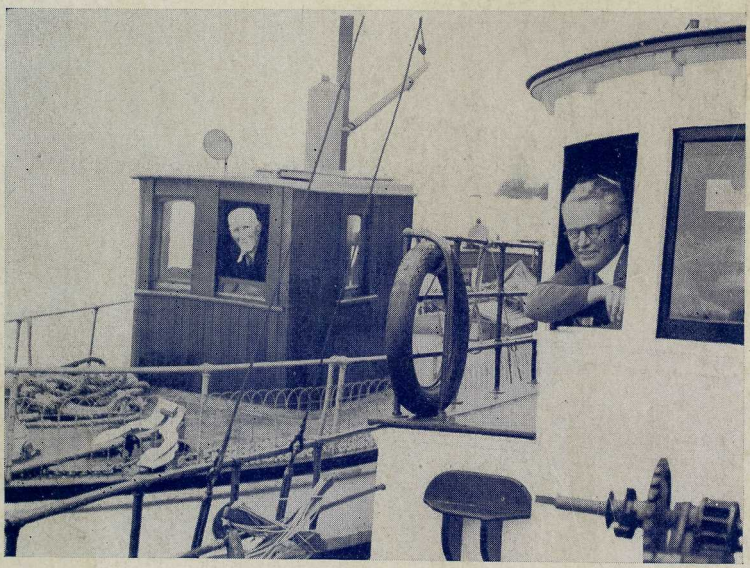
MY CAPTAIN OLIVER

By ROBERT C. SCOTT



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BRITISH COLUMBIA
KIMSQUIT
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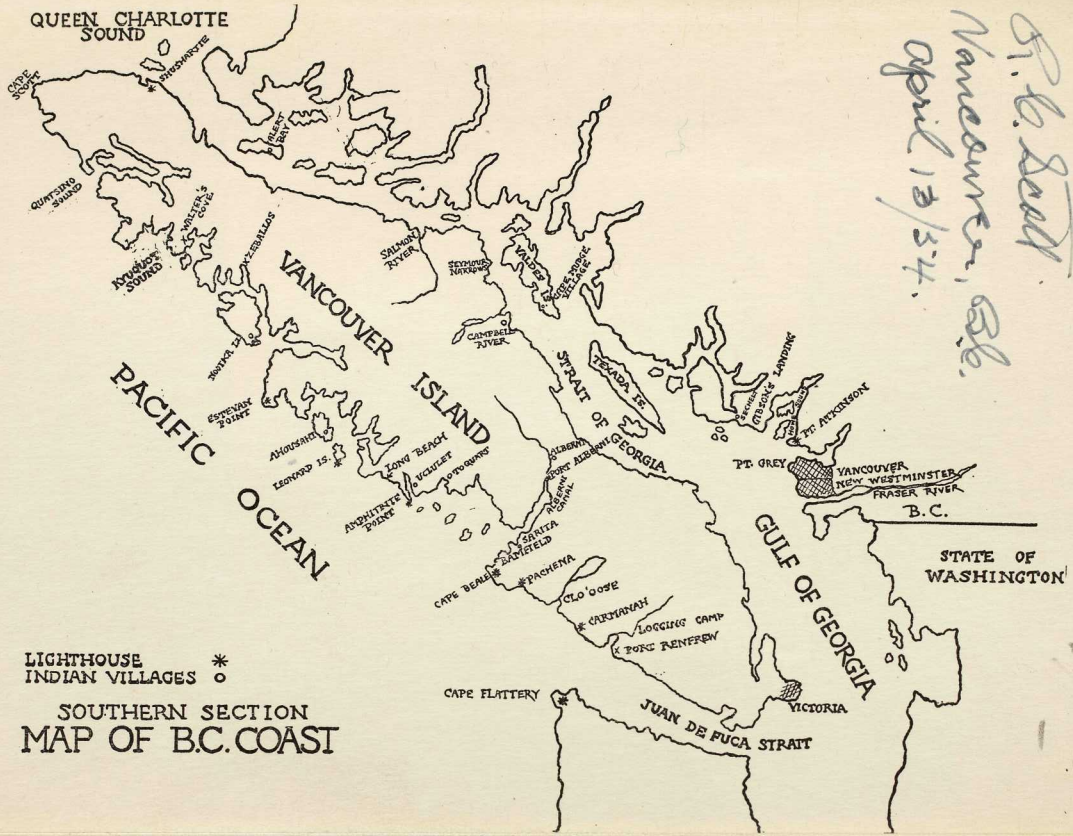
KING ISLAND
BELLA COOLA
OWEKANO LAKE
ADDENBROCK LT.
RIVERS INLET
SHUSHARTIE



SOUTHERN SECTION
MAP OF B.C. COAST

All good wishes,
F. G. Scott
Vancouver, B.C.
April 13/34.

$1.50

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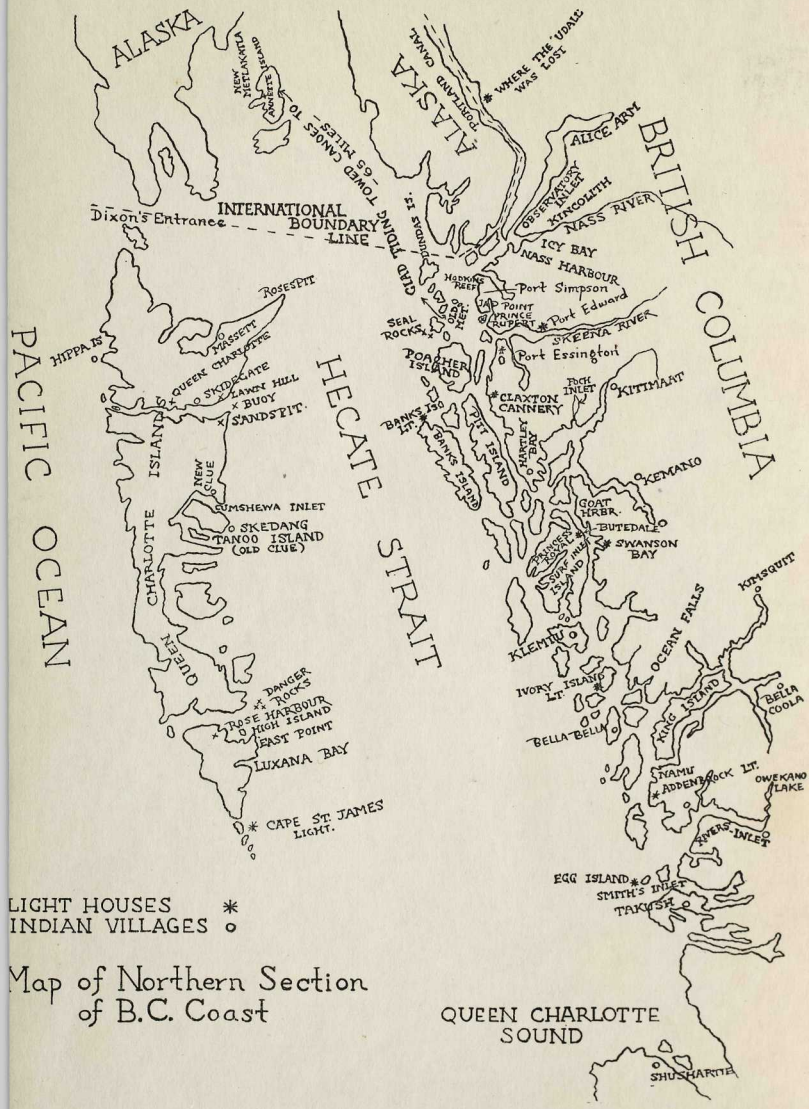
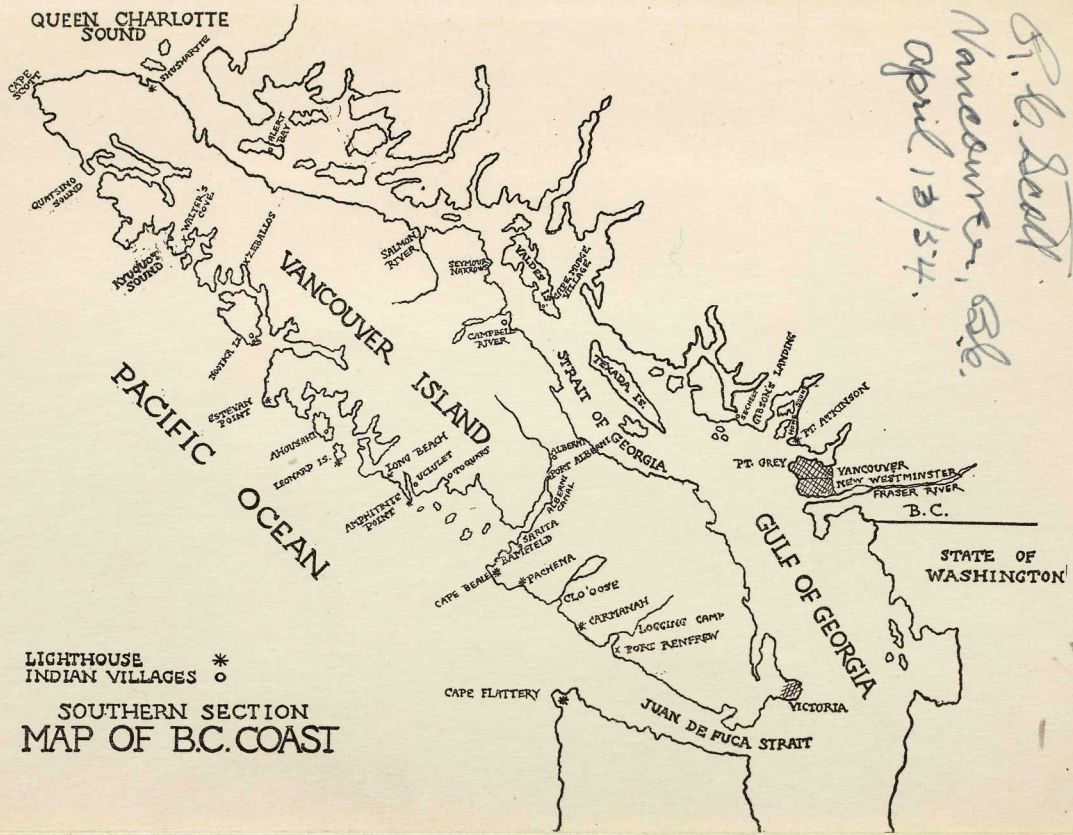


LIGHT HOUSES *
INDIAN VILLAGES o

Map of Northern Section of B.C. Coast



All good wishes,
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Vancouver, B.C.
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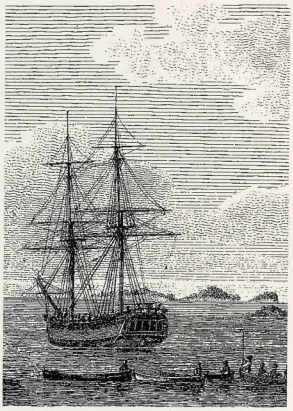

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MY CAPTAIN OLIVER

Captain Oliver bids farewell to Captain Scott at Queen Charlotte Island church

MY CAPTAIN OLIVER

A Story of Two Missionaries
on the
British Columbia Coast

BY
ROBERT C. SCOTT

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
The Committee on Missionary Education
KENNETH J. BEATON, *Secretary*
299 QUEEN STREET WEST, TORONTO 2 B, ONT.

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AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO MY WIFE AND SON,

WHOSE LOYAL CO-OPERATION MADE POSSIBLE MY SERVICE WITH CAPTAIN WILLIAM OLIVER AND ON INDIAN MISSION FIELDS OF OUR CHURCH.

Preface

THE original stimulus to the writing of this little book came from a conversation some years ago with the Rev. J. G. Brown, D.D., Principal of Union College in Vancouver, B.C. We were standing in front of St. Andrew's-Wesley Church in that city during a meeting of the Annual Conference. Captain Oliver had just come out of the building and passed by close to us. As he looked after him, Dr. Brown said: "Is the Church going to allow that man to pass away without making some record of his great service in our Marine Work?" Then he turned to me and said, "Why don't you write it?" I was at the time the missionary on the *Thomas Crosby III*, of which Captain Oliver was the skipper.

When we returned from Conference, I asked the Captain to tell me the story of his life. I had little success until I told him that Dr. Brown had suggested he owed it to the Church. Loyalty to the claims of the Church, always large in his life, proved to be the incentive which overcame his natural modesty. He gave me the facts regarding his early life and a statement of his activities up to the time I went aboard the *Thomas Crosby III* with him in 1925. All that is added comes from my close association with him in the years that followed. But it was not until after my retirement from the

principalship of the Alberni Indian Residential School in June, 1944, that I was free to undertake the duty of recording the facts of the Captain's life.

In doing so I have not attempted to write a complete history of Marine or Indian missions on the coast of British Columbia. That has been done by others. But I have tried, first, to give an authentic picture of the man and his work as I knew him; secondly, to show the type of work which Marine and Indian mission workers are doing all the time; and thirdly, through the romance and the adventure of it all, to stimulate a greater interest, and a larger support for these activities of our Church. It is my sincere hope that by reading the record someone may be led to dedicate himself or herself to this great and worth-while task. I have depended, in the main, upon the Captain's own talks with me and my long personal experience with him, but I have also checked my writing with all references to him in such works as: *Up and Down the North Pacific Coast by Canoe and Mission Ship*, by Rev. Thomas Crosby; *One Hundred Years of Canadian Methodist Missions*, by Mrs. F. C. Stephenson; *That They All May be One*, by Mrs. Stephenson and Sara Vance, and *In Great Waters*, by Dr. George C. Pringle. In several instances I have made corrections as the records in some of these works are not exactly true to the facts as given me by Captain Oliver.

My main source of information, however, has been the original "Log" of the mission boat *Glad*

Tidings, beginning in December, 1884. This book has been in my possession for some years and I have read and re-read it. It is written in the handwriting of Thomas Crosby, Ebenezer Robson, and others who made trips aboard that first mission boat. No better source of information of the life of this grand old man of the Marine Work could be available to anyone.

I wish also to express my gratitude and appreciation to the following friends who have been generous in the help and information given so as to make this record as complete as possible: The Rev. George Edgar; Rev. W. H. Gibson and his sons, John and Wilfred; Mr. J. Edward Rendle; Dr. W. T. Kergin; Mrs. Agnes Oliver, widow of Captain Oliver; to Rev. Denzil G. Ridout, D.D., for the use of photographs as illustrations; and to Rev. Arthur Barner, D.D., and Rev. S. S. Osterhout, D.D., who have read the manuscript and made valuable suggestions.

There are many others, loggers, fishermen, lighthouse-keepers, men of all races and creeds to whom go my hearty thanks for their kindly and helpful attitude to me through the years. To these I must add the scores of friends among our Indian people, outstanding among whom is Chief Billy Assu of Cape Mudge. It has been to make their lives a bit more real to those in our Church who have not had the privilege of knowing them personally, and, above all, that our native people may

receive more intelligent and active assistance in their long struggle for a better life that these pages have been written. The welfare of all these coast folk was always a first claim on the time and strength of Captain William Oliver.

R. C. Scott.

Vancouver, B.C.,
May, 1947.

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Introduction

SOMEONE has written, "No man is a hero to his valet"—but, of course, Captain Oliver never had a valet and, in any case, Bob Scott would hardly fill the bill.

This book is the story of two men—Captain Oliver, the hero, and Captain R. C. Scott, the narrator. It is almost impossible to untangle them. This is somewhat of a disadvantage, but it has a compensating advantage, in that we have a much broader picture of the work than would otherwise have been possible.

It was never my good fortune to meet Captain Oliver, but I know his kind. The men that "go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters" have certain characteristics which set them apart. When God touches one of these men the result is generally unpredictable. This was true of William Oliver, the story of whose exploits is so well told by Captain Scott. There is more to it than that. This book is the unconscious revelation of what happened to the young man from Bruce County when he came to learn the ways of an "old salt" and how and why he came to hold "his" Captain Oliver in affection and respect.

The Methodist Church was fortunate in having Captain Oliver as a pioneer of its Marine Work.

He set high standards of devotion and service. He created an immense reservoir of goodwill by his unselfish service. To Captain Scott, who succeeded him, he handed a torch which Bob always kept high.

The story of the work is well told—with a modesty which makes it all the more valuable.

GEO. DOREY.

MY CAPTAIN OLIVER

CHAPTER I

PERILS AND EVILS OF A SAILOR'S LIFE

C-R-A-S-H!!!!—"Losh me! what's that lad up to now?" Well might this mother drop into broad Scotch, for it was scarcely four a.m., and from the noise it seemed as though every pot and pan on her kitchen shelves had clattered to the floor.

Then she remembered "Wullie" had asked her the night before to call him at four o'clock. He wanted to go to work as one of the door boys for the firemen in a large shipyard in near-by Dumbarton on the Clyde. She had refused, saying that he was too young, just twelve years old. But Wullie was determined to have the job. It took fine skill in timing to open the door to allow the firemen's shovel to enter, and then to close it without breaking the rhythm of the shoveller, or keeping the door open so long that cold air could enter. Besides that, he wanted the money.

So, left to his own resources, the boy had watched the weights of the grandfather clock which stood against the wall. He had noted just where the descending weight was at the hour of four o'clock, and had laid his plans. Getting a piece of board, he built up on it a pile of his mother's pots and pans. This he balanced on the edge of a chair so that when

the weight descended the whole pile slid on to the floor with a resounding crash.

Years afterwards, a disabled vessel was rolling helplessly in the long oily swells of the Mediterranean. The rudder chains had parted and the quadrant was swinging viciously from side to side of the deck under the stroke of the rudder in the sea. The sailors allowed it to swing over to one side of the deck, and then tried to hold it until the chains could be made fast, but without success. It was dangerous work, for they were thrown helter-skelter when the vessel rolled. Then someone said it was a job for the ship's carpenter, and, although it was his watch below, he should be called. Someone went down and called him. The man came up wearing only his underwear, for he had been asleep in his bunk. He looked at the swinging quadrant, saw the danger to the men, and returned below. In a short time he came up with two heavy wooden wedges. Waiting until the quadrant had swung to one side of the deck, he stepped forward and quickly jammed the wedges underneath, thus holding it fast. He turned and said, "Make fast your chains," and returned below. For William Oliver it was a simple thing to do.

On a vessel returning from Calcutta, bound for Amsterdam with a cargo of teak wood, the crew were tired out and dissatisfied. The grub was so bad that a man would not touch it unless he were really hungry. To make matters worse, a leak which developed during one of the bad storms kept

the men at the pumps night and day. The ship's carpenter looked over the situation; rigged up a windmill by means of sails and attached the gear to the pumps. The result was a much-needed rest for the tired crew. Once again William Oliver had shown his ability to meet a crisis.

Years after this, aboard the first mission steamship, the *Glad Tidings*, the head of the high-pressure cylinder blew out, leaving the vessel helpless. Oliver went down into the hold and found among the various items, which he always kept there, some pieces of oak plank which belonged in the head of a large cask. These he cut and fitted into the cylinder head. He braced it across and back with strips of iron and bolted these down hard. The ship was able to make Port Simpson thirty miles away. But this ability to meet a situation on the spot had its not-so-good side. Many a time necessary preparations were not made beforehand for an emergency. The Captain had always been used to having a crew of men aboard, each man having his work to do, so it was not necessary to prepare beforehand. Things could always be done while under way.

I shall not soon forget my own experiences as a member of the crew of the *Thomas Crosby III* under Captain Oliver just outside Rose Harbour in the Queen Charlotte Islands. We were zooming along with a fair tide out towards Danger Rocks and a sou'-east swell. When uncomfortably near the rough water, the Captain handed me a hammer and

some nails and a short piece of board, saying, "Batten down that for'ard hatch." It was no easy task for a missionary, who had barely got his sea-legs and who was none too good at hitting a nail on the head when ashore, to get that hatch securely battened down. Many a time I was soaked through with the heavy spray which came over the bow when we hit those tide rips. When I knew the Captain better, and understood what we might expect in such places, I always asked if I might batten down the hatch beforehand. The Captain always agreed. Doubtless, such experiences reminded him of his own early days at sea. Perhaps he recalled during his first voyage being let down over the side in a bosun's chair to put patches of canvas and plank over the holes in both bows. They had been stove in by ice off the Newfoundland Banks and as he worked the icy water swept over him. So how could a bit of salt spray from the warm Pacific possibly hurt the missionary? It would be good for him.

William Oliver was born in Bishopston, Scotland, across from Dumbarton on the Clyde, on March 19, 1848, the son of Robert and Elizabeth Oliver. As a lad he worked in his father's brickyard until at the age of eleven he crossed the river with his family to reside in Dumbarton. There, while working as a rivet boy, he went to school after an irregular fashion. His father was an Anglican and his mother a Presbyterian. Neither of them went to church much, but his mother "always cleaned herself up on

the Sabbath." Both of them drank some, and Oliver as a lad began to form a taste for strong drink.

At sixteen, he was apprenticed to learn the trade of ship's carpenter. As he worked, he saw that he needed more education, and went for some time to a night school conducted by a Mr. Lawson, who also worked in the shipyards during the day. During his apprenticeship he worked on the famous clipper ship, the *Cutty Sark*, one of the best of the ships in the tea trade. Many times this vessel, noted for her speed, was the first to arrive from the China Coast, and in consequence got the highest price for her cargo. The Captain once said to me, "My last job on the *Cutty Sark* was to fasten the figurehead on her bow, and do you know what I did? Well, I just gave 'Nan' one big kiss on her cheek for good luck." That was like him, childish, perhaps, but it was more than that. It was the heart of a child which, running forward with the years, could feel the lift of her bow and the sting of salt spray in his face as the vessel scudded along at the head of the ships homeward bound from China.

After finishing his apprenticeship at twenty-one, William Oliver went to Greenwich and shipped aboard a wooden sailing vessel as ship's carpenter. At sea he was free from the temptation to drink, but the food was poor—salt pork with "sweet soup," a concoction of black molasses and scraps of black bread. This, with black coffee, without sugar, formed the staple diet of the crew. On the way out to the Miramichi River in New Brunswick to load

lumber, they ran into trouble off the "banks" approaching Newfoundland. For days they were battered by ice floes and both bows were stove in. Oliver's work as ship's carpenter, as already told, saved them from foundering. In this way, having kept his own ship afloat, he was the saviour of the crew of an Irish brig who were taken off their vessel only two hours before it went to the bottom. They finally reached their destination, where the vessel was beached for repairs. This work and the loading of return cargo occupied three months.

Returning to Cardiff, the crew were paid off and Oliver reshipped aboard the *George* of Cape Breton, under the command of Captain Grant. This began an association which was to last for years, as Captain Grant later became the owner and operator of vessels in the whaling business out of Victoria, B.C. Oliver sailed to the Mediterranean under Captain Grant, into the Black Sea and out, and then to India and the Malabar Coast. At Calcutta, owing to an attack of jaundice, he was left behind by his ship. Upon recovery, he shipped aboard a wooden vessel which loaded teak wood. Elephants were used in the loading and, when completed, the vessel sailed for Amsterdam. They were a long time on the way and the food became bad. "You could not eat it unless you were hungry," he told me. "There were weevils in the biscuits; it was a bad trip, you got your pound of biscuit and your pint of water, and it was enough at that."

At Amsterdam, there was a good pay day for the crew. Oliver had been away from home for about three years by this time and intended going home to see his family. "But," he said, "there was too much rum in Holland." His money was soon gone. He was too ashamed to go home, and would not even write, because he had no money to send with the letter. He went back to Liverpool on an old vessel and was there three weeks trying to get a berth. Finally he shipped aboard a steamship going out to Baltimore. He got a month's pay in advance; paid up his board bill, and started out with one pair of blankets and a "donkey's breakfast" under his arm, as the sailors of that day called the bundle of straw for their bunks.

Drink again got the best of him at Baltimore, and the ship sailed without him. Then began one of the sad chapters in Oliver's life. He attached himself to a boarding-house keeper who, in return for his bringing sailors to the house, gave him his room and board. These men were usually made drunk and then sent by the proprietor aboard ships in the harbour which were ready to sail. The skippers of these vessels paid one month's wages for each man thus supplied. This amount was charged up to the account of the sailor as an advance on wages. All this was distasteful to William Oliver, so he broke with it and got a berth on a ship bound for Liverpool. From there he sailed again through the Mediterranean and up to the Black Sea.

On returning to England, he got a berth on the

S.S. City of Brooklyn, which loaded coal at Cardiff and sailed around the "Horn" to Valparaiso. There they loaded a cargo of guano. While the Captain was ashore on a Sunday morning, paying off a steward, the crew decided to have a holiday. Some of the men got drunk and swam ashore. They went up-town and got more liquor. After coming back on board, they made a lot of trouble. In an effort to quiet them, the second mate finally drew his revolver and shot one man in the cheek. There was a big row and the men who had gone ashore without leave were put in irons. On Monday morning, when the Captain returned, the sailmaker and some others of the crew were determined to leave the ship. As a warning to the rest, the sailmaker was hung up by the thumbs. In an hour or so he was glad to be let down and to keep quiet.

Rounding Cape Horn on the return voyage, they were caught in a bad gale. The vessel rolled so continuously that the cargo of guano was churned into foam. It was impossible to take soundings of the water in the hold. The pumps were manned night and day. It was a hard trip, but it was followed by a good pay day upon arrival in Liverpool. This for Oliver simply meant more drink. Instead of going home or buying clothes and tools, when his money was gone he shipped aboard the *Mary I. Baker*, bound for New York.

Upon arrival, they loaded wheat and returned to Belfast. From there they ran to Troon, near Ayr,

and took aboard a cargo of pig iron for New York. It was a long weary trip, eighty-four days in all. At the end of forty days food began to run short. For the crew, life was sustained by gathering up the wheat left lying from the previous trip along the ship's bottom and between her timbers. This was cleaned as much as possible and ground into a coarse meal from which a porridge was made. Some of it was roasted to make a sort of coffee. It was Oliver's job as ship's carpenter to keep the columns of pig iron from shifting. It was piled in hollow squares from keel to deck, and night and day he had to keep these tiers "tommed up." In plain language, it was his task to keep wedges tightly jammed between the top of the tier and the deck. This meant constant climbing up and down the inside of these columns for the entire depth of the ship. From New York they carried a cargo of crude oil to Marseilles, where for Oliver there was more money and more drink. From Marseilles they went to Cardiff and loaded coal for Valparaiso and sailed from there to Victoria, B.C., in ballast.

Chapter II

A ROVING SAILOR FINDS CHRIST

ONCE more Oliver was left behind by his ship. He went to Moodyville on the Fraser River, where he worked at his trade repairing sealing schooners and other vessels. Later, in what is now New Westminster, he worked on the stern-wheelers, as the river steamers of that day were called. Recalling those days, he said to me, "Working and drinking until I got very bad and was down and out." He felt in his despair that the only one who could help him was the minister, so he took his way along the deep ditch which bordered the path from the shipyards to the village. As he walked, he realized that he would never get past the saloons with money in his pocket, so he took the last fifty-cent piece he had in the world and threw it into the muddy water which was there more than five feet deep. He told me that he had hardly ever been to church any place since his boyhood days. It may be that the memory of how his mother used to clean herself up on a Sunday morning was used of God to point the feet of this needy man into the right path.

Such an act may seem ridiculously inadequate to explain the amazing change in William Oliver's life. Dr. George Pringle tells of a woman, living in an isolated spot, whose only way to make Sunday

different for her boys and girls was to put currants in the buns. However, unless God has some way of using common-place things done in faith, then many a humble disciple can have no ability to witness for Him at all. At any rate, Oliver felt that he must get to the minister if he would find help. At the parsonage of the old Mary Street Methodist Church in New Westminster, William Oliver found in the Rev. Ebenezer Robson a sympathetic and practical helper. They went into the study and the minister listened as this man poured out his story. Then they knelt in prayer, and his awful need was presented to God, who so loved—"that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Meantime, Mrs. Robson had prepared a hearty breakfast, with plenty of strong coffee, and this helped to strengthen body and soul of the man.

Afterwards, William Oliver went up the hill into the woods behind the house. And there, to use his own words, "I rolled on the ground and prayed and prayed until, all at once, I seemed to see Jesus on the Cross for me. Then my sin, just like a great burden, rolled from my shoulders and I knew I was free. The appetite for liquor and tobacco left me. It has never returned, but I believe, Robert, if I became careless, it might come back." From his knees William Oliver arose, a "new man in Christ Jesus," for "old things had passed away and all things had become new."

The new life showed itself in new associations.

Instead of going to town at the week-end for drink, William Oliver went to church, where he had found Christ. Said he, "At the very first meeting which I attended after I was converted, four other men found the Saviour." This urgency to be busy in the service of his new Master, who had done so much for him, became one of the dominant traits for the rest of his life. Never would he allow an opportunity to pass for speaking to others of his new-found joy, or of assisting men, women or children, regardless of race, colour, or creed, in the needs of their everyday life.

Sometimes this urgency was misunderstood, but not often. Once when the Rev. James Allen, at that time the General Secretary for Home Missions, was aboard the mission boat *Homespun*, he was taken ashore by one of the crew to visit a lighthouse. This man told me that when they got to the lightkeeper's dwelling, the old mother was the only one up. It was six a.m. and she had said several times, "You know, we are very glad to see you, but we have been up all night." Mr. Allen, then and there, determined never again to be taken on such a visit at such an hour. However, the morning I saw the Captain make such a call, the lightkeeper and his wife had not been long in bed, as it was summertime. But when we got to the door, the upstairs window was thrown up and words of welcome came to us that left no room for misunderstanding of the way these particular people felt about the early morning call. If further evidence were needed,

then the breakfast prepared by the lady of the light left no room for argument—both figuratively and literally. The many times Oliver risked all he had in order to be of service to those in need showed a spirit in him which was seldom misunderstood.

