USE OF THESSES

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IN SEARCH OF SOULS:

THE CULTURAL INTERACTION BETWEEN HIRAM BINGHAM JR.,
THE HAWAIIANS AND THE GILBERTESE
THROUGH MISSION CONTACT 1857-1903

SANDRA JOY RENNIE
(M.A.)

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STATEMENT

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere except where reference is made in the text. It is not and has not been used for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university and is the sole work of the author.

Sandra Rennie
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SUMMARY

In the late nineteenth century, a diverse group of people were to be found on the coral atolls of the Gilbert Islands. These people included, besides the Islanders themselves, English, American and Chinese traders, American, native Hawaiian and English Protestant missionaries, French Catholic priests and English officials of the British Government. An intricate and complicated play of action took place as these people met and interacted on the tiniest of atolls straddling the Equator. Consequently the action these people took was obvious - obvious in that it was observable but not obvious in that it was understood. The meaning the actors gave it was often misinterpreted or completely lost.

The thesis focuses on one act from that play - the advent of American and native Hawaiian Protestant missionaries who first came to the Gilbert Islands in 1857. Hence representatives from three distinct cultures, American, Hawaiian and Gilbertese, met and interacted in the Gilbert Islands through American Protestant mission contact. The focus of the thesis is on the life of Hiram Bingham Jr., son of one of the original Boston Protestant missionaries to Hawaii, who was to become the pioneer missionary to the Gilbert Islands in November 1857. The tensions within Bingham Jr. himself are explored. On one level, there was the choice between becoming a man of wealth and power or becoming a man of God. On another level, Bingham faced a dilemma in either following his father's footsteps and living a secure life in Hawaii as a pastor or in making a name for himself as pioneer missionary in the harsh environment of the Gilbert Islands. On yet another level, Bingham had to decide between his yearnings for commendation from his father and the Mission Board at Boston and his desire to do exactly what he wanted.
Bingham, in fact, became a missionary, went to the Gilbert Islands and ran the mission there to his own design and desire. Like so many other Europeans or Americans, Bingham repudiated the desire for a predictable life in a familiar setting and opted to make his fame in little-known islands of the Pacific. He would become a 'first' even more than his father who, after all, had travelled to Hawaii as part of a group. Bingham was hungry for success.

Most Islanders on Abaiang and Tarawa saw little relevance in the particular type of Christianity that Bingham espoused and attempted to convey to them. For his part, Bingham had scant respect for them. They were interested in war and power struggles; he was interested in establishing a holy government which ruled for the common good.

The Hawaiian missionaries were mid-way between their own fast disappearing culture and espousal of the white man's ways. They vainly attempted to mediate between the Islanders in the Gilberts and Bingham. The Islanders therefore confronted at least two different interpretations of Christianity: that of Bingham and that of the Hawaiians. So began a triangular set of relationships fraught with misunderstanding.

The mission was a fiasco as a means of Christian conversion. Yet it nurtured changes in the various islands of the Gilberts. Different concepts on organization of society, identity, time, space and knowledge were presented to the Islanders. Many adopted new ways. These modifications paved the way for the establishment of the British Protectorate in 1892. Bingham saw all change as progress, and noting the changes occurring in the Gilbert Islands, attributed it all to his mission and refused to concede defeat.
GLOSSARY

aba
a defined plot of land

te aba n tinaba
the land from tinaba - see tinaba

Anti
spirit(s)

Anti-ma-aomata
half-spirit, half-human; denotes a particular period of history

Anti Tioba
the spirit Jehovah - a cult

aomata
man (human)

arobai
serf, servant

atua
the totem of the Anti

babai
Cyrtosperma chamissonis: a large tuberous plant which grows in stagnant water; akin to Taro in appearance

(te) baba na aine
women's association

bakatibu
ancestor

bangota
sacred place, shrine, used for spirit worship or sorcery

boti
literally, the specific seating place of each lineage within the maneaba. A term used to denote the lineage through the father

(te) buaka
real war

buakonikai
bush land(s)

bubuti
solicitation of goods or services, with the implication of reciprocity

eiriki
relationship, sometimes involving sexual intercourse, between a man and his wife's sisters and (in some cases) cousins; or a woman and the brothers and cousins of her husband

ibonga
sorcerers

I Kiribati
Gilbertese person or people (adopted since Independence)

I Matang
European

inaomata
commoner or freeman, landowner

kainga
the extended family settlement and the people within it; the basic social and residential unit before the creation of consolidated villages in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

kario
sorcery to induce the ability to compose song and dance forms

Karongoa n Uea
the clan of the Chief of the maneaba
kaunga  slave or servant, one without land
(te) kiriwe  a rising or a riot
Kiribati  name adopted for the republic composed of the Gilbert, Phoenix and Line Islands and Banaba
maneaba  communal meeting-house
mwenga  the individual household, dwelling
nikiranroro  literally 'the one remaining from her generation'; an old maid, an unmarried woman known to have had sexual relationships, divorcee
tabonibai  literally, the finger - servant or helper
tinaba  relationship, sometimes involving sexual intercourse and gifts of land, between a woman and the uncles of her husband
toka  minor chief, rich landowner, social rank below uea in northern Gilberts
uea  high chief, applies particularly to the northern Gilberts
(te) un  the anger
unimane  the respected male elders
utu  kindred, family or relatives connected with both father and mother
STATEMENT ON FIELD NOTES

My field work in Kiribati took place between April and September 1979 and June-July 1981. The Islands I visited were Butaritari, Abaiang, Tarawa, Maiana and Tabiteuea. Due to the sensitivity of the oral information I collected, I am unable to reveal the names of my informants, for which I apologize. Much of this material relates to wars between families and the result of these still has relevance to-day. On many an occasion, information was given me on the understanding that I should be discreet with its use. A set of documented field notes, however, will be available to examiners of this thesis on request.

During my field work, I gathered information mostly from men, mature and old men or the unimane. The oldest man I interviewed was in his nineties. There were a few other very old men but mostly they fell within the age group of forty-five to seventy-five. As I visited a variety of islands, I availed myself of the services of different interpreters. Although the bulk of my interviewees were Protestant I also interviewed Catholics and 'pagans'.

Interviews did not usually take place either in the maneaba or in groups. I chose to interview individuals as group interviewing can lead to consensus views being expressed. Further, the age-sex prerogative of Gilbertese society poses a problem. During one women's group I interviewed little information was gained because the younger women believed it impolite to offer information which the oldest woman did not divulge. During interviews, a tape-recorder was not used; instead, notes were taken. Before an interview took place it was necessary to give two or three sticks of tobacco to the interviewee. This was to indicate my acknowledgement that I was gaining knowledge which was the property of the individual.
Although I had compiled a list of questions under various headings, I later discarded this rigid approach and chose to listen. On any one topic, be it mission contact, warfare or the worship of the Anti, variations in details occurred. In the past, sanctions had existed to ensure 'accuracy'. Also an accurate knowledge of one's genealogical tree was necessary because the maneaba required this. But to-day the maneaba as it existed in the past exists no longer. New identities have been formed and there are now government, Protestant and Catholic maneaba. In the past, there were in every boti people, usually men, who specialized in acquiring and accurately committing to memory the oral traditions not only related to their own boti, but to Gilbertese mythology and history as a whole.\(^1\) Much of Gilbertese mythology has now been forgotten as identification with the boti has weakened. In addition, knowledge, once passed from father to son, comes now from another source, the schools. Beginning in 1857, the Islanders have gradually been exposed to the written word and to new bodies of knowledge which challenge the old views. Traditional knowledge is in danger of being forgotten altogether while the written word has acquired almost a sacred quality.

In my quest for information in 1979 and 1981, I therefore encountered fragmented knowledge. The gathering of oral knowledge, however, was not without its benefits. Although often I was exposed to a variety of interpretations on an event, I gained a deeper appreciation of the divisiveness of Gilbertese society which still persists to-day as a reflection of the former bitter struggles between lineages. At times, it was obvious that an informant was giving his perception of events and would

not divulge information which would cast shame on his family. Through the various opinions offered, however, along with historical details from mission and other sources, I have been able to reconstruct events.

The most interesting aspect in the analysis of my field notes was the exploration of myth-building. On Tabiteuea, many men told me that the gods had been chased away from Utiroa after Bingham came. Details differed; the message was the same. On Abaiang, I was told that Bingham had been implicated in the war between Tewaki and Temaua. One man told me that Bingham had provided arms to Temaua; another that Bingham gave him and his side the Sunday School Hymn to sing. Present-day descendants of Tewaki say that Tewaki would have won but for the assistance Bingham rendered Temaua.

During my fieldwork, I also made queries on any aspect of Gilbertese life where I needed further understanding. Answers to these questions as well as observations often led to insights into how Gilbertese society functioned. In relation to myth-making, I was intrigued at the number of times that it was mentioned that a woman acted as spy and disclosed information which led to one side's demise and the other's victory. Women were not part of a man's _boti_ nor his _utu_. The distrust that this fact may have engendered in times of war could have been considerable.

It will be seen that I have used my oral information in a variety of ways - to provide reconstruction of past events, to present unchallenged information of common accord, to reveal and analyse myth and to enhance my perception of Gilbertese society, both then and now.
PREFACE

This thesis presents a fusion of three academic areas - history, ethnographic reconstruction and psychobiography. The general focus is on cultural interaction between the pioneer missionary to the Gilberts, his native Hawaiian associates and the Islanders of the Gilberts. Although the specific focus is on Hiram Bingham Jr. and his internal career, my wider interests are in the 'translation' of Christianity not only for him but also for the Hawaiian associates and the Islanders living in the northern and central Gilberts, particularly on Abaiang, Tarawa and Tabiteuea.

Culture contact history, or what I prefer to call cultural interaction, grew out of the attempt to grasp a deeper meaning of the history of Pacific and African societies. It became evident that imperialist history distorted perceptions of those histories. Initially contact had been seen as a contest between the powerful (the Europeans) and the powerless indigenous people - the fatal impact. Change was perceived as the imposition of Western values on to indigenous societies. European society was depicted as progressive; societies of the Pacific and Africa as static.

Modern Pacific historians in studying the interaction between Islanders and Europeans began to see that the contest between the two was not always so one-sided. Modern anthropological studies revealed that indigenous societies are anything but static and that the contradictions within them can generate cultural change independently of European contact.

is a continuing process. Functionalist theory was refined and more dynamic models were adopted. Historians, or ethnohistorians, became more intent on grasping the views of indigenous people and on understanding the societies in which they lived. Recourse was made to the collection of oral testimonies and anthropological writings on the structure, symbols, and dynamic interplay of various facets of indigenous societies were studied. It was not just that historians were spending more time in the field interviewing informants. The focus changed. Emphasis was less on events per se. Events became important as illustrations of a state of mind or a particular world view. Ultimately it is the meeting of different world views which is the essence of cultural interaction. Cultures, as such, do not come into contact - nor are cultures conflict-free wholes. Rather, it is the particular world views of representatives of culture which meet and interact. Islanders were not always the victims but often active participants in this interaction. Recent examples of this approach to contact are to be found in two recent theses. Ronald Adams' thesis, now published as a book, concentrates on one island in Vanuatu, that of Tanna. Adams outlines the interaction between John G. Paton, Presbyterian missionary, and the Tannese. Adams presents the world view of Paton and his quest, when on Tanna, for a spiritual magistracy with himself as leader. Tannese society is depicted as one characterized by the political significance of the gift exchange amidst political diffusion where various ranks and titles were dispersed. All Tannese did not regard Paton in the same way. The same Tannese did not see Paton in the same light throughout the contact period.

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time. At times he was regarded as a useful ally and a big man; to others a fearful foe to avoid because of his seeming control over disease.

Ilma O'Brien views the interaction between Islanders and Christian missionaries on Ponape and Kosrae. In looking at two distinct islands, she compares the effects of and reactions to traders and missionaries on each island. O'Brien explains the reasons for the dissimilar response and the repercussions which followed. In Ponape the social organization, with its various titles, was flexible; it could accommodate trader and missionary, Protestant and Catholic, and lure them into the complex web of political rivalries. In contrast, the political centralization on Kosrae lacked room for adjustment. When faith was lost in the prevailing social structure, in the face of demographic change and disease, Christianity was adopted.

In both these theses the complexity of the Pacific societies is presented. Their inhabitants are not seen as faceless Islanders but as active participants who tried to involve the Europeans within their own scheme of things. Like Adams and O'Brien I have attempted to present the coming of Christianity to a Pacific island group in terms of an interactionist model. In this model the structure of the Pacific society, and the dynamic interplay between forces within it, have as much to do with the fate of the mission as the particular teaching, methods and policies of the missionaries themselves. A fit needs to occur between the two elements. In the Gilberts this fit was very poor.

The study of cultural interaction in an historical perspective is still a relatively new academic area, sitting between the disciplines of

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history and anthropology. Its theoretical framework is still in the process of formation. At present, there are no set theories as such on how to pursue the study of cultural interaction. Those embarking on the course become eclectic and grasp at various models from anthropology and the sociology of knowledge.

The central stance I am adopting is that cultural interaction can best be studied at the micro individual experiential level. Each participating actor in a contact situation may have a world view moderately or largely different to another participant. Adams has noted that various Tannese held various views on Paton and the 'world' in general. I have found that on Abaiang contemporary Islanders had different reactions to the presence of Bingham. Also world views can be altered within one generation. A static approach is therefore inadequate.

My views on cultural interaction have been stimulated by the reading of both Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their book *The Social Construction of Reality* and Kenneth Boulding's book *The Image*. Berger and Luckmann concluded that the 'sociology of knowledge understands human reality as socially constructed reality'. Boulding's earlier study of the image (or knowledge or world view) noted that the relational dimension of the image varied markedly from culture to culture and within groups of those cultures. The image was coded through a particular value system. Hence social reality is not the same for all people or static throughout time. Nor is it just modern society with its sub-cultures which spawns a variety of world views or different interpretations of 'human reality'. It is not likely that any pre-contact society was completely holistic. Discord and divisions gave rise

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to and consolidated the construction of different 'realities'. In the situation of contact with Europeans, this process often intensified as some Islanders took advantage of the new knowledge and others clung to their previous world view.

The study of cultural interaction has concentrated more on the employment of tools in information gathering rather than theory establishment. The ethnographic reconstruction of past societies, which is the essential background in the study of cultural interaction, requires fieldwork during which oral information is collected. Ethnohistorians have not been the only ones to turn to oral information as a source. Social historians, in their bid to understand the lives, perceptions and opinions of ordinary folk, took up the tape-recorder as an additional tool of the historian. The problems of distortions, additions, memory fading and telescoping of time beset all collectors of oral sources. Historians confronted the element of myth.

Concern arose that oral information distorted the facts to such a degree that its validity as a source was questionable. The defenders of oral information reminded critics that historical written documents contained the same biases and limitations. People wrote from their own viewpoint often for a particular purpose. The good historical researcher deciphers any document for the explicitly stated, the implicitly suggested and what the author reveals unknowingly. This is done in the belief that an external truth, however elusive, exists.

It was not unusual, therefore, that one of the major exponents of oral information, Jan Vansina, took the approach that oral information should be put to the same rigorous tests as written documents. Coming from the context of African studies, Vansina argued that oral traditions 'were historical sources of a special nature'. He therefore established a methodology by which oral sources could be collected and evaluated, ridding it of obvious biases and errors.

6 Jan Vansina, Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology, Chicago, 1961, 1 and passim.
In the Pacific context, Patricia Mercer argued that, in addition, the social structure of the society in which oral information is collected has to be understood. Further, '... a prerequisite for the student of oral testimony is an understanding of the methods of social anthropology.'

Another Pacific historian, Roderic Lacey, added further criteria: these included 'the development of adequate theories of memory', 'understanding of the cultural milieu and the communication situation', the recognition that the teller usually sees himself or herself as a prime mover in events, and realization that the collection of oral information involves 'conversational narratives'.

By this Lacey meant that the dynamics of the dialogue involved the meeting of 'two personalities, two minds, two ideologies, two histories and two cultures...'. This same point was taken up at a seminar on the making of ethnographic texts at New Mexico in 1984. Of the several papers, one was entirely devoted to the concept of cultural translation. Talal Asad, social anthropologist, pointed to the inadequacies of an approach that effectively masks power-charged relations between ethnographer and informant as well as between the languages and cultures involved.

Bronwen Douglas, in her review article 'Ethnography and Ethnographic History: Some Recent Trends', reiterates this theme of 'stress on discourse and dialogue' and 'the intersubjectivity of the ethnographic process'. She further questions the validity of using historical background as an objective basis for placing oral information in the context of 'reality'. She argues:


8 Roderic Lacey, '... no other voice can tell': life histories in Melanesia, paper presented to Conference on Oral History in the Pacific, La Trobe University, 1980, 35.

9 Ibid.

An ethnographic historian would counter that all historical 'data', like all ethnographic 'data', are products of interpretative processes; that all interpretations, including historical ones, are in and of a present... A reflexive approach ... promoted a view of all knowledge as fragile, contingent and constructed...\textsuperscript{11}

This was in line with the arguments of Thomas Spear, anthropologist and historian in African studies, in a paper at the Conference on Oral History in the Pacific held at La Trobe University in 1980. Instead of taking a defensive view of the validity of oral testimonies, he adopted a positive approach. He did not attempt to justify oral sources by using historical documents. Rather, he saw oral traditions as a 'system of meanings which emerges out of a people's historical experience'.\textsuperscript{12} Values are expressed; structures are delineated; the process of 'becoming' is explained. Spear urged that oral testimonies be accepted in their own right. The task of the historian was not, therefore, to peel off inconsistencies illuminated by historical documentation but to accept the whole as a rational entity in itself.

It is this positive view of the use of oral testimony to which I subscribe. Oral testimony, myth, poetry and songs depict a state of mind. They highlight the factors in life which are perceived to be important. The function of myth, its importance to society, the sectors in society which propagate it, believe it or oppose it, delineate a society and its process of development. In my own fieldwork in Kiribati, the different interpretations of one event confronted serve to illustrate the way Gilbertese society operated in the present and in the past. I was exposed to the rivalries between lineages, the meaning of shame in losing a war, the power of a victor, the importance of land, the secrecy of knowledge and its power. The

\textsuperscript{11} Bronwen Douglas, 'Ethnography and Ethnographic History: Some Recent Trends', Pacific History Bibliography and Comment, 1984, 42.

\textsuperscript{12} Thomas Spear, 'Oral Traditions: Whose History?', paper presented to the Conference on Oral History in the Pacific, La Trobe University, 1980, 8, 16, 17.
testimonies I received were valuable in this context. I went to Ajabang and Tarawa hoping to learn of the reception to Christianity. The Islanders were more interested in relating the details of their wars. Everywhere, however, among Protestants and Catholics, Hiram Bingham Jr. was recognized as the pioneer missionary and often the most important missionary for the Northern and Central Gilberts. Bingham's name and actions had become enmeshed in some war stories and this connection is explored in the thesis.

I have viewed the Gilbertese (Northern and Central) reception of Protestant Christianity against the background of the life of its pioneer missionary, Hiram Bingham Jr. Bingham's life is not studied in biographical depth as my major interest is in Bingham as bringer of a different world view to which the Islanders had previously been exposed. It was not just that Bingham was the pioneer missionary: he was the sole European missionary until 1872 when Horace Taylor arrived. Taylor presented no challenge to Bingham's missionary policy despite the fact that Bingham later lived in Honolulu. Bingham's views on the running of a mission remained intact until Alfred Walkup executed a different missionary policy in the 1890s. Bingham faced criticisms from several sources but he persisted in the belief that his missionary policy of relying on Hawaiians and giving the Gilbertese as perfect as possible a translation of the Bible was the path to take.

Other Pacific historians have given particular reference to a central figure. Ronald Adams' thesis, which has already been mentioned, is concerned with John G. Paton, Presbyterian missionary to Tanna, and how he was perceived by the Tannese. H.G. Cummins in his thesis on James Egan Moulton analyses his contribution to both the religious, educational and political life in Tonga during this period. Bingham differed from both

Paton and Moulton and they from each other. Even within the context of Protestant missionary activity, individuals came from a variety of backgrounds, from mechanics to scholars. Further, they were situated at different points along the spectrum from orthodox Calvinism to liberal evangelism. The differences between American and English missionaries are especially marked. Further differences in each appeared through time. This area will be further explored in the Prologue. In addition to the development of distinct types of evangelization, from the conservative to the most liberal approach of the Christian Scientists, individual differences also existed. The Pacific attracted the idiosyncratic among missionaries as well as traders and beachcombers. Some missionaries were part of a group as was Hiram Bingham Snr. His son Bingham was both pioneer and lone American missionary for over ten years. Most missionaries did not identify with only one Pacific island group. Bingham's identification, throughout life, was with the Gilberts. Mission policies differed, while variations existed within Protestant theology. Even when missionaries used the same words, such as Holy Spirit, conversion, love and God, these words held different meanings for different individuals.¹⁴ There were, of course, shared meanings which bound Americans and English missionaries, and even traders, government officials and missionaries. But the Pacific was also a place where individuality flourished and variants of general themes had a greater chance to develop.

Bingham will be placed within the context of the dialectical relationship between the particular details of his personal life and the general religious and socio-economic background of America of his boyhood and youth. This has been the approach of both Adams and Cummins who have analysed the

childhood and youth of their respective missionaries in the context of broader societal experience. The world views these experiences gave rise to are examined in the light of their influence on missionary policy. Cummins, in addition, makes use of psychological theory to gain further insights. He used the theories of Erik Erikson, Robert Coles and Leon Edel which in his words 'provided a way of looking at things'.^15

Erikson, a neo-Freudian, in his theory of the epigenesis of the ego, outlines a sequence of eight psychosocial development phases which span the entire life cycle. In each phase a development crisis occurs with the necessity to manage new encounters within a given time frame. The accomplishment of the development task is described in terms of successful or unsuccessful solutions. In reality the outcome is a balance between these extremes.16 Hence, the babe will establish a degree of basic trust while overcoming a sense of basic mistrust. The development task in the next stage (the young child of eighteen months to four years) is the acquisition of autonomy versus shame and doubt. The next phase, the ambulatory stage, finds children of four and five developing a sense of initiative or forming a sense of guilt. During school age, the child is posed with the task of developing industry as against inferiority.

The stage of adolescence is the most crucial. Although the central development task is that between the formation of identity rather than experiencing identity diffusion, there are other considerations. Erikson outlined seven dimensions representing a partial polarization of development crises on the developmental continuum. The final three phases are concerned with adulthood. The task of the young adult is to develop intimacy rather than isolation. The seventh phase witnesses the development

^15 Cummins, Missionary Chieftain, foreword.

crisis of generativity versus stagnation. The last phase is that of mature age during which one builds up integrity or sinks into despair. The crisis in any one stage can be intensified because of inadequate resolution of an earlier development crisis. This will be illustrated in my study of Bingham. For Bingham was to be tormented in adulthood and question his attainment of generativity largely because during adolescence he had not adequately resolved his decision on which career to follow.

The crucial characteristic of Erikson's psychosocial theory is that it offers a conceptual explanation of the individual's social development by tracing it in relation to encounters with the social-historical environment. In Erikson's own words:

The study of psychosocial identity, therefore, depends on three complementaries ... namely, the personal coherence of the individual and role integration in his group; his guiding images and the ideologies of his life; his life history - and the historical moment.

Erikson saw the individual as not only grappling with the challenges of the biological world but also a socio-cultural environment at a given historical period. It is because Erikson sees ego development as a continuing process and related to the broader socio-historical context as well as child-rearing patterns that historians have found his model so useful.

However, Erikson has been criticized for devoting more detailed attention to the childhood phases and only briefly sketching those of adulthood. Yet Erikson does convey a sense of development of the person throughout life. Indeed; this ability is his strength. That early experiences have a direct effect on the adult personality has also been

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20 Ibid.
challenged. An interactionist model sees early experiences shaping early personality which influences the kinds of later environments one is likely to encounter, which in turn influences later experiences, which affects personality and so on. 21 This criticism, however, is rather an extension than a repudiation of Erikson's main tenets.

Other theories of personality have proved less amenable to use by historians. Theories of social psychology, Jean Piaget's cognitive psychology and development psychology all focus on particular areas rather than seeing the individual as a totality. Jean Piaget was specifically interested in intellectual development in children; social psychology is concerned with particular kinds of events such as the decision-making process; development psychology is involved with description and explanations of changes in behaviour and psychological structure. 22 All these theories require exact and detailed data and take advantage also of non-verbal data - tone of voice, body movements and facial expression - all denied to the historian. There is little room for reconstruction, a task with which the historian is very familiar.

Another psychologist who views development of the individual in the context of the life-cycle is Daniel J. Levinson. He has developed a socio-psychological perspective of the life course which gives 'equal weight to the personality, the sociocultural world, and the relationship of person and world'. Levinson is particularly interested in the 'mid-life decade', thirty-five to forty-five. Levinson sees the life cycle as a sequence of eras which has its own bio-psycho-social character. Transition from one era to another is characterized by a transitionary period during which commitment to crucial choices forming the basis of a new life

22 Ibid., passim; Maier, Three Theories of Child Development, 75-144.
structure is made. During structure-building phases, choices are made which will validate the structure and within this values and goals will be pursued. Levinson's first era is pre-adulthood (0-22), with the age-group 17-22 constituting the Early Adult Transition. The second era lasts from 17 to 45, the Mid-Life Transition taking up the last five years of that period. The middle adulthood period (40-65) follows. The Late Adult Transition, from 60 to 65, inaugurates late adulthood.23

The theories of Erikson and Levinson, although differing in detail, complement each other. Levinson provides additional insights for looking at the adult personality. I use such words as 'guidance' and providing 'additional insights' deliberately. Psychobiographical interpretations cannot be seen as providing the total answer. Nor can any psychological explanation ever be unquestionably true. Given these limitations, some may question the validity of using psychobiographical analysis at all. Yet it is theories such as those of Erikson and Levinson that, in relating psychological factors to other historical, political, social and intellectual forces, give them credibility. Further, in understanding a human life, the biographer needs the benefit of every intellectual resource available. Describing the facts of an individual's life and then externally judging that person as either successful or a failure is thin analysis. Every individual has a hidden inner self and psychology is a tool which can help to reveal that secret area and assist the biographer to perceive with empathy the inner world of the subject.24

23 A.I. Rabin et al. (eds), Further Explorations in Personality, New York, 1981, 44-87.

I have chosen to delve beyond Bingham's external projection of himself and have tried to gauge his motivations which in turn clearly affected his mission policy in the Gilberts. This path has led me to incorporate psychological theory into my study of Bingham. Erikson and Levinson have provided me with the most useful models. My use of these models will be elaborated mainly in Chapters One and Six where Bingham's life is studied in greater depth.

Bingham, the pioneer missionary to the Gilberts, has been alluded to briefly by a few historians but never studied in depth. For example, Char Miller in his book Fathers and Sons: The Bingham Family and the American Mission devotes two of his chapters to Bingham Jr. where he is seen in the context of a five-generation study. The central argument of the book revolves around the family's changing contribution to the American mission. As each generation interprets this differently and reflects a different period of American life, father-son conflicts ensue. Miller sketches Bingham's life and considers his contribution to the Protestant mission in the Gilberts as a dismal failure. Bingham generally is presented as an ineffectual and unadventurous type who was attracted to the Gilbert Islands because he regarded them as similar to his native-born Hawaii.

Whilst agreeing with Miller's assertions that the father-son relationship was important for Bingham, I believe I have considered Bingham's early life more fully and come to the conclusion that Bingham's relationship or lack thereof with his mother was even more important in his development. Nor can I agree with Miller, who appears to lack sufficient familiarity with the Gilbertese background, that Bingham was essentially a diffident man who chose the familiar. The Gilbert Islands were nothing like Hawaii. Further points of divergence with Miller's views are presented in my review.
of his book which appeared in 1983. Bingham was a far more complex man than what is presented by Miller. In my thesis I hope to show that Bingham was not a man who 'could not envision any other future for himself than the one his parents had outlined at his birth', as Miller contends. Finally, to judge Bingham as a failure is to underplay the part of the socio-political environment particularly on Abaiang and Tarawa. Bingham appears to Miller as an ineffectual person who failed his mission, but the social and political context of Abaiang and Tarawa and the time of Bingham's stay there were so unfavourable that it is unlikely that a John Williams or a Hiram Bingham Sr. would have succeeded. True, Bingham Jr.'s personality and mission policy did not help, but a proper perspective would rather see the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The point of my thesis has not been to judge success or failure of Christian conversion as such. It has been to try to capture the interaction between Bingham, his Hawaiian associates and the Gilbertese. As the world views of these actors interacted, subtle shifts occurred particularly for the Islanders. The Islanders were exposed to different perceptions of time, space, order and community. Sometimes a shift in world view occurred for some Islanders in a single generation. This is illustrated in the thesis by the different reactions to Christianity between Kaiea I and Kaiea II on Abaiang. Meanwhile American missionaries such as Bingham and Horace Taylor clung tenaciously to their world view and kept translating the actions they observed through that prism. So while men like Bingham persisted in perceiving the world in the same way, many of the Islanders were in fact being slowly prepared for another encounter with the white man – the colonization by Great Britain. The path of the British officials

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was made easier by the changes and shifts already made in the world view of many Islanders. It is the field of cultural interaction, the meeting of world views and the forming of new world views which is a more meaningful one to delve into than concentration on the success or failure of a Christian mission.

It is because of these interests that it was important to take a multi-disciplinary approach. The reaction of the Islanders in the Gilberts to the Christian message as presented by Bingham and the Hawaiian associates could not be understood unless the various structures and value systems of the Gilberts were delineated. A history of the Protestant mission there would also be limited if its prime policy-maker was not studied in some depth. It is for such reasons that in recent years interdisciplinary approaches have become more common. The blending of history and anthropology has given birth to a new genre of history called ethno- or ethnographic history. Sociology and psychology have been joined by the psychologist Levinson in a bid to gain a broader understanding of the developing personality which he feels cannot be divorced from interaction with society. An amalgamation of psychology and anthropology has been achieved by Robert I. Levy in his study of the Tahitians on the Island of Huahine.26 Both an anthropologist and a psychiatrist, he has opted for the study of personality in culture using psychological methodology.

These multidisciplinary approaches have been born largely in the decade of the 70s because of a need to gain further insight into the dialectic between man and society. The fusions, however, cannot be made without conscious acknowledgement of the contradictions between the fields of study. It is not simply the differences in methodology of various disciplines. Foci and perceptions also differ. This will be illustrated in the

comparison of history and anthropology. The writing of history has in the last hundred years relied on the collection and analysis of written documents. Through the cross-checking of data and realization of the biases of the authors of documents, historians believe that an approach to an 'external' truth can be made. Anthropologists working in the field, whose (to quote Bronislaw Malinowski) 'sources are in the behaviour and in the memory of living men', regard 'truth' as the reflection of an individual's perception of the world around him and its events.²⁷

In the past, a further difference between the two disciplines was reflected in their respective focus. Historians concentrated on events as illustrations of change. Anthropologists were more interested in the ethnographic present and concerned with the dynamics of a society for its own sake or to fit in with models of other societies. Meanwhile historians, despite their provision of comparative data, concentrated on the particular.

These differences in approach between historians and anthropologists have largely broken down. Anthropologists have long since jettisoned the view that societies are perfectly functioning entities. Recognition has been given to disharmony and change within societies. Hence more dynamic models have been adopted and the structural-functionalism of Malinowski and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown has been increasingly questioned. With due consideration of change, the anthropologist Martha MacIntyre studied the traders of Tubetube in New Guinea within an historical context.²⁸


the context of anthropological writings on the Gilbert Islands, attention has been focused on change through time and historical context.\textsuperscript{29}

Likewise historians have evidenced a growing interest in social interaction and symbolic behaviour. A realization has grown that study of informal and small-scale interactions may reflect larger conflicts. Examples of this approach are provided by Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, \textit{Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft}, in which the co-authors trace social patterns and status in a bid to understand the accusations of witchcraft in seventeenth-century Salem, Massachusetts.\textsuperscript{30} More recently, Rhys Isaac in his book \textit{The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790}, borrowing from the symbolic anthropology of Clifford Geertz, traced everyday customs and actions as statements patterned by culture.\textsuperscript{31} While anthropological insights may have been used, however, the focus is still on the larger events in history and the analysis was related to this. But some historians have begun to concentrate on a particular aspect of society. The ethnohistorian Michele Stephen is engaged in the study of dreams within traditional Melanesian religion. She has noted that particular dreams can be agents of change when they are manipulated by the individual.\textsuperscript{32}

The role of the individual as a fomentor of change has long perplexed the historian. Despite the long union between history and biography, not all historians agree that the individual is capable of determining the course of events. Despite the dialectical relationship between the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{29} See William H. Geddes, 'Social Individualization on Tabiteuea Atoll', \textit{Journal of the Polynesian Society} (hereinafter cited as \textit{JPS}), 86 (3), September 1977, 371-397.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Rhys Isaac, \textit{The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790}, Williamsburg, 1982.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Michele Stephen, 'Dreams of Change: The Innovative Role of Altered States of Consciousness in Traditional Melanesian Religion', \textit{Oceania}, 50 (1), 1979, 3-22.
\end{itemize}
individual and his or her society, it cannot be denied that some individuals exert more than the average influence on their social and political environment. It is because of this that the most respectable of historians have devoted attention to the individual. In the Pacific context Gavan Daws in his *A Dream of Islands* analyses the lives of five Europeans who joined their destinies with the Pacific. Deryck Scarr has edited two series of *Pacific Island Portraits* which include the study not only of Europeans but also Islanders as well.\(^{33}\)

It is probably within the context of the Pacific Islands that individual Europeans had greater influence because of the small size of those societies. This is often why they went there in the first place so that their policies and actions could have a greater impact, so they could see the fruits of their labour, so they could stand on a less cluttered stage. However, the European individuals discovered that they could not easily impose their systems or world views on to island societies. The inhabitants of Pacific societies were not passive bystanders but often active protagonists who interacted with a variety of Europeans—traders, beachcombers, missionaries and government officials—often on their own terms.

The world view of the Europeans was not an undifferentiated whole. While traders, missionaries and government officials often shared notions of what constituted space and time, good and evil, the structure of the universe and man's, especially the European's, place within it, community and deviance to its rules, individuals espoused variants of the major world view. There were those who accepted new scientific ideas, such as Darwinism, and moved with and even ahead of their times. James Egan Moulton,

missionary to Tonga, was such a man. On the other hand, there were others
who clung to ideas which became increasingly outmoded: these were the
conservatives who wanted to create a type of society in the Pacific which no
longer existed in their home countries. It is to this group that Bingham
belonged.

Likewise, no one society in the Pacific presented a holistic entity.
Different clans and even different individuals held variations of the
prevailing value system. Hence different individuals regarded the European
presence differently. They put the Europeans' trade goods to different
purposes; they reacted differently to the Christian message. Cultures do
not make contact or interact; individuals and their world views do.
Therefore it is the micro-level which must be explored and Pacific ethno-
history is particularly suited to this type of analysis. The particular
phase of interaction which concerns me is that between the conservative
Hiram Bingham Jr., his Hawaiian associates dislocated both within and away
from their Hawaiian society, and Islanders of the Northern and Central
Gilberts in the late nineteenth century.

This interaction was not simply a process of the bringing and the
receiving, or rejection, of the Protestant Christian message. It became
evident that instead a dialectical and triangular process had occurred.
Christianity was perceived differently by Bingham, the Hawaiian missionaries
and the Gilbertese. All three interpreted it through the prism of their
own world view and cultural values, extracting from Christianity what made
sense to them.

This study could neither be dealt with exclusively in chronological
terms nor completely thematically. Dealing as it does with history,
cultural interaction at different places at the same time and biography, or
rather the exploration into a man's emotions and mind, there is no straight
line to follow. To attempt this would distort the picture and rob it of its complexity. A certain measure of backtracking is unavoidable. To assist the reader a chronology is provided.

The thesis is divided into three major parts. The first looks at both Bingham’s early culture and the culture of the islands he went to in 1857. In the first chapter, Bingham’s early years in Honolulu with his parents and sisters, his boyhood in America and his youth at Yale, are portrayed in an attempt to find the root causes of Bingham’s inner tensions so evident in later life. The second chapter attempts to depict the various structures and values of the Gilbert Islands. The Gilberts presented three distinct social structures yet all shared, by and large, a common value system. There could not have been islands less appropriate for the implanting of Bingham’s ideals and missionary strategy which did not cater for diversity.

The second part deals with the coming of Christianity to the Gilbert Islands from 1857 onwards. To the Gilbertese it was the bringing of the ‘Book’, as they saw the Bible as the central symbol of the Protestants. This part also deals with the triangular relationship between Bingham, the Hawaiian missionaries and the Gilbertese. Bingham settled on Abaiang in the Gilberts in November of 1857. He concentrated his efforts on trying to convert Kaiea whom he regarded as king of the island. This policy of working through the leaders was in keeping with the Hawaiian Christianization experience but it was not to work on Abaiang which witnessed incessant warfare. Logistics enabled Bingham to make only fleeting visits to the other ten islands the American Protestants were to take. These short visits were to gauge the receptivity of the Islanders to the introduction of Christianity and to introduce Hawaiian missionaries. By and large the Hawaiian missionaries laboured in vain. On Tabiteuea, where a different social structure to that of Abaiang existed, the Hawaiian
missionary Kapu set up a mission base which enjoyed relative success. The power Kapu built up on Tabiteuea, however, led to resentment of a section of the Islanders and a resulting horrifying massacre. The American Protestant Mission, spread over eleven islands and encompassing three distinct social systems, succeeded in none for any protracted period of time.

The third chapter deals with Bingham’s stay at Abaiang between 1857 and 1864 and 1873 and 1875. The perceptions and interactions between Bingham and the Gilbertese are explored. The fourth chapter relates the fortunes and misfortunes of the Hawaiians on the other islands. The relationship between Bingham and these Hawaiians and his policy towards them are both examined. The fifth chapter looks at the effects of the presence of both Bingham and Kapu on Tabiteuea. Kapu followed a different policy to that of Bingham; he was forced to as there were no high chiefs on which to rely. He also presented a different view of God and Christianity. Missionary influence was quite different on this island.

It was thought better to concentrate on Abaiang and Tabiteuea, dealing with the other islands in general, for a number of reasons. Missionary experience on both these islands was both more dramatic, had more lasting effects and, in consequence, generated more source material. Bingham wrote about his life on Abaiang. The civil war on Tabiteuea led to a greater volume of written material to which Bingham contributed. It was also on these two islands that I spent the longest period of time gathering oral history. The material for the other islands, in comparison, is scanty. Further, I decided a perusal of the relationship between Bingham and his Hawaiians and between those Hawaiian missionaries and the Gilbertese to be a more valuable exercise than presenting the details, as they exist, of mission events on all the islands the American Protestant Mission took over.
The third part of the thesis concentrates on the inner career of Bingham as he viewed the lack of his mission's progress. From his early naive assumption that missionary success would be both immediate and automatic, he slowly came to realize that he could not achieve momentous success in his work as a missionary in the Gilberts. Bingham again became a divided man. Before it had been the decision between pursuing wealth and success in the secular world or becoming a missionary. Now that he was a missionary in the Gilberts, Bingham became torn between functioning as a missionary preacher or concentrating on his translation work which, in due time, would guarantee success and fame. Unresolved conflicts which arose during his adolescence surfaced again in his middle adulthood.

The sixth chapter, of necessity, backtracks to Bingham's early days on Abaiang. Events are viewed through his own personal perspective and the gap between what he yearned for and what transpired is traced. Thwarted by lack of success, Bingham attempted to bridge this gap. A tension arose between his commitment to preach and his love of translation work, a work which promised recognition. Bingham, however, enjoyed his term as official Protector of the Gilbertese and other 'South Sea Islander' contract labourers who went to Hawaii in the 1880s. This period is outlined in chapter seven. In Hawaii, the Gilbertese looked up to him; they needed him. Bingham had the regard for which he had yearned and ceased to complain about being distracted from his translation work. In chapter eight, Bingham's attitude to the obvious demise of the mission is outlined. The hope of a successful mission in Micronesia run by Hawaiians and supervised by Americans had been the dream of both the Reverend Dr Luther Gulick and Bingham. Bingham had tried to translate this dream into reality in the Gilbert Islands but it steadily evaporated. The Reverend Alfred Walkup, who came to the Gilberts in 1880, completely revised Bingham's approach to the mission yet it still continued to founder.
Bingham, however, did not concede defeat and claimed for his mission the success in bringing a barbarous people to a more civilized plane. The mission did play a major role in preparing the Gilbertese for later waves of modernization and in particular the smooth setting up of the British Protectorate in 1892. Bingham saw a linear process and deemed it as progress. However the actual process was the forming of new world views in which the Islanders took an active part in synchronizing the old and new.

The effective aspects of the mission have been examined rather than concentrating on why the mission failed as a Christianizing movement. It could be said that there were no reasons for the mission to succeed given its timing, the structures within Gilbertese society, and the particular personalities of both Hawaiian and American missionaries involved. The Gilbertese had little desire to change and the option to their own lifestyle, as presented by Protestant missionaries, was not attractive. Indeed, why should the mission have succeeded?

It is felt that a richer and rounder view of the mission is gleaned from the examination of the relationships and interactions between Bingham, the Hawaiian missionaries and the Gilbertese. A study of this triangular relationship, the perceptions of those involved in it and the results of the presence of the Protestant missionaries in the Gilberts in the late nineteenth century is the substance of what follows.

Note: On 12 July 1979 the Gilbert Islands, along with Banaba and the Phoenix and Line Islands, became the independent Republic of Kiribati. The Islanders are now referred to as I Kiribati.
PROLOGUE

Christianity was first permanently introduced to the Pacific by the Missionary Society of London in 1797. In both its social and theological emphasis it was a product of the eighteenth century. In particular, it grew out of the revival influence of George Whitfield. The London Missionary Society (LMS) was established in 1755. Although basically Congregationalist, it accepted Calvinists, Anglicans, Calvinist Methodists and Presbyterians.¹

The Directors of the LMS were usually merchants or ministers of religion, whilst their patrons included the gentry. The missionaries themselves, however, came from the lower middle class or working class and were often poorly educated.² Their missionary zeal was influenced by their belief in the significance of the times they lived in, and the need to reach the 'heathen' before the ushering in of the millenium age. Events such as the French Revolution were interpreted as conflicts between good and evil, progress and decay. The millenial beliefs coloured the whole missionary movement.

LMS emissaries were sent to Tahiti, the Marquesas and Tonga. Only the Tahitian mission survived although it was abandoned in 1808. The Reverend Samuel Marsden re-established the mission in 1811.³

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² Gunson, Messengers of Grace, 1-31

In America, missionary zeal was influenced by events in England but was also subject to its own religious tradition and events peculiar to America such as the American War of Independence. New England Puritanism, which since the seventeenth century had exercised a pervasive influence in Northern America, reasserted its role after the War for Independence against Great Britain. American society witnessed rapid change from this time on and the Puritan movement took some control in the reordering and reorganizing of America. The nineteenth century saw a wave of republican 'virtue' sweep the United States, with many viewing the recent War for Independence as a separation from the vice of Europe. An increasing number of Americans saw 'virtue' as the key to the maintenance of a successful state. Protestant leaders set up Sunday schools, orphanages, asylums for the deaf and societies for the suppression of vice. This was all aligned with Yankee ideals of law and order, productivity and the general ordering and improvement of society. Lynam Beecher's sermon of 1812 inaugurating the Connecticut Society for the Reformation of Morals and Suppression of Vice dwelt on the uniqueness of the American people. It was not, he believed, that they were inherently more 'virtuous' than other people but their 'state of society', with its accompanying arrangement of habits, laws, customs and


institutions, set American society apart from others. Most of this 'arrangement' emanated from New England. By mid-century the Reverend Samuel Damon could claim:

New England cannot be shut out in the cold, or Plymouth Rock blown up. New England principles are readily permeating all portions of the Northern American continent and controlling the destiny of the Western world.

Historians have related the rise of 'benevolence' in Congregationalism to the social upheaval which convulsed New England as the nineteenth century began. Community stability declined as individuals and various interest groups expressed their own views but the Federalists, to which Congregationalists adhered, argued for the maintenance of a stratified society. Thomas Jefferson, in contrast, reasoned that the will of the majority, the common people, must prevail, although all were to work 'in common efforts for the common good'. Jefferson came to office in 1800, when the West had been opened and families had emigrated there in quest of a better life. Meanwhile, in the East, manufacture increased, supplanting the agricultural mode of living. New ideas abounded in every aspect of life. Unitarianism and Deism challenged the orthodoxy of Congregationalism whose clergy by now had lost their security in tenure. Congregationalists perceived disorder in society and attempted to bring in tighter controls.

So although the 'benevolence' movement within American Protestantism needs to be seen as a humanitarian and progressive one, the components which made it less compromising and more rigid cannot be ignored. The quest for

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7 Samuel Damon, *Puritan Missions in the Pacific: A Discourse delivered at Honolulu, on the Anniversary of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association, Sabbath evening, June 17, 1866*, Honolulu, 1866, 23.

8 Scott, *Watchmen on the Walls of Zion*, 45-74, 108-120; see also Banner, 'Religious Benevolence as Social Control', 23-42.
social intervention led to a more prescriptive approach in which a host of activities were banned such as alcohol and tobacco. Gone were the days when a cleric could enjoy a 'drink'. Puritanism, in some aspects, became more puritanical than it had been in the seventeenth century. The quest for 'virtue' became all-consuming in the nineteenth century. There were other modifications. Although still persisting in the belief that man was totally depraved from conception, there was less emphasis on predestination and a turning to revivalism as in England. Man, after all, could play a part in his own and others' salvation. This became the whole rationale for the mission movement. Also as in England, American Congregationalists, who formed the dominant religion in New England, firmly believed in the imminent arrival of the millenial age.

It was within this atmosphere that the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was formed in 1810. There were salient differences between the ABCFM and the LMS. The latter was broader in its intake of Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians. The ABCFM was almost strictly Congregationalist. Yet the ABCFM missionaries were far better educated than the missionaries of the LMS.

In 1812 the first ABCFM overseas mission was sent to India and Ceylon. A mission to the North American Indians was later established before attention was turned to the Sandwich Islands, or Hawaii as it was to be later known. On 23 October 1819 two graduates of Andover Theological Seminary, Hiram Bingham Snr. and Asa Thurston, boarded the Thaddeus along with their wives and sailed to Hawaii. They were accompanied by two teachers, a physician, a printer and a farmer, the accompanying wives
and three Hawaiians. Bingham was to become unofficial leader of the mission.

In 1820, the ABCFM missionary band arrived at Honolulu. Prior to the ABCFM arrival there had been decades of white contact in the islands which had led to a questioning of Hawaiian values and beliefs. Political centralization had already been achieved by Kamehameha, head chief of the Island of Hawaii. He had subjugated the head chiefs of the remaining islands of the group and, along with the petty chiefs, regarded them as within his sphere of influence. With the death of Kamehameha in May of 1819, his son Liholiho was proclaimed paramount chief. Liholiho was immediately requested to break the *kapu* by his mother, who, in turn, had been influenced by Kamehameha. The young successor finally agreed to do so. The breaking of the *kapu* led to the secularization of the state by guaranteeing hereditary succession and relinquishing the need for the blessing of the priests. The priesthood had lost its major function. The political structure was stabilized.  

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10 The *kapu* system has been spoken of as a 'system of a religious law'. This particular system originated from the distinction between that which was sacred or divine and that which was common or earthly, between male and female. In practice the system consisted mainly of a multitude of prohibitions, and set up penalties for violation of the rules.

The missionaries blessed Providence on the timing of their mission and quickly set about to make the most of a favourable situation. Bingham was not deceived into thinking that the religious system had been completely overthrown, realizing that the common people still retained their worship. Nor did the secular motives for the overthrow of the kapu system escape him. From the outset the missionaries sought to influence and 'convert' those of rank and power who were in a position to persuade their followers to emulate them. The missionaries offered learning, the art of reading and writing, and clothes, all of which delighted the Hawaiians. As early as 1823, schools for the chiefs were set up. Nearly every influential chief was to join a mission church while the petty chiefs, bereft of power since the breaking of the kapu, assiduously opposed the new movement.¹¹ In 1828 a 'work of grace' began in the islands of Oahu, Hawaii and Maui.

From 1836 to 1840 a religious phenomenon was unleashed which made the 'work of grace' of 1828 pale in comparison. Congregations increased until 2,000, 4,000 and even 5,000 assembled. In the autumn of 1838, a congregation of at least 10,000 assembled on the western shore of Hawaii to hear the gospel being preached. At Hilo on Hawaii, the Reverend Titus Coan baptized 1,705 on the first Sunday of July in 1838. Bingham preached regularly every Sunday to a congregation of 3,000. Missionaries had preached the fearful consequences of sin; exhorters had gone from house to house praying and speaking further on this danger. It was not long before hysteria swept the islands. By the end of the revival 22,297 new church members had been

admitted. Statistics, however, cannot be interpreted as evidence that the missionary enterprise had achieved everything it claimed. Hawaiian society was not as radically altered by the missionaries as they thought. But the perceived success of the mission served as an example to later ABCFM missionaries in the Pacific. The Hawaiian experience became both a model of and a model for success in missionary enterprise.

The distressed economic conditions facing the United States by the late 1830s meant that financial assistance to Hawaii was severely curtailed. The LMS, not facing the same problems, was launching into new areas. A base was established at Samoa and an attempt to do likewise at the unresponsive Marquesas. The Wesleyans entered Tonga and Fiji in the 1830s. The end of the decade was marred by the clubbing to death of LMS missionary the Reverend John Williams, on 20 November 1839 at Erromanga in present-day Vanuatu. The missionaries confronted a somewhat different scene in Melanesia from the one they had encountered in Polynesia. In Polynesia there were always stratified societies with identifiable chiefs. This was not always the case in Melanesia. In the Solomons and the New Hebrides social rank depended on individual initiatives, the accumulation of wealth and prowess in warfare. Social rank was achieved rather than ascribed. In 1845, Marist Brothers were killed in the Solomon Islands. Meanwhile,

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Bishop George Augustus Selwyn founded his Anglican Melanesian Mission. The LMS was already in Papua and the Wesleyans in New Britain.  

This brief geographical overview of Protestant Christian mission contact across the Pacific needs to be counterbalanced by a historical survey of the various developments in mission thinking over the period so that the ABCFM mission to the Gilberts in 1857 can be placed in context. The religion of the early English missionaries has been described as 'robust' by Dr Gunson. They were contemptuous of ecclesiastical authority but still accepted a hierarchical view of life. They were unencumbered by social values arising, in part, from the humanitarian movement.

The later Protestant missionaries represented a different tone altogether. Evangelicalism was linked to the humanitarian movement afoot in the 1830s both in England and America. It also owed much to utilitarianism. Time was economized, sobriety introduced, the concept of self-help stressed. The prescriptive approach was stressed. In contrast to Evangelicals of this type, Tractarian Anglicans were more tolerant. In Melanesia, they did not issue blanket prohibitions against tobacco, traditional dancing or betel-nut chewing. Customs which appeared harmless were actually encouraged.

In the later decades of the nineteenth century, another type of Evangelicalism permeated the Pacific. It was concerned with faith and

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social justice, lashing out at labour recruiters and traders alike, although these views were later modified. These missionaries became even more fixed in their attitudes on alcohol and tobacco. Alongside this brand of Evangelicalism were the Liberal Evangelicals who were opposed to both Calvinists and Tractarians. It was adherents of the Liberal Evangelicalism who were concerned with understanding the societies to which they were sent as missionaries. Many of the LMS and Wesleyan missionaries received honorary doctorates for their ethnological work. They espoused Social Darwinism without qualms. Christian Scientists, another offshoot of Liberal Evangelicalism, turned to practical Christianity rather than doctrinal clarity and the saving of souls. After 1890, over 100 industrial schools were established in the Pacific.15

The above survey represents only broad movements. Nor does it include the crucial part played by Islander missionaries who developed their own mission beliefs and tactics. The first Christian Islander envoys were the Tahitians who went to Hawaii and Tonga. The Tongans later went to Samoa. In turn, Samoans, along with Tongans and Rarotongans, were sent to New Caledonia, the Loyalty Islands and other parts of Melanesia including Fiji. Islander missionaries laid the groundwork before the coming of white missionaries. Cook Islanders tended to be the shock troops while the Samoans were the occupiers and stabilizers. In the 1850s Hawaiians went to Micronesia and the Marquesas. In the late 1860s and 1870s, Fijians were in New Guinea and along with Tongans and Samoans in the western Solomons.

15 Gunson, 'Victorian Christianity in the South Seas', passim. Anglican and LMS missionaries alike were to be found among the Christian Scientists. Compare the Reverend James Egan Moulton of Tonga, a Liberal Evangelist, with the Reverend John C. Paton on Tanna, Vanuatu.
Samoans also served as missionaries in the Ellice Islands and later in the southern Gilberts. The Europeans were often only the supervisors and policy-makers. Islanders like the Samoans eventually wrested this power from them and developed their own identity. This never really happened for the Hawaiian missionaries.

In the early 1850s the ABCFM turned its attention to Micronesia. The native Hawaiians were to provide some of the manpower for the new missions. These missions were to be jointly run by the ABCFM to whom American missionaries belonged and the Hawaiian Mission Society (HMS) which would represent the native Hawaiian workers. This latter body was founded in 1852. Ten years later the ABCFM formally withdrew from Hawaii, when the HMS took the new name of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association (HEA). The HMS was obliged to live up to its name and truly be a missionizing society; its field was to be the Marquesas and Micronesia. There, members of the new society would perform 'the same good work as in the Sandwich Islands'. They would 'direct and systemize the native elements, giving form to society and government ... and thus stay the progress of disease and decay'.

The first missionary tour to Micronesia took place in 1852. Aboard the Caroline were the offspring of missionaries to Hawaii who were now themselves missionaries. These included the Reverends Benjamin Snow, Albert Sturges, John and Luther Gulick along with their wives. Five Hawaiians, including two married couples, accompanied the missionaries as assistants.

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17 Rufus Anderson, *History of the Sandwich Islands Mission*, London, 1872, 333-48; see Polynesia, June 10, 1858, cited in American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Papers, 1852-1929 (hereinafter cited as ABCFM Papers), reel 1. In 1852 the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society was also formed from among the children of the American missionaries to Hawaii with the express purpose of collecting funds to send one of their members, the Reverend Luther Gulick, to Micronesia and there support him.

18 *The Friend*, 1, August 1852, 26.
On 5 August 1852, the mission ship lay at anchor off Butaritari. The next day the missionaries visited the head village of Butaritari 'for the purpose of seeing the King'. The sight which greeted them was a boy of fourteen dressed in pantaloons and shirt 'both of which were quite dirty', seated on a small mat-covered platform in a Gilbertese house crowded with spectators. The 'boy-king' was surrounded by chiefs, the principal ones of whom, 'large men of dignified appearance, ... silent and reserved', were his four uncles. The missionaries saluted and shook hands with the 'king' and gave him presents of both an English and a Hawaiian Bible along with other Hawaiian books including a hymn book. A red blanket completed the offering. Then the letter from Kamehameha III to the 'kings' of Micronesia was brought out and translated by Richard Randell, resident trader.

He interpreted for the missionaries as best he could. However, missionary concepts were not easily translated into the Gilbertese language. The missionaries spoke of the 'word of God'; Randell interpreted this as 'spirit talk'. The Butaritari Islanders would have readily believed that the God of which the missionaries spoke was therefore another Anti or spirit, which every family had in the Gilbert Islands, and which were known to 'speak' or communicate with their adherents by whistling. The Anti of the missionaries actually spoke. In the Gilbert Islands there were both strong and weak Anti, the former demanding worship on pain of punishment. Which type was that of the missionaries? How much power did He have?

Luther Gulick found the Butaritari Islanders to be 'an active, intelligent race with nothing in their intellectual parts to deter the missionaries from attempting their civilization'. He went on to add that even their language, 'though of course destitute of innumerable terms for material

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objects they have never seen, is not found more deficient as a vehicle for moral truths than the mass of uncultivated dialects'. He further stipulated that it was 'probably more full in the necessary terms than many'.

But Dr Luther Gulick, along with the Reverend Albert Sturges, was to settle on Ponape. There they were to be assisted by the Hawaiians, Berita Kaaikaula and his wife Debora. Ponape was divided into independent wehi or districts. These were U, Net, Sokos in the north and Kiti and Metalanim in the south. The highest chief in each district was the Nanmariki who exercised final authority in all matters pertaining to his district. The Nanakin was the chief who acted as intermediary between the Nanmariki and the people. The missionaries first called at Metalanim before proceeding to Kiti where they met the young Nanakin whom they regarded as a powerful leader who would guarantee their protection. His personal authority over the people of Kiti was far greater than that of the aged Nanmariki. In Metalanim, the three most influential chiefs were engaged in constant rivalry and so Kiti was chosen as the most suitable missionary base.

The missionary schooner Caroline had earlier called on Kosrae. At Kosrae, a far less liquid and more stratified society than Ponape, the missionaries had called on the High Chief, King George. He decided to

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20 Luther Gulick, 'Lectures on Micronesia', Hawaiian Historical Society Annual Reports, 52nd Report, 1943, 7-56.

accept the Reverend Benjamin Snow, his wife Lydia and the Hawaiian couple Daniel Opunui and Doreka his wife. Hence, by 1852, two missions had been established by the ABCFM in Micronesia. The following year, the layman James Bicknell, grand-nephew of Henry Bicknell of the LMS, was sent to the Marquesas by the ABCFM. He was to supervise the eight Hawaiian families sent there. Bicknell stayed till 1861 after which the Hawaiians took over the mission. Here, the mission was hampered by both the indifference of the Marquesans and the endemic warfare.  

In 1855 another ABCFM missionary, the Reverend Dr. George Pierson, was sent to explore the possibility of establishing another missionary base in Micronesia. He availed himself of the offer of a friendly whaler-trader, Captain Ichabod Handy, to take him aboard the Belle as he cruised through the Marshall and Gilbert Islands. At the Marshalls, Pierson stopped off at Ailinglapalap where he met the high chief Kaibuke who promised his personal protection to the missionaries if they should settle there. Pierson also travelled through the Gilberts group.  

Along with Pierson was the Hawaiian missionary helper Kanoa who came with his wife Kahola and their eighteen-month-old child. There was little communication between missionary and helper; Pierson spoke no Hawaiian, Kanoa knew no English. Yet Kanoa seemed to be able to communicate with the Gilbertese. Pierson noted his 'remarkable facility [in] making himself understood'. He also noted that Kanoa had 'a very quiet Christian spirit'. The Gilbertese had taken 'a great interest in Kanoa and his wife' and Pierson believed the Islanders to be impressed 'to see one like themselves

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so intelligent and *nearly equal to white man* [emphasis added]. Pierson told the Gilbertese that forty years ago the Hawaiians were 'ignorant like themselves and that the change had been brought by Missionaries'. They, the Gilbertese, could also improve. Meanwhile Kanoa 'spent much of his time learning the native language and imparting some instruction'. Pierson was also impressed by the Gilbertese. After visiting Beru in the south he reasoned that 'from the appearance and conduct of the natives' they were 'capable of being highly cultivated'. The Islanders there indicated the presence 'of natural capacity beyond what might be expected in a people who are in the lowest ranks of ignorance and barbarism'. He likewise found the people of Abaiang 'very fine looking, their foreheads high; courteous, pleasing and intelligent'.

In 1857, the same year that the Gilbert Islands mission was established, Pierson returned to the Marshalls with the Reverend Edward Doane. They settled at Ebon, the home of Kaibuke, who wielded power over all the islands in the southern part of the Ralik chain. In the previous fifteen years, Kaibuke had extended his authority beyond these islands. Pierson and Doane were both mid-Westerners. Their stay in the Marshalls was short. Pierson left in the first year because of ill-health and never returned. Doane's wife died in the same year and Doane did not return to the Marshalls till 1865 when he brought his second wife.

Everywhere the ABCFM went, their missionaries looked to strong chiefs on whom they could rely. The later ABCFM missionaries in Hawaii had done likewise. The early LMS Directors had looked to strong chiefs for support

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24 George Pierson, 'Journal of a Voyage from the Sandwich Islands through the Kingsmill and Mulgrave Islands, to Strong's Island in the Caroline group', 1855, ABCFM Papers, reel 2.

in missionary activity in Tahiti, the Wesleyans in Tonga. So, it was not surprising that Hiram Bingham Jr. would follow the same policy when he came to the Gilberts in 1857. But whereas in the Marshalls, Ponape and Kosrae strong chiefs existed, on Abaiang, where Bingham was to settle, they did not. Bingham was to be hampered, as had been the LMS Directors years earlier in their consideration of Tahiti, by clinging to a belief that a strong power existed on an island. At Tahiti in 1815, conditions changed when Pomare secured his position and the missionaries took advantage of this. But on Abaiang and neighbouring Tarawa, where warfare was endemic as it was in the Marquesas, no such strong power emerged. The mission could not move forward. Yet Bingham persisted in clinging to the Hawaiian model of running a mission. In contrast, Snow repudiated this model and, on both Kosrae and later in the Marshalls where he was to settle, leaned towards championing the cause of the common people. He came to believe that a mission could flourish on their backing alone. In this matter of missionary approach and other matters, Bingham was to reveal himself as conservative and inflexible in comparison with his contemporary ABCFM missionaries in Micronesia.


27 The Directors of the LMS had believed that there was a powerful chief Tu (Pomare) on the Island of Tahiti on whom the missionaries could rely. It was later revealed that Pomare’s position in Tahitian society was tenuous; he competed with other chiefs for supremacy. British misconceptions about the power of the Pomare line proved to be the gravest problem in the first eighteen years of the mission. The Reverend John Geddie did the same on Aneityum, Vanuatu; Matthew Spriggs, 'A school in every district: the cultural geography of conversion on Aneityum, Southern Vanuatu', *JPH*, 20 (1), January 1985, 23-42.

It was not till 1815 that Pomare secured his position. His adoption of a new strategy of warfare, in which cannon was used, helped him to defeat his competitors. The missionaries took advantage of the stabilized situation and devised laws to remould Tahitian society and also increase their own influence. Pomare, who had always favoured the missionaries, believing that their presence assisted in securing a paramount position, accepted missionary advice. See Garnett, *To Live Among the Stars*, 30-5.
Events in Bingham's early life, his childhood socialization, his boyhood in America and his youth at Yale, shaped his attitude to God, the world and other people. These attitudes, in turn, affected his view on missionary work. Bingham came to the Gilbert Islands not only with a distinct missionary strategy based on mission experience in Hawaii, but also with a particular Christian philosophy arising from his personal life experience. Bingham conceptualized Christianity in a universal form which he believed could be transplanted to any society. The Islanders he came to, however, lived by their own value system which was incompatible with Bingham's ideology.
On 16 August 1835, a mother living in Honolulu wrote with great concern of her four-year-old son:

His intellect is clear - his apprehension quick - his disposition affectionate, more than ordinarily so. But his necessities, O how many! His will is not in subjection - he is stout-hearted - will not indeed maintain a contest long - but in almost everything, as for the first moment, at least... Some way or plan of his own to be met by us uniformly before he can come into our wishes - He is disposed to be fretful, by no means of a quiet and contented spirit having the talent of amusing and employing himself quietly and pleasantly...

In some things, he has somewhat courage and boldness - will climb to the ridge pole where the straw is off of one of the highest of the native houses - in other things is the veriest baby. The habit of crying when not pleased is to say the least, to us his parents, very troublesome... Indeed his habits are many of them bad ones... I fail, I do sadly fail of being to him what I ought to be. My heart is heavy within me in view of it. My soul longs to be enabled to take him just as he is to the blessed Saviour, and beg his help...

The boy was Hiram Bingham Jr., who was to grow up to head the Protestant mission to the Gilbert Islands twenty-two years later in 1857. We are told that the young Bingham had an affectionate nature, was very self-willed, needed an audience, was somewhat intrepid but also a 'cry-baby'. The dominant aspect of his character appeared to be his need of the attention of others. Others were important to him; he was not an inner-directed person. The mother’s diagnosis of her son's character proved to be a perspicacious one. Bingham Jr. was to demonstrate a rigid determination to

1 Sybil Bingham, 'Character of Hiram Bingham, Jr.', Bingham Family Papers, Honolulu (hereinafter cited as BFPH), Box 2.
have his own way throughout his life, in his dealings with his missionary father, the missionary Board and indeed all with whom he came into contact.

The written portrait reveals even more. It provides an insight into the relationship, or lack thereof, between mother and son. Sybil Bingham, wife of one of the first missionaries to Hawaii, did not approve of her son. In her eyes, he did not reach the mark and it is difficult to believe that this lack of approval was not realized by the growing child. The mother's attitude was to have broad ramifications. For the rest of his life, Bingham Jr. craved attention, approval, commendation and gratitude. Reading through his life's correspondence, one is struck by his recurring need for constant expression and demonstration of love and commendation.

The irony was that he became head of a mission which from a missionary point of view was a failure. Bingham Jr. felt he never received approval from the missionary Board despite his sufferings and his conscientious performance of duties. When he created a written language for the Gilbertese, however, he received adulation from that secular world which he had rejected as a sacrifice to God.

Bingham Jr. was born in Honolulu on 16 August 1831. As a young child he lived with his family in Manoa Valley, a particularly lush and beautiful section of Honolulu. His father, Bingham Snr., had been among the first company of missionaries to Hawaii and had emerged as the unofficial leading spokesman. His stubborn, belligerent manner had offended his peers on many an occasion. Yet although fellow missionary workers resented his domination, a young mission needed the skills of leadership and organization which Bingham Snr. possessed.\(^2\) He soon attained a position of influence

with the royal family and chiefs of Hawaii. His relationship of influence over the chiefs, however, was one of necessity according to Bingham Snr. It was merely a means to an end for it was the ordinary Hawaiians who captured his concern.

For the first nine years of his life, Bingham Jr. lived in Honolulu along with his parents and sisters. It was an insular life for, as was usual for missionary children, association with Hawaiian children was forbidden. Hence Bingham never learnt Hawaiian in Hawaii. Still, there were four sisters; Sophia was eleven years his senior; Lucy and Elizabeth were five and two years older than him respectively; Lydia was three years younger. Bingham Jr., even as a four-year-old, craved the company of his sisters. It may be thought that they took over the role of 'mother'. His relationship with his sisters, however, grew to be one of his protection over them, and Bingham Jr. was attracted most to his youngest sister, Lydia. The lack of a relationship with his mother inclined the young Bingham to turn more readily to his father.

