HEROIC METHODISTS

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Wesley Preaching in the Fields.

HEROIC METHODISTS

OF THE

OLDEN TIME;

OR,

ANECDOTAL SKETCHES OF SOME OF THE NOBLE MEN AND WOMEN WHOSE BEAUTIFUL LIVES ADORNED, AND WHOSE FAITHFUL LABORS BUILT THE WALLS OF EARLY METHODISM.

INTENDED TO PLEASE AND PROFIT BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY DANIEL WISE, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF A WONDERFUL LIFE; OR, PEN PICTURES OF INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF JOHN WESLEY;" "A SAINTLY AND SUCCESSFUL WORKER: A STUDY OF THE LIFE OF WILLIAM CARVOSSO," ETC., ETC.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO METHODIST PARENTS AND SUNDAY TEACHERS.

THE sketches contained in this volume were written at the request of my highly esteemed friend, Dr. Vincent. Part of them have already appeared in "The Classmate." They are reproduced here considerably enlarged; with sketches of several other noted characters added. In their composition, the author has not aimed at the completeness which would be proper in biographies, but only at bringing into view such facts in the lives of their subjects as were illustrative of the leading features in their characters. Neither has he written for adult readers. He has only sought to awaken in the minds of our boys and girls a glowing admiration for the noble dead of Methodism, whose lives were made glorious by the might of their faith, by the grandeur of their heroism, and the greatness of their success. He has desired to beget such admiration as, without inspiring bigotry, will command their respect for our Church, and cause them to regard their connection with her institutions as being eminently honorable.

If we wish to preserve the spirit, the life, the zeal of early Methodism, we *must* make our children ac-

quainted with the lives of its founders and builders. As Bishop Jewell said of the Reformers and their heroic acts, "Let these things never be forgotten—let your children remember them forever." The record of our Founders is as thrilling as that of the Reformers, (martyrdom excepted,) and the recollection of it quite as vital to our future Church history as was theirs to the preservation of Protestantism. It is therefore becoming to say to every Methodist parent and Sunday-school educator who wishes Methodism to live, and to live forever, "Let the deeds of our Methodist fathers and mothers never be forgotten—let your children remember them forever."

This volume is a contribution to this end. It may also be regarded as an introduction to the study of Methodist Church history, inasmuch as, being a collection of facts relating to our historic characters, it may be presumed, without immodesty on the author's part, that it will kindle a curiosity in the minds of its young readers, which will lead them hereafter to consult the luminous pages of Tyerman, Stevens, and other Methodist historians and biographers.

DANIEL WISE.

ENGLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

A PAIR OF NOBLE BROTHERS.

Pancras, the boy hero—Two students of an ancient university—How and why they were persecuted—Their heroic endurance—They go to Georgia—Their return—They are shut out from many pulpits—They preach in the fields—What they suffered from noisy mobs—An Archbishop's threat—Meek endurance of a great insult—A mob in Cornwall subdued by the elder brother—What these brothers accomplished....Page 13

CHAPTER II.

THE SWEET SINGER OF METHODISM.

Westminster School—Some of its poet-pupils—A narrow escape—A great temptation—Charles Wesley's no—Charles at college—Becomes serious—His heroic conduct—What Methodism is—Great truths now known to children—How the Wesleys found them—A sacred hour—Charles robbed by a highwayman—A big parish—Great labors—An illustration of Charles' zeal—His marriage—A happy bridal day—Charles Wesley's courage during an earthquake—A preacher of power—His hymns—How he often wrote hymns when he was old—His dying song—Who sing his hymns..... 29

CHAPTER III.

SUSANNA, THE MOTHER OF THE WESLEYS.

A quaint epitaph—Susanna Wesley's grandfather—Her father—Susanna's birth and childhood—She marries Samuel

Wesley—Her homes in London and in South Ormsby—Epworth rectory—Almost burned to death—The rescue of the boy John—Severe trials—She sends her jewelry to her husband in prison—The new rectory—Mrs. Wesley training her children—Conquering their wills—Mrs. Wesley's last days..... Page 57

CHAPTER IV.

THE ORATOR OF EARLY METHODISM.

The pot-boy at the "Bell"—His desire to go to college—Gives up hope—His mother sees an open door—In college—Unkind treatment—His conscience disturbed—Persecutions in college—Meets John Wesley—A grand movement—The dawn of his greatness—Ordained by a friendly Bishop—In Savannah—Preaches in many American cities—Becomes a Calvinist—Preaches in Great Britain—Marvelous effects of his preaching—Grand courage of Whitefield—Lord Chesterfield's compliment—Travels and death 66

CHAPTER V.

THE LADY SELINA.

The earl's daughter and a funeral procession—Lady Selina's ancestors—Her childhood—She marries Lord Huntingdon—A marked day in her life—Her love of Methodism—Her work among the nobles of England—Bitter drops in her cup—Her friendship for Whitefield—Her great charities—Her college for young ministers—John Fletcher's dream—Its effects on a collier lad's life—Happy death of Lady Selina 84

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOOD VICAR OF MADELEY.

A bright-eyed Swiss boy—Fletcher's ancestors—Fletcher at school—Scaling a garden wall—Almost drowned in the Rhine—

Effect of a trivial accident on his career—Fletcher and the Methodists—Becomes vicar of Madeley—His zeal—Baiting the parson—The butcher who threatened to burn his own wife—Fletcher at Trevecca—Poor health—He marries Mary Bosanquet—A singular question put to his bride—His death—His high character ..... Page 104

CHAPTER VII.

THE NOBLE MISTRESS OF CROSS HALL.

Mary and the "Book of Martyrs"—A would-be martyr—Mary's new-born joy—Mary in perplexity—Mary's great temptation—Mary and her Methodist friends—She refuses to go to balls and theaters—The reward of her courage—Mary's courage in the face of death—On board the "Royal George"—A happy relief—Mary's zeal—Refuses to marry—Cast out from her father's house—Story of the nun Gertrude—Mary's Orphanage at Laytonstone—Threatened by a mob—Cross Hall—Marries John Fletcher—Her widowhood and happy death..... 123

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUNCE WHO BECAME A SCHOLAR.

A crushed child—Effect of harsh words on young Clarke—Converted in an open field—Longing to lead a noble life—Hard study—Cold reception at Kingswood School—The boy preacher—Clarke in the Island of Guernsey—A fierce mob—A remarkable answer to prayer—Adam Clarke's learning—His "Commentary"—How a well-meaning blockhead came near keeping Dr. Clarke from becoming a scholar—Death by cholera... 142

CHAPTER IX.

A SCOTTISH LADY'S BEAUTIFUL LIFE.

An ancient chair—Darcy Brisbane's childhood—Darcy in London—Darcy and the gardener—Darcy in Scotland again—

Her marriage to Sir Walter Maxwell—Death of her golden hopes—Meets Mr. Wesley—Becomes a Methodist—How she spent her time—Her day-school for poor children—Offers of marriage—Introduces Sunday-schools into Scotland—Her good works—Her death.....Page 162

CHAPTER X.

THE PRINCE OF MISSIONARIES.

The mayor of Brecon—His hopes concerning his son—College life of Thomas Coke—What the Bible did for the young man—Coke and his first preaching—He becomes a Methodist—His courage—Wesley's love for Coke—Ordained superintendent for America—Coke's travels—His marriage, and how it came about—His great gift for a mission to India—His death at sea—Coke's example 176

CHAPTER XI.

A MAIDEN'S LOYALTY TO CHRIST.

Luther's moral courage—Heroism in a kitchen—Hester Ann Roe—Her birth—Childish love of duty—A sad spectacle—Cruel temptations—A good resolution—A flood of persecution—Hester's courage—A mother's threat—Hester in the kitchen—Her filial love—Her marriage—Usefulness and happy death—What Longfellow sings of the pious dead..... 194

CHAPTER XII.

THE SQUIRE OF DUNMORE.

Frolic and quarrel of Irish squires—Gideon Ouseley wounded—Ouseley's ancestors—Gideon's school days—Serious thoughts while sick—A strange event—A startling discovery—Gideon converted—The call to preach—A sermon in a grave-yard—Preaching on horseback—An ugly old man—A narrow escape—

A cock-fighter converted—Ouseley's missionary journeys—Silencing rowdies with a stroke of wit—His happy death. Page 210

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MOUSEHOLE FARMER'S BOY.

Mousehole village—William Carvosso's child life—Apprenticed to a farmer—Conversion—Made class-leader—Conversion of his three children—Secret of his success—Death of his wife—His purpose when sixty-five years old—His personal power—His love of the class-meeting—His happiness—His death.. 230

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LEARNED SHOEMAKER.

A foolish feat—A home of poverty—In a stamping mill—A hard lot—Running away—In a large shoe-shop—Adventures—A brother's death—Conversion—Ignorant and poor—In business—Rebuked by a boy—Becomes a local preacher—Insulted by a military officer—Honorable shoemakers—A woman suitor—Marriage—Writings—Anecdotes—Death 250

CHAPTER XV.

A CHILD OF PRIMITIVE METHODISM.

A breakfast party—Thomas Jackson's boyhood—His schoolmaster—Watching sheep—Hard work on a farm—A lad sleeping on his knees—A great fact—Young Jackson's father and mother—A useless confirmation ceremony—Weeping over his sins—A real conversion—A joyful meeting—A bold confession—A true knight of the cross—Persecution—Hungering for knowledge—Studies—Invited to preach—Sent to a circuit—Discouragements overcome—Heroic efforts to learn—A noble resolve—Popularity—Filling high places—Old age—Peaceful death 268

CHAPTER XVI.

AN ECCENTRIC CHARACTER.

An odd fact—Playing parson—A mother's love—Finding the smile of the Lord—Resentful pride—Dawson's Episcopal friends—Joins the Wesleyans—The cunning steward—Dawson at a missionary meeting—Dawson's fame—The peddler and his yard-stick—An electric effect—Dawson's oddity—A punning speech—Dawson in conversation—Adam Clarke's compliment—The miller's man—Excited congregations—Last days. Page 288

Illustrations.

PAGE

WESLEY PREACHING IN THE FIELDS 2
SUSANNA, THE MOTHER OF THE WESLEYS 50
WHITEFIELD'S LAST EXHORTATION 81
LADY HUNTINGDON 85
TREVECCA COLLEGE 100
JOHN FLETCHER 119
ADAM CLARKE 143
THOMAS COKE 177
AN IRISH FUNERAL 221
CARVOSSO 231

HEROIC METHODISTS OF THE OLDEN TIME.

CHAPTER I.

A NOBLE PAIR OF BROTHERS.

Fear to do unworthy things is valor;
If they be done to us, to suffer them
Is valor too.—BEN JONSON.

MANY hundred years ago, in times when the followers of the blessed Christ were hated and often hunted to death like wild beasts by wicked men, there was an orphan boy in Rome named Pancras. He was only fourteen years old, but he was heir to great riches. This boy had heard of Jesus and had learned to love him very dearly.

Some one told Diocletian, the proud emperor of Rome, that Pancras had become a Christian. "Bring him to my palace!" cried the tyrant.

When the lad was taken into his presence the emperor said to him fiercely, "You must sacrifice to Jupiter, or I will have you put to death!"

Meekly but firmly the noble boy replied, "I am a Christian and ready to die, for Christ our Master inspires the souls of his servants, even young as I am, with courage to suffer for his sake."

"Take him away and let him be beheaded!" said the cruel monarch.

And then iron-handed, pitiless soldiers led the lad out of the city, where one of them cut off his head.

Was not Pancras a hero? If the emperor had threatened to kill him and then spared his life, he would still have been a hero, because he had the courage to face death for his Lord's sake. You will, therefore, understand that whoever consents to suffer loss, or mockery, or pain, or death, rather than do a wrong or deny the adorable Christ, is a real hero.

Let me now introduce you to two young stu-

dents who, although not martyrs like brave young Pancras, yet had his heroic spirit. They

JOHN WESLEY AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

were brothers, and belonged to an ancient university at Oxford, England, about one hundred and fifty years since. By reading good books and by the conversation of serious friends, they were led to engage in the service of the Saviour. Being very much in earnest, they prayed

much, studied the Bible closely, went to church often, visited the sick, helped feed the poor, and, in short, lived by very strict rules or methods. Their strictness offended the dons and students of their college, because it was a silent reproof of their own sinful lives. Hence our young heroes, and a few companions who were like-minded, were laughed at, mocked, spoken against, insulted, called "Methodists," "Bible Moths," fools, madmen, and enthusiasts. The young reader can readily imagine what a trial of courage it was for this little band of Christian brothers to endure all these trials, not for one day or one week, but daily, almost hourly, through many months. Their university was their world, and it was almost wholly opposed to them. What temptations to give up their Master's service! What strong wills, what firm faith, what devotion to duty were required to keep them loyal to their unseen Lord! Some of their companions did throw down their arms and desert to the enemy, but those noble brothers stood firm as the everlasting hills. They

knew that "the path of duty in this world is the road to salvation in the next;" and being resolved to gain salvation, they walked bravely on in the path of duty. Nothing daunted them. All the powers of the university could not make them stir from the Master's side. Were they not a noble pair of brothers?

While they were thus proving their loyalty to the blessed Christ, they heard a call for some good men to go to Georgia as missionaries to the Indians. They were both tutors in the university at that time, living in cozy chambers and amid many pleasant surroundings. To go to Georgia was to tempt the dangers of the ocean in an uncomfortable ship, to face unknown hardships, and to exchange the society of the learned for companionship with savages. Nevertheless, thinking it to be their duty to go, they promptly offered their services, which were gladly accepted. Their friends, if not angry, were surprised at their conduct. They could not understand why two such fine, finished scholars should choose to exchange the

halls of learning for Indian wigwams. But their motives were pure and their aims lofty. One of them, speaking for both, said:

"Our end in leaving our native country was not to avoid want, God having given us plenty of temporal blessings, but simply this—to save our souls; to live wholly to the glory of God."

O noble brothers! Not for gold did ye consent to suffer, but for the honor of serving the Christ, and for the sweet satisfaction which fills, and the glorious beauty which adorns, those who tread in the Master's steps!

They were disappointed in respect to their hopes of teaching the Indians of Georgia. Hence they preached to the white colonists for awhile, and then, after many rough experiences, returned to England. Though they missed the object at which they aimed, yet, like true men, they had done what they could.

There were but few real followers of the Christ in those days. Many called themselves his disciples, but in most cases their hearts were not his thrones, and they were strangers

to that sweet peace which these heroic brothers had found, and which they gloried in preaching as the privilege of all. It seems strange that preaching such good tidings should make people angry. Yet it did. Hence, when these brothers came out of London Church pulpits, they were usually met with this remark from the vicar:

"You cannot preach in this pulpit again."

"Why not, sir?" they would ask.

"Because you *will* preach the intolerable doctrine of salvation by faith; besides, when you preach here such crowds come to church that our regular hearers can't get their seats, and they don't like so much heat and such crowding."

The younger of these two brothers, who had been made curate of one church by its vicar, who was his personal friend, was shamefully treated by its wardens. They reviled him, told him he and his brother were full of the devil, and finally prevented him by force from entering the pulpit. He complained to the Bishop.

That haughty dignitary said the wardens had done right. At last the good vicar, alarmed at the violence of his church officers, dismissed his curate. And thus it came about that, after a few months, this noble pair of brothers found the pulpits of London barred against them. Had they chosen to preach a dead Gospel their rare talents would have given them access to almost any church pulpit. But, feeling it to be their duty to tell the people that their sins might be freely forgiven through Christ the Lord, they would not preach otherwise. They could endure the scorn of men, but they could not refuse to do the bidding of their beloved Lord. Were they not a noble pair of brothers?

Driven from the pulpits of their Church, these grand men made themselves illustrations of a truth once uttered by the great poet Milton, and which you would do well to lay up in your memory. Here it is: "Who best can suffer, best can do." As we have seen, they had suffered bravely. They now began to *do*, what they never would have dreamed of doing,

if they had not suffered by being branded as men unfit to stand in Church pulpits. They began to preach the Gospel in fields, on commons, in public squares, in any place, indeed, where bodies of men and women could be gathered to listen.

This was what the blessed Christ did during his earthly life, but it was a very unpopular thing to do in England when these brothers and a few kindred spirits went into the fields at Bristol, London, and elsewhere, and drew thousands upon thousands around them to hear the old, old story of the wonderful love of Christ to poor sinful men. Hence it required courage in these brothers to face a multitude which was not seldom a mob of faces flashing with the fires of angry passions. Nor were angry faces always the only objects which tested their courage. They were frequently insulted with fierce howlings, profane curses, and savage threats. At times the mob would surge toward their temporary pulpit like heaving waves dashing upon a shore, as if bent on

crushing them to death. At other times such missiles as sticks, eggs, stones, and lumps of mud were rained upon them like deadly hail. In some instances magistrates threatened to arrest and send them to jail. Once a gentleman sued one of them for trespass by passing through his grounds to a field in which he was to preach to a vast multitude. To the shame of an English court, it forced him to pay nearly one hundred dollars in a fine, and costs, to gratify the malice of the man who entered this vile suit.

As if to try their courage still more severely, an Archbishop threatened to cast them out of the Church for thus imitating their Lord. To them this would have been a very sore affliction, for they were very decided Churchmen. But even this official power did not terrify them from their purpose to do their utmost to win men from sin by every lawful means within their reach. The more they were threatened, persecuted, opposed, the sterner their purpose became. The violence of the

wicked was to their zeal what a current of air is to glowing coals; and every new difficulty, instead of hindering their labors, only caused them to put forth more strength. Am I not right in calling such heroic men a noble pair of brothers?

While the younger of these brothers was preaching in the streets of a country village one day a rude man shouted,

"You are a scoundrel and a rascal!"

With a meekness like that of his divine Master he made no reply to this vile insult, but kept on preaching. But this noble spirit made the rough fellow still more angry. Turning to the mob, he shouted in a voice choking with rage,

"Take him away and duck him!"

And then, that he might move the people to action, he stepped up to the preacher, seized him by the nose, and wrung it violently. But the young man's unresenting spirit and dignified endurance of this unmanly insult, instead of stirring the passions of the crowd, touched

their sympathies. Moreover, the hand of the Lord was outstretched over his brave servant, and he suffered no further harm.

The elder brother was in Cornwall at one time preaching Jesus, when a noisy rabble gathered about his lodging, shouting like maniacs and crying,

"Bring out the canorum! Where is the canorum?"

By the canorum they meant the preacher. Seeing that he did not come out the mob forced open the outer door and filled the hall of the house. Those next to the door of the parlor then placed their shoulders against it, and crying to those behind, "Avast, lads, avast!" pushed it off its hinges. In a moment our hero stepped forward, gazed on those angry men with an unquailing eye, and asked,

"To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? or you? or you?"

His majestic calmness awed the noisy rabble. Speechless they fell back as the noble preacher advanced, until they were in the street. Then

the fearless servant of the Christ cried to the vast crowd assembled outside,

"Neighbors, countrymen! Do you desire to hear me speak?"

"Yes, yes," responded the mob, suddenly captivated by the moral grandeur of the speaker's fearless manner and speech. "He shall speak. He shall! No one shall hinder him!"

Just then some friendly gentlemen rode up and advised the preacher to proceed by water to a neighboring town. He followed their counsel, and they escorted him to a boat. He was no sooner gone than the slumbering fury of his foes revived. They ran along the shore, and when the preacher landed they were at hand to confront and insult him again. Nothing daunted, the brave man addressed their leader, saying calmly,

"I wish you a good-night."

The profane creature retorted in a gruff voice, "I wish you were in hell;" and then, as if frightened at his own great wickedness, turned away with his vile associates, and left the un-

conquerable preacher to pursue his journey without further hinderance on their part.

These instances are given you as illustrations of the treatment those noble brothers met with during several years after they began preaching the truth. You see by their conduct in such perils, that, like the young hero Pancras, they had the true heroic spirit, and that they were what I have called them, a noble pair of brothers.

Perhaps you ask, What did they accomplish by their heroic work? What good did it do? To be frank with you, I cannot fully answer your questions. To do that, I should need to look into the mystic records kept in heaven, and find out the number of its saints clothed in white robes of glorious purity who were led to enter the path to glory through the labors of those brothers, their helpers, and successors. I should need to find out how much of the present spiritual life of many Protestant Churches can be traced to the work of this precious pair of brothers. I should need to count and meas-

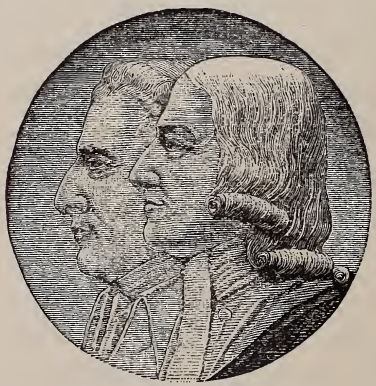
ure the blessings inherited by the millions of Methodists who are found to-day in almost every part of this great globe. No, I can no more fully answer your questions than I can count the stars which stud the blue heavens, or the trees which grow in the forests of the earth. All I can say is, that through their heroic work, and that of their fellow-laborers and successors, "a multitude that no man can number" have been persuaded to enter the honorable and blessed service of the adorable Christ. Millions of that mighty host are in heaven to-day. Millions more are on the way thither. And of all it may be said,

"Hallelujah," they cry,
To the King of the sky,
To the great everlasting I AM;
To the Lamb that was slain,
And that liveth again,—
"Hallelujah to God and the Lamb!"

Need I tell you the names of those brothers? Nay, you have already found them by my sketch of their heroic work, to be the Wesley brothers. Great and immortal men! The elder was named

John; the younger, Charles. You will find all you need to know at present of the former in a work written expressly for your benefit, called "The Story of a Wonderful Life;"* of the younger I will tell you something more in the next chapter.

* "The Story of a Wonderful Life; or, Pen Pictures of the most interesting Incidents in the Life of the celebrated John Wesley. Adapted to the Tastes and Needs of Young People."



JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY.

CHAPTER II.

THE SWEET SINGER OF METHODISM.

For his chaste Muse employed her heaven-taught lyre
None but the noblest passions to inspire,
Not one immoral, one corrupted thought,
One line which, dying, he could wish to blot.

—LORD LYTTLETON.

ONE of the most ancient schools for boys in England is at Westminster. It is called Westminster School. Many illustrious men of England have been its pupils. Among these were several poets. George Herbert, sometimes called "the sweet singer of the temple," was one; Dryden, whose translation of Virgil is often used as a "pony" by lazy boys in Latin classes at school, was another; William Cowper, the most popular poet of his own times, and well-known to most boys and girls of today as the author of Johnny Gilpin's famous ride to Islington, conned his lessons on its benches. So also did many other poets whom

I have not space to mention here, because I wish to devote this chapter to one of its poet-pupils, whose beautiful hymns have made his name a household word among all who love to sing the praises of the blessed Christ. His name was Charles Wesley, the sweet singer of Methodism.

Charles was born in his father's vicarage at Epworth, England, in 1708. He was the youngest son of Rev. Samuel Wesley, vicar of that parish. When born he was so nearly dead that he neither opened his eyes, nor cried, nor gave other hopeful signs that he would live. But gentle hands wrapped him in soft wool until he opened his eyes and cried for further care. This was indeed a narrow escape from death of the infant, whose spiritual songs were in after years to be the delight of unnumbered millions of the lovers of the blessed Christ.

Charles had an elder brother, named Samuel, who was an usher in Westminster School. To his care, when only eight years old, the bright little fellow was duly sent. He was making

fine progress in his studies when an Irish gentleman of great wealth, named Garret Wesley, offered to adopt him, and make him his heir. His father consented, provided Charles was willing. After a time the gentleman visited the school, talked a good deal with the lively boy, and finally asked him,

"Are you willing to go to Ireland and live with me?"

What a strong temptation this was for the poor son of a poor village rector! Most boys would have said yes to such an offer. But Charles, perhaps without exactly knowing why, thanked the rich man, and told him he would rather remain where he was. This decision had consequences of which neither Master Charles nor the kind Irish gentleman dreamed. It led to the lad's becoming the sweetest singer of our Lord's praises England ever produced, and it caused Garret Wesley to adopt a kinsman, who became the grandfather of the Duke of Wellington, the conqueror of the once mighty Napoleon. Had Charles said yes instead of no

Methodism might have had no sweet singer and Napoleon no conqueror. How marvelous that such great results should hang on the yes or no of a poor little school-boy! Yet little words have often wrought wonders since the world began, and a poet only told a plain truth when he wrote these lines:

> "But words are things; and a small drop of ink,
> Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
> That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think."

When only eighteen years old we find Charles a student at the University of Oxford. His brother John, who was to become the most remarkable man of his times, was teaching at one of the colleges of the university, and was living a very strict, religious life. Charles was a cheerful, merry youth, not given to college vices, but at first neither studious nor serious. Very soon, however, he gave himself to study in good earnest; but when his more serious brother begged him to care for his soul, he replied not angrily, yet with some warmth of feeling,

"What, would you have me to be a saint at once?"

Perhaps he felt more than he was willing to confess at that time. Be this as it might, he did shortly after suddenly begin to think very soberly about his need of salvation. From that time he became a superior and brilliant student, and an earnest seeker after God. He also strove to keep his fellow-students from college vices, and to persuade them to become true Christians. It was now that he began to display the heroic qualities described in the last chapter. After standing up for Jesus in his college amid bitter persecution, which he withstood like a brave soldier at his post until he was graduated, he went with his brother John to Georgia. Shortly after his return from that distant land he gained the perfect peace which Jesus gives to all who have true and large faith. Then, filled with holy love for God and men, he joined his brother in that wonderful work of preaching wherever they could gather a congregation, until all England was ablaze with that divine

spiritual fire which is called Methodism. That fire was nothing less than a portion of the holy flame kindled more than eighteen hundred years ago by the love of the adorable Christ. Methodism is indeed but another name for the love of Jesus burning like an undying flame in the hearts of men, making their hearts pure and their lives full of truth and beauty. It is found in all living Churches, though often called by other names. To be ashamed of genuine Methodism, therefore, is to be ashamed of the life which Jesus puts into the hearts of all his genuine disciples, whether they be called Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Churchmen, or Methodists.

If the reader, whether boy or girl, were asked, "Does the Saviour forgive sin now as he did when on earth?" the reply of either or both would be, "Yes." If further asked, "Does Jesus tell men that he forgives them when they believe in him?" they would say, "Certainly." Perhaps they would further say, that as Jesus, when living with men, said to a poor, trembling,

penitent sinner, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," so now, by the precious Comforter, his other self, he makes his forgiveness known by filling every believing heart with a sweet peace, and teaching it to call God "Father! Father!" Children now know these wonderful truths and mercies of the Saviour, because they are better taught about them than were even such wise and learned men as the Wesley brothers when they were students at college and missionaries to Georgia. They were loyal soldiers, ready to suffer and die for their Lord, through many, many weary months before they were sure that he had forgiven their sins. All that time they were asking:

"How can a sinner know
His sins on earth forgiven?
How can my gracious Saviour show
My name inscribed in heaven?"

These questions they could not then answer, but after their return from Georgia they were told that they might know that the blood of the blessed Christ had washed away their guilt.

They were still very slow to believe that good news. But, like good Bereans, they searched the Scriptures until they found that it was true. Then they sought for the precious blessing like men digging for hidden treasure. Charles found it first. As he was the first to be called a Methodist, so he was the first to find his Lord. A day or two later his brother entered his room about ten o'clock in the evening with a troop of rejoicing friends. There was a halo of holy joy on John's fine face as he stood in his brother's presence exclaiming, in a voice thrilling with the emotion of a new-born love,

"I believe! I believe!"

