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MRS. CLIFTON CLAY









The  
*Life of Clifton Clay*

OR

*True Stories for Parents  
and Children*

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WRITTEN BY

*A. L. COBURN*

IN THE YEARS 1903-4

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RAY PRINTING COMPANY  
CHARLOTTE, N. C.



## PREFACE.

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This little volume has been written that good may be done, that souls may be saved, and that God's name may be glorified.

Cliff was a bad boy, but O how good God was to him!

These are true stories, and many who are now living in Rowan, Montgomery, and other counties, can testify to them.

Let us all trust in the Lord, and do good, and meet in Heaven.

Yours truly,  
A. L. COBURN.



## DEDICATORY.

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This little book is dedicated to

MY DEAR WIFE

who has for twenty-six years stood by me in prosperity and adversity, in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow; and to whom, under God, I feel that I owe all that I am or ever shall be.

An affectionate husband,  
A. L. COBURN.





# LIFE OF CLIFTON CLAY.

## CHAPTER I.

In the year 1849 there lived in the county of R—, in the State of N—, a man and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Clay. Five children had been born to them, but they all died in infancy, the eldest being only two years old. So they were left all alone. But on the 25th of July, 1849, another child was born to them, Clifton by name—and I am the boy. And as the law recognizes pencil writing I will sharpen up my old stub and write my will.

My will is to do all I can to save everybody. When I think of God's goodness to me I feel it my bounden duty to do everything in my power to save sinners. And as I have been asked and insisted upon by friends to write out a sketch of my life, I will endeavor to do so by the help of God, for three reasons: First, to gratify my friends; second, hoping that some good

may result from it; and third, that I may tell others of God's goodness and mercy to me.

I was a bad Cliff. As I have already said, I had neither brother nor sister, and as they all died when small, you may be sure my parents were very solicitous about me. So when there was the slightest physical ailment to be seen in me the old sweet oil bottle that hung by a string from a nail driven in a log of the old house was taken down, and an old pewter spoon was taken from the shelf, and Cliff was drenched. Ugh! what a nauseous draught it was. I tell you my parents came very near killing me trying to keep me alive. O, how I dreaded that bottle and spoon! But after I got a little larger Mother left off the spoon, and would stir the stuff up in a cup. Now you know boys get loose and fly off the handle, or say things they ought not to say. Now that was just what I did. I was too mean and lazy to work.—One day mother wanted me to do something for her, and forgetting the consequences I said, "I'm sick." That was enough. Mother got the cup, and the bottle was lifted from the nail, and before I had time to frame another lie, the stuff

was ready. I told my mother I could not take it in the house, as it would surely make me vomit. So I went out, but instead of taking it, I threw it under the house, and came back with the crookedest face you ever saw.

My father and mother were members of the church, but not Christians; and consequently let such conduct pass unpunished. But from a child, notwithstanding I never heard my father or mother pray, or even ask a blessing at the table, I wanted to be a good boy; and when it would get dark I would think about how bad I had been, and was afraid to go to sleep. Oh, how I wished father and mother would pray! I thought if they would even pray at the table it would help me to do better.

My father was a good carpenter and also a good farmer. He was often employed by the sheriff of the county of R—— to transact business for him, and these things often kept him from home during the winter season. He was always at home on Sunday. So one Sunday morning I got father to the crib to see the fun, and Charley did not get the attention he thought due him, and he got mad and was walking after me. I grabbed him on the shoulder

and he grabbed my thumb, and would have bitten it off if father had not been present. That broke up the circus. I don't remember having another show after that.