Despite his belligerent manner, Bingham Snr. was a loving parent who won the love and admiration of his children. Bingham Snr. had two personalities, one for the public and one for his family and others dear to him. He was a directive rather than a stern father and too intelligent to break the individual wills of his children; rather he guided them. He made the first doll in Hawaii for his eldest daughter and played with all his children. He was not just the austere preacher. The young Bingham must have been attracted also to the only other male figure in the household, but it went far beyond this. The father offered his son love and approval in return for certain desired actions. Bingham would never satisfy his mother's aspirations for his spirituality. Spiritual goals were set far more sternly by the mother than the father. The mother questioned motivations; the father looked to action. Bingham therefore learnt from his father that love

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3 Miller, Fathers and Sons, 61; Miscellaneous item, BFPH, box 14.
was a reward for services rendered. One could earn another's love. It was not free-flowing or automatic; Bingham Jr. knew that from his mother.

Bingham Jr., however, was precious to his father. Two other children, who would have been Bingham Jr.'s brothers, had died within a year of their birth. Bingham Jr. was the only surviving son. He became his father's 'Isaac', his sacrifice to God. Bingham Snr. clearly outlined a course of action through which his son could earn commendation and love, the very needs of the son. Bingham Snr. was determined that his son would become a missionary, his successor. Even as a baby, he was put into the arms of the Queen of Hawaii, Kaahumanu, and dedicated to Hawaii as a missionary. So it was not just that the father was important to the son in providing a loving, strong and directive personality amidst a feminine household. The son was essential to the father's self-image. A symbiotic relationship developed. It was not surprising that the dream of the father would become the reality for the son. It was not that Bingham Jr. would not have other inclinations. He would, but these would become fused with his role as missionary. He could not disappoint his father; he needed his approval.

Whilst in Honolulu, the Binghams enjoyed the patronage of the Hawaiian royal household. Queen Kaahumanu became both Sybil Bingham's friend and patron. Many people, including those of the royal household, the missionary congregations and missionary colleagues, looked up to the Binghams regardless of whether they liked them or not. The Binghams were important. The 'great revival' occurred in Hawaii in the mid-thirties when Bingham Jr. was between five and eight years old. It was during this very impressionistic

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4 A.M. Bingham, 'Sybil's Bones', 13; Snow to Gulick, 4 August 1866, Micronesian Mission - HEA Papers, Honolulu (hereinafter cited as MM-HEA).
5 Hiram Bingham, 'Address at Kawaiahao Church, August 16, 1903', Children of the Mission Manuscripts, Honolulu (hereinafter cited as CMM).
6 A.M. Bingham, 'Sybil's Bones', 30.
stage that Bingham Jr. perceived his father as an important figure in the
mission preaching to crowds of up to 3,000. In addition, large numbers of
'inquirers' flocked to the Bingham premises 'early in the morning, coming to
ask what they must do to be saved'. The influence of these early years was
powerful. Ultimately, the relationships Bingham Jr. shared with his father
and sisters in his early childhood and his perceptions of the family's place
in Honolulu were consequential for his later contacts in life - his missionary
colleagues, his parishioners and his Hawaiian associates. Even his view of
a relationship with God was moulded by early experience entwined with future
circumstances.

The mood and the goals of the Hawaiian mission were to change. It was
forced to dispense with the dream of modelling Hawaii according to the ideals
of Puritan New Englanders. Given the additional influences in Hawaii of
European speculators, Anglican priests and French Catholics, adaptation,
conciliation and compromise were needed. Bingham Snr. could not so easily
adapt his personality to meet new conditions. He was still the leader and
the agitator. During the revival of the late 1830s, the remoter areas of the
islands were reached and new mission leaders, such as the Reverend Titus Coan,
came to the fore. These young personalities came with fresh ideas emanating
from America as to the best means of reaching the hearts of a people and of
running a mission. Bingham Snr.'s leadership, once needed but often
resented, could finally be rejected. At the same time, Sybil Bingham's
health was fast deteriorating with the advance of tuberculosis. A visit to
the United States was planned with the hope that Bingham's ailing wife would
recover. On 3 August 1840, the Binghams left Honolulu. Bingham Snr. would
never be allowed back. The missionaries had decided that he was

7 Bingham, 'Address at Kawaiahaoo Church', CMM.
8 Miller, Fathers and Sons, 54-5.
too enthusiastic and too abrasive, tending to deal with situations directly
instead of patiently and circumspectly.

Bingham Jr. recalled the day the Binghams left Honolulu with pride. 
Although many white missionaries sighed with relief at the Binghams' 
departure, this did not interfere with the demonstration of affection for the 
missionary couple on the part of Hawaiian converts and 'inquirers'. Bingham 
Jr. reminisced in later life on that occasion:

I remember how on August 3, 1840 ... multitudes of the members of 
this church [Stone Church of Honolulu] full of love for my dear 
parents, accompanied their dignitary teachers to the wharf to bid 
them good-bye...^9

Bingham Jr. may well have been aware of the hostility building up towards his 
father, yet he also witnessed the attention the congregation gave their 
pastor attesting to his importance. People noticed the Binghams whether 
they liked them or not. Young Bingham Jr. also wanted to be noticed.

At nine years of age, then, there was a sudden break with the solitude 
and peaceful beauty of Manoa Valley. Hiram Bingham Snr., his rapidly 
declining wife Sybil, Hiram Bingham Jr., Elizabeth and Lydia left Honolulu. 
The two eldest sisters had left some time before. Aboard the barque Flora 
on the morning of 26 December 1840, Bingham Jr. read the book of Deuteronomy. 
He later said that 'he was a naughty boy to disrespect his mother so much as 
he had done' and then went on to say that he no longer wished 'to live in 
this world ... but ... go to heaven.'^10 Whether or not the disrespect shown 
to his mother was an isolated example or part of a general pattern we do not 
know. Bingham, however, was never to become close to his mother. On 
arrival at Brooklyn, young Bingham Jr. was sent to a succession of relatives

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9 Bingham, 'Address at Kawaiahao Church', CMM.
10 A.M. Bingham, 'Sybil's Bones', 15.
and schools and so deprived of seeing much of either of his parents or sisters for the next seven years. 11

Bingham Jr. first entered a boarding school in New Haven on 9 February 1841. During the following years, he seemed to miss mostly his father, not his mother, and his Hawaiian homeland. Bingham Jr.'s separation from his family was complete except for correspondence. He kept his father's letters but not those of his mother; or were there any to keep? Sybil Bingham occasionally tacked on postscripts to her husband's letters which revealed a woman scrutinizing her son's soul and finding it wanting. She might have guessed that her son had other inclinations besides that of a religious vocation and would choose the latter for the wrong reasons. 12 At thirteen, Bingham Jr.'s political conscience was emerging. He wrote and told his favourite sister, the lovely Lydia, that he was a strong Whig. The letter went on to disclose his relationship with his father:

How I wished that father was here to go with me [bathing]. Then I could swim out with him and he could help me if I had the cramps and he could also tell me how far I swam. 13

Bingham Jr. still needed his father to guide him and set his parameters, not just in swimming, but in every endeavour. It is not surprising that the young Bingham grew to desire a missionary career; it was his father's wish. It had also been demonstrated in Hawaii as an avenue to the limelight. To follow a missionary course also meant that Bingham Jr. would earn his father's

11 Ibid.; Miller, Fathers and Sons, 4-5.

12 A.M. Bingham, 'Sybil's Bones', 15. Bingham himself doubted his own Christian stance although such doubts were usual during the conversion stage. He wrote to his father on 31 January 1846: 'Oh that I knew I was a Christian. Oh that I was one', BFPH, box 4. Yet earlier, at the age of ten, Bingham had written to his mother on 13 November 1841 revealing his concern about his truly being a Christian and loving Jesus enough - BFPH, box 4.

13 Bingham was most likely referring to the Whig party in America at that time which was a successor of the Republican party which had arisen in opposition to Andrew Jackson's Democratic party. Most of the Northern evangelicals espoused the Republican party. They did not believe in Jackson's popular sovereignty; see Charles Cole, The Social Ideas of the Northern Evangelicals 1826-1860, New York, 1954. Bingham to Lydia, 23 November 1844, BFPH, box 4.
approval and so satisfy his own inner psychological need. Bingham Jr., however, can never be seen as simply the meekly submissive son: later, he would defy his father and, throughout his life, he would defy others including those on the Hawaiian Board of Missions.

Certain themes emerged during the years surrounding the departure from Honolulu. These coloured Bingham Jr.'s attitude to the world and eventually his interpretation of Christianity. The major themes were the dichotomy between poverty and wealth, submission and power. The Binghams had never been wealthy in Honolulu but they had enjoyed both the contact and patronage of the Hawaiian royal family along with the beautiful surroundings of their home in the Manoa Valley. This scene was obliterated on entry into the United States. The Binghams were homeless and almost completely dependent on friends and relatives for clothing and housing, the basics of survival. In America a financial crash occurred in 1837. A spate of commercial failures and a general stagnation of business took place in the spring and summer of that year. However, the 1837 crisis was primarily a banking and commercial phenomenon. The depression of 1839 through to 1843, in contrast, was one of the most economically depressed stages in American history. It was to this economic scenario that the Binghams came.

Bingham Jr. lived with several different relatives in Connecticut before residing in Kingsborough, New York. He later attended a high school in New Haven before entering Williston Academy in Northampton, Massachusetts. 14

Mr. Williston, after whom the Academy was named, took on the role of the Bingham family's benefactor. While his father had been a clergyman, Williston had amassed a fortune in the manufacture of cloth-covered buttons.

He donated large sums of money to the ABCFM. Due to a family connection with Sybil Bingham, he helped the Binghams from the time of their arrival in the United States. As Sybil Bingham became increasingly ill, he issued benevolences to the family. Her death approaching, he found a house for the Binghams so that all the family could live together once more. He also admitted the three younger children into his school.15

From the age of nine, Bingham witnessed his father's fall from a proud position of power, which he had enjoyed in Honolulu, to humility in a bid to gain favours from such benefactors as Williston whose power was based on money. When Harpers, the publisher on whom Bingham Snr. had relied to put out his book *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands* and so contribute to the support of the family, turned him down, he was on the brink of financial disaster. He could only accept an offer from a Hartford printer on the terms that he himself would have to sell 4,000 copies in advance.16 The family fell deeper into debt. Bingham Jr. worked to cancel this deepening debt by helping to sell his father's book.

Bingham Jr. learnt pertinent lessons from this experience. Power lay with political and financial backing. Power and wealth were aligned as were poverty and submission. Those devoid of power needed to humble themselves before the powerful. Power, to which Bingham Jr. was attracted, could be benign if it were used for benevolent purposes in assisting the destitute. Financial debt could only be cancelled either by receiving gratuities from the benevolent wealthy or by working hard to earn money. Gratitude and a willingness to render services accrued to the benefactor who assisted the needy. This mental framework filled out earlier lessons that service deserved a reward and that love itself was a reward for services.


16 Ibid., 11. Bingham was dismissed from the ABCFM in 1846 and published his semi-autobiographical *Sandwich Islands* in 1847. Fifteen years later he received an annuity from friends so that he would not live in poverty - Miller, *Fathers and Sons*, 262.
As Sybil Bingham neared her death from consumption, the Bingham family were gathered, at last, under the one roof. The family reunion was fraught with tension and heartbreak by the imminent death of the mother. Bingham Jr. was sixteen. The psychological outcome of witnessing this death can only be guessed. Bingham was to feel the physical effects of proximity to his mother for in later years he too would suffer from lung trouble.

This ailment was to become an onerous burden for him as it would eventually curtail Bingham Jr.'s liking and need for physical activity. Whilst at high school in New Haven, he had worked on the ships during holidays and loved it. One of his liveliest journals was that of 1852 when, as a man of twenty-one, he sailed aboard the schooner Lamartine. He enjoyed the male company and used to listen enthralled to the sailors' tales of adventures and narrow escapes in far-off places. He worked hard along with everyone else scrubbing down decks and keeping the dog-watch. Bingham never shied away from hard work. His love of ships was to last throughout his life. He liked big ships, ones with three masts, powerful ships to withstand a powerful sea.

Two years prior to his sailing on the Lamartine, he had entered Yale University in 1850. By this time, he had reached his full height of six feet four inches. The liberal arts course at Yale was of four years' duration. In the first three years, the students took Greek, Latin, Mathematics and a smattering of Geography, History, Science, Astronomy, English Expression and Rhetoric. The Senior year concentrated more on Metaphysics, Ethics, Natural Theology and Moral Philosophy. The course was structured 'not to teach that which is peculiar to any one of the professions, but to lay the foundation which is common to them all'.

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Hiram Bingham, 'Journal at Sea, 1852', Bingham Family Papers, Yale University Library (hereinafter cited as BFPY), box 7.
1850s Yale was becoming increasingly conservative. Its identity with the religious life of the country was also waning.

Bingham won first prize for his studies in Astronomy in 1853. At this stage, there was no conflict between science and religion. Charles Darwin did not publish his *Origin of the Species* until 1859. Not until the following year did public debate erupt when on 30 June 1860 Thomas Henry Huxley, defender of Darwinism, confronted Bishop Samuel Wilberforce. By this time, Bingham was far away from America and it is not known if he ever read Darwin.¹⁸

Nor can the particular religious influences Bingham came under while at Yale be verified. It appears, however, that Bingham did not subscribe to the more liberal theology of Horace Bushnell who produced his work on Christian Nurture in 1847. In a reaction against revivals, Bushnell emphasized that the child could be nurtured to Christianity and that conversion was a gradual process. His emphasis was on training; he believed too much was made of the conversion experience. Bushnell's theory of religious education softened the rigid Calvinistic theology which emphasized the sinfulness of man and the need for traumatic repentance. Bingham appeared to adhere to the conservative tradition.¹⁹

At Yale Bingham demonstrated skill not only in academic pursuits but in sporting achievements as well. He paddled a canoe the length of the

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Connecticut River and became the first student to kick a football over the old courthouse on the New Haven green.\textsuperscript{20} These pursuits satisfied not only his sense of adventure but, more importantly, his need for achievement and attention from others. It was also, however, a reflection of the age in general, when a young man was expected to compete and achieve success. At Yale itself, increasing attention was placed on examinations, prizes and rankings.\textsuperscript{21}

Bingham Jr. was nineteen, the usual age, when he underwent the traumatic conversion experience. He was now firmly convinced that he wanted to be a missionary and just as firmly fixed on where he would missionize - Hawaii. The time was approaching when he might need to diverge from his father. He wrote of his dilemma to his elder sister Elizabeth:

Where would you like to have me go as a missionary? What say you of the Stone Church in Honolulu? I wish Father wanted to have me go there, and my mind would be settled immediately. I shall probably go just where he would like to have me labour, even to the very city, for I have such a love for him ...\textsuperscript{22}

This passage points to the crux of Bingham's problem. At nineteen, Bingham was no longer an adolescent yet the major problems of adolescence still beset him. The psychologist Erik Erikson sees the crisis of adolescence as the inability to settle on an occupational identity which can greatly disturb young people and lead to identity diffusion. Late adolescents are found with continued identity diffusion concerning their own potentialities and their prospective place within their society. Bingham was among this group. Erikson further sees the phase of adolescence, and

\textsuperscript{20} A.M. Bingham, 'Sybil's Bones', 21.


\textsuperscript{22} Bingham to Elizabeth, 25 March 1850, BFPH, box 4.
the development task within it, as the most complex in life - the central stage of the development crisis. Lack of resolution at this stage can lead to development crises at later stages in life.\textsuperscript{23}

Bingham went on to disclose to Elizabeth why he wanted to labour in Hawaii. It was not simply that he missed Hawaii and wanted to return to the scene of his childhood. Certainly it was not because he lacked any sense of adventure, as has been suggested by Dr Miller.\textsuperscript{24} Bingham explained the reason in his own words to Elizabeth:

\begin{quote}
Now without bragging, I hope you will allow me to say that if I ever am a graduate of Yale, and come out a good scholar, it will be a pity if I cannot make my influence tell on the world. You must know that not many years will elapse before Honolulu will be one of the most important ports in the world, and I think that there I can have the opportunity for exerting my influence for good to the greatest extent.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

Bingham yearned to make an impact on the world, but he wanted power for the employment of 'good'.

The young Bingham genuinely believed that Hawaii was to become an important place in the world. At Yale, he had written a paper entitled 'The Civilization and Destiny of the Sandwich Islands' which had been presented in July 1853, the year he had graduated with a Master's degree. In this paper he revealed his visionary idealism and early leanings to philanthropy. He argued that 'because a nation does not immediately and entirely change its costume, its style of architecture and its own peculiar manner of life, for the Broadcloths of a Parisian Shop, the marble palaces of Broadway & the ceremonies of an English Court', it was no reason to call that nation barbaric. He further argued that the Hawaiian Islands had adopted the externals of civilization and had become 'a living example of the power and effect of Christian Civilization'. He asserted that:


\textsuperscript{24} Miller, \textit{Fathers and Sons}, 76.

\textsuperscript{25} Bingham to Elizabeth, 25 March 2850, BFPH, box 4.
No nation ever made more rapid strides in adapting the physical as well as moral and intellectual characteristics of civilization. The present appearance of the Hawaiian parliament would do credit to any legislative body. The Sabbath attire of a native congregation would become any New England church ... Their plains and valleys, dotted with the numerous dwellings with the European & American style, ... the farstretching plantations of sugar cane, the sound of the sugar mill, the steam of the boilers, their well made roads & bridges, ... all these would not so much remind a traveller of a heathen land, as the abode of civilized people. It is not without reason that the Hawaiian nation claim for themselves a rank among the civilized of the earth.²⁶

Bingham therefore acclaimed Hawaii's rapid westernization which, in his mind, was synonymous with progress. Hawaii's destiny was to continue on its course of progress and become 'a central light, the Celestial rays of which shall dispel the darkness of every island whose sands are trod by Polynesian sons.' Further, Bingham Jr. celebrated the commercial development of Hawaii. Hawaiians were 'to hold with honour to themselves that relation to the commerce of the world which their situation commands so placed on the great Western thorough fare ...', but above all, Bingham Jr. believed that Hawaii would stand 'an abiding monument of the power of the gospel ... and a precious diadem of American Philanthropy.'²⁷ The young Bingham had witnessed individual philanthropy; now he was interested in national philanthropy.

In his writings to his sister Lydia and in his paper at Yale on the Sandwich Islands, Bingham was outlining his Dream. He wanted to return to his childhood home but in a particular capacity. The psychologist Daniel Levinson, whose work is an extension of Erikson's, is largely interested in the occupational identity of men from their adolescence through to their late adulthood. Levinson sees the problem of choice of occupation extending from adolescence to the early adult transition or novice phase between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two. It is during

²⁶ Bingham, 'The Civilization and Destiny of the Sandwich Islands', July 1852, BFPH, box 4.
²⁷ Ibid.
this phase that the Dream is formed. The Dream is a vague sense of self in an adult world. It has the quality of a vision. A young man has the development task of rendering the Dream with greater definition and finding a means to live it out in his life structure. Many young men develop a conflict between a life direction expressing the Dream and another that is quite different. A man may be pushed in the latter direction by his parents or by external constraints. He may therefore adopt an occupation which does not reflect his true self. Levinson argues that those who betray the Dream deal with the consequences later in life.\textsuperscript{28}

Bingham had other problems. At Yale he fell in love with a beautiful and wealthy young lady named Mary Hunt. To Lydia, he confided that he truly loved Mary and was broken-hearted that she was 'so much prejudiced against becoming a missionary wife'. Time, he hoped, would heal 'the deep, deep wound'. He was much affected by this rejection of himself and his proposal and further confided to Lydia:

I sometimes feel almost ready to say, that I will, hereafter forever shift my heart up in its own little self, and live by myself, alone, through life, with none but a sister's heart to which I give vent to my feelings.\textsuperscript{29}

To a certain extent, this is what he did. His former affectionate nature was subdued. From there on, he did not readily reach out to others. His public image evidenced tact rather than warmth, yet his private personality still yearned for demonstrations of deep affection. It was while at Yale that Bingham Jr. became closer to his sisters. He was becoming his own man and ceasing to rely on his father. His relationship with his sisters cannot be seen as one of dependency. Rather, he took the role of chief advisor and protector. Five months after suffering a 'broken heart' he wrote to his elder sister Elizabeth and told her that if her love for her

\textsuperscript{28} Levinson, \textit{The Seasons of a Man's Life}, 90-5.

\textsuperscript{29} Bingham to Lydia, 1 February 1851, BFPH, box 4.
friend was 'steady and constant', then she should make up her mind to go to China with this friend as his wife.\textsuperscript{30}

At the end of his final year at Yale, many of his classmates wrote him notes of farewell. A perusal of these reveals that Bingham was regarded with both fondness and respect. He was remembered for his insistence on early rises but also for his generosity in sharing his time and love of sailing with others. That Bingham had well advertised his intention to serve a missionary career in Hawaii is also evident from the notes of farewell. James Whiton wrote to Bingham: 'I have "cut you out" as they say, Dear Bingham, for the right hand man of Rex Kame-hami-eha who very appropriately rules the Sandwich Islands.' In a lighter and more ignorant vein Theodore Weston wrote: 'I shall be delighted to hear of your good fortune and your success in persuading the Sandwich Islanders to eat roast-beef instead of "boiled clergyman".' Most of the notes were far more serious. Bingham was obviously expected to achieve something of merit in the world. As Jack Smith put it: 'If you do not do something in the world, I shall die a false prophet.'\textsuperscript{31}

Charles Lewis wished Bingham '... fame, wealth and all sorts of happiness'. This, in fact, was what Bingham really wanted. His Dream of returning to Honolulu to exert his influence for good and to work alongside the royal family was already a modification of other inclinations. Unlike Bingham, few graduates of Yale in the 1850s turned to the ministry as a career. Instead they looked to law and commerce.\textsuperscript{32} The period between 1815 and 1860 saw a tremendous growth in national wealth. Following the financial crisis of 1837 through to 1843, phenomenal growth took place. The West had been opened up, immigrant arrivals increased, gold was

\textsuperscript{30} Bingham to Elizabeth, 1 June 1851, BFPH, box 4.

\textsuperscript{31} Yale College, Hiram Bingham's Senior Class Album, Yale Publications Collection Y671.853bi.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.; Miller, Fathers and Sons, 70.
discovered in 1848, factory production rose, foreign trade expanded and the railroads and general communication developed. The poor did not benefit but the entrepreneurial group increased its share of national benefits. Risks were great and failures occurred. But the number of wealthy men increased greatly between 1815 and 1860. By 1849 there were fourteen millionaires in New York. 33

The pursuit of wealth permeated American society. The revivalists, who had been extending across the country up to 1840, felt their impulse grinding to a halt in the face of the mercantile ethic. 34 Bingham was not immune to this. Dr Miller's contention that Bingham 'could not envision any other future for himself than the one his parents had outlined at his birth' is, as I hope to show, off the mark. 35

On graduation from Yale, Bingham Jr. took control of Northampton High School in Massachusetts. To his sister he boasted that he 'ran the school all by [himself] with the dignity and fatherly care of a man of sixty'. 36 Bingham Jr. perceived himself as a protector. He further disclosed that he won the attention of his students, particularly the girls, who gave him peaches and flowers which he was happy to accept. This seems to suggest that he had far greater ease in establishing himself with the female rather than the male sections of his class. However, his relationship with his female students may well have been akin to that with his sisters. He could have taken a paternal, patronising attitude towards them. His students were important to him for in May of 1854 he wrote: 'How pleasant it is to

34 P. Miller, The Life of the Mind in America, 73.
35 C. Miller, Fathers and Sons, 73.
36 Bingham to Lydia, 4 March 1854, BFPH, box 4.
win the confidence and love of one's pupils.' Bingham Jr. probably entered teaching rather than proceeding immediately to a theological college for emotional reasons. If he were to become a missionary he needed to have a wife in view, as ABCFM missionaries were not allowed to go to the field unwedded. Bingham Jr. may not have been able to endure another possible rejection, besides, he was still emotionally attached to Mary Hunt. He taught for approximately a year and wrote to his father that his students regretted 'the prospect of [his] leaving'. To his sister Lydia, he provided a more graphic and revealing description:

As I left, a large number of girls ... came to bid me good-bye. They were all of them bathed in floods of tears and could not speak but cordially shook hands. When I went to the Depot ... I found assembled there many of the ... girls and some of the boys. They did not pretend to repress their tears. One of the sweetest and prettiest girls says 'We can never love another teacher as much as you.' Long shall I remember my dear scholars.

Bingham Jr. flourished on such displays of affection. He had not lost sight of his missionary career; he was merely marking time. Whilst teaching at Northampton he met another teacher, Minerva Clarissa Brewster, whom he was considering as a missionary wife. Bingham Jr. was attracted mostly by her personality. He wrote to his sister: 'she would not be called handsome, or beautiful, and yet she has a very sweet expression, but to her mind, her good sense of propriety, and spotless Christian Character which leaves one to admire her.' Bingham Jr. went on to add that she 'never puts herself forward to attract attention'. He was drawn to his opposite. Clarissa also presented a sisterly image and possessed a personality contrasting to that of Sybil Bingham. Bingham Jr.

38 Bingham to Lydia, 5 April 1854, BFPH, box 4.
39 Bingham to Lydia, 8 May 1854, BFPH, box 4; the name Minerva was dropped by the future Mrs B., as Bingham often called her, because it was the name of a Greek goddess.
was offered the opportunity of a complimentary tour of Europe if he became companion and moral tutor to James Hunneswell Jr., son of a family friend and a successful Boston merchant. The only hesitancy Bingham Jr. showed in accepting the offer was due to a fear that his relationship with Clarissa would suffer. Yet he disclosed to Lydia that he had 'not yet committed' himself on that account and sixteen days later he left for Liverpool.40

Bingham Jr. delighted in the worldly splendour and power of Europe. He visited England, France, Prussia, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy. He remembered his 'memorable birthday ... in the ... famed city of Paris'. London excited him and he remarked with awe at the noble palace of the Marquis of Westminster whose income was $5000 per day.41 Yet when he returned home he entered the Theological Seminary at Andover for missionary training. Bingham Jr. denied his inner yearnings for political power, wealth and an influential life to take up missionary service. His attraction to wealth - his first love had been with a wealthy girl - points to a search as to why he did not follow the bulk of his classmates at Yale who chose commerce or law. Bingham fought other inclinations when he chose the ministry as a career and the resultant identity confusion permeated his later life. In choosing Hawaii as his missionary post, Bingham had modified his aspirations, although his Dream still contained elements that reflected his inner yearnings. Bingham wanted to exert an influence on the world at Honolulu which he regarded as a place of importance. There he could associate with the royal household as had his father and witness the prosperity of the port of Honolulu. It was this Dream which Bingham strove to materialize. However, later modifications to the Dream were made which amounted to its betrayal.

40 Bingham to Lydia, 8 May 1854, BFPH, box 4.
In seeking an answer as to why Bingham built his Dream around a missionary career it is necessary to go further than his father's influence. It went far deeper than this. By this stage, Bingham Jr. had internalized and conceptualized Christianity on the basis of his own life experience.

A perusal of Bingham Jr.'s sermons reveals several recurring and consistent themes. These are the themes of power versus submission, riches versus poverty, God's government based on benevolence and law versus rebellion, debt and labour and finally rewards for services rendered. Each of these themes was echoed in actual life experiences of the young Bingham.

'God is our creator, preserver, benefactor,' claimed Bingham Jr. To Bingham the word benefactor had special meaning. God also signified the ultimate power in and ruler of the Universe. It was therefore a privilege to submit to this power and 'put ourselves under His government in the universe', but like an earthly benefactor, God used His power to deliver benevolences. He did not rule through a repressive but a just, moral government. As 'subjects of God's government', however, Christians had to earn the benefits of God's benevolences and love. These privileges were not automatic and free-flowing as Bingham Jr. had perceived they were not in life. Rather they were a reward for services rendered along with obedience to God's laws, just as his own earthly father's love was a reward for obedience and services. All were under penalty of His laws. To refuse to obey made one a rebel and so undeserving of God's benevolences. One chose to become a rebel; it was an act of free will. Consequently, rebels were deserving of punishment and being denied God's love.

The laws and commandments of God's kingdom were based on agape love to one's fellow man and grateful love towards God. The injunction to

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42 Bingham, 'Texts of Sermons', 5 May 1862; 21 December 1862; 9 February 1867; BFPY, box 7.
Christians was to 'love one another whereby all men may know that we are Christ’s disciples, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.'

Bingham emphasized the concept of love. Throughout life he displayed an abnormal, constant need of love. His life experiences fashioned the manner in which he viewed this emotion. Love, to Bingham, signified such emotions as gratitude on one hand and compassion on the other. The love expressed to God was one of grateful service as that of a child of the nineteenth century to a parent. It was the emotion of gratefulness akin to that of a recipient of benevolence to an earthly benefactor. Bingham argued:

The Master says "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Jesus Christ knew what were the instinctive promptings of the human heart. The grateful recipient of favours from an earthly benefactor instinctively longs for opportunities to manifest his gratitude toward such a benefactor. Such are the longings of a Christian, and, blessed be God, we may to this end, be labourers together with him.

Christians were under a 'debt of gratitude'.

Yet, love was a dialectical process. God's love was a reward for services rendered as it had been with his own father. The love of God took the form of compassion. Bingham wrote: 'God has compassion for the repentant sinner ... Because He is love.' This love was not one of mere dispensation; God also needed love. The reason why the soul was so precious to God was not only due to 'his compassion' but because it is capable of loving him through eternity.

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43 Bingham, 'Texts of Sermons', 2 February 1866 (hereinafter cited as 'Texts...').

44 'Texts...', 27 June 1869. Many missionaries of different persuasions throughout time have emphasized the need for Christian love, or agape. This, after all, was one of the major tenets of Christianity back in Roman times. Individuals, however, have translated the meaning of Christian love differently. I am arguing that Bingham perceived its workings through the particular prism of his personal life experiences.

45 'Texts...', 16 December 1866; 2 June 1867.
Whilst God represented complete power, Christ, His son, personified submission, humility, self-denial, sacrifice and poverty. Bingham had witnessed his own father in both the stance of power and the posture of submission. Therefore, it was not difficult for him to conceptualize that Christ represented opposing characteristics to God although, along with the Holy Spirit, all three were one. Christ had been rich but had become poor 'for our souls'. He had been rich in power, wisdom, honour, glory, wealth and comfort. Yet, he had humbled himself to be obedient till death. He had performed this service so that the penitent might become rich, not in worldly wealth, but in 'life, brethren, sisters and mothers ... in sickness and death ... in glory'.

Christians needed to be conscious of this type of wealth. No Christian could be really poor although he may be in worldly terms. Rather, as Bingham explained, it was the unsanctified who suffered poverty: 'How poor, the unsanctified soul.' In another sermon he proclaimed: 'What in reality are worldly riches' when the Christian could become 'rich in power, joy and in Christ's love'. Yet again, Bingham referred to Christ as being 'worth more to us than sensual pleasure, riches or fame'. Bingham himself yearned after these things but would deny himself and subdue his desires to follow the almighty God as had Christ Himself.

Christ had needed to make the supreme sacrifice because the debt and poverty of unsanctified mankind was so great. Time and again Bingham pronounced: 'How great must be our poverty'; 'How great our debt'. And yet again: 'If such a sacrifice were necessary, how great must be our poverty.' Bingham felt deeply mankind's poverty and debt as he had

46 'Texts...', 3 August 1862.
47 'Texts...', 2 February 1866; 4 April 1869.
48 'Texts...', 10 November 1872. Again these concepts were general among Christians, particularly Evangelical Christians. The words conveyed a special significance to Bingham, however, because of his association with actual financial poverty. The imagery had monetary significance for Bingham.
experienced his own family's near destitute condition. Mankind was in debt due to inherited and continuing sinfulness. Due to Christ's sacrifice, when he reverted from heavenly power to a humble, poor existence on earth, Bingham argued: 'We are under none the less the debt of gratitude...'. Consequently, one debt had been exchanged for another. The unrepentant were under the debt of sinfulness; the sanctified were under the debt of gratitude.

As Bingham had experienced in his own life, one needed to labour to reduce one's debts. The same principle applied spiritually. Christians were obliged to labour to reduce their debt to Christ who had sacrificed his life for them. This labour not only went to repaying the debt but also resulted in the flowing of God's love to the workers. Service begot love as it had in the relationship between Bingham and his father. The services Christians were to perform were acts of benevolence. The practice of benevolence constituted 'labour together with God'. It amounted to co-operation with God. The necessity of work never escaped Bingham. Christians were not passive, for 'even the elect' needed to work out their own salvation. Further, Christians were responsible 'for the eternal salvation of ... fellow men'. Bingham well knew the meaning of

49 'Texts...', 27 June 1869.
50 'Texts...', 21 December 1862.
51 'Texts...', 27 June 1869.
responsibility. Although Christians had to 'labour for God's kingdom', this service was both delightful and 'sure of reward'. On one hand, Christians were to deny themselves; on the other, the service was to 'prove a pleasure'. Thus, a dichotomy emerged within Bingham's thinking. Christians could be poor materially yet rich spiritually. They were under obligation to deny their desires and ambitions, yet Christian service was pleasurable.

Service for the Lord was not only a pleasure but a 'duty and privilege'. All were subjects of God's moral government. Although under this government there were infinite benevolences, there were also laws. Bingham argued that the character of a government corresponded with the character of the ruler as in any earthly jurisdiction. As God was good, His commands were likewise beneficial. However, all were 'transgressors of God's laws' and all were 'under penalty of law'. Mankind was obliged by duty to repent; to refuse or delay to do so constituted rebellion. 'No sinner will escape the penalty of broken law,' argued Bingham. He regarded as rebels those who refused to become co-workers with God, thereby retarding the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth. The unrepentant were rebels against God's moral government and the future kingdom of Christ. 'How fearful a risk incurred by rebels to God's government,' reasoned Bingham; they were deserving of punishment.

The themes constantly reiterated in Bingham's sermons were reflections of actual life experiences. Bingham had witnessed the power of his father in Hawaii. After the shift to the United States the family had been plunged into poverty. His father had become increasingly humble

52 'Texts...', 25 November 1858; 5 May 1862.
53 'Texts...', 2 February 1862.
and put himself at the mercy of benefactors. It was therefore not surprising that Bingham perceived God as an almighty benefactor. Bingham had had to work to help clear the family's debts. It was therefore natural that Bingham saw Christians as having an obligation to service as all mankind was in debt. On his journey to Europe, Bingham was reminded again of worldly wealth and splendour. On his return he decided to reject his own inner yearnings for political power and wealth and to deny himself, as Christ had done, by coming under God's government. The laws of God were based on benevolence and love. As a missionary, Bingham felt he could further American philanthropy and benevolence and through hard work earn the love not only of his earthly father but of God Himself.

Immediately on his return from Europe, Bingham entered the Theological Seminary at Andover. However, he never completed his course, being obliged to leave in mid-winter of 1856 due to ill-health. It has been suggested by Dr. Miller that this illness was psychosomatic in origin and directly related to the indecision of his mind. He sees Bingham Jr. as being torn between following his own inclination as to his missionary field or obeying that of his father. Bingham Snr. desired his son to serve in China which had been opened as a missionary field in 1844. The son first wished to serve in Hawaii then later decided on Micronesia. Dr. Miller further argues that the particular ailments of which Bingham Jr. complained were fabricated, unconsciously, so as to render himself unfit for service in China.54

Health problems were nothing new to Bingham Jr. His letters reveal a constant concern with illnesses such as scarlet fever, measles and other ailments. This concern cannot be ignored but can be seen also as an attempt

54 Miller, Fathers and Sons, 74-6.
to attract the attention he so needed. The situation of 1856 was entirely different; his health virtually collapsed. He complained of lung trouble, poor digestion, weakness of voice and sore eyes. His worst complaint was that of his lungs. His mother had died of tuberculosis when he was nearly sixteen in 1847. Eight years later the son was complaining of his lungs. It is medically possible that he caught tuberculosis from his mother, incubated the disease which then manifested itself years later resulting in a possible abscess on the lungs. In the interim, his body, initially a strong one, was trying to combat the disease. In 1853, before his trip to Europe, he had been 'lying on [his] back a sick man'. In the mid-winter of 1856, when the climate of New England would have exacerbated his condition, he left Andover and went to work in mid-western Illinois for a time. By the summer of 1856, helped by a beneficial environment, he had recuperated. It was not that he had fully recovered his health, nor was it that his seeming recovery was due to any final decision-making by Bingham. He claimed that he had already made up his mind while at Andover. He decided that he could not spend another winter in New England and so relinquished his hope of ever finishing his course. Yet he was still determined to become a missionary - in Micronesia. He probably looked forward to a warm climate. The climate of China would have appeared as daunting to him as New England.

His other ailments cannot be fitted neatly into a psychological framework. He had first complained of 'sore eyes' as early as 1841 at ten years old. Throughout his days at Yale he made the same complaint,

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55 I extend my thanks to Dr Judith Leigh of the Australian National University Health Centre for discussion in June 1982 on this medical point.

56 Bingham, 'Private Journal of a Voyage, 1854', BFPPY, box 7; Bingham to Prudential Committee, 5 September 1856, BFPH, box 4.
informing his sister Lydia that he could not read at night for it rendered his eyes unfit for the following day. His eye problem persisted well after he had made his decision as to his missionary field. Later in the Gilbert Islands he was to wear special goggles his wife made for him to shield his eyes from the excessive sunlight. This same ailment would also severely limit his translation work.\(^\text{57}\) It was not surprising that Bingham was not eager to learn the Chinese language with its multiplicity of intricate characters. Both his weakness of voice and digestive problems were to persist and were impediments to his service as a missionary. Bingham Jr. was a sick man. Although his nervous disposition cannot be ignored, this must be viewed as another ailment and not as the root cause of the others.

This period of disagreement with his father reveals Bingham Jr.'s firm determination to have his own way, a trait he would display throughout life. It pained him that his father's wishes conflicted with his own, but he was still determined to do what he wanted. The issue of the missionary field also demonstrated Bingham Jr.'s diplomatic handling of his father. As early as March of 1850, when Bingham Jr. still had hopes of serving in Hawaii, he wrote to his father:

> Would you not prefer to have me take the Stone Church at Honolulu? ... That is my wish; to labour in [your] footsteps ... 0 if you only wished it I would strain every nerve to bring it about. If I were in your place I would like nothing better than to see my son take my place, and perpetuate the name of Bingham. [Emphasis added]\(^\text{58}\)

He knew his father wanted the name of Bingham perpetuated and he was appealing to this instinct. If his father would not acquiesce, however, he must defy him as his father had defied his father and as his future son would defy him.

\(^{57}\) Bingham to Bingham Sr., 4 September 1841, BFPH, box 4; Bingham to Lydia, 1 January 1852, BFPH, box 4; Bingham to Anderson, August 1860, BFPH, box 5; Jane S. Warren, *The Morning Star: History of the Children's Missionary Vessel and of the Marquesan and Micronesian Missions*, Boston, 1860, 257. It is quite possible that Bingham had ophthalmia.

\(^{58}\) Bingham to Bingham Sr., 9 March 1850, BFPH, box 4.
Bingham did not choose Micronesia due to any lack of an adventurous spirit, as has been suggested by Dr Miller. As a child he had never been daunted by danger. As it turned out, his eventual field, that of the Gilbert Islands, was to test his courage and nerves to the full. He was to live in primitive conditions alongside materially poor people who were beset with both warfare and intermittent drought. It appeared that Bingham wanted to be a pioneer, to make a name for himself in another island group. He knew that he would be working with Hawaiians. This would necessitate his learning both Hawaiian and the language of the Islanders where he was to be established. Perhaps he saw the opportunity to be a 'first' in giving an alphabet to an Island people and thereby attracting attention. He certainly knew he could never entertain this hope in China. Bingham did not directly choose his specific field in Micronesia. Yet, in seeking to work with the Hawaiians, the possibility of being sent to the Gilbert islands, where the Hawaiians were to be concentrated, must have occurred to him. It had been the hope of another missionary child of Hawaii to build up an Anglo-Hawaiian community where American and Hawaiian missionaries would work side by side in Micronesia. This was the Reverend Luther Gulick who, at one time, entertained thoughts of requesting dismissal from the ABCFM to become a missionary expressly for the HMCS. The role of mediator between American and Hawaiian missionaries was, however, taken over by Bingham Jr.

On 18 November 1856, Bingham married his fellow schoolteacher Minerva Clarissa Brewster. The following year, before they left for Micronesia, they spent some time in Honolulu. Bingham visited his childhood home in the lush Manoa Valley. The Gilbert Islands could not have been more remote from this particular spot. Whilst at Honolulu Bingham received the first of three calls to take care of the Stone Church there. He rejected the offer.
Writing to Lydia, he disclosed: 'But, sister, you know I long to preach Christ to those who have never heard of his dying love. They have the gospel here but Micronesia is in darkness.' Still, he wavered. He was rejecting not only his childhood home, his Dream, but also the adulation of his 'Father's old people' who were making 'much effort to detain' him as their pastor.59 A conflict arose within him, to follow his Dream or to live beside the materially poor in the hope of saving their souls. He would also be a first, a pioneer, even more than his father. The intrepid side of his personality won. So he sailed with his wife Clarissa to Micronesia aboard the Belle.

It was decided at a General Meeting in Ponape (further west in Micronesia than the Gilbert Islands) that Bingham and his wife Clarissa would be settled on the Gilbert Islands. Bingham wrote that he had no regrets in not having become the pastor at Honolulu's Stone Church. He argued that the Gilbert Islands was the field 'where Hawaiians will probably labour to the best advantage, and where most of them will, for years to come, be located'.60 He looked forward to the fact that the Hawaiian Kanoa and his wife Kahola would accompany himself and Clarissa to the Gilberts. But not everyone was convinced that Bingham had been fitted with the most suitable post. The Reverend Dr Luther Gulick wrote of his doubts to the Reverend Dr Rufus Anderson:

I greatly question whether on his account, for his own health's sake, he ought to go to the most trying post Micronesia presents – trying I mean particularly on health. I fear he will soon break down there and so be eventually lost to Micronesia. The most favourable position that could be found will be sufficiently trying to his health.61

Those thoughts must have crossed Bingham's mind also but he accepted the offer of a missionary post in the Gilbert Islands.

59 Bingham to Lydia, 19 May 1857, ABCFM Papers, reel 1.

60 Bingham, 'Journal of a Voyage in the "Morning Star" No. 1 from Boston to Apaiang', BFPH, box 12.

61 Gulick to Anderson, 6 November 1857, ABCFM Papers, reel 1.
So, on 17 November 1857, Hiram Bingham, his wife Clarissa, and his Hawaiian associates, Kanoa and his wife Kahola and two Hawaiian domestics, landed at Abaiang in the equatorial Gilbert Islands. Bingham was far from well; his wife Clarissa was pregnant. Yet just as impeding for Bingham was his particular mental vision and psychological outlook. Bingham had denied his inner cravings for wealth and power and instead had taken up the cross of Jesus. He was fired with the desire to set up a benevolent government, based on *agape* love, in the Gilberts. He also harboured a missionary plan based on the history of the mission in Hawaii. He was sure that hard work would reap success; he needed recognition and acclaim for any success he might achieve. Bingham, because of his knowledge of the Hawaiian experience, had wanted to go to Abemama where there was an established island kingdom. It was believed by those missionaries who had previously visited the Gilberts that a similar kingdom was arising on Abaiang. This was to be a mistaken view. There was no more inappropriate place for Bingham to test his vision than Abaiang. And Bingham was to learn the sour lesson that hard work is not always rewarded with success.
MAP 1: THE GILBERT ISLANDS
On that day in November of 1857 when Bingham, Clarissa, Kanoa and Kahola stepped off the Morning Star at Abaiang they entered another world. Abaiang is an atoll just north of the equator in the Gilbert Islands. These sixteen islands, mostly coral atolls, were also known as the Kingsmill Islands. The Islanders themselves called them Te Aba n Tungaru or the land of the Tungaru. Life on Abaiang would prove to be an experience as startlingly new to the Hawaiians as it would be for the Binghams.

Abaiang had been chosen as a missionary base because of the recommendation of another missionary, the Reverend Dr George Pierson, who had travelled through the Gilberts aboard the Belle in 1855. The Belle’s diplomatic captain Ichabod Handy had told the Islanders at Abaiang that the religion Pierson brought would 'do them good'. Pierson travelled to other islands in the group but returned to Abaiang and to a very warm welcome. He described the scene:

They acted like children who were delighted at the sight of dear friends, and were expressing hopes that we had come to stay. They said that during our absence much had been said about missionaries and there had been but one feeling expressed - that was a desire for Missionaries and also a desire to obtain clothing.¹

¹ Pierson, 'Journal of a Voyage through the Kingsmill Islands', ABCFM Papers, reel 2.
Given this warm invitation and the fact that the island was in close proximity to three other islands, Marakei, Tarawa and Maiana, Abaiang appeared to Pierson as the best place to commence the mission. It was not Bingham's choice. He would have preferred to go to Abemama where the high chief Baiteke held a firm rule not only over Abemama but also over the two nearby islands of Kuria and Aranuka. Butaritari had no attraction for him because though there was also a high chief there, earlier missionary contact in 1852 had established that he was a mere boy. Bingham was attracted to power for personal reasons and not only because his missionary plan called for a power base. However, it was Abaiang which was decided upon and Bingham, at this stage, obeyed the decision of his superiors.

No island could have been more unlike his native Hawaii. Abaiang is not only hotter than Honolulu but, worse, has very little daily or seasonal fluctuation in temperature. The Binghams were to find it monotonously hot. Abaiang is also on the tip of a drought belt. Bingham, who had longed for a warm climate to soothe his lung ailment, was to find himself a prisoner of incessant heat untempered by a reliable rainfall. Nor was the topography of Abaiang anything like Hawaii with its daring peaks, deep valleys, rich volcanic soil, lush vegetation and lavish flowers. On Abaiang there is not even a modest hill; the average height above sea level is only four metres. Nor are there any valleys or rivers. Instead, there is simply coral sand, a vegetation dominated by coconut trees, and the ever-present sea.

The view which generally greets the sea voyager to the Gilbert Islands is the view of a single atoll, a low line on the horizon. It is the sight of a dense fringe of coconut trees clutching a thin strip of glaring white

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2 The Reverend George Pierson first went to Abemama in 1855 to enquire if the Protestant missionaries would be welcome to stay. He received an almost hostile response. Bingham met with the same response in 1867. It was not till 1873, when Bingham returned to Abemama, that it was agreed that a missionary would be permitted to reside there. Both the high chief Baiteke and his son Binoka impressed Bingham. Bingham to Pogue, 19 October 1876, MM-HEA. Bingham to ABCFM, 23 November 1857, ABCFM Papers, reel 1.
coral sand amidst the blue depths of the Pacific Ocean. Having negotiated a passage through to the lagoon's calm aquamarine water, the sea voyager is imperfectly encircled by the coral atoll. The first and lasting impression one gains of the Gilbert Islands is the scarcity of land. On Abaiang the width of land varies between half and two and a half kilometres; the length is approximately twelve kilometres. \(^3\)

The soil is poor due to its coral formation and supports a relatively narrow range of vegetation. Besides the coconut trees, breadfruit, pandanus trees and babai (Cyrtosperma chamissonis), a root vegetable, are grown. Elsewhere in Micronesia the pandanus fruit is shunned as a food, but in the Gilbert Islands it is relished. The menace of drought complicates the situation and in such times, even the hardy coconut tree is threatened. The limits of the land are inescapable.

Abaiang shares these limitations. It shares the poor soil, lack of land, rainfall and basic resources such as wood, stone and rock. Bingham estimated that in the 1850's Abaiang had a population of 3,211, 500 of whom were aged and a further 1,000 of whom were children. He later remarked that his original estimate had been too high. \(^4\)

Nevertheless, there was a heavy concentration on the land. The lack of any major disease, excepting yaws, and the fecundity of the people exacerbated the problem.

Given the general lack of resources, the Gilbertese were extremely resourceful. They built houses and canoes; practised abortion; designed weapons and armour; preserved food and wove head garlands from the tiniest of perfumed flowers as there were no large flowers available. Limits to

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\(^4\) Bingham to HMCS, 25 August 1868, BFPH, box 5.
the population were essential and the Gilbertese practised several methods of abortion, one of which was to beat the abdomen of the pregnant woman with sticks. The Gilbertese also built houses, a thatched roof resting on four low corner posts, and community meeting-houses, the maneaba, with their distinctively shaped roofs. The lack of sufficiently large tree trunks meant that the Islanders had to ingeniously design their canoes and make them from pieces of wood fitted together. The sails were made of woven pandanus. Woven pandanus mats were also worn by the Gilbertese men whilst dancing. Otherwise, like the children and youths of both sexes, they went naked. With the onset of menstruation, girls wore a short skirt, hung from their hips, made of coconut fibre. Although the Gilbertese had a limited range of food products, they put these to creative uses. The pandanus fruit, boiled with various parts of the coconut, made a delicious toffee-like food which is both nutritious and can be preserved for a year. Puddings were made from babai and coconut.

The sea was of the utmost importance to the people: many varieties of fish and other sea life could be eaten and the sea also provided giant clam shells, smaller shells, large fish heads (which were used to make helmets), shark teeth for trimming swords and coral slabs on which to balance the roofs of the maneaba. But it was the land which held priority. It possessed a psychological significance which the sea did not. This was because various sections of the land provided an identity for the

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6 R. Parkinson, 'Beiträge zur Ethnologie der Gilbertinsulaner' , *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* , 2, 1889. I extend my gratitude to Dr Katherine Luomala who kindly provided me with a full translation of the above (hereinafter cited as Parkinson, 'Translation'). Parkinson describes a house as follows: 'The posts are about 4 feet high and joined at the upper ends through pandanus or coconut trunks hewed to shape; on them rests the roof, projecting and so far over the side posts ... that it approaches within 2 feet of the ground', 48. Arthur Grimble, *The Migrations of a Pandanus People, as Traced from a Preliminary Study of Food, Food Traditions and Food Rituals in the Gilbert Islands* , Wellington, Polynesian Society Memoir No. 12, 1933-4, 29-43.
individual lineages or *boti*. Also the land produced the ubiquitous coconut which had so many uses:

From the stem the sucrarine sap, or toddy is drawn ... the leaves are used for thatching houses, making mats, baskets and the girdle ... The wood is used in the building of canoes and for other purposes. The husk furnishes coir for their sennit, cord, rope etc; the shell is made into cups, ladles, bottles and other household utensils; the milky fluid affords drink; the kernel, both ripe and unripe, is the staple food of the atolls.7

Nothing was wasted.

There was little conspicuous display of wealth. It was shameful to envy and equally shameful to be envied. There was no buying or selling or even any real exchange system. The resources which did exist were available to all Islanders. A system of *bubutí* was practised through which a person might request any item or service from his kin which could be refused only with great difficulty. A reciprocal service would be expected by the donor in the future.8

The physical environment, and the material culture it gave rise to, were starkly dissimilar to the Hawaiian Islands, as was also the socio-political situation. On 18 November 1857, Bingham was met by Temaua, an elderly man with a rather dry manner, at Koinawa, about mid-centre of Abaiang. He was a chief, but not the sole chief on the island, and not the same chief who had met Pierson, also at Koinawa, three years previously. The implication of this was not lost on Bingham. He noted in his diary that on 19 November, he and his wife Clarissa had received a visit 'from Tinteratau


8 Charles Wilkes, Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 5 vols, Philadelphia, 1845, 5, 89. Although possessions and services could be borrowed by any member within the same *utu*, there are distant and close *utu* and an element of flexibility exists through which a person can choose not to recognize a person as of their *utu*.
and Tintepaua, sons of the former king who was the brother of the present. These had previously asked Pierson to stay.' Temaua, however, was not the uncle of Tinteratau and Tintepaua. His only relationship with their father, Bureka, was based on his adoption of one of Bureka's sons. Most of the contending chiefs were connected in one way or another by adoption, marriage or blood, but this did not prevent the chiefs from engaging in incessant rivalry.

Captain Ichabod Handy, who had rendered Pierson so much assistance, had suffered disruption to his oil trade because there were wars not only on Abaiang itself but also between it and the nearest island neighbour Tarawa. After Pierson left Abaiang, Captain Handy, who had been trading since 1849 or 1850, went from Abaiang and Tarawa trying to bring about a reconciliation.

The trade concentrated on the procurement of coconut oil for which the Islanders received tobacco, alcohol, a few knives and sundry other implements. Captain Handy did not have a monopoly of this trade on Abaiang. Following Handy, Captain Richard Randell, of the Sydney firm Smith, Randell & Fairclough, extended his trading relations to Abaiang from his base in Butaritari, an island north of Abaiang. There was no conflict between the two traders as each had business transactions with different chiefs. The evidence suggests that one captain traded with the north of the island and the other with the south. The traders relied on chiefs who functioned as oil agents or intermediaries to whom the Islanders came with their various amounts of oil. The power of the chiefs with whom such

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9 Bingham, 'Journal of a Voyage to Apaiang', 2, BFPH, box 12, 103.
10 Pierson, 'Journal through the Kingsmill Islands', ABCFM Papers, reel 2.
traders dealt was therefore enhanced. These chiefs were given an advantage in a competitive situation in which various chiefs vied with each other. Handy’s oil agent is unknown; Randell dealt with Temaua’s son, Kaiea.

Warfare figured prominently in the world of the Abaiang people. The Gilbertese will tell the inquirer that most wars were brought about because of land disputes, although minor pretexts would provide the catalyst. Yet it was not so much the need but greed for land which fomented wars. Those aspiring to become high chiefs needed additional land and the accompanying tribute from the people of that land. Such a pattern incited the jealousies of other chiefs who witnessed the rising power of one of their number. A deposed chief could enlist the sympathies and support of other chiefs to whittle the power of a contender who threatened the balance of power. Hence, Abaiang was a centre of intrigues, jealousies and warring factions. And it was to such a situation that Bingham came with his ideals of a new society based on cooperation and agape love.

There were three other ways, besides that of warfare, of obtaining land. The main avenue was inheritance. Although each boti or lineage had its own land (the kainga), which had run originally from ocean to lagoon in parallel strips, land was inherited by the individual. This was not only true on Abaiang but in all the Gilbert Islands excepting Butaritari in the north where land was inherited and owned collectively by the utu or the kindred of both parents. Yet, elsewhere it is still the utu that is concerned in the ownership of buakonikai land (i.e. land barring the kainga sites). A child receives land from both its mother and father if the latter is known. Sons generally received more than their sisters and the elder children usually more than their younger siblings. The age-sex prerogative of Gilbertese society was reaffirmed.

The reason why females generally received less land than their brothers went deeper. Women married into other families and joined other *boti*, and could therefore not be entrusted with more land than they needed as their land would become amalgamated with that of another *boti*. That land was individually owned, therefore, did not make for an individualistic society as the interests of each person were set within the context of one's *utu*, *boti* and *kainga*.

Marriage was another means of acquiring land. On Abaiang, as elsewhere in the Gilberts, childhood betrothals and subsequent marriages were arranged with a view to acquiring land and to forming useful alliances. In Abaiang, this last factor took on a special pertinence as useful allies were needed in wartime. Of course, there were always cases where a young couple would defy the choice of their families and elope with the person of their own desire. On marriage, the wife brought her share of *buakonikai* land to her husband. Marriage on Abaiang was not polygamous nor was it strictly monogamous. Although any man only had one legitimate wife, his *rāo-ni-kie* or companion of the sleeping mat, he was allowed further sexual partners if they fell into the classification of either *eiriki* or *tinaba*. The former included the wives of his brothers and the uterine sisters of his wife. The eldest daughter was always married first but her husband had certain power over her sisters. Until these sisters were married, they were under his care, and even after they had married, he still exercised certain rights over them. The *eiriki* was a guarantee against childlessness for if a man could not ensure an heir through his wife, he had the opportunity of impregnating one of her sisters.  

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The third means of acquiring land was through the *tinaba* relationship. A man's *tinaba* was found among his sons' wives, his brothers' sons' wives, his wife's mother and his wife's mother's sisters. Permitted extramarital sexual relations usually only took place between a man and the wives of his brothers' sons. A man's *tinaba* was the one who was called on to anoint, garland and generally look after him during ceremonies in the *maneaba* or meeting house. Such services involved reciprocity on the part of the man; he was required to give a portion of his *buakonikai* land which came under the title *te aba tinaba* or the land from *tinaba*. This land became the property of the woman and, like her original share of land, was retained by her in the event of divorce. Divorce was fairly common and the right to decide on such a course granted as readily to the woman as to the man.  

In other areas, however, women were far more restricted than men within the patrilineal society of the Gilberts.

Not only was there more than one avenue to gaining land; there was also more than one way of losing it. Individuals lost their land not only through confiscation during wars. Payment in land was the fine for such crimes as theft, murder and rape. The amount to be paid was decided on by the *unimane* or old men of the *maneaba*. Land was a dominant feature in the thinking of the Gilbertese. To be without land was to be pitied; it was to be without a voice in the *maneaba* or a say in community matters. A strong family equipped with allies, however, could defy the verdict of the *unimane* in which case war resulted. War ever threatened. Bingham would at first accept the challenge of a war-torn island thinking that it was in such a situation that he and other missionaries could bring the maximum

14 Grimble, 'From Birth to Death', 33.
15 Parkinson 'Translation', 52; Maude, *The Gilbertese Boti*, 47.
benefit in establishing peace and order. Later he would bemoan the frequency of the wars and point to them as a central cause of the mission's lack of growth.

The Gilbertese had various words denoting the different types of physical conflict. *Te buaka* was real war, intense, organized and inclusive of groups. The meaning of landownership, as a sense of belonging, was disregarded; land became a status symbol. The bounty of the victorious in *te buaka* was land and the people to whom it once belonged. These were essential stepping-stones towards the making of a high chief. The Gilbertese term for 'slave' was *kaunga*, *arobai* or *toro*. The *kaunga*, the property of successful war-lords or *uea*, usually stayed on their land, but were required to deliver tribute to the *uea* to signify their dependence on him. Some people refused to become *kaunga* and would flee to a nearby island in the hope of refuge and the gathering of support for counter attack. One war would often lead to another. A kaleidoscope of shifting alliances ensued for an ally in one war may be an enemy in the next. Such was the situation not only on Abaiang and neighbouring Tarawa but also on the nearby islands of Marakei and Maiana. At times, a war chief from Abaiang would side with an *uea* from Tarawa to fight a rival at home. But that rival may also have an ally on Tarawa and so both islands were split. Refugees of the war might flee to Marakei or Maiana. Power in all four of these islands was very transient and very segmented. Land ownership patterns also became segmented as a war chief might have land, the spoils of war, not only in other sections of his island but also on other islands.

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16 Katherine Luomala, 'Feuds and Wars', unpublished notes. Again I thank Dr Katherine Luomala for her courtesy in lending me these notes.

17 The term *kaunga* should be distinguished from *rang*. The *rang*, although landless, were free to work for whomever and wherever they pleased. There was probably a greater number of *rang* in the five southern islands.
This gave these war chiefs the opportunity to speak in the maneaba of other districts and other islands.

Elsewhere in the Gilberts, the situation was not as confusing and war took on a different meaning. The Gilbertese had two other terms for fighting. *Te kiriwe* referred to brawls and skirmishes between two *boti* or two *utu*. *Te un*, literally translated as 'the anger', denoted physical combat between individuals or minor squabbles between families.  

To the north of the cluster of Marakei, Abaiang, Tarawa and Maiana was the 'kingdom', or rather high chiefdom, of Butaritari and Makin. These two islands, the latter being an extension of the former, had been under the rule of a single high chief since legendary times. Butaritari's high chieftainship did not preclude the authority of the unimane within the maneaba system. The redistributive activities of the high chief overshadowed his limited political functions. This ritual of food distribution and tribute demonstrated the acknowledgement that the high chief was the ultimate source of land rights and a privileged mediator in disputes. Butaritari society was hierarchical with *to uea*, the high chief and his family, at the apex and the *kaunga* at the base. In between were the petty chiefs or *toka* and the common landowners or *taboibai*.  

The beachcomber Robert Wood, who had lived at Makin since the 1830's, spoke of the inhabitants of this society as 'being abundantly supplied with  

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18 Luomala, 'Feuds and Wars'.

food, and living an inactive life, with nothing to disturb the peace, which had continued unbroken for upwards of a century.\textsuperscript{20} This was not entirely true for there were squabbles over who should succeed to the high chieftainship. Brawls resulted but these took place largely within the same family when brothers and cousins competed for the title. Once the issue of succession was settled, a further reign of peace would ensue.\textsuperscript{21}

Captain Randell had set up his original trading base at Butaritari which is the only island in the group with an adequate to generous rainfall enabling the growth of vegetation and vegetables. Periodic starvation was not the problem it was further south.\textsuperscript{22} The inhabitants were described as having 'stout, hearty figures' and 'round, jolly faces'.\textsuperscript{23} Trade was not as important to the people of Butaritari and Makin as it was in Abaiang and Tarawa. Trade goods added prestige but they were not the necessity they were in the rest of the Gilberts. Nor did trade have the political effects in this society that it had on both Abaiang and Tarawa.

To the south of Abaiang and Tarawa was another high chiefdom consisting of Abemama with its two vassal islands of Kuria and Aranuka. The name Abemama literally means land in the moonlight. Yet this romantically named island became the seat of a line of power-hungry men who perverted the laws of the maneaba to suit their own political ends. So strong did the power of the high chiefs Baiteke and his son Binoka become that no one dared defy them and warfare was quelled.\textsuperscript{24} Strict laws were enforced resulting from

\textsuperscript{20} Wilkes, \textit{Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition}, 73, 83.

\textsuperscript{21} Stevenson, \textit{In the South Seas}, 238.

\textsuperscript{22} Butaritari has an average rainfall of 100"-120". In the southern islands the average is less than 50". Great Britain, \textit{Geographical Handbook Series}, 309.


\textsuperscript{24} Arthur Grimble, 'The Maneaba', unpublished notes provided by the courtesy of Professor H.E. Maude, 28-9.
the reorganization of society. Binoka strictly controlled the trade and no women were allowed to board passing trader ships. Baiteke had had nine foreign residents killed and had refused Bingham's request to leave a missionary teacher on the island in 1867 fearing that the missionaries would teach the Islanders to think themselves as important as himself. Six years later he changed his mind and a Gilbertese, Moses Kanoaro, was sent. Baiteke and Binoka were keen to gain new knowledge which the missionaries brought but neither of them was impressed with the Gilbertese convert. Both Baiteke and Binoka maintained their rule through fear probably due to the fact that the high chiefdom was in fact of tenuous origins. Robert Louis Stevenson, that well-known traveller of the Pacific, wrote of the 'dynasty' in this way:

It would be natural to suppose that this monarchy [was] inherited intact through generations. And so far from that, it is a thing of yesterday. I was already a boy at school while Apemama was yet republican, ruled by a noisy council of Old Men, and torn with incurable feuds. And Tembinok' is no Bourbon; rather the son of a Napoleon.26

In this high chiefdom, as in that of Butaritari and Makin, polygamy was practised. There was little else the two high chiefdoms had in common.

Further south still were the islands of Tabiteuea and Nonouti. Here the highest level of political integration was the maneaba system. The maneaba were the gigantic roofs which could be sighted from afar amidst the coconut trees. Virtually a huge thatched roof supported on coral slabs, they were very high in the centre but so low around the edges that one had to stoop to enter. Their construction fascinated early

25 Bingham to Pogue, 19 October 1876, MM-HEA.

Europeans to the Gilberts. Luther Gulick, who visited the Gilberts in 1852, recorded his impression:

Their council houses loom up in the distance, the most prominent of all other objects on shore. Most of them are over an hundred feet long, nearly fifty feet wide and thirty to forty feet high ... It is here they congregate on every public occasion, in tumultuous rabbles of delight, or anger. Here every public measure is carefully discussed, and here they dance and revel for many continuous days and nights.27

The maneaba was far more than an impressive physical edifice. Its significance also went far beyond that of being merely a community meeting place in which dancing, ceremonies and law-making took place. The maneaba was a monument to the basic political and social structure of the Gilbert Islands.

In the maneaba the unimane, or elders of the various boti, met to discuss matters pertaining to the larger community.28 The boti, predominantly patrilineal, was the Gilbertese descent group and it was

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28 Anthropologists differ among themselves on which Gilbertese term to use for the lineage. For consistency, I have followed the pattern of Grimble and Maude, whose works I quote so much, and chosen the term boti. By no means is this the only correct one. William H. Geddes, in his North Tabiteuea Report, Rural Socio-Economic Survey of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Victoria University of Wellington, 1975, 14-16, uses the term kainga. Henry P. Lundsgaarde, in Cultural Adaption in the Southern Gilbert Islands, 1938-1964, Eugene, Oregon, 1966, Table XXIV, refers to the term inaki. All three terms refer to a physical location with which the lineage identified itself. The kainga was the land tract of the lineage; the boti was the seating place within the maneaba where a particular lineage sat; and the inaki was the particular thatch-row of the maneaba under which a lineage sat. Where a lineage lived, where and under what it sat in the maneaba identified a lineage. See also Kenneth S. Knudson, Titiana: A Gilbertese Community in the Solomon Islands, Eugene, n.d. [1965], 22-5; see especially Henry P. Lundsgaarde and Martin G. Silverman, 'Category and Group in Gilbertese Kinship: An Updating of Goodenough's Analysis', Ethnology, 5, 1972, which reveals the complexity of the Gilbertese descent groups.
through the *boti* that the individual found his identity.\(^{29}\) Each *boti* had its own specific place in the *maneaba*. Here consensus was sought after in the hope that the concerns of the community would prevail over those of the individual *boti*. It was considered shameful to put the interest of oneself or one's family above that of the community. But this was the ideal which was not always translated into reality, for there was a tension between the ideal and the assertiveness of each *boti*. The cases taken to the *maneaba* usually involved land disputes, theft, assault, murder and adultery. Punishment generally resulted in forfeiture of land.

Each *maneaba* was independent to itself; no other *maneaba* could interfere with its business.\(^{30}\) The advice of the collective *unimane*, in any one *maneaba*, though 'generally considered as final', was at times disregarded and recourse was had 'to arms, each party being assisted by their friends'. This action was most likely to occur when a particularly strong family felt well placed to defy the *unimane*. Captain William Hudson, of the United States Exploring Expedition which took place between 1838 and 1842, revealed that: 'The discussions are sometimes very animated and violent quarrels occasionally take place between different speakers who are with difficulty prevented by others from coming to blows...',\(^{31}\) At such times, consensus and community became fragile entities. John Webster, aboard the *Wanderer*, noted the occasional pattern when:

... the guilty party be discovered, and he be an owner of land, the matter is brought before the elders of the people, who meet together in the Maniapa [*sic*], and decide upon the amounts in nuts or land to be paid by the offender ...  In the case of the

\(^{29}\) Although the *boti* was the main identity for an individual there were others. The *utu* took in kindred related to both parents but still excluded one's marriage partner and relatives thereof. Nevertheless, it provided a useful and far broader range of kin than the *boti*. The *mwenga* was the nuclear household but existed within the extended family.


thief being an extensive landholder, and having plenty of friends to undertake his cause, he will refuse compensation. \(^{32}\) Arms are then resorted to, and the affair is decided by battle.