That was, in truth, an hour of sacred bliss—a wonderful hour, indeed, in their lives and in the history of the world. Had it never been, Methodism would have remained like the lamps of the foolish virgins in our Lord's beautiful parable. It would have lacked the oil which gives it light and warmth, even the blessed truth that men may know their sins forgiven. Lacking that, it could not have become such a thing of

power as it was, and is, and, I hope and believe, will be for evermore.

The brothers and their friends prayed together. They also sung a hymn written just before by Charles. It is almost, though not quite, certain that the hymn was the one which contains this beautiful stanza:

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke: the dungeon flamed with light:
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee."

These lines told the story of their own experience; of their misery while living in sin; of the light of God's eye which caused them to see and to feel their guilt; of their joy when the Christ, by the mouth of the holy Comforter, whispered to each of them, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." O blessed light! O glorious Comforter! They had no more doubts now. They were as sure of their forgiveness as of their existence; and our sweet singer sung

their certainty in one of his beautiful hymns thus:

"What we have felt and seen
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible.

"We who in Christ believe
That he for us hath died,
We all his unknown peace receive,
And feel his blood applied.

"Exults our rising soul
Disburdened of her load,
And swells unutterably full
Of glory and of God."

In those times there were many foot-pads in England, who stopped travelers in lonely parts of the king's highway, to rob them. Charles Wesley met one of those robbers one day while riding horseback on his way to preach in London. His horse had suddenly become lame. The thief sprang out from behind a ruined hut, pistol in hand, saying:

"Your money or your life!"

Without losing his self-possession Mr. Charles

handed the brutal wretch his purse. The fellow took it, felt it, and asked:

"How much is there in it?"

"About thirty shillings."

"Have you no more?" asked the thief very gruffly.

"I will see," replied Wesley, putting his hand in his pocket and giving him the copper coins it contained.

Still dissatisfied, the robber repeated his question, "Have you no more?" to which Charles rejoined:

"Search for yourself."

This he was not inclined to do. Yet he said, in a commanding voice, "Get off your horse!" Wesley did so, and then pleaded with the villain not to take the beast. "Leave me my horse," he said; "I will not pursue you." After a little hesitation the thief granted his request. Wesley remounted and rode slowly on his way, thanking God that the robber had not taken the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars which he had in a secret pocket, nor his watch, nor his

saddle-bags. He felt that God had given him courage to face the robber calmly, and had delivered him from one of the perils to which his itinerant work exposed him.

Charles Wesley, like his noble brother, had now taken the world for his parish. With a zeal as untiring as his Master's, he preached two or three times nearly every day, traveling, mostly on horseback, but sometimes in carriages or in boats, all over England and Wales, and also over a considerable portion of Ireland. This he did several years, and until the cares of his household compelled him to confine his labors to Bristol, London, and places readily approached from those cities. The story of his journeys, hardships, persecutions, and spiritual triumphs, reads more like a romance than a history of real events. Yet of its truth there can be no reasonable doubt. You must read that history when you are a little older.

Here is one incident which illustrates the unconquerable zeal of this devoted man of God. He is crossing a field on his way to meet the so-

ciety in an out-of-the-way place not likely to be disturbed by the mob. Springing up a sharp ascent he sprains his leg and falls to the ground in great pain. His alarmed brethren carry him to a hut near by, which is soon filled with a crowd of the brethren, curious to know what has happened to the preacher. Regardless of his pain, he spends two hours singing, praying, and talking. This exhausts him, and his friends place him on a wretched bed in the hut. "Their love," he says, "quite delighted me."

The next morning at six he is found meeting the society. At eight a surgeon dresses his badly-sprained leg. No sooner is the surgeon gone than he persuades the brethren to carry him out of doors in a chair, which they place on a table in the midst of a crowd that has gathered hoping to hear him preach. He does preach; but being unable to stand he does so on his knees, and he writes, "For near an hour I forgot my maim."

At noon he is taken in a wheeled chair to a place called Oakhill. There he spoke kneeling

during a pouring rain and "felt no pain or weariness till it was over." The service ended, his friends lift him into his saddle. He journeys all that afternoon, twenty miles, to his home at Bristol; but, he says, "in such extreme pain as I have not known with all my broken bones and sicknesses."

It was several weeks before his leg was well. But so zealous was he in the work of his Lord, that in spite of pain he preached twice every day all through the time of this affliction. O wonderful zeal, born of love for Jesus and the souls of men! Yet this is the true Methodistic spirit.

When about forty-one years old Mr. Charles married Miss Sarah Gwynne, a highly respectable Welsh lady. The deep piety of both Charles and his bride was illustrated by the manner in which they spent their bridal day. Let the bridegroom describe it. He says, "At night I led my Sally to church. My brother joined our hands. It was a most solemn season of love! I never had more of the divine pres-

ence at the sacrament. . . . We walked back to the house and joined again in prayer. Prayer and thanksgiving was our whole employment. We were cheerful without mirth; serious without sadness.

Well did John Wesley say of this marriage day, "It was such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage." One who was not a spiritual Christian said, "It was more like a funeral than a wedding." No doubt it had that aspect to such as think marriage days ought to be celebrated with excessive feasting, vain sports, and noisy revelries. Charles Wesley and his bride thought otherwise. They knew that both parties put the happiness of their future lives in each other's hands on their marriage day. Hence they were thoughtful. They had their reward in the life-long happiness which grew out of their marriage.

Charles Wesley was, as you know, a poet. He was, therefore, a man of tender and delicate feeling. He showed these qualities beautifully when four years after their marriage his wife's

beauty was defaced by the small-pox. Instead of letting his affection cool, as some men might, he increased it, and frequently told her that he admired her more than he had ever done before. If he had married her because of her youthful beauty he could not have said this truthfully. But since it was her character, her sweet disposition, her affectionate heart, her modest dignity, her pure mind he loved, he could say it sincerely, because the small-pox could not rob character of its beauty.

Yet this loving and lovable man, who was timid by nature, had a faith which made him lion-hearted in the midst of dangers that filled most other men with terror. This was seen during a violent earthquake which threatened, in 1750, to swallow up the city of London. The first shock had caused thousands to flee into the country. Charles was holding a five o'clock morning service in the Foundry when a violent shock made the building tremble to its foundations. Every face was pale, and a great cry came from many lips. It was indeed a

moment sufficiently fearful to chill the blood of the boldest. But there was at least one man who neither quaked nor feared, as was seen when Charles, who was repeating his text at the moment the rumbling was heard and the shock came, cried out:

"Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; . . . the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge!"

This was sublime courage, born not of nature, but of faith. So Charles felt and believed, for he said of it, "God filled my heart with faith and my mouth with words, shaking the souls of the people as well as their bodies."

Mr. Charles was a preacher of great power. To those who loved his Lord, or were seeking the Christ, he was a son of consolation, full of tender feeling. To the evil-minded his words were arrows tipped with fire, burning their way into the conscience. The crowds who hung upon his fervid lips were often moved by the

Holy Spirit like a field of ripening wheat shaken by the summer's blast.

His hymns have gilded his name with glory, and caused it to be loved by Christians of every name in all parts of the round world. Perhaps no Christian poet ever wrote so many hymns as came from his pen. Certainly no one man ever wrote so many good ones. It was natural for him to put his thoughts into verse. Even when he was growing old, he would ride out on a small gray horse and compose a hymn as he rode along, jotting it down in short-hand on a card which, with a pencil, he carried in his pocket. It was no uncommon event for him to ride up to a friend's house, leave his pony in the garden, and run in-doors crying out:

"Pen and ink! Pen and ink!"

Then, sitting down, he would write out the lines composed while on horseback. This done he would look kindly round, salute his friends, say a few pleasant words, give out a hymn, and point their thoughts toward eternal things,

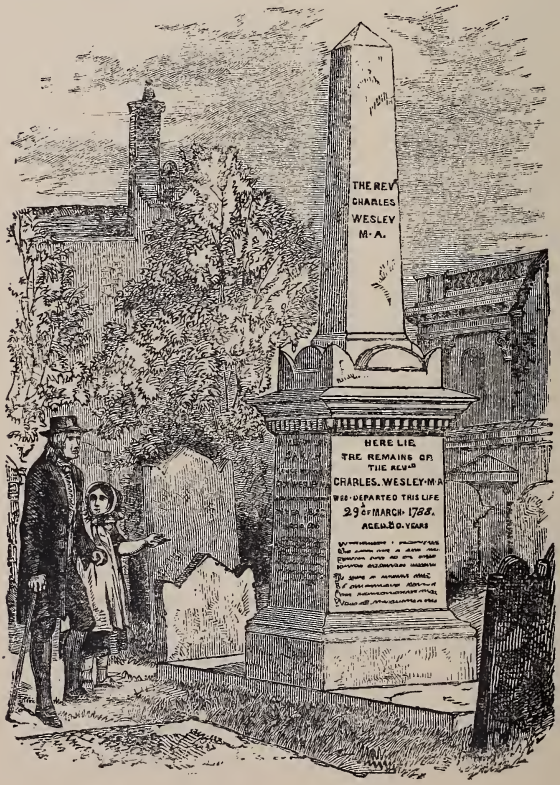
and then the dear little man would take his departure.

For some three years before his death Mr. Charles suffered from painful and wasting disease. As you may suppose, to such a man the coming of death was not a source of terror, but of holy joy. Not long before the mortal hour, after lying quiet and in great feebleness for some time, he asked his beloved "Sally" to write down these, his dying words:

> "In age and feebleness extreme,
> Who shall a helpless worm redeem?
> Jesus, my only hope thou art,
> Strength of my failing flesh and heart:
> O could I catch one smile from thee,
> And drop into eternity!"

This was his last song on earth. He lingered yet a little longer. On the 29th of March, 1788, he sunk out of his earthly life into everlasting bliss. He had lived a little over seventy-nine years. He had preached the Christ for half a century. He had written hymns which the Church will sing until the world perishes by fire; and which, if not in form, yet in spirit

and substance, will be sung by the Church triumphant along the eternal ages. The sweet singer of Methodism has become the sweet singer of the Church universal.



Susanna, Mother of the Wesleys.

CHAPTER III.

SUSANNA, THE MOTHER OF THE WESLEYS.

The crown and head,
The stately flower of female fortitude,
Of perfect wifehood and pure lowlihood.
Through all her placid life
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.—

TENNYSON.

IN a curious old English book there is a chapter of quaint epitaphs, among which is the following, copied from the tombstone of John White, Esq.:

"Here lies a John, a burning, shining light,
Whose Name, Life, Actions, all alike were White."

You will be interested in this John White when I tell you that he was Susanna Wesley's grandfather, and therefore the great-grandfather of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Mr. White was a Puritan, and a lawyer. He was noted for his love of liberty, and for his very superior abilities. As the above epitaph

implies, there was no spot on his name, and his actions were good and pure.

John White had a daughter named Elizabeth, who became the wife of the Rev. Samuel Annesley, probably in the year 1652. She was a very pious lady, very truly loved by her husband, who was one of the noblest men of his times. Like the ancient prophet whose name he bore, he served God from childhood to hoary age. Daniel De Foe, of whom you have heard as the author of that immortal children's book, "Robinson Crusoe," wrote of him that—

"His pious course with childhood he began,
And was his Maker's sooner than his own;
As if designed by instinct to be great,
His judgment seemed to antedate his wit.
His soul outgrew the natural rate of years,
And full-grown wit and half-grown youth appears.
Early the vigorous combat he began,
And was an older Christian than a man.
* * * * * *
The heavenly Book he made his only school,
In youth his study, and in age his rule."

This good man, after passing through a college at Oxford, became an Episcopal minister,

suffered much persecution because he would not conform to bad laws, and finally settled over a parish of Dissenters in London, where, as is supposed, on the 20th of January, 1669, his daughter Susanna, the heroine of this sketch, and the mother of the Wesleys, was born.

It would please you, I am sure, could I give you exact pictures of what Susanna did, how she looked, and how she behaved, while a girl in the home of her infancy. But this cannot be done. Very little is known of her early life. But enough is known to assure us that she was a good, gentle, obedient, studious, and industrious girl. She loved books; she was eager to gain knowledge; and she did not disdain to learn housework. Better still, she loved the Saviour while yet a child. She was the youngest in a family of twenty-four children, mostly daughters; yet, since love ruled over that large household, her home was a nest of happiness and sweet content.

When she was nineteen years old she became

the bride of young Samuel Wesley. She had known him six years, as a student who was a frequent visitor at her good father's house. It was no idle fancy, but a true affection, which led her to become his wife. He was a young man of good family, a superior scholar, pious and pure in his life, and therefore Susanna loved him, and trusted herself to his protection. When the young student looked on her fair form, and thought of her beautiful character as he led her to the marriage altar, no doubt he believed that he was highly favored of the Lord, for she was indeed in all respects a very superior girl.

> "Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
> In every gesture dignity and love."

The young husband was poor. He was only curate, or helper, to a rich London vicar. His salary was but one hundred and fifty dollars a year. With this paltry income they were able to board in a humble family, "without going into debt," for several months after their marriage. Mr. Wesley was then presented with

the rectorship of an ancient church in the pretty village of South Ormsby, Lincolnshire, with a salary of two hundred and fifty dollars a year.

The scenery around Mr. Wesley's new home was quite pleasing; but the "rectory," in which he and Susanna were to live, was wretched enough to awaken a spirit of fretfulness in any but such pious souls as have, with St. Paul, learned to be content with any earthly lot. Our young couple had already learned this hard lesson, as you may infer from the following lines about himself and his wretched abode by the youthful rector:

> "In a mean cot, composed of reeds and clay,
> Wasting in sighs the uncomfortable day;
> Let earth go where it will, I'll not repine,
> Nor can unhappy be while Heaven is mine."

Did Susanna Wesley complain and fret during the seven years she lived in this mean cot, misnamed a rectory? By no means. Rather, she made the best of it, and of their narrow income, by being cheerful and thrifty. A child

was born to them every year, and it was a daily struggle on their part to "keep the wolf from the door." But they did it, thanks to their mutual love and thrift. And the grace of the Lord Jesus kept them happy.

While living in this wretched house at South Ormsby Mrs. Wesley had her loving heart sorely wounded by the death of a little two-year-old daughter, named Susanna, and of two infant boys, twins. And about the time that she quitted the place for her husband's new parish at Epworth her beloved father was called by his Master to ascend to heaven. Thus, you see, she had to bear the heavy burden of poverty and of bereavement. Yet her noble heart did not repine, because it was filled with love and devoted to *duty*.

In the year 1696 Mr. Wesley, through the good will of the Queen of England, was made Rector of Epworth, with a salary of about one thousand dollars a year. Though a much better parish than South Ormsby, it was by no means a paradise for its rector and his delicate wife.

The people, though not poor, were rude and ignorant. The "rectory," though much larger than the "mean cot" of their first parish, was old, rickety, and uncomfortable. Yet Mrs. Wesley entered it hopefully with her children, Samuel, Emilia, Sukey, and baby Mary. Her outward comforts would have been much increased in it but for the fact that in furnishing it, and making it fit to occupy, her good husband had to incur a debt which proved to be a millstone about his neck for many years. To make matters still worse, the rectory barn soon fell to pieces from old age, and a few years later a fire burned down a third part of the rectory itself. Seven years afterward a second fire consumed it entirely.

This latter fire happened in the middle of a winter night. The cry of fire awakened them from sound sleep. Mr. Wesley, bidding his wife and eldest daughter "shift for themselves," ran to the nursery to get out the children. When Mrs. Wesley reached the hall door the wind drove the flames into her face.

She could not climb up to the windows, as the children had done, and was in imminent danger of being burned to death. Three times she tried to force her way through the raging flames, and was as often driven back by their fury. "In this distress," she says, "I besought our blessed Saviour for help, and then waded through the fire, which did me no further harm than a little scorching my hands and face."

Thus did God and her own rare courage save this noble mother from a terrible death. But, unknown both to her and her good husband, one beautiful boy, six years old, had been left behind, fast asleep. The noise and the light roused the little fellow, and looking through the curtain he saw a roaring sea of fire on every side of the room except at the window. Springing from the bed, he climbed on a chest which was near, and looked out of the window. The people saw him. The house was ready to fall in. There was no time to get a ladder. Must that sweet boy perish before their eyes? No. A tall man planted himself

beneath the window. Another man stood on his shoulders. The child was handed down. A moment later the burning thatch fell in, but the child was saved.

That boy was John Wesley! God preserved him from death in that burning house that he might live to become the Founder of Methodism, and one of the brightest lights this poor world has ever seen.

The loss of their home was the cause of many serious troubles to Mr. and Mrs. Wesley. Furniture, clothing, and money had gone with the old rectory, and Mr. Wesley quaintly said, "We had now very little more than what Adam and Eve had when they first set up housekeeping." Their eight children, to Mrs. Wesley's great grief, had to be scattered among friends and neighbors, where they were misled by wrong teaching and bad example. Worse than even this was the cruelty of their creditors, who hated the good, much-tried rector, and sent him to jail for debt. This last trial was enough to crush an ordinary woman, but

Mrs. Wesley, though in great straits for food, bore it with heroic fortitude. Thinking more of her husband's needs than her own, she sent her small store of jewelry, not keeping back even her wedding-ring, that he might sell it to keep himself from hunger in the debtor's prison. He sent back her little treasures instantly, but he loved her more than ever for the noble act.

The cruelty of Wesley's enemies kindled the sympathies of his friends. His debts were paid, a new rectory built and furnished, his children gathered beneath his roof-tree once more, and brought again under the loving care, the wise instruction, and the patient training of his most excellent wife.

I suppose that children who are unwisely permitted to do pretty much as they please will not admire the manner in which the good Susanna reared her little ones. She had many of them to teach and care for—eighteen or nineteen in all, nine of whom died young. But to the ten who lived she was one of the wisest and best of

mothers. She began to train them as soon as they were born, putting them to bed at regular hours, allowing them, when older, to eat only three times a day, teaching them to speak gently and properly when at their meals, and to eat and drink what was set before them without grumbling. When they were one year old she would not let them *cry aloud*, but only *softly*. She conquered their self-will by a wise use of the rod, punishing their willful misdeeds, while cheerfully forgiving such offenses as were caused by want of thought. She was never angry with them, not even when using the rod; never scolded them, but always rebuked their faults with loving gentleness. She kept them close to their books during study hours, but permitted them to frolic at their own sweet will during the hours daily devoted to play.

Boys and girls are too apt to think themselves harshly dealt with when they are not permitted to do as they please. They are foolish enough to fancy that happiness consists in having their own way in every thing. Mrs. Wesley's chil-

dren, no doubt, had just such thoughts. But she, being a wise woman, knew that to let them do as they please was certain to spoil their characters and ruin their happiness. Let me tell you what she said about training her children to submit to her authority. Here it is, and I want you to read it for your own sake:

"I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong foundation of a religious education. . . . When this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents till its own understanding comes to maturity and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind."

This is sound sense, though, it may be, you will regard it as you do bitter medicine. It may be bitter at first, but, like good medicine, is a cause of happiness at last. As Mrs. Wesley further said:

"As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so whatever cherishes this in children insures their after-wretchedness: whatever checks and

mortifies it promotes their future happiness and piety."

These are golden words. Mrs. Wesley firmly believed in their truth. She made them her guide in rearing her many children. The grand characters of John and Charles Wesley were among the rich results of that guidance. Had she not subdued their wills while they were children, that noble pair of brothers, instead of rising to the highest rank in the glorious army of the world's benefactors, would very likely have enlisted in the army of the Evil One. You may be sure that, now they are in heaven, they are very grateful to their good mother for the pains she took to conquer their wills when they were little children.

This good mother was the chief teacher of her children during early childhood; but she gave them no book lessons until they were five years old. Then in six hours she taught all but two of them to know their alphabet, and to read in a few days. She kept them in her family school-room six hours a day, and, aided by her husband

as they grew older, laid the foundations of a good education in all their minds. She also taught them good manners, to speak properly to the servants, to each other, and to visitors. But her chief care was to make them understand their duties to God. Whatever she thought needful to their best good in this world and in the next she faithfully taught them.

She was, no doubt, as good and as wise a mother as ever lived — just such a mother as was needed to train the boy who, snatched as a brand from the rectory fire, was to be the apostle of Methodism, and also to guide the boy Charles, who was to become the sweet singer of the modern Church. Such was the good effect of her careful mother-training that when her children were mostly grown up her husband could say,

"God has shown me that I should have all my nineteen children about me in heaven. They will be saved, for God has given them all to my prayers!"

When Mrs. Wesley was sixty-six years old

her husband died in the triumphs of faith. He left her a poor widow, rich in nothing but her faith and the affection of her children. She made her home, first with one and then another, until, in 1730, John Wesley, having secured a parsonage in connection with his chapel in Moorfields, made it her home. There she remained under his affectionate care until 1742. In that year this noble woman, this peerless mother, after a brief but sharp illness, said to her son John, and her daughters Nancy, Emilia, Hatty, Patty, and Sukey, who surrounded her bed, "Children, as soon as I am released sing a psalm of praise to God!"

Then, without even a sigh, her happy soul ascended, followed by the requiem sung by her children, to be greeted in the heavenly rest by the songs of the angelic choir and the "well done" of her faithful Lord.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ORATOR OF EARLY METHODISM.

"A host of knights in armor clad
Hath the Holy Ghost ordained,
All his work and will to do,
By his living force sustained.
Bright their swords, their banners bright;
Who would not be ranked a knight
Foremost in that sacred host?
O, whate'er our race and creed,
May we be such knights indeed,
Soldiers of the Holy Ghost!"

IF the young reader had been living about one hundred and fifty years ago, and had stepped into a respectable inn named "The Bell," in the city of Gloucester, England, he might have seen a young lad about fifteen years old acting as pot, or serving-boy. He wore a blue apron, knee breeches, and shoes fastened with large bright buckles. Armed with mop and slop-pail, he washed the floors and cleaned

the rooms. He also waited on customers, running to and from the bar with the foaming tankards of ale or the glasses of wine and spirits for which they called. As we look on such things, it was a bad business for any youth to be in. But in those olden times, though a humble, it was not deemed a disreputable calling.

Whoever looked closely at this poor lad could readily see that he did not belong to the low class from which pot-boys were usually taken. His keen eyes, his thoughtful brow, his intelligent expression, his graceful manners, and his courteous speech suggested that he was better than the calling he filled. Visitors explained this by the fact that he was a son of the landlady of "The Bell." Yet not one of them dreamed that his name would one day become a household word wherever the English language should be spoken, nor that his memory would be as ointment poured forth in every Christian land. But you will know that he did rise to such celebrity when I tell you that

his name was George Whitefield, the orator of early Methodism.

But how came this lad to be a serving-boy at "The Bell" inn? He was not low-born, for his grandfather and great-grandfather were ministers of the Church of England. His father started in life as a wine merchant in Bristol, but quitted that business, hired "The Bell" inn at Gloucester, and died when George, his youngest child, was only two years old. His mother was thus left, with seven children, to gain her living, as best she could, by keeping the inn. It was probably a bitter struggle for bread on her part, and therefore it became necessary for George, when fifteen, to lighten her load by doing a menial's work. He was among the brightest lads in his school, and it was his mother's wish to send him to college, but when he saw that she could not afford to thus gratify the warmest desire of both her heart and his, he said to her one day:

"Mother, you had better take me from school. You can't afford to send me to the

university, and more learning than I have now will spoil me for a tradesman."

Then the good woman sorrowfully consented to his laying aside the scholar's gown for the blue apron of the serving-boy. He did it cheerfully for her sake, and therefore his work, though mean in itself, was made noble by the filial love which inspired him to do it.

George Whitefield's early boyhood had not given much promise of this nobleness in his youth. He had been very wayward. He had hated instruction. He had even filched small sums of money from the pocket and till of his loving mother. In later boyhood he had shown a passion for the theater, and had nursed a strong desire to become an actor. But as he grew older some of his follies dropped out of his life. After he was twelve he gave himself to faithful study in St. Mary de Crypt's school, and a good book which he purchased led him to think very seriously about his soul, and in various ways to mend his life.

One day a poor student of Pembroke College,

Oxford, visited George Whitefield's mother. He was called a *servitor* at college, because he supported himself by doing personal services for rich students. He told Mrs. Whitefield that he had earned enough in this way to pay all his expenses the last quarter, and that he had a penny left. His words were like windows through which the poor lady could see a way by which her son might get a college education. With much animation she cried out,

"This will do for my son!"

Then turning to young Whitefield she asked, "Will you go to Oxford College?"

The young man gladly consented. Influential friends promised their assistance in procuring him admission. He therefore laid aside his blue apron, gave himself to study, shook off every old idle habit, became very attentive to religious duties, and, aided by a friend's gift to pay his initiation fee, entered college at Oxford when he was eighteen years old. A humble mind, patience, a strong will, and a mother's love were the steps by which he had

climbed the "Hill Difficulty" that had frowned so darkly on his youthful career.

But entering Pembroke College as a *servitor* was not reaching the last hill-top. Other and steeper mountains lay before him. Most Oxford students in those times were the sons of noblemen. They were rich, proud, fashionable, given to expensive vices and to scornful treatment of poor students who did not belong to their noble orders. Hence young Whitefield soon found himself neglected, snubbed, and harshly treated. Though living amid hundreds of students, he found so little sympathy among them that he could truthfully say with the psalmist, "I am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top."

The sorrows of our young *servitor* were made more bitter by his sense of guilt for the sins of his previous life. Afraid of the "wrath to come," he sought to escape it, not by going to Jesus for a free pardon, but by vain efforts to make himself better, and by doing various things to commend himself to the favor of

Heaven. He wore woolen gloves, which were unfashionable, a patched gown, and dirty shoes. He ate coarse bread and drank sage tea without sugar. He spent whole days and many hours at night lying prostrate on the cold ground in earnest prayer. In fact, he came near ruining his health by these vain ways of trying to save his soul. His strange conduct caused his fellow-students to mock and treat him more rudely than before.

After struggling three years against these great trials, our distressed student became acquainted with John and Charles Wesley and their companions, who were sneered at as the "Holy Club" by the wicked undergraduates and scornful "dons" of the university. John Wesley encouraged him, though even he had not then learned that the pardon of sins was not to be purchased with penances of any kind. But Whitefield soon discovered through the Gospel that he could gain that most precious of blessings as a free gift by simply believing that Jesus, in shedding his blood for the sin

of the world, actually died for *him*. This was good news indeed to the despairing young man, and, as thirsty travelers in the desert rush to a bubbling spring to drink, he looked to Jesus as dying for him. Then a ray of light from heaven swiftly darted into his soul, and he was a new creature. Speaking of that grand moment in his life, he said:

"O with what joy unspeakable, even joy that was full of and big with glory, was my soul filled when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God broke in upon my disconsolate soul!"

He was now at the top of his second "Hill Difficulty." His long night of sorrow and humiliation was ended. The day of his coming greatness had dawned. His great ability as a pulpit orator began to be seen. Friends were attracted to him on every side. One gentleman gave him an annuity to enable him to remain at Oxford. Bishop Benson, meeting him while he was visiting his mother at Gloucester, ordained him when he was twenty-one years old. Wher-

ever he preached people flocked to hear him. His words moved them to tears, and caused many to repent of their sins. The despised servitor, the former pot-boy of "The Bell" inn, had suddenly emerged, like a bright particular star, from the darkness which clouded his early days, and shone forth as the coming prince of pulpit orators.

