

## HOW IT BEGAN . . .

WHEN GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN was consecrated as First Bishop of New Zealand in 1841 the Letters Patent of the new See defined its northern limit as thirty-four degrees north of the equator, and so included not only the whole of New Zealand but also the islands now known as Melanesia.

1849 Thus it was that on 1st August, 1849, the small schooner "Undine", of 22 tons burthen and with a crew of four, glided quietly from Auckland harbour bearing Bishop Selwyn towards the untamed and uncharted islands of the Pacific.

In a short voyage the Bishop established friendly contact with many islands and initiated the policy followed for many years. He brought five native boys to be educated in New Zealand—the forerunners of the native teachers and clergy of Melanesia.

1851 Subsequent visits, sometimes in the face of native opposition, increased these islands contacts, brought more boys for training to New Zealand, and encouraged



Bishop G. A. Selwyn

Selwyn to establish a mission station at Nengone under the Rev. William Nihill. Here Nihill laboured unceasingly until his sudden death from dysentery in 1855.

Early in 1854 Selwyn returned to London to urge that the growing importance of the Island work demanded it be developed as a separate See. His influence in England was magnetic; he was able to secure approval for the new See, £10,000 was raised for its endowment, and the first "Southern Cross" was built for the work by enthusiastic subscribers. To this purpose Miss Charlotte M. Yonge devoted the profits of her widely read book "The Daisy Chain".

The most significant event of Selwyn's visit was that on his return he was accompanied by the Rev. John Coleridge Patteson, later to be the First Bishop of Melanesia, and to suffer martyrdom on the island of Nukapu.



Bishop J. C. Patteson,  
first Bishop of Melanesia