I did not go to school much. My father raised a boy, Wilburn A——, who was older than myself. I went to school with him a few days to Mr. C. He was a good man and very kind to me, but I was afraid of him. I also went a few days to his sister. I cannot remember much about either of them, except that I was afraid of them both without a cause. I said Mr. C. was a good man. I say so because his after life shows it—he is still living. The next teacher I went to was a Mr. P. I was some older and not quite so shy. This man would sing and pray in his school. Mr. C. may have done the same—I don't remember. I have always loved singing and praying ever since I can remember anything. Mr. P. taught me my first tune; it was "Happy Day." Neither of these ever whipped me. It was not because I did not need it, nor that the teachers failed to do their duty; it was just because they failed to catch up with me in my meanness. I was always on the lookout. My father never whipped me. Sometimes I would cry out of a whip-

ping and sometimes I would lie out of it. I always got out of it. I always got out one way or the other. I remember one day when my father was gone to mill, I took it into my head to survey. So without chain or compass, with only a hatchet to mark with, I started out. My idea was to mark something every six steps. Father at this time was building a new house, and the scaffolding poles were up all around the house where he had been weather-boarding. It was six steps to the first, and six steps to the next, and so on along the line to the corner; but as I could not make it from that line of poles to the next at six steps, I tried it to the corner of the house, and as that was the proper distance, I whacked away on the corner tiling. When father came home about the first thing he saw was the hacked tiling. Cliff was called, and just as soon as I saw father's face, I knew there was something wrong. Pointing to the tiling, he asked, "Who did that?" My heart began to jump, and my breast to heave, and my eyes to swim, and I suppose my lips looked to him as if they had been struck by an insulted yellow jacket, and I said, "It was m-m-me." Then I told him

all about it, my starting out the six steps, and so on. Father then gave me a scolding, and I saw I had done wrong and was sorry for it and never did the like again.

One summer day father was plowing near the house and I was playing around. He told me to bring him some water while he plowed another round. I said all right. So I got the water and waited until he was near the end, then I ran to him puffing and blowing as if I had run from the spring, which was some distance from the field. I handed him the water; he drank some of it and looked me in the face and said, "Cliff, did you go to the spring for this water?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "I don't believe you; this water is warm." "Well," I said, "the reason of that is the sun is shining right in the spring." Now this was all a lie; I had not been to the spring at all. I got the water out of the kitchen and stood in the chimney corner till father came in sight and ran and gave it to him. I don't know what he thought; he threw the water out, and next time I gave him fresh water. My father was very kind to me, and I don't know what made me treat him so. I don't know that he ever refused

me but one thing that I plead for, and I am surprised that he denied me that. He went to town one Saturday and got a pair of new boots. Very early Sunday morning I inquired if he was going to church that day. He told me he was not. I then told him I wanted to carry his watch and wear his boots to church, and he refused to let me have them. I thought he treated me real mean, for I was certain I could take care of the watch, and the boots were only four numbers too large. So because I could not get them I would not go to church at all.

## CHAPTER II.

My father was a great hand for guns, and very fond of hunting. I often went with him. I loved to see him shoot birds and squirrels. I dreaded the crack of the gun, but I knew that it was the ball that killed. When I would see father take his old rifle and put down a ball and go to the pen and shoot a large hog or cow, and would see where the ball went in, causing instant death, it made me very much afraid of bullets, for I knew they carried death with them; and, like every other bad boy, I was awfully afraid of dying.

One day I was out of employment, and

was, as usual, prowling around in the house, aggravating my mother. I climbed up on an old trunk, and from that to the top of the bureau, and opened the clock to see what I could find in it. My mother knew nothing of what I was doing, as her back was turned to me, and she was very deaf. I kept fumbling around, and at last spied a ball of lead on the clock weight and lifted it off and took it to mother. She said, "Cliff, where did you get that bullet?" I told her. "Now you go right back and put it where you got it from. The clock won't run without it." So, for once in my life, I obeyed mother and turned back. On reaching the trunk, in order to make a successful climb, I put the ball in my mouth and started up; but to my horror the thing went down my throat, and I knew when a ball entered anything it was certain death. I did not expect to reach mother, but I started that way with a scream every jump—with both hands on my mouth, raking for the ball. Mother was very much alarmed at the noise and the capers, and asked, "What in the world is the matter, Cliff?" I told her between screams that the ball was in me; that I had swallowed it, and it would kill me. I was



scared almost into fits. To my great surprise mother laughed at me, and told me it would not kill me unless it had been shot in me. She said the clock would not run without it, but it did; and the ball didn't kill me, sure enough.