Mr. Wesley, who was then at Savannah, sent for him to preach in Georgia. He went, and, after winning many hearts on shipboard, reached Savannah. He was popular there. But, having set his heart on founding an Orphan-house in Georgia, he soon returned to England to beg the money, and also to be ordained as "priest," or elder, as we name that office in our Church.

When Whitefield planned an Orphan-house he thought only of some friendless children whom he saw in Georgia. It was a noble yet not a wise thing for him to attempt, because he had no money with which to do it. But his loving Lord used his young servant's unwisdom as a means of making his wonderful talents as a

preacher a blessing to thousands, both in America and in England. Whitefield's Orphan-house compelled him to visit many places to beg money. The people crowded to hear him in every city from Charleston, South Carolina, to Boston, Massachusetts. When he returned to England, in 1741, his preaching drew immense crowds, and was, as it had been in America, the instrument of winning very many to the service of his divine Master.

While Whitefield was in America he became a very zealous advocate of the cruel, unscriptural creed of the celebrated John Calvin. At the same time a few of his friends in England declared their purpose to preach that harsh creed until all the Methodists should accept it. Mr. Wesley was quite willing to let alone those of his followers who believed it, if they would only be quiet. This did not satisfy Whitefield's special admirers, and, therefore, they left Mr. Wesley's societies. Whitefield approved, and when he returned to England he, too, separated from Mr. Wesley. You will be pleased to learn

that, though they differed in opinions and labored apart from one another, yet, after a brief space, the hearts of these truly good and great men were reunited in love. The love for Jesus which filled both of their noble natures would not suffer them to hate each other, but made them brothers in feeling, if not in molding their work by one pattern.

Whitefield preached the next three years in England, Scotland, and Wales—sometimes in churches, but often in the open fields—to congregations numbering many thousands. The effects of his sermons were often truly marvelous. Thousands were made so to feel the guilt of sin that they wept and groaned and cried aloud for mercy. But, though all who heard him felt the power of his sacred eloquence, yet not all admired him. Formal Christians censured him, because they disliked the strange excitements which attended his words. Lovers of "church order" condemned him, because he did not do Christian work according to their rules. Wicked men hated him, because his words

caused their guilty consciences to accuse and disturb them.

These angry sinners frequently insulted and mobbed him, but they could not daunt him. He had the soul of a hero, and could stand with an unquailing eye and cheeks unblanched in the face of thousands of savage men who seemed bent on taking his life.

No chivalric knight of the olden time, no great soldier of modern days, ever displayed a grander courage than Whitefield when, as at Moorfields, in 1742, he calmly defied a vast mob of the lowest order of the people. It was during the Whitsuntide holidays. Mountebanks, players, puppet shows, drinking booths, and rude, vulgar games had drawn an innumerable multitude from the courts and alleys of London to that then open space. Whitefield, with a little band of praying followers, mounted a rude pulpit, and, after singing and prayer, began preaching. The charm of his oratory soon attracted thousands from the booths and shows. Vexed to find their business injured, the owners of

those places of idle resort sent a buffoon, mounted on the shoulders of a man and armed with a long heavy whip, to slash the preacher. Then they got a pole for a standard, and with a noisy drum at their head marched in front of the preacher's stand. They yelled, threw dirt, rotten eggs, and stones; but Whitefield's calm courage held them in check, and finally subdued them into something like quietness. Over a thousand persons sent him notes stating that his preaching that day had led them to feel the need of a Saviour!

This is a typical sample of Whitefield's persecutions. Sometimes he was assaulted in his lodgings. Once he was whipped in bed by a man who insisted on seeing him after he had retired. But he made more friends than foes, and many a wit, scholar, statesman, and fashionable lady loved to hear him preach in Lady Huntingdon's drawing-room and elsewhere.

One of the most polite wits of the day, Lord Chesterfield, was greatly pleased with his oratory. He praised it in courtly style, saying,

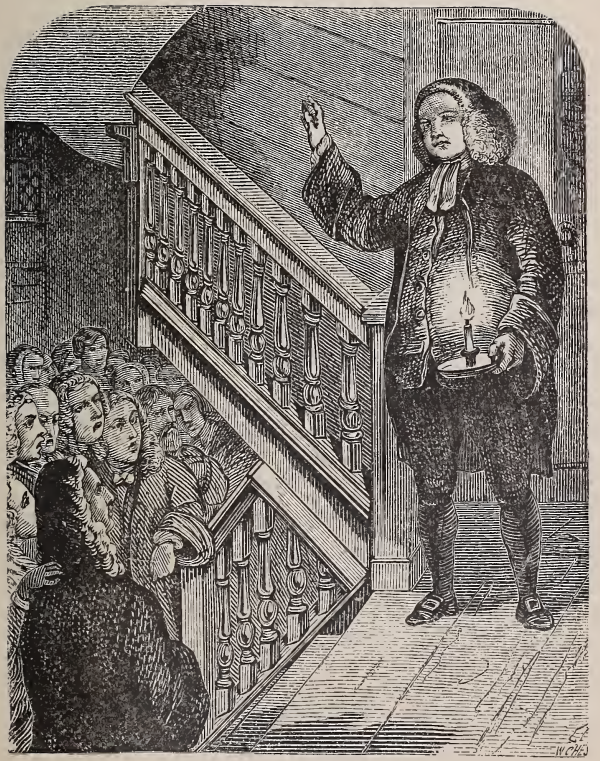
"I will not tell you what I tell others, how I approve you."

Though this courteous nobleman was not won to the Master's side by Whitefield's wonderful preaching, he was sometimes strangely excited by it. I will give you one example: Whitefield was illustrating the danger of the sinner, using as a figure the case of a blind beggar led by a little dog. He supposed that the dog had broken its string. The blind man was then described as groping his way with his staff between his hands, but wandering, totally unaware of danger, toward the edge of a precipice. Keeping along the border of the gulf with his staff, he drops it, and it falls into the depths, which are so deep that it sends back no echo. Supposing it had fallen only to the earth at his feet, the blind man stoops to reach it, takes one step forward, but treading on nothing but the thin air, he stands poised on one foot only for a moment, and then falls headlong into the yawning deep. At this point in the illustration the lordly Chesterfield, carried

away by the life-like word-painting of the orator, sprang from his seat, exclaiming,

"He is gone!"

No wonder that the man who could thus excite a proud man like Chesterfield was listened to by countless thousands. Nor need we wonder that it was his delight to preach; neither can one feel surprised to be told that he was in great demand both in England and in America. His zeal moved him to heed these demands, and in doing so he traveled, though often sick, all over Great Britain; made more voyages to America; and finally, in 1770, after preaching at Exeter, N. H., on Saturday, journeyed to Newburyport, Mass., where he was to preach the next day. So eager were the people to see and hear him that they went in crowds to the house where he was to sleep. As he was going to his chamber, he paused on the stairs and spoke to those who lingered in the hall. They were his last words. The next morning he was seized with a fit of asthma, and died in peace in the fifty-sixth year of his age. Instead of



Whitefield's Last Exhortation.

preaching to a human crowd, he joined in the song sung in heaven by the hosts of angels and redeemed souls!

Whitefield, though not great except as a pulpit orator, was a truly good man. He was one of our Lord's bravest heroes and most faithful servants. The story of his abounding labors reads almost like a fairy-tale, and probably, next to John and Charles Wesley, he was the most successful of the leaders of early Methodism. He was, indeed, a true spiritual knight, a doughty and victorious "soldier of the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER V.

THE LADY SELINA.

And all her life is one perpetual hymn,
Prolonged in cadence throughout all her days;
Now low in prayer, now swelling high in praise,
Waking faint echoes amidst shadows dim.

—ELIZA ROGERS.

MANY years ago a little band of mourners was following the coffin of a dead village maiden about nine years old. It was borne on the shoulders of four men, who were carrying it to an ancient church-yard for burial. This sad procession was seen by the daughter of a noble English earl who lived in a stately mansion which stood in a spacious park near by. This little lady was about the same age as the maiden about to be buried; and, moved by a child's sympathy, she followed the body to its last resting-place.

While standing near the open grave, and listening to the solemn words of the burial service,

Lady Huntingdon.

this earl's daughter was very deeply moved. The tears flowed from her eyes, and more serious thoughts than girls of her age are wont to cherish arose in her mind. "What if I too should die!" she asked herself; and then, shivering with fear because of her felt unfitness to meet the great King, she silently but earnestly prayed that, whenever she should be called to quit the present life, she might not be afraid, but might die a happy death.

None of the people who saw that weeping little lady dreamed that such sober thoughts were in her mind. But God knew them; and no doubt he heard the prayers she offered, not only on that day, but for many, many days after, in the quiet of her richly-furnished chamber. And from that day onward she was a seeker of heavenly blessings.

This sensitive child was named Selina Shirley. She was born August 24, 1707. Her father was Earl Ferrars. Her family was one of the oldest and noblest in England. Princes, dukes, earls, and barons had been numbered

among her proud ancestors. The little girl, though a mere child, was called Lady Selina. No doubt many children in the neighborhood of her father's grand old mansion thought she was a very worshipful little personage; but to Him who made both rich and poor she was of no more importance on that account than the daughter of the meanest peasant on her father's estate. A beggar's child who loves and serves the Lord Jesus is more precious in God's sight than a king's daughter whose heart is proud and full of sin.

But young Selina was not proud, nor, as she grew up, did she become fond of gay dress and fashionable pleasures. She did, indeed, try to be good, by praying, going to church, giving money and clothing to the poor, and such other deeds as she thought to be "good works." By such acts she hoped to win the favor of God. Yet she remained unhappy all through her girlhood. When she was twenty-one she married Lord Huntingdon, and went to live in his large, beautiful house at Donnington Park. She had

a loving husband, great riches, a lovely home, and she lived a moral and even a benevolent life. Yet she was not happy. Nor could she understand why, with so much to make her heart joyful, she was still like the waves of the sea, forever tossing about and unable to find rest.

At last there came a marked day in her life. Her husband had a sister named Lady Margaret, who had learned about the Lord Jesus through some of Mr. Wesley's Methodist preachers. This lady, while visiting Lady Huntingdon, said to her one day:

"Since I have known and believed in the Lord Jesus for life and salvation, I have been as *happy as an angel.*"

This happiness was just what our Lady Selina had been vainly seeking ever since the hour in which she wept and prayed beside the open grave of the village maiden. She had not found it, because she had not asked it as a free gift from Jesus. Nor was she willing even then to cease trusting in her many good works. But

being brought to the brink of the grave by illness, she at last looked for mercy through Jesus only. Then the scales fell from her eyes, the light of the Lord's wonderful love shone upon her heart, the blessed, loving Holy Spirit moved her to call God "Abba, Father!" She knew then that her sins were all forgiven for Jesus' sake, and, like Lady Margaret, she too was "*happy as an angel.*"

Lady Huntingdon was fully aware that the proud nobles among whom she moved would make sport of her new-born faith if she made it known. But she had the courage of the ancient and noble blood which flowed in her veins, and she bravely sent at once for Wesley and his brother Charles to visit her at Donnington Park. She told them of her blessed experience, and of her intention to help them spread that view of the Gospel which had made her so happy. She told others also of her faith and joy, and it was soon known in many a lordly hall and courtly circle that the Lady Selina had become a Methodist. Her titled friends were

in a rage. Some of them tried to persuade her husband to compel her to let Methodism alone. But he, though not himself a Christian, was too manly, and loved freedom of thought too much, to meddle with his wife's religious liberty. Yet he did send a Bishop to talk with her, and try to convince her that she need not be so strict and zealous. But her ladyship defended her faith so effectually that she baffled the Bishop, who, being beaten in argument, finally lost his temper, and went away in angry haste. This was a bad example for a bishop.

Lady Huntingdon had never been frivolous and giddy-minded; but from girlhood had been a diligent student and a thoughtful reader of instructive books and the word of God. Hence, she was able to talk wisely and well. Her manners were very dignified and very courteous. She was able, therefore, to speak for her Lord to the greatest lords and ladies in England. She had the courage to do so. She knew that with all their grandeur they were very unhappy. One of the gayest ladies in the court of the

British king, the Duchess of Marlborough, said to her in a letter:

"I always feel more happy and contented after an hour's conversation with you than I do after a whole week's round of amusement. When alone my reflections and recollections almost kill me, and I am forced to fly to the society of those I detest and abhor."

To many such grand ladies as this miserable duchess our Lady Selina became a teacher of the truth which guides souls into the path of heavenly peace. She also persuaded many of them, as well as many noblemen, to hear that wonderful orator of early Methodism, the Rev. George Whitefield. By these means she induced a goodly number of the proud dames of England to esteem the Pearl of great price more highly than they did the costly coronets which glittered on their lofty brows.

But Lady Huntingdon had received from her Lord the gift of a meek and lowly heart; hence she often left the drawing-rooms of the rich and visited the humble cottages of the

poor, seeking to give them bread for their bodies and spiritual food for their souls. Writing to Mr. Wesley of this part of her work, she said:

"Much of my time is taken up in bringing souls to seek after the Lord. I have some difficulty in keeping them from clinging to me—such wondrous love they bear me."

No wonder they loved her. Her words showed them the way to Jesus so clearly that very many were able to say to her, as did one very poor woman whom she visited: "You have saved my soul! I have such tastes of the divine love as are not to be expressed. O what a thing it is to have the heart all flowing with love to the Lord Jesus!"

The countess showed both her decision and her humility by her presence in Mr. Wesley's plain chapel, known as "The Foundry," whenever she was in London. Turning her back on the stately churches, with their lordly congregations and velvet-tongued preachers, to which the nobles of England flocked, she often

wended her way to that humble chapel, and took her seat among the untitled common people who truly loved her heavenly Lord. Nor did she despise the preacher, though he might be one upon whose head priestly hands had never been laid. Hence, after honest John Nelson, whose rough hands had just laid down the brick and trowel, had spoken one day, our countess grasped his hard fingers and said, in tones which must have thrilled his pious heart:

"John, God hath called you to put your hand to the plow. Great will be your punishment if you dare to look back. . . . Fear not; press forward; God will bless your testimony."

It pleased her Lord to put some bitter drops in the cup of rich earthly blessings from which Lady Huntingdon drank so freely. When she was about thirty-seven years of age two of her boys, George and Ferdinando, were taken from her by small-pox. Two years later her husband dreamed one night that a skeleton crept into his bed and lay down at his side. Lady

Huntingdon made light of this uncanny dream, which was probably caused by a too hearty supper. Yet two weeks after his lordship died of apoplexy! This was, indeed, a strange coincidence; but there is no proof that the dream was sent to foretell the death.

These trials were heavy blows. They wrung her heart with agony, but did not cause her faith to stagger. She did not wrap herself in the black weeds of widowhood and sit down to weep, complain, and murmur; but, though walking in the deep shadows of these great afflictions, she opened her grieved heart to the fullness of her Lord's love, and, filling her purse with gold and her lips with words of divine wisdom, went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men. She became more devout, more spiritual, more active in works of faith and labors of love than before. Writing to Dr. Doddridge, she said, "I want my heart on fire always, not for self-delight, but to spread the Gospel from pole to pole." Truly this lady appears both grand and beautiful, walking

unhurt and peaceful through the fires of her sore bereavement!

Though the countess greatly admired Wesley, the honored founder of Methodism, and for a season acted with him and his helpers, yet Whitefield was her favorite. His wondrous power to attract both rich and poor was one reason for her preference. Men and women of high birth and of lofty stations in society, though hating the truth, could be drawn to her mansion to hear him preach. She seems, also, to have held some of his opinions which Wesley rejected. Hence she gave her money and influence to build up the fruits of his labors into a connection of which she herself became the head. She made Whitefield her chaplain. She built chapels in London, Brighton, and other cities. She founded and maintained a college in Wales for the instruction of young men called by the Saviour to preach his Gospel. She sent money to this country to support an Orphan-house in Georgia, and to help convert our Indians. She also assisted poor ministers,

and never grew weary of giving so long as any money remained in her coffers.

That she might have more to give, she refused to occupy such stately mansions as are the usual homes of nobly-born ladies; but chose to dwell in a modest house very simply furnished. She even sold her jewels, and spent their price in doing her Master's work. It never pained her to give, but she was known to shed tears when her empty purse forbade her giving more. During her long life she gave away princely sums, amounting to *more than half a million dollars!* And all this was the fruit of the love she bore for "Him who first loved us."

I have mentioned the fact that this good lady founded a college in Wales. It was at a place named Trevecca, and the college building was an ancient castle. You will be pleased to learn how it gained its first student.

She had written to John Fletcher about her plans. That holy man was so delighted with the idea of a college for the instruction of pious

young ministers that he dreamed about it on the night after receiving her ladyship's letter. In his dream he saw the figure of a pious and active youug man who belonged to his parish. The lad was only "a collier and a getter out of iron stone" in Madeley woods, but he had a mind far superior to his business. He was a capital singer, had a fine gift in prayer, and was noted for his good common sense. In his dream this young man appeared to Fletcher as a proper person to go to Lady Huntingdon's college. The thought was new to him, though he, no doubt, had been impressed before with the idea that the youth might become a very useful worker if he were but suitably educated.

This dream would not have been remarkable but for the fact that the very next morning the young collier called at the vicarage. His mind, he said, had been strongly moved to visit his pastor, and to tell him of his desire to obtain such an education as would fit him to do good service for the Master he loved. The result

Trevecca College.

was that Fletcher recommended him to the Lady Selina, and the lad, James Glazebrook, became the first student in her college at Trevecca.

Surely the Spirit of the Lord was in that dream of the good vicar, and in the impression which led the collier lad to call on him that morning while his memory of the dream was fresh. It is neither wise nor profitable to make too much of dreams and impressions, nor should they be altogether despised, because the voice of the Master may be in them. In this case the final effect of the vicar's dream and the lad's impression was to lift James Glazebrook first from a coal mine to a college, next into the office of a minister in the Established Church, and then into the vicarage of Belton. He honored his high vocation, lived a pious and useful life, was the author of several good books, and is, no doubt, rejoicing to-day with the holy vicar and the faithful countess in the mansions of our "Father's house."

Lady Selina was, indeed, a great and uncom-

mon lady; yet she was not without her faults. She had a very strong will, and would do things in her own way or not at all. This weakness was as the spot on the sun in her beautiful life. But even in this her fault was less than it seemed, because her own way appeared to her to be the best way. Yet we should all love her memory better if she had been guided more than she often was by the wishes of the wise and good men who accepted her as their leader in the blessed work of the Lord.

Many pleasing stories from her grand life could be told if we had more space. As it is, we can only add that when the frosts of eighty-four winters had whitened her venerable head the pains of a mortal disease warned her that the death angel was close at hand. She saw his approach, but felt no alarm because she knew that the message he bore came from Him whose love was too great to be doubted. To Lady Erskine, who sat by her bedside, she exclaimed,

"O Lady Anne, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh! The thought fills my heart with joy unspeakable." When still nearer the end she said, "My soul is filled with glory. I am as in the element of heaven itself. . . . I am encircled in the arms of love and mercy. . . . My work is done. I have nothing to do but go to my Father.

With these words of trust she calmly forsook her worn-out body, and was borne by ministering angels to that bright world from which pain, sorrow, sin, and death are forever shut out.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOOD VICAR OF MADELEY.

But though he holy was and virtuous,
He was to sinful men full piteous;
His words were strong, but not with anger fraught;
A love benignant he discreetly taught.
To draw mankind to heaven by gentleness
And good example was his business.
* * * * *
A better parson there was nowhere seen.

—CHAUCER.

A BRIGHT-EYED Swiss boy, only seven years old, offended his nurse one day by some childish freak of temper. "You are a naughty boy," said the angry woman. "Do you not know that the devil is to take away all naughty children?"

This was not a wisely worded reproof. Neither was it true, because God has not given power to the evil One "to take away idle children." But her words so impressed the thoughtful boy that after he was in bed that

night they came into his mind, and he said to himself, "I am a naughty boy. How do I know but God may let the devil take me away this night?"

This thought troubled him so deeply that he actually left his bed, fell on his knees, confessed his sins, and prayed for pardon until his young soul found rest in a belief that God both forgave and loved him. He then returned to his bed and slept in peace and safety.

On some other day this lively little fellow, having displeased his father, ran out of the house into the garden to escape punishment. Seeing his father in pursuit of him, he began running as fast as his young feet could carry him. Suddenly his heart smote him as he thought, "What! do I run away from my father? Perhaps I shall live to have a son that will run away from me?"

Then he turned round, met his father, and was ready to receive with meekness whatever punishment might be given him.

These incidents show that this child, though

faulty at times, had a very tender conscience, a very serious and thoughtful mind, and a disposition to do whatever his conscience said he ought to do. You will see, therefore, that for his age he was a very remarkable boy, and likely to become a very uncommon man.

Do you ask his name? It was John William Fletcher. He was born at Nyon, Switzerland, in 1729, or more than a century and a half ago. His father was a military officer of noble descent and aristocratic family connections. The life of this boy will interest you when I tell you that he lived to become one of the best of men, John Wesley's very dear friend, and a very able defender of the doctrines of Methodism.

At school young Fletcher was no idler, but a diligent, earnest student. He loved knowledge, and that love made study more a pleasure than a task to him. Hence he took the highest prizes offered to his classes, and won the praises and admiration of his teachers. Nor was he content with school studies. Be-

sides them he read, not silly novels, but books which instructed and strengthened his mind during the hours which most other boys devoted to play. Having formed this habit when a boy, he followed it all through his youth, so that he became a man of much learning and many accomplishments. Thus, by making good use in his early days of the opportunities placed within his reach, he laid the broad foundations on which the usefulness of his after life and his noble character were solidly built. Having spent the spring-tide of his life in sowing good seed, he reaped a rich harvest of honor, happiness, and usefulness in the summer and autumn of his manhood.

The men whom God intends to honor in their manhood he often protects from danger by marvelous providences in their youth. He did so in young Fletcher's case, snatching him several times from the very jaws of death.

One of his escapes from death happened when he was a lad at home. Going one day to his father's garden for fruit, he found the

gate locked. The wall was very high, but he ventured to scale it. With difficulty he reached the top, when, his foot slipping, he fell over. The fall would have been death but for the singular fact that a heap of freshly mixed mortar was on the very spot upon which he fell. That mortar saved him!

Another of his escapes was on that historic river, the Rhine. He entered it one day to bathe. Its waters were running with dangerous rapidity. But trusting to his great skill in swimming, and to his caution in keeping near the shore, he ventured to take his bath. In spite of his carefulness, however, he was drawn into mid-channel, and borne irresistibly down the rough and roaring stream. On, on, he went, mile after mile, until a side current bore him into what looked like a creek of smooth water. While trying to swim out of this current he struck his breast against a pile, which was one of a number which supported a powder mill. The blow made him senseless. During the next twenty minutes he remained un-

conscious while the current carried him around the piles to the farther side of the mill. There, coming to himself in calm water, he reached the shore, to be greeted warmly by a number of persons who had been the astonished witnesses of his wonderful passage under the mill. He was then five miles from the spot where he had entered the river, and free from either bruises or weariness!

Mr. Wesley, when told of this most surprising incident in his friend's life, said, "It was not a natural event, but a work wrought above the power of nature, probably by the ministry of angels."

Doubtless the loving hand which feeds the sparrows was spread over the exposed life of his servant in that hour of danger; as it was also on several other occasions when there was but a step between him and death. God had a great work for Fletcher to perform, and he was immortal until that work was done.

Having graduated with honor from the University of Geneva, young Fletcher felt uncertain

as to what profession he ought to enter. His friends wanted him to become a preacher, but thinking himself unfit for that holy calling, he determined to enter the army. Hence, after some time spent in military studies, he went to Portugal, where he received from the king a commission as captain of a company of Switzers, which was to sail in a ship for Brazil.

At this critical point in his career an accident, trivial in itself, changed the current of his life. While at breakfast one morning a waiting-maid let a kettle of boiling water fall, and so scalded his leg that he was obliged to keep his bed. Before he was able to walk the ship sailed, and was never heard of again! Thus a maiden's careless act saved him from an untimely and watery grave.

Another commission was promised him by his uncle in Flanders. But before it was procured his uncle died, peace was proclaimed, and, seeing his way into the army hedged up once more, he sailed to England, where he became tutor to the two sons of a wealthy gentle-

man, named Hill, in Shropshire. He was then twenty-three years old. He did not even dream that the events which seemed like unfortunate accidents were the instruments by which his heavenly Father was leading him into paths of peace, purity, usefulness, and honor. Yet such was the case.

Up to this time young Fletcher thought himself to be a truly good man. In his outward life he was indeed a model of youthful virtue. But his heart was a nest of corrupt things, as he learned to his surprise and grief when the Holy Ghost shone upon it. He received this painful but blessed light after going to the meetings of the Methodists. Through many ensuing months he groped about in gloom and sorrow seeking the Saviour, partly by works, and partly by faith. With all his knowledge he had not learned that Jesus saves sinners by faith *only*. But one day, while he was lying prostrate on his face in earnest prayer, he had a mental view of Jesus bleeding on the cross. At the same moment he felt in his most inmost

soul that Jesus, having died for the sin of the world, must, therefore, have died for him, and had, indeed, become "the bread of life" to him. That was his hour of blissful triumph. He had found peace with God, power over inward sin, and was a gloriously happy man. Faith, simple faith, faith only, had saved him, had made him a son of God, an heir of heaven. He had found and won the highest prize of this mortal life.

From this time till the moment of his death, Fletcher's warmest desire was to be pure in heart, and to spend all his time and power in doing service for his Saviour. Having enlisted in Christ's army he became a truly loyal soldier. Gratitude to his Lord now moved him to preach the Gospel. This he did, first among Mr. Wesley's societies, and afterward in Madeley, of which parish he was made vicar in 1760.

Madeley was a wicked place. Very few of its people attended church. When urged to attend by their new vicar, some of them said they could not wake early enough in the morning to

get their families ready in time. To silence this excuse, Fletcher went round his parish at five o'clock Sunday mornings ringing a bell, and calling on the sluggards to awake and prepare for church!

Such was his zeal, and such were the vigor, tenderness, and power of his preaching, that his church was soon crowded with hearers. Many wicked men then became very angry. They persecuted him with false and cruel words. One day, when he was about to preach at Madeley Wood, they prepared to "bait a bull" near the preaching place, and also, they said, to "bait the parson." Some were appointed to pull him off his horse. Others were to set the dogs on him. But just as Fletcher was starting from his vicarage he was unexpectedly called to attend the burial of a child, and was consequently late in reaching Madeley Wood. The conspirators while waiting his arrival entered a drinking booth. In the midst of their carousals the bull broke loose, rushed upon the tent, overturned it, and made its occupants run like chaff before

the wind. Hence, when Fletcher arrived he found his enemies gone, and was able to preach in peace to the quiet people who were there to hear him. Thus his enemies, instead of "baiting the parson," were themselves baited by their own bull!

There was a butcher in Mr. Fletcher's parish whose vile heart was stirred, like a pool of mire and dirt, by the power of the pastor's preaching. This man's wife, however, was moved by the same word to seek the salvation of her soul. Her diligent attendance at church excited him almost to madness. He threatened, he raved, he cursed, and finally, being in a savage mood one day, he said to her,

"If you go to John Fletcher's church again I will cut your throat as soon as you come home!"

This brutal threat greatly disturbed the poor woman. But she had a courageous soul, and she cried mightily to God all that week. When Sunday came, having confidence in her faithful God, she resolved to attend church, come what

might. When dressed she descended the stairs. Her husband angrily asked her,

"Are you determined to go to John Fletcher's church?"

"I am," she replied with modest firmness.