Brawls, arising from fancied or real insults, were quite prevalent. This accounted for the many scars upon the men. Weapons consisted of wooden swords lined with sharks' teeth and long spears likewise armed. The aim was not to kill, which would incur a fine, but to scar. For protection, the men wore suits of armour made from coconut fibre. Helmets of porcupine fish were also worn. \(^{33}\) Personal combat provided a show of ostentation and evidence of bravery and valour. It was also an index to the ongoing tension between individuality and conformity to consensus.

Further south than Tabiteuea and Nonouti are the five southernmost islands of Beru, Nikunau, Onotoa, Tamana and Arorae. The ABCFM/HEA control never went as far south as this area. The London Missionary Society established mission stations here in 1875. Beru and Onotoa are atolls, the rest are reef islands. It was on these five islands that the maneaba system was strongest being especially suited to the smaller reef islands. Oral tradition holds that the Samoans, who infiltrated the Gilbert Islands in the fourteenth century, developed the maneaba system throughout the group but more especially in the south. The evidence reveals a pattern of

\(^{32}\) Webster, *The Last Cruise*, 27. See also John Coulter, *Adventures on the Western Coast of South America, and the Interior of California: including a Narrative of Incidents at the Kingsmill Islands, New Ireland, New Britain, New Guinea, and other Islands in the Pacific Ocean*, 2 vols, London, 1847, 209, for depiction of disruption in the maneaba.

interaction, selective adoption and modification, with earlier styles showing through. Communal houses existed long before the Samoans arrived. These were primarily foci of general community activities which lacked the ritual significance of the later *maneaba*.

The first of the new type of *maneaba* was built on Beru by the Samoan Tematawarebwe and his followers. The importance of the Samoans' influence was the modifications they gave to the *maneaba* which related the various *boti* together. Further, certain obligations and expectations were created and ritualized between the *boti*. Finally, one *boti* was made supreme through time, that of *Karongoa n Uea*. This was the *boti* of Tematawarebwe. The role of this *boti* was to tell the story of creation, the traditional lore, and the tales of the voyage from Samoa. None could contradict the guardian of this knowledge. The first word and the first decision was the prerogative of *Karongoa n Uea*. The final judgement, though influenced by the consensus of the meeting, was in the hands of the Uea. The high chief of Butaritari came from this *boti* as did Temaua and his son Kaiea of Abaiang. Baiteke and Binoka of Abemama did not and this is why Baiteke had needed to reorganize the society on Abemama to see that his own *boti* had precedence.

Hence, there were several variations of political and social control in the Gilbert Islands, but these were part of a continuum for the influence of the *maneaba* was evident in all of these. Circa 1650 A.D. the warriors, Kaitu from Beru and Uakeia from Nikunau, raided throughout the Gilberts bringing a more equalizing influence within the *maneaba*. Their influence

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35 Maude, *The Gilbertese Boti*, 44.
was naturally stronger in the south, from whence they came, and weakest to the north. In Butaritari the maneaba system still acted as a counterbalance to the limited power of the high chief whereas on Abemama this counter-balance had been stifled. In the cluster Marakei, Abaiang, Tarawa and Maiana, the maneaba system existed but not with the same force as it did further south. It could do nothing to curb the ambitions of contending chiefs, each determined to be high chief of his particular island. On Tabiteuea and Nonouti, the maneaba system was strong although the multiplicity of districts weakened its impact as a control over the whole island. The maneaba was strongest on the smaller five southernmost islands. The Gilbert Islands, therefore, presented a continuum of various stages of political control but throughout there was the central identification with the boti. The Protestant mission commenced by Bingham was to take in all the various forms of socio-political control. It was therefore evident that no one plan could suffice.

The magico-religious world was also a splintered one which divided society in the Gilberts, for various Anti were worshipped by various people. Most of the Anti stretched back to creation. They explained and regulated the material world or, at least, particular sections of it at certain times. Following the Anti in time were the Anti-ma-aomata who were half spirit and half human. Finally full humans, the aomata or bakatibu, the ancestors, appeared. In this way the Gilbertese telescoped time to render it more comprehensible. The Gilbertese also had a creator god named

Na Areau. There were many Anti but the Gilbertese were not confused by the complexity of their religious pantheon because all people did not acknowledge all Anti. Instead, they identified with those Anti linked to their kainga sites and, as individuals had access to various kainga sites, more than one Anti was followed. Belief in the Anti was therefore related to particular 'interests' or identifications. The Anti, if correctly 'worshipped', would protect those interests. Further, it is reputed that it was the Anti who gave particular skills and specialized knowledge, most likely to the utu who traditionally lived on a portion of the kainga land.  

Worship took place outside at the bangota, or ancestral shrine, which was generally on the ocean side within the kainga. Captain William Hudson described the bangota:

... a flat slab of coral stone about 3' high and 2' wide - set up and dressed with a thick wreath or castral of coconut leaves. It was placed in the centre of a circular platform of sand and pebbles about 9' in diameter - raised 5" or 6" above the soil - and surrounded by a ring of stones.

Sometimes the bangota was enclosed by coconut posts with twine; many were inside the maneaba. The shrine or pillar had a hollow in the middle about ten to twelve inches in diameter. It was to this hollow that 'the priest applies his ear and is supposed to receive from thence the instructions of the divinity'. Communication between the Anti and the living took place...

37 Arthur Grimble, Gilbertese Myths, Legends and Oral Traditions, PMB 69, 27; Parkinson, 'Translation', 58. The specialized knowledge or skill could be borrowed by any other utu member on request but could not be divulged to 'outsiders' and in that sense was jealously guarded. However, knowledge could be diffused to a certain extent because the utu was not a static unilateral group but a versatile non-unilinear group in which utu could be viewed as either close or distant kin. See William H. Geddes, 'Social Individualization on Tabiteuea Atoll', JPS, 86, 1977, 380-2. See also Martin G. Silverman, Disconcerting Issue: Meaning and Struggle in a Resettled Pacific Community, Chicago, 1971, 231-6.

38 Hudson, Journal of the U.S. Exploring Expedition, 236.

39 Ibid.; Parkinson, 'Translation', 54-55.
through visions, dreams, but more especially through whistling. The whistling needed to be interpreted by the 'priest' or family head. Presentations of food and prayers were offered to the Anti who was entreated for favours or begged to desist from punishments. Fear was an important component of the worship but room was left for manipulation of the Anti. A particular pattern of behaviour would almost guarantee a reaction on the part of the Anti. The atua referred to the totems or emblems of the Anti. These totems were not worshipped in themselves but could be neither killed nor eaten, the latter of which was regarded as incest. Magic abounded but its tone was protective rather than malevolent. Evil needed to be kept at bay.⁴⁰

There was no distinct priestly class as such although there were the sorcerers, whom Professor Maude refers to as ibonga or Tani Kaiwa who generally came from the boti 0. The term ibonga is a generic one. The practitioners of kaiwa followed one of four schools of divinations. Their predictions of the future were based on te tai or coconut leaves and knots; te tau kirikiri or the pattern of small stones; te naveau or the folding of young coconut leaves and kaiwa, the drawing of lots. In addition, there were also those who practised kai ni kamaen which provided the magic formula and set out the rites to assist in the composition of dances and songs.

R. Parkinson, the German ethnographer who visited the Gilberts in 1889, did not differentiate between the various functions of the ibonga and characterized all those practising magic as Zaubere (magician) or Wundermann (miracle man). Although various schools and activities existed and different types of knowledge were held by different people,

the real differential is between the utu ibonga and specialists outside this category. Specialized knowledge was the property of the utu and within each utu, there would be those with skills of divination to which utu members could come requesting assistance without offering immediate compensation. The assistance to achieve advantage in war, love, the dance or good health was usually available to utu members only.

There were occasions, particularly in wartime, when recourse to the most skilful ibonga, with the most powerful Anti, was sought. The relationship between the ibonga and his Anti was most important. It was the skill and knowledge of the ibonga in entreating the Anti to heed his bidding which marked an ibonga as effective. The skill and knowledge of the ibonga and the power of the Anti were both involved. The Gilbertese adhered to the belief in relative power and it was not considered disloyal to disregard kinship ties so as to enlist the assistance of a specialist outside the boundaries of the utu. 41

Gilbertese song, poetry and dance were also part of this framework; they were laced with magical incantations and were handed down by the tanikaini kamaen. 42 The island dances were really dance songs. A seated group formed a circle and chanted while the dancers performed in front of them. The music came from the rhythm of the beating of the men's pandanus matted skirts. These dances were not lascivious and the performing girls and women needed to maintain a vacant facial expression. It was the singers who worked themselves into a frenzied excitement.


contrasting with the strict control of the female dancers. The male
dancers were allowed both facial expression and vigour in their
dancing.

Gilbertese dance was testimony to a strong sense of precision and
control but it also allowed for an emotional outlet when hysteria occurred.
Dance also provided a means of display which was shunned in other aspects of
life plus a means of competition in a non-competitive society. Especially
did different maneaba districts enjoy competition with one another through
dancing. Along with dancing, the racing of miniature canoes and the flying
of kites, when victory was 'awarded to him whose kite reaches the highest
point of perpendicularity', provided a means of competition and display. The Gilbertese were subjected to a continuum of value systems throughout the
group but the basic over-riding elements were control and subjugation of the
self. A delicate balance existed not only in the ecology of the Gilbert
Islands but in its society. Control and an absence of display placed
strains on the Islanders but were balanced by outlets. Bingham was to
criticize these 'outlets' without understanding the role which they played
within society. He was not so interested in trying to understand Gilbertese
society as in re-modelling it according to his ideals.

Although the emphasis in Gilbertese society was on self-control and
diffidence, room was made for vindictiveness, personal vengeance,
exhibition of skills, competition and display to take place within certain
limits. Egalitarianism was especially strong in the south. Within the
two kingdoms, an individual knew his or her place in the hierarchical
system, although Butaritari was a far more fluid society than that of
Abemama. At Abaiang, as at Marakei, Tarawa and Maiana, the need for
personal ambition was given fuller freedom because of the war-torn situation.

43 Bingham to HMCS, 29 October 1863, CM.
In this context, a man could distinguish himself as a successful war-lord or uea and it was in this capacity that Temaua of Abaiang would try to prove himself.

Contact between the Gilbertese and foreigners, notably Europeans, commenced in a sustained way from the 1820's onwards with the coming of the whaling ships. Over seventy different ships touched at some island in the group till the period of the 1850's. Not all islands had the same volume of contact. On the whole, there was little the Gilbertese could offer the voyagers but the whaling ships did need water, wood and coconuts. Butaritari was better supplied with these commodities than any other island in the group. The whaling captains commenced the coconut oil trade as a side business. Ship captains were generally the only ones to actually land on the islands to stay for any length of time.

Both sides were eager to trade. The Gilbertese wanted iron and steel tools while sea captains wanted coconut oil and any souvenirs. Captain Davenport of the *Alfred* found 'coconuts ... and a few mats and bonnet hats ... very exceptable [sic] to our ship's company'. The island women were also very acceptable to the ship's company and the nikaronroro, that portion of Gilbertese women who were unattached and supported themselves from their lovers, were often available. All other women were jealously guarded by their fathers, husbands and brothers. 'Hail the canoes!' wrote the Captain of the *Zone* when at Tabiteuea in 1856. Trade for 'shells,

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44 A perusal of the whaling logs to the Gilbert Islands between 1820 and 1888 was made.

45 Log of the *Alfred*, 22 March 1847 - PMB 801.
green coconuts, mats and fish' commenced at 1 p.m.; 'three Waihinas ... staid [sic] aboard until 4 P.M. when they left the ship.'

Iron and steel implements were not the sole items Europeans provided. Very quickly, tobacco became not only another trade item but the one most valued, providing the very measure of barter. Yet in 1836, when the 

_Corsair_ visited Nikunau, the Gilbertese there were entirely ignorant of its use. William Reney, aboard the _Corsair_, describes the encounter:

I offered them tobacco, which they accepted. I put a piece in my mouth, to convince them it was not injurious; they imitated me by putting a piece in their mouths, but soon spat it out.

Tobacco was soon 'the only article called for'. In 1841, the United States Exploring Expedition found that the:

chief desire was to obtain tobacco, of which they seem to be extravagantly fond; it was their constant request, and whilst in their canoes alongside, or on deck, the cry was constantly "tebake", ... so eager were they after it, that when one had put a piece in his mouth, others would seize him, and actually force it out with their fingers. On Tarawa, the islanders were entirely ignorant of the use of tobacco'. The Europeans brought pigs and chickens which the Gilbertese propagated and traded back to the Europeans for tobacco. The _Maria Theresa_ procured fowl, fish, coconuts and some mats for 'Tobacco and pipes'. Hogs were bought for a few heads of tobacco. The barter was set: food for tobacco. The trade in implements still continued. In July of 1855, Captain Handy landed '5 kegs of tobacco' on Abaiang but also '2 doz. hatchets and 4 doz. sheath knives'. The previous year he had

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46 Log of the _Zone_, 25–27 August 1856, 16 September 1856 – PMB 831. See also Maude and Leeson, 'The Coconut Oil Trade', passim, for a very comprehensive survey of early European contacts with the Gilbertese.


48 Wilkes, _Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition_, 49.
landed '9 pieces of cloth'. This was unusual; cloth was not valued by the Gilbertese.\(^{49}\)

From the whaling ships came the beachcombers, strays not only from the ships but from their home society as well. On the whole, beachcombers lived in accordance with Gilbertese custom and presented no real alternative life style. Relationships between I Matangs or Europeans and the Gilbertese were based largely on conformity to Gilbertese codes of behaviour and standards. One European who had been on Nikanau since 1836 was manufacturing sour toddy for sale to visiting ships. The Gilbertese previously had lacked the knowledge of making an alcoholic beverage from the coconut tree. The increasing availability of liquor, alcoholic toddy and firearms was to leave its mark on the islands.\(^{50}\)

The first party of missionaries to the Gilberts in 1852, however, was shocked that so little of the more useful assets of western civilization had found their way into these islands. Luther Gulick wrote:

> We were surprised to find so few useful articles introduced among the people in exchange of the hundreds of barrels of oil the foreigners have exported. Gunpowder, muskets & tobacco with a few knives seem to be all they have brought for trade. Neither cloth nor knives in any number or quantity whatsoever are to be found among them.\(^{51}\)

Little food was imported so the Gilbertese ate the same food items as before. The pigs and chickens brought in by the I Matangs were not consumed by the Gilbertese except at feasts and later in the 1870's when drought ravaged the

\(^{49}\) Log of the Maria Theresa, 3 February 1860 - PMB 325; Log of the Belle, 3-11 July 1855 - PMB 680.

\(^{50}\) Maude and Leeson, 'The Coconut Oil Trade', 401.

\(^{51}\) Ibid., 410; Gulick, 'Micronesia', 80.
ammunition, liquor and tobacco for all. He had a sharp mind and learnt to speak 'the language almost like a native'.

Nine years later in 1849, Captain Ichabod Handy of Fairhaven, Massachusetts, and principal owner of the barque Belle, commenced oil trading at Abaiang. In 1851, he unloaded 29,000 gallons of coconut oil in Sydney and from then on whaling became a sideline. By 1855 the oil trade was concentrated on Butaritari, Abaiang and Abemama. Handy withdrew from the trade leaving Randell, who had since formed a partnership with Charles Smith of Sydney and shipping manager Hugh Fairclough, without real competition. He had agents, both European and Gilbertese, on the Islands of Abaiang, Tarawa, Maiana and Tabiteuea.

In the Islands of Abaiang and Tarawa, the traders' activities served to undermine stability. It was not so much the introduction of firearms as the fact that aspiring chiefs became oil agents for traders which gave them an advantage in the competition for power over the island. Jealousies were intensified. To become an oil agent of a competing trader was tantamount to declaring war against other oil agents in the district or on the island. Another avenue for prestige had been created; another tool to secure power had been forged.

The society which Bingham came to, therefore, was vastly different to his native Hawaii. It did not provide a stable political stage on which Bingham could enact his missionary plan based on his father's experience in Hawaii. Bingham's code of ideals based on the common good and sharing among a community of believers was hardly applicable to a society splintered into various boti with each lineage striving to pursue its own interest.

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55 Maude and Leeson, 'The Coconut Oil Trade', 404.
Bingham settled as resident missionary on Abaiang in the Gilbert Islands between 1857-1864 and 1873-1875. He was perceived by the Islanders through the lenses of their own world view. A web of misunderstandings developed between Bingham and the Abaiang people. Bingham made only fleeting visits to the other ten islands which were to be taken by either the ABCFM or the HEA. The Hawaiian missionaries, who were under the control of the HEA, were placed on eight of the Gilbert Islands in the northern and central sections. It was Bingham's central policy to have these Hawaiian missionaries operate independently on their particular islands. There they stayed for many a decade without much evidence of success. Missionary events on the island of Tabiteuea, however, took a different pattern. Here, Bingham's two brief visits were to have repercussions. Here, the missionary success all had waited for in the Gilberts occurred. An investigation into events on that island, however, would cast further doubt on Bingham's policy of leaving the Hawaiians to their own devices.
Bingham's church at Koinawa, Abaiang — rebuilt in 1870 after the first Christian church ever erected in the Gilbert Islands was desecrated by the war between Abaiang and Tarawa in 1869. The 1870 church was dedicated on 18 November 1871. Two years later a fine bell, the gift of Honolulu friends, was hung in a thatched tower. (Photo courtesy of HMCS Library, Honolulu)
Bingham was twenty-six when he arrived at Koinawa, Abaiang with Clarissa and his Hawaiian associate Kanoa with his wife Kahola. Bingham was over six feet tall, gaunt and with watery blue eyes. Outwardly diffident, his quiet exterior disguised an intense determination. He was a man bent on success and he was determined to establish a successful mission base on Abaiang. His father, Hiram Bingham Snr., had claimed a major part in the 'Christianization' of Hawaii. Now it was the son's turn to achieve similar results in the Gilberts. He would follow the tactics of the early missionaries in Hawaii. They had converted the influential chiefs who, in turn, had persuaded their people to follow Christianity. Bingham would attempt to do likewise at Abaiang.

Bingham landed at Koinawa not only with a distinct missionary policy but also with an inner vision based on his ideals and his own personal interpretation of the Protestant Christian message. He hoped to inaugurate a new rule based on Biblical principles where the government was a reflection of God's benevolent government in the universe. Bingham envisaged a loving community which was made up of both ruler and the ruled,
including men and women, young and old. This common bond and community spirit between Christians was precious and worth more than any material wealth. This was the message Bingham was to give to the Gilbertese.

God's government was not only benevolent, however, it was also omnipotent. Whilst Christians earned the benefits of God's benevolences, those who refused God's commands and did not enter the Christian community made themselves rebels against God and his government of the Universe. This view would colour Bingham's perceptions of future events on Abaiang. Those who disobeyed God's commands were rebels, argued Bingham, because they hindered the progress of Christ's Kingdom on Earth. Hence, there was an element of urgency for Bingham as he and other Christian workers like him were directly responsible for the hastening of the Millennium. The missionary brig was aptly named the Morning Star. The Gilbertese on Abaiang, for their part, did not share Bingham's view of God or the cosmos. They had their own Anti and lived in a world punctuated by wars.

The Binghams had been met by Temaua when they had first landed at Koinawa. Temaua was also known as Teaoti, a Gilbertese version of George, indicating that some European had viewed him as 'king' of the island as George was King of England or even King of Tonga. The trader Richard Randell, however, regarded the son, Kaiea, as 'the most popular and influential man on the island'; he was Randell's oil agent. Yet, at the time of the Binghams' arrival, Temaua had established himself only recently at Koinawa after having disposed of its former chief Bureka. Previously, Temaua had warred against another chief, Kokoria, in northern Abaiang. Still, his power was not yet consolidated. Hitherto, he had lived at Ribono, an islet north of Abaiang. He had, however, some land near Koinawa and, feeling too isolated so north of Abaiang, had decided to

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1 Bingham, 'Journal of a Voyage to Apaiang', 2, BFPH, box 12, 100. The Gilbertese do not have separate letters for b and p. Early American missionaries used p whereas nowadays b is used as in Abaiang.
move nearer to the centre of the island from where he could wage war more successfully and so accumulate more power.\footnote{Here, as elsewhere when indicated, I am relying on my notes of field investigations during my two field-trips to Kiribati during 1979 and 1981. In this case the information was gathered in 1979. On many an occasion, information was given me on the understanding that I should be discreet with its use. Due to the present-day pertinence of the fortunes of forebears, identification of information is not given, for which I apologize. A full set of documented field notes, however, can be provided to examiners on request. (Hereafter field notes will be referred to as Rennie, Field Notes, 1979 or 1981.) See also Niel Gunson, 'Abaiang and its Dynasty under Missionary Influence' for discussion on the relationships of the chiefs. This unpublished paper was kindly provided by the author.}
Bureka had escaped to Ouba, one of the Abaiang islets on the windward side of Abaiang and in close proximity to Tarawa. His cousin Tewaki, whose land was at both Atirababa near Koinawa and Tabontebike at the southern tip of the island, deemed it wise to move also. He shifted to Tarawa and settled on his land there at Nuatabu in the north. Bureka joined him later and asked for his assistance in planning a retaliatory war against Temaua. Bureka had no land on Tarawa and hence no power. It was essential that he return to Koinawa to reclaim his land.  

This situation demonstrates that the Binghams did not arrive in a society which was fixed and stable with a definite head; they merely entered the scene at a particular phase in the developing kaleidoscope of island rivalries. Yet Bingham made the error right from the start of regarding Temaua as 'king' of Abaiang. Bingham asked Temaua if he and his companions could stay. Temaua was delighted to have them, no doubt hoping that it would consolidate his tenuous position at Koinawa, since the presence of white men gave him both status and hopefully material power. This had been previously demonstrated by the presence of traders on Abaiang. Bingham met these expectations initially by presenting Temaua with gifts of 'a sheath knife, plane irons, file, small looking glass and a bunch of beads'. Temaua reciprocated by allowing the Binghams to bring the lumber for their house on to Koinawa and by offering them a piece of land on which to build their home. He offered them a choice of three locations. The Binghams chose the site furthest away from Koinawa at Tabonteba, approximately half a kilometre from the main settlement. The Binghams chose this location because of the need for seclusion of which they had had

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3 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
4 Bingham, 'Journal of a Voyage to Apaiang', 2, BFPH, Box 12.
little since their marriage. After assembling their house, Bingham built a high fence around it. To the Bingham family, this fence symbolized their personal need of privacy.

Political rivalries, skirmishes and warfare were commonplace to the people of Abaiang. Warfare was both a reflection of and a further cause of the inherent factionalism of Gilbertese society. Warfare and the religious cosmos were inextricably linked for the Gilbertese. Victory in warfare was not only victory for the *uea* and his followers but also for the *Anti* who bestowed the gift of victory upon them. Everything emanated from the *Anti*, valour, wisdom and strength. Nothing developed naturally in human beings, be it valour in battle or individual inspiration for the creation of poetry and song. Thus it was the *tanikairikamaen* who were the poets and song-writers because they could successfully implore the gift of creation from the *Anti*. The particular magic they used was called *kario* which aided in bringing down the inspiration from the *Anti*. The *ibonga* were also the healers of the sick because they had the gift of healing. The *ibonga*, from whom all families could seek aid, was therefore a very important man because of his ability to secure the assistance of the *Anti*; but in no area was he so important as in warfare. A war chief never embarked on a war without consulting his seer. The sorcerers were involved also in the other side of war, peace-making. They would try to either avoid war or to seek peace negotiations when the opportunity arose. Each party would have their own sorcerer. So these practitioners of magic were involved in every aspect of warfare; they advised on whether to engage in battle or not, which action to take and when, and they negotiated the terms of peace. Their homes were

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5 Bingham to Lydia, 16 March 1858, BFPH, box 4.

also places of refuge. During wars, therefore, sorcerers or *ibonga* were carefully sought out. They were especially secretive and their houses were surrounded by tall fences.\(^7\)

Tewaki, following the beckonings of his cousin Bureka, prepared to war against Temaua. He resorted to magic. He spent three months at Buariki at the northern tip of Tarawa where he bathed himself before sunrise at high tide uttering magical incantations. He also went to Taratai to his relatives where he enlisted the aid of a sorcerer named Noubwebwe. This man may have come from his own *utu*. Another sorcerer, Kantabu, however, was recruited from Marakei and most likely was a specialist. Tewaki, in addition, had many men he could count on for he was a war hero from the war Nanon te Rawa in northern Tarawa. These men he gathered at Buariki and after consultation with his sorcerers decided to launch his attack on Temaua three days after the full moon in the month of February of 1858.\(^8\)

Temaua, aware of the proposed attack through his spies, rounded up his men from the north of Abaiang at Koinawa. The fighting men, along with their women and children, passed by the Bingham's front door. Tewaki not only had to confront Temaua but also Kabunare whose land was at Tuarabu in south Abaiang. Kabunare was a cousin of Temaua by marriage, the former's mother being a sister of Temaua's wife. Looking through his telescope, Bingham saw five canoes approaching Abaiang from north Tarawa. Kaiea, Temaua's son, was soon at Bingham's door asking for the loan of his telescope. Kaiea had been shown this seemingly magical instrument in his former inspection of the Bingham home. He must have quickly realized its

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\(^7\) Maude, *The Gilbertese Boti*, 33. Tall fences or walls of coral stone were built for other reasons than to protect the secrecy of sorcerers. Walls were also built for defence, to demarcate the boundaries of the *kainga* or for privacy for the benefit of others than the sorcerers. The houses of Tabuarik, one of the most widely known *Antī*, were a sanctuary for refugees. There were also other particular places on islands, which having a sacred quality were recognized as places of refuge to most people on an island. Such a place is the *kainga* of Kabubuarengara in Temanoku village on Tabiteuea.

\(^8\) Rennie, Field Notes, 1979; Bingham to Lydia, 16 March 1858, BFPH, box 4.
practical application. One look into the instrument now to spot the approaching canoes of Tewaki and he was gone. The men went on to meet the oncoming fleet while the women and children stayed at the Bingham's abode. Their house had become a refuge.

Before the attack Bingham gave his blessing to Temaua and Kaiea and prayed on their behalf. Unbeknown to him this action embroiled him more deeply into the Gilbertese world of war. The armed warriors were assembled very near to the Bingham premises as it was expected that Tewaki would land there. Bingham calculated later that approximately 100 canoes had come, many forty feet in length, which was long for the Gilbert group, and carrying ten to twenty warriors. Given that the total population of Tarawa at this time was near 3,400, this would seem to have been an exaggeration as only a section of north Tarawa was involved. Nevertheless, Bingham was understandably alarmed. Bingham recalled the moment:

A navy of savages was bearing down. There was no "Morning Star" for us to take refuge in. There were no mountains to flee to, no caves to take refuge in, no neighbouring island to escape to.

At my request Kanoa and family united with us in asking our Blessed Master to care for us ... to care for our poor people to whom we had come to tell of a Saviour's dying love ...

We prayed earnestly and frequently that if possible no blood might be shed but if this could not be, that an invading enemy might be repulsed and our people spared to us.

The Tarawan canoes changed direction and sailed southward to Komatine near Tewaki's relatives.

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9 Bingham to Lydia, 6 May 1858, BFPH, box 4; Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.

10 Bingham to ABCFM, 5 March 1858, ABCFM Papers, reel 1. Canoes in other parts of the Pacific were much longer. For instance the longest Fijian canoes were 100 to 120 feet in length. These canoes, however, were constructed differently from those of the Gilberts. As there were no tall thick trees in the Gilberts, the Islanders were forced to make their canoes from 'sewing' pieces of wood together; they could not hollow out a log. The largest canoe in the Gilberts was probably that of Kaiea whose canoe of 70 feet was a marvel to Bingham.
Each side fought valiantly but both war leaders, Tewaki and Temaua, died in battle. Bingham visited the battlefield the following day. Temaua had a hatchet 'buried in his face, his nose being split in two'. Corpses lay on the ground, many of which had had their heads removed. The headless corpse of Tewaki was gloated over. On one body, the Abaiang people, deemed the victors, had voided their excrement, indicating their contempt and hatred. Kaiea had survived but his left cheek had been lacerated by a spear. This later became swollen but Bingham took care of Kaiea and washed and dressed his wound daily till it healed.11 Oral history claims that Kaiea won the battle because he had Bingham's blessing. Even the descendants of the defeated Tewaki argue this today. Bingham had prayed to his God, or, as the Gilbertese saw it, his Anti, Jehovah. Informants also claim that Bingham gave firearms to Temaua and Kaiea and taught their side a battle hymn. The Gilbertese had their own victory and battle songs. They were composed by the sorcerers and were regarded as highly important. The one claimed for Bingham was the Sunday School Army Hymn which went:

Oh, do not be discouraged,  
For Jesus is your friend;  
He will give you grace to conquer,  
And keep you to the end.12

It is most improbable that Bingham gave firearms as the Morning Star did not carry them. It is also unlikely that the above hymn, which was translated by Clarissa Bingham, was ready just two months after the Binghams' arrival. What these stories do demonstrate is, however, the belief in the importance of Bingham to the battle's outcome. Kaiea now held a reasonably firm position on Abaiang. He had consolidated his hold on Koinawa and, with Kabunare as his ally, he had most of Abaiang in his favour. Bingham

11 Ibid.

12 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979. See Appendix for copy of a Gilbertese war song.
hoped he now had a leader with whom he could build a new society on biblical principles.

A very different situation prevailed on Tarawa. Control of this island was split into larger factions with a particular rivalry between the north and the south. Towards the close of 1858, Kaiea was visited by 'several of the high chiefs from Tarawa who came with their congratulations. One Tarawan was the great grandson of the old king of Tarawa who [was] betrothed to a daughter of [their] king...’ The 'old king' referred to was Marera who came from the Nabeina area in northern Tarawa which was, however, a deal further south from Buariki from where Tewaki had launched his attack against Temaua. Marera was not a king but merely a chief. There was no one 'king' on Tarawa but the high chief with the greatest potential for power was Kourabi. He was the grandson of Tabau, who although over eighty by this time, had once been a mighty warrior having fought in over nineteen battles, testimony to the instability of Tarawan politics. His grandson was recognized as acting high chief because his son Taberannag had been blinded in battle. The Reverend Samuel Damon, who visited the Gilberts in 1860, described Kourabi as 'a thorough Tarawan giving himself up to the pleasure and rollicking habits of a "fast man"'. Yet Damon also thought of him as a stern ruler. The jurisdiction of his rule was limited to the area around Nabeina - Tabiang, Nea, Tabiteuea and Koinaba. Kourabi had warred only recently against the people of Tabiang and was thought to have received special magic from a sorcerer named Taoani from Betio. Sorcerers were ever in the middle of political intrigues and could act as spies as well as advisors. They were therefore approached

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13 Bingham to Lydia, 12 December 1858, BFPH, box 4.

14 Samuel Damon, 'Glimpses and Glances at the Sights, Scenes and People of Micronesia', 1861, Morning Star Papers, MM-HEA.
cautiously and tentatively. Kourabi had other contacts in Betio, the southern tip of Tarawa. His wife Tokaua was a Betio woman and his father had some support there. It is probable that Kourabi harboured desires to extend his rule down to Betio, but there were those who were determined that this should never happen.

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15 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
In 1859 Bingham and the new Hawaiian assistant Mahoe, who had come to the Gilberts the previous year straight from the missionary seminary at Honolulu, visited north Tarawa. They travelled in the small boat *Alfred* which was towed by one of Kaiea's forty-foot war canoes. Kourabi received them kindly and the following year a permanent station was set up in his territory to be supervised by Mahoe and another Hawaiian, Haina, who arrived in 1860. Haina was a very different type of man to the educated Mahoe; he lacked his charisma and polish. Kourabi promised to protect the two Hawaiians and their families and when they were troubled by a thief, the offender was put to death. Mahoe noted that the people were 'greatly afraid of the king' but he cared for them [the Hawaiians] 'in a friendly way'.

The fortunes of the mission appeared to be on the rise. Missionary bases had been established at Koinawa (Abaiang) and Nabeina (Tarawa). Kaiea had a hold, though still tenuous, on Abaiang. Further, he had links with some of the chiefs of northern Tarawa. Kourabi was perceived by many as a strong ruler even though his jurisdiction was over a limited area. Kaiea had ordered a $600.00 timber 'palace' demonstrating his desire for the display of his power. He did not evidence too much interest in using Christian principles as a base line for his rule. Yet, in March 1859, 'with permission of royalty', a site was purchased in Koinawa for a chapel. By May the construction was completed. The following year the first school-house was erected. The church had symbolic importance for it signified the setting up of a shrine. The Gilbertese had their own shrines, *bangota*, the most important of which were housed in the *maneaba*.

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16 Bingham, 'First Missionary Voyages of the "Star of Peace" to the Islands of Maiana and Marakei, 1860', CM; Bingham to Lydia, 9 September 1859, BFPH, box 5; Mahoe to Clark, 7 February 1861, MM-HEA.
chapel was built to house 300; the average Sabbath attendance was fifty. Of those fifty, one regular attender was Kaiea. In 1860 Bingham wrote: 'The king and a few others attend very regularly, and often remain through the Sabbath school ...' The Sabbath was not as yet observed but Kaiea refused to buy oil on that day.  

Bingham began to feel that at last his efforts were beginning to be blessed by the Holy Spirit. Kaiea had put aside all his wives except one, Kaobanang. A few adults, including Kaiea and his now sole wife Kaobanang, had learned to read and write. Kaiea had banned alcohol in 1859 after falling ill as a result of its excessive use. He attended prayer meetings while Kaobanang took a leading role in the women's prayer meetings. Kaiea had also given up smoking. Polygamy, drink and tobacco were frowned upon by the American Protestant missionaries. Kaiea appeared to be attempting to follow Bingham's instructions. Yet he obviously perceived Christianity simply as a series of tabu rather than the adoption of a Christian perspective. Bingham probably acknowledged the fact that Kaiea treated Christianity as a set of ritual rules but he was heartened that at least a start had been made. Thus when he received another call to take over the Stone Church in Honolulu, he wrote to Anderson in Boston:

You will not wonder that just at this present time I should feel exceedingly reluctant to leave my field when it seems in some respects to be ripening in two or three villages for a harvest; when the king is as it were now about deciding whether he will serve the Lord with all his heart, giving up all to Him, or whether he will lay up for himself treasure on earth.  

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17 Bingham to Anderson, 20 September 1862, BFPH, box 5; Bingham to Anderson, 4 November 1859, BFPH, box 5; Bingham to Anderson, 12 September 1860, ABCFM Papers, reel 2.

18 Bingham to HMCS, April 1861, CM.

19 Bingham to Anderson, 4 November 1859, BFPH, box 5; Bingham to Anderson, 30 May 1861, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
Kaiea also offered to take Bingham to Butaritari which was of great assistance as the little Star of Peace was not the most seaworthy of boats. Bingham was convinced that 'Every village must be reached.' He looked to Kaiea for assistance in this and wrote to the Reverend Ephraim Clark in Honolulu: 'What an amount of religious instruction he might impart throughout the group if his whole head should be given to the work of saving souls.'

By early 1862 war again threatened. On northern Tarawa, Kourabi's brother-in-law Roua took two oil agents under his patronage from a trader other than Smith, Randell & Fairclough. This act was interpreted by Kourabi as a challenge to his leadership. Previously he had been sole oil agent which gave him both prestige and wealth. In fear of reprisal, Roua escaped with his followers to the south of Abaiang. Back in 1860, another party had been driven off Tarawa by Kourabi. All the Tarawan refugees shared a deep dissatisfaction with Kourabi's rising ambitions. Meanwhile, in the nearby island of Marakei, inter-family feuds had resulted in certain refugees landing on Abaiang as well. Along with Kaiea's sister and her following, usually domiciled on Tarawa but now at Abaiang, and the Tarawan father-in-law of Kaiea's two daughters, a strain was soon placed on the limited resources of Abaiang. The fact that the Gilbert Islands were undergoing a period of drought aggravated matters. Therefore, it appeared prudent for Kaiea to rid himself of the additional population.

20 Bingham to Clark, 17 April 1861, MM-HEA.

21 Bingham to Anderson, 29 September 1862, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; Bingham to Lydia, 16 December 1861, BFPN, box 5; Haina to Clark, 24 September 1862, MM-HEA. This letter was translated from the original Hawaiian by Kiope Raymond in Honolulu. I extend my thanks to him for translating many Hawaiian letters in the Micronesian Mission-HEA Papers, 1852-1900, located at the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society Library in Honolulu. (Hereinafter translated Hawaiian letters, all by Kiope Raymond, will be cited as 'translated from the original Hawaiian').
Kaiea decided to take up the cause of the Tarawan refugees and to return them to their home island. He equipped himself with his fleet of 300 canoes and two cannon. The whole operation was discussed with Bingham who condoned the action as long as Kaiea took the role of arbitrator and not aggressor against Kourabi. Bingham was uneasy because there was a mission station under Kourabi's control. On the other hand, Kourabi was far from paramount in Tarawa. It was conceivable that another Tarawan chief would challenge him. He wrote with concern to his sister Lydia:

Whether Te Kourapi can hope for the unity of Tarawa, with as great a degree of confidence as can Victor Emmanuel for "a united Italy" may be doubted. How far our king may attempt to force his arbitration I can hardly conjecture ... He is very far from growing in grace.²²

Kaiea did not take Bingham's advice and behaved most aggressively. Kourabi was almost forced to flee his island but for the timely intervention of Captain Richard Randell who did not want to lose his trading post. Kaiea had humiliated Kourabi and the scene was set for further revenge.

During the turmoil of war, little respect was shown towards mission property. The side fence of the chapel was broken while inside mats and cushions were torn, with some of the items stolen. The identity of those guilty is given merely as the 'crowds at Koinawa'.²³ Further disturbances occurred when Mahoe, stationed at Nabeina (Tarawa) under Kourabi's care, returned to Abaiang accompanied by a Tarawan when all intercourse between the two islands had ceased. This act was probably not only seen as violating protocol but may have led to the belief that the Hawaiian missionaries were actually spies. Even Bingham's reputation

²² Bingham to Lydia, 16 December 1861, BFPH, box 5.
²³ Ibid.
could have come into question. His mission had a station at both
Koinawa (Abaiang) and Nabeina (Tarawa). Bingham made an annual tour to
Tarawa in his boat, the Star of Peace, and he had been reticent in advising
Kaiea to attack Kourabi.

Bingham noted that Kaiea had suffered a relapse into paganism because
of the war but the relapse was of short duration. In 1863, Kaiea turned
again to Christianity with more seriousness than before; Bingham became
his chief advisor. According to Bingham, he liberated over 100 'slaves'.
In fact, Kaiea had released those paying tribute to him from this
obligation. He set up juries of twelve men to settle law cases. He also
renounced his tobacco agency to his financial detriment, between $400.00
and $500.00 per annum, a substantial sum. He had been the agent for two
Sydney firms as well as an Hawaiian one called Gelett & James. Kaiea went
further by imposing a duty of $5.00 for every 50-gallon cask of oil

24 Bingham to Anderson, 20 September 1862, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; Bingham
to Anderson, 7 May 1863, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.

I am not attempting to project an image of the Islanders on Abaiang
viewing Bingham on irrational grounds. Rationality, like truth, is related
to the perception of the individual actors. The belief that Bingham and
his Hawaiians could have been spies was natural in an atmosphere of wars and
political intrigues. Few could be trusted. To a large extent, it was the
structure of Pacific societies which fashioned reactions to white men.
Hence in Ponape, as Dr Ilma O'Brien so persuasively argues, the Ponapeans
lured foreigners into their scheme of things. They exploited a situation
of cultural interaction and used beachcombers as intermediaries and
Protestantism as a means of opposition to Spanish rule. But they were
able to do this because their society was divided into independent states
and the title system lent an element of versatility. Because of the
centralized system of Kosrae, King George viewed traders as dangerous and strove
to ban or control them while thirsting for European knowledge. The rulers
of Kosrae who accepted Snow's presence, laid the ground for their own
demise. On Tanna, Vanuata, the Tannese viewed the Reverend John Paton in
terms of their own socio-political system. In all cases, Islanders were
approaching the event of white presence nationally on their own terms.
That some Islanders exploited the situation better is not related to
rationality but to the particulars of socio-political organization.

See Ilma E. O'Brien, 'Cultural Continuity and Conversion in the Eastern
Carolines: a study of interaction between islanders and Christian
missionaries in Ponape and Kosrae', Ph.D. Thesis, La Trobe University,
1979; Ron Adams, In the Land of Strangers: A Century of European Contact
with Tanna, 1774-1874, Canberra, 1984.
purchased with tobacco. This money was to be used for national defences, internal improvements and the general benefit of the people, in short, 'for the general good'.

To rule for 'the common good' was incompatible with the Gilbertese concept of family rivalry and the assertiveness of ambitious families over weaker ones. It was not that Kaiea had given up the goal of rulership. Rather, he plied Bingham with questions on the best course of being a Christian ruler. Evidently, Kaiea had decided to rule by charity rather than by force. He would maintain his power through the love of his people rather than their fear. He would be their benefactor and in return he would receive his people's gratitude. It is obvious from where these idealistic notions of 'the common good' and benevolent love came.

Bingham's emphasis on love was peculiar in that it was conceived by him as an approach to restructuring society on Abaiang. In contrast, Snow, on Kosrae and in the Marshalls, championed the cause of the commoners against the chiefs. He accepted a division of interests. The Reverend James Egan Moulton, in Tonga, likewise believed in a division of power, oppositions and checks and balances. It was these ideas he taught at Tupou College. Both these men were contemporaries of Bingham yet they did not share Bingham's concept of benevolent love as a principle for organizing society. In fact, Bingham subscribed to ideas akin to Jeffersonian Republicanism at the turn of the century and to tactics adopted by missionaries to Hawaii in the 1820s. He looked to the past. Writing in October 1863, Bingham outlined his thoughts on a fund being used to benefit

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25 Bingham to Clark, 3 October 1863, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; Bingham to Clark, 20 October 1863, ABCFM Papers, reel 3. See Gunson, 'Abaiang and its Dynasty', for discussion on the repercussions of Kaiea's actions inspired by the missionaries.
the community through defence and internal improvements and then went on to say:

To this the high chief alluded to readily consents and seems to think the idea a good one. May he never aspire to the kingship. How many kings of the present day would consent to give up the greater part of their private income on such grounds, and to devote the whole duty from imports for charitable purposes among their people, and all the license fees, for the general good. May we not call such a man a wise and Christian ruler; and the more so since he has liberated all his own personal slaves ... May his name long be associated with Alexander and Lincoln.²⁶

Bingham had Kaiea under his influence.

Bingham dated the first revival of religion on this island of Abaiang to mid-1863. A mission party of twenty, mostly women, had formed in Koinawa. The church was always full. According to the Hawaiian missionary Aumai 'they want to hear the word of God. There is no noise, disturbance, laughter, gadding about.',²⁷ Many were clothed. This was in marked contrast to earlier congregations. There were now three schoolhouses with between thirty and 105 attending. These students learnt handwriting, map-reading, singing and reading. Kaiea's wife Kaobanang was baptized along with other women. Her Christian name was Elizabeth. Later that year Kaiea was also baptized and took the Christian name of Abraham. The significance of this name cannot be overstated. Abraham was the patriarch, the protector and the founder of a flourishing new tribe. A quiet, Christian rule under patriarch Abraham, however, was not to ensue. Kourabi was intent on attacking Kaiea at Koinawa in retaliation. By this time, the people of Abaiang expected the attack. The folly of attempting to drive Kourabi off his own island was now obvious. Bingham had been

²⁶ Bingham to Anderson, 20 october 1863, BFPH, box 5.
²⁷ Bingham to Clark, 3 October 1863, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; Aumai to Clark, 1 December 1863, MM-HEA.
correct in making his request that Kaiea be the arbitrator and not the aggressor.

It is important to assess the reasons for the fluctuations between rejection and acceptance of Christianity by Kaiea. Also, the role in which he viewed Bingham needs to be examined. I am suggesting that Kaiea turned to Christianity when war threatened because he may have perceived Bingham as a sorcerer who could assist him in the outcome of battle. Bingham's influence in the war against Tewaki, after which Kaiea became the leading chief on Abaiang, had been notable. His seemingly magical telescope had warned of the approach of the Tarawans; he had given his blessing from his Anti, Jehovah; he had prayed for Kaiea; and daily he had tended Kaiea's battle wounds till they healed. In the chapel, Bingham spoke to the Anti and revealed His messages, not from the interpretation of the whistling of the Anti but from the interpretation of His word from the book, the Bible. This chapel was surrounded by a pandanus fence as was the Bingham's home. In the context of Gilbertese belief, Bingham could have been a sorcerer for he performed actions and tasks which only the sorcerers did. They too fenced in their premises for privacy; they too had the gift of healing sickness and wounds; they were in direct contact with the Anti and received their messages. Further, they were always in the middle of wars and were sought after to give their advice, blessing and to negotiate peace treaties. Their homes were places of refuge. The missionaries also negotiated peace treaties and their boat was called the Star of Peace. The flag of the missionary brig Morning Star bore the symbol of a dove which was doubtless explained to the Gilbertese.

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28 It may be that the ibonga specialized and some would deal only with healing while others would become involved in the intrigues of war. Certainly, the song-writers were a distinct group. I have followed the ethnographer Parkinson in stating that sorcerers were involved in both the arts of healing and advice and negotiation during wars. Parkinson, 'Translation', 26-8, 34.
Furthermore, Bingham had demonstrated that he could take sides in a war as did sorcerers. The idea of Bingham as a possible sorcerer would have been one which needed time to grow, so that the lack of an immediate acceptance as sorcerer does not militate against this explanation. After all, there were activities of Bingham which did not fit into the pattern of activities of a sorcerer. Bingham did not actually attend the scene of war during action, as a sorcerer would have done, but waited till the war was over. More importantly, Bingham would have needed to prove himself. The Anti themselves had to do this by demonstrating their power; their prophets needed to do likewise. In addition, the relationship with a sorcerer was one based on distrust and caution. It was a tenuous and tentative relationship and one did not readily and immediately embark on it without weighty consideration. A sorcerer was never solely claimed by one person; he was open to the bidding of all and could choose, at any time, whomever he wished to assist. A sorcerer's power was expressed in his ability to secure the goodwill of the Anti; a person's power was reflected in getting a sorcerer to heed his bidding. If one achieved this, one's prestige rose. The converse was true. A sorcerer was therefore chosen very carefully.

It is unlikely that Kaiea regarded Bingham's presence as a guarantee of intervention by naval vessels on his behalf or that, if this could be secured, it would have any effect. Before the 1870s naval vessels of various nationalities made only occasional visits and these meant very little to either the Gilbertese or the Ellice Islanders. Later, when

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29 May I make it clear that I am not arguing that all the Abaing Islanders perceived Bingham as a sorcerer. I am merely suggesting that Kaiea, in adhering to his former world view, may well have done so. His son adopted a different world view. In parts of the Pacific and beyond, missionaries were regarded, at times, as sorcerers. See Ronald Adams, 'In the Land of Strangers and Degraded Human Beings', 158-9; James P. Ronda, "We Are Well As We Are": An Indian Critique of Seventeenth-Century Christian Missions', William and Mary Quarterly, 54, 1977, 75. See also Spriggs, 'A School in Every District', for perceptions of Geddie.

30 Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 64.
Kaiea would find himself exiled from his own island, it would be Captain Benjamin Pearce (who, like the notorious Bully Hayes, bought oil where he could and even raided the stores of more respectable traders) who would come to Kaiea's rescue for the same reason as Randell had assisted Kourabi, that of the interests of trade.

Bingham would later request the U.S. Navy Department to assist Kaiea. In 1870 the U.S. Ship *Jamestown* with Captain N.S. Truxton in command would arrive at Abaiang. It was an ineffectual visit. After the signing of a pledge by four chiefs to protect American laws, Truxton would sail off satisfied after the salute of five guns. Truxton was a gentleman. Captain Meade of the U.S. *Narragansett* was later sent and, although a sterner man, simply shot fire over heads. By 1876, the Reverend Horace Taylor was arguing for demonstration of real power to the extent of destroying villages. As it was, Taylor disclosed that the Gilbertese 'laugh about men-of-war'.

To resume the sequence of events, in the war with Kourabi, the aggressor finally went home to Tarawa and peace returned to Abaiang. At this stage, in June of 1864, Bingham's health collapsed forcing him to leave the Gilberts and return to the United States of America via Honolulu. Many developments took place during his absence. Kourabi and Kaiea, former enemies, became allies through the marriage of Kaiea's

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32 Taylor to Clark, 26 May 1876, ABCFM Papers, reel 6. Missionaries throughout the Pacific looked to naval intervention to secure justice as they perceived it. See Adams, *In the Land of Strangers*, 150-67, for discussion of John Paton's association with the gunboat *Curaçao* on Tanna.

33 Bingham to Lydia, 2 December 1864; Bingham to Anderson, 17 May 1865, BFP, box 5. Bingham did not relinquish his missionary career. His plan was to live mainly in Hawaii while spending at least three months of every year in the Gilberts. He returned to the Gilberts in November 1868. Bingham to Clark, 20 March 1868, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
son Timau to one of Kourabi's daughters, Baturia. The alliance between Kaiea and Kourabi was further strengthened by the betrothal of a daughter of Kaiea's cousin to Kamatie, a son of Kourabi. Mahoe had not only been Kaiea's emissary in the marriage arrangements but had performed the actual ceremony. The three Hawaiian missionary wives had waited on the wedding guests while Mahoe, Aumai and Haina had 'sat with royalty'. It was, from all accounts, a splendid affair. This pact, however, between two relatively strong chiefs caused alarm among the petty chiefs of both Abaiang and Tarawa. On Abaiang, some of the chiefs had become dissatisfied with the new laws which Kaiea, with the assistance of the unimane, had promulgated. Murder, theft, adultery, Sabbath-breaking and the bearing of arms in peace-time were to be punished. The first three were punishable by Gilbertese custom; the latter two were not. Moreover, policemen had been appointed by Kaiea to see that the new laws were obeyed. Thieves were arrested and Sabbath-breakers were fined. Many chafed under these laws and resented the increased power of Kaiea these represented. Kabunare, one-time ally, took to the south end of the island with 300 of his followers. He refused Kaiea's invitation to return to his favour and instead joined disaffected parties in Tarawa, notably Nawaia of Betio, who were determined to crush the rising power of Kourabi. Kourabi turned to his new ally, Kaiea, for assistance. Kaiea was eager to render aid fearing that if Kourabi was overthrown, his own turn might be next, and therefore contemplated making an expedition to Tarawa to bolster Kourabi's forces.

34 Bingham to Clark, 18 November 1868, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
35 Ibid.
At this point, in November 1868, Bingham returned to the Gilbert Islands on tour as master of the new missionary brig, *Morning Star II*. Kaiea asked him for his advice on what action to take. Bingham remembered the incident with perfect clarity:

> It was a responsible moment for me, one of the most in my life, but, as he presented the case, I could not see that, if it were, in his judgement as commander in chief, a stroke of military strategy necessary to the preservation of his own kingdom to cross over to Tarawa to re-unite his forces and to assist his allies, it would be morally wrong to do so and I answered him accordingly. ... He decided to go.36

It went further than this. Bingham believed Kaiea to be a true Christian applying Christian rules and setting up a community of believers. Those who did not wish to obey and join in this community were 'rebels' not just against Kaiea but also against God.

At Tarawa, Kourabi prepared for battle against Nawaia from Betio. He told the Hawaiian missionary Haina: 'stay in your places with prayer to God that our side may be victorious.'37 As yet Kourabi was not baptized, but he harboured the idea that there was a link between prayer to the new Anti Jehovah and the hope of victory in warfare. He interpreted Christianity through his own religious world view. Haina could not stay in his place as, with the other Hawaiians, he needed to attend a General Meeting to be held at Butaritari for four days. Haina, at this stage, was alone in Tarawa for Mahoe had shifted to Abaiang to serve with another Hawaiian named Aumai and to open up a theological school to train the Gilbertese to become pastors.

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36 Ibid.
37 Haina, 'Parish Report of Tabian, Tarawa, August 21, 1868', MM-HEA.
Bingham and his Hawaiian missionaries had sailed down to Tabiteuea after the General Meeting and from there up to Tarawa. There, they saw 'evidence of continued warfare in the smoke and flame of burning houses'. It was then they learned that 'the rebel party' had sailed for unprotected Abaiang with a fleet of 100 canoes. Koinawa, location of Kaiea's palace and the missionary premises, was their target. The $600.00 palace was plundered as were sections of the missionary property. The school-houses were torn down in Ewena and Aonebuaka near to Koinawa. Mrs Bingham's school-house had portions demolished and was occupied as a venue for Gilbertese dancing; the chapel became a dwelling. European traders told Bingham that 'the rebels' had said the missionaries could choose between death or banishment. Bingham decided to interview both Kabunare and Nawaia to find out whether this report was correct. Kabunare cunningly replied that it could not be true, for were not the missionaries neutral? He knew they were not. The very language Bingham used demonstrated that he had taken sides and had chosen Kaiea against 'the rebels', the term which he constantly used when referring to Nawaia and Kabunare. Kabunare further stated that he was willing to return to 'his allegiance'. 'Perhaps our king will pardon him,' Bingham conjectured.

The time which followed was a tense one for all the missionaries on both Tarawa and Abaiang. The Binghams' house was occupied but they themselves were not physically attacked. Bingham wrote of one amusing
incident: 'a gun was fired near us by parties unseen, for the purpose of
sport at our start, as some of us were star-gazing one evening.'\textsuperscript{40}

Meanwhile, Kaiea could not return to his home island for it was held by
Nawaia and his followers. Captain Pease of the \textit{Water Lily} visited Tarawa
and left Kaiea with a large number of guns and plenty of ammunition to
assist him. Bingham hoped that Kaiea could soon 'dictate terms of peace'
and be 'reinstated in power'. Despite Kaiea's imperfections, Bingham
believed him to be 'desirous to govern as a Christian ruler'. His
problem, as Bingham saw it, was his lack of sufficient power to carry out
his wishes in the face of hostility from other chiefs who were 'heathen'.\textsuperscript{41}

Bingham's mind went back to Hawaii when he wrote:

\begin{quote}
... until some Kamehameha shall arise to rule these two islands
with the neighbouring islands of Maiana and Marakei, or until chiefs
shall cease to be ambitious ... our work may perhaps move slowly.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

Bingham had once hoped that Kaiea would be another Kamehameha.

The \textit{Morning Star} left the Gilberts in December 1868 and during the
following months the Hawaiian missionaries bore the brunt of the anger of
the south Tarawans. Nawaia from Betio in south Tarawa and his ally
Kabunare from southern Abaiang revealed their distaste for everything
connected with the mission. Before the \textit{Morning Star} left a Gilbertese
climbed up and bit the nose off the figurine.\textsuperscript{43} In Gilbertese society
unfaithful wives were punished by having their noses bitten off. Not only
were they rendered less attractive but their infidelity was revealed to the
community at large. This same action on the \textit{Morning Star}'s figurine could

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid. There is little information on the less respectable of traders
such as Captain Pease.

\textsuperscript{42} Bingham to Clark, January 1872, BFPH, box 6.

\textsuperscript{43} E. Bailey, 'Report of the Trip of the Morning Star in Micronesia,
1876-7', \textit{Morning Star Papers}, MM-HEA.
imply that the missionaries were seen as unfaithful. The missionaries certainly had not honoured their vows of neutrality. This was epitomized by Mahoe's past actions in performing the marriage ceremony linking the families of Kaiea and Kourabi and in acting as Kaiea's emissary. Mahoe now paid the price. He claimed that he was insulted almost daily by the Tarawan party. He was threatened with death because he withheld an item a man demanded. On 11 December 1868, both he and his wife Olivia were assaulted. On 13 March 1869 he was struck in the back with a knife. One week later he was threatened with a gun but, fortunately for him, it did not go off. Five days later, he was shot in his own house by a Tarawan man, Tingitap, who had pretended to be his friend. The ball went right through his right shoulder and Mahoe fainted in a pool of blood. Later his home was demolished as was that of the Bingham's where neither plank nor tree was left standing. The trader Robert Randolph said there was no one leader among the Betio people who had been responsible for this; they were just 'a mob'.

Some time in 1870, Kaiea returned to Abaiang and his demolished palace. Bingham, back in Honolulu, was unaware of this. He was outraged over the treatment of Mahoe which he claimed had taken place with no provocation. The Betio people and Kabunare thought there was every provocation. Although Mahoe had not overtly provoked retaliation, many of his actions had deepened suspicion and antagonism. He was a friend of both Kaiea and Kourabi and had been instrumental in influencing their policies and their rise to power. The missionaries were perceived as having upset the balance of power.

Bingham was also disgusted at the destruction of mission property on Abaiang. He wrote to the United States Navy Department to ask for affirmative action against the guilty. He referred to Kaiea as a 'Christian' and went on to say:

44 J.F. Pogue, 'Report to Micronesia, 1869', Morning Star Papers, MM-HEA. Robert Randolph, and Robert Corrie of Maiana, were two of the more able and better educated of Captain Randell's oil agents. When Randell left the Gilberts in 1873, Randolph stayed on as an independent trader.
Should he be assisted in returning to his own home, there is good reason to believe that the protection which he would offer ... would secure to the American Board a safe repossession of the land now in the hands of rebels and would greatly aid the establishment of a Christian government so much needed for the cause of humanity in those islands.45

Bingham was obviously prepared not only to render his own assistance to one side, that of Kaiea, but also to enlist the naval support of the United States to secure Kaiea's position, the security of mission premises and the furtherance of humane godly government. All three were linked in Bingham's mind and 'might' was needed to secure 'right'. But by now Kaiea was a broken man. He had less power than ever. He told the missionary delegate to the Gilberts of 1869, the Reverend Alexander Pogue, that he thought all his woes had befallen him because he had listened to the missionaries.46 Kaiea had lost esteem; his obedience to missionary dictates had not brought him success, but he did not renounce Christianity and became a deacon of the Abaiang church. He died on 15 February 1871 as a Christian and was buried the day after his death, in repudiation of the Gilbertese custom which allowed the body to decompose above ground.47

Meanwhile at Abaiang a new chapel was built and dedicated in November of 1871. The Sabbath was respected with 200 attending Sunday services. At the dedication of the new chapel, 160 had attended and Kabunare made his stand for Christ. He later explained his former opposition to Kaiea. He told Ahia that he had been angered by Kaiea's desire to become king. Kabunare had also disliked the Sunday law because Kaiea had proclaimed it.

45 Bingham to Pierce, 8 February 1870, MM-HEA.
46 Pogue, 'Report to Micronesia', MM-HEA.
47 The Friend, 21, July 1872, 52-3; Ahia to Pogue, 20 April 1871, MM-HEA.
To Kabunare missionary influence and Kaiea's kingly ambition had been interlinked. So, the missionary chapel had had to be torn down along with Kaiea's palace. Pogue had noted back in 1869 that although the factions competed with one another, they united 'to oppose the laws promulgated by Abraham Kaiea'. They also united 'in opposing the missionaries [whom] they ... thought to be the authors of these laws'. Christianity had been perceived as encouraging the ambitions of both Kaiea and Kourabi; but now Kaiea was dead and Kaiea's son had not espoused Christianity.48

At the time of the dedication of the new chapel in November 1871, Kaiea's son Timau had attended the service. Of him, Ahia said:

I see his governing of his people and the work of Jesus which perhaps he will regard, perhaps not and perhaps it will topple over, through the pleasures of this world. Let us request that he will be converted from darkness to light.49

However, this was not to occur for quite a long time. Kabunare, on the other hand, had espoused Christianity. At the dedication, he had made a most telling speech in favour of Christianity. Further, he was soon to give up three of his four wives, smoking, dancing, the wearing of the pandanus mat and alcohol. He, like Kaiea before him, was interpreting Christianity as a series of ritual tabu.50 Thereafter Kabunare and Timau (or Kaiea II) alternated in their adherence to Christianity.

Kaiea II was eventually baptized but his view of the Christian faith was quite different from that of his father. He did not view the practice of Christianity as the pursuit of magical services through which victory in battle could be secured. Rather, he saw it as a series of laws providing an alternative mode for organizing society. People would be brought under control by these 'Christian' laws rather than subjugated by warfare. It

48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
is true that the process of law-making had begun under Kaiea I but his son would further its development.

In 1872 Bingham returned with his wife Clarissa to reside once more at Abaiang, where they stayed until 1875 when Bingham again took ill. They returned to find an orgy of drunkenness on the island. Bingham wrote: 'Men, women and even children stagger ... over the island.' Most shocking was the fact that Kaiea II's mother, Elizabeth, and one of the first to be baptized, led this orgy. The drunken bouts resulted in quarrels and murders. Yet Bingham was gladdened to find that he was soon to be joined by another American missionary family, that of the Reverend Horace Taylor and his wife Julia. Taylor was to supervise the Training School, but civil war soon raged again on Abaiang. Bingham mused that the mission station had for so many years been a camp-ground. All the Tarawans had not returned home and new contentions had arisen. Bingham now claimed that nearly all the Tarawans were encamped on Abaiang fighting on either one side or the other. Kabunare had again recruited the assistance of Tarawan allies. This time he was opposing Kaiea II. By March 1874 the contending parties were induced to come to terms of peace and Bingham felt that these prospects were good. Kaiea II invited Kabunare back and the Tarawans finally went home.52

For a certain period following this episode an upturn in the fortunes of the mission seemed to occur. Bingham's letter to the Reverend J.F. Pogue of 5 October 1874 disclosed that things were 'never so good in Abaiang'.53 During 1874 alone, 100 had sought admission into the Church. In all, sixty Christians were counted; Sabbath congregations were over 150 and the

51 Bingham to Pogue, 21 March 1874, MM-HEA.
52 Ibid.
53 Bingham to Pogue, 5 October 1874, BFPH, box 15.
Training School had twenty-six students of both sexes. Women's prayer meetings continued with force enabling Gilbertese women to meet without their menfolk. None from the south-east of Koinawa, however, attended Sabbath service. This was the territory of Kabunare and, although he had formerly declared himself for Christ, he had since renounced Christianity. Kaiea II, in contrast to Kabunare, had become 'an inquirer' and was becoming generally more amenable to missionary programs. He had banned alcohol and imposed a fine on those who refused to comply with the ban. He also attempted to set up a village school where the teacher would be supported by the people. He summoned the unimane to consider this matter. Bingham disclosed that the people did not rally round the 'king' much on this point, and he himself doubted that the schoolteachers could be paid by 'this poor people'.

The people of Abaiang, as in most of the Gilbert Islands, were very poor. As Bingham explained to the Reverend Ephraim Clark, Captain Richard Randolph had kept accounts of the coconut oil trade on Abaiang from 1872 to 1876 and they showed that 'each man, woman and child' received 'about £1.30 per year'. Bingham argued that these people could not afford 'to purchase clothing, books, stationery, tools and tobacco, to say nothing of contributions'. He then ended his letter to Clark: 'This fact causes me great pain.' Bingham's associate, Taylor, had already written to Clark in Honolulu about the problem of poverty:

> The people are very poor, poorer than I had supposed, although I knew something of the poverty of the people of India I hadn't thought it possible for people to be as these are.

54 Bingham to HMCS, 23 December 1874, BFPH, box 6; Bingham to Clark, November 1874, BFPH, box 6; Bingham to Pogue, 20 March 1875, MM-HEA.

55 Bingham to Clark, 3 August 1874, BFPH, box 6; Bingham to Anderson, 3 August 1874, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
Taylor went on to add that 'the Christians are generally poor people.'

For many of the landless poor, Christianity became a haven; it provided a community which transcended boti demarcations and where Christians could help one another regardless of their lineage. Christians were also given a venue for self-expression, this being particularly important for the women. On Abaiang, as elsewhere in the Gilberts, women met together and set up prayer meetings. Often 'the women were more wide-awake than the men'. It was the poor and the women who first translated Christianity as Bingham meant it to be, a Christian community of people whether rich or poor, men or women. Bingham had hoped that a benevolent ruler would usher in such a community but Kaiea I had lacked sufficient power to do so.

In 1875 Bingham's health once again collapsed and he made a desperate attempt to return to Hawaii. He was therefore unable to attend the eighteenth anniversary of the mission on 18 November 1875. At this service 160 attended, sixty of whom were fully clothed. Evidence of interest in the Christian program was not limited to church attendance. Book sales increased and the three schools (the village, training and mission day school) were all progressing well. Taylor asserted that the village school was still 'a Government school, as it is supported entirely by oil given to the king for that purpose and not by the mission'. Kabunare had again adopted Christianity and had again renounced alcohol. He attended school, meetings and established family worship. Meanwhile, Kaiea II had backslidden in the faith.

By 1877 Taylor was back in the United States negotiating a marriage with the sister of his late wife so he could return with her to Abaiang. Understandably, the girl's mother was putting up a vigorous opposition.

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56 Taylor to Clark, 14 November 1874, ABCFM Papers, reel 6.
57 Taylor to Clark, 18 November 1875, ABCFM Papers, reel 6.
Meanwhile Taylor's information of the events and missionary progress on Abaiang was conveyed to him through the letters of the Hawaiian missionaries. In one week he received eight such letters, telling of great progress and the establishment of law on Abaiang. Elsewhere war continued but not at Abaiang because 'there is law there'. Bingham had been informed that Kaiea II had at last 'taken up his cross' and was a member of the Abaiang church. He had taken the Christian name of Isaac, son of Abraham, leader of a flourishing tribe. This re-conversion of Kaiea II could have resulted from increased recognition of the political importance of approval by Europeans. Up till 1876, as Taylor had indicated, the Abaiang Islanders took little note of men-of-war. That same year, however, Lieutenant Pugh of H.M.S. Renard was sent to Abaiang to investigate the murder of a trader. Pugh threatened to blow up the Council-House, war canoes, sheds and Kaiea II's dwelling if he did not bring forth the murderer, an Islander, for due punishment. The unfortunate Islander was produced, tied to the cannon and blown to pieces.58

Isaac Kaiea and his people had also adopted a written code of laws. It was not unusual for the Gilbertese people to have laws which were promulgated by the unimane in the maneaba, but hitherto laws had been a reaffirmation of custom to meet a particular case. Now the written laws encompassed general ideas on the running of society. The laws were a blending of Biblical teaching, as interpreted by Protestant missionaries, and Western views on desired conduct. The Sabbath was to be respected and liquor was to be banned. In repudiation of Gilbertese custom, a man could no longer take his wife's younger sisters as additional 'wives'.

