

10.12.65 NZ Herald

Emancipation of Pitcairn

In calling for immediate self-determination for Pitcairn Island, the trusteeship committee of the United Nations General Assembly may be confronted with practical difficulties. Because of the lack of shipping, an official copy of the resolution could take many months to reach the erstwhile hiding place of the Bounty mutineers.

A special airmail delivery is a possibility, but long-range fuel tanks and nice navigation would be required. The usual practice of sending a team of observers to supervise elections also raises problems. For one thing, the population has dwindled rapidly and there may not be enough able-bodied islanders to bring the officials ashore in longboats.

Should the 90-odd islanders decide to throw off the yoke of colonialism—they are under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Fiji—they could just as logically apply for membership of the General Assembly. They have an extraordinarily good record in observing the peaceful aims of the Charter.

A Christian or a Young could possibly restore a sense of realism to the deliberations of the trusteeship committee. After all, they descended from men with practical experience in self-determination.

...and pupils he showed me a small hole in the hillside at the back. "I dug that," he said, "and it means that when the war comes to St. Martins there will be room for all of us."

"How far does it go?" I asked. The shelter, my Uncle James told me, was about nine feet down a narrow passage dug by sheer labour through the hill. There the passage opened out into a small square cave. Food was there, also candles, drink-

...do about things like that. With uncle as an explaining guide I carefully examined the shelter, and I'll have to admit that it impressed me. Much time and thought had gone into it, and it looked like a miniature Maginot Line in St. Martins.

As we came out, uncle coming second because he had to blow out the candle, I struck my head solidly against a pumpkin just as the exit was reached.

...coming back to St. Martins in his vacation and digging further shafts around the shelter. "Is there any known record," he said, "of any organised search for gold ever having been made in the St. Martins district?"

I could find no such record and wrote and told him so. So if you hear one of these days of a big strike of gold near the city you'll know that my Uncle James has struck it lucky.

THE ISLAND OF FEW VISITORS

(SPECIALLY WRITTEN FOR THE PRESS.)

[By IRENE O. LAING.]

IN 1767 "a young gentleman, son to Major Pitcairn of the marines," discovered an island, thus beginning its official history and incidentally causing his own name to appear in all the best geography books. Later he lost his life in the Aurora. It is a pity that he never heard the place-names that the mutineers of the Bounty and their descendants gave to various parts of his island. Here is a short list: Goat-house, Poolau, Tattafie, Headache, Pancake, Water Valley, Oh Dear, Boar-roll, Big-fence, Oleander, Up-Lucky, Cow-pen, Funny Boo-boo and Ted-side. Many of them have little incidents connected with them. Oh Dear is the site of a fish story, where a big one got away, and a nest of eggs was found at Up Lucky. Every small piece of ground has its own name. Ted-side is just an economical Pitcairn abbreviation for "Tother side of the island."

The people of Pitcairn speak two languages, English, and a private language of their own, which is a mixture of English, Tahitian, and words of their own manufacture, further complicated for an outsider by the odd phrasing. Anything on the water or seaward side of anything is "downside" and the hill side is "upside." When a teacher asks one of the boys to bring her something "from the upside of the bottom shelf," he knows just where to look.

The village is built on the northern slopes of the island and as Pitcairn is shaped something like a rock-cake, with a hump in the middle, it is easy to see why, when the islanders are going to go up, over, and down the other side, they simply say they are going down behind. They have a more graphic phrase than "dead as a doornail," too. They say, "killed dead as a hatchet."

The coast is rock-bound, and there are only little strips of sandy beach, one at Ted-side, one down Rope, and one the landing place in Bounty Bay. It is at this last that the islanders keep their boats, both the large whaleboats they use to go out to the steamers.

Big vessels cannot enter Bounty Bay; they lie off in the roadstead and the islanders go out to them to collect goods ordered from New Zealand, or England, and also to exchange fruit for goods and sell curios to the passengers.

Sometimes when there is a heavy sea they have an exciting time, especially if a ship has called during the night.

At the end of August, 1938, "sail-ho" was called, and then came the sound of the public bell. This bell,

the old ship's bell which marked the hours on the Bounty, has a regular code of signals. Three hits are public bell, and five mean a ship.

On this occasion word had been received by wireless that the Tainui would be in at 9 o'clock next morning, and had asked for fruit, so everyone bustled about getting things ready. The islanders knew there was cargo for them on board, and were also expecting some passengers to be landed.

At 8 o'clock next morning off they went to the Edge (the edge of the cliffs), then down the precipitous path which, nine months later was to be blocked with rocks and boulders by a landslide.

The boats were launched, rowed out to the ship, and loaded. At 12.30 p.m., when they started back, the ship had drifted out of sight round the point, and it was 2 p.m. before the first boat came in. She was heavily loaded with cargo, and in addition brought three returning islanders. Having unloaded she put out to sea again to lighten the other boats.

The second boat also came in, unloaded, and put out again safely.

The third was not so fortunate. While they were coming through the surf the undertow was so strong the men had to keep pulling and wait their chance, till a surf came along and gave them a push. After a hard struggle they managed to reach shallow water, when a foaming wave, refusing to be balked, came in and swamped the boat.

One man jumped out with a rope, and men and women from the shore rushed out into the water, grabbed the rope and hauled the boat in, then kept it steady while the men unloaded. There were organs, gramophones, and chests of clothing, and as one onlooker said, "they were all drowned."