"Well then," he rejoined, "I shall not cut your throat as I intended, but I will heat the oven and throw you into it the moment you come home."

He said this with fierce looks and bitter oaths. The noble woman knew that, such was his brutal nature, he might not hesitate to keep his word. Yet she stood firmly to her purpose, and though, naturally enough, her heart beat with painful anxiety, she trusted in God to protect her, and went to church.

Mr. Fletcher preached that morning on the three young Hebrews who escaped unsinged from the flames of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace. His words so strengthened the good woman, that when she left the church her soul was all aflame with the love of God, and she said to herself,

"If I had a thousand lives I could lay them all down for God."

Thus blessed she went home, not knowing what might befall her. But God had been there before her, and had filled her husband's guilty soul with such fear, and such concern for his salvation, that he had no longer any disposition to hurt a hair of his wife's head, much less to thrust her into a fiery oven.

The most surprising feature of this event is the fact, that on that Sabbath morning Mr. Fletcher's memory became so confused that he forgot both the text and the sermon which he had intended to preach. In that emergency he took up the subject of the first Scripture lesson for the day, which was that of the Hebrew youths and the fiery furnace. He found himself unusually helped while dwelling on that theme. Thus, you see, that God, in answering the persecuted woman's prayers, had operated on the minds of both Mr. Fletcher and her wicked husband. He had guided the former to a topic suited to her circumstances, and had dis-

disarmed the latter by convicting his guilty conscience of sin. O how wonderful are the ways of our loving Father in caring for his children in their afflictions!

Fletcher's life was as pure as his preaching was faithful. He spent much of his time in prayer, in fasting, in visiting the sick, in teaching the young and ignorant, and in helping the poor. He spent nearly all his income in deeds of charity. At one time he wrote several able books in defense of Mr. Wesley and his teachings. At another he taught the students in a seminary for young ministers at Trevecca, in Wales. Sometimes he made tours to various parts of England, preaching with wonderful spiritual power to thousands of souls. Perhaps no man was ever more devout, spiritual, zealous, active, and charitable than John Fletcher. In sober truth, his devotion to his Master was limited only by his ability.

This restless activity after several years broke down his delicate frame, and compelled him, toward the close of the year 1777, to start for

his native land, where, by timely rest and medical treatment, he hoped to regain health and strength. It was nearly four years, however, before he was sufficiently restored to return to his English parish. In 1781 his health was such that he again resumed his labors in his beloved parish of Madeley.

Twenty years before he had been introduced to a young lady of fortune, Miss Bosanquet, of Cross Hall. Had she been a poor girl he would most likely have made her his bride at that time, for they were mutually attracted toward each other. But being comparatively a poor man, he would not offer himself to a lady of wealth, and they did not even keep up a correspondence. She was a noble Christian woman, and a devoted Methodist. She loved the Lord with her whole soul, and, seeing no charm in a life of worldly pleasure, gave her time, her mansion, and her fortune to the care of poor people and orphan children. In 1781 Mr. Fletcher married her, and took her to Madeley vicarage.

John Fletcher.

Before they were married he asked his bride, "Are you willing to marry my parish?"

This was a singular question to ask a bride, but the lady, being of a like spirit with the bridegroom, cheerfully and sincerely said she was. After they were husband and wife, and arrived at Madeley, he took her round his parish to introduce her to his people, to whom he said,

"I have not married this wife only for myself, but for *you*. I asked her of the Lord for your comfort as well as my own."

His good wife proved by her devotion to the spiritual wants of his flock and her charities to the poor, that her promise to marry his parish was not a trifling word uttered to be forgotten, but a pledge to be redeemed by Christian work. And during the remaining *four* years of his life they lived as near to a state of perfect happiness as is possible in this imperfect world. Piety, purity, and love were unfailing springs, filling their lives with spiritual delights and domestic bliss.

When Mr. Fletcher was in the fifty-sixth year of his age he went home one Sunday from his church to his bed. A week of bodily suffering, mingled with exquisite spiritual joy, followed, and on the succeeding Sabbath his glad soul escaped from his frail body and entered into everlasting rest!

A better man, a more courteous gentleman, a more faithful minister, a more affectionate husband, a truer friend to early Methodism than John Fletcher never lived. Mr. Wesley loved him, trusted him, and thought seriously at one time of conveying the leadership and property of his connection to him. But this was not desired by Fletcher, who was destined to enter heaven before the great Wesleyan leader. After his death it was truly said of him that he was "blameless and harmless, a son of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, shining among them as a light in the world."

> "Grace was in all his steps, heaven in his eye,
> In all his gestures sanctity and love."

CHAPTER VII.

THE NOBLE MISTRESS OF CROSS HALL.

Thou didst on her spirit shower
Heavenly gifts, the precious dower
Of the souls that love thee best;
Calm devotion filled her breast,
And the flame of sacred love
Raised her hopes to thee above.

—Jacqueline Pascal.

BOYS and girls, even when very young, often have very curious thoughts. I will give you an example of this taken from the early life of a lady whose life was filled with beautiful deeds. She was one day poring over the pages and pictures of a book much read by the people of her times, called the "Book of Martyrs." Young as she then was, only about seven years, Mary had been seriously trying to find out what the Bible meant by believing in the blessed Christ. To her child's mind there was something in the idea of being saved by

faith that was not either plain or pleasant. Hence after looking awhile at pictures of martyrs burning at the stake, she put on a very sober face, and said to herself,

"I really think it would be easier to burn than believe. I do wish the Papists would come and burn me. Then I should be quite safe."

Dear little would-be martyr! She knew as little of the pains of burning as she did of the sweetness of trust in the blessed Christ. But the Holy Spirit, who has the same love for children that Jesus showed so beautifully when he took boys and girls into his arms and blessed them, smiled on Mary's serious soul, and his smile, though she knew not what it was, caused her to hope in God's precious mercy. After thinking silently awhile she said aloud, though still talking to herself,

"God does love me, I believe, after all. Perhaps he will show me what it is to believe and be converted."

If Mary had been favored with teachers or

parents who knew the way of life she would now have been told that she already had a measure of faith. But though her friends were Church-going people, they knew little more of godliness than its *form*, therefore thoughtful little Mary had to grope her own way into the light, like one who in the gloom of night walks on an unknown path.

Her busy brain kept on thinking for a year or more about faith, and her troubled heart was sometimes angry with God because he had made faith the gate-way to heaven. At last, when she was in deep anguish one day, she said to herself,

"If God wished me to die a martyr I could do it, or to give away all I have, or when grown up to be a servant, that would be easy; but I shall never know how to believe."

O perplexed babe in Christ! The adorable Christ was even then teaching her the meaning of faith. In that same moment two lines of a hymn which she had previously learned dropped from her memory into her heart like

dew-drops on a thirsty plant. Here is the couplet:

> "Who on Jesus relies, without money or price,
> The pearl of forgiveness and holiness buys."

Then her young heart swelled with new-born joy. It bubbled over with divine love, a drop of which had been put into it by the Holy Spirit. She cried out,

"I do, I do rely on Jesus! Yes, I do rely on Jesus, and God counts me righteous for what he hath done and suffered, and he hath forgiven all my sins!"

Happy Mary! The blessed Christ had led her into the light of his love, and put a new glad song of joy into her mouth. She was now surprised at the blindness which had kept her so long from seeing how simple, how easy a thing it is to believe in the blessed Christ.

But being as yet a mere child, and having no one to guide her, she soon fell into many bitter trials. She was not a very strong girl. Her perplexing thoughts about her duties troubled her. She became nervous and low-spirited.

Her father and mother, who did not understand her feelings, nor properly value the nobleness of her nature, reproached her until she became sick in body and weary of life. Then the Wicked One whispered to her trembling soul,

"You have blasphemed against the Holy Ghost!"

This false but horrible accusation preyed upon her spirits like a deadly disease through many weeks. At last she told her sister, who was five years her senior, and who had gained some knowledge of the blessed Christ through a Methodist maiden, who had been her servant. Her sister, full of tender sympathy, very properly replied,

"Why, you do not *mean* to blaspheme, do you?"

Then this dear child saw that she had been yielding to the tempter, who goeth about like a roaring lion, and who had been trying to devour her faith. Lifting her pale, sad face toward heaven, she cried out,

"Lord, thou knowest I do not mean to blaspheme!"

Thus that spell was broken, and she was happy again. But other trials came. Her parents took her to the gay city of Bath when she was twelve years old, and required her to go with their parties to ball-rooms, theaters, and other assemblies of ungodly people. This troubled her, yet she did not then know whether it was her duty to refuse or to submit. Hence her young soul was like a little boat tossing about upon a sheet of wind-swept water. Sometimes she was sad. At other times, especially after talking, as she did now and then with some good Methodist ladies, she was hopeful and happy.

By and by her grandfather and grandmother died. Her sister married. She then had more liberty, and made more friends among Methodist ladies, many of whom had passed through trials very similar to her own. Aided by their guidance and by much study of holy Scripture, she gained more and more light, increasing

peace, and stronger purpose to be loyal in all things to the blessed Christ.

Her father still insisted on her occasional attendance at the theater. After studying the question and feeling certain that the theater is not a fit place for a Christian to visit, she opened her heart to her father. She besought him not to insist on her presence either there or at any other place of worldly pleasure, for, said she, meekly though firmly,

"I am determined, my dear father, no more to conform to the customs, fashion, or maxims of worldly people."

It required great moral courage on Mary's part to say this to her father, whom she dearly loved. She could not have said it if she had not felt sure that she must either offend her heavenly or her earthly father. Being more afraid to grieve the former than to incur the anger of the latter, she took her stand at the post of duty. The blessed Christ, who very tenderly loves his most faithful little ones, rewarded her richly by so filling her heart

with the well-spring of his love that she joyfully sang this sweet stanza to his praise:

"My star by night, my sun by day,
My spring of life when parched with drought,
My wine to cheer, my bread to stay,
My strength, my shield, my safe abode,
My robe before the throne of God."

No theater, no ball-room, no gay scene of revelry, could have made her so happy as Jesus made her at this time. Her joy was, however, put to the test some months later, when her father and brothers took her with a party of friends to visit a large war ship. When their little yacht was near the great ship it was in great peril of being upset by the rush of a strong tide. Some of her lady companions, filled with fear, made loud outcries. Seeing Mary quiet and calm, one of the gentlemen said to her,

"Miss Bosanquet, why are you so calm?"

"I see no danger," she replied; "but it is our business to trust in God. I am quite ready either to sink or be saved."

What precious, beautiful faith! But the boat did not sink. The party went on board the ship, which was named the "Royal George," and which sunk while at anchor some time after with a thousand men on board. The captain courteously showed them over the ship, and then, after feasting them on a cold collation, proposed a dance. This proposal pleased all the ladies except Miss Mary, to whom some of them said in a teasing tone,

"Now, Miss Bosanquet, what will you do? You must dance; you cannot run away."

This was indeed a trial of her resolution. She cried in her heart to her adorable Master for help to resist the temptation. Just then a messenger from the deck called the captain. He left them at once, but soon returned to say,

"O what shall we do? The Prince of Wales is coming on board."

Mary was relieved. The dance had to be given up, the cannon were loaded to salute the prince, and our party quietly returned to their yacht.

On their way up the river the party agreed to go to Vauxhall, a popular place of idle amusements. Miss Mary said firmly,

"I cannot go to Vauxhall!"

"Then you will have to stay in the yacht with the sailors," replied her companions.

From this dilemma she was relieved by her brother who, owing to a sudden disagreement with another gentleman, offered to accompany her home.

"I was truly thankful," she wrote in her Journal, "when we got into the coach."

As Miss Bosanquet grew in years she also grew in spiritual strength and in purpose to be wholly the Lord's servant. By mingling with holy women of the Methodist societies she found much encouragement. Perhaps the zeal which led her to injure her very delicate health by over much attendance at Church was not a wise zeal. About this time she refused an offer of marriage, lest by marrying she should deprive herself of opportunities to work for her beloved Lord. This, too, may have been a

mistake; but her motive was sublime and honorable. She also fell into another error of the good women of those days in that she refused to wear any but the very plainest of dresses made somewhat after Quaker patterns. Of course, such dresses were far more becoming and more Christian than foolishly fashionable ones. Yet she would have done better had she dressed neatly and tastefully, rejecting only expensive and showy ornaments.

You will be surprised to learn that the more devoted to the blessed Christ this dear young lady became, the more severely did her father and mother treat her. They were afraid she would persuade her brothers to become Methodists. Hence, when she was twenty-one years old, and had come into possession of a small fortune of her own, her father said to her one day,

"You must promise me that you will never on any occasion, either now or hereafter, attempt to make your brothers what you call a Christian."

"I think, sir, I dare not promise that," she replied firmly but meekly.

"Then you force me to put you out of my house," was her father's cruel rejoinder.

Finding her father fixed in his purpose to send her away, she provided a lodging for herself in a part of London called Hoxton Square. Yet she would not occupy it until one day her mother, as she was going out with her father, said to her,

"If you will, the coach when it has set us down, may carry you home to your lodging."

This was indeed a hard speech for a mother to address to a noble and innocent daughter. It was slightly softened, however, by her father, who added,

"And we shall be glad to see you to dinner next Tuesday."

Mary watched her parents go out. But she said nothing. After they left she prepared her trunk. When the coach returned she passed out between the servants, who stood on each side of the hall weeping, and was driven to her

as yet unfurnished rooms in Hoxton Square. Thus she was cast out of her father's house because she would not be unfaithful to her beloved Lord.

Heroic Mary! Though not a martyr doomed to burn, as she in her childhood had wished to be, she was now suffering martyrdom of the heart, by being driven from her home by her father and mother, whom she still truly loved, though they treated her so cruelly. She was now giving up father and mother for her dear Lord's sake. She knew, however, that he would love her and preserve her. She had the faith of a beautiful nun named Gertrude, who, when she refused to renounce her faith in the blessed Christ, was told by a Bishop,

"You shall not have the last sacrament given you when you die; and your dead body shall be thrown upon a dunghill."

To this threat the brave girl replied: "I do not think your lordship will be able to find any place to cast my body where my Saviour cannot find and raise it up at the last day."

This noble speech was the fruit of the same faith as that which led Mary Bosanquet to cling to her religion and to her Methodism when her parents turned her out of her home. They had no right to take that cruel step, and Mary behaved like a loyal disciple when she preferred Christ to their approval. It was of such brave souls as hers that the poet sung:

"'Tis a sight of beauty
When a noble heart
Bravely does its duty
Though each fiber smart.
Courage, faith, and patience,
Principles divine,
In the worst vexations
Like the rainbow shine."

It would, I think, interest you if I had space to give in detail more of Miss Bosanquet's long and beautiful life. But since this is meant to be but a brief sketch, I can only tell you in broad outline what she did from the time she was sent away from the elegant home of her childhood until she died.

After remaining awhile in London she re-

moved to Laytonstone, which was her birthplace, and where she had a house of her own. In that house she established a home for helpless orphans. Assisted by Mrs. Ryan, a holy Methodist woman, whom she made her companion, she fed, clothed, and instructed some thirty poor little waifs at her own expense. She also opened one of her rooms for meetings two evenings in the week. At these meetings she read the Scriptures, prayed, and talked about Jesus to all who chose to attend. Many were richly blessed on these occasions, but some of the people of Laytonstone were angry. One night while she was speaking to a large company in the kitchen the front door bell was rung with great violence. While her maid was going to the door, four rude men, armed with big knobsticks, walked, by way of the back door, into the kitchen. Next the maid came from the front door with a frightened look and trembling limbs. Stepping up to her mistress, she whispered,

"It is Mr. W. come to inform you that you

must please leave off your service. There is a great mob coming, and the ringleaders are four men armed with clubs."

Nothing daunted, Miss Bosanquet looked on the people and on the four rough fellows with a fearless eye. Speaking in a clear, calm voice, she replied,

"O we do not mind mobs when we are about our Master's business. Greater is he that is for us than all that can be against us."

Heroic lady! Her courage seemed to awe the rough men. They listened quietly while she finished her remarks to the people, and when at the close she gave them each a tract, they bowed with respect, and walked out without saying a word. She heard no more of mobs.

After a few years Miss Bosanquet purchased an estate in Yorkshire, to which she removed her orphans. Her dear friend, Mrs. Ryan, died about the time of her removal; but she did not give up her orphans on that account. The name of her Yorkshire property was Cross

Hall. She made it a house of mercy to many poor orphans, and a house of blessing to many of her neighbors. She did great good to many serious and seeking souls by her pious words and her many deeds of self-denial. Like Lydia and Dorcas, and other elect ladies of the ancient and apostolic Churches, she abounded in holiness and good works.

She had spent fourteen years of diligent work for Jesus at Cross Hall, where the eminent and holy Rev. John Fletcher proposed to marry her. He had loved her long, and she had secretly cherished a true affection for him. So in 1781, when she was forty-two years of age, she was married to that truly great and remarkably good man, and went with him to his vicarage at Madeley. It was a very happy marriage.

No vicar's lady ever did more to assist her husband than did Mrs. Fletcher. No wife ever made a happier home than hers. Perhaps no husband and wife were ever more closely united in thought, in feeling, in pur-

pose, and in work than this holy and devoted pair.

After four years of love, happiness, and usefulness in Madeley the angel of death called the saintly husband from his vicarage to his mansion in our Father's house. It was a stunning blow to this devoted lady. But she was comforted when she thought, "I belong only to Jesus now," and she sung,

> "Be bold in Jesus to confide,
> His creature, and his spotless bride!
> Thy husband's power and goodness prove.
> The holy One of Israel he!
> The Lord of Hosts hath chosen thee
> In faith and holiness and love."

After her husband's death she remained in Madeley, serving God and the Church with a zeal and charity limited only by her means and her strength. All she had she spent on the poor, reserving only enough for her own use to make life barely comfortable. One year she expended only about five dollars for her own clothing, but gave about nine hundred dollars

to the poor! At last, when seventy-six years old, worn out by age and disease, the Saviour gave his beloved her long, last sleep. Without sigh, or groan, or pang, she sank out of life into the Everlasting Arms.

"They looked—she was dead!
Her spirit had fled;
Painless and swift as her own desire,
The soul, undressed
From her mortal vest,
Had stepped in her car of heavenly fire,
And proved how bright
Were the realms of light
Bursting at once upon the sight."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUNCE WHO BECAME A SCHOLAR.

"Thou must be brave thyself,
If thou the truth would teach;
Live truly and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed."

IMAGINE a slender, homely, plainly-dressed boy about eight years old, sitting on a form without a back, and holding a Latin grammar in his hand, while tears are chasing each other down his rosy cheeks. He has been trying in vain for two days and a half to commit a lesson in that grammar to memory. He just now despairs of ever being able to get it, and, placing the book on his seat, sneaks with downcast eyes to a class in English. His teacher sees him, and in a tone which makes the boy's heart leap, exclaims,

"Sir, what brought you here? Where is your Latin grammar?"

Adam Clarke.

Tears flow freely from his eyes as he replies, "I cannot learn it."

The angry teacher rejoins, "Go, sir, take up your grammar. If you do not soon get that lesson I shall pull your ears as long as Jowler's, [the name of his big dog,] and you shall be a beggar till the day of your death."

The crushed child slinks back to his class, when the boy beside whom he sits down says very bitterly,

"What, have you not learned that lesson yet? O, what a stupid ass!" and then in tones of mockery he repeated his own latest lesson in the ears of the dull boy.

These harsh words are like daggers piercing the heart of the dunce. They cut him to the quick, rouse all his mettle, and move him to say to himself, "What! shall I ever be a dunce and the butt of these fellows' insults?" And then his mind becomes flooded with light. He snatches up his book, masters his lesson in a few moments, recites it to his teacher, returns to his seat, masters another, and so surprises

both teacher and pupils that, instead of laughing at him, they stare at him with a very great astonishment. From that day onward that boy took rank among the best scholars in the school, and lived to become one of the most learned men in England and a very distinguished Wesleyan preacher.

That boy's name was Adam Clarke. He was born at Moybeg, Ireland, in 1760. His father was a school teacher, and his ancestors had been known many years as honored and honorable people.

Ten years later a youth in a farmer's dress was kneeling in an open field and praying with clasped hands and uplifted eyes to the unseen and all-seeing God. He rose after some minutes and went to his hoe; but being unable to work because of his deep feelings, again dropped upon his knees to pray. Presently he fell flat upon his face and cried for mercy in great agony. No ear heard him, he feared, as he arose and resumed his work. But his heart was in such a blaze of desire that he soon stopped

working, looked up to heaven, and trusted in Jesus as having died for him. While he was yet looking to that Blessed One his burden fell from him like an unfastened garment, and his soul was filled with such happiness as he had never felt before.

This was Adam Clarke's conversion. His mother's teachings, much reading of the Bible, the preaching of John Brettell, a "tall, thin man, with a serious countenance," who was a Wesleyan preacher, and God's inward voice, which speaks to all, had led him to feel the guilt that led him to seek help from Jesus, whose precious blood can wash the heart of any penitent sinner clean.

Before this happy day, Adam, though he had been a very moral youth, had looked with desire upon the pleasures of sin, and the places where they could be tasted had appeared to his eyes like enchanted gardens. But from that hour those pleasures had lost their charm, and he saw that they were nothing better than glittering soap-bubbles. Therefore he turned from

them and began longing to live a real and noble life.

This longing was not followed by idle dreams of honors to be won and good done without hard work. Young Adam's common sense taught him that great lives are the fruits of much hard labor. Hence he toiled over his Greek, Latin, and mathematics. Above all other books he studied the Bible, with earnest prayer to its Author to teach him its meaning. The effect of this constant study was the rapid growth of his mind. It also added to the beauty of his character. Hence his friends loved him, admired him, trusted him, and took pleasure in hearing him pray, exhort, and preach. When he was only twenty-two years old he was recommended to Mr. Wesley as a fit person to be a Wesleyan preacher. Wesley wrote him, telling him to go to his school for the sons of preachers, at Kingswood, England, and wait there for further orders.

When he reached Kingswood his shrunken little purse had only three halfpence in it. On

giving Mr. Wesley's letter to the head master, he was told that Mr. Wesley had said nothing of his coming,

"We have no room for you," said the master sharply. "You must go to Bristol and lodge there until Mr. Wesley returns from Cornwall."

Poor, penniless Adam, whose home had been a nest of love, felt crushed, yet he made out to reply,

"I cannot return to Bristol, sir. I have no money to subsist on."

The teacher was angry, yet not daring to turn him out of doors, put him into a comfortless room at the end of an old chapel, and treated him with cruel neglect and harsh annoyances until Mr. Wesley's arrival, at the end of two weeks. When Wesley saw him he blessed him and sent him to preach at Bradford, in Wiltshire.

He had the appearance of a stripling, and when he made his first appearance in his chapel at Bradford the people were surprised. "Tut,

tut, what will Mr. Wesley send us next!" exclaimed an elderly gentleman, half aloud, as Adam walked down the aisle to the pulpit. But after hearing him preach, as he did with power, the people took him at once to their hearts. He became both popular and useful. His lips dropped pearls of wisdom, because, as he said, "the Bible was his one book and prayer his continual exercise." And that wonderful book, which had given him a longing to live a noble life, now kept his heart and life so good and pure that, like the Red-cross Knight in Spenser's "Faery Queen," "Right faithful true was he in deed and word."

Young Clarke preached constantly, often out of doors in bad weather. He traveled many miles. He fared hard, for the Wesleyans of those days were mostly poor. He often slept in cold rooms. His salary was very small. He was often insulted and persecuted. Yet he did not fret, complain, or grow weary of trying to persuade wicked men to be good; to teach miserable souls how to be happy, and to make this

bad world better. He was obeying the motto of a Grecian sage, which says, "Stand thou as a beaten anvil to the stroke, for it is the property of a good warrior to be flayed alive and yet to conquer." Surely this was living a noble life! It was giving self for the good of others. It was working, not for money or honor from men, but for the delight he found in making others happy, and thus pleasing Him who gave his life for the ransom of this guilty and unhappy world.

Most boys and girls have read or heard of the Greek hero Leonidas and his brave three hundred, who withstood the army of Xerxes at the famous Pass of Thermopylæ. The world honors their memory because, being few in number, they defied a host, and because they died for their country. Adam Clarke, though he neither fought with the sword, nor died fighting, had as grand a courage as those Greeks, as you will confess if you look on him in a scene which I will now sketch.

He was sent to preach in the beautiful Island

of Guernsey, which lies in the British Channel. The people hated the Gospel, and one evening several hundred armed men gathered round the building in which Adam was preaching. All his hearers except thirteen noble souls fled affrighted at the shouts and threats of the mob. "Let us pull down the house and bury them in its ruins," cried one of the vile leaders of the howling crowd. Crow-bars were sent for, and many strong arms began digging away the foundation. One, more fierce than the rest, pointed a pistol through the window at Mr. Clarke, but it flashed in the pan. Nothing daunted, our hero said to his faithful thirteen,

"God is able to save us. Let us trust him! But if we stay here we shall all be destroyed. They seek not you, but me. I will go out among them. After they have got me they will let you pass unhurt."

"Don't leave the house. You will certainly be murdered if you do," pleaded his friends, with many tears. But the heroic preacher nobly rejoined:

"They will soon have the house down. I will go out among them in the name of God!"

"I will go with you!" cried a stout-hearted young man; and then these two heroes, unarmed except with the shield of faith in God, walked right into the midst of those blood-thirsty men. The moon was full and clear, and they were plainly seen by all. Yet that angry, shouting mob became suddenly silent as the chamber of death. It opened as by a common impulse, and let the bold preacher, followed by his brave companion, pass beyond their reach. Not an arm was raised, not a word was uttered, until their intended victim was beyond their reach and his devoted friends whom he left behind had also left the chapel. Then, as if waking out of a strange dream, they gratified their malice by renewing their curses, demolishing the roof, and breaking all the windows in the building.

This was heroism, indeed—not the heroism of the armed soldier, but the unarmed heroism of faith in God. It was still more grandly dis-

played on the following Sabbath, when Adam Clarke went to the same place, met the same half-savage mob, and calmed their fury by a bold address, which caused some of its leaders to shout,

"He is a clever fellow! He shall preach, and we will hear him."

Thus, by the lofty courage of faith, did Adam Clarke subdue hundreds of wicked men who, without other cause than his desire to make them better and happier, had conspired to kill him.

While Dr. Clarke was stationed in the beautiful Island of Jersey he witnessed a very remarkable answer to a prayer offered by John Wesley. He was with this great apostle of Methodism on board a vessel bound from his island home to Penzance. The wind, fair at first, died away. They were becalmed. "Let us go to prayer," said Wesley.

Dr. Clarke offered prayer, as also did two other preachers. Then Wesley prayed, saying,

"Almighty God, thou hast sway every-

where, and all things serve the purposes of thy will. Thou holdest the winds in thy hands and sittest upon the water-floods, and reignest a king forever. Command these winds and these waves that they obey *thee*, and take us speedily and safely to the haven whither we would be!"

Clarke says that all who were in the cabin felt the power of this brief but beautiful prayer. Rising from his knees Wesley resumed his reading without saying a word, but Clarke went on deck, and was surprised to find the vessel sailing swiftly on her proper course before a steady breeze, which wafted them to their desired port.