58 Taylor to Clark, 26 May 1876, ABCFM Papers, reel 6; Taylor to Clark, 7 March 1877, ABCFM Papers, reel 6; Taylor to Clark, 4 March 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 6; Taylor to Clark, 28 July 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 6; Bingham to Clark, 7 February 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 5; Bingham to Clark, 21 January 1879, ABCFM Papers, reel 5; Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 66.
Re-marriage was allowable only in cases of adultery. Nor could any man 'pollute the woman who is abandoned as a man-less woman'. In Gilbertese society divorced and abandoned women did not attract the same respect as virgins. On another issue, the death penalty was insisted on for murder whereas previously it had incurred a fine in land. Court was set up every Tuesday if necessary with the 'king' and unimane acting as judges. Sometimes the trader Richard Randolph or the Hawaiian missionaries were called in to assist. No arms were to be carried in peace-time, while retainers of Kaiea II were 'taught as soldiers to observe the laws and aid in the peace of the king'. The 'soldiers' were sworn in on the Bible 'to take care of the king and the peace of the laws and the spiritual welfare of all'. A special house was built for them. Meanwhile the church was repaired, re-thatched and cleaned. Those who opposed the laws were seized and bound with ropes and fines were exacted from them. 59

It was inevitable that opposition against this new regime would form. The disgruntled left Abaiang to join 'rebel' forces in Tarawa. In August of 1878, Isaac Kaiea sent the Hawaiian Leleo as an emissary to Tarawa to persuade them to return. Leleo landed at the 'rebel' camp, interviewed Nawaia and called a roll of Abaiang men there. Then he read out Isaac Kaiea's despatch:

To the people of Abaiang now on Tarawa,

We write that you give attention to Leleo, for he and the elderly men with him have with them what we have to say. And of what mind are you? Do you not desire to return to Abaiang that we may together be gathered under our written code of laws for the law has been broken by your going to Tarawa.

And this also is to be thought of: our country is in danger of getting a very bad name among foreigners on account of you having gone to war.

59 Leleo, 'Report on Apaiang, 18 September 1877', MM-HEA; Kanoa to Bingham, 25 February 1878, MM-HEA; Bingham to Clark, 7 February 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
Men and brethren beloved, do you not love your own code of law?  

The Abaiang 'rebels' liked neither the code of law nor its author because it restricted their movement and opportunity to gain power by traditional means - warfare. Moreover, Nawaia refused to free the Abaiang men as he needed their support in his attack against Kourabi. Matang was another Tarawan who was determined to topple his northern foe.

There had been seven months of bitter fighting between the northern and southern sections of Tarawa. Already five 'rebels' had been killed while Kourabi had lost two of his men. Haina and his wife tried repeatedly to intercede and propose terms of peace. At last they appeared to be successful. In July of 1878, Haina wrote to Bingham:

Here is the reason for the war. They wanted to kill Kourabi and I say there is no reason; they are only trying to be critical. Because Te Kourabi also carries the name Kalakaua, that is the reason for the war, it is a big war. Abaiang and Marakei men have been called to fight Te Kourabi. We made a peace treaty and they agreed, the side of the rebels and the Chiefs' side and they met on board the Morning Star shaking hands and signing their names as follows.

Te Kourabi
Te Kariaki
Te Namanoku

However neither the names of Nawaia nor Matang appeared on this treaty; they had not joined in the hymn 'There is a Happy Land'.

There were many on Tarawa who were angered by Haina who was a pacifist and would not promote the fighting against Abaiang. No one on Tarawa wanted to be told 'Dwell as loving friends'. Nor did Nawaia or Matang want to hear that Kourabi and his followers were friends of Kalakaua 'living under the Hawaiian flag'. Kalakaua was the King of Hawaii and had been since 1874. If Kourabi had taken his name it meant that he was...
styling himself as a king or was able to enlist the Hawaiian King's support and had given him his allegiance. Whichever it was, it could not be tolerated by either Nawaia or Matang. The so-called peace treaty was therefore of short duration. By the time Leleo came to Tarawa on 30 August 1878 with Kaiea II's despatch, both Nawaia and Matang were preparing to wage a war against Kourabi. They told Leleo to take Haina and his wife Kaluahine back to Hawaii. If he did not do so then 'they would be in trouble'. According to them, Haina had interfered too much.

Matang used Taoani, the sorcerer from Betio who had once assisted Kourabi. Taoani would now be used to trick and betray him. Taoani told him that the settlements immediately south of him were ready to rebel. Meanwhile, Matang had formed alliances with certain chiefs in Taratai and Buariki, both north of Kourabi's settlements. While Kourabi was dealing with those south of him his real enemies were marching down from the north. He was trapped. By 31 August Kourabi, along with thirty-three of his family and followers, was dead. According to Bingham, eighteen years of mission labour on Tarawa had been wiped out. But it was not completely so. War continued on Tarawa as rivals fought for Kourabi's lands. Yet Haina and Kaluahine stayed on that turbulent island. In April 1879 they started

63 Haina, 'Report of the Island of Tarawa, 1878-79', MM-HEA; Haina to Bingham, 27 November 1878, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian). There had been almost incessant warfare on Tarawa since 1871. Haina to Pogue, 25 October 1871; Kanoho to Pogue, 9 August 1871; Kopu to Pogue, 5 August 1871, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian). Kourabi of North Tarawa had become a Christian taking the name of David. Henceforth Bingham viewed the wars on Tarawa as between rebels and Christians and exonerated the warring activities of Kourabi. See Bingham to Clark, 7 February 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.

64 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
a school with five pupils and twenty-two attended Sabbath meetings. War would continue; the Tarawans claimed that 'they die when there is peace and they live in war'. In his Micronesian report for 1879, the delegate, the Reverend Edward Doane, wrote of Tarawa:

Tarawa the dark, Tarawa the war-land! The smoke of a year's war had not blown away. The roar of guns, the wounded, dying natives, frenzied by liquor, their boldness to steal, to take life, to rob the homes of the traders, are still scenes frequently seen.

Isaac Kaiea was greatly alarmed at the death of Kourabi. He took swift action and within three weeks killed Kabunare, because he feared his disloyalty. Both Bingham and Taylor condoned this action although Kabunare was a fellow-Christian. Bingham wrote that at last Isaac Kaiea was head of his island. Although Bingham believed Kabunare to be a Christian, he knew him to be surrounded by 'powerful heathen chiefs not friendly to Kaiea or the written code of laws'. It was Kaiea who had introduced law and order into Abaiang so it was he who was in Bingham's favour. Bingham elaborated his views:

We had hoped that Te Kapunare had ceased from plotting wars but if reports are true our young king Kaiea was compelled to take up arms against him before he could be strengthened by the arrival of the rebel party from Tarawa who were victorious...

I sincerely believe that our young king Kaiea has been truly desirous of maintaining peace.

Bingham identified with Isaac Kaiea as he had with his father Abraham Kaiea. As long as the Abaiang chiefs appeared to be reorganizing society on Christian principles, Bingham believed that all who opposed them were truly rebels. They were rebels not just against the Kaieas but against God Himself. The 'rebels' were therefore deserving of punishment. Bingham longed to see order established in the group and began to question the

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65 Bingham, 'Trouble on Tarawa and Apaiang', ABCFM Papers, reel 5; Haina, 'Report of Tarawa', MM-HEA.
67 Bingham to Clark, 21 January 1879, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
ability of the Gilbertese to attain it by themselves. Although Bingham wished the Gilberts to remain independent, he wondered if peace and order could only be established by an external power such as Great Britain or the United States of America.

Taylor, on the other hand, still clung to hopes that Isaac Kaiea could unite the Gilbert Islands without external assistance. His reaction to the killing of Kabunare was almost jubilant:

... I rejoice at the wonderful way in which the Lord is bringing order out of confusion ... If Kabanare had not been killed and his party defeated they would have waited with the Tarawa rebels [to] fight king Isaac. They are now disposed of and the king of Apaiang has partisans in Tarawa. So he can attack the Tarawa rebels at both ends and then will be king of Tarawa and Apaiang and extend his laws over both islands. I do not rejoice at the bloodshed, but I do rejoice that through the jealousy of heathenism and barbarism the triumph of Christianity and civilization is being hastened and believe the result will ultimately be the placing of king Isaac at the head of all the Gilbert Islands with the beginning of Christian civilization. 68

Taylor could afford to have such a grandiose dream while he was absent from the reality of the Gilbert Islands.

Doane gave a more realistic picture. He reported that Isaac Kaiea was fighting factions in Tarawa and when asked about his church attendance had replied: 'too much fight to go to church now'. 69 Unlike his father who saw a link, however tenuous, between following Christianity and attaining victory in war, Isaac saw war as an alternative to Christianity. If he could not organize his people by Christian laws then he would do it by force, the Gilbertese way. Kaiea II was pressured for almost a year, from 1880 onwards, to wage a retaliatory war against Tarawa. At last he capitulated. On 14 January 1882, 200 war canoes sailed to Tarawa from Abaiang. Taylor, who by this time had realized the true situation, had expected this, for in September of 1881 he had written:

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68 Taylor to Clark, 'fragment', ABCFM Papers, reel 7.
The greater part of the people of this island collected on the
south end and had sent canoes over to Tarawa to 'make peace'.
If they are not shortly engaged in war with Tarawa, they will
doubtless be fighting among themselves. The fighting of these
four islands of Marakei, Apaiang, Tarawa and Maiana, has got to be
like that of the celebrated Kilkenny cats.70

Tarawa itself was embroiled in dissension. Kourabi's death had
resulted in constant squabbles over his lands. Late in 1881, there had
been a fight at the north end with twenty killed and one roasted and eaten.
Matang had emerged as the strongest leader. As Tarawa had more than one
strong leader the island splintered into factions which constantly fought
among themselves. Haina simply wrote to the Hawaiian Board as follows on
20 March 1882:

In the year 1877
A civil war 1878
A civil war 1879
A civil war 1880
A civil war 1881
A civil war 1882
A foreign war
in the year 1877

In 1883 the Annual Meeting of the Gilbertese Mission reported 'preparations
for a general war continuing'. At Abaiang, the Hawaiian Leleo told of the
'king' reviving the hula and preparing for war.71 And so the pattern was
to continue until the coming of the flag and the jurisdiction of Great
Britain.

Back in 1868, Bingham had written to the Reverend Ephraim Clark that
the wars on Abaiang and Tarawa were taking their toll of missionary progress.
According to Bingham, over ten years of warfare, as it was then, had

70 Taylor to Means, 15 September 1881, recorded in Missionary Herald, 78, 1882.

71 Haina to Hawaiian Board, 20 March 1882, MM-HEA (translated from the
original Hawaiian).
interfered greatly with the spread of the Gospel. Although the missionaries tried to intercede as peacemakers and drew up one peace treaty after another, their attitudes and actions did much to contribute to the issues and intensity of the wars. The missionaries, Bingham, Taylor and the Hawaiians, lent their support to certain chiefs and were forced to take sides as a consequence. Although claiming to be neutral, they were not so in practice. The whole scene of war and intrigue took on a cosmic dimension for both Bingham and Taylor. For Bingham, the rebels against Kaiea I and II were not just challenging a high chief; they were hampering the progress of the millenium. Taylor, for his part, believed that the Gilbert Islands were struck with 'the same spirit that is urging on Russian Nihilists, German Socialists, French Communists ... and to the same object – to overthrow kings and make all equal'. No doubt, he believed this worldwide movement to be a plot of the Devil to frustrate God's mighty plans. Therefore, the missionaries felt no shame or ambivalence in giving their blessing to the side they favoured.

The continuous warring state of Abaiang, along with Marakei, Tarawa and Maiana, did hinder the missionary work. Warfare was only the most dramatic expression of the inherent factionalism within these islands which was the real hindrance to the spread of the Christian message. The horizons of most of the Islanders stretched no further than their lineage. Within their lineage, they could look to support from their kinsmen and from their Anti. It was only the warlords, wea, whose vision encompassed an entire island. Yet Bingham brought a message of community and agape love where all people could unite and assist one another, live in peace and act for 'the common good'. Such an idealistic vision could not take root in islands

72 Bingham to Clark, November 1868, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
73 Taylor to Means, 28 September 1881, ABCFM Papers, reel 7; Taylor to Anderson, 28 March 1881, ABCFM Papers, reel 7.
beset with factionalism. It was not so much that the religion Bingham offered was too austere but that it was too idealistic and impractical given the reality of Abaiang at that time.

Missionaries elsewhere in the Pacific faced situations of war and gave their support to a particular side. They attached themselves to a rising or already established power base. No such entity existed on either Abaiang or Tarawa. It was not that Bingham backed the 'wrong' side; there was no 'right' side. If a strong and ruthless leader had arisen on Abaiang to quell all opposition and bring peace and order, then the missionaries might have had more success. No such leader appeared. Neither of the Kaieas was of the stance of Baiteke or Binoka of Abemama. The Kaieas had aspirations, but lacked the ruthless tenacity to realize them. Abraham Kaiea was a broken man after the war against the south Tarawans in 1869; Isaac Kaiea was referred to as a 'weak, vacillating' character by a later American missionary. Kourabi of Tarawa was a far stronger personality yet for all his force and because of it, he was killed in battle. A leader was needed who combined both cunning and strength.

Christianity, on the whole, received a lukewarm and intermittent reception from the Gilbertese people. They perceived its message through the lenses of their own conceptual framework. Kaiea I saw Christianity, not as a new religion, but as an addition within his own religious world view. He adopted the prescriptive side of Christianity rather than its community-building aspect. He looked to Bingham for advice in war as the uea would look to a sorcerer. Before his death he may have realized that Christianity was a new faith with its own rationale. Kaiea II, on the

74 Irving Channon, 'Gilbert Island Tour, 1892', MM-HEA.
other hand, viewed the laws emanating from missionary teaching as a viable alternative to war in ordering and controlling his people. Chiefs such as Kabunare and Kourabi of Tarawa saw the hope of victory in warfare in Christian prayer to the new Anti Jehovah. It was the poor, the landless, the women, who accepted Christianity for the love of a Saviour and the community to which it gave rise.

The goals of the missionaries were not totally lost. Attempts were made to reorganize society on Abaiang and new concepts of political order and cohesion were aired. European political organization was introduced. The idea of the Gilbert Islands as one entity which should be concerned with its international reputation was first offered, however tentatively, by Kaiea II. This was a foreign idea, for the Gilbertese thought of themselves as not only coming from just one island but even more so from a single boti on its kainga. Kaiea II did not repudiate this idea but presented an alternative view. Also, women had their first opportunity to congregate among themselves, away from their men, to discuss matters and organize events. Among Isaac Kaiea's laws were two which pertained particularly to women and their freedom from domination by men. A foundation was laid in the education of the people. Isaac Kaiea set up the first government school. It was not just the new skills of reading, writing and arithmetic which were taught. Other subjects such as geography and history broadened the horizons of the students. Despite the fact that Bingham had not succeeded in setting up a model society through either of the Kaieas, a slow evolutionary process had begun and a legacy of Christian and Western ideas on organizing society had been left.

Although Bingham made visits to other islands in the Gilbert group, Abaiang was the only island on which he resided. From this point he hoped to superintend the Hawaiian missionaries who established and ran missionary
stations on the other islands. They too would use Bingham's strategy of relying on chiefs with the hope that they would usher in Christian rule. By and large the Hawaiians would be no more successful than Bingham in persuading a majority to adopt Christianity.
Kanoa and his wife Kahola with Maka and Olivia at Butaritari
(courtesy of HMCS Library, Honolulu)

Haina, his wife Kaluahine and their children
(courtesy of HMCS Library, Honolulu)
MAP 4. The Hawaiian missionaries were located on the Islands of Butaritari, Marakei, Abaiang, Tarawa, Maiana, Nonouti and Tabiteuea, as this map indicates.
I think these people will not be educated until ten years have passed when we will be gray haired and our teeth will fall out. This is because they are so different.

Haina in 1862

Bingham's role was that of superintendent of the Hawaiian missionaries who established and ran missionary bases on the other northern and central islands in the Gilbert group. He was to orchestrate the mission in the Gilberts. Bingham always made the initial visit to a particular island to ascertain its receptivity to the Christian message. He usually followed this by another visit to introduce the Hawaiian missionaries to an island as he had on Tarawa. The policy of using Hawaiians in the front-line of the mission with an American missionary overseeing them had been promoted by Luther Gulick. Bingham took over this policy and put it into practice. It suited Bingham that the Hawaiians would become the preachers and travellers in the Gilberts. Bingham was ever conscious of his weak voice and lacked the confidence to preach to crowds. His health was still frail when he arrived at Abaiang; he knew he could not travel extensively. The Hawaiians would perform the bulk of the preaching and teaching. This was the plan.

As early as 1831 the Lahainaluna School had been established with the express purpose of training preachers and educating teachers among the Hawaiians. Till 1849 this high school-grade institution was controlled and sustained by the ABCFM, but even when it came under the control of the Hawaiian Government, the missionaries still exercised considerable
influence and control. Yet only a portion of the graduates became preachers; most became teachers, lawyers, clerks and even governors. In 1863 the Reverend William Alexander opened the Wailuku Theological School on the island of Maui. Fourteen years later, the North Pacific Mission Institute of Honolulu was established. The courses at these schools were reasonably sophisticated, but as they were based on Western thought patterns it is not easy to ascertain just how much the Hawaiians absorbed. Often the Hawaiians simply listened to lectures which they then memorized. Instruction at Lahainaluna had been in Hawaiian. The freshman course offered subjects such as mathematics, English, geography, biblical studies and history - national, ancient, Hawaiian and biblical. The senior class learnt geometry, navigation, natural philosophy, astronomy and didactic theology. Bookkeeping by double entry was taught along the way. The Wailuku School offered a course of only one year's duration, while the North Pacific Institute offered a three-year course.¹

There was a distinct advantage in using Hawaiians as missionaries; they were paid a lot less than a white missionary. By the 1850s the missionary salary for a white man was $450.00; for a Hawaiian it was $200.00. Hawaiian domestic help was paid $150.00; initially Hawaiian missionaries had been expected to take on the additional role of domestic help. As another Hawaiian missionary child, the Reverend Albert Snow, bluntly put it: 'It is a prime object to get Hawaiian missionaries into the field. If they don't do quite so well, their cost is but a trifle

compared to white missionaries.' Nevertheless, the mission salaries compared well with those usual for Hawaiians.

Although the idea that Hawaiians could be missionaries had been accepted by the HMS, it was slow to ordain Hawaiians or to give them any recognition for their labours. The HMS justified its caution because of 'the instability of the Hawaiian character'. By 1864 there were still only five ordained Hawaiian preachers, yet the HEA was 'happy to be able to report so decided a progress towards a native pastorate over independent churches throughout the group'. Not till 1869 did Hawaiians earn the right to be listed by personal name in the Annual Reports instead of the anonymous 'native pastor'. Yet Hawaiians continued to take up Christian work.

Missionaries, both in Boston and Honolulu, had decided that Hawaiians were to be sent to the Marquesas and Micronesia, particularly the Gilbert group. Nevertheless they were to occupy a certain position within restricted boundaries, the perimeters of which they could not trespass. Hawaiians were expected to manifest a particular modal personality, one of modesty, deference and humility. One can ponder the psychological effect of being denied the rewards of service for so long. Obviously it would have varying effects on different individuals. While most might internalize the expected behaviour pattern, others might rebel either openly or unobtrusively. These problems need to be considered in assessing the Hawaiians' role as missionaries to the Gilberts.

2 Snow to Gulick, 1 Jan. 1864, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; Micronesian Mission to Anderson, 29 Sept. 1857, ABCFM Papers, reel 1. By 1890 Hawaiian missionaries were paid $300.00 per family or $250.00 if single. See also Patricia Bieber, 'Some Observations on the Hawaiians of the Micronesian Mission', 28 Aug. 1974, Pacific Island Paper 699, Honolulu.

3 ABCFM Reports, 1862, 159; ibid., 1868, 98.
However, Hawaiian missionaries were first sent to other parts of Micronesia in 1852. Daniel Opunai and his wife Doreka were settled on Kosrae. Berita Ka'aikoula and his wife Debora went to Ponape. S. Kamakahiki Kaaha arrived on Ponape in 1855. The Hawaiian missionaries were not a great success. The Micronesian languages, contrary to the thinking of American missionaries, were difficult for the Hawaiians to master. Daniel died the year after he settled on Kosrae, Berita seven years after he arrived at Ponape. Kamakahiki resigned after two years to resume his ministry in Hawaii. All faced the condescending attitude of the American missionaries who used their wives as domestic help.  

In 1853, a company of native Hawaiians was formed to be sent to the Marquesas. Earlier attempts to establish a mission post there had been abortive. The LMS had made the attempt back in 1797 and in 1831 when Tahitian assistants had been brought in. The ABCFM had made their attempt in 1833. They found the Marquesans hostile and unresponsive. The rugged terrain also hindered travel. In 1853 four Hawaiian couples arrived in the Marquesas. Two of them were to spend 100 years between them in the Marquesas and to little avail. The Hawaiians' experience in the Marquesas closely resembles the fate of the Hawaiians in the Gilberts. The mission never prospered. In contrast, the Hawaiians who were sent to the Marshalls played a pivotal role in the Christianization of the Marshallese.  

The first Hawaiians to come to the Gilberts were Kanoa and his wife Kahola who came out with the Bingham's, and Mahoe and Olivia who arrived the following year. Bingham could neither speak nor understand Hawaiian when he first arrived in the Gilberts. Kanoa probably knew little English.

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Part of a team, they were divided by language initially. Bingham disclosed his lack of familiarity with Hawaiian in his journal of 1857: '... in the afternoon we listened to Evarts' account, which being in Hawaiian was not very intelligible to me...' In the same journal he went on to say that he would learn Hawaiian from the 'sailors'. This appears surprising when Kanoa was somewhat of a linguist and could have taught Bingham Hawaiian. Pierson had noted in 1855 that Kanoa quickly learnt a little Gilbertese to the extent that he could impart 'some instruction'. He had spent two years at Kusaie, further west in Micronesia, and had become proficient in the language there. In 1855, when he was with Pierson, Kanoa could not understand English. Perhaps he had learnt some English by the time he met Bingham but communication between the two must have been more than a little strained.

Despite the fact that both Kanoa and Mahoe had been educated at Lahainaluna seminary, from which they had graduated in 1854, neither was immediately ordained as was the case for American missionaries. Mahoe was ordained first in 1860 but Kanoa waited until 1865, ten years after his missionary career had commenced. By 1864, there were only six ordained Hawaiian missionaries both in Hawaii and throughout all of Micronesia. Most of the Hawaiian missionaries were termed unordained evangelists, that is, licensed preachers, or catechists who were neither ordained nor

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6 Bingham, 'Journal of a Voyage to Apaiang', 2, BFPJ, box 12, 17, 119. Two years later Bingham wrote to Anderson that 'his acquaintance with the Hawaiian' was 'very imperfect'; Bingham to Anderson, 5 November 1859, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.

7 Pierson, 'Journal of a Voyage through the Kingsmill Islands', ABCFM Papers, reel 2.

8 Of the twenty-one Hawaiian male missionaries who served in the Gilberts, seven are known to have attended theological schools. These included Kanoa, Mahoe, Maunaloa, Paaluhi, Lutera, Kaaia and Mahihila. There are at least two Hawaiian missionaries, Tevita and Kanau, of whom little is known. Eleven of the twenty-one were ordained whilst serving in the Gilberts. These were Mahoe, Kanoa, Leleo, Ahia, Maka, Kapu, Lutera, Paaluhi, Kaaia, Mahihila and Kanau.
licensed but who could still practise as teachers of religion. In other ways Hawaiian missionaries were made to feel inferior. On the missionary brig, the Morning Star, they were stationed between the forecastle and the kitchen. Of course, they could be entertained in the cabin at the cabin table 'for convenience, economy, or politeness', but this only 'with the concurrence of the American missionaries who may be on board'. As late as 1880, the Reverend Alfred Walkup, who came out that year, noted that the Hawaiians 'acted as if the cabin was a tabued place for them'. He added: 'Doubtless ... they feel grieved at not having the same accommodation as the white people.' The Hawaiians were literally, as well as figuratively, kept in their place.

Despite the general missionary policy towards the Hawaiians, feelings of inferiority could have been tempered by the sharing of a warm relationship with a white supervisor. Bingham claimed a close affinity with

9 Bingham to ABCFM missionaries, 2 June 1879, ABCFM Papers, reel 5. The Hawaiians who became unordained evangelists, pastors and missionaries probably came mainly from the maka'ainana or kauwa ranks. In pre-contact Hawaii there were various rankings. At the apex were the paramount chiefs of the individual islands. They arose from the highest class called the ali'i. This group claimed direct descent from the gods. Following them came the maka'ainana who, although designated as commoners, were in fact the junior branches of the same stock. Within this stratum came the farmers, fishermen and craftsmen. A bond of mutual obligation and duties bound the two strata. The maka'ainana rendered services and goods while the ali'i both confirmed the former's tenure in land rights and petitioned the gods for bountiful harvests. The lowest level in Hawaiian society was the kauwa. These were the outcasts in that they did not participate in any kin relations with other strata. Their genealogies had been forgotten. The relations between the ranks became somewhat blurred after contact, trade relations and especially after the Great Mahele when the land was sold in fee-simple. By 1854 the maka'ainana owned only 1% of the land.

10 General Instructions of Hawaiian Board to Captains, July 1886, in Morning Star Papers, MM-HEA; Walkup, 'Report for 1886-1887', MM-HEA.
Hawaii and the Hawaiians and most likely would have argued that he was on excellent terms with his Hawaiian associates. He lamented the lack of Hawaiian workers in his field, for up till 1860 there were still only three Hawaiian families in the Gilberts, those of Kanoa, Mahoe and Haina. Bingham had sent out an urgent plea for at least five more although he believed that thirty Hawaiian men were needed. He wrote to Anderson in Massachusetts: 'You will not wonder that our hearts are saddened by the non-arrival of Hawaiian missionaries.'

Yet, Bingham was happy with the particular Hawaiians he had. He applauded Kanoa:

We find Kanoa a most valuable help meet. He is a humble, faithful, patient, persevering, devoted missionary. Oh for many more like him ... We are much pleased with Mahoe...

Later, in 1864, Bingham wrote that he was:

pleased with the attention shown by many of the high chiefs to my Hawaiian associate [Kanoa], convincing me more than ever before, that Hawaiian missionaries may win the confidence and command the respect of these proud savages.

Bingham was not the only one to think highly of this pioneer Hawaiian missionary. The Reverend J. F. Pogue, delegate to the Gilberts in 1869, described Kanoa as a 'mild, kind pleasant active man' who said very little. When asked for an opinion, 'His thoughts for the most part, were weighty, and well digested.' Captain Isaiah Bray, of the Morning Star, spoke of Kanoa in 1880 as one of the 'humble followers of Christ'. In short, Kanoa was perceived as the ideal of a Hawaiian missionary - industrious, faithful and, especially, humble.

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11 Bingham to Anderson, 4 November 1859, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
12 Bingham to Clark, 5 August 1858, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
13 Bingham, quoted in ABCFM Reports, 1864, 138-9.
Born in 1822, he was thirty-five when he came with his wife Kahola and their young son to settle in the Gilberts; Mahoe was nine years younger. Mahoe had a different personality to the mild Kanoa. He was efficient and businesslike, yet Bingham also found him 'intelligent, well-educated, unusually polished for a Hawaiian, humbly modest, respectful, tractable, loving the souls of the poor heathen'. Mahoe was also perceived as the ideal type for a Hawaiian missionary. By 1865, three more Hawaiian families had been settled in the Gilberts, those of Aumai, Maka and Kapu. In 1865, Kanoa moved to the new station of Butaritari with Maka; Aumai and Kapu stayed on Abaiang; Haina was sent to Tarawa with Mahoe.

The Reverend Albert Snow remarked on this shift of location for Kanoa. He mused that it was a pity to have taken him from Abaiang as 'the king and people respected and loved him' while caring little for Aumai and Kapu. On the other hand, he believed that with 'any less the man than Kanoa' a station might not have been secured on Butaritari. 'They seem to take to him,' he wrote of Kanoa; Kanoa had a 'winning ... manner'. He obviously had the ability to win both the admiration and the affection of others. Snow also hoped for greater things from Kanoa now that he was 'more free to act himself'. Snow believed that he would become both more efficient and effective.

Snow was specifically referring to Bingham's supervision of Kanoa on Abaiang, of which he was critical. Further, there were certain personality traits of Bingham which Snow saw as inhibiting the freedom of the Hawaiian missionaries and ultimately as jeopardizing the whole mission in the

15 Bingham to Gulick, 25 April 1859, CM.
16 Snow to Gulick, 21 August 1865, MM-HEA.
17 Snow to Gulick, 23 August 1865, MM-HEA.
Gilberts. Snow saw Bingham as a dominating man with a definite air of superiority. He wrote to Luther Gulick, whom he knew to be sympathetic to the Hawaiians, in 1866:

If we Americans and equals feel the difficulties which have often been expressed of working or counselling with [i.e. Bingham] have you no more feelings for your Hawaiian brethren than to advise ... a continuation of the same state of things with only the hope or expectation that sickness or death may interpose for their [the Hawaiians'] relief.18

He advised Luther Gulick 'to talk with Mr. Emerson as to how he found the Hawaiians working in the Gilbert Islands under the superintendence of Bro [i.e. Bingham]'. Bingham, at this stage, was recuperating in the United States. Snow was pressing for another American missionary to replace him, or, should he return to his missionary field, to accompany him. He claimed that Kanoa had confided in him in August 1866 that none of the Hawaiians had received a word from Bingham since he had left the Gilberts in mid-1864. The Hawaiians had also said that they were 'not all together satisfied with Mr. Bingham's translations'.19 Apparently, Bingham had not allowed the Hawaiians to make either suggestions or corrections. Snow summed up his deeply-felt beliefs on the unsuitability of Bingham as supervisor of the Hawaiians when he wrote to Gulick:

I know and appreciate your favourite policy of freedom in counsel and in action. But they need upon the Gilbert Islands a liberal minded common sense American advisor and not a dictator.20

These were very strong words. It is important to know what else the Hawaiians themselves thought of Bingham besides that which Snow disclosed. No written comment of theirs is made either way, although it is known that the Hawaiians never looked to Bingham as a father-figure as they did to Pogue whom they fondly referred to as Polepe in their many letters to him.

18 Snow to Gulick, 13 July 1866, MM-HEA.
19 Snow to Gulick, 23 August 1865, MM-HEA.
20 Snow to Gulick, 13 July 1866, MM-HEA.
The Hawaiian missionaries wrote to Bingham in both Hawaiian (from the 1870's onwards) and English, but the bulk of their letters were written to other members of the Hawaiian Board. Bingham rarely wrote to the Hawaiian missionaries in the Gilberts.

As it was, Kanoa did do quite well in the new missionary post at Butaritari. This was not before a frightening incident occurred. Soon after Kanoa and Maka moved to Butaritari, the high chief Kaiea I killed three Hawaiians from the ship Pfeil, in mid-1866, whilst in a drunken stupor. The two Hawaiians deemed it wise to flee, but returned in December 1867 after they had been invited back by the high chief. This was after Bingham had visited the island in August to smooth the path and persuade Kaiea to take back the missionaries. Butaritari had had more contact with traders and their trade goods than any other island in the group. The higher rainfall guaranteed a greater crop of coconuts. Further, the hereditary chieftainship had secured peace and order in the two islands of Butaritari and Makin. In all, Butaritari was the most suitable island for a trading post. One of the trade goods was alcohol and the high chief had fallen prey to its effects. Yet despite a bad start, it was on Butaritari, more than anywhere else in the Gilberts, that the opportunity existed to put into practice Bingham's strategy of influencing the high chief to bring about the Christianization of the people in general. Both Kanoa and Maka were to use this strategy to the fullest extent.

Maka displayed a very different image from that of Kanoa. He was neither submissive nor diffident. At the 1869 General Meeting of the mission, Pogue, delegate for that year, reported that Maka had been most

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21 The Friend, 18, 1 January 1867, 8; 20, March 1870, 21–23; Missionary Herald, 64, May 1868, 154.
objectionable. Although regarding Maka as an energetic worker, he also found him 'very excitable, full of talk, headstrong, tenacious of his own views while not willing to consider the views of others'. It was put to Maka that he move to Tarawa where the 'king' was exiled. Maka flatly refused. Even after several hours of discussion, he would not give in and insisted that all his reasons for not doing so be entered into the minutes.

Pogue was not alone in his assessment of Maka. Four years earlier Snow had observed the attitude of superiority of this Hawaiian missionary:

It was somewhat amusing to see how consequential Mr Maka was. You would have thought that he was the delegate sent down with special commission to right all Hawaiian affairs.

Apparently, another American missionary, a 'Mr. Hall', was quite disgusted and thought Maka should be told 'to play second fiddle' to Kanoa as he was the senior missionary. Some suggestions regarding the need for modesty were eventually made. Snow believed that Maka would become 'the leading man' on Butaritari because of his executive ability.

Kanoa, however, was a man who could win the hearts of people. Before Kanoa and Maka had left they had taught a group to read and write in Gilbertese. On their return they found that those they had taught had become teachers for others; two hundred could read and write. Further, there were six who they thought had 'truly turned to God'. The art of reading and writing was appreciated on Butaritari more than anywhere else in the Gilberts, because of the need of understanding both words and numbers at the most advanced trading post in the island group. Maka wrote that the high chief and the people had abandoned the drinking of alcohol, that congregations were full on Sundays, and that boarding schools had been

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23 Snow to Gulick, 23 August 1865, MM-HEA.

24 Missionary Herald, 64, October 1868, 319.
set up for both boys and girls. By 1870 a church of eighteen had been formed which included the brother of the high chief, named Itei, and only two years later Butaritari was spoken of as 'the brightest spot in the Gilberts'; 520 could read. The number of inquirers grew. Doane, who made a tour of the mission in the Gilberts in 1874, remarked that the 'Hawaiian brethren are apparently beloved by the people'. At the time there were six church edifices with a membership of 130. 25

MAP 5: BUTARITARI and MAKIN

25 Missionary Herald, 66, January 1870, 199; 68, January 1872, 13; 71, April 1875, 115; Maka to Pogue, 'Parish Report of Butaritari, June 1870 to May 1871', MM-HEA.
Yet in 1878 Kanoa wrote: 'The octopus does not leave his habits, advancing and retreating. So are some companions. Concerning this parish of Butaritari, it is like a bunch of bananas, their hearts suddenly became rotten.' The previous year Maka, ordained since 1872, had set up a parish in Kuma at the north end of the island. He took charge of this area and that of Makin while Kanoa retained charge of Butaritari town. There were no additions to the church in Butaritari town that year, which puzzled Kanoa. He was unaware of the longstanding rivalry between Butaritari and Makin. This was because the 'aristocratic' families at Makin did not have the same ancestor as those of Butaritari. Teauoki was the ancestor of the Butaritari 'aristocratic' families and Kaiea I was one of his grandsons. The Makin 'aristocrats' therefore felt that they owed no allegiance to Butaritari; the head man of Makin was largely independent of the high chiefs of Butaritari. All other head men, descended from Teauoki, sided with the high chief except for the head man of Kuma who allied himself to Makin, constituting himself a semi-independent chief. By setting up a parish in Kuma and outlying Makin island, Maka had deprived Butaritari of its unique position in having missionaries.

In 1879 Itei succeeded his brother Kaiea I. Although he was reputedly a Christian he took over all his brother's wives. By this time the mission at Butaritari was at an all-time low. Those who had previously followed mission teaching reverted 'to old ways, viz. fornication, liquor drinking, smoking and dancing'. In 1881, however, by which time Maka had vacated Kuma to return to Hawaii, Kanoa wrote to Bingham:

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26 Kanoa to Bingham, 31 July 1878, MM-HEA.

27 Missionary Herald, 74, May 1878, 155; 76, July 1880, 224; Lambert, Rank and Ramage, 199, 235, 245.
The progress of God's work in these fields, hard for so many years, is something new. Nothing is impossible with God. The hard hearts are very soft. There is no drunkenness this year. It is strictly forbidden by the king's word.28

The wandering ones were returning and new ones were seeking the Lord. The high chief came under the full sway of Kanoa and later Maka, who returned to Butaritari town in 1882. Itei became monogamous, which was quite a sacrifice given that the high chief of Butaritari was required to maintain polygamous relations which enriched the chieftainship and extended his influence. Maka received 350 Christians in the space of a year. As Snow had predicted, he did become the leading missionary at Butaritari.

Robert Louis Stevenson spoke of Maka as 'a light-hearted, lovable, yet in his own trade very rigorous man' who 'gained and improved an influence on the king which soon grew paramount'.29

Kanoa and Maka were able to wield an influence not only over Itei but also over his brother B'akatokua, who succeeded him in 1885, and the youngest brother Bure-i-mou who ruled from 1889 till 1910. The French Catholics who came to Butaritari in 1897 believed it was the two Hawaiians who ruled Butaritari and not the high chief. It was noted that the Protestant school was well attended and that 'plenty of Bibles' were 'visible'.30 Yet the Hawaiians had begun to complain of a 'lukewarm state' ten years earlier. Stevenson, who was on Butaritari in 1889, concurred with this view and spoke of Maka as 'weekly flogging a dead horse and blowing a cold fire...'.31 In the meantime, Kanoa had been dismissed by

29 Missionary Herald, 81, June 1885, 238; Stevenson, In the South Seas, 214.
31 Stevenson, In the South Seas, 229-30.
the Hawaiian Board and was running his own independent church attended by his own personal following. The Hawaiians' control on the populace through their influence of the chiefs was dwindling.

By 1872, when Butaritari was spoken of as the brightest spot in the Gilberts, there were Hawaiians for all the eight islands the HEA was to take. Bingham would also return to the Gilberts on a permanent basis the next year to introduce the Hawaiians to the various islands. The Hawaiian Kanoho was sent to Marakei while Lono settled on Maiana. The Reverend Leleo was sent to Nonouti; the Reverend Kapu and Nalimu were already at Tabiteuea. Twelve Hawaiian men, in all, had come by this stage. The further nine Hawaiian missionary families appointed between 1880 and 1892 either joined or took over from existing stations. Although Bingham complained about the lack of Hawaiian help, some would think that there had been more than enough Hawaiians for a small population. Snow was the most vociferous about this point. Writing to Pogue in 1872 specifically about Hawaiian missionaries, he said:

There seems to have been a difference of opinion regarding the way of working the Gilbert Islands. Mr Bingham seems fully intent on saving them if a multiplicity of labourers can do it. His policy would seem to be that their chances of being saved, other things being equal, are in proportion to the number of labourers employed.

Snow went on to say that missionary personnel at Boston, 'the Boston folks', agreed with him that the Gilberts were '... being swamped by so many Hawaiian labourers...'.

In 1860 Snow had been required to move to the Marshalls. Although previously he had had scant respect for Hawaiian assistants, he was to change his mind on facing the different logistic situation in the Marshalls. Kosrae was one island; the Marshalls were scattered atolls in two main

32 Six Hawaiian missionaries to the Gilberts had been ordained by 1872.

33 Snow to Pogue, 24 September 1872, MM-HEA.
chains. Snow was now intent to recruit Hawaiians to carry on the work in the Marshalls. Hezekiah Aeá was the first. He and his wife were followed by six other Hawaiian couples who used the methods of their Hawaiian home churches to train local deacons and who adapted pre-Christian types of social organization and festivity to Christian forms. Local churches were allowed to evolve along their own lines while the Hawaiians travelled up and down the Ratak and Ralik chains of islands. The Marshallese, products of early mission schools, worked alongside the Hawaiians. They were more usually commoners. In 1869 when a Training School, with an American High School curriculum, was established, a steady stream of Marshallese teachers and pastors was produced. By 1872 the mission was firmly in the hands of the Marshallese themselves.34

On both Marakei and Maiana, the Hawaiian missionaries followed Bingham’s strategy of backing those whom they regarded as chiefs with the hope that these would influence their people towards Christianity. This was the opposite policy to that which Snow had used both on Kosrae and in the Marshalls. Unlike Butaritari where the chieftainship was secure and hereditary, on Marakei and Maiana, as on Abaiang and Tarawa, no one chief held sway for any protracted period of time. On Marakei, even more than on the other three islands of the war-torn group, political instability prevailed. Here strong men, rather than chiefs, rose and fell. Six months after the arrival of David Kanoho and his wife Rachael, he wrote of the people of Marakei: 'there is not a glimmer of light of dawn amongst

them at this time'. Yet by 1878 there were ninety Christians. Kanoho then gave a glowing report of missionary progress:

Ignorant living ... worshipping idols, praying to pregnant women, praying to fishing canoes, to nets, worshipping idols, to the cutting of the hair of honoured men and daughters to strengthen their bodies for anger, living in the old taboos, seeking pleasure, avarice, pride, lust, to be of two minds, living filthily, murdering, drinking, stealing, lying. All these things ... have passed.  

MAP 6: MARAKEI

35 Kanoho to Pogue, 4 July 1872, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian); Kanoho, 'Parish Report of Marakei, June 1, 1872 to May 31, 1873', MM-HEA.

36 Kanoho, 'The Work on the Island of Marakei for June 1, 1877 to May 31, 1878', MM-HEA.
Marakei, however, was subject to the same war spirit which plagued its neighbouring islands. On 30 October 1877 a disguised war-canoe came from Abaiang with soldiers hiding in the bottom. Soon they were running on shore with guns, staves, shark-teeth sticks, hatchets and war-knives. The men from Abaiang were mostly Marakeians who had previously escaped to Abaiang during wars to recruit assistance, so as to return later to reclaim their land. A strong man in the east of Marakei assembled his men to ward off the attack. Kanoho, based on the west side of the island, intervened and referred to the code of laws set up in Abaiang, told the intruders to leave, saying: 'You are rebels and damage the peace of the land here, for the peace of the land is observed; there is no drinking or thieving, or opposing Sunday. You go right back.' The strong man was not grateful to Kanoho because he wanted to fight. The men from Abaiang had followers in the west of the island, so Kanoho found himself in the middle of intrigue, having insulted both the 'rebels' and those who wanted to fight them.

The war between east and west continued into 1879 and resulted in the general dispersion of Christian members, of whom there were 218 at this stage. The school was disrupted, Christians scattered. The Reverend Edward Doane, in Marakei in 1879 on tour, left the island 'with guns firing, and the war flag given to the breeze'.

At Maiana, the station was superintended by the Hawaiian missionary William Nehemiah Lono and his wife Julia. Bingham described their entry into Maiana in 1872:

As the boat approached the shore an elderly chief Beru by name met and welcomed us, escorting us to a large council-house ... When

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37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
the question was asked whether they would provide a place for their teacher to build on, it was replied that a site had been previously set apart for that purpose. The chief was constantly called by the people about him Abraham. May he indeed become more and more a Christian patriarch, and father to the faithful on Maiana.  

Bingham probably saw another Kaiea of Abaiang. Yet, on his first visit to Maiana in 1860, he had referred to Karotu of Tebiauea as 'king' of Maiana. Subsequently Karotu's power was challenged by Arawatau, a chief from Bubetei at the southern end of Maiana, and Karotu had been forced to flee. Arawatau was the eldest of four brothers to hold chieftainship in succession over the Bubetei area in the south of Maiana. Their father Tewaki had been a war-lord.

Beru, one of these four brothers, must have only recently succeeded as chief of the settlement around Bubetei when Lono arrived. His taking of the name of Abraham would seem to indicate that, in emulation of Abraham of Abaiang, Beru wanted to be or was seen as a rising chief. But his bid for power was not to go unchallenged.

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40 Bingham to Clark, January 1872, BFPH, box 5.

41 Bingham to Anderson, 11 May 1861, BFPH, box 3; Rennie, Field Notes, 1981.
Lono was given what many regarded as the toughest field in the Gilberts. He arrived in a time of drought and was blamed for the lack of rainfall, the Maianans saying that the constant blowing of the conch-shell to call them to church had frightened away the rain. In the Marquesas, the Hawaiians were blamed likewise for drought, poor fishing and sickness. Lono set up his station at Taniamanimaeano which was later renamed Eden. Yet Beru befriended Lono and Lono in return gave his support to Beru who was soon to be involved in warfare. Preparing him for battle, Lono
covered his head with a piece of white cloth and called him Abraham, father of the people, and blessed him. Beru went to 'Eden' and stayed there for some weeks in prayer. He was not yet a Christian and was simply preparing for battle in the customary way, except that he was using Lono instead of a sorcerer. Beru was successful in te Nenebo, or the war in compensation, and it was after this event that Beru and his family became Christian.\textsuperscript{42}

Beru's 'conversion', however, did not result in the conversion of the people in general, for this patriarch had very limited power indeed. In 1875, Lono wrote that few associated 'to hear the word of life ... and on some sabbaths none at all'.\textsuperscript{43} At one time there were fifty in his school, another time only one. Lono saw the hindrances to progress as pleasure-seeking, avarice, drinking and the desire for war. On 20 November 1876 another war started on Maiana which Lono claimed was due to 'the lofty thought of someone to become a big person like a king'.\textsuperscript{44} On 19 July 1877 yet another war erupted with Abraham Beru, 'the first fruit of Christianity on Maiana', emerging as the victor. Lono interpreted the war as one between pagans and Christians and claimed that Beru 'gained the victory through Jehovah'.\textsuperscript{45} He took sides in the wars as had Bingham on Abaiang, viewing those who posed a threat against a 'Christian' chief as rebels not only against the 'legitimate' ruler but also against God. Beru was involved in still another war in January 1878. Lono remarked that: 'It was a customary thing, the flying of bullets whistling inward and seaward above us at night and day.'\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{42} Lono to Pogue, 17 June 1872, MM-HEA; Rennie, Field Notes, 1981; te Nenebo is land given in compensation for murder. It literally means 'the place in compensation for striking'; Morris, 'Hawaiian Missionaries in the Marquesas', \textit{HJH}, 13, 1979, 49.

\textsuperscript{43} Lono, 'Parish Report of Maiana, 1875', MM-HEA; Lono to Pogue, 19 July 1876, MM-HEA.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.; Lono to Bingham, 13 September 1877, MM-HEA.
Despite these war-torn conditions, Bingham believed that the 'day seems to be dawning on Maiana'.\(^47\) Lono reported eleven Christians, twenty-two candidates for baptism and forty-seven at school in 1878. Women's meetings were organized and, as on other islands, 'the women were more wide-awake than the men'.\(^48\) Doane's report of 1879 was not so complimentary and for eight years of missionary labour, Doane saw little evidence of success. Of Beru he said: 'a high chief was pointed out to us, but he was little respected by the people'.\(^49\) Doane saw the reality in contrast to Bingham, who clutched at any evidence of success and who continued to view these heads of utu, bereft of any extended power, as patriarchs wielding great influence.

On Nonouti, Bingham could not make the same error. As on Tabiteuea, its neighbouring island, Nonouti was ruled under the maneaba system in which high chiefs were forbidden. Bingham first stopped at Nonouti in 1867 when he returned from the United States as captain of the new Morning Star. He received a friendly response, but a mission station was not established till 1872 when Leleo and Kaehuaea settled there. By this stage the Anti Tioba cult had spread there from Tabiteuea, which Bingham spoke of as evidence of the presence of the 'adversary of souls'. It is not known at which district the missionaries stopped in 1872, but there they met with opposition and were obliged to move further north where they were welcomed by 'a village about one mile from "the feather folk"', a name by which the cultists were known because of their use of feathers.\(^50\)

\(^47\) Bingham to Clark, 7 February 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
\(^48\) Lono, 'Parish Report of Maiana, July 14, 1879', MM-HEA.
\(^49\) Doane, 'Report of the Gilbert Island Mission, August 20, 1879', MM-HEA.
\(^50\) Bingham to Pogue, January 1872, MM-HEA.
Though it may appear that it was the adoption of the cult which caused the Nonouti Islanders to reject the missionaries this, in fact, is not the case. At no time did the cult spread over the entire island; there were still many who were faithful to the old Antí. Yet this latter group objected just as strongly to the missionaries as did the adherents of the cult.

The lack of trade on this island compared with that of Butaritari was reflected in both the indifference to learning and the relative incapacity to buy Christian literature. Leleo sold only three books after a five-month tour of the island. Cultists and pagans alike insisted that 'the god Jehovah is only for the white people. We do not know the nature of this person. The gods of our ancestors are good enough for us, for they are the gods of rain, wind and thunder'. Leleo could not even convince them that his God was stronger than the Antí when his medicine allegedly cured a sick woman. Many believed that it was not the medicine of the Hawaiian's God but the Antí who had healed her.  

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51 Leleo to Pogue, 30 May 1872; Leleo to Pogue, 13 July 1872, MM-HEA; Kaehuacea to Pogue, 4 June 1872; Leleo to Bingham, 8 September 1873, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian).
In 1874, Leleo reported Nonouti as 'a drunken land' where drunkenness was rampant as were the accompanying fighting, stealing and adultery. There was no desire to be taught in Christian ways. Where once he had had fifty pupils, he now had twenty. At one time there had been 150 at the Sabbath service; congregations were now as low as five. The Islanders urged Leleo to give them such goods as clothing, fish hooks and haole food, but this he refused to do and so earned the title of Tauti or mean one. The power of his God was ridiculed. One old man took hold of some New Testaments and tearing them up said: 'Where is the power of the book?'
When shall I die?\textsuperscript{52} The books came to be seen as a symbol of the Christians and they came to be known both on Nonouti and Tabiteuea as the 'book-party'. Leleo himself was also mocked. One hundred tobacco sticks and a tub of sour toddy, both of which were prohibited by the missionaries, were placed inside Leleo's home to taunt him. Captain Gelett of the \textit{Morning Star} reported that the Islanders were insolent to Leleo and frequently robbed him.\textsuperscript{53} Leleo, like so many other Hawaiian missionaries in the Gilberts, was too gentle, too self-effacing and exhibited little personal charisma.

Leleo moved to Abaiang in 1874 due to his wife's illness. Before he left, A.J. Lowther, one of the traders on Nonouti, spoke of Leleo as a devoted missionary 'constantly traversing the island in his indefatigable labours among the people'.\textsuperscript{54} Lowther also noted that the \textit{Anti Tioba} cult was beginning to disappear on Nonouti after just three years. Resentment against the missionaries did not likewise dissipate. The mission home was destroyed. A Gilbertese teacher named Teraoi came to replace Leleo but he later went to Abaiang to attend Taylor's Training School there. In 1878 Nonouti was abandoned as a missionary post. It appeared that the brief missionary presence had had little effect. Bingham remarked that 'the people seem to be in a very wild and raw state', to which Taylor agreed saying that the 'people on Nonouti are as wild as ever'.\textsuperscript{55} A Gilbertese

\textsuperscript{52} Leleo, 'Church Report for Nonouti, 1874'; Leleo to Pogue, 10 June 1874, MM-HEA.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.; The \textit{Friend}, 24, March 1875, 22.

\textsuperscript{54} Chamberlain, 'Synopsis of the Voyage of the Morning Star for the year 1875', ABCFM Papers, reel 4.

\textsuperscript{55} Bingham to Clark, 7 February 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 5; Taylor to Clark, 4 March 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 6.
teacher named Tebwe was left on Nonouti in 1882 and five years later received 178 people into the church. Yet this was a short-lived increase, for within two years many of these new adherents were re-baptized as Catholics. The French Catholics had come to Nonouti, their first point of missionary contact in the Gilberts, in 1888. Before the end of two years they had baptized nearly half the population of Nonouti. Later the Catholics and Protestants became fairly evenly matched throughout the island.

In the decade up till the establishment of the British Protectorate over the Gilbert Islands, the mission continued to founder. Everywhere there was a downward trend; a disenchantment deepened between the Gilbertese and the Hawaiians. This disenchantment was something aside from the political disturbances on Maiana and Marakei or even the infiltration of the Catholics on Nonouti. The Hawaiians had failed to sustain the interest of the Gilbertese people. On Maiana Lono had only ten Christians by 1888 and had taken to trade. The white traders made a deal with him; they would render him assistance in inducing the Islanders to establish Sabbath laws and generally secure order on the island, if he would desist from trading. On Marakei there had once been 218 Christians but by 1888 most of these had fallen away. Kanoho also was trading and earning the resentment of the traders. On Butaritari both Maka and Kanoa had been dabbling in trade even earlier, probably because of the greater opportunity to do so there.


Mahoe, delegate for the Gilbert Islands in 1890, said that he had been charged with encouraging the Hawaiian missionaries. The dearth of letters between Bingham and the Hawaiians would seem to indicate that Bingham was remiss in this area. The Hawaiians needed exhortation and encouragement for theirs was generally not a happy lot in the Gilberts. The fact that missionary success eluded them made their conditions seem even worse.

The Hawaiian missionaries fared badly in the Gilberts and their position was aggravated by mission policy. One of the issues about which the Hawaiians continually complained was their inability to own land and property formally in the Gilberts even though they had paid for it. The Hawaiian Board claimed all such property as its own. The American missionaries in Hawaii at one time had argued for the right of every Hawaiian to own some land, but this concept was changed when Hawaiian missionaries were in the field. The Hawaiian missionaries, for their part, did not appreciate the double standard and they vehemently argued for their right to land ownership in the Gilberts.

As early as 1871 the matter erupted when Leleo wrote to Pogue in Honolulu on this subject. After a plea for extra money, he digressed to the issue of land ownership in quite a subtle way:

The difficulty this Mission faces is one which the Hawaiian Board should help, for it is not well for the members of this Mission to think they own real property or property they can sell to old residents [when, in fact, they did not].

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58 Mahoe, 'Thoughts on Gilbert Island Work, 1890', MM-HEA.
59 Forbes to ABCFM missionaries, 21 June 1881, MM-HEA.
60 Leleo to Pogue, 20 October 1871, MM-HEA.
He went on to discuss the dilemma of the Hawaiian missionaries who, according to the Hawaiian Board, could not own property. Lands bought and houses built all belonged to the HEA even though it had contributed no financial assistance. So, when the Hawaiians left for a new parish, they made a financial loss because they had to start up again. Leleo therefore asked that the Hawaiian missionaries at least be awarded $20.00 to help with the purchase of land. Further, he asked for supplies in lumber, small boats with full equipment, barrels in which to store oil, blackboards, chalk and maps. 61

Five years later a specific case arose, proving that Leleo's recommendation had not been heeded by the HEA. Haina and his family were told by the Hawaiian Board to move to Abaiang, yet on Tarawa Haina had completed a house, thirty by twenty feet with a wide porch, in August of 1876. Haina wrote asking for reimbursement of the cost of the house, but he never received the requested $67.00. 62 In 1881, Maunaloa wrote to the Reverend A.O. Forbes again raising the issue. Lands had been bought by Hawaiian missionaries 'as sites for residences and for seeking health in living here'. This made sense in an environment where one needed land to be self-sufficient. Besides the fish in the sea, the coconuts, babai and pandanus fruit that could be grown provided the bulk of the diet in the Gilberts. Maunaloa continued:

We have decided if it is possible for the Hawaiian Board to compensate them for their lands, then they will belong to the Hawaiian Board. Some will not buy new lands without the consent of this Mission. This is a real hindrance to missionary work... 63

The same year a committee on mission lands was formed headed by Leleo. In September of 1883, at the Annual General Meeting of the mission, the resolution adopted from the committee of 1881 was discussed anew. The

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61 Ibid.

62 Haina to Hawaiian Board, 16 August 1876, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian).

63 Maunaloa to Forbes, 21 September 1881, MM-HEA.
Hawaiians decided that the Hawaiian Board should buy land 'for the perpetual use of the Board'. If this did not eventuate then the 'authority to sell is with the owner'.

The lack of land ownership also detracted merit from the Hawaiians in the eyes of the Gilbertese. In the Gilberts, almost every individual regardless of gender owned land. Those without land had lost it either during a war or through fines. To be bereft of land not only implied a loss in status, it meant the paling of one's identity, as a family without land had no representation in the maneaba. In 1878 when Kanoa was pondering the cause of the backsliding of the Butaritari Islanders, he gave three reasons. Firstly, the missionaries were regarded as without consequence because they did not own property. Secondly, the missionaries became sick and died like the Gilbertese. Thirdly, the Gilbertese wanted to maintain their own ways. Kanoa was very perceptive, seeing the matter closer to the Gilbertese point of view. Power was an important consideration to the Gilbertese. Particularly was this true of personal power, something with which the Hawaiian missionaries were not well endowed.

Also since they and their families often became very ill, it was evidence to the Gilbertese that the Anti of the Hawaiians had no real power. Sickness and death haunted the Hawaiians. Of the twenty-one Hawaiian men who served in the Gilberts, twelve ended up seriously ill while there. Paralysis and severe rheumatism were common ailments in the Gilberts and six Hawaiian men were afflicted with either one of these diseases. Haina, Maka and Aumai ended up with paralysis through their entire bodies. Aumai became ill only a year after he landed at Abaiang. Six years later, in 1869, he returned to Honolulu due to his condition; he never returned to the missionary field. Paaluhi, Kaaia and Kaai had inflammatory rheumatism.

64 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Gilbertese Mission, September 4-7, 1883, MM-HEA.

65 Kanoa to Bingham, 31 July 1878, MM-HEA.
Lono suffered from haemorrhage of the lungs; Kanoho had elephantiasis; Mahoe lost the use of his right arm after he was shot; Kanoa returned to Honolulu after five years in the Gilberts due to ill health. Leleo had sores all over his body and it was feared that he had the same leprosy as his wife. Maunaloa had a 'wasting illness' and died on 2 January 1885, just five years after his arrival in the Gilberts.66

The missionary wives suffered even more. Kanoa's wife had a large tumour in her stomach, although she died not from this but in childbirth. Kapu's first wife, Maria, died of a liver disease, possibly hepatitis, and could not keep her food down for months before she finally died. Maka's wife Mary was afflicted with paralysis; Lucy Leleo became a leper in the Gilberts. Kailihoa Kanoho was paralysed down one side; Julia Nua died of cancer.67 No less than eleven Hawaiian men lost their wives in the Gilberts and the majority of these deaths were premature. Four of these men had nervous breakdowns after the death of their spouses. These included Kapu, Nua, Lutera and Ahia. Children were lost in death in almost every Hawaiian family in the Gilberts. The Hawaiians obviously had the wrong Anti; they were not protected from illness. Yet the Hawaiians persevered and, whereas both Bingham and Taylor vacated the Gilberts when they suffered ill-health and faced death in the family, many of the Hawaiians facing these same traumas stuck to their posts.

The Hawaiians faced other problems. Supplies were not shipped to them on time. The Committee on Foreign Missions claimed in 1878 that the Hawaiian missionaries were to 'introduce some of the comforts and customs of civilized life as well as ... [establish] churches'. But the Hawaiians found it very difficult to present even a veneer of civilization. They had

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66 See Appendix No. 3. Hawaiians suffered elsewhere in Micronesia and the Marquesas. See Morris, 'Hawaiian Missionaries in the Marquesas', 53.

67 See Appendix No. 3.
grown accustomed to a European life-style and had acquired a taste for European goods, clothing and housing. This had been due, in part, to the activities and policy of the Hawaiian Board, so it was somewhat hypocritical for this same Board to fail to deliver supplies on time. In 1859, Bingham reported to the Reverend N.G. Clark that Kanoa and Mahoe had no soap, the symbol of cleanliness to the mission.68 This shortage was trivial compared with the lack of food supplies. In 1865 Kanoa wrote to Luther Gulick that the Morning Star had sent out insufficient food and clothing, and that his children (he had had six but four had died) were 'almost naked, with torn trousers ...' Three years prior to this, Kanoa, whilst in Honolulu, had explained to the Hawaiian Board 'what is happening down here, what is going smoothly and what is not; what is giving us problems and what is not and our main concern, the lack of food'.69

In 1871, Maka headed a committee which requested Pogue to increase their salary to $200.00 per annum and to give them permission to sell the oil they received for books to enable them to buy food from passing ships when their food ran out. The Hawaiians were prepared to reimburse the Mission Board later. According to Maka, hunger was a real problem as the Morning Star often arrived after bread, rice and foodstuffs had run out.70 Besides starvation, the Hawaiians could choose between debt to the Hawaiian Board or debt to passing ships' captains. The problem was a perpetual one, for as early as 1866 Mahoe had written to Luther Gulick:

Please urge the Hawaiian Board to be wide-awake and not to reduce at all the amount of food ordered by us as in the past years. You did not fulfil our request for food and for the year past

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68 Bingham to Clark, 23 September 1859, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
69 Kanoa to Gulick, 14 August 1865, MM-HEA; Haina to Clark, 24 September 1862, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian).
70 Maka to Pogue, 18 October 1871, MM-HEA. The Hawaiian missionaries in the Marquesas faced the same problems. The French Catholics mocked the Hawaiians saying they were only poor men without clothes and without warships. Morris, 'Hawaiian Missionaries in the Marquesas', 53.
my food was reduced a half to $\frac{1}{2}$ barrels of flour, 6 tins and 1 barrel of rice and 2 barrels of poi. That was all the food, so my food was all gone. If it had not been for Haina and Kaluahine, what would we have done? 71

(Haina and his wife Kaluahine had agreed to share their supplies with Mahoe.) Yet this was one issue that Bingham finally took up. He was actually aware of this particular plight of the Hawaiians and championed their cause in this case. In 1890, in a Report of the Committee on Foreign Missions, of which he was chairman, he wrote:

These Hawaiian brethren, who leave a land of plenty, on these low coral islands, put faith in us that to the best of our ability we will provide for their regular visitation once a year, and they plan accordingly. We cannot lose sight of this fact. We ought not to. If we cannot reasonably expect to secure for them such visitations, then surely they ought to be forewarned. We should plan to make regular annual trips through Micronesia. 72

He then added that this was especially true for the Hawaiian missionaries in the Gilberts who were in desperate need of annual supplies.

Ten years earlier, Bingham had criticized Captain Bray of the *Morning Star* for handing out second-rate treatment to the Hawaiians. Bray argued that it was difficult to enter the lagoons of the Gilberts; Bingham disagreed. By this stage, the missionary brig was carrying freight for financial gain, and Bingham claimed that Bray carried such freight in priority to missionary supplies which lay on deck whilst freight trade was safely secured below. 73 In 1900, Bingham was still arguing that: 'The tours must never be sacrificed,' so that 'the Marshallese can tour in the smooth time of the year' that they 'may have an easy time'. 74 Bingham resented that only a flying visit was made through the Gilberts to catch the right season for the Marshall Islands. This attitude of priority for

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71 Mahoe to Gulick, 20 June 1866, MM-HEA.


73 Bingham to Clark, 5 July 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.

74 Bingham to Smith, 27 March 1900, ABCFM-HEA.
the Gilbertese interests earned him criticism from other missionaries. The Reverend Dr Pease noted Bingham's 'particularity for Hawaiian missionaries and for the Gilbert Island mission'. He further accused Bingham of being unfair to the rest of Micronesia. Pease felt it was hopeless fighting Bingham, he regarded him as a 'very determined man' who held a 'dominating influence in the Foreign Committee of the Hawaiian Board'. Bingham, if at times condescending to the Hawaiians, did have their interests at heart. Snow had also criticized Bingham in the past on his Hawaiian policy and his preference for the Gilbert Islands. Snow had wanted Hawaiian missionaries for the Marshalls in the 1870's but, as he put it to Pogue:

> Feeling as he does, I should be very slow to call any Hawaiians from the Gilbert Islands, to help us in the Marshall group; even if we should fail to get any new labourers direct from Hawaii.

Bingham consistently regarded the Hawaiians as belonging to the Gilberts. Yet he could have intervened on their behalf more than he did when he so well knew conditions in the Gilbert Islands.

Bingham built up a reputation for championing the Hawaiian cause, although a survey of his dealings with them gives a slightly different view. It is true that Bingham believed that the Hawaiian missionaries were a beneficial force in the Gilberts. His actual relationship with them was another matter. In the case of the land-holding issue, Bingham never took a stand. In 1871 it had been Pogue to whom Leleo had written and not Bingham. The issue of the granting of furloughs was another which Bingham did not enter. Although he took up some of the issues affecting the Hawaiians he could have done more to reach out to them, for he did not share a close personal relationship with them. While he intervened on their

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75 Quoted in Bingham to Smith, 24 June 1891, ABCFM-HEA.

76 Snow to Pogue, 24 September 1872, MM-HEA.
behalf, he regarded them as a group rather than as individual friends. This problem of relating to others was a general one for Bingham; he was, to a large extent, locked in himself. Yet the Hawaiians needed a father-figure to relate to and confide in. The Hawaiians often referred to the American members of the missionary group as *makua* as if they were parents to them. Mahoe, for example, back in 1870, had written to Pogue: 'I am your child in the words of Christ.' Most of the Hawaiians looked to Pogue rather than Bingham as their protector.77

The Hawaiians faced many difficulties and sadly, except for the sporadic support of Bingham, they faced these without the sympathy or empathy of the HEA. The Hawaiians were not readily granted furloughs and they were expected to serve long periods without them. Even during periods of personal stress the Hawaiian Board did not permit Hawaiians to return home. The Hawaiian Board's treatment of Hawaiians undergoing stressful periods can only be called, at times, savage. In 1880 Leleo, faithful Hawaiian veteran, was instructed to return to Honolulu. He was emotionally wrecked because his wife, now a confirmed leper, could not return with him. Leleo refused to believe that his wife had the dreaded disease and argued that she had become sick after eating a poisoned fish on Nonouti; Leleo could have been correct. He refused to leave his wife and was then notified of his dismissal 'after his faithful service to them for so many years'. The fact that the Hawaiians saw themselves as personal servants of the Board's members made the dismissal more excruciating. The precise reason for Leleo's dismissal is difficult to ascertain. One would

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77 Mahoe, 'Report of the Delegate of the Hawaiian Board of the Rev. Mahoe on a visit to Micronesian Islands, AD 1889-1890', MM-HEA; Mahoe to Pogue, 8 December 1870, HEA Archives.
think that it could not be because he refused to return to Honolulu, given the circumstances. It was certainly not due to his trading activities which he took up after he was informed of his dismissal. Leleo's wife died within the next three years. In the meantime, Leleo was asked by the Gilbert Island Mission to desist from trading and return to his missionary work again, to which he agreed. Maunaloa referred to Leleo as 'our friend ... the one who has long endured in fruitlessness, the heat of the day, death from hunger and poverty in this place for so long years past'. He wrote to Forbes in Honolulu that Leleo had returned to the mission fold and that he had relinquished all mercantile activities. He also informed Forbes that Leleo had never entirely given up his mission work. Leleo returned to Honolulu in 1884, by which time he was blind, and died in his homeland in March of 1891. The Hawaiian Board spoke of him as faithful, capable and self-sacrificing. That sacrificial spirit had been well tested.