Well, I let such things alone, and went to play with my pet cat. Sometimes cats get tired of boys' fun. One day another boy and myself put five half-grown cats in a half-bushel gourd, and started down a long hill. About every fifty yards out would fly a cat. Now that was great fun for the boys, but hard on the cats. One day when I was playing with my old yellow cat she seemed to get tired all at once, whirled on her back, kicked up with her hind feet, and ripped the back of my hand open with her sharp claws. This so enraged me that I set her claws in the fire on hot bed of coals. Just as the cat was scurrying out of the fire-place, kicking off the live coals, mother came in. She said, "Cliff, what are you up to now?" I told her the old cat had scratched me, and I put her in the fire. The back door of the house was shut, and there was no possible chance for me to escape, and she whipped me—just as she ought to have done. That was

the first and only whipping my mother gave me. Once after that my cat scratched me, and I wanted to throw her in the fire, but remembered what I got before, and was afraid to repeat it. So I went and got a handful of balm of Gilead buds, caught the cat and sat down on her, opened her mouth and crammed it full of those sticky little buds. Mother came in on me again, but both doors being open this time, I made my escape without being whipped.

You see I was continually getting into trouble, or else getting something else into it. My life was no pleasure, I was so mean and so disobedient to my mother; and she was so easy and indulgent with me as to let me go unpunished. Now, she did this through kindness to me, but it caused us both much sorrow later on. My father would often come home from a business trip under the influence of liquor. That would fret mother, and they would often say unpleasant things to each other. I always dreaded to see him come home. He was an honest, generous, hard-working man. He often went to church, but still continued to drink at times. Sometimes he would quit for a good while, and I would get in hopes he had quit for all time, and

would be a good, kind father all the time. Then the monster would lay hold of him again, and I, poor boy, would sink back into despair.

I had an uncle who lived near my father's who was a good man, and I would often go down there and stay for dinner to get molasses to eat. We never had molasses at home; we always had plenty of honey, and the pesky things that made it I despised. I had no pleasure in the yard in the summer; the hateful bees would be on the clover blooms, and often I had alarmed mother by a whooping yell, coming towards her on one foot, with one of the pests sticking to the bottom of the other. I would have had a good time at Uncle's if it had not been for two things. My Uncle always had a blessing at the table. I thought that was so nice; and the molasses was always on the table, and it was so good; and his children thought so strange that I loved molasses, and it seemed just as queer to me that they wanted to go home with me to get honey; but so it was. The two things that I didn't like was a big spinning wheel and my aunt's sister, who lived with my uncle and spun on the wheel from morning till night.

Now the b-u-m, w-u-m, w-a-m, buzzing noise of that wheel and the girl who turned it, I could not bear. She was good-looking and pleasant and all that; but she was one of those endless teases. She was always wanting to kiss or bite me, and if it was after dinner when she made for me it did not take me long to get home. She often visited my mother, and I dreaded her coming just about as much as I did the sweet oil bottle and spoon. Every time she came she would run me down and kiss me, and made me mad as a hornet. After a hard race one summer day she got her kiss, as usual, then took her seat beside the north door to cool off. The old house was neither ceiled nor weatherboarded. I slipped up and saw the back of her neck through a crack, and seeing the best chance of my life to get even with her, I got my squirt-gun. It held about a half-pint of water. I drew it full, fairly gritting my teeth all the while. I stole softly up behind her, stuck the gun in the crack, and then with vengeance, I shot the whole load on the back of her neck. I did not wait to see what she did, but heard a racket as I was leaving, and she has never kissed me since that day.

I was now large and old enough to help father in the field. I liked to lounge about the kitchen, and cook, in my own way, but I despised the field. One day when he was in the field, a mule ran away with the harrow and broke it. I was so glad. I thought now I will have a long rest. But father sent me about a mile to get an augur, and in a few minutes after my return the harrow was mended, and father went to harrowing and Cliff to digging. Father would sweat freely, and of course I wanted to be like him. I would dig and lam with all my might, but never could get my shirt wet. One day in August we were cutting briars in the bottom. Father was drinking and had the toothache to boot; so you may know things were not pleasant. About 10 o'clock he told me he would have to quit, but for me to work on till about eleven, and then come to the house. I dreaded staying down there that long by myself; but I let in to work like a man, and was determined for once in my life to go home with a wet shirt. So I would dig and cut briars with all my might for awhile, and feel my shirt to see if it was getting wet; then I would go at it again in good earnest, but all to no avail. So about the time I

thought I ought to start home I got in the branch and threw water on my back till it was good and wet, then away I went for home, but the sun was so hot my shirt was as dry as a chip when I got to the house.

