The New Missionary Series

JAMES CHALMERS

THE NEW MISSIONARY SERIES

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BY

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IF that West Indian engineer had not blown his whistle at just the wrong minute, the adventure would not perhaps have proved so risky.

But I had better explain what was happening.

A little steam-launch, called the *Miro*, had crawled against the tide up the Aivai River. On board were three white people, one of them a young lady. It was the very first time a steamer had gone along that river, the very first time any white men and women had explored it, and the black cannibals who lived on its banks had never before seen either a steamer or a white man. As the vessel

turned a bend in the stream, a native village came in sight. It was built on both sides of the river, and as the white travellers appeared, the startled natives, thinking that the steamer was some evil spirit from another world, were thrown into a terrible fright. The women and children were rushed across the river in canoes, to be taken to places of safety. The whole scene was something like an ant's nest when you have trodden on it, and the little creatures dash about hither and thither, bearing their precious eggs out of harm's way.

The big white man at the bow of the steam-launch told the engineer to stop the engine. "We dare not go among them while they are in that state," he said.

Soon the savages ceased their flutterings, and the *Miro* steamed slowly up to the village. The three white people on board

saw that the canoes had been lined along the banks of the river, and that in every canoe there stood black savages, nearly naked, as still as stone statues. They were the fighting braves of Iala, lost in wonder at the strange sight before them.

The steamer drew up amid-stream, and at a word from the big Scotchman in the bow the anchor was dropped. The chain rattled as it ran out. Then that silly West Indian engineer blew a shrill blast on his steam-whistle.

Every savage in the canoes jumped upright. Each man had a bow pressed against his body and an arrow between his toes. As soon as the shrill whistle pierced the air, a hundred arrows were in the taut bow-strings, and aimed, ready to shoot, at the two white men and the white woman in the little steamer.

It was a critical moment, but the big

white man—who was James Chalmers, the famous missionary of New Guinea—did not turn a hair, or show the slightest sign of fear. He had been in such tight places scores of times. Danger was the breath of his nostrils. For him death had no terrors. He was a pioneer of the Gospel of Christ's Love ; and he had never shrunk from any duty, however perilous, that came to him as a missionary. If he felt any fear—and I daresay he did have just a tiny feeling of uneasiness—he did not show it. Quite calmly he told a Papuan boy, who knew the language of the people, to shout out that it was peace they were bringing, not war. They had a white woman with them to show that they were friends, not enemies. The chief made a sign to his braves not to shoot their arrows, and in a few minutes a canoe was sent to bring the

missionaries to the river-bank. James Chalmers stepped ashore and threw his arms in a friendly way round the chief's neck. Again he told him that he was bringing a message of peace, and that he would come again soon and stay with them, and tell them about the love of God and of Jesus Christ.

James Chalmers had "a way with him." He could cast a spell over savage people, and make friends with them very quickly. But he knew it would not be wise to stay long; and after giving the chief a few little presents, he and his two companions returned to the steamer and sailed away again. He had made friends with a savage tribe that lived by fighting, and that celebrated victory in battle by eating the bodies of its dead enemies.

If you want to hear any more about James Chalmers, you must let me take

Chalmers greeting the cannibal chief.

you back many years in time and thousands of miles in distance, to a tiny village named Ardrishaig, in Scotland, where, in 1841, Chalmers was born in a humble stonemason's cottage. There in the little fishing village the boy James spent most of his childhood. Living close to the sea, he got passionately fond of it, and was happy if he could set sail in a boat or even get a plank of wood to float about on. James Chalmers was born with the spirit of adventure in his very soul. He was restless and eager. Danger spelt joy to him. Three times he was nearly drowned, and three times he saved the lives of other boys who were drowning. He could not afford a boat of his own, but the fishermen on Loch Fyne liked the merry lad, and would take him out with them. The idea of building a little boat came to Chalmers,

and he and his playfellows set about it ; but the job proved too big for them, and they had to be content with little cruises in a big herring-box, which they caulked and tarred to make it watertight. When Chalmers had been carried out to sea in this crazy craft through a line breaking, an end was put to that risky game.

James Chalmers was soon a clever boatman, and as he grew stronger he became a splendid swimmer. One day a child fell off the quay and was drowning. A woman cried out, and he instantly ran up to the quay-side, pulling off his coat as he ran, and plunged in, just in time to seize the little child's dress as it was floating away on the current.

If I could truthfully say that James Chalmers was fond of his lessons and school-books I should rejoice to say so. But the truth is that he was not a diligent

scholar, and he never became one. He loved the open-air, the blue sea, the rolling waves, the flap of a sail, and the music of water rippling under the bow of a boat; and he did not take kindly to books unless they were amusing stories. But at Sunday-school he was interested in letters which his teacher used to read from a missionary in the Fiji Islands. They told of savages and cannibals, and of the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ over them. One Sunday the minister wondered if any boy in that school would become a missionary and take the Gospel to cannibals. In his heart James Chalmers said: "God helping me, I will." The wish remained with him, but the way did not open for a long time. But he gave his heart to Jesus Christ, and remembered his vow to go and teach the heathen if occasion ever came.