Kanoa, a solid veteran, was another who was disowned by the HEA in his later years. In 1875 his first wife had died in childbirth. A few years later Kanoa married a local Gilbertese girl on Butaritari. In October of 1883, Walkup wrote to the Reverend J.O. Means in Boston informing him that Kanoa's wife was a 'public woman'. He claimed that her adulterous behaviour had been going on since 1879, and he asked Forbes in Honolulu to recall Kanoa 'under penalty of dismissal in case of refusal'. At the

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1885 General Meeting of the Gilbert Island Mission, Kanoa revealed that he had indeed been recalled to Honolulu. He refused to go but agreed to discontinue as a missionary 'on account of their sins', giving his books to Maka. Walkup queried Forbes as to whether Kanoa had actually resigned. The HEA Report for 1886 must have satisfied Walkup's curiosity as it announced that the Board had accepted the resignation of Kanoa 'with deep regret'.

Bingham revealed the truth as to what had happened ten years later, after Kanoa had died. The Hawaiian Board had ordered Kanoa to divorce his faithless wife, but Kanoa had refused because he was sure he could eventually save her. So, 'the veteran missionary, nearly fifty years' on the island of Butaritari, 'was read out of church' according to Bingham. Kanoa then started an independent church and, due to his influence with the Islanders, attracted many recruits. Certainly, in this case, Bingham took the side of an Hawaiian against the Hawaiian Board. But to whom did he disclose the truth?

The story of the Hawaiians in the Gilberts is not one totally of their being dismally stranded on equatorial coral atolls. It has already been mentioned in passing that some of the Hawaiians turned to trade. A few traded due to necessity but others sought to make the most of their situation in the Gilberts and profit themselves. Trading was seen as one of the Hawaiians' major failings not only by the HEA but also by traders and later British officials. Commander Rooke, of HMS *Miranda*, noted that the Hawaiian missionaries, 'owing to their carrying on trading seem to have

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79 Walkup to Means, October 1883, ABCFM Papers, reel 6; Walkup to Forbes, January 1886, MM-HEA.
no hold on their people whereas the Samoan native missionaries of the London Society seem to be much better educated and keep their people well in hand and do good work'. It must be questioned whether the trading practice of the Hawaiians was a major cause of their lack of missionary success.

It could be argued that Rooke had it the wrong way round; it was because the Hawaiians had no hold on the people that they were forced to trade. The Samoan missionaries, in both the Ellice Islands and the five southern islands of the Gilbert group, were so established within the community that they were supplied with money, food and other necessities. The Hawaiians, on the whole, did not receive such preferential treatment. They were on the borders of Gilbertese communities, a thing apart. Caught in the wars of Marakei, Abaiang, Tarawa and Maiana, the Hawaiians often had their food supply destroyed. Samoans in both the Ellice Islands and the five southern Gilbert Islands did not face this same problem.

In both the southern Gilberts but more especially the Ellice Islands, the Samoan missionaries were able to achieve sweeping changes because of several factors, not the least of which was a basic compatibility between Samoan and Ellice culture. Samoan missionaries were therefore given an entry into Ellice society which they exploited to the full. The church became a source of counsel for social, economic and political affairs in general. Rank order came to rely on the degree of assimilation and relative position achieved in the church hierarchy rather than on traditional birth order. The chiefs came under the influence of their Samoan pastors as the church became the central institution. The Ellice Islanders may have seen benefit in setting up a liaison with Samoa's superior

81 Rooke (HMS Miranda), 'Reports ... of Proceedings when visiting the Islands of the Union Group ..., 1886', Royal Navy, Australian Station (hereinafter cited as RNAS), XVI.
resources and thereby expand their inter-island alliance horizon. The arrival of labour-recruiting ships also probably provided an added incentive in this direction. When the Samoans came to the Ellice Islands they were at their peak of self-confidence. By the 1860s they had risen from their subordinate role and had wrested powers and privileges from the European missionaries. 82

The Hawaiians did not have these advantages. Mahoe, when delegate to the Gilberts in 1890, argued that the Hawaiian missionary salary should be raised to $300.00 per annum for married men with families and $250.00 for single men. He claimed that:

the increase of this salary of the missionaries is something to restrain them to live on their missionary work. It is evident that the reduction of the missionary is something to incite the missionaries to engage in mercantile pursuits. 83

He further asserted that the new monthly offering day, when church members donated many coconuts for 'the cause and for buying books', misled European traders into believing that the Hawaiians were 'cocoanut merchants ... trading on ships'. According to Mahoe, this type of 'reviling and exaggeration' was a constant thing. Was, therefore, the whole issue of

82 Ivan Brady, 'Christians, Pagans and Government Men: Culture Change in the Ellice Islands', in Ivan A. Brady and Barry L. Isaac (eds), A Reader in Culture Change, vol. 11, New York, 1975, 111-145. In the Ellice Islands, the missionaries had required that ancestral shrines be torn down and that the remains of ancestors be buried with all other ritual items. Overt infanticide, abortion and polygamy were abandoned. Non-Christian puberty rites were outlawed although circumcision was identified as a Christian practice. Traditional games, dancing and singing were banned. But to counterbalance these prescriptive, the laws missionaries suggested helped to replace sanctions eroded by foreign influence, and village rulers became deacons bolstering their influence. Further, the parallel practice of effecting ritual communication with the new God through the use of a specially constructed shrine may have added still another facet of cross-cultural compatibility. See also Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 41.

83 Mahoe, 'Thoughts on Gilbert Island Work, 1890', MM-HEA.
the Hawaiians trading a case of 'exaggerated petitions making a small thing big...'?  

Nearly all of the Hawaiians traded at some point whilst in the Gilberts, which incensed local traders. In 1887, two of the resident traders on Maiana were angry at Lono for his assistance to the Maianans trading on the ships whilst he took commission for the hire of his boat.84 Traders on Marakei faced a similar problem with Kanoho in the late 1880's. They urged Walkup to take Kanoho off the island and even threatened to do so themselves. Not only was Kanoho competing with them for trade but he had also taken up the role of sheriff, breaking in and taking in charge the possessions of a deceased trader. He had bought stock, which included both tobacco and ammunition, from another trader about to leave the island.85 Sir John Thurston referred to Kanoho, whom he accused of trying to run Marakei's trade, as 'an old boat steer'. He had little respect for him and also called him 'a veritable nuisance' like 'so many of his class'.86 On Tabiteuea, the Chinese trader John Ah Nim accused both Nalimu and Kapu of trading. Church members brought in coconuts, either through fines or donations.87 Snow, in 1871, and later Walkup in 1886, accused Maka on Butaritari of trading. Snow believed that Maka needed a warning 'to having a more careful eye to his pecuniary affairs'. 'Perhaps,' he added, with a note of sarcasm, 'he may wish to be released from the service of the Board to enter more fully into the trading business.' Snow also remarked that Bingham's charity for the Hawaiians would not lead him to condemn Maka too

85 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1887-1888', MM-HEA.
86 Thurston, 'Journal kept ... during his cruise to inaugurate the British Protectorate over the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in 1893', 10 July 1893 - National Archives of Fiji.
87 Bingham to Missionaries of the ABCFM in Micronesia, 31 May 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 4.
harshly. Maka's usury business involved making cash loans to the members of his flock while holding their land as security. He made at least ten tons of copra per annum from the nuts he collected as interest. Maka later refined the scheme by issuing credit in return for the right to gather all produce from a specified coconut grove until the debt was paid. Back in 1869, Maka had refused to leave Butaritari, on which most trade goods were landed, to take another missionary post at Tarawa. It may have been that Maka simply did not want to lose the business which he was building up. Maka also had four or five houses in his yard and his personal residence was 'large, airy, clean and neat'. He also knew that he would receive no compensation for these houses. Pogue had remarked on Kanoa's five houses on Butaritari, claiming they were better than those of the white missionaries in Micronesia. It was known that Kanoa also lent money and held land on security.

Walkup further believed that the Hawaiians were deceitful about their trading practices. He claimed that they worked through their children, most of whom rejected the Christian faith, but kept the profits for themselves. In 1883, when Haina's children were returning from Hawaii, he remarked wryly that they were probably coming 'to help him I suppose in his trading'. By 1896, Walkup was disgusted. In his annual report for that year he wrote: 'The Hawaiian missionaries have been trading tobacco for food, deacons get drunk then pass the communion.' There were further malpractices reported. In the 1890's, Lutera on Abaiang was amassing both land and coconuts. He took three pieces of land and a canoe by way of a

88 Snow to Pogue, 8 August 1871, ABCFM Papers, reel 4; Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1886-1887', MM-HEA; Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 39, 67, 76.
89 Walkup to Forbes, January 1886, ABCFM Papers, reel 12.
90 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1896', MM-HEA.
fine for the theft of a piece of bread by a boy living in the mission yard. Lutera took another piece of land because he thought a coconut from his tree had been stolen.  

It is important to differentiate between those Hawaiian missionaries who were forced into trading to survive and those who traded for their own financial advancement. Leleo and Kanoa both began mercantile pursuits after being admonished or dismissed by the Board when their salaries would have ceased; they had to survive. They could not partake of the *bubuti* system whereby a Gilbertese could request, without refusal, either food or goods from their kin. There were other Hawaiians who were intent on commercial enterprise. Maka on Butaritari and Kapu on Tabiteuea were both endowed with organizational ability which they used to further their business interests.

Of course, the Hawaiians always had their defenders, of whom the foremost was Bingham. In 1888, he wrote to the Reverend William E. Strong in Boston:

In reference to the frequent charges made by traders about the mercenary spirit of Hawaiian missionaries, it must be remembered that the contributions of churches must be dispensed there, and that the support of these missionaries in matters of food and service must be secured largely through barter or service.  

Two years earlier, he had written to the Reverend N.G. Clark in Honolulu, and within this letter of 16 January he quoted the Reverend M. Lyons who had argued:

The secular work may be necessary to their living comfortably. Paul had to work to get something to live on. I have had to work to be able to live on $800.00 p.a., by being school-agent, Post Master ...
Bingham's role had started out as superintendent over the Hawaiian missionaries in the Gilberts. When he left the Gilberts in 1875 after his second bout of severe illness he largely abandoned this role. With Bingham residing at Honolulu, the Hawaiians were left without any supervision. When Captain Davis arrived in the Gilberts in 1892 to set up a British Protectorate, he made the following remark:

...the whole question of mission work now requires thorough investigation. On most of the islands complaints were made that the missionaries traded. This they denied. ... There are many smaller points which require looking into in individual islands. The cause, I believe, of most of these irregularities is the want of proper supervision by the white missionaries.94

Meanwhile Bingham still regarded the Hawaiians as the mainstay of the mission force in the Gilberts, and persisted in thinking that an increase in the number of Hawaiians would solve the problem of missionary inertia so evident there. Bingham became increasingly defensive about the Hawaiians' usefulness, as he was to become defensive about his concentration on translation work. He intermittently took up certain issues of the Hawaiians, but ignored others. He was concerned about the Hawaiian missionaries as a group but not really as individuals with their individual problems. Bingham could have done more for the Hawaiians as a group. He did not agitate for compassionate leave in extreme cases, regular furloughs or the Hawaiians' right to own land. Nor did Bingham appear to understand the psychology of the Hawaiians or their view of Christianity and of God. Most important of all, the Hawaiians did not seem to regard Bingham as they did other missionary personalities in Hawaii such as Pogue. Bingham was not makua or a father-figure for the Hawaiians. They often took their problems elsewhere.

94 Davis to Commander-in-Chief, 9 August 1892, Royalist Proceedings, 1892, RNAS, XVII.
Walkup was largely correct in his estimation of the Hawaiian missionaries. They did little to promote the Christianization of the Gilbertese despite the efforts of the best of them. Though they were less than well treated by the Hawaiian Board, the roots of their demoralization reached much deeper. The changes wrought in Hawaii during the nineteenth century due to western contact had demoralized a large sector of the people. In comparison, Samoan society as late as the 1830s was still in the early stages of culture contact. Although the society had been challenged it had not been undermined at the time of mass conversions as in Hawaii. The Samoans still believed in the efficacy of their culture. The Hawaiians did not.\(^95\)

Some Hawaiians found relief in a community of fellow believers in Christ, along with father figures such as Pogue. Most were further degraded by the treatment, conscious or otherwise, of the mission body. Nor did those Hawaiians who went to the Gilberts meet with a warm reception there. The Gilbertese, in the northern islands, always preferred a white man who symbolized power and wealth. The Gilbertese believed the Hawaiians to be weak, mean and, at worst, possible spies in the wars of the northern islands. The Hawaiians persevered, but they did not push; they suffered but they did not inspire admiration. They evidenced endurance, but lacked dynamic energy. The Hawaiians had largely dependent personalities and this is why they suffered from the lack of American supervision. This dependence was fostered by the paternalistic trend of the Hawaiian Board. The Board nurtured the Hawaiians in Hawaii but then abandoned them in their overseas missionary fields.

A few of the Hawaiians gained some success in the Gilberts, most notably Maka and Kanoka on Butaritari and Kapu on Tabiteuea. The rest laboured in vain. It could be argued that Maka and Kanoa succeeded more on Butaritari because it was the seat of a secure high chieftainship. On Tabiteuea, however, no chief at all existed. Yet it was here that the mission succeeded more than anywhere else in the Gilberts. It was also here that Bingham found that his lack of supervision led to events which would cast further doubt on his policy of using Hawaiians as missionaries.
The *maneaba* at Utiroa at the time of the U.S. Exploring Expedition in 1841
CHAPTER FIVE:
Bingham, the Tioba Cult and the Tabiteuean Civil War

At first the people were all one. Then the book came, then there were two parties, the bird-feathers religion and the book religion.
Testimony of Takaria, 1882

Amidst the dwindling missionary success as on Butaritari, or its almost complete absence, as on most of the other islands, there was one exception, that of Tabiteuea. On this island, with its lack of high chiefs or those who aspired to be so, it was impossible to put into practice Bingham's strategy based on the Hawaiian model. Yet it was here that missionary progress appeared the most promising. On Tabiteuea, as on the other islands, Bingham tended to leave the mission in the hands of the Hawaiians with only sporadic interference on their behalf in practical issues. He made the initial visit to Tabiteuea in 1867 to ascertain its receptivity to the missionary message and the following year introduced two Hawaiians to the island. On Tabiteuea circumstances again would be different. Bingham's presence at Tabiteuea was to have repercussions. Further, his general lack of supervision of missionary matters was to lead to a chain of events which would involve him fifteen years later on a committee to investigate the Hawaiians' outrageous behaviour.

When Bingham reached Tabiteuea as captain of the Morning Star some time during 1867, he was accompanied by the shrewd trader Richard Randell who acted as intermediary. Although Bingham had erred in believing that a sole head chief presided over each of the islands of Abaiang and Tarawa, he
could not be so misled on Tabiteuea. Bingham was forced to admit that:
'There is no king or leading chief of the whole island but each district
seems to be governed by its more important elderly men or land-holders.'
Tabiteuea was ruled under the maneaba system having nine distinct maneaba
districts. The name Tabiteuea specifically means that a high chief is
forbidden. As Tabiteuea was the largest island in the group with the
highest number of independent maneaba districts, there was a greater
likelihood of disputes between those districts. Provision was made to
quell such an outcome. Each district was assigned a position in the
maneaba in relation to all other districts and this entailed certain rights
and obligations. Therefore a dispute between one district and another
could result in an island meeting which would be attended by representa-
tives from the whole island.

Despite this provision, however, the maneaba system could not always
prevent the occurrence of squabbles, discord and skirmishes, and there had
always been instances of combat between individuals and skirmishes between
families and even districts. These could not be compared to the large-
scale wars of Abaiang and Tarawa; nevertheless, Tabiteuea was beset with
rivalries and factions. When the United States Exploring Expedition came
to Tabiteuea in 1841, Captain Hudson of the Peacock noted that the northern
districts as far down as Eita were 'at war with those of the south...'
'War' may have been too strong a word as it is doubted that accelerated
physical hostilities had eventuated. Charles Wilkes, of the same
expedition, was more accurate when he wrote: 'The four northern towns are

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1 Missionary Herald, 35, April 1869, 130-2.
apparently united together, and hostile to the southern ones. Certainly, a general antipathy existed between north and south of the island.

MAP 9: TABITEUEA

3 Hudson, Journal of the U.S. Exploring Expedition, 198; Wilkes, Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition, 58. Wilkes, however, erred in believing that Eita was linked to the most northern settlements.
Within the north, the district of Eita had pretensions of becoming leader, as did other districts, and competed with nearby Utiroa. When John Anderson, seaman from the *Peacock*, was found missing after the crew's stay at Utiroa, the settlement was bombarded and then razed to the ground on 9 April. Three hundred houses were destroyed. After this affray, a small party from Eita came to Utiroa 'to assure our party of their goodwill, and their joy at the destruction of Utiroa.' It was within this continuing context of a fragmented power structure and latent rivalries that Bingham arrived in 1867 with his news of his God and the Book.

Bingham and the Hawaiian missionaries, who came the following year, also came to an island which had had little contact with trade when compared with the volume of trade at Butaritari in the north, the five southernmost islands and even Abaiang and Tarawa. Although trading vessels had touched at Tabiteuea since the 1820s, contact had been brief and sporadic. South Tabiteuea, especially, was rarely visited owing to the extensive ocean reef which made navigation hazardous. In northern Tabiteuea, the coconut oil trade was popular. Richard Randell, pioneer trader of Butaritari, later extended his business to encompass other islands and by 1852 had two oil agents, George Adams and Henry Green, on Tabiteuea. In the same decade Randell's rival, Robert Towns, well-known Sydney shipowner and whaler, established trading posts on both Tabiteuea and Nonouti.

The coconut oil trade suited the Gilbertese because it did not unduly upset their normal way of life. The Gilbertese produced oil for their own

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5 Maude and Leeson, 'The Coconut Oil Trade', 396-437 and passim. Robert Towns was a Sydney entrepreneur with widespread commercial interests in the Pacific. Early attempts to enter the oil trade in the Gilbert and Ellice groups were unsuccessful. The final attempt was when he entered into partnership with Captain Michael Eury in the late 1860s. Macdonald, *Cinderellas of the Empire*, 27.
use; they simply made more. In return for oil, the Islanders received tobacco and hoop-iron, but tobacco predominated; by the forties they had become passionately fond of it, both chewing as well as smoking it. A decade later the scene changed. New imports such as axes, firearms, needles, scissors, thread, fish-hooks and tin pots were introduced. The immediate effect of these imports was the reduction in labour and time for house and canoe construction and food production. However, Tabiteuea with its large population and low rainfall produced too little surplus to take advantage of this new range of goods. Although by the sixties there were at least four traders on Tabiteuea, tobacco was the main commodity the Tabiteueans received for the oil they produced.6

The traders, often oil agents of more established traders, were a motley lot who varied in their respectability. Some, such as Alfred Hicking, were respected by all; others such as James Garstang, whose activities gave rise to myths about his brutality, were feared by the Tabiteueans. Nor did the traders form a stable group. Acting as individuals, some would live on Tabiteuea while others would stay only a short time. Early on, reputable traders such as Richard Randell and Robert Towns controlled the trade throughout the Gilberts. Later, in the 1870s, both notorious traders or pirates such as Bully Hayes and diverse trading companies from Germany took an interest in the Gilberts alongside Chinese traders.

Although some innovations introduced by the traders may have been adopted by the Tabiteuans, it was only done so within the accepted mode of life. The other contact with the outside world was that gained through the recruitment of labour. Large-scale recruiting began in the early

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1860s with the arrival of vessels seeking labourers for Peru. The ever-pervading threat of drought rendered labour recruitment an attractive prospect for the Islanders. Labourers went also to Fiji, Samoa, Tahiti and New Caledonia. The labourers returned with material goods and sometimes with new ideas and religious enthusiasms.

When Bingham reached Tabiteuea during the latter part of 1867, he preached at two maneaba situated at Tanaeang and present-day Tekaman. The response was positive and friendly. Bingham wrote to Clark that the missionaries had been cordially welcomed and that they had found 'the wide door' open to them. The following year, as promised, Bingham came with two Hawaiian teachers named Kapu and Leleo. Instead of returning to the Tanaeang area, however, Bingham went to the districts of Eita and Utiroa determined to locate the mission more centrally.

On 20 August 1868 the Morning Star lay outside Utiroa. Bingham wrote to Clark that the people there appeared willing to receive teachers. While within the maneaba at Utiroa, an old man 'cordially invited the missionaries to take a station ... in his district, Eita, under his charge'. The man, named Taubuki, was an uncle of some of those who had been killed during the Peacock's attack on Utiroa back in 1841. The visit of both the Peacock and the Flying Fox was well remembered and referred to as 'the burning fleet'.

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7 See Dorothy Shineberg, 'French Labour Recruiting in the Pacific Islands: An Early Episode', unpublished paper kindly provided by the author.
8 Ngurubenua later split to form Tekaman and Tekabweibwei.
9 Bingham to Clark, 29 January 1868; Bingham to Clark, November 1868, BFPH, box 5.
10 Bingham to Clark, November 1868, BFPH, box 5.
Bingham accepted the old man's offer, unwittingly insulting the people of Utiroa who had welcomed him initially and who were rivals of Eita. Bingham then went about choosing land for a mission site. Here he confronted difficulty as no one wanted to part with any land where coconut trees grew. Finally, some clear land was found in Tetabo within Eita. Tetabo was also the place of the spirits. The section Bingham chose was near a huge Mamanai tree, the branches of which reached over the proposed missionary site. Bingham was requested to move the boundary because the tree was sacred, being dedicated to the Anti Auriaria, one of the several Anti in the district. Bingham cheerfully assented to this as he saw no need to irritate his hosts so soon. Despite the initial problem over land donation, the people of Eita were delighted to have the missionaries in preference to their rival district Utiroa and to Tanaeang further north. The missionaries came from a big ship of the white man, and big ships had come to signify both power and material wealth, both of which Eita coveted in its bid for leadership.

Bingham then returned to the Tanaeang area and explained the new situation. He described the people there as being very disappointed at his change of plan; they earnestly entreated him to leave the missionary families instead with them. Bingham explained that 'they felt that they had a special claim upon us from our having asked them first if they would receive missionaries'. They had destroyed their spirit stones, given up

the drinking of fermented toddy and the maneaba had been 'thronged with a
dense crowd who listened with the most marked attention'. Bingham then
asked if one of the two missionary families could be located at Tanaeang
while the other stayed at Eita. But he did not understand that he had to
leave either both families or none at all. So this offer was hastily
declined as it was feared that the 'removal of one of the families, now that
their effects had been landed, would be an offense to their more fortunate
neighbours, and perhaps an occasion for war'.

Inter-district warfare was seen therefore as a distinct possibility.

Besides, an alternative was available to the people of this area.
Pogue later remarked in 1869 that Bingham had a rival for adherents. His
name was Tanako and he came from Tanaeang. Pogue called him a sailor, but
he had been recruited for overseas labour having worked both in Fiji and
Samoa, where he had come into contact with the religious services of the
Roman Catholics. According to Pogue he was 'a priest among his own
people'. Whether or not Tanako came from the boti 0 or can be spoken of as
ibonga or sorcerer cannot be verified. Pogue also believed that it had
been after hearing Bingham preach about Jehovah that Tanako had proclaimed

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12 Ibid.
his new cult, claiming to be the prophet of Jehovah. Bingham himself recounted that on his second visit he had found a middle-aged man who claimed to be Jehovah's priest. And at the second maneaba he had visited, possibly that in Tanaeang some two miles from present-day Tekaman, he had found it 'surrounded by a line of small crosses some four feet high and adorned with many light tufts of birds' feathers ...' By means of the cross Tanako claimed the power of healing the sick.

In fact Tanako's claim to a special calling probably predated Bingham's arrival in 1867 although it is impossible to determine by how much time. But Bingham's arrival in 1867 and subsequent rejection of Tanaeang as a missionary site helped to accelerate and spread the cult as, 

14 Bingham to Clark, November 1868, BFPH, box 5.
15 Dr William Geddes places the date as early in the 1850's but this is probably far too early: see William Geddes, 'Social Individualisation on Tabiteuea Atoll', JPS, 86, September 1977, 384, and Geddes, North Tabiteuea Report, 17. See also Maude and Maude, 'Tioba and the Tabiteuean Religious Wars'.


The Anti Tioba cult of Tabiteuea, however, was not a cargo cult, millenerian, messianic, vitalistic or revitalistic. Although the Gilbertese way of life was upheld, it was not under attack in the early
in the context of district rivalry, Tanaeang needed its own separate identification. The two moments of appearance and development of the cult into a viable movement are distinct and need to be treated separately. Bingham was wise enough to realize this when he wrote: 'The rise and success of this false prophet are remarkable events in the religious history of this portion of the Gilberts' [my emphasis]. Cults do not arise fully matured and singularly equipped for adoption by a recipient people: they must satisfy the needs of the community or they will soon fade away. In seeking to meet a community's needs and aspirations, a cult will usually modify its beliefs and adopt new ones to suit the contemporary situation. So it is imperative to study an individual from 'possession' right through to his or her position as a successful cult leader.

The Gilbertese religious world was not a static one but was subject to change, as evidenced by the adoption of new Anti at the time of the Samoan influx. Although each boti generally worshipped only one Anti, there were cases where a particular Anti was worshipped by a wider group. This was usually due to fission of the boti. There were other times, however, when

1860's when the cult probably had its embryonic beginnings. Missionary contact was not made till 1867, and it is unlikely that the tactful Bingham would have castigated the Gilbertese life-style on an initial tour.

Some cults have arisen as completely indigenous movements. See M.J. Meggitt, 'The Sun and the Shakers', Oceania, 44, 1973-1974, 1-37, 110-26; John Waiko, 'Cargo Cults: The Papua New Guinean Way', Niugini Reader, 1972; John Waiko, 'Disaster or Millenium: What is this Thing called Cargo Cult in Melanesia?', unpublished paper presented at Kula Conference, Virginia, 1981. Waiko sees cults as 'an instance of traditional response ... associated with facing a challenge or an enemy'. Such an enemy could be a natural disaster like an earthquake. See also Michele Stephen, 'Cargo Cult Hysteria: Symptom of Despair or Technique of Ecstasy?', Occasional Paper, No. 1, La Trobe University, 1977. For discussion on the positive, creative aspects of cults, I am indebted to both Michele Stephen and John Waiko for discussion on the nature of cults.

16 Bingham to Pogue, January 1872, MM-HEA.
several boti began to adhere to one singleAnti because it had demonstrated power over the Anti they had formerly followed. This situation may have occurred during the influx of the Samoans in the fourteenth century. Change, however, did not occur readily and generally the religious system segmented society into lineages. It did not bind society together into one all-embracing whole. There was only one major exception. This occurred when the whole community was threatened as in famine or in the wake of some disaster. At such crucial times, a form of ritual meal took place in which all groups participated. Further, a stone pillar was erected and supplication was made to the Anti Tabakea.\textsuperscript{18} In times of great stress the community bound itself together.

Signs from the Anti were received through whistling, dreams, divinations and magical incantations. Such means of communication with the spirits are common to many peoples. Dreaming is a potential source of both communication and creativity, and recent scholarship has illuminated the significance of 'altered states of consciousness'. The study of dreams has been a field largely dominated by psychologists, but the new sociological approach emphasizes the cultural relativity of 'normality' and the different cultural interpretations given to 'altered states of consciousness'. Dreams can provide a continuing source of validation for new knowledge and cultural innovation under the guise of having communication with the ancestors and deities. Although all people dream, not everybody's dream is regarded by the community as significant or prophetic. What differentiated a sorcerer or a new prophet was the ability to both manipulate and interpret dreaming power. Prophetic dreamers could only attract the attention of the community

if the need to seek new answers to problems arose. These considerations are important in analysing the function of Tanako's dreaming.

Tanako returned to his home district of Tanaeang some time in the early sixties. Only 'one' of his dreams has been recorded. It is highly likely that he had had many but he would advance only his most dramatic which would have been re-moulded to attract the attention of the community. Tanako claimed to have been told by Tioba in a dream what form of worship should take place. The outdoor shrine was to consist of a circle surrounded with coconuts in which was placed a cross adorned with the feathers of all types of birds. The dream ended with Tanako, who had been taken up to heaven, descending back to Tabiteuea, with Tioba saying to him: 'And now that you are about to descend I will go all over Tabiteuea with you, and then we will go all over the north and afterwards all over the south.' This one dream is most likely the synthesis and redrafting of several.

Tanako probably started preaching as soon as he returned home. Apparently he converted an important family in Buota. Obviously he had not converted everyone in his own district of Tanaeang, even as late as 1867 and 1868, for when Bingham first came there there were many who listened to him and who wanted missionary teachers to live with them. When Bingham returned the following year there were still many who listened and who were disappointed that they had not received teachers. Tanako's cult came to be known as Anti Tioba, the name Tioba being a derivation from Jehovah.

20 Maude and Maude, 'Tioba and the Tabiteuean Religious Wars', 313.
21 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
The more common name of the cult was *te Buraeniman* which simply meant the feathers.

The cult retained certain Gilbertese customs such as the encouragement of dancing and singing, but also incorporated elements of Christianity. A closer examination reveals that it did so only on a very superficial level. Though the cross was a symbol, it was not one of the most notable ones. The cross was adorned with feathers and had tobacco smoke blown on to it to satisfy the cravings of the *Anti*. The Sabbath was practised but in a very peculiar manner according to Christian teaching. Its celebration continued for two or three days or even longer. Nor was the interval between Sabbaths of six days' duration but 'according as he Tanako was informed by the spirit'.

The cult therefore fell well within the framework of Gilbertese beliefs. The *Anti Tioba* was another Gilbertese *Anti* among many which claimed more attention because it claimed to demonstrate more power. Its particular power was that of healing the sick. If Tanako could assist the ailing, it is probable that he came from the *boti O* as it was men from this *boti* who had the power of healing. The Gilbertese world view harboured the ability to incorporate new *Anti*. This new *Anti* was worshipped, as were all others, at an outdoor shrine.

The inclusion of new symbols, such as the cross, was not the most innovative characteristic of the cult at all. It was something far more pervasive. This was the element of unity of the different *boti*. The dream spoke of going all over the north and then all over the south. During the period of the 'sabbaths' imposed by Tanako, food offerings were made to the new *Anti*. This was reminiscent of the ritual meals in honour of the *Anti* Tabakea in which all groups united in times of stress whether of the *boti* Karongoa or not. Followers of the new cult destroyed the old

\[22\] Bingham to Clark, November 1868, BFPH, box 5.

\[23\] Bingham to Pogue, January 1872, MM-HEA.
spirit stones, symbolic of the old Anti, the belief in which had divided the lineages. The hymn of the new cult spoke of a 'unity':

In joy now let us join together
and circle rapidly around.
Separate and lonely we shall fall away
bewildered, quickly go astray.
Let there be no retreat from unity;
Therein lies our strength.24

The concept of unity was not one to which the Gilbertese were accustomed. They thought in terms of their individual lineages or boti.25 Yet Tanako was attempting to remove the divisions which the established worship of the Anti generated. Tanako had developed a mechanism for group identity, a function which 'traditional' Gilbertese religion had never fulfilled. It is therefore important to ascertain the needs of the community at Tanaeang which this new cult apparently satisfied.

It has previously been suggested that Bingham's rejection of the Tanaeang district as a missionary base in favour of a rival area, that of Eita, was a pivotal point in the acceleration of the cult. Seen within the context of traditional rivalries, the rejection takes on crucial significance. If Eita and Utiroa, a rival area, could have the 'power' of the missionaries which their big ships symbolized, then Tanaeang could turn to its cult which became a banner to unite the three most northern districts against, and to differentiate them from, Eita and Utiroa. This could have been the reason Tanaeang was so willing to adopt Christianity back in 1867. When Bingham returned in 1868 and chose Eita as a missionary base, this may well have been the crucial moment when mass conversions to the Tioba cult took place. The concept of unity was not inherent; it evolved in response to needs. Later still, it would develop into a more offensive and expansive movement and spread to the south and later, in 1872, to

24 Maude and Maude, 'Tioba and the Tabiteuean Religious Wars', 314.
25 See Maude, The Gilbertese Boti, 62, for an example.
neighbouring Nonouti. But it is important to look at events at Eita and Utiroa to understand this further development of the cult.

Both Eita and Utiroa initially accepted missionaries, but Utiroa, age-old rival of Eita, subsequently repudiated its welcome and remained faithful to the old Anti. Informants tell of Takaria, a sorcerer from Utiroa, gathering all the people from his district together in a meeting to call on their various Anti. An offering of Te Tuae, a specific pandanus food, was made to the Anti who were then asked to vent their anger against Bingham and his God. Takaria then chased the Anti to the direction of Eita. An invisible fire prevented the Anti from attacking the new God and so they returned, defeated, proving that Bingham's God was the strongest.

Henceforth, 'conversions' to the Christian religion occurred in Utiroa. This tale requires interpretation. Acceptance of the Christian God Jehovah cannot be seen, at this stage, as evidence of the deeply felt and tortuously traumatic stages of conversion. What had occurred was an adherence to the rules of the Christian teachers. The people of Eita and Utiroa did not accept Jehovah as the jealous, omnipotent God of the Universe but simply as the strongest Anti at that time. Bingham had unwittingly challenged the Anti by choosing land near the tree dedicated to Auriaria and by landing effects at Tetabo, the place of the spirits. Bingham must have been perceived as representing power. Still, it was the two Hawaiians, Kapu and Leleo, who were left as teachers and not a white man. It is therefore important to determine how the people of Eita and Utiroa perceived the power of the Hawaiians and the power of their God. After all,

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26 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
the Anti had proved defenceless and had capitulated to the new God. How
did the Hawaiians present their God?

Bingham had cheerfully complied with the request not to interfere with
the tree to Auriaria; Kapu would not be either so gentle or obliging. The
God Kapu would proclaim was one of power and force, something the Gilbertese
could understand, and not a God of love and charity which Bingham had
portrayed. It was probably not simply a difference between the personali-
ties of the gentle Bingham and the forceful Kapu which gave this
distinction. It was more a demarcation between the religious view of the
European and that of the Hawaiian. James Bicknell of the Hawaiian Board
was convinced that Hawaiians interpreted Christianity in a different way from
Europeans. Whereas the latter believed in a jealous but otherwise benign
God, the Hawaiians presented an angry God.\footnote{27} The Gilbertese also believed
in angry rather than jealous Anti and so Kapu's message struck a chord
within the community in which he preached. The Tabiteueans believed
strongly in their Anti at the time of the missionaries' arrival and would
not have accepted Christianity had they not perceived that the imported God
was stronger than their Anti as evidenced by oral history. Nowhere else in
the Gilberts did such speedy acceptance of the new faith occur even where a
similar, if not identical, social system prevailed as on Nonouti; the
process was not inevitable on Tabiteuea. It is therefore imperative to
analyse, not only how Kapu portrayed his God, but also how he presented
himself. He could not proclaim his God to be powerful if he himself, as
his representative or prophet, did not evidence maka.

Kapu was an energetic, forceful organizer with business acumen and
displayed similar personal attributes to Maka on Butaritari. He was also

\footnote{27} Gregory Dening, \textit{Islands and Beaches: Discourses on a Silent Land,}
aggressive, exacting, dominant and commanded attention, a man bent on success who wanted it quickly. His relations with those with whom he had to work were not the smoothest. But with gentle, unassuming Leleo, no overt clash occurred although tension existed between them. When Nalimu, who came from a high family of Hilo, Hawaii and evinced a certain pride, came to work with Kapu in 1872, dissension was inevitable. By mid-1872, Nalimu was writing to Pogue and reporting Kapu for 'fault-finding'. He went further in quoting Leleo, who had said such a tactic was consistent with Kapu's character whom he regarded as a liar and from whom it had been a relief to separate and go on to Nonouti. Kapu, though of humble origin in Hawaii, had to be chief organizer and the central figure in the mission on Tabiteuea. Leleo had let him take this role; Nalimu would question it. To the Gilbertese, Kapu was a figure worthy of respect. The Reverend M.A. Chamberlain, delegate to the Gilberts in 1875, remarked that 'the people welcomed their missionary with unmistakable proofs of strong affection'. Even drunkards quietened down when they passed by the mission premises. Both Kapu and his wife Maria, a forceful woman, were treated with respect. The force of personality of both Kapu and his wife was noted.

It is probable that if Kapu had been on either Abaiang or Tarawa he would not have waited for the chief to introduce changes in society, but would have attempted to initiate these himself. Kapu wasted no time in preaching the fundamentals of Christianity to the people of Eita. By September 1868, the same year that Kapu and Leleo had settled at Tabiteuea,

28 Maude and Maude, 'Tioba and the Tabiteuean Religious Wars', 312.
29 *Hawaiian Advertiser*, 14 April 1952, 7.
30 Nalimu to Pogue, 26 July 1872, MM-HEA.
31 Chamberlain, 'Synopsis of a Voyage for the Year 1875', ABCFM Papers, reel 4; Chamberlain, 'Report of the Morning Star in Micronesia, 1875', MM-HEA.
Kapu had persuaded the *unimane* to propose to the people that they throw away 'those things which they were accustomed to regard as the character of the true God ...' During the week of 11-18 October, 320 sacred objects such as stones, branches and bones were thrown out. One member of the *unimane*, a man called Takawaiku, defied Kapu and told him that the *Anti* 'would take vengeance on him'. Said Takawaiku: 'They are angry. You will die.' But Kapu did not. On 11 October he preached on the character of the true God, and the sin of worshipping other things called gods. He told them that their *Anti*, 'in which they had so long trusted, were vanities and powerless to help or punish'. He asked them to choose between the anger of the *Anti* or 'the fury of the true God'. He succeeded in getting the people of Eita to repudiate their *Anti* to the extent that by 1 January 1869, they celebrated their first New Year under the sacred Mamanai tree dedicated to Auriaria. Previously, no person had been allowed to sit under it. Eventually the tree was given to Kapu, a sign of complete capitulation, and Kapu purchased half the land on which it stood; he was hopeful of obtaining the other half.  

Thus, delegate Pogue could report that not ten months after having landed at Eita, 'the people had outwardly forsaken their ancestor worship, abolished their taboos, given up the hula ... and became teetotallers'. The schools were crowded and there were large congregations on the Sabbaths. All appeared interested in the instructions given by the missionaries. Students could recite the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, read in books prepared for them and sing hymns, all in their own

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language. They also answered questions from the catechisms. By 1871, Kapu claimed to have 1,800 students, 1,000 of whom could read the Gospels.  

Kapu's presentation of Christianity was, in many respects, the antithesis of Tanako's cult. Kapu was seen by the Gilbertese in much the same light as Tanako, a prophet of another Anti. Kapu censured singing and dancing which Tanako celebrated. Smoking, which had been ritualized by Tanako, was banned by Kapu. The Christians followed a strict Sabbath during which nearly every activity was curtailed. Saturdays were spent in fishing and preparing for the Sabbath. Later, even the sailing of a canoe would be banned on a Sunday. Violation of the law would result in a fine of 5,000 coconuts.  

The most distinguishing feature of Christianity when compared to Tanako's cult was the insistence on schools and education.

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33 Ibid.; Kapu, 'Parish Report, June 1872', MM-HEA. It is interesting to code the progress of the mission as stated by the two Hawaiian missionaries. In 1869, Kapu had claimed that 3,000 had celebrated the New Year at Eita. At an estimated population of 6,176 for the entire island, this seems highly unlikely. In 1871 Kapu, although informing Pogue that none had entered the church as yet, claimed that 1,800 Tabiteueans were in school and 1,000 of these could read. If true, this would have been a momentous success. Its truth, however, can be doubted for even at the peak of a later 'revival' there were never so many at school. The following year Nalimu gave statistics for his station - 200-300 at Sabbath service, 45-50 children at school and 85-100 at Sabbath school. Kapu moaned that he only had 10-20 in his congregation for the people were 'angry at [his] teaching'. Kapu claimed that Nalimu was preaching a softer line of Christianity which discredited his own approach. The next year, however, Kapu claimed 400 in his church; Nalimu announced he had 1,000 at Sabbath service. By 1875, Kapu had 300 in his church with 100 at day schools. The Reverend E. Bailey visited Tabiteuea the following year and described the Islanders as mostly 'still wild pagans'. Pogue, 'Report of Delegate Pogue to Micronesia, 1869'; Nalimu to Pogue, 20 July 1872; Kapu, 'Parish Report, June 1872 to June 1873'; Nalimu to Pogue, 26 August 1873, MM-HEA; Chamberlain, 'Report for 1875'; Bailey, 'Report for 1876', Morning Star Papers in MM-HEA.

34 Kapu, 'Parish Report, June 1872', MM-HEA; Kapu to Chamberlain, 26 April 1876, MM-HEA; Bingham to Clark, 10 May 1880, BFPH, box 6; Doane, 'Report of the Gilbert Island Mission, August 20, 1879', MM-HEA.
'The Book' became the symbol of Christianity as feathers were of the cultists. By 1875 there were 100 in the school with a congregation of thirty. Yet the demand for New Testaments exceeded the supply. The following year the congregation doubled and between 300 and 400 attended Sabbath worship. Between 80 and 150 were attending Sabbath schools where the seven verses of the week were recited and where the students readily answered such questions as 'Who is the only one and true God? What is the Bible? What is the church?' The Kapus wrote to Miss M.A. Chamberlain, daughter of the missionary to Hawaii, disclosing that the students recited the answers which they had committed to memory 'with eagerness' for they were 'not lazy about it'. Nalimu ran his day school while Kapu and a Tabiteuean each had control of two others. There were also Wednesday meetings 'for prayer and instruction'. Kapu used both different tactics and a different strategy to that of Bingham. He was not interested in pursuing the salvation of individual souls as was Bingham. Rather, he was intent on restructuring society and had the organizational acumen to do this. More importantly, however, unlike Bingham he instituted an integrated school system.

Both Kapu, situated at Eita, and Nalimu at Utiroa had established girls' schools by 1872. Nalimu reported in 1873 that his wife Keahiloa held women's meetings but it was mostly the girls who attended. Kapu's wife Maria also held meetings with the women. According to Gilbertese custom, women were disinclined to go out unless accompanied by their spouses. Kapu explained this situation in his Report of 1874: 'Formerly the women

35 Chamberlain, 'Synopsis of the Voyage of the Morning Star for the Year 1875', ABCFM Papers, reel 4.
36 Kapu to Martha Chamberlain, 19 July 1875, MM-HEA.
37 Kapu to Parker, 4 August 1875, ABCFM Papers, reel 5; Kapu to Martha Chamberlain, 28 July 1873, cited in Hawaiian Mission Children's Society Annual Report, June 1874 (hereinafter cited as HMCS Report).
were tabooed and not allowed at all to go out; the men were angry. That stupid way has gone by and the women are permitted to attend religious meetings. Maria held these meetings on Fridays in whichever house the women themselves decided. All women were welcome including 'unbelievers'; between 70 and 110 women would meet regularly. According to Maria, the women were 'glad to be released by their own husbands'. Later, women went not only to the Friday but also the Sunday meetings unaccompanied by their men. Whereas formerly the women had 'refused to go without their husbands', they were more than willing to do so later on and the women's meetings became self-sustaining. Even after Maria died in 1876, the women continued to meet. Kapu wrote to Bingham:

As regards the meetings of the women, it is something new to me to see in what large numbers they come together to observe them. They are their own teachers. It was a mistaken thought of mine that because of the death of Mrs. Maria Kapu they would not carry on.

However, Nalimu still faced the problem of men disallowing the younger sisters of their wives, over whom they had control, from partaking in any Christian activity. Women were not freed, but it was a beginning. In 1877, the women started contributions for the Foreign Missions by making cord.

During 1876 Kapu had endured a period of trials and tribulations. To herald the year, the youngest child of the Kapu family died on 11 January. Less than two months later, on 3 March, their home was burnt down and everything destroyed, according to Kapu. In the same year, after months of

38 Nalimu to Pogue, 26 August 1873; Kapu, 'Report for North Tabiteuea, June, 1874', MM-HEA.
39 Bingham to Clark, 6 March 1879, BFPH, box 6.
40 Chamberlain, 'Synopsis of the Voyage of the Morning Star for the Year 1875', ABCFM Papers, reel 4; Bingham to Clark, 7 February 1878, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
illness and inability to digest food, Maria died of 'liver troubles' on 9 April. Kapu was directed to return to Hawaii to seek a new wife. He left Tabiteuea in July and did not return till June of 1879, still unwedded. Although missionary policy dictated that missionaries be accompanied by a spouse, it was believed that Nalimu could not carry on alone. Other Hawaiian missionaries did persevere alone but their missionary stations had not been blessed with the same success which had occurred on Tabiteuea. As it was thought that Kapu was the main drive behind this success, an exception to missionary policy was made for him.

One is led to question the basis of Kapu's success and power over the Tabiteueans in his parish. It goes beyond Kapu's force of personality for he was not only respected but feared. On Tabiteuea, 'the Book' became a recognized symbol of Christianity even for the unbelievers. Both Kapu and his wife Maria presented Christianity in the vein of fear. Maria's dying words to the women in 1876 were reported to be:

I humbly request you now to leave your own sins, all of you, and drinking liquor and everything disdainful to God ... believe in Jesus the beloved son of God and ... be saved in your souls, for if you do not do so, I declare truly ... that your souls will descend to the unquenchable fire where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Kapu not only put the fear of hell into the Tabiteueans. Although the Missionary Boards both at Boston and Honolulu had dismissed the controversies between Kapu and Nalimu, the accusations Nalimu presented cannot be overlooked. As early as 1872 Nalimu accused Kapu of lying 'to the natives saying "A warship will come to fight this island". The men became

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41 Kapu to Martha Chamberlain, 26 April 1876, MM-HEA; 'Report of Committee on Foreign Missions on Rev. W.P. Kapu', 1 June 1878, MM-HEA.

42 Kapu to Chamberlain, 26 April 1876, MM-HEA.
terrified and brought coconuts to him... The memory of 'the burning fleet' still remained and any repetition of this incident would be dreaded.

After the death of his wife Kapu instilled yet another fear into the Tabiteueans. Spiritism became 'prominent in his beliefs and teaching'. He claimed to be in communication with the spirit of his dead wife and would consult her for advice. American missionaries to the Gilberts were aware of 'Kapu's power over the natives from his witchcraft or communications from his wife's spirit'. The Hawaiian, the Reverend Nehemiah Lono, asserted that many in the Mission Board at Honolulu knew of Kapu's spiritism and yet did nothing to relieve him of his position. This would have included Bingham. The ability to communicate with his dead wife enhanced Kapu in the eyes of the Tabiteueans. Only the *ibonga* could communicate with the dead and they were gifted by their *Anti* with this power. One did not trifle with those who had such a gift. Later some of the Islanders would claim that Kapu had control of the weather. It was said that 'Kapu has control of the rain' and 'power to control the island'. Kapu was perceived as having maka. After his return to Tabiteuea, Kapu evinced a new aggressiveness.

In March of 1879, Bingham conveyed news of Tabiteuea to the Reverend Ephraim Clark. Given that he received the news from Kapu by post he was probably describing events of late 1878. Kapu had reported congregations of 800-900. Here 'the elderly men say that it is a new thing for them to stand up and confess their sins before the congregation with heaviness of

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43 Nalimu to Pogue, 26 July 1872, MM-HEA.

44 Taylor to Means, October 1883; Taylor to Smith, 12 January 1885, ABCFM Papers, reel 12.

45 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1886', MM-HEA.
their hearts for their sin'. This indeed was a novel situation for the Gilbertese when the unimane, on an island where they were so much respected, had to lower themselves in the eyes of younger men, women and children. In his parish report, Kapu claimed he had 160 at school, had sold 158 books and had accepted 190 new Christians into the church. There were 800 at the Sabbath school which included 'children, youth, old men and old women'. He asked Bingham to send him 250 New Testaments, 250 hymn books, 150 readers, 100 arithmetic books, 50 geography books and 100 slates. He was hailed as 'another Elijah'. He told Bingham that he had joined forces with Nalimu and that they had taken four tours of the island accompanied by 800 Islanders. Nalimu reported similar success. There had been 170 new admissions to the church in October 1879. All in all, there were 202 new Christians with 200 at school. He also needed a renewed book supply with 400 Bibles and 400 hymn books. Here, at last, was the missionary success for which Bingham himself had yearned. And success had occurred where there was no high chief on which to rely. At least, Bingham's policy of using Hawaiians in the field seemed to be finally vindicated.

The mission bodies in both Honolulu and Boston received these statistics with joy. The Missionary Herald of 1880 echoed the figures. The missionaries, Kapu and Nalimu, had received 300 new Christians in just four months. Captain Bray of the Morning Star reported Kapu as saying that he

46 Bingham to Clark, 6 March 1879, BFPH, box 6.
47 Kapu, 'Report of North Tabiteuea, 1879', MM-HEA.
48 Bingham to Clark, 16 January 1880, BFPH, box 6.
49 Kapu, 'Report of North Tabiteuea, 1879', MM-HEA.
50 Nalimu, 'Parish Report, June 1878 - June 1879', MM-HEA.
51 Missionary Herald, 76, 1880, 434.
had audiences of 2,000 and had had to use the maneaba as the church was too small. But no one questioned these figures. No one, including Bingham, seemed shocked at the heavy fines imposed on the Tabiteueans - 5,000 coconuts for breaking the Sabbath, 1,000 coconuts for drunkenness. Nor did anyone question the use of the coconuts or to whom they were given. When Nalimu announced in his parish report of 1879 that he had 202 new Christians, no one linked it to the war he had just mentioned. Yet his letter to Bingham was clear. It mentioned that there had been a battle in June of 1879 and 170 had been admitted to the church in October of that same year. Still none of the missionaries pondered over the likelihood that the two occurrences might have been connected. On 13 June Kapu, Nalimu and 2,000 others went to Tanaeang to preach the Christian message. The people of that village opposed their entry and according to Nalimu treated them like thieves and were ready to assault them. Kapu announced in his parish report that there had been a war 'for a very short time and now all is peaceful'. Thirteen of 'the rebels' had been slain and only one 'on the other side'. Kapu ended his report with the words: 'There is nothing else that is important.'

Kapu gave more details in his letter to the Reverend Mr Hyde. He told Hyde there were some in Tanaeang who wanted the Christian message preached but others, led by Tanako, opposed this. Kapu had been threatened with death if he went to Tanaeang as it was thought he 'was the one that was bringing trouble upon this nation'. While Kapu had been away at Oahu, rain

52 Bray, 'Report of the Ninth Voyage of the Morning Star No. 3 to Micronesia, 1879 and 1880', MM-HEA.
53 Nalimu to Bingham, 13 November 1879, MM-HEA.
54 Nalimu, 'Parish Report, June 1878 - June 1879', MM-HEA.
55 Kapu, 'Report of North Tabiteuea, 1879', MM-HEA.
had fallen ending a long drought. When the Morning Star's anchor dropped, the rain cleared and did not fall again till April of 1879. Kapu had been blamed for the lack of rain. According to Kapu, the Tabiteueans had backslidden. He confided in Hyde: 'The people are turning from righteousness to dance, get drunk, and all manner of frivolity, that is what gets me mad.' He also confessed that a member of the unimane from Tanaeang had told Kapu that the people from there 'are very angry with you; they don't want you a bit.' Kapu had decided to leave Tanaeang alone but those people had attacked the Christians during a Sabbath service.\(^56\) Nalimu gave a more honest résumé of the situation. On 15 June the Tanaeang people had disrupted the service at Eita. It had been a combined service with both Kapu and Nalimu present along with all their parishioners; quite a crowd would have been assembled. The Christians had retaliated and the feather-folk 'all fled, were pursued, beaten, their houses set on fire, their canoes stolen'. One day the battle raged and then ceased. Nalimu went on: 'they abandoned their gods and no one was allowed to set up gods for them on penalty of death and forfeiture of lands...'.\(^57\) This was a strong, graphic portrayal of what had taken place and yet the Hawaiian Board, where Bingham was Corresponding Secretary, did nothing to investigate. At Boston, the Missionary Herald reported in 1880 that the northern and southern parties were fighting over 'some heathenish rites - the north to sustain them - the south to remove them'. All was well for 'right won the day'.\(^58\) It was more a case of might winning the day.

Feeling the threat of the confederacy under Kapu's control, the Anti Tioba cult became likewise aggressively expansive. With converts in

\(^{56}\) Kapu to Hyde, 10 August 1879, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian).

\(^{57}\) Nalimu, 'Parish Report, June 1878 - June 1879', MM-HEA.

\(^{58}\) Missionary Herald, 76, June 1880, 223.
Ngurubenua (which later split into the districts of Tekaman and Tekabwibwi), Buota and probably Terikiai, the cult moved to Tewai in the south where Tanako is reported as having married a woman and established a stronghold there. With the war of June 1879, the extreme northern villages were quelled. According to the trader James Garstang, those northern villagers feared another war and believed that Kapu and Nalimu 'had been exciting the natives of Tauma, Eita, Utiroa and Kabuna to attack them and exterminate them if they refused to conform to the resolutions of the two missionaries'. By this stage Kapu and Nalimu had the entire north under their control along with two converts in the south, Taniera and Aberain. They then substantiated their system of political and social control. Even foreigners came within the orbit of mission control. They were forbidden to bring firearms ashore and could sell only food, clothing and tools to the Islanders. The authority of the maneaba was by-passed. In its place young policemen were appointed by the missionaries to ensure that the missionary laws were obeyed. In December of 1879 the following laws were adopted under the direction of Kapu and Nalimu:

1. No gun to be brought ashore; the violation of this law incurred a fine of 5,000 nuts.
2. Drunkenness was prohibited; the penalty was the cutting down of five to ten coconut trees of the offender.
3. Deliberate bodily injury would result in two to twenty trees cut down according to the degree of injury.
4. Violation of the Sabbath was fined in coconuts from fifty upwards.

All fines were paid 'to the assembly' and supposedly disposed of by equal distribution among the different maneaba. According to Kapu each maneaba's

59 Kapu to Pogue, 15 July 1872, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian); Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
60 Bingham to Clark, 10 May 1880, BFPH, box 6. James Garstang was an oil agent of the notorious Bully Hayes who was taken from Ponape and installed at Tabiteuea. Garstang's reputation was almost as bad as that of Bully Hayes. Both were renegade and ruthless. Myths have developed around their treacherous activities but serious scholarship has by-passed them. Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 27; Basil Lubbock, Bully Hayes: South Sea Pirate, London, 1931, 189-245.
61 Kapu, 'Notes of the Battle of September, 1880 at Tabiteueua', MM-HEA.
portion was divided equally among the individuals of that maneaba.

Garstang claimed that the people of Eita had been fined 39,000 nuts in February of 1880, those at Utiroa 40,000.\(^{62}\) It is highly unlikely that Kapu and Nalumu established such a major redistribution centre.

On 28 December 1879 Garstang came to Utiroa on the Sabbath to find, much to his surprise, that instead of having organized religious instruction, the missionaries were engaged in breaking up firearms. Not only the Islanders but also the Europeans on Tabiteuea were asked to surrender their guns. The trader Alfred Hicking, one of the most respectable in the Gilberts, gave up five trade guns. Wilhelm Schroder, a German trader, refused to comply, but on 31 December 1879, twenty to thirty Gilbertese came to his home and forced the guns from him saying if he did not give them up, he would have to leave the island. New Year's Eve was then spent breaking up the guns of the traders.\(^{63}\) Bingham received this news with delight: 'Evidently the people are in earnest in establishing the reign of peace in their midst.'\(^{64}\) It was naive of Bingham to believe that all this was happening voluntarily, especially after Nalimu's account of the recent clash with Tanaeang. Bingham was not the only one to accept without question that all was well at Tabiteuea. Alfred Walkup, who came to the Gilberts in 1880, was likewise impressed.\(^{65}\)

The north, by this stage, was consolidated into a unified section. Old rivalries against the south matched missionary determination to convert this area and rid it of the Tioba cult. In September of 1880 the Hawaiian missionaries, along with 1,000 followers, travelled to the south for the

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\(^{62}\) Garstang, 'Copy of a Log', 21 May 1880, 12 February 1880, MM-HEA; Kapu, 'Notes of the Battle of September, 1880 at Tabiteuea', MM-HEA.

\(^{63}\) Garstang, 'Copy of a Log', 12 February 1880, MM-HEA.

\(^{64}\) Bingham to Clark, 10 May 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.

\(^{65}\) Walkup to Garstang, Hicking and Ah Nim, 18 September 1880, MM-HEA.
third time in an attempt to bring this area under control. Hitherto, the
southerners had refused obstinately. The party stopped first at Tewai,
centre of the *Tioba* cult, then journeyed further south before returning to
Aiwa, last of the 'Christian' villages. By this stage, the southerners
had decided to prepare for war, fearing the worst; the north intended to
justify those fears. On 14 September the northern party began to march
southward singing the Sunday School Hymn:

> Oh do not be discouraged,
> For Jesus is your friend,
> He will give you grace to conquer,
> And keep you to the end. ⁶⁶

The battle was fought at the islet of Tewai. The north won as a
result of greater numbers and the adoption of a new type of warfare (that of
encircling and killing the enemy). The northerners, according to Garstang,
had never destroyed all the weapons and had both made and procured new ones
from returned labourers. ⁶⁷ This battle was unlike the previous one and the
scene turned to a horrifying massacre. Approximately 600 were killed and
piled into a heap which was later set on fire. Before this, some had
climbed on to the heap pretending to be dead and were burned with the
corpses. Kapu retreated to the *maneaba*, most likely a little dazed that
the situation had got so out of control. Nalimu dispassionately watched
the whole procedure. After the massacre, Kapu rejoined Nalimu and, along
with certain *unimane* from the north, divided up the land of the conquered,
taking six large pieces for themselves. ⁶⁸

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⁶⁶ Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
⁶⁷ Maude and Maude, 'Tioba and the Tabiteuean Religious Wars', 317. This paper on the Tabiteuean Civil War is not only the most recent but also the
most comprehensive and detailed. It is essential reading for information on
the civil wars on Tabiteuea. See also Katherine Luomala, 'A Gilbertese
Tradition of a Religious Massacre', *Hawaiian Historical Society, Sixty-
second Annual Report for the Year 1953* (hereinafter cited as *HHS Annual
Report*) for an earlier version; Garstang, 'Copy of a Log', 21 May 1880, MM-
HEA; Garstang and Hicking to Consul of Samoa, March 1881, BCS, series 2, 4,
copy kindly provided by Professor Maude.
⁶⁸ Maude and Maude, 'Tioba and the Tabiteuean Religious Wars', 321-4;
with H.G. Cummins, 'Holy War: Peter Dillon and the 1837 Massacre in Tonga',
*JPH*, 3, passim.
Two days after the battle, the *Morning Star* anchored off Utiroa and was boarded almost immediately by excited traders 'full of abuse and accusations against the missionaries'. Captain Bray was informed that they had made the same to their respective governments. The Chinese trader Ah Nim previously had sent a letter to Bingham in Honolulu with a list of accusations against Nalimu connected with the war. Both Bray and Walkup noted that the trader Garstang was intoxicated and therefore were not prepared to accept the charges readily. Besides, Garstang had a further credibility problem: he was the agent for the infamous Bully Hayes who bought oil where he could and at times unscrupulously raided the stores of other traders where he could not. Garstang's reputation was as notorious as Hayes'. The traders were told to assemble their evidence and meet the next day at Kapu's church at Eita, hardly a neutral venue.

According to Ah Nim there was a definite reason for the attack on Tanaeang:

From what I can ascertain the reason for the outrage was to make the natives of the town in which I resided to profess Christianity and to intimidate them into attending Church and paying fees to the missionaries.  

Ah Nim brought nine charges against Nalimu. These were that he had set fire to the *maneaba* at Tanaeang in 1879; that he was a thief; that he instigated war against Tanaeang in 1879; that he bought liquor for trade; that he destroyed the firearms of the traders by force; that he threatened his own wife; collected nuts unjustly; instigated the Islanders to move Schroder's house; and told the Tabiteueans that the traders were rogues, thieves and liars, while giving low terms of trade themselves if they would stop dealing with the traders. The Islanders backed Nalimu's denial and

69 Ah Nim to Wilson of H.M.S. *Wolverine*, 1 March 1880, MM-HEA.
the traders failed to get anyone to validate their assertions. Walkup and Bray therefore hastily decided that the missionary rules had 'affected the profits of trade' and the traders 'feeling the loss of power and trade had made these accusations with the hope of having the missionaries removed from their work'. Captain Bray accepted that there had been a war; the traders said 2,000 had been killed, Kapu said 200, but Bray dismissed any idea that the missionaries had anything to do with it. He simply noted 'the great change in Tabiteuea' and the large churches. He concluded that Satan was alarmed and had stirred up his servants, the traders, against the missionaries. According to Bray:

I think they were made pretty sensibly to feel what asses they had made of themselves in bringing so many charges and no proof against them.70

However, he did gain the impression that Nalimu and Kapu had 'a little too much zeal'.

Meanwhile, Bingham had received Ah Nim's letter and was finally asking for an investigation and, if the assertions were found true, for Nalimu's dismissal. He could procrastinate no longer. The Committee of Foreign Missions in Honolulu wanted Nalimu to report back to Honolulu. The motion was adopted on 23 March 1880.71 Yet this initial move was later forgotten and the idea of an investigation dropped, probably because of Bray's convictions that the traders were lying. So the HEA Annual Report of 1881 casually mentioned that a battle had been fought 'between the heathen party of the south and the Christian party of the north end'. The editors went on to say that 'This seems to have been a sequel to the fight of a similar nature in June of the previous year, and brought about by the

70 Missionary Herald, 77, February 1881, 60; Bray to Forbes, 20 September 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 8; Bray, 'Report of 10th Voyage of the Morning Star, 1880–1881', ABCFM Papers, reel 8; Report of Foreign Committee in regard to Nalimu, 24 February 1880, MM–HEA.

71 Bingham to missionaries of ABCFM, 31 May 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 4.
heathen party, who fully expected to conquer, as the Christian party had destroyed their weapons. The *Missionary Herald*, in Boston, reported that there had been a fight in which the 'toddy drinkers were about annihilated'. However, the missionaries were innocent of any involvement.

Although the mission bodies in both Hawaii and the United States were glossing over the seriousness of the event, the results of Bingham's lack of supervision of the Hawaiians and their activities in the Gilberts were soon to be revealed. Kapu returned to Honolulu. According to Bray, he had become 'sickened' during the massacre and this was 'the cause of his sickness and return to Honolulu'. In 1881, Forbes remarked that Kapu was 'still not in a fit state'. Meanwhile reports of the massacre, and the missionary involvement with it, reached the world press. In 1881, Captain W.H. Maxwell of the *Emerald* came to investigate the charges. Maxwell was not quick to condemn the missionaries, but on reflection he wondered about their value:

> From some remarks and questions afterwards, however, I gathered that some of the missionary law was distasteful to many of them; for instance, I was asked if the missionaries in England prevented the people from singing and dancing, and whether they were obliged to pay all the fines the missionaries imposed. I told them that their obedience to the missionaries was a matter for their own consciences, ... and that men-of-war had nothing to do with missionaries as regards enforcing their laws or demands; ...

Obviously, Kapu had threatened that a man-of-war would arrive if missionary laws were not obeyed.

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73 *Missionary Herald*, 77, January 1881, 60.

74 Bray to Sturges, 29 August 1881, *Morning Star Papers* in MM-HEA; Forbes to American missionaries in the Gilbert Islands, 21 June 1881, MM-HEA.

75 Maxwell (H.M.S. *Emerald*), 'Report on the Gilbert, Ellice and other Islands, 24 July 1881', RNAS, XV.
When the story of the massacre seeped into the Californian papers, the Mission Board at Honolulu knew there had to be a further investigation. A committee of five made up of Captain Isaiah Bray, the Reverend Horace Taylor, and the Reverends Maunaloa, Lono and Leleo was formed. On 22 August 1881, the committee went down to the south to the scene of the massacre to seek evidence from the inhabitants. They met with those who had taken part in the battle and asked them what had occurred. Their reply was: 'What does Nalimu say? What are we to say?' When assured that they would not be punished, they gave the following story. There had been two parties on Tabiteuea: heathen and Christian. The heathen party wanted to drink and dance but in no way interfered with the northerners getting their coconuts from their own land in the south. Kapu had alleged that the southerners had interfered at this point and this was a cause of resentment. The heathen, however, refused to receive the missionaries. Nalimu had asked the northerners what they would do about it and when they had replied that they would kill the southerners, had not remonstrated. It was later claimed by Teraoi that 'the missionaries had led the people on and said that it was the Lord's war'. Amidst this information were contradictions not only among the people but incidents of individuals contradicting themselves. The committee found Nalimu guilty while Kapu was excused as being 'misrepresented by Nalimu' and as having gone 'to the scene of slaughter against his judgement'. Taylor added that this was the judgement of charity. But Taylor trusted Kapu and Kapu was cunning enough to further this trust. Bray had noted his humility, an attribute so admired in Hawaiians, and so Kapu found favour in the eyes of the committee. He could play the game. Nalimu, on the other hand, had no such shrewdness. With more bravado than discretion, he shunned role playing and spent no time


77 Ibid.; Taylor to Means, 29 January 1883, ABCFM Papers, reel 12.
feigning a humble disposition. Taylor would later note, at a third investigation, that Nalimu's 'whole manner ... is against him'. The committee had no power to remove Nalimu, which appears very strange. So Nalimu stayed on at Tabiteuea continuing the schools and sending certain pupils to the Training School at Abaiang.

The scandal, for the massacre had become such, did not die. In May of 1882 Bingham was directed by the Hawaiian Board to write to the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM to inform them that there would be another, a third, investigation. The reason given was that the Hawaiian Board did not endorse the Report of the Gilbert Island Mission. The Hawaiian Board still clung to the hope that exaggerated claims had been made. The Reverend J.O. Means of Boston wrote to the Reverend A.O. Forbes in Honolulu that he could not envisage how those in Hawaii could arrive 'at any more correct judgement than was reached by those who made the examination at the Islands'. But a third inquiry, the second official investigation, was held at Honolulu for six days with Bingham as Chairman.

Bingham presided over a Committee of six. From the outset Nalimu's guilt was virtually established. It was explicitly stated that 'the existence of a very general belief that Mr. Nalimu was the leader in this war must be acknowledged'. This was hardly the way to conduct an open investigation. Evidence was assembled for the defence of the missionaries. It was conceded that the massacre was not the result of 'a preconceived hostile movement' but a macabre ending to a peaceful evangelical episode. It was asserted that the missionaries themselves denied the charge of guilt

78 Taylor to Forbes, 8 March 1881; Taylor to Means, 29 January 1883, ABCFM Papers, reel 12.
79 Maunaloa, 'Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Gilbertese Mission at Apaiang, July 25, 1881', MM-HEA.
and no Gilbertese could be trusted. Bingham, who long before had called the Gilbertese a race of liars, made the same point now. In contradiction, however, two Tabiteueans witnesses were called to defend the missionaries. One of these, Joseph, said that Kapu had told the Islanders to desist from war. The Committee found it strange that the two Hawaiian missionaries would lead the Tabiteueans to war when they had been involved in destroying weaponry. The whole investigation, under Bingham's guidance, was dealt with emotionally rather than rationally.

