University of New Zealand

THESIS

Presented for the Examination for

M.A. AND HONOURS

In History

By

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"The zeal of the Missionary is to live in solitude and discouragement and in apparent reverses. It is to animate him when none shall feed the fire; and when all shall join to repress it. When hope itself languishes, it must be a flame to burn with steady brightness and stimulate to labours and perseverance, when many waters shall pour themselves out to quench it."

Richard Watson.
PLATE 1.

Facsimile of the Front Page of the Buller Family Bible.
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PREFACE.

The tapestry of history is composed of myriad threads and colours, each of which must be examined separately before the finished pattern can be rightly understood. While any biography is necessarily very limited in scope, and by centering in one individual tends to distort the ordinary pattern of human relationships and the relative importance of men and events, it nevertheless provides a valuable insight into the interaction of circumstance and human character, which is the basis of all history. This study seeks to show the work of a Wesleyan minister during critical years in the establishment of his church, and to examine his connection with and influence upon Wesleyan development. It is a study of personality, and of the growth of a church whose contacts with Maori and European have been extensive. An examination of the past achievements and weaknesses of that church is not only full of interest, but can throw considerable light on its present position and problems.

Trustworthy fact is the essential pre-requisite for any reliable historical interpretation or study, and considering the absence of any accurate and well balanced account of the events outlined in this thesis, it has seemed advisable to make it more factual than might otherwise have been necessary. To avoid the inaccuracies, if not grave errors, of most secondary sources, extensive use has had to be made of existing primary material and in this there are regrettable gaps. The Wesley Historical Society in England has been unable to provide any additional material; an advertisement for information in the British "Methodist Recorder" brought no response; the Mitchell Library in Sydney harbours no documents unavailable in New Zealand; and the Buller family owns
no private papers. In the library of Trinity College in Auckland there lie many manuscripts, but probably few relevant to this thesis, and all uncatalogued, unsorted, and often packed securely away. It is to be hoped that this valuable material will soon be made available for study. The originals of the Wesleyan Missionary Correspondence, which have been extensively used in the first half of this thesis, were sent to New Zealand from England a few years ago, were hastily typed here and never corrected. Thus the copies are full of mistakes of greater or less consequence. It is also understood that some letters had "disappeared" in England before their value was recognised.

Such research as has been done for this thesis has served to suggest many more questions than can possibly be satisfactorily answered in so limited a scope, and yet all of which have their interest and importance. Yet is not this call to continue following after truth part of the challenge of history?
ABBREVIATIONS ETC.

1. The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes:

Diary = Buller "Diary."
D.M. = District Meeting.
N.D.M. = Northern District Meeting.
S.D.M. = Southern District Meeting.
N.Z. = New Zealand.
Q.M. = Quarterly Meeting.
Secs. = The Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.
W.M.C. = The Wesleyan Missionary Committee.
W.M.S. = The Wesleyan Missionary Society.
W.M.S. Corres. = Wesleyan Missionary Society Correspondence.

2. All letters, unless otherwise stated, are to be found in the Wesleyan Missionary Society Correspondence.

3. All dates not given in full are in the nineteenth century.

4. The initials of the names of authors given in the Bibliography are not repeated in the footnotes.

5. According to the modern custom, the use of capital letters has been reduced to a minimum.
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Religion in early eighteenth century England was scarcely more than a social convention, lifeless and impractical; government belonged to the upper classes and was oiled with "influence:" morality, enthusiasm and righteousness were out of fashion. In such an England on May 24th, 1738, John Wesley, an Oxford don and an Anglican clergyman of thirty-four years of age, felt his "heart strangely warmed" and knew for a certainty that Christ had died to save him from his sins. "Wesley ... was a man who ... had the brain of a statesman, the culture of a scholar, the message of an apostle (and) ... also the glowing and tireless zeal of a preaching friar of the Middle Ages." Inspired with enthusiastic assurance, he, aided by other like-minded men, felt compelled to carry the Gospel message wherever it was most needed, and as the dignified Established Church began to close its doors, even John Wesley himself consented to be "more vile" and to preach in the open air to the eager or hostile crowds. In spite of considerable persecution the movement spread rapidly, especially among the lower classes. Jealous, sincere, if often uneducated lay preachers, whom John Wesley came to recognise as a true creation of the Lord, played no unimportant part and while the European membership was seventy one thousand in 1791, by 1833 that of the United Kingdom was over three hundred thousand, with nine hundred thousand members in other parts of the world.

The growing membership and the hostility of the Established Church forced Wesley to introduce some independent church organi-

4. Ibid., 1833, p. 274.
ation, although he never desired to separate from the Anglicans. In 1874 a Deed of Declaration, enrolled in Chancery, legally constituted the Methodist Conference and in the same year, by venturing to ordain Whatcoat, Vasey and Coke for overseas service, Wesley took an action legally equivalent to separation. The final break came only after Wesley's death.

In 1797 and 1812, secessions led to the formation of the Methodist New Connexion and of the Primitive Methodist Church. In 1814 Dr. Jabez Bunting was elected to the Legal Hundred which governed the church. A man of outstanding administrative talent, he wielded semi-autocratic power in the church for almost forty years, during which time the status of the ministry was raised, laymen gained a greater share in church government, and the authority of the Conference was exalted. Two small secessions preceded that of 1849, when a hundred thousand members left in consequence of a disagreement over Bunting's general policy. This, then, was the position of English Methodism as the New Zealand Mission began.

John Wesley, by claiming the world as his parish, opened a unique vista to the young church. Crowds in Scotland in 1741 and in Ireland in 1747 heard Methodist preachers and the 1791 Conference recognised France as a new circuit with one minister. The American church, under the virile leadership of Francis Asbury, grew apace. To Gibraltar, Newfoundland and the West Indies, to Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone.

6. "Lord Mansfield told me ... that ordination was separation." Charles Wesley to Chandler, quoted Tyerman, op. cit., p. 439.
9. Born 1745, went to America in 1771. Ordained a Methodist Bishop in 1784, he organised the whole Methodist Connexion in America. Died 1816.
the word had spread before the turn of the century: and Ceylon, India, the Cape of Good Hope and South America were evangelised shortly afterwards. Methodist influences played round Australia from the beginning, although the first missionary was not sent until 1815. Within a few years the South Seas Mission also included Tonga (1822) and Fiji (1832.) Thus, when Samuel Leigh, on returning to England from Australia in 1820, urged both the Conference and the English Methodists to support a mission to New Zealand, which he had visited earlier, his action was really part of the broader missionary effort. This New Zealand Mission became, through the ill-health of the missionaries, denominational rivalries, friction with the London Missionary Committee, and its comparatively disappointing results, the most heartbreaking of all the Wesleyan Missions.

Behind the expansive energy of Methodism lay no novel theology but old truths revived and given a new emphasis. Methodism as a child of the Church of England, followed the Roman Catholic tradition rather more than did some dissenting bodies, yet it was a tolerant church, demanding no rigid orthodoxy of doctrine, worship or thought, and considering itself as just one branch of the Church Universal. Wesley based his teaching on the sole authority of the Bible as interpreted by reason, but it was a personal Gospel of what God had done for him. Methodism stood primarily for the Arminian doctrine of atonement, for the doctrines of assurance and perfection: all men could be saved, could know they were saved and could be saved to the uttermost. Wesley believed the ministry to be called of God, without being in the

Apostolic Succession, and although a preaching ministry was emphasised, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper were retained.

The Society maintained strict rules which insisted upon the need to grow in grace and required regular church attendance and diligent attention to private and family devotions. Regular disciplinary checks enforced such regulations. John Wesley "distrusted democracy whether in church or political government," and Methodist Church government partly illustrates this. The foundation of the new Church was the class meeting, "a small group of church members gathered together for Christian fellowship and witness bearing, under the leadership of some well-approved person." The quarterly tickets given to the class members became the symbol of church membership. At first the meetings of the class leaders were merely to make reports and to hand in the class money which largely supported the Church, but they came to have general supervisory functions, and congregational representatives and officials were included. The country was geographically divided into circuits of one or more churches, governed by a Quarterly Meeting of all circuit leaders. Circuits were united in Districts with their annual synods of laymen and ministers, and all were subject to the annual ministerial Conference. The elected President of Conference held the supreme executive power, assisted by the District Chairmen, the Circuit Superintendents and the local ministers, who together formed the ministerial hierarchy. Special committees of the Conference supervised various departments of the church organisation and one of these, the General Wesleyan Missionary Society, which was finally formed in 1818 to be "co-extensive with the Connexion, and to

12. "I know (it) to be a fable," he wrote. John Wesley to Charles Wesley, 19.8.1785.
consolidate its whole missionary interest," supervised the foreign mission fields. 15

Warm Christian fellowship was considered a keynote of the new Church, and this found expression in such typical Methodist gatherings as the love feasts, where a congregation would unite in a frugal meal, talking of spiritual things and remembering the poor: the watch night service; and the covenant service. It was a singing religion, the hymns of Charles Wesley especially, carrying Methodist theology in a popular and simple form to many thousands. It was a religion where laymen could play an important part in preaching and in church organisation.

To this Church the Reverend James Buller belonged, and of it he was both fond and proud. "I have read the standard works of (Methodism's) venerable Founder and do, from conviction, most cordially acquiesce in the doctrines therein contained, as being agreeable to the Word of God: and the doctrines of no other body of Christians with which I am acquainted appear to me so much in unison with the tenor of Holy Writ, and the experience of true Believers. To the discipline of Wesleyan Methodism I am, under God, indebted for the privileges which I now enjoy.....In a word, next to the salvation of my soul, do I value my connexion with Methodism." "Methodism, considered as a system ..... is the work of God." 19

15. Stevens, op. cit., Vol.III, p.262. This followed the Leeds Missionary Rally of 1813. This was an era of missionary activity, the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society being founded in 1795 and 1799 respectively,
16. Born 1708, converted 1738, he remained in the Anglican Church. During his life he wrote 5000-6000 hymns, many of which are still used.
17. "Wesleyan," "Methodist," and "Wesleyan Methodist," were used indiscriminately.
18. Buller to Turner, 20.10.36.

The first Christian mission among the Maori people of New Zealand was established by the Church of England at the Bay of Islands after Marsden's visit there in 1814. In New South Wales the Wesleyan missionary after 1815 was Samuel Leigh, a man of glowing faith and great missionary enthusiasm, but although he was vigorous in mind and body, the difficult conditions of the penal settlement soon undermined his health. Marsden, his true friend throughout, persuaded him, in 1818, to try to recuperate by visiting New Zealand, and it was during that visit that Leigh grasped the great need for, and the tremendous possibilities of, a New Zealand mission.

On returning to England two years later Leigh felt stronger, and sought permission from the Wesleyan Missionary Society to begin a mission to the Maoris. When his request was refused, he toured the Midlands, collecting sufficient gifts in kind to establish the mission and to maintain it for five years. A meeting in Sydney in 1821 appointed a committee to assist the General Committee in London in managing the New Zealand mission, and at the beginning of the next year Leigh landed in New Zealand. Until May 1823 when William White arrived, Leigh waited at the Bay of Islands, not presuming to start the mission alone, but the two men, with the advice of their Anglican brethren, finally established it among the Ngati-Huruhuru tribe at the head of the Whangaroa harbour. In August the Reverend

23. Leigh to Taylor, 5.4.22.
24. White to W.M.C., 24.5.23.
Nathaniel Turner and a layman, John Hobbs, arrived as reinforcements, only to find Leigh so very ill that he had to be sent back to New South Wales immediately. The Whangaroa natives were notorious for their ferocity, and the missionaries lived in considerable danger and met with much truculence, hostility, "ignorance, barbarity, and wickedness" from them. Yet rather too much time was spent on station buildings and property.

When in 1827 Hongi swept over the area the Whangaroa mission was abruptly concluded, the missionaries fleeing for their lives. In view of the alarms of the previous years and the anxiety felt even at the Bay of Islands, this retreat did not betoken undue timidity. Turner, who had been in charge since White's removal in 1825, believed it to be necessary to abandon the mission temporarily, but within six months the way opened for a return. The Hokianga was chosen for the settlement of the new mission, in part because a Ngapuhi chief, Patuone, had invited the missionaries to come. James Stack, who had been in the Whangaroa mission, returned in October, followed shortly afterwards by a mission party including among others John Hobbs and Luke Wade, of who began the Whangaroa Mission. Cf. Leigh to Secs., 4.11.22:

White to Secs., 4.11.23
27. Born 1800, entered the ministry in 1824 from N.Z. and served here, except for five years in Tonga, until his retirement in 1856. Died 1883.
28. Te Aro, one of the three brothers whose protection the mission enjoyed, had been involved in the "Boyd" massacre and at least once threatened to repeat it on Turner. Cf. Turner to Secs., 29.1.24, Journal 16.11.23: F.Y. in N.Z., pp. 284-290.
32. Stack to Morley, 4.11.27: Davis, "The Life and Times of Patuone."
33. He had been at Whangaroa in 1827. Morley, op. cit., p. 40 misspells his name as "Ward."
although Wade returned to Sydney in 1829 on account of his wife's health. Not until 1828 was Mangungu, on the southern bank of the Waihou river, an accessible spot, with some cleared land, much good timber, and near a reasonable harbour, chosen as the site for the station. In 1830 William White returned to supervise the mission, Stack leaving in the next year and Hobbs sailing for Tonga in June 1833, just after a John Whitely had arrived. In January of the following year William Woon, an ex-missionary to Tonga and a printer, was engaged by the mission as he was en route to Sydney. On January 16th 1831 the first convert had been baptised but he had unfortunately died early the next morning. 

Although unsuspicious, it was still a beginning.

White, although hard-working, energetic, and well versed in Maori lore and language, was a difficult man with whom to agree. He was not-tempered, he increasingly displayed an impatient of criticism and an autocratic manner and he was over-impressed with the need to civilise the natives and to practise economy in the mission. He had arrived at an auspicious moment. as the Maoris began to exchange their earlier apathy and unfriendliness for a keen desire to hear the Word of God, although it was a day of only small beginnings. The public examination held at Mangungu at Christmas 1834 showed that gratifying progress was being made in reading, writing and learning the catechism.

4. Stack to Secs., 27.3.28, Journal, 18.1.28.
5. White to Morley, 8.3.30.
8. Whitely to Secs., 23.6.33.
9. Ibid. Whitely was born 1806, entered the ministry 1832, and served in N.Z. from 1833 until he was shot by some Maoris in 1869.
10. White to Secs., 6.2.34.
11. Morley, op. cit., has February 16th, as has White in the W.M.S. Corres. but he gives the day as Sunday. Sunday 16th. was in January, as the letter implies and as White's MSS. Journal says.
Cf. Stack to Secs., 27.4.31.
13. "Woon to Secs., 17.3.34: Early letters, Woon to Secs. 16.4.35.
14. White to Secs. 5.2.35.
and constant demands for slates and pencils proved the interest of
the natives.

More and more were attending the church services so that, by the
del1 of 1833, there were sometimes over two hundred Maoris gathered
at Mangungu each Sunday. Although no regular visitation was possible,
the missionaries took an interest in the surrounding districts where
about three hundred people all told would gather for worship, and
Sunday was observed in most villages. Insistent demands for books
were partly met by buying New Testaments from the Church Mission
until in 1836 a printing press arrived at Mangungu, after several
mishaps, and Woon was able enthusiastically to start work. Un-
fortunately some misunderstandings on the station and lack of binding
equipment hindered his work.

Yet none "not informed that this was a Wesleyan Mission Establish-
ment would come to that conclusion from passing observation,"
47
wrote Whitely, and White's colleagues objected to being kept "up to
the head and ears in secularity, while the groundwork of the Mission
is only attended to as a secondary concern." When the Reverend J.
Orton was sent to investigate New Zealand conditions, White refused
even to read his report; and James Wallis, after his arrival in
December 1834, soon found himself opposed to White, who consistently
hindered him from fitting himself to be a Christian missionary.

45. W.M.S. Corres., 24.1.33, Hobbs comments of the Maori, "no doubt
there is a great deal of pride and vanity among them in their
teaching and learning."
46. Woon to Beecham, 21.3.36; Woon to Bunting, 26.6.36:
Morley, op. cit., p.60.
47. Whitely to Beecham, 3.2.35.
48. Whitely to Secs., 5.7.35.
49. White to Beecham, 2.2.35. Cf. Orton, 19.9.33 and June 1833.
50. Born 1809, entered the ministry 1833, served among the Maoris
until 1863, retired 1868, died 1895.
51. Whitely to Beecham, 3.12.34; Wallis to Bunting 27.1.35.
Many argued that if the Wesleyan Missionary Society had not the money to support its missionaries in full time service and to relieve them of the need to trade, as White insisted upon doing, the Wesleyan missionaries should be withdrawn. White also seemed purposely to try to retard and prevent the expansion of the mission, although his brethren felt that a new era was opening, when thirty men could be employed in a mission which was "very discouraging a few years ago, and which was almost abandoned."

At last Whitely and Wallis insisted on going to establish stations in the Waikato, which White claimed to have visited as early as 1825. Woon had begun the work at Kawhia in November 1834; and following a special District Meeting in April 1835, Whitely went to Waiharakeke and Wallis to Waingaroa. Woon later shifted to Manukau and then to the press at Mangungu. Questions concerning the policy, administration and general behaviour of White necessitated his visiting England to regain the confidence of the Committee there, and so in April 1836 earlier requests for the reappointment of Nathaniel Turner were answered by his arrival in New Zealand. He found the mission in a critical state, full of tension and distrust, but he complained that the Committee had left him no discretion

52. Whitely to Secs., 3.2.35. Each missionary received a sufficient salary.
53. Woon to Briggs., 28.4.35.
54. Whitely to Beecham, 5.1.35 (Two dates are given but Whitely left Mangungu in April, so this letter could not have been written in July): White's Journal, January 1825.
55. Woon to Secs., 20.11.34.
56. White to Secs., 4.6.35 (resolutions appended): Whitely to Beecham 4.10.35 (his first letter is missing): Wallis to W.M.C. 29.7.35.
57. Turner to Bunting 16.11.36: cf. W.M.S. Corres., General Report of the Committee appointed by Conference 1837 to investigate White's case. He was expelled from the work and later returned to Mangungu to live, his behaviour greatly annoying the mission.
58. N.Z. Brethren to Secs., 4.6.35. W.M.S. Corres., Report of special meeting at Mangungu 22.4.35.
11.

save in the selection of new stations, even though the London Committee was far away and ignorant of the New Zealand situation. It was to be a recurring complaint.

He straightway called a meeting of the missionaries to announce the Committee's decision to hand the Waikato over to the Church Mission, and instead it was decided to begin work at Kaipara and the Hokianga Heads. With great sorrow Wallis and Whitely made the change over, and when in July White finally sailed for England, Turner was able to reorganise the mission. It was an anxious time with native disturbances in the South and with constant requests from the Waikato for the Wesleyans to reoccupy the southern stations. With nearly two hundred full church members and over one hundred "on trial" for membership the mission was growing, but it was decided to print membership tickets to allow better supervision of members, for all realised that while the forms of religion were being impressively followed, there was little spiritual depth. Still, new buildings appeared at Mangungu, the two new stations were established, Waima was suggested as a third, and best of all, the missionaries were re-united in mutual respect and love.

The next few years saw continued progress with an increasing membership, a keen desire for instruction and books, good attend-

59. Turner to Secs., 27.5.36.
60. Wallis to Secs., 4.8.36, Journal 1.6.36; Whitely to Secs., 25.4.37.
61. Woon to Beecham, 17.8.36, Journal 30.7.36.
62. The Report of the Society 1836 records 195 members, the 1836 D.M. Minutes have 190.
63. Turner to Secs., 21.9.36.
64. D.M. Minutes 1836.
65. Waterhouse in 1840 found that exaggerated and highly coloured reports had been sent from the N.Z. mission and so the earlier figures are suspect, as are Woon's comments. Waterhouse to Secs., 7.1.41 (typing misprint has 7.1.40.) Buller had deprecated exaggerated reports in 1838, Hokianga Journal, 13.7.38.
66. This was inadequately supplied by buying New Testaments from the Church Mission in 1838, by British and Foreign Bible Society supplies, and by the Mangungu press. Turner to Secs., 21.11.38.
ances at public worship and class meetings, a general improvement in outward behaviour, and some sign of real godliness. Although mission schools remained ineffectual for many years, the missionaries were able to insist on better houses and methods of cultivation from the converts, and sought to set an example on the mission stations. The District Meeting of 1835 decided to encourage the natives to grow wheat; it urged that soap should, as soon as possible, replace tobacco as an article of barter in the Society: and a special appeal was made to England for flour mills, nails, garments, medicines and the like. At the same time requests were made for men who were trained in Greek and Hebrew and could therefore intelligently learn and translate into Maori, and for missionaries trained to undertake the multifarious duties of a lonely station. The lack of adequately trained men was ever a disability to the Wesleyan Mission.

The tardiness of the Anglicans in occupying the vacated Waikato stations, together with constant demands from the Maoris for the Wesleyans to return, caused the matter to be again referred to London. At Mangungu there was sharp disagreement between exponents of a Taranaki and those of a Waikato mission, but in 1839 the matter was joyfully settled when permission to re-enter the Waikato arrived from England. All agreed on the need to extend the mission southwards, even to Cook Strait, fearing that encirclement by the Church Mission would be fatal. Whitely returned to the south almost immediately, Wallis soon followed, and the important Waikato mission entered

69. W.M.S. Corres., D.M. Minutes 1838: cf. those of 1840 and 1841.
70. Turner to the "Watchman," 29.10.38.
72. Turner to Secs., 22.10.38.
73. Turner to Hunting, 9.11.37.
13.

upon a new period of progress.

On March 18th, 1839 the "James" entered the Hokianga Harbour with four missionaries aboard—the brethren Bumby, Creed, Warren and Ironside— and how joyfully these new workers were welcomed! John Hewgill Bumby had come to relieve Turner who had, for personal reasons, been seeking a recall. Although a godly man of great enthusiasm, Bumby had no qualifications for his new position, for he lacked experience, was not very strong, and was very slow in learning the Maori language. His unfitness for the work was soon realised by Turner and, indeed, by Bumby himself.

Soon after the arrival of the "James" a meeting of a few of the missionaries at Mangungu initiated a policy of active expansion. More missionaries were to be sought and the Gospel was to be taken to the Cook Strait area and to Taranaki before winter delayed proceedings, or the Anglican and Roman Catholic Missions could forestall the Wesleyans. Already the Reverend James Watkin had been appointed to open a station at Waikouaiti in the South Island. Hobbs and Bumby were sent south to scout for the mission and in June 1839 they reached Port Nicholson. They examined the district and paid a deposit on

74. Wallis to W.M.C., 18.4.39: Smith "The Wesleyan Mission to the Waikato, 1835-41."
76. Born 1808, converted 1823, entered the ministry in 1829, and served in England until coming to New Zealand where he was drowned in 1840. Barrett, op. cit., passim.
78. Only Turner, Hobbs, Woon, Creed, Ironside and Bumby were present. Bumby to Secs., 4.5.39. The difficulties of planning in this period were accentuated by the lack of reliable statistics. Bumby had been told that there were one million Maoris, but he thought sixty thousand the maximum. (Bumby to Waterhouse, 23.8.39.) Different missionaries, with different ideas of the population distribution had varying ideas of where the mission should establish itself (cf. Wallis to Secs., 12.3.39) and mistakes like the Kaipara mission resulted.
a piece of land between the Kumutoto and Te Aro streams, the two chiefs concerned (Ke te Tawa-rahi and Ngatata) promising to tapu the area. Native teachers were left to instruct the natives when the two missionaries sailed for home. They visited Cloudy Bay, Queen Charlotte Sound, Kapiti, the West Coast and Taranaki before landing at Kawhia and walking home overland, calling in on Whitely, Wallis and Buller en route. The door to southern expansion stood open.

Some of the money raised in England at the centenary of John Wesley's conversion was spent on a ship for the South Sea Mission, and in September 1839 word arrived that the "Triton" had been renovated and was sailing for New Zealand carrying six missionaries, who had been appointed largely because of the increasing Roman Catholic Mission in the colony. On May 7th, 1840 the ship sailed into the Hokianga Harbour with H.H. Turton and T. Bulle and their wives, and with J. Aldred, G. Smales, and G. Buttle, aboard. The Reverend and Mrs. J. Skevington had stopped in Australia and did not arrive until December 1841. They had had a slow and not altogether enjoyable journey, for the "Triton", a vessel of one hundred and twenty tons from the West Indian sugar run, was full built with very bluff bows and wall-like sides. Her motion was irregular, peculiar and uncomfortable in the extreme, she was difficult to manage, needed almost a gale to move at all, and lacked sufficient space for stores, or large enough cabins for the tropics. She was altogether most unsuitable for her work, but possibly any ship was better than none.

80. Hobbs to Secs., 1.12.39, Journal 8.6.39. The boundaries of this land were never definitely outlined.
82. Secs. to N.Z. Chairman, 2.9.39.
84. Skevington to Secs., 15.9.42.
85. Ironside, op. cit.,p.4: Lawry to Secs., 2.1.45.Cf. White to Secs., 7.1.32.
In accordance with London instructions to open stations on the West Coast without clashing with the Church Mission and to avoid any congregating of missionaries on a few stations, Bumby lost no time in taking the new men to their appointments, and extension was planned to Waipa, Taranaki, Cloudy Bay and Port Nicholson. While returning from Kawhia to Tangiteroria and Mangungu, Bumby decided to cross by canoe from Motutapu to Whangaparoa, outside of Auckland. There, on June 26th 1840 when the canoe overturned, he, and most of the natives in it, were drowned. It came as an overwhelming shock to his colleagues.

"The short period during which I was permitted to enjoy his loved society, I deem no ordinary privilege," wrote Buller, and he hastened to Hokianga to help Miss Bumby. Investigations into the tragedy revealed little. The immediate effect of this sudden loss which robbed the mission of its superintendent was serious, but the long term effect is harder to estimate, for certainly Bumby was a man of neither the physique nor the temper wisely to govern a growing mission.