The learned doctor believed that He who holdeth the winds in his almighty grasp sent that favoring breeze in answer to Wesley's prayer of faith. I think he rightly judged. I insert it that it may incline you to believe, as the doctor did, that God is a hearer and answerer of the prayer—*of faith.*

Adam Clarke bore all his persecutions—and

he suffered many—in the same sublime spirit that he displayed in the affair described above. He was also faithful in all his duties as a preacher, a pastor, and a student. Next to his Saviour and the souls of men, he loved knowledge. Hence he became a popular preacher and a very learned man, and therefore people loved to confer honors upon him which he never sought. When he was forty-six years old his brethren told him they meant to elect him president of the Wesleyan Conference. This was the highest honor to which, as a Wesleyan preacher, he could aspire, and very few men would refuse to accept it. He was as humble and modest as he was truly great, and he entreated his brethren not to vote for him. But they did, and he was elected. Even then he begged them to give the chair to the brother who had the next highest number of votes. This they refused to do, and two of the preachers took him by force out of his seat and placed him on the table! Finally, seeing they would have him preside, he took

the chair, and made such an excellent president that he was called to perform its duties for the second and third time before he died. In his case, as in that of most truly great men, he found that "before honor is humility."

Adam Clarke became a very learned man. He understood many languages. He did not skim over them like a bird over a lake, but he mastered them. Hence, on one occasion, when called by the members of the Royal Antiquarian Society to see an inscription in what to them was an unknown language, he astonished them all by saying, "This inscription is Coptic."

He was correct. The boy who had once been dubbed a dunce had become the teacher of learned men! Diligent, persevering study had wrought wonders, and the scholars of England hastened to cast the honors of their societies at his feet. Royal dukes invited him to their palaces, and the Government called him to complete some records which required a kind and degree of learning which few men

were known to possess. Suppose that young Clarke had gone into the enchanted palace of sin when its pleasures tempted him, instead of resolving to lead a noble life, would his brow have been crowned with these high honors and the respect of great minds? No, no, never!

Dr. Clarke wrote a very learned commentary on that most sacred Book, which he esteemed his invaluable treasure. It shed a bright light on the meaning of the holy Bible, and tens of thousands read it with pleasure and profit. He also wrote sermons and other good works, of which you will learn when you read his "Life," as you will wish to do when you are a little older.

Dr. Clarke might have been useful perhaps without his great learning, because he was truly devoted to Christ. But if he had not made himself a scholar his influence for good in the world would not have been so vast as it actually was and still is. It is a curious fact, well worth noticing, that a good but unlearned man once came very near turning him aside from

the studies but for which he could never have written his commentary. It happened on this wise:

While on his first circuit he saw a Latin sentence written on the wall of his chamber. It reminded him of a passage in Virgil, and he very naturally wrote it, with a slight and pertinent alteration of one word, underneath the one already there.

The preacher who next occupied the chamber, feeling mortified at his own ignorance, and envious of a stripling who was a better scholar than himself, wrote the following petulant words beneath Clarke's citation from Virgil:

"Did you write the above to show us that you could write Latin? For shame! Do send pride to hell, from whence it came. O young man, improve your time; eternity's at hand!"

When young Clarke next occupied that preacher's chamber and saw this foolish rebuke, it deeply wounded his conscience, causing him to think that he was perhaps wasting

his time by spending a portion of it in the study of the classical languages. Under the pressure of this great mistake he kneeled down and solemnly promised his divine Master that he would never again meddle with Latin or Greek as long as he lived.

Happily for himself and for Methodism, when Mr. Wesley found, as he did shortly after, that young Clarke was fond of classical studies, he bade him "not to forget any thing he had ever learned," and urged him to acquire as much knowledge as he could. Thus Wesley, who knew the value of learning, was the means of showing the young student that his promise, being founded on a serious mistake, was not binding. Thus relieved of a burden placed on his aspiring young soul by a well-meaning blockhead, he resumed the studies which finally crowned his head with literary honors, and added immensely to the usefulness of his life.

When this great, good, noble, heroic, and learned man was seventy-two years old he was

stricken with the cholera. A friend said to him soon after his seizure:

"My dear doctor, you must put your soul into the hands of God, and your trust in the merits of your Saviour."

He was very faint, but he replied, "I do, I do." A few hours later he heaved a short sob, and his soul ascended to heaven. Men sighed and said, "A pillar has fallen. A light has gone out. A star has disappeared. A great spirit has left the earth."

This was all true; but while men mourned angels rejoiced that another of Christ's warriors had fought and won his last battle, and had come to the royal throne of the glorified Jesus to receive his eternal crown.

CHAPTER IX.

A SCOTTISH LADY'S BEAUTIFUL LIFE.

What hope, O Jesus, thou canst render
To those who other hopes surrender—
To those who seek thee, O how tender!
But what to those who find!

—ST. BERNARD.

THERE is a family in Scotland which owns an oaken elbow-chair, on which is carved the heraldic coat of arms adopted by its ancient chiefs, with the date 1357. Its owners are very proud of this chair, because it reminds them that their ancestors were great people many years ago.

I wish to interest you in the life of a daughter of this ancient family, named Darcy—Darcy Brisbane. Her claim on your notice is not founded so much on her greatness as on her *great goodness*. And you know that goodness is better than greatness.

The most marked feature in Miss Darcy's

character when she was a child was kindness, especially to the poor. More than once during her childhood when she saw poor children, half clothed, and shivering in the cold, she took off some of her own outer garments and wrapped them about the chilled bodies of the suffering little ones. Perhaps this was not a wise thing to do, unless she acted under the direction of her parents. But she did it to relieve the pain which the sight of suffering children caused in her tender heart, as well as to comfort the objects of her childish charity. When she grew older she did deeds of charity from the still nobler motive of trying to please the Saviour. She did them for Jesus' sake.

Miss Darcy was very quick to learn and very diligent in her studies; first at home under private tutors, and afterward at school in the city of Edinburgh. Hence, when only sixteen years old, she was quite well educated, and is said to have been a very dignified young lady.

She left school when sixteen, and was at once

invited to visit Lord and Lady Lothian, her uncle and aunt, in the city of London. While with them she was taken to the gay court of the King of England and presented to the queen. No doubt she made a fine appearance, for she had a tall, straight, slender figure, beautifully proportioned. Her face beamed with intelligence, and her penetrating eyes were full of sweetness. Her complexion was dark, and when she was dressed in the fashion of the court, she moved with credit to herself among the proud dames and grand gentlemen of the royal circle.

While at Lord Lothian's villa, near London, one day she took a walk in his garden. Her serious and interesting face drew the attention of the gardener, and won his confidence. Thinking she must be a Christian, he stood before her, hat in hand, and with a very humble air told her that he was a poor sinner, bowed down beneath a load of guilt which he knew not how to get rid of. His touching story moved our young lady to tears. She had

not herself then learned to love the Saviour. But she had read and studied God's holy book, and knew, therefore, that all sinners were invited to come to Jesus. So she told him that Jesus would be sure to forgive any poor sinner who believed on his precious name.

The gardener's thirsty soul drank in her words at once. He then and there believed that Jesus had died for *him*, and his burden rolled off his conscience in a moment. His soul was made happy, and he returned to his work praising God like the lame man who was healed by the apostles in the ancient days at the beautiful gate of the temple.

It is a very unusual thing that one who does not love Jesus should thus guide another into the light of his precious love. In after years it gave Darcy more pleasure to think that what she had said to the gardener guided him to Jesus, than to recall the splendors of the royal court in which she had been presented. The latter fact floated in her memory like a brilliant dream which had vanished in empty air, but

the former lived in her heart a living thought which was "a joy forever."

Miss Darcy's aunt, the Marchioness of Lothian, died while Miss Darcy was still a visitor at her mansion. After the aunt's burial the young lady returned to Scotland. Shortly after a very amiable, honorable gentleman, Sir Walter Maxwell by name, sought her hand in marriage. He was a man every way worthy of a maiden's love. Her friends were pleased with him, and she accepted him, became his blooming bride, and went to live on his fine estate, expecting a long life of married happiness.

But this, alas! was only the dream of a golden hope doomed to be buried in Sir Walter's untimely grave. Two years after she had stood at the bridal altar she followed his remains to the tomb in the black weeds of widowhood. Six weeks later her son and only child was suddenly taken from her by a fatal accident. This last was indeed a terrible affliction, coming as it did so quickly after her

husband's death, and in a wholly unexpected manner. So deep was her grief under these repeated trials that she was heart-broken, and was never known to mention either husband or child after their death!

Yet, strangely as it may sound to you, she gained by these sad losses. They led her to seek comfort in God. Her papers, found after her death, made this fact clearly known. "God," she said, "brought me to himself by afflictions." And when she was told that her darling son was dead, she stood as if stunned for some time, and then said, "I see God requires my whole heart, and *he shall have it.*"

Thenceforth her life, which, but for these afflictions, might, and probably would, have been that of a fashionable lady, became a life of faith, of prayer, of purity, and of beautiful Christian charity. Her heart, which had been given to her husband, her son, and to the pleasant things of the aristocratic circle in which she moved, was henceforth laid without reserve at the feet of the Son of God.

Lady Maxwell had been brought up a Presbyterian. In her early days almost all the Scottish people were reared in that faith. The Presbyterians have a glorious record in the history of Scotland. They have been its heroes, its reformers, its martyrs, but when Lady Maxwell was young they had lost much of the power of the faith which had given their fathers and mothers very high rank among the noblest of our blessed Lord's disciples. They had become very cold and formal. Hence, when the heart of our lovely young widow was broken, she found none who knew how to pour into it the healing balm of the Master's love so wisely and so well as John Wesley and his followers.

These were not then numerous in Scotland; but among them were a few noble ladies in whose drawing-rooms our great founder sometimes explained our heavenly Father's way of saving souls from guilt and sin. Through these ladies our weeping widow was introduced to Wesley. His preaching and letters so guided

her that she took her heavily-laden heart to Christ, and he gave her rest.

Having found peace among the Methodists, she bravely joined their ranks. She knew that this step would cost her the good-will of most of the high-born dames and titled gentlemen who had hitherto been proud to number her among their friends. She knew they would call her a fanatic and other idle names; would cease to be her intimate friends; and, instead of admiring, would despise her. But knowing that the smile of her Lord was worth more than the favor of all Scotland's nobles or of all people on earth, great and small, she nobly dared to join the then despised Methodists in Edinburgh. She believed they knew more about the deep things of God than did her Presbyterian friends. And so Lady Maxwell became a member of the Methodist Society; but without ceasing to love the Presbyterian Church. Like every genuine Methodist she was no bigot.

She was young and in sorrow then. Perhaps you think she acted without proper forethought,

and was therefore sorry for it afterward. Not so. Long years afterward she said to a friend, "If I had never known the Methodists I should never have attained to those enjoyments in religion to which I have attained under their instructions. . . . If God has a people on earth, and he has many, it is the Methodists."

Hence, you see, she was glad to the end of her days that she had the courage, when sitting in the funereal ashes of her husband and child, to join, not the rich and powerful Church, but the one which, though then small and poor, was rich in Bible truth and in the experience of faith, hope, and love. Young Christians who hold her views and tread in her steps never regret their decision; while those who join Churches merely because their members are rich and fashionable, in most cases find occasion to weep over a folly that costs them the life and sweetness of their faith.

Perhaps you would like to know how this saintly lady spent her time. Her home at this period was in Edinburgh. She rose at four

o'clock and went to hear preaching in the Wesleyan Chapel at five, preaching at that early morning hour being usual among the Methodists of those times. On returning home she spent the time in prayer until seven, her breakfast hour. After breakfast she gave attention to household affairs until eleven. From that hour until twelve she prayed for her friends, for the Church, and for the world. The early portion of the afternoon was given to reading, writing, out-door exercise, and works of benevolence. Both before and after dinner she spent some time in secret prayer. When she had no company she spent her evenings in reading until the supper hour, (probably nine o'clock.) After supper she conducted family prayer, and then, after a season of praise, she retired early, filled with the sweet peace of God, and sure that if death should come in the night her waking would be in heaven.

With slight changes in later life, this was the way her ladyship spent her time at home to the end of her earthly days. Do you wonder that,

living like this, she became one of the most pure and saintly of women?

There were no Sunday-schools in those days, nor were schools for the children of the poor very general. Lady Maxwell's heart was grieved to see so many poor children growing up without proper teaching in the streets of Edinburgh. She proved the reality of her grief by establishing a day-school in Edinburgh for the instruction of such, both in letters and religion. She supported this school forty years, until she died, and in her will left property sufficient for its perpetual maintenance. During her life-time eight hundred scholars enjoyed its benefits.

You may be sure that such a handsome young widow, possessed of considerable wealth, had offers of marriage. She did, but she declined them all. Perhaps none of her admirers were enough like her beloved Lord to help her climb to those lofty heights of enjoyment to which she aspired. Her precise reason is unknown. Yet her letters prove that, having her heart completely filled with the love of Christ, she

was content to remain a widow, and that she was unspeakably happier with Christ in her loneliness, than any woman can be with a godless husband and a heart which refuses its throne to the Redeemer.

Lady Maxwell showed her great love to Christ by doing all the good in her power. That she might have more means for this purpose, she denied herself many things which people in her circle thought highly becoming, if not necessary. She sold her carriage and horses, and spent the price in buying food for the hungry. She would wear no jewelry. She dressed, not like a dowdy or a Quakeress, yet plainly, without ornament, and in materials which were tasteful without being very costly. Neither to waste money nor to attract attention seemed to be the rule by which she regulated her dress. She never forgot that she was a lady of birth and station and a Christian; but she made the principles of the Christian the rules by which she clothed the lady.

When the Sunday-schools of Robert Raikes

began to bless the poor children of England, in 1780, Lady Maxwell introduced them into Scotland. When a pious woman, named Lady Glenorchy, died, and left her the executor of her estate, with instructions to spend its proceeds in certain works of charity, she accepted the sacred trust, and, during the latter half of her life, gave a large portion of her time to the delicate and often difficult duties which her deceased friend's will required.

But this, with her other works of charity, served to feed the holy flame of love to Christ, which burned in her heart, like the sacred lamp before God's altar in the Jewish temple, with an undying light. She loved God with all her heart. She spent all her waking moments in offering spiritual sacrifices to her Lord, or in doing good to the souls and bodies of men. This way of living made her very happy. A serene peace continually filled her soul. When she was sixty-eight years old, after a gradual decline of strength, during which she seemed more like an inhabitant of heaven than a suffer-

ing woman on earth, she passed out of the body "without a sigh, struggle, or groan," and soared up to the throne of Him whom she loved better than life. It was a beautiful ending to a beautiful life.

The date of her death was July 10, 1810. Her remains were buried in Greyfriar's Churchyard, Edinburgh.

Of such a death as hers we may say with Longfellow, in these beautiful lines:

"There is no death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but the suburb of the life Elysian,
Whose portal we call Death."

CHAPTER X.

THE PRINCE OF MISSIONARIES.

High in the temple of the living God,
He stood amidst the people, and declared
Aloud the truth, the whole revealed truth,
Ready to seal it with his blood.—POLLOK.

IN the spring of 1763 a dignified old gentleman and his son were seen seeking admission at the gate of Jesus College, in Oxford, England. They had come from the picturesque town of Brecon, Wales, of which place the father was mayor. The son was a lad who had just passed his sixteenth birthday. He was short for his age, but remarkably handsome. His hair was dark, and fell in clusters of curls on his shoulders; his features were regular; his complexion fair and beautiful; and his dark eyes so radiant that they gave his face an expression of cheerful sprightliness. Their object in visiting the college was that this mayor of

Thomas Coke.

Brecon might enter the lad as a student in that ancient seat of learning.

No doubt that venerable father cherished high expectations of his son's future goodness and greatness. He was a Christian gentleman, and his fondest wish was, that his handsome boy might become a good minister of the English Church. Too many fathers who have longed to see their sons pass through college to eminence among men have been doomed to sad disappointment through the bad use their sons have made of their great opportunities. But in this father's case, his proudest hopes were fully realized. His son became a very useful minister of the Gospel, the father of the missions of the great Wesleyan Church, the prince of modern missionaries, and the first Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America! He wrote his name, not in water, but in deeds which will never die. It stands high on the roll of immortal worthies whose names will always be cherished by good men on earth, and which are also "written in

heaven." Do you ask his name? It is Thomas Coke, LL.D.

Boys and girls ought to know that neither men nor women become good and great by mere chance. One cannot soar to places of real honor on golden wings, nor be carried to them in the arms of a rich father; but must ascend to them step by step. Rich or poor, one must rise by his own efforts. Therefore, seeing that the rich and handsome Thomas Coke did rise, every youth who desires to be one of the world's worthies will be eager to learn how he did it.

When he was a very small boy Thomas was thought to be dull; but after he was eight or nine his mind waked up, and he became so diligent in his studies that he was prepared to enter college when but a little more than sixteen years old. His father's riches secured him good teachers; but it was his own diligence in study that fitted him for college. Had he chosen to be an idle fellow, his father, in spite of his riches, instead of a scholar, would have had a dunce for his son.

Being the son of a rich and honorable gentleman, and being also handsome, lively, and fond of gay companions, Thomas at once found himself surrounded by a set of wealthy young men, who, like the "unjust judge," "feared not God, neither regarded man." Many, if not most, Oxford students at that time were notoriously wicked. They courted this young student's society, invited him to their midnight carousals, to their dancing and gambling haunts, to the theater, and tempted him to do deeds which he knew to be both wrong and ruinous. Finding that he had been taught by his father and mother to respect and love the Bible as the greatest and best of books, they tried to make him believe that it was nothing better than a "cunningly devised fable." At first these things shocked him, but after giving himself to their practices awhile, his feelings changed, and he found pleasure in deeds which hurt both his body and mind, caused him to neglect his studies, and began to corrupt his heart. Had he continued in this evil path he might have

become what is called a fashionable gentleman, but not a benefactor of mankind.

Happily for himself, as well as for the world, he did not walk long in that evil direction. When in the midst of his uproarious companions, he could not help thinking of the beautiful lives of his father and mother. When alone, that "still, small voice," which is God's whisper to erring hearts, bade him reflect, and gently moved him to study that dear old book, the Bible, which contains God's thoughts. He also read much in writings which point out the grandness and glory of Bible truth. The effect of these good influences was his firm belief in the Bible, a purpose to shape his life by its teaching, a giving up of wrong practices and bad companions, and a return to the proper duties of a student's life. His gay fellow-students laughed at him, but he had the courage of his opinions, and, therefore, despised their ridicule, and stuck nobly to his college duties. Hence, in due time, he was graduated with honor, and returned to his home in Brecon,

crowned with the approval and respect of his instructors.

He now became very popular in Brecon society. He was elected mayor. He was very active, partly in business, and partly in studies suited to his purpose to enter the ministry. After spending three years in this way, he was ordained, first a deacon, and two years later a "priest;" but it was not until he was twenty-eight years old that he entered fully on the work of a minister by becoming curate of the parish of Petherton.

Dr. Coke now began to reap the fruit of his previous studies, which had so filled his mind with Bible knowledge that his sermons were rich in good thoughts. This, with his handsome face and his gentle voice, drew so many people to his church, that it was soon overcrowded with hearers. But his sermons were like sweet music, in that, though they charmed men's ears, they did not persuade them to lead better lives. The cause of this great failure was in himself. Dr. Coke, up to this time,

though moral and sincere, and an admirer of our Redeemer, had never taken Christ into his heart as his personal Saviour and King. Though his sermons told about Christ, yet the spirit of Christ was not in them, and, therefore, they failed to win the people to the Lord's service.

But the reading of certain good books, and some conversation with one of Mr. Wesley's preachers, and with a pious peasant who was a Wesleyan, led him to perceive that he ought to seek the forgiveness of his sins through faith in the Son of God. Being a true man, he no sooner saw this to be his duty than he set about it in good earnest. His prayers were soon answered. He was filled with peace, love, hope, and joy. And then his preaching became a thing of power. It startled many, and led some to become children of God through faith in the Lord Jesus.

But others became very angry. They spoke bitter words against him. They plotted for his removal, and when he was dismissed from his church by his rector, they actually rung the

bells of the church in token of their joy. Years after, those same men, grown wiser and better, made their bells ring out a joyous welcome when he made a casual visit to Petherton.

There was real manly grit, as well as Christian meekness, in Dr. Coke. He showed the latter, by speaking kindly of his enemies. He displayed the former, by standing outside the church doors to preach the farewell sermon he was not suffered to deliver from the pulpit. His foes had gathered baskets of stones with which to drive him from his post. But though Coke had the meekness of a lamb, he also had the courage of a lion. His bravery inspired his friends. They stood by him. His enemies were awed, and he faithfully warned them to "flee from the wrath to come."

Shortly after, Coke visited the great and good John Wesley. They were mutually attracted toward each other; and Coke made up his mind to preach under Wesley's direction. Wesley wrote of him: "Dr. Coke, being dismissed from his curacy, has bidden adieu to his honorable

name, and determined to cast in his lot with us." Wesley was right. As viewed by men, the rich, learned, handsome, honorably connected Dr. Coke made a great sacrifice when he turned his back on the honors and emoluments of the Church of England, and devoted himself to the hard toil of an itinerant life. Those were the times when the Wesleyan Church was yet struggling with gigantic obstacles to its success. It was, therefore, a grand and noble deed for Coke to exchange his prospects in the Church of England for the hard work and unpopularity then inseparable from the career of a Wesleyan preacher. But it was by that sacrifice, for Jesus' sake, that Coke was enabled to make an imperishable and glorious mark upon the history of mankind.

Coke's preaching was so tender, so simple, and so rich in good thoughts, that it drew crowds, and won many to better lives. Yet, like Wesley, he was often assailed by vile mobs which insulted him with hard words, and tried to strike him with sticks and stones. Once

they drenched him with a fire-engine. Nothing daunted, however, he went all over England preaching the Gospel. He took no holidays, but filled every fleeting hour with work for his heavenly Master.

Wesley loved and trusted Dr. Coke. He often journeyed with him, and when Coke was thirty-five years old Wesley sent him to Ireland to organize a Conference in that priest-ridden island. He was the first President of the Irish Wesleyan Conference, and filled that office almost every year to the end of his life. The Irish preachers loved him with an affection which in time became like that which children cherish for a good father.

When Coke was thirty-seven years old, Wesley ordained him superintendent or Bishop for America. He came to this country, and with the consent of the American preachers ordained Mr. Asbury as joint superintendent or Bishop, with himself, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was organized by the Conference which met at Christmas, in 1784. He

then made a grand missionary tour of several thousand miles in the United States; after which he returned to England, to renew his labors in our fatherland.

The story of Coke's remarkable labors during the next thirty years is very, even intensely, interesting, but cannot be told in this brief sketch. You must be content, at present, to know that he made eighteen voyages across the Atlantic, not in immense steam palaces, such as float on the ocean to-day, but in small vessels with wretched accommodations, and often commanded by captains who hated every good thing. One such commander actually threatened to throw him overboard as the Jonah who brought them stormy and contrary winds! But nothing could daunt his noble mind, or keep him from toiling for the good of men. Hence, when driven from stress of weather to the West Indies, he founded a mission among the poor negroes of those islands. He planted the Wesleyan banner in Nova Scotia. He also sent missionaries to Africa, to Wales, and to some

of the wildest parts of Ireland. During twenty-eight years the missions of the Wesleyan Conference were principally managed by him, and his great soul lives to-day in the missionary spirit of that powerful body, which knows him as the father of its grand missionary work, which now covers many lands.

It was hard work in those days to raise money for missions. Even Christian people did not either see the beauty of missionary work or feel it their duty to give money to promote it. But Coke was both a liberal giver and a successful beggar in its behalf. Curiously enough, he gained a devoted wife for himself while seeking money for his Master. Shall I tell you how it happened?

He was at Bristol. Hearing that a charitable lady named Penelope G. Smith was in the city, he called upon her, and laid his vast plans for preaching Christ to distant nations before her with such enthusiasm that her soul caught a spark of his holy fire, and she said,

"Call on me, sir, at my home in Bradford,

Yorkshire, and I will give you one hundred guineas for your cause."

Coke did call after a season, and the lady, instead of one hundred, gave him two hundred guineas. A noble donation! Better still, she gave him her friendship, which, after several months, grew into mutual love, and was followed by a happy marriage.

It was made happy, not merely through their mutual affection, but also through their devotion to the work of their Lord. She was a lady who loved her elegant home and its many comforts. Yet, because she would not hinder her husband's great work, she joined him in his constant travels over England. They had a big old-fashioned family carriage in which they journeyed from town to town and from city to city. No doubt it would have been easier for both had they kept at home, enjoying the pleasant things which adorned their mansion. But they loved the Master's work better than their personal comforts. Hence, she made herself the cheerful companion of his journeys,

until it pleased their beloved Lord, after six years, to command her to make the last journey, along the shining road which leads from earth to the Father's house, in which there are many mansions, kept as everlasting resting-places for Christ's weary workers.

When Coke was sixty-five years of age he set his heart on going to India to found a mission among its swarthy millions. Most men at that age desire rest; but his heroic soul was eager to crown its earthly career with a great act of self-denial. His brethren at first declined to consent, chiefly because they dared not add such an expensive mission to their list. But standing before them with tears in his eyes, he said:

"If the Connection cannot furnish means, I will gladly defray the expense of an outfit to the extent of thirty thousand dollars!"

This act of sublime self-devotion won the Conference to his plans. Six young ministers were given to him as assistants. On the last day of the year 1814 he set sail with his devoted

little band, full of exultant hope that his voyage might result in great blessing to thousands of the dusky sons of India. His hope was realized; but he did not live to see it. On the morning of the 3d of May following, when his attendant entered his cabin, he found the venerable missionary stretched lifeless on the floor. A placid smile imprinted on his marble features showed that his great soul, in the solitude of that state-room, had peacefully and without pain ascended to the Paradise of the God he loved, and had so long and faithfully served.

Such men as Dr. Coke never die. They live in their work. The words they speak, the books they write—and Dr. Coke wrote several—the missions they found, the churches they build, and the converts they make, are like seeds which grow and multiply, and spread from age to age. The good to which they give birth grows on forever, and is constantly making mankind better. It is equally true that the works and words of bad men are an undying curse to the world. Think of what evil such a

man as Coke would have done, and could have still been doing, if, instead of turning away from his wicked fellow-students at college, he had spent his life in self-indulgence, in doing wicked deeds, in setting a bad example. And while you think of this difference, let young Coke's example nerve you to put away evil from your life, and resolve to be, first a disciple of the adorable Jesus, and then a benefactor to your race. Such a resolve will be sure to make you happy, and it may lead to your becoming a blessing unto thousands!

CHAPTER XI.

A MAIDEN'S LOYALTY TO CHRIST.

Like as the armèd knight
Appointed to the field,
With this world will I fight,
And faith shall be my shield.

—ANNE ASKEW.

WHEN Martin Luther stood up in the great hall at Worms to defend the truth in presence of the proud Emperor of Germany, his firm step, his clear unflinching eyes, and his bold though respectful speech, excited the wonder and admiration of many spectators. The world at that time could not have gathered a more grand assembly than that famous "Diet." It was made up of the chief dignitaries in Church and State. Most of those haughty grandees hated the humble monk and thirsted for his blood. His life hung as by a slender thread on their decision. And many a brave warrior felt, when Luther stood before them

with none to defend him but the invisible God, that he would rather march into a fiery battle-field than to stand in Luther's place. Heroes of the sword felt that the unarmed monk, whose only weapon was the truth of Jesus, was a greater hero than themselves. One of them exclaimed, "Poor monk, poor monk! thou art making a nobler stand than I or any other captain has ever made in the bloodiest of our battles."

And they were right. Luther's courage was nobler than theirs. It sprang not from that brutal passion which moves warriors to rush furiously upon each other; but from the love he bore to Christ, and the faith in God's word which was hidden in his heart. It was in truth that highest kind of courage, which is called *moral* courage.