Stark facts remained unchallenged. Nearly 600 people had died. Nalimu had watched the burning of the bodies. The land of the defeated had been claimed and divided among the victors. Nalimu, guileless, admitted to viewing the spectacle and to taking land. Kapu denied both, claiming that he had decreed that the land be given to the orphans of the defeated party. These facts could not be whitewashed; a scapegoat was needed.

The final summing-up was that it would have been better if Kapu and Nalimu had not gone to the south. The people of the south were not friendly with those of the north and resented the laws passed by the missionaries in 1879. When all remonstrances had failed, the Hawaiians should have returned to the missionary base. Further, they should have had nothing to do with the division of land. Nalimu was found guilty, although Lono, till the end, remained unconvinced of this fact. Nalimu had 'a previous bad report'; he had proven himself of unsuitable character for missionary work. Yet the only 'bad report' there was on Nalimu was that sent by Kapu in the past. Kapu had avoided condemnation due to his cunning and shrewdness; Nalimu lacked both. In 1875 the Reverend M.A. Chamberlain had spoken of Nalimu as an 'able and independent man' who, however, had a 'facility for getting into hot water'. Kapu, on the other hand, appeared

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81 'Report of the Committee on Foreign Missions respecting Mssrs Kapu and Nalimu', Honolulu, July 1882, MM-HEA.
82 Ibid.
'humble'. Taylor wrote of him in 1881: 'I don't know of a Hawaiian missionary whom I would sooner trust than Kapu.' Bingham thought likewise.

Kapu was permitted to return to Tabiteuea some time in 1883. Walkup, in his report of that year, mentioned this fact and stated: 'It is thought that good results will surely follow, that is, clothing, schools, and growth in spirituality.' There had been a decline in 'Christianity' during Kapu's absence. Kapu could only maintain control when he was actually present on Tabiteuea. When he left, the Islanders reverted to their former ways. J.R. Le Hunte, Judicial Commissioner for the Western Pacific, noted this trend when he visited the Gilbert Islands in 1883. According to him:

... at Taputonea [sic] the "Police" system was only introduced a short time ago after the arrival of the Hawaiian missionaries; and after one trial, as soon as these teachers had departed, had been rejected by the entire community, who dismissing the young "Police", resorted to their older "Maniap" [sic] Governments.

Le Hunte went on to speak of the massacre in which the Hawaiian missionaries had taken 'most iniquitous advantage' of the enmity between the northern and southern sections of the island. He mentioned that these two Hawaiians had been removed and he believed that others were to be sent that year of 1883. However, the two new Hawaiian missionaries, Z.S.K. Paaluhi and S.P. Kaaia, did not arrive till 1886 or 1887. So Kapu had a good three years as sole missionary. During this time, he strove to reverse the backsliding and to consolidate his power on the island. As early as December of 1883 laws against drinking were enforced. On 9 August 1884 Kapu wrote to Pogue

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83 Taylor to Forbes, 8 March 1881, MM-HEA.
84 Walkup, 'Gilbert Islands Report, 1882-1883', MM-HEA.
85 Le Hunte, 'Proceedings', 10 October 1883 - WPHC 4, 159/1883.
declaring that: 'The people of Tabiteuea here have chosen elders among themselves and have enacted some laws.' There were three; it was obvious that Kapu was the major influence for they ran counter to Gilbertese custom. One referred to manslaughter or murder, the penalty for which was to be death, whereas hitherto it had incurred a fine in land. The third law definitely refuted Gilbertese custom. It read:

   It is not right for two wives and one husband to dwell together, and the second wife shall be dismissed to marry someone else.

The laws were put into force and when a woman was killed, the Tabiteueans executed the murderer. Kapu also organized the building of a road. He boasted to Pogue that it was 'as big and wide as Niuana Avenue' in Honolulu. Kapu's congregation, however, was not altogether happy with him. Taylor mentioned this in his letter to the Reverend Judson Smith of 12 January 1885. Taylor recounted that one of the deacons had laid several charges against Kapu, two of robbery, including the stealing of contributions, and one concerning private money. He and Kapu had nearly come to blows. The Tabiteueans told 'strange stories of laws made by their missionary, the breaking of each bringing him an income of cocoa-nuts'. Captain Bray believed that there was 'no doubt that the mission station' was also 'a trading station'. He felt compelled to report that even Kapu's own church had asked 'that Kapu be sent home and another missionary be sent'. Kapu was finally dismissed by the Hawaiian Board but continued on at Tabiteuea. Commander E. Rooke of H.M.S. *Miranda*, found that the Tabiteueans 'all seemed to be under the guidance of the missionary, a native of Oahu...'

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86 Kapu to Pogue, 9 August 1884, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian).
87 Taylor to Smith, 12 January 1885, ABCFM Papers, reel 8.
88 Bray, 'Report of a Voyage to Micronesia, May 2, 1885', ABCFM Papers, reel 8; Bray to Forbes, 8 June 1885, *Morning Star Papers*, MM-HEA.
89 Rooke (H.M.S. *Miranda*), 1886 - 'Report of Proceedings when visiting the Islands of the Union Group ... and the Gilbert Group, April to July 1886' - RNAS XVII.
This was in early 1886 before either Kaaia or Paaluhi had arrived. When the two missionaries did come, Kapu still retained his power. Walkup noted this:

The natives could understand Rev. Kaaia taking up the work at Nalimu's place, but Rev. Kapu's resignation had either not been explained, or they did not see the meaning of it, so long as the man remained at his place and work. It was a mistake in sending Rev. Kaaia to Nalimu's place to take up Rev. Kapu's work. Another difficulty is the peculiar political vein in which the missionary is regarded on this island. Rev. Kapu had been regarded not only as missionary but lawgiver for the island.90

Kapu went too far in his attempt to build up both a political and economic 'empire' for himself. The people of Tanaeang, after being fined 100,000 coconuts for drunkenness, decided to call for a Catholic priest from nearby Nonouti. Previously, the Tanaeang people had looked to the Tioba cult as a defence against Kapu's militancy. Now they sought refuge in the Catholic religion backed up by French warships. The first Catholic missionaries had landed on Nonouti in 1888. In January of 1891 Father Bontemps arrived at the northern section of Tabiteuea.91 The three northern districts welcomed him, although the majority of Tabiteueans still maintained the Protestant faith. This led to fears that Kapu might mount an offensive against a minority.92

In 1892 the British Protectorate was proclaimed over the Gilbert Islands. Captain Davis of H.M.S. Royalist reached Tabiteuea in July. He found dissension between the Catholics and the Protestants. The Catholics were assembled at the northern end of the island and were angry because the Protestant unimane were able to fine them. They wanted Father Bontemps to come to the island to make laws for them. Nor did they want to be under

90 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1886', MM-HEA.
91 Sabatier, Astride the Equator, 262-74.
the same flag as the Protestants. They further accused Kapu as the instigator of ill-feeling against them. Captain Davis believed that Kapu had 'much influence with the natives' which he had 'abused shamefully', so he ordered his expulsion. 93 The Friend reported in 1892 that Kapu had been unjustly accused and that: 'No doubt the Hawaiian Government will make proper inquiry.' 94 John Thurston, High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, looked into the matter. He noted that some of the Islanders liked Kapu while others were afraid of him. He believed that 'a danger did exist and that Kapu would avail himself of any opportunity to set the majority on the Catholic minority'. 95 His conclusion was that Kapu was justly expelled and was not a fit subject for the intervention of the Hawaiian Government.

Kapu's style of mission work had certainly veered greatly from that of Bingham. He had not relied on a chieftainship and had himself instituted a school system and organized the Tabiteuean people under missionary laws. Yet, for all his success, it was one which related predominantly to his own personality. When he was absent from Tabiteuea, the Islanders reverted to their own ways. So perhaps Bingham was right in concentrating on sincere commitment to Christianity rather than rapid societal change. Perhaps the latter could not be achieved without the former.

Although Kapu enjoyed a degree of missionary success denied to Bingham, Bingham joined in the applause of mission progress on Tabiteuea. It

93 Davis to Commander-in-Chief, 23 July 1893, enclosed in Davis (H.M.S. Royalist) 1892 - RNAS XVII.
94 The Friend, 50, February 1892, 83.
95 Thurston to Marquis of Ripon, 25 August 1893 - WPHC, Despatches to Secretary of State. See also John Thurston, 'A Copy of the Journal kept ... during his cruise to inaugurate the British Protectorate over the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in 1893' - National Archives of Fiji.
appeared his policy of using Hawaiians had at last been vindicated. His deep faith in the Hawaiians led him to accept all that Kapu claimed. But Bingham's lack of supervision of Kapu and Nalimu led to their domination over the central districts of Tabiteuea and their determination to extend missionary jurisdiction throughout Tabiteuea. With Tabiteuea divided between the 'Book' and the 'Feather' followers, war resulted.

The presence of the missionaries on Tabiteuea also led to a further accommodation to the white man's world as it had on Abaiang. Different conceptions of time, space and community were introduced. Knowledge was no longer the property of the *utu* but disseminated from a school. Identifications transcending *utu* and *boti* were formed through adherence to Christianity as well as to the cult. Kapu's road eased communication. Although exaggerating his claims, he still laid the foundation for the education of the people. Women were granted greater freedom. Further, the concepts of law, fines for law-breakers including the death penalty for murder, the reorganization of communities with policemen supervising the district - all these changes laid the foundation and paved the way for British rule. Bingham would realize in the future that it was slow changes such as these which were the real result of the mission rather than rapid Christianization of the northern and central Gilbert Islands.
PART III
THE INNER CONFLICT

Bingham had yearned for instant missionary success but the Gilbertese were largely indifferent to both him and his message. This indifference galled Bingham. It was another form of rejection and twice before in his life he had suffered this. His reaction to rejection was to turn inwards and this again he did, becoming lost in his translation work.

For a period of three years, however, Bingham turned from his translation work outward to the Gilbertese contract labourers in Hawaii. For the first time, the Gilbertese looked to and relied on him. He at last formed a relationship with the Gilbertese, one of power and protection in which he felt most comfortable.

Back in the Gilberts, the American Protestant mission continued its downward path. A new missionary, the Reverend Alfred Walkup, revised Bingham's missionary strategy. He echoed the criticism of others before him and placed less emphasis on a literature for the Gilbertese and more on the establishment of a training school. These changes came too late; the mission was doomed. Walkup was no more successful than Bingham in his missionary objectives. Bingham, however, never gave up the assertion that his mission had civilized if not Christianized the Gilbertese. The mission did greatly ease the path of the establishment of the British Protectorate. Bingham perceived such changes bringing the Islanders into closer accommodation with Western ideas on law and organization as progress. He also claimed credit for his mission in hastening this.
Hiram Bingham Jr. and his wife Clarissa Bingham before they left Honolulu for the Gilbert Islands in 1859

(Courtesy of HMCS Library, Honolulu)
The events, as they have been previously portrayed, profoundly affected Bingham. He started out with a distinct missionary strategy, a firm policy of using Hawaiians in the field and his own particular view of Christianity which almost amounted to an ideology. Bingham's world view was largely a static one yet events in the Gilberts had not always fitted in with that world view. Bingham found that conflict which had started in his late teens reasserted itself. If, as has been suggested, Bingham chose a missionary career, in virgin mission territory, despite his attraction to wealth and power and a scholarly bent, it was even harder for him to accept the failure of his mission. Bingham had adopted a career which denied his true self. He had modified his Dream. A conflict, therefore, which began in adolescence over a career choice reached a crisis point in his mid-life transition or, in Erikson's terms, the crisis of generativity. The background of events on Abaiang which led to a crisis is now examined from the time of Bingham's first landing.

When the Binghams had waved good-bye to their fellow missionaries who boarded the Morning Star for other parts of Micronesia in 1857, they had found themselves alone for the first time since their marriage. The Binghams had welcomed this isolation. In his letter to his favourite
sister Lydia, Bingham wrote: 'Last evening we sat together for the first time at our own table all alone.' Bingham wished only that Lydia were there with them. The two people he could best relate to were his wife Clarissa and his sister Lydia.

Physically, Bingham was still somewhat frail. If, as is highly probable, he had already contracted a form of tuberculosis from his mother, then this would account for it. Fellow missionaries had expressed concern for Bingham's health in this new environment. Bingham must have been aware of the problem, yet he accepted the challenge of his missionary field. He stipulated that it had been his 'preference to preach among the heathen' rather than remain in Honolulu to take over his father's church. He claimed that he and Clarissa 'were both happy in leaving for the dark isles of the Pacific'. Bingham had chosen to become a pioneer missionary in the Gilberts. He expected success and named his two-storeyed house near Koinawa 'Happy Home'. Instead, the Binghams were to confront war, illness, the death of their first-born, retarded progress towards Christianity and general indifference from the Gilbertese people. This indifference weighed most heavily on Bingham.

On 16 March 1858, Bingham wrote to Lydia that he and Clarissa were still 'very happy' in their work. They had already started to reduce the Gilbertese language to a written form. It was remarkable that he could express any happiness at all at this juncture; they had just lost their first-born son. The child had been born dead, strangled by the umbilical cord. Their hearts were broken. Bingham wrote: 'our fond hopes are blighted ... there is no little boy about to gladden the heart of fond

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1 Bingham to Lydia, 30 November 1857, BFPH, box 4.
2 Bingham, 'Journal of a Voyage to Apaiang', 1, BFPH, box 12.
3 Bingham to Lydia, 16 March 1858, BFPH, box 4.
parents, to cheer a father's heart.' In view of the loving, close relationship he had enjoyed with his own father, it must also have been a blow for Bingham to lose the chance of affection from his own son. It was during this bereavement that Tewaki and his Tarawan allies had attempted to invade Abaiang. The two trials had telescoped, increasing each in magnitude.

Six months later, the Binghams still appeared enthused about their missionary work. Bingham declared to Anderson in Boston: 'We have no time for teaching English, we feel the great work is the preaching of Christ.' Bingham prefaced this declaration with his view, a most unflattering one, of the Gilbertese people:

The sight of naked men, boys, girls and more than half naked women, the observance of their extreme poverty, their worship of false gods, their unbounded lying, their covetousness, theft, warlike spirit and bloody warfare, a realizing sense of their ignorance of a final judgement of heaven of hell of Jesus Christ, have made me long to preach to them...

In contrast, the Reverend Ephraim Roberts, who visited the Gilberts aboard the Morning Star late in 1858, wrote that the Gilbertese were 'a very promising people'. He added: 'The Gospel, I have no doubt, will take hold of them.' Three years earlier Pierson had specifically found the people of Abaiang 'pleasing and intelligent'. He agreed that they were 'capable of being highly cultivated'.

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4 Ibid.
5 Bingham to Anderson, 21 September 1858, ABCFM Papers, reel 1.
6 Roberts to Anderson, 9 September 1852, recorded in the Friend, 8, February 1859, 12.
7 Pierson, 'Journal of a Voyage through the Kingsmill Islands', ABCFM Papers, reel 2.
A mere two years after first landing on Abaiang, Bingham was lamenting the lack of missionary progress. He disclosed that though there were none who openly opposed the preaching and though there were many who gave a verbal assent to its truth, yet most were 'painfully indifferent to the offer of salvation'. It was naive for Bingham to expect instant receptivity and acceptance of the Christian message on the part of the Abaiang people. Such ready 'conversion' had occurred nowhere else in Micronesia, Polynesia or Melanesia. It had taken fifteen years to 'convert' Tahiti and even in Hawaii, where pre-conditions had been so favourable, it had taken several years. One is led to ask what unconscious drives within Bingham propelled him to consciously aim for the almost unattainable. This will be pursued later.

Meanwhile, it slowly began to dawn on Bingham that instant success would not be his, although faint glimmers of hope flickered from time to time. Bingham, perhaps in frustration, began to castigate the Gilbertese people in general and the place itself with vehemence. There was much that the Abaiang Islanders did which irritated him. For instance, the Binghams' mail from Honolulu had been eaten by some Abaiang people as they thought it was a new type of food. Bingham had had to buy back the scraps over several months. The incident, however, which really angered Bingham was the request from Kaiea for payment of the land which his father had given the missionaries. There were rumours that if the Binghams did not pay up,

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8 Bingham to Gulick, 25 April 1859, CM.
9 Ibid.
then their lives would be endangered. Bingham was incensed: 'If ever there be a nation of liars, I think the Kingsmill race is one.' Bingham alluded to this episode often but his wife Clarissa gave a slightly different picture. Bingham, on more than one occasion, exaggerated and over-dramatized a situation. According to Clarissa there had been threats of violence but these had not come from the high chief Kaiea. Captain Fairclough, partner of Captain Randell, had asked Kaiea if the reports had been true and Kaiea had reported that 'his father had given the land and he agreed with his father's doing'. It had been Bingham who had offered to pay for the land rather than Kaiea demanding payment. Kaiea had admitted that some of his people had urged him to kill the Bingham if payment was not forthcoming, but that he himself harboured no intention of so doing. The idea of payment for land in fact had come from an Apemama man whom the Morning Star had brought from Ponape in the Carolines. He had told Kaiea that on Ponape the missionaries 'pay well to the chiefs, ... and give property to the chiefs, paying for firewood and water'. The situation was resolved by Bingham giving up two axes, twenty yards of cotton, two hatchets, six yards of print, two plane irons, four files, one long knife and two sheaths, the accumulative value of which amounted to $10.48. Bingham might well have been more appreciative of the gift of land from a land-starved people in the first place.

10 Bingham to Anderson, 4 November 1859, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
12 Bingham, 'Miscellaneous Items', BFPH, box 20.
Bingham also complained of the barrenness of the coral atolls. In his letter of 4 November 1859 to Anderson, he quoted the naturalist James Dwight Dana:

How much of the poetry or literature of Europe would be intelligible to persons whose ideas are expanded only to the limits of a coral island: who had never conceived a surface of land above half a mile in breadth - of a slope higher than a beach ... what elevation in morals should be expected ... Assuredly there is not a more unfavourable spot for moral or intellectual development in the wide world than the coral isle with all its beauty of grove and lake.¹³

To Bingham, Abaiang was a 'barren coral island near the equator, where the sun sometimes raises the thermometer to 150°, and where no vegetables grow save a coarse species of taro, which is scarce, ...' This was an exaggeration; the temperature never goes so high. Bingham was haunted by the imagery of merciless barrenness. On every level it confronted him. He missed Hawaii with its high peaks and lush vegetation; here he faced coral sands fringing a quiet lagoon. At Hawaii thousands of people had flocked to hear missionary preaching during the late 1830's; here indifference and apathy towards the Christian message surrounded him. Even a son had been denied him.

¹³ Bingham to Anderson, 4 November 1859, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
Bingham became obsessed with the limits of his present environment.

'The dazzling glare of our white beach and coral flats is so great under a vertical sun that I find touring very trying to my eyes ... If cloudy I go across the lagoon in the boat to preach somewhere shielding my eyes while natives steer.' Bingham blamed the environment for his concentration on 'more translating' rather than touring or preaching. The strain to his eyes of sun on white sand, however, was equally inhibiting of his ability to translate. Yet he made a choice, translation over touring, since he claimed he could not do both. So although earlier in the year of 1859 he had declared that his mission was to preach, he was already doing less of it. The strain of translation work was very heavy on his eyes and he could only manage three or four hours daily. In 1860 he wrote to Anderson that:

> in order to secure these three or four hours of eye labour, ... I need to be very regular in my habits. I find it expedient to sit with my eyes closed during very many of my evenings using only ears and voice. I am often obliged to refrain from manual labour and from strong sunlight after the close of the forenoon session, lest I render my eyes useless for the next day.\(^{15}\)

By 1861 his wife Clarissa confessed to 'Aunt Mrs Clark', wife of missionary Ephraim Clark, that Bingham was mainly translating and engaging in very little touring on Abaiang. Bingham the linguist began to overshadow Bingham the missionary preacher. Clarissa went on to say that during the evenings she was using her 'pen and eyes' for her husband.\(^{16}\) Clarissa had submissively subjected herself to the goals of her husband. As well as producing her own translation work, she rendered great assistance to Bingham.

\(^{14}\) Bingham to Clark, 23 September 1859, MM-HEA.

\(^{15}\) Bingham to Anderson, August 1860, BFPH, box 5.

\(^{16}\) Clarissa Bingham to Clark, 13 May 1861, BFPH, box 15.
Bingham was determined to press on with his translation work at whatever cost. So compulsive a devotion demands a reason. At the Special Meeting of the Micronesian Mission in August of 1858, the question was asked: 'To what extent may the missionaries engage in literary and mathematical pursuits?' It was realized that intelligent and well-educated missionaries may want to do something else besides preaching the gospel. Bingham ended up writing a twenty-six page treatise on the subject. In it he argued that missionaries 'should determine upon and seek to carry out that plan for the employment of time, which we conscientiously believe will tend most to the rapid advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom'. He went on to add that missionaries could not tour and preach day and night without rest. However, he cautioned: 'We do well to examine ourselves', those having a taste for literary biases, as:

to the conscientious belief that hours, days, weeks, months and even nights spent in the perusal of favourite ... literary or other [past-times] have been spent to the most rapid advancement of Christ's Kingdom. Perhaps if freed from this bias if any such there be (and who shall dare say he has none) we might feel condemned for the neglect of many golden opportunities for leading dying sinners to Christ.17

Translation work was, of course, in a different category. Bingham agreed with general mission policy that one of the aims of the mission was 'to train natives in their own language', but Bingham's study of the Gilbertese vernacular turned into a fascination beyond that of the missionary plan.18 Even more compelling than this linguistic fascination was a need of recognition and acclaim for some form of success. Bingham would claim attention through his translation work.

17 Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Micronesian Mission, 31 August 1858, ABCFM Papers, reel 1.
Yet Bingham still reiterated that he had a special call to preach and rejected a second call in 1860 to take over his father's church in Honolulu. He argued:

I am already on the ground and have obtained I hope some influence for good with the chiefs and people of Apaiaing. I have also felt that any acquaintance with practical navigation and boat sailing (to the latter of which I was trained during my residence of 8½ years at New Haven) were reasons why I might be more especially fitted for the post I have now - superintending missionary in the Gilberts. 19

Bingham was 'exceedingly reluctant' to leave the Gilberts due to his belief that he was forming a relationship of influence over the high chief Kaiea; further, two or three villages were ripening for a harvest. Bingham stated that he would only leave the Gilberts if the Boston Mission Headquarters considered relinquishing the Gilberts as a missionary field altogether. It was not an easy decision. Bingham was torn between staying in his missionary field and becoming a first and making a name for himself, or leaving for the security of his beloved home, Hawaii. In July of 1860 Bingham wrote to Lydia: 'I love the poor heathen of the Kingsmill Islands, and all the white-headed ministers of the Sandwich Islands.' 20 It was the last time he would admit any love for the Gilbertese. To the Reverend Ephraim Clark of the HMS he wrote a sterner reply, stipulating certain conditions which had to be met if he were to accept the call. These were that his father be returned to Honolulu, that Luther Gulick be sent to replace Bingham at Abaiang and that the Prudential Committee at Boston give its approval to his leaving the Gilberts. 21

Bingham was usually circumspect, discreet and impeccably mannered. Back in 1859 he had written to Anderson in Boston: 'I am but a novice in

19 Bingham to Anderson, August 1860, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
20 Bingham to Lydia, 2 July 1860, BFPH, box 5.
21 Bingham to Anderson, 30 May 1861, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; Bingham to Anderson, 17 August 1860, MM-HEA.
missionary matters, and wish to act as far as possible in accordance with
the views of those who have held the helm for so many years.' Eighteen
months later he was making demands. To ask that his father be returned
to Honolulu was an especially bold demand seeing that the missionaries
there had made it quite clear that they never wanted him back. In the
United States, Bingham Snr. was in both disgrace and debt. Because of
these particular circumstances Bingham, as his son, felt impelled to
justify his father by himself becoming a successful missionary in the eyes
of the Missionary Boards both at Boston and Honolulu. That success had
to be both immediately forthcoming and spectacular. The castigation of
Gilbertese society and its people was perhaps a ploy to emphasize the
changes he, as missionary, would bring to the Gilbert Islands. Bingham
was not prepared to wait long decades for missionary success because he was
not totally committed to pioneer missionary work. The general identity as
missionary had been one which had been grafted on to him. As missionary to the
Gilberts, it was also an identity through which he could make a name for
himself as a pioneer and creator of a written language. Bingham was
struggling to mould his own sense of identity. Perhaps this is why he was
reluctant to heed the call to Honolulu and opted to persevere in the
Gilberts in the hope of success.22

And in 1860 it seemed that success was within his reach. The
Gilbert Islands, by then, had its first chapel and school located at Abaiang.
The high chief Kaiea attended both. A missionary station had been
taken on Tarawa, while missionary tours had been made to Butaritari,
Marakei and Maiana. Most importantly Bingham thought he was gaining a
grip on Abaiang through the influence of the high chief Kaiea.

22 Bingham to Anderson, 4 November 1859, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; see
Cushing Strout, 'Ego Psychology and the Historian', History and Theory, 7,
1968, passim.
Bingham was not only cultivating a relationship with the high chief Kaiea; he also sought the company of an English trader, Captain Richard Randell. Randell, whose trading base was on Butaritari, had extended his trade to both Abaiang and Tarawa. Randell was a successful man; by 1861 the value of his estate was over the $25,000 mark. He had acted as interpreter for the American missionaries of 1852 and subsequently for Bingham. He did much to aid the mission by way of provision of services and goods and was not entirely indifferent to the message it brought. Bingham sought Randell out and was intent on saving his soul. He was attracted to a strong male figure and Randell's association with the sea added appeal. Bingham was delighted when it appeared that he had 'won' Randell who offered to captain the Morning Star free of charge. Randell had put God before Mammon; he was spoken of as another Paul in missionary literature.

An examination of the relationship between these two men illuminates much in Bingham's character. Although at first it would appear that Bingham and Randell were the antithesis of each other, they had a great deal in common. Both men had strong ambitions for success. Randell had realized material success; Bingham yearned for missionary fame and literary success. Both looked for success in 'a small pond'. Randell was a successful businessman not in London but in the Gilberts. Likewise, Bingham wanted to be a successful missionary, not in China, India, or even Hawaii, but in the Gilbert Islands. In many ways they were each other's alter ego, the basis for their attraction to each other.23


Randell symbolized the success for which Bingham hungered. Power, success and glory fascinated Bingham. 'Who are not naturally desirous of fame, riches and pleasure?' he had asked in a sermon aboard the Morning Star in 1858. He had gone on to say that one needed to deny oneself. Four years earlier, on tour in England and Europe, he had been enraptured at the palace of the Marquis of Westminster: 'The income of the Marquis is said to be 5000.00 dollars per day.' He had directly experienced the inconveniences of his family's poverty and the accompanying dependence on wealthy benefactors. Bingham saw a positive good in wealth. His first love had been a beautiful but also wealthy girl; but Bingham had subjugated his ambition for wealth and the power that went with it for another form of success, a success in winning souls to Christ. 'What in reality are earthly riches?' Bingham had questioned. Christians could become rich in peace, joy, hope and Christ's love. Bingham wanted Randell to make the same sacrifice he himself had made and surrender the quest for wealth and worldly success for the riches of Christ. Randell was vulnerable to this suggestion for, like Bingham, he too had a guilty conscience. Randell had four wives and had given himself up to the pleasures of the flesh. He had an inner need to seek God and was initially attracted to Bingham's seeming purity. Randell, however, did not persevere in his noble declaration to captain the Morning Star free of charge and decided instead to remain the successful trader. Perhaps he had perceived that not all of Bingham's aspirations were pure

25 Bingham, 'Sermon, Nov. 15, 1858', BFPY, box 7.


or without self-interest. For whatever reasons, he decided to maintain his own life-style.

In 1861 Bingham's elated hopes for missionary progress collapsed; mission prospects plummeted. The Abaiang Islanders deserted both the chapel and the school. That year 'Happy Home' was renamed 'Banner Cottage'; the little house was no longer symbolic of missionary joy. Bingham became depressed. In March of 1862 he wrote: 'We could hang our heads in shame, and cover our faces in grief, so faint are the evidences that our labours are to be blessed.' In another letter, he wrote: '... there is not a native of Apaiang or Tarawa upon whom we may look on as a friend of Jesus.' To Anderson in Boston, Bingham projected his own shame on to the Gilbertese:

Here however you might have seen degradation and heathenism as you never saw it elsewhere ...

I cannot speak of the Gilbert Islands as a promising field, when compared with the Marshall Islands. Some traits peculiar to our people stand much in the way of the speedy triumph of Christianity.

In the Marshall Islands, ten Islanders had been received into the church by 1864. Many others attended both church services and mission schools. Yet the mission was not without its problems, for the eagerness of the common people for the knowledge provided by the missionaries led to the jealousy of the chiefs who would make their enmity against the mission manifest. But mission progress continued in the Marshalls and Bingham felt obliged to justify the relative lack of missionary success in the Gilberts.  

28 Bingham to Anderson, 31 March 1862, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
29 Ibid.
Writing to Clark in Honolulu, he again blamed the Gilbertese people for his lack of success as he saw it, claiming 'that our people will throw great obstacles against the speedy coming of the time to favour Zion'.

He disclosed to his sister Lydia that he and Clarissa mourned because they saw 'no more fruit' of their labour. His heart was 'very heavy'. He had realized that there would be no 'rapid conversion of the heathen'.

By this time he was thirty; he was, in fact, writing the draft on his birthday. He recalled that Jesus Christ had commenced his ministry at thirty as had his 'own dear father'. Then he dwelt on his own lack of success. It was unbearable. In 1845, Bingham had copied out a sermon on 'The causes of wearyness in well doing'; the first had been 'the want of success'. Bingham now knew the personal meaning of those words. It was at this juncture that Bingham wrote the following hymn, the opening verse of which was:

Ah me became a stranger here,
And one not yet at Rest!
I have no home beloved below
Upon this earth around.

The age of thirty is an important one. The psychologist Levinson sees it as a transition year. It provides an opportunity to work on the limitations of early adult life and to create the basis for a more satisfactory structure. A crisis occurs when a man, on finding his life structure intolerable, cannot form a better one.

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31 Bingham to Clark, 17 April 1861, MM-HEA.
32 Bingham to Lydia, 16 August 1861, BFPH, box 5.
33 Bingham, 'Sermon Book, 1845', BFPY, box 7.
34 Bingham to Lydia, 16 December 1861, BFPH, box 5.
In the face of lack of missionary progress, Bingham averted a crisis by turning his attention to another avenue for success, his translation work. He did this, however, not without guilt. To his sister he wrote in August 1861: 'I hope to have completed the translation of the four gospels by Clara's next birthday; some might be disposed to advise me to give less time to this work and more to oral preaching.' Bingham's conscience was beginning to prick. Although not having relinquished the goal of preaching — he had told Clark that 'every village must be reached' — he gave more and more time to translation. He disclosed that he had given himself up to translation work 'during the winter months', which may have made sense in Boston but hardly did so on the equator. He had enlisted the assistance of a Gilbertese lad named Joseph Tekeuea and had given him $1.00 for every hundred words he could find for Bingham. His obsession with translation was beginning to take root.

Depression, shame and boredom haunted Bingham. He wrote to Lydia: 'There is so much monotony in our daily life that it is difficult to decide what to write about.' Yet he was living in a complex society which he took little trouble to understand. Bingham had no interest in learning how Gilbertese society functioned; he simply wanted to align the society with his ideals and it did not occur to him that an appreciation of the present society might help him to change it. To Bingham Gilbertese society was just another example of 'heathenism'. It was the antithesis

36 Bingham to Lydia, 16 August 1861, BFPH, box 5.
37 Bingham to Clark, 15 August 1862, MM-HEA.
38 Bingham to Clark, 17 April 1861, MM-HEA.
39 Bingham to Lydia, 16 August 1861, BFPH, box 5.
of God's moral Government and therefore not worthy of study. When Louis Henry Morgan of the Smithsonian Society wrote to him with a request to fill in a kinship schedule, Bingham was reluctant to do so. Many years later, the English missionary William Goward of the LMS wrote to Bingham to obtain 'some statements regarding the Gilbertese as they were in the heathen days'. He wanted to know about:

... their worship, priests, sorcerers, wars, weapons, ceremonies, war-canoes, battles, raids upon islands by slavers, manners and customs - at births, deaths, marriages, coming of age, usages as regards lands and dispositions, singing, attitude to yourself and native missionaries. Village life, social and public, laws, games, morality, punishments, clothing, family life and customs ...

Goward had needed to ask these questions because Bingham had never written anything on these subjects. Although he could not have satisfied all of Goward's queries, he had never displayed much interest in Gilbertese society at all. Still, he was no different to either Gulick or Sturges on Ponape. Nor were they interested in comparative anthropology. Those missionaries who were so interested belonged to a liberal branch of Evangelicalism to which the American missions did not subscribe.

Bingham became querulous. He began to find fault with his family. The depths of his despair can be seen when he turned against his favourite sister Lydia. He wrote to her complaining that she had not addressed her previous letter to him in the right vein of affection. The exact address she had used cannot be determined but apparently it had been cold in comparison to the usual addresses of 'Darling brother mine', 'My very dear brother', 'My dear Hiram'. Bingham took offence. He examined the sixty or so letters he had received from her so far to see if she had used this

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40 Bingham to Morgan, 4 November 1859; 28 August 1860; MS. located at Bishop Museum, Honolulu.

41 Goward to Bingham, 8 May 1905, BFPH, box 10; Garnett, To Live Among the Stars, 143; Gunson, 'Victorian Christianity',
'cold' address before; he found she had done so only once. He questioned her: 'Is this fact significant? Does it indicate that time and distance are in any degree tending to diminish the ardour of your affection for a darling Brother?' His basic insecurity in human relations demanded constant affirmation of affection towards him. The Abaian Islanders displayed a certain amount of respect to him but not affection. Bingham wrote of no displays of affection from them. It was not till 1875, when the Binghams finally left the Gilberts, that they saw expressions of 'tender love' which they had 'not been accustomed to see among the Gilbert Island people'.

In 1862 Bingham not only began to feel shame but he also began to doubt himself. He wrote to Anderson that a particular type of missionary was needed for the Gilberts, a physically tough and rugged type. Bingham explained:

We need most emphatically touring missionaries, men of much physical endurance, able and willing to live much on what the islands produce, to sleep night after night on the ground, to drink miserable water, to row or paddle many a weary mile to windward with no natives to help, to walk many a mile wide, glaring flat beneath a torrid sun before one can preach to the natives after he has left his boat. Perhaps this explanation was given as an excuse as to why he could not tour; but it was also an admission that he was no longer the 'right man' for the job as he had once conceived himself. Bingham was beginning to face the realization that he was not suited to the task to which he had so determinedly committed himself. He had to stay, however, in the Gilberts

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42 Bingham to Lydia, 16 December 1861, BFPH, box 5.
43 A. Bingham, 'Sybil's Bones', *HJH*, 9, 1975, 27.
44 Bingham to Anderson, 31 March 1862, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
if he were to continue with his translation work with which he was increasingly beginning to identify. Bingham was searching for himself. He had rejected his desire for wealth and power to become a missionary. He had sacrificed a secure position as pastor of his father's old church in his homeland Hawaii to become a pioneer missionary to the Gilberts. Yet in this capacity he had to succeed quickly and he was not doing so. If Bingham could not enjoy quick success then he would turn to a secure success in which hard work would earn rewards.

In 1863 the little Abaiang house once more became 'Happy Home'; missionary fortunes began to soar. A missionary party had been formed and the first baptisms had occurred led by Kaiea's wife. Kaiea followed suit only months later. In October Bingham had spoken of 'the first revival of religion on this island...' Bingham became really excited for here, at last, was the opportunity to reform Abaiang society through the agency of Kaiea. Bingham wanted a community based on agape love which transcended boti demarcations. Bingham's God was one of love and benevolence. In God's image, man also could be benevolent:

Everyone is conscious of a power to influence his fellow men either for good or evil. If this influence be for good, on the side of virtue - so far forth then is he instrumental in promoting the glory of God.  

How pleased Bingham must have been when Kaiea revealed that he was willing to usher in such a benevolent government on Abaiang 'to the glory of God [and] for the benefit of his poor people'. Bingham was confronted with a conscience-stricken chief and he remembered the words of his father:

45 Bingham to Clark, 3 October 1863; Bingham to Anderson, 20 October 1863, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
46 Bingham, 'Sermon Plan on I Corinthians iii.9', BFPY, box 7.
The conscience awakened chieftain may ply you with questions which will tax your sagacity so to meet them as not to be involved in party strifes or in neglect of duties and opportunities for promoting needful reforms and for laying broad and lasting the foundations of good society.47

Bingham took full opportunity to influence Kaiea to bring in reforms. In the process, he impoverished the chief, because Kaiea had to liberate his 'slaves' and relinquish his tobacco traffic whilst setting up a charitable fund from taxes on tobacco. Bingham applauded these actions and wrote:

How many kings of the present day would consent to give up the greater part of their private income ... and to devote the whole duty from imports for charitable purposes among their people, and all the license-fees for the general good? May we not call such a man a wise Christian ruler ... May his name long be associated with Alexander and Lincoln.

Yet once Bingham had admired wealth and had spoken with pride and satisfaction of Honolulu becoming one of the most important ports of the world. He knew that wealth and power went together but here he was helping to undermine the basis of Kaiea's power.48

For all Bingham's emphasis on love and charity, his community of Christians was an exclusive one under penalty of law. One was either a co-worker with God or a rebel. One had to submit oneself to the omnipotent God of the universe. Bingham interpreted this as meaning that converts had to discard both their traditional ways plus the acquired bad habits of the Europeans, especially liquor drinking. Gilbertese dancing, burial rites which allowed the dead to rot above ground, family structures which permitted eiriki and tinaba, polygamy, nakedness, war and magic were all put on the same footing and regarded by Bingham as heathen practices which had to go. He had no appreciation of how some of these practices operated to balance Gilbertese society. Further, the Gilbertese were not

47 Bingham to Anderson, 20 October 1863, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
48 Ibid. See also Bingham to Clark, 3 October 1863, BFPH, box 5; Gunson, 'Abaiang and its Dynasty under Missionary Influence'.
ready for the laws which took their place. Bingham understood none of this and the most minor deviation from prescribed behaviour was penalized with expulsion. Before the end of 1863 the first four converts had been excommunicated. One of these included Joseph, the young Abaiang Islander who assisted Bingham with his translation work and who was ostracized on the report that he had been seen drinking with a beachcomber. Not until he showed true repentance was he allowed re-entry into the Christian community. Joseph wrote to Bingham:

I now for the first time am calling to mind your word to me that I was to be pitied, and I desire to tell you that I have great grief while I remember your remarks to me and I am very fearful of the fire below. And I do not cease to pray to God and I weep. I desire to hear from you. I ask you to write to me. I am your friend who is very sinful. Joseph Tekeuea. 49

Bingham's God was also one of vengeance.

Bingham did not remain much longer at Abaiang to witness the progress of his Christian teaching. The following year, in June, his health collapsed. He was suffering from continual diarrhoea and chronic inflammation of the bowels; liver damage was also suspected. Bingham thought himself dying. He and Clarissa managed to get sea passage to the Marshall Islands where they stayed for some months before being able to go on to Honolulu via Ponape. At Honolulu, Bingham gained twenty-four pounds in weight. He had been on his back for five months. There, Dr Strangewald found no organic disease but rather a 'great prostration of the nervous system'. He recommended nine to twelve months away from

49 Bingham to Anderson, 20 October 1863; Bingham to Anderson, 7 May 1863, ABCFM Papers, reel 3. Bingham emphasized love in a relationship with his God. William Goward's wife informed Bingham that the people of Beru, in the southern Gilberts where the LMS had stationed itself, remembered the way in which Bingham had spoken of his God. She wrote: '... the people talked often about your speaking to the one "anti" you worshipped as if you were not afraid of Him, but trusted and loved him'. Emmeline Goward to Bingham, 7 June 1905, BFPH, box 10. There was, however, another side to the relationship with God.
missionary duties and '... a visit of the eastern part of the United States'.

In September of 1865 Bingham travelled to the United States aboard the steamship *Costa Rica*. He went to Brooklyn, Massachusetts and Ohio, but not just for the sake of his health. Whilst in the States, Bingham busied himself in organizing the printing of his translations. From the original Greek he had translated up to Corinthians. Thirty-two hymns had already been printed at Abaiang in 1863 with the help of a ship-wrecked printer. Yet from Cleveland, Ohio, Bingham wrote to Anderson in 1866 claiming that he could not continue with his translation work:

> Some one is needed who will be able to undertake the translation of the Old Testament. The weakness of my eyes is such that I can hardly expect to perfect myself sufficiently in Hebrew to make it advisable to undertake the work. I shall greatly rejoice if I am ever permitted to finish and revise the translation of the New Testament.

Bingham later decided to carry on his missionary endeavour, which had become synonymous with translation work, and base himself in Honolulu while spending three or four months per year in the Gilberts.

Dr Ian Jeffries endorsed the idea but the plan originated with Bingham.

In March of 1867, Bingham took command of the new *Morning Star* and became its first captain. The sea had been an early love of Bingham and no doubt he enjoyed this position; but mostly he was pleased to be returning to Honolulu after his stay in the eastern states of America. Aboard the *Morning Star* he wrote: 'Tomorrow we trust we may be permitted to feast our eyes with the sight of Hawaii.' Following a short stay in Honolulu, the Binghams re-entered the lagoon at Abaiang on 16 August, Bingham's birthday, to be greeted by 'a converted heathen, whose joy at

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50 Bingham to Lydia, 2 December 1864; 25 October 1864. Bingham to Anderson, 17 May 1865, BFPH, box 5; Strangewald to Bingham, 16 May 1865, ABCFM Papers, reel 3; Clarissa Bingham to Gulick, 12 October 1864, BFPH, box 5.

51 Bingham to Anderson, 23 January 1866, BFPH, box 5.
meeting us was so great that tears flowed freely down his cheeks'. Wrote Bingham: 'I think we can never forget that.' He thrived, more than most, on such displays.

Bingham toured the Gilbert Islands aboard the Morning Star, going as far as the Ellice Islands [Tuvalu] and Nui. He was astounded at the evidence of missionary progress at these places under the care of Samoan missionary workers of the LMS. Referring specifically to Vaitupu of the Ellice group, Bingham wrote:

We shall not soon forget this delightful visit, though the contrast of one year of eight months of missionary labour here with those of six and a half years at Apiaang, could not be otherwise than, I had almost said, painful ...

Bingham felt wretched.

By now thirty-seven, Bingham was naturally concerned about his advancement. Yet he could see little evidence of it. Levinson sees the decade between thirty-five and forty-five as one in which most men struggle both with themselves and the external world. Every aspect of their lives is questioned. For Bingham, also, it was a painful decade.

Bingham became frustrated with his comparative lack of success. In the Marshalls, the mission there too had matured. There were nearly 100 communicants at this stage. Already, two Marshallse, products of early missionary schools, were working alongside Hawaiian missionaries in preaching the new faith. The following year, 1869, a school for training Marshallse missionaries was established. Although its scope was broader.

52 Bingham to the owners of the Morning Star, 23 January 1868, BFPH, box 5.

53 Bingham, 'First Voyage of the new Morning Star to Micronesia', in the Friend, 18, March 1868, 9-21; the Ellice Islanders, however, had been exposed first to Christianity in 1861 when a Cook Islander deacon of the LMS evidently drifted to the Ellice group. He stayed for four months and arranged for the later arrival of Samoan missionaries under the direction of the Reverend Archibald Murray. The LMS took over the Ellice Islands as a district of the Samoan Mission in 1865. Garnett, To Live among the Stars, 159; Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 40; Levinson, Seasons of a Man's Life, 60-5, 130-40.
(its curriculum was based on that of American High Schools), a steady stream of Marshallese pastors as well as teachers was ensured. In just three years, the mission would be firmly in the hands of the Marshallese who came to see Christianity as a banner under which to unite against cruel and dominating chiefs. Likewise both on Ponape and Kosrae, where his fellow ABCFM American missionaries worked, the mission had become integrated into those societies. These facts must have weighed heavily on Bingham's mind.

In March 1869, Bingham relieved himself of the position of master of the Morning Star. This duty was interfering with his translation work. He told Clark that 'many can take that position [of captaincy] but Mrs Bingham and myself are the only ones familiar with the Gilbertese language and the work of translation and book-making should go on'. Bingham could have been trying to reaffirm his worth. Certainly it was in the area of translation that he believed he could make the best, and most successful, contribution to the Gilbertese mission. Not all agreed that an emphasis on translation work was the right way to run a mission. One in particular was a fellow American missionary in Micronesia, the Reverend Benjamin Snow. Snow sent a letter to Luther Gulick marked 'private', with the added postscript advising Luther Gulick to burn the letter if necessary. The contents of the letter added up to a stern criticism of the manner in which Bingham was running the Gilbertese mission. Snow believed that Bingham was devoting all his time to translation and the production of a Gilbertese mission literature, and that the Gilbertese were in dire need of something more basic. He reminded Gulick that he himself had said that there were 'the books but no readers'. Even missionaries at Boston were beginning to query Bingham's approach to mission work. According to Snow,

54 Hezel, The First Taint of Civilization, 208-10.

55 Bingham to Clark, 20 March 1868, BFPH, box 5.
Snow added:

And in that work on the Gilbert Islands I have no faith that Mr. Bingham could ever succeed. His intense soberness and want of love for children, and, if I understand him rightly, almost utter want of capacity to interest them, shuts out all hope that he will ever do anything in that department. How much talk did he make with your children ...? I remember hardly anything except to criticize and try to correct their bad English. That seemed to move his pity so much ...\(^{56}\)

Snow's remarks on Bingham's poor rapport with children are significant. There is no indication that Bingham ever subscribed, as did Albert Sturges on Ponape and most likely Snow himself, to the new school of American theology represented by the educator Horace Bushnell. Bushnell believed in concentrating on the child and nurturing that child to Christ. Bingham gave little consideration to children or their schools. His focus was on converting adults.

Snow went on to argue that the return of Bingham increased rather than decreased the need for another American missionary on the Gilbert Islands. Snow felt that the Gilbertese needed 'a good, wide-awake cheerful, hopeful man to go and labour with the Hawaiians'. Snow grudgingly, and with a note of sarcasm, conceded that no one was more 'intensely desirous' for the salvation of the Gilbertese than Bingham, then he quickly added:

'... while this is true do not let another generation of those poor Gilbert Islanders go down to hell...\(^{57}\) Snow reiterated three times that a

\(^{56}\) Snow was not unusual in arguing for a system of schools. John Geddie, in southern Vanuatu, had such a system just five years after his arrival on Aneityum. In eight years he established 56 schools in each of the districts of the island; see Spriggs, 'A School in Every District', JPH, 1958, 36. Snow to Gulick, 13 July 1866; 23 August 1865, MM-HEA. Snow was not exaggerating about Bingham's relationships with children. In 1878, he wrote to his own two-year-old son that he would probably never see him grow up to manhood as he himself was sure to die before too long; Bingham to Bingham III, 29 August 1878, BFPH, box 6.

\(^{57}\) Snow to Gulick, 23 August 1865, MM-HEA.
cheerful man was needed as he had gained an impression 'of solemn calling upon the whole [missionary] concern in the Gilberts'. To add credibility to his criticisms of Bingham he quoted Captain Randell's views. According to Snow, Randell had expressed the opinion that Bingham was 'too requiring', too 'exacting' and somewhat of 'a pharisee'.

Snow had originally settled on Kosrae as resident missionary but since 1862 had become supervisor of the mission in the Marshalls. He had left the luxuriant island Kosrae to move reluctantly to stark coral atolls. At Kosrae, he had established an ever-expanding church. Although initially he had formed a friendship with King George, he later chose open confrontation with him rather than compromise. Snow's emphasis on the equality of believers appealed to the commoners with whom he increasingly identified. He was to follow this policy, in contrast to that of Bingham, in his new field of the Marshalls. There, in the early 1860s, the chiefs grew progressively cooler towards the mission. By 1864, they had revealed their opposition to further missionary encroachments. Snow rejoiced. A blunt man, he was more satisfied when people revealed their true inclinations. His words: 'The mask is off and the chiefs can claim no special favours or special considerations on the score of their piety' disclose a man who was relieved that he could openly deal with the chiefs he wanted to - in confrontation as he had on Kosrae.

Snow knew that the schools had been a determining factor in mission success in both Kosrae and the Marshalls. He knew from his experience in Kosrae that the mission ultimately had to be run by the indigenous people. At Kosrae, and before, he had never been a champion of Hawaiian assistants.

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58 Ibid.
But he was to change his mind on shifting to the Marshalls. Kosrae is a small island; the Marshalls are scattered atolls forming two main chains of the Ralik and Ratak. There are over twenty main islands. Snow came to rely on the Hawaiians and this brought him into direct conflict with Bingham who wanted any available Hawaiians for the Gilbertese mission. It is also within this context, then, that Snow's criticism of Bingham should be seen. Bingham probably smarted in the face of Snow's success wherever he went, including coral atolls very similar to that of the Gilberts. Snow wanted Hawaiian missionaries for his own mission and not that of Bingham. The two men were in constant conflict.

With his return to the Gilbert Islands, Bingham, at last, displayed some interest in setting up a theological school on Abaiang. Still, it must be said that a similar school was not set up in the Marshalls till 1869. The school fitted in with Bingham's plan to build up a native ministry which he saw as the major hope for establishing Christianity in these islands. According to Bingham: 'the reliance for Gilbertese churches must be upon pastors raised up among the people'.

Bingham, however, was not to superintend the school; Mahoe, a trusted Hawaiian missionary, was to occupy this position. The school did not eventuate till 1871. Meanwhile, Bingham was free to pursue his translation work. When the third call from the Stone Church in Honolulu came in 1869, Bingham rejected it on the specific grounds that he would not desist from his translation work. The following year, the Reverend Stephen Whitmee and the Samoan missionaries of the LMS began to set up bases in the southern Gilbert Islands below Tabiteuea. The Samoan pastors were to experience the same success here as

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60 Missionary Herald, 65, April 1869, 131.
they had in the Ellice group although it took longer. Meanwhile, Bingham returned to the Gilberts in 1870 for four and a half months. During this time he admitted only eight of the fifty 'inquirers' at Abaiang. Like his jealous God, Bingham was jealous of the standard he upheld for entry into the congregation of saints.

The year 1870 was not a happy one for Bingham. It was the year of his father's death; he himself was thirty-nine. Further, events on Abaiang and Tarawa provoked Bingham's anger and disgust with the Gilbertese. During the war between Abaiang and Tarawa, the missionary premises, along with Kaiea's palace, had been demolished. Further abuse had been hurled at the first missionary to the Gilberts. According to him, the grave of his first-born son had been dug up and the little bones scattered. In his words: 'A savage clan ... [succeeded in] rifting the grave and scattering the bones of our precious first born'. Bingham was incensed. Any faith he may have had in the Gilbertese was now lost. Yet it was not so much that 'the violence done to that little grave' caused Bingham's distaste for the Gilbertese; this only vindicated and intensified that attitude. Further, his right-hand man, Mahoe, had been shot, the 'Happy Home' had been demolished, and the Morning Star had been lost. Due to the damage inflicted on the missionary premises at Koinawa,

61 In the Gilberts, the Samoans encountered problems they had not found in the Ellice. There were the problems of language (the Gilbertese language is Micronesian and has little similarity to Polynesian languages); the conservatism of maneaba governments; nor were the Samoans viewed as kinsmen. In comparison with the northern islands, however, the Samoans did not have to contend with an unstable political scene. Probably the biggest factor was the tenacity of the Samoan missionaries. Full of confidence, the Samoans by this stage had developed a Samoanized version of Christian belief and behaviour, and hence they were imparting something of their own. Eventually the Samoans transformed the southern Gilberts. In 1900 a Training School was established at Rongrongo in Beru when the Reverend William Goward took over from Whitmee; Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 41, 9, 89.


63 Cited in the Examiner, 18 September 1893, BFPH, box 14. See also Miscellaneous Items in same box.
Abaiang, Bingham claimed that hopes of establishing a theological Training School there were dashed. Some might argue that this was not the case simply because a building had been destroyed. There was more to come. The LMS had sent Polynesian pastors into the southern islands of the Gilbert group. Progress in the missionary cause was rapid. Bingham had to admit that as many stations were established by the Samoans 'at one stroke ... as we have taken in fourteen years in the whole group'. It was galling. The success which had eluded Bingham was flourishing for the Samoans. In justification Bingham wrote to Clark:

The Samoans have only a very small frontier of the field ... Their islands have not as much soil territory as Apaiang. I doubt whether the five islands would much, if any, exceed the territory of Tarawa alone though their population is greater.

But then, people was what it was all about. Bingham had failed to reach the hearts or minds of the people. The Samoan success can be explained partly by the different social structure of the five southern islands. Nor were these islands entrapped in war. The personality of Bingham had also played a part. Bingham was trapped within the confines of his own personal Christian ideology. He could not communicate with others; he had tried to reform a society before he had reached the hearts of the people. Bingham, however, saw Christianity more as a matter of the head rather than the heart. As his own appreciation of Christianity stemmed from his mental attitude, he expected this of others.

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64 Bingham to Clark, 21 October 1870, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
65 Bingham to Clark, 2 March 1871, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
66 Bingham to Clark, 17 July 1871, ABCFM Papers, reel 3.
Bingham was now a mature adult. Neither of his parents were living. His only child, up to date, had been born dead. Missionary success had eluded him; he had not yet finished his translation of the New Testament. There were no fruits for his labour. He worked but with no results; he produced but those products were impaired or unfinished. He was a man denied progeny and productivity, the needs of his further development as a man.

Bingham had entered his mid-life transition, the stage Erikson refers to as the crisis of generativity. It is a stage when the fight against stagnation is the intrinsic struggle over generativity. It is also the time when a man must deal with the disparity between what he is and what he has dreamed of becoming. If a man at forty has failed to realize his most cherished dreams, he must begin to come to terms with the failure and invent a new set of choices around which to build his life. It is during the mid-life transition that the neglected parts of the self urgently seek expression. In middle adulthood the task is to modify or relinquish the Dream altogether. If the Dream cannot be fulfilled then a man needs to free himself from its excessive hold and determine what other aspects of the self he will try and live out. This is the psychological scenario Bingham faced from 1871 onwards.  

Bingham never intended to remain permanently in the Gilberts after 1864, but in 1873 he decided to stay for an entire year instead of the three or four months he had been spending in the Gilberts since 1868. He ended up staying till 1875. Things were 'never so good' at Abaiang.

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There were more than 100 inquirers, 154 by the end of 1874, and the Sabbath school was well attended. A new church had been built with its steeple and fence. Kaiea II had begun the construction of a government school although he was receiving little support from his people. The 'king' at Abemama had finally accepted missionaries and the Gilbertese Moses Kaure had been sent. And the Binghams were to be granted American missionary companionship: the Taylor family was to arrive the following year.

In 1871 Bingham had been told to await instruction to begin a Training School at Ebon in the Marshalls. Bingham quickly assembled five or six young men 'in a little school which we honour with the name of our “training school”'. This was continued and when Taylor arrived he taught geography and music while Bingham taught arithmetic. By the end of 1874 there were twenty pupils of each sex at the school. The importance of the school cannot be over-emphasized. Sabbath congregations trebled in one year; both men and women were attracted. At last, Abaiang had a tangible benefit from the missionaries which no other island had. A variety of subjects were taught such as history, geography, natural history, arithmetic, writing, singing and astronomy. Even in the school, however, Bingham could not forget his translation work. He saw his teaching as an opportunity to perfect his translation:

I then spend three quarters of an hour with the more advanced pupils in considering any criticisms they or I have to make on the passage in hand. Thus the translation is being perfected while my dozen critics are sharpening their faculties, and becoming better acquainted with the meaning of the sacred text.

That the training school was located at Abaiang was an initial triumph for Bingham because both Luther Gulick and the Mission Board at Boston had intended that it be established at Ebon in the Marshall Islands. Bingham

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68 Bingham to Clark, 21 March 1874; Bingham to Clark, November 1874, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.

69 Bingham to Clark, 22 March 1875, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
had been determined that it should be set up in the Gilberts; for once, Snow had agreed with him. Snow, believing that the Training School was the key to missionary success, said:

we shall not see a deep thorough impression made upon that most populous part of our Micronesian field until something more is done in hand to hand work. Let there be a station established ... that the natives themselves and the Hawaiian labourers and the world and the Lord too, can see that we are thoroughly in earnest about their salvation.\(^\text{70}\)

Snow felt that it was here that energies should be concentrated and not in translation work. Not only would the Islanders themselves be trained to partake in missionary work but there would be a 'healthy toning up influence ... upon the Hawaiian labourers already there'.\(^\text{71}\)

Once again Bingham became dangerously ill. It has been suggested by Dr Char Miller that this illness was again psychosomatic and that Bingham became ill after learning of his wife's pregnancy, which brought about his desire to return to Honolulu. Clarissa's diary, however, reveals that Bingham became increasingly ill before she became pregnant. As early as 26 February she spoke of Bingham's illness, yet it was not till the following month that she wrote of her suspicions of pregnancy.\(^\text{72}\) Bingham was ill throughout February and March. A change was again necessary. Passage aboard ship to Samoa was secured; Bingham once more thought himself dying. In Apia, Samoa, the Binghams stayed with a physician, Dr Turner, who gave his version of Bingham's condition as: 'no evidence of organic disease but of great nervous prostration and want of tone in the whole system especially in the bowels.' Yet he also found 'atrophy of the liver and enlargement of the spleen'.\(^\text{73}\) This would suggest that Bingham

\(^{70}\) Snow to Gulick, 4 August 1866, MM-HEA.

\(^{71}\) Ibid.

\(^{72}\) A. Bingham, 'Sybil's Bones', HJH, 9, 1875, 26-7.

\(^{73}\) Ibid.
had contracted severe hepatitis back in 1864. By August the Bingham family were in Honolulu. On 19 November 1875, Clarissa gave birth to a son, named Hiram Bingham III.

Meanwhile, Luther Gulick had toured Micronesia as delegate for the mission in 1875. Like Snow, he also strongly advocated the need for a permanent Training School. What he noted in the Gilberts was that the mission had collapsed after Bingham's departure. The root cause of this he saw as the lack of a firmly established Training School. In his report he wrote:

Bingham's departure revealed the helplessness of the Mission in his absence and plainly demonstrated the value of a system of missionary management which our Hawaiian missionaries and the native helpers can thoroughly understand and conduct alone.

Gulick then went on to list the ingredients of such a system - a common standard of Christian attainment prerequisite to church membership, a common confession of faith and the same covenant, the same consistent rule of church discipline, but most importantly, the same general system of education and a Training School. Luther Gulick went on to say: 'Your delegate saw no traces of this."

Bingham, back in Honolulu, recovered his health. There he later took on the position of Corresponding Secretary of the HEA. He did so with reluctance as it kept him from his beloved work of translation. As Corresponding Secretary Bingham worked with meticulous precision, but not always with warmth. It is revealing to compare his addresses in letters to those of other missionaries. Bingham addressed a Mrs McCully, Foreign Secretary of a Women's Board for Micronesia, as 'My dear Madam' and closed with 'Very respectfully yours'. The Reverend A.O. Forbes, Corresponding Secretary after Bingham resigned, wrote to Mrs Smith, President of the

Gulick, 'Synopsis of the Voyage of the Morning Star for the year 1875', ABCFM Papers, reel 4.
Women's Board in the Pacific, as 'Dear Sister' and signed 'Very sincerely and cordially.' There was a distinct difference in tone yet Bingham himself complained of cold addresses. Bingham restricted his affection to those closest to him, but to the outside world he was respectful, diplomatic but cool.

In 1876 there was talk of training the Gilbert Islanders at Honolulu in the North Pacific Missionary Institute under Bingham. Bingham flatly refused to be part of such a scheme, arguing that his lack of physical strength would not permit him to teach, work as Corresponding Secretary and do translation work all at the same time.

Bingham held the position of Corresponding Secretary till May of 1880 when on his own request he declined re-election. His reason was that his translation work was suffering. Bingham's refusal of re-election needs to be seen in full context. The Reverend Mr Bond, serving in Hawaii, asserted in 1879:

> These are my convictions. The Gilbert Islanders have enough to save them already ...
> You are greatly needed in your present position. It strikes me as the greater wisdom to try and hold all we can here with the hope of accomplishing something in a vastly less important sphere. If you resign the Secretaryship ... the only man I know who could do that work is Brother Forbes, but it would be suicidal to take him from Hilo. The Papists are pushing ... Bishop Willis is bound to take every strategic point we leave open ... Who would think of advancing into an enemy's country leaving his rear unprotected? So pray let Micronesia go for a little, so far as it must be, and let book-making go too, and give all the strength you may be blest [sic] with to an effort in Christ's name to save Hawaii.

Bingham did not heed this plea even though he was fully aware of the encroachment of Roman Catholicism on Hawaiian soil. In his usual

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75 Bingham to McCully, 25 March 1880; Forbes to Smith, 15 June 1881, MM-HEA.
76 Bingham to Clark, 7 May 1879, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
77 Bingham to HEA, 4 February 1879, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
determined fashion, Bingham did what he wanted and proceeded to use diplomatic manoeuvres to get the necessary committees to endorse his plan. He succeeded and in 1879 it was resolved that even while Secretary he would be given more time for translation work. The Reverend A.O. Forbes and the Reverend Dr Hyde undertook to share Bingham's workload. Finally, the Committee on Education considered there was, after all, a need for an increase in Gilbertese literature. Bingham had won his round. Yet even though Bingham was given extra help he gave up the position of Corresponding Secretary the very next year. Bingham was more interested in his translation work. He was reading proofs for the second edition of the New Testament. He did not, however, lose all interest in the Gilbert Islands mission and pleaded for still more Hawaiians to be sent there.

On reflection, Bingham's adult years, from thirty onwards, were plagued with frustrations and decisions to ease those frustrations. He had had to wait or chose to wait till he was forty-four before becoming a father. He had arrived in the Gilberts at twenty-six yet by forty he could see little evidence of missionary progress for his efforts. Bingham faced the most serious development crisis since his identity crisis during adolescence. Earlier doubts as to which path to take in life were probably resurrected. The fact that he had denied his other inclinations to choose a missionary career, the fact that he had not resolved all issues then deepened the crisis of adult years which Erikson characterizes as the development of generativity or stagnation. Unless enrichment occurs the individual is plagued by a sense of stagnation, boredom and interpersonal impoverishment.

Bingham's Dream in adolescence had been to sit alongside wealth and power. He had married these inclinations with a desire to become a missionary in his birthplace, Hawaii. But Bingham had betrayed this

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Dream and chosen instead to become a pioneer missionary among materially poor Islanders straddling the Equator. Yet he had not succeeded in bringing them to Christ. Elsewhere in Micronesia, American missionaries established flourishing mission bases. Samoan missionaries succeeded in converting the Southern Gilbert Islanders. Bingham's sacrifice bore no rewards. He appeared to be striving after the wind. Did he regret his rejection of offers to become the pastor of his father's church in his beloved Honolulu? Was he haunted by memories of his father's demise during his adulthood? Bingham had not yet enjoyed the success prior to a demise; he had climbed no pinnacle.

Bingham longed for recognition and proof of his identity as a missionary. He found this in his translation work. This determination to concentrate on translation - as an achievable goal, a future emblem of his productivity, a monument by which his name would be remembered and to which his son could take pride - can be understood in terms of his pressing development crisis.

Bingham did succeed in escaping from the tyranny of his boyhood Dream. He succeeded in resolving his inner conflicts and meeting external demands. Nowhere is this more clearly revealed than in his discourse entitled 'An Appeal for Micronesia' which he delivered in Honolulu on 28 January 1877. This discourse had included a personal proclamation which deserves full quotation:

Would the offer of the finest mansion in this city and tens of thousands of money at our disposal in the bank tempt us to remain here in ease and comfort? Not for one moment. I would rather be permitted to give the entire Bible to the Gilbert Islands than to become property manager of the richest plantation in the group. I would rather make one poor sinner acquainted with the story of Jesus and His love, who but for me would never have heard of Christ than to sit upon the throne of this kingdom. To give up position and standing in Society for the sake of obeying Christ's last commands is no cross. Among the sweetest memories of my life are those of
telling of the precious name of Jesus to thousands who never before had heard it, and to some who but for me would doubtless have gone down to the grave ...\footnote{Bingham, 'An appeal for Micronesia made in Fort Street Church, Honolulu, January 28, 1877', ABCFM Papers, reel 5.} [emphasis added]

This passage provides a clear insight into Bingham's soul and mind. Bingham had always been attracted to wealth and power. He had made a conscious decision to repudiate them, as Christ had done, and in obedience to his earthly father's bidding. He would find his call not so much in becoming the first missionary to the Gilberts, but in becoming the father of a written language. There were many plantation owners and there were many missionaries but there was only one translator for the Gilbertese Bible. Although his wife Clarissa also translated work into Gilbertese, her identity was only an extension of Bingham's. He now repudiated longings for wealth and power willingly because he had found his identity.

Bingham had achieved certain goals not only with the outside world but within his own self-esteem. He was at last the father of a son. He had captained a ship and acted as Corresponding Secretary for the HEA. All these accomplishments paled in comparison to his chief goal of translation work. He had completed the New Testament and looked forward to finishing the Old Testament along with a Dictionary. To some it might appear that Bingham was following scholarship under the guise of being a missionary. This, in fact, was what he was doing. The two identities of missionary and scholar or preacher and linguist merged to form one identity for Bingham. He still thought of himself as a missionary and would later urge his son to follow this same career. Bingham had convinced himself that he could do more for the Christianization of the Gilbertese by translation work than by any other means. Bingham had not only resolved his inner conflicts as to his identity. He also met
external demands by skilful manipulation of both the Boston and Honolulu missionary boards. He would not be deterred from his major goal in life.

The next external demand, however, came not from the missionary boards but from the secular world. In December of 1879, the first Gilbert Islanders arrived in Honolulu to work on the sugar plantations on the outer islands. Their numbers would grow and Bingham would be asked to become their protector. Bingham again became plagued with indecision as to whether or not to take up the role. Eventually he decided to do so and discovered that there were other activities, besides translation work, which gave his life meaning.
CHAPTER SEVEN: In the Land of their Teachers: 
the Gilbertese contract labourers in Hawaii

They are sorrowful in remembering their homes in the Gilberts and their families located there. They say they have no refuge here.