In 1838 the Reverend John Waterhouse had been appointed General Superintendent of the Australasian Missions, with his headquarters in Hobart. There he had joined the "Triton" in 1840 on his way to inspect the New Zealand Mission and fortunately he was still in the country when Bumby was drowned. A strong, honourable and godly man, Waterhouse firmly settled the New Zealand affairs while retaining the love and admiration of his brethren. He found that the financial accounts had customarily been lumped together by the Chairman in a way which forbade any audit or any control over extravagance, and at
Mangungu he found that stores were wasted and assets squandered carelessly. The barter system was operated in a ruinously wasteful manner, and caused many petty jealousies among the missionaries themselves. Trifling squabbles, such as had earlier endangered the mission and greatly grieved Buller, were rampant until Waterhouse insisted upon restoring brotherly relationships. He was favourably impressed with most of the New Zealand missionaries, but of Buller he spoke especially highly in his practical manner: "From what I see and hear he is one of your best young men .... I wish we had many more such 'God-sends,' it would save great expense." Before leaving, Waterhouse divided the mission, giving authority to Whitely in the south and to Hobbs in the north to take control until Burnby's successor could arrive.

Peculiar difficulties were becoming manifest in the Mission. The natives were showing a growing love of money, stimulated by their participation in the timber trade. The large payments they demanded for services and goods taxed the meagre mission funds, one man wanting a sovereign to carry a letter from Mangungu to Tangiteroria when he was making the journey anyway. Some professed to prefer the old cheap religion and many disliked having to contribute to the support of their missionaries as Waterhouse insisted that they should do. In addition the Treaty of Waitangi had been signed in 1840, and although the Mission had earned the Government's support by its loyalty, yet many of the new settlers, especially in the south, were opposed to missionaries. At a critical time the Wesleyan Mission was divided, without any

90. Waterhouse to Secs., 7.1.41. (Typing misprint, has 7.1.40)
91. " " 19.5.40 (Typing misprint, has 19.5.41, but cf. Buller to Secs., 16.6.40, Journal 17.5.40, and Orton to Secs., 18.5.40.)
92. D.M. Minutes 1840.
93. Woon to Secs., 17.7.40.
authoritative governing body nearer than London, with no outstanding leader among its senior missionaries, and already beginning to suffer financial stringency. Thus James Buller completed his probation and entered the full ministry just as new avenues of opportunity were opening before the Mission and as it entered upon a new stage in its own development.

PART III. The Young Missionary.

James, the eldest son of James and Jennifer Buller, was born in Helston, Cornwall, on December 6th, 1812. He was one of six children, three sisters and one brother surviving infancy. His father, who was a deacon in the local Baptist Church, trained his son carefully in the Christian religion and from the first the lad had a "sense of the value of religion," growing up with a bias toward God. Unfortunately he had no faithful and experienced friend to guide him in the critical years of adolescence - a fact he always regretted - but he avoided any of the grosser sins and regularly attended public worship. His education was not neglected, although he apparently neither learned the classical languages nor acquired any habit of disciplined and intelligent study.

During 1832 his interest in religious matters quickened, a fact which he could only have explained as a mystery of God's providence. He began more regularly to attend the prayer and penitent meetings of the Helston Methodist Church until his friends there, noticing the change, invited him to their class meeting, where in the Company of Christian believers Buller began to understand more of Christianity. Becoming convinced of his sin, he cried: "What shall I do to be saved?" and after some time found his answer by trusting in the Cross of Jesus

94. Beza Bible, Family Record. (Cf. Frontispiece.)
95. N.Z. Methodist, 15.11.84, p.125.
Christ. After that he "continued to walk in the light of God's countenance," as he afterwards said, determined "to do or be whatever seemeth best to Him." The assurance to which Buller had won through during these days of conversion remained with him throughout his long and active life and was the secret of his widespread influence and patient perseverance in the face of great discouragement and difficulty.

Even earlier he had thought of becoming a preacher and at last, five months after his conversion, his name was added to the Prayer Leaders' Plan at the Helston church. Shortly afterwards he took his first service and, as he wrote, "in October 1834, through the pressing entreaties of another local preacher, I ventured to take a text." Thenceforth Buller continued to preach an occasional sermon, finding great joy in the work and rejoicing to note that his "feeble services were acceptable" to those among whom he laboured. However, in the next year, circumstances necessitated his removal from Helston, so at his own request his name was not added to the Preachers' Plan there, although his trial sermon in order to qualify as a local preacher, had been delivered before the Reverend Walter Lawry.

His affairs being still unsettled in April, he thought of emigrating and consulted Lawry, fearing lest he lose the opportunity to enter the ministry, in which calling alone he felt that he could find satisfaction. Afterwards he loved to compare himself with Abraham, "going forth and not knowing whither he went." Lawry and another friend lent him £50 and £30 respectively to pay the outward passage, and in

96. W.K. Letters, Buller to Secs., through Turner, 20.10.36. This is almost the only available account of Buller's early life.
97. Ibid. Cf. N.Z. Methodist, 15.11.84, p. 124, says he had no thought of entering the ministry when he left England.
98. Ibid.
October 1835 he and his wife sailed from Dover in the "Platina", reaching Port Jackson eighteen weeks later. It seems that Buller had made some arrangement regarding employment in Sydney on his arrival, but when this came to nothing he agreed to serve for two years as tutor to Nathaniel Turner's large family. Looking back, he might well believe that God was guiding him to a place where he could best fulfil the desire of his heart—the Christian ministry and the missionary work, "that sacred cause in which my soul delighteth."

The mission party sailed from Sydney early in 1836. They were told that their task was hopeless, that the only course was to wipe the cannibal savages off the face of the earth, but they set out confidently. For six days they had to wait outside the Hokianga Harbour before they dared cross the bar, but with what eagerness the passengers watched the strange sights of the new land as the boat glided up the river to Mangungu (23 miles,) where they disembarked amid general excitement.

While the Turners occupied "hite's capacious, if unpretentious, house, the Bullers were given a raupo dwelling with several rooms overlooking the river. Woon's house, some low native huts, a boat house and a burial ground completed the Mangungu station. "Neither meadow nor garden met the eye. Flocks of goats wandered over the place. The stiff clay was in heaps here and pits there...The name of the station was appropriate—Mangungu which means broken to pieces."

Buller's agreement to teach the Turner family lasted until the beginning of 1838, but more and more of his time was given to the mission. Writing after six months in the country, he said he was certain that he had done right in coming to New Zealand, for he felt

100. Careful investigations have provided no knowledge whatever of Mrs. Buller's early life.
quite at home among the people, a strong interest in their spiritual welfare and an attachment to them. Thus at the annual District Meeting in October 1836, Buller presented himself as a candidate for the ministry, "from a powerful conviction ..., strengthened by the concurrence of corresponding events" that this was the Lord's will, and promised to diligently study, to learn the language and, under God, to serve the Mission faithfully. The Meeting, composed only of Turner, Whitely (who should have finished probation in 1835 only that no word had come from England) and Wallis (who was due to finish probation in 1836), described him as "a young man of sterling piety and very promising ministerial talent: remarkably clear in his Christian experience and in his views of all our doctrines, which he most cordially believes." Believing him to be well fitted for the general ministry of the church, they could yet only accept him as an assistant missionary until instructions came from England. Nothing had been heard in the following year so he was again recommended, his diligence and proficiency in the Maori language being especially commended. The fact that Buller had not found it easy to learn a strange language without either grammar or lexicon, except for one which he had prepared for himself with native assistance, and without a quick or trained ear, made his achievement all the more remarkable. It was also decided to pay Buller £20 a year in consideration of the fact that most of his spare time was devoted to the mission. This was increased to £80 a year in 1838 and the Committee were asked to consider either assisting Buller to discharge the debt consequent on his emigration or to give him some additional

105. W.M. Letters Buller to Sees. 20.10.36.
106. D.M. Minutes, 1836.
allowance for books and clothes.

In the meantime word had arrived from England that Buller had been accepted as a probationer for the ministry, and having satisfactorily passed the consequent examinations at each District Meeting, he was finally received as a full missionary in 1840, at the District Meeting over which Waterhouse presided. Whitely later described how Buller and Creed were both examined by the Meeting, and how neither having answered satisfactorily, they were both re-examined. The case of Buller, who came first alphabetically, was considered late one afternoon and largely through the keen support of Hobbs, Buller was passed, although not unanimously. The evening's discussions increased the general feeling of dissatisfaction, as a result of which Creed, Buller's equal in every way, was put back a year. "Speaking plainly -Brother Buller had passed undeservedly and it was resolved that another should not pass so easily." This account, however, written at the height of a war of letters, conflicts with the official account in the minutes which states that Buller passed unanimously; with the consistently favourable account of Buller given by Waterhouse who was quite frank in his letters; and with various incidents which show that Creed was not Buller's equal. Anyway, no probationer put in charge of a large circuit, burdened with great responsibility, isolated from his brethren, and shut off from any supply of good books, can be expected to distinguish himself in probationary examinations. That was a lesson the Wesleyan Church never learnt.

Until December 1838 Buller laboured at Mangungu, spending much time assembling and binding native books and learning how to deal with

111. D.M. Minutes, 1840.
112. Whitely to Secs., 1.10.42.
113. Waterhouse to Secs., 7.1.41 (typing misprint has 7.1.40): D.M. Minutes 1840.
the Maoris. One Sunday morning in January 1837 news reached Mangungu that three native teachers had been attacked and two killed while taking the Gospel to a heathen pa. Turner, Whitely and Buller hastened to the scene in an endeavour to keep the peace; but it was only after one small engagement and much bustle, noise and anxiety that the matter was settled. Reports came from the south of uncontrolled, cannabalistic wars, and even in the vicinity of the station heathen natives plundered European dwellings and some savage murders were committed. The behaviour of some of the European traders in the Hokianga only increased the troubles of the missionaries.

During this time Buller made pleasing progress, and gained from his association with the older and more experienced men much of the practical wisdom and self-confidence which he showed in later years. In March 1837 he had the privilege of listening to Samuel Marsden himself when that venerable missionary visited Mangungu. Buller "is rapidly getting hold of the language and bids fair to become a very useful man to this mission," wrote Turner to the Secretaries. In spite of the evils of the timber trade, the work at Mangungu was growing. On August 27th, 1837 a great crowd assembled for the weekend at the station, twenty one couples were married on the Saturday, one hundred and twenty nine were baptised on the Sunday, in spite of the high qualifications required of candidates, and among the other services of the day was one at which "Mr. Buller gave us a good sermon in English." This was followed by more weddings and baptisms. The District Meeting of that year reported over four hundred church members with nearly

115. Ibid., p.43; pp.48-50. 116. Ibid., pp. 35-36 etc.
117. Ibid., p.43; pp.48-50. 118. Ibid., pp. 35-36 etc.
118. Ibid., p.43; pp.48-50. 119. Ibid., pp. 35-36 etc.
119. Ibid., pp. 35-36 etc.
two hundred on trial, and after the meeting Wallis travelled south to visit the Waikato, while the Bullers supplied at Kaipara until his return in December.

There was always plenty to do at Mangungu. Each weekend the natives assembled from all around in their canoes, and the Sundays were fully occupied in prayer and praise. An early morning prayer meeting, one English and two Maori services, Sunday schools, class meetings and love feasts filled the day, and in the evening it was a joy to hear the Christian hymns coming from the native huts. On occasions Buller would visit some of the numerous small villages and outlying tribes around Mangungu. At some he would be welcome, at others the Maoris would be uninterested or hostile: in some there were Christian natives waiting a service or awaiting class tickets, in others the missionary could only seek an opportunity to speak to the heathen he met, and to transform their scoffing into some religious truth. Quickness in repartee was essential. The reply "I shall do as my fathers have done," or the niggling questions so loved by the Maoris, - "How many days will the world be burning?" and the like - disappointed the missionaries, although there were some compensating joys. An occasional native, like Moses Tawae, the influential Waima chief, would converse shrewdly and intelligently in beautiful, figurative language, and some Christian villages showed signs of improvement even if the conditions in most were shocking. Although Buller felt the Holy Spirit to be especially present in the mission at this time, he believed that little could be done in some of these villages except by

120 D.W. Minutes 1837.
124. Ibid., Journal 3.4.38.
"spending a day or two there and going from house to house," and by more regular visits. In this he was correct for without constant supervision and patient instruction, strong Christian convictions could not be fostered among the Maori people.

It was a period during which, Buller wrote, "the Lord often draws my soul with the influence of His love," but during which he often regretted the way external things distracted his mind from the things of God. Yet external things can do much to fashion a Christian's character. Buller was always sensitive to the beauties of nature, to the whispering forests and the rushing rivers of North Auckland, to the song of the birds and the colours of the sky. He saw these as the supreme expression of God's handiwork and doubtless his long and often lonely journeys through the speaking stillness of the virgin country in part explain the calm depth of his Christian faith. At Mangungu, too, he had both the opportunity and the duty to read widely among the available religious literature, and this he did. His journal is full of references from his reading, even when it seemed his every moment was busily employed. He disciplined himself to write each week a full sermon in English so that he might the better fit himself for his work, and not become too wrapped up in the narrower affairs of the mission field. These early sermons exhibit a logical, clear, concise, homiletic method as well as spiritual insight not usual in so young a preacher.

At the same time the isolated conditions of Mangungu, perhaps especially after Hobbs returned there in 1838, encouraged petty jealousies and quarrels on the station. Buller wrote in his diary

126. Ibid, 18.6.38.
127. Buller, "Sermons written at Mangungu."
128. Turner to Secs., 19.3.38.
deprecating such uncharitableness and adding, "I am abashed when I remember how guilty I am in common with all the rest in this particular." His journals of the period are full of self-abasement, and of a desire to possess a richer Christian experience. He longed for a more persevering spirit in every sphere of life, for a more vital prayer life, for a life wrapped up in God. Nor was this a facade, - it was the real spirit of James Buller. Although in future years he was to attain the highest positions which the church could offer, and to show amazing virility and strength of character, yet his private diaries only reinforce those public utterances in which his humble spirit is revealed. His journal also reveals considerable knowledge of the South Sea Islands generally, and an appreciation of a fact often overlooked by the mission authorities, that New Zealand was presenting special problems in mission organisation. The conflicting interests of the various tribes, their scattered dwellings and migratory habits, their contacts with Europeans, the lack of any authoritative government, and indeed the lukewarmness of many of the missionaries themselves, all seemed to Buller to be real difficulties. "It strikes me," he wrote, "that to have our hearts fully warmed with divine love is the first great point,....then to lay ourselves out fully, perseveringly and directly for the benefit of the people is the next ...... then by ardent prayer for a humble dependence on the divine aid and blessing, we may reasonably hope for success .......This is not and has not been the case here." "A church without discipline is like a garden full of weeds, and such is our case."

Indeed Buller was becoming increasingly unhappy and worried. In part this was due to the advent of Bishop Fompallier and Roman

Catholicism. On January 20th, 1838 some chiefs assembled at Mangungu to consider the work of the "intruders" and their action in distributing images and in converting the people. The Wesleyan attitude was clearly laid down by the London Committee. "In respect to Popery, your course, as Protestants, is clear. With it there can be no dallying. It ought to be encountered in the spirit of uncompromising hostility." Turner, however, had to be very firm to stop the chiefs taking drastic action against the Catholics and some outrages were committed behind his back. The Bishop seemed to command an unlimited supply of money and presents and was active in seeking native support, yet the Protestants complained that little was done to abolish heathen habits and customs and that idolatry had been introduced among the converts. "Popery, I trust, will not prevail," wrote Buller, always its active opponent, for he believed it to be intolerant, and contrary to liberty, property or free conscience.

Conditions at Mangungu increased Buller's unhappiness, although he never stopped, as did many of his brethren, to telling tales to London. He grieved for the wretched state of the natives and already realised the evils consequent on the timber trade in which many were engaged and which produced nothing of permanent value commensurate with the labour involved or the wastage of a national asset. The converted natives showed little outward improvement, at times seeming to revert to old habits and to be renouncing frugality, industry and cleanliness. Christian natives must serve as an example to the heathen, Buller believed, (although too little attention was paid to preaching to the heathen around Mangungu,) and a higher standard could well be

132. Beecham to the Chairman 2.9.39.
133. Buller to Sees., 5.2.38: Woon to Beecham, 28.7.38: W.M. Letters etc., Buller to the Editor of the Colonist, 23.7.38.
136. Ibid., 30.6.38.
required by the mission. Schools, which were non-existent at Mangungu, seemed to him to be essential and he suggested a threefold class division and regular religious instruction, with native teachers in the various outstations. Such ideas were exceedingly difficult to implement, as Buller later found, but they showed a young man ready to think for himself and with youth's enthusiasm for improvement and deprecation of a task - especially so vital a task as evangelism - improperly performed.

He was dissatisfied with his own employment, feeling cramped in his work and tending to lose interest. Until almost the end of 1838 he was working under the orders of others, bearing "responsibility .... without apparent success." Turner was no organiser and the lack of order in managing the mission worried Buller, although he realised that it was none of his business. With all the opportunities which Mangungu offered the four missionaries, they were achieving little, spending their time in secular concerns and somewhat neglecting the more important visiting, preaching, translating and devotional work.

Buller loved to get away from the strife and disorder. He had discerned some of the weaknesses of the Mangungu station, and indeed of the Wesleyan Mission generally: among other things its lack of strong and capable leadership, the quarrelsome nature of some of the missionaries, the same over-emphasis on mission property which had been apparent earlier and the slowness with which real evangelisation proceeded. He determined to run his mission station more efficiently, although some of his criticisms were the result of his inexperience.

On the night of August 18th, 1838, while Buller was at Waima, Turner's home was destroyed by fire with the loss of all his property.

137. Ibid, 30.7.38.
139. Ibid, 1.7.38.
140. Ibid, 23.7.38.
and of the mission records. At a special District Meeting it was arranged that the Bullers should give the Turners their house and should move to Pakanae, at the Hokianga Heads, where Whitely was stationed. Buller would thus have the chance to visit the northern tribes who were wanting a missionary. For Whitely, a man of strong character and fearless views, devoted to the Maori people and a good organiser, Buller had great respect, but after only three months Whitely was transferred to the Waikato, and Buller was appointed to his first sole charge, the Pakanae or Newark mission station.

141. Turner to Secs., 23.8.38.
142. D.M. Minutes 1838.
Newark was a difficult station. It included a wide area in which the Roman Catholics were active, and where many of the natives were apathetic and considered it an insult for any missionary to leave one tribe for another as Whitely had done. It was a task to put any young man on his mettle. Except for an occasional small English service at a Captain Parker's house, Buller had always to preach in Maori, but few of the villages were Christian or were interested in spiritual things. Thus when the chief, Moetara, whom the missionaries had already visited, came with his tribe to Newark in November and died there in December after being tended through an illness and baptised by Whitely, Buller and Hobbs, his relatives refused him a Christian burial, although they refrained from the usual superstitious rites.

Buller had undertaken his new work fully conscious of the responsibility resting upon him and determined to lean heavily on the support of the Holy Spirit of God. He slowly drew up his plans and was beginning to gain the confidence of the natives when word came for him to relieve Wallis at Kaipara. He had really achieved little beside guarding the small Christian society at Newark and preaching to many heathen, and Woon, who followed Buller in February 1839, was little impressed with the station. An increasing influx of traders and the disappointments of frequent changes of missionaries undermined the
Newark Mission, which was eventually abandoned.

The Kaipara Mission was pioneered by James Wallis, who, in company with Turner and Whitely, purchased land on the banks of the Wairoa River in June 1836. A dense forest of large trees covered the area right down to the water's edge and much energy was needed to clear a space for a house. In 1841 an agreement was signed by Hobbs, Buller and a man named Hawke concerning the cultivation of the land on the Kaipara station, for no missionary had time to be bothered with the care of so large a property.

Disappointment with the new mission was keen at first. There were fewer natives in the district than had been thought and they were mostly apathetic. On Sundays four or five attended divine worship: by most the day was profaned. Tirareu, the principal chief of the district, who lived at the Tangiteroria pa half a mile from the mission house, was a man of valour, shrewd and intelligent, firm and jealous of his reputation, but of mild demeanour. As he was related to the anti-Christian chief, Pomare, of the Bay of Islands and partly depended on him for defence, as well as being a staunch polygamist,

8. Buller to Secs. 24.4.45, but in F.Y. in N.Z., p. 61 he wrongly gives the date as 1838. For an account of how the land was bought twice to satisfy the natives of the legality of the sale, see Wallis to Secs., 27.5.41. The area is variously given as 150 acres in the original purchase, and as 300 acres costing about £40 (Turner to Beecham 20.11.38.), The grant under the Old Land Claim Ordinance, 8.11.45 was for 400 acres. (Journals to the House of Representatives 1863-D. 14, p. 69, Claim 942.) Hobbs and Woon to Sir. Geo. Gipps, 11.3.41.

9. N.D.M. Minutes, 1841.

10. e.g. Turner to Secs., 21.9.36.

11. 1,000 was the first estimate, and with this Buller agreed (F.Y. in N.Z., p. 65: "Wairoa Report 1841") yet Wallis found only 300-400 (W.N. Letters, Wallis to Secs., 28.3.38,) and Buller to Secs., 22.4.52, implies that there were 500-600 in the circuit.

12. Wallis to W.M.C., 17.11.37.


15. " " 21.11.43: Wallis to W.M.C., 17.11.37: Creed to Secs., 7.5.40.
he remained heathen less from conviction than from convenience.
When the Ngapuhi chief, Hongi, had earlier swept over the area with his firearms, he had slaughtered and dispersed the Ngatiwhatua tribe, the original inhabitants of the Wairoa district. With the retreat of the Ngapuhi and the Christianization of the Waikato, these gradually returned, settling mostly on the banks of the Kaipara.

The circuit thus included several tribes: the Ngapuhi in the north, the Urio ha reaching from Kaipara to Cape Rodney, and the Ngatiwhatua and Ngatimoe in the south, so that the way was opened for some inter-tribal jealousy. In addition, Wallis and the Church Mission clashed on several occasions, but in the general agreement between the two missions signed in October 1838, the Upper Mangakahia was allotted to the Church Mission in an attempt to prevent further friction.

The brig, "Elizabeth," on which the Buller family had spent three anxious days with a captain ignorant of the coast, entered the Kaipara Heads on February 13th, 1839, and from there the luggage had to be laboriously moved upstream to Tangiteroria. Buller long remembered his first glimpse of the station. About 20 acres had been cleared of forest though many stumps remained - and the shell of a large weatherboard house had been erected. "The station," he wrote in his journal, "situated upon the banks of a winding stream, is closely environed by sombre, impenetrable forests and a universal gloom prevails around ...." All was desolate, with the unfinished house,

18. Turner to Secs., 23.11.38.
the garden run wild, some unharvested wheat, the natural denseness of the place and the almost entire absence of human life, for the natives were mostly working downstream. Some might have considered it an evil omen.

Wallis left for Waingaroa on February 21st. and Buller's small service in the mission house parlour on the next Sunday, followed by a visit to the almost deserted pa, introduced him to the climate of his work. After a brief visit from Turner, the Reverend Henry Williams and some other friends, routine work began. Tirarau was full of questions. How long would this missionary stay, he wondered. "How many years before you turn Christian?" Buller parried. "Perhaps a thousand" came the reply, which only opened the way for a discussion on future judgement. Tirarau's conversion would be the key to the district and Buller was always quick, as all missionaries needed to be, to turn the cavil of the natives into some Christian lesson.

It was with full confidence in Buller and with no mention of his youth and inexperience that his brethren had sent him to Kaipara. Turner held great hopes of his future usefulness, and Hobbs, after visiting Tangiteroria in 1841, professed himself "much pleased with Brother Buller's proceedings." Their expectations were not disappointed. Buller was of sound physique and strong character, and the Maoris soon learnt to respect his word and came to follow his leadership. While in the native kaingas he would conform to their etiquette, but at Tangiteroria the rules of English decorum were enforced, and these the Maoris quickly learned.

24. Ibid, Journal 7.3.39 and 25.3.39 etc.
For almost two years most of Buller's goods were stored at Nangungu awaiting transport, although supplies were almost unobtainable at Kaipara. The mission station, which was neither centrally situated nor near any large native settlement, served a vast area and ever new kaingas were waiting to be visited. Tirarau's tribe spent much of its time timber felling, but although it respected the missionary and his advice, it cared little for his religion. At the inland settlement of Tangihua, sixteen miles from Tangiteroria, there was a small Christian group which would sometimes visit the station when Buller could not visit them. The most promising work at first was among a settlement of about two hundred Maoris under their chief, Parore, in the beautiful Kaihu valley, fifty miles by river and track to the west.

A new settlement was established at Okaro near the Tairoa Heads about 1840 and, in spite of the difficulties of working among so migratory a people, Buller found great encouragement there. He also pioneered, soon after his arrival, the work on the Oruawaro River, just opposite Okaro, and that at Omalwi on the banks of the Kaipare River one hundred and twenty miles from Tangiteroria. By 1843 he estimated that there were four hundred of the Ngatiwha and Ngatimoe tribes, people earlier noted for their dishonesty and ferocity, living there. Among the scattered people of Otakanini at the Kaipara Heads there was also a small Wesleyan Society. The Uriohau tribe living near the mouth of the Otamatea River welcomed Buller when he began visiting there, although at first they remained heathen. However, as in the

27. Cf. N.D.K. Minutes 1841 when arrangements were made for forwarding the goods.
28. Buller to Secs., 21.11.43: Dieffenbach, "Travels in N.Z."
30. F.Y. in N.Z. p. 64.
33. Buller to Secs., 21.11.43. 34. Ibid.
fishing season natives from all around would flock to Otamata, it was quite an important place. Buller also occasionally visited Whangarei, twenty miles overland to the east, and Auckland was for some time a part of his large and growing circuit. Other small villages and scattered tribes could be visited as Buller travelled around.

To the difficulties of distance, and of caring for so large, scattered and migratory a population, were added the dangers and trials of travel in lonely, rough, forested country, dissected by swift and treacherous rivers and crossed by only native tracks. Wading for long stretches through water, travelling by night or through the pelting northern rain were not unusual experiences. Hardly less pleasant were the conditions of lodging in some of the more backward kaingas. It is a tribute to Buller's physique that in spite of such hardships he suffered few illnesses. Indeed, being younger and stronger than many of his brethren, he did not find the travelling as wearisome as they did, but rather delighted in such opportunities to commune with God, the Creator, and to ponder quietly over many questions.