Most Scottish boys aspire to go to a university, for in Scotland education is more prized than in England; but James Chalmers could not realise that hope. His parents were too poor to pay for it. As he did not see his way to be a foreign missionary, therefore, he took up mission-work in the slums of Glasgow. Perhaps he found out that there was heathenism as dark in the mean streets of the Scottish city as he saw afterwards among the savages of New Guinea. While he was at work in Glasgow, an opening came for him to go out to the Foreign Mission field under the London Missionary Society, and his heart leapt with joy at the prospect.

Some men carry an atmosphere of adventure about with them. James Chalmers did. Though he went to a college in a very quiet village in rural Hertford-

shire, about twenty miles out of London, adventures came to him even there. They seemed to fly at him. Perhaps he brought some of them upon himself. He led the frolics of all the other students, and was ringleader in all sorts of practical jokes. Students at colleges where missionaries are trained always intend to be very serious when they grow up; but to make up for it beforehand they like to get all the fun they can during college days. Chalmers was a big fellow, with a lot of energy, and with animal spirits bubbling over in him. So when a joke was going he always joined in it.

One night, when the students were all at supper, they were amazed to see a big bear walk into the hall, rise on its hind legs, and roar angrily. Then it caught one of the quietest students and gave him a rough hug. Another student, who

knew that it was James Chalmers dressed in a bear-skin that he had borrowed, turned out the gas, and a great hubbub followed. Another joke of Chalmers' with that bear-skin was to pounce on an Irishman who used to sell fruit to the students. The old man was quite startled when a big bear stopped him in a corridor and upset his basket by a rude embrace. While he was at Cheshunt College, Chalmers saved another life from drowning.

All who met this fun-loving Scotsman liked him. Though he was so lively and full of mischief, he was a very real Christian, tender and gentle at heart, and very simple-souled. His devotion to duty never failed; and though he did not study very hard at books, he was all the time fitting himself to be a brave and true missionary. When at last he was ready to go abroad, the London Missionary

Society decided to send him to the South Sea Islands. He was ready to go anywhere, but especially happy when he learned that he was to be a missionary to the savages of the Pacific Ocean. Before he left England, Chalmers married a lady, Miss Hercus, of Greenock, who proved a brave, good wife, always ready to help him in his work, and even to share its perils. She was really "a whole-hearted missionary," as Chalmers himself said.

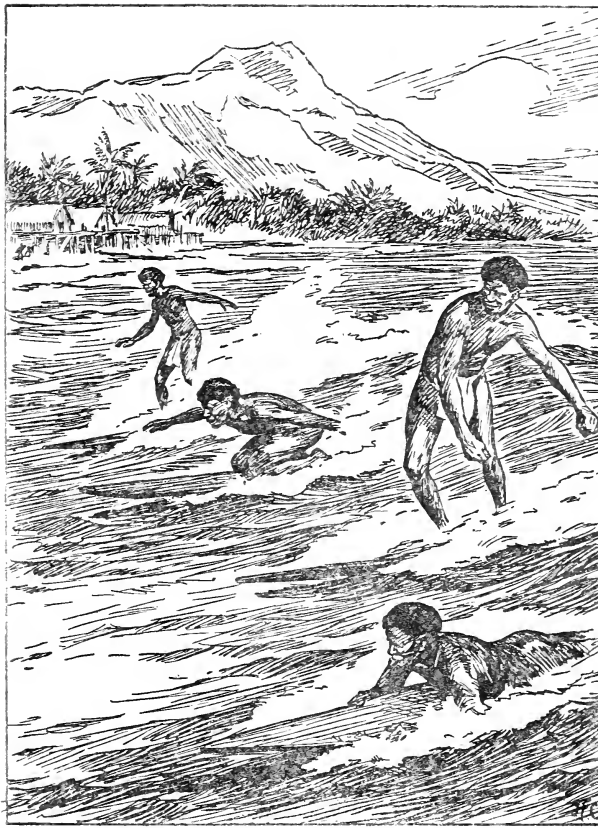
The voyage to the South Seas began with a tempest off the English coast, and ended with a shipwreck in the Pacific Ocean. Chalmers must have felt quite in his element. The Hervey group of islands, to which he was then bound, lies to the north-east of Australia. The ship in which they sailed was the *John Williams*, making her first voyage. It