Since the war started there have been few vessels calling at Pitcairn, and the wireless has been the people's one link with the outside world; yet they are not dismayed at being thrown back on their own resources. They stopped making available places out on the hill that were suitable for cultivation, and planted potatoes, corn, beans, and other vegetables. Sugar cane, arrowroot, and maniotia had almost died out, so they set to work to replant them.

Adam's Town is probably the only "town" in the world that has no shops. The islanders order their supplies months ahead, so that when war broke out some were faced with the fact that though they might have flour and sugar on order, there were no ships coming to deliver the goods. Salt at least was easily supplied.

They simply went back to their old method of boiling sea water.

When they wanted to make bread, they boiled hops for the balm, and mixed it with flour the night before, so that it was ready to knead into the flour and put to rise the next morning.

Some of the people ran out of supplies of flour and other "ship goods," and it was at this time a report reached New Zealand that the islanders were starving. (One report stated that they had been reduced to eating rats!) Actually they had plenty of island foods to live on, and though the men do go out shooting rats, they do not bring them home.

On November 8 last everything was proceeding as usual, when there was a sudden cry of "Sail ho!"

Some people who were on their way up the hill with barrows to collect firewood thought it was only a joke, as some of the islanders would call "sail ho!" if they saw a fishing smack, but when they heard the call "Up the harbour, get down to the landing," they knew it must be a ship at last.

What a scattering there was, and what excitement! For three months they had received no word from overseas friends, and there had been no chance to send away letters. They were able to get some flour, biscuits, and other odd things from the ship, too. November 8 was a red letter day.

One night a ship came in after dark. The islanders had no way of telling what ship it was. From the shore they could hear dogs barking, but many ships have dogs aboard. It was not till 11 p.m., when the boats came back, bringing some of the men from the vessel ashore with them, that the rest of the islanders learned that the ship was the North Star, with Admiral Byrd and his party on board.

Next day a number of islanders went out to the ship to see the dogs and the snow-cruiser.

The North Star had brought sufficient flour and sugar to keep everyone supplied for a while, so that she was doubly welcome.

The Christmas holidays were gay in spite of the war. The church was decorated, and at 5 in the morning the bell sounded and the day began with Christmas hymns. In the afternoon there was a Christmas tree, and much fun and laughter.

Meals were not in accordance with the usual tradition, as many

people had rose-apple pudding on Christmas Day. These rose-apples are about the size of a large plum, with a hard stone in the centre and a flower on top. They are hollow and pop if stepped on. The islanders cut them in half, take out the stone, and cut off the flower top, put them through a mincing machine, then mix them with coconut milk and boil them. After that they are ready to go into the pudding or pie. They have a sweet scent like a rose, and a scenty flavour, and it is from this that they get their name.

Since Christmas the people of Pitcairn have watched for ships and listened to the voices of the radio.

MORE FACTS About the Historic Island of Pitcairn

■ AN APPEAL FOR FAIR PLAY

ROY CLARK, Resident Missionary

MANY articles in the newspapers and magazines have erroneously depicted the manner of living of the Pitcairn Islanders. Some of these articles are amusing in their utter absurdity, while others are misleading and give an entirely wrong conception.

In a certain religious paper, there was recently published a half-page illustration showing Pitcairn Islanders boarding a passing ship. There they were alongside in their dug-out canoes and clothed only to the waist. The picture portrayed them as black as Solomon Island savages and with their broad-brimmed hats they were climbing the ship's ladder with baskets of fruit. The impression that the author gave was that we were just as uncivilized and uneducated as natives of the Solomon or New Hebrides Islands.

The truth is this:—

We have, in the first place, boats so well built and so strongly made that they call forth the admiration of not only the passengers of the steamers, but of the officers and crews as well. The boats are built by those who know how, and are not merely put together. The timber used in the making of these boats is the best the island can afford. We do not board ships from canoes.

The boats that are used in boarding the passing steamers are used to visit nearby islands, one of them being more than a hundred miles away. They are proper whale-boats and the length is from thirty-five to thirty-six feet. Going in and out of our rock-bound harbour to and from passing ships puts a terrible strain on the boats. They are equal to it, and sometimes are used for six months before they have to be repaired.

Do we look like heathen people as we board the passenger steamers? We do not. Is it true that there is no distinguishing feature between the islanders and the other natives of the South Pacific? I say there certainly is. Some on the island still retain the dark complexion of their Tahitian mothers of four generations back, but a quotation from Mr. Harry Shapiro (an anthropologist who visited Pitcairn for ten days) will prove that

the European inheritance predominates over the Tahitian.

He says: "There is a preponderance of the European inheritance over the Tahitian, and more Occidental features are discernible than those of the South Sea Island natives, but in appearance they range through all gradations between European and Tahitian."

Are the Pitcairn Islanders to be likened to other natives of the Pacific in either physique or intellectual powers? Again I refer to Mr. Shapiro, who says: "The people are superior physically and are also a hard-work-

ing and intellectual lot. In psychology and behaviour they are predominantly British.

"Is there a comparison in features, habits, manners, and intelligence between the inhabitants of Pitcairn and of other islands of the South Seas? Away with the suggestion that there is, and that this body of religious people is as the unconverted of other neighbouring islands."