Like most mission stations, Tangiteroria was very lonely and isolated, and the work there sometimes seemed monotonous and disappointing. Occasionally visitors would bring outside news: very occasionally some mail would arrive with letters and papers sent from England possibly eighteen months before, or with some news, two or

34. Kaipara Reports 1843 and 1849. As Buller evangelised new villages his work multiplied until as early as 1843 he was asking for another missionary to reside at Kaipara Heads. Cf. Buller to Secs., 21.11.43.
36. e.g. "A Journey in the Northern Island of N.Z." pp.59-60.
38. Woon to Orton 20.7.42, implies that he knows little of Buller, one of his "nearest" neighbours.
three months old, from a fellow missionary in New Zealand. How eagerly such mails were awaited! Books were comparatively scarce, although an occasional parcel would come from England. Yet Buller never allowed himself to become out of touch with the outside world and he regularly disciplined himself by Bible study, systematic reading and careful preparation, to be better fitted for his work. An occasional visit to Mangungu, — where he delighted in meeting his brethren and hearing their sermons — to Whangarei, and to Auckland, saved him for stagnation. The annual District Meetings afforded a valuable opportunity for the missionaries to come together: to renew in fellowship their spiritual vitality: to compare experiences and obtain advice: to catch a glimpse of their work in relation to the wider activities of Wesleyan Methodism: and to quicken their minds by this rare contact with their brethren. It was partly for this reason that the English Committee's decision in 1851 to divide the
New Zealand District was opposed here. The missionaries could seldom visit each other and Buller was quite disappointed that even Hobbs, the acting-Chairman for a time, had so seldom come to Kaipara. The traits of self-reliance and sturdy independence which such a life fostered in the more able of the missionaries were, when blended with self-discipline and a keen awareness of outside issues and current developments, the foundation of a strong character.

The tasks of the missionary were legion. He was expected to settle disputes, difficulties and family arguments, to arbitrate between native and European, and to assist in keeping law and order.

39. e.g. Buller to Beecham, 12.6.44.
40. Buller to Secs., 22.11.39: Buller to Osborne, 6.3.52: F.Y. in N.2, p.37.
41. Buller to Hobbs, Letter 6.7.43.
42. F.Y. in N.2, pp. 54-7.
43. Ibid, p.64: Buller to Secs., 10.6.46, Journal 8.5.46, etc.
The natives consulted him over their illnesses, real and imaginary, and he had to be nurse, doctor and apothecary for his own family as well. His primary duty was to preach and teach, but in addition he had to act as a trader, bartering the contents of the mission store for the goods and services of the natives. On the missionary devolved the main responsibility for improving the mission property and feeding his family, so that he must be builder, gardener, and farmer in one. Buller, believing that the missionary should always set an example to his people and that he would be respected according to the superiority of the standards he maintained, was especially diligent in caring for the Tangiteroria station. Each station had to be largely self-supporting and visitors might come at any time, for there were few places of hospitality and the Wesleyan stations had a good reputation. Once, for instance, the forty survivors of the wreck, "Aurora," arrived at Tangiteroria. Few of the missionaries were sufficiently versatile not to get into some amusing—or serious—difficulties. When to this were added both such routine tasks as study, prayer, and visitation, and the duties of the Wesleyan connexion, it can be seen that the missionary was not idle. The strain of this life on him and on his wife, living as they did among an uncivilised race and often separated for days and weeks together, should not be underestimated. The personal sacrifice involved was

44. e.g. Hobbs to Secs., 20.2.44 tells how Buller and others disposed of some New Testaments. Cf. Buller to Secs., 24.2.44.
45. F.Y. in N.Z. pp. 57-9. Cf. Hobbs to Secs., 4.6.44. Only gradually could the station be improved (N.D.M. Minutes 1845) and money for repairs was not easily obtained. Williams, op. cit., p.55.
46. Buller to Secs., 16.6.40, Journal 23.4.40-3.5.40; Lawry to Secs., 7.10.44.
48. e.g. The Printing Committee of 1846 asked Hobbs and Buller to prepare such articles for the press as they deemed necessary (Minutes of a Translation and Printing Committee, N.D.M. Minutes 1846) and in 1852 Buller was asked to assist with a Maori biblical and theological dictionary. (N.D.M. Minutes 1852.)
only augmented in times of sickness, their helplessness heightening their sense of dependence upon God. No wonder objections were raised when an English writer said: "Anyone will do for a missionary."

When Hobbs and Bumby returned from Port Nicholson in 1839, the question of whom to appoint there was raised. Few of the men had sufficient knowledge of the Maoris or sufficient experience to go, and Hobbs refused to take his family to so wicked and degraded a place. At last Buller was chosen and authorised to establish a station on the land purchased by Bumby and Hobbs. A missionary to such a place truly needed "a spirit such as in the martyrs glowed, dying champions for their God," daring native difficulties and possibly European enmity, and Bumby for one intended the station to minister to all the Strait and Sounds area.

Creed was sent to supply at Kaipara and as it was feared that the "Triton" might be somewhat delayed, Buller started to walk to Port Nicholson, his family agreeing to follow later. He set off rejoicing in the opportunity to explore new territory and to meet new tribes, as well as being aware of the difficulties and dangers of the trip. Leaving Kaipara on November 27th, 1839, he was accompanied as far as Kawhia by Whitely, and together they visited various tribes and villages en route. Only after some delay could Buller get any natives to agree to go on with him, but at last he set out again, taking an inland route from Kawhia. Some outposts of Whitely's circuit were

49. Turton to Secs., 19.10.40.
50. ante p. 13-14.
52. D.M. Minutes, 1839.
53. Buller to Secs., 22.11.39.
54. Bumby to Secs., 29.11.39.
55. Buller to Secs. 22.11.39.
visited and for several days rich country was traversed before Buller reached the barren, desolate land round Lake Taupo, but great was his joy to find even among the fugitives of that district, some knowledge of Christianity. He preached wherever he could and gave away some books which he had with him and for which the natives were most insistent. After travelling on through thick forest he at last reached the Wanganui River. This route was shorter than that around the coast and enabled Buller to avoid the very rough country in the west with its large and dangerous rivers, as well as the war party of which he had heard. Wallis's later implied criticism of Buller for not choosing a route to acquaint him with the layout of the Waikato mission was, considering the topography of the area, unreasonable.

On Friday, January 10th., he reached Pipiriki whence he pressed on to the coast and then followed it through Otaki and Waikanae, calling in on the Anglican missionaries, Hadfield and Williams, on his way. Buller was anxious to explore the possibilities of a West Coast mission and as most of the Maori settlements, especially in the south, were near the coast and as he could learn from report of inland conditions, he was surely in a position to do so.

Not until Buller had left the north did news of the situation at Port Nicholson reach his brethren. The New Zealand Company had bought all the land there and refused to recognise any prior claims which were not legally substantiated. No written agreement existed for the land tapued for Bumbv and Hobbs—indeed even their pre-emptive

57. Ibid., p.73: Buller to Secs., 11.2.40.
58. Wallis to Secs., 25.1.43.
59. F.Y. in K.E. p. 75, says Friday, January 11th, the only date record on the trip, but January 11th, was a Saturday in 1840. Errors consequent on this have been numerous, e.g. Fildes,"Advent of the Church," p.8, has the dates connected with the arrival of the "Aurora" in Wellington wrongly.
60. Cf. Wallis to Secs., 25.1.43.
right could be questioned - so by December Wallis was writing of the need to buy land from the Company, as well as to be careful lest the Church and Wesleyan Missions should clash in the Cook Strait area. When the "Tory" visited Hokianga, Wakefield, the representative of the Company, appeared very amicably inclined, but Bumby was most circumspect.

On Sunday, January 26th, Buller conducted divine worship on board the Company's ship, "Aurora," and although he had been warned of the prejudice against missionaries, he found many who favoured the establishment of a mission as a safeguard against the Maoris. The position had totally changed since Buller's appointment. He had been sent to occupy mission land which had apparently been resold, and while he was joyfully received at the Te Aro Pa, where a chapel had been built and where many protested that the land had not been sold by its rightful owners, there was nowhere to build the mission house which he needed for his family. The situation was so awkward that Buller and the natives went to state their case to Wakefield, but he replied that he had had an amicable agreement with Bumby who regretted Buller's having gone to Port Nicholson. The arrival of the Church missionary, Williams, in the district just before Buller and the absence of any danger of a native attack, persuaded Buller that in view of such

62. Buller to Hobbs, 18.4.41, Hobbs to Whitely 14.4.41. When Aldred asked Buller for the deeds of this land, Buller replied that none existed. Aldred to Secs., 16.4.41, and Hobbs to Secs., 8.4.43.
64. Bumby to Secs., 29.11.39.
65. Ward, "Early Wellington," p.25: Irvine Smith, "The Streets of my City," p. 90. Hobbs and Bumby had left Port Nicholson in June 1839 before the "Tory" arrived, so when Buller left for the south nothing was known of the intended settlement there. He was not sent to meet the ships, a common error repeated in this latter book.
66. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.2.76, p.28: Buller to Secs., 11.2.40.
67. Buller to Secs., 25.3.43: Buller to Hobbs, 12.4.41.
68. Ibid. Wakefield's Journal mentions no "amicable agreement." Cf. Whitely to Secs., 13.5.41.
changed circumstances he should return immediately to seek advice
from his chairman and to prevent his family from coming south. He
sailed north reaching the Bay of Islands on February 2nd, (although
he evidently intended to return, for the Porirua natives built him a
house) but at Mangungu Buller found that Wakefield's account of his
conversation with Bumby was quite false. He returned to Tangiteroria
in time to stop his family's departure.

Whitely and others criticised Buller for not accepting the land
which the natives had offered him and staying in Port Nicholson.
Yet to have built anywhere must have caused friction with the Company and
risked the loss of buildings as well as land; Buller was not to know
that Wakefield's report was false; his Society had definite orders
not to clash with the Anglicans; and so prominent a missionary as Wallis
favoured abandoning Port Nicholson altogether. The circumstances had
so completely changed since the objects of Buller's appointment were
outlined that he was right in seeking fresh instructions, and it is
questionable whether he could have achieved anything by staying.

At the beginning of 1840 Bumby visited Australia, so Buller,
on his return from the south, waited upon Captain Hobson at the Bay of
Islands and obtained from him satisfactory assurances of the intentions
of the British Government regarding the Maoris and their land.
Thus he was able to recommend his brethren to support Hobson as the
London Committee had intended that its missionaries should do. The
help they subsequently gave Hobson was of considerable importance.

70. Whitely to See., 23.12.42. 71. Whitely to Beecham, 11.5.43.
73. The question of the Port Nicholson land is very complicated, but
eventually the Society was given a Government grant. Pratt to
Freeman, 16.5.1941; Morley, op. cit., p. 333.
74. Buick, "The Treaty of Waitangi," p. 337n; Barrett, op. cit., p.159:
N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.2.76, p.28; Hobbs to See., 25.8.41, quoting
Hobson to Hobbs 22.2.41.
Heathen customs and habits were not easily overcome among the Maoris. As late as January 1837 Tirarau commanded that a slave be killed and eaten, and three years later his wife laughed when Buller reproved her for having committed infanticide. At funerals the natives disfigured their faces and danced and mourned and feasted until Buller wrote that he knew not which was worse, "the absurdity or disgust of heathenish customs." He had enough sense of humour to save him from the great sorrow or annoyance felt by most of his brethren at such scenes. More than once he pondered on the "awful obstinacy of sinners," but his remonstrances usually went unheeded. Even in 1846 Parore's son had his face tattooed, although others in the tribe promised not to follow his example; and Tirarau, on falling ill, sent for both Buller's medicine and the spirit doctor.

In 1842 Tirarau's tribe discovered a skull in the potato store of a respectable European settler's home at Mangawhare. All Buller's influence, with that of Parore and of the Urichau tribe, was exercised to postpone action until Forsaith, the European concerned, could appear to state his case, but while the natives were away fishing they were incited by a heathen chief to take redress by plundering the dwelling concerned. No Christians were involved in the outrage, and in the face of the firm stand taken by the Government, Tirarau had to agree to pay compensation. Buller always feared lest such uncontrolled behaviour should lead on to further trouble and he did all in his power to restrain the Maoris.

77. " " " 5.6.39, " 15.5.39.
78. Ibid. Journal 24.3.39 and 15.5.39.
79. Buller to Secs., 10.6.46, Journal 11.5.46; the same 27.2.46, Journal 25.2.46.
81. Ibid., pp. 86-87.
Following this incident, some natives decided to cross to Whangarei and — as far as Buller knew — visit a Justice of the Peace there on whose property they had some alleged claim. Buller later averred that he had tried to persuade them to wait until they could see Maer, the European concerned, in person, but they were determined to go. He could not accompany them and fearing what they might do, he sent a letter with them advising the caretaker of Maer's property to act generously and to show no fear lest the natives should start plundering. In fact the natives raided Whangarei. "They conducted their operations in a most deliberate manner; and, lest any opposition might be made, they brought with them a letter from their missionary, Mr. Buller, recommending the settlers to submit to be plundered with the best grace they could ...," wrote a contemporary author. The letter was really written to only one individual and surely if this had been Buller's role he would have been able neither to continue visiting and caring for the Whangarei society, nor to control the natives afterwards. Such was not the case.

Inter-tribal warfare had always affected the mission work adversely and the Wesleyan missionaries consistently sought peace. Buller tended to be more open-minded in deciding the rights of the questions involved in such disputes than were his brethren and he also realised, after such incidents as the "rahui-ing" of the Kaipara coast by the Uriohan tribe in 1842, that advantage might be taken of the pacifism of the Christian natives. Then, in 1844, Hone Heke brought

82. Buller to Secs., 12.6.46 and 8.8.42.
85. Cf. Woon to Secs., 10.4.43: Warren to Secs., 8.5.43.
Buller to Secs., 25.3.43.
86. Another tribe entitled to catch shellfish in the area were subsequently attacked. Buller to Secs., 8.8.42.
inter-racial warfare to North Auckland. Buller was worried on going to Hokianga for the District Meeting to find the Maoris there very excited. On the invitation of the sub-protector of aborigines he was one of those asked to represent the Wesleyans at a conference with the Governor at the Bay of Islands, but as the Governor was delayed, Buller had to return home before he came. He remarked how unpopular the Government was with many of the Maoris whom he had met, for they blamed it for the depression and for its weakness in the northern crisis.

As the war continued, some of the missionaries grew very fearful and those at Mangungu wrote in April 1845 insisting that the mission there be evacuated, (although Hobbs and an assistant missionary did not leave and Warren at Waima remained self-possessed in spite of the danger.) In Auckland feeling ran high against both the Government and the missionaries, and grave fears for the safety of the town were entertained. The Auckland brethren also feared for the northern mission, but the Wesleyans were fortunate in that their stations were away from the actual fighting and were spared the confiscations of the English troops which the Anglicans thought might undermine their work.

At Kaipara the Maoris had eagerly awaited Buller's news from the Bay of Islands, but for the most part they remained calm, in spite

87. Buller to Secs., 19.9.44, Journal 29.7.44. They were loyal to the Crown. Hobbs to Secs., 20.8.44.
89. Hobbs to Secs., 25.2.45: Lawry to Secs., 26.3.45 and 8.4.45: Hobbs and Woon to Lawry, 21.4.45. As no captain would go to Hokianga they had to await Government action. Lawry to Secs., 6.2.46.
90. Warren to Secs., 13.3.45, 10.5.45, and 31.7.45.
91. W.M. Letters, Buddle to Whitely, 15.4.45: Letter of Buddle to Buller, 15.4.45: Lawry to Secs., 13.1.46, 8.4.45, and 9.7.45: Buddle to Secs., 18.3.45: Warren to Secs., 10.5.45.
92. Selwyn Papers, 1839 - 1865, Vol. 1, p.56, H. Williams to Selwyn, 21.7.45.
of the fact that Parore of Kaihu was Heke's brother and that Tirarau was the grandson of Kawiti, Heke's ally. Buller's main fear was lest the Government should take some rash and ill-concerted measure, but in the meantime he felt safe. Several Kaipara chiefs had received flags as tokens of loyalty and many others had asked for them. Pomare wrote from the Bay of Islands telling Tirarau to send his Europeans away, and Kawiti sent a bag of bullets and a typically figurative letter seeking Tirarau's aid in an attack on Auckland via Kaipara and the Waitakere Ranges—a quarter in which Auckland was undefended. Tirarau, on Buller's advice, refused to aid the rebels and declared his intention of opposing any passage of his land and of defending the mission station and the Europeans even with his life. In such circumstances Buller could not leave. Tirarau allowed him to inform the Government of Kawiti's proposal. Twice in this period Buller visited Whangarei, from which the Europeans had been driven, and on the second visit he and Tirarau persuaded the natives to give up a stolen boat and to pay compensation for some other robberies.

On January 19th, 1846 a messenger brought news to Tangiteroria of Kawiti's defeat, and a month later that chief and two hundred warriors arrived at the station. Firing, shouting, dancing, feasting, and haranguing were the order of the day. Tirarau, to Buller's relief, returned Kawiti's gift of muskets, publicly asserting his friend-

93. Lawry to Secs., 26.3.45: Buller to Secs., 19.6.45.
94. Buller to Lawry, 22.3.45: cf. Lawry to Secs., 2.5.45.
95. " " Secs., 19.6.45.
96. Buddle " " 16.5.45.
98. Ibid, Buller to G. Clarke, through Lawry, 29.4.45.
100. Buller to Secs., 27.2.46, Journal 19.1.46.
101. Ibid., Journal 16.2.46 (typing misprint for 17.2.46)
ship with the Europeans, and asked Buller on the following day to
write to Auckland telling the Government of Kawiti's visit and request-
ing official news regarding the peace. Earlier Buller had been able
to help greatly in keeping the Government informed of conditions around
Kaipara.

Throughout the war, then, the Kaipara Maoris remained loyal and
peaceful, a fact due almost entirely to Buller's efforts and attributed
by Tirarau solely to the presence of the missionary. Had none but
missionaries come to New Zealand there would have been no war, he said.
Buller was also fortunate in that his people were only indirectly
affected by the war, the abandonment of Christianity and the revival
of heathenish practices which were apparent elsewhere in the north,
worrying him little.

Buller, not unnaturally, had definite ideas about how to end the
war. "The subjugation of the rebel tribes," he wrote, "is absolutely
necessary. The security of the Colonists, justice to the British
Government and even mercy to the Natives themselves, require it. To
make peace with them on any ground short of their free surrender of
themselves would certainly tend to involve the country in another in-
surrection." Thus Buller was sorry to hear Kawiti's account of the
war and to find that he did not acknowledge defeat but spoke of peace
on equal terms, in no way recognising the superiority of British power.

In 1841 a group of Wesleyan families emigrated from England,
intending to establish a Wesleyan settlement near Kaihu. Their schooner,
the "Sophia Pate," was wrecked on the Kaipara Heads on August 31st, 1841,

102. Ibid., 20.2.46.
103. E.g. W.H. Letters, etc., Buller to Clarke, 7.6.45 and 19.7.45.
105. Layry to Secs., 26.2.45.
107. " " " 27.2.46, Journal 20.2.46.
with the loss of all the passengers except one child whom the Buller's
brought up. Righteously indignant at the dastardly behaviour
of the captain and crew, Buller, with two passengers who had left the
boat at the Bay of Islands, went to Auckland, which Buller had been
intending to visit for some time, to invoke justice against the rogues.
He held two services on each of the three Sundays he was there, formed
in his first week a class of five which had doubled before he left,
and generally began the Wesleyan work in the township. From the very
start the importance of Auckland as a centre for mission work, and the
need for a resident missionary there to advise and protect not only
resident natives but also those frequently resorting to the vicinity, 109
many of them Methodists, were realised.

The District Meeting of 1841, while referring the matter to
England, favoured the establishment of a church in Auckland and Buller
had already included it in his circuit, although he was too far away
adequately to care for it. To have a station at Auckland, the new
capital town from which supplies and communications could be forwarded
throughout the colony and the minister of which could officially
represent the Society, would be invaluable. In such circumstances
the Wesleyans forgot that since they claimed an exclusive right to the
West Coast stations they had implied the right of the Church Mission
to those on the East Coast. To argue that they were not specifically
excluded from Auckland or that the Anglicans were not properly caring
for the inhabitants, overlooked early Wesleyan ideas of moral obligation

108. Maggs Bros., "Particulars of Manuscripts," Buller to Day, 29.9.41:
Buller to Secs., 25.10.41; H. Lawry to Secs., 21.11.45:
F.Y. in N.Z., pp. 81-2.
109. Buller to Secs., 25.10.41; Turton to Beecham, 16.3.43:
Kaipara Report 1841.
110. W.M.S. Corres., N.D.M. Minutes, 1841 and 1842.
111. Warren and Buller to Secs., 6.7.43.
In July 1842 when Buller was again visiting Auckland, he interviewed the Governor and obtained permission to request a grant of land from the Colonial Secretary for a chapel. At two public meetings the building scheme was launched, trustees being nominated at the second meeting as the grant required. The site Buller chose was very central and large enough for mission premises, a chapel and a school, and by the beginning of 1843 a brick foundation forty by twenty-five feet had been laid and the materials for a plain but adequate wooden superstructure prepared. The building cost £220 and a vestry costing £20 was immediately added but by the opening services, which Buller and Warren conducted in July 1843, the church was almost paid for and already there was talk of a new one.

For the work was quickly growing. Thirteen European and one hundred and fifty native members were returned in 1842, and in the next year Buller spoke of congregations totalling three hundred. Yet Turton was little impressed by the Society, for the fifteen European members whom he met were all of the lower class and only sixty attended the afternoon service on New Year's Day while the rest of the town, having had enough of church in the morning, went drinking, shooting or walking. Buller also found Auckland to be a wicked place and a bad

112. White to Secs., 1.8.33, probably first expressed this idea.
113. Buller to Secs., 2.8.43.
114. Ibid., Buller and Hobbs were two of the five trustees. N.D.M. Minutes 1843.
115. Turton to Secs., 10.5.43. It was approximately the site now occupied by the Magistrate's Court in Auckland between Chancery Street and Victoria Quadrant.
117. Buller and Warren to Secs., 6.7.43.
118. W.M.S. Corres., N.D.K. Minutes, 1842 and 1843.
119. Turton to Secs., 10.5.43.
example to the Maoris.

The need for a resident missionary in Auckland increased and Buller's time during his visits was fully occupied in preaching to the Maoris, most of whom lived two or three miles from the town, and to the Europeans; in taking class meetings and prayer meetings; in visiting; and in attending to church business. At other times the Society was cared for by two local preachers, although Turton feared that Buller had been unduly careless in trusting so much to these without any due investigation of their pasts. Various suggestions were made in order to obtain a more satisfactory supply for Auckland and earnest pleas were sent to England for a minister to come out, Buller believing that great advances could be made under capable leadership.

At last Buller was sent to supply there and when Buller visited Auckland in December 1843, while he was disappointed in the lack of spiritual religion and found the congregations somewhat decreased, yet he addressed a Sunday School of seventy children and began a new class meeting. Most of all he enjoyed the company of Buller, another young missionary. In March 1844, with the arrival of the Reverend Walter Lawry from England to be the Superintendent of the New Zealand Mission and the Auckland minister, Buller's responsibility for that Society ended. The importance of establishing Methodism in such a centre as Auckland has always been, need not be emphasised. While most of the missionaries were quick to see the need for this extension yet Buller was one of the first to do so and his contribution to Auckland Methodism in so early beginning the work there, in nurturing

120. Buller to Secs., 14.2.43, Journal 10,12.43.
121. e.g. Buller to Secs., 8.8.42, Journal 17,7.42.
122. Turton to Secs., 10.5.43.
123. Whitely to Secs., 16.9.42 and 23.12.42; Buller to Secs., 13.1.43.
and supervising it for two years when his ordinary circuit was already so extensive, and in urging its importance both on his own brethren and on the London Committee, should not be lightly passed over. He had not been able to devote much time to the Auckland church, but the foundations were laid so that under Lawry and Buddle the work there could develop rapidly.

In the general work at Kaipara Buller received no little help from native assistants. The most outstanding of these was Taimona Te Ikanui, a teacher of exemplary character and Scriptural piety who was keen not only to improve himself, but also to convert others. At Kaihu and later at Oruawaro he was able to do valuable work in taking services and teaching the native school. Other assistants, although they came and went, proved very useful. Then, for instance, the original Kaipara tribe, which had long been indifferent to Christianity, asked for religious instruction it was by sending them a Maori teacher, Hoani Hikitanga, that Buller answered their request and provided the close spiritual oversight he had not time to give himself. The church had no standard system of paying its teachers: in fact their stipends tended to decrease. Valuable as was the work which a native assistant could do under the general supervision of a missionary, there were several difficulties to be considered. It was not easy to get suitable young men of sufficient training and of the required stamina for the work for it would have been futile to have had an assistant who required more supervision than the tribe would have needed without him. Again, the church was slow in outlining any definite plan of employment and was without the money to pay extra

125. W.N.S. Corres., Wairos Report 1844. For an example of the quality of these teachers see Williams, op. cit., p. 60.
126. In 1844 Taimona was kept by the Society at an estimated cost of £25 a year. In 1845 his salary was fixed at £10, and in 1851 at £5. (N.D.W. Minutes 1844, 1845, and 1851.)
native workers; and the Maoris themselves would not respect the authority of the native teacher, who was thus severely handicapped in his work. The Wesleyan Mission did not, as a consequence, employ native teachers on any scale corresponding to the needs of such circuits as Kaipara.

As the Wesleyan Mission had not the money to erect native chapels, none were built unless the Maoris were keen enough to erect their own. Consequently the history of mission property provides a good guide to the growth of the mission. At Tangiteroria a neat and commodious chapel to hold two hundred people was built in 1842, the total cost when a vestry was added being £120, of which £30 was raised by subscription. At about the same time a small raupo chapel was built at Tangihua with no cost to the Society. The keen Wesleyan group at Kaihu built for themselves a very lovely chapel in native architecture, to hold three hundred people, its crowning glory being the proper door and the small glazed windows which the Society had provided.