belonged to the London Missionary Society, and was bought and kept by the boys and girls of England as a mission-ship, to keep fresh the memory of a great South Seas' missionary who had been murdered by savages. On the way from Sydney the *John Williams* called at Niue, or Savage Island, where there was a missionary named George Lawes. On 8th January 1867, the *John Williams* was at Niue, ready to sail for Samoa, when a high wind caught the mission-ship, broke her anchor-chain, and drove her on to the coral reef, where she became a total wreck. Everything was done to save the ship, and rockets were fired to tell the islanders that the vessel was in danger ; but the swell of the ocean was so heavy that no help could be given. In the darkness those on board (there were seventy men, woman, and

children) saw the white surf beating on the cruel reef whose sharp points were soon to tear open the ship's sides. Happily, boats were lowered in time, and just when all were safe, the good ship *John Williams* was dashed with an awful crash on the rock. There she lay, buffeted by the waves and clouded in spray. It was a sad day for Chalmers, and for the London Missionary Society; but when the boys and girls of England heard of the wreck, they brought out their pennies and sixpences, and in a little while another *John Williams* was sailing the Pacific Ocean.

Of course Chalmers had to stay longer than he had intended at Niue, as there was no ship to take him and Mrs. Chalmers on to the Hervey Islands. He was not discouraged, and never thought for a moment of turning back. While he was

at Niue he picked up a few more adventures, and very nearly lost his life. The natives of the coral islands of the Pacific Ocean are very fond of the sport of surf-swimming. They get a long piece of wood, run out into the sea, and lying on the plank, let the strong waves rush them back through the heavy surf to the shore. It is a very exciting game, and the natives are very clever at it. Chalmers watched the lads surf-swimming, and thought he too would try the game. But he chose a very rough day, and instead of coming swiftly and smoothly to shore on the rolling wave, he got too far out, and was sucked back by the sea. The waves dashed him about like a cork, and he was badly bruised on some boulders. At one moment he thought he was lost, but gathering up his strength—and he was very strong — he gave a mighty leap



The native surf-riders.

into a wave, and just reached the shore. But he had to be carried from the beach to bed, and after that near shave he never tried surf-swimming any more.

All Chalmers's clothes and baggage were lost when the *John Williams* was wrecked, and when he counted his belongings he found he had only a shirt, a pair of socks, a pair of trousers, and his watch. He had no boots or coat, and for a time he and Mrs. Chalmers were short of food; but when at last a schooner took them to Samoa, they were very kindly treated.

At that time there were pirates in the South Seas. One, named Bully Hayes, was very famous. He was a big, handsome Englishman, who feared no one; and though he had the manners of a perfect gentleman, he was really a sorry rascal. Bully Hayes bought the wreck

of the *John Williams,* and saved a great deal of the cargo. He also agreed to take Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers on his pirate ship from Samoa to Rarotonga, where Chalmers was to work. The pirate captain was very good to Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers. He did not lose his temper as often as usual when Chalmers was on his ship, and he told Chalmers some exciting yarns about his adventurous life. Bully Hayes let Chalmers hold religious services on his pirate ship, and if Chalmers had allowed him, the rascally buccaneer would have compelled all the crew of his ship to attend the services. Somehow Chalmers had a power of making people want to be better people than they were. He was so good and yet so brave himself, that even bad men liked him and wanted to copy his good points. So when he was saying good-bye to the pirate,

Bully Hayes gave him a letter which said: "If only you were near me, I should certainly become a new man and lead a different life." I expect James Chalmers was very proud of that testimonial from a pirate, because it was a very great tribute, coming from such a man as the pirate captain. Good people are not always nice; but Chalmers was both good and nice; and that made people love as well as admire him.

Nearly two years had passed since Chalmers left England before he reached the mission-station at Avarua, to which the Missionary Society was sending him. Chalmers was the first off the ship, so eager was he to get to the scene of his work. A native carried him ashore on his back, as the boat could not be sailed right up to the beach. While he was being carried through the surf, he received

the name by which he was ever after known, and by which I shall write of him from this point. The native wanted to call out to the people on shore the name of the passenger he was carrying, so he asked Chalmers, "What fellow name belong you?" That was the nearest he could come to the question in English, "What's your name?" Chalmers replied: "Chalmers." The native couldn't say that word, so he yelled out, "Tamate!" And by the name of Tamate, Chalmers became known in the South Seas — indeed, through the whole world.

For ten years Chalmers's lot was cast in one of the most beautiful islands in the Pacific Ocean. It was a paradise set in a silvern sea. Outside Rarotonga there is a black coral barrier reef over which mighty blue waves throw cascades

of white spray and then run swiftly up the long white beach. The island itself, with its hills and valleys covered with coconut palms and bread-fruit trees, is ringed by a blue lagoon. Of Rarotonga it might be said that "every prospect pleases," and "only man is vile." But by the time Chalmers reached Rarotonga, even the savage islanders were coming out of their heathenism. The Gospel had changed their habits. At one time Rarotongans thought only of war and slaughter; now their minds were turned towards peace. Chalmers was disappointed to find they were so civilised and Christianised. He had hoped to work among fierce savages, even cannibals; and he asked the London Missionary Society to send him somewhere else—somewhere where his love of adventure would have free play. The Directors did not agree to his request, and

Chalmers spent ten years on his first station, happy years of hard work, teaching the students, guiding the native pastors, and visiting the mission-stations. He fought the drink evil, which white men had taken into the islands, and which cursed the poor natives till they themselves were anxious to give it up.

