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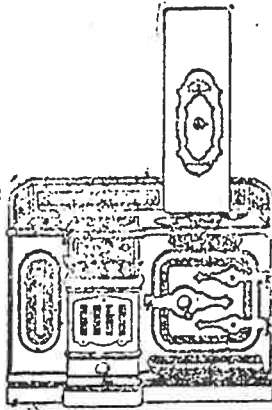
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**IN MEMORIAM.**

**ANNA WOODS BEST**

was born in Donaghadee, Ireland, on October 27, 1835, and was the daughter of the late Rev. Thomas Ballard, a noble-spirited minister of the Irish Wesleyan Church. At the early age of 14 years she gave her heart to God (to use her own words), "decidedly and forever." When 17 years of age she sought and found the blessing of "perfect love." Her young life, though serious, was bright and joyous, and the influence of her consistent example resulted in many of her fellow-pupils in the school being drawn to the Saviour. From the time of her conversion to the day of her death her supreme ambition was to be a soul-winner, and her efforts in this direction were greatly owned of God.

On July 5, 1857, she was married to Rev. Edward Best, an earnest and successful minister of the Irish Conference. After many years of service in Ireland Mr. and Mrs. Best came to New Zealand in 1850. Mrs. Best was the guiding star and true helm of her husband, entering sympathetically into everything that concerned his work in the circuit. Not a little of his success in the conversion of souls was due to her prayerful efforts and faithful dealing.

During the years of her widowhood, Mr. Best having died on November 18, 1900, she was brave, patient, and trustful, never failing to realize the precious promises of God to the widow and the fatherless. As a member and leader of St. John's, Ponsonby, Auckland, it would be difficult to estimate the value of her influence. Week by week for many years she met her class in her own home, and this was esteemed a privilege by leader and members alike. Her wise counsels, clear expositions of the Word, definite testimony, and fervent prayers did much to strengthen the faith, comfort the hearts, and direct the lives of all who were privileged to attend. The class meeting to-day languishes largely for want of suitable leaders. Here was a sweet, strong, tactful spirit-filled woman who made the institution attractive, and therefore successful. Given one such leader in every circuit (not to say church) throughout the Dominion, and the spiritual tone of the Methodist Church would be vastly improved.

Her eventide was light. She had no misgivings about the future, but anticipated with joyous expectancy her entrance through the portals of death upon the larger, fuller life of Heaven. When nearing the end of her earthly pilgrimage she said: "Of all the songs that were ever sung or ever will be sung this is the best, 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . be glory and dominion forever and ever.'" After a brief illness of a few days this "elect lady" of gifts, grace, and fruits exchanged mortality for life in her eighty-first year on Wednesday, January 5, of this year. Her children rise up and call her blessed, and many thank God for having come under the influence of a character so noble and a life so saintly as that of Anna W. Best, who, "being dead yet speaketh." The funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Rev. G. Pond, who also conducted a memorial service at St. John's on Sunday morning, January 9, when a hallowing sense of the Divine presence was realized. G. B.

**MRS EDWARD BIBBY (WAIPAWA).**

An Appreciation: Rev. C. E. Beecroft.

It is expressing no commonplace to say that Waipawa will never again be the same to the ministers and adherents of the various churches now that Mrs. Bibby has passed away. With her late

husband she had been identified with the township from its early days, and in each of them every religious and philanthropic enterprise found an unfailing and liberal helper.

To the writer the name of Bibby is associated with all that is noblest and worthiest in human character, and all that is generous in human friendship. Mr. James Bibby, of Quernmore, Lancaster, whom I was privileged to know in the early eighties, came as near one's ideal of a Christ-like man as any I have met in the course of a lengthened ministry. The sweet aroma of his saintly life and large-hearted generosity lingers still in the valley where his 80 years of pilgrimage were spent.

Hence when on my arrival in this Dominion I learned that a brother of my venerated friend was living at Waipawa, I gladly availed myself of an invitation to visit his home. For two-and-twenty years that home has opened to me its hospitable door, and offered me the warmth of its cheerful fireside. It was there in 1888 last that I found refreshment to mind and body after the strain of a heavy year's engagement. And now that its gracious mistress has gone up higher it is small wonder if, to scores of us who knew her worth, Waipawa should seem henceforth strangely desolate and grey. For "there hath passed away a glory from the earth."

Though members of the Anglican Church Mr. and Mrs. Bibby were for many years almost invariably found at the Sunday evening service in the Methodist Church. Its hymnology and its form of worship kept them in touch with precious associations in the Homeland. Our ministers were always sure of their sympathetic and practical interest in any financial effort, whilst to the young minister's wife Mrs. Bibby's motherly interest was beyond all price.

In a letter which lies before me as I write her son, Mr. Councillor E. Bibby, bears grateful tribute to his mother's "pure, unselfish, devoted life, full of acts of love in the service of her Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, in whose steps she earnestly tried to follow." That brief sketch, done by a filial hand, exactly describes and explains her personality so universally honoured and beloved. The imitation of Christ was the secret of its charm and of its quiet strength. These holy foot-steps in whose print she trod led her along the way of consecration, of communion with God, and of self-sacrificing service. The hallowed pathway had for her its inevitable Via Dolorosa, but it conducted also to the broad, sunlit spaces of redeemed character, and it brought her at last to Olivet and to the uplifted doors of the Father's House.

The end was singularly beautiful. She was thought to be recovering from a serious illness, and had come downstairs unassisted on what proved to be her last day on earth. Early on the morning of January 12 her faithful attendant, Miss Avison, called Mr. Edward Bibby to his mother's room, and he recognised at a glance that the end was at hand. Within an hour, leaving on the arms of her son, she peacefully breathed her last. "There was no pain or distress of any kind. It was just such a death as she had always wished for." She drew away from earth and time.

As sets the morning star,  
 Which goes not down behind the darkened  
 Nor hinders, obscured, amidst the tempests  
 But melts away into the light of heaven.

"Her children arise up and call her blessed," and at the mention of her name through the coming years in the households of Waipawa, many a heartfelt benediction will bear witness to the enduring fragrance of a stainless and unselfish life.