As other villages became established in the faith they, too, wanted their own chapels. The chapel at Okaro, permission for the erection of which was given in 1844, took nearly two years to complete but it was an even lovelier example of Maori architecture than that at Kaihu. Only the windows and the doors had been made by a carpenter.

Whangarei also had a neat raupo chapel and a half-built European church before the war started, but it is noteworthy that no chapels

129. " 20.10.47 says £60 was raised by subscription.
131. Ibid: Buller to Secs., 24.4.45.
132. Buller to Secs., 27.2.46, Journal 12.2.46 (probably a typing misprint for 13.2.46.)
were built for three years after the war. In 1849 a chapel was begun at Otamaatea, although the death of the chief's son stopped work on it for a long time. At Oruawaro, also, a building in native architecture was erected. The desire to build a chapel, the nature of the building erected and the cost of it to the Society, were a reliable guide to the depth of religious feeling in any village. The building also proved a stimulus to the people concerned. The Okaro Maoris planned to build themselves a new row of houses once their chapel set a standard in the village. Both at Kaihu and later at Okaro, the Maoris built for Buller a special room - the "Prophet's Room" - where he could obtain some privacy, and he greatly appreciated their thoughtfulness and their desire to consider his comfort.

In days when candidates for church baptism were required to reach a reasonably high standard, church membership was an indication of the development of the work. Numerically, the Kaipara Mission during this period did not compare very favourably with those in the south where there were more natives and a more enthusiastic welcome for Christianity - a comparison of membership figures of the New Zealand missions shows forcibly that the south was the area of growth. In 1839 there were about sixty-eight church members at Kaipara, but this more than doubled in the next two years, and at the

133. Buller to Secs., 24.4.45: W.M.S. Corres., N.D.K. Minutes 1845 and 1849 both record four chapels. These were at Tangiteroria, Tangihua, Kaihu and Okaro, that at Whangarei not being counted.
134. Buller to Secs., 11.9.50: F.Y. in N.Z. p. 64.
135. Buller to Secs., 27.2.46, Journal 12.2.46 (see note 132 above.)
137. Leigh had been instructed to baptise only when there were "evidences of a true turning of the heart unto the Lord." In 1833 Orton suggested modifying this to require a renunciation of the old faith, a sincere seeking for salvation and a changed outlook.
same time Buller estimated that about four hundred Maoris were attending divine worship throughout the circuit. In addition there was a small European congregation at Tangiteroria. By far the largest society was at Kaihu which returned over sixty members in 1842, Tangiteroria and Okaro following with twenty four and Otakanini, Tangihua, Oruawaro and Omakuiti having smaller classes. The wars and upsets in the years after 1843 produced a substantial decrease in both church members and adherents and only very gradually did the mission recover from such a setback. In 1849 there were only one hundred and forty members, only three hundred were attending church, and the eleven class leaders of 1843 had dwindled to six. From that date onwards, however, the mission began to go ahead again, and by 1853 about four hundred and fifty Maoris, probably over eighty per cent of the population of the circuit, were attending church. This represented no inconsiderable growth since Buller's appointment to Kaipara, but it illustrated the slowness and the setbacks which marked the work of the Wesleyan mission in the area, and indeed throughout North Auckland.

Buller needed to be constantly on guard at Kaipara against Roman Catholicism, for Bishop Pompallier and several of his priests were very active in the area. Shortly after Buller's arrival, however, two Catholic converts recanted and made peace with Tirarau, who was a very pro-Protestant heathen, so that Buller began with an undivided fold. The decision of Tirarau was really the key to the position. When in 1843 a priest came to live near Tangiteroria, Buller refused even to be friendly with him, and warned Tirarau repeatedly against

138. W. N. S. Correspondence, N. D. M. Minutes 1839, 1840 and 1841.
139. Ibid., 1842.
140. Ibid., 1845 and 1849.
such heresies. As a result Tirarau paid increasing heed to Buller and even came to church more frequently. Buller was always at pains to show his people the errors of the Church of Rome, countering the work of the priest by diligently teaching the Bible.

The priests, having nothing to gain by defeat and all to win by victory, seemed to seek public arguments with the Protestant missionaries. In 1841 Buller became involved in one before a large Maori group in one village. For five hours the dispute continued until all were weary, but Buller rejoiced to see the respect shown by the natives for "the Book," and he tried to make it the basis for his remarks, showing that the Wesleyan church was a real part of the church universal. He ended by accusing the priest of being untruthful and of upholding an intolerant and idolatrous church. In February 1844 Bishop Pompallier himself came to visit Buller and they argued about the position of their churches for some time. Buller stated that while he was free of personal enmity, he regretted the introduction of Catholicism to the Wairau and would strenuously oppose it. About the same time he became involved in a discussion with two priests who had attended one of his services, but becoming tired of fruitless disputes, Buller decided to avoid them in future."Involuntary" discussions occurred, however, whenever he and the local priest met. Then in 1847 the priest visited Buller to protest about his attempts to instruct Catholic natives in Protestant doctrines. For four hours the argument raged until the natives present were tired and the priest—according to Buller's version of the story—was out of temper. "He departed, somewhat less confident, I thought, than when he came."

142. Buller to Seca., 21.11.43.
143. " " " , 14.2.44, Journal 14.1.44.
144. " " " , 20.7.41: cf. Whitely to Seca., 26.11.41.
145. " " " , 14.2.44, Journal 3.2.44.
Buller wrote. A little earlier an old Wesleyan Maori, when visited
by a priest, had from his own experience and from his knowledge of
Wesleyan doctrine, been able to defend his Protestantism, and this
further strengthened Buller's position among the natives.

Buller, like his Wesleyan brethren, constantly protested against
the use made by the Catholics of presents to bribe their congregation,
against their metaphor of the tree to prove that the Protestant
Church was not a true church, and against their disregard of any real
change in the conduct or belief of their converts. In time a small
Catholic group was established at Kaipara, but that church did not
make gains anything like proportionate to its efforts, and for that
the active opposition of Buller - and Tirarau - was mainly responsible.

Perhaps more than any of his brethren Buller was convinced of
the need to educate the Maori people. He realised from experience
that the missionary had constantly to struggle to raise the natives
from their old ways, but he did not realise, at first, what was involved
in the change-over. He considered the natives among whom he worked to
be halfway between a savage and a civilised race and he wrote, "the
translation is sure in its progress, but not quite so rapid as we de-
sire it." He was perhaps optimistic in thinking the change to be
sure: it would not be both sure and rapid. He also thought that only
by educating the coming generation of Maori children could the
Wesleyan Church build on a firm foundation. Believing, as he did,
that New Zealand would be colonised by Europeans, he realised that steps

146. Buller to Secs., 19.7.47.
147. " "  " , 23.12.46.
148. " "  " , 14.2.44, Journal 4.2.44; the same 19.7.47.
149. W.M.S. Correspondence, Wairoa Reports, 1845, 1844 and 1852. The Roman
Catholics claimed to have made considerable headway in the
country, but this the Wesleyans denied. Buller to Secs., 20.7.41:
F.Y. in N.Z., pp. 59-60.
150. Buller to Secs., 27.4.47.
151. " "  " , 23.12.46.
must be taken to equip the young Maori to face new temptations and new conditions of life. Without proper educational facilities the church could never root out heathen superstitions and savage ways.

Buller's practical suggestions were the result of his experience at Tangiteroria. Separate Sunday Schools for children and adults were a vital part of Wesleyan mission practice in New Zealand, and these existed in as many Kaipara villages as possible. Buller liked to keep control of these himself, but he was assisted gratuitously by native teachers. Lessons were mainly taken from the New Testament and the catechism, though instruction in reading, comprehension and spelling were also given. In 1842, to give some idea of proportions, ninety one men, sixty women, thirty-eight boys and twenty-three girls were estimated to be receiving instruction in such schools - a total of two hundred and twelve. In this field also the upset of the war was apparent in a sharp drop in membership but by 1852 there were over three hundred Maoris gathering in Sunday Schools.

Day schools were the real problem. The natives were scattered and migratory, Buller had not the time and was travelling too much to undertake regular school duties, satisfactory native teachers were hard to obtain, and no funds were available to pay them. At the same time the Maoris had little desire to learn and were indisposed to continued application or to disciplining their children into regular

154. Warren to Secs., 6.4.47.
156. Ibid.
157. W.M.S. Corres., N.D.M. Minutes 1843, 1845, 1849 & 1852. In 1849 only four Sunday Schools were returned in comparison with seven in 1843. Yet there were still ten native teachers returned, and nothing was said about there being more villages without Sunday Schools. If it is not a misprint it means that the decrease was in schools as much as in scholars.
158. W.M.S. Corres., Kaipara Reports, 1841, 1842, 1843, and 1846.
attendance at school or study.

Buller began his first day school at Tangiteroria soon after his arrival, but he soon discovered that such a school was impracticable and by 1842 he had realised that some entirely new system was necessary. In the meantime only irregular and unsatisfactory education was possible; in 1846, for instance, from five to twenty five young people gathering morning and evening at the station for school. The only solution seemed to be a "boarding school" at Tangiteroria.

Early in 1848 Buller persuaded some children to go and live on the station, but not until 1849 was a commodious weatherboard school building costing £135 erected there at Government expense. Relying on further Government aid, Buller employed a native teacher and enrolled twenty eight scholars, but when no help was forthcoming, the teacher was dismissed and the school dwindled. By 1852 it had almost ceased to exist, the profitable timber trade luring away the last pupils.

Lack of financial resources for education work had increased Buller's difficulties. The District Meeting of 1846 recommended, probably at Buller's instigation, that £300 be given annually to native education. He only wished that the grant could have been more generous. In 1848 he hoped for financial assistance from both

161. Cf. Ibid., 1846 and 1848.
162. Ibid., 1846.
164. " " , 11.9.50: W.M.S. Corres., Kaipara and Wairoa Reports 1851 and 1852.
165. Buller to Secs., 19.5.44. The W.M.S. did provide some educational supplies.
166. Buller to Secs., 23.12.46. He believed that in time the Maoris would contribute to their own education.
the church and the Government education grants, but all he received was £75, on the basis of £5 per boarder, in 1849 and 1850 and £50 in 1852. This sum was not enough to pay a teacher, to provide equipment and to clothe and feed the children as was necessary in any school among such a people, yet while no other system of instruction had been found practicable, education was of tremendous importance. The riddle was never solved.

The curriculum followed in teaching native races is most important. Buller, as a missionary, made Christianity, - the Bible and the catechism - the basis of all his teaching. As great importance was attached to questions of character and behaviour, the boarders were instructed in cleanliness, tidiness and discipline, "lawless insubordination" and "wild, boisterous mirth" not being allowed, although, not surprisingly, Buller found it required much patience to apply Wesleyan discipline to native children. Believing too, that the English language should be taught, Buller yet found it hard to teach it. The success of the various schools was apparent at certain public examinations where many could read, some write and a few do arithmetic and speak English. Other ex-pupils were able to measure and calculate timber quantities in the forests.

Buller had given much time and thought to educational problems, and he had urged their importance on both the London Committee and the New Zealand brethren. He had used his influence in favour of

168. Ibid., 1849.
169. Ibid., 1849 and 1849.
170. Buller to Secs., 11.9.50.
171. " " " 13.10.45; W.M.S. Corres., Kaipara School Report 1848: P.Y. in N.Z. pp. 181-2. He later insisted that the missionaries had had first to teach the Maoris in their own language.
172. Buller to Secs., 2.2.47 and 9.3.48.
such Maori boarding schools as the Anglicans were establishing, or
even of feeding and clothing the children at an efficient day school,
but shortage of money had ended all his plans.\footnote{174}

The timber trade, which had never been liked by the missionaries,
was especially important in the Kaipara with its wonderful forests.
After a temporary decline, it revived there in the late eighteen
forties, and Buller, realising that it would continue as long as the
demand existed, saw that he could only hope by warnings, instructions
and entreaties to mitigate its evils. He feared that the Maoris
of the South and East, following steady agricultural pursuits productive
of valuable property and industrious habits, would far outstrip those
who traded with timber\footnote{177} which only wasted assets and produced easy
money and consequent improvidence. Famine often resulted from a total
neglect of agriculture and as no habits of industry, thrift or stability
were formed, the failure of the trade would make beggars of
the Maoris concerned. In addition the heavy work, in all sorts of
conditions and weathers and the Maoris' disrespect of sanitary
rules, seriously affected their health. Contacts were made with all
sorts of Europeans and new temptations were faced. In the meantime,
however, the Kaipara Maoris were wealthy in European goods, their
dress improved, and when Messrs. Walton and Aitken, the timber
merchants, replaced barter with cash payment, the natives were able to
improve their diet also.

Buller felt that his work at Kaipara was in some way symbolised

\footnote{174. Buller to Secs., 13:10.45 and 19.9.44.}
\footnote{175. Cf. Turner to Beecham, 20.11.38.}
\footnote{176. W.M.S. Corres. Wairoa Report 1846: Buller to Secs., 26.7.52.}
\footnote{177. Ibid.}
\footnote{178. Buller to Secs., 26.7.52.}
\footnote{179. Ibid. 11.9.50.}
\footnote{180. W.M.S. Corres., Wairoa Report 1846.}
\footnote{181. Ibid, 1846 and 1852: Buller to Secs., 19.4.53.}
PLATE 3.
Tangiteroria Mission Station.

PLATE 4.
Manners Street Church and Mission House, Wellington, 1848.
by the Missionary Meetings held annually after 1847. These demonstrated the unity of all the tribes in the Christian religion and required co-operation among them; they expressed the missionary enthusiasm which lay at the heart of Methodism and taught the Maoris to appreciate the cost of their religion; they recognised the Maoris' love of communal gatherings; and they had proved successful elsewhere.

The meetings were held around the circuit: at Tangiteroria in 1847 and 1850, at Okaro in 1848 and 1853, at Kaihu in 1849, at Otamatea in 1851, at Mount Wesley in 1852, and at Oruawaro and Mount Welsey in 1854. The hosts on each occasion were proud of the honour and went to considerable trouble in preparing their villages and seeking to outshine everybody else. Indeed, the hospitality at Otamatea was so extravagant that Buller reproved those concerned. The numbers and enthusiasm increased every year until in 1850 Buller estimated that about three hundred and fifty, or two thirds of the Maoris in the circuit, were present, and in 1852 five hundred came and hardly anyone stayed at home. That of 1854, on account of the distances, was held in two parts. Those who came took a pride in dressing neatly and Buller would compliment them on their tidy appearance and use all his influence against the use of the dirty and unhealthy blankets for clothing. Indeed, in 1852 Captain Drury of the H.M.S. Pandora, which was in vicinity, was so pleased with the natives that he promised to mention the matter to the Admiralty.

182. F.Y. in N.Z., pp. 103-106.
183. e.g. Warren to Secs., 21.5.48; Buller to Secs., 15.3.49.
184. Ibid. Buller considered this stimulus to improvement most valuable.
185. Buller to Secs., 18.4.51.
186. " " , 19.3.50 and 22.4.52.
188. Buller to Secs., 9.3.48; 15.3.49; 18.4.51; 19.4.53; 27.4.47.
189. Buller to Secs., 22.4.52.
All sorts of expedients were used to obtain money - Buller must have paid pounds for proffered goods and services - and the collections increased considerably from £6. 12. 10 in 1847 to £47. 18. 2½ in 1853. No time was wasted at these meetings. Typical was that of 1847 when the Maoris assembled on the Friday and spent the Saturday in making preparations. On Sunday there was an early morning prayer meeting, children's school, a Maori, and an English service, adult school, a love feast, divine worship, and finally the Sacrament of Holy Communion to complete a busy day. Often a public examination or a general meeting was held on the Monday morning and in the afternoon the missionary meeting with its typical Wesleyan procedure of reading an annual report and speaking to various resolutions. These meetings illustrated how the customs of the heathen could be happily blended with the paraphernalia of English Wesleyan tradition, and they developed in the Maoris a willingness to contribute to their own church.

But after all, the primary task of the missionary is to convert the heathen. During 1844 Henry Lawry, Walter Lawry's son, spent several weeks at Kaipara learning the Maori language and the management of an isolated mission establishment. A godly young man himself, he could yet pray for some of the spirit which rested upon Buller - no mean compliment -. He said that probably few missionaries laboured as hard as Buller did with so little encouragement, but he noticed Buller's influence over the Maoris in that while they accepted lies and mischief from anyone, only from Buller, whom they trusted, would they accept words of truth and soberness. Buller frequently felt discouraged, especially in the early years when interest in the mission seemed

191. Buller to Secs., 18.4.51, 19.4.53.
192. " " " , 27.4.47.
194. Ibid. Cf. Creed to Secs., 7.5.40.
to ebb and flow. At first less than half the natives in the circuit would come to church—though Buller tried to carry the gospel to all—but among these some work of grace was apparent as the candidates for baptism showed. By 1843, however, with the wars and the Roman Catholic advances, progress had ceased, the heathen were more stubborn than ever and the church seemed to be stagnating. Only gradually did the situation change until most in the district attended church, many sought baptism and Buller's personal prestige increased.

Tirarau and his tribe caused Buller great anxiety. While they valued his presence and advice, they clung persistently to heathenish ways and continued to desecrate the Sabbath—a dreadful sin in Wesleyan eyes. At times they attended church, and they did so more regularly after Tirarau publicly declared his allegiance to Protestant Christianity in 1848, many becoming church members, but still their religion lacked spiritual depth and they soon slipped back into the old ways in spite of their professions. For this Buller largely blamed the chiefs, saying that Tirarau exhibited the ignorance of a very superstitious mind. When after fifteen years of missionary care this carelessness and indifference yet remained, Buller insisted that the station be moved south to those who cared for their Christianity and responded to the attention of the missionary.

The mission had always been supported at Okaro, but in 1846 the people there were greatly blessed—a blessing expressed in true Wesleyan style by weeping congregations—a new spirit pervaded their

197. Buller to Secs., 11.9.50.
198. " " " , 21.11.43.
200. Ibid., Wairoa Reports 1848 and 1849: Buller to Secs., 11.9.50 and 18.4.51.
201. Buller to Secs., 26.7.52.
meetings and actions," a godly jealousy" governed their intercourse with all non-Christians, and this "growth in grace" continued. Their Christian hospitality was spectacularly demonstrated in 1851 by their reception of the survivors of the French vessel, "Alomêne", wrecked north of Kaipara. The people at Kaihu, having realised their spiritual poverty, prayed about it and received a similar blessing; and the Uriohau tribe, after their conversion, held fast to the faith. Only at Whangarei and at Tangihua did the work apparently fail altogether. The Maoris at the latter place, partly influenced by those at Whangarei, renounced Christianity and even took by stealth the body of a child earlier buried at Tangiteroria, after Buller had refused to allow them to do so.

On the surface Buller's efforts might seem to have prospered, but he was most keenly aware of the fact that this was not altogether so. Polygamy, cannibalism and intertribal war might be renounced, the Bible might be read, church attended, Sunday observed and outward behaviour be orderly and correct, but there was little spiritual understanding in the people, little depth and virility in their Christian experience, little freedom from the bondage of ignorance, depravity and weakness. Covetousness and worldly mindedness seemed to be ingrained in the native heart. Buller could only say that his were a people prepared for the Lord and sometimes it was only the fact that he was doing God's work which saved him from despair. The reasons for this comparative failure were numerous: it was something that the fact was squarely faced.

205. " " " , 13.4.51 and 11.9.50.
206. " " " , 2.2.47.
207. Cf. Buller to Secs., 14.11.40: Waterhouse to Secs., 7.1.41 (typing misprint has 7.1.40.)
208. W.M.S. Correa., Kaipara Reports 1840, 1841, 1844, 1845, 1849 & 1852.
At the same time there was a definite tendency for the Wesleyan preachers to disparage their own work and to expect rather too great success. Surely the testimony of outward conformity to Christianity with the consequent revolution in native habits and customs, sustained as it was over a number of years and throughout a wide area in spite of considerable temptations, should not be lightly overlooked. The temper of the Kaipara people found expression in their contribution of £140, when Buller was transferred, to show their earnest desire for another missionary.

One highlight of Buller's life was his ordination with Hobbs at a special service during the 1844 District Meeting, the General Superintendent, Walter Lawry performing the solemn ceremony. Buller thus felt himself really consecrated to the Wesleyan ministry and an answer was provided to the arguments of the Church Mission disparaging the Wesleyan ministry.

By 1851, considering the high death-rate among the Kaipara natives, their tendency to withdraw down stream and the continued carelessness of Tirarau in comparison with the enthusiasm and needs of the southern villages, Buller decided that he must leave Tangiteroria, the mission home and all the amenities there. He eventually chose a section about a mile south of the present town of Dargaville on the western river bank. An offer to buy the Tangiteroria property for £250 was accepted, and the money was used to cover the cost of removal to Mt. Wesley where the natives had given forty to fifty acres and where a house coating 996. 4. 4. was built. Buller was left in Kaipara

210. Whitely to Osborne, 10.9.55.
211. Ibid. Buller to Secs., 19.9.44, Journal 4.8.44.
212. Buller to Secs., 21.11.43; W.M.S. Corres., S.D.M. Minutes 1843.
213. " " " , 26. 9.51.
214. " " " , 22. 4.52.
for an extra year so that he might complete the transfer.

In order to see the work at Kaipara in perspective it is necessary to consider general mission conditions during these years. Much strife and vituperation were caused between the two sections of the New Zealand District by a disagreement originating between Hobbs, the Chairman of the Northern District, and Gideon Smales, a probationer who had married Bumby's sister. In this disagreement neither acted wisely. Hobbs sought refuge in a special district meeting which expressed its unqualified disapproval of certain of Smales's actions and overlooked Hobbs's misdemeanours. The trouble dragged on, however, poisoning the spiritual life and fellowship of the north and earning public notoriety for those concerned. Various attempts at settlement were made until, following a hint from the Northern District Meeting and with the support of Whitely, Smales took it on himself to shift to the south. Although before tempers rose neither Whitely nor Smales had been able to imagine any unworthy motive for Buller's part in the matter, Whitely later accused him of acting as he did through fear or favour of both Hobbs and Warren, and suggested that Buller, among others, having never experienced the "anxious solicitude" of probation in England, had been moved by "envy and inexperience." Such charges bear the stamp of ill-tempered and unjust criticism, considering that even his opponents placed Buller in a different category from Hobbs and Warren, and that the Southern men later agreed that: "the view taken by the Northern

216. Ibid., 1853. Stallworthy, op. cit., p.11.
217. Smales to Secs., 14.4.41: Whitely to Secs., 10.2.42.
219. Whitely to Secs., 22.3.42 and 1.10.42.
220. Whitely to Secs., 23.12.42.
Division is the correct one!"

The question of using native agents in the Mission was raised early and it was decided that little use could be made of them unless they could pay themselves, but slowly the missionaries came to realise their potential value. Finance and training were the crucial issues. Lawry, on his arrival in New Zealand, keenly supported a training institution to provide trained, Christian, Maori leaders, instructed in the English language and in civilised ways of life. Buller took little active part in the arrangements made for the school, but he heartily supported the use of native teachers and, indeed, any means of supplying the widespread demands for Christian instruction.

Certainly the consistent cry of these years was for more missionaries, the two sections of the district each urging its own needs. The London Committee were explicit, at first, in stating that the evangelisation of the Maoris must come before the needs of the European colonists and only gradually did it become plain that the "Mission" would have to become a European "Church." "We have not time nor means to devote to (the Europeans)" wrote Ironside in 1842, yet his District Meeting in the following year considered how the missionary's time should be divided between the two races. European services gave prestige to the mission in native eyes and might benefit the Maoris who were learning English, but, on the other hand, Wesleyan congregations were usually of the poorer classes who could not support a minister, and the missionaries feared - with good reason - lest they lose their zest for the Maori work. Buller believed that

221. Lawry to Secs., 7.10.44.
222. W.M.S. Corres., S.D.M. Minutes 1842.
223. Ibid., Extracts from the Journal of W. Lawry, 14.5.44.
224. Whiteley to Secs., 18.2.41: Wallis to Secs., 25.1.43: W.M.S. Corres., Minutes of Special D.M. to Secs., 20.2.43.
225. Beecham to Chairman, 2.9.39.
226. Ironside to Secs., 14.3.42.
only by the labour of evangelical men could the Maori race be preserved. He further held that the colonisation of New Zealand challenged the church to increase its staff: but he soon saw the need for a European church which would in time repay any money spent in commencing it and which would, as well, support its own ministry and provide centres of influence and pecuniary assistance for the Maori work. "Every important settlement ought," he wrote, "...to have a Wesleyan minister stationed there, not exclusively, of course, but particularly devoted to the English department." Such a statement was typical of his vision and of his contempt for the difficulties which hindered church development.

At this stage, however, church extension became allied with the crucial problem of finance. Between 1841 and 1844 the cost of the mission rose from £4451 to £8678. The system, which ultimately remained until 1844, of dividing stores among the stations for use as barter, caused both jealousy and extravagance and the persistent combining of all the northern accounts made auditing of any kind impossible. Unable to bear this expense, the Missionary Committee limited the New Zealand expenditure, gradually increasing the grant from £4000 in 1845 to £5500 in 1850, but dropping it to £5000 in the next year. Among other duties of a deputation sent to New Zealand in 1852 was that of reducing expenditure, and although some of its suggestions were impracticable yet the final arrangement, placing

228. Buller to Secs., 13.10.45 and 27.11.51.
229. W.M.S. Corres., "Gross amount of W.M.S. spending in New Zealand until 1848." These figures were questioned by the N.Z. missionaries, however, who believed some of them to be greatly exaggerated.
231. Ibid. 1845 and 1851: Letters of Buddle to Buller 19.12.44: W.M. Letters etc., Hoole, 7.3.44: M.M. Minutes, sub-Committee of Finance 29.1.51 and 1.4.46.
some responsibility on the European churches, achieved a considerable saving.