One night we had hardly tied up at a cannery wharf on the Skeena River when the cannery manager came aboard to say that an employee, the husband of one of the women at the cannery, was reported to be dying in Prince Rupert Hospital. He had no boat, would the Captain go in the mission boat and take the wife to her husband? No entreaty was needed. I marvelled how he managed to find his way in the darkness of the night. Those who know anything about the Skeena River, with its sand-bars and winding channels, will know what I mean. However, the man who had sailed the river before there were any aids to navigation knew where he was going. After a long run through the darkness, we reached Prince Rupert and the woman got to her husband's bedside.

On another occasion, the sawmill at Queen Charlotte closed down and the men were likely to lose their wages unless a lien were placed on the assets of the company. Captain Oliver was asked if he would take a delegation of the men to Prince Rupert on the *Thomas Crosby III* in order to safeguard their livelihood. The mail steamer had just left that day and there would be no other boat for two weeks. By that time it would be too late. We left Queen Charlotte at eleven p.m. that night

with the delegates on board. At midnight we passed the buoy off Dead Tree Point and headed out across the Straits. It was a seven hours' run before we could pick up the buoy at Edye Pass on the other side. That left plenty of time for a change in the weather. It was December, and it took no small degree of courage to face the waters of Hecate Strait in the night at that time of year. The Captain, if he had any fear, never let anyone even guess it. Before we reached the shelter of the pass on the other side of the Straits the sou'-easter was hard upon us. The delegates were seasick and, to make matters worse, the high-pressure pump on the engine began to run hot. Fortunately we got inside of Seal Rocks, about five miles south-west of the Pass, before we had to stop and repack it.

This was one of two times in my experience with the Captain that we had a real difference of opinion. He had been used to packing steam pumps and insisted that I pack this one tightly. I was running the engine—a sixty-h.p. full Diesel. I argued with him but finally gave in and made the packing tight, with the result that the pump again ran hot. The old skipper finally gave in and I had my way, but not before we got crusty with each other. We both felt badly. But, as a Socialist friend of mine said when he and his brother quarrelled after a long day piling shingle bolts, "We were both too tired to be Christians." The all-night run, with the storm and the anxiety due to the heating up of the pump, really had its effect on our nervous system, to say

nothing of the men who lay around sick on the bunks and on the floor of the main cabin down below.

I may as well tell of the other time, for this illustrates the character of the grand old man as I knew him. It was the month of November, 1925, and we had just returned from Vancouver with our new Diesel engine. We were going to bed aboard the *Crosby* when we heard a steamer whistling outside our anchorage. We knew something was wrong, but what it was we could only guess. We were not long left in doubt. In a few minutes a gas boat came alongside and the manager of the mill said that a raft containing half a million feet of lumber had broken away from alongside the steamer and was drifting out toward the bar at the mouth of the Inlet. Would we go and tow it back to the steamer? The answer was, "Certainly!" How proud we were of the new engine you could not realize; neither could the Board of Home Missions, who had provided it. The old engine would have been hopeless for such a job. We got under way at once outward bound in search of the drifting raft. We overhauled it not far from Skidegate village, about six miles from the edge of Hecate Straits. Two smaller boats had lines on it, but they could do nothing in the heavy south-west wind which had torn it away from the steamer and was still blowing hard.

We got a line on it, but were also helpless. The mooring-cleat on our after-deck was too close to the

stern to allow us to steer. We were slowly drifting toward the bar. The blackness of the night, the roar of the wind in the rigging, and the hiss of the waves as they broke past our bow did not make for calmness. I was new there, for from former experience I thought that the Captain did not always put his wheel hard over and that this may have been partly the reason the *Crosby* did not answer her helm. Finally, as I stood on the deck just outside the wheel-house window, I made bold to ask, "Captain, have you got your wheel hard over?" He stepped to the door and spoke only three words, but they were crushing, "Take the wheel!"

I was sorry at once for my folly, but had to obey orders. Inside at the wheel, with the raft drifting and the boats helpless, I felt my position keenly. In a moment I stepped to the door and apologized. Then it struck me that one of the small boats might put a line on our bow and so be able to pull our head around in the right direction. The Captain told me to try it and returned to the wheel. I was more than delighted to see that the ruffling of his dignity had passed so easily. However, I never knew the Captain to hold spite against anyone. In this fundamental respect he was a Christian and a gentleman. With the smaller boat to keep us headed right, we began to gain slowly against wind and tide, and by two a.m. next morning we had the raft back alongside the steamer, where it was made fast. We were tired when we got to bed but very happy. This bit of service not only gave the

Captain entry into the hearts of the people at Queen Charlotte but, when we afterward built the mission house there, the entire lumber bill, apart from the finishing lumber which had to be brought from the city, was donated by the operators of the mill.

Another outstanding quality was his simple childlike faith in God. It never left the Captain. Incident after incident showed that. When he told me about the high-pressure cylinder head blowing out on the *Glad Tidings*, as the boat was en route across the Straits, he gave me this further information. When he had the head in place and they were ready to proceed on their voyage, right ahead on the course they were following was a big ugly reef showing black against the surf breaking along its entire length. The tide had been high when the accident occurred and, said the Captain, "We did not know that reef was there. Now, don't you believe the Lord blew out that cylinder head just to save us being shipwrecked?" Well, what do you think? At any rate, as I said to him, "There is nothing to prove that He didn't do it."

Another time we were within ten miles of Cape St. James, the lighthouse at the extreme southern end of the Queen Charlotte Islands. We had been trying for days to get to it but had been forced to turn back. That evening the sou'-easter, which had been blowing for days, had hauled into the sou'-west. This was a favourable wind for landing at the light, but the swell was still so heavy that we would never have been able to get ashore.

Again we turned back. The Captain felt that by early morning we might be able to make it. So instead of running back around East Point and anchoring in our usual place behind High Island outside of Rose Harbour, he decided to run close up to the beach in Luxana Bay and anchor there for the night. The wind was off shore when in the south-west and it would save us an hour's run in the morning.

We had just nicely entered the mouth of the bay two or three miles out from shore when there came up one of the worst snow squalls I have ever experienced. We could see nothing. Even the anchor davit at the bow was blotted out. I was out on the deck in front of the pilot-house trying to get a glimpse of what lay ahead. It was quite impossible. Shelter my eyes with my hands as best I could, the snow blinded me. I wished that the Captain would turn around and head out to sea before the storm, but I knew how anxious he was to get to the lighthouse. This time I had sense enough to hold my tongue. After some minutes, with no let-up in the violence of the squall, he swung around and so got the snow astern of us. Even then we could see nothing and ran by compass out toward the open sea. Finally we had a glimpse of East Point and laid our course to clear it. Continuing to run by compass, we got around Gull Point and after some minutes made out High Island and anchored behind it.

By this time it was quite late and I was about to turn in. The Captain, who had gone out on deck to take a look around, came below again, followed by a gust of wind which seemed to fall from the mountain-side and to flatten out the *Crosby* like a storm-stricken sea-gull. As the anchor chain growled and the boat finally came up into the wind, the Captain said, "The Lord didn't want us in Luxana Bay tonight." Sure enough, had we anchored there, the wind in its sudden shift back into the sou'-east would likely have driven us ashore before we could have up-anchored and got under way. Luxana Bay lies exposed to the sou'-east and we would have found ourselves on a lee shore. Mr. Matt Jemson, at one time the engineer on the *S.S. Thomas Crosby*, told me they were caught there one night. They had to put down two anchors and steam slow ahead all night to save being driven ashore. Perhaps the Captain had recalled that occasion.

Chapter III

A VOLUNTEER FOR MISSION WORK

FOR many years the Rev. Thomas Crosby, who had been appointed to work among the Indian tribes in 1874, had been carrying on his work along the coast by means of Indian canoes manned by natives. The hardships attached to such a way of travel had gone unnoticed by this apostle of the Church. Later on his health showed the results of such labours, but all through the years he had pushed his way into village after village, ignoring the labour and the dangers. On one trip he was accompanied by the Rev. Amos Russ of Victoria, president of Conference that year. En route to the Nass River, they camped out ashore at night as Crosby was accustomed to do. Before landing, their canoes had suffered a near shipwreck and most of the supplies and their clothes were wet. They pitched tent and, after a hot cup of tea brewed over the camp-fire and the usual evening prayers, they retired for the night. Before morning several inches of snow had fallen and Mr. Crosby, being a tall man, had pushed his feet beyond the tent wall. Mr. Russ was first up and on going outside noticed Mr. Crosby's stockinged feet were covered with snow. "Crosby," he shouted, "you'll kill yourself if you keep on this way. You must get a steamboat."

It is to be noted that the first suggestion of such an improvement in the means of travel came from an officer of the Church. It apparently had never occurred to the missionary himself. About that time, too, friends in Ontario seemed to get the same idea and small donations began to come to Mr. Crosby. Later he went to that Province himself and began to raise funds for a mission boat. In the fall of 1884 he had funds in the bank almost sufficient to build a suitable boat. Thinking that he might be able to buy a boat in Seattle cheaper than it would cost to build one, he made a trip to that city. Being unsuccessful, he came back again to the Rev. Ebenezer Robson in New Westminster. His problem was the usual one for an aggressive missionary—not enough funds to carry out his project.

Meantime, William Oliver, having heard the sermon which Mr. Crosby had preached before he left for Seattle, had come to Mr. Robson, saying, "If that man who preached last Sunday night wants to build a mission boat, I'd like to build it for him." So when Mr. Crosby got back from his fruitless visit to Seattle, Mr. Robson told him of Oliver's visit and of his suggestion that he build a boat. To Mr. Crosby, "this was the Lord's doing," and he quickly availed himself of the offer.

The vessel, christened the *Glad Tidings*, was built at New Westminster that fall and was later taken to Victoria to have the engines installed. This little ship carried on a successful work along the coast

for more than twenty years. She was seventy-one feet long, with a beam of fifteen feet. She drew eight feet of water aft when light; her engines were steam of three hundred nominal horsepower. The engine-room was amidships, and forward of it was a freight hold. The fo'c'sle had accommodation for two crewmen. The cabin accommodation was astern and below decks. This arrangement was changed in 1892, when the cabins were placed on deck, an improvement for both passengers and crew. William Oliver put his very best into the building of the boat. He worked for less than one-half his usual wages and saved money for the Church, just as he continued to do for years afterwards.

Mr. Crosby was the skipper for some years and William Oliver served as engineer. Later, when Mr. Crosby was appointed to the Lower Fraser Indian Mission, Captain Oliver became the skipper. At all times he was invaluable in keeping the vessel safe while Mr. Crosby was ashore at meetings. An incident from the "Log" will illustrate this. Mr. Crosby had gone up the Nass River over the ice, leaving Captain Oliver in charge of the boat, which was anchored in Nass Harbour, a short distance below, where Crosby and his party had left their row-boats hauled out on the ice. Oliver spent the day getting wood and water aboard and in making everything shipshape. It was February 17, 1885, weather cloudy and cold, and both wind and cold were increasing. When Mr. Crosby returned to the boat next day, they ran around the point a little

lower down the river into what was well-named Icy Bay. Captain Oliver was on watch until midnight. Then Heber Douglas, an Indian, relieved him. At two a.m. Douglas called out that the anchor was dragging. Mr. Crosby continues in the Log:

"We were soon on deck to find that the wind had become so much stronger that it was breaking right into the bay and we were now adrift. As we neared the shore, which there was the steep side of the mountain, we paid out all the chain on the big anchor, and let go the kedge anchor as well with a long rope attached to it. This served to pull the vessel's head up into the wind. Meantime, Oliver got up steam. Our stern swung round, just clearing the rocky shore-line. The terrible wind continued to drift us up the bay.

"After steam was up we began to make some headway, but what a time in the terrible wind and freezing cold to get our anchors up. We worked hard and soon the kedge was hauled up, and almost instantly the deck was covered with frozen ropes. It took until eight a.m. to get back to the place from which we had drifted. There we put down both anchors, for by that time the wind gave us some heavy, hard strikes. Mr. Oliver kept fires under the boilers all day. The wind kept up until the next night, but toward morning on the following day it grew less and we got up our anchors and got out of the river."

The *Glad Tidings* left Victoria on her maiden

voyage on November 29, 1884. A few notes from the Log may help understand how Captain Oliver got his urge to be up early in the morning. Every missionary who ever worked with him has wondered about that. One of these men said: "I can't understand how it is that the tide is always right for Captain Oliver at four a.m." Let the record speak for itself:

"Dec. 4th, 1884, left at ten a.m. in the blinding snow storm.

5th, Left Duncan Bay at four-thirty a.m., moonlight and a strong S.E. wind.

6th, Heaved anchor at three-thirty a.m.; a fine clear morning.

7th, We were all roused before daylight by the church bell, and went ashore for prayer meeting.

8th, Rose at four a.m. and took wood and water aboard.

9th, Rose at two a.m. and left by moonlight.

10th, Weighed anchor at five a.m., weather thick and wet, struck a snag as we passed out of the bay.

11th, Rose at five-thirty a.m. and left for home—a grand time when we got there (to Port Simpson). The brass band was on the wharf to meet us and there was great joy as the people thought we had been lost. . . ."

No wonder that the ordinary missionary could not understand such driving necessity, but to William Oliver it was all in a day's work and indicated by the nature of the work to be done. I think that I may lay claim to the distinction of having broken the Captain off this early rising which for years always kept the missionary short of sleep. However, as I did not accomplish it until after the Captain was more than seventy years of age, there is not so much credit coming to me after all.

It was when we were in the Queen Charlotte Islands on the *Thomas Crosby III.* We had both been at the service in a logging camp. The Captain left when it was over, about nine p.m., and had gone aboard and to bed. I went to the home of the only married couple at the camp. As they had not seen anyone for a couple of months except the men in the camp, I spent some hours visiting with them, enjoying their hospitality. I returned to the boat about midnight. The Captain had told me never to mind getting up, since he would get the boat under way by himself. But when I heard him beginning to stir around at four a.m., I got up, hurriedly threw on some clothes, and was out on deck just as he was preparing to climb the ladder up the wharf to let go the lines.

In the Queen Charlotte Islands the rise and fall of the tide is much greater than it is farther down on the mainland coast. Often it meant climbing a ladder, slippery with seaweed, for twelve or sixteen feet in the darkness. I always felt that the old

Captain might slip and fall either to the deck or overboard. Then someone in the Church, having heard of the accident, would say, "Who was the missionary on board?" "Oh, that was Scott!" "Where was he?" "Oh, he was in bed." There would be no use trying to explain. Anyway, I could not bear the thought of anything happening to the old Captain. So I always got up. When he saw my determination and knew that I was working hard and doing with little sleep, he gradually rose later and later until at times it was seven o'clock before we got under way.

Chapter IV

MARINE MISSION WORK EXPANDS

SINCE Mr. Crosby and Captain Oliver now had a boat, they were freer to travel and to cover more territory than was formerly possible. They used the little mission steamer to station new missionaries on new fields as well as to visit missions already established. With Port Simpson as her home port, trips were made in all directions: up the Nass River; to the Queen Charlotte Islands; up Rivers Inlet; up Kitamaat Arm, and to most of the Indian villages on the coast.

In 1885, following a petition for a teacher at Gold Harbour, a Haida village on an island in Skidegate Inlet of the Queen Charlotte Islands, the *Glad Tidings* dropped anchor one day and put ashore a young Tsimpshean Indian, his wife and two young children. They with all their belongings were left on the beach. As the tide was falling, and at about half tide, the man and his wife carried their goods and chattels up the beach beyond high-water mark. The stove, however, was too much for them and it had to be left where it had been landed. The only message from the mission boat, which left as soon as the man was put ashore, was that given by Mr. Crosby: "Young man, don't let the grass grow on the path between your cabin and the forest." In

plain language that meant, "Young fellow, it is up to you. Pray your way through all difficulties in making entry into the hearts of these people."

George Edgar, the young man in question, was a recent convert. His people, the Tsimpsheans, were hereditary enemies of the Haidas, among whom he was thus unceremoniously left. How would he be received? He was not long left in doubt. For the young men of the village came to him and said: "The older chiefs are up at the Slate Chuck River. We have sent for them; until they return we do not know whether you may remain or not."

When the tide turned and began to approach the place where the stove had been left, Edgar appealed to the young men of the village. They came and carried the stove above the high-water mark, but they said again: "Don't think by this that you will be allowed to stay here." It was October and when the sun went down long shadows crept out from the hill behind the village. Smoke from the fires within poured through the roofs of the big houses and slowly faded into the darkness of the lowering night. The children were hungry, cold, and crying. Perhaps it was this that brought the young men again to the beach. They said: "It is not the custom of the Haidas to leave even their enemies without food or shelter. You may come up and have a corner of one of the big houses, but don't think from this that you will be allowed to remain." Not that night, nor the next day, but on the day following, the chiefs returned to the village. A big meeting was

held. There was much talk, but finally they agreed to give the young man a chance, although they had asked for a white teacher. George Edgar afterwards became a minister of the Methodist Church. This is his story of going to Gold Harbour to become the first missionary teacher as told to me at Klemtu, where he was the honoured pastor.

Other developments of the mission work in which the *Glad Tidings* played an important part were quite similar. A young Englishman, who had given up a good position in the Old Country to come to Canada, heard a sermon by Mr. Crosby in the old Gorge Road Methodist Church in Victoria. An earnest appeal was made for workers among the Indian people. Although he was in charge of the office at Grey's Lumber Mill, this man, later to become the Rev. W. H. Gibson, did not hesitate to volunteer for that work. Mr. Crosby accepted him as a "lay agent" and instructed him to go to Rivers Inlet in the place of Mr. Brett, who had given up mission work to become bookkeeper for the Rivers Inlet Cannery. Mr. Gibson arrived on the old steamer *Boscowitz* in 1891 and settled with his little family on the island at the head of Rivers Inlet.

What this meant to a pioneer missionary family may be seen from the picture drawn by one of his sons, who writes: "My mother really loved the Indian people, but was very nervous when left alone among them, as she often was when father was away visiting other villages. At the mission house there was a long verandah at the back of the building. I

remember one day in my father's absence about a dozen Indians, old and young, perched themselves on the railing all the afternoon, watching the white woman going about her work. Mother did not know 'Chinook,' the jargon used by whites and Indians at that time, nor did she know their own language. She was very much relieved as evening drew on when they decided they had seen enough. They were really friendly but she did not know that. On another occasion she prepared dinner for an Indian who had been cutting wood for us. My father was delayed in reaching home, so mother put the meal on the table and motioned to the man to help himself. He did, and there was nothing left for the rest of us."

A near tragedy occurred in the life of this family when an exceedingly high tide swept up the Inlet accompanied by a high wind. Mr. Gibson was once more away at his work. Again the son tells the story: "It was a Saturday afternoon in December and my mother and my grandmother had just finished the weekly baking. The water had risen almost to the door, as we were due to have a high tide about that time. It kept rising, however, and soon it covered the floor of the house. We began lifting things onto the tables and beds. Then some of the furniture began to float. My mother lifted the little folding organ onto a table and the rest of us were wading around saving this and that. Mother kept anxiously watching for father. Looking down the Inlet, we saw a heavy squall approach-

ing. Just then my father arrived in the nick of time. The rain began to fall in torrents and then the squall struck in all its fury. My father rowed around to the back of the house, and ran the bow of the boat into the window. We piled in and he took us in two loads to a bank higher up in the woods behind the house. Then he and I returned to try and save the bedding and some food. It was all in vain. The giant waves threatened to engulf the house and we were compelled to get away with only a few packages of food and some of the bedding. We spent the greater part of the afternoon under the root of a fallen spruce tree, but by dark the wind had gone down some and we were able to get across to Grant's house on the sawmill side of the river. There we spent the next week or two.

"We were practically destitute, having lost all our furniture and household goods. A big log had crashed through the house and mud and silt covered the floors. The Indians had been accustomed to bringing father their money for safekeeping. In the excitement, the box in which this cash was kept was forgotten. There was three hundred dollars in all, in gold and silver coins. The box was never seen again, but for days the Indians kept digging in the sand for the money. It seems incredible, but finally every coin was found and returned to my father. Who says the Indians are not to be trusted?"

The *Glad Tidings*, with Captain Oliver and Mr. Crosby aboard, came more or less regularly to visit

this pioneer missionary family. On one such occasion, they asked Mr. Gibson to go with them aboard the mission boat some twelve miles down the Inlet to Brunswick Cannery. They promised to bring him back the next morning, but very early that day Captain Oliver came to him and said that Mr. Crosby thought they had not time to take him home. Left to his own resources, he found an old canoe, fashioned paddles out of a piece of board, and started on the long row back. A heavy wind came up and soon he was in difficulty. The canoe began to leak and he had hard work keeping it afloat. Finally a cannery boat, the *Flora*, came along and rescued him in the nick of time. The canoe swamped immediately and Mr. Gibson was in a state of exhaustion. The son added to this, "My mother did not think this was right on Mr. Crosby's part." Well, in that day, nothing mattered but the work.

Even in those early days the *Glad Tidings* was representative of the attitude of the Church toward the liquor traffic. On Sunday, May 26, 1889, the Log entry is as follows: "Went ashore at Cape Mudge and held service. Found many of the Indians drunk and one man badly hurt. Was informed that a coloured man and a white man had been there the day before with a boat load of whisky." "There were several fights during the day; held service again at night."

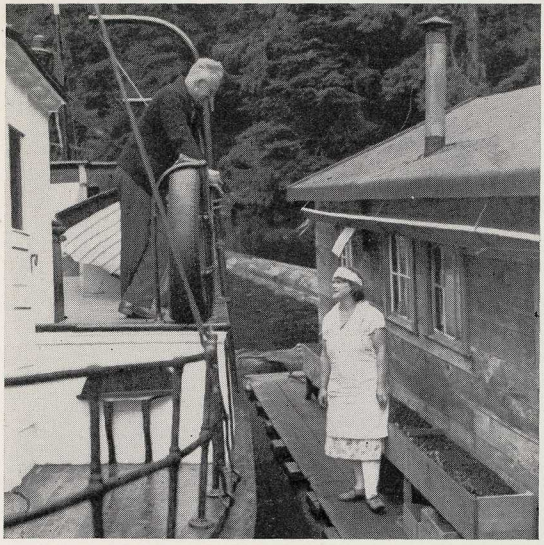
Next morning, the *Glad Tidings* left at three-thirty and reached Green Point village farther up the coast

at seven a.m. The Indians after service told Mr. Crosby about the men with the whisky schooner. They found them both in the woods where they had hidden. The culprits were taken aboard the *Glad Tidings* and down to Alert Bay, where they were placed under arrest. Chief Billy Assu of Cape Mudge, who was then a young man of about twenty, remembers this event and became a strong enemy of the drink traffic. He told me that often he went to the beach with a shotgun and warned the whisky schooners to keep away from the village. This may serve to connect the life and work of Chief Assu, who is still living, with the activities of the *Glad Tidings*. The missionaries have been a great help to his people and laid the foundations for the later development, which has made of Cape Mudge one of the model villages on the British Columbia Coast.

An interesting sidelight of the work of the *Glad Tidings* about this time shows the varied character of the work done. The Christian Indians, who under Father Duncan of the Anglican Church had built a fine new village at Metlakatlah not far from what afterwards became the city of Prince Rupert, were having trouble with the missionary authorities of that Church with headquarters in England. Father Duncan, the first Protestant missionary on that northern coast, appealed to the American Government for land in Alaska. This being granted to him, the *Glad Tidings* was called on to assist in the removal of the people of the village to their new home in Alaska, some eighty miles away.

Several trips were made by the *Glad Tidings*, under Captain Oliver, with as many as sixty-six Indian canoes in tow at one time. The new site of this village was at Port Chester on Annette Island. I heard the Rev. Stanley Jones tell of being entertained there within the last year. He described the comfortable homes, wide streets, and community institutions of that fine town in the North. He also said that, being a white man, he had been given quarters in the community hall provided for such people—where they could be watched. Some, at least, of the native people have not the same idea of white superiority as some among ourselves evidently have.

I have just come, March, 1947, from a sacred concert in Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver. It was given by a choir of thirty-six voices under their own native conductor, with their own native organist, from the Duncan Memorial Church in this same Alaskan village. The choir members were the grandsons and granddaughters of the pioneers whom the *Glad Tidings* towed from their old home on the northern British Columbia Coast to their new home, as yet an unbroken forest at Port Chester. Their minister, who travelled with the choir, told us that they had two reasons for making the tour, which took them as far south as Los Angeles, California. First, that they might renew friendships with the men of the United States and Canadian armed forces whom they had entertained in their village during the war; and second,



Captain Scott on the "Thomas Crosby" makes a call at a floating cabin

Captain and Mrs. Oliver in cabin of "Thomas Crosby"

to give a demonstration of the value of mission work, and of the power of the Gospel message to change the lives of people who seventy years before were mainly pagan.

The highlight of their tour had come when they sang in the legislative chamber in the capital of the State of Oregon, the legislature having adjourned to hear them. As I listened to the "Gloria" from Mozart's "Twelfth Mass," Gounod's "Sanctus," Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," and the plaintive Negro Spiritual, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" the latter sung, unaccompanied, by the men of the choir with great emotional appeal, there came to me a vision of those fifty canoes filled with quiet, determined folk who, on August 26, 1887, had left their homes and gone out to a new country to find freedom of worship. In imagination I could see the feather of white at the bow of each canoe as it plowed along in the wake of the *Glad Tidings*, on whose wheel was the steady hand of William Oliver. I thrilled at the faith and courage of the forefathers of the singers, and could see why the darkness and the uncertainty of the days ahead were dispelled, as the choir sang with rising crescendo Mallotte's "The Lord's Prayer": "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever, Amen!" and the Scripture came to mind: "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Chapter V

THE *GLAD TIDINGS* LOST—OLIVER BUILDS *UDAL*

IN APRIL, 1896, William Oliver was married to Miss Agnes Calder by Mr. Crosby at his home in Port Simpson. This young woman was a daughter of Stephen Calder, one of the first converts among the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands. As a little girl she had often gone with her people in their large canoes to the fishing grounds on the Fraser River, or to Victoria. These great canoes hewn out of single cedar trees were many of them from fifty to sixty feet in length and propelled by oars and two sails. They were so wide that the crew could sleep crosswise of the boat. For days the people would wait at the Skedans Islands just below Cumshewa Inlet, on the east coast of the Queen Charlottes, for a favourable south-west wind. When it came, they set off on their perilous trip across fifty miles of open water in Hecate Strait. There was great rejoicing when they arrived at Bonilla Island and anchored safely.

Many a time the *Glad Tidings* called at Agnes Calder's home village at old Clue. She had been among the young people of the village who had heard Captain Oliver lead in the singing of hymns.

The first time she ever saw him he sang for them the hymn which so well expressed his own experience:

I've found a friend in Jesus,
He's everything to me—

So great was the enthusiasm which his evident earnestness and devotion inspired, that before long the young people learned it, and the song became one of their favourite hymns. She had seen him at other times, too. When her mother had sold her ceremonial blankets and other equipment for the old-time celebrations to Mr. Crosby, Captain Oliver had come to their home to carry these articles on board the *Glad Tidings*. "But," she said, "I thought him such a strange man, he spoke never a word to anyone."

Agnes Calder went to Port Simpson Girls' Home as a pupil and was taken under the care and tuition of Mrs. Crosby. There she learned to cook and to keep house. Some time later Captain Oliver took eighteen months off from the *Glad Tidings* and went to new Clue, where Agnes and her parents had gone to live. This was a Christian village, and its little church, the result of the work of Mr. Crosby, Captain Oliver and the Indians, was an outstanding influence for good. Captain Oliver, always practical in his interest in the native people, during his time ashore erected a plant for the extraction of oil from the livers of the dog-fish which were very plentiful in the near-by waters. The Oilery, as it was called, made no small contribution to the welfare

of the people during the time when they would otherwise have been unemployed.

Although labour unions were unknown at that time, Captain Oliver had his troubles. His crew of seven men refused to work any longer unless he secured a new cook. Quite a modern approach, that! And so it was that the Captain in his difficulty thought of the young woman who had been trained by Mrs. Crosby in the Girls' Home at Port Simpson. He asked her if she would take over the cooking for the crew. She agreed, and so well did she manage that not only were there no further labour troubles, but the Captain became more than interested in her himself. From October until the following May she did fine work as cook for the men. After that she worked in the general store which the Captain had established for the convenience of the people. During this time they became better acquainted and after more than two years had passed Captain Oliver asked her to become his wife.

As the years passed the fine character of this native woman became more and more evident. Over and over again she proved a helpmeet in deed and truth. In fact, all his best friends know that, had it not been for this quiet, unassuming and practical woman, Captain Oliver in his old age would not likely have had a roof over his head. She it was who became his good steward and saw that something at least of what he earned was put aside for a rainy day. Otherwise all of it, in

accordance with his usual habits, would have gone to the support of the missionary enterprise, or to someone whom he thought more needy than himself. In addition to being a good financier, she was a good housekeeper. Oh! what apple pie she could make! For forty years she shared his joys and sorrows and won a place of respect and esteem in the hearts of all who knew her. She is now living in Vancouver with her son.