The above statements of a well-known scientist disprove this false impression. And now I will add my own opinion. The Pitcairn Islanders are far more advanced in appearance

and moral conduct than many who pass them by on board the passing steamers.

Some time ago a clipping from a daily newspaper was sent to me. The writer of the article stated that Pitcairn Islanders raised tobacco and coffee, and that it was exported for trade. It is incredible and mystifying how such inaccurate reports ever become circulated. Are such incorrect statements spoken intentionally for the purpose of harming the islanders because they are Seventh-day Adventists? Or are such reports made in ignorance of the history of the island? In either instance the assertion that the islanders cultivate tobacco and coffee is absolutely wrong.

Does tobacco grow on Pitcairn Island? It does, tons of it. Do the islanders cultivate this noxious weed? No, they do not. It is not even noticed or touched. There is not an islander who uses tobacco in any shape or form, let alone cultivates it. The tobacco plants grow wild, mostly on the south side of the island, and

one may live on Pitcairn for months and not see even a single plant.

The islanders look with contempt upon tobacco, and I have often heard many remark that they cannot see what pleasure is derived from smoking. I will admit that when these people were of the Church of England many of the older men used tobacco, but since they became Seventh-day Adventists this habit has been given up, and today not one Pitcairner uses it in any form. The only person on the island who uses it is a New Zealander, a man over eighty years of age, who smokes a pipe.

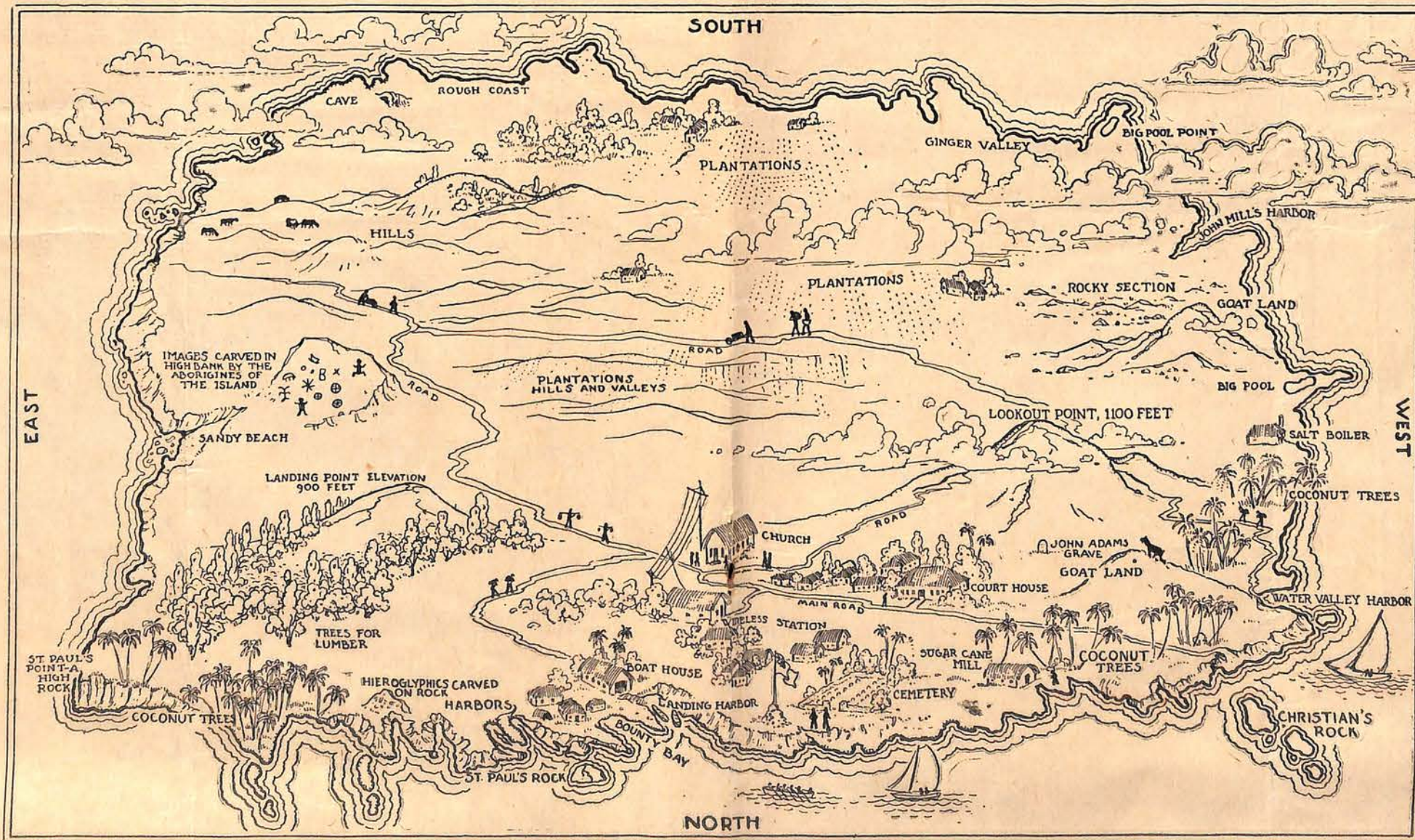
Alongside the narrow pathways and in many valleys can be seen the coffee-tree. During the months of April and May these trees are weighted with the red coffee berries. The children delight in playing with them. They are picked and scattered here and there in their play, and are trampled underfoot by those who pass by.