Mahoe, 1890

When Bingham had been resident at Abaiang between 1857 and 1863 and later from 1873 to 1875, a triangular relationship between himself, the Hawaiian missionaries and the Gilbertese had developed. After 1875 Bingham lived in Honolulu, never again to return to the Gilbert Islands, yet the opportunity for this same triangle presented itself in Hawaii. By the late seventies some of the Hawaiian missionaries who had served in the Gilberts had returned home, and nearly 2,000 Gilbertese came to work on Hawaiian plantations between 1878 and 1887.\(^1\) The Gilbertese found Hawaii totally unfamiliar and were grateful that there were a few in Hawaii who could speak their language and understand their ways. Five of the Hawaiian missionaries who had once lived in the Gilberts were able to minister to the Gilbertese labourers. Bingham discovered that, even though he had left the Gilberts, he now had a congregation of Gilbertese on his doorstep. A symbiotic relationship developed between Bingham and the Gilbertese. The Gilbertese needed a spokesman while Bingham needed a

\(^1\) This is an approximate number calculated from statistics derived from J.A. Bennett, 'Immigration, "blackbirding", labour recruiting? The Hawaiian experience 1855-1871', JPH, 11, 1976, 3-27. Bingham calculated that some 1,608 Gilbertese had come by 1884 but they continued to come till the end of the nineteenth century. Bingham to Strong, 26 February 1884, BFPH, box 6; Bingham, 'Notebook as Protector', BFPH, box 6.
people to look to him for guidance and support. As a result of this, Bingham underwent somewhat of a transformation and for a few years was prepared to put aside his translation work.

The Gilbertese began arriving in Hawaii as early as 1872 but the first to come were not brought out by the Government. On 19 May 1878 the *Storm Bird* brought to Hawaii the first twenty-five Gilbertese who were directly sponsored by the Hawaiian Government. Such Gilbertese labour continued to come till 1887; the last of the Gilbertese did not leave Hawaii till 1903. The Hawaiian Government brought out 'South Seas Immigrants' because it faced two major problems. The first was lack of labour for Hawaii's development; the second was the decline in the Hawaiian population. David Kalakaua, who had been elected as king in 1874, believed that if 'similar' people could be brought to the Hawaiian shores, both problems would be solved simultaneously. It was hoped that other Polynesian and Micronesian people would intermarry with the Hawaiians.

Kalakaua found a kindred spirit in an English-born American adventurer who came to Hawaii in 1861 as a Mormon missionary. His name was Walter Murray Gibson. Gibson was a man who entertained lofty but often impracticable ambitions. He had been Consul General for Central America. He had travelled also to Malaya, Borneo and Sumatra where he had been accused of fomenting rebellion against the Dutch. In Hawaii he again tried to implement his romantic ideals, this time of the sovereignty of Island States, by entering the political arena. He envisaged Hawaii as taking a leading role in the process. Like Kalakaua, he distrusted the rise of American influence in Hawaii and shared his concern over the

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2 Bingham, 'Notebook as Protector', BFPH, box 6.

decline in the Hawaiian population. Gibson was determined to reverse the tide. By 1882, as Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, he was one of the leading white politicians in Hawaii. Other white politicians viewed askance Gibson's enunciations that Hawaiians should run their own affairs. 4

The most immediate problem was to arrest the decline in the Hawaiian population. The Hawaiian people needed to be revitalized if they were to become the shining light to the rest of the Pacific Islanders. At the same time there was a pressing need for a labour force for the expanding sugar plantations of Hawaii. In December 1864 a Bureau of Immigration had been established to tackle this problem. 5

Most of the 2,403 South Sea immigrants who came to Hawaii between 1878 and 1887 were Gilbertese. 6 They did not intermarry with the Hawaiians nor were they valued as labourers by the plantation owners. A high proportion of the Gilbertese emigrated as family units which included the very young and the very old. There were, however, a number of single men and an even higher proportion of single women. Some of these would have been very young, thirteen to fifteen, and others would have been old. Many of them would have fallen within the category of the nikiraroro which literally means 'the remainder of one's generation'. This was made up of unmarried non-virgins, the divorcees and the widows. Not all women in these circumstances would become nikiraroro automatically. Widows and divorcees could re-marry; non-virgins could be forgiven by their families. It is conjectural that some women deliberately chose to become nikiraroro so as to indulge in an independence

4 Jacob Adler, Claus Spreckels: The Sugar King in Hawaii, Honolulu, 1966, 17-19, 56, 131; Kuykendall, The Hawaiian Kingdom, 3, 143, 251. See also Gavan Daws, A Dream of Islands: Voyages of Self-Discovery in the South Seas, Queensland, 1980, 129-163, for a stimulating study on Walter Murray Gibson.
5 Kuykendall, The Hawaiian Kingdom, 2, 178-82.
6 Bennett, 'Immigration, "blackbirding", labour recruiting?', 9.
which was impossible within the confines of the family structure. Their independent existence was threatened, however, by the strict sexual codes of the Samoan pastors in the five southern islands of the Gilbert group. For whatever reason they left the Gilberts, records indicate that only four Gilbertese women actually married Hawaiian men. Other Gilbertese women lived with Hawaiian men but refused to marry them lest 'such marriage would interfere with their return to the Gilbert Islands at the expiration of the three years'. Nor do the records indicate that Gilbertese men married Hawaiian women to any extent.

The Gilbertese, like the other South Sea immigrants, were contracted to work in the Hawaiian Islands for three years. They worked mostly on the sugar plantations but also on rice and coffee plantations. Oahu, Kauai and Maui were the major destinations but some Gilbertese also went to Hawaii and Molokai. The hours of work were sixty a week - ten hours a day, six days a week. Men were paid $5.00 a month for the first year with an annual increment of one dollar per month; women were paid one dollar per month less. These wages were lower than those of either the Japanese or Portuguese. Old people were either not required to work or simply to work sufficient hours to earn their board. The young, including those up to fifteen, were meant to attend Public Schools. Adequate nutritional food was to be provided by the plantation owners who were also to provide medical care, all necessary and suitable bedding and to pay any taxes levied by the Government on the contract labourers. The Government guaranteed a free passage home for those labourers wishing to leave Hawaii at the expiration of their contract. If the labourers wished to stay in Hawaii, they could either enter a new

7 Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 61; Hiram Bingham, Journal of a Tour of Inspection among South Sea Immigrants in behalf of the Hawaiian Board of Immigration by their agent for the inspection and protection of Immigrants from the isles of the Pacific, Nov. 2, 1880, HSA, 82. This source is a goldmine for information on the Gilbertese labourers in Hawaii.
contract or 're-ship' which referred to itinerant work usually at two or three dollars a week.⁸

The Gilbertese were unused to constant labour and they pined for their homeland. Why, then, were they so eager to leave for Hawaii in the first place? The Gilbertese migrants mostly came from the southern islands which were intermittently threatened by drought. Others came from Abaiang, Tarawa, Maiana and even Butaritari and Makin which were well within the rain belt. Abaiang, Tarawa and Maiana were war-torn islands and there were those who wanted to flee from continual warfare. In 1879 when Isaac Kaiea of Abaiang launched an attack on neighbouring Tarawa, the Storm Bird succeeded in getting fifty-three Islanders from Tarawa and thirty from Abaiang.⁹

Some of the Islanders who left the Gilberts for whatever reason, however, never reached Honolulu. The ships which brought the Gilbertese to Hawaii - the Storm Bird, Pomare, Julia, Hazard and Hawaii - took the Islanders firstly to a waiting station at Jaluit, in the Marshall Islands. Here many Gilbertese died. Their stay there was often a long one, as much as eight months, and during that time they were vulnerable to pathogenic micro-organisms. From there, infection spread to the recruiting ships on the outward journey to Hawaii. When, in October of 1880, the Hawaii started out from Jaluit for Honolulu, Captain Benjamin Whitney found 'five quite sick from dysentery'. Later the dysentery resulted in eight deaths. One Gilbertese died of consumption while another simply died of old age. Whitney blamed Jaluit saying 'there seems to be something at Jaluit that disagrees with them'. It was not surprising then that at Honolulu, where the ships docked, both Bingham and his wife Clarissa had much work to do in attending to the sick. Bingham directly referred to the trip of the Hawaii in 1880

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⁸ Bingham, Journal of a Tour of Inspection among South Sea Immigrants, passim.
⁹ Bingham to Clark, 7 May 1879, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
and claimed that 'quite a number' of the 180 Gilbertese aboard were taken immediately to the Hospital. He decided to hold his Sabbath afternoon service at Quarantine rather than the Home Church on 17 October 1880.\textsuperscript{10}

The survivors were scattered over many plantations through the several islands of the Hawaiian group. On some plantations there were only a few Gilbertese; on others there were as many as 116. The conditions under which they worked varied with the individual plantation owners. The labourers came into more direct contact with their foremen or lunas. These were often Hawaiian although there were a few German lunas. At times lunas meted out harsh treatment of which the plantation owners were unaware.

The cooks were usually of Chinese extraction, the Chinese having migrated to Hawaii since the 1860's. Both the variety and amount of food also varied from one plantation to another. By law a certain amount of protein had to be provided, which usually took the form of fresh beef ($1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds per person each day), although fresh salmon or other fish, corned beef, pork or mutton was sometimes provided. The diet also included rice but the Gilbertese invariably preferred taro, it being akin to their native babai, and often sold their share of rice in order to procure the taro. Sometimes a Chinese cook would favour the Chinese workers and steal food apportioned to the Gilbertese to supplement the Chinese diet. Not a few Gilbertese, dissatisfied with both the quality and variety of food provided, opted to buy and cook their own food. The plantation owners gave them fifty cents a day to enable them to do so.\textsuperscript{11}

On the whole the Gilbertese were adequately fed yet many of them became very sick and died. In total, approximately 17% of the South Sea Islanders died within their contracted time of labour. Although some of these were

\textsuperscript{10} Bennett, 'Immigration, “blackbirding”, labour recruiting?', 14; Whitney to Wilder, 'Abstract of a Journal aboard the "Hawaii" at Sea', October 1880, HSA, file 53; Bingham to Clark, 21 October 1880, BFPH, box 6.

\textsuperscript{11} Bingham, Journal of a Tour of Inspection among South Sea Immigrants, passim.
old, many others died from dysentery, consumption and dropsy. The Gilbertese were always sick from bronchitis and influenza. There appear to have been two major reasons for this. One was climatic, the Gilbertese being simply unused to a cool season. The second was that the Gilbertese did not appreciate the necessity of cleanliness in both their accommodation and their clothing. The Gilbertese were unused to cleaning their dwellings because in their homeland they lived in wall-less houses through which fresh breezes blew continually. In Hawaii they were accommodated in walled dwellings often with insufficient space and ventilation. In addition, the cooler climate of Hawaii forced them to wear Western clothing which they did not understand needed to be regularly washed.

In late 1880 Bingham was approached by the President of the Board of Immigration, His Excellency H.A.B. Carter, and asked if he would accept the position of 'Inspector and Protector of the South Sea Islanders'. At this point, Bingham expressed his 'thoughts very freely ... not hesitating to let them know that in view of the great mortality among the immigrants' he could not 'encourage the Gilbert Islanders to come'. He told the President that he would 'prefer not to accept the position'. He was prepared, however, to put the matter before the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Missions, which would have to make the final decision.

Decision did not come easily to Bingham, although once he had made up his mind he was set on his chosen course. Nor did he ever engage in any action he did not desire; he could be very stubborn. Bingham almost agonized over the decision whether or not to become 'Protector'. He had been a critic of the Gilbertese labour scheme to Hawaii from its inception and had

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12 Ibid.
13 Bingham to Clark, 21 October 1880, BFPH, box 6.
14 Ibid. Bingham often spoke and wrote in the negative which indicated his often equivocal position. He was a man who disguised his inner motives by obtuse wording.
done what he could to prevent it. Being diplomatic and discreet, however, he had done so unobtrusively. He summed up his attitude in his letter to the Reverend N.G. Clark dated 1 November 1880:

I shall give very careful attention, as we missionary people ought to be prepared to advise the Gilbert Islanders as to the expediency of their leaving their homes to come to these shores. For us as missionaries to oppose the efforts of the Government to introduce here the greatly needed labourers, except as we could show good reasons, would give great dissatisfaction, and it becomes us to be 'wise as serpents'.

It was not that the missionaries were directly involved in the Gilbertese labour scheme but they were reticent to criticize any action of the Government. The missionary success had been based on the premise of courting those in power, so Bingham was acutely aware of the delicate ground on which he was treading in criticizing the labour scheme. Yet in June of 1879 he had written to Clark in Boston complaining of the vices of the Storm Bird's captain who had been hired by the Hawaiian Board of Immigration. Captain Johnson, it appeared, was often drunk and kept several Gilbertese women as mistresses. Bingham wanted his removal and felt 'constrained to use ... efforts to prevent the natives in our mission from coming to these Hawaiian Islands as immigrants in the said vessel'.

The Hawaiian Gazette of October 1880 detailed the arguments Bingham had put to the members of the Board of Immigration as to the feasibility of transplanting the Gilbertese to Hawaii. Bingham felt this could only be accomplished if certain conditions were adhered to which might well make the whole venture unprofitable. Bingham argued that the Gilbertese would need to be brought out in families which meant that only a proportion of them would actually be working on the plantations. He further believed that rather than the Gilbertese increasing the Polynesian stock they would only 'swell the ratio of decrease'.

15 Bingham to Clark, 1 November 1880, ABCFM-HEA.
16 Bingham to Clark, 11 June 1879, BFPH, box 6.
17 Hawaiian Gazette, 27 October 1880.
Hiram Bingham's views were not totally representative of either the American or Hawaiian Board's reaction to the importation of the Gilbertese to Hawaii. His view was largely a personal one; he was very much a lone campaigner on behalf of the Gilbertese. The Reverend George Armstrong believed that the whole exercise would prove beneficial to the Gilbertese and that they would 'learn more of Christian civilization here in one year than thirty in their own'. Walkup, who visited the Gilbertese on their islands, also favoured their migration to Hawaii. He wrote to Clark in 1881 that 'the labour ships ... are a good thing and will prove a benefit in the end to the people'. In this matter, as in others, Walkup would oppose Bingham. Taylor was also favourable to the emigration of the Gilbertese.

Clark received a letter from Taylor early in 1881 which stated:

> While I have no wish to help personally, either directly or indirectly in getting this people away from here, I am far from being sorry at their leaving. If they live here they can eat cocoanuts, fish and sawdust [Taylor was most likely referring to Te Kabubu which is powdered pandanus fruit], dress themselves - perhaps - and sleep. If they go to Honolulu they can't help getting some new ideas, their mouths will be open enough for that, and though it will be hard work for them, their work will amount to something for the world. But I don't think that they can get all these 25,000 people away from here at once ... At all events I am glad ... that Mr. Bingham has been appointed Protector of the South Sea Immigrants. Those poor people need just such a man to look after their interests.

The native Hawaiian missionaries in the Gilberts also had nothing against the Gilbertese leaving. They could hardly do so when it was their king, Kalakaua, who was behind the scheme, a king whom they lauded and with whom they identified. Bingham realized this problem and disclosed it to Clark:

18 Compare with views in Bennett, 'Immigration, "blackbirding", labour recruiting?' and Richard Bedford, Barrie Macdonald and Doug Munro, 'Population Estimates for Kiribati and Tuvalu, 1880-1900: Review and Speculation', JPS, 89, June 1980, 216, which state that Hawaiian missionaries were against the immigration of the Gilbertese.

19 Bingham to Clark, 1 November 1880, ABCFM-HEA.

20 Walkup to Clark, 7 February 1881, ABCFM Papers, reel 12.

21 Taylor to Clark, 8 February 1881, ABCFM Papers, reel 7.
'our Hawaiian missionaries are very slow to go contrary to the wishes of their king, Kalakaua, and doubtless, would heed his wishes much more than those of the Hawaiian Board'. The Hawaiians, even indirectly, must have encouraged the Gilbertese to visit Hawaii when they told them stories of its beauty and wonders. They probably also influenced the Gilbertese in a more direct manner. Captain Whitney, of the labour recruiting ship Hawaii, disclosed in 1880 that 'the Hawaiian Missionarys [sic] have met have talked in favour of the natives immigrating they say they do not make eney [sic] progress in converting them'. Tito Haina, son of the Hawaiian missionary on Tarawa, actually told false stories, painting a very rosy picture of life in Hawaii. The Gilbertese were told by him that they would live with the king in Honolulu and only work when they wished.

Given that no one in the Gilbert Islands was really opposed to the islanders' emigration, it is not surprising that with the drought-ridden state of the south and the war-torn conditions of the north, an increasing number migrated. Bingham in Honolulu could only watch in despair. On 9 April 1880, 282 Gilbert Islanders landed at Honolulu from the Government immigrant vessel Hawaii. The immigrants included Islanders from Marakei, Butaritari, Makin and Banaba. The John Bright arrived the same day with a further 100 Gilbertese. The Storm Bird was to follow in a few weeks with 120 more newcomers. And so, wrote Bingham, 'these poor creatures continue to come'.

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22 Bingham to Clark, 24 December 1879, BFPH, box 6.
23 Albertine Loomis, To All People, Honolulu, n.d., 340-44.
24 Whitney to Wilder, 'Abstract of a Journal aboard the "Hawaii" at Sea'.
25 Bray, 'Report of the 10th Voyage of the Morning Star', MM-HEA.
26 The Friend, 38, July 1880, 21.
Bingham only had the assistance of the Gilbertese Moses Kaure who was working with him at Honolulu on his translations. This helper was despatched on the *Morning Star* to dissuade his fellow Islanders from coming to Honolulu. Bingham's plan was to have the *Morning Star* dock at any one Gilbert island before the labour vessel arrived there. This way a person from the missionary brig could warn the Islanders against leaving, and announce the dangers of migration. In October of 1880 Kaure was aboard the *Morning Star* and when at the Gilberts told 'some bad story about the usage of the Natives at the Hawaiian Islands'. According to Captain Whitney, 'he told enough so that I could not obtain no more immigrants [at Butaritari]'. There was also an Hawaiian, one of the crew of the missionary brig, who told the Gilbertese that they would die if they went to Honolulu. Kaure had told the same story, that 25% died in Hawaii and that the Gilbertese had to work very hard without suitable provisions. Besides this ploy, Bingham had asked the Gilbertese in Hawaii to write to their relatives and friends back home telling them to remain there.

Bingham had limited success in preventing the emigration of Gilbertese to Hawaii. Even though some were dissuaded, many more wanted to leave the Gilberts. Captain Whitney thought the missionaries were fighting a losing battle trying to prevent this action. Associating the *Morning Star* generally with missionaries, he wrote:

... I do not see why the missionaries [sic] want to stop them from immigrating [sic] for the most of the Islands is over crowded with Natives and food is scarce and as for christianizing them they will never make any progress the last 20 years experience ought to convince them of the fact for a more demoralized set of beings I have never seen. The Arctic Indians is far ahead of them and they have never seen a Missionary.28

27 Whitney to Wilder, 'Abstract of a Journal aboard the "Hawaii" at Sea'.
28 Ibid.
Captain Whitney took the Hawaii on to Jaluit in the Marshalls to find both the Storm Bird and the Pomare there. The Storm Bird had twenty-eight adults and seven children while the Hawaii, in spite of the obstacles set up by the Morning Star’s presence, had forty-eight adults and six children. Seventy-eight Gilbertese were waiting at Jaluit. So the Gilbertese continued to come to the land of their teachers.

As Bingham was doing all he could to prevent the Gilbertese from coming to Hawaii, it was somewhat ironical that he was requested to take up the position with the Hawaiian Board of Immigration. Yet the Gilbertese would need a protector in the new land. Bingham wavered. In his indecision he disclosed to Clark in Boston: 'I seek light.' He believed himself too physically frail to handle the position. 'My weak flesh and voice cry out "unable".' He then queried Clark: '... should I leave the word of God and serve tables?' This statement is a key to understanding both his perception of his role in life and his view of the ministry. Bingham in later life shunned any position which was oriented in the slightest way to the worldly, although initially he had had a distinct secular side to his nature. This aspect of his personality he repudiated, for his vocation in life simply had to be dominated by the ministry, of which however he had a very narrow view. To Bingham it meant solely preaching and teaching or translating the word of God. He lacked the broad vision of the Catholic Father Damien who laboured till he died for the lepers of Molokai.

Bingham concluded his letter to Clark by informing him that perhaps with the wider implications of 'other duties' the Immigration Board permitted, he may still be able to cater for the spiritual interests of the Gilbertese if he accepted the position. He stated that he could never resign as a

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29 Bingham to Clark, 21 October 1880, BFPH, box 6.

missionary of the American Board. His loyalty to this Board was matched only by his loyalty to his father.

In October 1880 Bingham could only tell the President of the Immigration Board that he was glad to do all he could 'to benefit the strangers' but feared objection from the American Board to his taking up the offered position. Bingham was being diplomatic as usual; he was also shifting his own reticence to another focus. The consent of the Board was necessary as he was a member of that body. This, however, was granted followed by the recommendation of the Hawaiian Missionary Board. So it was settled. Bingham should take up the position of Protector for a trial period of one year. By December, Bingham was officially the Protector of the South Sea Islanders.

As agent of the Board of Immigration, Bingham had full power to inspect the condition of the Islanders; to enforce all contracts made and to explain these; to hear all complaints on both sides; to settle differences, by law if necessary, and in his own words, 'to cheer the Gilbertese'. On behalf of the South Seas Immigrants Bingham needed to check their quarters, their food rations, medical care, the schooling of their children, and hear any complaints. He needed to explain rights and duties, to assist those who needed redress in cases of injustice and to ascertain how many wished to return to their homeland. For his work as Protector of Immigrants from the South Seas he was to receive $1,000.00 per annum.

Bingham started his work by writing 'A few Hints to Employers' which was published by the Saturday Press on 18 December 1880. He informed employers...
that the majority of Gilbertese were 'exceedingly ignorant and degraded heathens ... the depth of whose ignorance it is difficult even for one well-acquainted with them to conceive'. He believed the Gilbertese were entirely unaware of the amount of labour which was required of them, and that ninety per cent would say that they had been deceived into coming to Hawaii and would want to return home. He told employers that the Gilbertese were unused to hard labour and would suffer from the cooler climate of Hawaii. He depicted the Islanders as a very sensitive people who would resent harsh words and rough treatment; 'gentleness, kindness and forebearance' were needed as in the case of 'balky horses'. The Gilbertese, Bingham wrote, were dangerous when angered. He went on to give more practical advice. As the Gilbertese were jealous of their wives, it was expedient to have married couples work within sight of each other. For the same reason it was not to be wondered at that men would be reluctant to leave their ailing wives back in the quarters. Bingham further argued that married couples should have a room to themselves. He signed the piece, 'Yours in behalf of an ignorant race'. Previously, in April 1880, Bingham had published in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* another piece where he again stated that the Gilbertese were in 'extreme ignorance' and that he greatly pitied them.\(^{34}\)

Bingham's real work was the visiting of the Gilbertese at the many plantations throughout the Hawaiian Islands. In December 1880 and January 1881, Bingham travelled to the island of Maui where he visited Lahaina, Olowalu, Waikapu, Wailuku, Wailue, Paia, Grove Ranch, Makawao and Hamakuapaka 'finding Gilbert Islanders at all these places, for whose good I sought to labour as a missionary and a philanthropist'.\(^{35}\) Thirty years

\(^{34}\) Bingham, 'A Few Hints to Employers' in *Saturday Press*, Honolulu, 18 December 1880; Bingham in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 1880.

\(^{35}\) Bingham to Clark, 14 January 1881, BFPH, box 6.
back, Bingham had written an essay on 'Patriotism and Philanthropy' in
which he expressed his belief that the philanthropist possessed the noblest
feelings ever found in man for he loved 'man as man, as a member of the
human family'. Three years later, while at Yale, he had written another
essay on Hawaii which he saw as 'a precious diadem of American Philanthropy'.
Yet this early idealism had not been much in evidence during his missionary
work at the Gilberts. There, Bingham had recoiled in horror at the people
whom he regarded as little better than savages. Now he had a chance to
fulfil his early idealism. For a time he forgot about his translation work.
'It is true,' he wrote to Clark, 'that for the time being literary work for
the people has been largely suspended', but so was it 'when I was in the
way of making tours in the Gilbert Islands'. For the first time, Bingham
did not mind laying aside his treasured translation work.

To explain this change, it is necessary to determine the satisfaction
Bingham derived from his care of the Gilbertese. Bingham was certainly an
important man in Honolulu at this point, a man sought after for his
assistance and advice not only by the Hawaiian Government but also by the
Gilbertese. These immigrants, as Bingham noted, 'naturally looked so
largely to me for advice and sympathy'. He acknowledged that 'as more
Gilbert Islanders come to know my power to aid them the more inclined they
are to apply to me for aid and advice'. But Bingham also gained affection.
Ethel Damon, a friend of the Wilcox family who owned Grove Farm on Kauai,
noted that the Gilbertese on seeing Bingham approach at a distance would
call out: 'Pinaam, Pinaam'. Bingham thrived in such a situation as he
had when his students at Northampton High School and his own sisters had

36 Hiram Bingham, 'Patriotism and Philanthropy Compared', 26 October 1850;
Hiram Bingham, 'The Civilization and Destiny of the Hawaiian Islands',
15 July 1853, BFPH, box 2.
37 Bingham to Clark, 14 January 1881, BFPH, box 6.
38 Ibid.; Ethel Damon, Notebook, at Grove Farm Museum, Kauai.
looked to him for advice and had rendered him affection in return. The role of Protector suited him. Bingham, in describing his congregation of Gilbertese at Honolulu, mentioned one man from Nonouti who lived with them and who wanted to return to the Gilbert Islands as a missionary teacher. Bingham claimed there were others like him and believed that if only he had more physical strength 'many more would flock around' him every night. The Gilbertese had become a people with prospects and not just ignorant savages.

That Bingham craved attention and signs of affection is revealed from his relationship with his young son. He wrote to his six-year-old son in July 1881: 'It was a joy to have you say you love me very much.' In January 1883, he wrote to Hiram Bingham III: 'I want to hear you say again "Papa, I love you".' His 'very dear son' became 'my darling boy' because he had received a little note from him. Bingham's need for constant expression of affection went far beyond normal limits. Bingham had never received signs of affection from the Gilbertese when he had served in their islands, but the Gilbertese labourers in Hawaii seemed at times to express a genuine fondness for him. Bingham named his new home in Honolulu 'Gilbertenia'; at last he was identifying with the Gilbertese.

So Bingham was happy to give half his time to the American Board of Missions and the other half to the Hawaiian Board of Immigration. He was joyous that while working for the latter he had opportunities to further the gospel work. He wrote: 'I have been taking care of them [the Gilbertese] on behalf of the government' and 'my opportunities for direct Christian work among them have been greater than they would otherwise have

39 Bingham to Means, 7 December 1881, ABCFM-HEA.
40 Bingham to Bingham III, July 1881; Bingham to Bingham III, January 1883, BFPH, box 6; Bingham to Clark, 14 January 1881, ABCFM-HEA.
been'.\textsuperscript{41} Bingham never lost sight of the Christianization of the Gilbertese. He wrote to Means in Boston that it was providential for the Gilbertese to come over to Hawaii where he could be appointed as their Protector. He now had the opportunity 'to preach Christ' and meet the labourers after work in their quarters 'to talk about Christ'. He went on: 'Above all things I do desire to lead them to Christ. I trust, however, that the power to aid them in their temporal conditions opens the way more effectively for me to reach their hearts.'\textsuperscript{42} These statements placed Bingham firmly within the ranks of conservative Evangelicalism. Late Victorian conservative Evangelicalism became even more fixed in rigid social attitudes, crusading against alcohol, tobacco, traders and labour recruiters. The issue of social justice versus 'saving souls' was, however, a complicated one. Individual missionaries sometimes found themselves becoming deeply involved in social and economic affairs although they saw their main task as conversion of the 'heathens'. This dilemma on which area to concentrate was especially prevalent in India where Protestant missionaries found their quest for conversion hampered by the caste system, illiteracy, poverty and oppression. Some came to believe that the spread of Christianity depended on favourable social and economic conditions. Yet not all missionaries accepted this idea. The Reverend George Pearce of the Baptist Missionary Society in England propounded the view that conversion must precede reform. For Liberal Evangelicals or Christian Socialists 'saving souls' took second priority. They were more concerned with establishing medical missions and industrial schools.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{41} Bingham to Clark, 14 January 1881; Bingham to Means, 7 December 1881, BFPH, box 6.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.

In the Pacific context, William Goward of the LMS represented Liberal Evangelicalism. Although writing at a later period, his philosophy on missionization is well expressed in his words: 'Save the soul first, then teach the finer ideals of the Christian life.' Goward was imploring Bingham not to ban Gilbert Islanders from the church because they smoked. But Bingham believed in purity. His strict views were also enforced for the congregation of Gilbertese at Honolulu. At Honolulu a regular Sabbath service was held plus a prayer meeting for women led by Clarissa Bingham. The Wednesday and Sabbath meetings were run by the Gilbertese themselves. Several had been 'propounded' for admission to the Reverend Mr. Parker's church and many more wanted to enter, but Bingham believed in long and tried probation.

By mid 1882 Bingham was complaining about his health and feeling his work as Protector very taxing. And the work was strenuous at times. Bingham had work on Oahu, Kauai, Maui and Hawaii. On any of these islands he travelled miles to the various scattered plantations. He attended to his work conscientiously and methodically, making his reports to the president of the Board of Immigration.

He found much to criticize. Bingham was intent on investigating the payment of contract workers. Labourers were supposed to be paid from the day they set foot on Hawaiian soil, yet most of them were not paid till they actually started work on the plantations. Payment was to be made at the end of every calendar month, but some plantation owners waited till the end of twenty-six days of labour. Yearly increments were to occur at the end

44 Goward to Bingham, 12 January 1907, BFPH, box 10.
45 Bingham to Clark, 14 January 1881; Bingham to Means, 7 December 1881, BFPH, box 6.
46 Bingham to Clark, 2 May 1881, BFPH, box 6.
of a calendar year but often these were not paid till after 312 days of service. As the Gilbertese were off-duty approximately one-quarter of the time mainly due to sickness, they were seriously disadvantaged by not being paid according to law. 47

By and large the plantation owners did not think highly of the Gilbertese as labourers. According to them, the Gilbertese feigned sickness, got into brawls, generally complained a lot and did not put in a good day's work. For their part, the Gilbertese stated that they had insufficient food, were forced to work when ill and were maltreated by lunas who used horse-whips on them.

Bingham pursued his duties as protector with thoroughness and at times tenacity. But he always viewed issues from both sides. He empathized with overseers who believed the Gilbertese shirked work by pretending to be sick. Bingham wrote on this matter:

So frequent are the cases in which labourers apparently able to work claim to be sick, that sometimes cases occur in which they are pressed to work when really they should be off duty. This subject is attended with peculiar difficulties, and yet is one which needs constant examination. The Gilbert Islanders are so given to deception, that we cannot wonder that overseers come to feel that no dependence can be put on their word as to whether they are sick or not when they claim to be unable to work. 48

Hence there were cases of sick ones being roughly handled. One woman on Kauai was beaten for not working when ill. Another man was hauled out of bed and forced to work while sick. Medical treatment to those injured or sickly was another but related matter. At times ailments were ignored if it was too difficult to get a doctor. An Islander from Abaiang who had

47 Bingham to Carter, 2 May 1882; Bingham to Carter, 5 August 1881, BFPH, box 6; Bingham, 16 July 1881, in Damon, Notebook. See Bingham to Armstrong, 28 March 1882 (HSA) for the terms of the contracts between Gilbertese labourers and their employers.

48 Bingham, Journal of a Tour of Inspection, passim.

49 Ibid., 58.
fallen off a horse and suffered a bad injury had been left totally unattended. In another case a sore leg had received no treatment. Medical attention varied. If a doctor was not available, then the responsibility devolved on to the plantation owners who generally administered castor oil and salts. When women were sick, their husbands were not permitted to nurse them unless death was at hand. This was a common complaint. At Kohala, Oahu, one man asserted that he had been dragged off to work while his wife lay dying. Death occurred often. In 1881, at the plantation of a Mr Purvis at Kauai, seven of nineteen Gilbertese on the plantation died. Dysentery was the cause of four of those deaths. At Elelele, six out of nineteen Gilbertese died. Whether on the outer islands or at Honolulu, Gilbertese deaths increased. Half of Bingham’s Bible class in Honolulu died within two years.

While Bingham toured the plantations he noted very few births. As abortion was the only method of birth control used by the Gilbertese, this was very unusual. There may have been some old women at the plantations who knew how to abort, but it is more likely that the Gilbertese made a deliberate decision not to have children.

Bingham found that generally the Gilbertese labourers were adequately fed, although there were cases when sick ones did not receive their rations. The Gilbertese also entertained friends from other plantations and so the individual ration was somewhat lessened. At Makee Sugar Company, Bingham confronted the plantation owner, Colonel Spalding, on the matter of inadequate rations. He refused to divulge just how much he fed his workers and also openly admitted to using a whip on a man who had not turned out to work when called. Further, he had refused to advance wages till the

50 Bingham, Notebook as Protector, BFPH, box 6; Bingham, 16 July 1881, in Damon, Notebook; Bingham to Clark, 1 November 1880, BFPH, box 6; Bingham to Strong, 26 February 1884, HEA-ABCFM.

51 Ibid.
expiration of 312 days of work, so Bingham determined that the matter should be decided in court and made the necessary arrangements. At the Hawaiian Agricultural Company, Bingham also found *lunas* who used not only whips but also pistols.\(^{52}\)

Another concern of Bingham's was the accommodation of the labourers. Generally he found this inadequate as very rarely did each individual have the 300 cubic feet required by law. He firmly believed that each family should have a room to itself. On one plantation, Bingham found thirty-nine married couples in one room along with four unmarried men, two unmarried women and two children. At Eleele there were nineteen Gilbertese in a room twenty-one feet by sixteen feet equipped with just one small window; at Kaloa there were seventy in four rooms, and at Lihue conditions were also very crowded.\(^{53}\) According to Ethel Damon this was due to the wishes of the Gilbertese themselves, who, because of the cold weather, 'all wanted to huddle together'. Damon also claimed that twelve to twenty-five Gilbertese on one plantation had voluntarily crowded into one house although three were available.\(^{54}\) Yet in the Gilbert Islands each family had had their own private sleeping place, although there is no doubt that the Gilbertese would have found the Hawaiian winters cold. Bingham believed that the Islanders were given inadequate bedding; one blanket was simply not enough, and therefore the Gilbertese were forced to huddle together. On one occasion Bingham found a bunk platform of sixty feet on which many Gilbertese were supposed to sleep; the customary sleeping mat of the Gilbertese was lacking as was even a straw pillow. At Kohala, on one plantation, the labourers' quarters had no water closet 'and no retired place nearby'. These were the bad cases. At Kamakua Sugar Plantation, the

\(^{52}\) Bingham, *Journal of a Tour of Inspection*, 105-6, 160-4. See also Bingham to Armstrong, 17 April 1882, and Bingham to Bush, 4 September 1882, HSA.

\(^{53}\) Ibid., 20, 55, 85, 129, 157. See also Bingham to Bush, 31 October 1882, HSA.

\(^{54}\) Damon, *Notebook*. 
Gilbertese spoke highly of their plantation owner. On Saturdays they were allowed to come home early from work so that they could have Saturday after­noons for doing their washing and cleaning. There had been no deaths at this plantation.  

In September 1881, after his visit to Kauai, Bingham submitted a report on the treatment of the South Sea Islanders. He made many recommendations. He insisted that wages be paid at the end of each calendar month and that proper lodging (with suitable bedding) be provided, which necessitated a separate dwelling for each married couple. The diet of the Gilbertese was to be improved for there was too much rice to which the Gilbertese were unaccustomed. Also special diets were necessary during illnesses. The sick were never to be forced to work and were to receive medical attention. All children were to be placed in school. Finally all cases of cruelty were to be reported. Bingham also advocated sickness and accident benefits, which was remarkable for that time.

The Hawaiian missionaries found much the same conditions as had Bingham. The Gilbertese were fortunate in having five sympathetic Hawaiian missionaries, Mahoe, Maka, Lutera, Kanoho and Lono, to minister to their physical as well as any spiritual needs they might develop. Just the sound of a Hawaiian who could speak their language must have been a comfort to the Gilbertese. For over ten years Mahoe cared for the Gilbertese on Kauai. One of the plantation owners there, a Mr E.P. Adams, built a church and furnished a home for Mahoe so that he could more easily care for the

55 Bingham, Journal of a Tour of Inspection, 11, 179.
56 Bingham, 'Report upon the Treatment of South Sea Islanders', 8 September 1881, BFPH, box 12.
Gilbertese on his plantation at Kialauea. Maka was stationed at Honolulu, but made regular excursions to both Maui and Kauai. Lono was pastor of Kaumakapili in Honolulu but visited Kauai in 1884 to assist Mahoe with the Gilbertese there. Kanoho was based on Maui between 1880 and 1883. Lutera also aided Mahoe on Kauai before he ever went to the Gilberts. On his return from the Gilberts to Honolulu in 1891, he took care of the Gilbertese at Lahaina on Maui till 1903.

The Hawaiians were supported partly by the Gilbertese and partly by the HEA. In 1890, however, Mahoe was requested by the HEA to devote himself exclusively to the care of the Gilbertese on a salary of $300.00 per annum. Mahoe, like Bingham, found much to criticize concerning the care of the Gilbertese. In January 1881 he informed Forbes that thirty-four of the 391 Gilbertese brought to Kauai had died. He further claimed that many managers did not care for the sick; some managers even deprived the sick of their food with the slogan 'no work; no food'. Both Mahoe and Maka agreed that plantation owners could be either kindly or tough. The good employers cared for their workers, feeding them well, giving them decent houses in which to live and paying them correctly. The tough employers economized on food and accommodation costs, neglected the sick ones and employed ruthless tunas who ordered their labourers to work whether they were well or not. The Gilbertese often argued that they were maltreated by the haoles and were regarded more as slaves than labourers. According to Mahoe: 'They were tearful because of their unfortunate condition.'

57 HEA Report, 1880, 10-11; 'Report of the Committee on the work of the Kauai Association, 1879-1880', HEA Archives; Maka to Bingham, 28 May 1879; Maka to Forbes, 4 May 1881, MM-HEA.
58 Ibid.
59 Maka, 'Report on the Gilbert Islanders in Hawaii, 1880', HEA-ABCFM.
60 Ibid.; Mahoe, 'Report of the Missionary Work among the Gilbertese on Kauai from June 1, 1883 - May 31, 1884'; Mahoe, 'Report of the Missionary work among the Gilbertese, May 1, 1885'; Mahoe, 'Report of the work among the Gilbertese on Kauai for the last part of 1890', MM-HEA.
Slaves were held in very low repute in the Gilberts and if the Gilbertese felt like mere slaves, they must have been deeply depressed. Tempers rose; disturbances occurred with the Gilbertese sometimes taking the law into their own hands. Charges were frequently brought by the Gilbertese before local magistrates ensuring 'trouble and loss, ... [and] money being spent on policemen and Hawaiian lawyers crafty to get money'. Brawls and disturbances occurred regularly till 1884. Mahoe reported with great relief that in 1884 and 1885 there had been 'no big disturbance among the Gilbertese families on Kauai'. By the mid-eighties, the Gilbertese had begun to obey 'the law of the land'.

The Gilbertese came under various modes of influence whilst in Honolulu. Not all were beneficial. There were many temptations especially in Honolulu - liquor, opium, gambling and card-playing. There was also the lure of the Mormons who claimed to be able to cure all illnesses. Then there was the opportunity to collect arms which had a strong appeal to many Gilbertese, enabling them to continue wars of revenge on their return to their islands. Ethel Damon noted this trend among the Gilbertese on Kauai. According to a friend of the Wilcox family, 'everyone had saved up his wages to buy a rifle...'. Walkup wrote to Means in October of 1883 saying that the Gilbert Islanders were returning from Hawaii armed and 'only waiting for others to reinforce them to take the island [of Nonouti]'. The Julia had landed Islanders from both Abaiang and Tarawa at Nonouti where they tried to take over the island. In 1885 Haina, still on Tarawa, wrote to Pogue...

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62 Mahoe, 'Report of the work ... on Kauai ... 1890', MM-HEA; Bingham to Clark, 2 May 1882, BFPH, box 6.

63 Damon, Notebook.

64 Walkup to Means, October 1883, ABCFM Papers, reel ; Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 63.
that the Gilbertese arriving from Oahu had come armed and had started yet another war on that island.  

Some forgot the feuds of the Gilberts and turned their interest to the growing community of Christians. As early as 1880, the Gilbertese were being received as Christians. Maka reported in 1881 that eighteen had entered the church on Oahu and these Gilbertese had asked him not to leave them. Bingham claimed to have 'a considerable number of Gilbertese' in Honolulu for whom he maintained a special service for over five years. Lutera, at Lihue on Kauai, found that the number of Gilbertese interested in Christianity was increasing and completely filling 'up the place of meeting'. The Gilbertese appreciated his lively approach. He, in turn, had empathy for their condition in Hawaii. Lutera, Maka and Mahoe all established warm relationships with the Gilbertese assisting them both spiritually and materially. Kanoho, working at Lahaina on Maui, reported a good sale of books, but had to conclude that 'the missionary work here continues the same, it doesn't climb it doesn't go down'. Yet a community of Gilbertese Christians would later be formed there. Mahoe claimed that by January 1888 there were thirty-four baptized Christians, although many more attended services, out of 357 Gilbertese on this island. The Gilbertese returning home took back certificates of their Christian standing.

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65 Haina to Pogue, 2 November 1885, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian).
66 Maka to Forbes, 4 May 1881, HEA Archives; Bingham to Means, 7 December 1881, BFPH, box 6; Mahoe to Forbes, 22 October 1885, HEA Archives.
67 Kanoho to Pogue, 8 June 1881, MM-HEA (translated from the original Hawaiian).
68 Mahoe, 'Report of Kauai, 1888', 11-12, MM-HEA.
To what extent Bingham co-operated with the five Hawaiians who looked after the Gilbertese in Hawaii is not known. It almost appears that Bingham and the Hawaiians went their separate ways in this work. The Hawaiians continued to care for the Gilbertese until 1903 when the last of the Islanders finally left. Bingham, however, resigned his position as Protector in July of 1884. By the end of 1882 he had virtually ceased his touring on behalf of the Immigration Board, for much of his time was spent arranging the repatriation of those Gilbertese wishing to return home. Every few months the three-year service ended for some company. Most of the Gilbertese brought in by the Hawaiian Government had finished their three-year term by 1883. On 20 April 1884, the last company of Gilbertese left the Hawaiian Islands. Previously the Storm Bird had returned Gilbertese in June 1881, the Julia on 1 February 1883 and the Mana on 11 January 1883. In July 1883, Bingham wrote that his 'hands were full in making arrangements for sending back some 230 Gilbert Islanders'. At this stage he also wrote: 'Pray for that ignorant and degraded people'. Bingham still had scant respect for the Gilbertese. As late as 1888 he would refer to them as being neither a brilliant nor an attractive people. His noblest emotion towards them was pity. It was not only that he lacked any love for them; he did not even like them. Bingham appeared to lose interest in the Gilbertese newcomers still arriving in Hawaii. Private parties continued to bring out Gilbertese labourers although the Hawaiian Government had ceased to do so. Bingham explained to the Reverend Judson Smith that he was never told whether his duty extended to these fresh arrivals brought in by private parties; he decided for himself it did not. By November 1883, the Government had already returned approximately 750 Gilbertese and Bingham

69 Bingham, 'Notebook', BFPH, box 12; Bingham to Sophie, 26 July 1883, CM.
believed that less than 300 remained. In late February 1884 he calculated that 900 had returned. He wrote to Means that 'the opportunities for personal work among this people are being constantly diminished in numbers, and more time is available for literary work'.

Bingham was incorrect in thinking that work on behalf of the Gilbertese was over, for Mahoe reported in 1884 that there were six locations on Kauai where Gilbertese lived. Although many had left, there were fresh arrivals. The following year, Mahoe reported that there were nine locations. The actual number of Gilbertese was increasing. In 1884 there had been 216 on Kauai; in 1885 there were 310. Besides the new arrivals, there were those Gilbertese who were coming to Kauai from other Hawaiian islands. A few wanted to remain in Hawaii. These were very much in the minority. Others had specific reasons for not wanting to return home, the most common of which was that some were both afraid and ashamed to return completely empty-handed. Still the Gilbertese continued to come. In 1887 Mahoe wrote: 'I thought my work for the Gilbertese was about through. But in December, 1887 a ship filled with Gilbertese arrived.' One hundred and twenty arrived at Lihue making a total of 230 in Kauai.

Mahoe was still concerned about the plight of those wishing to leave Hawaii who could no longer do so. In 1888 he personally interviewed the king, David Kalakaua, who was surprised to learn that the Gilbertese were unhappy in Hawaii. 'How is it?' he asked. 'Do the Gilbertese not want to live here in Honolulu?' Mahoe replied: 'No, they have great love for their land.' The king wanted the Gilbertese to visit him at his palace

70 Bingham to Means, 3 November 1883; Bingham to Strong, 26 February 1884, BFPH, box 6.
71 Ibid.
72 Mahoe, 'Report of the Missionary Work ... on Kauai from June 1, 1883 - May 31, 1884'.
73 Ibid.
74 Mahoe, 'Report of the Missionary Work on Kauai, June 1877 to June 1878', MM-HEA.
where he could show them the latest equipment including the electric lights. He also arranged the return of the Gilbertese. Mahoe returned to Kauai to ascertain the number of those wishing to go. Very soon enough for two shiploads expressed a desire to leave. The Minister of the Interior, the Honoured Luther Aholo, ordered the Gilbertese to the Immigration Station at Kakaoko in Honolulu, where they waited some time before they finally left. During this time Mahoe held services in the Kawaiahao church for the Gilbertese. He also found work for them so they could buy food. As late as 1890 there were still 147 Gilbertese on Kauai; these were 'sorrowful in remembering their homes in the Gilberts and their families located there'.

There was still much work to do for the Gilbertese in Hawaii, yet Bingham resumed work on the translation of the Old Testament on 16 August 1883 on his fifty-second birthday. As he wrote to the Reverend A.E. Strong in Boston: 'The numbers having been so much reduced on the plantations and the people having become better acquainted with their rights, there has seemed to be less occasion for my touring.' Yet it must be taken into account that he had suffered illness again in 1884. He had often complained of illness while touring the islands and at times had cancelled certain tours. He had a digestive problem and during 1884 stayed on a beef and milk diet. Meanwhile he became increasingly defensive about staying in Honolulu rather than returning to the Gilberts. In 1884 he expressed the wish to return to his missionary field but told Strong that his health simply would not permit it. He feared the constant diarrhoea he had always suffered in the Gilberts. Later, in 1891, he would flatly refuse the

75 Mahoe, 'Report of the Missionary Work on Kauai, June 1877 to June 1878', MM-HEA.
76 Bingham to Strong, 26 February 1884, BFPH, box 6.
77 'Miscellaneous Note', BFPH, box 15.
His words to Smith were:

I feel constrained to ask to be allowed to go on with the revision of the New Testament either here in Honolulu or in New York where I might await the arrival of the corrections from Abaiang.\textsuperscript{78}

In 1896 he would again write to Smith that he longed 'to return to the Gilbert Islands' but his 'way seemed hedged up'.\textsuperscript{79}

Bingham was back on his old track of completing the translation of the entire Bible. For a period of three years Bingham had been voluntarily alienated from that course. During that short time his philanthropic work had satisfied him and not once had he complained that he was neglecting his translation work. That period had now ended. He asked the permission of the Hawaiian Board to bring over Moses Kaure from Abaiang, who had previously aided him in 1883 with the New Testament, to assist him in his translation work.

Yet Bingham did not entirely neglect the Gilbertese remaining in Honolulu while engaging in further translation work. There were a number of Gilbertese who had finished their plantation work but could not return to their home islands. They were stranded in Honolulu, situated in the slums amidst dirt and poverty. There they lived in 'a tumble-down shanty too old and decayed to be a suitable habitation for human beings in a section where the cholera did sad work last year'.\textsuperscript{80} These Gilbertese were made up not only from those who had finished their plantation work but from newcomers. On 31 December 1894, 167 Gilbertese arrived in Honolulu.\textsuperscript{81}

According to Bingham, not one was a Christian. But Bingham's stern enforcement of probationary periods may have hindered not a few. Bingham

\textsuperscript{78} Bingham to Smith, August 1891, ABCFM-HEA.

\textsuperscript{79} Bingham to Smith, 21 October 1891, BFPH, box 8.

\textsuperscript{80} Bingham to Smith, 4 November 1896, BFPH, box 8.

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
still worked on their behalf and acted as a trustee, depositing their money and drawing out cash for them in times of need. He could not forget the Christian endeavour: 'We trust that what we are trying to do for the Gilbert Islanders in the Hawaiian Islands for their spiritual and temporal welfare may not be without fruit.' Bingham also hoped that such work justified his continued stay in Honolulu where he could proceed with his literary work.

Bingham wasted no time in informing Smith in Boston that he and Clarissa were engaged in work for the Gilbertese:

I wish you could have gone with Mrs. Bingham and myself into one of the slums of our city last week into a yard where are dwelling several families of wretchedly poor Gilbert Islanders forlorn in their dirt and poverty, ...

Two years later, in 1898, he was helping with the temporal welfare of these same Gilbertese. A few Christian families had donated sums for their relief. Bingham acknowledged that the 'Gilbertese poor and sick and infirm in our Honolulu slums' had to be assisted and the dead had to be buried. Yet he could not forget his real vocation which was that of a missionary rather than that of a philanthropist. Bingham reported that: 'Excellent opportunities ... for evangelistic work among them have been afforded, and there are some who seem to appreciate the gospel message, and to strive to serve the Lord Jesus.' Fresh immigrants to the city of Honolulu were arriving as late as 1899. They went to the sugar plantations of Maui and Kauai. In August 1899, forty such Gilbertese arrived and went to join the growing community of Gilbertese in the slums of Honolulu. To earn a living, the women braided hats and the men engaged in fishing and worked on the wharves. Bingham still looked after the banking of those who wanted it and deposited savings for them from their earnings in the Hawaiian Pastoral

82 Ibid.
83 Bingham to Smith, 21 October 1896, BFPH, box 8.
84 Bingham, 'Report Respecting Gilbertese Publications', 15 April 1896, MM-HEA.
Savings Bank. Christian friends continued to donate funds for the relief of the Gilbertese but Bingham was reluctant to give these to the Gilbertese except in cases of emergency. He gave the reason for this as being that he had no desire to make 'rice Christians'. Bingham believed himself to be 'discreet' but others may question whether he was not obsessed with the purity of motive of his converts. Only five of the forty new arrivals had joined a local church; perhaps Bingham questioned their motives. He certainly held that converts must be pure before they entered the church rather than accepting all people and then trying to persuade them to Christian principles. He never espoused the belief of the LMS missionary, the Reverend William Goward, who worked with the Gilbertese in the southern islands and argued: 'Save the soul first, then teach the finer ideals of the Christian life.'

By 1900 there were two permanent settlements of Gilbertese, one in Honolulu and one at Lahaina, Maui. The Hawaiian Lutera was given charge of the Gilbertese at Puanoa, Lahaina, while in Honolulu a Samoan, Charles Isaiah, married to a Gilbertese woman, took care of a congregation of seventy over half of which were women. The Honolulu colony was originally near Kakaako but was later transplanted to the shore station near Kalihi. The Annual Report for 1901 of the HEA commended this poor yet industrious Honolulu community for its contributions to the mission. In January of 1900, a fire broke out in Honolulu and the Gilbertese were shifted to a relief camp. Accommodation here was free but the Hawaiian Government began to demand rent which some of the Gilbertese simply could not afford. Some squatted on the sea wall; others lived in makeshift huts of corrugated iron. The

85 Bingham to Strong, 7 August 1899, BFPH, box 8.
86 Goward to Bingham, 12 January 1907, BFPH, box 8.
87 HEA Report, 1901, 70-1; June 1902, 23-4; 1903, 22.
following year, the Board of Health demanded their removal. Bingham asked in the *Advertiser* just where these Gilbertese were expected to go. It had been fourteen years since the last opportunity for free passage to the Gilberts. Some of the people had not even fulfilled their initial contracts until after that. Bingham asked that these Gilbertese be provided with suitable accommodation or be given a passage home. The Gilbertese were transferred to the immigration station at Kalihi Kai.

Clarissa had always worked alongside Bingham, whether it was in the caring for the Gilbertese in Honolulu or in assisting in translation work. Bingham thought of her as a born linguist; they worked together as a team. While Bingham brought out his Bible and Hymns, she wrote Bible Stories (1864), a Primer (1865), an Arithmetic book (1870), a Geography (1870) and a Book of Worship for Women (1896). She suffered even more from physical illness than Bingham. In 1894 the terrible disease of *paralysis agitans* began in her right hand. In 1898 she could no longer write; by 1901 she was very ill, becoming physically dependent on others for her every need. The paralysis even affected her vocal chords so that it was easier to move her head than to speak. She died on 17 November 1903. Although speech was very difficult she did speak as she lay dying. Bingham recorded these words which were an expression of her love for him, the love he had needed all the years they had shared, the love he had been deprived of as a young child. Clarissa had provided the demonstrations of affection which Bingham had always craved. Clarissa and Bingham were well suited. It was said of her: 'While accepting and faithfully performing any task of responsibility that was laid upon her, she carefully avoided anything that would bring her into

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88 Loomis, *To All People*, 344-6.
prominence...\(^89\) This attribute of humility was the factor which had attracted Bingham to her in the first place. He faced no competition from her; her energies were devoted to his achievements.

In the year Clarissa died, the last group of Gilbertese left Hawaii. Bingham and Mr John T. Arundel made the necessary arrangements. There were 200 stranded South Sea Islanders, 180 of whom were Gilbert Islanders. Arundel offered to take the company to Tarawa aboard the British ship Isleworth for $1000.00 if the passengers could provide their own food for the ten-day passage. Only thirty-eight of the Gilbertese had any money at all. Two men had saved $536.55 between them which was exceptional for the Gilbertese. The rest averaged approximately $34.00 each. Altogether, the Gilbertese collected $708.70 while Christian benefactors gave a further $291.30 to make up the $1000.00. There was also the expense of removing the Gilbertese colony at Lahaina, Maui, to Honolulu. The Gilbert Islanders contributed $24.00, benefactors gave a further $101.00 while Wilder & Co. donated $250.00. These 'homesick and disheartened ones' had 'waited for an opportunity for half a generation [sixteen years]' to return to their homeland. The ABCFM Annual Report stated in 1904 that the Gilbertese who had saved money 'willingly gave what they could ... to help their fellow countrymen...' The company sailed on 22 October 1903.\(^90\)

It is noteworthy that a community spirit prevailed among the Gilbertese. According to the acting British Resident Commissioner at the time, Mr R.H. Cogswell, all the Gilbertese on board were 'followers of

\(^{89}\) Myers to Mrs Channon, 1903, BFPH, box 20; Women's Board of Missions of the Pacific Islands, A Loving Tribute to the Memory of Mrs Clara Brewster Bingham, Honolulu, n.d., HMCS Library.

\(^{90}\) The Friend, 61, November 1903, 6-7; HMCS Report, 6, 1904, 13; Cogswell, 'Enclosure No. 1 in Acting Resident Commissioner's Despatch, No. 2/1904', WPHC 4. See also 'How the Gilbert Islander Fund was Raised and Spent', in Pacific Commercial Advertiser, 23 October 1903. My thanks go to Dr Judy Bennett who provided me with copies of the latter two documents.
Christianity'. Gilbertese custom did not place any Islander under the obligation of helping a fellow countryman but only those members of one's own boti or utu. The Gilbertese normally had no concern for those outside their lineage. Perhaps it could be argued that the experience of being a minority group in a strange land had kindled a community spirit, but the influence of Christianity with its emphasis on brotherhood cannot be ignored.

On arrival at Tarawa, 'the old people ... wept profusely, with joy, at being once more in their native land'. They returned to a new environment; the British had taken over the Gilbert Islands in their absence. The British flag was hoisted and copies of the Native Laws and Local Regulations were handed out to the repatriated and they were told of law and order. The scene closed with a hymn signifying the two stringent challenges to Gilbertese culture to that date - the coming of Christian religion and the coming of the British Flag.

Bingham, from the time of the first arrival in Hawaii of the Government-sponsored Gilbertese till the repatriation of the last of the Gilbertese in Honolulu, displayed concern and empathy for these transplanted ones. His humane assistance to them was invaluable. He was never, however, the pure philanthropist. Ever in the back of his mind was the hope that all his good works, and that of the Hawaiian missionaries, would result in the Gilbertese turning to Christ. The preaching of the Christian message was Bingham's primary task in caring for the Gilbertese.

91 Cogswell, 'Enclosure No. 1 in Acting Resident Commissioner's Despatch, No. 2/1904', WPHC 4.
92 Ibid.
His good works and that of the Hawaiian missionaries did bear fruit. The proportion of Gilbertese who became baptized Christians was higher than that in the Gilbert Islands. Yet, Bingham still did not come to love these people; his noblest emotion was pity. It was this pity and the hope that the Gilbertese might turn to Christ eventually which motivated his benevolent actions. The effect of the Hawaiian experience on the Gilbertese was varied. Not all became Christians. Some turned to drink, opium, and a few saw the opportunity to amass firearms to take back with them to their home islands. Not one acquired a foot of Hawaiian land and only a few saved any money. Nearly seventeen per cent of the Gilbertese died. The survivors took back tales of a different society where different laws applied. The Gilbertese horizon was broadened and some adjustment had been made to face the challenge of British rule.
Hiram Bingham Jr. as an old man committed to his scholarly translation work
(Courtesy of HMCS Library, Honolulu)
While Bingham was in Hawaii looking after the Gilbertese there and progressing with his translation work, the Reverend Alfred Walkup was not only revising, but repudiating much of Bingham's missionary strategy in the Gilberts. Walkup, who had come to the Gilbert Islands with his wife Venie in 1880, was the antithesis of Bingham in both personality and appearance. A fiery, red-haired and bearded, stockily-built American who had been a boxer before turning to Christ, Walkup was a man of action. In contrast to the refined and discreet Bingham who believed in shrewd diplomacy, Walkup was rough, candid and blunt, yet very warm-hearted. Walkup had his own views on running a mission and these starkly contrasted with those of Bingham. The two were often in conflict although Bingham was one person for whom Walkup always retained a respectful tone. Nevertheless, he defied Bingham at every stroke.

Bingham's view, with which Taylor had concurred, was to 'convert' the high chiefs in the hope that they would influence those within their jurisdiction. Further, Bingham believed that the Hawaiians were sufficiently capable of running a missionary base independently and it had been his policy to locate the Hawaiians on eight of the Gilbert Islands. He maintained faith in the efficacy of the Hawaiian missionaries till the very end despite their failings. Bingham asserted that the Hawaiians:
... had proved themselves in the Gilbert Islands efficient labourers in their efforts to educate the people and to introduce some of the customs of civilized life as well as in establishing churches and developing Christian character.¹

He did realize that a native ministry must eventually arise and always held that Abaifang was the best venue for the Training School. In all, Bingham saw the major thrust of the mission as a stationary, resident American missionary family supervising a multiplicity of Hawaiian missionaries, to be followed by Gilbertese workers at a later date. Walkup did not share this view. He had no interest in wooing the favours of a dubious chief who wielded little power. He also preferred to travel from island to island rather than staying at any one place. Nor did he have any faith in the Hawaiian missionaries whom he regarded as more of a hindrance than an aid to the mission. His hope was in a Gilbertese ministry. He disagreed with Bingham over the site for the Training School. Just two years after he shifted to the Gilberts, he moved the School to Kusaie [now Kosrae], further west in Micronesia.

There were other issues on which Walkup and Bingham disagreed. While both welcomed the coming of the British Protectorate in 1892, they differed in their attitude to the incursion of the French Catholics which began in 1888, just four years earlier. As the mission continued its downward path, Walkup not only proclaimed loudly the problems he perceived to the Missionary Board at Boston but tackled head-on these same problems. Bingham, on the other hand, seemed content to continue whole-heartedly with his translation work, intervening only from time to time on certain issues. It almost appeared that he had ceased, to a large extent, to care whether or not the mission was a success. In fact, Bingham began to see the triumph of

¹ Bingham to Missionaries of the ABCFM in Micronesia, 31 May 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 4.
the mission as the civilizing, rather than the Christianizing, of the Gilbertese people.

The first disagreement between Bingham and Walkup concerned the location of the Training School. The actual venue of this School, however, was an index to a much deeper controversy between the two men. Walkup believed that the setting up of the Training School was vital to the success of the mission, yet Bingham had procrastinated in its establishment. Walkup also held, as did the Hawaiian pastor Mahoe, that the mission needed a comprehensive system of schools, which included high schools, throughout the northern and central Gilberts. In 1890 the respected Hawaiian missionary Mahoe, who had served on both Tarawa and Abaiang, returned to the Gilberts as missionary delegate for that year. He made twelve recommendations, eight of which concerned the issue of a school system in the Gilbert Islands. Mahoe was arguing for a greater emphasis on educating the people, declaring that 'missionary work is not separate from teaching'. He advocated the ordaining of assistant preachers and the appointment of some of the missionaries as full-time teachers. He saw schools as having equal importance to the mission as churches; the two complemented each other.

Mahoe was not overtly criticizing Bingham and his missionary strategy in the Gilberts. The mission, however, had largely failed to gain a strong foothold in any section of the Gilberts and questions were being asked as to why, when so much energy had been spent presumably by both Bingham and the Hawaiian missionaries. Within Mahoe's recommendations were echoes of the criticisms of others on the way the Gilbert Island Mission had been going under Bingham's supervision. Foremost of these was Snow who had directly

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2 Mahoe, 'Thoughts on Gilbert Island Work, 1890', MM-HEA.
questioned Bingham's running of the mission in the 1860's. Like Mahoe and Walkup, Snow emphasized the building of a school system; he saw no distinction between missionary work and teaching. Bingham and his wife Clarissa had de-emphasized the latter and concentrated on producing a literature, before the foundation of a comprehensive school system. The relevance of that choice was questioned by others. Walkup saw his Training School as the place where both missionaries and teachers could be trained for such a school system.

In October of 1882, Walkup wrote to Means in Boston informing him that the Gilbertese students had made more progress at Kusaie in five weeks than they had at Abaiang in an entire year. He attributed the progress to the cooler, more fluctuating climate, the variety of food, and competition with the Marshallese who were also sent to the Kusaie School. The result, Walkup asserted, was 'more thoughtfulness, service, and higher resolve'.

Bingham, meanwhile, agonized over this decision by Walkup. He had claimed in May of 1880 that Abaiang was:

... the best strategic point for bringing to bear the largest amount of personal influence upon the inhabitants of the group and especially in checking the war spirit in the four islands of Apaiang, Tarawa, Marakei and Maiana.

He argued that Abaiang was near to other populous islands, that there was an abundance of fish in the lagoon, and went on to list other advantages, in contrast to all the disadvantages he had once cited when he lived there. Nor did Bingham agree with the mingling of the Gilbertese with the Marshallese. He wanted the Gilbertese to have their own School at Abaiang. Taylor had wanted to superintend the Training School at Butaritari where a milder climate and greater chance of growing vegetables existed. Bingham

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3 Walkup to Means, 30 October 1892, ABCFM Papers, reel 12.
4 Bingham to Missionaries of the ABCFM in Micronesia, 31 May 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 4.
still contended that Abaiang was the best location. In one letter after another, he wrote to the Reverend Ephraim Clark that Abaiang was 'by all odds the best place'. But Walkup had his way. In September 1882, the Kusaie School opened.

The Kusaie School was fundamental to Walkup's view of the ministry in the Gilberts. He believed it essential that the Gilbertese be trained to run their own mission. Lessons were given in both Gilbertese and English to the nineteen students in 1883. Walkup assessed 'his boys' as 'clean, spotted and cloudy' according to their moral stance. In intellectual capabilities they were classified as either dull or clear. In the 1890's a Training School for girls was established called the Kawaiahao Girls' School. They were to become the wives of the native ministers. Walkup was not content just to create a Gilbertese ministry; he challenged the HEA and argued for the separate identity of the Gilbert Island Evangelical Association. Because of Walkup's commitments at Kusaie, there was far less time for him to supervise the mission in the Gilberts, so that responsibility devolved on the very workers, the Hawaiians, whom Walkup had come to distrust.

Walkup had other problems. The French Catholics first came to the Gilberts in May 1888 when Monsignor Leroy became resident priest at Nonouti.

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5 Ibid.; Bingham to Clark, 28 January 1880; Bingham to Clark, 12 March 1880; Bingham to Clark, 8 April 1880, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.

6 Bingham, 'Miscellaneous Items', BFPH, box 14; Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1883', MM-HEA; the Friend, 58, June 1898, 51.

7 Walkup to Emerson, 29 January 1891, MM-HEA. These girls were selected on the recommendation of the 'native leaders' under whom they studied. Women missionaries at the Kusaie School came to the Gilberts to take the girls away. Families were not always willing to let the girls go. Mrs Venie Walkup tells of incidents of families literally dragging the girls from the missionaries. Wilson to Smith, 2 February 1901, ABCFM Papers, reel 21; Mrs Alfred Walkup, 'Journal of a Voyage to the Gilbert Islands', 1887, BFPH, box 23. Venie Walkup died the following year.
Walkup did not despair. Instead he placed his hope in the changed conditions coming to the Gilbert Islands, first the coming of French Catholicism in 1888, followed four years later by the setting-up of a British Protectorate by Captain E.M.H. Davis. Walkup thought that these changes would give the Protestant Mission the boost it had needed for so long. Another religion would engender competition. Walkup reasoned: '... perhaps Roman Catholicism may help Protestantism as Protestantism has helped Roman Catholicism by starting a competition and the gendering of a certain spirit of emulation.' Great Britain, for its part, would establish law and order which were deemed necessary for the success of any mission. Bingham had often blamed the seemingly incessant wars of Abaiang and Tarawa for hindering his mission's progress. Walkup's hope for the mission had a logical basis. By the time the State and a rival religion came to the Gilberts, however, the Protestant Mission was already falling apart. In 1893 there was a General Meeting for Protestant missionary workers in the Gilberts; there was not another for twelve years. The Hawaiian missionaries were growing old and increasingly disenchanted. Many of them had already returned home to Hawaii or had died. The mission suffered from lack of finance, manpower and the evidence of any real success. The timing of the establishment of the Protestant Mission had been awry. It had exhausted itself before it could take advantage of the new forces in Gilbertese society evident by the 1890's. The mission was doomed.

