwards that it was made clear to them also that he was going.

When we reached Melbourne, we found that God had so stirred up the people regarding prayer that seventeen hundred prayer-meetings were being held on Tuesday night of each week, and God had brought together in Melbourne fifty leaders in evangelistic work from all parts of Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, and several from America.

The first two weeks of the Melbourne mission fifty meetings in different parts of the city were held nightly, with a nightly attendance of fifty-three thousand people. Numerous town halls, theatres, and tents were employed for the meetings. Each day at one o'clock a meeting was held for business men in the town hall, accommodating about three thousand people, women being admitted to the gallery. But these meetings became so largely attended that it was necessary to have one at twelve for women and another at one for men. An afternoon Bible-reading was held at three o'clock in the same place. The last two weeks of the mission the evening meetings were concentrated at the Exhibition Hall, capable of seating eight thousand people. The very first night of the meeting here the place was not only packed, but, just before I rose to speak, the thousands outside broke through the doors and swept the police before them, and it was some time before the overwhelming multitude could be kept back. God's power was manifested in the meetings from the beginning. During the four weeks of the mission more than eighty-six hundred persons professed to accept Jesus Christ.

At a meeting of converts that I went back to address a month later, six thousand of the converts were present at the meeting. When I asked all the converts to stand, they arose *en masse*. Then, when I asked all those who had already united with some evangelical church to be seated, perhaps nearly half of them took their seats. When I asked those who would at once seek admission to some evangelical church to be seated almost the entire remainder took their seats.

The fire spread from Melbourne all over Australia. Brief missions of a week or two were held in the leading centres, such as Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo.

A longer mission, covering about three weeks, was held in Sydney. The most interesting feature there was the one o'clock meetings for business men. These were held in a building capable of seating twenty-five hundred people. For over two weeks leading men in commercial and political life, including members of both houses of the Legislature, gave up their noonday meals to attend these lectures on the Bible and on infidelity. Many professed agnostics openly renounced their agnosticism, and became active workers. One of the two Liberal ministers of the city sent an open letter to one of the Sydney papers renouncing his liberalism, and declaring that he had been thoroughly convinced by the lectures to which he had listened. Hundreds of men were converted in a single night. The revival fire spread to the bush and the mines. In places where no evangelist had gone, Christian men would get the sermons as published in the papers, and circulate them among their neighbors.

I have just read a letter from a layman who has been going over Australia and New Zealand nine months after the close of the missions, and he writes that the fire is still burning, and those who were aroused by the meetings are still working.

From Australia we went to New Zealand and Tasmania, and here God blessed his Word as remarkably as in the larger colony. Missions of ten days each were held in Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin in New Zealand, and Launceston and Hobart in Tasmania. No building would hold the crowds. Christchurch, a place of about sixty thousand inhabitants, has a beautiful hall accommodating thirty-five hundred people, but the capacity of this was not sufficient for the exigencies of the meetings. Other halls in the same building were employed, but would not accommodate the crowds. One man, who came forty miles to attend the meeting, did not succeed in getting in, but was blessed on the outside. On one night there were five thousand people packed in the various halls inside the building, and an open-air for more on the outside. Toward the end, two meetings were held each night in the large hall,—one at 6.30 for the women and one for the men at 8. It rained each night, but the men stood out patiently in the rain waiting for their turn. As soon as the hall was emptied of women and the doors were opened, the men came in like a flood. There was more opposition from the unbelieving elements of the community in Christchurch than perhaps anywhere else, but there was a most signal victory for the truth. The secretary of the Atheist Club was converted. The same day his wife was converted in another meeting. He wrote his recantation of his atheism and his acceptance of Jesus Christ.

One of the most notable gatherings in Hobart was the meeting for children. It is said that at that one meeting a thousand children gave credible evidence of having intelligently accepted Christ.

In Launceston, Jim Burke, the cham-

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