Soon after their marriage the Olivers went to Port Simpson, where they lived for some time in the mission house. The life there, as related by Mr. Jack Gibson, now of Powell River, B.C., reminds one of the early days of the Methodist Movement in England when classes were arranged for young children by John Wesley. "We were called every morning," says Mr. Gibson, "soon after five o'clock and were given a portion of the New Testament scriptures to read. After that we were allotted a portion of the *Christian Guardian*, all of this before breakfast. Captain Oliver was there at that time; it was his job to get gravel hauled up from the beach for the paths leading to the school and the mission house. He was no slave-driver but got the work done by 'kidding' us along. Many a time in those days I sat by him in the rather noisy, but devout, evangelistic meetings which invariably ended the Sunday. Although Captain Oliver was not the emotional type, he showed devout concern in those meetings."

Some years after his marriage, disaster overtook

the *Glad Tidings*, which had been the life and interest of Captain Oliver for nearly twenty years. The vessel had been repaired at near-by Georgetown, but needed engine overhaul as well. This could only be done in those days at Victoria. Arrangements were made to have the vessel towed to the south by the *S.S. Boscowitz*. During a stormy passage across Queen Charlotte Sound a bad leak developed. When Shushartie, on the southern side of the Sound, was reached, it was decided to leave the mission vessel until the next trip. The storekeeper was to pump out the boat and have it in shape for the *Boscowitz* on her next trip. Before this could be done a raging sou'-easter tore her away from anchorage and piled her up on the rocky beach. There the pounding seas quickly reduced the vessel to a hopeless wreck. For many years after this event in 1903 the timbers of the boat, which had been named by the natives on the West Coast the "Come to Jesus" ship, whitened with the seasons. The sight was merely of passing interest to the traveller who knew nothing of its history, but it was a spot made sacred by memories to many who knew her in the prime of her activities as the first mission vessel to plow the waters of the Northern Pacific.

After a stay at Port Simpson of about a year, Captain and Mrs. Oliver moved to Victoria, where he became first officer on the *S.S. Boscowitz*. It was hard for him to forget the work of the Church. He fretted constantly during the seven months he was aboard this ship. Finally, at a cannery on Rivers

Inlet, they loaded salmon all Sunday afternoon. On his return to Victoria, he said to his wife, "Agnes, it's not right, I have promised my God that I would quit." This he did. The *Boscowitz* was in a sense one of the forerunners of the present Union S.S. fleet. There is no doubt, had the Captain been interested in a good position, he would have become one of the outstanding skippers of the company. But his heart was in mission work.

However, at the time there seemed no opening and no chance of another mission boat, so he and Mrs. Oliver returned north. He became a partner along with Dr. W. T. Kergin, Mr. Richards, teacher of the Boys' School at Port Simpson, and others in the *S.S. Nell*, a small freighter of one hundred and fifty tons used in the coasting trade. For four years Captain Oliver was master aboard her. During these years trips were made to Alaska, to the Queen Charlotte Islands, and to mainland points as far south as Seattle. The cargo was principally coal, oil and box lumber for the canneries. This lumber came from the Georgetown sawmill.

At the time of one of these voyages to Alaska "Soapy" Smith was in his hey-day there. On another voyage to the Queen Charlotte Islands two well-preserved totem poles were brought from Clue on Moresby Island. These were delivered to Tacoma for shipment to the Smithsonian Institute. On still another voyage to the Queen Charlottes, a load of cattle was taken over. As there was no

wharf at Sandspit, they were thrown overboard to swim ashore under their own power. During my time there was a herd of wild cattle deep in the wilds of Graham Island. They were said to be offspring of this herd.

Life on the *Nell* took on the pattern of the Captain's religious beliefs. Ship's prayers were not conducted, but, doubtless, the men objected to having to anchor from Saturday at midnight until five minutes after twelve on Sunday night. The engineer had orders for a full head of steam at that time. Sometimes the Captain was caught too far away from a settlement to attend a service and he spent the day in meditation, Bible reading and prayer. John Gibson, a member of the crew of the Nell, writes: "When I took my trick at the wheel during the Captain's watch, he spent the time sitting behind me at his charts, but mostly in reading his well-worn Bible."

It was one of the Captain's outstanding characteristics which was the real cause of the loss of the *Nell*. The vessel had undergone repairs at Georgetown, having been lengthened and fitted with twin engines. She was then really a tidy little vessel and left Georgetown for Victoria, where a survey was to have been made by the Marine Underwriters. Just as he left Georgetown, the Captain took in tow a couple of Indian canoes. These his generosity urged him to take part way down the coast—something, as Dr. W. T. Kergin said, he was under no obligation to do. When they reached Tugwell

Island, some ten miles west of Prince Rupert, the sou'-easter which was blowing had increased to such an extent that it was impossible to go farther. So the Captain ran up under the shelter of the island. When he gave the order to go astern just before anchoring, some carelessness on the part of the man left to look after the tow-lines of the canoes resulted in their being wrapped around the propeller. The ship was rendered helpless. Soon after, the vessel dragged her anchor and went ashore on Ryan's Point, a mile or so astern of their anchorage.

After being refloated, a boat was secured to tow her back to Georgetown, but tragedy befell the vessel. The wind had hauled into the north by the time the return was attempted and they were obliged to take shelter behind Hodgkins' Reef. In a short time the wind again veered into the sou'-east. While they were still some six miles away from their home port, the *Nell* snapped her tow-line and crashed on Jap Point, a rocky, dangerous reef which juts far out to sea. Very soon the vessel was damaged beyond repair. Following the loss of the *Nell*, Captain Oliver went to Skidegate in the Queen Charlotte Islands and acquired the oilery there. This plant he ran for six years. Then the timber excitement at Moresby Island stirred his Scotch interest and he secured a tract on the northern shore of the Island across from the village of Skidegate, not far from where he afterwards made his home on the Sandspit side.

As American interests bought up more and more timber, he sold part of his holdings and put six thousand dollars of the money into the building of a mission boat to replace the old *Glad Tidings*. That he might never have his money returned, because the Church would fail to buy the boat, did not bother the man in the least. The work could not be done without a boat. He had the money. Even if the Church was not interested, what did it matter? He left the building of the vessel to two men in New Westminster while he went home to Scotland, where he visited his mother and other members of his family. Some of them he brought back with him. He also brought a complete outfit for the new boat, blankets, curtains for the port-holes, kitchen materials, a lot of brass fittings and other valuable materials such as his wife told me were not suited for a mission boat. "They were far too expensive" in her estimation. Be that as it may, the boat ran only seven months after her first trip in December, 1908, and was lost during a voyage in northern waters. The missionary aboard was a Mr. Webber, who, with Captain Oliver, made up the entire crew. The boat was fitted with a first-class gasoline engine and was named the *Udal*, a Haida word which means, "The dearest thing I possess."

The story of the loss of this boat has been told before, but never correctly. It has been stated that it struck an "uncharted rock." This was quite true, for the mariners' charts do not show the cliffs of the shore-line as dangers to navigation. The

truth is, according to the Captain's own story, that he left the wheel for a moment to take a look at the engine. Just then, as they were close inshore to avoid the strong head tide, the boat took a sheer before he could do anything to avoid it and hit the shore, which was there very steep. So great was the force with which she struck, the planking was sprung away from the stem. The water rushed in and the boat sank in a matter of minutes, giving the Captain and Mr. Webber time only to get into the dinghy, saving nothing but the clothes they were wearing.

They rowed back along the shore some five miles to where a white man lived in a cabin with his Indian wife. There the shipwrecked men were kindly entertained. A trip was made to the scene of the wreck, but no trace could be found of the fine little vessel, which had been truly named by her master and owner, "The Dearest Thing I Possess." As the boat had not been taken over by the Church, the entire loss fell upon this man who, when he became a follower of the Lord, had given Him his all. When he sang the hymn which he had taught to the Haida Indians at Clue—

I've found a Friend in Jesus,
He's everything to me—

he manifested a spirit which could never count as too important the loss of any earthly possession

Chapter VI

SCOTT JOINS OLIVER—FRIEND OF LIGHTHOUSE-KEEPERS

THE loss of the *Udal* and the self-sacrifice so manifest through the devotion of her owner made such an impression on the Church that within three years another boat had been found to take the place of that fine vessel. The new boat was purchased from a fishery inspector, who with his wife had made their home on board. It was nicely fitted up and was called by its owners, the *Homespun*. The boat was forty-five feet in length and had a gasoline engine of twenty horsepower, which gave it a speed of some eight knots. There were some really interesting things about the *Homespun*. One was that, the cabin accommodation being somewhat limited, the missionary had to sleep in what was really an extension of the main cabin that ran back under the main deck. A curtain gave privacy, but it was not possible to stand upright when once inside.

Many of the celebrities of the Church of that day slept in that room. These included Dr. G. H. Raley and the Rev. James Allen, at that time the General Secretary for Home Missions. There was one thing about the room, however, that was evidently to the liking of the missionary aboard

the boat but not to the Captain. It extended so far in that, when the missionary got in and off to sleep, it was very difficult for the Captain to rout him out at four a.m. This, in turn, brought another of the old skipper's ingenuities into play.

Captain Oliver, even in my day, always made the porridge. It was made promptly at seven a.m. and never before. The fact that we might have been running all night made no difference. There were no snacks or mugs of coffee at midnight on his ships. Not until *seven a.m.* did the fire go on and the porridge pot settle down to produce that breakfast item without which the day for the Captain would have been hopelessly spoiled. So, when the Captain could not get the missionary up, after he had had his breakfast, he put the porridge back on the stove and burned it beyond recognition.

When the young man arrived on the scene, the main item on the breakfast menu on mission boats where the Captain was aboard was completely spoiled. What the missionary did under the circumstances is not known. But it is a matter of fact that, one day after a particularly poor breakfast, he told an interested family group ashore, who did not by any means allow him to guess that they knew the Captain, that "that old man on the mission boat is hopeless; why, he can't even make decent porridge." As the story goes, later on that evening the Captain ambled along to visit his niece and her husband. They said to him, "What old man have you got on the mission boat who

cannot even make decent porridge?" The Captain only grinned and had nothing to say. The strategy worked, and ever after that the young man, in self-defence, got up when he was called. Strange to say, too, the porridge was always good.

My personal experience with Captain Oliver began about this time in the history of our marine work. I had been sent to the Coast under doctor's orders after a rather bad breakdown in mission work on the prairies in 1913. My doctor said to me, "When you get to Vancouver, be sure and go to see my uncle. He is a great missionary." When I got settled in the city, I went over one evening to see this man, none other than Dr. A. E. Bolton, the great pioneer of medical mission work on this west coast. Ill health at that time had made it necessary for him to retire from active practice, but his zeal for the work of the Church was unabated. It was only natural that, after some conversation on such matters, the doctor should say, "You're just the man we want for this Crosby marine work. It is too bad we can't see Captain Oliver." It may seem strange that I should be led in this way into contact with one of the great pioneers of mission work on the Coast and at a time when I was free to entertain the idea of the marine work. It may seem strange, too, that within a half hour after Dr. Bolton had said that to me, the old Captain should come to the door.

Of course, it goes without saying that Captain Oliver agreed perfectly with Dr. Bolton. It was

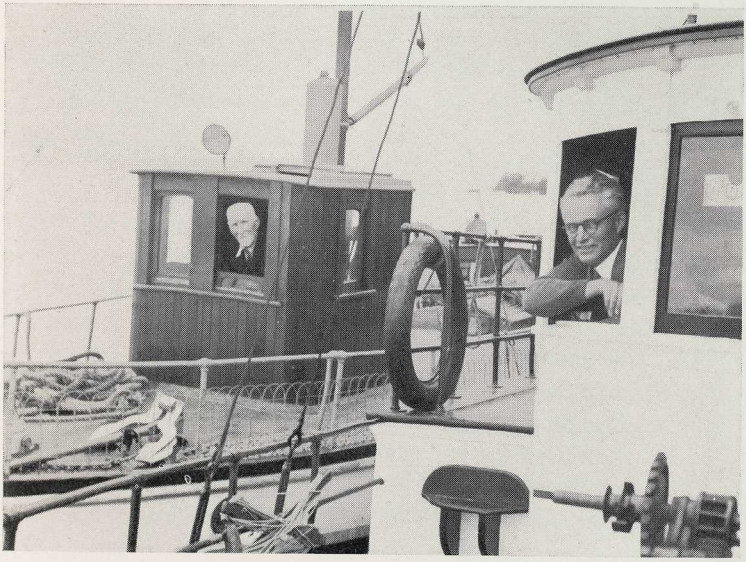
arranged that I should come down to the boat the next morning to meet the Rev. J. H. White, Superintendent of Home Missions, and to enjoy a trip—my first one—on salt water. That was quite a trip and it illustrates another quality of the Captain to which one had to become accustomed if he were to take steps in time to avoid trouble.

I was standing on the deck of the *Homespun* before we left Vancouver and noticed just forward of the pilot-house two tins of gasoline. Knowing nothing at all about such things at the time, it never occurred to me that any particular significance attached to the tins. There were three ministers aboard with Dr. White en route to Howe Sound to look into some matter concerning Home Missions. We had just reached Point Atkinson, at the entrance of the eastern arm of the Sound, when all at once the engine stopped. There was a nasty short sea running and in a few minutes the boat was rolling helplessly in the trough of the waves. All the ministers were sick with the exception of Dr. White. The Captain and his helper, a young lad, worked away at the engine. They disconnected fuel pipes, etc., but could get no gasoline. All at once the Captain's head appeared at the door of the pilot-house. He threw a funnel and a monkey-wrench to me as I braced myself against the wall of the pilot-house and, pointing to the tins of gasoline, he said, "Here! put that in there"—pointing at the same time to the deck-plate which covered the pipe to the gas tanks.

While I was busy pouring the gasoline down the funnel, Dr. White came up and took a look at what was going on. He knew what had happened, but to his great credit he said never a word. Going below, he tried to comfort the seasick clergymen with the good news that we were soon to be under way again. The others, however, had had enough of it and decided to return to the city. After tying up at the dock, they ate the lunch which they had intended having at Howe Sound. They were gradually getting back to normal when one of the ministers, who was responsible for a college the finances of which were at times a matter of concern, remarked that if he had been at home that day he would have had to face a note at the bank. Another quipped, "Well, you had to cough up just the same."

The *Homespun* did good work for some three years. Then the Church, having responded to the zeal of her leaders, decided to do something worthwhile in marine mission work to honour the great pioneer, the Rev. Thomas Crosby, as well as provide adequate means of carrying it on. So the *Homespun* was sold and in 1912 a fine vessel was built, to be named the *Thomas Crosby*. This ship was eighty-three feet in length, with a beam of eighteen and one-half feet and was of one hundred and sixty-six tons gross burden. Fitted with steam engines, the boat was powerful enough for work any place on the coast and at any time. The ship was quite a contrast to the Indian canoes, manned by his native

Floating village at lumbering camp



Captain Oliver on "Udal" with Captain Scott on "Thomas Crosby"

friends, with which Dr. Crosby carried on his work for years.

At times four services were carried on at once by this vessel at large canneries. The missionary spoke to the white people; the Japanese deckhand gathered his countrymen together in another place and spoke to them; the Chinese cook did the same for his friends; and Captain Oliver talked to the Indians in the Chinook jargon which he knew so well. This fine vessel carried on the work for some three years after her launching in 1912. In addition, services were held at all points from Vancouver to the Queen Charlotte Islands. Through an arrangement with the Department of Marine and Fisheries of the Dominion Government, a subsidy was granted to the ship. In return for this, regular calls were to be made at the lighthouses, carrying mail to them not less often than once a month.

By this arrangement Captain Oliver's interest in the men and women of the lighthouse service was indulged to the point of delight. He said to me one day in later years, "Robert, never pass up a lighthouse. You never know what may have happened." This was before the day of radios and radar stations and for many weeks lighthouse-keepers were left to their own resources. Many are the stories which can be told of the days when this fine steam vessel served in the work of the Church. The *Thomas Crosby* called one day at an isolated lighthouse, one that frequently could not be visited

at all owing to its exposed position. They heard that the lightkeeper and his young lady friend wanted to get married. It was necessary to have a marriage licence. So a member of the crew was put ashore to look after the light. Then the lightkeeper and the young lady were taken some forty miles down the coast to the nearest place where a licence could be obtained and the wedding performed. On the return journey to the lighthouse a marriage supper was served on board. The cake had been baked while en route and a very happy time was enjoyed by all, both newlyweds and the crew.

But the story does not end here. Something over a year later the wife, now expecting her first baby, was helping her husband get mail and supplies ashore. She was running the gasoline engine which operated the hoist. Her husband's row-boat with him on board was being pulled up. It was about half-way up, some thirty feet from the water, when the engine failed. Her efforts to start it were too much for a woman in her condition. When she saw her husband begin the long climb, hand over hand up the hoisting cable, it was too much for her nerves and she collapsed. The husband reached the top of the derrick and made the perilous descent to the platform in safety. He carried the insensible form of his wife to the house. There, before morning, her baby was born with no one but himself to care for her.

Would you say that it just "happened" that the *Thomas Crosby* came along early that morning. At any rate she did, and the Captain and a helper went ashore in the row-boat while the *Crosby* anchored near-by. It was decided that the wife must be taken to Alert Bay, forty miles distant, where medical and hospital services could be obtained. The weather was threatening and the lighthouse was in such an exposed position that haste was necessary, if they were to get off to the *Crosby* before the waves got any bigger. The woman was put on a door, the nearest approach to a stretcher that was available. She was made as comfortable as possible with blankets and pillows and was, as they thought, securely fastened on. The boat with its precious burden and the Captain and his helper one at each end was being lowered away from the landing platform, when suddenly the woman began to struggle. She got loose from her safety bonds and was in mortal danger of going overboard, for she was somewhat delirious. Fortunately, the husband got the boat hoisted back to the platform in safety. They were making the fastening more secure when signals from the *Crosby* drew attention to the fact that the tide had turned and it was now too dangerous to make the attempt. The woman was taken back to the lighthouse, while the Captain and his helper managed to get back on board the *Crosby*. They heaved anchor at once and got under way, leaving the husband and his wife alone for another night.

Making back to Alert Bay, they picked up a nurse and left again at daybreak for the lighthouse. On arrival, they found that the seas had subsided somewhat and the nurse and the Captain went ashore. After receiving attention, the woman was once more placed in the row-boat, this time upon a proper stretcher, and safely lowered away, and so taken aboard the *Crosby*. The run to Alert Bay was made as quickly as possible and the mother was placed in St. George's Hospital. After some months' care I saw her and her baby, both of them well, leave once more for their isolated lighthouse home. She was taken there by the Rev. T. C. Colwell aboard his mission boat, the *William Oliver*.

It is not at all strange that the people at that lighthouse never wanted to see the mission boat pass without calling. It was my privilege one summer morning a few years later to row in from the *Thomas Crosby III*, while the boat stood by a little way out to sea. The blue of the sky was reflected from the mirror-like surface of the long ocean dead swells which rolled in from Queen Charlotte Sound to dash themselves against the steep sides of the island in a smother of spume which flung itself upward from the rocky shore-line. The lightkeeper's wife came to the top of the bluff with her little son by her side. A tame deer gambolled near by and the white walls of the lighthouse made a pleasing contrast against the background of dark firs. I rowed in as close as I dared and carried on a conversation with the lady of the light. Naturally it centred on the welfare of the

Captain and the regret that weather conditions made it impossible to land. "Never pass by a lighthouse, Robert. You never know what may have happened," was a maxim that, in this case when acted upon, bore fine results.

Another story concerns a wedding at a lighthouse about half-way up the British Columbia Coast between Vancouver and Prince Rupert. It shows the degree of confidence that some, at least, of these folks had in Captain Oliver. The widow of the lightkeeper, she had lived there for over forty years, was much worried that her son, who was now lightkeeper, had little or no chance to meet young women. He was getting on a bit in years and she saw no future for him unless he might be so happy as to get a wife and companion. In her trouble, she turned to Captain Oliver, not once but almost every time the *Thomas Crosby* visited their lighthouse. The old lady, whose motherly heart was so disturbed, became the more insistent as the months passed. Finally, Captain Oliver, armed with a photograph of the son, consented to try to interest a young woman in him.

The Captain chuckled as he told me how he went first of all to Rev. G. H. Raley, the Principal of Coqualeetza Residential School at Sardis. Having so many worthy young women on his staff, it seemed a good place to make inquiries. Dr. Raley was somewhat amused as he tried to forecast the reactions of the lady members of his staff. Nevertheless, he said he would call them in one by one and see if

any of them expressed an interest. He did so, but the Captain reported to me that not one of them treated the matter seriously. I might say that the Captain, having given his word, took the matter very seriously. Not to be defeated so easily, he next went to the officer in charge of the Salvation Army in Vancouver. That gentleman referred him to the matron of their Home for Girls in the city. Diffidently, but resolutely, Captain Oliver presented himself at the office of the matron. "She was a big woman, with a wealth of white hair, and when I told her what I wanted, she said, 'Oh, would I do?' " Then she became serious and said, "Well, there is a young woman on our staff who has had a rather trying disappointment. Her young man, who went overseas, forgot her and has married an English girl. I'll mention it to her. She is alone in the city."

She did speak to her. The upshot of the matter was that the young woman said that in a couple of weeks she would be willing to pay a visit to the lighthouse and see the mother and her son. Captain Oliver was delighted and a date for the arrival of the young lady was fixed. As soon as he returned up the coast, he went to an old friend, the owner of a near-by cannery. The lighthouse was about ten miles from the cannery, and he gave his friend strict orders to meet the young woman upon arrival of the steamer. He was to keep her as his guest until he could send a boat to the lighthouse. After that, if she sent him word, he was to go out for her, bring

her back to the cannery and take care of her until she could get the first steamer back to the city. All this was duly agreed to by the canneryman. At the time specified the young lady arrived. She was kept as a guest until a boat was available to take her to the lighthouse.

Upon her arrival she was given a hearty welcome. To make a long story short, it all appealed to her and upon the return trip of the *Crosby* the two young people were married by the missionary on board the mission boat. Like all such stories, they lived happily ever after. That, in this case, is no mere matter of words, for a happier home would be hard to find. During the recent World War II this good lady became the No. 1 Red Cross worker of the whole Ocean Falls District and received special mention for her outstanding achievement.

The mother lived for some years after this. Whenever the mission boat called, she would be waiting at the end of the table in the sitting-room. She had become blind in her later years, but her first question, always the same and put to the missionary as soon as he entered the room, was, "How is Captain Oliver?" Following that, the inquiries would be for the wife of the missionary, for Dr. Darby, thinking always of everyone but herself. And when she smiled, her face shone with the light of an unselfish heart, bright as the sunshine chasing cloud shadows from golden grain fields. The missionary never left without a sense of deep humility and the feeling that blessing had been

conferred on him even as he tried to bring the comfort of the Gospel to this home at one of our British Columbia lighthouses.

The first World War had far-reaching effects even on activities far removed from its centres of action. The *S.S. Thomas Crosby*, being an oil-burning vessel, became very expensive to operate owing to the rise in the price of fuel oil. In addition, supplies became limited and some members of her crew enlisted. So, when the Department of Marine and Fisheries made a good offer to charter the vessel, it was accepted. Later the *Crosby* was sold to the Government and the money from the sale was set aside by the Church to provide smaller boats which could work the coast-line more intensively than could one larger vessel with such a large itinerary to make.

While the *Thomas Crosby* was under charter to the Department of Marine and Fisheries, Captain Oliver remained aboard as skipper. One evening they tied up at the wharf at Port Simpson. The Captain, as was his custom when in mission work, went up to the Home carried on by the Woman's Missionary Society of our Church for Indian girls to spend the evening visiting the staff members. Just before he left, one of the staff members said to him, "Well, Captain, I suppose you will be off at four o'clock tomorrow morning as usual!" The Captain, with a twinkle in his blue eyes, said, "Oh, no, Miss M., we don't leave until eight o'clock. We're not working for the Lord now, we're working

for the Government." This was a sample of the quiet humour which lay deep in the heart of this man. It came out in unsuspected moments, and always with the same laughter-making power.

Chapter VII

SCOTT TAKES OVER THE *IWYLL*

IT was a good thing that I was not accepted as missionary aboard the new *S.S. Thomas Crosby*. I would never have been able to stand the physical strain in keeping up with the driving energy of Captain Oliver. With a fine new boat, hours of work would have meant nothing to him. During daylight and long before, the vessel would have been under way in carrying on the work to which he had dedicated his life. Mere inconvenience or the necessity of keeping on the go would have meant nothing to him. My association with the Captain at this time was quite short. I did not see him again after the breakdown of the *Homespun* off Point Atkinson until some time in 1913, when I had been stationed at Howe Sound.

One day the *Crosby* came in to Gibson's Landing en route north. My brother and I went aboard and went as far as Sechelt, then walked the fifteen miles back by road. As we came along, we saw for the first time the streams along the route filled with salmon from bank to bank. It was quite unbelievable to us, who had never seen a salmon before, certainly not in its native waters. But there were other experiences for me at Gibson's Landing. It was there I got my first boat and learned something

about the sea. I knew nothing about either one up to that time. I had lived on the banks of the Saugeen River in old Ontario as a boy and could handle a row-boat with the best. But a gas boat was something else! I had never even been aboard one until the trip on the *Homespun.*

It was while I was at Gibson's Landing, too, that a great blessing came into my life with my marriage to Miss Millie Wakefield. For all these years she has shared in many a strenuous trip in marine mission work. While at Howe Sound we made trips to all parts of that lovely piece of water. Lovely, that is, when the Squamish winds are not blowing in the winter-time.

On one trip, as we returned after visiting all the settlers on Gambier and other near-by islands, the boat suddenly developed a bad leak. It took all my time pumping to keep the water from getting over the floor. We thought we might have to beach her in Long Bay, but I found that by pumping hard for five minutes, I could rest for two. So we kept on for Gibson's, six miles away. I stood by at the pump and Mrs. Scott steered. After a very anxious time of it, we reached the Landing and ran the boat into shallow water, where it promptly sank. Had I had more experience, I would have known that what happened was that a packing had worn out of the gland in the stuffing-box on the tail-shaft. It is possible I could have done something about it. However, we were fortunate and reached home safely. The late Dr. Carruthers, of the Presby-

terian Church, told me once that it was his firm conviction that marine missionaries were a special charge of Providence. It might be true at that.

At Gibson's Landing the church was enlarged and a parsonage built. Work at Bowen Island and other points was carried on. Roberts Creek was worked by boat when weather permitted, and by bicycle when it was too rough to venture out on the waters of the Gulf. But, better than all else, I had a first-class training in meeting loggers, fishermen, and other men who worked in the forest and fishing industries. In our community there was a settlement of Finnish folk. They were fine people, but were definitely Socialists. In fact, as there were halls of the two main Socialist groups in Canada near-by, I got a post-graduate course in Marxian philosophy which has stood me in good stead through the years.

One of the leaders in one of these parties became a great friend of mine. He told me that he had never been to school except for a short time when he was eight years of age. From twelve years until he was eighteen, he said, his principal occupations were mining coal and drinking whisky. He then decided he was hurting only himself, and he began to study. After a while he was able to read the latest French novels, but became disinterested and began to read the Socialist literature of the day. Many a long talk did we have together. His constant regret, however, was that a new order was impossible without revolution by force. "Because,"

as he said, "the human animal won't learn." As we talked of the problem, I began a long way off to lead him a long way around to my standpoint as a Christian and as one who believed in the power of Christ to change human hearts. But he usually saw me coming and, just before I reached the place where he would have to answer my statement of the case, he would say, "Now, you know there are some things upon which we cannot agree." So it was left. I felt that here was a real man, one who was wrestling with life's problems and not simply drifting.

We are all influenced by our experiences. He told me once that he had been a believer in God until the day he climbed a couple of hundred feet to the top of a bluff on the sea-shore in search of work at a logging camp. He had been refused work and had been told to get out of the camp. As he tried to make his way down a logging chute to the beach, he had fallen and had rolled right to the bottom. Getting up bruised and discouraged, he said that he had cursed God and had lost all belief that He was interested in us humans. I felt greatly drawn to this man and did so wish that he might know Jesus, through whom we know God and by whom he might have had the "peace of God which passeth understanding." But, as he set the limit of his own understanding as the gauge of all that was to be allowed entrance to his life and heart, he went on through the years a solitary and, I used to think, a sorrowful yet seeking soul. He always

came aboard the *Crosby*, if he was in port when we called in, and always with the same wistful earnestness as we talked together.

From Gibson's Landing we were moved to Hazelton for two years, just long enough to meet miners at their work and have an interest in the native people aroused in me. It was there that the Rev. Arthur Barner, then Superintendent of Indian Missions in Canada, asked me to give what oversight I could to the Indian people in that area. Each time I went to Kitzegucla, then called Skeena Crossing, sixteen miles west of Hazelton on the C.N.R. en route to the Rocher de Boule Mine, I held service with the Indian people and gradually got to know them a bit better. The mine was five thousand feet up the mountain and I made the trip by horseback or just plain walking. It was all worthwhile and fitted into the plan of my life.

In 1919 we went to Cape Mudge Indian mission. I was at the time the Chairman of the Hazelton District of the Methodist Church and a member of the Stationing Committee when Conference met that year. I well remember how Dr. S. S. Osterhout, Chairman of Vancouver West District, held up the proceedings of the committee asking from time to time, when some brother wanted to get on with appointments to other fields, "Well, what are we going to do for Cape Mudge?" He followed his question with a statement of the great need of the Indian people, who were, in his words, "drifting back to heathenism." They had had no missionary

for two years and during the "flu epidemic of 1918 had been without the help and oversight such a worker could have given." I felt more and more like volunteering and finally did so on condition that protection be given to the Hazelton District in making appointments. This the committee agreed to do. So I was appointed to Cape Mudge with the promise of a new mission house, a church and a boat.