While Chalmers, eager for a more adventurous life, was working quietly at Rarotonga, a new mission was being started among the fierce heathen savages in New Guinea, or Papua, as we now call it. Chalmers heard of this fresh venture, and the pioneer spirit in him was stirred afresh. He felt that God had called him to preach the Gospel to the people still in darkness, and he chafed at the trivial round, the common task that was his portion at Rarotonga when bolder work was needed elsewhere. At last his chance

came, and consent was given him to join the plucky little band of workers in Papua.

New Guinea is the largest island in the world, if we agree to call Australia a continent and not an island. Little was known about Papua and the Papuans when the missionaries began their work ; but all that was known was bad and fearsome. The Papuans were all savages, and many of them were cannibals. New Guinea was described as an " unknown land, full of terrors, savagery, and human degradation," but " a sort of glamour rested over the island." Most of Papua is within the tropics, which are the hottest part of the world. Gold and jewels were believed to exist in plenty there. Rare spices grew in lovely groves, and mighty trees raised their heads over wonderful undergrowths. Of the people it was only

known that they killed and ate most of the white people who ever landed, or were cast, on their shores.

When he reached Papua in 1878, Tamate saw many strange sights. He found that the people, out of fear of wild beasts and of their enemies, built their houses on the tops of high posts, and that nearly all their villages were surrounded by water. The Papuans wore no clothes, but thrust sticks through their noses, wore big rings in their ears, and feathers in their hair. On their faces they daubed paint, or tattooed strange devices, which made them look uglier than ever. Their axes, knives, and weapons were all made of stone, for they had no iron, and had not learned the use of fire. As they lived along the coast and there were no roads, they went about in canoes, and were as comfortable swimming in the

water as when walking on dry land. The women did all the work, while the men fought their enemies; for they were seldom at peace with their neighbours. After a battle, the victors had a feast. It is a common idea that cannibals eat the enemies they have killed, because they think that by eating them they will have their virtues and bravery. But Tamate found that Papuan cannibals ate human flesh because they liked it. A converted cannibal, of whom he asked if man is nice to eat, told him that beef, and pig and sheep were "no good," but man "he too much good"!

If he went to Papua in search of adventures, Tamate soon found them. When his house was being built, the natives began demanding tomahawks, knives, hoop-iron, and beads, and declared they would murder him if they did not get

them at once. One evil-looking savage, with a heavy stone club in his hand, rushed at Tamate; but the missionary stood his ground. "You may kill us," he said, "but never a thing will you get from us." Tamate was in one of his "don't care" moods, and he told the savage that he didn't give presents to people carrying arms. When they saw that Tamate was not to be frightened into doing anything he didn't want to do, the natives began to respect him, and soon he was winning their confidence. They came to his house, when it was finished, bringing gifts of food. One delicate morsel, intended for Mrs. Chalmers, was a slice off a man's breast, already cooked. Mrs. Chalmers said, "Thank you," very politely; but she preferred mutton.

Tamate's wife was as brave as her

Stopping a fight.

husband. Once, when the natives were threatening to murder them, Tamate wanted the women to escape to the ship and leave the men to face the savages. But Mrs. Chalmers would not hear of that. They had come to Papua, she said, to preach the Gospel, and to do the people good, and God would take care of them. "If we die, we die; if we live, we live," said the brave woman, like Queen Esther in the Old Testament story. They all decided to stay together, and, if need be, perish together. But God did take care of them, and though they awaited the attack of the savages all the next day, their lives were spared through the action of another chief who came to their help.

On another occasion, when a savage had stolen a knife, Tamate's Chinese cook annoyed the natives, and they came out and surrounded his boat in their

canoes. The savages had clubs and spears, and Tamate saw that he was in great danger. He told them to go away, but they jeered, and became more threatening. Then Tamate told the captain to blow the whistle of the little steamer. This time the effect was quite different from the adventure at Iala, for in a few minutes every canoe was gone. The savages had fled in terror. When he went pioneering among Papuans who had not seen white men before, Tamate used to take print handkerchiefs and beads for the men and pieces of Turkey-twill calico for the women. When he had made these little presents he generally felt quite safe, and explained that he was a messenger of peace and goodwill. But the secret of his safety lay in his charm and his fearlessness, which disarmed the savages.