I worked but little after this with father. He continued to drink for some time. His health began to fail. He was called to the war, but got a young man in his place. He quit drinking a very short time before his death. The preacher came to see him, the only time I ever remember of one being at our house. I do not know what he told the preacher, but I know strong drink brought him to an untimely grave. He died on the 7th of January, 1863. I loved my father, but could not shed a tear when he died. I thought I loved my mother when a boy, but I know now that I did not love her as I ought, or I would have obeyed her, and O how much better it would have been for me in after life if I had obeyed my mother. Boys, let me tell you, for I know it is true, you will have a hard time getting through the world if you are disobedient to your parents. I entreat you to love, honor and obey them while they are with you, and you will always be glad you did so when they are hidden away in the grave.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THINKS HIS MOTHER TREATED HIM WRONG.

My father now being dead the estate had to be settled. My uncle administered on the estate, made sale, paid all the debts, and paid over several hundred dollars to my mother. She gave me one half of what was paid over, and it was not long till I got the other half and spent it, but it being war times money was worth but little. Corn was \$15 per bushel. We had a right hard time of it, and it was all because I would not obey my mother. As I have said before, she was too slack with me; and now as father was dead, I intended doing just as I pleased. Mother bought Charlie at the sale; he was now getting old but was still fine looking and pranky. I would take him and ride out and run races on Sunday, and keep mother forever uneasy about me. Now, boys, don't treat your dear mother like I did; if you do you will always regret it, at least I have.

After the death of my father I went to school one session to a young lady, a Miss S. She was a good teacher and I loved her, and wanted to please her. I learned

more at this school than I did in all the others I attended. I never had the opportunity of going to her any more. I was very anxious to go to school more, but the war was going on and uncle Wiley R. who had administered on the estate, had to go to the war, was wounded and came home and died, and my mother caring nothing for education, made my chances very poor. But there was an old friend of my father's living near us who said to me one day: "Cliff, if you will be a good boy and work and pay me, I will see the teacher, Rev. C., at the parsonage, where my boys are going to school, and you may go there." Now that was glorious news to me. I loved that preacher and wanted to go to him; all my associates were going, and I anticipated a good time. I hurried home to tell mother the good news and to get up my books, paper, slate, etc., to have everything ready for the next morning. Mother was not in when I got home, but I gathered up my books and was washing my slate when she came in and said: "Cliff, what are you going to do with your books and slate?" I then told her of the offer Mr. C. had made me and how glad I would be to accept it. To my horror mother said. "If



Mr. C. is going to take you in hand and send you to school, he can board you, for I will not." No one, except one treated as I was at that time, can have any idea of my feelings. Father and uncle both dead and mother working against my best interest, and I knew it; but she did not think so; she had no education herself, and often said it made people proud and high minded to educate them. How sad for children when mothers look at things of great importance in such a light as that. Now I believe mother was as honest in her opinion at that time as Saul of Tarsus was when he was persecuting the Church. Oh, dear mothers, be careful with your children! No mother can properly manage children without daily asking God's help. Mother was not a Christian, and the way she treated me made me feel very rebellious towards her, and I would go off and associate with bad boys and girls, learned to fiddle and dance, play cards, and drink and swear, and beat my way on rail-roads and almost everything else that was bad. When I would get home mother would quarrel with me about those trips and the company I was keeping, and I would think and tell her of the offer

I had had, and how I wanted to go to school and be with better boys. Then I would give her rough, ugly talk and leave her again. I would go to Sunday school and preaching, and when I would hear the superintendent talk and the preacher preach, I would make up my mind to be a good boy, but often before I got home I would lay some plan for wickedness to be carried out during the week. But when I would retire, be it early or at midnight or later (as was often the case) I would feel awful about my condition. I would often get down on my knees and try to pray, but I was so wicked and had no one to lead me in the right way. Oh, dear boys and girls, never fret and worry your mothers whether they be Christians or not. May this chapter do both parents and children good.