My wife never forgets to remind me of the wire I sent her to Hazelton when asking her if she would go with me to Cape Mudge. I told her that the church proposed a ten-thousand-dollar expenditure there. We went to the field in July, 1919, with high hopes, only to find no one at home in the village. The mission house had fallen into disrepair—the roof was moss-covered and leaking, the paper hung from the walls downstairs in great blue-moulded sheets, doors and windows where not broken were wide open. The little schoolhouse had been unoccupied for two years and the cattle, as they roamed, had found it a restful place where they could go in and get rid of the pestering flies.

We were staying at the annex of the hotel at Campbell River, but it was too expensive for plain missionaries. So I went up the coast about eight miles and got Mr. R. J. Walker, one of the former missionaries at Cape Mudge, to come with me to look over the situation. After a thorough inspection of the house, it was his judgment that it was well worth repairing, but it would have to be moved out from its position under the trees at the foot of the

hill. Mrs. Scott then went back to her father's home along with our little two-year-old boy, and I began to stir up the church authorities in the city with a reminder of the need for action.

Ultimately a boat, the *Iwyll*, was brought down from the Kootenay Lakes. After a train journey of some two weeks the seams of the hull had opened with the sun. When we swung it over the side into the water at the C.P.R. dock in Vancouver, it almost sank, so bad were the leaks. The man who was to repair the house had a boat, and he took the *Iwyll* in tow. I remained aboard and bailed constantly with a pail. In this way we made it around into False Creek, some five miles distant by water. There the boat was beached for repairs. When the *Iwyll* was ready for sea, we started up the coast for Cape Mudge, arriving on September 2, 1919.

The work of moving and fixing up the mission house began in earnest. I lived on the *Iwyll* and remember how I used to lie in fear and trembling when the boat tossed during the night in the swells from the wake of passing steamers. I could hear the beat of their propellers and a little later the swish of the waves as they came inshore. Even after putting everything away as safely as possible, I had to get up at times and hold things from being thrown about. In spite of my best efforts, one night the teapot was broken to pieces. When it came time for the replastering of the house, it was my job to go over every morning to get the plasterer at Campbell River and to take him back again over the two and a

half miles of Discovery Passage which lay between there and the village.

I shall never forget the fear which swept over me one morning as I crossed. The fog was drifting in thick banks. During one clear moment I saw the Union *S.S. Cowichan* approaching from one direction and a fast Canadian National passenger boat coming from another. I was in mid-channel. How to avoid being run down I did not know. In a moment of panic I turned the boat back toward the Cape Mudge shore, but a moment's thought brought me back to my senses, as I knew that would likely put me right ahead of the big C.N.S.S. three-stacker. So I turned again and kept my compass course and was lucky enough to escape being run down. I hit the wharf at Campbell River, as the boys say, "right on the nose." But those were days of anxiety, greater than were necessary, due to my inexperience.

While the plasterer was at work it was my job to tear off the loose plaster ahead of him and then to wet down the lath in readiness for the new coat. Finally, the house was as ready as could be at the time and we moved in near the end of October.

Meantime, the work of the missionary had begun in earnest. There were funerals to attend, babies to baptize, and couples to be married. Services were started in the village and at Campbell River among both Indians and the white people. An appointment was opened at Heriot Bay, on the other side of the island, and trips were made to other points as well.

Bible classes were started twice a week at the village for the young men. At one of these a young chap said he had learned from the Japanese fishermen that it was the sun which had created the world. I remember saying, "Well, it is easy to talk that way, but who made the sun?" That was a poser and left us at much the same point as from where we started. All of this came up in the study of Genesis, chapter one.

But intensive work following the many weeks of getting the house into such condition that we could move into it, along with the wider activities, proved too much for my strength. I was taken down with 'flu and the doctor moved me over to the hospital at Campbell River. Mrs. Scott, left alone with young Robert, found it too much to get wood for two fireplaces and three stoves to keep the house warm. The nor'-west wind was blowing and it was cold. So, in desperation, she moved over to the hotel at Campbell River until I got some better. The process was so slow that we finally had to go down to her father's place for a rest. In less than a month we were back and were able to hold the delayed Christmas Tree at the village to the delight of all.

During the next summer the Home Mission Board provided funds for a furnace, and after it was installed our heating problems were over. The house was lovely and warm. More furnishings, too, had been supplied by the Board, and we settled down to our work in earnest.

Chapter VIII

MEN OF THE CANNERIES AND LUMBER CAMPS

IN March, 1920, friendship with Captain Oliver was renewed. He came along to take us on a trip up the coast to show us where the various camps were located and how to reach them. He also showed us the places in which we could find shelter during a storm. Meetings were held whenever we reached a camp or a settlement. In one Finnish community a Sunday School was organized, to be carried on by the school teacher.

In one of these families was a young lad who at a later time injured his leg seriously. He had been celebrating his tenth birthday with his boy friends and had loaded up a home-made cannon fashioned out of a piece of one-inch water pipe. He had plugged one end of it, but did not realize that it was just as liable to shoot out of one end as the other. When he lit the fuse that is what happened. The wooden plug was driven into his leg right to the bone. I came along one day and he showed me a bottle in which he was putting the slivers of wood as they came out of a running sore on his leg just above his right knee. Although not a doctor, I realized that it was a serious condition. As they were far removed from medical assistance, I persuaded the

mother to let us take her son home with us to Cape Mudge. This she agreed to, and we kept him in our home and took him over to Campbell River every morning for treatment. Finally, he was sent to Vancouver. After a prolonged stay he was able to return home with a stiff leg, but at least it had been saved. Needless to say that from that family the children came to Sunday School.

At a logging camp on this same trip with Captain Oliver we arrived the evening before a strike was to be called. As we had not chosen the time for our coming, it seemed best to carry on with a meeting. I borrowed some lamps from the cook-house—this was in the days before every camp had its own electric lighting system—and began to put them up in one end of the reading-room. One of the men, who seemed to be a leader, came to me and asked if I intended to have a meeting. Thinking on my feet, I replied, "That is just as the boys say." He asked if I was going to run it myself or did I want a chairman. Once more I said that it was just as the men said. He asked them and, in as many seconds, half a dozen men moved that I run it myself. Some of the men were playing poker, but after this introduction they laid aside their cards and joined the others along the walls on seats placed there.

I remember one of the hymns which I sang, for I got little help from the men, was "A better day is coming, the morning promised long." I did my best. I told them that, if they would let me get through, I would not run away but would be right

there to answer any questions, if I could. The man said, "That's fair." I told them that God was leading the upward movements among men; that all that was good in the working-class movement was of God; that the only way for them to save the world for the working class was to save it for all the people; that evil-mindedness, or evil acts, would do no good in the end, but only harm; that they would need God more than ever in the glad new day to which they were looking forward.

When I was through, their leader got up and proceeded to tear my talk to pieces in the same way I had heard so often from my Marxian friends at Gibson's Landing. I answered back as he gave me opportunity, but just then the foreman looked in and said that it was my night. I explained that I had asked the man to speak, but the meeting closed right there. One of the men told me afterwards that the other man had not got so very far ahead of me at that. Be that as it may, it was a great privilege to talk to these men—men who risk their lives every day in their work. If hurt in this task for all the people, there is not the same glory attached to it as when wounds are encountered in the service which many of them gave as soldiers. I knew one man who had come through World War I unhurt but who lost both feet within six months after he again took up his work as a logger. There are no "wound stripes" for men in industry. One wonders why?

When we got back to the boat again that night, the Captain and Mrs. Scott and little Robert were all tired and ready for bed. Even the rush of the strong ebb-tide against the side of the boat did not keep any of us awake. This trip continued as far as Alert Bay, eighty miles from our home port at Cape Mudge. It demonstrated both the skill of the Captain and the seaworthiness of the *Iwyll*, for we had a rather heavy sou'-easter on our stern for the last eight of ten hours. At Alert Bay we met the Rev. T. C. and Mrs. Colwell, who had just been appointed to that field. They accompanied us back as far as Salmon River, which was the dividing line between our fields. Their boat was the *William Oliver*, named after the Captain.

At Salmon River it meant a tramp of ten miles to the upper part of the settlement. With the help of a young man, who was my assistant on the boat later on, we carried our little portable organ slung on an oar between us. Mrs. Scott carried a satchel of hymn books and then sang duets with me at the service which followed, and played the organ, too. On a later visit we were wakened one morning by the man at whose home we held the services saying his wife was very ill and had to get to hospital. We took her on board as soon as the tide was high enough to clear the bars in the river, since we always went a couple of miles up the river to the first bridge to tie up. Once out on the salt water, we continued until we reached Campbell River, forty miles south.

Many were the types of men and women whom we met while at Cape Mudge. One, who had a "handlogging show," made us welcome to his home and we always had service there. But afterwards he would try to banter us in a nice way. Once he said that the doctors had examined the human body thoroughly and had found the various organs all of which they had named, but they had never found the "soul"! He was a practical man. So I said to him, "Well, you have taken a dynamo to pieces often, but did you ever find the electricity?" That rather stumped him. After service another time, he had his little boy sing a verse of the "Red Flag," but we countered by having our little Robert sing the chorus of "Get God's sunshine into your heart."

Another character whom I often remember was a fisherman-logger who had his home in a little bay around the corner from the wharf at Salmon River. He was typical of a certain type of American, good-natured and kind but inclined to banter one a good deal. His talk was in a typical southern drawl. One day we were caught at the wharf at Salmon River. Mrs. Scott knew enough about the tide rips off it to be worried when she saw a little white water on the tops of the waves out in the channel. I really did not think it would amount to much and made light of it, thinking to quiet her. But those white tips spread with startling rapidity. Before I could get the engine going, or the lines thrown off the wharf and so get clear, the boat, the *Edward White*, was dashed against the wharf with such force

that the railing on the house-deck was broken right off. We got away as quickly as possible, but before we could get around the end of Helmcken Island, some three miles south, the tide rips or the waves from them had torn our dinghy away from the boat. We had not had time to take it on board and were towing it astern. We reached the island and found good shelter from the wind for the night.

The next day we ran back to the area near the wharf, looking for some sight of our row-boat. Finally, I went in to see this American who, I felt, might have seen it. He pointed to it tied up at his float in the little bay. I said to him, "My, but you must have had to go out in your gas boat to get it. That was a bad rip last night." He replied, "They told me it was Mr. Scott who had left the wharf in such a hurry, but I said it could not be Mr. Scott. He would not get scared at a little wind." Then he told me of a man who had come into the bay for shelter not long before. He said he had been a fisherman for thirty years, but had never seen such waters. He had lost a whale-boat loaded with house furnishings. So, "I says to him, says I, whar war' you a-fishin', to hum?"

Some ten miles along the beach from Campbell River there was a large logging camp, where very little seemed to be done for the comfort or convenience of the men. Near the beach, at the one end of the camp, there was a rather large building with a break in the twelve-foot wall about eight feet from the ground all around. The remaining four

feet were enclosed with a very fine-meshed chicken wire. I often wondered what the building was used for, but never saw anything going on that would indicate its purpose. One day, as I was passing, I stepped to the end of the building and took a look through a crack. I was surprised beyond words to see a "tee" built up at one end. Evidently the owner of the camp wanted to get in shape for his golf games in the city. Aside from the tee, the place was as empty and bare looking as the bunk-houses of the men.

At another place in the camp there was a neatly painted little house. Through the door, which often stood open, one could see large easy chairs and a rug on the floor which gave an air of leisure and comfort to the place. It was evidently the living-quarters of the camp owner. In contrast, when we first began going to that camp, there was not even a plank laid down on the railway trestle which led to the dock. There was no float from which one could go on board or leave a small boat. One had to climb up or down the ladder at the end of the wharf, quite a feat on a dark night when the tide was low! I do not know whether our marine mission work had anything to do with the gradual change which took place, but there was at least a connection in time. Services were held in the cook-house every alternate Sunday night and there was usually a good congregation.

I remember one occasion when we had an "amen" corner from which one of the loggers persisted in

saying as I talked, "You said a mouthful that time, Mister!" That was the first time our young lad of six had ever seen a drunken man. He was very frightened and crowded so closely into the seat where his mother was playing the organ that it made it difficult to carry on. However, it was not long before the temperature of the room became too warm for the poor chap and he finally fell off his seat to the floor, then got up and stumbled out. The fresh air revived him and later he came and apologized to me. I have never in thirty years been insulted by any of these men and I am utterly for them.

On Wednesday evening, every two weeks, we used to run the ten miles over to this camp and hold night classes for those of the men who could not speak very good English, or for some others who wished to get a little more of the "three R's" than they then possessed. It may be that something of what was being done for the men reached the ears of the manager. At any rate, changes began to take place. A plank was laid down along the railway trestle, which must have been a boon to the railway men of the logging train when doing their work. It removed the hazard to their safety in having to watch every step when dumping the logs. It was also a boon to the missionary as he picked his way back to the wharf on a coal-black night with the aid of a flashlight. A float was put at the end of the wharf, to one side, and a proper landing "apron" installed which adjusted itself to the height of the

tide. This made landing or going on board a small boat a much easier thing.

I used to think the idea of the manager in making it so hard for men to leave or to land at the camp was due to the fact that, if he made it too easy, more of the men would go to Campbell River at the week-end, get drunk and remain away from work for two or three days. It made it difficult, of course, to carry on the work of the camp. It is possible he was won over to the other idea of giving the men better accommodation and making it easier for their friends to visit or leave the camp because of an upsurge of human sympathy, which was there as the following incident showed.

In that camp it was never possible for anyone not attached to headquarters to get into the office, the "sanctum sanctorum," of the employer. Every other person stood at the counter inside the front door, stated his business, and then got out as soon as he was finished. One day, however, the bookkeeper, who was also the secretary of the local hospital board of which I was the chairman, said to me, "The old man is in camp today. He is now up in the woods. If you would like to see him, you had better be inside when he gets back." As there was something in connection with the hospital books which he wished me to see, there was a bona fide reason for my being invited within. However, the "Old Man" did not know the bookkeeper had felt for some time that it would be only right for the

owner to make a contribution to the work of our mission. That was his secret and mine.

It was in this way that I was in the inner office when the great man arrived. He sat down by the stove and began pulling off his boots. I thought the best method of approach would be a frontal attack. So, at what I thought to be an opportune moment, I asked if he would be interested in making a contribution to our mission work. The reply came back with the force of a bullet, "No, sir!" Then he started on somewhat of a tirade. I was so completely stopped that I just listened as he went on. "When I was a young fellow, I worked hard for long hours, but now everybody seems to want a white-collar job. What does a man want, anyway, more than a place to eat and sleep and a job to work at?" I broke in with, "Well, I would say that was just a beginning. A man is not a man at all until he has at least that." He surprised me utterly when he came back with, "That's right, what is it Shakespeare says:

" 'O man, if thou art born but to eat, to sleep, to dream,
What art thou better than the brutes?' "

Then he said that he had been reading a very interesting book. It was a Life of Christ, and he had sat up half the night to finish it. It was written by an Italian, but he could not remember his name. I said, "Oh, you mean Papini's *Life of Christ.* I have just read it myself." "Yes, that's the name."

Then he added, having got out of his heavy work boots by this time and put on a lighter pair, "Come over to the house, I want to talk to you." This was an invitation that sounded like an order, but, at any rate, I was not slow to follow. We walked across to the little house and he said, "Sit down" in the same tone which bordered on, but was not intended to be, roughness. I sat down. Then he began fumbling in his pockets of his coat which hung on the wall at the end of the room, sat down at the table and said, "What's your name?" I told him. In a moment he handed me a cheque for twenty-five dollars, saying, "Here, this is for your work. It's my own. I have no right to give the company's money away."

Then he began to talk about his boys. There were three of them—the two older ones worked in the camp, but the youngest was at college in Victoria. The father said to me with a strange quietness, "I went to Vancouver the other day and I met the youngest boy on the street. He had left college. I asked him what he wanted to do, and he said he wanted to work in the camp. So I told him to go on up, but "that hurt me more than anything since his mother died." How human he was, after all, and what big hearts are to be found under the rough exterior of these men of the woods! They have to be big; they work with big things in a big way.

At Cape Mudge, too, we made regular visits to the lighthouse at the southern end of the island.

Often we had to walk the mile and a half by lantern light along the rough beach, or else we waited for the tide and then had to haul our row-boat up the beach when we got home. It was a big, heavy, sixteen-foot row-boat. The friend who gave it to us said he wanted us to have a safe boat. It was, but when it had to be hauled up the beach at low tide for fifty yards, an inch or two at a time, that was something different for my wife and me.

On one occasion we were lying behind the big float at Rock Bay, about twenty-five miles north of Cape Mudge. It was a fine, quiet harbour and we had gone to bed with a feeling of perfect safety. Next morning just at dawn, Mrs. Scott, who is a light sleeper, wakened up and called to me that we would have to get up and look after things as a big steamer was passing out in the channel. I tried to be very composed and said that there would be three big waves and that would be all. There was nothing to worry about. Had I known that five American destroyers had just passed at full speed with the tide at high slack, I would not have been so cool about it. The first big wave hit the outside of the big float and gave it a heave which came right through to our boat with very disconcerting effect. Before I could get my trousers pulled on over my pyjamas, the second wave hit us and I was certain that we were in great danger. There was a large freight shed on the float outside us and the heavy raft on which it was built began to come ashore. There was only the width of our boat

between us and the rocks which rose steeply just inside of us.

The end of the big float began to tear away the ends of the logs forming the float which led inshore on an angle, and it looked for a few moments as though we would be crushed. I threw a blanket around our little boy just after the second wave hit us, and climbed out on the float. The rats were running helter-skelter everywhere, and I remembered that "Rats desert a sinking ship," but I laid Robert down, well wrapped in his blankets, and went back to assist Mrs. Scott get off the boat, which was now careering like a runaway horse behind the surging float. After she was safely off, we braced ourselves to stay in the centre of the largest part of the float. The ends of the logs were broken and worn off as they chafed together in the churning water. But once I felt that we were safe for the moment, at least, and being unable to do anything about the boat, we began to look around us.

The sea was one expanse of heaving dead swells. Just outside the big float, behind which we had tied up for the night, the small company tugboat had been made fast. It was rising and falling straight up and down with the six-foot swells, but fortunately was not being thrown against the logs of the float. It would not have been afloat very long had that been the case.

What interested us most, in spite of the possible danger to ourselves, was the sight of the skipper aboard the tugboat. He was standing in the door

of the pilot-house where he had evidently been sleeping. He had one leg into his trousers and was trying desperately to get the other one in. In spite of our own situation, we could not help laughing at the fix he was in. At one moment he would brace himself against the door of the pilot-house, and make a lunge to get his other leg into his trousers. Before he could do so he was thrown off balance and had to hang on to the side of the door until he regained his equilibrium. Then the process was repeated. We did not wait to see how it ended, but turned our attention to our own boat as soon as the waves had subsided somewhat. Finally, we moved out from behind the float and around its end to safety, but it was a trying experience while it lasted. The boat was right at the edge of the rocks when we got it away. Had the float come farther inshore, the *Iwyll* would have been crushed like an egg-shell. However, the ends of the float logs had been worn down to where they resisted further damage and held, and that was what saved us.

A night-watchman ashore, who had seen the ships pass, said they were going full speed, their bows lifted high and their sterns hidden in the waves they were throwing up. The fact that the tide was at high slack and the "L"-shaped character of the shore-line made the sequence of waves travel fast and unimpeded. Besides that, the ships passed only about three hundred yards outside the bay where the floats were anchored.

Potlatch masks turned in by Government order at Cape Mudge

Totem poles and long-house framework at Alert Bay

Other stories of our Cape Mudge days come to me. We had gone to Salmon River on our regular trip. At the little Indian village we found an old man lying in a tent at the point of death. His friends had evidently given him up and he was left without any attention. I investigated and found him in a shockingly filthy condition. I went aboard the *Iwyll* and got a pair of clean flannelette blankets and then called a young Indian, who by the way was none too well disposed to me or to mission work, to come and help me. He could not very well refuse. So we went at it and gently pulled the soiled blankets from beneath the aged man. He was not only very ill, but was blind as well. We put the clean sheets on his bed and then buried the old ones. We asked a woman to prepare broth and to feed him. He was not able to eat much, but his breathing became more regular and he was plainly resting easier. He lived until some time next day and I stayed with him until the end. He understood my words of Scripture and passed away in comparative comfort. He was buried the same day on the little hill just inside the bar at the mouth of the river. As it was drawing toward evening, I saw some of the Indians during the service at the graveside looking across the river toward a valley which extended at right angles back between two high mountains. The sun was gradually sinking in a blaze of golden glory, but the lower it went the farther out the dark shadow of the mountain crept over the mouth of the river. The

Indians were plainly relieved when the service was over, and they quickly filled in the grave and left the place.

I asked the reason for their concern and learned that the old people had a story about an evil spirit which crept out of the darkness of the valley and across the river mouth when the shadows deepened. This evil spirit would have come right to the graveside had not the grave been filled in beforehand and would have stood guard over it and made it impossible for old Billy's spirit to get away to the happy hunting-ground in peace. Through the teaching of the missionaries even the old people are losing their fears. The darkness is giving place to the light, but the dawning is delayed in places because of the lack of workers.

At one fairly large logging camp at Elk Bay we always held service each time we called, which was usually once a month. A song service was the main part of such services, and in these Mrs. Scott was always a great help. Besides playing the organ, she sang duets with me. This sort of thing invariably went over well with the loggers. Following the song service came the preaching service. I never tried to get the men to church through the showing of pictures or anything of that sort. I felt the Gospel was worth while and could stand by itself. So, I would always say, "Boys, we are going to hold a service in the cook-house this evening. You will all be welcome." Sometimes a man would say, "What kind of a service?" and I would reply right

back, "A church service." Perhaps he would reply, "Okay, we'll be there." Generally, I knew that a man who said that would not be present.

But sometimes he did come. Whether it was the singing or not, we usually had a good attendance. At this camp, for the closing hymn I always asked for the men's choice. No one ever had a chance to ask for any other hymn, for "Dutchy" was ready with "No, so-and-so." His choice was always "Lead, Kindly Light." One evening after a service, I said to Dutchy, "I never heard you make any profession of religion. Why do you always ask for that hymn?" He said, after a moment's pause, "Oh, well, a fellow knocking around the camps has to have something to hang on to."

"Lead, kindly light—the night is dark and I am far
from home,
Lead Thou me on."

I wonder if the average church member can give as good a reason for singing that hymn.

At Hardwicke Island, across from Salmon River, we found a camp where we always had a good meeting. There was a little school-house and it was usually filled. The teacher undertook, with the help of some of the other ladies, to conduct a Sunday School between our monthly calls. I shall never forget the first time we arrived there. The tide was running strong and a westerly breeze was blowing. I got hold of the boom stock with a boat-hook, but was unable to do anything but hang on. Had I

let go, the boat would have drifted away. My hands were numb with cold, for it was still late winter-time. The Captain kept calling to me, "Make fast, sir! Make fast!" After a time he saw he must do something about it as well, so he came ahead on the engine and we finally got tied up.

I was conscious, too, that the men in the woods along the shore had their eyes on us and they would be wanting to see how the new "Sky Pilot" would get along under difficulties. As a matter of fact, we had landed at the wrong place but, knowing no better, we did the best we could.

Another time at this camp we were tied up at the right place, which proved to be a very uncomfortable spot. We had had a good service and had come back to the boat for the night. We went to bed, but got no sleep. The tide was rushing like a mill-race around the shoreward end of the reef, and the west wind was hauling around the corner behind us. When they met, the dead swells came back in to where we were tied up and the boat was jumping like a bucking horse. The planking was likely to be split as we were thrown against the logs alongside which we were lying. It had seemed a fine place to be until the tide began to run out against the wind. But after that, at about two in the morning, we had to get out and do something to save the boat. We had a number of sacks of church papers, the *Christian Guardian*, at that time. We had not been able to distribute them as yet. Failing anything better, we tied the sacks safely at the top and then

put a heaving line around them and lowered them into place between the boat and the logs. Our ordinary fenders were quite useless, but when we got back on board wet and cold, my helper said, "Well, that's one good job those church papers have done, at any rate." I guess he was right, although he might have said it was "another good thing."

A friend in Vancouver, who had a sash and door factory, supplied me with small portable library boxes free of charge. We placed libraries in every camp. Books were gathered from everywhere—the churches, the Kiwanis Club, the public library and from private individuals until hundreds of books were out. Some of these boxes are still in use in our marine work.

I remember one day hippety-hopping across a boom of logs toward the shore, when the foreman, who was not far away, yelled at me to be careful or I would get drowned. That was after he had tried to assume a very disinterested manner when I had called previously. So, if you watch them, these men always give themselves away and you get a glimpse of their true selves. Usually it is much better than they would have you believe.

Chapter IX

POTLATCH EVILS

THE story of the Cape Mudge Mission has never been told, so far as I can find out. It is well worth telling. Cape Mudge village is situated near the lower end of Valdez Island. It is about one hundred and ten miles north of Vancouver and marks the southern end of Discovery Passage. One of the most important lighthouses on the British Columbia Coast is placed there. In the early days the people of the village got a very bad name. Just why I have never been able to find out. I found them very decent folks. I have been told, however, that the northern Indians en route to the Fraser River or to Victoria were always happy when they got safely past Cape Mudge, and usually they made the trip at night.

This explanation seems to be borne out by an experience of the missionaries aboard the old *Glad Tidings*. One entry in the logbook tells of going ashore and being given leave to hold a service in the house of a certain man. A potlatch was in progress and their service was hardly started when some of the "Dog Eaters" came to the house and forced the man to withdraw his consent. The service ended at once and could not be renewed. The *Glad Tidings* kept calling each time it passed up and down the

coast en route from the north to Nanaimo and to Victoria.

In March, 1888, an entry in the logbook says that one of the chiefs gave land for a church. Over and over again the Cape Mudge people had asked for a church and a teacher, but another entry says significantly, "These people ask for a teacher, but no one will ever stay with them." Another entry that same year, on April 19th, says:

Took on four thousand feet of lumber at Alert Bay for Cape Mudge. Got to the village about ten p.m. the same night. Left the next morning, for Nanaimo, at nine a.m.

As unfolded by Captain Oliver, the above entry contains quite a story. It means that they got the lumber for Cape Mudge at Alert Bay and arrived at ten p.m. the same day. What is not in the log is that it was a fine moonlight night, so they began building and worked all night long. When the mission boat sailed for Nanaimo the next morning, the first mission house at Cape Mudge had been finished and the first missionary was in it. His name was George Reid. A later entry in the log-book of the *Glad Tidings* says, "Oliver (Captain) has 'Salvation Army George' here." Well, it was a good name and doubtless a good work was begun. Mr. Reid stayed for three months and then left the field, thus corroborating the earlier entry in which it said, "No one will stay."

Be that as it may, Mr. R. J. Walker came to the

village as missionary teacher in 1892. He remained for twelve years, and during his time substantial progress was made. A large, well-built mission house was erected and later on a school building. Many of the older people in my time, who could read and write, owed it to Mr. Walker's teaching. Mr. Walker was followed in 1904 by Mr. J. Edward Rendle, who for thirteen years was teacher-missionary and a wise counsellor and friend to the people. Owing to the prevalence of potlatching and all that followed it, which made for reaction and for extreme difficulty in carrying on school or church work in the village, Mr. Rendle was moved in 1917 to Clo'oose on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

About this time, or a little later, the younger men of the village had come to their elders and chiefs asking that they be allowed to withdraw from the potlatch in order that they could build better homes for themselves and their families. They were told that, if they wished to live like the white people, they should get out and live with them. This was an impossibility, so these young, ambitious men had to settle down and carry on as members of the potlatch even against their will. Then came the 'flu epidemic of 1918. The people, with no missionary to help them, had to hire a white man to come and carry wood and water to their houses. Every able-bodied man in the village was ill, and one of the best of the younger men died as a result of the 'flu.

It is hardly right to say that the disease alone killed him, for he had been the "wild man" of a recent potlatch. As part of the preparation for that act he had to go into the woods and live without clothes, except perhaps a blanket, as in the old time. He had to keep away from all contact with other people and to find his living in the forest as best he could. Then, at the climax of the potlatch ceremony, he suddenly reappeared and did the dance which corresponded with the wild creature whom he represented, snapping and biting at all within his reach. As a result of it, he was badly run down when the 'flu came and he alone of all the people in the village fell a victim. This made a deep impression on the people.

It was shortly after this experience that we landed at the village in July, 1919, as described earlier. On the whole, the people, those of them who were at home, seemed glad once again to have a missionary among them. When we arrived, there were still three of the big potlatch houses—the big, long houses of earlier days. These were in good condition and there were two others which were not so well preserved.

Potlatches were held after our arrival and once Mrs. Scott and I went and stood at the door to see what was going on. The people were seated all around the walls of the building, and a big fire burned in the centre. The highest chief sat in one corner, to the left of the platform. The others were arranged in their respective places, according

to their rank and prestige. Above them were two large totem poles representing the Thunder Bird. We were there only a few minutes when an old lady came walking all the way across the floor with a lovely gasoline lamp which she wished us to accept as a present. I knew enough about the law to know that anyone receiving such a gift became a member of the potlatch and was liable for prosecution as much as any other person connected with the affair. I refused as politely as I could, and it took a good deal of emphasis in a kindly way before the old lady turned and walked back to her place near the head chief, muttering to herself as she went. I suppose I had violated a very important law among them, but I was determined not to be involved in any way.