This moral courage is often shown in the humblest places as truly as in Diets or other grave assemblies. The school-room, the play-ground, the parlor, or the kitchen may be its sphere. The beautiful maiden of whom this

sketch treats displayed her heroism in her mother's kitchen.

Her name was HESTER ANN ROE. She was born in Macclesfield, England, one hundred and twenty-six years ago, that is, in 1756. Her father was the Episcopal minister of that town. He was a good man, and was very careful to teach his little daughter to fear God and to keep his commandments.

Hester was a very forward child. When only five years old she could read the Bible very readily. She loved it, too, and was very careful to say her prayers every night and morning. She did this not lightly, but seriously, because it was her *duty*. But one evening, when she was six years old, her nurse, while putting her to bed, told her some very amusing stories. These stories so filled her mind that she forgot to pray before getting into bed. After the nurse had left the room, however, she thought of her omission, and it appeared to her so great a sin that she became frightened. The thought of God's

anger terrified her, and she screamed aloud. Her father and mother, hearing her shrieks, rushed up stairs to her chamber with a light, and, after learning the cause of her fright, comforted her with soothing words.

This little incident shows that Hester had a very quick and tender conscience. Had she known how pitiful our heavenly Father is, instead of giving way to fright, she would have told him how sorry she was for forgetting to pray, and then have offered her prayers where she lay. Under her circumstances that night, He who is more loving than any human father would have freely forgiven his sorrowful little child. But at that time Hester did not know the tenderness of God's great love.

There was a sad but beautiful spectacle in Hester's home when she was nine years old. Her good father was on his dying bed. He was very happy. For the sake of his wife and children he would have liked to live awhile longer on earth. Yet he knew that he was going to share the glory of Jesus, and that

knowledge filled him with joy. Shortly before his end he cried aloud,

"Hetty!"

Hester hastened to his bedside. He took her hand, and, in tones of most tender love, said:

"My dear Hetty, you look dejected. You must not let your spirits be cast down. . . . God will bless you, my dear, when I am gone. I hope you will be a good child, and then you will be happy."

Here he paused long enough to place his feverish hand upon her head. Then lifting his eyes to heaven, he added, in the tones of one who felt that he was speaking to the invisible God:

"Unto God's gracious mercy and protection I commit thee. The Lord bless thee and keep thee, . . . and make thee his child and faithful servant to thy life's end!"

As soon as his hand was removed from her head, Hetty, feeling quite overpowered, dropped upon her knees and wept until, as

she wrote afterward, her "eyes were almost swelled up." She never forgot that sacred hour.

After her father's death this bereaved maiden was very sad and serious for some time. Her sorrow was painful to behold, and her relations and friends, with kind intentions, were so really unkind, even cruel, as to try to make her cheerful by laughing at her seriousness; by pressing her to go to dancing parties and to the theater, and by tempting her to waste her time reading foolish novels and romances. She was the pet of her rich "godmother," who helped the others in these things by giving Hetty money to buy gay dresses. Thus tempted, Hester soon became very fond of dancing, card-playing, theater-going, novel-reading, and dressing finely. But none of these things made her happy; for, through the wise instruction of her dead father, she knew they were practices which injure the soul.

Hester, much troubled in conscience, tried

for several years to follow these amusements and to be pious at the same time. Millions, both before and since her time, have tried the same foolish experiment, and, like Hester, they have all found it as impossible as to mingle oil and water. The harder this bright maiden tried the less was her success. Peace would not visit her heart so long as it loved vain amusements and the companionship of such as would not either fear or love the adorable Jesus. Writing of her feelings during this experiment, she wrote: "Often in the midst of the dance I felt as miserable as a creature could be, with a sense of guilt and fears of death and hell." She finally reached the wise conclusion that she must either give up the dance, the card-table, the theater, and the love of gay dresses, or part with all hope of winning the eternal crown and the white robe laid up in heaven for the disciples of Christ. Very wisely, when eighteen years old, after listening to a sermon by Mr. Simpson, her father's curate of Macclesfield, and a dear

friend of Mr. Wesley, she resolved to give up her beloved amusements, and to become a loyal disciple of the Lord Jesus. Will any sensible boy or girl dare to say this was not a wise, right, and good resolution?

It was in putting this good resolution into practice that Miss Hester became a real heroine—a heroine both of the parlor and the kitchen, as you will see if you read on.

In those old times there were few ministers or church people in her neighborhood, except the Wesleyans, who knew that guilty sinners could find pardon by trusting in the blood of Jesus. For this reason, when Hester made up her mind to be Christ's disciple, she went to a Methodist meeting, where she was taught the simple way of faith in Jesus and was greatly comforted.

It now appeared to her that it was her *duty* to join the Wesleyans, because among them she could find better helps to a spiritual life than in any other Church. But this step opened a "flood of persecution" which it was

hard to endure. Her mother, most of her near relations, her godmother, and her old companions in sin, all hated the Methodists with a perfect hatred. The cause of their hate was their ignorance of Methodism, and their dislike of a religious life so earnest and spiritual that it could not tolerate the idle amusements in which sin-loving souls find delight.

Our brave young maiden found their hate had a poison sting. It led her former associates to laugh at her; it led a young man whom she loved to forsake her; her rich godmother told her she would not leave her any property if she became a Methodist; her relations were led by it to rebuke her with taunting words; worse than all, it inspired her mother, whom she fondly loved, to become her persecutor. First, her mother entreated her not to become a Methodist; then she spoke harshly to her. Next she made her a prisoner in her own house, refusing her permission to go out of doors for eight weeks. Finally, she threatened to turn her out of doors!

But Hester stood as firm as a wave-beaten rock. She would not yield. Her sense of duty to the Saviour she loved made her strong, patient, and enduring. The presence of Christ in her heart kept her happy, meek, gentle, and loving to all. At last, after suffering these bitter persecutions for some six months, she said to her mother one day:

"Dear mother, I must seek the salvation of my soul, and I must use the means. I am therefore determined to leave you and go to be a servant rather than be kept from the Methodists. Yet, if you will consent to it, I should greatly prefer continuing in your house, though it be as your servant."

It seems strange to us in these days, when Methodism is honored by unnumbered millions, that any mother, much less a minister's widow, could have been so bitter and so cruel as to consent, as Hester's mother did, to send her daughter into the kitchen solely because she would be a Methodist. Yet such was the fact. The gentle Hester, delicately reared, unused to

kitchen work, accustomed to move in the best society, was actually made servant-of-all-work in her mother's house, and treated as such! All the burdens of housework were placed on her youthful shoulders, which had never been trained to bear the yoke of toil.

Jesus blessed this noble maiden by making her so happy that his love became her meat and drink, and so overflowed her soul that, as she wrote, she had no interruption of her bliss through the eight months during which her domestic servitude lasted. Jesus made her unspeakably happy while loyally suffering this hardship for his sake. Was she not an heroic maiden? Though only a feeble girl, she had a fidelity which, though displayed in a kitchen, is as worthy of admiration as the courage of Luther in the grand Diet of the German Empire.

At last Hester's mistaken mother was stricken down with fever, and was most lovingly nursed by her persecuted child, who now returned good for evil. So devoted was Hester

to her sick mother that her strength soon began to give way. The physician declared that the maiden's life would be the price of her continued servitude. Then the rich godmother came, and, touched by the signs of Hester's failing strength, insisted on putting an end to her kitchen service. Thus Hester was restored to her proper place in the family. "But," she writes, "it was then nearly too late; my health had received such a wound that it did not recover in many years."

You may be sure that after this proof of her loyalty to her beloved Lord, Hester would not serve him with a careless spirit, but with very great zeal. She learned to love him with her whole heart, and to serve him with all her might. And he gave her victory over all sinful feelings, and filled her with unfailing streams of peace, joy, and everlasting life.

Miss Roe became a very useful lady in the Church. She honored her Lord, and he made her honorable. Her piety shone with such brightness that many serious people sought to

talk with her about Jesus, and in doing so were richly blessed. After a time she became a class-leader, and during her short life she guided hundreds not merely to Christ, but into the highest, sweetest, richest attainments of his precious love.

When she was twenty-eight years old she became the beloved wife of Mr. Rogers, a Wesleyan preacher, who stood very high in John Wesley's confidence. With her husband, to whom she was in truth a "helpmeet," she went first to Dublin, then to Cork, and next to the cradle of Methodism, City Road Chapel, in London. The parsonage of that chapel was Wesley's home, which was made like paradise by that great man's saintly spirit. He regarded Mrs. Rogers as a daughter, and she reverenced him as a holy patriarch. She was present at his death, and saw the glory of heaven on his countenance. "The more we gazed upon it," she says, "the more we saw of heaven unspeakable."

In 1794, when she was little more than thirty-

eight years old, after twenty years of Christian service, she was sent for by her Lord to join the "Church of the first-born in heaven." Just before she died, taking her husband's hand, she said, "My dear, the Lord has been very kind to us. O he is good, he is good!" Shortly after she laid her brow, clammy with the cold sweat of death, upon her husband's breast, and whispered, "I am going;" then, kissing him with her expiring breath, she closed her eyes on earth. Her released soul, borne by angel hands, ascended swiftly to the home of the pure in heart, where she rejoices now in the presence of the Redeemer, "seeing him day and night forever."

Do you feel sorrow because a lady, whose life was so pure and therefore beautiful, should die in the very prime of life? You need not feel sad on her account, nor on account of any of the disciples of our Lord who go early to their homes in heaven. For such to die is not loss, but gain. As Longfellow sings to the memory of the holy dead, you may say:

"O how blest are ye whose toils are ended!
Who through death have unto God ascended!
Ye have arisen
From the cares which keep us still in prison.

"Christ has wiped away *your* tears forever;
Ye have that for which we still endeavor.
To you are chanted
Songs which yet no mortal ear have haunted."

Such thoughts as these are very full of comfort to the young, who are often obliged to part with their parents. But though death is a kind friend to those who love the blessed Christ, there is no reason why you should not love to live as long as the great King chooses to keep you in this pleasant world. It is his wish that you should be cheerful and happy every day; that you should adorn yourselves with the sweet flowers of innocence; that you should study your lessons, perform your tasks, in fields, workshops, or offices, with songs of gladness in your hearts. Perhaps you will have many trials, as Hester Roe had. Perhaps not. If so, bear them like heroes, and, if they become very burdensome, if your health gives way, if mortal

sickness comes to you, then you may say with our poet:

"Ah! who would not, then, depart with gladness,
To inherit heaven for earthly sadness?
Who here would languish
Longer in bewailing and in anguish?

"Come, O Christ, and loose the chains that bind us!
Lead us forth, and cast this world behind us.
With thee, the Anointed,
Finds the soul its joy and rest appointed."

CHAPTER XII.

THE SQUIRE OF DUNMORE.

So should we live, that every hour
May die as dies the natural flower,—
A self-reviving thing of power;
That every thought and every deed
May hold within itself the seed
Of future good and future need.

—RICHARD M. MILNES.

ABOUT one hundred years ago there was a scarcity of food in the pleasant Irish village of Dunmore. To relieve the suffering poor the kind-hearted gentlemen of the neighborhood formed themselves into a committee of relief. One afternoon one of those young squires, named GIDEON OUSELEY, after spending some time among the hungry families of the place, sauntered down the village street. As he came near the tavern he saw a group of his friends leaving it in the frolicsome mood of men whose heads were excited by the fumes of wine

and whisky. Their frolic soon changed to a quarrel between two or three of the party. One of them, named Hart, ran off in a burst of passion, having his fowling-piece under his arm, and was followed by another of the half-drunken young men. In the scuffle which ensued the gun went off, and its contents struck Mr. Ouseley, who was coming up toward the revelers, in the right side of his face and neck.

Supposing Ouseley was mortally wounded, his friends bore him tenderly to his home, and, with pale faces and beating hearts, placed him on a couch. His gentle wife was deeply shocked. Knowing but too well that her husband was the boon companion and the leader of the gay, drinking, gambling, and rollicking squires of the surrounding estates, she feared he had been wounded to death in some shameful brawl. Happily, however, his wound was not mortal; neither was it caused by his own folly. Yet it cost him the sight of his right eye; and, singular as it may seem, it proved to be a blessing in a strange disguise—an earthly

darkness destined to be succeeded by heavenly light.

But who was Gideon Ouseley? you ask. He was the eldest son of an Irish gentleman whose ancestors, made poor by the great civil war in England which cost King Charles I. his life, had removed to Ireland and settled, some in Dunmore, and some in other towns. Gideon was born in Dunmore, February 24, 1762.

Gideon was taught Latin and mathematics by Father Tom Keane, a priest who wore a long blue coat and Hessian boots, and who had very winning ways. Gideon loved study, and stuck so closely to his books as to injure his health somewhat. His father wished to send him to college at Dublin; but Gideon's tutor being unable to teach him Greek, the lad could not pass the required examination, and so missed the opportunity of completing his education. After a time his father removed to another county, where Gideon, when about twenty years of age, married a very superior young lady. His wife's father dying a few

years later, he returned with her to his former home near Dunmore Castle.

Up to the time of his being shot in the eye young Ouseley was a leader in the rude sports and vulgar vices which were the delight of the thoughtless young squires of his town and county. He was droll, witty, daring and skillful in games and rustic sports. He loved whisky and gambling, and was going down hill so fast as to cause his patient young wife much anxiety and sorrow.

But now that he was kept from his gay companions in fun and frolic by the wound which seemed to be the messenger of death, a great change came over his thoughts and feelings. In his boyhood his good mother had often made him read to her from the Bible and from Young's "Night Thoughts." Images of that loving mother, and the impressions made by his early reading, now floated, like half-forgotten pictures, in his mind. To bring them out more clearly, he asked his gentle wife to read to him, in her soft sweet voice, from the

"Night Thoughts" and other writings of Dr. Young. She did so gladly, fondly hoping that her husband might thereby be won from the wild paths of folly in which he had been descending toward ruin.

Her hopes grew bright as evening stars in clear air when Gideon, seeing that he had been the "companion of fools," resolved to be henceforth a man every way worthy of his noble wife. Strong in will, he went forth from his sick chamber resolved to give up his former vices. He felt sure that he was master of himself until his tempters and the hour of temptation came. And then, alas! he learned, as millions upon millions of other sinners have also learned, that, until God assists, a sinful soul cannot conquer sin. In a short time he was as gay and wicked as before. Nevertheless, his broken purposes were sticking in his heart like spear-heads, filling him with misery which was very keen and very hard to endure. And the hopes of his suffering and affectionate wife were clouded in thick darkness.

About this time a strange event happened in Dunmore. Some Irish dragoons were stationed in its barracks. Directly after their arrival some of them, who were Methodists, hired a room in the village inn, where they began to hold prayer-meetings. Such a thing had never before been known in Dunmore. The people could not understand it. There must be, they thought, something wrong in it —some underhand design, some trick—and they watched those praying dragoons as detectives watch suspected criminals.

Gideon Ouseley shared these suspicions. In April, 1791, he went to the meeting, "with one eye blind, and the other full of shrewdness and roguery," to search out the hidden purpose of these devout soldiers. Yet, with all his keenness, he could detect nothing covert or evil in them. But, after going several times, he did make a discovery which startled him. He saw that he himself was a very wicked man in the sight of God; that sin is a vile, detestable thing; and that, if he was forced to appear

before the divine Judge as he then was, he should "be ruined, most certainly," and that forever.

Once more this strong-minded man tried to make a good man of himself, and once more sin was too strong for him. But after going to class-meeting, studying the Bible, praying much, and listening to some Wesleyan preachers who came to Dunmore, he learned that the pardon of sin and power to overcome it must be accepted as *free gifts* from the hands of Jesus. Seing that he must remain the guilty bond-slave of sin forever, or be saved by Jesus only, he at last, on a memorable Sunday morning, looked to Jesus as having died for him.

"Then," said he, "I saw that Jesus loved me and gave himself for me; and the hardness of my heart all passed away. I melted at the sight of that love of God to me; and I knew—yes, I *knew*—that God had forgiven me all my sins. My soul was filled with gladness, and I wept for joy."

Gideon had not a drop of coward blood in his

veins, and, therefore, did not hide his light beneath a bushel. He forthwith told the story of God's love to his friends. He joined the Wesleyan Society. He lived a new and beautiful life. People said he was crazy; but he knew that, for the first time in his life, he was in his right mind, and that his greatest need was more faith, more love, more purity. For these best of blessings he prayed constantly, and a few months later the Lord so filled him with the spirit of love and purity that he cried out:

"My God, my God! I never thought such happiness was to be attained in this world."

When this precious blessing fell upon him he was twenty-nine years old. He lived to be seventy-seven. Yet from that happy day until the hour of his death his heart, though often tempted, was kept full of the love of Jesus.

Ouseley was so full of love to Christ that he could not keep from speaking of it, not only to his friends, but also to his neighbors. In a short time his wife became sharer of his heavenly bliss. But his neighbors made sport of his

words. Still a voice in his heart kept bidding him preach the Gospel. He pleaded his unfitness. How could he preach a sermon, having never learned? But the voice replied, "Do you not know the *disease*" [of sin?] "Yes, Lord, I do," his heart responded. "And do you not know the *cure?*" rejoined the voice. "O yes, glory be to thy name, I do!" was his heart's answer. "Go, then," said the voice, "and tell them these two things, the disease and the cure; never mind the rest; the rest is only talk."

Still he was hesitant, as he might well be, in view of his lack of training for the work of the ministry. But the Master knew that he was no common man, and that he had all the fitness really needed for the peculiar work he wished him to do among the rude people of Ireland. Hence the Master kept bidding him to preach until, like the truly heroic man he was, he said:

"I will make no more excuses, should it even cost my life; should they even dash out my brains!"

This was manly speech, and he meant it all. The resolution it expressed was put to a thousand tests during his long after-life. But he never shrunk from cunning priest or fiery mob. Brutal men could treat him cruelly; they could take his life; but they could not compel him to refrain from telling the story of sin's disease, and its cure through his Master's dying love. Noble Gideon!

This "sweet story of old" he told wherever he could find a gathering of the people. At weddings, wakes, funerals, stations, fairs, markets, or any other place in which he could find listeners, he talked of Jesus and his love. He spoke mostly in the Irish language. His voice was "strangely sweet," and thus his word found favor with many who would have refused to hear him had he spoken in English. For five or six years he made Dunmore the center of his movements. Afterward he settled in Ballymote, from which he made long preaching journeys. Finally, his success having made him a marked man, he was taken into the Irish Wes-

leyan Conference, and kept in the field as a home missionary to the end of his days.

While riding one day trying to find people willing to listen to the story of his Master's love, Ouseley lighted upon a procession of mourners on their way to the grave-yard with a dead body. Joining the party he rode with them to the grave. When the priest began droning out the words of the ritual in Latin, which was an unknown tongue to the ignorant peasants, Ouseley translated them into their native language, and repeated them in his own winning way. His earnest manner, so opposite to the lazy drawling of the priest; his tenderness, in such marked contrast with the cold indifferent tones of their parish instructor, roused the attention of the wondering people. Their impulsive natures were stirred. Even the dull priest himself listened with silent astonishment while Ouseley, at the close of the service, spoke of Jesus as the giver of rest to the weary, and as the only "Way" to heaven.

This little touching sermon ended, the good

An Irish Funeral.

man rode away. The people gazed at him as he passed over the adjacent hill, and then asked the priest,

"Who is that man, father?"

"Indade, I don't know at all," replied the bewildered priest; "but I think he must be an angel. Sure no mortal man could do the like o' that."

Gideon shot his arrow at a venture that day. But it struck one heart with gracious effect, for years after, he met a man who said to him,

"Don't ye remember the berrin', an' ye explainin' the mass that the praste was readin'?"

"I do," replied Ouseley.

"Ye tould us that day," the man rejoined, "how to find the Lord; and, blessed be his holy name! I've had him in my heart iver since."

O happy preacher! This poor man's words no doubt made his big heart swell with gladness, because they showed him that those few words spoken in a grave-yard had saved at least one soul from death.

Mr. Ouseley was in the habit of riding into

markets and fairs on horseback. Seated in his saddle, with a black cap on his head, he talked to his wondering listeners in the Irish tongue with such natural eloquence and deep feeling that very many poor priest-ridden Catholics were led to trust no longer in their Church, but in Jesus only. Yet he often met with cruel treatment; as when talking one day to a crowd in the street in Granard, an old man with a gray head threw a handful of street-dirt over the people right into Ouseley's face. With great calmness he freed his mouth from the dirt, and cried out,

"Now, boys, did I deserve that?"

"No, no!" the people shouted. Presently the same old man tried to throw more dirt in his face. But the preacher's calm courage had so won the good-will of the people, that they fell upon the ugly old man as if, says William Arthur, "they were trying to kick twenty devils out of him."

At another place the people, stirred up by their priests, waylaid him in a lonely part of the

road. When he came near they "rose up out of the ditches like a swarm of bees on all sides." Rushing upon him, armed with sticks, they shouted, "Deliver!" and struck him on his head and shoulders with their clubs. He put spurs to his horse, and after much effort, forced his way through them. Badly bruised and bareheaded, for he had lost his hat in the fray, he rode away, rejoicing that, like the apostolic heroes of the olden time, he was counted worthy to suffer for the sake of the dear Lord he loved.

One day when Ouseley was preaching from his saddle in the market-place at Maguire's Bridge, a notorious cock-fighter, named Terry M'Gowan, came along carrying a game-cock beneath the tail of his coat. God's word broke Terry's heart. Forgetful of his fighting-cock, he raised his hands in prayer. The bird flew, and so did the poor cock-fighter's sins, for he found pardon, peace, and joy on the spot. Full of gladness he ran home and told the good news to his wife. She, poor soul! thinking he was

crazy, sent for the priest to charm away his madness. The priest, on arriving at Terry's house, soon learned that Ouseley's words had been the means of bringing a new life into Terry's heart, and, after calling the missionary a madman, he said, in a coaxing tone:

"Now, Terry, just mind your own business, and go to your duty next Sunday."

"I will, if your reverence will do one thing for me," replied the shrewd Irishman.

"What is that, Terry?"

"Come with me to Maguire's Bridge to get the Lord to *undo* what he did for me there this day."

"What did he do for you, Terry?" asked the priest.

"He said to me, 'Terry M'Gowan, your sins, which were many, are all forgiven you,'" rejoined the rejoicing convert.

The priest, feeling as if what he thought was his business had been taken out of his hands by a higher power, angrily retorted as he walked off,

"I give you up as a lost case!"

Thousands of poor papists were led, like Terry M'Gowan, by Ouseley's preaching to listen to the voice of Him who has power on earth to pardon the sins of men, women, and children. The story of his missionary journeys up and down the "Emerald Isle" is more romantic than many idle fictions. It shows that he was shrewd, witty, brave, unselfish, a lover of other men's souls, and loyal to his Lord, whom he loved with all his heart. Though not what the world calls a great man, he was greatly good, and that is the highest kind of greatness.

Ouseley was, as many Irishmen are, very quick-witted. He knew how to use this gift for his Master. Here is an example of it that will please you.

He was preaching one day in the open air, sitting on his horse in the center of a group of friendly listeners, when a gang of fierce men rushed upon his congregation, trying to get near enough to him to "bate the life out of him!" Pausing, he cried,

"Make way for those gentlemen. I have important business with them."

His friends wondered. The rowdies were puzzled. The preacher only was calm and self-possessed. Looking into the faces of his hesitating foes he said,

"My friends, are you acquainted with the priest of this parish?"

"We are."

"Will you take a message to him from me?"

"We will. What is it?"

"I want him to tell me, if he can make a fly; not a fishing-fly, but one of those biting, buzzing fellows, like this one sitting on the neck of my horse. Can he make such a fly out of a bit of clay?"

"Shure, what's the use o' askin' him that? Of course, he can't do it," said they scornfully.

Then, with one of his irresistibly comic smiles, Ouseley retorted, "Well then, my dears, if a priest can't make a little fly out of a bit of clay, how can he make the Lord Jesus Christ out of a bit of bread?"

This was a question no wit among them could answer. They saw that they were fairly cornered, that they were "taken aback." Ouseley's friends smiled, his enemies felt confused and slunk away, and the brave, witty preacher finished his sermon without further interruption.

It need scarcely be added that Gideon Ouseley, after seventy-seven years of life, died a happy man. The disease which cut the "silver cord" was very, very painful. But the last words he uttered to his loving wife and friends were words of triumph. "I have no fear of death," he said; "God's Spirit is my support;" and then, shortly after noonday, his purified soul ascended to the throne of his beloved Lord.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MOUSEHOLE FARMER'S BOY.

Impatient to be truly great,
Ambitious of a crown above,
He coveted the highest seat,
He asked the gift of Perfect Love.
—C. WESLEY.

THERE is a pleasant little village in the west of old England which is built along the shore of a pretty sheet of water called Mount's Bay. It is about twelve miles from a narrow neck of granite cliffs known as Land's End. Those cliffs jut out into the Atlantic Ocean and are beaten on both sides by its restless waves. But Mount's Bay is usually quiet, and the little village on its edge is a quaint place, bearing the odd name of Mousehole, which name was suggested by a cavern in a neighboring cliff that had a very narrow entrance.

But this village, though small and little known, produced a man whose name is now a

Carvosso.

household word in Methodism. He never did deeds which men call wonderful, yet he was a very remarkable man. His name was William Carvosso, and every boy and girl who desires to live a happy and useful life ought to inquire why our Church has inscribed his name on the roll of her famous men.

William was not born in a stately mansion, but in a very humble cottage, on the 11th of March, 1750. His father was a poor fisherman at the time William was born, and was shortly after seized by a party of sailors called a "press gang," carried on board of a ship of war, and forced to become a seaman in the British navy. Hence, this boy seldom saw his father, whose visits home were very infrequent, and who, while William was quite young, died in a seamen's hospital far away from his family. For this reason young Carvosso never knew the blessing of a father's watchful care.

His mother, left wholly to herself, did the best she could to bring up William and four

other children. She had to struggle hard to win bread and clothing for her household, and was so poor she could not afford to send her children to school. Yet, being a faithful mother, she taught them to read. Whether her children were dutiful or otherwise is not known. All we know of William's early childhood is that he one day fell headlong into a river and was nearly drowned.

We judge that he was neither idle nor mischievous, but bright, good-natured, and active; because when he was only ten years old a farmer living near Mousehole took a fancy to him and offered to give him work on his farm. William was much pleased with this offer, because, though it was by no means an easy lot to be a farmer's drudge, yet he was sure of getting more and better food than his poor mother could afford to place upon her frugal table. Hence, with his mother's consent, when only ten years old, William Carvosso became a farmer's hired boy.

It must be true that this poor boy felt that

his little duties were things which needed not merely to be done, but to be done well; for the farmer soon became very desirous to secure him as an apprentice. Had he been idle, careless, disobedient, his master, instead of wishing to keep him, would have been glad to get rid of him. As it was, William became his apprentice, bound by law to work for him until eighteen years old.

When William was thirteen years old the farmer died. Had the boy been idle and fond of change he would have made his master's death an occasion for leaving his place; but he had no wish to become a "rolling stone." He was, therefore, content to serve the farmer's widow, and he remained with her, not merely until he was eighteen, but until he was twenty-one.

All this proves that young Carvosso had such fine qualities as industry, honesty, good nature, a desire to please, and skill to use his strong pair of hands. No lad could spend eleven years in the service of one family without these

virtues. But he also had some serious faults, of which he wrote as follows:

"During this time I was borne down by the prevailing sins of the age; such as cock-fighting, wrestling, card-playing, and Sabbath-breaking. I lived without God . . . more than twenty years."