The coffee berries that the world spends millions of pounds to buy, are on Pitcairn no more thought of than

the leaves of autumn that are scattered to the four winds by the gentle breezes that blow over this lovely isle. During all my twenty-five years' residence on this island I can recall but one instance when anyone ever planted a single coffee plant. I can recall many instances where the trees have been cut down to clear ground and make way for other planting and for making curios to be sold aboard the passing steamers, also by school children to make bows used in rat hunting, but I cannot recall ever seeing a Pitcairn Islander stoop down to till the soil to plant a coffee plant.

Do the islanders pick or drink coffee? Positively no, except in one instance, and in this case the man is not a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To my knowledge there is but one on the island who drinks coffee. Pitcairn Islanders believe, with good reason, that coffee and tea are harmful, and never use them.

In regard to pigs, you could not persuade a Pitcairn Islander to touch swine's flesh. It is never eaten, and many have never seen a pig. One would be a great curiosity to the children.



A pen-sketch of Pitcairn Island. Opposite St. Paul's Rock are two harbours for boats to enter and take off timber that has been sawed inland. To the west are Bounty Bay and Landing Harbour.



The Sound of the Waves

R. HARE

(Lines written on lone Pitcairn Island)

ONLY the sound of the wild, wild waves,
Washing against the shore:
Only the sigh of the wild, wild winds,
Whispering for evermore.
Yet glad in the thought of service sweet,
We turn our eyes to Him,
And all the echoes passing by
Change to a holy hymn.

The wild waves, rolling for ever on,
Rolling by night and day,
Tell of the Hand that curbs their might,
And the Voice they all obey.
Pale moonbeams wear their sweetest smile,
Shaded by love divine,
And hope points on to the glory-light,
Where suns immortal shine.

Roll on, wild waves, 'tis freedom's home,
Roll on in tireless glee,
Whisper with us the endless praise
Of Him who rules the sea.
Echo, ye wild winds; sweet and low
Faith chants her evening prayer—
There's not a place our feet may tread
But love can find us there.

SIGNS *of the* TIMES

WORLD EVENTS
IN THE LIGHT
OF PROPHECY

Volume 51, Number 31

Price 1d.

Warburton, Victoria, August 3, 1936

THE . . . "Bounty" Mutiny

The Truth About
Pitcairn Island

—
GEORGE WAITE



The mutineers of the "Bounty," headed by Fletcher Christian, casting Lieutenant Bligh and his companions adrift after placing them in an open boat on the wide ocean.

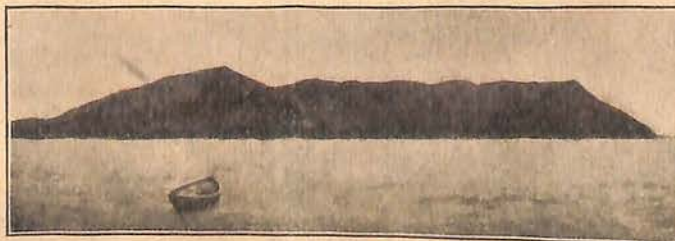
STUDENTS of past events assert that history in all ages has been falsified by writers influenced by bias, conscious or otherwise. This is true of film producers and authors of books and saga stories dealing with Pitcairn and its people, past and present, and the mutiny of the *Bounty* and the after eventful history. American and Australian go-getters have exploited these themes, and in the effort to make their pictures and stories sensational and attractive, have little regard for historical accuracy or the actual conditions and customs prevailing in the island mentioned. They mix up the dancing girls of French Tahiti with the Puritan Pitcairners, whose ancestors, after a period of anarchy and indifference to ethics and religion, due to the exhortations of John Adams, gave up all frivolity and evil ways and became a devout, orderly community without a parallel in this world of unrest.

Pitcairn Island today is a social beehive, all workers and no drones, without crime or poverty. Equal natural rights, with corresponding duties, are recognized, without coercion by police or politicians. Each settler has his own holding, with mutual assistance whenever needed—the nearest

approach to the ideals of the early Christians that I have met with in a long life's wanderings, covering five continents and the isles of the seas.

The Pitcairners are bound together with a fervent practical faith in the tenets of the Seventh-day Adventists. They regard the Bible as an inspired guide to truth and human conduct.

There are no animals on Pitcairn except wild goats. The island grows all tropical fruits. Oranges of high flavour bring good prices in New Zealand, and flour and clothing material are purchased with the proceeds. Trepang or beche-de-mer fishing has not been a success. The islanders are expert boat builders, and island traders pay for boats on the barter system. Thousands of coconuts are exchanged for agreed values. Before the depression in New Zealand, Pitcairners would go there and work in the bush or at other vocations to obtain requisites for their people with their wages.



A picture of lonely Pitcairn Island, as it rises out of the broad waters of the southern Pacific Ocean.

A noteworthy peculiarity is the recurrence of atavism or reversion to primitive types in the Pitcairn families. Some children are dusky brown, like Polynesians; others are like Saxon blondes, this being pronounced in the Christian and Young families.

The population of Pitcairn at present is about two hundred, descendants of mutineers and voluntary exiles from America and other lands. After Norfolk Island was abandoned as a penal settlement, it was granted to the people of Pitcairn, who migrated there in a body. But some became restless in the gloomy atmosphere of old convict prisons, with their sad associations, and some members of the Young, Christian, and Warren families, of both sexes, returned to the more tropical isle of Pitcairn.