Some of the boys and girls that I associated with were not so bad (or, at least, my Sunday associations). They did not know how bad I was, neither did they know my feelings. I had some cousins that were bad, and associating with them—as I frequently did—caused me to be more wicked and restless than I would have been. I scarcely ever went to church with them.

I would go to church with others, and often spend Sunday evening with my cousins and wear off the good impressions made on my mind by hearing good sermons. I had one cousin, D. C., with whom I associated more than any one else. I remember D. C. and myself going one night to a Lutheran church, where Brother K. was conducting a protracted meeting. He was a great revivalist. We were sitting together. Rev. K. preached with great power that night, and the Spirit carried the word home to the hearts of the people (or, at least it did to one). As the faithful minister was going through the congregation talking to the people who were affected by the words, he saw two boys about the size of D. C. and myself sitting on the back seat behind the door. He looked at us a moment and saw that we were deeply affected, and ripe for instruction. He came to us and began to talk. They were the first words of that kind I had ever heard. He was right at us, and meant no one else but Cliff and D. C. Well, my heart just felt like it would jump out of my breast or bust. Sometimes the word "awful" is used in the wrong place, but I think I can safely say I felt awful. I felt that if I did

not feel better and do better that the devil would get me, and that it would not be long until I would be in his clutches. The good brother told us if we would come and go with him to the mourner's bench, and pray earnestly to God, and repent and decide in our minds to be better boys, our hearts would feel better. I wanted to go, but as we were on our way to church we had fixed our coats in a very peculiar way for the sake of convenience. I felt I never could go walking down the aisle before the congregation with my coat inside my pants. So I went to work to get it out, but could not without the preacher finding it out. I told him I could not go that night, and he left us, and soon afterwards dismissed the congregation. I felt very serious. As D. C. and I walked home he said, "Cliff, what did you think to-night when the preacher was talking to us?" I told him how I felt, and that if my coat had not been in the shape it was, I would have gone with him to the mourner's bench. He said he had made up his mind to go if I went, and thought of his coat, and while the preacher was at us, he managed to get his out. We went back the next night, and when the invitation

was given for those who wished to be prayed for to come to the altar we went. I did not become satisfied concerning my soul, but felt better, and joined the church during the meeting. My mother was a member of that church. Not feeling satisfied about my spiritual condition, and having no one at home to encourage me or speak a word of comfort to me, and none of my associates spoke to me on the subject of religion, the serious impressions made on my mind during the meeting wore off to a considerable extent. Connecting myself with the church put me under the lash of the whip in the hand of God. I was not a consistent member, and God would lash my conscience often when engaging in the sinful pleasures of the world. D. C. and I would attend plays and dancing parties. We could furnish the music or take our places on the floor. It did not differ to us which place we had so we got to the party. When I would be at these parties my conscience would tell me I was doing wrong. When I would go to my room I would think I never would go to another party. I would feel so bad over my conduct that I could hardly get any sleep. Young man, don't trifle

with your soul as I did with mine. Join some branch of the Christian church, and be true to the same and to God, your preserver and benefactor.

I associated with another young man by the name of David L.. He was a trader and gambler. He took me to the first bar-room I ever entered. We went back from Main Street, around a building and turned again. It was night and very dark. He knew the way, but I did not, as I had never been there before. The town is a prohibition town at this time, and that den may be there yet. We went down under the ground about seven feet. Daniel tapped at a door, as I thought, and a man opened a space about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  by 6 feet, by letting down a plank which served as a counter. We got what D. called for, and he paid for it. The open space was then closed, and we groped our way through the darkness as best we could, and got out.