I never preached against the potlatch. In fact, I do not ever remember discussing it in private with any of the people, but we took this stand right at the first. After that no more advances were made to us. The average white person knows little or nothing about the real nature of this custom among the Indians of this coast. Consequently some very stupid letters are written as to the way in which the Government is "persecuting" the Indians and interfering in what, these people say, is after all a very harmless and happy time for the native people. The fact is that the potlatch stands for all that is reactionary. Good Canadian money from the white taxpayers is being spent by the Department in the interest of Indian education and better health,

but the potlatch hinders true advancement in these or any other way.

It had its place in the very early days, when it took a place among the people such as the Land Registry Office holds among white folk. When one of us gets title to a piece of land, it is registered in the Land Registry Office. It remains the property of that person until it is disposed of by him. In those days among the native peoples wealth was reckoned only in things which the great hunter or man of prowess had accumulated. When he got more than he could use, the surplus was of no use to him. So he gave it away. But it was not given privately. All the people were summoned, "called" is their word. When they were assembled, they listened to an account of all the wonderful deeds of the man who had called them. It took days to do this, the tribal poet had been called in earlier, and for weeks he had trained the family and friends of the man to sing the songs in which were recounted the stirring deeds of the giver. Later, after it was all over, the totem-pole carver would be given the task of putting into permanent form the events of the life of this man along with the totems representing his family and tribe.

When the proceedings were all ended, the man calling the people and "giving away" had for ever after the place and position accorded to him during the ceremonies. That, in itself, might not have been too bad at first, but during the years other practices crept into and were incorporated in the

potlatch. It came to be that every person receiving a gift had to return twofold to the giver. Also that wives might at that time leave their husbands and go to live with other men who might have called them to do so. One story I heard was to the effect that the man whose wife had left him on such an occasion did not mind her going away. "But," said he, "to think she went off with old, dirty Dan."

The law of returning double was illustrated in my own time at Cape Mudge with regard to household effects. Some of the young men had bought good home furnishings and were trying, even under the potlatch system, to provide better homes and surroundings for their families. To such men it was a bitter experience to see their fine beds or other articles given to someone in the village who cared nothing at all for their value. To make matters worse, they received in exchange old worn articles which they were under obligation to receive and to take into their homes. I have seen the whole village street for many yards filled with furniture of all kinds, along with dishes and other articles. I have also seen at the close of the proceedings the great man of the day, or his announcer, standing on a platform raised as much as twenty-five feet above the street calling out the names and "giving away" these various articles to all and sundry.

It goes without saying that these older men took advantage of such an occasion to see that these younger men were humbled and made to drop back, as far as they could accomplish it, into the more

obedient group who had little or nothing of value in their homes, but who were classed, nevertheless, as having high standing among the villagers. The potlatch kept everybody poor.

As time passed, these young men arranged their own defence. They went to the city and bought at second-hand stores old beds, tables, sewing machines and any other articles for which they were liable. They put these in some shed or up in the attic of their homes. Then, when the great man "called," they brought out their collection of these articles. The man "calling" them could say nothing, as they had complied with the rules of the game and had brought back to him two of every article which they had formerly received. In this way, they kept the more desirable articles in their own homes. This circumvention did not interfere in any way with the oratory of the man giving the potlatch. He proceeded with all the usual flourishes of word and action to give away these things to others, even though he knew he had been outwitted by the younger men.

But there were ways in which these younger, progressive men could not protect themselves. One day when I was in the village, a man from across the channel ran his gas boat up on the beach at high tide, right in front of the home of one of the oldest men in the village, a man who stood high in the potlatch society. He scattered gasoline all over the boat and set it on fire. He piled a dugout canoe on the top and it, too, was consumed in the

flames. I could not imagine a man in his senses doing such a thing. I had visited this same man in the hospital just a few hours before. He was waiting to be discharged and apparently had gone home and taken his gas boat out at once. Whether it was because he wanted to show gratitude to the gods for being restored to health, I did not know. Wondering about it all, I asked one of the younger men of the village why it had been done. He replied, "Oh, I guess he did it for Tommy Wallace." That was all I could get out of him. He might have told me more, for what he really meant was that the man had done it as a "dare" to old Tommy. The potlatch is filled with such things as one man daring another and challenging him to go one better, as it were.

The old man, not to be outdone and having no gas boat of his own, took that of his son. This was a fine new forty-foot boat, a much better one than his challenger had burned and was equipped with an up-to-date gas engine. The son was all ready to begin fishing and the boat was to have been his means of livelihood. But, in the light of what had occurred, his father's honour was at stake according to the potlatch standards. So he made no resistance, but suffered the loss of his boat. The old father took it and gave it to the first man, along with *two* canoes, thus outdoing his challenger, who had tried to bring him into disgrace in the eyes of his fellow-villagers. The son did not have another boat for years. That, of course, was some-

thing which could not be helped. Potlatch standards had to be maintained. I am sure, were the son free to talk, and had he not been bound by the old custom which kept such as he quiet before their elders, he would have voiced deep disappointment.

As a further light on the effects of the potlatch, one of the most experienced Indian Agents told me that in one village a young man and his wife had saved up some three thousand dollars. They held a big potlatch and gave it all away. They were left paupers, but that did not matter since they had achieved a place to be envied by all their friends. It did matter, however, for that same fall the 'flu epidemic hit their village. This young man died and the wife was left penniless. That did not matter since her father sold her to a man old enough to be her father, and she became practically his slave. She had no recourse, as it was all according to the old potlatch customs which governed their lives from the cradle to the grave.

A case somewhat similar came to my own notice at Cape Mudge. A young fellow, who seemed to be not vitally connected with the potlatch, was to be married to a young woman whose father was held in high esteem in potlatch circles. I heard about it and went to him and suggested that he be married in the church. He looked at me for a minute and said, "When a man wishes to be married, he goes to the minister, the minister does not come to him!" I replied that I was not coming

to him as the minister, but simply as a friend who was interested in him. That did not change matters. He paid some hundreds of dollars to the woman's father and got his wife according to the old standards. They did not live together long and the home broke up. I had their two children in our residential school as a direct result of the breakdown of the home. But this sort of serfdom in which the people were held by the potlatch was not its only evil effect on village life.

When a potlatch began in Cape Mudge, and sometimes these affairs were carried on for weeks, the day school closed down, for none of the children would come. When we walked along the street, people who were our good friends would pass us without the slightest recognition, their heads, so to speak, held high in the air. It seems strange that white people, who know little or nothing about the effects of this old custom, put hindrances in the way of the better class among the native people themselves. These do not want to have anything to do with the potlatch. They know one cannot make progress by looking backward all the time. The modern world is pressing in on them and they want to take advantage of its opportunities so as to find their places in the new order; they know that the old order is doomed. At the same time, a lot of sympathy is due the older people. Their complex social system has broken down in the midst of this machine age. The new individualism, which it has

brought, has given to even the lower classes among them equal advantages with the nobility.

At present there is a strong movement being initiated to bring back the potlatch. It is possible that we shall see an effort made to amend the Indian Act so that the practice may be again instituted. I do not for a moment think that the Indian Affairs Branch will listen to such an appeal, but to many of the older people that seems to be the only way in which they can regain their former influence in their tribes.

In the fall of our second year at Cape Mudge a big potlatch was held on an island near Alert Bay. The men who put it on had gone to the Indian Agent and asked permission to hold it. The Indian Agent could not give them permission to break the law, and the request was refused. However, these men went ahead with their own plans and put on a big potlatch, to which many of our Cape Mudge folk were called. It is said that some three thousand dollars' worth of presents were given away. Having carried out this potlatch in spite of the Indian Agent's refusal, there was nothing for him to do but to take action under the Indian Act. The R.C.M.P. were at that time stationed at Alert Bay and they collected the evidence. Some forty people were summoned to answer the charge against them, among whom were five or six of the principal men at Cape Mudge, including the chief.

When I learned that they had to go up for the trial, I thought the time to be a friend to a man was

when he was in need. So I offered the use of the mission boat, the *Iwyll*, and they gladly availed themselves of the opportunity. It saved them both money and time. Having arrived at Alert Bay, I did my best to get the chief to plead guilty, for I knew none of them had a chance. In view of the way the clause in the Indian Act regarding potlatching is drawn up, none of them could possibly escape being judged guilty. The main group of Indians, however, thought otherwise and they decided to fight the case. Two Vancouver lawyers were engaged and attended the court. These were fine men. They finally told the accused the best they could hope for was to get as good terms as possible, since it was not possible to secure their acquittal. Had they been so disposed, they could have secured one remand after another and made a lot more money out of the case. On the contrary, they gave their clients good advice when they told them to plead guilty. They got all the accused off on suspended sentence.

This was granted by the court on consideration that, as an evidence of their good faith, the Indians would hand in all their potlatch paraphernalia. Our Cape Mudge people were as good as their word. From—well, I do not know from just where they came, but rattles, masks, blankets, whistles and ceremonial feasting bowls were produced in a bewildering confusion. I had been many times in every house in the village and I had never seen any of them. As one man said to me recently, "Those

things were never seen unless they were being used for the purpose for which they were made!" In the light of this statement made by one of themselves, why did the Indians use these things before the white people at the recent Diamond Jubilee ceremonies in the city of Vancouver? I am quite sure that it was to show the innocent white folk how wonderful were the costumes and how free from harm were the various dances. But I challenge any native to contradict what I have written previously about the evil effects of the potlatch system. The dances were put on in Vancouver by those who, in my opinion, are the ones most interested in having the law changed so that once again the old customs may flourish among them.

At Cape Mudge it was my duty and privilege to list all articles turned in by the people, and to put tags on them bearing the name of the owner. When this was completed, word was sent to the Indian Agent and he came down in his boat and took everything away—a whole boat-load. These goods were all sent to Ottawa, placed in the museum, and sold to interested parties. The amounts received for these articles were then remitted to the owners in full. One man in our village received a cheque for one hundred and twenty-five dollars at one time, and another for seventy-five later on. He got more afterwards, and every one of the owners was treated in the same generous fashion.

This prosecution opened the way for the young men, who previously had been so roughly refused by

the older people. They at once began to build better houses and the village took on a new look. Even the chief gave his assistance and a village street was made which conformed to the crescent shape of their landing beach. His own large totem pole was later removed and given to the manager of a near-by cannery. There was great rejoicing in the village among the younger men that fall. One of them one evening brought out all his potlatch belongings—sewing machines, beds, tables, chairs, etc., and filled a section of the street in front of his home. As though it were a real potlatch, he got up on a table and made a great speech. I could not tell what he was saying, but they were all having a lot of fun. Eventually, all those articles were burned up completely. From that time that young man began to plan for his new home. Today he has one of the finest in the village.

It would surprise many of my readers were they able to visit some of those homes. They would find them clean and well furnished; they would see fine chesterfield sets and other articles of furnishings such as are found in our own white homes. They would see pianos and radios, and in the kitchen up-to-date stoves with, in many instances, the very latest in kitchen sinks. Their bathrooms in some cases put to shame the one in the home of the missionary. There is electric light from their own plant, and hot and cold water in practically every home.

It had been my great desire to see a church built

in the village. Some little time after they had given up the potlatch, a meeting was held at which all the men were in attendance. The chief presided and, after much talk, an unanimous decision was reached. The chief announced it to me, "The boys want to build their own homes first." I accepted the decision without any question, for I knew that many of those young chaps were in need of better homes. Earlier, I had tried to show the men what a chance there was for using the lumber out of the old potlatch houses for a church building. With my white man's so-called superior business sense, I pointed out that they could get all the framework and the lumber for everything except the finishing lumber out of those old houses.

My suggestions met with a significant but thoroughly courteous silence. In the end, every one of those big houses was torn down and burned. The people were far more logical than I had been; for them to have used that lumber would have meant that something of the old order would have intruded itself into the very services of the church, and they wanted none of it. They made a complete sacrifice.

During my time at the village I had talked to the chief about becoming a Christian and joining the Church. He was very guarded in his responses for a long time, but finally one day he came to me and said, "I'm ready now." He did not want to join the Church until he had made up his mind as to whether he was really in earnest. When that time came he simply said, "I'm ready now." He

was, and he has stood firmly for what is best, as he always used to say, "for my people."

Previously he had organized a logging company on a co-operative basis, which provided work for all the men of the village who wished to take part. A "donkey" engine had been purchased, and after wages were paid one-half of the income from the sale of the timber was divided equally among the members of the band. The other half was placed on deposit at Ottawa. Five per cent. interest was paid on it by the Government. Out of this fund money was drawn to provide the water system and the electric lighting system, which have meant so much to the welfare and comfort of the village. In 1928 the Rev. George Knox was appointed to Cape Mudge field. Under his leadership a fine little church, twenty-four by forty feet, was built. The cost of the materials alone was twelve hundred and twenty dollars, every cent of which was paid by the people of the village. All the work was done by the people themselves. The church stands today, free of debt, a monument to their faithfulness in carrying out their promise to build it after they had completed their own homes.

Under the Rev. T. T. Moore, the present missionary, further progress has been made. A Young People's Society has been formed, and one aspect of its work has been to provide the social hall with dishes enough for use at all their village functions. When the first large convention of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia met at Cape

Mudge, the young ladies of the association did a fine job in serving the several hundred people who were gathered for the occasion. The Young People's Society also provided a moving-picture machine; and they operate and control the weekly showing of pictures in the village.

Chapter X

OLIVER AND SCOTT ON *THOMAS CROSBY III*

DURING the time we were at Cape Mudge, the work of building smaller boats out of the funds received from the sale of the steam vessel *Thomas Crosby* went on under the Board of Home Missions. The *William Oliver* was built for the work at Alert Bay, and served the adjacent coast from Pine Island Light to Salmon River, forty miles south on Johnstone Straits. Later this boat was moved to the Queen Charlotte Islands for a time. At Cape Mudge a fine thirty-six-foot boat was built to replace the old *Iwyll*. It was named the *Edward White*, after one of the pioneer missionaries of the former Methodist Church. The boat is still being used by Dr. George E. Darby in his work at Bella Bella. It ought to be replaced by a larger and better boat for the hospital work. This will likely be done in the near future.

In Vancouver a larger and more powerful boat was bought for the work in the Queen Charlotte Islands, with Captain Oliver as the skipper. Before leaving Vancouver, it was cut in two and lengthened, and it was thought it would have done the work on that far-western marine field very well. However, it had not been long on its new field

before it was lost. The Captain and the missionary had gone ashore at the Captain's home at Sandspit for a few minutes on the night of December 5, 1920, leaving the *Crosby*, as they thought, safely anchored. In the darkness of the early evening it dragged anchor and was blown across Skidegate Inlet and was pounded to pieces on the rocky shore near Miller Creek, just inside of Dead Tree Point. The Captain discovered the loss within a few minutes and set off in a row-boat to try and find the vessel. But it was a hopeless task. He was in serious danger of being blown out to sea, but was rescued by a neighbour who went out in a motor-boat and brought him safely to land. All that was saved from the wreck was the gasoline engine, a forty-h.p. Miller heavy-duty unit.

Three years later, Captain Oliver, backed by the Home Missions Board, got to work on another mission boat somewhat larger than the one that was lost. He had a large boat shed built at his home in Sandspit; and there the boat, afterwards known as the *Thomas Crosby III*, was built. It carried on the work for nearly fifteen years in the Queen Charlotte Islands and along the northern mainland coast. The old Miller engine which had been salvaged from the wrecked *Thomas Crosby II* was installed—and worked betimes. The new boat was much heavier than the one in which it had been first installed, and having been in the salt water did not improve it in any way. An interesting sidelight on the

building of this boat was given to me by Captain Oliver.

It seems that he had a man who was a very devout Seventh Day Adventist helping with the carpenter work. He was a good carpenter and the excellence of the workmanship went to prove it. Being true to the teaching of his church, the man would not work on Saturday, and Captain Oliver would not work on Sunday. So they had two Sundays each week. The man was a neighbour of the Captain, and the arrangement worked very well until the last day or two. The Seventh Day Sabbath, like the old Jewish Sabbath, begins on Friday at sundown and lasts until Saturday night at sundown. On Saturday evening of that week there was a very high tide, just what was wanted to get some logs afloat which the Captain had on the beach. He was anxious to get them off that night so that they would be ready for the launching on Monday morning. There was plenty of time to do this, he thought, between the ending of the Seventh Day Sabbath at sundown, and the beginning of his own at midnight. So he carefully watched the sun as it drew close to the hill-tops in the west. As it sank behind the tallest of them, he called to the son of his neighbour to come and give him a hand with the logs. Their Sabbath had ended. They were just in the midst of the work when the father came rushing along the beach, calling out to the Captain and wanting to know why he was teaching his boy to break the Sabbath. The sun had not set, it was

only behind the tallest of the hills. I can imagine the Captain grinning and saying nothing, for the man was his good friend, even if they could not agree. Today that boy is a minister of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the city of Vancouver.

On the completion of our work at Cape Mudge we were appointed to this boat, the *Thomas Crosby III*, by the Conference of 1925, which met that year in Victoria, B.C. In July Mrs. Scott and Robert and myself joined the *Crosby* at Prince Rupert and it became our home for the summer. The first part of the season was spent in the cannery work on the Skeena River. In those days the missionary at Port Simpson moved down from his home town to the Skeena and made his headquarters for the season at Sunnyside Cannery. The minister in our Prince Rupert Church, the late Rev. G. G. Hacker, also spent time on the Skeena and did a grand job in organizing the work as well as taking a valued part in it. Several services were held each Sunday by these workers along the Slough, the northern arm of the Skeena which runs along the C.N. Railway leading to Prince Rupert.

Our work with the *Crosby* touched the canneries on the other side of the river, which could only be reached by boat, namely, Balmoral, Carlisle, Claxton, Oceanic, and Port Edward. At Balmoral, Claxton and Oceanic Canneries there were small church buildings which had been built during the time of the *Glad Tidings* mission boat, and they were fine centres for this summer work.

A story from those early days, which shows the humour of the Captain, concerns the building of the church at Claxton. When the manager of the cannery was approached by Mr. Crosby as to where the land for the church would be given, he pointed along the hill, saying, "Oh, over there." The Captain said the next morning they began work. They had had the usual breakfast on the *Glad Tidings*, namely, oatmeal porridge followed by morning prayers. They had gone out to work about six-thirty a.m.; it was raining and the Captain found the digging of the postholes for the foundation of the church hard work. Mr. Crosby, who was working somewhat to one side getting out the posts, noticed the change in the tempo of the Captain's shovel, and he called out from the bushes which hid him from sight, "William, what's the matter?" The Captain replied, "The porridge is all gone, sir, there's nothing left but the prayers; we'll have to go aboard and get something to eat."

During the afternoons of those Sundays, when we were on the Skeena, we ran out to visit the people in the lighthouses, of which there were two not far off the mouth of the river. At one light the keeper said he had become a Christian during the last winter. He had been up and on duty for thirty-six hours during a heavy fog. He was very tired, but became conscious of the ships that were stealing past the lighthouse guided by the blasts of the fog-horn. It came to him that they were depending on him, and it strengthened him to carry on. Then the thought

suddenly came to him, "Why do you not depend on Christ?" Right then and there, he said, he opened his heart to the Saviour, and entered into a new peace and strength. He had some really good books, and I was able to give him one or two more which I thought might be helpful.

The evenings of each week-end were usually spent in services at Oceanic and at Port Edward Canneries. At Oceanic Cannery we had the assistance of Port Simpson people, who were the direct descendants of the first converts among their people, the Tsimpsheans. It was an inspiring thing to have Ernest Dudoward play the organ. He was the grandson of Diex, the famous princess of the Tsimpsheans, one of the very first converts among her people. He had been taught by Mrs. Osterhout —an accomplished organist. Not only did he play the hymns, but he accompanied my brother when he sang such songs as "The Lord is My Light," by Frances Allitsen, and did it well. These same people organized social parties to try to break the monotony for the employees during the evenings when they were not busy in the cannery. These were well attended and were of profit to all. Services were held at Port Edward Cannery in turn with those at Oceanic.

I shall never forget going around one afternoon inviting the fishermen, both whites and Indians, to come to the service that evening. I came across four white men who were mending their nets. I thought they would not likely attend service, but I

knew, if I passed them up, others would think, "Oh, the preacher knew better than to tackle those fellows." So, in my best manner, I asked them to come to the service. One man replied, "The C.P.R., the Bank of Montreal and the Methodist Church are the ruination of the country." I replied, "Oh, the Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches have just united to form The United Church of Canada." He came back with, "Well, it'll be worse than ever."

When I pressed them to come to the service, this chap said, "You go along to that bunch of cabins, and in the end one you will find 'Big Mike.' If 'Big Mike' will go, we'll all go." Once more I was sure that "Big Mike" would not go, but I knew that I had to go and invite him. I found him a really big, upstanding man, although he was at the moment sitting down with a wash-tub in front of him. I said, "Mike, the men out there said that, if you would go to the service tonight, they would all go." A slight grin played around the corners of his mouth. This grin belied the tone in which he spoke and the vigour with which he rubbed the socks in the tub. He said with a distinct Irish brogue, "When the revolution comes, I'll be wading in blood up to me knees." I knew he was baiting me, so did not take him seriously, but began to talk quietly to him. I had a not-too-bad visit with him, and left him in a much better frame of mind. Of course, he did not come to the service, but we had

a good meeting in the net-loft of the cannery with a good attendance.

As nothing could be done during the week when fishing was in progress, Captain Oliver took us away up to Dundas Island, off Port Simpson, where there was a fishing centre for trollers. These men live on their little boats for months; they eat, sleep, and work on them. Usually their rising time in summer is two a.m., and they troll out on the fishing grounds until late afternoon or early evening. Then they came in to sell their fish, cook themselves a meal, and try to get some sleep before the early hour next morning. We distributed magazines and papers, and it came to us that it would be a fine thing if these men had a place in which to get a bath. They had to clamber over the rocks after going ashore in their dinghies to get a little water for drinking and cooking. A bath was out of the question for weeks on end until they went to Prince Rupert. So we felt they ought to have a bath-house with a room in it for reading and writing during times when the fishing was slack.

From our own crew, and from here and there and everywhere, we managed to collect a few dollars. The owner of the Georgetown sawmill, the same place where the *Glad Tidings* and the old *S.S. Nell* used to load for their trips, gave us lumber at a reduced rate. Captain Oliver was the building foreman, and the crew of the *Crosby III* were the workers, as well as anyone else who could be persuaded to come and lend a hand. I remember

that for several days one week, Rev. Evan Baker of Prince Rupert acted as cook and gave the eagerly awaited signal out of the galley window to "come and get it." It was hard work. All the lumber had to be brought ashore and then "packed" up the beach to the building site. The black-flies were like an attacking army. We plastered ourselves with fly-oil, but it seemed only to whet the appetites of these vicious insects.

That summer we had with us on the *Crosby* the son of one of the general officers of our Church. He also worked on the building. One day he was trying to set a rafter and to drive a nail into the brace to hold it there while standing on one of the plates with one leg twisted around the rafter. He did not know how to hold the head of the nail against the side of his hammer and stick it into the brace while trying to hang on with both hands and the one leg. He had the nail in his mouth, but how to get set so that he could get it into the brace he did not know. Meantime, while I wondered if he would fall, Captain Oliver was calling to him from the floor, "Put a nail in it, Hughie, put a nail in it." However, he finally got it nailed.

I don't remember just how we managed to complete the building, although a lot of credit should go to the Lions Club of Vancouver. They gave us one hundred and fifty dollars toward the cost of the lumber and materials. The day came when the building was finished. In front we had a large float of logs securely fastened together and

floored with plank. An approach led from the raft to the shore alongside the bath-house. Along it was laid a three-quarter-inch water pipe with a tap at the end of the float, by means of which the men could fill their water buckets and tanks without going ashore over the rocks. Inside the house there were two rooms, one of which contained a stove with a water coil in it, and a hot-water tank and a shower-bath. In the other room there was a long table on which there were magazines. There the men had room also for writing letters. The only rules we imposed were that there should be no gambling and no liquor. A row-boat fisherman was appointed to take charge. He provided wood for heating the water; the men brought their own towels and paid him twenty-five cents for a bath. We felt that this sort of thing was a tough argument for those of the men who toyed with the idea that the preacher did nothing to help folks. It was a great delight also to Captain Oliver.

Chapter XI

THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

I WISH I could convey some idea of the eagerness with which we watched for the first glimpse of the Queen Charlotte Islands that morning in late August, 1925, after we had finished our cannery work for the season. We had become infected with the interest of the Captain in those enchanted islands, which lie some fifty miles off the mainland coast across the Hecate Straits and comprise "Canada Farthest West." Anyone who knows the character of those straits knows that the name as pronounced by a small boy is probably the right description, namely, the "He Cat" Straits. Certainly the weather there is as unpredictable and as wild and stormy as the actions of any tom cat in his most irresponsible moments.

This day, however, it was early and the usually westerly summer winds were not very bad. The sun had risen behind us; and every few minutes, when we knew that we were about half-way across, we were out on deck straining our eyes for the first glimpse of the islands. The Captain was unusually happy that day, partly because he was going home; and also, it is possible, because he had a missionary aboard and he was thinking of the days of service ahead. After a run of about three hours or more

from Edye Pass—yes, I can remember the course yet, south by west and a half west—we caught sight of the peaks of the mountains which run north and south about three-quarters of the way across the islands. They seemed at first like the jagged teeth of some giant saw which lay upturned on the horizon. A little later the top of Maude Island, which lies in the centre of Skidegate Inlet some miles back from its mouth, came into view. Then, gradually, a faintly bluish-purple tinge lay along under the mountains as they raised themselves a bit higher in the light of the morning sun. Later still, the Captain pointed out the yellow bluffs of Lawn Hill. Then we picked up the buoy off Dead Tree Point, and with slow speed in contrast to the eagerness of our hearts we crossed the bar just inside the buoy and headed across the outward end of the inlet for the Captain's home at Sandspit.

It was refreshing after our run of thirteen hours from Prince Rupert to land where one could walk with ease and pleasure along the paths bordered by giant spruce and hemlock. The ground beneath the trees was park-like in its open spaces. Free from underbrush, it invited strolls into the cool depths of the woods. But the main interest centred in the friends whom we met, and not the least interesting was the introduction to Mrs. Oliver and her home. It would be quite unchivalrous, too, if one did not mention the excellent meal which she served, topped with delicious apple pie and real home-produced whipped cream. After weeks

aboard ship, no one who has not had the experience can enter fully into our feelings on that first visit to Sandspit at the outer end of Skidegate Inlet. Even at that time one could sense the potential value of that part of the islands, which have now become one of the outstanding centres for the defence of Canada.

But park-like areas ashore did not comfort us very much, for by nightfall the westerly wind had gained in strength until the *Crosby* was a very uncomfortable place in which to sleep. That night, our first in the islands, we got a good idea of Sandspit when used for an anchorage in westerly or northerly winds. Poor Hughie was so seasick that he had to go ashore first thing in the morning. We made up a lunch for him and he stayed ashore all day. In the evening we had quite a job to get off the beach to the *Crosby* without the row-boat being capsized. However, we managed it safely, lifted anchor and laid our course for Queen Charlotte City, some seven miles farther up the inlet. This community was the centre of population and boasted of a sawmill for the production of spruce lumber. Here there was a small church building and the work was sustained by a very loyal group of people. Services were held at three points—Queen Charlotte, Skidegate Oilery and at Sandspit. At each place, with the help of loyal people, Sunday Schools were organized. Later on a Trail Ranger group was begun, and a C.G.I.T. group as well.

During these days the question of a place for the

missionary to live was very much to the fore. After conference with several of the leading people, it seemed best, under the circumstances, for us to go south to get a new engine installed before the really bad weather began. At the same time, we were to try and get some help in the building of a mission house at Queen Charlotte, which seemed by consensus of opinion to be the logical place for the missionary to live. A wire was sent to the Superintendent of Missions suggesting this plan. After waiting for three or four days without getting any reply, we decided to leave the next morning unless we got word to the contrary. No word being received, we left Sandspit at four a.m. on September 2, 1925, en route to Prince Rupert on the first lap of our journey south.

The weather did not look any too good, but it was calm at the time, so we started out. When we got half-way over, it blew up from the sou'-east; and before we got to the other side of the straits it was, as Captain Oliver said, "just as bad as we wanted." Everything that was movable in the cabin was thrown to the floor. Outside, it came down thick with heavy rain, but we got a sight of the shore-line below Edye Pass, corrected our course and laid one to bring us close to Seal Rocks, which lie just outside the entrance to the pass. Then, it was everyone's business to keep a keen lookout for the Rocks. Even Mrs. Scott was out on deck, for as we now had the wind mostly behind us, the boat was fairly steady. It was she who, at a moment

when the tension was getting high, suddenly exclaimed, "There they are!" and right ahead a cloud of spray went up twenty-five feet into the air as a wave broke over them. We turned aside and got safely into the sheltered water of the pass.

Just then the *Marfish*, as the *S.S. Thomas Crosby* had been renamed, passed us and went on into the pass en route for Prince Rupert. Her skipper, now in the fisheries service, had been given his first lessons in seamanship under Captain Oliver aboard the big *Crosby*. He had stayed behind us all the way over just to see that we did not come to any harm. The *Marfish* was hardly out of our sight when our engine stopped dead. It was a mercy it did not stop when we were outside, or we would in all probability have been lost on Seal Rocks. One could easily imagine what would have happened with the seas breaking over them as they were when we first sighted the rocks. It took us half an hour to get the engine going again. This showed the urgent need for new equipment.