There were only three white mission-

aries in the whole of Papua at this time. Dr. W. G. Lawes, who had started the mission, suffered terribly from fever due to the damp heat of the climate ; but he stuck to his post, translated the Scriptures into the Papuan tongue, and did noble work as a teacher. Another missionary was the Rev. M. Macfarlane, who was far away at the other end of Papua. Tamate was the pioneer in all new ventures. For a time, while the other missionaries were resting, Tamate was alone on the island. But he had brave, good helpers in the native workers, who came from the islands of Samoa and Rarotonga to take part in giving Christianity to the savage Papuans. Tamate was a very strong man, but he often had fever, and more than once he was poisoned by bad food. Once a drink of milk from a coco-nut made him ill for a month. He lost weight, and

was sometimes strained by his hard work. But he kept cheerful, though he lived among horrible cannibals who wore human bones as decorations and sometimes dangled strips of human flesh on their arms as trophies. "No doubt," said Tamate, "many of them hoped to have a feast off our bodies."

Like David Livingstone, Tamate was born to be an explorer. He had a boat called the *Ellengowan,* which was a very good ship, and in her he went on exploring trips up and down the coast of Papua. Sometimes the natives were friendly, expecially if Tamate gave them a few bits of hoop-iron and a handful of beads. Papuans do not have money like we do. The little Papuan boys and girls do not get Saturday pennies or sixpences on their birthdays—though their parents are very kind to them—because the people of

Papua do not buy and sell with money. They barter one kind of goods for another. If Tamate wanted some taro or yams, he would give the natives hoop-iron for them. For a steel axe he could get heaps of food, because the Papuans, having no iron, and no forges even if they had iron, cannot make axes except out of stone. And stone axes do not wear very well ; the edge soon chips off. Some of the traders who went to Papua did not treat the natives fairly when they got food in exchange for iron and beads. Later, the natives began to use tobacco as money, and they do still. Tamate always gave them good value, and they soon found they could trust him. When they had learned that he was a man of peace, he preached to them a little—told them very simply that they need not fear evil spirits, because God was their Father and had

sent His Son Jesus into the world to tell them that God was love, and that through following Jesus they could overcome their temptations, and fear nothing.

The things that amused the natives most about Tamate were his boots. Papuans wear nothing on their feet, and to see Tamate with his feet in leather cases tickled them hugely. Then his nose caused them fun. Papuans have not much of a nose on their faces. Generally it is small and broad and also rather ugly. But Tamate's nose was straight and thin, and he did not spoil it by wearing rings in it, or by pushing a stick through it. His white teeth, too, interested them. Among the Papuans black teeth are fashionable, and they chew betel-nut to give them the right colour. Once, on one of his journeys inland to see a tribe who had not seen a white man before, Tamate

chewed betel-nut, too. His guide was a chief who had a great many odd notions. He squeezed the juice of a seed into his eyes to make them bloodshot; and when this chief saw a bird on a tree in front of the path, he called out to it to "get away from there," because it was stopping their progress. It was this chief who got Tamate to chew betel-nut, and to squirt the juice out of his mouth to the north, south, east, and west, so as to keep the wind away. Tamate did what he was asked, to please the chief, though he knew these were just silly savage notions not worth any thought.

Whenever Tamate was away on his journeyings, Mrs. Chalmers stayed at their home at Suau. Though she was so very brave, yet she was delicate in health. The climate and the loneliness, as well as the fear that she or her husband might

one day be killed by the savages, made her get worse. A pain came in her lung, and one day Tamate said he must take her home to England to see a big doctor, and get her cured. They had been in the South Seas for ten years, and they had earned a rest. But they did not want to leave their faithful Rarotongan native teachers alone with the Papuans. Yet this time they had to go. Tamate got Mrs. Chalmers to Australia, but he had to go back to Papua. While he was away Mrs. Chalmers got worse and worse, and then she died. She was a very heroic woman and a very fond wife, and poor Tamate felt his great loss deeply. Mrs. Chalmers had left a dying message that Tamate was " on no account to leave the teachers." So, though it must have been heart-breaking for him, he went back alone to Papua, and went

on with his work for seven more years before coming to England. He said he felt happier in his work than he did, or could do, in civilisation. But there was a great blank in his life, and he did not go back to Suau, where he and his wife had been so happy. He made a new home at another place on the Papuan coast.

When Christianity is being taken to a savage country like Papua, three kinds of missionaries are needed. The first breaks the ground by getting to know the people ; the second preaches, starts a church, and perhaps translates the Bible into the native tongue ; the third sets up a college and teaches the converts how to become missionaries and pastors to their own people. Tamate felt his work was to break up new soil. That is why he was always going up and down the coast to see new tribes, or travelling in-

land to see if there were savage people there who would like to hear the Gospel. Tamate did his work in his own way.