There were many reasons for the costliness of the New Zealand mission, but the money was spent on the stations and not on the missionaries. "Your missionaries," Lawry wrote, "......(are) poor, and their houses are meanly furnished." Some, lacking private resources, had to run into debt in order to live, all had a frugal table and were shabbily dressed and Buller found it difficult to live even respectably, although he had never entered the ministry seeking wealth. In fact, the New Zealand missionaries had larger expenses than had an English minister and there were constant additional calls on their purse, yet their salary, without the small children's allowances, was only £150 a year. These men, in preference to allowing the mission staff to be decreased, freely consented in 1853 to make themselves responsible for the £500 a year miscellaneous expenditure in the mission account. A wonderful spirit of self-sacrifice for God's sake prompted this offer, but it should not be forgotten that the Wesleyan missionaries laboured constantly under the strain of great financial hardship and insecurity, constantly struggling and saving to live respectably, educate their children and make two ends meet.

By 1845 the question of providing some place of education for the families of South Sea missionaries had become urgent—some, like Buller, meanwhile employing a private tutor—but the London Committee would do little. Finally it was decided that the missionaries would

233. Boyce to Hoole, 15.9.53.
234. Cf. Lawry to Secs., 7.10.44.
235. Ibid.
236. Lawry to Secs., 17.9.44.
237. Buller to Osborne, 6.3.52.
238. e.g. Letters of Buddle to Buller, 1.1.45.
239. Warren to Osborne, 12.4.53: S.S. Minutes, sub-Committee of Finance, 4.6.51.
240. Boyce to Hoole, 15.9.53.
241. Lawry to Secs., 29.11.46: Wallis to Secs., 15.10.47.
combine to erect and manage the school on a joint-stock principle. Buller was elected one of the trustees of this school by a meeting of "Proprietors of the Wesleyan Educational Institute" in July 1848, and a minister was at last sent from England to take charge of it. "There is no one thing in the history of our mission for which I more heartily praise God than for (our children's school)," Buller wrote.

When in December 1846 Earl Grey issued his well-known despatch concerning native lands, the Wesleyan missionaries in New Zealand, who had never been allowed to buy land for themselves, protested strongly. Not only did they believe the principle of the despatch to be unjust, but in view of the missionaries' support of the Treaty of Waitangi, they feared that its consequences would be ruinous. Fortunately, when the matter was raised with Earl Grey by the Secretaries, a satisfactory reply was received and Buller might well feel that a "portentous cloud" had disappeared from the horizon.

The English Wesleyan Church was bitterly divided during 1849 over questions concerning Bunting's administration, but the New Zealand men remained stoutly loyal to Bunting's side, and Buller wrote home expressing his great sorrow at the "lamentable consequences which are the immediate results of the agitation caused by factious and wicked men." There was no danger of a parallel split in the New Zealand mission.

The position of General Superintendent, which Lawry had come to New Zealand to fill, proved unsatisfactory both here and in

242. Lawry to Secs., 10.2.48.
243. Buller to Secs., 27.11.51.
247. Buller to Beecham, 15.3.49.
Australia. In part Lawry's personality, his inexperience of mission work and his increasing age were responsible for his unpopularity, but the indefinite extent of his authority, his orders to curtail the New Zealand expenses and the fact that in his own financial arrangements he was not responsible to the District Meeting, all fomented the trouble. The London Committee, which was too far away to carry out adequately its executive functions, at first wholeheartedly supported Lawry. When the matter was raised at the 1852 District Meeting in Auckland, Buller, although he had no seat on the meeting, took a lead in insisting that the matter should be openly discussed and moved that Lawry be asked to leave the meeting. Buller claimed that he had acted with candour, honesty and loyalty throughout; but that he was one of Lawry's leading opponents, and that he was to some extent moved by personal feelings seems undoubted. The Deputation of 1853 succeeded in largely settling the trouble, although it reappeared when it was planned to transfer Buller to Auckland. On a doctor's advice, he requested to be stationed in a town, but there was strong feeling in Auckland against appointing a leading opponent of Lawry either as his junior in the circuit or to his church. Buller had always maintained that such disagreements should be openly voiced and not whispered behind the back of the person concerned, and he felt that Lawry's

249. Lawry to Secs., 16.1.50.
250. Buller to Osborne, 20.9.53 and 6.3.52: Lawry to Secs., 4.4.44; Whitely to Secs., 4.12.50; cf. Secs., to Young and Boyce, 1.10.52: Letters of Buddle to Buller 29.8.49 and 11.4.50.
251. Kaipara, Waima and Mangungu had been created a separate district by the Committee. Cf. Whitely to Secs., 27.2.52.
254. Ibid.
retirement in 1854 solved a serious problem. Although there were real grievances against Lawry's administration in New Zealand, his age and years of service perhaps merited greater consideration.

The Deputation also suggested to the New Zealand brethren that they become part of an Australasian Conference. At first some feared lest the effectiveness of the mission suffer, but once they were assured that the evangelising work would continue, all caught the new vision. As Buller wrote, it would give the New Zealand mission an accessible executive and it allowed it to be represented at the Conference. Various suggestions were made, but the scheme adopted in England allowed for annual Australasian Conferences, and arranged satisfactorily for the various church funds. Henceforth New Zealand could largely determine its own destiny. It began by dropping the title "Society" and becoming the "Wesleyan Methodist Church."

256. Buller to Osborne 22.12.53: Whitely to Osborne 17.10.53.
257. Secs., to Young and Boyce, 1.10.52.
258. Buller to Osborne, 22.12.53.
259. The scheme suggested by the 1854 District Meeting was similar to that adopted in 1875: N.D.M. Minutes, 1854.
260. Ibid.
Minister, as a location for human beings to settle on, (Wellington) was never designed by nature for any such preposterousness," wrote Turton in 1847, but after the trouble in the north, it was to Wellington that Buller was finally appointed in 1854. Wesleyan Methodism had become so well established in that growing area since 1840 that a second minister had been sent there. The usual Wesleyan comments about the wickedness and worldly-mindedness of the town and about its evil effects on the Maoris were made, but the annual report, suggesting considerable exaggeration, claimed in 1849, for instance, congregations of eight hundred of each race. The earthquakes of 1842 and 1854 were a setback, however, and as Watkin, whom Buller followed, had been ill during his last few months in the circuit and away at Conference, the work was much in arrears when Buller arrived. Watkin had described 1854 as "a most painful year."

After a brief stay in Auckland, Buller reached Wellington in April 1855. It was a large and scattered circuit among both Maoris and Europeans. In Wellington itself, congregations varying from one hundred to two hundred and fifty attended the large wooden church in Manners Street, although the absence of any spirit of devoutness

2. Letters etc., Watkin to Buller, 22.3.55: Letters of Biddle to Buller, 16.4.56.
3. Aldred to Secs., 16.4.41: Watkin to Secs., 14.3.51 and 5.3.47.
grieved Buller from the first. Monthly services were held in turn
with other denominations at a Union Church in Karori, but since the
earthquakes and the removal of the Jones family to the Wairarapa, the
cause at Karori had declined. Six miles north at the town now called
Johnso...
encouragement among a migratory and apathetic people, many of whom were in contact with European evils, and cared little to improve themselves. Yet Buller believed it to be essential that the church should continue unabated its efforts to prepare the Maori race for its future responsibilities, social, political and spiritual. It would be something if Christianity could hold its own during such critical years.

Watkin had found little time to give to the Maoris, but as Buller gave them both time and the benefit of his experience, there were soon encouraging results and a sincere, if not exalted, piety became apparent in many. Teachers were established in each Wesleyan village, daily services were held in the kaingas, Saturdays and Sundays were largely given to teaching the natives and the Sacrament service was regularly administered to about two hundred communicants. Gradually the outward appearance of the Maoris was improved, and they demonstrated their zeal by building native chapels at Te Aro and Hutt. Latterly the Maori disturbances in the north had their repercussions on the Wellington natives. Buller gave Featherston, the Superintendent of the Province, and the Government his full support and advice in quieting any trouble and in assuring the loyalty of the Maoris. He also used his influence and experience to restrain the provocative actions and the fears of the Wellington settlers.

The Wellington circuit was no sinecure. There were at least two English and two Maori services each Sunday, there were long distances to travel on horseback or on foot, there was need constantly to combat

15. Buller to Boyce., 30.10.57.
18. Ibid., p. 113: Diary 1860 passim. For the effects of the disturbances on the church see W.D.M.B. Wellington Report 1860.
Roman Catholic propaganda among both races, and there were problems to face regarding both finance and membership. Nor did the Wellington church help itself, but even left most of the class leadership to Buller.

Buller began in Wellington by removing from the church roll all who had even temporarily left the township and by decreasing it by more than forty until it stood at one hundred and thirty three. After five years an increase of twenty nine could be reported, but in that period over one hundred members had shifted elsewhere and Buller's successor again decreased the roll considerably. Thus complaints about the stationary membership had little meaning, for with such a migratory population the church had to run to stand still.

Congregations apparently increased, for in 1857 the circuit returned European congregations of one thousand and Maori congregations of three hundred and fifty. Two years later it became necessary to add galleries to the church in order to seat the crowds and Woon, on hearing Buller preach, described it as an "able and impressive discourse."

Finance was a minor issue until in 1853 Wellington was made responsible, "at whatever hazard," for paying one minister. However, shortly after Buller's arrival there occurred "an unprecedented circumstance in the Society's financial affairs" when a credit balance appeared. Subscription lists were instituted to help with the minister's stipend, the Poor Fund was converted to circuit uses, and the Wellington collections increased, but few of the members were

19. Watkin to Secs., 6.9.51
21. Ibid., September 1853 and 10.5.55.
23. Wellington Q.M. Minutes 2.1.61.
25. Woon to Hoole, 20.10.57.
wealthy and the cost of establishing the cause generally, as well as of supporting the minister, were extremely heavy. Constant removal expenses for the itinerating ministers only increased the difficulty. As a result Buller had himself to pay over £60 of the cost of repair for earthquake damage until a Conference grant could be obtained, and the circuit could not expend because no third minister was available unless his salary could be guaranteed. Insistent demands were made upon Wairarapa for more substantial assistance, but, although a circuit debt was only avoided with great effort, the Quarterly Meeting in 1859 pledged itself to support a third minister. By an anticipation of income a debit balance was avoided at Buller's last Quarterly Meeting but the circuit was soon in grave financial difficulties. The tone of these later meetings suggests that the faith which prompted so poor a church to contribute generously to connexional funds, to extend the work, and to try to support a third minister, was in large part due to the inspiration of Buller, for while he was there all seemed acutely aware of the need of a third agent but after his departure the Quarterly Meeting decided it no longer needed the extra help which they had at last obtained in 1859. Certainly he had himself to collect most of the money for such projects as the new galleries.

Watkin had been unable to settle the Wellington properties in any proper trust before he left and he held them in his own name, merely giving Buller the deeds, and only after considerable anxiety was this satisfactorily settled. There was, too, a considerable debt

27. Ibid., 10.7.55 and 2.1.56: W.D.M.B., 13.11.56.
28. Wellington. Q.M. Minutes, 7.1.57, 6.7.59 and 5.10.59.
29. Ibid.
30. e.g. W.D.M.B. financial reports 1857.
31. Wellington Q.M. Minutes 4.7.60.
32. e.g. Diary, 16.3.60.
33. Letters etc., Boyce to Buller, Remarks on Buller's letter to Boyce by
on certain buildings, something owing on a Thorndon property, and some badly needed repairs after the earthquakes. This was an additional burden for the church, but yet a pipe organ was installed in Manners Street to replace the clarionet and orchestra used earlier and a very valuable section was, by wise foresight, secured next to the Wesleyan Church in Lower Hutt.

Steps had been taken since 1851 to establish a native industrial school at Pukehinau in Wellington, but by 1854 the prospects of the institution were not bright. Buller believed from the beginning that it was unwise to build such a school in the town, and in 1856 the land was leased for twenty one years at an increasing rent to allow for any necessary improvements to be made. The Wesleyan church had no day schools in Wellington and Buller did nothing toward the establishment of any, for in 1855 the Provincial Government passed an education bill which, once the Government promised to amend it in order to make some provision for religious instruction, obtained the support of the church. A native day school was started in 1857 under a graduate of the Auckland Native Training Institution, but the attendance was unavoidably fluctuating. Buller chaired the meeting at which the Aglionby Sunday School was reconstituted in 1855 and from that time onwards it was most successful. Those at Taita and Wellington, however, were less promising. Native Sunday Schools were held regularly in every village.

One Wellington official protested strongly after Buller had been

Watkin (no date): Watkin to Buller, 20.3.55.
37. Ibid., Financial D.M. 4.11.56.
38. Ibid., 29.11.55 and 13.11.56, see post... pp. 110 - 112.
39. S.S. Minutes. District Committee Meeting 18.11.57.
40. Aglionby S.S. Meeting Book, 28.5.55.
41. W.D.M.B. 29.11.55 and 13.11.56.
in the circuit for a few months against the use of the Liturgy at the morning service. This was in line both with the Conference resolutions and with Buller's own inclinations, and after a short discussion the matter blew over. It is illustrative of those little matters which cause unpleasantness in a quarterly meeting. The minutes of these meetings illustrate the strong lead given by Buller to his officials, and Woon wrote that Buller exercised considerable and conservative influence in Wellington itself. Dr. Featherston had told Woon that he had never known a minister to acquire such extensive influence in any community in so short a time.

Spiritually, the Wellington church was lukewarm rather than hot, and Buller from the first deprecated the worldly mindedness and fruitlessness of the congregation there. Some of the officials were godly men and the Quarterly Meetings were marked by brotherly unanimity and an earnest desire to further the work of God, but there were few outstanding conversions in the church, little attention was paid to private means of grace, and class, weeknight and prayer meetings were ill attended. This, even more than the financial poverty, the migratory population, the lack of whole hearted co-operation between minister and people and the need of more ministerial assistance, explains the little progress made by the church. Without spiritual vitality a church has no reason to exist. It is true that the church was not keeping abreast of Wellington's growing population, but Buller confessed that although it fell far short of Bible standards, it was doing well in comparison with other churches in the area.

The result of Buller's work in Wellington was perhaps most obvious in the absence of Wesleyan schools from the town and in the

42. Woon to Hoole, 20,10,57.
regulation of church property there. On his removal he was thanked by the circuit officials for the "very able and energetic manner" in which he had conducted the affairs of the circuit, and for his "earnest and efficient ministry" which had been "...instrumental in awakening in the minds of many, and especially of the young, a deep sense of the vital importance of Christianity." The real results of his work - his part in representing Methodism in the town, in re-establishing and re-invigorating the church, in transmitting to his congregation the spiritual vigour and enthusiasm of his own life - these were not so obvious, and their value was in part dependent on the future activity of his successor and of the congregation, but ultimately they alone mattered.

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Part II. Christchurch 1860 - 1866.

Wesleyan missionaries had visited Banks Peninsula at least as early as 1845, leaving native teachers to care for the Maoris in the district. A few Methodists came out on the first ships and in 1852 the first minister was appointed to Christchurch. Blessed by a succession of strong ministers, who were aided by zealous local preachers and who ministered to an enthusiastic people, the work in Christchurch grew quickly. A second minister was obtained in 1859 and the first church, which had been enlarged once but was still too small, was replaced in the same year by a new one on High Street.

Buller was in the prime of his life when he was appointed to this promising church. Of robust frame, vigorous, energetic and hopeful,

45. Wellington Q.M. Minutes, 4.4.60.
46. For a contemporary description see Fitton, op. cit., pp.193-215.
47. Creed to Secs., 26.11.45.
48. S.D.M. Minutes 1852.
49. This church seated 370 people. W.D.M.B. Christchurch Report 1859.
79.

he set an example of tireless labour to his congregation and was able to inspire enterprise in others. He quickly won the esteem of all classes and rose to a position of "unsurpassed influence in the ecclesiastical life" of the town. A large circuit and much travelling was what he was used to, and he brought to Christchurch his extensive experience, his wide knowledge and overall view of the work of Wesleyan Methodism, and an earnest prayer that his work might be for the Lord.

On any Sunday in 1860 two services were held at Christchurch itself, at Lyttelton and at Kaiapoi, and one at Papanui, Woodend, Riccarton and St. Albans. Within three years ten preaching places had been added to the plan and in the following months, as new local preachers arrived and as young men were encouraged to preach, the extension was even greater. Class meetings were begun at such scattered points as Rangiora and Selwyn, Spring's Track and Oxford, Templeton and West Melton, Prebbleton, Ashley and Hokitika, Malvern Hills and Horton Valley. Canterbury was becoming well covered with a network of Wesleyan societies.

This meant a busy life for the minister. As well as the Sunday preaching, there were services to conduct on almost every night of the week, and yet it was said that "his sermons ... (were) instructive, impressive and delivered with forceful fluency." When did he have time to prepare these and how did he keep so fresh? He was a faithful visitor, indefatigable in his efforts to reach the homes of all his scattered congregation and particularly attentive to the sick and aged. The preaching plans for several quarters included a missionary tour lasting several weeks, during which Buller could visit those scattered

52. Canterbury Schedule Book, passim.
53. Morley, op. cit., p. 413.
settlements and outlying farms where regular services were impossible. In addition there were the myriad meetings which the minister must attend - the inevitable Wesleyan tea meeting in one part of the circuit or another, a meeting of the officials of some church organisation, a public lecture or a congregational rally. The Bible class became the "Christchurch Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society," the Bible Society, or the Sabbath Observance League of a few years later, received his keen support, and when a public meeting was held to request aid for the operatives in Lancashire who were hard hit by the American Civil War, Buller was on the platform. Weddings, baptisms and funerals; the welcome and friendly help given to immigrants; the quiet gift from his own poverty to those in greater want; the assistance given to those in trouble - these were possibly his most valuable work, but that most often forgotten. There were often visitors at the Parsonage, but there, in his spare time and when the family left him in peace, Buller sought to read, to prepare himself for the mass of work and to attend to the details of the administration of the Southern District. The hours spent in travelling around a circuit, which included at times Waimate and Hokitika, and in visiting throughout a district embracing the South Island, need not be mentioned. Yet doubtless some murmured that a minister does no work!

In December 1862 the congregation of the High Street church met together and decided to construct yet a larger church, and within three months plans were afoot to buy a section on the corner of Durham and Chester Streets and to advertise for a plan for a church to seat eight hundred downstairs with room for galleries. A Melbourne firm furnished

55. Morley, op. cit., p. 413.
56. e.g. Diary 1.1.62, 3.11.62 and 2.12.62. It was an excellent way of raising money.
the chosen design which had, however, to be cut down by the local architect in order to decrease the expense. Yet the tender finally accepted was for £7,200. To save time, Bealey, the Superintendent of the Province, laid only a corner stone in January 1864, and the church was finally opened in December of that year. The first service was taken by a Presbyterian minister - a real gesture of friendship - and Buller preached in the evening to a congregation of seven hundred. Altogether, after the sale of the High Street property, a Government grant and the collection of subscriptions, a debt of only £3,000 remained after a total expenditure of £12,000. The strong stone building has become one of the traditions of Christchurch.

Meanwhile, a two-storeyed wooden parsonage had been built on three acres of land in Ferry Road granted by the Provincial Government, and churches were being erected in all parts of the circuit, permission to build usually being given on condition that the building was opened debt free. In many cases the land was donated. Thus, during these years, Wesleyan churches were placed in many of the more important centres around Christchurch and this was done without burdening the Connexion with numerous debts. The boundless faith in the future of Canterbury which prompted such efforts has been fully justified.

Even in view of this building programme and of a depression in 1860, the church was not in desperate financial straits. By 1861 the Quarterly Meeting felt able to support itself entirely and even contemplated taking a third minister within a year or two, although their present situation with a debt on the church, a new parsonage under way,

59. Lyttelton Times, 13.2.64, p.3: 30.1.64, p.4.
60. "Laying the Corner Stone at Durham St."
the salaries of two ministers and heavy expenses, surely justified their request for a final grant of £300 from the Mission Committee. At the same time Christchurch's contributions to connexional funds increased considerably, probably under the impetus of a connexionally minded minister. Although the Christchurch collections increased almost six-fold during this period, and ordinary revenue quadrupled, yet still at least one circuit effort was needed to pay off the debt which had accumulated. This was due especially to the large amount charged on the circuit for the removal of ministers and when after Buller left, the parsonage had to be repaired and furnished, his successor began under a serious handicap. Buller had had earlier to buy his own furniture, although his salary was only £300 a year, and the parsonage was supposed to be furnished by the congregation.

The expansive urge in the Christchurch church and its strong financial position were a reflection of its growing membership. The one hundred and eighty members of 1861 had more than trebled five years later, in spite of the beginning of the Free Methodists in 1865. In part this was due to the growth of the older churches - the membership of Durham St. doubling - but even more it resulted from the development of new class meetings in various other settlements. This showed the spiritual vitality of Christchurch Methodism in those years, encouraged, but not caused, by Buller's own sincerity and devotion. Its roots lay in the evangelical fervour exhibited by local preachers, the officials and the members of the church, a fervour which found expression in prayer meetings and cottage gatherings around the city and which naturally resulted in church services where all were filled with the Holy Ghost and

63. S.S. Minutes, Buller to President of Conference, 21.11.61. Their request was apparently not granted. W.D.M.B., S.D.M. Minutes 1861.
64. Q.M. Cash Book, Canterbury Circuit, 1860 - 66.
at which many were converted. "God is with us," Buller could write, and he greatly rejoiced during his quarterly visitations to find a deepening spiritual consciousness among his people.

How much he was upheld and inspired through these difficult years in his own life by the piety of his congregation, none will ever know. The church in Christchurch rested on sure foundations, for this work of revival continued unabated for many years.

Originally the Canterbury Maoris were almost exclusively under the care of Wesleyan teachers and about half of them were church members but when in 1859 the Wesleyans could not provide a permanent agent, the Church of England stationed Canon J.W. Stack at Kaiapoi. Buller insisted on bringing the two Societies together on a basis of co-operation, and on explaining this to the Maoris concerned. As a result very friendly relationships existed between Buller and Stack, and the latter was quick to realise and appreciate this. The religious character of the natives was low, but they were willing to learn and to listen to preaching, and their behaviour was, on the whole, praiseworthy. Buller gave them as much time as he could, especially before the arrival of the native Wesleyan minister Te Kote, holding services among them, distributing books, visiting them and conducting their weddings, baptisms and funerals.

At this time, too, responsibility for education devolved upon the churches. In 1859 the Wesleyans in Canterbury controlled three schools, eight were reported in 1862 and six in 1863, and these provided sound elementary instruction for from three hundred and fifty to five

69. Ibid., 1863.
hundred children. Financially they were mostly supported from Provincial Government grants which steadily increased during these years, 71 thus permitting of extension work. The executive authority was placed at first in a sub-committee of the Quarterly Meeting but latterly in special sub-committees, of most of which Buller was a member. To the extensive day school work was added the care of an increasing number of Sunday schools caring for ever more children. One big difference between the two types of school was the contrast in size of the classes, for while the former might average almost fifty, the latter usually had only about twelve in a class.

The early Wesleyan church had a strong tradition of discipline. Each was his brother's keeper, so the ministers at their meetings had a mutual examination and the class leaders assisted the ministers in admonishing the backsliders, and in purging the membership rolls. Such ideas doubtless lay behind the following pointed paragraph written by Buller to his own son Walter. "I have no personal intercourse whatever with Mr. and Mrs. X. The latter has an oily tongue with the poison of asps underneath it, and I felt it my duty to let her husband know it, and they terminated all further communication, which had never been cordial!"

A special deputation from Christchurch, in view of certain circumstances, had gained permission from the District Meeting of 1864 to retain Buller for more than the term allowed by the rules of itinerancy, and about the same time, urged on by a gift of £100, a second minister had been obtained for Christchurch city. As he spent much of his first year at Hokitika the need to divide so huge a circuit had become

72. Ibid., 1862 and 1863.
73. Family Letters, 15.9.64.
74. W.D.M.B., S.D.M. Minutes 1864: Christchurch Q.M. Minutes 3.10.64.
PLATE 5.

Pitt Street Church, Auckland. c. 1900.

PLATE 6.

Durham Street Church, Christchurch.
urgent. How the circuit had grown during Buller’s ministry! The exuberant growth and religious background of the young settlement, the able and devoted laymen whom Buller had attracted to the church, the absence of any real financial anxiety and the consequent ability to expand the work, all help to explain the difference between the Wellington and Christchurch Wesleyan societies. In the latter place Buller had had the joy of seeing his work prosper.

Part III. Auckland 1866 - 70.

In 1865 Buller accepted a unanimous invitation from the Auckland circuit to become the minister there, and he shifted after the Conference of the following year. Under the care of some very able ministers, most outstanding of whom was Thomas Buddle, the Auckland circuit had grown considerably since 1844 and was, on account of its situation, one of the most important in the colony. Whangarei until 1866, and Thames from 1867 to 1870 were included within its bounds, and beside the services held in the High Street, Hobson and Union Street churches in the city, there was regular preaching in such suburbs as Parnell, Remuera, Epsom, Grafton, Three Kings and Avondale (then called Whao Road) and further afield at Titirangi, Howick and North Shore. In 1866, however, Auckland obtained a third minister and considerable use was made of lay preachers, so that while the weight of supervision fell on Buller he was spared much of the immediate responsibility and travelling.

During these years - and for many years thereafter - the debt on the Pitt Street church hung like a dark shadow over Auckland Methodism.

75. Auckland Q.M. Minutes, 28.9.65 and 26.6.66.
76. Born 1812, entered the ministry 1835, served in N.Z. from 1840 to 1883 holding many leading positions in the church. Died 1883.
77. Auckland Q.M. Minutes, March 1865: Morley, op. cit., p. 204.
The plan for a large new church had been initiated in the early eighties by Buddle and Warren who had persuaded and urged the trustees to take action. About an acre was bought on the corner of Pitt St. and Karangahape Road (for the High Street property had become out of the way) with the intention of re-selling some of it at a profit, and the foundation stone of the new church was laid in November 1865. The original intention was to erect a building costing £4000-£5000, but in the end the cost of construction, added to the costs of the section, the basement and the fittings, totalled some £11,000. The site had necessitated the laying of extra strong foundations, and the building was erected when charges for labour and materials were very high.