Walkup had not been in the boxing ring for nothing. He took up the challenge with both energy and alacrity. In 1889-1890 he stationed himself at Nonouti for three months in an attempt to deal with the Catholic influence there. It was to little avail for by the end of 1889, half the island's

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8 Sabatier, *Astride the Equator*, 176; *the Friend*, 50, November 1892, 87; Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1895', MM-HEA.
population were baptized Catholics, which included ex-Protestants. In 1892, the Reverend Irving Channon, who had just come to Micronesia, took control of the Kusaie School, leaving Walkup freer to combat the Catholic challenge elsewhere. Walkup travelled from one island to another in his steamboat named Hiram Bingham.9

The Catholics brought not only a differing doctrine but a more lenient view on 'conversion', a more generous attitude to other cultures, and less prohibitions than the American Protestants.10 The French Catholics not only tolerated the use of tobacco but gave it away, along with other trade items, 'somewhat lavishly'.11 This upset the resident traders as much as it did the Protestants. The traders had once been enraged over the trading practices of the Hawaiian missionaries; now they had to contend with the gift-giving of French priests. By this stage, there were simply too many traders for them all to make a substantial living.12

The gift-giving activity of the priests was diametrically opposed to the Protestant stance, for Protestant missionaries gave away very little and even demanded money for books. The lack of generosity on the part of both American and Hawaiian missionaries sullied the Protestant image in the eyes of the Gilbertese. Captain Davis found the charge for books far too high and the fines, often instigated by missionaries for trivial breaches of Christian discipline, appalling. When he asked why many a Gilbertese preferred the Catholics to Protestant missionaries, he was told:

9 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1895', MM-HEA; Sabatier, Astride the Equator, 195; Garland to Emerson, 30 September 1889, Morning Star Papers in MM-HEA; the Friend, 50, May 1892, 34-5.

10 Dianne Langmore, 'Missionaries in Melanesia before the First World War: beliefs and values', unpublished paper kindly forwarded by the author.

11 Mitchell to Hyde, 18 November 1896, MM-HEA.

12 Information relating to various Islands in the Western Pacific, 7-8, GI4349, WPHC 4.
Oh, that Roman Catholic missionary man, he no trade, he no fine - he give um book - no makee pay, Oh he belong good man.\textsuperscript{13}

The Catholics made a point of telling the Gilbertese that the Protestants sold books whereas they did not. The Catholics also gave away goods at the very time that such items had come to be appreciated. If the Protestants had given books and clothing freely when they first arrived, it would have been of little avail. These items were not valued in the 1860's. Timing was crucial.

Above all there were differences over tobacco between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. This issue even divided the Protestants. Walkup, although the most energetic and realistic of the American Protestant missionaries, was also the most extreme on this issue. He was adamant that tobacco be forbidden under all circumstances, arguing that the Lord's Communion be refused to anyone using it. Walkup went so far as to regard its abstinence as 'a test for membership' as the use of it was not to the glory of God. He wrote:

Perhaps I am a crank, but as Paul was not instructed in some things by man, or the Apostles that were with Christ, so I have not taken my ideas from man, ...\textsuperscript{14}

In this matter, he differed from Bingham who had always taken a moderate view. Back in 1876, Bingham had written to Clark:

Must we not wait for a more general spirit of self-denial at home before we can look for the same among a people whose luxuries and comforts are so very few, and to which tobacco is in their view so great a necessity claiming it, as they see, to be food for them as it often [helps?] the cravings of poorly filled stomachs.\textsuperscript{15}

Twenty-two years later, Bingham again justified the moderate use of tobacco. Walkup had removed a missionary from Butaritari on the ground of his

\textsuperscript{13} Davis to Commander-in-Chief, 9 August 1982, 26-RNAS XVII.

\textsuperscript{14} Walkup to Smith, 24 February 1898, ABCFM Papers, reel 17; Walkup to Bingham, 22 October 1902, ABCFM Papers, reel 24.

\textsuperscript{15} Bingham to Clark, June 1876, MM-HEA.
receiving members without first asking them to desist from using tobacco. A committee in Honolulu was formed to discuss the case. The case was dismissed and Bingham went on to say that:

We do not think that the moderate use of it [tobacco] should be made the matter of church discipline. Nor do we think that baptism should be refused to any person simply on the ground that he used tobacco moderately. No mention is made of tobacco as such in the covenant adopted by the Protestant churches in the Gilbert Islands.16

But Walkup's influence remained in the Gilberts. Bingham was in Honolulu.

Walkup also differed from Bingham in his attitude to the incursion of the Catholics. Walkup was deeply concerned and afraid to leave the Gilberts to the Gilbertese teachers. He argued:

As far as I understand their knowledge in Biblical Studies, they are inferior to Catholic priests. If we are not able to challenge the minds and to prove to the people that the Catholics are in error, they will leave us. Therefore if the Hawaiian Board wants to sustain this Mission, they must try hard to supply the stations with missionaries of experience about Christianity. Pardon me if I go too far.17

Bingham maintained a relaxed attitude, believing that the Kusaie students could handle the missionary work in the Gilberts. This was in 1896 when there were only two Hawaiians left in the field, Kaaia on Tabiteuea and Mahihila on Maiana. Two years later, only Mahihila was left.

Bingham did not seem the least perturbed; he had other things on his mind. Foremost among these was his translation work. When the Catholics had begun to infiltrate Hawaii and pose a threat there a decade earlier, Bingham had not been concerned then either. His translation work took his prime attention. Bingham only became worried about the Catholics in the Gilberts when their activities directly affected him or specifically his translation work. He reacted angrily to the fact that the Catholics were

17 The Friend, 54, September 1896, 72.
using his translation work without giving him due credit. Underneath a calm exterior was basically an angry man. Father Edouard had brought out a translation of Matthew with illustrations and annotations, a book of Bible Stories, a Catechism, Hymn Book and Dictionary. Bingham was determined to bring out his own dictionary. Edouard had beaten Bingham to it. Bingham's quest for perfection had slowed down his translation work.

Although Bingham accused the Catholics of basing their work on his own, they, in fact, questioned the validity of some of Bingham's translations. Back in the 1860's the Hawaiians had done the same. The Catholics adopted an entirely different tactic in producing literature for the Gilbertese. They brought out a Gilbertese Grammar, but their most important work was a Life of Christ. This book had many beautiful illustrations which added to its appeal. Neither Clarissa nor Bingham had ever really tried to simplify the Christian message and had largely ignored the value of illustrations, although Clarissa's Bible Stories had contained a few.

Two American missionary ladies teaching the Gilbertese and Marshallese at the Kusaie School entreated Bingham to write something more appropriate to hasten the spread of the gospel. By 1896, this matter was crucial because of the perceived threat of the French Catholics. Yet despite this, and regardless of the fact that he noted that the Catholic literature was having more appeal because of its illustrations and simple approach, he ignored the earnest requests. Mrs Garland had written that what was needed was 'a short story of the life of Christ... giving a more connected idea of His life upon earth, and a clearer conception of it all...'. Miss Jessie Hoppin was even more critical though in a subtle way. She believed that such a book was needed in the training school for the benefit of the Gilbertese teachers who would later be in the field. She added that such a book was

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18 Bingham to Smith, 21 October 1896, BFPH, box 12.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
no replacement for the Bible but that it would be a valuable aid in leading the people to the study of the Bible. Her letter contained a polemic directed at Bingham. She said that if the Life of Christ had really permeated the personal lives of both the Hawaiian and Gilbertese teachers, then the Kingdom of God should already be firmly established in the Gilberts. It was obvious to everyone that it was not.  

Miss Hoppin was trying to say that the life of Christ had never been presented in an effective way so as to inspire either the Protestant teachers or the mass of the Gilbertese people. She was criticizing Bingham's management of the mission. Her argument was that shorter, simpler and more compelling literature was needed by the Gilbertese. Bingham, in contrast, was intent on refining and revising his life's work, the translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek. This criticism was not a solitary case. Snow had made similar criticisms in the early sixties.

Bingham was adamant; he would do no such work as a 'Life of Christ'. He had other preferences. His interest in the Gilbertese language had become a passion, almost an obsession. He continuously stressed the deficiency of the Gilbertese language yet it absorbed him. In 1895, his Bible Dictionary and Concordance appeared. Various commentaries on the Bible followed. His real energy went into the Gilbertese dictionary. All the time he had been translating he had been noting down words in preparation for such a work. When he had a good-sized dictionary, he lent the manuscript to a philologist who was studying Pacific dialects. The philologist left Hawaii and gave the dictionary to a Japanese butler; the manuscript was never seen again:  

By 1884, he made it clear to the Missionary Board that he wanted to compose

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21 Ibid.

22 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1896', MM-HEA.
his dictionary and stated there was a necessity for it.\textsuperscript{23} The type of words he wanted to translate, however, leave one to wonder whether he was really interested in helping the Gilbertese to an appreciation of the Bible. It was true that Bingham was trying to translate such words as 'grace', 'shepherd' and 'swear', but he also argued that there were so many words in the Bible of which the Gilbertese had no equivalent such as 'ephad' and 'phylactery'. Many would argue that the Gilbertese did not really need to know of the garments worn by a Jewish High Priest or of the charm bracelets worn by the Jewish people of the past. This concern of Bingham revealed a certain intellectual pedantry. It was established practice to translate the Bible from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek. The Revised Version of 1881 exemplified that standard. However, the words to which the Bible was being translated were also important. It could be argued, perhaps in hindsight, that the inclusion of local words to clarify the meanings expressed in the Bible would have been worth more than exact and literal translations. The task of finding the most appropriate words in the local language was that which the Reverend James Egan Moulton in Tonga set himself. Unlike Bingham, Moulton did not have to start from nothing. Moulton wanted to revise in three years an existing Tongan Bible so as to include 'the best things from the [Tongan] language, ancient and modern'. This work brought him into conflict with the premier Shirley Baker who accused Moulton of perverting a translation. Such an accusation could never have been made against Bingham whose goal was academic perfection. However, for Bingham the translation of the Bible appeared to become a mark of scholarship rather than a tool for missionary work.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{23} Bingham, 'Miscellaneous Items', BFPH, box 14.

Meanwhile Walkup was in the thick of battle against the incursion of the Roman Catholics. By 1892, the French Catholics had landed at Butaritari and Brother Conrad had settled there. Butaritari was to become the stronghold of Catholicism in the Gilberts. In 1903, a bishopric was set up there and a grand stone church built which is still standing. Walkup, a determined fighter both in and out of the boxing ring, hastened to Honolulu to negotiate the bringing out of new missionaries to the threatened Gilberts. On Butaritari, Kanoa had been dismissed in 1886 and Maka returned to Hawaii in 1894, so the island was left open for rivals. John Nua and his wife Julia came to Butaritari from Hawaii in 1892. A clash of vibrant personalities occurred between Nua and Walkup who preferred his Gilbertese trained teachers to any Hawaiian. In February 1895, Julia died and Nua, overcome with grief, was driven to near madness. His boisterous behaviour later led to his dismissal by the British Resident Commissioner. The Reverend Louis Mitchell, a graduate of the North Pacific Missionary Institute, arrived at Butaritari in later 1894. Mitchell, married to Ruth Mahoe, daughter of the Reverend Joel and Olivia Mahoe, was black, being half Mauritian. He faced a hard time in the Gilberts. The Gilbertese were prejudiced against his black skin, a point which amused the white missionaries. He also bore the brunt of Nua's anger and jealousy. Further, he suffered from frequent accusations by Walkup who accused him of a series of charges, including the charge of

26 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1898', MM-HEA.
collaboration with the Catholics. It was deemed prudent in Honolulu to send Mitchell back to Hawaii in 1896 and out of Walkup's jurisdiction.28 It was at this time that the Peniel Mission of Los Angeles, a new mission body, entered the scene at Butaritari. Philip de la Porte, Robert Anderson, Louis Scribner and L. Skumfeldt were recruited by the ABCFM to work as missionary helpers in the Gilberts.29 La Porte was stationed at Tananiak village on Butaritari while Anderson and Skumfeldt, a Swede who had emigrated to the United States in 1889, initially went to Abaiang but later joined La Porte at Butaritari. These men promised to work in harmony with the other Protestant missionaries in the Gilberts. Anderson was a Quaker; the ABCFM was no longer fussy about whom it recruited. They were all single which was against the early mission rule that missionaries should be accompanied by spouses. Skumfeldt was referred to as a 'crank' who could not read intelligently. Walkup believed he had no energy at all, was a very poor scholar, and not even well informed on the Bible.30 Walkup prepared for yet another confrontation. He was contemptuous of Skumfeldt, distrustful of Anderson who was not bound to the Articles of Faith and who did not believe in baptism, and resentful of La Porte who soon assumed control on Butaritari. Walkup wanted these men to be referred to as merely assistants and not even catechists.31 In his direct, aggressive way he entered one conflict after another with the missionary workers who came to the Gilberts. Still, Catholicism did not take over Butaritari till after 1910 when Tabu took over the high


30 Walkup to Smith, 17 July 1896, ABCFM Papers, reel 17; Mitchell, 'report for Butaritari, July 1895', MM-HEA.

31 Ibid.
chieftainship. His father, Bureimoa, had been a nominal Protestant having been tutored by Kanoa and Maka. It was not till Catholic schools were set up that Tabu, chieftain from 1910 to 1912, espoused Catholicism believing it to be a more powerful force than Protestantism. By the turn of the century, the Catholics had successfully made encroachments on all islands except the five southern ones held by Samoan pastors.

Inevitably, there were occasions of strife between the adherents of the two rival religions. On Nonouti, during 1889, when the Catholics were in the ascendancy, Boua, a Protestant catechist, was struck in the skull during a Wednesday prayer meeting. Sticks and stones were thrown. The French priest intervened before any damage could be done. Then it was hard work restraining the Protestant party from 'annihilating the Catholics from this Island'. The establishment of the British Protectorate was to intensify the rivalry as Gilbertese who received positions of authority used them to favour their own co-religionists. Mr R.H. Cogswell, Acting Resident Commissioner in 1903, wrote to the High Commissioner in Suva:

Where a Mission had a majority of its adherents in the Government the opposite denomination suffered, and vice versa. Missionaries are themselves responsible for inducing the Kaubure to make petty and oppressive regulations in their favour.

Walkup referred to an instance on Tabiteuea during September 1895 when a mob was raised to stone the Protestant judge and clerk. This action was instigated by the jealousy of the illiterate and Catholic chief of Kaubure. Previously in April, Catholics from the village of Tanaeang had destroyed a Protestant teacher's home at the extreme south of the island. Such instances of oppression were not one-sided. Catholics were menaced by

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32 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
33 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Work, 1888-1889', MM-HEA.
34 Cogswell to Major, 20 June 1904 - 192/1898, WPHC 4.
35 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report', 1895', MM-HEA; Garland to Emerson, 30 September 1889, Morning Star Papers in MM-HEA.
Protestants. The two rival religions were in conflict, demonstrated poignantly by native pastors and priests quarrelling over and tugging at dead bodies 'for the right of burial'.

By 1892 the Catholics claimed more than 2,000 converts, most of them on Nonouti and Tabiteuea. Two years later the number of baptised adherents exceeded 5,000. The French Catholic mission offered an alternative faith for those who could not join traditional rivals. The French also had a lenient view on dancing and tobacco and gave away presents. Perhaps more fundamentally, the Mission concentrated on schools for children, an area neglected by Bingham who had never heeded Bushnell's call for Christian nurture.

Walkup's hopes that the incursion of the French Catholics would assist in the propagation of the Protestant faith were not fulfilled. Nor did the establishment of the British Protectorate appear to ease the path of the Protestant mission. The Protectorate had imposed some order on the Gilbert Islands. Charles Swayne, who arrived in the Gilberts in December 1893, was the first Resident Commissioner. He had recognized the high chiefs, or those who posed as such, on the islands of Butaritari, Marakei, Abaiang,

36 Swayne to H.C., 17 September 1895 - WPHC 4, No. 79.
37 See Sabatier, Astride the Equator, 236, 244, for instances of Protestant harassment of Catholics in the southern Gilbert Islands; Cogswell to Major, 20 June 1904 - WPHC 4, 192/1898; Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 50-1.
Tarawa, Maiana and Abemama. On the other islands, he set up the *kaubure* or councillors who were vested with power and authority. In addition, a magistrate, a scribe and policemen were chosen for each island. Courts were established, as were Island Funds financed by taxes and fines. Swayne collected what he took to be the local laws and from them devised a general Code. British officials were to formulate other laws which were in direct conflict with Protestant teachings. This episode was heralded by the arrival of William Telfer Campbell in late 1895. Campbell was a fiery Orangeman who succeeded in alienating Protestant and Catholic missionaries alike. His interest was in securing the administration of the Gilbert Islands firmly in his own personal grip.

Campbell annulled the Sabbath law, informing the Gilbertese that it was no crime to fish or collect food on a Sunday, a decision at which both Walkup and Channon winced. He also permitted dancing on certain holidays during the year. The Islanders took this as permission to practise for the dance all year round. He set up Government schools which all children

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38 Ibid.


40 Channon to Emerson, 1 January 1895, MM-HEA.
were to attend from 9 a.m. till noon. In these schools the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic were to be taught but no religious instruction was allowed. A Government Agent chose the teachers who were to be supported by the people from the Island Fund (i.e. their own taxes). Campbell refused to allow missionaries to retain children in the mission yards. Finally, he instituted his own religion of work in which all adults were required to participate. Time spent on public works and practising for the dance meant less time in school. It was not only the missionaries, of both religions, who complained. The usually diplomatic Arthur Mahaffy, Assistant High Commissioner, wrote to Sir Everard Im Thurm, High Commissioner, in 1909:

I do not think I exaggerate when I say that there have been occasions when the natives have been encouraged in practices to prevent their proper attendance to their religious duties, simply for the purpose of thwarting the endeavours of the Mission and hindering their work among the natives...

Mahaffy went on to report on Campbell's disbanding of compulsory education, the withdrawal of the prohibition against card-playing, and the relaxation of the rules concerning dancing. Mahaffy, in particular, was speaking of the harmful effect to the Sacred Heart Mission but the actions of Campbell had equally detrimental repercussions on the Protestant mission. It could have been Walkup, not Mahaffy, who wrote the following:

It should be explained that dances take place every Saturday afternoon and do not cease till 10 p.m., by which time the natives are so exhausted that they do not go to church on Sundays and must then undertake the necessary work to procure their Sunday food, which in former times was all done on Saturdays.

41 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1890', ABCFM Papers, reel 12; Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1897', MM-HEA; Macdonald, Cinderellas of the Empire, 84.

42 Mahaffy to Major, 11 March 1902, enclosed in Major to C.O., 10 July 1909, C.O. 225/86.

43 Ibid.
Walkup referred to the Government works as turning the villages into 'military camps'. Sabbath attendance declined. Schools were broken up as both adults and children danced during the nights and slept or gathered food in the daytime. Campbell even permitted divorce. In all, there was much which mitigated the force of Protestant teachings and Walkup felt that it was time 'some more tea ought to be wasted. This time in the South Sea Islands.'

In 1916, it was under consideration to increase Government grants to missionary bodies if the missionaries taught hygiene, English, industrial training and instruction in agriculture. Walkup, back in 1901, had expressed the belief that 'if a Protestant white missionary was on each of the islands' and English was taught and an industrial school set up, 'Mr. Campbell would let scholars be taken from public works'. In the Island Report of 1911, both Protestant and Catholic schools had been criticized. Of the 'native missionaries and teachers' of the Protestants, it was said: 'As this Mission is in a moribund condition the standard of Education and Discipline is exceedingly poor.' Objections were made about the training stations at Taratei (Tarawa) where both the Protestant and Sacred Heart Missions had their headquarters. Scholars at the training schools claimed exemption from both public works and the supervision of police and kaubure over them. Campbell did not feel their claims were justified; as he curtly put it: 'work performed in Tarawa training schools was not sufficient to exempt the inmates from Public Works.'

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44 Walkup to Bingham, 28 December 1901, ABCFM Papers, reel 24.
The Protestant missionaries retaliated by claiming that the level of education had been better in 1896. Walkup argued that since the arrival of British officialdom the level of education had actually deteriorated. British officials had rendered little financial assistance and instead had interfered with attendance at schools by forcing people to public works and by re-allowing the dance.\textsuperscript{48} For their part, British Resident Commissioners found much to criticize about Protestant education. The most common criticism was that the Gilbertese had been taught in their own language rather than in English. Bingham had believed that English would never be necessary in the Gilbert Islands. He gave his reasons:

\begin{quote}
I do not think it at all probable that English will ever be generally read or spoken by the Gilbertese. Their islands are such wretched abodes for human beings that white men will never go to dwell in numbers among them.\textsuperscript{49}
\end{quote}

This was another point on which Walkup differed from Bingham. Whereas Bingham had never taught English, seeing no necessity to do so, Walkup had begun some instruction in English at the Kusaie Training School. According to British officials it was not enough. Further, it was believed by British officials that the Protestants had placed too much emphasis on religious education and not enough on practical skills and technical education. Mrs Clarissa Bingham's books, in particular, were found to be 'too religious' to be used as readers in the government schools. Resident Commissioners who followed Telfer Campbell did not necessarily agree with the above criticisms. Mr E.C. Eliot would write in his tour report of 1914:

\begin{quote}
... the Government is indebted to the mission - irrespective of the spread of Christianity - for a sound primary education having been diffused throughout, without State aid, ...\textsuperscript{50}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{48} Walkup, 'Notes on the Jubilee, 1857-1907', ABCFM Papers, reel 24.

\textsuperscript{49} Bingham, 'Address at Meeting of the ABCFM in General, Oct. 11, 1904', BFPH, box 14.

Although it appeared that many of the decisions of the British Resident Commissioners, in particular that of Telfer Campbell, did much which was detrimental to the progress of the Protestant Mission, there were, in fact, resonances between the worlds of the American missionary and that of the British official. Personnel from each party perceived disorder in the Gilberts and their methods to rectify this struck common chords within a general framework of Anglo-Saxon views on the organization of society. Much of the groundwork accomplished by the mission proved of intrinsic value to the setting-up of the British Protectorate.

Foremost, the Protestant Mission had provided a basic education for the Gilbertese without which the laws of the Resident Commissioner could not have been so well understood or put into practice. The Protestant Mission was in the forefront in this area because the Sacred Heart Mission was not really strong in education till the turn of the century. Walkup had been pleased to report in 1903 that a census of Abaiang revealed that sixty per cent of adults and 30 per cent of children could read and write. The Gilbertese, both adults and children, had been taught the fundamentals of reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and Biblical history. Those Gilbertese who had been to the Kusaie School had enjoyed the benefit of a more thorough education. There, they underwent a four-year course, and in addition to the above subjects, also learnt physiology, outlines of theology, homiletics, composition and music. Students also learnt such practical skills as the organizing and running of a meeting, the taking of minutes from such, book-keeping and basic accounting. It was not surprising that the Protestants provided a reasonably high proportion of office-bearers in

the new Protectorate. Moses Kaure, student of Bingham and his assistant in translation work, became Chief of Kaubure (assistant to the Native Magistrate) on Abaiang. In 1898, Walkup claimed that most of the office-bearers on Tabiteuea were Protestants. At Abaiang, Kaiea II had a cabinet of Christians to administer the government.  

Besides the aid in providing a basic education, the American Mission, including both American and Hawaiian missionaries, held certain attitudes and policies in common with British officials. One of Captain Davies' first acts had been the forbidding of a supply of firearms in the Colony. The Protestant missionaries had always been ready to denounce war, wrote up innumerable peace treaties and destroyed arms. In 1892, Walkup had destroyed ninety guns and had thrown them into the sea in an attempt to end a war on Tarawa. It proved to be of no avail, for after he left, the war continued. The very symbol of the missionary brig the Morning Star was that of a dove signifying peace. Arthur Grimble, Resident Commissioner in the 1920's, saw the affinity between Mission and Government in this respect when he said: 'The Missions had first preached on the sin of war. The British Government repressed any symptom of unrest.'

Both British officer and Protestant missionary, whether American or Hawaiian, shared the same concepts of organization of Gilbertese communities. The British Government enforced new laws but many of these were akin to those of the missionaries. It also appointed policemen, but so had the missionary Kapu on Tabiteuea and so had Kaiea II of Abaiang under missionary influence. The Colonial Government issued fines but so

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54 Rick to Wharton, Butaritari, 12 June 1892, U.S. Dept of State, Consular Despatches, Butaritari, 1888-1892
had the Hawaiian missionaries. Curfews were proclaimed but these had existed before H.M.S. *Royalist* had ever touched at the Gilbert Islands.

Walkup reported in 1889 that on Abaiang:

... the king and his cabinet have been imitating civilization, as they suppose it to be, by having a company of home-guards and policemen to arrest any person travelling the villages without clothes, or without a light, after retiring bell.56

Roads were built under the British jurisdiction, but the first one had been built on Tabiteuea overseen by Kapu. Even courts had been set up before the entry of the British officials. As far back as 1863, Kaiea I, in a case involving the brutal attack on a European cooper by a Gilbertese, had had the offender arrested and brought before a jury of twelve men. The verdict was hard labour for three months.57 Kapu had instituted the death penalty for murder before the British introduced it.

Many of the prohibitions of the British Government for the Gilbertese were likewise those of the Protestant missionaries. Both prohibited the drinking of alcohol, and both proscribed the dance although Telfer Campbell allowed it on certain holidays. Both outlawed gambling, abortion, the betrothal of children, and the burying of the dead near dwelling-houses.58

The social structure of Gilbertese society was questioned by British official and missionary alike when it came to laws on marriage, the *tinaba* custom, in which a daughter-in-law rendered certain services to her father-in-law, and the *eiriki*, whereby a man controlled not only his wife but also her younger sisters until they were married. Protestant missionaries had criticized both these practices, believing in holy, monogamous marriage. Under the influence of missionary teaching, Kaiea II had proclaimed two laws in 1890 in an attempt to prohibit both child betrothals and cohabitation.

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56 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1888-1889', MM-HEA.

57 Aumai to Clark, 1 December 1903, MM-HEA.

58 'Native Laws of the Gilbert Islands, 1894', W.P.H.C. 4, Miscellaneous Paper, 'Native Laws'.
outside marriage, British law outlawed the *eiriki* and the *tinaba* without realizing the social functions they fulfilled. The punishment for *tinaba* was set as imprisonment with hard labour for not less than twelve months and not more than two years. In 1898, it was ruled that 'a married man shall not sleep in the house or village of his wife's sisters unless accompanied by his wife'. Sir Arthur Grimble, who had come out to the Gilberts as Resident Commissioner in 1912, claimed that Gilbertese women had been rendered more freedom and safety in travelling due to British influence. Grimble was claiming for British law what rightly was due to mission influence, as women's meetings, where the womenfolk could meet without their husbands, had been first formed by the American and Hawaiian missionaries. After a short while the Gilbertese organized these meetings themselves. On Abaiang, where besides Tabiteuea, missionary influence was greatest, Kaiea II enacted laws specifically pertaining to the status of women as early as 1877. These laws were that the taking by a man of the younger sister of his wife was forbidden, that marriage was dissolvable only in the case of adultery and that the 'pollution' of a man-less or unattached woman was forbidden. Kaiea II had also appointed policemen to ensure these rules were honoured; a court had been established. British law, therefore, did not lead the field in ameliorating the condition of Gilbertese women.

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59 Walkup, 'Gilbert Island Report, 1891', MM-HEA.


62 See Chapter 3.
Besides practical and concrete evidence of a sharing of goals and attitudes between missionary and Government official, there was another more intangible aspect generated by the missionaries which greatly benefited the British. This was the easing of the path to centralization from the embryonic beginnings of an identity beyond that of the boti. The sense of a community encompassing several boti had been first engendered by the forming of Christian communities sharing one God. This sense of Christian identity and community was an important component of future development as a nation. Kaiea I had been the first to speak of the reputation of 'our country' or the Gilbertese as one people. Of course, he was still tied to island rivalries and advancement of his own boti, but the germ of the idea of one people had been sown.

In the same year that Great Britain set up a Protectorate over the Gilbert Islands, Bingham finally saw the translation of the entire Bible into Gilbertese on press. Two years earlier he had actually completed the translation work; he looked for applause from the Mission Board at Boston for that accomplishment. In 1891 Bingham, usually diplomatic and subtle, wrote a somewhat scathing letter to the Reverend Judson Smith in Boston:

The Annual Reports of the Prudential Committee used to contain notices from time to time of the translations of the New Testament, and of our literary or evangelistic labours of the Gilbert Islands; but only once has any reference been made to the work of translating the Old Testament, since I began it on August 16, 1883, and that was in 1885. The Annual Reports, however, have never failed, during all these years, to catalogue my name as "residing in Honolulu"... I have watched to see whether the Prudential Committee would not think it worth their while to state why I was residing here instead of being in Micronesia where both Mrs. B. and myself would very much prefer to be, could we there maintain our health. I suppose I have looked all the more as the Annual Report is in the way of speaking of

63 Bingham to Clark, 21 January 1876, ABCFM Papers, reel 5.
Bible translations — ... The Annual Report for 1889 reports Mr. Stover’s work, Dr. Baldwin’s work, Dr. Bludget’s work; Mr. Doane’s work, Dr. Pease’s work and Mr. Rand’s work of revising the Latin Bible in the United States.

But why should I say more? I do not doubt that if you are alive and well when I get the Bible all done you will suggest to the Committee to let the patrons of the Board hear of it through the Annual Report.64

This was a very straight letter for Bingham to write, but his concluding remark softened its tone when he asked Judson Smith to ‘bear with the foolishness of an old man whose life’s work will soon be ended’. He was a mere fifty-nine. In 1891, however, Bingham had been ill and had feared consumption of the bowels.

At Honolulu the Hawaiian Board had presented Bingham with an engraved gold watch, while Moses had received a purse of gold money at a party where cake and ice-cream had been served. Ironically, Bingham received his greatest acclaim for his accomplishment of translating the Bible into Gilbertese from the secular world he had rejected. In 1895 he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from both Yale, his old college, and Western Reserve College. He would later receive the same from Oahu College in 1897.65 Bingham had wanted plaudits not so much from the world as from the Missionary Board of the ABCFM. The translation was 'the principal work' of his life. With the entire Bible completed, Bingham was intent on revising and revising; perfection was his goal. By 1892 he had put out six editions of the New Testament. A seventh came out, electrotyped, in 1893. Before his death in 1908, he had thirteen editions of the New Testament and eight of the complete Bible.

The cause of this obsession can be found perhaps in Bingham’s early socialization. Bingham had never been able to satisfy his mother as to his

65 Miscellaneous Items, BFPH, box 14; Bingham to Gates, 4 January 1904, ABCFM-HEA; The Friend, 48, May 1890, 36.
spirituality. At the age of four, she had criticized him and had found him wanting. Viewing him as physically adventurous, she had disapproved. Bingham therefore had been curbed in his ambulatory stage, a time psychologists such as Dr Erik Erikson see as crucial in developing a sense of autonomy in coping with the outside world. It is a phase when shame or self-doubt can be implanted. If over-manipulated during this stage, there is a danger that the growing child and eventual adult might tend to over-manipulate himself. A precocious conscience develops allied with an obsession with repetitiveness. Erikson states: 'By such obsessiveness ... he then learns to repossess the environment and to gain power by stubborn and minute control.' The final outcome may be the development of a person who 'governs by the letter rather than the spirit'. These traits all fit Bingham. He was obsessed with repetition; he was stubborn and he endeavoured to gain control through committees and boards. He was definitely a man who governed by the letter rather than the spirit. This is evident in his dealings with the Gilbertese as their Protector. He performed his tasks with diligence, sensitivity and conscientiousness. Yet, when the numbers of Government-sponsored Gilbertese declined, he resigned. He did not feel the same duty towards the hundreds of Gilbertese brought to Hawaii by private parties.

Meanwhile, the translation of the entire Bible completed, Bingham became increasingly defensive in explaining why he could not return to the Gilbert Islands. In 1896 he wrote to Smith:

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We are thankful to our Heavenly Father, and to the American Board for the opportunity which has been afforded us here to prepare books for the Gilbert Islanders ... It has been a great cross to me to be solely absent from my field of labour, and to be so cut off from direct contact with the mass of the people, but we are thankful that here have always been near us some of that people, who, if they received the light, received it from us, and their number ... has been so many that your expression beginning, "shut off from direct missionary work as you have providentially been these many years..." might very correctly have begun with the words "so largely".67

Bingham deployed all his diplomatic skill in the above letter. Based in Honolulu, his beloved birthplace, he was doing what he wanted to do most - linguistic study and translation work.

With the Gilbertese Bible and Bible Dictionary with Concordance completed, Bingham saw the need for a Gilbertese Dictionary. He had been planning this work for many years. In 1907, the Reverend William Goward, who overseered the LMS activities in the southern Gilberts, wrote to Bingham, after ordering 1600 books from him, to encourage him to press on with the research for a Gilbertese Dictionary. 'You are THE one to whom we all look for the Dictionary.'68 Bingham would have warmed to such encouragement.

The Dictionary was not published in his lifetime. His son, later lecturer at Yale University, undertook to finance its publication. Bingham had succeeded in producing all he had set out to do. At times he had stubbornly refused to produce that literature which other missionaries had requested as being necessary for the mission work. He had once refused to write a Gilbertese 'Life of Christ' even though mission workers had implored him to do so. In his later life he yielded. In 1906 he wrote to the Reverend Judson Smith:

I have my 'Ancient History' ready for the last revision and printing; then I want to finish my 'Life of Christ', my 'Physics and Physical Geography' are nearly ready.69

67 Bingham to Smith, 27 March 1900, ABCFM-HEA.
68 Goward to Bingham, 13 January 1907, BFPH, box 9.
69 Bingham to Smith, 26 January 1906, BFPH, box 8.
By this time it was too late. That book had been needed at least ten years before. The Catholics already had a firm stronghold on the northern and central Gilberts.

Although Bingham had received great acclaim for his Gilbertese Bible from the secular world, he continued to chafe at the lack of recognition from the Missionary Board for his work on behalf of the Gilbertese. In 1901 he wrote to Smith:

... The other day I received from the Rooms at Boston a copy of the Annual Report of the Board, but it contains no notice of what I am trying [sic] to do for our people. I suppose I ought to be content as I see that Dr. Pease is still on the list of American Board missionaries; and nothing is said of his work in the Report concerning the Marshall Islands. On examining the list of missionaries now connected with the Board I find that only three male missionaries have been longer in the service than I. Messrs. Farsworth, Hartwell and Pixley. So I stand number 4. Surely I might be classed among the veterans, although today I am only 69 years and six months ... 

From the secular world, however, he continued to receive one plaudit after another. In 1904 his name appeared in Men of Mark in America. Two years later, he was included in Who's Who in America. His reactions to these signs of recognition appeared modest and unprepossessing. He wrote: 'It seems preamptuous on my part to admit the propriety of my name being included in your list of Men of Mark in America.' In reality he loved such laurels.

Meanwhile the mission was continuing its downhill path. As late as 1904 Walkup still maintained hope for the mission. He still believed that the setting-up of British law, the coming of Catholic competition and the increase in trade all provided a milieu more conducive to the Protestant Mission than at its commencement. Writing to Smith in Boston, he reasoned:

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70 Bingham to Smith, 14 February 1901, BFPH, box 8.

71 Bingham to Gates, 4 January 1909, ABCFM-HEA Papers.
Nevertheless, I think there never was a more favourable time for work than the present, providing we modify our methods to changed conditions. Changes consist in the new atmosphere caused by the setting up of British law, the coming of Catholic opposition, and increase in trade. These things have given the people something else to do and think about...\textsuperscript{72}

The mission continued to decline. It languished through lack of money, men and ministerial training. Within this gloom Bingham saw progress. He would have agreed that his mission had greatly eased the transition of a group of isolated islands into a single Protectorate under Great Britain. Bingham began to understate the failure of the mission and to point to what he saw as its successes, especially the social changes in Gilbertese society. And there was at least some progress in the mission itself. In 1905 there were twenty-four unordained, three ordained Gilbertese pastors and twenty-nine teachers. The ABCFM Protestants claimed 2,295 adherents.\textsuperscript{73} The Catholics had had 5,000 by 1894 covering the same islands. Their numbers continued to grow.

Walkup, in contrast to Bingham, was deeply concerned over the mission's fate. A fierce typhoon struck Kusaie in 1905 and badly damaged the Kusaie School's buildings. The Bingham Institute, which the boys' quarters were known as, was disbanded. Sixty teachers were released but there was a break in the training of other Gilbertese. Another school did not open till July 1908 when it was moved to Banaba [Ocean Island]. Channon had been instrumental in this move, although he had been told by the Reverend William Goward that this location was too distant from the Gilberts.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{72} Walkup to Smith, 27 August 1904, ABCFM Papers, reel 21.

\textsuperscript{73} Miscellaneous Items, BFPH, box 14. Eventually, the numbers between Catholics and Protestants balanced out. By 1937 there were 13,042 Catholics compared to 12,015 Protestants. The bulk of Protestants, however, was concentrated in the five southern islands. The ABCFM mission in the northern and central islands was easy prey for the Catholic mission. Sabatier, \textit{Astride the Equator}, 335.

\textsuperscript{74} Goward to Channon, 28 February 1908, quoted in Channon to Barton, 15 March 1909, ABCFM Papers, reel 21.
Bingham concurred with this opinion. He wrote to Dr James L. Barton: 'I should recommend that the boarding school for boys and girls in the Gilberts be located on the island of Abaiang. My next choice would be Butaritari.' Meanwhile, Walkup was stressing the need for a high school on Abaiang. In his view:

School work is low and will be until stimulated by a starting of our higher schools in the group, near of access, and with doors open for candidates. This is the key of Mr. Goward's success. A thing we have never had in our Gilbert work.

Walkup, in his usual direct fashion, always put things bluntly. In an indirect way he was criticizing Bingham. Although Bingham had always argued that a Training School should be established on Abaiang, he had neither formulated nor implemented a plan to set up 'higher schools' throughout the Gilberts. Instead, he had concentrated on his translation work. Walkup was reiterating the criticisms of Snow in the 1860s, Chamberlain in 1875 and those of Jessie Hoppin and Mahoe twenty years later. Snow had remarked that there were 'the books but no readers'. He had argued that the Gilbertese needed someone to superintend a system of schools. Chamberlain had stressed the need for a training school. Jessie Hoppin had argued that a more basic literature in Gilbertese was needed which could be used as direct teaching tools. Mahoe had advocated the setting-up of a school system. Walkup was the last of a line of critics of Bingham's missionary strategy. Yet Bingham had persisted in his lofty translation work.

Walkup was concerned over other matters. Foremost was the indecision over the proposed transfer to the LMS, whereby all the sixteen Gilbert Islands would be placed under the one missionary body. As early as 1898, Walkup had written to Bingham on this matter. Bingham was never in favour of the idea and yet again the two men had clashed. He replied to Walkup:

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75 Bingham to Barton, July 1906, ABCFM-HEA.
76 Walkup to Smith, 16 May 1906, ABCFM Papers, reel 24.
How do you think that Samoan ministers would be welcomed here at
the northern end, wearing 'lava lavas' without pants and some
smoking.77

Bingham was not opposed to the moderate use of tobacco but he knew that
Walkup was, and so cunningly asked this question of him. Walkup had good
reasons for wanting the transfer, as he was to disclose in a series of
letters to Boston. Succinctly, it was because he felt the ABCFM could no
longer cater, even if it cared to, for the needs of the Gilbertese.

Walkup was guarded in his criticism of Bingham. He was not so with other
missionary personnel. Both Walkup and Channon felt that the ABCFM had
forsaken the Gilbertese.

The letters to the ABCFM became increasingly tinged with hot anger.
Walkup wrote curtly to the Reverend Judson Smith: 'Now I think if the
ABCFM cannot finish this work - and the LMS can - let the work be handed
over, the quicker the better.'78 Four years later, Walkup wrote again,
this time in a more beseeching manner:

It is so hard to stand by and see the work going to pieces before
our eyes. Even if the Board intends to give up the work in the
future, we feel it ought to be kept up to the highest standard
until that time comes.79

This pleading mood did not last with Walkup. In 1907, his blunt,
pugnacious personality again emerged and he now had a special target on
which to unleash his ire. Writing to the Reverend William Strong, he
referred to the Reverend Dr Barton's plan, of uniting with the LMS and
letting things go until that time, as a deliberate scheme to extinguish the
Gilbertese work. 'In Seattle,' he wrote, 'they have a Christian Extension

77 Bingham to Walkup, 18 December 1894, MM-HEA. This letter was read
before the Hawaiian Board on 8 April 1895.
78 Walkup to Smith, 30 June 1902, ABCFM Papers, reel 24.
79 Walkup to Smith, 30 June 1905, ABCFM Papers, reel 24.
Society but our Board might be called "Extinguishing Society"!" Talk of a transfer lagged on for twenty-two years until a final decision was made. Walkup believed that the effect of this waiting and indecision was 'a heavy fog resting on the work'. In 1901, when in his mid-forties, he had written to Bingham: 'We have often been in the valley of humiliation.' How well Bingham would have been able to empathize with this. He had felt the very same emotion. It had been prudent of him, not just for his health's sake, to return to Hawaii and concentrate on writing a literature for the Gilbertese as the best possible way to aid them. He, like Walkup, had pleaded with the ABCFM to send both more white missionaries and Hawaiians, as well as additional money to run the mission. The provision of these, however, was not the only answer to a successful mission.

In 1908 both Bingham and Walkup died. Bingham died on Sunday, 25 October, in the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, after a serious operation. Walkup met his death after being adrift for weeks on a canoe. He survived the exposure and starvation but over-ate when he finally landed. Channon was now the only white missionary of the ABCFM left to cater for the needs of the Gilbertese. He missed Walkup. He wrote to Barton that Walkup had 'had the utmost confidence and love of the natives'. In September 1909, he asked for two white missionary families to be sent out to the Gilberts. Three months later, he wrote again to Barton and bluntly stated that if the Board could not send out

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80 Walkup to Smith, 16 May 1906, ABCFM Papers, reel 24.
81 Walkup to Strong, 24 June 1907; Walkup to Bingham, 22 June 1901, ABCFM Papers, reel 24.
82 Sabatier, *Astride the Equator*, 176; Channon to Barton, 7 December 1909, ABCFM papers, reel 21.
reinforcements, then 'out of justice to the islands' the work should be
handed over to the Reverend William Goward of the LMS immediately. 83

The two families finally arrived in 1912. And so the mission
staggered on. The two families which came out were those of the Reverend
Frank J. Woodward and a Mr Richard E.G. Grenfell. Grenfell was not a
trained missionary. Originally from Ballarat, Australia, he had been a
clerk in the employ of the Pacific Phosphate Company on Ocean Island. In
1910 he had applied for a post as a clerk in the Western Pacific High
Commission. Although Grimble believed him to be 'a very capable clerk',
he did not think him suitable for Government service. 84 Two years later,
Grenfell was working for the ABCFM. He was a clever man who learnt the
Gilbertese language in three months. The Gilbertese, however, did not
regard him as a 'real' missionary, being aware of his former connections. 85

Woodward set up a high school on Abaiang and the remains of his home,
built near to where the 'Happy Home' once stood, stand today. He spoke of
the Islanders of Abaiang as:

... still children in character and strength of principle, ...
Having no temples or regular priesthood, reverence is paid to
stones, trees, birds, and relics of the dead. We have to combat
the old-time heathen dance, with all its evil tendencies. 86

Meanwhile, Grenfell spoke of Tarawa as an island where sorcery and heathen
customs abounded. 87 The descriptions the two new missionaries gave were
little different to the depictions of Gilbertese life given in 1852 and
1857 by the first missionaries. On the face of it, little seemed to have
changed.

83 Channon to Barton, 9 August 1909; Channon to Barton, 7 December 1909;
Channon to Barton, 9 August 1909, ABCFM Papers, reel 21.
84 'Chronology in Miscellaneous Items', BCPH, box 14.
85 Rennie, Field Notes, 1979.
87 Grenfell, reported in Missionary Herald, CXI, August 1915, 379.
In 1917, the ABCFM transferred the work to the LMS and the former's responsibility to those Gilbert Islands as far south as Tabiteuea finally ceased.
EPILOGUE

In many issues of the mission Bingham fought alone and defied others around him. He persisted in the belief that the provision of a literature for the Gilbertese was the best way he could serve the spiritual interests of these Islanders. Right till the end, he defended and applauded the Hawaiian missionaries when everyone else held them in low repute. Almost single-handed, he tried to prevent the intake of Gilbertese contract labourers into Hawaii. He doggedly persisted with his translation work even when instructed to return to the Gilberts by missionary personnel in Boston. In his translation work, he wrote what he wanted to and not what he was asked or even implored to write. All along, he insisted that the only place for a Training School in the Gilberts was at Abaiang when others thought it best at Butaritari, Kusaie, and even later at Banaba just west of the Gilberts. Finally, Bingham would proclaim the mission a success when everyone else was speaking of its failure. From the first instance when he had defied his father and had chosen Micronesia over China and even Hawaii as his missionary post, till his death, Bingham chose his own path. Bingham still wanted commendation for this path and there was an ironical twist when he received more plaudits from the secular world he had rejected than from the missionary boards at both Boston and Honolulu for his translation of the Bible into Gilbertese.

Bingham did not die in despair even though the mission he had headed had been a fiasco in terms of gaining a firm Protestant stronghold in the northern and central Gilberts. Besides his own personal success in giving the Gilbertese the Bible in their own language translated from the original Hebrew and Greek, Bingham claimed success for the mission. The ABCFM
Protestant Mission in the Gilberts had not become integrated with the societies of any one of the islands on which it was established. Yet shifts in the world view of the Islanders occurred during the presence of the mission. The shift was not one from a magico-religious belief system to the rationalist view of the Europeans. The Gilbertese belief system was rational on its own terms. The European missionaries subscribed to magico-religious beliefs as illustrated by their belief in a millenium.

But many Islanders, sometimes within one generation, did change their beliefs and began to perceive the world in different ways. This did not occur solely as the result of missionary presence but it was missionaries, rather than beachcombers or traders, who set out to establish a new political, religious and social system based on Western concepts of time, space and organization. New identities and institutions were formed.

Bingham did not perceive the nuances of cultural interaction and the merging of world views and the creation of new ones. He simply saw a progressive line from the barbarity of the Gilbert Islanders to their gradual civilization.

Bingham firmly believed that the Gilbertese had made great progress through the years since he and Clarissa had first landed at Abaiang. In an address given on 11 October 1904, at a meeting of the ABCFM in general, he told of his former view of the Gilbertese:

I could tell you tales of opposition. How eleven years after we went there, a savage clan from a neighbouring island threatened our lives in our own houses, shot a Hawaiian missionary, tore every house in the station, carrying off every vestige thereof, rifting the grave and scattering the bones of our precious first born. This is now gone.¹

The theme of the Gilbertese improvement was one Bingham reiterated time and again. He told Walkup that the Gilbertese were progressing and that there

¹ Bingham, 'Address at Meeting of the ABCFM in Honolulu, October 11, 1904', BFPH, box 14.
was 'a vast difference between them now' and when he had first gone to the Gilberts.\(^2\)

In 1907, the year of the Jubilee, Bingham provided a spectacle demonstrating the progress of the Gilbertese. He had a group of fifteen Gilbertese from his Sunday School class visually exhibit 'the way in which they have risen from the horrible pit and miry clay of heathenism to a plane of Christian civilization not to be despised...' Bingham could not have expressed the Gilbertese progress in a more condescending manner. He saw the Gilbertese rising, not to the pinnacle of a mountain, with all its connotations of grandeur and achievement, but to a plain. A ladder was produced, the bottom of which stood in mire. At the top of the miniature plain, symbolic of a semblance of Christian civilization, was placed a cross, a church, a school-house, a bag of copra, a court-house and a jail. The Gilbertese students complied in agreeing to climb the ladder. Each brought a certain article which explained the rise in standard of the Gilbertese. These Islanders were depicted as being formerly savage and living in abject poverty. The money they had received from the copra trade had been spent on tobacco, guns and rum. They had gone naked except for the women's \(\textit{viri}\) which was unwashable. Their houses had been wall-less with their dead buried close by. And, of course, they had been illiterate. No value whatsoever was seen in any facet of their former life. Yet at one stage, Bingham had marvelled at the intricate construction of the Gilbertese canoes. He had noted the resourcefulness of the Islanders in preparing special food for times of drought. All this was forgotten. Bingham simply saw a black and white picture which starkly demarcated the primitiveness of the former Gilbertese culture with the civilizing forms of Christianity.

\(^2\) Ibid.
On each rung of the ladder a Gilbertese student would place an artefact which was a symbol of civilization and Christianity. On the first rung was placed the Gilbertese Bible, on the second the Primer, scissors, needle and thread with some soap, on the third Bible Stories and slate, paper, pen and ink. On the next rung was placed the Hawaiian oo or spade and an illustrated Reader. Next came the Geography and Arithmetic books. Other books produced by Bingham and his wife followed along with such items as medical supplies. Finally, came a photo of the pupils at the Kusaie School. Throughout the demonstration, the Hawaiians' contribution to this progress was made amply clear. It had been the Hawaiians who had taught the Gilbertese both to make and to wash clothes. They had taught reading and writing as well as demonstrating to the Gilbertese the use of a spade for the cultivation of the babai. Yet Bingham was clearly claiming more for the mission than was credible. No mention was made of the influence of the traders or whalers, or even the British Government for that matter. The whalers would have taught the Gilbertese how to use a spade for the cultivation of babai. The traders brought iron and steel tools which assisted the Islanders. British law and order finally quelled the war-spirit of the Gilbertese, a feat which the mission had never accomplished.

This exhibition was not performed simply for the Jubilee. Bingham had arranged the very same spectacle in July of 1899 at the Foreign Mission Rally. He was firmly convinced of the progress of the Gilbertese. He had argued as much back in 1876 in reference to Abaiang:

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3 Bingham, 'Commemoration of Fifty Years in the Gilbert Islands, 1907', BFPH, box 14. Bingham, however, was using the ploy of exaggerating the achievements of both himself and his Hawaiian missionaries by depicting pre-missionary contact Gilbertese society as completely without worth and by dismissing the beneficial influences of other groups.
But is it nothing that, in proportion to the population, more people regularly attend church, nay are church members than in London, that probably more can read and write than in Manchester, ... a Government school-house has been built and school is taught by the Gilbertese, that a training school ... is in operation.

The King is a son of a King who died in the faith, having made in his old age, great efforts to learn to read and write, to establish a Civil Code of laws, to introduce civilized customs, ...  

The Kaieas had given up polygamy, wore clothes, kept accounts and acted as commission merchants for foreign traders. In Bingham's view the Gilbertese had gone a long way even by 1876. Walkup, at the Jubilee in the Gilberts, concurred with Bingham that the 'ABCFM mission has not been a farce'.

Bingham appeared to claim that all change was accreditable to his mission. It also appeared that he saw little to admire in the pre-contact society of the Gilbert Islanders. Yet when he had first arrived in the Gilberts he had marvelled at the construction of their canoes and the means through which they preserved food during the droughts. It could be that Bingham exaggerated the barbarity of the Islanders, particularly on Abaiang and Tarawa, to highlight any progress the mission, and consequently himself, could claim in the Gilbert Islands.

Towards the end of his life, Bingham thought it time to move elsewhere. As he had said at the Jubilee at Honolulu, there was no need for Hawaiians to continue to go to the Gilberts; there were now enough Gilbertese missionary workers to carry on. Walkup disclosed Bingham's feelings on the matter:

4 The Friend, 25, December 1876, 97.

Dr. B. had expressed the judgement that we have been so long at work in the three groups [of the Gilberts, Marshalls, and Carolines] that we might with much propriety, account our duty of carrying the gospel to them accomplished, and turn our attention to other parts.6

He added wryly: 'Probably he would hardly wish to affirm that the Islands were fully Christianized.'

The place where Bingham felt the mission should go next was Mindanao in the Philippines. This place seemed to capture his romantic imagination. 'We must keep on to the West,' he had said at the Jubilee.7 The Philippines were under American rule which Bingham saw as an advantage. He expressed the wish that he might go there. It was no idle remark. In 1902, he had written to the Reverend Judson Smith:

You were quite right when you wrote that I would be interested to know that you are now making diligent inquiry for a suitable man to lead in the opening of work in Mindanao. I am indeed deeply interested. For years my attention has been directed to that great island ...8

He went on to add: 'Oh, how gladly I would offer for Mindanao were I again a young man ... will you not permit us to jooon [sic] the missionaries on Mindanao and do what we can to help in the work during our few remaining years of life.'

On Sunday, 25 October 1908, Bingham died in Johns Hopkins Hospital at Baltimore, Maryland. He had entered the Hospital to have a surgical operation on the spleen. The operation was a success but Bingham died of a heart attack days later. The Reverend O.H. Gulick, writing an account

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6 Walkup, 'Papers on Proposed Transfer, 1912', ABCFM Papers, reel 21.
7 Bingham, 'Commemoration of Fifty Years in the Gilbert Islands, 1907', BFPH, box 14.
8 Bingham to Smith, 15 March 1902, BFPH, box 8.
of his life for the Missionary Herald spoke of him as a man of industry, self-denial and thoroughness. He was a man spoken of in admiration. Bingham had not just been the indefatigable worker and scholar; he had also been a visionary. His vision was one of spreading American civilization, philanthropy and Christianity. His hopes were that these would be furthered westward in the Philippines. He died not in despair but with hope.

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9 Missionary Herald, 104, December 1908, 565.
APPENDIX 1 - GENEALOGIES

A. Chiefly Line on Abaiang

1. TENINGO (from Kaumai, Abaiang)
   (a) Nei Reetu (of Butaritari chiefly line)
   (b) Nei Kaewebonikua
2. EKEUEA (a)
3. TEMAU Matakite Beia
   x Nei Tabarae
   Nei Ruonamakin
4. KAIFA I Nei Toti
   x Nei Kaobanang
   (daughter of Tarawan chief Taburimai)
   Nei Maure
5. TIMAU Nei Tangarik Kumai Benuakai Iakoba Kabunare II
   (KAIEA II)
   x (a) Nei Baturia (daughter of Tarawan chief Kourabi)
   (b) Nei Tekaneba
6. KAURIRI Nei Kinateao Nei Taonakieba
   (KAIEA III (a))
B. Chiefly Line on North Tarawa

1. TABERANNAG
   x (a) Nei Tekaboi
   (b) Nei Kamoia

2. KOURABI (b)
   x Nei Tokaua (from Betio)
   Nei Utimawa
   x Taua
   Beneua
   x Nei Tonganibeia

3. KIRIMAUA
   x Tekatau
   Kamatie
   x (a) Nei Kimaia
   (b) Nei Kanake
   Nei Baturia
   x KAIEA II
   Take
   Karakaua
   Nei Terima
   Tekinaro
   x Nei Temoa
   (from Maiana)

4. TIBAU
   (KAIEA III)
   Kauriri
   Nei Kinateao
   Nei Taonokiebu
   Tibau
   Nomaroku
E enga takuriri?
E enga takurara?
E tae te kai
E toka te kai
Ante ana kai e?
E au kai o!
Ma i ioia, ma i ioia
E toka te kai e

Where are the strong?
Where are the healthy?
You will be cut down
I am dominant
Whose spear is this?
It is mine
I have won, I have won
I am dominant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missionary</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>J.W. KANOA and wife KAHOULA</strong></td>
<td>Born 1822, Attended Lahainaluna Seminary - graduated 1854, Arrived in Gilberts with 1 child 1857 - Abaiang, Back in Honolulu to recover health 1862, Return to Gilberts 1863, Ordained 1865, Lost wife 1875, Ceased association with HEA 1886, Died 1896 - Butaritari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joel H. MAHOE and wife OLIVIA</strong></td>
<td>Born 1831, Attended Lahainaluna Seminary - graduated 1854, Arrived in Gilberts 1858 - Abaiang, 1858 - Tarawa, 1860 - Abaiang, 1865 - Tarawa, Ordained 1860, Lost use of right arm in war 1869, Returned to Honolulu 1873, Died 1891 - Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>George HAINA and wife KALUAHINE</strong></td>
<td>Arrived in Gilberts 1860 - Tarawa, 1872 - Abaiang, 1874 - Tarawa, 1876 - Abaiang, 1877 - Tarawa, Slow paralysis 1880, 11 children (2 died), Died in Straits of Marakei 1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.P. AUMAI and wife MAUI</strong></td>
<td>Arrived in Gilberts 1862 - Abaiang, Beginning of paralysis from 1863, Returned to Honolulu because of sickness 1863, Lost one child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W.B. KAPU and wife MARIA</strong></td>
<td>Arrived in Gilberts 1864 - Abaiang, 1867 - Tarawa, 1868 - Tabiteua, Ordained 1869, Wife died of liver damage 1876, Expelled from Gilberts by British - returned to Hawaii 1893, Died as Pastor of Hanalei, Kauai 1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and Wife</td>
<td>Arrived in Gilberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert MAKA and wife Mary M. KELAU</td>
<td>1865 - Butaritari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George LELEO and wife LUCY</td>
<td>1868 - Tabiteuea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel KANOHO and wife Rachel KAILIHAO</td>
<td>1869 - Tarawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.D. AHIA and wife</td>
<td>1869 - Tarawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeteo KAEHUAEA and wife</td>
<td>1872 - Tabiteuea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nehemiah LONO and wife JULIA</td>
<td>1872 - Maiana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Henry B. NALIMU and wife
Born 1835
Arrived in Gilberts 1872 - Tabiteuea
Returned to Honolulu 1882

Solomon Kahue MAUNALOA and wife HARRIET
Attended North Pacific Missionary Institute -
graduated 1880
Arrived in Gilberts 1880 - Abaiang
Back at Honolulu 1881
Had a wasting illness 1882
Returned to Gilberts 1881
Wife died 1882
Returned to Hawaii 1883
Died 1885

Z.S.K. PAALUHI and wife EMMA
Attended North Pacific Missionary Institute
Arrived in Gilberts 1887 - Tabiteuea
Returned to Hawaii 1889 - Abaiang
Ordained 1890
Returned to Tabiteuea 1891
Suffered from rheumatism 1891
Youngest son died 1891
Died 1904

Martina LUTERA and wife HARRIET
Attended North Pacific Missionary Institute
Arrived in Gilberts 1887 - Abaiang
Ordained 1890
Wife died 1890
Nervous breakdown after wife's death 1890
Returned to Hawaii 1890
Died 1908

S.P. KAAIA and wife
Attended North Pacific Missionary Institute
Arrived in Gilberts 1887 - Tabiteuea
Ordained 1893
Superintendent of schools at Abaiang 1895 - Tabiteuea
Wife died 1895
Suffered from rheumatism 1895
Returned to Hawaii 1899

John NUA and wife JULIA
Arrived in Gilberts 1892 - Butaritari
Wife died of cancer 1895
Returned to Hawaii 1895
Died 1916
David KAAI and wife PAALUA MAKEKAU
Arrived in Gilberts 1892
Crippled with rheumatism 1895
Returned to Hawaii where pastor 1919 - Molokai
Died

Daniel Punua MAHIHILA and wife SERIA
Attended North Pacific Missionary Institute
Arrived in Gilberts 1892 - Maiana
Ordained 1892 - Abaiang
Returned to Hawaii where Pastor of Hanalei, Kauai 1903
Died 1917

TEVITA

KANAU
Ordained 1886 - Marakei
APPENDIX 4 - CHRONOLOGY (from the time of the first missionary contact in the Gilbert Islands)

1852 The first Protestant (ABCFM) missionary tour to the Gilberts

1855 The Reverend Dr George Pierson visits the Gilberts aboard the Belle

November 1857 The Reverend Hiram Bingham Jr. and his wife Clarissa come to the Gilberts. He has rejected a call to take over the Stone Church in Honolulu.

1857 Kanoa and his wife Kahola arrive with the Binghams at Abaiang

1858 Mahoe and his wife Olivia arrive at Abaiang

Tewaki launches an attack from Tarawa against Temaua at Koinawa. Both are killed and Temaua's son Kaiea becomes high chief on Abaiang.

1859 Bingham and Mahoe visit Kourabi, a chief in North Tarawa (Nabeina)
The first church in the Gilberts is erected at Koinawa, Abaiang

1860 Haina and his wife Kaluahine arrive and go to the new station of Tarawa

Bingham rejects a second call to take over the Stone Church in Honolulu

The first schoolhouse is erected in the Gilberts at Koinawa, Abaiang

Missionary tours are made to Butaritari, Marakei and Maiana

1862 Aumai and his wife Maui arrive and stay at Abaiang

Kourabi drives off various families from Tarawa

Kaiea of Abaiang decides to return the refugees and mounts an attack against Kourabi

The mission station at Koinawa, Abaiang, is attacked

October 1863 The beginning of a missionary party at Koinawa, Abaiang

1864 Bingham takes ill and leaves the Gilberts

1865 Maka arrives and moves to Butaritari with Kanoa. Haina is sent to Tarawa with Mahoe.

Kapu and Maria arrive and stay at Abaiang with Aumai

Bingham visits the United States and organizes the printing of his translations
1867

Kapu goes to Tarawa

Bingham takes command of the new Morning Star. He relieves himself of the position the following year.

Bingham makes his first visit to Tabiteuea and Nonouti

1868

Kourabi of Tarawa and Kaiea of Abaiang become allies through the marriage of Kaiea's son Timau to one of Kourabi's daughters

Kabunare of Abaiang turns against Kaiea. He joins disaffected parties in Tarawa who plan to overthrow Kourabi.

November 1868

Bingham returns to the Gilberts

Kaiea joins Kourabi against Kabunare and Nawaia of Betio, Tarawa. The mission station at Abaiang is attacked and the church is pulled down.

Bingham returns to Tabiteuea with the Hawaiians Kapu and Leleo

1869

Kanoho and Rachel arrive and go to Tarawa

Ahia also arrives and goes to Tarawa

Protestant missionaries become aware of the Anti Tioba cult on Tabiteuea

1870

Bingham visits the Gilberts for 4½ months

His father, Bingham Snr., dies

A church of 18 is formed in Butaritari

1871

Bingham visits the Gilberts

Kaiea of Abaiang dies. His son, Timau, becomes Kaiea II. A new church is built

1872

Bingham visits the Gilberts again and makes the following arrangements:

Leleo and Kaehuaea are sent to Nonouti

Kanoho settles on Marakei

Lono is sent to Maiana

Nalimu joins Kapu on Tabiteuea

1873

Bingham and his wife Clarissa return to the Gilberts and stay till 1875

August 1874

Horace Taylor arrives at Abaiang

1874

Kaiea II becomes a Christian 'inquirer'
1874  Leleo moves to Abaiang

1875  Bingham falls ill again and leaves the Gilberts

November 1875  Bingham III is born

1876  A war on Maiana

Kapu leaves Tabiteuea after the death of his wife and does not return till 1879

1877  A war on Maiana involving Beru

Bingham elected Corresponding Secretary for the Hawaiian Evangelical Association

Kourabi of Tarawa is overthrown

1878  Another war on Maiana

Nonouti abandoned as a missionary post

The Storm Bird brings the first 25 Gilbertese to Hawaii who are directly sponsored by the Hawaiian Government. They continue to come till 1887.

Kaiea II, who had become a 'Christian', adopts a written code of laws

On Tarawa, Kourabi is killed by Tarawan rivals

1878-1879  Opposition builds up on Abaiang against Kaiea II

Kaiea II kills Kabunare

1879  A war on North Tabiteuea results from conflict between the Anti Tioba cult and the Hawaiian missionaries' followers

1880  The Reverend Alfred Walkup and his wife Venie arrive in the Gilberts

Maunaloa stays one year at Abaiang

A second war between followers of Anti Tioba and those of the Hawaiian missionaries occurs in South Tabiteuea

May 1880  Bingham requests not to be re-elected to the HEA as Corresponding Secretary. He wants to devote more time to translation.

December 1880  Bingham is officially the Protector of the South Sea Islanders

1882  A Gilbertese teacher, Tebwe, is left on Nonouti

Walkup sets up a Training School at Kusaie
1882
Kaiea II prepares an attack on Tarawa

Bingham presides over a third investigation into the Hawaiian missionary involvement with the Tabiteuean wars

July 1883
Bingham resigns his position of Protector of the South Sea Islanders

August 1883
Bingham resumes work on the translation of the Old Testament

1886
Kanau is at Marakei

Z.S.K. Paaluhi and S.P. Kaaia arrive at Tabiteuea

1887
Lutera arrives and stays at Abaiang

Paaluhi goes to Tabiteuea along with Kaaia

May 1887
Bingham has a nervous breakdown. He visits San Francisco in June. He returns to Honolulu in November.

1888
The first Catholic missionaries land on Nonouti

April 1890
Bingham completes the translation of the Old Testament into Gilbertese

1891
A Catholic Father arrives at Tabiteuea

1892
The British Protectorate is proclaimed over the Gilbert and Ellice Islands

Bingham is in San Francisco to see his complete Bible on press

The Reverend Irving Channon arrives in Micronesia and takes over the Kusaie school

Nua arrives and goes to Butaritari

Kaai arrives and stays at Abaiang

Mahihila goes to Maiana

French Catholics land at Butaritari

1893
Kapu expelled from Tabiteuea by the British

Tevita is at Abaiang

1894
Bingham turns to the preparation of a Gilbertese Bible dictionary

He is on the Board of Managers of Kawaiahao Seminary. He resigns this position the following year.

1895
The Reverend Louis Mitchell, a Mauritian, arrives at Butaritari. He stays till 1896.
1896 The Peniel Mission of Los Angeles joins forces with the ABCFM at Butaritari

1899 Bingham is still looking after the Gilbertese, now in Honolulu's slums

1901-1905 Bingham complains of heart trouble

1903 The last of the Gilbertese contract labourers leave Honolulu

17 November 1903 Clarissa Bingham dies

1903 A Catholic bishopric is set up on Butaritari

25 October 1908 Bingham dies in Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland

1908 Walkup dies

1912 The arrival of the Reverend Frank J. Woodward and Mr Richard E.G. Grenfell to continue the Protestant mission

1917 The ABCFM transfers its missionary work in the Gilberts to the LMS
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XIV - Pacific Islands, 1877-79
XV - Pacific Islands, 1879-81
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19 - I-9 Education - Circulars, General, 1910-1946

GEIC 32
32-I-Items 5, 11, 12, 17, 19, 18 Agreements with island Governments, i.e. Butaritari, Tabiteuea, Tarawa and Abaiang
32-II-Item 1 Proceedings of H.M.S. Royalist, 1892
Item 2 Correspondences relating to the Administration of the Gilbert and Ellice Island Protectorate, 1904
Item 8 Various Letters to Capt. Davis of H.M.S. Royalist, 1892-1893
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Item 10 Local Laws in Force in the Gilbert and Ellice Island Protectorate
Item 11 Copy of Despatch No. 36, 9/8/1892 from Capt. Davis of "Royalist" concerning the British Protectorate over the Gilbert Islands

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Item 3 (a) Island Reports, January 1895  
(b) Island Reports, July 1895
Item 4 Report on the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate for the Years 1896-1900
Item 7 Report on the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate for the Years 1901-1906
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Item 3 S.H. Davis - Visit to the Gilbert or Kings Mill Group, 1880
Item 4 C. Phillips - Visit 1881
Item 5 S.H. Davis - Visit 1882
Item 6 J. Marriott - Visit in the John Williams, 1883
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