Half of the population of Norfolk Island are descended from *Bounty* mutineers, and the Adamses, Quintals, McCoys, Nobbs, Youngs, and Christians are in the leading positions. The Rev. Thomas Adams is Wesleyan minister on Norfolk Island, and Captain Parkin Christian, formerly skipper of the schooner *Resolution*, is living in retirement, being over eighty-two years of age.

The adverse tariff on Australian products by

New Zealand, blocked the islanders' market for their products, so that they were forced to apply for relief to the Federal Government.

The Pitcairn descendants are in demand throughout the Pacific from New Guinea to the New Hebrides, as they are real sons of the sea in handling boats, and are also competent plantation overseers. The natives regard them as Polynesians of the highest type and born to rule.

After Commander Bligh had returned to England and reported the loss of the *Bounty* by mutiny, the *Pandora* was sent out to Tahiti to bring to justice the mutineers. The story of Bligh being on the *Pandora* is incorrect, as he was appointed Governor of New South Wales. No trace could be found of the *Bounty* or crew until about twenty years after the mutiny, when an American ship passing Pitcairn saw three youths in a boat. They were welcomed aboard, and the skipper sent the mate ashore. He found the only survivor of the *Bounty*, John Adams, with dusky women and young folk of both sexes regarding him as the respected patriarch and religious leader.

There are different versions of the story told by Adams of the burning of the *Bounty*, of how he became religious, of how the mutineers divided into factions under Christian and Young and were opposed to Quintal and McCoy, and of how the Tahitian men met violent deaths, their women siding with the white seamen, Christian and Young imploring Adams to be silent for the children's sake regarding the unhappy past that led up to the untimely deaths of the Tahiti men and all the mutineers except Adams. During the faction fight, according to tradition current in Tahiti, Adams found a blood-stained



John Adams, the mutineer. He experienced a wonderful reformation, and the sole survivor of the "Bounty" mutineers, he taught the wives and children of the mutineers the principles of the Christian religion.

Thursday October Christian, son of Fletcher Christian, the mutineer, and a Tahitian mother, and the first person to be born on Pitcairn Island. Thursday October Christian was born somewhere about the year 1790, or about 146 years ago.

leaf of the Bible containing the admonition: "Come let us reason together," and he called a truce, regarding the text as a divine warning to stop fighting. But neither Adams nor Christian left any written record, and as they settled down to the religious life it was deemed unwise for the children of the fighting factions to do other than draw a veil over the dark deeds of the past.

The father of the writer was a wanderer in the South Seas before gold was discovered in California or Australia. He had been in Tahiti, Pitcairn, and the Marquesas in the service of the American navy, and he knew as much as could be known about the *Bounty* mutineers. The writer has been shipmates with Pitcairners and has called at the island and also at Norfolk Island and other isles where these interesting people have relatives, and he is in regular correspondence with them. Following Adams, Surgeon Buffet and Chaplain Nobbs were the religious leaders until the coming of the Seventh-day Adventists to Pitcairn from California.

[Next week articles by other writers will appear, interestingly describing life on Pitcairn Island.—Ed., S. OF T.]

BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH

ARE you ready for His coming?
Are you ready for your Lord?
Do you know His power to save you?
Do you love His holy Word?

Are you ready for His coming?
Have you victory over sin?
Have you made a full surrender?
Does He reign supreme within?

Do I hear you say, "Not ready?"
Haste! Before His altar bow;
Hear, the Spirit's voice is calling,
Come, get ready, come, come now.

Mercy's voice will cease its pleading;
Soon the last call will be heard,
Hear, oh, hear Him calling, calling,
Haste, obey His blessed Word!

Saviour, now I humbly pray Thee,
Work Thy works of grace in me;
Write upon my heart Thy statutes;
I surrender all to Thee.

Surely then I shall be ready,
Waiting, watching, Lord, for Thee,
And with joy shall go to Zion
When Thou comest, Lord, for me.

—Mrs. T. Buchman.



The Twenty-Third Psalm

THIS psalm seems unfathomable in its significance and suggestiveness. We speak of its poetry as idyllic. Let me say it is also prismatic. From every facet there gleams a distinctive light. We find rhapsodies of joy and deep notes of tranquillity in this little gem set in a veritable constellation of divine effulgences.

The whole psalm, brief as it is, is an interpretation and amplification of the first five words—"The Lord is my shepherd." When he has said this, he has said it all. This text has a strange power when its discovery is made, confessed, and admitted into the current of the life. Shut your door, Christian, and repeat these words on your knees, and see how your cares will be lifted and that legion of threatening disturbances will become harmless names; the consciousness of that shepherding Presence will spell peace and safety, and will give courage and comfort amid all the alarms and misgivings of your busy life.