Great efforts were made to pay the debt off. Subscription lists were made out, some unwanted property was sold, special soirees, bazaars and collections were resorted to, and some help came from outside, although when Auckland, which had done much for the connexion, asked for some general assistance, it was refused. In 1867 the fictitious prosperity resulting upon the Maori wars and the influx of soldiers, immigrants and outlying settlers, was suddenly replaced by a depression. The extra land held by the trustees could not be profitably sold, money was scarce, and many shifted away to the Thames goldfields. At the end of 1867 there was a debt of nearly £5000 on the church, and the only loan available was at ten per cent interest. The crushing burden of this debt had widespread repercussions, especially when to it was added

79. According to a later resolution of the trustees. Auckland Q.M. Minutes 1.10.67.
82. Auckland Q.M. Minutes, 28.3.70: Chappell, op. cit., pp. 53-54.
about £800 owing on other churches in the circuit.

The situation was productive of much serious thought and Buller felt convinced that the root of the trouble was that the church had done wrong: he referred to the "evil of building churches with borrowed money." While he was far from condemning all speculation, he sought to show his congregation the wrongfulness of such "chance" speculation as that of the trustees with the land they had hoped to sell profitably, and to persuade them that the Christian must, at any cost, avoid the dishonest and evil practices so common among business men. Amends could only be made by honestly and fully repaying the debt.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that the general circuit finances caused much anxiety. The credit balance existing on Buller's arrival did not cover the £72 removal expenses charged to the circuit, and when to this was added the cost of furnishing and painting the parsonage, the circuit was immediately in debt. The necessity of raising the stipend of a third minister meant that not until the end of 1868, as Thames began to send in contributions, did circuit income exceed its expenditure, and it was of little use obtaining special donations to end the debt while this was the case. Doubtless the financial condition of the colony and the tendency for some church members to neglect the weekly offering explain why the income during these years increased only slightly, and why the Pitt Street class money tended to decrease. However, there was again a small credit balance before Buller left the circuit. Meantime, the usual consequences of financial poverty had not been lacking: church attention had tended to become fixed rather on pounds, shillings and pence than on con-

84. Auckland Q.M. Minutes 27.9.69.
85. Lectures; Anniversary services, 8.10.67.
versions, no expansion of the circuit had been possible, and some
voices were raised to advocate the abandonment of Titirangi and the
dismissal of the third minister.

The membership of the circuit, which in 1866 was returned as
about three hundred and fifty, had declined by 1870 by almost seventy,
the figures for Thames being excluded in both cases. For many quarters
no membership returns were given, but while a new class meeting
was begun at Mt. Albert, the number of classes in Auckland itself grew
less. This trend is more clearly illustrated by a comparison with other
circuits. During these years the percentage growth of Methodism in the
various centres throughout the Colony had, in every case except Auckland,
exceeded the percentage growth of the population, but there it
was considerably less. This was only mitigated by the fact that the
percentage of people in Auckland attending the Wesleyan Church was
slightly above the average. The Quarterly Meeting showed little con-
cern over this for its main interest seemed to lie elsewhere, but it
must be remembered that Auckland Methodism, suffering itself from a
fluctuating population and many removals, was by this means able to
strengthen the church in other centres.

Christian doctrines should teach people to confront difficulties
by prayer, not complaint; but in practice this is seldom so. Buller's
work was made more difficult by an undercurrent of criticism in Pitt Street
Some complained that lack of sufficient pastoral visitation was partly
the trouble, not realising that their minister was one of the most
efficient pastors in the Connexion, and that lay visitation can - and
should - also play a part in church development. Buller commented that

89. N.Z. Wesleyan 30.6.71, p. 89. In Auckland the population in-
creased by 30%, Church membership by 15½%. The average percentage
of the population attending Wesleyan Churches was 6.67, in Auckland
it was 7.04.
he probably realised the truth of this complaint more than did anyone else. Some remarked that all the ministers did not attend the prayer meetings, (they had other engagements) but Buller asked what would happen to a church that could not conduct its own prayer meetings, and whose officials neglected both prayer meetings and leaders' meetings? He had to try to convince some conservative members of the congregation that religion could tolerate fun and laughter and that secular music was not necessarily a prelude to trifling behaviour. The church people, by running down their minister, by talking and criticising behind his back, by complaining instead of praying, were causing much of the disappointment and failure in the church. The financial difficulties of the church, to which were added the individual anxieties consequent on the depression and the gold fever of the Thames mines, had undermined the spiritual vitality of the Auckland church, and the personal piety of its members. "I am sure," wrote Buller, "that the Caledonian Mine has wrought unspeakably worse moral and religious evil in the churches than it has bestowed material wealth upon the world." The church had been brought into such scandal and disrepute that some re-assertion of the Christian position had become necessary.

The Wesleyan Church in Auckland was responsible for several day-schools in various parts of the city, under the management of a general school committee and supported partly by fees and partly by a Government grant. As these were under capable teachers and were supervised by Government inspectors, they entailed little anxiety for the Church authorities. More important were the Sunday Schools of the city which, in 1864, had about five hundred children in their charge. The Wesleyan hymn book and catechism, scripture lesson books and the Bible were

used in these schools, and an occasional visit was paid them by the ministers.

Before the war there had been promising Native Churches in several places around Auckland, caring for both resident and visiting Maoris. These had been largely under the care of the students of Three Kings College, but with the war much work almost disappeared. However, in Auckland Buller had to undertake much connexional responsibility. He twice visited the North Auckland Maori Mission during his chairmanship, he had to take a general interest in the fate of Three Kings College, and the events of the war brought him increased anxiety, for the Northern District reached to New Plymouth. In addition, Auckland had come to be regarded as the centre of the New Zealand Wesleyan Church and several of the Trusts and Land grants held by the church were situated there. Buller was fortunate in 1869 in obtaining a supply for Pitt Street Church while he visited around his district.

The murder of John Whitely by some Maoris near New Plymouth early in 1869 came as a heavy blow to Buller, and temporarily robbed him of his usual optimism. If the Maoris could shoot a man whose whole life had been given to their service & who had so earned their love, then no one in the colony was safe, and the possible limits to the war seemed to disappear. Only a policy of exterminating the whites could have provoked the deed, he wrote. He blamed the paralysis and indecision of the Government and the type and command of the troops for the futility of the efforts being made to defeat the Maoris in their own country, and believed that once the mistake of fighting had been made, a large force had become essential.

5. Buller, "Journal of a Visit to Kaipara."
In 1868 Buller received a unanimous invitation to remain in Auckland for a fourth year, and when he came to leave in 1870 there can be little doubt of the real affection in which he was held. Auckland Wesleyanism had required a minister able to free it of those things which were retarding its development, to defend the integrity of the church through years of great temptation and strain, and to prepare it once again to make its work in the community its primary concern, for the erection of the Pitt Street buildings had unfortunately absorbed all the Church's energy and attention. Few apparent results crowned Buller's ministry there, and several years passed before great progress was made, but the Church had been safeguarded and strengthened through very critical years.

Part IV. Thames 1870 - 1873.

News of the gold discoveries at the Thames reached Auckland in 1867. Excitement quickly rose; a hasty and somewhat indefinite arrangement with the Maoris over the land was made by the Government; first Shortland, and then the adjacent township of Grahamstown, were laid out; and those with money to develop their claims soon made their fortunes. When, in 1870, the main rush was over, the population at the mines numbered ten to twelve thousand. In October 1867 the Rev. G.S. Harper was sent from Auckland to visit the area and a few weeks later Buller went there himself, preaching in the open air to considerable crowds and beginning a Sunday School. Early in 1868 a church was opened at Shortland and was crowded on Sunday by generous congregations, although other denominations soon became established in the town. In the next year Buller opened the

98. Auckland Q.W. Minutes, 27.9.69.
100. Ibid, 31.5.71, p. 66.
Grahamstown Church on land obtained, after much difficulty, from the Maoris.

From the first Buller, as Superintendent of the Auckland Circuit, had been interested in Thames, (although Harper had been stationed there after 1868,) but when the Adelaide Conference of 1870 agreed to form a separate Shortland Circuit, Buller was appointed there as the first minister. Regular services were held not only in the two main churches but also at Shellback, later called Tararu, Eureka, Puriri, and Punga Flat. Tapu and Coromandel had been occasionally visited earlier. It was the most compact circuit he had yet had, but he wrote of being up to his knees in mud in getting from the parsonage to the church in winter so that travelling conditions were not good, and certainly there was too much work for one man.

Buller entertained exaggerated ideas of the destiny of Thames, which, with its fine harbour and strategic situation at the "necessary" terminus of any trunk road from the south, must become the emporium of New Zealand. His only regret was that "vested interests" and an "effete Provincial Government" had pursued so short-sighted a land policy there. His belief in the future of Thames, reinforced by his experience of its phenomenal development, explain the active expansionist policy which he pursued in the circuit.

All things seem possible on a goldfield. Church membership, which by July 1870 had passed the one hundred mark, had increased to one hundred and sixty three two years later in spite of an ever in-

101. Reminiscences, Harper to Morley, 14.2.87. The dates here vary from those given by Buller, e.g. Thames Class Meeting Book.
102. The 1871 Conference was asked to change the name to Thames, Thames Q.M. Minutes 12.7.70.
103. F.Y. in N.Z. p. 154: Letters Buller to Boyce 1.4.70.
104. N.Z. Wesleyan 31.3.71, p.35.
creasing number of removals. In 1871 Buller spoke of there being six hundred Sunday School scholars in the circuit, and two schools were begun that year at Coromandel. The Grahamstown building became too small, the Tararu Sunday School, founded in 1870, had almost one hundred scholars three years later, and that at Eureka had over sixty. Few churches three years after their commencement could boast of ten class leaders and nine local preachers.

The greatest difficulty was to accommodate the congregations. A year after its opening the Grahamstown church was enlarged to seat almost five hundred people. That at Shortland was fitted with comfortable seats and a communion rail and had two vestries added, but there was soon talk of providing a larger building. When Buller opened a new church at Tararu in 1872 to replace the inconvenient and inaccessible building used earlier, about two thirds of the cost of £105 was already paid. In addition, the single storeyed parsonage built on some land which Buller had obtained from the Maoris in 1868 had to be considerably enlarged to house his family. Nor did this building programme saddle the circuit with any unmanageable debt, for although £300 was owing on the parsonage, Shortland quickly paid for its alterations, and Grahamstown, by a great effort at its third anniversary, ended the debt of almost £1000 on the church there.

Money caused little real anxiety among gold-miners, Buller was

105. Thames Q.M. Minutes 12.7.70, and 3.7.72.
106. N.Z. Wesleyan, 31.5.71, p.66.
107. Ibid., 30.4.71 (on front page; leading article headed 1.5.71), p.62, (Thames Q.M. Report, 4.4.71.)
108. Ibid., 1.2.73, p.28.
111. Ibid., 29.6.72, p.93: Thames Q.M. Minutes, 5.4.72.
113. Ibid., 11.10.70, 2.10.72, and 4.10.71: N.Z. Wesleyan, 31.1.71, p.45: 2.1.73, p.13.
paid £250 a year, but he had been there a year before any credit balance appeared and only by an occasional special effort was a circuit debt avoided. As the work expanded, so did the expenses, especially when it became necessary to support a second minister. However, arrangements were early made to administer the church finances properly through a banking account, instead of leaving the money to the private care of the circuit steward, as had been customary in the early days.

After the Wesleyans had been denied the use of the Maori church at Coromandel a site was donated and money quickly collected to build a church there, for, although there were only three church members at the time, Buller expected shortly to see a separate Coromandel circuit. Nor were his dreams unfulfilled. A young English minister, W.J. Williams, was obtained for Coromandel in December 1870, a church and parsonage were soon erected, and within a year Williams gained permission to give his full time to that end of the circuit. No wonder Buller was hoping in 1871 to get another young minister, "very urgently required for this increasing and important circuit likely ere long to be second to none in the colony."

The hearty enthusiasm and exuberance of those days when eight hundred thronged the church for an anniversary, two thousand gathered for an interdenominational picnic and two hundred was "not a large attendance" at a midweek meeting, are hard to recapture. Yet all was not perfect in the Society. Buller's officials included a number of

114. Cf. Thames Q.M. Minutes, 12.7.70 - 1.4.73: N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.5.73, p. 76.
115. Thames Q.M. Minutes, 5.7.71.
116. Diary 1871, (introduction.)
118. Ibid., 30.4.72, p. 60, (Q.M. Report 5.4.72:) 31.7.72, p. 107, (Q.M. Report 3.7.72.)
120. Ibid., 31.3.71, p. 45.
121. Diary, 30.1.71: F.Y. in N.Z., p. 156.
the leading citizens of Thames - a witness to the position of the church in the community, - but after the first rush there was much coming and going among church members and, even more importantly, among local preachers and church leaders. With so shifting a population a stable church was not easily built. As the numbers under his direct care increased, Buller was justified in complaining that it was not "possible, when a minister does his best, to overtake the visiting," yet adequate pastoral oversight is essential to any strong church. It is also difficult to have to care for two churches of equal strength like Shortland and Grahamstown, and Buller did not avoid the snare, for some of his officials complained that Shortland did not get its fair share of attention.

The greatest difficulty Buller faced was a purely personal one. He and his wife had had eleven children, two of whom were buried at Tangiteroria. As the years passed the early bonds of love and tender understanding between husband and wife wore thinner as Mrs. Buller's health failed her somewhat and she seemed unable to share and sympathise with her husband in his work. Their eldest boy, James Martin, a Christian lad dearly loved by his father, had died while at school and a younger boy had been accidentally shot while playing in Christchurch. Especially after the conversion of his eldest daughter, Maryanna, Buller had turned to her with passionate longing for human sympathy and understanding. Her death in 1864 had been an overwhelming blow. After that a profound change came over him: he was more than

122. Diary, 14.1.71.
125. Family Letters, Buller to Anna; 4.1.60, 17.3.62, 21.4.62, 12.11.62, etc.
126. Ibid., Buller to Walter, 11.5.64.
ever conscious of the uncertainty of life and of the inadequacy of
human wisdom: he lived a life apart from all other men, for there was
no one on earth in whom he could confide. Eventually his faith in God
was deepened as a result of his need for divine support. Only after
these years of crisis at Thames were over was Buller able to stand
forth matured, tempered and strengthened in character by the dreadful
ordeal of mind and spirit through which he had passed. Meanwhile his
work in Christchurch, in Auckland, but especially in Thames had suffered,
and his health was seriously impaired.

His trouble was increased by the waywardness and public dis-
grace of two of his sons whom he never ceased to love and care for
even at personal sacrifice and in spite of their cruel ingratitude.
Buller had always loved his homelife, believing that a minister's
home should be a model of cleanliness and discipline, and he blamed
his own personality and his own sins for his family troubles: "I know
I have failed," he wrote, "Very seldom was there any suggestion of re-
bellion against such trials, and then God was not blamed. The Thames
parsonage, being a little way from the town, allowed Buller more unin-
terrupted time for reading and studying than he had enjoyed for years,
but for some months he was unable to make use of it, and anyway he
found his lack of early training made it difficult for him to assimilate
what he read. Preparing sermons became most difficult for he felt
unworthy to preach, and as a consequence he felt that his preaching was
not gripping the congregation as it ought. "I wonder I have kept in

127. Ibid., Buller to Walter, 16.7.64. Diary, 31.8.71.
128. N.Z. Wesleyan, 2.1.72, p. 187. (N.D.M. Report.) His extensive private
diaries were in part the result of his inability to discuss
many things with anybody else.
129. Family Letters, Buller to Anna, 21.4.62: Ibid., Buller to Walter,
27.5.64: Diary 1871, passim.
130. Family Letters, Buller to Anna, 21.4.62. "Journal of Voyage to
Adelaide," 1856-7, passim.
131. Diary, 15.3.71 and March 1871.
132. Ibid., 11.5.71 and 15.11.71.
the ministry so long," he wrote, and time and again he recurred to
the idea of retiring, partly from fear of dishonouring so high a calling.

Buller was very aware that his own spiritual sufferings were
reflected in the lack of religious enthusiasm in the church, for
while there were peace and unity manifest throughout the circuit, a
"powerful visitation of the Holy Ghost" was sadly lacking. The young
men's class meeting became ever less well attended until finally it
ceased to meet, a tragedy in the church life for which Buller blamed
his own poor leadership. Indeed few of the classes were well attended.
A similar development was, however, manifest throughout the New Zealand
church as the spiritual fire of early Methodism everywhere tended to
give way to a more placid religion, which militated against the en­
thusiasm of the class meeting or the evangelical service. This change
was most keenly felt by the older ministers who had been used to a
different spirit - and who would say they were not right?

The church was outwardly well organised, however. Among other
things a keen Wesleyan Sunday School Union of seventy three teachers
met quarterly, and the afternoon Quarterly Meetings were always
followed by a public tea meeting which provided an opportunity for
social intercourse and for informing the church members of contem­
porary events and of church needs. On Buller's removal, too, he was
especially thanked for the public lectures he had given on numerous

133. Ibid., 11.5.71 and 26.12.71.
134. Ibid., 29.12.71.
135. N.Z. Wesleyan, 31.7.72, p. 107 (Thames Q.M. Report, 3.7.72.)
supported such Unions. Ibid., 14.2.74, p.29.
137. Thames Q.M. Minutes, 1.4.73.
A lecture given in Thames on Martin Luther by W.J. Williams raised the ire of the Roman Catholics there, and when Buller followed it with another lecture, there was some disturbance of the peace of the township. A bodyguard of sturdy Protestants protected Buller and the police had to keep watch over the parsonage for one night before the affair blew over. Buller, however, felt he had done right in upholding liberty of speech and refusing to be intimidated. Perhaps this was one of the circumstances which persuaded him to become Chaplain to the Orange Lodge at Thames, for he later justified his action by saying that he would always guard freedom of conscience and individual liberty, that there was nothing in Orangeism to which a Christian could object, and that when one side has organised the other must do likewise. His influence was always exercised strongly in favour of Protestant unity, and his own congregation appreciated the firm stand taken by Buller in public matters in opposition to that which he believed was evil or against the best interests of the town.

In addition to the ordinary circuit duties, Buller had to supervise the big district of which he was chairman, and to pay frequent visits to Auckland for business or for special services. When he came to leave Thames large congregations gathered for his final services, seven hundred Sunday School scholars assembled to hear him speak and his "valedictory soirée" was crowded, and included representatives from all the Protestant churches. It was a fitting tribute, for he had done more than any other man to establish Methodism in the Thames.

140. N.Z. Wesleyan, 14.2.74, p. 29.
141. Thames Q.M. Minutes, 1.4.73.
142. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.3.73, p. 74.
The last years of Buller's active ministry form a triumphant conclusion to it, in no way confirming an old rule that a minister is unwise to return to a former circuit. Indeed, Christchurch can hardly have seemed like the same circuit, for during the past seven years, the churches north of the Waimakiriri River, those south of the city, those of St. Albans, Papanui and Shirley, and those of Lyttelton and Banks Peninsula had separated to form four new circuits. Thus only the remnant of the once extensive circuit was left, classes meeting at Durham Street, Waltham, St. James in Montreal Street, Woolston and Lincoln Road.

Under Buddle and Kirk, the two able men who had occupied the circuit since Buller's departure, the work of consolidation and development had continued apace. The membership had decreased to considerably less than three hundred as a result of the division of the circuit, but new members were being constantly added, and almost seventy were received into membership by Buller. This was in spite of the cessation of the class at St. James, and of the neglect, for a while, of that at Woolston. Although attendance at the class meetings was tending to decrease in Christchurch, as elsewhere, no class of communicant membership was instituted until after Buller had left the circuit. In spite of all this the church grew because of the earnest spirit of revival throughout the circuit. In May, 1874, interdenominational prayer meetings were held daily at noon with congregations of some sixty or seventy and, after three weeks, these were followed by a general exchange of pulpits among the non-Conformists of the town. In the

143. Christchurch Q.M. Minutes, 7.10.67.
144. Ibid., 4.10.69.
145. Ibid., 4.10.70: Lyttelton Q.M. Minute Book, introduction.
146. Cf. Christchurch Q.M. Minutes, 2.4.73, 2.7.73 and 4.1.76.
147. Ibid., 30.12.74.
fourth week, evening services and prayer meetings were held, with the result that there was renewed spiritual zeal and a new feeling of unity manifest in all the churches concerned. In the following year the Reverends J. Berry and A.R. Fitchett took part in a mission in Durham Street, with such promising results that the services were prolonged. The church was thronged with listeners, the two vestries were full of people seeking salvation and for weeks afterwards the church continued to feel the influence of the mission. Great memories of those days lived on: some remembered picnicking on the river bank on Sunday evenings in order to get to church early enough to obtain a seat; others recalled not only the outstanding preaching but also the wonderful organ extemporisation by R.T. Searell between the verses of the hymns. The Durham Street choir, large and well trained, was an additional asset to the church.

The two Sunday School rooms behind the Durham Street church had been crowded to the point of unpleasantness for some time, so in 1873, after some discussion, it was decided to build a new Sunday School at right angles to the church and in similar stone. The new building was completed and opened in April 1875 with a debt of only £200 on it, and this was wiped out by letting the building for the first year each week to a school. An organ was, with some difficulty, installed in the church in 1874.

There had been discussion for some time of the need to build a church on the East Town Belt, but Buller was not very enthusiastic because he felt that the residents of the district were not behind the project. However, J.B. Ballantyne, one of the leading laymen of Christchurch

148. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.7.74. p. 117.
149. Ibid., 1.8.75. p. 178.
150. Bruce: "The Early Days of Canterbury," pp. 148-9. Before hymn books were common each verse was read by the minister before being sung.
151. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.11.73, p. 171.
152. High St. Minutes 30.4.73 - 1.3.75: N.Z. Wesleyan 1.1.75, p. 17.
keenly forwarded the scheme and, largely through his generosity and enthusiasm, a section was bought on the corner of Worcester Street and the Belt, and the church was opened in April 1876. It was destined to be a power house for Methodism. The St. James' church, which was thought to be too near Durham Street, was shifted to Harper Street in Sydenham in 1875 and a section was bought there in Colombo Street in the following year. The Wesleyan map of Christchurch was being extended.

These changes merely illustrate the expansive energy of those days. Minister and officials were alive to any opportunity to start a new church, and they allowed nothing to stand in their way. Some of the outstanding and most prosperous business men and public leaders in Christchurch gave freely of their time, their money, their ability and their energy to further the work of God through the medium of the Durham Street Methodist Church. They played no inconsiderable part, too, in assisting such connexional ventures as the theological training institution or the Home Mission Fund.

In these circumstances finance could cause no serious anxiety. The women of the church had, by constant work over two years, prepared for a great bazaar in 1873 in aid of the new Sunday School. This realised £750, and at a second bazaar in 1874 an almost similar amount was raised. Class and ticket money had for many years been the main source of income of the Wesleyan church but after the middle of the century the New Zealand church found its support increasingly in regular church collections, although class money was still a large item

153. Christchurch Q.M. Minutes 1.10.73-6.7.75: N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.5.76, p.112.
155. e.g. Christchurch Q.M. Minutes, special meeting, 22.10.75.
156. Ibid., N.Z. Wesleyan 1.12.74, p. 230, (Canterbury D.M. Report, 1874.)
157. Ibid., 1.11.73, p. 171 and 1.10.74, p. 183.
158. Class money was a weekly contribution by class members; ticket money was a special quarterly gift by the members.
of income. This change was well illustrated in the Durham Street of these years when, in spite of a growing membership, class offerings were decreasing. While under a good preacher, like Buller, who could attract a large congregation, the Sunday collections might greatly increase and amply support the church, under a poor pulpit man they would not. Consequently, the church was left with a fluctuating and uncertain income, while a tendency appeared for the financial responsibilities of membership to be forgotten. These have been grave weaknesses in New Zealand Methodism. As early as 1875 a letter appeared in the Connexional paper showing how lamentable was the state of finance in the Christchurch circuit, for its giving had in no way increased proportionately to the increase of the circuit, (which in 1875 had taken a second married minister) nor to the development and exploitation of the province with the new public works and immigration schemes. This was blamed, however, upon the people not the minister.

While it could be shown that a surprising amount of money had been raised, the main thesis of this argument still held good. The new building programmes, the support of an extra married minister (though Buller's salary was now only £275 a year,) the furnishing and repairing of the personage, plus the old burden of ministerial removal expenses, had cost much and after his arrival Buller had arranged a special tea meeting and canvassed for donations to clear off the circuit debt of nearly £300. Perhaps, considering all this, it was creditable that the circuit debt in 1876 was only a little more than £100, but this was largely due to the generosity of a few wealthy men.

While on the one hand the expenses of a church should not be

159. In 1871, 263 members gave £260: 10:5. In 1874-5, 302 members gave £258: 18: 0.
60. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.11.75, p. 247 and 1.12.75, p. 271.
61. See Christchurch Q.N. Cash Book, 2.7.73 - 4.1.76. Note N.Z. Wesleyan 1.11.73, p. 170, where the circuit stewards appeal for all to give fairly to the church.
allowed to increase until they press heavily on the members, on the other it is a sign of weakness when all do not share fully in meeting the cost.

In 1873 it was recorded that two men offered their services to assist Buller in the work of pastoral visitation, and the Quarterly Meeting approved the idea and urged others to do likewise. Efficient lay visitation, where it has been possible, has proved to be a very valuable part of church organisation. It both reflects and produces spiritual earnestness, while overcoming the visiting problem which faces the minister of any large church. Buller wisely encouraged such offers.

In 1876 Buller asked the Conference for permission to retire, partly because he wished to visit England and partly because of his failing health. His request was reluctantly granted. The Durham Street Quarterly Meeting later placed on record its great appreciation of the Christian character and ministerial ability of the man to whose able and successful ministry the circuit was so much indebted. The esteem in which he was generally held was symbolised by the gift of two hundred and fifty gold sovereigns, contributed by his friends within and without the Wesleyan church in Christchurch, made on March 4th, 1876, when he and his wife left for England. Able as has been the succession of ministers at Durham Street, none has had a greater gift of rallying strong laymen around him, none has been more constant in seeking the unity of the Protestant churches and in insisting that the church has a part to play in community life, and none has more sincerely worked for the extension of the Kingdom of God.