These sins, thus frankly confessed, were low and vulgar deeds, such as were common in those days among English peasant lads. Young Carvosso was led into them by the common custom of his associates, and without thinking much about their wickedness. Still, they were very bad practices, as he saw after his eyes were opened by the good Spirit of God. Had he continued in them they would have ruined him, body and soul, and his name, instead of being like sweet ointment, would either have never been heard of outside his native town, or, if known, it would have been a by-word and a reproach. Happily for him he saw a spectacle, when he was about twenty years old, which led him to change his course of life. What was it?

Young Carvosso had an only sister who lived twelve miles from Mousehole. One bright Sunday morning, dressed in his best suit, he entered his mother's cottage for the purpose of taking her to the parish church. There he was astonished to see his sister on her knees, and to hear her pray very tenderly for her mother and brothers. She had just been converted, and had walked twelve miles that morning to tell the good news and to persuade her friends to seek her Saviour. William listened to her prayer, and when she arose from her knees he noticed that her eyes were filled with tears. Taking his hand, she asked him, in tremulous tones,

"My dear William, what preparation are you making for eternity?"

His reply is not on record; but it is known that he promised her he would go to the Wesleyan chapel in the evening of that day; that he kept his promise, and that, while listening to the sermon, "the scales fell from his eyes," and he had such a "sight of the dam-

ning nature of sin," that he was "afraid the earth would open and swallow him up."

He might have stifled these solemn feelings had he been determined to keep on doing wrong. He did a wiser and a better thing. He encouraged them, and repented of his past folly. He turned his face from evil, and from the very depths of his heart cried out,

"If thou wilt spare me, O Lord, I will serve thee to the end of my days!"

This was a right and manly promise, which he carried out at once in a manly manner. That very night, in the presence of his room-mate, he knelt down and prayed. He also forsook his old companions in sin, and for several days kept up an almost unceasing prayer for mercy. He was very strongly tempted to despair, but he lustily cried out, "I am determined, whether I am saved or lost, that while I have breath I will never cease crying for mercy." The ever-loving Jesus pitied him in that moment of mental agony; and, says Carvosso, "Christ appeared within, God

pardoned all my sins, and set my soul at liberty."

This was the turning-point in Carvosso's life. Heretofore he was like a ship without a helm, tossed about by the waves of circumstance. Now his purpose to be God's servant was a rudder by which he was guided into the Wesleyan Church, into a good degree of worldly prosperity, into a life of great usefulness, and finally into the heavenly city of which Jesus is the unsetting Sun.

One of the first things Carvosso did after this sweet, clear conversion was to become a student of the Bible. "I determined," he wrote, "to be a Bible Christian." That resolution, faithfully carried out, did wonders for him. It made his mind grow; it kept his faith strong and growing; it guided him nearer and nearer to God; it taught him to love God with all his heart. No pen can tell how much Carvosso, like John Bunyan and millions of other greatly good souls, gained by being a faithful student of the Bible.

So pure was Carvosso's life, and so rich his experience, that four years after his conversion, and while he was yet a poor farm laborer, he was appointed a class-leader. Shortly after he married a pious young woman, who proved a helpmate indeed. His next step was to hire a small farm, upon which he lived until he was thirty-eight years old. He then moved to a much larger farm, twenty-six miles from the place of his birth. Here he toiled early and late, and though his land was poor, his industry, energy and skill changed it from a spot of comparative barrenness into a fruitful garden. He lived on it twenty-seven years, reared his family of three children respectably, and saved enough to enable him to live without business during the last nineteen years of his life.

You will be pleased to learn how his three children were led to the feet of the blessed Christ. They were in their teens, living quiet lives at home, but without living faith in their young hearts. Carvosso had taught them the

truth, had prayed for them daily, but had not set himself in good earnest to bring them at once into his Lord's service. But one evening, as he was going home after a love-feast, a neighbor said to him,

"I had the unspeakable happiness last night of witnessing the conversion of my little daughter while I held her in my arms."

This beautiful picture of a little girl finding Jesus while in the arms of her father touched Carvosso's heart. It also pained him, because it brought up the images of his own children, who were still unsaved. Looking earnestly into the face of his friend he exclaimed,

"Why, I have two children who are getting up to mature age! I am grieved to say that I have not yet seen any marks of a work of God upon their minds."

His happy friend, with deep feeling, rejoined, "Brother, has not God promised to pour out his Spirit upon thy seed and his blessing upon thine offspring?"

This question set Carvosso's soul on fire with

strong, restless desire to see his children made happy in the Christ. He began praying for them as he had never prayed before. His heart was in an agony. Every day he pleaded with his heavenly Father. Nor did he pray in vain. Two weeks had scarcely passed when one day he was called from his field work by a message from his wife begging him to come home at once.

Wondering what might have happened, he entered the door-way of his house, and was met in the hall by his wife, who said,

"Grace is up stairs troubled about something; but she will not tell us what troubles her, only she keeps saying she must see father."

The good farmer hurried up stairs. Entering his daughter's little chamber he saw her weeping. Looking at him through her tears, she exclaimed with much feeling:

"Oh, father! I'm afraid I shall go to hell!"

"No, no!" replied Carvosso, joyfully. "Glory be to God! I am not afraid of that *now*."

The weeping girl then told him that for two

weeks her sins had pressed upon her heart as a very heavy burden. This showed him that God had begun to answer his cries on the day in which he had begun to pray for his child in faith. Hence with a glad heart his ready tongue, which was wise to win souls, told her how to go to Jesus. Giving due heed to his words, Grace gave herself to Jesus to be his disciple forever, and was soon made a very happy girl.

Not many days after, his elder son, who had been very careless and idle, went to him with serious face and manner, saying:

"Father, I should like to go with you to class to-day."

The penitent lad found that class-meeting to be like the mount of God. Jesus soon met him there with the precious gifts of love, peace, joy, and purity.

Carvosso's younger son was the good class-leader's best beloved. He was studious, and his life was beautiful, lacking only the one thing needful. His father kept praying for him, but

without apparent effect, until one day he took him aside, talked closely to him, wept over him, as he besought him to add faith to the youthful virtues which already adorned his character. The lad melted under his father's tender appeals, consented to go to class, where he soon tasted the sweet manna with which Jesus feeds all who ask the precious gifts of his everlasting love.

Both of those lads lived to become useful Wesleyan ministers, doing honor to their pious father by following his bright example, and, like him, making their lives a benediction to the world. His daughter kept the faith, and as a Christian matron adorned the doctrine of her beloved Lord.

The secret of Carvosso's success, both as a farmer and as a Christian, was his entire devotion to duty. Whatever his hand found to do, whether in the cultivation of his land or in the service of God, he did with "his might." Whether he plowed or prayed he was in dead earnest. He never permitted his farm work to

keep him from doing his religious duties. With him God was first, business next. Hence it came to pass that while his soul grew like a thrifty tree in the garden of the Lord, his farm flourished also, and finally yielded him a "moderate competency," which enabled him to spend the latter years of his long life in going about and doing good like his divine Master.

When Carvosso was sixty-three years old, his good, faithful wife died. His only daughter having married, and his two sons being Wesleyan ministers, his home was desolate. Then he said, "I will go at once out of the world, and retire from all its cares. . . . I will give up my few remaining days wholly to the service and glory of God."

This was a grand and noble purpose, especially for a man who had lived sixty-five years, of which fifty-five had been spent in downright hard work. Had he chosen to spend the rest of his time in quiet, restful leisure, no man would have blamed him. But Carvosso saw no charm in idleness. He was a true man, to

whom life meant action. And since his heart was filled with the love of Jesus, and burned with unquenchable desires to be useful, he now gave all his time and all his energies to the godlike work of making other men happy by teaching them how to be good. Carvosso had peculiar gifts. He had what is sometimes called *personal power*. That is, he could deeply impress the minds of all with whom he conversed, whether in private interviews, in public prayer-meetings, or in that narrow circle known among Methodists as the "class-meeting." This power was the fruit, in part, of his sincerity, his earnestness, his tenderness, and his simplicity. What he said was so obviously the language of his heart, that it commanded attention; it was spoken with such deep feeling, in such thrilling tones, and with such spiritual authority, that his hearers were made to feel. His words were things of power. But the highest source of his great influence was the fact that, like Stephen the first martyr, he was "filled with the Holy Ghost." There was a glory

shining in his eyes, a spiritual atmosphere surrounding his features, and a divine unction attending his speech, which cut wicked men's consciences to the quick, and moved good men to seek for still higher degrees of goodness and purity.

Had he been a victorious general, a great artist, a brilliant writer, a profound lawyer, a successful merchant, or a remarkable inventor, he would have seemed greater in the eyes of the world than he now does. In reality he did more good to the souls of men than he could have done had he filled some post counted high and great by the world at large. During his journeys from town to town in the west of England, continued through nineteen years, he persuaded hundreds of sinful men and women to give up wicked practices and to seek Jesus; and he led thousands of half-hearted Christians into that pure way of living which John Bunyan describes in "Pilgrim's Progress" as a blessed life in the land of Beulah.

Carvosso was one of the happiest men who

ever lived. You will, when you read his diary, find him often saying, "I thank thee, O my God, for this heaven of love and joy in which my soul now lives. . . . All is calm and joy and peace. . . . The Lord keeps my soul like a watered garden, as a spring shut up to all but himself. How sweet the moments I have enjoyed with my God this night!" These are specimen extracts. Though he had temptations and trials, yet he was for many, many years a very happy man. Among all the worldly men, however great, whose lives have been written, there is not one who drank so deeply and constantly from the fountain of happiness as Carvosso. Indeed, very few such men ever knew what it was to be really happy, because very few of them were true disciples of the Lord Jesus; and none but his disciples can be truly happy.

When he was eighty-five years old Carvosso died a triumphant death. He suffered several weeks before his death from a very agonizing disease. But he bore his pain like a hero. He

marched fearlessly up to the mystic door of death, and actually died while trying to sing the Doxology! His death was the glorious end of a pure, joyous, earthly life. It was the passage of his great and pure soul out of a decaying body into the beauty, the sweetness, and the bliss which redeemed sinners enjoy in the heavenly world.

Thus the child born of poor parents in a Mousehole cottage, after living a toilsome but noble and useful earthly life, became a king and a priest unto God in the heavenly world. If the reader wishes to live an equally happy life, and attain to the glory of heaven, he must do as Carvosso did when he repented of sin and gave his heart to God. To be sorry for sin is the first step toward goodness. To trust in Jesus for pardon is the next. Then come unceasing loyalty to duty, constant work for Jesus, and, finally, a happy death and a crown of life in the beautiful city of our God. Let him who would wear the crown take the first step at once.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LEARNED SHOEMAKER.

"God helps them that help themselves."
"Dost thou love life? then do not squander time,
for that is the stuff life is made of."
Plow deep while sluggards sleep."—POOR RICHARD.

THERE are boys who have a foolish fondness for feats which are perilous to life and limbs. The subject of this sketch, young Samuel Drew, was one such boy. Like that famous British admiral, Lord Nelson, he knew nothing of fear. Hence, when only about ten years of age, being on a common in Cornwall one day, for the purpose of looking after his master's sheep, he noticed some sea-birds whirling sportively over the tall cliff, which formed the border of the common. Attracted by the movements and hoarse voices of those birds, he strayed to the edge of the cliff, that he might watch their flights more closely. Looking be-

low, he saw them flying in countless numbers to and from their nests half-way down the rugged rocks. Instantly he said, half aloud,

"There must be eggs and young birds down there. I'll go down and see if I can't get some."

The cliff was two hundred feet above the waves which dashed and roared beneath, and its face was almost perpendicular. To descend such rocks in search of birds' nests was not an act of real courage, but of daring foolhardiness. Yet Samuel made the attempt. When nearly half-way down, a jutting crag stopped him, and very reluctantly he said to himself, "I *must* go back!"

But this was easier to think than to do, for the ledge on which he stood was so sharp and narrow that he could not turn round. His position, therefore, was one of great peril. One false step would cost him a deadly fall. There was no one near to help him. The wild sea-gulls whirled about him, making what now seemed to him unearthly noises, and a violent

death stared him in the face. For a moment his courage failed. His heart beat with the quick movements of fear. His limbs trembled, but only for an instant. Rallying his spirits, he crept backward half an inch at a time, until he reached a nook deep enough to let him face about; and then, by slow, resolute efforts, he succeeded in regaining the summit of that dangerous cliff. Through his own mad folly he had stood face to face with death!

This incident shows that Samuel was a boy of no ordinary character. You can see by it that he had a strong will, steady nerve, daring courage, and wonderful self-possession. Nevertheless, he was far, very far, from being a boy of much promise. His father, though descended from wealthy ancestors, was very poor. He had indeed been deserted by his family because he would be a Methodist. Hence his son, this Samuel Drew, born in Cornwall, 1765, one hundred and seventeen years since, was brought up in a home of poverty. When only *eight* years old he was put to work in a "stamping-mill,"

where he was made to assist in cleansing the tin ores from the neighboring mines. When he was nine his good mother died. When little more than ten he was apprenticed to a shoemaker, and made to work at cobbling shoes, to toil on a small farm which his master cultivated, and to do not a little of the drudgery of the house.

Hence you see his lot in life was a very hard one. It was bad enough in itself; but he made it worse by behaving badly. He was cunning, given to idle tricks, to the use of impudent language, to rash adventures, to robbing orchards, to rough sports, and to do many acts of disobedience, both to his master and his father. In short, he was a very self-willed boy. Yet his mind was strong and bright, but it was, as yet, like an unpolished jewel, the beauty and value of which is hidden in a crust of coarse mineral. Nevertheless, his much-tried father caught some glimpses of its power, and often said of him:

"That boy, ungovernable as he is, has more sense than all of us."

No doubt Samuel was very roughly used by his master, who not only burdened him with over-much work, but also subjected him at times to cruel beatings. This treatment soured his temper and wore out his patience. Hence, when seventeen years old, he ran away, with about eighteen cents in his pocket and a little handkerchief filled with his small stock of clothing. This was a foolish thing to do, and it cost him much suffering. The first night of his flight he made his bed in a hay-field. His few cents were cautiously spent on bread and milk the next day. Hungry and footsore, he finally reached a town called Liskeard, where he found work with a shoemaker who pitied him, but he had been so poorly taught by his late master that he was pronounced a "miserable tool." His shopmates laughed at him as a bungler. Happily his employer and his son were very kind, and the latter taught him how to do better work. Yet, when the former learned by accident that he was a runaway apprentice, he bade him go back to his master. Fortunately

for Samuel, just as he was sent adrift his eldest brother Jabez, who was in pursuit of him, rode up to his employer's door, and took him home to his father's house at Polpea. Here, his indentures being canceled, he remained several months, working on his father's farm. The hardships of his brief tramp had made him a little wiser, if not a better, boy.

His next step was removal to a place named Millbrook, where he found work in a large shoe-shop. He was still, he says, "a wretched tool at the trade;" but he worked willingly and with diligence, though at first he could earn only very small wages. Yet he improved after a time, and his contact with his brother workmen sharpened his naturally bright, though still ignorant, mind, so that one of his shop-mates afterward said,

"I remember that in our disputes those who could get Sam Drew on their side always made sure of victory; and he had so much good-humor and drollery that we all liked him."

Samuel, though never profane himself, still

kept up his companionship with those who were. His love of adventure also led him to join bands of smugglers, whom he helped in the gloom of dark nights to land from their vessels goods which had not paid lawful duty. While in this dangerous business, and in other mad-headed doings, he had several narrow escapes from violent death. After hearing of one of his most perilous feats one day, his father sorrowfully exclaimed,

"Alas! what will be the end of my poor, unhappy boy?"

It would surely have been swift destruction but for an unexpected event which occurred when Samuel was about twenty years of age. This was nothing less than the death of his eldest brother, whose pale face wore a radiant smile when, with his dying breath, he said to his father,

"My dear father, all is well. I have on the wedding garments. Return thanks to God, dear father; I am going to glory!"

This spectacle of triumphant faith made the

up to this time reckless Samuel very serious and thoughtful. His brother's funeral sermon, preached by the famous Dr. Adam Clarke, made him still more thoughtful, even to repentance. Then, giving up his old sins, he made up his mind to live a right and true life, and to become a disciple of the holy Jesus. The Lord pardoned his sins while he was praying alone in the shadow of a great tree. Having found peace, he joined the Wesleyan Church at St. Austell, Cornwall.

Samuel was now twenty years of age. He could scarcely read, and his writing was like "the traces of a spider dipped in ink and set to crawl on paper." But, moved by his new-born faith, he now gave all the powers of his active mind to self-improvement. He worked with all his might by day at his trade. He read, not useless novels, but books which taught him knowledge while eating his meals and at night. So ignorant was he that he felt compelled to read with a dictionary at hand from which to learn the meaning of even many common words.

It required much hard work, great courage, a resolute will, and rare persistence, to gain admission into the temple of knowledge. But he had all these qualities, and therefore he soon began to improve with a rapidity that astonished all who knew him.

His poverty was so complete that it stood frowning like a mountain in his upward path. It compelled him to work eighteen hours out of twenty-four. It left him with very little money to buy books. And when, after a brief period, he started a small shoe business on twenty-five dollars of borrowed capital, he was sometimes so closely pressed as to be forced to go supperless to bed after toiling eighteen hours with awl, hammer, and lapstone. The struggle was a hard one, but he kept out of debt, and two years after his conversion to Christ and Methodism he found himself able to repay his borrowed money, and in possession of a small stock of leather, a thriving little trade, a growing reputation for honesty, industry, and thrift, and a considerable addition to his mental store

of facts and ideas. By taking the Christ for his Saviour and as the pattern for his life, he had ceased being a wild, troublesome, daring youth, rushing headlong down the way to destruction, and had become a peaceable, upright, respected, prosperous man of business, moving toward heaven with a face set fixedly on the prize of a useful life on earth and a crown of glory in the eternal hereafter. He did heroic work at this period of his life, overcoming difficulties such as few men ever completely master.

Mr. Drew, though part way up, was not yet at the top of the "Hill Difficulty." Though no longer in debt, he had to be very economical and very industrious in order to live comfortably. He came near stumbling over the rough-edged rocks of politics. Being a good talker, he was often drawn into long political talks by the politicians of the place, who visited his shop and hindered him in his work. To make up the loss of time thus wasted he often worked on the bench, after closing his shop

windows, far into the night. But one evening, while he was pegging a shoe, after shutting the shop, an unknown boy, putting his lips to the key-hole of the shop door, cried, in a shrill, piping voice,

"Shoemaker! Shoemaker! Work by night and run about by day."

This was insolence on the part of the boy. But Mr. Drew, accepting it as a just rebuke, dropped his work, said to himself, "True, true, but you shall never have that to say of me again," and from that hour left off meddling with idle political talk.

Henceforth Mr. Drew gave himself wholly to "driving his business," and to study during week days. On Sundays he preached Jesus, having become a Wesleyan "local preacher." By a singular act of choice, he selected for his reading books about the nature of the mind and about spiritual subjects—that is, books about what is called metaphysics. It sounds strangely, but it is a sober fact, that this poor cobbler of St. Austell determined to become a *meta-*

physician!—a student of mental and spiritual science.

No doubt this purpose made many persons laugh at him. They who did so could not see what kind of stuff this shoemaker was made of. They could see that in appearance he was by no means likely to become a philosopher. But they could not see the mighty mind that was working in his brain. Hence it was that when he was in a bookstore one day two proud military officers, clothed in scarlet and bedizened with gilt, looked at him with scornful surprise as he said to the bookseller,

"Have you a copy of Plato's Phædo, sir?"

Plato's Phædo, indeed! What could a shoemaker want with such a volume as that? Thus these haughty soldiers queried among themselves. And then one of them, taking a child's spelling-book from the counter, offered it to the modest cordwainer, and with a sneer on his lips said,

"Mr. —— has not got Plato, my man, but here is a book he thinks likely to be more serv-

iceable, and as you do not seem to be overburdened with cash, I'll make you a present of it."

Drew resented this insolent speech with a dignity so becoming as to cover the military upstart with confusion. Perhaps the purse-proud man did not know, or, if he did, he had forgotten, that many noble minds have earned an honest living by cobbling shoes. Whittier, our noblest American poet, justly rebukes such narrow minds in his song to the great cordwainer's craft:

"Let foplings sneer, let fools deride,
Ye heed no idle scorner;
Free hands and hearts are still your pride,
And duty done, your honor.
Ye dare to trust for honest fame
The jury Time impanels,
And leave to truth each noble name
Which glorifies your annals.

"Thy songs, Hans Sachs, are ringing yet,
In strong and healthy German;
And Bloomfield's lays, and Gifford's wit,
And the rare good sense of Sherman;
Still from his book, a mystic seer,
The soul of Bœhmen preaches;
And England's priestcraft shakes to hear
Of Fox's leathern breeches."

Of all the many sons of genius who have ennobled the shoemaker's craft none have excelled Samuel Drew in the clearness of their mental eyesight. But at that time his light had not shone far beyond the place of his abode. He was as yet only beginning to climb up the ladder. He was toiling for the knowledge which was to make him a master among those who strive to understand the greatest mysteries of life.

While he was busy working and studying for this end, he one day sold a pair of shoes to a woman from the country. This queer customer told him he would live more comfortably if he were married. To this he assented, laughing, and saying, "I know no one who will have me."

The woman replied that she could find him a wife. A week later she actually brought a young woman to his shop, and said,

"I have brought my daughter, sir, for you to see if you'd like her!"

Mr. Drew objected that he knew nothing of the girl, whereupon the maiden herself spoke up, and said,

"O, sir, the trial of the pudding is in the eating."

Of course, Mr. Drew felt obliged to decline the honor of marrying the strange maiden who was so eager to be his bride, and she and her mother were forced to go home chewing the cud of disappointment. He laughed at this incident, which, not improbably, led him to think of marriage, and to select, as he did, a very suitable lady named Honor Halls, who became his bride in April, 1791, when he was nearly twenty-seven years old.

Shortly after his marriage Mr. Drew began to use his pen. For several years he had no study. His seat during those evening hours given to writing was a low nursing-chair beside the kitchen fire. His desk was a pair of bellows laid across his knees. There, amid the rattle of dishes, the cries of babies, and the prattle of children, he wrote some of the profoundest thoughts which have ever dropped from a mortal's pen.

His first work was a pamphlet exposing the

folly and falsehood of a vile book called "The Age of Reason." It at once attracted the attention of scholarly men of the Episcopal and other Churches, many of whom complimented him very highly. He wrote other pamphlets on different themes; but the books which made him famous were on the "Immortality of the Soul" and the "Resurrection of the Body." Great men praised him, honored him, and became his friends, because of the great ability he showed in these and in other works which he afterward wrote. He was then able to lay aside his awl and lapstone, live on the fruits of his pen, and enjoy the society of learned men. By dint of right down hard work he had climbed from the bottom of the social ladder far up toward the top rung.

After he became known as a great writer he was often invited to preach in the great Wesleyan churches in London. But he never adopted a very clerical dress. Hence his appearance, when he entered one of those large churches in brown top-boots and light-gray breeches,

caused a frown to darken some faces and a smile to light up others. Drew was indifferent to both. His mind was indifferent to every thing but the great truths he was about to preach, and the richness of his sermons soon made thoughtful people forget his boots and breeches.

A curious blunder was once made by a man in Devonshire, who, one Sunday, said to the people of a country congregation:

"Mr. Drew, from Cornwall, the author of the Mortality and Immorality of the Human Soul, will preach here this evening!"

Such is greatnesss when viewed by little people!

When sixty-eight years old Samuel Drew died. The day before his departure he said to his nurse, "Thank God, to-morrow I shall join the glorious company above." This he no doubt did. When the next day he closed his eyes to earth, he ascended to the blood-washed throng of pure and noble souls who dwell in the city of God.

Every boy and girl who loves the memory of the greatly good, especially of those who in the days of their youth were roughly dealt with, but who, aided by the grace of God and their own industry, made themselves useful and happy, will do well to inquire more fully into the life of this celebrated Methodist. The full story of his life will teach them many precious practical lessons, and aid them in their efforts to be and to do good.

CHAPTER XV.

A CHILD OF PRIMITIVE METHODISM.

"My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,
A son of parents passed into the skies."

ONE dreary November morning in 1861 four hundred gentlemen and ladies assembled at a breakfast party in a public hall at Manchester, England, to do honor to a gray-haired minister who was nearly eighty years old. This aged man, whom his friends called "a child of primitive Methodism," had been an editor, an author, a theological tutor, a very distinguished itinerant minister, and a president of the Wesleyan Conference. The meeting greeted the noble veteran in an address filled with praise of his good deeds and beautiful character. It was evident that he was very highly esteemed and greatly beloved. Do you ask his name? It was Thomas Jackson.

I am sure you will want to know more of this honored man, when I tell you that he was the son of an English farm-laborer, that when a boy he seldom went to school, and that he climbed up the ladder of life from a very humble condition to high places in the Wesleyan Church by his own strong purpose and unresting industry. Let us see how he did it.

Thomas Jackson was born, December 12, 1783. His birthplace was a little stone cottage thatched with straw, standing in a small Yorkshire village, named Sancton. His father, though only a poor peasant, was a very industrious, honest, upright man. His mother had the heart of a true woman. They could not clothe their children in purple and fine linen, nor send them to halls of learning. But they did what they could for them, clothing them probably in coarse fustian, and sending them to the village school when they could afford to give their time for that purpose, which, in truth, was not often.

The village school to which young Thomas

went sometimes, was not favored with a teacher having many facts in his head or skill to teach. He taught nothing of grammar or geography. Reading, writing, very little arithmetic, and the Church Catechism, were all he tried to teach the rude urchins who were under his care. The ancient horn-book, from which he taught the alphabet, was a thin board with a short handle, having the alphabet and a few short words printed on a sheet pasted to its face. This printing was covered with transparent horn to keep mischievous or thoughtless fingers from picking off the paper.

The school-master in that hamlet kept his unwilling scholars in order with a thick hazel wand and a tough ferule. When teaching the catechism he gathered his pupils in a half circle before him, holding his book in one hand and his hazel-rod in the other. The forgetful boy, the dull one who could not learn, and the idle one who would rather play than listen, were sure to be reminded of their faults by whacks from that dreaded wand.

That hazel-rod was in the teacher's hand continually. It was made to do duty even at recess. There was a post with a cross-beam in the school-yard to which a bit of lead tied to a cord was fastened. When the boys went out, one of their number set this piece of lead swinging. If the pupils did not return to the school building before the lead ceased moving, this lord of the hazel-rod and horn-book took his stand outside, brandishing his scepter and prepared to lay it on the shoulders of the idlers. But his boys, though dull scholars, had their own tactics. They formed themselves into a square, and rushed past him in such a solid body that the rod only touched a few of their number. Surely such inventive lads deserved a better teacher.

Poor as the school was, Master Thomas could not attend it long or often. The needs of his home required that in the summer season he should earn a scanty pittance by watching sheep on some hills in the neighborhood. The scenery around those hills was grand, but it gave

small delight to an ignorant child of only eight or nine years old. Hence his days were dull and dreary as he sat, stood, or walked through ten or twelve weary hours, day after day, without seeing a solitary human face. His only shelter from burning suns or pelting rains was a hut built of sods by his own childish hands, with no better roof than a bundle of straw or a few bunches of weeds. He had no books, nothing to relieve the gloom of those long and wearisome days. His was indeed a cheerless childhood.