Notwithstanding their tears and their privations, there was a light on those faces not often seen even on the faces of the well fed, the well clad, and the well to do. What is the explanation? Nothing less than the consciousness of His sustaining and comforting Presence. May we say that here is the assurance of guidance, the assurance of sustenance, the assurance of protection, and the assurance of comradeship. What more can we ask? These alone furnish the present with peace and comfort, and the future with a satisfaction and a glory surpassing earthly privileges, looking forward to that day when we shall "dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—Selected.

shook with loud peals of derisive laughter at this suggestion, but undismayed he began to read, "In My Father's house are many mansions —" and gradually the rude room became silent as the quiet voice went on to tell, by a verse here, a phrase there, the story of the arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. And when he knelt to pray, those murderers and plunderers knelt with him and listened respectfully and attentively. Long and fervently the humble servant of the Lord prayed—even for them! When he had finished, they arose silently, and offered him their best in the way of a bed, where he slept soundly until morning.

When he awoke, his baggage was beside his bunk undisturbed. Once more, before partaking of the breakfast they offered him, he read and prayed. And when he left, the robbers refused to take a cent for his lodging. They even thanked him for coming and for his interest in their behalf!

At the next stage stop he learned of the death, at the hand of Jim Stevens, of the fully armed man he had met, who made fun of his sword—the Word—as a means of protection.

Often in his declining years he told this story to his grandchildren, describing vividly the prayer scene in the robber hut, and ending with these words: "My Bible palsied their arms, unnerved their hearts, and bowed their knees."

Are you armed with this matchless, untarnished, unbreakable sword? Not one of us can ever be really safe without its protection.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

THE story of Daniel in the lions' den—how it has filled hearts with trust in God, from infancy to old age! King Darius of Medo-Persia, after fasting all night, repenting of his weakness, came trembling in the morning and cried down into the den:—

"O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?"

And from down in the den, where the lions paced to and fro or crouched before the servant of God, there came the comforting response:—

"O king, live for ever. My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me."

No wonder the king issued the proclamation declaring the God of Daniel the true and living God who "delivereth and rescueth."



Where Henry's Name Was Written

Frances Kittredge

HENRY'S father stopped his motor-car at the corner of a great business block.

"Wait for me, Henry," he said, "either in the car or on the footpath near by."

Henry watched his father till he saw him disappear inside the building. Then he looked above the entrance and read, in great letters carved in granite, "Henry Walker Building."

It always made Henry's heart thrill with pride when he read those words, to think that he was the nephew of the man who had put up that great building. It was his greatest ambition to build just such a building, and have his name written over the entrance. When he grew up, he meant to make that ambition come true. His building would be eight stories high, and cover a block, just like Uncle Henry's, and over the entrance would be the words, "Henry Ward Building."

Henry was in the third grade at school. He studied hard, and brought home the best marks. He wanted to learn a great deal, so that

Remember the Lord

REMEMBER the Lord in the days of thy youth,
And give Him thy life and thy heart;
For now is the time to accept of the truth,
And His Spirit will never depart.

Remember His grace and affectionate love,
How He suffered and died for thy sake;
Just serve and obey till He calls thee above,
And of His kind mercies partake.

Remember His wonderful power and thought,
What wonders His silent works show!
We see all around what His handiwork wrought,
In His knowledge we constantly grow.

Remember the Saviour is calling today,
He is tenderly calling for thee;
Come forward and serve Him and turn not away,
And Jesus thy keeper will be.

—Walter A. Shawker.

he could earn enough money to build his building.

He wanted to be as much like his Uncle Henry as he could. He tried to walk like him, and talk like him, and to "keep his eyes open" as Uncle Henry did. He had often heard it said that Uncle Henry was a great man to see everything that was going on.

So now, as Henry saw the people passing along the crowded street, he watched them closely so that he would grow to be an observing man.

That was how he came to notice the bent old lady's bag. The bent old lady looked as if she were not much used to crowded city streets, and did not like them. She was carrying a suit-case, a parcel, and a little leather handbag. The handle of the bag was broken, but the lady did not seem to notice it.

"That big envelope is going to fall out," thought Henry. Just then it did fall out, and dropped on the footpath. But the old lady did not know it, and walked on.

Henry darted out, picked up the envelope, and after running a few steps, overtook the lady.

"You dropped this," he told her.

She glanced at her bag. She was dismayed when she saw the broken handle.

"I do not know," she said, "what I would have done if I had lost that paper. I will always be thankful to you. What is your name?"

"Henry Ward."

"Henry Ward," she repeated. "You know, Henry, that your name will always be written on my grateful heart."

Henry told his father about it as they rode away. "She said that my name would always be written on her grateful heart."

"That is the best place you can write your name, son," said his father, "on the grateful hearts of those you have helped. It is better than on granite, even on such a building as your Uncle Henry's."

SIGNS *of the* TIMES

WORLD EVENTS IN THE LIGHT OF PROPHECY

Volume 51, Number 32

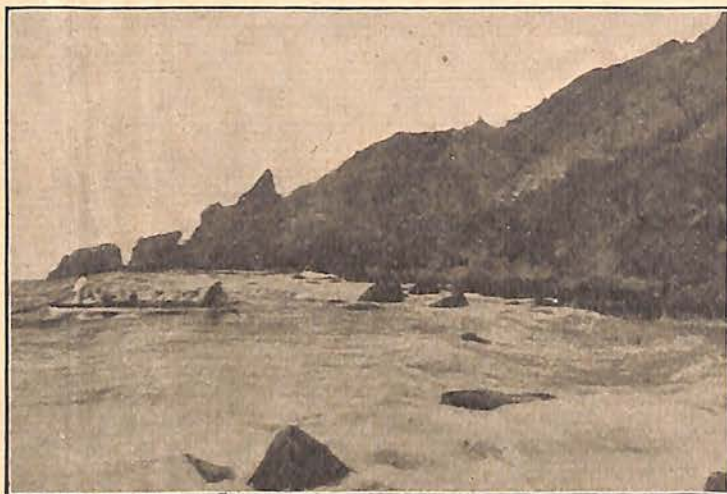
Price 1d.