When he made up his mind to reach a new tribe, he got on his boat, and sailed to their part of the coast. Then he went ashore for a very short time. It was like paying an afternoon call. "Good afternoon," he would say; "my name is Tamate. Yes, I'm a white man, as you see. But I'm a man of peace and a friend. My Master's name is Jesus Christ. He sent me to call on you and tell you about His Father, God. I can't stay now, but I'll call again soon, and if you like I'll bring a teacher with me, and leave him to teach you about God and Jesus Christ. This time I'll just leave you some Turkey-twill for the grandmothers, some hoop-iron for the fathers, and some beads for the mothers." The savages did not

ask Tamate to have afternoon tea ; but generally they gave him something nice to eat. When Tamate had paid calls like this all along the coast, he would make a second visit, and perhaps stay a night with his new-found friends. Then he would keep his promise, and send one of his Rarotongan teachers. If the Missionary Society could spare another white missionary, Tamate would send him to live at one of the places where he had made friends, and soon there would be a church there. In the end, a Training Institution was started at Port Moresby, to teach the young Papuan Christian men how to read and write and preach ; and the missionaries at the stations along the coast would send their best young men to the institution. That is how the mission-work in Papua is being carried on now.

At the east end of Papua the coast is

rocky, and there are mountains inland. The people at this end were savages, but not very fierce, and not many of them were cannibals. But the west end of the big island is very different. The coast there is sandy, and the land low and marshy. The people there were very savage tribes, very wild in their ways, and very fond of fighting. They ate human flesh whenever they could get it. Tamate was very anxious to explore the rivers at the west end of Papua, and the fierceness of the savages did not make him afraid to do it. Really he was more afraid of fever than of cannibals, for the inland swamps and deltas of the rivers there were very unhealthy. The Gulf savages were especially wild people, who used to dash along the coast in their war-canoes, fall upon another tribe to kill and eat them, and carry away all their belongings.

Tamate was bent on going to the Gulf natives, though it was thought to be rushing into the arms of death. But he seemed to bear a charmed life. He went to them when a great gale, called a monsoon, was lashing the seas into fury. The savages were astonished to see his ship come through such a tempest ; and when his oarsmen pulled the boat ashore, the chief asked Tamate to give him some of the medicine that made his boat go. He told the Gulf savages at Motu-motu that they must not go and make war again on their neighbours, and they meekly said they would not. Once more Tamate was able to cast his own peculiar spell over these savage children—for a savage is like a child who has had no one to teach him not to do naughty things, and grows up without any sense of right and wrong.

When he went to Orokolo, where he

found a savage temple decorated with human skulls, Tamate took two native helpers with him, and they preached to the cannibals in this very temple of their horrible practices. The savages heard the Gospel with willing ears, and when they had been told about Jesus they said: "No more fighting, Tamate, no more man-eating. We have heard the good news, and we shall strive for peace." By this time Tamate had travelled over more of New Guinea than any other man, black or white, and, though he had had many narrow escapes, he had made friends with thousands of savages. God had given him just the qualities to win the hearts of men, and he used them always as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, and never to gain glory for himself.

In time, Tamate came back to England. Though he loved Papua and his savage

Preaching to cannibals in one of their temples.

friends, his heart ached to see his native heath again. He called it "the strange land of damp, mists, and frost," which perhaps it is ; but he had heaps of friends at home, and they wanted to see him. Besides, Tamate was very tired with so much rough travelling. "I am getting very old and rheumatic," he wrote in 1886, though really he was only forty-five, and he was still very active and alert. In May of that year he started for England, and in August he was welcomed home by the directors of the London Missionary Society, who were very proud of their bold pioneer, Tamate. But he was welcomed everywhere. Instead of resting, he went all over the country, speaking and preaching, and he was so popular that people travelled miles to hear him. What a story he had to tell ! And how splendidly he told it !

Tamate was a big man with a large head. His hair was curly and long, and it looked like a lion's mane. There was just something in Tamate's face that always made one think of a lion. His eyes flashed and his big voice was loud and clear. He could make you hear even if your seat was in the back gallery, or behind a pillar. What he said made you tingle and want to go out with him to Papua to see the wonderful land and its amazing people. If you could not go back with Tamate, you felt you had to give your money to help someone else to go. Tamate made lots of people put half-crowns in the collection-box when they only meant to give sixpences. Some of them went home, and after thinking about what Tamate had said, they got out their cheque-books and sent a cheque to the Missionary Society. That's the kind of

man Tamate was—he could tame savages and he could make other people open their purses. Both are very hard things to do.