When he was about thirteen he was hired by a farmer as a servant. His master was a hard man. He called this poor boy up in the morning at the break of day, making him plow, or hoe, or dig, or thrash wheat until the sun went down. The thrashing with the flail, giving stroke for stroke with a strong brawny man, as he was forced to do, was a cruel tax upon his boyish strength, and gave him such a fearful sense of weariness that he carried the memory of it with him down to the grave. To a boy

thus treated life must have seemed like a long sunless day.

Thomas had an acquaintance who, after one of his days of toil, kneeled down by his bedside to pray. But so worn was this overworked boy that he fell asleep on his knees, and when he was called the next morning found himself in the same position. He had slept all night on his knees! Poor little fellow!

Thomas Jackson spent three such toilsome years as a farmer's servant. Then his father apprenticed him to a carpenter, wisely thinking that, seeing he could not hope to save money enough to purchase a farm, he might, by skill and industry, rise to the position of a master mechanic.

This change gave him a better prospect for the future, but did not much lighten the present burden of his labor. He still had to work very hard early and late. But not having to milk cows and care for horses on Sundays, he was able to rest from his weariness on the Lord's day. It also removed him from the

companionship of the rough, ignorant, and profane farm boys and men with whom he had been obliged to live and work.

It was a great fact in this lad's hard early life that, though ignorant and subject to great hardships, he had kept himself free from the vices of the rude fellows he had known. The good example and instructions of his honest father and his faithful mother, with the sermons he had heard from the Methodist preachers who visited his native village and its neighborhood, had kept him from falling into many sins practiced by boys of his age and class. When he was an old man he said of this period of his life:

"Whatever my sins were, and I confess they were many and great, I never did, in the whole course of my life, utter a profane oath, nor, to the best of my remembrance, take the name of God in vain."

All honor then be given to this poor boy! Not from choice, but by the force of things he could not control, he had been the companion

of ignorant and wicked lads who did not fear God. But, though living and working with them, he was not of them. At least, he kept his lips pure from a vice which most if not all, of them practiced.

How came he to do this? One of its causes may be found in the fact that the humble cottage in which he was raised was a house of piety and virtue. His father was a devout Methodist, as was his truly noble mother also. His father was obliged to leave home very early to get to his work in season, and could not therefore conduct family prayer in the morning. But his energetic little mother, as soon as breakfast was eaten, was in the habit of leading her children into her best room, where, as they kneeled around her, she prayed for them in the deep and thrilling tones which are born of mother love sanctified by the love of the blessed Christ. Hers were no dead prayers, but loving petitions, which, having touched her children's souls, ascended to the ears of the great All-Father.

The deep piety of Thomas Jackson's precious mother, the faithful instructions of his devout father, and the preaching at the Wesleyan chapel which he attended, were the sweet influences which kept the boy from falling into the vulgar vices of the peasant boys and men who were his companions in toil.

Still he was not a pious boy. He did not love his Lord; nor was his heart free from many sinful feelings; nor was his life pure from evil deeds. Yet when the Archbishop of York visited a neighboring town to "confirm" the youths who in their babyhood had been baptized in the parish church, he went, with others equally unfit, to receive that rite, which is only an invention of men, not required by the Gospel. One of the questions asked the young candidates was,

"Who is your ghostly enemy?"

"I don't know, sir," was the reply which went round the class of untaught urchins, who probably thought ghostly meant something like the ghosts that superstitious people dread.

When the question reached Master Thomas, he promptly replied,

"The devil, sir."

"Ay, to be sure, the devil," rejoined the preacher, approvingly.

But, ignorant and careless though they were, those young rustics went to church on the day appointed, and the white-robed Archbishop placed his hand upon their empty heads. No wonder Mr. Jackson in writing of this event in his life, felt obliged to say,

"Of the imposition of the hands of the Archbishop I confess, like many others, I thought but little. My attention was mainly directed to the holiday connected with it."

I suppose the worst thing growing out of this old Church rite is, that it leads young people who are yet living in sin to fancy themselves true disciples of the holy Christ. Happily for young Jackson, the Methodist teaching he had received kept him from thus deceiving himself. He knew himself to be still a sinner despite the Archbishop's hands. And this knowledge be-

came deep conviction a year or two after, when in a Methodist prayer-meeting his conscience accused him mightily of his many sins, and his young soul staggered beneath a load of guilt, like one crushed by a mighty burden. Of this deep awakening he says,

"I wept in the anguish of my spirit, and prayed as I had never prayed before."

The brethren gathered about him, but not to comfort him by telling him that having been confirmed he was a member of Christ's Church. No, no. They knew that there is no healing virtue in any form, but in Christ only. Hence they begged him to trust in Christ as his Saviour. This he did, though not then, but in another prayer-meeting the next evening. When he did so trust he says,

"Then my guilty fear at once departed, and my heart, before lacerated and broken, was filled with all joy and peace."

Young Jackson was no half-hearted convert. His whole life was made new. "The entire bent and habit of my nature was changed," he

says. Hence he felt no shame, but openly confessed that he had become the Lord's disciple. On the following Sabbath he visited his native village. His mother met him on the door-step. His first words to her were,

"Mother, I have found peace with God!"

Then mother and son wept joyful tears together. The father, though less demonstrative, was equally glad. All three went to class-meeting and to a love-feast on that hallowed day. At the latter meeting the joyous youth said, among other things,

"As to my new and spiritual birth, *I am only three days old;* but I hope to share the happiness of heaven forever, and to sing the praises of my Saviour in strains that will make the heavenly arches ring."

This was no shallow boast, but the words of a brave young soul thoroughly in earnest. Nor was his conversion fruitless of immediate results. Within a short time, two of his brothers and his uncle Thomas followed his example. Thus the little stone cottage in Sancton be-

came a house of joy. A revival spread through the neighborhood, and many an evil life was changed into purity and peace. If young Jackson had been a half-hearted convert no such fruit would have grown out of his conversion.

Having crossed the Rubicon, with a stern purpose never to recross the boundary between a good and bad life, young Jackson burned the bridge behind him. By this figure I mean, that he broke off every connection that might tempt him to go back. He forsook all his former worldly companions. He gave up every amusement that might lead him away from his beloved Master. He also joined the Wesleyans. He stood boldly out beneath his Lord's banner, like a true heroic knight of the cross.

He was persecuted by his Lord's enemies. Some cursed him. Others refused to let him work on their properties. One man, and he a parish minister, threatened to horsewhip him. Another wished he had the power to hang him. But none of these things moved him, since his soul was happy and those who knew him best

approved him. The man who employed him and in whose house he lived was soon led by him to the Lord, as also was his wife. They learned to love him as if he had been their own son.

One effect of this new life on young Jackson's heart was to produce a burning love for the souls of men. His first efforts to win disciples for his Master made him feel very keenly his lack of knowledge. He knew very little indeed. He had none to instruct him. He had next to no books, and very little money to buy them. There was no public or private library within his reach. Yet feeling from the day of his conversion, that he was called of God to preach the Gospel, he determined to prepare himself by study for that great work. Hence his Bible became his constant study. Wesley's Sermons and Fletcher's Checks he also devoured with eager relish. He walked six miles to buy Murray's Grammar. He hired a "carrier" to bring him, from the town of Hull, a copy of Watts' Logic, and subsequently, "The Improve-

ment of the Mind," by the same author. These books he read and studied during the few spare hours at his command. But he was in earnest. He read not for pleasure but profit. Hence he sucked honey from his scanty store of books. And his hungry mind soon began to grow like a tree planted by the side of a living stream.

Very soon his talents, piety, and prayer-meeting exhortations attracted notice. He was asked to preach. He consented, but with much trembling. His sermons, though crude, were profitable, because they were little streams flowing out of his own experience. The people were pleased. Preachers were scarce in those times, and, therefore, without his own solicitation, he was appointed to a circuit before he was twenty-one years old, and while he was still an apprentice. Without knowing it he had stumbled on the secret of success. He had shown that he was a true man, and, therefore, the Church wanted his work and called him to do it.

His inward call to the work of the ministry

being thus outwardly confirmed by the act of his brethren, he borrowed money enough from his brother to purchase his indenture from his master. His Methodist friends gave him means for an outfit. His uncle Thomas presented him a sum sufficient to buy a horse. Thus equipped this untutored stripling went out from home, followed by the blessing of his parents, the good wishes of his friends, and accompanied, without doubt, with the Spirit of the blessed Christ.

He was homesick and discouraged at times during his first year on his circuit. But he had pluck, industry, and perseverance, as well as faith. He studied hard, prayed much, preached as well as he could, found many friends, and was successful in winning souls. His mind was bent on success, and he succeeded, as all young men will who give all their strength to what they undertake.

Think of this heroic youth for whom the schools had done so little, beginning to study Greek one year after he quitted the carpenter's

bench! He was on his second circuit, and had to preach nine times a week, when he bought his Greek grammar and Greek Testament. To study these and to read works on all topics, he often rose at three o'clock in the morning, both summer and winter. Wrapping himself in his overcoat in the latter season, he often sat shivering over his books in cold houses, where his circuit work permitted him to tarry only for a night.

O, noble young student! Do you ask, What helped him to do this hard work? It was his consecration to it. Here is a resolution he adopted at this time:

> "O God, to THEE
> My life, my blood, I here present,
> If for thy TRUTH they may be spent."

This resolution was not like the morning cloud or early dew, but it was a life-long purpose, which no weariness in working, no difficulties rising in his path, no increase of years, could overcome. You may be sure, therefore, that his path led upward. The work done in

secret revealed itself in his sermons, in his manner, in his spirit, and in all he undertook. Men saw it, and learned first to respect, then to honor, him. Large Churches soon asked for his services. Men of influence marked him as one worthy of trust, and they who knew him best learned to value him most.

After a few years of circuit work he was appointed editor of the Methodist Magazine and other publications of the Wesleyan Connection. He filled this office nineteen years. He was next appointed tutor in the Wesleyan Theological school, in which he labored eighteen years. Twice he served as President of the Wesleyan Conference. He wrote numerous books. His long life, in truth, was filled up with noble work for God. Few men have been more industrious or more useful than Thomas Jackson, the peasant's son and the self-taught scholar.

At last the rolling years bore him to that period of life when the strongest men have to cease working. His noble figure bowed beneath the weight of eighty-nine years. His hair was

gray, his steps slow and feeble, but his soul was strong in faith, in love, in hope. He was not fretful and querulous, as too many old men are, but cheerful, sprightly, and happy. On that eighty-ninth birthday his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren gathered gleefully around his beloved person to receive his gifts, and listen to his wise and pleasing words. He was in truth a grand old patriarch.

His death was as beautiful as his life. His friends, including his venerable wife, whom he was in the habit of calling his "angel," ministered to him as his vigor gradually faded. Among his last words were his citation of these two lines of Charles Wesley:

> "My Light, my Life, my God, is come,
> And glory in his face appears."

"That," said he, "is my testimony—*my testimony*. I have no great joy, but I have perfect peace, perfect tranquillity."

Thus sweetly this child of primitive Methodism passed from the scene of his many earthly

labors into the presence-chamber of his royal Master and beloved Lord.

Methodism never had a more faithful worker than Thomas Jackson. He loved it with a love second only to the affection he bore for his Lord. Not long before his last sickness he wrote, in the language of a dear friend, "May Methodism live! And may it live forever!"

CHAPTER XVI.

AN ECCENTRIC CHARACTER.

> Better a death when work is done,
> Than earth's most favored birth.
>
> —GEORGE MACDONALD.

AN odd fact will interest you at once in this sketch of a somewhat singular, but very popular, local preacher, who was born at Garforth, England, more than a hundred years ago. His name was William Dawson. While yet a very little fellow he had a playmate, named William Arthur, whom he very fondly loved. One day Master Arthur was found to be sick with the small-pox, and little Dawson's grandmother, with whom he was living at the time, said to him:

"Willie, dear, your playmate is sick abed. You must not go to his house, because if you go near him you will catch his disease and be made sick yourself."

Willie was too young to understand why it was dangerous to visit his playmate. Hence, after vainly trying awhile to amuse himself alone, his desire to see his friend grew stronger than his fear to disobey his grandmother. With stealthy step he crept into young Arthur's house, up to his bedroom, and into his bed. There he was found shortly after, trying to comfort the sick boy with a tenderness which was very sweet, no doubt, to the poor patient, but which cost the thoughtless Willie long days of suffering from the same loathsome disease. This incident shows that he had a loving heart, and that it was not, at that time, guided by a wise head.

There was a burial-ground around the parish church in the village where Willie lived. He and his friend used to play among the tombs. One day, finding the church door open, they strolled inside. "Let us play parson and clerk!" said Willie. "You shall be clerk; I will be parson." Then, climbing up the high pulpit-stairs, he opened the big Bible and read

a chapter with much mock gravity. After his mother heard of this boyish act she often remarked, "Willie was born a preacher." This thought pleased the good lady, but it was only true in part. No child is "born a preacher." He may be born with a richly gifted soul; but he must be "born again" before he can become a true minister of our beloved Lord.

When William was six or seven years old his good grandfather died. This event caused his removal to a place named Barnbow, where, in his father's house, he was henceforth reared very carefully, and trained with wise love by his pious mother. He was always a serious boy, studious when at school, and given, as he grew older, to the reading of religious books. Hence, while he was gaining a fair English education, he was also looking with desire toward the entrance to the narrow but beautiful way that leads to happiness in this world, and to honor, glory, and bliss in the world to come.

His mother, whom he loved very tenderly,

guided his young feet toward the strait gate. Good books helped him also to find it. One or two thoughtful companions and his parish minister encouraged him; but he was a long time searching for the smile of the Lord. He found it at last at the communion-table, where, while the minister was saying, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee," etc., his eye of faith beheld the holy Jesus dying on the cross for him, and he claimed him as his own Saviour. In a moment his sorrow for sin was swallowed up in the well-spring of peace and joy which burst forth in his young soul. He was then "born again," and thereby made spiritually meet to become a preacher of the Gospel, if called thereto by the voice of his Lord.

He was now a young man of eighteen, and a diligent worker on his father's farm. It soon became his lot to mourn the death of his father; and his duty to succeed him as steward on the estate of a gentleman owning certain coal mines, and to cultivate a farm belonging

to the same person. Young as he was, he was compelled to stand in his father's place as head of his mother's household, and the chief provider for the family wants.

Some young disciples make such worldly work an excuse for neglecting their Christian duties. Young Dawson, acting more wisely, was as faithful in caring for his soul as in looking after the work of his stewardship and farm. Hence he grew in favor with his beloved Master in heaven, and with his earthly employer and friends. He also kept up his habits of reading good books and of writing out his thoughts. All this tended to improve his character, to strengthen his mind, and incline him to work for the benefit of others. The love of the Christ taught him to be unselfish, and to care for the welfare of his friends and neighbors.

Hence, good people soon noticed that the young man had gifts for public work. His minister gave him an opportunity to talk in the social meetings; and, happening to enter a

Wesleyan prayer-meeting one Sunday afternoon, the blunt old class-leader who conducted it in the absence of the preacher, said, very abruptly:

"Willie, go to prayer!"

But up to this time Dawson was a firm Episcopalian, and not at all in favor of any but printed forms of prayer for public uses. Hence he refused to pray, and even felt angry with the class-leader for asking him.

On reaching home he said to himself, "Why did I feel angry when that good man asked me to pray?" His conscience told him that pride was the root of his wrong feelings. Knowing that pride is very offensive to the holy Jesus, he mourned because he had found it in his own heart. And being drawn by the fame of Samuel Bradburn, a famous Wesleyan preacher, to go more and more to Methodist meetings, he soon grew less and less like a Pharisee, and more scriptural in his opinions about printed forms of prayer. Therefore, the next time the same old class-leader, to use Dawson's own

odd phrase, "stuck the hymn book in his face," and said, in a somewhat rude manner, "Here, give out a hymn and go to prayer!" he humbly obeyed the good man's brusque command.

Young Dawson's uncommon talents, and his marked uprightness of character, soon led his Episcopal pastor and other clergymen to interest themselves deeply in his welfare. They urged him to prepare himself to enter the ministry of the Established Church. They directed his studies to that end, and held out hopes of being able to procure financial aid by which he might enter some literary institution. For several years the young man looked with expectation to a clerical career in that Church. Though heavily burdened with business, he spent every spare moment in study or in active work for his Lord, in prayer-meetings and elsewhere. He even preached when called on, as he often was, in small Wesleyan chapels. At last, finding more spiritual sympathy among the Wesleyans than among his Episcopal

friends, he united with the former when he was about twenty-seven years old. Eight months afterward he was received as a local preacher. He was already a popular speaker, and was soon followed from place to place by persons who were both delighted and profited by his zealous, original, spiritual, practical, and really able sermons.

The following year he was recommended to the Wesleyan Conference as a traveling preacher, and accepted. But in settling his business affairs he had planned to have his brother succeed him as steward of the collieries and lessee of his farm. When making this proposal to the head steward of his employer's estate, he was astonished at being told that his brother's services were not needed. His cunning superior had a relative to whom he wished to give the position. Guessing that he entertained some such sinister design, Dawson's eyes flashed fire as he replied :

" Well, then, I'll remain ! "

The head steward started as if he had heard

a sudden thunder-clap. The result was that our local preacher at once made up his mind to abandon his purpose to join the Conference, knowing that his mother and her family needed his services, since his brother was not permitted to fill his place. It was a great, a noble sacrifice; but he made it cheerfully, for the sake of the good mother whom he so truly loved. For the same filial reason he would not marry. Thus, for his mother's sake he spent his days as a bachelor, and also as a local instead of a traveling preacher.

But what became of his call to preach? He honored it faithfully as a local preacher to the end of his life. While diligent in business, he was also zealous in preaching whenever opportunity offered. His popularity was such that calls for his services were numerous and abundant, not only from country places, but also from the large city chapels. When it was known that he was to preach in one of the latter, it was no uncommon sight to see numerous persons leaving their usual chapels where trav-

eling preachers officiated, and flocking to the one where Dawson, the local preacher, was to fill the pulpit.

Dawson was a devoted lover of the cause of missions. He was one day present at a missionary meeting held by the Baptists in Leeds. Hearing the distinguished Dr. Andrew Fuller speak of what Dr. Carey and others had already accomplished among the heathen, his soul caught the holy fire. And when the doctor asked, "Where will it end?" Dawson responded, "In heaven!" The congregation wondered, but his beaming face, flashing eyes, and fervid tones, showed that his response was the expression of one whose soul was touched, not by a passing enthusiasm, but by the celestial fire of love for the Christ and for a world in bondage to sin.

Shortly after this Baptist meeting the Wesleyans held their first public missionary meeting in Leeds. Mr. Dawson was one of the speakers. Some of the leading orators of the Wesleyan pulpit spoke that evening, but none

of them kindled more missionary fire, produced deeper convictions of duty, or called forth such intense expressions of feeling, as did this remarkable local preacher. Even the chairman of the meeting, a grave layman who had at its opening begged the people not to applaud the speakers, was so far carried away by Dawson's eloquence that, though he restrained his tongue from joining in the responses of the congregation, he could not keep the tears from flowing down his own cheeks.

After this meeting Mr. Dawson's fame as a missionary speech-maker spread far and near. He was one of the men people loved to hear, and was often called to plead for the heathen in many of the best chapels of the Connection, and in all parts of England. A society in a city distant from his home, when disappointed of its leading speaker for a certain great missionary meeting, was advised to send for him. Two gentlemen were sent forthwith to invite him. On arriving at Barnbow they found him busy in one of his fields digging a ditch.

After hearing their request he said, "You must be mistaken of your man." They answered, "No, it is no mistake. Go and help you must. We cannot do without you."

Striking his spade into the ground, he responded, "If it *must* be so, then it *shall* be so." After calling a laborer to go on with the ditching, he led the deputation to his humble abode. While his mother was preparing a lunch he changed his dress, and soon reappeared, clothed no longer as a working yeoman, but in a suit of black, which made his fine figure look as respectable as an English squire. It scarcely need be added that his address at the meeting not only pleased the people; it also quickened their love for the cause of missions. Dawson's tongue and brain were inspired by his own sincere love for his Lord and for the blinded souls who knew nothing of the love of our adorable Jesus. Hence, his words were as coals of fire which kindled a holy flame of desire in those who heard him to send the "good tidings" abroad.

Mr. Dawson's preaching was not merely pleasing to most who heard it; it was also profitable, in that, like the words of the Christ, it led many to "go and sin no more."

One example of his power to thus persuade men may be given here. He was preaching near Leeds. A peddler who greatly admired him was present. This man was called "Short Measure" by the public, because he measured his goods with a yard-stick which had done long service as a walking-cane, and was consequently shorter than thirty-six inches. Dawson's text was, "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." As he placed sinners of various classes in the divine balance, the peddler made noisy responses of approval. Presently the preacher drew a picture of the peddler's well-known dishonesty with such effect that the guilty man sat dumb with conviction for several moments. Then, moved by his stricken conscience, he took his offending yard-stick, which he had held under his arm, placed it across his knee, snapped it into two

parts, and, dashing the pieces to the ground, exclaimed:

"Thou shalt do it no more!"

On another occasion, when preaching in Sheffield, and begging his hearers to give their hearts to the Lord, he paused, placed his hand upon his own heart, lifted his eyes heavenward, and, in a voice choking with feeling, said, "Lord, here's mine!"

The effect of this action was electric on many. One man cried out, "Here's mine, too, Billy!" while others exclaimed, "That's right," "Glory be to God," etc.

Dawson's popularity was partly owing to a vein of oddity and wit which ran through all his speeches and sermons. But his success had a higher source. He was a truly good man. He believed in his own preaching. The public believed in his sincerity. They knew his character to be without a stain. God was with him, filling his heart with feeling and his words with power. Like Stephen, the first martyr of the Christian Church, he was "full of the

Holy Ghost," and that was the real secret and source of his success.

Here is a specimen of his odd and ready method of taking advantage of trivial incidents. While speaking from a missionary platform one evening, he was interrupted by a commotion near the door. In an instant every eye was turned from the platform. The next moment loud applause rang through the spacious chapel. Dawson, with entire self-possession, coolly said to the chairman,

"I'll stop a little, sir."

Then, after taking into his mind the cause of this unusual excitement, he put on a comical expression and exclaimed:

"There he is! There he comes! All are glad to see him, fresh as a *roe* from the mountains of Israel, and leaping with all the agility of a *buck* over his neighbor's fences."

Peals of happy laughter followed this punning speech. It hit the case exactly and suited the prevailing feeling. The stir had been occasioned by the sudden appearance of Rev.

George Roebuck, a former pastor, who, unable to reach the platform through the dense crowd which packed the aisles, had made his way to it by stepping on the backs of the pews. There was little dignity in such a proceeding; but Dawson's puns, by giving a comic aspect to the affair, diverted attention from its clerical impropriety, and put the vast audience into a highly good-humored mood.

Mr. Dawson had a very remarkable gift for conversation. He was not only an entertaining talker, but he also talked wisely and well. He once rode eighteen miles with Dr. Adam Clarke in a somewhat crowded old-fashioned mail-coach. The learned doctor was delighted with the eccentric farmer. Meeting the eloquent Dr. Newton the next day he said to him,

"Your friend Mr. Dawson and myself talked all the way to Liverpool yesterday evening, and what an astonishing mind he has got!"

Dr. Clarke was no flatterer, and being a good judge of men, his remark to Dr. Newton may be safely accepted as a merited compliment to

the real greatness of Dawson's mind. If he was often witty, he was no shallow jester, but a man who said odd things because he could not help seeing the ludicrous or funny side of things.

The seeming lightness of his words was often relieved by the solemnity of his manner and the earnestness of spirit with which he uttered them. Their oddity was like the feathers of an arrow, helping to give them force and penetration. I will give you an illustration of this fact.

He often met a miller's teamster who had badly backslidden from his former devotion to Christ. He rarely passed the poor fellow without saying,

"Well, John, have you joined the regiment again?"

"No, master, not yet," the man usually replied.

But one day Dawson's soul was strongly moved with desire to lead this man back to his forsaken Lord. When John came near, Daw-

son stopped directly in front of him. Then, looking with his eyes glistening with deep feeling, he said, with intense earnestness,

"I tell thee, John, thou art a deserter from God and truth. As such thou wilt have to be *whipped or shot!*"

These unusual, odd words stuck to John's memory until they filled him with such a haunting dread of personal affliction and final ruin, that he found no rest until, like Peter, he wept bitterly over his sins, and recovered the peace of Christ which he had once so wantonly thrown away.

Dawson's preaching often had great power over his congregations. After describing the Prodigal Son in graphic terms one day he paused, looked toward the door of the chapel, and shouted, "Yonder he comes, slipshod! Make way—make way there!" So completely had he filled the imaginations of his hearers with images of the ragged prodigal that this exclamation led many to turn their eyes toward the door, while not a few actually rose to their

feet as if in expectation of visibly beholding what the preacher had verbally portrayed.

The latter years of this good man's life were spent, not in business, but in the employment of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. So valuable were his services to that cause, that some of its wealthy friends subscribed a sum sufficient to purchase an annuity for his benefit; so that he might throw off the cares of his farm, and give himself wholly to the delightful task of pleading with the people in behalf of the heathen, whom his soul loved. Missionary money was probably never more profitably spent.

Mr. Dawson died suddenly in 1841. At two o'clock in the morning he called from his bed for assistance, saying, "I am very poorly!" On being placed in a chair by his friends he breathed with difficulty. Shortly after, placing his arms across his breast, he said:

> "Let us in life, in death,
> Thy steadfast truth declare."

Just then kind-handed Death touched him, and his freed spirit ascended to the Lord he loved.

In that glorious world his life of loving labor was rewarded with a crown of glory purchased for him by the Good Shepherd in the hour when he laid down his life for his sheep.

O blessed world! where all such workers as Dawson and the faithful Methodists of the olden time dwell with the good of every age and sect in love and harmony. Sweetly does an old poet sing of it in these lines:

"O how beautiful that region,
And how fair that heavenly legion,
Where good men and angels blend!
Glorious will that city be,
Full of deep tranquillity,
Light and peace from end to end!
All the happy dwellers there
Shine in robes of purity,
Keep the law of charity
Bound in firmest unity.
Labor finds them not, nor care.
Ignorance can ne'er perplex,
Nothing tempt them, nothing vex;
Joy and health their fadeless blessing,
Always all things good possessing."

THE END.

Books by the Author of "Heroic Methodists."

THE STORY OF A WONDERFUL LIFE; or, Pen Pictures of the most Interesting Incidents in the Life of the Celebrated John Wesley. Adapted to the Tastes and Wants of Young People. By DANIEL WISE, D.D. Price, $1.

We are much obliged to the publishers for this finely-conceived and well-written biography of the founder of Methodism. It is of that class of reading much needed by our young people; and if their tastes have been perverted so as not to enjoy it, the greater is the reason why it should be urged upon their attention. Dr. Wise wields a vigorous and graceful pen, and his spirit is in harmony with his subject on the one hand, and on the other with the youth of the country, in behalf of whose moral and religious improvement, and their literary cultivation, his labors have been abundant. Truly, John Wesley's was a wonderful life, both in itself and in its fruits to this day. Though long dead, he speaketh yet to vast audiences, and will speak to generations unborn, even to the end of time. Happy the youth who will not only read, but heed the lessons of godly wisdom, of faith and work, taught by the life of John Wesley. Reading it aright, they will learn to admire and love Methodism, as it was held by the founder and his associates in the last century. Grown people will find much to inform and entertain them in Dr. Wise's handsome volume.—*Western Methodist*, Memphis, Tenn.

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