Warburton, Victoria, August 10, 1936

Pitcairn Island *and* LIFE UPON IT

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C. H. Watson



Bounty Bay, Pitcairn Island. The photograph shows Pitcairn Islanders skilfully riding a wave over the rocks to the landing-place.

IT was calm most of the way to Pitcairn. Ten days of travel across a wide sea, 3,000 miles without one object visible but the sea, the stars, the sky, and the sun, then a little 'dot' rose out of the ocean before us. Moments passed, and it grew more distinct, rose to loftier view and greater proportions, and before noon our good ship had stopped before the little kingdom of romance—Pitcairn Island."

Thus writes Mr. R. Hare, a missionary to this island, whose pen has supplied the following description of Pitcairn:—

"The day before, the sea was rough, and heavy rain fell most of the day. The question of landing was assuming a serious aspect, but on Sunday morning the sea was as a great mirror of glass, for the storm had gone by.

"On the voyage across our captain delivered a lecture on Pitcairn and her people. Thus an interest was awakened in the minds of the passengers. So, long before reaching the island, the deck was lined with eager watchers, looking out over the cliffs and groves of the little world that had grown out of the sea.

"Boats were now visible, coming across the water. Reaching the side of the steamship, the islanders soon scrambled up the ladder with oranges, bananas, and curios for sale. Quite a lot of business was done. A boat load of tourists was taken ashore, another load of fruit brought out, then the

things for Pitcairn were loaded into the boats. We were sent down in a large basket, and then, with a sweet farewell song, the islanders said good-bye, and three boats pulled for the shore.



Photograph of a delicately beautiful leaf from Pitcairn Island. The leaf is wonderfully transparent, and upon it a Pitcairn Islander has painted flowers in colours.

"The landing-place consists of a narrow strip of sand between the cliff and a narrow ledge of rocks that serves as a breakwater. Great skill is required in navigating this part of the journey. The boat must wait until the wave lifts her into just the right position, and then every oarsman must pull with his strongest stroke. As the boat strikes the shore, several of the men jump out into the water and draw the little craft up as far as possible, and then as the wave recedes the others get out.

"We were astonished at the richness of the vegetation, and the beauty of the steeps that rose before and beside us. On the way up we passed through a coconut grove where the trees towered to the height of fifty and seventy-five feet. Each bore its cluster of nuts just underneath the leaves that must battle with many a storm. Vegetation is luxuriant, and both sugar-cane and sweet potatoes flourish.

"We were glad to reach the end of our journey on the sea. As we reached the top of the village and looked out over the deep, we had our last view of the departing vessel. Then there came a little thought of solitude—life on a little dot with ninety million square miles of ocean all around. But there is every comfort in the realization that there is no part of our little world beyond the reach of our heavenly Father.

"There is no place on the earth where the human heart might live



A close-up view of the landing-place at Pitcairn Island.

more oblivious to the world's cares and annoyances than on Pitcairn, the lone rock of the ocean. Here the rush and struggle after personal gain does not appear, neither does the rise or fall of tomorrow's market press the heart.

"Some forty-eight homes nestle among the coconut and orange groves on the northern slopes of Pitcairn. Of these dwellings, some are thatched with leaves from the palm-trees, but others, of more modern style, are roofed with corrugated iron. Most of them are provided with open windows, having shutters that may be closed in case of storm. Locks and fastenings are unknown and unnecessary in the simple home life of this little kingdom.

"In their domestic life, some of the homes are provided with ovens built of stone. In these a fire is lighted, and when sufficiently heated, the ashes and embers are removed and the bread, made of corn and sweet potato grated, is readily and perfectly baked.

"When salt is required, large tin dishes are filled with salt water and placed over a furnace. Here the boiling process is continued until the water evaporates and the salt is left behind. To supply the place with sugar, the sugar-cane is ground up and pressed, and the juice thus secured is boiled in a vessel similar to that used for making salt, till it becomes a thick syrup that will keep for any length of time.

"The homes have wooden floors, and walls built of boards cut by pit-saws in the forest. Water is caught in tanks, but a permanent supply is obtained from a spring far up on the hillside, and carried thence in a long line of open pipes formed of the hewn-out stems of palm-trees. The water is thus brought to a place convenient to the village. There the little boys and girls bring their wheelbarrows and fill their vessels with pure, sweet water.

"On wet days and at odd times, when not engaged in the forest or about the gardens, the men and boys take an interest in making small boats, walking-sticks, small boxes, and various souvenirs of Pitcairn. Many of these articles display both skill and patience in their workmanship. The women and girls are very expert in making baskets from the coconut leaves. Smaller baskets are also made of strips obtained from the palm leaves. Some of these are perfect works of art. Various forms of hats are also made from fibres obtained from leaves that grow on the island. The work in some of these is of a very fine quality, and much time is required for the making.

"Many of these things are sold to passing ships and tourists, who sometimes land for an hour. Life on Pitcairn is full of activity, and in the case of manning the boats on a rough sea, it requires both skill and courage. Storms sometimes blow fiercely, though as a rule climatic conditions are mild."