162. Ibid., 1.3.76, p.58. Pastoral visitation was a duty of the leaders as well as of the ministers in Buller's opinion.
163. Ibid., 1.2.76, p.32.
164. Christchurch Q.E. Minutes, 29.12.84.
The folly of attempting to make broad generalisations about the condition of Wesleyanism throughout the colony, or about the results of one man's ministry, is apparent from the preceding study. Each circuit had its own difficulties and opportunities resulting in part from conditions extraneous to, and beyond the control of, the church, in part from the character, vision and piety of the laymen, and in part also from the policy pursued in earlier years. In those circuits where the officials and congregation were both enthusiastic in developing and propagating their religion, and where there were no questions of finance and property detracting attention from the real work of the church and turning the eyes of the church in upon itself, advancement had proved possible. Elsewhere Buller had been able to achieve comparatively little.

Each circuit had required different gifts from its minister: one required an evangelist, another needed an organiser: one wanted a fiery leader, another sought a man of God. Thus it was only natural that the minister should achieve greater success in one circuit than in another, for the greatest man does not possess every gift, and for this reason the rule of itinerancy was not always in the best interests of the church. Buller took to each circuit the same qualities of leadership, piety and Christian charity, but for the few years of his pastorate the policy pursued in the circuit, in so far as it was subject to the control and advice of the circuit officials, followed his lead only to a greater or lesser extent according to his personal prestige. His preaching and lecturing had varying influence according to the composition of his audience and the atmosphere of his church, and his personal contacts were of some importance, but how little he was able to do in most churches to determine their future growth and spirit. So much depended on the local congregation, their officials and the succeeding ministers. Yet his work had not been without reward,
for many had been converted, many had been guided along the Christian way, the circuits entrusted to his care had all been strengthened in some degree by his ministry and he had made the nebulous, but very real, contribution to his church of a sincere and earnest life.
Colossians 1.28. "When we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Reverend Fathers and Brethren, with much "pain and trembling" I approach the duty that officially devolves upon me this night. You will not, perhaps, press, in such a moment as this, the standard of the occasion. Gladly am I not at the feet of my revered Brethren, nor fill the office of a teacher to those who might instrue me. Your sympathy and what is better, still, your prayers, will be given me; and this is my belief. My head goes out into yours, that the great Father may be with us, that He may red upon us, that the motives of this time may graciously attend the word. Addressing myself, more particularly, by way of dear brethren and all of yourselves, I would remind you—
The circuit minister has a task of great importance to perform: one which requires his full time attention and ceaseless efforts. Yet as the sweep of a church broadens, there is an ever increasing number of connexional duties to be considered in the organisation and supervision of the local and missionary churches, in the administration of various funds and in the legislative functions of the District Meetings and Conferences. These demands of the ministers no ordinary gifts of leadership, of tact, and of foresight. Buller played a full part in this side of the church's activities, for he held high executive office, being for twenty years the Chairman of the district in which he resided, in 1864 President of the Australasian Conference, and in 1875 President of the second New Zealand Conference. In addition, the strong lead which he gave the church had a very definite, if not easily calculable part in shaping the Methodist Church of New Zealand as it stands today.

His first appointment to the office of Chairman was made in the face of some jealous opposition, but very shortly he was being complimented by his brethren in Australia on his wise and business-like correspondence and on the good reports of his work which they had received. His years of office were not without their difficulties and disappointments, but on the whole they were happy. Almost every year from 1855 until the New Zealand Conference of 1874, Buller represented his district at the Australasian Conference in January. Considering that he was one of the worst of sailors, this meant no small sacrifice.

1. 1855-1866, 1873-5 Chairman of the Southern District, 1866-73.
   Chairman of the Northern District.
2. Letters of Buddle to Buller, 16.4.56.
3. W.H. Letters, etc. Boyce to Buller, 1.5.56.
4. "Letters-Lectures 1835-1869," (henceforth "Lectures") D.M.
   Speech 1866. (Fragment only, so the date uncertain.)
especially on the few occasions when, through the delays of travelling by sailing ship, the Conference was almost over before the New Zealand delegation could arrive. Although the distance prevented more than twenty or thirty from attending these Conferences, they provided a valuable opportunity for those present to gain a broad vision of the church work, to receive inspiration from the contact with brethren from Australia and the South Sea Islands and to meet other church leaders. These long absences meant that Buller's church was left either without a minister or with only a supply, but his habit of giving a full account of the Conference on his return not only gave his congregation a wide and intelligent view of the connexion, but also gained their support in implementing the Conference policy.

Some of the questions facing the young New Zealand church deserve consideration, and among the first was the matter of colonisation. In later years, Buller earnestly refuted the current belief that the missionaries had opposed colonisation as such, but there can be no doubt that most greatly feared the evils associated with it, and strenuously opposed irregular or irresponsible colonisation, or any schemes of private colonisation such as were propounded by the New Zealand Association. "A colony founded upon such principles must terminate in the entire subjugation of the New Zealanders to a state of servitude and slavery to the new proprietors of their country, and would lead to their extinction," in the opinion of the Missionary Society. Considering primarily the welfare of the natives, the missionaries were forced by the growth of lawlessness in the land to admit

6. Wellington Q.M. Minutes, 16.4.55 and 8.4.57.
the need for some strong central government although at first they did not favour complete British sovereignty and feared the introduction of British troops. Their support for the Treaty of Waitangi was undoubted.

Buller, however, unlike most of his brethren, had great faith in the future of New Zealand and consequently was an active supporter of colonisation, "(which) I ever regarded as being in the order of God's providence and therefore right," he wrote. His later writings develop the implicit idea that, since the Maoris could not have adequately developed the country, it was the divinely appointed privilege and duty of the Anglo-Saxon race to do so. He loved to draw a comparison between England and New Zealand and to visualise the time when the infant colony would be the Britain of the Southern Hemisphere. While realising and regretting the evils consequent upon European settlement, he regarded them largely as an opportunity and a challenge. Christianity which alone had made colonisation possible, must now strive to raise the Maori to an equality with the European. Thus Buller's attitude was more positive in relation to this question than that of his brethren, who were less optimistic regarding the country's future, and more fearful of the results of European intervention. Certainly British colonisation of New Zealand was inevitable, but it did grievously

9. Secs., to Chairman, 2.9.39: Woon to Secs., 24.6.39. Hobbs to Secs., 26.1.41, summarises the argument by saying that however much blood might be shed between the races after British intervention, more would have been shed without it.
13. Compare, Turner to Secs., 20.11.38, and Buller, "Among the Maoris."
14. Inevitable, that is, considering the immediate circumstances of the period. To apply the term more generally would suggest historical fatalism.
effect the Christian mission to the Maoris.

The financial difficulties which had early confronted the Mission did not disappear with the establishment of European churches in the country. In part this was because the Wesleyan Church attracted rather the poorer class who had emigrated in the hope of better things, and who were particularly susceptible to commercial depressions, than the wealthier sections of the population. In addition, the older Wesleyan churches of England and Australia lacked sufficient money greatly to assist the New Zealand church, and what funds were available were administered by a mission committee somewhat unsympathetic with New Zealand demands.

In 1854 it was proposed to decrease the annual grant to £3000, although as a result it might be necessary to reduce the New Zealand staff, in spite of the rapid settlement of the country; and the expense of the New Zealand Mission continued to displease Australia for many years. "Some of our preachers and people are most opposed to these grants from the Mission Fund on principle," Buller was told when he sought help for struggling Wellington. It was feared that generosity would produce neither economy nor independence in New Zealand but, by going to the opposite extreme, extension work was hindered, for a new church can seldom be self-supporting at first. When in 1854 Canterbury requested the mission committee to make it a final grant of £2500 on promising to maintain and extend the work, it was decided to invest £2000 of the grant as a nucleus for a Wesleyan Church Sustentation and Extension Fund to be built up by regular contributions from the various churches. Such a statesmanlike policy would secure to the

15. Letters of Bulkle to Buller, 6.9.54.
16. Ibid., 11.8.58.
17. W.M. Letters etc., Boyce to Buller, 1.5.56.
18. S.S. Minutes, Buller to President of Conference, 21.11.61.
110.

District a fund for extension work administered by men cognisant of, and sympathetic with, the needs of the area. In 1865 an engagement was made with the Conference by which the grant to New Zealand was to be annually reduced until in 1869 it would cease altogether. Earnest pleas for dependent circuits to support themselves and for the larger circuits to contribute more were made, but it proved almost impossible adequately to sustain and extend the work without aid, and this constant poverty of the church had widespread, if indirect, repercussions.

First in the sphere of education. Before there were any schemes of state education, the Wesleyans established several schools. Wesley College in Auckland provided for several years almost the only liberal education available in the colony, but after 1856, as other schools were founded and various ministers shifted away, the first prosperity disappeared, until finally the original proprietors - all Wesleyan ministers - gave the college and the grounds to the Connexion. Having received no interest, they now forfeited the principal also. A Maori boarding school, such as Buller had long wanted, had been opened at Three Kings in Auckland in 1848 and in the next year there were about one hundred and fifty scholars. At first the school was so successful that Buller wrote: "Nothing could be so hopeful for the future prospects of the New Zealand youth as the multiplication of such schools as is now to be seen at Three Kings," but as missionary work declined and the natives grew impatient with education, the school ceased to function.

In the meantime, however, the enthusiasm of Governor Grey and the success of Three Kings had persuaded the church to establish other

20. Lectures, Buller to ministers, 2.1.67, (circular.)
23. Lawry to Secs., 7.4.68, and 14.4.69.
24. Buller to Secs., 27.11.51.
schools, largely by means of government grants. Nothing was done
about the property granted at Wellington until in 1865 it was recommended
that the Provincial Government be allowed to buy it, and suggested
that the money be invested for educational purposes. Eight
years later Buller suggested it be used to assist in training native
ministers. At Kai Iwi, near Wanganui, better results were obtained,
but, unfortunately, the school there was barely established before the
Maori Wars ended the venture. Buller and the Southern District Meeting
had had much to do with both these undertakings.

Thus the Wesleyan boarding schools, none of which had been establish-
ed from church funds, had all failed by 1861, although day schools
still existed in certain towns where there were no other educational
facilities. Buller himself believed education to be the "God-given
duty" of the state, believing that it cost less to educate well in
youth than to reform in manhood. To any denominational method, whether
supported by State grants or not, he was unquestionably opposed, believing
it to be inimical to the best interests of education, wasteful, and
productive only of increased sectarian bigotry and of Papal and High
Church supremacy. He supported so-called "secular" education during
the discussions of 1871, although favouring the teaching of the common
bases of Christianity in the school, but only by those qualified to teach
them. Thus in Wellington for instance, he opposed the creation of
Wesleyan day schools after the Government began to consider the question.

25. W.M. Letters, Whitely etc., to Lawry etc., 17.11.53: Sir George
      Grey to Lawry, 13.5.53.
26. ante, p. 76: S.S. Minutes, S.D.M. 1865.
27. N.Z. Wesleyan, 13.76, p. 79.
29. Lectures, "My Trip to Sydney and Melbourne" etc., 17.2.68.
30. Ibid., "Notes for Speech at Education Meeting."
31. Ibid.: N.Z. Wesleyan, 30.3.72, p. 42: S, and A. Pitt St., 3.3.69:
      Lectures, "My Trip to Sydney and Melbourne" etc., 17.2.68.
32. N.Z. Wesleyan, 31.5.72, p. 74.
On the one hand Wesleyan Methodism lacked the financial resources to establish its own schools, but on the other such influential church leaders as Buller used all their influence against denominational education. The ultimate wisdom of their decision is very questionable for the lack of church schools has undoubtedly been disadvantageous to the Methodist in comparison with the Presbyterian, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches of New Zealand; while the Methodist schools and colleges of Australia have proved a strength to the church and to Protestantism generally.

Secondly, it proved almost impossible to staff the New Zealand church adequately, for ministers could only be sent to places which could pay them, although the salaries offered were very small. However, there was also a real difficulty in obtaining ministers at all. Not for many years was there any number of New Zealand candidates and Australia could barely supply itself, so that help had still to be sought from England. Buller, undeterred by a somewhat unsympathetic conference and by financial difficulties, and spurred on by his faith in the future of New Zealand and in the divine mission of Wesleyan Methodism, played no small part in securing an adequate and able staff for the church. As his District Meeting said in 1856, without more men the Maoris could not be properly cared for, nor the older ministers replaced, nor the tide in the affairs of the church be taken at the flood. Certainly Buller seemed expert at getting as many men as possible for his own district.

In order to expedite the immigration of ministers, the circuits began forwarding the £60 passage money to England and Buller sent several such drafts from Auckland and Thames. Every District Meeting

34. Cf. Letters of Buller to Buller, 7.3.62 and 28.11.66. Buller was almost jealous.
35. Buller to Osborne, 11.4.67. Letters etc., Buller to Osborne, 1.4.70.
made urgent requests for men, even after the 1871 Conference insisted that all requests be made to England through the President of Conference - a condition which Buller considered most harsh. Buller wrote personally to invite some young men to come, and gained permission to look for suitable candidates while in England. He constantly emphasised that only able and efficient men were of any use, for the "intelligent, sharp-witted and practical colonists" would not tolerate an inferior minister. Some of the best men ever to enter the New Zealand ministry were among those who came. At the same time Buller and others used all their influence to secure a native ministry in New Zealand, looking to it to rebuild the native church.

As more candidates became available in New Zealand, the question of training became acute. At first Buller strongly endorsed the requirement that the ministers should learn the Maori language, it even being suggested that they begin work on a mission station. Then in 1872 the Southern District Meeting questioned the want of system in selecting candidates. They advocated a medical examination and later Buller was one of several who suggested the need for some definite standard to be required of applicants. The value of this is undoubted and both suggestions have been subsequently adopted. The need for special theological instruction had been early recognised, perhaps especially by such as Buller, who regretted their own lack of training. His District Meeting in 1862 urged the desirability of establishing some college, but at the time a joint Australasian institution in

36. Diary, 24.2.71: N.Z. Wesleyan, 29.2.72, p.23 and 14.2.74, p.29.
37. Letters etc., Buller to Hartley, 1.4.70: N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.3.76, p.55
38. "     "    " 1.2.70: Buller to Osborne 11.4.67.
39. e.g. F.W. Isitt and W.J. Williams.
42. N.Z. Wesleyan, 13.2.75, p.28.
Australia was being considered. Yet nothing was done and the candidates were still thrust into circuit work to learn from experience. Buller's District Meetings forwarded several proposals, that in Auckland in 1872 seeking the establishment of a college near that city. The 1876 Conference finally passed a motion, with Buller's support, to re-open Three Kings for Kaori students and to place the candidates under the supervision of the Principal there. A trained ministry is a source of strength to any church so that, although very little had been really achieved, it was noteworthy that the matter had been kept open and church opinion educated towards some definite action.

Thirdly, the lack of financial resources severely limited the expansion of the church during these critical years, as events in Wellington and Auckland had, in part, shown, yet Buller achieved much. In the first place he believed it wise to secure land - and plenty of land - in every new township while it was available and was being sold at upset prices. As a result of this far-sighted policy valuable properties were secured for the church in many areas. He also opposed any over-hasty selling of church land of potential value. Had this policy been followed, Methodism might have been better endowed today and more firmly established in certain of the more recent towns and suburbs.

In the second place Buller was instrumental in beginning or reviving several important Wesleyan churches. The Wesleyans had introduced Christianity to Otago in 1840 and had an honourable record before their minister was withdrawn in 1858 on the ground that the native work was vanishing, while the Europeans were well cared for.

45. Ibid., 1.2.76, p. 35: Marley, op. cit., p. 279.
46. S.S. Minutes, S.D.M. 1862.
47. e.g. Ashburton (N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.12.73, p. 186,) Greytown, Masterton, Napier (W.D.M.B., S.D.M. 1857,) etc.
48. e.g. in Napier and H. Wairoa (N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.3.76, p. 55, p. 56.)
The following District Meeting suggested that Buller visit the area with a view to re-establishing the work, but nothing was done until the gold rush of 1861 brought many Wesleyans to the diggings, and the matter became urgent. In January 1862 Buller visited Dunedin and the gold fields, receiving an enthusiastic welcome in both places. A public meeting in Dunedin made arrangements for building a church, several church members were enrolled, the natives at the Heads were visited, and Buller was able to announce that a minister would arrive shortly. Best of all, he enjoyed the help and sympathy of the Presbyterian Church throughout. Two years later he was able to visit Invercargill before its minister came, and by preaching and lecturing to encourage the young church.

About the same time the township of Timaru began to develop and it became imperative for a Wesleyan church to be started there. Buller, therefore, visited the place in 1865, preaching on the Sunday of his visit and inspecting the district. As a consequence he secured a ministerial immigrant, J.B. Richardson, for the circuit. Camarau, pioneered from Dunedin, was recommended as a circuit at the 1864 District Meeting, and monthly services were begun in Ashburton ten years later, so that Buller played an important part in the history of South Canterbury Methodism.

Gold mining also caused the quick opening up of the West Coast, and there Buller was the first Protestant to preach. His journey on horse-back to the Coast was adventurous, and his first "church" somewhat unusual, but he was able to place the third Christchurch minister

54. The South Canterbury Methodist District reaches from Bakaia to Camarau.
In Hoki tika until it became a separate circuit in 1866.

In the North Island, which had been settled earlier than the South, Buller found fewer opportunities to expand the work. However, he was able to pioneer the work at Thames, and after the Maori Wars he visited the "Waikato several times and helped to re-establish the church there, although once a minister was stationed in any area Buller was quick to withdraw and to allow him to follow his own policy.

On the one hand, Buller had had unique opportunities to extend and re-establish Methodism; on the other, the church was extremely fortunate in having a man of exceptional faith and energy, an apostle of expansion, in a key executive position during these years.

Another part of his duty as chairman was to visit around his district. In Otago, Timaru, Hoki tika and the Waikato his visit was a prelude to the commencement of a Wesleyen church; in Nelson, where there was some dispute over the use of fermented wines at the Communion Service, it was to restore peace; in a host of places it was to open a church or to conduct an anniversary service. In 1867, and again in 1869, however, by his visits to the northern mission stations he was able to take to the isolated missionaries some of the inspiration of an experienced and sympathetic visitor. He was greatly grieved at the change in the Maoris, whose intemperance, indifference to religion and thriftlessness showed a general falling away from Christianity.

Only in a few areas were a devoted few to be found. Among other things, he encouraged the Maoris to do more to support their own missionary, but he returned convinced of the need to reorganise the Maori work and to build up the northern mission.

57. S.S. Minutes, Innes to Buller, 10.4.62: Diary, 1.8.62 - 7.8.62.
58. Buller, "Visit to Kaipara:" "Notes of a Journey to Hokianga:"
As Chairman of the District Buller had journeyed extensively, but when he became President of Conference his travels were even greater. Such visits did much to link the church together, for the people were introduced to a church leader who brought them his broad outlook and wide knowledge of church affairs over a large area, and Buller gained a personal knowledge of the country and of the needs of individual Wesleyan churches. This experience enabled him to advise wisely on general church problems.

Fourthly, the poverty of Methodism proved almost fatal to its Maori mission. Even the years preceding the wars were difficult ones for both Anglican and Wesleyan Missions, some of the Church missionaries speaking of withdrawal, since the natives had lost their first love and were becoming increasingly worldly-minded. The Wesleyans regretted the great temptations facing the native Christians and leading many to fall, but they drew a conclusion earlier drawn by Buller, that the Mission must continue to grow in order to counteract the evils of colonisation, and to sanctify its advantages. Yet, in fact, the Maori work was declining. The missionaries had realised from the first that few natives had been thoroughly converted, for in Buller's words "a heathen people require two conversions - first of the judgment, then of the heart," and the missionaries had not had time to achieve so much. Undoubtedly great advances had been made and an inner circle were truly spiritually minded, but colonisation and commerce had followed the missionary too closely. By both precept and example the traders and settlers had undermined the mission work, and bewildered

59. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.4.75., p. 73.
62. Buller, "Missionary Speech 1877."
the natives and a similar result had followed from the rivalry of Anglican, Roman Catholic and Wesleyan missionaries. The early Wesleyan missionaries, ignorant of the European ministry, had tended to insist upon the importance of the native work, but by about the eighteen fifties the emphasis had entirely changed. Thus, during these critical years, the Wesleyan church actually withdrew men from the Maori to the European work and the European circuits, which were struggling to support their minister, objected to his "wasting" time on the Maoris. While the Missions of other churches were sustained by large grants from overseas, the Wesleyan Mission suffered more than the European churches from the inadequacy of the mission grants. Political agitations and wars were just the last straw, for the Maori tended to associate missionary and government and to repudiate both.

When fresh advances became possible after the wars, the Home Mission funds of the New Zealand church were divided among the separate districts, so that the Northern District was left to carry, almost unaided, the crippling burden of reinstating the northern mission. Buller became one of the leaders in a movement to reorganise the mission, his District Meeting took time to consider the matter, and he sought to impress the Conference with the need to help the Maori work and with the difficulty of maintaining the promise that New Zealand would, unaided, support the mission. Yet the Australasian Conference remained unyielding, and Buller felt very keenly their lack of sympathy for the New Zealand position. The union of the foreign and home mission funds was allowed, but later attempts to

64. Letters of Biddle to Buller, 16.4.56.
65. Buller, "Among the Maoris."
66. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.7.73, p. 98 and p. 102.
68. Diary, 24.2.71.
decrease the foreign mission quota of the money were almost in vain. At last, in 1875, a central home mission fund for the colony was established so that the burden was fairly distributed but, in the meantime, had it not been for the income from lands held in trust for the Maori, the mission must have been abandoned and the results of lack of money during a critical period are still apparent. Certainly Buller's own circuits had always contributed generously.

As the prospects of the Maori mission brightened and a reaction towards Christianity set in, it was important for the Wesleyan church that it had men like Buller and Buddle, who understood and were sympathetic with the Maori race, to reinstate the mission after the wars, to lead a movement to interest the European churches in the Maori mission, and to stop the policy of gradual relinquishment which had earlier been apparent.

By this time other important issues were facing the church. It was becoming increasingly obvious that the Australasian Conference was not cognisant enough of New Zealand needs to legislate in the best interests of Methodism here, and while certain matters-connexionals funds, ministerial examinations, home missions, etc. - required central administration in New Zealand this was impossible until New Zealand had its own central authority. Without this the church was unable to develop and adapt itself to changing circumstances. Some even maintained that a New Zealand Conference would save time and expense, and it would certainly give the laymen an opportunity to share in church government, increase the connexional spirit in the church, and give all the ministers the opportunities and privileges of conference associations. No time could be more opportune for the change than the

69. N.Z. Wesleyan, 29.2.72, p. 23: 1.7.75, p. 146. One third was given to foreign missions.
70. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.2.76, p. 28: 30.11.72., p. 169.
early eighteen seventies, Buller and others argued, while some senior men yet remained to guide the transition, and while the country was beginning to leap ahead after the war.

Conservative opinion feared what might result from any change in the established constitution of the church, and felt the time to be inopportune. Strangely enough in the Northern District alone were the conservatives in the majority but Buller, who at first opposed any alteration, changed his opinion, especially after the 1871 Conference had so neglected New Zealand interests. Indeed he became the first to put forth any definite plan of separation, suggesting affiliation with the English Conference while retaining certain connections with Australia. Buddle strongly opposed this, believing it to be logically weak and practically difficult, and desiring to leave the actual plan of separation to England and to make only the moderate demand of affiliation to Australia. In the Northern District Meeting Buller and Crump had alone to defend separation against a strong opposition including Hobbs, Wallis, Warren and Henry Lawry, but the matter was taken to Conference by other Districts of Australia and New Zealand, and it was agreed to divide the Australasian Conference into three parts, each of which would hold an annual Conference, with a general conference to be held triennially.

This was an important and valuable transitional step to complete separation and allowed New Zealand affairs to be dealt with by a conference cognisant of, and interested in improving the New Zealand church. The matter also differentiates the conservatism of Buller and Buddle who

72. N.Z. Wesleyan, 2.1.72, p. 187.
73. Diary 5.4.71.
74. Buller to Buller, 20.9.70 (It seems probable that this date was a misprint for 20.9.71.)
75. N.Z. Wesleyan, 29.2.72, pp. 26-28: 30.3.72, p.40. For other suggested schemes see Quick, "Colonial Conferences."
were prepared to alter and adapt institutions in order to conserve the best interests of Methodism, from that of the older brethren who had age's fear of change. It was fitting that Buller, as the last New Zealand ex-President of the Australasian Conference, should preside at the first New Zealand Conference in 1874 and have the privilege of saying: "I now declare this Conference to be duly and legally constituted."

Buller also keenly supported the movement to admit lay representatives to the conference, possibly in part because of his association with such outstanding laymen as those of Christchurch. Although he believed ministers to be more than just "hirelings and 'speaking brethren,'" his District Meeting was in favour of allowing the laymen equal representation and almost equal speaking and voting rights in conference with the ministers. This "radical" attitude of New Zealand was defeated at the General Conference of 1875 but, in view of the large contribution always made by laymen to the Wesleyan church, it was fitting that the doors of conference should be opened to them even although at first they were not opened as widely as New Zealand had wanted. Buller had earlier moved that the public be admitted to certain conference sessions, so gradually a more democratic flavour was being added to colonial Methodism.

The difficulty which Buller had experienced in maintaining interest in class meetings was one common to other New Zealand, and indeed to English Wesleyan churches. The classes had proved invaluable as a means of teaching religious truths; of developing deep piety and

76. N.Z. Wesleyan, 14.2.74, p.21.
77. This was the only issue on which he voted at the English Conference of 1876. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.11.76, p. 249.
78. Ibid., 1.7.75, p. 148.
79. " , 1.12.73, p.187.
80. " , 1.3.73, p.57.
81. " , 1.6.77, p.133 : 1.10.78, p.224.
a habit of self-examination; of conserving the true interests of
the church; of supervising church members; and of meeting a social
need, but other attractions and a new and less introspective attitude
to life seemed after 1850 to be undermining them. Suggestions for
improvement met with much conservative opposition, and no real answer
was given to the central question of providing some spiritual nurture
for the souls of men. Without that the church would die, for the
reason of its existence would have vanished, but by gradually changing
to communicancy as the basis of church membership, this question was
in part by-passed.