Near Prince Rupert we picked up the fisheries cruiser *Heron* and were running parallel to her when we sighted one of the big three-stackers of the Canadian National Steamship fleet coming straight at us out of the mist. We went hard over to port and the big vessel passed between us and the *Heron*, but the wake she left us gave us a lively time of it for a few minutes.

We reported the situation at Queen Charlotte to the Rev. G. E. Hacker, who was the Home Missions

Convener of the Presbytery. He said we were doing the right thing to go south before the really bad weather came on. We sailed next morning at four-forty-five. The Captain, at seven o'clock, porridge-time on the *Crosby*, had gone below, leaving me at the wheel. He had given me a course which would take us just inside Gibson Island, off the mouth of the Skeena. As soon as he got the porridge on, he came back to the pilot-house and relieved me at the wheel. I had only gone below and was going from the engine-room to the passage just outside the galley, when I was thrown violently against the partition. There was another, less violent, deadened thump, and we came to a stop.

I hurried back to the pilot-house and found we were hard and fast aground on a sand-bar. The Captain said, "Get the chart! There ought to be four fathoms of water here." Sure enough, the four fathoms were marked on the chart, but the shifting sand-bars had piled up there at the time. We were, as a result, high and dry. I got an idea of the Captain's seamanship right there. He did not try to go astern, which would have piled the sand higher under us, but he kept the engine going ahead until we were sure we were hard and fast aground and so in no danger of slipping off into deep water. Then he stopped the engine. As it happened, we were fortunate, for the tide was almost low and, by the time we had our breakfast, it had begun to rise. We were soon under way again, none the worse for the experience.

This was one time when the Captain's local knowledge was a bit out, but he had a wonderful store of information regarding navigation marks. On one occasion, when coming out of Prince Rupert Harbour, he asked me if I saw a tree-top dead ahead much higher than any of the others. I replied, "Yes, I do," and he said, "Steer for that." I did, and was surprised when we got closer in to find that the Department of Marine had placed a light there right in line with that tree and that it led into Metlakatlah Pass.

Another time, en route north from Namu through Fitzhugh Sound, we were approaching the entrance to Lama Pass. There is a light there now, on Pointer's Island, which guides vessels safely into the channel. "But in those days," said the Captain, "There were no lights. We used to run straight up the middle of Fitzhugh Sound until we had that white cliff on the east side of the Sound right abeam of us. Then we put the wheel hard over, and, with the cliff dead astern, we ran right into the mouth of the pass." The land at the entrance to the pass is very low and a vessel would go aground before it could be seen. The hills farther inland were a black shadow which extended far out over the water, so that it was almost impossible to see the shore-line. I have never passed that way without wondering how those old sailors managed to keep out of danger, but the Captain said, "You could see that white cliff on the darkest night."

Up at the other end of the pass, just above Bella

Bella where it comes out of Seaforth Channel, we were passing along south-bound close inshore one day, and he said, "In the early days there were three tree-tops in a cluster higher than any of the others. You could see them on the darkest nights. When we got them exactly abeam, we put the wheel hard over and ran right into the entrance to the channel. If we went farther ahead without turning, we would have piled up on the rocks." There has been a lighthouse there for years now—at Driad Point. As we continued our voyage south, we picked up the Rev. T. C. and Mrs. Colwell at Alert Bay, and at Cape Mudge we took the Rev. G. B. and Mrs. Ridland aboard en route to Presbytery meeting in Vancouver. We arrived on September 8th, very happy to be at the end of our long voyage.

It was November 9th before we left for the north again. It had taken longer to install the new engine, a fifty-horsepower full Diesel, and it had also cost a lot more than was at first calculated. But the performance of the engine and the feeling of security which that gave us were more than worth the expenditure. No one who knows those northern waters would have attempted to run the boat in all weathers with the old equipment; and we never knew when we would be asked to make a trip for some good cause.

En route home at Stag Bay, on Hernando Island, just north-west of Powell River, we were held up by a heavy sou'-easter. We put out all our anchor

chain and lay close up to the land all night. There was a small clump of trees on the shore which gave us some shelter from the wind, but the swells hauled right around the corner of the island and we rolled all night. At Cape Mudge we picked up a large anchor which had been left in our care by the crew of an American fishing tug which had been wrecked. The company afterwards gave it to us for our help to the shipwrecked men. We picked up the anchor, lashed it down on the forward-deck of the *Crosby* and later used it to hold the big float offshore in front of the Fishermen's Rest House at Dundas Island.

After our share of sou'-easters, we arrived on November 19th, at a small bay about half-way up Banks Island on its easterly side. I kept taking soundings all the way in, and, when we got a level sandy bottom at ten fathoms, we dropped our anchor. I took the row-boat and made further soundings. We did not want to be caught without knowing what sort of water was inside our anchorage if perchance we had to make our way farther into the bay during the night. I was surprised to find that we were really lying between two islands. The Captain said that I might be glad I had done this twenty years from that night.

The *Crosby* was, as the sailors say, "by the nose," that is, our bow was down in the water farther than was normal. This was due to the stock of building material which we had taken on board at Vancouver. We had everything we needed to finish

the mission house at Queen Charlotte, including doors, windows, and brick for the chimney. It kept us steady in a sea, but we were glad to find, after making an early start from our anchorage at Banks Island, that the sea was very calm when we reached the eastern edge of the straits.

I have been across the Hecate Straits in every month of the year, but I never had such a quiet, uneventful crossing as we made that day. There was not even a ripple on the water. It almost seemed that Providence was coming to our aid in getting the materials for the mission house safely across the dangerous piece of water. En route over, the sea-gulls were sitting on the canopy over our after-deck. Captain Oliver went and got a sea-biscuit and broke it into a basin for them. He said, from the number in the flock, that "Those gulls know that there is more than porridge and prayers aboard this ship." Upon arrival at Queen Charlotte, the first thing I did was to send a wire to my wife telling of our safe arrival. Everyone was glad to see us back, and services were resumed at all our points.

During the week the Captain and I got the foundation laid for the new mission house. My job was to dig the post-holes, some of them to a depth of five feet in order to get a good footing. Then we went along the road by the beach and got the posts. All the lumber for the dimension work was given us without charge by the sawmill people. Soon we were ready for the carpenters.

After being out until two in the morning looking for an Indian who was supposed to have been shipwrecked on one of the islands, we were called the next night to give a big raft of lumber a push into place alongside the *S.S. Prince John* at the wharf at Queen Charlotte. The small local boats were not able to move it against the strong wind, but for us with our new engine it was an easy job. How proud we were of our new equipment! It was a nasty night, with sou'-east wind and rain, so we lay alongside the raft until it was unloaded and then we pushed it back into place at the mill dock.

The carpenters were making good headway with the mission house, so I left them to finish it, and went south on the *Prince John* just before Christmas to get Mrs. Scott and Robert. We also wanted to buy the house furnishings, which were being supplied by the Board of Home Missions. We got back to the islands on the return trip of the *Prince John*, on January 7th, and arrived at Queen Charlotte on the 10th to find that nothing had been done on the house since I had left. It was a case of too much celebration over Christmas, but it meant that for three weeks we had to live aboard the mission boat. During that time we all, including Captain Oliver, had a bout with the 'flu.

Fortunately, the weather was good until near the last of the month. Then we got one of the worst sou'-easters I have ever experienced. Mrs. Scott was still in bed with the 'flu, and the wind got so bad that we had to heave anchor and get out from

Queen Charlotte. We ran out to the east of Queen Charlotte wharf toward two small islands which lay not far away to the sou'-east. The course to Aliford Bay lay between these islands, as spurs of reef ran out from the outer ends of each of them. I was on deck trying to see them, and the Captain kept asking, "Can you see the islands, sir?" I said, "I can see one of them." "I must see them both," said he. It was simply impossible to see. Shelter my eyes as I would, the rain drove against them with such stinging force, as though it were hail, that it blinded me. Finally the Captain turned back toward Queen Charlotte, but it was impossible to anchor in our usual place. The sea bottom there is too soft to make a good holding in a gale and, anyway, we would have been driven ashore before our anchors could have held.

So the Captain turned out towards Robinson Island, farther up the inlet. He asked me if I could see it. I was out on deck and, as the storm was now mostly behind us, I could make out the loom of the islands in the darkness. Having got his bearings, the Captain ran over and around the end of Lena Island, about two miles distant, and we anchored in a sheltered bay along its southern shore. Captain Oliver said he had never known it to blow in there, but all night long we were both on watch. The wind caught the tops off the waves and carried them away in flying spume like driving snow, "the woolies," the fishermen called them.

The two anchors dragged and every little while we had to pull up the smaller one and then run ahead, dragging the big one, and so re-anchor. The row-boat, which was tied astern, swamped and the oars were carried away.

All this time Mrs. Scott lay below, ill with the 'flu. I spent my time first with the Captain heaving anchors, etc., and then staying below as much as possible to try to reassure her. I must say she was calm and not nervous, or so she made it seem to me. This went on until after two a.m. Then the violence of the storm abated and we were able to get some sleep. If the Church officials had been there that night, they would have been glad and thankful, as we were, that we had an engine which gave us not the slightest concern. We kept it going slowly and it was always ready for use. In my log-book, I notice that in the entry of that date I blessed the men who designed the engine; those who installed it; and those who had provided it for us.

We moved into the new mission house at Queen Charlotte in early March, 1926, but before long we found our shoes and all our clothing mildewing in the clothes closets. The lumber for partitions had been green when put in place. As a result, all our clothing had to be taken out twice a week and hung around the stove to dry. The mattresses on the beds were also mildewing on the under side and had to be put around the stove during the day. But all these difficulties were at last overcome and we were

glad to have as our first guest the Rev. Arthur Barner, the Superintendent of our Indian Mission work for Canada. He was on one of his routine trips of inspection and was a welcome guest.

At this time there were several other bad storms. Captain Oliver was half-sick with the 'flu, but refused to give in. Finally, I persuaded him to go home for a couple of weeks. Every night I went aboard and slept on the *Crosby*, so as to be on hand should there be any need to care for the boat during bad weather. Our first trip south in the Queen Charlottes with the new engine was made as soon as the Captain was feeling better. We arrived at Rose Harbour, a whaling station about eighty miles south of Skidegate Inlet. In the whaling season we held services regularly with the crews.

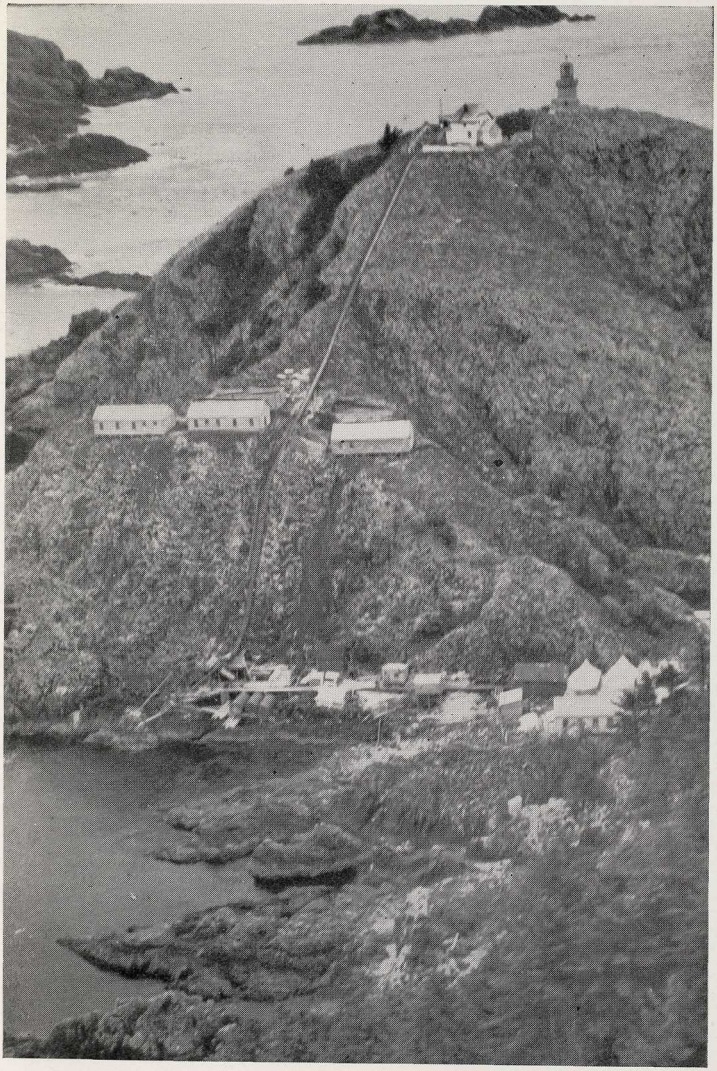
On one occasion, when the boats were tied up by bad weather, we held a service on the middle one of three whalers which were tied up alongside one another at the dock. I carried the little organ aboard and we had a good service, with over twenty men present. The Rev. Dr. G. H. Wilson, who was on board with us for that trip, gave the sermon and had a good hearing from the men. My brother sang two solos, which were much appreciated. We always tried to do what we could for the men, especially in the winter months when the watchmen were there. This, too, was always appreciated.

Our main objective was to get to Cape St. James Lighthouse, at the extreme southern end of the

Queen Charlotte Islands, some twenty miles south of Rose Harbour. This lighthouse is one of the most exposed on the coast. West of it lies the open Pacific; to the south there is no land until you reach the northern tip of Vancouver Island some one hundred miles distant; to the east it is one hundred miles to the mainland; and to the north lie the stormy Hecate Straits stretching for another hundred and fifty miles to the north end of the Queen Charlottes. In those days the lighthouse tender made a trip every three months. Between times the only sight to relieve the monotony for the light-keeper and his wife was the smoke of a distant steamer hull down on the horizon, or the sight of a small fishing boat as it tossed on the troubled waters of the strait away to the east.

A mile and a half south were the rookeries of the great sea lions. When the wind was favourable their roars mingled with the noise of the pounding surf. The light is situated on the top of St. James Island, which is in the shape of a "Christy stiff" hat. It is fifty or sixty yards in circumference at the top, and is reached after a climb of three hundred and twenty-five feet. An incline railway stretches upward fifteen hundred feet from the little landing wharf to the top of the island. At the seaward end the ascent is almost perpendicular for the first one hundred feet.

All this has been somewhat changed by World War II, and many of these isolated but strategic



R.C.A.F. official photograph

Cape St. James Lighthouse

places have been made radio stations. In this way connection with the outside is much better maintained, but there is still the same need for the fellowship of human beings, which somehow does not seem to percolate through a radio tube to any satisfactory extent. But, when we got to the lighthouse that first trip in 1926, the lightkeeper and his wife had not seen anyone to talk to for weeks and weeks. So they both talked at the same time. Neither one realized that the other was talking until I may have shown my predicament by turning first to the one and then to the other. Then the man turned to his wife and said, "Now, I'm talking." In a moment he apologized and said, "You know, this life has a tendency to make us nervous." That could easily be seen, for his lip trembled as he spoke. We went there every month of the year and always took in some sort of extra supplies, a little sugar or butter. The Department of Marine co-operated well. They would send us the mail for Cape St. James by steamer from Prince Rupert to Queen Charlotte and we picked it up and took it along on our first trip south.

The first time I took Mrs. Scott down to that lighthouse the wife of the lightkeeper had not seen another woman for five years. It was pathetic to see how she tried to keep her for herself. When we were all sitting in the little parlour, just before she felt someone was going to say, "Let's go and have a look at the light," she would say to Mrs.

Scott in her Scotch accent, "You havena' seen our upstairs. Come away up 'til I show you." Then the two of them would go upstairs and stay until good manners made it imperative that they come down. Later on, at the psychological moment, she would say, "You havena' seen our cellar. Come away down 'til I show you." Then they would go down and look at the canned foods on the shelves.

If we did not make a landing the first time, we kept going back until we did. The Captain would meantime lie off with the *Crosby* with the new engine slowly turning over and ready for instant action. It was impossible to anchor in bad weather. But if we did not always manage to land, we could get in near enough to shout to the lightkeeper. And that seemed to do him good, perhaps as much as the things we sent ashore. There were times, of course, in the summer months when Captain Oliver would get ashore. That was something which was always appreciated by the lighthouse folk, for he was the continual inspiration in such work. He was "weather wise," too, and we were never caught there by any sudden turn of wind or weather. If I had managed to get ashore and he had to remain aboard, there would always be the warning whistle to tell me to hurry back before the wind or sea got up. Away up three hundred and twenty-five feet, one could not sense the changes in the water very well.

This fine understanding of weather signs was another characteristic of the old Captain. One day the mission boat was tied up alongside a larger vessel at Prince Rupert. The skipper of that ship, looking over the rail, said to Captain Oliver, "Where are you bound today?" "To Sandspit," said he. "Not today," replied the other man, looking at the skies which were already showing signs of sou'-east weather. But the old missionary-skipper took a long look at the sky, gave his customary little cough, and said, "I think the wind is just on this side of the straits." They left in due course, but while it was rough on the eastern side, as they got farther across the wind dropped and by the time they were nearly over to the island side it was a fine sunny day.

After four years on the island, during which time the church at Queen Charlotte was enlarged and the work further organized, we were moved over to the mainland in the summer of 1929, with headquarters at Ocean Falls. Just before this happened, I was able through an association during my college days with Sir Joseph Flavelle to interest him in the work of our little hospital at Queen Charlotte. One thing needed very badly was a proper X-ray unit. By reminding Sir Joseph of the time when another college boy and myself had been in charge of a large tent which he had donated to the Camp Education work of the Frontier College, he was led to invest another five hundred dollars in that hospital on the

most westerly fringe of Canadian settlement. The encouragement given the people by this good start enabled them to carry through successfully a drive for another one thousand dollars. They got their X-ray machine, and Dr. G. A. C. Roberts came over and put the institution on its feet. The Rev. Stanley Redman was appointed as missionary, then we felt that all phases of our work were well cared for.

Chapter XII

SERVING—NOT COUNTING THE COST

CAPTAIN OLIVER was now eighty-one years of age, and it seemed best for him to retire. As I had secured my Towboat Master's Certificate, I was to take over from him and be in charge of the *Thomas Crosby III* on the new field, Old as he was, the Captain never did really retire. He began to build another mission boat at his Sandspit home for the west coast of Vancouver Island. When the hull was finished, we went over on the *Crosby* and towed it to a large logging camp farther south in the Queen Charlottes where there was a derrick big enough to handle the new sixty-horsepower engine from the dock into its place in the hull. The *S.S. Prince John* would not take that risk, although it had brought the engine from Vancouver and had placed it on the dock at the logging camp.

During the trip from Sandspit with the new boat in tow an amusing incident occurred. The Seventh Day Adventist man was again helping with the carpenter work and was on board with us en route to the logging camp. We were having a bite of lunch, and my brother, who was engineer, had opened a can of beans. The gentleman had already had one helping and was given another. All at once he stopped eating and pushed a little way back

from the table. My brother went to him at once and said, "Are you ill, Mr. F.?" He sat perfectly still for a moment and then said one word in his soft English accent, "Pork!" He had come across a small piece of pork in the beans, quite an adventure, I would say, and had thus unintentionally violated one of the strict rules of his religion—he had eaten pork, a product from an unclean animal.

The boat when finished became the *Melvin Swartout* and was stationed at Bamfield, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, where it did grand service on that dangerous piece of the coast for several years. But more of that later. During my four years with headquarters at Ocean Falls, many an incident took place which showed the value of having such a boat as the *Crosby* on that part of the mainland shore. It was not without difficulty, either, that services were kept up at all outlying Indian villages, logging camps, with cannery watchmen and the four lighthouses on that part of the coast.

One incident comes to my mind. The weather had been so bad during December and January that the lighthouse tender had been unable to land supplies at Egg Island Light. These had been left at Margaret Bay Cannery, on Smith's Inlet about ten miles from the island. When we came along in early February it was still blowing, but we got the mail from Margaret Bay and went out to the lighthouse. Egg Island is situated at the mouth of Smith's Inlet in the middle of Queen Charlotte

Sound. It is the point from which most of the coasting vessels take their bearings and change course for Addenbrook Light on Fitzhugh Sound. There was still too much swell to risk a landing in a row-boat at the usual place. The lightkeeper came along the rocky shore-line and called to us to go around to the north-easterly side, where there was a sort of bay midway between the eastern and western ends of the island. The swells outside were so large that they were hauling around both ends of the island from seaward, but we could lie off in comparative comfort at that point.

My helper was Mr. Hugh Lousley, son of the Rev. J. A. Lousley of the Manitoba Conference of our Church. He went in with the row-boat. Then watching his chance, he put it in stern first in a little cove where the rocks were perpendicular. The lightkeeper watched his chance and dropped into the boat, and Hughie bent to the oars and got clear. The surge of the seas was rising eight to ten feet straight up and down the wall of rock, but of course they were not breaking.

Once on board the *Crosby*, the lightkeeper delved into the three sacks of mail. He had had a great time explaining to his little six-year-old son why it was that Santa did not arrive at their home at Christmas. All the parcels for their Christmas were in those sacks. When it came time to go ashore again, he was determined to take one of the sacks of mail with him. I saw the danger of losing it, so made them take a heaving-line and make it fast

around it. My thought was that they would get in to the rocks stern first, allow the keeper to jump out, then let the boat go back to the end of the line as the swell subsided, ready to come in with the next one. Then the mail sack could be jerked out in time to allow the boat to go back free again. To my consternation I saw the lightkeeper jump ashore and then turn to drag the mail sack out all on the one wave. This took a split second too long and the sea dropped away from underneath the boat, the stern which was held in against the rocks lodged and the boat dropped bow first. The incoming surge turned it end for end and Hughie was thrown into the water.

He was a strong swimmer and with great bravery he went in with the next surge and tried to get hold of the rocks. Before he could begin to climb up, the water fell away and the incoming surge threw him violently against the rocks and then snatched him away again. He tried to get on the capsized row-boat, but that, too, was impossible. The greedy waters overflowed him or threw him off. With great presence of mind he dived under the upturned boat. There was an air pocket inside, up along the bottom. Lying on his back, he kept his face where he could breathe, and rested himself as he floated by hanging on with one hand grasping each edge of the boat. When he got his wind again, he came out from under. As the lightkeeper had by this time regained his senses, he threw the heaving-line out toward him. Hughie grasped

it, made it fast under his arms, then went in toward shore again, and the lightkeeper hauled him to safety.

I was left alone on the *Crosby* with night coming on, but made my way back to Takush harbour, six miles farther up the inlet, and anchored there for the night. Next morning the sea had calmed and I went back to the lighthouse. The lightkeeper this time was able to launch his own boat, bring Hughie out to the *Crosby* and take the other sacks of mail off. It was a case of "All's well that ends well," but it might easily have been different. Later on that day, when Hughie was standing alongside me in the wheel-house, I saw scratches on his hands and wrists, and said to him, "Hughie, did you get those cuts from the rocks yesterday?" He said, "Yes, and I'm black and blue from my ankles to my hips." I had tried to tell him of the might of the sea, but it did not seem to sink in. Now it had made its own impression.

Earlier that winter Hugh had gone to the city for Christmas, and I was left at home at Ocean Falls in charge of the *Crosby*. One lovely Saturday afternoon two of the younger men of the town had gone up Dean Channel to a bay about twelve miles away for duck shooting. That night the north wind started to blow. On the Monday morning the local Provincial Police officer came to see me, saying the wind had evidently caught these two and was holding them up; their folks were very anxious, for everyone knew the terror of that wind.

Would it be possible to get the *Crosby* to go in search of them? I said, "Well, I can run the engine if you know where to go and how to get there." He said, "Then, let's go."

We made the first six miles in forty minutes, for the wind was blowing out of the inlet on which Ocean Falls is situated. But when we reached the entrance and turned up Dean Channel, our troubles began. In a very short time we were covered with ice: decks, pilot-house, windows, ropes, and anchor gear. The freezing spray came over the bow in great sheets and the mast and rigging were ice-covered half-way up. We had to lower the less exposed of the pilot-house windows slightly, leaving only a crack through which to see ahead. When the flying spray came over, we dodged aside and the water hit the inside wall of the pilot-house behind us. It was quickly covered with ice. It took two hours to make the next six miles bucking into that head wind and sea, but we made it. On arrival at the bay where we thought the young men had taken shelter, I had to break the ice off the anchor davit with a hammer before we could anchor. But we got those boys. They had eaten all the lunch which they had taken with them on the Saturday and were down, as they said, to "plain duck." Their parents and friends rewarded us well, for it was a mighty relief. Those winds blow for two or three days to as many weeks at times, and the boys would have been in a bad way. There was no other boat at Ocean Falls fit to make the trip.

Later in that same spring we were lying in Takush harbour at Smith's Inlet. It was dusk when we anchored. Outside the wind was coming up from the sou'-east and it was going to be a nasty night. We had scarcely time to get our oil clothes off, when we heard a boat come alongside. Through the light from the cabin windows we could see a man lying on the after-deck of the gas boat. He was wrapped in blankets and had been badly hurt in a logging accident. His friends were afraid to venture out in their small boat and asked if we would take him to Bella Bella Hospital. It made one think, but then there was nothing else to be done. What a boon was that new Diesel engine! We knew the *Crosby* could run before anything short of a gale; and felt that, if we could once get outside and get the wind astern of us, we could make it. That meant haste to get off. My brother and his wife were my helpers. She had had two years' training as a nurse, so, when we got the man aboard, she made him as comfortable as possible. We got the anchor up and were away.

The man was so badly hurt that we could not take him down into the cabin. Later a section of the wall of the companionway leading down into the cabin was made removable. After that we could take stretcher cases down below. This time, however, we made him comfortable on deck. My brother made a screen of canvas around the canopy stanchions so that the patient was as good as inside. Hot drinks were given him and the night wore

away without incident. It was dark, but we had our courses in the logbook and everything was shipshape. After an all-night run we got him to hospital the next morning before eight o'clock. It is such trips as these that give entry to the heart of our coast folk, and our missionaries aboard the boats are doing it all the time.

One day in the fall, when in Vancouver for some repairs to the boat, just as we were almost ready to leave, the wife of a fisherman whom we knew well came to us and asked if we would tow her husband's boat back home. They could not face the trip alone with the bad weather coming on as their boat was not fit to travel singly. That was quite an order, for it meant towing the boat for some three hundred miles. The husband, downhearted after a bad fishing season, had taken to drink and had to get out of the city. It did not mean going out of out way, so we told the wife that we would take them along.

The next morning the year's supplies which had been purchased for the family were loaded on board the *Crosby*, but the trouble was to get the husband on board. He was in a state of drunken friendliness and had told me that he knew he was doing wrong as he had been rightly brought up. Finally, he went on board his own boat and was soon asleep. I told my brother to let go the lines of the fishing craft and pole it quietly out to the end of the slip. There we would put a line on it. This was accomplished easily enough, but when we stopped at the oil scow

to refuel, the man wakened and came aboard the *Crosby*. He was rather quarrelsome by then and was determined to steer. He said that he knew the coast better than I did and took the wheel out of my hands. I stood by all the time and kept an eye on him. The man's daughter had been put aboard her father's boat to steer, so we made good progress. We tied up for the night at Howe Sound. The next morning Jim was quite sober and very sorry for the trouble he had caused.

We got along without incident by taking care when approaching or crossing open stretches of water, and soon had reached the south side of Queen Charlotte Sound. As the weather had turned sou'-east and it was blowing hard, we turned in at Hirst Island, opposite Scarlett Point Light. The shores of the little bay where we anchored were "steep to," so we put a new head-line ashore. It was a piece of what was called the "foregoer" from a whaling vessel, that is, a one-and-a-half-inch pure manila rope. It was used to attach the harpoon to the heavy three-inch cable which followed it and ran around the drums of the winches aboard the whaler. When we made it fast around the root of a spruce tree that evening, Jim said, "If we blow out to sea tonight, we'll take a piece of British Columbia along with us." That was true; the line was the best, and we had no fear of it giving way. We put out anchors at the bow and the stern to hold us off-shore, and went to bed with a sense of perfect security.

While we were there waiting for weather to cross the Sound, we visited an old couple who had made their home on the island for some years. They had come there with all their worldly possessions in a large dugout canoe. In addition to flour and sugar, oatmeal and other food supplies, they had brought along two pigs and some ducks. It was a rocky shore upon which they landed, and the old lady said it was not many weeks before the pigs had fallen over the rocks and had broken their legs and had to be killed. The ducks managed perfectly. Later the woman got a pair of goats and, when we were there, these had multiplied until they had a good-sized herd. To make them crowd around her, all she had to call was "Mama's ba-a-bies!" and they came running from all directions.

What a job this couple must have had! They lived at first in a tent, then kept picking up lumber from the beach until they had enough material to build a house—a small one, of course. To make a garden they carried earth from other near-by places to build up that to be found in small pockets along the rocky hill-side. In these they had planted gooseberry and currant bushes, and the old man as we walked through his small plantation could tell us exactly how many pounds of fruit had been taken from each bush. He would compare that with the amount taken the year previously. He would have made an excellent food controller.

As we sat in their little one-room home, they

told us something of their life story. The man had not learned to read until he had been over sixty years of age. He had found his way along the streets of cities by looking at the signs on the store windows, etc., to tell what sort of merchandise was sold there. When he saw the large coloured lights which druggists used to put in their windows, he knew that he could get drug supplies, and when he saw a painting of false teeth he knew he was at a dentist's. When we knew him, he could read the newspaper quite well. He was a French Canadian and had the talent of his people for industry and getting along with what he had. He showed me some of the finest of deer-skins which he had tanned by his own process into very fine soft material; from these he had made his jackets. His wife was clothed in overalls of blue denim. And you could see the little round mark in the hip pocket which told of a small box of "snoose" (snuff) being carried there.