## CHAPTER V.

### A LEAP FROM A RUNNING TRAIN.

Well, David and I got out of the bar-room, got to the train and reached home late at night. I said he was a trader and

a gambler, and we agreed before we started to town to make all we could by trading and otherwise, and to divide the profits equally. He was very successful and I received several dollars that trip. He was naturally sharp; his father was well read and smart, but very wicked, but I think the son was worse than the father. The old man Jim L. was a gunsmith and jeweler, and Dave would cheat him every time he traded with him, and cheating you know is stealing.

Dave and I went to the town of S. to see a man hung. He took with him, among other things to trade on, a squirrel. He got into a fuss with a young man. The squirrel was chained to his coat, and was in his pocket, and in the skirmish the squirrel got out and bit Dave's hand, so that the front side of his clothing was covered with blood. He got the best of the young man and they were parted, but in the crowded streets of the town the fellow slipped up behind him and struck him on the head with a rock, cutting it to the bone, and it bled freely, so the back of his clothing was covered with blood, and he looked so horrid I thought I would never go with him any more. But I did. We

got some very bad whiskey one evening and went to a corn-shucking that night, and just like whiskey will do, it made fools of us. We passed a few words, and he hit me with an ear of corn, and I talked kindly as I could to him and he threw another at me. I then told him if he struck me again I would settle with him. In a short time he threw another. I had prepared myself with a large ear, which was lying by my side. I gathered it, threw and struck him below the eye and knocked him down in the shucks and left. He got up, enquired for me, and swore if he could find me he would shoot me. Some of my friends hunted me up, and told me what he had said, and advised me to stay out of his reach. I was not afraid of him, and thought I knew how to manage him. So I watched my chance. walked up behind him, laid my hand on his shoulder, and said: "Dave let us settle this and have no further trouble." I told him he had hit me three times and I had hit him but once, and I was willing to drop the matter if he was. So we departed in peace.

I had quite a number of cousins and associates in the community where I was raised, but I will mention only four: Mose



B. was a cousin of mine and a bad Sabbath-breaker. He attended Sunday school and preaching but very little. and then not for any good. The others were Jake C., Jak S., and Lock. S. The latter lived just in sight of mother's, and they had a still house, and it was nearer our house than theirs. I spent much of my time with him at the still. I rambled with him but little, not a great deal with Jake C. but was often with him at home, Sunday school and preaching. I always loved to get with him and his sister to go to church. One rainy Sunday morning I watched for them, but in vain. I started alone and went quite a distance out of the way looking for some others that I hoped to see that day, but all in vain. In my trip, coming to the railroad, I found a train stopping for wood. I knew that it would go by the church (where the preacher talked to me) and the station was only a mile the other side. So without money or barter, I mounted it. I say barter; I used to take very fine peaches from mother's orchard to the station, leave Charlie and grandmother's old carriage, get on the train and give the conductor a dozen of them (if I could not beat him out of the ride) to take me to the

town of S., where I would trade more peaches for biscuit and fried chicken, and then beat my way back to the station. Charlie and I were always home before night. Mother found me out, and as she had never seen the inside of a car, I told her to go with me one trip. So we went to the station. I put up Charlie and took a lot of peaches and got on the train. I paid mother's fare and bought her fried chicken and biscuit, and that satisfied her. When we got back to the station I found a young lady and her brother there from the city of G. They wanted to go about fifteen miles into the country. So mother told them if they would go home with us I could take them the next day. So they went. I liked the young lady very much, and she told me she would write when she got back to G. But alas! as we were going on the next morning I was not as careful as I ought to have been. So at a very bad place in the road, I turned the old carriage over, threw her out, and liked to have killed her. I have never seen her since.

But back to my trip on Sunday. When the train passed the church it did not seem to be running fast, and as it was raining (and had been for three days.) I

didn't want to walk back, and the conductor had not found me out yet, so I concluded to jump off. I did, and the first thing that struck was my head and shoulders in the ditch of a red mud cut; and that was another time Cliff's coat was not fit to appear in the congregation.