At the end of a year Tamate started back again for Papua, very glad, I am sure, to get away from the fuss English people made over him; but he had some more of it in Australia, where he stopped for a while. Very soon a lady, whom he had met in England, came out to be his second wife, after which he was not so lonely. The second Mrs. Chalmers did not mind roughing it; but life at Motumotu must have been trying for her, as there was not another white man or woman within 180 miles of their home. The savages were fond of her. One chief wanted to kiss her, but he had to be content with shaking hands. I expect Mrs. Chalmers shuddered when she was

introduced to a cannibal chief who did not wear any clothes at all, and who had just come from a feast on human flesh. However, though a very gentle lady, who had always lived in a nice house in England, with servants to do everything for her, Mrs. Chalmers was happy and cheerful in her new strange home, with only black boys as servants. She did get used to being left alone when Tamate went off pioneering—which he could not help doing, as it was in his blood—but she felt lonely, and had to make herself very busy to stop feeling mopish. Sometimes she went with Tamate in his whaleboat, and she was just as anxious as her husband to bring the wild Papuans to the feet of Christ. At last, in 1890, Mrs. Chalmers was so ill with fever that Tamate had to take her for a rest and change to Australia. From there they went by

steamer to Rarotonga and Samoa, which he wanted to re-visit.

I wonder if you have ever read Robert Louis Stevenson's poems. They were written for children, and he gave them a pretty name, *A Child's Garden of Verse.* He also wrote *Treasure Island,* which every boy ought to read, and a lot of fine stories for grown-up people, as well as some lovely essays which I think are nicer than his stories. Now Robert Louis Stevenson was a very great author, and very popular ; but he had consumption, and the doctors, when they found medicine did him no good, told him to go and live in Samoa, the beautiful island in the Pacific Ocean. Mr. Stevenson wanted to live very much, so he left his friends in England and sailed for Samoa. By chance he sailed on the very same steamer that Tamate and Mrs. Chalmers caught

at Sydney. They were soon very good friends, and they all enjoyed the trip. Mrs. Stevenson was with her husband, and the party of four were very jolly together, though both Mr. Stevenson and Mrs. Chalmers were in very bad health.

Even though Mr. Stevenson could invent exciting stories and write them for other people to read, he liked to hear Tamate tell stories of his own adventures, which were better than any one could make up. Mr. Stevenson loved Tamate, and said he was "as big as a church," which he meant for very high praise. "Oh, Tamate," he said, "if I had met you when I was a boy and a bachelor, how different my life would have been!" Until he met Tamate, Mr. Stevenson had not cared for Foreign Missions, and did not think highly of missionaries; but ever afterwards he was their friend. He wrote

strongly in defence of them, when people who did not know the facts criticised them and said unkind things about missionaries. Perhaps if Mr. Stevenson had met Tamate when he was a boy, he might have become a missionary himself. That is probably what he meant when he said: "How different my life would have been." On another occasion Mr. Stevenson said: "You are the man for my complaint, Tamate; you do me good."

Some friendships are like ships that pass in the night and signal friendly greetings, then part to meet no more. Mr. Stevenson and Tamate did not meet again, but they kept friends by writing letters until death came to part them. Mr. Stevenson died first. Though the climate of Samoa kept him alive longer than he would have lived in England, it did not cure him of his consumption.

He was very happy at Samoa, and made fast friends with another missionary on that island. The natives found him a very kind friend; and when he died, they carried his body to a grave on the top of a hill overlooking the blue Pacific Ocean, and since then, by order of the chiefs, no one is allowed to fire a gun near the spot, lest it should disturb his sleeping spirit. This is a very pretty idea, though it is not a true one, as Mr. Stevenson's spirit passed, with his death, to the care of our Father, God. I sometimes wonder if meeting Tamate made Mr. Stevenson so good to the Samoan natives. Perhaps it did. Tamate could cast his spell over a white author quite as easily as over a big black savage. He was what we call a magnetic personality, which means that he attracted people to him like a magnet does bits of steel.

Again Tamate returned to Papua with his brain full of plans for new pioneering work, and his soul still aflame with desire to convert the heathen Papuans to Christ. It was his nature to be restless, and as he got older the restlessness grew stronger. He had so much to do, that he wanted to hurry up and do it before his end came. His heart was now set on opening up a mission on the Fly River, where the very wildest of the Papuan tribes live. Scarcely had he got back to work than his new ship, the *Harrier,* bumped on the rocks in bad weather. A fearful sea broke over her, and to lighten the ship the masts were cut away. But it was hopeless, and Tamate, with all on board (including the poor old cat, which one of the sailors went back to save), had to get away in a little whaleboat, from which terrible plight they were rescued by a

pilot boat. Tamate hired a schooner, and reached his station at Toaripi, which was a new mission among people just emerging from savagery. Here Tamate had many queer adventures, of which I cannot tell you now. His life was one quick succession of excitements.

The adventure at Iala, which I have told you at the beginning of this book, occurred at this time. Tamate had got his new steam launch, the *Miro,* and though it was not as good a steamer as he had hoped, it was, he thought, good enough to explore the Fly River region ; and he made several daring trips among strange, fierce people in the little ship.