Small places usually need but little in the way of description, but Pitcairn is an exception to the rule. Though just a dot in the wild waste of Pacific waters, there is perhaps no other land washed by the tide of that great ocean that so captivates the romantic thought of the civilized world.

Lying midway between the coasts of Australia and South America, it has until recent years occupied a position of strange isolation, far from the track of ocean steamer or sailing ship. In extent it is only a little over two miles long and about one across—a little sea-girt kingdom comprising about 1,280 acres of land.

When the mutineers first reached it, its surface was very thickly covered with trees. But time has wrought many changes in its appearance. The highest part of the land is about 1,100 feet above sea level. Facing the north is an immense rock

in which is a large cave, well concealed by the trees and shrubbery, which help to make it a secure hiding-place. The mutineers had intended to make this cave their refuge in the event of their island retreat being discovered.

Overlooking the small bay where the *Bounty* was burned is a peak known as Ship-landing Point. "It rises in bold outline almost perpendicularly from the sea, its rugged, rocky front softened here and there by patches of grass and shrubs." Near its highest point is a curious rock showing in clear outline the figure of a man's head of enormous proportions. This is called the Old Man's Head. So very realistic is this rock representation of humanity that no flight of fancy is required to imagine that it looks continually down into the little bay with the mild benevolence of old age.

"Round the rocky shore some unique and interesting scenes are pictured—steeps, headlands, inlets, and caves are all in their places; but the rocks are stern and rugged, and the sea whitens them in vain. The caves for ever echo forth the sound of a rolling tide.

"About half way up the mountains on either side of the island a spring of water flows forth, cool and clear and sweet. That on the western side has never been known to run dry, but the one on the eastern side, which supplies the inhabitants with water, ran dry some years ago. The people claim that in answer to their prayers it was restored, and now gives a constant flow."

Truly the power of God is wonderful and His ways are past finding out, for in the midst of a waste of ninety million square miles of salt sea, this sweet spring water is lifted far above the tide, and caused to run in ceaseless flow upon a land from which rain is sometimes withheld for months together.

"The coastline of the little island is irregular and broken. In the quaint folklore of the people are told some interesting stories associated with certain localities."

Bounty Bay is the little cove where the old ship *Bounty* was grounded and burned by the mutineers. "Down a Rope" is a steep cliff over three hundred feet high, and so called because in former years the steep descent could be accomplished only by means of a rope. It was at the foot of this cliff that the mutineers first found the stone axes and other implements which told of earlier inhabitants. Here, too, is the rude imagery of that same bygone age—carvings of a people of whom history has no record, "but no interpreter has yet been found to give them speech. Mute in their unknown eloquence,

they face the great deep, but whether their records are of agony or triumph none can tell."

To the north-west, at a considerable distance from the shore, is a rock that received its name from an incident in which two young men romantically figured. In the early days the sons of McCoy and Quintal swam off to this rock, and there made a firm agreement that they would each win and wed the other's sister. This they did, and so the rock received its name, "Tane M'a" (the Place of Agreement).

"In the valley between Ship-landing Point and the great rock facing north, lies nestled among the trees the village settled by mutineers more than one hundred years ago. Groves of coconut and orange-trees surround it, while the beautiful banyan-tree, with its curious growth of long, rope-like roots hanging in thick profusion, and its towering branches, covered for ten months of the year with a spring-like robe of green, lends a delightful charm to the scenery."

But the groves are silent, for no song bird ever enlivens the deep shade with his sweet warblings. One small, homely bird, with coat of brown and white, is the sole occupant of these solitary woods, and to him has been imparted no gift of song. But as if to give him feathered company through the warm spring days, a beautiful white sea bird comes and deposits her eggs upon the bare branches of the banyan-tree; but the sharp, shrill cry of this snow-white visitant from the ocean serves only to remind us that the song of the birds is a feature of the woods, and is never heard upon the sea.

"From the highest point of the island a view of the entire horizon may be obtained, the far-away blue of the ocean mingling with the far-away mistiness of the sky in a perfect circle. Close to this viewpoint an orange-tree is growing, buffeted by storms, yet bearing its golden fruit. There the eye may gaze upon nature's wonderful vision while the taste enjoys her wonderful sweetness.

"There is no vehicular traffic of any kind on this curious island. The roads that lead to the village, the gardens, and across the mountains are all trodden by shoeless feet." No way of the city has ever intruded there, but the charm of nature's romantic scenery more than compensates for the absence of all the city man would have.

"Pitcairn! To thee, land of my birth,
My song I bring;
Thy hills and valleys, trees and flowers,
Their praise I sing.

"The coconut, with waving plumes
Of shining green,
The sweetly scented orange blooms,
Both here are seen.

"And stately trees and luscious fruits
Thy soil supplies;
But the enriching showers and rains
The heaven denies.

"Thou once wast fertile, rich and green,
But now, how bare;
And yet thou still art beautiful,
Still sweet and fair.

"Such matchless days of calm, fair skies
Thy summers bring!
And lovely, too, are all the hours
Of balmy spring.

"Each season as it rolls around,
New beauties gives;
And every object, silent, cries,
'My Maker lives.'"

—From "*Cannibals and Head-Hunters of the South Seas.*"