## CHAPTER VI.

### TOO CLOSE TO THE PREACHER.

The conductor or someone else found out that a passenger was overboard; and after running a short distance stopped the train. I followed on, but not to get on board. As soon as I could get out of the cut I left the railroad and the train went on. I went to a branch near by and washed the mud off as best I could, and went to the church where I intended going that day. I felt as if I never wanted to ride on that thing again, money or no money, barter or no barter, and right then and there I made up my mind that I would never jump off a train again. But mean boys change their minds so often. One Friday night Jake S., his brother and myself went to a singing at a church. After singing I proposed to them that we go to the town of C. that

night, a walk of about eleven miles. They agreed and off we went. Jake said he knew a man with whom we could stop, but when we got there he would not take us in at that time of the night, so we lay in the woods till I thought I should freeze. So I told them we would go back and try him again. We went back, and by hard begging we got in. We missed the train the next morning, and could not think of walking back; so we rambled about the town all day, went back to the same place and stayed Saturday night. We went with some of the family to see a very sick boy. The sick boy said that night that he wanted all his playthings brought to him. His mother gathered them all up and gave them to him. He separated them and divided them as best he could between his brothers. The poor mother was heart-broken, and said her boy was going to die. Oh! how I wished I was at home with my mother, whose heart was then throbbing for her wayward boy. I had not even told her that I was going to the singing Sunday morning. There was a young man at the place where we were stopping who went and got a quart of whiskey, and I got my full share of it; but we were able to get to

the train on time. So without money or barter—for none of us had a cent—I said hop on boys, and so we did. The train was very much crowded, and we stood on the back end and watched in at the door for the conductor. We had passed the church and were nearing the station when I saw him coming. Now, in those times they changed your money and you could pay your fare without a ticket. and it took a long time when the train was crowded. He was now near the door, and the train had slackened some and I now thought I could make it safely and not be caught. So I now leaped off and the boys followed me. We all escaped unhurt. O, the goodness of God to preserve such wretches as we were.

I want to say to boys that trains don't run now as they did then, and even if they did,, never, never undertake to beat your way or jump off, for the one is a sinful and the other a very dangerous practice.

The railroad at this point ran between two churches, the one a lutheran and the other a reformed. Rev. K. preached at the Lutheran, and Rev. C. at the Reformed church. We went to hear the Rev. C. that day. It was a communion occasion,

and the church was packed. The preacher saw us and beckoned for us to come that way. I hated to refuse him, for I thought a great deal of him, mean as I was. But the thought of walking down that long aisle in the condition I was in! My clothes were dirty, my face black, my pants torn, and my coat too short, but we went and got seats; mine was on the steps of the pulpit. O, how mean I felt there by the side of the preacher. I found out that day that mother was in great distress about me. And Jake's father was hunting for his boys, and was very uneasy about them. O, boys, don't treat your parents so. Just see what one bad boy can do. I was to blame for all this trouble. I will tell you more about Jake S. further on. I spoke of Mose B., a cousin of mine; he was a bad boy, and led me into many bad things. He was always ready for anything that was bad. Mose was with a man by the name of Allison C. a great deal, who was a very bad man. He had a railroad contract for making sills in time of the war. He boarded at my mother's while working at the sills and hired me to chop for him at ten dollars per day. [This was in war time.] After our day's work was done we

often went to dancing parties and made the night hideous with our wicked songs and frolicking. We generally went armed with at least two pistols apiece. One night I remember carrying three. Oh! how foolish, how foolish, but at that time I thought it was the thing to make me a gentleman. I will speak of them some time again. Lock S. and I got along all right except one time. Our mothers got into a difficulty. Lock got mad one day and came over to whip me, but I shamed him out of it. In a few days he came by for me to go with him to a wedding, and that was the last of our trouble. Jake C. and I were always on good terms. I will refer to these again.

I still worked on the little farm. Charlie was getting so old that he could not stand the farm work and my hard riding, so I traded him off for a young, wild gray. I had trouble to plow him, and that fretted mother. But there was one thing I could do—and that was to ride him. Now, that suited me better than plowing, so I rode a great deal. I wanted mother to like my new horse, and not be fretted at me about old Charlie, so at last I got her to ride him. She was a rider of the old type, and was

not afraid of a horse. After she rode him she liked him better. One day I got Lock S. to help me to kill a big hog. After we killed it we put it on a wagon, hitched the gray to it, and left mother and aunt to mind him while we washed our hands. He got away from them, ran down a steep hill, threw the hog off, and tore things up in general. A short time after this I got my horse and went off. I drank half-pint of corn whiskey, half-pint of rye whiskey, and half-pint of rum, traded him off for a little gray (a racer), came back by the town of C., lay down on a counter, kicked off a lantern, broke it—and had it to pay for, and went home and told mother the gray was gone.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A HORSE RACE ON SUNDAY.