Buller believed that a Christian minister should, while stand-
ing entirely aloof from all party connections, take a firm stand in
the community on the side of right, of morality and of education.
Warily fearing to be implicated in the bitter colonial party squabbles,
he refused either to enrol or to vote at elections. His advice to
Christian voters was that usually given by his church: "It is the duty
of the Christian to seek the 'peace of the city' by giving his support
to those who, by their talents and character, he believes to be most
worthy of the public trust"—in other words, vote for the person, not
for the programme. He was a true patriot and a sincere lover of his
country. He was for a time on the governing bodies of Nelson and
Canterbury Colleges and his experience with the Maoris and knowledge
of their customs and ways of thought were always at the service of
the Government. During the wars he aided by moral influence in calm-
ing the tribes in his area, he was one of those who advised the Govern-
ment concerning the administration of native affairs in 1856.

83. Diary, 1811.69.
85. Schofield, op. cit., p. 118. Cf. von Haast, "Life and Times of
86. W.H. Letters etc., the Governor to Buller, 30.6.58.
and he promised in the same year to contribute to the "Maori Messenger." His loyalty to the Government and willingness to help it were consistent with the general policy of his church, although he was perhaps more interested in public affairs than many of his brethren.

The Wesleyan church has been built around the pulpit, and the preaching work of its ministry is of great importance. Both the letters and sermons of Buller show his intimate acquaintance with every page of the Bible. He believed that a Christian minister could have only one subject, Jesus Christ, and that wide reading, deep thinking and constant studying were necessary to enable the message of Christ to be related to the broad field of human knowledge and need. Disciplining himself in youth to separate his sermons into clear, concise and definite headings, he later developed a flowing, yet logical style, while the depth of his sermons increased as his own spiritual experience was deepened. Essentially he was an evangelical preacher, realising most intensely his responsibility for the eternal well-being of his congregation and striving to bring them to make some decision for Christ, but he sought also to instruct his congregation in the duties and responsibilities of discipleship and in the bases of Methodism. Written in simple language, adorned with few illustrations or elaborate figures of speech, these sermons yet breathe an air of such fervent sincerity that they still retain some of the power which filled his church and converted many.

His ideal minister was a priest only as all Christians form a priesthood of believers: he was called of God, obedient only to Him, and dependent upon the favour of no man. Having a personal duty to

87. Ibid., Native Secretary to Buller, 20.8.56.
guard his own physical, mental and spiritual well-being, he had, too, a public duty to preach and to visit, to "speak, rebuke, and exhort with all authority." In connexional work he must be empty of worldly ambitions, careful in making changes, and always frank with his church officials - a strange mixture of the ideal and the practical.

The public lecture which was popular in the days before the cinema and radio allowed Buller to influence a much larger group of people than his own congregation, and to speak on subjects ranging from "A Century Ago" to "Our Young Men:" from "Commercial Morality" to "Our New Zealand Home" - subjects not suitable for the pulpit. This form of entertainment, with its appeal to reason and its outline of ideals and ideas usually unmentioned in more recent times, must have had considerable influence on those attending.

In the early days of the New Zealand missions the Anglicans and Wesleyans had laboured as brothers, but rivalry over mission boundaries - only partly solved by the signed agreement of October 1838 - differing land policies, and disputes over stationing, all helped to embitter feeling. Even before Bishop Selwyn introduced his High Church doctrines of the Apostolic Succession and Puseyite views became widespread, the Wesleyans had felt that their presence in the land was resented.

Co-operation even in translating and

89. N.Z. Wesleyan, 2.3.74, p. 37; 30.4.71, p.54: Conference sermon 1864.
91. Turner to Secs., 22.11.38: W.M. Letters etc., Whitely to Haunsell, 6.7.40.
92. Wesleyan missionaries were forbidden to buy land, Church missionaries were not.
94. e.g. Wallis to Secs., 16.1.44, etc.: Cf. Buller to Secs., 21.11.43: Letters and Journals of the Rev. John Morgan, Vol. 1, p.204, Morgan, 11.3.46, etc.
printing became impossible. Possibly because he was less concerned in this than most of his brethren, Buller remained friendly with the Anglican missionaries, and his letters are free from the antagonistic tone only too often present in theirs. Of Henry Williams Buller spoke in very high terms, and while sincerely regretting the harm done by Selwyn in his first few years in the colony, he not only respected his zeal and character but believed him to have later adopted a more moderate attitude. At Bishop Selwyn's farewell meeting in Auckland Buller was asked to speak, and when several dignitaries of the Mother Church attended the second anniversary of the Pitt Street Church, it seemed that at last brotherly love was beginning to prevail. Yet, however much Buller regretted it, he found it almost impossible in his European ministry to gain the co-operation of the Church of England.

He also favoured co-operation with the other Protestant churches and such gatherings as the interdenominational picnics at Thames or the joint revival meetings in Christchurch were a great success. It proved indeed to be "always pleasant and profitable to testify our substantial unity of faith and practice, notwithstanding our circumstantial differences of polity." His desire for Christian unity was the result of his firm belief in the oneness of a Protestant Christendom necessarily divided by liberty of thought and conscience among many churches, of which the Wesleyan church was by no means least. His first thought was to carry the Gospel where it was most needed, not to push denominational rivalries. However, when the Anglican "Church News" began to advance High Church views

96. Ibid., pp. 307-313: Buller, "Among the Maoris."
98. He was content to leave Otago to the Presbyterians 1859-60, and to
of the Apostolic Succession, Buller immediately rushed to the defence of the divinely called Wesleyan ministry, and regretted that such a "figment" should so really divide the two churches. Buller, then, was an apostle of unity among the Christian churches, while believing that each denomination should carry out to the full its God-given task, for he would have refuted the argument, often considered axiomatic, that co-operation results only from the weakening of denominational distinctness. It is such a policy as he desired which has been largely achieved today.

When Buller was elected President of the second New Zealand Conference in 1875, he was already feeling his age. As he rose to address his brethren his thoughts naturally turned to the years which had gone, and he saw again those first small District Meetings at Mangungu, the first Australasian Conference which he attended, and now the New Zealand Church that was able to stand alone. He exhorted his brethren to follow in the footsteps of the pioneers whom he had known, proud of their church and her tradition yet remembering that "with all true Protestants we are one." The Conference had met to survey the state of the church "financially, statistically and spiritually," and must as far as possible provide for the growing spiritual wants of this rapidly rising colony." In concluding Buller stressed the need to train the ministry carefully and implored his brethren to "covet earnestly the best gifts." "In all our discussions let us 'set the Lord always before us,' let us 'live as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous' .... (and) 'let all things be done decently and in order.'" Without intending it, he had spoken a fitting summary of his own ministerial work.

rejoice when the Anglicans entered fields for which his church could not care. (N.Z. Wesleyan, 30.11.72, p.169.)

CHAPTER V.

Conclusion:

In March 1876 Buller, accompanied by his wife and youngest daughter, left New Zealand on the ship "Waimate" and, after a good trip via Cape Horn, reached England twelve weeks later. The voyage having provided an excellent opportunity for church worship and for lectures, Buller hoped that some good had been done among both sailors and passengers.

In England Buller sought to act as an unofficial ambassador of goodwill between the mother country and the colony. By his books, by public lectures and private conversations, and by representing New Zealand at the British Wesleyan Conferences, he tried to create an intelligent interest in it among the British people. During his absence he wrote regular letters to be published in the Church paper in New Zealand and by this means, by private letters and by lectures after his return, he kept his friends posted on events in England. He found great inspiration in a British Conference of six hundred Wesleyan brethren and he was able to write home of the leaders of British Methodism, of their attitude to some of the great questions facing the church, and of the undeparted glory of Wesleyan Methodism as he saw it. Although his health forbade too much public speaking, he enjoyed the experience of addressing audiences all over England and in Ireland — where he was sent as a missionary deputation — telling them of New Zealand and trying to fan the flames of missionary enthusiasm.

When the British Conference answered his pleas for young men for the New Zealand Church by saying, "we have none to spare," Buller persuaded more than a dozen young men to emigrate with the intention

1. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.4.76, p.84.
2. Ibid., 1.9.76, p.203.
3. Ibid., 1.10.76, p.234 and p.231: 1.11.77, p.245: 1.11.78,p.246: 1.11.79, p.245.
4. Ibid., 1.8.77, p. 174: 5.2.77, p.34.
of entering the ministry in New Zealand on their arrival. Prospective emigrants of all ranks and professions besieged him with letters and visits, and he considered his experience to be a trust for their guidance. Very humbly he sought to guide them wisely without trying to persuade: urging them to act cautiously and always to remember that true godliness was the prime condition of success. It was unfortunate that many who did emigrate were hard hit by the depression of the 1880's.

From the first Buller had pined for the bright skies and lifelong ties of New Zealand and, although he sometimes wondered why he should return unless the church had work for him to do, yet his heart was in the South. He returned towards the end of 1880, and established his home in Christchurch, taking an active part in the church there and lecturing on England far and wide. Then in April, 1881 the "Taraewing" was wrecked on the Otiro reef, and among many others, some members of the New Zealand deputation to the Australasian Conference were drowned. Buller took the lead in Christchurch in making arrangements to help the bereaved and to continue the church work. He himself undertook the care of the St. Albans church, whose minister had been lost, and one official later said that he had never heard Buller preach with more tenderness, fidelity and power. The Quarterly Meetings recorded both an increase in membership and a substantial credit balance under his ministry.

Although Buller's fire yet remained, his health had been failing for some years, and during the remainder of his life he grew progress-

5. Among this group were such outstanding men as J.T. Pinfold, F. Baumber, T.G. Brooke, S. Griffith.
7. Ibid., 5,2,77, p.34: 5,12,79, p.269: Diary, 18,6,79.
8. E.g. in South Canterbury. N.Z. Wesleyan, 2,5,81, p. 103.
9. Ibid., 6,2,82, p.30.
10. Ibid., 1,10,81, p.235: 2,1,82, p.17.
ively weaker and suffered great pain. Enforced idleness and constant
clothing were trying to a man of his energy who talked almost to the
end of again taking up the work he loved. He died quietly in November
1884, followed very shortly afterwards by "kind and hospitable" Mrs.
Buller, who had nursed her husband throughout.

Buller had come to be considered one of the "Fathers" of
"Wesleyan Methodism in New Zealand and the general honour in which he
was held is apparent in many references. On his first visit to the
Conference of 1882 the whole assembly rose with acclamation to welcome
him - an unusual tribute to be compared only with that paid to
"Father" Budde on his retirement the same year. The years
of their active ministry had linked the young European church with the
Wesleyan Mission to the Maoris end with the great names of the
past. They had come to personify the pietist, vigour and vision
of Wesleyan Methodism at its best.

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One newspaper announced the death of "one of the most popular
clergyman in New Zealand," James Buller, although no one had ever been
more careless of popularity. He sought only one goal in life: to
follow and serve the Lord even more fully and thus to make his "calling
and election sure." Not only those who knew him, but the tone of
his private diaries and ordinary letters, witness to the sincerity and
humility with which he served his God, no matter what the difficulties,
sorrows, or even successes of his life. Constant tribute was paid by
his colleagues to his kind and courteous bearing in both public and
private life, to the Christian gentlemanliness with which he chaired

11. Diary 14.5.79; Diary 1883 passim: N.Z. Wesleyan, 15.11.84, p.124.
13. Ibid., 6.2.82, p.27 and p.38.
14. Waikato Times, 14.11.84.
16. N.Z. Wesleyan, 1.2.76, p.57: 1.12.75, p.274, etc.; E. S. Minutes, 3.3.1855.
meetings and dealt with outside organisations, to the wise foresight and untiring zeal which marked his work, to his efficiency, and withal to his humble attention to duty.

Truly converted in his youth, Buller had always been of forthright character and pleasant disposition. His time at Tangiterroria had developed in the young missionary qualities of self-reliance and disciplined leadership, for these were essential in dealing with the Maoris; and the tact and patience needed in handling men like Tirarau proved invaluable in later years. Buller formed in the seclusion of his station those habits of regular study, of quiet prayer, of careful sermon preparation and of disciplined devotion, which alone could assure a sustained and useful ministry, and by 1855 he had become skilled in managing men and in organising his time in order to get the most into it. The disappointments and sorrows of his later years drove him to depend on God alone for the strength to continue his work.

His beliefs in part explain his character, and certainly as a result of his strong personality they became of importance in explaining his work and influence. Let us briefly summarise these. Buller believed that God had sent His Son to redeem the world for its sins, that each individual could, though Christ, have a part in this salvation, and that those who refused it were eternally damned. This belief, taught him as a child, accepted by him at his conversion, and acted upon through all the vicissitudes of his life, was the mainspring of his life and teaching. Whether he was justified in believing such a doctrine is beside the point: certainly the strength, and purpose and drive of his whole ministry lay in the fact that he had a fixed principle by which to live, and that hesitancy, indecision.
and doubt were to him unknown. Life was full of meaning, even if, at times, that meaning was hard to discover. His personal piety was undoubted and his high ideals of personal conduct, of diligence, of unselfishness and of moral uprightness were possibly so exacting as in part to explain the wildness of some of his children. He accepted the Bible as the Word of God, and all faithful believers in Jesus Christ as members of the Christian Church. He sincerely believed that "righteousness exalteth a nation" and it was his desire to see the New Zealand which he so much loved a God-fearing and righteous people, which moved him at times publicly to rebuke wickedness in high places, and which made him energetic in church expansion and anxious for the purity of character and efficient training of the New Zealand ministry.

In the church Buller was always found on the side of efficiency and development, conservative in making changes until he was convinced that they were for the good of the church, and then their strongest advocate. Impatient of niggling hindrances and with boundless faith, he led his church on toward daring ventures: when many saw only difficulties and dangers, Buller-and Bullock—saw only the need, and left the rest to God. Such is styled "vision" when it succeeds, and "madness" when it fails. He was quick to recognise the requirements of changing circumstances and always felt proud that Methodism could adapt itself to new needs without being false to its Christian creed.

The local congregation is the real strength or weakness of any church so that the ordinary circuit minister has considerable influence. Stationed in four of the most important circuits of the time, Buller was able to play a vital part in establishing two of them on solid

foundations. In three circuits he increased the roll, in spite of his strict ideas of the responsibilities of church membership; he did much to secure valuable properties for the church; and in every circuit he helped to improve the finances as far as the recurrent colonial depressions and heavy expenditure of the church would allow. An indefatigable visitor, a lover of peace and harmony, an excellent preacher whose life witnessed to the sincerity of his sermon, and a leader who seemed able to attract the support of strong laymen, Buller did much to establish the pre-requisites of a live church. Probably few Wesleyan ministers have had a more honourable circuit record.

However, it is not easy lightly to assess the influence or effect of any Wesleyan pastorate. In the local church almost no important decision for good can be taken without the advice and consent of laymen, and this especially applied to Buller, who believed in dealing frankly with his officials. The connexional organisation of the church, with its democratic methods and the absence of any opportunity for extensive personal contacts, makes constant compromise necessary and prevents any one individual or group from gaining predominant influence. Yet some broad generalisations are possible.

Buller's influence in extending the sphere of Methodism, in buying valuable properties and in inspiring the erection of church buildings has left a permanent and tangible mark. His own piety and earnestness must have been equally valuable, in a less obvious, but not less real way, in inspiring both his congregation and his brethren. As the new generation of Wesleyan preachers arose who were ignorant of, and unsympathetic with, the Maori race, it was of supreme importance that the Wesleyan Church still had men like Buller and Buddle who could help to reinstate the Maori Mission and to summon the church to its support in the days following the Maori wars. Buller always worked for good-
will among the Protestant churches and perhaps may be called a forerunner of the policy which in 1913 culminated in the union of 18 the various branches of Methodism in New Zealand, and which later brought the Methodists to support strongly any movement for cooperation among the Protestant groups in the Dominion. He and Buddle, almost alone among the older men in supporting a New Zealand Conference, were able to give prestige to a policy of conservative change and helped to lead the church into avenues of trusting progress.

This study also suggests some more general conclusions. It has been unnecessary to consider at any length Buller's attitude to politics or to the great issues of his day, not because he was uninterested in, or uninformed about such matters, but because he kept his opinions largely to himself. Wesleyan Methodism in England was for many years 19 Tory in sentiment but in New Zealand it tended to stand aside from political and public questions until at times it was criticised for having no practical programme. In part this was because Wesleyan members were of diverse social station and political sympathies, but especially it illustrates the preoccupation of the church with religious and spiritual questions. Not until several years after Buller's death did Wesleyanism cease to be primarily a revival movement and become a church with a more comprehensive outlook. Buller believed that church and state should be separate - he disliked established churches - but the actual policy of his church tended to put the two in separate compartments connected only by common subservience to God and His moral law. Buller always insisted that ordinary moral criteria were applicable

20. Horrell, "New Zealand," p. 269, Methodism has entered politics since Buller's death over the question of Prohibition. He himself was not a teetotaller.
to both politics and commerce and sought openly to defend the right and to denounce the wrong, but even in this he went beyond some of his brethren. The church wanted to make saints, not citizens. At the time there was no thought that the church should extend its influence beyond religious and allied questions. The Wesleyan Missionary Society in England had protested in 1848 and 1852 against any breach of the Treaty of Waitangi, yet ten years later an equally serious betrayal passed almost unnoticed by the New Zealand church. The church thus escaped any entanglements with the partisanship and bitterness of party politics and avoided giving any excuse for the Government to interfere with it. On the other hand it made Wesleyan influence in public affairs negligible, perhaps in part producing the opinion that the church has no connection with real life; it forced the social conscience of the church to find expression in private charity; and it failed to make the church the active upholder of the doctrines of social justice and public righteousness, of which it might be called the guardian.

The great area of some of Buller's circuits - from Wellington to the Manawatu and the Wairarapa; from Christchurch to Hokitika and Waitaha; seems amazing even in days of bitumen roads and motor-cars. Their population may have been less than that of some modern circuits but the travelling involved, often over lonely and rough, if not dangerous country, must have been a strain on any minister. To give adequate attention to all parts of the circuit became impossible and even so indefatigable a visitor as Buller could not watch over all his congregation properly. Considering how important pastoral visitation is in the life of any church, this was serious. The minister who had also to prepare two sermons every Sunday and undertake much connexional

22 Sutherland, op. cit., p.83.
responsibility had little time to spare.

The Wesleyan minister, inadequately trained, poorly paid, burdened with the care of a large circuit and with connexional responsibilities, having no priestly pre-eminence or authority, and belonging to a church which was poor, which stood aloof from public affairs, and whose main emphasis was on evangelism, was in no position to acquire for himself great fame or position. This partly explains why the Wesleyan ministry in New Zealand has had less public influence and prestige than that in England, or than the Church of England ministry in this country. To conclude, however, as has been done, that the difference is explained by the comparatively poorer quality of the ministers of the New Zealand Wesleyan church, betokens a misunderstanding of their aims and achievements, and is an insult to many of the greater of their number.

Large circuits and an overworked ministry placed great responsibility on Wesleyan laymen who undertook much of the preaching, and frequently looked after those churches which could only be generally supervised by a distant minister. Such a system encouraged self-reliance and independence in the church, while robbing Wesleyanism of the full value of a specially-trained ministry able to stand above any narrow parochialism. The immense importance of laymen is well illustrated by comparing Buller's ministry at Wellington with that at Christchurch, where there was a strong group of pious, enthusiastic and far-sighted church officials. The generosity and drive of these men, who gave the church first claim to their time and money, enabled Methodism to spread throughout much of the South Island and provided it with many fine properties. The believing prayers of a devoted congregation explain the revivals of those years and the connexional outlook of the

23. e.g. Rusden, op. cit., p.461.
local church lay behind several far-sighted suggestions for benefiting
the whole church. The importance of laymen in the Methodist church,
illustrated by its institution of local preachers and its system of
church government, has been increased by the entire dependence of the
church on their voluntary contributions. Earlier the rule of
itinerancy, which prevented any minister from effectively grasping
control of his church before it was time to move on, and the minister's
dependence on an annual invitation of the Quarterly Meeting to stay in
the circuit at all, increased this tendency. It would almost seem that
the quality of the laymen was more important to the well-being of the
Church than the quality of its ministers.

The amazing growth of the church between 1836 and 1875 was
equalled only by the development of the colony in that time. The
demand for political self-government, satisfied in 1852-6, and the
impatience with British control were paralleled in the break-away of the
Australasian Conference in 1854; and the need for centralising political
authority, which was achieved by the abolition of provincial governments
in 1876, is similar to the need for some central control in church affairs
which lay behind the New Zealand Conference of 1874 and which brought
to an end the extensive powers held earlier by the separate District
Meetings. The difficulties of obviating control by some body ignorant
of the real needs of the colonial churches, while not entrusting it to
any conference too weak to implement its policy and to support the church,
were great, but were successfully overcome by the Australasian and
General Conferences. The attitude of those men who had witnessed
such changes and who consequently came to expect growth, development
and increasing independence in the church, played no unimportant
part in Wesleyan history. Without such willingness to devolve

authority, the growth of the church could not have kept pace with that of the colony. The element of contingency in the growth of Wesleyanism in the colonies should be remembered. Untrammelled by the connections with Anglicanism which gave a conservative twist to English Methodism, the colonial church was largely free to adapt and develop such organisation as it found necessary. Both this organisation and the various church funds were rooted, then, in need, more than in tradition, as this study has incidentally shown. This suggests that careful consideration should be given by Methodism today to the question whether altered circumstances give adequate reason for changing what experience has proved necessary; but if this question is answered in the affirmative, the change should be unhesitatingly made. Only thus will Methodism be true to its ancestry. It is clear, too, that whenever the duty of the church to the community has been put second to the organisation of the church, the result has been decadence.

In early Methodism there had been a strong Puritanical element which found expression, for instance, in severe condemnation of such "evils" as cards, jewellery and dancing, and in the strict observance of the Sabbath. Among some of the more progressive of the New Zealand church leaders there appears during our period, however, a tendency to distinguish between the essentials and the circumstantial of religion. Buller felt proud that the Wesleyan church could adapt itself to changing circumstances, and regarded kneeling at Communion or the use of fermented or unfermented wines as comparatively unimportant. Thus the door was set ajar— but only ajar— for a distinction which might logically be carried much further until the essentials of religion were defined very narrowly. Buller would have been among the first to condemn a development which could so transform Methodism, but the way had been prepared for it.

25. K.T. Wesleyan, 1.3.76, p. 57.
The anxieties, the perplexities, the disappointments of the modern ministry all find an echo in the writings of last century. The early spiritual enthusiasm of "Wesleyanism, which resulted in stirring conversion meetings, in the spiritual inspiration of the class meeting and the fervour of the early preacher, was already cooling by about 1860. In but small part can this be attributed to any change in the ministry, although a break between the younger and the older men had tended to develop during a few years when no men entered the New Zealand work. The main reasons seem to lie in changing conditions of life, which began to grow fuller and more complex as the colony developed. Increasing prosperity and a better standard of education played their part in turning men's minds from religion to other things and this tendency has increased with the years. Its results were by no means immediate, as Buller's experiences at the Thames and Christchurch show, but the decline of the class meeting and the gradual disappearance of the regular love feast and the well-attended prayer meeting were its signs. Slowly the whole form of the church was changing as a new type of preaching became necessary and something stereotyped appeared in Wesleyanism which was not known earlier. Unfortunately, although the older church leaders realised to some extent what was happening, they could provide no solution to the problem.

The failures and weaknesses apparent as Wesleyanism developed in New Zealand are too obvious to need further reference. In some cases they resulted from questionable ideas of the sphere of the church, from unwise organisation, and from misunderstanding, among some, of the true meaning of religion, but in part they issued from factors extraneous to the society. More important, however, are the achievements of Wesleyan Methodism. The most outstanding and lasting work of any church - and perhaps especially of the Wesleyan with its insistence upon
evangelism - is its effect upon the individuals who compose it and are influenced by it, and this is the least tangible. Wesleyan Methodism gave to New Zealand many men of wide influence in community and commercial life, who had been trained to leadership by their experience in the church, and who sought to carry Christian standards into community service. A list of Buller's circuit officials in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Thames would illustrate this. Its work in nurturing God-fearing and law-abiding citizens was not less important. The Wesleyan missionaries played no inconsiderable part in raising the Maori from his savage state, and had all Europeans demonstrated the sympathy and understanding which produced a working together of the two races under the missionary, the subsequent history of New Zealand would have been very different. It is regrettable that the share of the Wesleyans in this work is often entirely passed over, or barely mentioned by historians; and it is also regrettable that the church itself, increasingly out of touch with the Maori, short of money and especially hard hit by the Maori wars, should have forfeited in part the position won for it by the early missionaries. In spite of its handicaps, Wesleyan Methodism managed to become established in all the important centres of the colony and had the privilege of pioneering very many of the country districts. Properties, often illustrative of the faith of the early officials, were acquired in numerous localities, and have formed a valuable endowment for the future. A strong church organisation was gradually built up with the growth of the colony, until the New Zealand church was able to stand alone, a part on the one hand of world-wide Methodism, and on the other of the Protestant Council of Churches in New Zealand.

In no small measure was this success due to the early missionaries and ministers, men of devotion and faith who did not spare themselves
in Christian service and who did not shirk the self-sacrifice required of them. By joining the ministry they could expect a barely sufficient income, constant itinerancy at the command of Conference, a home often poorly and scantily furnished, long hours, hard work and much disappointment and difficulty. Yet of these things they scarcely thought, so convinced were they that they were obeying the command of God. Among these men James Buller holds a distinguished place.
The following abbreviations have been used:

T. - document is lodged in the Turnbull Library, Wellington.
Con. Of. - document is lodged in the Methodist Connexional Office, Epworth Chambers, Christchurch.

1. Manuscripts. (a.) Letters.


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A SKETCH MAP
of
BULLER’S CIRCUIT
in NORTH AUCKLAND
(N.Z. Flying Area Map)