We had several good meetings with the old couple and our usual evening conversation was followed by Bible reading and prayer. He had been nominally a Roman Catholic, until as a young man he had seen his sister buried in a wet corner of the graveyard without any service in the church, while her little girl friend, whose father had lots of money, was given a fine church funeral and buried in a much better place in the cemetery. But when we knew him, he had become a lot milder in his criticism of religion in general and enjoyed our

prayer and Bible reading. From the fruit gathered in their gardens they made preserves, which they sold to the many fishermen who made the island their headquarters. They also sold goat milk and meat. In this way they had enough with which to carry on in independence and what was to them happiness.

It was ten days before we got away from Hirst Island. The weather changed by that time and we made the crossing of the Sound safely. We had enjoyed the trip with our friends; and when we left them at their home they were most grateful for all we had done. Needless to say, they became our fast friends, and I am glad to say from that time Jim never touched another drop of liquor.

One other story I must tell. It relates to the time just before the Captain left the *Crosby* and I took over from him. That summer we had a young man from Saskatoon aboard with us. He had been with us the summer before, and had spent the intervening winter, while going to college, in learning from his mother how to cook and bake. He wanted to be able to make a real contribution to the *Crosby*, for he had seen from his first year aboard that the main implement in the galley was a can-opener.

In the years preceding my arrival on the *Crosby*, the Captain and the late Dr. J. C. Spencer had begun the building of a small school-house at Takush on Smith's Inlet. These men of faith decided to do something about the state of the Indian people

Captain Scott and Mr. Ashford visit elderly couple

Miss Potter and Captain Scott inside Takush long-house

there. Between week-ends, when engaged in the cannery work on Smith's and Rivers Inlet, they would spend the time working on the building. During my first summer on the *Crosby* I did something myself and was surprised at what a good job I made of putting in window frames in the little building. There was no water available except what had to be carried a good distance; and in the event of a teacher being secured that would have been something of a hardship.

Once again Captain Oliver's ingenuity came to the rescue. There was on the wharf at one of the canneries on Smith's Inlet a section of smokestack about three feet in diameter. In this the Captain saw a potential cistern for the teacher's residence at Takush. The cannery manager gave him permission to take the pipe, so we loaded it aboard the *Crosby*. En route the Captain put my boy, Robert, and this young prairie lad into that pipe to tap all around the inside and thus get the rust off. They worked like beavers, or it might be more apropos to say like woodpeckers or miners. The boy from the prairies was very fair and most careful about his appearance at all times. My boy was also fair, but when they came out of that pipe, as we neared Takush, they were both as red as any red Indians. All they lacked was some oil to give a shine to them and you might have expected to hear a war-whoop at any moment. Perhaps it was that trait of being willing to tackle anything that needed doing which has made that prairie lad

one of the outstanding medical men in the city of Vancouver. However, to get on with the water pipe, when we arrived at Takush it was loaded on two row-boats lashed together and taken ashore. Then it was rolled up the bank from the beach on long poles, by means of ropes around it which unwound as the pipe rolled upward. The crew of the *Crosby* provided the power. Finally the Captain put a wooden bottom in the pipe and caulked it well. He fitted a water tap into the side at the bottom and the tank was then placed at the kitchen door of the little residence so as to catch the water from the roof; and there was plenty of that during the winter. This left only water for drinking and for cooking to be carried, and it made a great contribution to the comfort of the teacher.

Later Miss Winnifred Potter, having heard of the plight of the Takush Indians, volunteered for the work there. What a change her work made in a year or two! The first time I saw the Takush Indians they were living in the old long houses of their forefathers. The big fire burned in the centre of the building, and the smoke found its way out through the hole in the roof as best it could. Little children played in the ashes around the fire. The smallest of them were stark naked and so black with soot and dirt you could not tell them from Negro children. After Miss Potter had been there a while, it was all changed; the children were properly clothed, and a start, even if it was a small one, was made in building separate houses for the

families. Those same children received prizes afterwards in the schools' exhibit at the Vancouver Exhibition for clothing which they had made.

Miss Potter gave herself unstintedly to the welfare of those people. It was a very necessary thing, as anyone can see, that the mission boat should call regularly. There were no other white people nearer than the cannery six miles away. However, she was never afraid, even when the people staged drunken dances around her house to scare her away when she first came. She said she just prayed and God took care of her. After some years of service there, she fell ill but refused to go to hospital. It was only when Dr. Herb. Barner, the physician aboard the *Crosby*, with the help of Rev. Peter Kelly, took her off by main force, so to speak, that she consented to go to Bella Bella Hospital. There everything possible was done for her, but it availed nothing. She passed away in a short time from a malignant disease, but left a record for unselfish and successful service that has not often been equalled. At present there is no teacher at Takush. The people are without help of any kind except as it is brought to them by the missionary aboard the *Thomas Crosby IV*, which is now doing the work on that section of the coast under the efficient leadership of the Rev. Peter Kelly.

Chapter XIII

MARINE MINISTRY OF HEALING

DURING our summers on the mainland coast, as soon as the fishing season closed, Dr. George Darby of Bella Bella always made a trip with us before his assistant for the summer had left the hospital. We called at all the logging camps on the coast and at every Indian village. The work done by this devoted and skilled medical missionary would astonish the average person were it fully known. Because of this, he is a general favourite with all the fishermen. One thing which he could do, that would bring scathing denunciation from these men were it done by an ordinary man in a boat, was to run through their nets during the night. On one occasion I heard that a fisherman's net had become wound around the propeller of the doctor's boat. Through the darkness the man came along the cork-line in his row-boat, swearing lustily at the person who had thus damaged his means of making a living. Then, out of the darkness, the doctor's voice came to the man, and his reply came back, "That you, Doc? Okay! I'll be there in a minute."

On these trips aboard the *Crosby* I have known the doctor to go ashore right after lunch and never show up again until the wee small hours of the

morning. His purpose in making these voyages was not alone to relieve suffering and to meet human need, but to get an estimate of the amount of work needed, and so to try to make arrangements for a doctor to travel regularly aboard the mission boat. He was looking to the day when the relieving doctor for the summer at Bella Bella would stay on after the fishing season closed and Dr. Darby was back from the summer hospital at River's Inlet. Then, during the winter months, this young doctor would link up the hospital with the people in the outlying sections of the coast.

In the year 1932 Dr. Eric Austin was appointed to the work at Bella Bella. After taking charge for the summer months, he came aboard the *Crosby* in the fall as the first medical man to be given oversight of that work aboard the boat. The coast was covered from Smith's Inlet on the south to Hartley Bay on the north. Runs were also made to the head of all the inlets between these places and to the outlying points on the coast bordering Hecate Straits. This made an itinerary of about one thousand miles a month. The work done by this able and painstaking young doctor was exceptionally fine.

On one occasion we called at a logging camp and found that the young daughter of one of the men was badly in need of having her tonsils removed. The parents could afford neither the time nor the money to go to the city to have it done, so it was arranged that on the next trip of the *Crosby* Dr.

Austin would do the work at their home. When we arrived, the *Crosby* was tied up alongside the float on which the home of the young couple was built. It was a fine sheltered bay, and the water was perfectly quiet. The main cabin of the boat was made into an operating-room. Extra lights had been put in place and my brother's wife had everything ready as nearly as possible in true hospital fashion. The little girl was carried aboard and the operation performed with complete success. Directions for her care were given to the mother. When we called again, en route south in a few days, we found her doing fine.

At another port of call farther up the coast was a man who had to give up his work owing to a large fatty tumour which had grown on the back of his neck and interfered vitally with its free action. He had to turn his whole body around in order to see anything just a little to one side. He could not turn his head. He discussed the matter with Dr. Austin who, after a thorough examination, assured the man that the operation could be done aboard the boat. That was arranged for the next trip. This man, too, could not afford to go to Prince Rupert and pay the doctor's fee and hospital bill. He was very glad indeed that it could be done by our doctor for a fraction of the expense. Once again my sister-in-law became the attending nurse. I arranged the operating-theatre by installing extra-powerful electric lights. The table in our main cabin, lengthened by the use of a smaller

one at one end, became the operating-table. My brother and I stood by on deck to see that no vagary of the wind should cause the boat to move; and with plenty of bumpers we held it quietly alongside the float. The operation was a complete success and the man later regained the normal movements of his neck. So far as we know, there was no return of the trouble.

On one of our trips we arrived at Kitamaat Indian village, where Dr. Austin did a lot of work among the people. The field matron who is stationed there by the Woman's Missionary Society of our Church had a good many cases lined up for him. She had also been called two days before to the home of a settler, who lived across the river some distance up the stream on its farther bank. When the doctor arrived she told him about the case; a young girl of about sixteen years had been taken with severe pain in the side. The nurse had done what she could for her, and word was to have been sent across to the village if further attention were needed.

Something about the case made Dr. Austin anxious. Before we left the next day, he said he thought we ought to run over to see the girl. We ran across the bay and anchored off the mouth of the river. We launched both row-boats and rowed about a mile up to where we could land, and then walked another half mile to the home of the settler. The doctor went upstairs to examine the patient.

When he came down he said it was a case of acute appendicitis and that she ought to be taken to hospital as soon as possible. We made a stretcher of poles and blankets and carried her to the boats. There we placed her in the centre of the larger boat, while I sat in the bow and a young Indian who was working at the farm took the paddle in the stern. The doctor followed in the smaller row-boat. We got along fine until the girl sat up in a sort of stupor and, looking across to the farther bank where there were some stumps, she said, "Oh, are those bears?" We quieted her as best we could, but I was glad when we got her safely on board. We left at once for Bella Bella, some one hundred and forty miles away, and ran all afternoon, all night, and until some time the next forenoon when we reached the hospital.

There were times when we had to use our search-light in some of the narrower channels, for we took the shortest possible route. We did not want to expose the patient to the hazard of rough water, as, for instance, had we gone out over Milbank Sound, a usually rough and exposed piece of water. We made the trip safely and Dr. Darby and Dr. Austin operated as soon as the patient could be prepared for it. She made a good recovery and, being out of a job and unable to do heavy work, another position was found for her. Money was also given to her by the hospital staff and other friends when she left. Thus do our marine and medical mis-

sionaries carry on, giving substance to the Master's charge when He said to His disciples: "As ye go . . . preach . . . and heal the sick."

In those days we had no radio equipment aboard the *Crosby III.* Just what that meant and what a difference now that the fine new *Thomas Crosby IV* has such excellent equipment can be seen from the following case during Dr. Austin's time with us. We were on our northern trip and had reached Butedale, some eighty miles north of Bella Bella. Our destination for the next night was to have been Kitamaat, sixty miles away at the head of Kitamaat Arm. We lay at Butedale that night, and the doctor did some work for the families of the men who worked in the fishing plant. Next morning we left in good time for the trip to Kitamaat. We had decided that we would not call in at Goat Harbour en route, as there was only one family, the storekeeper's, and they were never in need. It would also save us time which we knew we would need among the Indian people.

We got to Kitamaat, where the doctor did a lot of work. Next day we left to go on down channel to Hartley Bay, another Indian village. About half-way there on Douglas Channel there were two families who were handloggers and lived in Foch Inlet. Although one had to wait for slack water to get into the inlet, we always called, for handloggers are doing dangerous work and we did not know when we might be needed. We were surprised when we found only the two women at home.

They asked us if we had seen their husbands. Then the story came out. The husband of one of the women had gone out to his work as usual the day before. When he felled his first tree, in some way he failed to get clear. One leg was broken, a compound fracture which allowed the foot to twist around to one side. He managed to get out and dragged himself to the place where he had left his row-boat. He rowed for a mile back to his float-house, and his wife got the other woman to go for her husband. They made him as comfortable as they could, but it was clearly a case of getting him to the doctor as soon as possible.

They had to wait for six hours until the tide was slack, then they set off in one of their gas boats. Thinking we might be calling in at Goat Harbour, they determined to go in there. That took another six hours or more and it was evening when they arrived. Next morning, when we did not show up, they felt the best thing to do was to run out into the channel down towards Butedale and to flag the C.P.R. steamer en route north. This they did, and after another twelve hours' suffering the man got to Prince Rupert and to the hospital. Had we had the radio equipment, such as the *Thomas Crosby IV* has, we could have radioed our position from Butedale the night before and that gas boat with its patient would have flagged us on some part of the trip to Kitamaat. As it was, we had passed right by within a half mile of them and neither of us knew that the other was in the vicinity. With our first-class

medical man on board that poor chap would have been saved some thirty-eight hours of needless suffering. More power to those who have equipped the *Crosby IV* with the radio broadcasting equipment. It is needed on a coast such as the boat serves.

Chapter XIV

VANCOUVER ISLAND—WEST COAST MISSION

ANY story of the life of Captain William Oliver would be incomplete without that part of it which relates to the west coast of Vancouver Island. Following the tradition of missionaries, the *Glad Tidings* made trips to that part of the coast of British Columbia. They felt that wherever there were people there was an opportunity and a need which they must try to meet. Therefore, in August, 1887, the *Glad Tidings* left Victoria and went up the west coast of the island. Entries in the log-book show that the character of the coast was the same as it is today, namely, bad weather, big swells and fog. These were the constant attendants of the mission ship. Mr. Crosby is the recorder, and wrote shortly after they arrived off Clo'oose:

> Heavy swell, we are afraid to stay here. Most of us are sick, Oliver and I excepted, of course. Anyone inclined to sea-sickness had better not make this trip.

That part of the west coast from Port Renfrew on the eastern end to Kyuquot on the western, nearly one hundred and forty miles away, has been called the "Graveyard of the Pacific" owing to the many costly wrecks that have occurred there.

In walking from Bamfield to Pachena Lighthouse on the outer coast above Clo'oose, one is struck by the trails which lead off at right angles toward the shore-line. In the early days wrecks did occur and no one was the wiser, or even if they were seen there was in many places no way of getting near them. Consequently the Department of Marine put in life-saving stations at Bamfield and Tofino, some twenty miles farther up. They were equipped with unsinkable lifeboats manned by competent crews, and connected by telephone with the Pachena and Cape Beale Lighthouses. In addition, watchmen patrolled the coast from Bamfield to Pachena Light. The trails at right angles were made in order to let these men get out through the woods to the shore so that they could see the ocean. The lightkeeper at Pachena told me that, if they saw a vessel get inside a line between there and Cape Beale, they did not hesitate, but phoned at once for the lifeboat to come out. A vessel getting inside that line had little or no chance to beat its way out. This was, of course, particularly true in the days of sailing ships.

The winter I was on the west coast, a lone fishing boat came in to Bamfield Harbour in December, 1933, and the owner inquired for four other boats which had left Port Renfrew at the same time as his. Nothing had been seen or heard of them. It seems there were five boats, one of which had two men on board. They left Port Renfrew thinking they could make it up to Barclay Sound, about

twenty miles away. They were caught in a sou'-easter en route and off Clo'oose they became separated. The survivor said that he stood by the others all night until at five a.m. he had shipped a heavy sea. From then on he was so busy looking after the safety of his own boat that he lost sight of the others. To save himself, he headed, as he thought, right out to sea, keeping the wind slightly on his port bow. It was so thick nothing could be seen, and the roar of the wind deadened the fog signals from Pachena Light. He held on at full speed all morning. Just after noon he thought he must be far enough offshore to lay a course that would take him back towards Cape Beale at the southern entrance to Barclay Sound. What a surprise he got when, after about fifteen minutes' running, he saw Cape Beale Lighthouse! After running, as he thought, out to sea for more than seven hours, he was back at Cape Beale in those few minutes.

The south-east wind blows onshore all along that coast at an angle of about forty-five degrees. It had been so strong that he had drifted up the coast so fast that even at full speed he had barely managed to keep offshore. The other four boats had not such powerful engines and made so much leeway that they had been driven ashore. All of them were smashed on the rocks. I saw the wrecks afterwards, and they had been literally pounded to pieces. The bodies of the men, such as were found, were terribly mutilated.

In my time, we had lights and fog signals and other aids to navigation, but when the *Glad Tidings* made her trips there were no such aids to help the crew. Leaving Sooke, they had picked up an Indian who was to serve as pilot. Previously, there had been only Roman Catholic missionaries on that part of the coast, but already many of the villages were without a missionary of any kind. At Hesquiat the missionaries on the *Glad Tidings* met with the famous Roman Catholic missionary, Father Brabant, who went there in 1879. The log record says:

> Oliver (Captain) visited the priest, Father Brabant, and gave him papers. He would not shake hands; jolly old priest—nice house—cattle—fowls, no sign of hard times.

At another village Captain Oliver visited the priest and gave him papers. The log entry says: "Oliver prayed in the priest's house; silently, of course."

One thing on which the early Roman Catholic priests and Dr. Crosby agree was the poor living quarters and conditions of the Indian people of the west coast at that time. Father Brabant says in his memoirs that when he came to the coast the people were "savage, immoral and treacherous; their dwellings were hovels of filth and misery; their attire a blanket of cedar bark, dog's hair, or some other inferior article." When Dr. Crosby arrived on the *Glad Tidings*, only nine years later, the entry in the log of the *Glad Tidings* says of the people at one

village in that same area: "went over to ——, a village of about two hundred people; had service after visiting from house to house; it is a terrible place for dirt and stinking fish; I was sick." Folks who talk about all the evil and misery having come to the Indian people through the white man ought to consider the words of these outstanding missionaries, who had the chance to see these people as they were in the early days.

At Ahousaht services were held both on board the *Glad Tidings* and ashore. It was a village then of some three hundred people. There was a priest's house, but no priest. The log entry continues, "These people want a teacher and a minister, and did not seem to like our going away so soon." In 1896 the former Presbyterian Church stationed a missionary at Ahousaht. This was the beginning of a fine educational and missionary work carried on there for nearly fifty years. A residential school was established later. In my time it was under the principalship of the Rev. Joseph Jones, now of our Norway House Residential School. I was struck with the fine spirit in the school and with the progress made by the pupils. Unfortunately, this school was burned down some years later. The W.M.S. of our Church has struggled hard to keep a nurse and a teacher stationed at Ahousaht through the years, but it has been very difficult to carry on owing to the scarcity of workers.

Our Roman Catholic friends are taking advantage of our inability in this regard. They have a young

Bella Bella Hospital

Dr. Darby with staff on "Edward White" at Bella Bella dock

priest stationed at near-by Christie Residential School. He has a boat and travels around that district. One day I was aboard the Indian Agent's boat en route to Ahousaht when we called in at Christie School. As the young priest was going to Ahousaht that day in his own boat, he was invited to come along. I found him quite an interesting chap. He told us that he had a baby to baptize at Ahousaht. En route back, the priest was asked if he had baptized the baby. He replied, "No, it has not been born yet."

When our missionaries can take such meticulous interest in people, born and unborn, perhaps we shall do more and better missionary work. And yet, I am not at all sure that we want to do such things. Perhaps the interest we are taking in better living conditions and in trying to make better people of those now living is the best way to prepare for the betterment of those as yet unborn. The above incident illustrates the policy of the Roman Catholic Church. Once a person is baptized in that church, as a baby, that individual always remains a Roman Catholic so far as the church is concerned. Any later freedom of choice is ruled out.

In 1892 work was also begun at Ucluelet by the former Presbyterian Church. One of the first missionaries was the Rev. Melvin Swartout. The effects of his work can still be seen in the lives of the older people. A comfortable mission house was built and also a little church. The work done by this veteran of the Cross was cut short by his

untimely death in July, 1904. He had been holding services at Toquart on the north shore of Barclay Sound and had set out in his sail-boat to return to Ucluelet. This meant crossing a short section of water which was very bad for cross seas and tide rips. It was also near to the open sea. The man who told me said, "Mr. Swartout always carried too much sail on his boat." It would appear he was capsized and carried out to sea. This man also told me the missionary's Bible was still in the boat when it was found. Some weeks later Mr. Swartout's body was cast up on the shore at Long Beach, ten miles from Ucluelet on the exposed outside coast. He was buried in the forest at Ucluelet behind the little church. As I stood by the grave of this intrepid man, I felt humbled and prayed that continued success might attend the work for which he gave his life.

In 1892 the Rev. J. A. MacDonald established a school for the teaching of west coast Indian children at Alberni, at the head of the Alberni Canal, an extension of Barclay Sound. This developed into the fine residential school later carried on by the Rev. F. E. Pitts and others under the former Presbyterian Church. The school was burned down a few years ago, but was enlarged and reopened in 1940 with a pupil capacity of two hundred and twenty-five. Mr. A. E. Caldwell is now the principal and the school serves the Indian people on the mainland as well as those on the east and west coasts of Vancouver Island.

About 1893 the former Methodist Church began work at Clo'oose, about fifteen miles below Cape Beale on Barclay Sound. This work among the Nitinat people has shown good results through the years. In the summer of 1933 I was asked by the Home Mission Board to make a fact-finding survey of the west coast of Vancouver Island looking forward to the re-establishment of our marine work on a more permanent basis. After spending two months in the survey, which extended from Port Renfrew on the south to Kyuqout on the north, during which I travelled over eleven hundred miles, my findings were accepted by Victoria Presbytery at a meeting held in Nanaimo in September of that year.

It was established that there were more than three thousand people on the one hundred and fifty miles of coast, and this number was doubled in a good summer season. There were forty-nine ports of call, with four hundred and fifty-four families and four hundred and eighty-eight unattached persons for whom our Church was responsible. Of the families, two hundred and seventy-eight were white, eighty-seven Japanese and eighty-nine Indian. It was decided to reopen the marine work on the west coast. In this way the sting was taken out of the words of the Indian chief at Ucluelet when he said at the time the *Melvin Swartout* was taken off, "Halo Chickamen! halo Christ!" This is a Chinook saying which means "No money! No Christ!"

The *Melvin Swartout* returned to the west coast

that fall, September, 1933. As there was no one else to take over the boat, I was released for six months from the principalship of Coqualeetza Residential School. I had as assistant a young man from a well-known west coast family thoroughly familiar with the waters of the area. One of our first tasks was to put Mr. Ewart Hetherington ashore at Clo'oose, where he had been appointed the student missionary. En route there we put mail ashore at Pachena Light, and it was a thrilling sight to see the lightkeeper in his row-boat being swung out and lowered away to the surface of the sea to get his mail. Even if it was late in the fall, we had a good landing at Clo'oose and succeeded in getting Ewart ashore with all his belongings. At one time we almost had an accident. My helper on the boat was bringing a boat-load of house furnishings ashore. He just missed the exact moment as he came riding in on the top of the wave and almost lost control. I had my high rubber boots on so rushed in and got hold of the boat and managed to keep it end on before it could be turned sideways and capsized.

Estevan Lighthouse, about half-way up the coast between Bamfield and Kyuquot, was visited regularly. As it was impossible to land at the light, one had to land at Hesquiat, on the inside of the passage, and then walk six miles along the supply road leading to the lighthouse. These visits were greatly appreciated, and on one occasion I baptized the two children of the telegraph lineman who lived near-by. Calls were also made at Leonard

Island Light off Tofino, and at Nootka Light at the entrance to Nootka Sound farther up the coast. At Kyuquot, at the northern end of the field, a Sunday School was organized and was carried on by the public school teacher between our visits. Walters Cove at Kyuquot was a romantic spot. Outside and close at hand were the waters of the open Pacific. During bad weather the ground swell ran along the westerly side of the cove, but otherwise the shelter was good. There were thirty families living there, and many others who came and went with the fishing seasons.

On one occasion we arrived just before a big supply boat which had followed us around from Catala Island, near the mouth of Esperanza Inlet. There was a heavy swell running outside, and we were not certain whether we ought to venture out. We thought that the weather might get even worse, so decided to try it. We lay for a time inside White Rocks, watching. We saw one big swell break right across the passage ahead, where there was only six fathoms of water inside the reef. When we reached the narrowest part, just inside Obstruction Reef, we saw a fish-packer turn into the channel from seaward. It was a large boat, but it was entirely hidden from us except the white tops of her mastheads when it was down between the swells. However, it passed us, and we went on. We were fortunate and got around without any trouble, but what a swell! Fortunately there were no breaking crests, so we ran past Tatchu Reef, picked

up the buoy off Kyuquot and finally got inside. When we were in Walter's Cove, we heard the skipper of the supply boat asking if we had come around that day. He would scarcely believe that we had arrived just ahead of him. That sort of thing gives the mission boat and its crew a standing with sea-going men which can be got in no other way.

When it comes in the line of duty, why should the missionary not carry on? Those men on the big fish-packer had their boat loaded with herring until its decks were almost awash. In loyalty to their employers, and in order to get their own money out of the cargo, they dared the heavy swells and came through with their load to the cannery. Such men do not understand a marine missionary who does not do like things in bad weather, no matter what his other qualifications may be.

I am reminded, however, that everyone we met on the west coast did not agree with that finding. I had been asking lighthouse-keepers and others as to the best time to bring Mrs. Scott along with me for a trip. They one and all told me that January was a good month, as the weather was usually cold and the winds offshore. I took her with me in January, 1934, but every time we put the nose of the *Swartout* outside it was blowing sou'-east and the sea was rough. We were tied up in Tofino, where an elderly gentleman, an old settler there, took a great fancy to Mrs. Scott. He gave her candy and through her gave a very nice donation

to the work of the boat. Finally one morning early, he came down on the dock and shouted so that I might hear it, "You tell that husband of yours that any man who would bring a lady up this coast, at this time of year, needs to have his head examined." So that was that!

One of the memorable calls which we made was at the prospectors' camp which afterwards became the famous Zeballos gold mine. It was my high privilege to be the first one to make contact with the men on behalf of the Church. There were only about a dozen of them, but hopes were high even then for the development which afterwards took place. One evening in February, 1934, we held a meeting at the camp. Every one of the fourteen men attended. They sang the old songs and some of them were good singers. The cook, who was a hunchback, had quite a good voice, but he persisted in getting up every now and then when the tune was a lively one to do a step-dance. I did not know many of the men, so asked them whether they would like to hear a sermon. After they had had a good sing, they said they would like it. I read from the tenth of St. John's Gospel, then spoke of Jesus as the revelation of God, dwelling on the three things which come to those who enter into life through Him as the door, namely, salvation, freedom and satisfaction. The men thanked me for coming and seemed glad at the change the visit afforded them. One of the young men had a song-book from the Anglican camp at Gambier Island in Howe

Sound, another had a Rotary song-book. The next morning we were invited ashore for breakfast, and the cook told me I had taken the right approach to the men. They had not intended coming, but when they heard the old songs they changed their minds.

The Rev. Uriah Laite came to the west coast in 1938, following the term of the Rev. George Kinney. Mr. Laite carried on the work at Zeballos after it became a famous mining centre. He ministered to the people and was present when the mining company poured its first gold brick as a product of the mine. Being an experienced seaman, he took full charge of the *Melvin Swartout* and did a grand job serving the entire coast as minister and friend until he enlisted in the armed forces in 1941. In October of that year he went to Hong Kong with the Winnipeg Grenadiers as chaplain. He went through their terrible experiences, was taken prisoner, and knew the horror of the prisoner-of-war camps. Over there, as on this coast, he held up the Light which alone could give hope and courage. He is now serving in a Vancouver congregation. Once again the people of the west coast are waiting for a missionary to carry on there. Captain Laite's example on both sides of the Pacific is a challenge to the young men of the Church in these days.

In March of that year a telephone message came through from Port Renfrew that a logger had been seriously injured, and the manager of the camp wanted to know if we would come down and take

him to hospital. There was no other boat to be had. The weather did not look very good outside. A Government boat had just come in, so we ran across the Bamfield Harbour to ask the skipper what it was like. He told us that it was beginning to come up from the sou'-east, and said he was glad it was we that were going and not himself. We felt we ought to go and, having as my helper a very fine young man who was a good seaman, I felt we could go with some degree of confidence.

It came down thick almost as soon as we got outside Cape Beale. By this time it was also quite dark, so we laid our course for Pachena Lighthouse and were glad when we heard the fog-horn. We were in good position, so went on down the coast toward Carmanah Light, which was to be our point of departure for the entrance to Port Renfrew Harbour. As we came near where we thought the light ought to be, a curious change in the weather took place. The wind dropped and, although the swell kept up, the fog rested right down on the top of the water, although it seemed to be lighter some distance above us. Overhead we could see a faint reflection from a revolving light, but as we could not hear the fog-horn at Carmanah, we thought it might be from the light of Cape Flattery. We knew it could be seen from where we were if we had gone too far out from the land on our course. However, after running slowly and stopping our engine every little while to listen for the fog-horn, we finally picked up its three blasts and knew that we were in

position. Although we never saw the shore-line, we laid our course for the entrance to Port Renfrew. Just before we arrived, the fog lifted some and we made a good passage through the bay and right up the river to the logging camp. By this time it was just past midnight. As the first-aid man at the camp had the injured man ready, we took him on board and left at once for Victoria. To make a long story short, we had him in hospital by eight o'clock next morning after an uneventful run from Port Renfrew. Once again we were glad that our Church made it possible for us to be of service to the men in the camps. The *Melvin Swartout* was meeting a real need.