Mrs. Chalmers had come to England, and in 1894 Tamate paid his second and last visit home. He brought New Guinea fever home in his bones, and his visit was rather spoilt by his ill-health. Again he

stirred the hearts of all who heard him by his vivid word-pictures of what he had seen and done in Papua, and by his vision of what Papua would become under the reign of Jesus Christ. His friends saw he was greyer and feebler, but he was still the same Tamate, brave, bright, gentle, simple, and natural. Snow came in the winter, and he thought tropical Papua was paradise compared with frosty England. After the trying winter came a breakdown in the summer, and the stay in England, which Tamate wanted to be brief, was extended over a year. January, 1896, saw him back in Papua.

The last five years of Tamate's life were devoted to two great ideas. The first was to found a mission-base from which the people living in the delta of the Fly River could be evangelised. The second was to make friends with the

fierce, skull-hunting savages in the Aird River, still farther west. Tamate really wanted to make a complete chain of mission-stations from one end to the other of the south coast of Papua. Without a map you may not understand what a big piece of work this was for a single missionary to carry through ; but Tamate did only the pioneering, and then other brave men came along to be missionaries living at the stations. He made his last home at a spot called Saguane, on a little island lying in the mouth of the Fly River. It was a dreary place, for at this point the land is low and swampy, and fevers lurk in the hot vapours floating in the stagnant air. Tamate had a new language to learn, and all the work of a new station to carry on. The people of the Fly River basin, besides being fierce, were especially filthy—filthier than any people Tamate

in all his voyagings had ever seen. He found them harder to make friends with than any other tribe, but soon he was able to report that there was a great giving up of idols and charms in one district.

A great joy came into Tamate's heart in the spring of 1900, when a new young missionary, named Oliver Tomkins, went out from England to take over his station. This left Tamate free to explore the Fly River, and, if possible, to find a way to the inland tribes. Now he was happy. Tomkins and Tamate were soon friends. "He will do," wrote Tamate to the Missionary Society. "Send two more of the same sort." Upon the heels of this great joy came a heavy sorrow for Tamate, for Mrs. Chalmers, after fourteen weeks' illness, died at a spot called Daru, where a new station was being built, and was

buried in the native cemetery. In this hour of trial, Oliver Tomkins was as a son to the sorely stricken Tamate, whose only solace now was in his work. Again he was a lonely man, "lone on the land and homeless on the water," not so strong in body as he had been, but still full of zeal. Tamate really loved roughing it, and when people spoke of his life as full of hardships, he would not hear of it. To him the dull life of cities was a trial and a bore.

Tamate's end was tragic. But perhaps he would not wish to have died otherwise. After meeting all the other missionaries in a conference at Daru, Tamate started off with Oliver Tomkins to visit Goaribari Island, in the Aird River region. The two missionaries never returned. No one saw their end, excepting the savages, and the threads of the story had to be picked

up afterwards and woven into the tragic piece. On 5th April 1901, Tamate and Tomkins went ashore from their ship, the *Niue,* intending to stay about half-an-hour. The Goaribari islanders had not been friendly on the day before ; but as usual, Tamate had shown no fear. All that day the men on the *Niue* waited for the return of the missionaries ; but, they came not. We know now what happened. The savages let Tamate and Tomkins land, and then clubbed them to death and ate their bodies. The good Governor of Papua, Sir William M'Gregor, who was always a friend to the missionaries and was very fond of Tamate, hurried to the spot in his yacht and made inquiries. The village was burnt and the islanders were punished. In the native dubus (or club-houses) thousands of human skulls were found. The heads of Tamate and

Tomkins were recovered at Dopima, and buried. Later, a monument to the two martyrs was erected on the spot ; and a church now stands near the ground where the red blood of Tamate flowed on the sands.

So died one of the bravest of men ; and so the life-work of a noble soul received its blood-stained crown. Would Tamate have wished for any other sort of death ? He was not the kind of man who would want to die in his bed after a lingering illness. To give his very life-blood for the Papuans he loved so well and served so bravely would have seemed to him just the tribute he would wish to pay to the Lord Jesus who wore the crown of thorns and died nailed to a cross. Tamate's terrible death grieved his thousands of friends, and made hearts ache all over the world. But there is a saying that

the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church—which means that when anyone dies for Christ many more come forward to serve Christ. This happened with Tamate. If you went now to Goaribari, where Chalmers died, you might join in the Lord's Supper with some of the very savages who saw Tamate killed —even if they did not actually take part in killing him. When Tamate and Tomkins fell, other men came forward and offered their lives as missionaries in Papua; and now the doors that Tamate just managed to open a very little way into the dark places of that land of savagery, are flung wide ajar for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whose sun is now shining brightly where once all was black and ugly.

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