During my time on the west coast I met a man and his wife who had gone up the coast some years before to take advantage of the boom in land values which had set in at that time. The wife suggested, too, that it was, in part, to get her husband away from the temptation to drink. Their home was near the head of a bay across the entrance of which ran a bar where there were only four fathoms of water at low tide. This made it bad in sou'-east weather. With a big swell coming in from the open sea the bar was a lively place on which to be caught. The husband was a man of selfish and lazy habits; I am not sure which trait was the stronger in his character. The wife did all the work, cleared the land and tilled it. She became an expert as the years passed in grafting and hybrid work with plants and flowers. She ran an advertisement in a prairie farm journal

and got more orders than she could fill. These all had to be shipped out by the C.P. *S.S. Princess Maquinna* but, when the weather was bad, no vessel of that size could cross the bar. For this reason many of her orders for plants and bulbs had to be held over, and often they were spoiled through the delay. We tried to help out by taking out orders for her each time we called.

The first time we were there we had a good service in their home. There were several fishing boats in the harbour at the time and some of the men attended. We sang the old songs and got around toward the close to the old hymns. This prepared the way for a talk from a passage of Scripture, and for prayer as the meeting drew to a close. As we went back to the goat that night, we caught in the beam of the flashlight the blazing, greenish eyes of a large cougar as it stood looking over a log a little to one side of the path. The son of the family regretted that he had not brought the rifle. His mother had told us that she had killed several of these animals herself, and I could well believe it.

Months later, we found this brave woman quite ill from what seemed a serious disorder which needed medical attention. I had told the story of the family in a church gathering and had been given a sum of money to provide hospital care. She had grown indifferent to the values of religion and of prayer in particular. Alone in the bush, she had prayed many times but had never got any help. She wondered why, with all the sin and suffering in

the world, I could believe in a kind and loving God. I tried to show her that there were two creative agencies in the world, that of the great Creator Himself and, secondly, ourselves whom He had endowed with creative powers. On an earlier trip I had seen the pages of the only Bible in the house being used by the husband for cigarette papers! How much that family needed the visits of the mission boat! Shortly after this I was visiting another home farther up the coast. As the evening drew to a close, the mother gave me the Bible and asked me to read a portion and to have prayer. I could not help comparing the two homes. But our circumstances affect our beliefs, and that other mother, alone in the bush, had had eight babies with no one but her husband to help her in her hour of need. Not much wonder that in her isolation she had come to feel that no one, not even God, cared. But, to finish about the money, the mother agreed to go to the hospital in Victoria by the *Princess Maquinna*, and I met the boat farther up the coast and arranged for her passage on the trip down. The mother went all right, but she paid her own way. She recovered and returned to her home.

Some time later I had the privilege of marrying her oldest daughter to a man who was the watchman at a cannery a little way down the coast. She was a fine girl, with a good deal of the initiative of her mother. Each time we passed that way, we called at her home, and it was a joy to see the order and attractiveness of their modest dwelling. Two of the

boys out of that pioneer home have done well for themselves, but the father, poor chap, met his death by drowning in an attempt to go alongside the steamer in a canoe in blowing weather. The first time we had called at that home in the woods at the head of the bay, the two smallest children ran and crawled under the house like little puppies who were afraid of the strangers. They peered out at us and it was some time before we could persuade them to come out. Poor children, they saw so few people, so, for that reason alone, it was a blessing when the mission boat called regularly. They soon became normal youngsters.

On a visit to Riley's Cove we found two large seine boats tied up, as there were no pilchards at the time. It gave us a good chance to become acquainted with the crews. When invited, all twelve of the men came aboard the *Swartout*. I set up the little folding organ and asked what they wished to sing. Some of them were Scotchmen and wanted the old Scotch songs, but after a while some of them asked for hymns. One of them said to another, "What's that one they always sing in the church near Main Street in Vancouver?" I said, "Oh, you mean First Church?" "Yes," he said, "the minister is a Scotchman." Of course he is, and Dr. Andrew Roddan would have felt glad had he known that away up the west coast of Vancouver Island were fishermen who remembered the hymns sung in his church. Well, they sang and sang until I had to say it was time for us to be going, before

the tide got too strong off Estevan Point, for then it was always rough. They insisted there was no need to hurry and that we could stay until evening and time for a "mug up" before going to bed. We finally persuaded them and got under way, our hearts happy and voicing a prayer that God would bless these men "who go down to the sea in ships."

Chapter XV

NEW AND OLD FIGHT FOR INDIAN SOULS

I THINK I might close this story of the west coast by referring to some aspects of the Indian work which ought to give us cause for concern. And perhaps this may be a stimulus to some reader to enter in and to share the task of standing by our native people, and giving them all possible help in the long and upward struggle for better things.

In 1913 a young Indian, who had graduated from the Alberni Residential School the previous year, was sent as missionary by the Woman's Missionary Society of the former Presbyterian Church to the native people at Namukamis. This is one of the places at the head of Barclay Sound which Captain Oliver and the *Glad Tidings* had visited some years previously. This man, now no longer young, told me his story in the new Residential School at Alberni. He said, "I arrived at Namukamis village on January 8, 1913, and was welcomed by two of the principal men. So great was the joy of the people at having a missionary that they entertained me at their homes. For a week I did not eat a meal in the mission house."

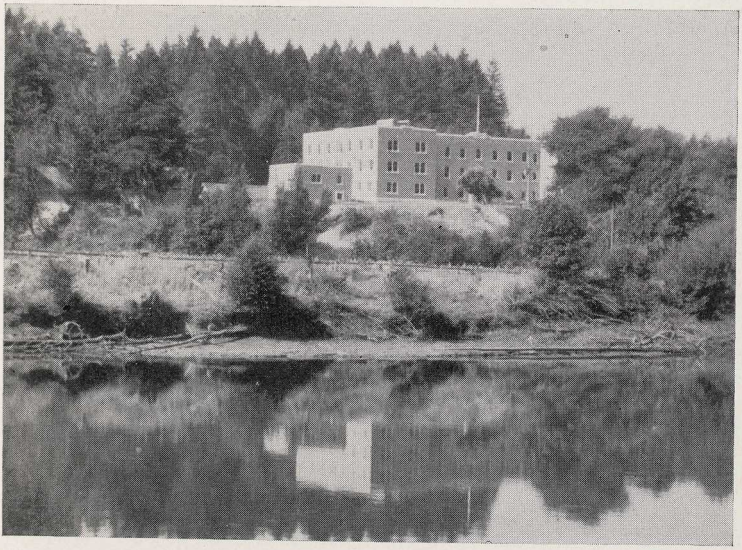
Contrast that welcome with the one given a Roman Catholic priest recently, when the people told him to keep moving and not to come back.

In 1933 and 1934, when I was at Bamfield with the West Coast Marine Mission of our Church, I was able to get to this village twice, and to their summer village at Dodger's Cove once. The first time I went to the village there were only some women, one boy about fourteen years of age, and some younger children at home. I was able to have a meeting with them. The second time I went, the men of the village were home. I was given to understand in a polite but not to be mistaken manner that a meeting was not wanted. The young boys of the village were interested and followed us along the shore as we went aboard the *Swartout*. Dodger's Cove, which is the summer village of the Sarita Indians, is sheltered on three sides, and has a lovely curving shore-line leading in from water deep enough to give good anchorage for fishing boats at any stage of the tide. It is near the fishing grounds. That is why the people from Namukamis, which is their winter village, go there as soon as the salmon begin to run. Usually this is in April. There are about thirty houses, located in equal numbers on each side of the harbour, all of them close to the beach.

Quoting from the log of the *Swartout*, the following are the facts of my third visit, and they reveal the attitude of these people to the Church.

"These people are the Sarita Indians and are divided into three classes, the children, the young people, many of whom are graduates of the old Alberni Residential School, and the older people.

Captain Scott (carrying portable organ) going ashore for service at a cannery



Alberni Indian Residential School

The children are as healthy and bright looking a lot of youngsters as I have seen anywhere on the coast, and the young folks measure up well. They speak good English and I met two or three who had been in grade VIII when they left school. They all seemed decidedly reserved when I spoke of having a religious service. Evidently they have not had any for some years, certainly not regularly. I think I know the reason for this reticence. With one exception, every person over thirty-five years of age, and I met a good many of them, when I mentioned a church service took on that sort of stubborn silence which an Indian assumes when he disagrees with the speaker. It is like the sun going down into a bank of black clouds—there is not much hope for fair weather for the coming day."

I met only one elderly person who was in the least interested in my suggestion of a service being held among them. The older people do not want a service, of that I am sure. Several of them laughed and talked together in their own language in what I felt was a mocking sort of way. I know this was so in two or three cases and, especially in one, for I talked with the woman in Chinook. She "hee-hee-ed" quite loudly and said over and over again, "Jesus Wa Wa," which being interpreted means "Jesus talk." Another of the elderly women with whom I talked said, "Me no Christian."

I was left standing on the beach to go or to stay just as I wished. They were not interested. A man came to the door of a near-by house and said some-

thing in their own language, and the women with whom I had been talking went on into the village and left me alone. Compare this with the time these same people welcomed the missionary and entertained him so gladly in their homes. What has made the difference? To my mind it is simply that the Church has left them alone too long. For thirty years they have had no missionary, and the old people who know only the old ways are once more in control.

After I went to the Alberni Residential School as principal in 1940, I had within a year or two a better idea of what was actually wrong with these people. At our first Christmas entertainment in the assembly hall of the school a man and his wife, with their son of fifteen years, tried to get in. The programme was already in progress. Fortunately I saw them in time and drew the doors of the hall shut so that the children would not see them. I succeeded by force in keeping them out. The mother was so drunk that she collapsed on a seat at one side of the corridor; the father staggered around in a drunken stupor; the young son, who was fighting drunk, kept pushing at me and was determined to get into the hall to see his brother. Who was this father? He was one of the men who, thirty-five years before, had welcomed the missionary to their village, had entertained him and had given him every assistance.

At a Christmas entertainment on the Reserve near the school the same year, those women among

the native people who took no active part in any of the old customs organized a Christmas Tree in the village hall. They had gone to a lot of trouble, but things were taken out of their hands almost as soon as the crowd gathered. The man by whom I sat at the back of the hall was much under the influence of liquor. He acted like it and smelt that way. To my right, at one side of the room about half-way along the hall, I saw a married man making love to the wife of another man as they sat in a group around the stove. When his attentions became too active for even her muddled brain, the woman got up and tried to walk away, but had to hang on to the back of the seat in order to be able even to stand. Farther along on the same side, near the front, a group of about a dozen young men were drinking, holding their bottles high over their heads between drinks and singing at the top of their voices.

When Santa Claus came into the hall, he was drunk and persisted in leaping about in the fashion of the old-time dances—at one moment squatting on his haunches and at the next staggering around. The ladies who were trying to introduce him to the audience finally had to give up. Having got "Santa" to one side and somewhat out of the way, these good ladies, when they had secured a semblance of quiet, tried to bring back something of the spirit usual at such gatherings.

As a preliminary to the unloading of the tree, they asked the audience to join in a Christmas hymn, "Silent night, Holy night." They began well,

but soon the group of young drinkers took up the song according to their own time and in several different keys. In their maudlin manner they outsang everyone else and the ladies and the others had to give up. It was the most disgraceful thing I have ever seen among the Indian people. I do not wish to be misunderstood, for many of these west coast folk are among the very best of our native people, but these best people take no active part in observing the old customs. They simply keep quiet. Although they might wish their own folk were different, still they *are* their own folk, and none of them has any social standing among the whites. They keep quiet for that reason, and also because there is nothing else they can do in the absence of any definite help from even our Church folk, who pretend to be interested in them but do not show it in any effective way.

There is another very powerful reason why such people do not make any outward objection to the carrying on of the old customs. These old people who have taken over the direction of affairs in the life of the Reserves have their own way of forcing compliance and co-operation. Sometimes their methods are heartless and cruel. On the Reserve where the hall described above is located was a man who was a good carpenter. He seemed to me to be an outstanding member of the native community and took no active part in such doings as I have described. I was told that he had become enfranchised, but even if he had not it was apparent

that he was quite advanced in the matter of his education and experience outside the Reserve.

His wife became ill of tuberculosis and after about two years she passed away. I had been visiting her during her illness, so when she died her husband came to me early one morning and asked me to telephone for the undertaker. I asked if he would like me to come and stay with him until the undertaker came, and he said he would. I went home with him. As we entered the house, I noticed two old people sitting on the floor at one side. They had their shawls pulled up over their heads, almost hiding their faces. I noticed, too, that the window at the foot of the bed had been opened up half-way. I said to myself, "This man knows something, and to provide fresh air he has taken care to have the window well open." But the real reason became clear when the undertakers, having laid the body on their stretcher, started to carry it out the door. These two old folks said something to the husband in their own language, and he said to the men, "*They* want you to take it out the window," and out the window it was taken.

I felt it was evidence of how much even this man, advanced as he was, was under the influence of the old people. He could not even determine how his wife's body was to be taken from his home. Naturally, he did not want to hurt their feelings, for, as I have said, they were his own people. But the finest example of how these old people keep control came to me the day of the funeral. I wondered

why there were so few out to show their sympathy with this man. One would have thought that he would have been an outstanding man and would have had lots of friends. All during the service, which was only a grave-side one, I kept thinking, "Surely others will come," but a bare half-dozen were present. Even the father of the dead woman did not attend. Oh, yes, they have their own ways of showing disapproval of any of their number who favour the new white ways of life as compared with their own, and some of these methods are cruel.

Once again let me make it clear that there are among these west coast Indians some of the finest people, but they have not the influence they would like to have. They simply keep quiet. Why should they do otherwise? We white folks have let them down. They have been for years without any ministry from the Church. Some of them on this Reserve carried on a Sunday School for years without any ministry from the Church. In the end they had to give it up. They are waiting with sad hearts. They know that there is no future for them in the customs which the old people carry on, but what are they to do? They are Indians, and anyone who says they are free to come in among us white folks simply does not know the facts. Indian children, while accepted in some public school districts as pupils, are in other cases not allowed to mingle with the white children in that way. Dispute it as we may, there *is* a colour line in Canada, and it is not all outside the Christian Church.

These people are not waiting for us and for our leadership. They are, as in the case of the Sarita people, saying to us, "No, thank you! We can get along very well by ourselves." And these Sarita people are the dominating group in all that section. When I first went to the Alberni Residential School, I organized a Young People's Society among the young native people near the school. They were grouped in the four departments as are our own young people. Every two weeks they were to meet at the school. When they did, we had coffee and sandwiches after the meeting. But I could never get much response from the young men. They seemed to be holding back for some reason which at the time I could not understand. Later on, I discovered what it was. At one of the meetings which they were holding in a home on the Reserve, alternating with the one in the school, I found the entire group of about thirty young men listening to one of the old men telling them stories of their old customs. He was seeing to it that they were not being carried away by the new teachings. From that time, the society dropped and died out. There was an end to it, but the cause had become clear to me.

Although in most of the west coast villages the old people are again in control, all villages are not so antagonistic to the Church as are the Saritas and some others who come more under their influence. There are villages in which, because the Church has tried its best under the very difficult circum-

stances to continue its service, the spirit of the people still goes out with favour to any effort to bring the services of the Church again into power. Such a village is Ahousaht, where the W.M.S. of our Church has struggled strenuously to keep a nurse and a day school teacher among the people.

I went on one occasion on the Indian Agent's boat to Ahousaht. I had hoped to arrive in time to have a meeting, although my main reason for going, and the reason why the Indian Agent was taking me along, was to get in touch with the parents of some of the pupils in the school. When it was noised around that I was in the village, even though it was ten o'clock at night, the people took it into their own hands. Nothing would do but that I should hold a service with them. They went around and notified everyone by ringing a bell as they went along the streets. The meeting was held in one of the old long houses, which I saw had again become a residence for at least three families. There was one at the far end, and you could see their entire household arrangements as you entered the building. There was one at the left-hand side, and one at the rear to the right of the door. None of these spaces was partitioned off; there was not even a blanket, nor a piece of carpet hung up so as to give a bit of privacy. It was plain to me that these people had drifted back into their old ways more than was good for them.

This was borne out by letters which came from Ahousaht to a girl in the school. The writer told

how two young people were recently married; how much the bridegroom had paid the bride's father for his daughter; and of all the old marriage customs that had been observed. The bridegroom had gone with his friends, about forty of them, to the bride's home and, after three attempts, "he got her away." Then the other young men had walked the plank made slippery with fish slime. One other young man had jumped farther than any of the rest for another young girl. But the door is still open at Ahousaht and may the Church, through reviving our west coast marine work, or some other way, take advantage of the opportunity.

Gambling is rampant on the west coast at certain seasons of the year and brings with it all the well-known hindrances to the higher life much as we see when gambling is prevalent among white people. Hal-Lal games went on for weeks near the school at Alberni every Sunday night. I have known them to begin playing at seven p.m. and to be playing at seven the next morning. All this goes to show the struggle that is taking place between the old and the new. As at Cape Mudge, the old people know that, when the old customs pass, their authority and prestige go with them. Where the old ways are still in the ascendancy, conditions remain much the same as in the earlier days. All attempts on the part of the Indian Affairs Branch to get better living conditions, better health, and better educational facilities are definitely hindered by these influences.

The Church now has the money for mission boats. She waits only for those who will enlist in the service of Christ for the blessing of their fellow men. Some may say, "Well, if the work done in the past has been so good, then the Indian people will get along. We do not need to worry about them." Very well, let us put ourselves under the same rule of life. Let us close our churches; disband all our Young People's Societies; and give ourselves to the enjoyment of the material things so abundantly supplied in our day. The young people will take care of themselves. Let the gamblers have their way. Things will come out all right in the end; anyway, you can always blame the police. "Quite a worthy decision!" say you. But would you take such a step? Then, if not, what right have we to condemn the native people in some villages to just such conditions? In many cases not only is there no church but also there is no school.

Chapter XVI

CHANGED COMMUNITIES CHALLENGE CHURCH

NOW, in contrast, may I try to give you a picture of the results of continuous mission work in some of the villages on our northern British Columbia mainland coast. Through my association with Captain Oliver I met some of the old pioneers who were still living and in the work in my time. One of these was the Rev. George Edgar, who was stationed at Klemtu, formerly China Hat, forty miles above Bella Bella. He told me this story. It gives the background against which we must measure the success of missions to the native people.

When he was a little boy, he lived with his family in one of the large long houses of his people, the Tsimpsheans, at Port Simpson. As there was much fighting among the people, a hole had been dug in the earth floor of the house, just inside one of the walls. This led to an underground passage, which opened into an underground room well beyond the walls of the house. In that room there were always biscuits and water. One morning he heard a quarrel between a woman and her husband. In the midst of it the woman drew her shawl over her head, went out the door, and started down the

beach to cross to another section of the village. The man waited a few moments, then took his rifle, stepped to the door, and shot her down in her tracks. In a few minutes bullets were flying everywhere. At once, like young rabbits, all the children in the long house ducked down the hole and crawled through the passage into the underground room where they stayed until the shooting was over.

Contrast that scene with those which have been repeated week after week in that village as the result of continuous work of devoted missionaries. The people are to be found in their church regularly on the Sabbath Day. There they listen to the Gospel, and take part in the service of song which is led by a choir of their own young people. The organist leads them on a pipe organ and at Christmas time they hear the "Hallelujah Chorus" played by this young man and sung by their own young people. Gone are the old long houses and, instead, are comfortable individual homes; streets have been laid out and a water system installed for the village. Fire protection has been organized, and the life of the village has become one of ordered comfort and security. This change in the people of the village was brought home to me very forcibly at a cannery service on the Skeena River. The organist was none other than Ernest Dudoward, grandson of the famous "Princess Dudoward," the first convert among her Port Simpson people.

Down the east coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands, just north of the eastern entrance of the

passage which leads through to the west coast above Rose Harbour, is a small island. Its sides are precipitous, and two lone trees stand on its top like drooping sentinels, dwarfed and twisted by the south-east gales. There is no vegetation except long coarse grass and a deep moss which cover the top of the island. Here, seventy years ago, the people of Nunstram's village took shelter from the mainland Indians when they came on the war-path. For weeks at a time they stayed there, miserable and half-starved, in fear and trembling. Go ninety miles up the same coast today and you come to the modern village of Skidegate. There Nunstram's descendants, along with those from other Haida villages, have united and live together without fear of marauding bands of enemies.

I officiated at a wedding in that village while I was in the Queen Charlotte marine work. Two of the outstanding young people of the village were being married. Our party was entertained in the home of the missionary until we saw the procession coming along the lower street of the village. They were led by the village silver band. The bride followed, leaning upon the arm of her father; she was followed by the bridegroom and the best man. The bride, when she came closer, as usual, looked charming with her beautiful dress, bridal veil and orange blossoms.

After the ceremony in the church, the procession re-formed and the band led the way to the community hall. Here a splendid feast had been

prepared; the food was excellent, and everything was done in the customary way. The only sign of the old order was that people of the Eagle clan took seats at the table, for the bride was an Eagle, and the Raven clan served. I sat next to the bride on one side, and found her to be very interesting in conversation, and quite unaffected in manner. The table setting was faultless. The after-dinner speeches, both by whites and Indians, were well up to standard for such occasions. Gifts were showered upon the bridal couple.

To me it seemed as though the spirit of the late Rev. J. C. Spencer was very near, because he had been the one who had inspired the people to build their fine church and mission house. For years he had poured his strength and talents into the life of that village. He was followed by others down through the years. And the scene just described showed the response of the people to the way of life as they had seen it lived in the life of that devoted Christian doctor and other missionaries. Rev. George Affleck is at present the missionary there. He and Mrs. Affleck are continuing the high type of service given through the years in this village which has had constant ministry from the Church. Being experts in young people's work, they are having deserved success in these days when our young native people are faced with all those influences which affect our own young white folk, but without the long background which our boys and girls have to help keep the right path.

Visit with me now a mainland village where another of our devoted missionaries laboured for years in the early days. A fine little church and a mission house were built. The work had made a good beginning when, for some reason or other, under an arrangement with a sister church, the missionary was sent elsewhere. The other church was not able to continue the ministry so well begun, and the people were left to themselves. For fifty years they have had no resident missionary. One afternoon the *Thomas Crosby III* arrived at the head of the inlet where this village had stood. We heard that the people were up at the lake, about three miles distant. So Captain Oliver, the Rev. Arthur Barner, and I walked through the woods to visit them. We could hear the drums and shouts before we got to the big houses. As we stood outside the one being used for their ceremonies, we got a smell of home-brew. When we entered we saw an old man sitting to one side of the doorway in an old, broken-down arm-chair. He was sunk down in a drunken stupor and was snoring loudly like an overgrown poodle dog. His whole demeanour reminded me of such an animal.

In the centre of the house a woman with a bear-skin drawn over her head was dancing. The people, young and old, sat around, their eyes drooping as the result of much drinking of home-brew. It was a sickening sight for those of us who knew the native people at their best, and one was heartsick thinking of what these folks might also

have been. When the chief came over to us at the conclusion of the dance, he said, in explanation of what we saw, "We've no one to help us, and we've lost our way." Leave it to an Indian to use language that is picturesque and suggestive. It was true. Their missionary had been taken away and they were without help. The village was a sad contrast to those described earlier in this chapter, but the people were as fine in possibilities as any other group. In our mainland villages, as in those of the west coast of Vancouver Island, we see the same results from taking missionaries away. At the moment, it seems as though better things are in store for this village through the work of our mainland marine mission under the Rev. Peter R. Kelly and the co-operation of the Indian Affairs Branch at Ottawa. A school will likely be built as soon as possible. And then, ah, yes! then there will be need for another teacher!

One more story to show how another of the fine mainland villages got its start. Bella Coola is one of the finest of these native towns. The homes of its people are good; the life of the church is maintained; and a hospital keeps a watchful eye over the health of the community. But, go back fifty years. The missionary who had been there had become discouraged and had withdrawn, leaving an empty mission house. The new man was known afterwards among the people as the "big little man." For W. H. Gibson was small of stature, but big in heart and in ability. When he arrived it was late fall,

and it was cold. There was no stove, but he found parts of an old one in a back shed. These he wired together. Then he made a stove-pipe by wiring together pieces of old gasoline tins which he found here and there. The steamer came only once a month, and it was not many days before the scanty food supplies which he had brought with him were exhausted.

It was cold at nights, so when he went to bed he used to take some coals out of the stove and place them in a tin on the floor under the old camp bed upon which he was sleeping. He had not enough blankets to put any under him, but the heat from the coals got through the thin mattress, and it kept him comfortable until they died out. Then it was cold. The natives of the village, generally speaking, were not friendly. But one morning when he had no food there came a knock at his door. An old Indian stood there with a piece of salmon, just enough for the day. Every morning afterwards there was the same knock and, when the missionary opened the door, he found the same amount of salmon placed there for him. It never failed until the month was up and the steamer returned with fresh supplies of food. But until it came he lived on salmon, nothing else. Later on, Mr. Gibson was joined by his wife and family. The people responded to his teaching and example. Thus were laid the foundations of the fine village of today. What does the world not owe to consecrated mis-

sionaries of the Cross who in every country have been the foundation-layers of good things to come!

But what about these days and the needs of our Indian people? The young Indian people are sharing with us whites the privileges and the dangers of this day and age. They have stood shoulder to shoulder with our own young men in the defence of our country; they have sat in the pilot's seat of our aircraft; they have stood watch on our ships, both naval and merchant marine; and they have bought Victory Bonds. They are being recognized as vital elements in our industrial life and labour unions are enrolling them as members. They have formed their own Native Brotherhood and soon will plead their cause before the Inter-Parliamentary Committee with a view to amending the Indian Act. A Vancouver paper recently carried an item reporting that a young Indian had been made a police officer, the first appointment of its kind. He had been a fisherman, logger, cowboy and soldier overseas. Now his duties will be those of a liaison officer between the city and his own people, because an ever-increasing number of them are to be found within its limits.

The military and naval authorities, the labour unions, the Department of Fisheries, Police Department and the income tax officials all recognize the growing place of the native people in our country. What about the Church? Enough said! On this coast we at one time had sixteen missions among

the Indian people, but now, due to withdrawals and amalgamations, we have scarcely more than one-half that number. Some of our mission hospitals are in danger of being closed through lack of nurses, day schools on Reserves are closed for lack of teachers; marine and Indian missionaries are greatly needed. It ought to be a challenge to the best among our young people to lend a hand to these native people who are going their way subject to all the influences which play upon our own young people, but without the helps to make right decisions and keep the right paths.

It is true that the work of the past years has paid fine dividends, and some among our young native people are taking responsibility. This last year a young Kitamaat man took the normal course in Vancouver through the help of the Indian Affairs Branch in Ottawa. He is a graduate of the Coqualeetza Residential School and has gone back to his own village to become the principal of their two-room day school. But, taken as a whole, the native people simply cannot supply the necessary leadership for this day and age. They must have assistance. Now is the "accepted time" and "now is the day of salvation" for these people for whom many of our best missionaries have literally laid down their lives. It is the "day of salvation" for ourselves, too, for the only way in which to save ourselves, and it has always been so in the spiritual life, is to save others.

"Halo chickamin, halo Christ!"—"no money, no Christ!" I would like to put those words in every United Church as a challenge to our young people from the old Ucluelet chief when he saw the mission boat being taken away from his area. It is not poverty of church funds today that is keeping our mission work back. I do not say that the scale of remuneration for mission work ought not to be better. By all means, let us pay more money to our workers. But waiting until we are better paid is not going to solve our problem for providing leadership nor help the work begun by those who went out from our congregations "not counting their lives dear unto themselves." If they had counted the cost, what has been accomplished would never have taken form at all. It is my faith that those, who will in our day go out to this work not counting the cost, will find that God will see to it that "all things shall be added unto them." Who will go? The need is great!

When William Oliver retired from the *Thomas Crosby III* in 1929, it was simply a change of the place from which he worked. He went to his home in Sandspit, where after building the *Melvin Swartout* for the work on the west coast, he bought at Prince Rupert in 1932 a boat which the Provincial Police Department was giving up. It was forty feet long, had a beam of ten feet and was well powered and well built. He renamed it the *Udal*, of precious memory. In this boat he carried on marine mission work by himself, or with the help

of any whom he could interest to travel with him. It was work just as he had previously done, even though his more than eighty years slowed him up somewhat. That did not hinder him, however, from making an all-night run from a cannery at Smith's Inlet to Alert Bay Hospital. A little Indian girl had fallen from the dock at low tide and had been badly injured. To the Captain that sort of thing was still all in the day's work. However, the inevitable comes to us all and, finally, the old skipper was not able to go out aboard his own boat. So he sold it and bought a home in New Westminster. From it, as long as he was able, he became the self-appointed missionary to the seamen aboard the increasing number of deep-sea vessels which were to be found in the harbour of that city.

Later, he became ill and was taken to hospital. He was not long there, for even his strong frame was beginning to yield to the power of disease. Not so with his spirit, for the day he died he sang one of his favourite hymns so that all in the near-by wards could hear:

> "I've reached the land of corn and wine,
> With all its riches freely mine;
> Here stands undimmed one blissful day,
> For all my night has passed away."

What a word for a departing sailor! "All my night has passed away!" No more darkness, no more storms, no more weather thickening down all around, no more fog. The light that broke

through the shadows along the shore that day in February, 1937, for William Oliver was the light of the day when

" . . . There shall be no night . . . .
And they need no candle, neither light of the sun,
For the Lord God giveth them light;
And they shall reign for ever and ever.

A few days later he was laid away in Fraser View Cemetery in New Westminster, overlooking the great river on the banks of which so many years before he had built the *Glad Tidings*. Below him now pass in review scores of fishing vessels, and the ships of many nations—a fitting resting-place for one whose heart was always with the men who sailed the seas.

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