Oh! but I felt bad over that trip, and made up my mind that strong drink should never get me into trouble again and cause me to pay out money.

I run one more horse race on Sunday with a girl. (I say girl because no lady would do such a thing as that on Sunday.)



My horse jumped a mud hole, caught his foot in a hanging strap, turned a summersault, and threw me on my back. When I caught my breath and came to myself, my horse was lying on his back beside me. I saw at once that I was near eternity, and felt that I was not prepared. I decided in my mind to stop horse racing, and I did stop my part of it. I would go to preaching to some church on Sunday. There was service at the Lutheran church one Sunday and at the Reformed church the next. These two churches were too near each other to have service on the same day and at the same hour. There was no Methodist church in the community where I lived; but I had heard father and others speak of them and the Baptists frequently. They said that a Methodist preacher was known by his coat-tails being torn loose at the back—one with the Bible and the other with the bottle.

The preachers at the above mentioned churches conducted their meetings in a very quiet manner. Sometimes they would have revival meetings, and when penitents were converted, they would give vent to their feelings and sometimes shout, and some one in the congregation would say,

“There is another one got religion.” Well I wanted to be pious and good, but I did not want to do as they did. I went to a Presbyterian church once ; the church was nice, the preaching was excellent, and the singing was inspiring. Altogether it made me love those people. I heard of a Methodist meeting a few miles off, and a crowd of us decided to go to it one night; we went, and such a place and such a time as they had. On top of a hill in an old pine field we found a little log house about 18x24 ft. and about ten feet high; it was not ceiled nor were there even planks nailed over the cracks. Some one told us that was the church, but the preaching would be in the grove. Well, that church did not look like a church to me; father kept his corn and wheat in a better house than that in his barn-yard.

When it began to get dark some candles were lighted, and a large pine knot fire was made on a table covered with soil. The pine knot fire was such as we used to have at corn-huskings. The meeting began and a fine-looking man with flashing eyes and a thundering voice arose to conduct it. I asked some one who he was, and was told that his name was Triplett—Preacher

Triplett. Such a name!—three at once! I thought I never had heard such preaching. You could have heard him a mile. Before he was done preaching that night there were three at once, sure enough. An old lady was jumping around a tree shouting; a man was walking around on his hands and feet, drunk, hollowing that Lizzie (that was the lady's name who was shouting) was going up that persimmon tree to heaven. So I turned away, and as for the Methodists, the half had never been told. I decided that I would not go to see such a show again soon. My health being delicate, I concluded farm work did not agree with me. So I went to see a man by the name of Brown who made and repaired buggies and wagons. He said he wanted someone to help him at the trade. We made a contract, and on the morning of the 19th of August, 1867, I bade my mother adieu, and left her alone and went to learn the trade with Brown. He belonged to the Methodist church, and read a chapter from the Bible, and prayed every morning and evening. I liked the reading and praying very much, and behaved myself at the family devotions except on one occasion. An old colored man came to work for Brown

and Mrs. Brown gave him a piece of muskmelon for his breakfast. He laid it on a pile of lumber in the yard, and took his seat on the doorstep while Brown had prayers. I saw that the darkey's affections were on the melon, and not on things above. While Brown was reading, a cow, smelling the melon, ventured to take it. The old man threw up his hands and said, "hus, hus!" The cow gave it up a minute or two, but returned. The "hus, hus!" was repeated. Brown closed his book and said, "Let us pray." The darkey on the doorstep, with his eyes fixed on the melon, myself sitting just inside the door with my eyes on the darkey was the situation so far as we two were concerned. Brown prayed and we watched. But alas! the next effort the cow made was with a determined will. The old man again renewed his efforts to protect his melon, and said "hus, hus, hus!" but all in vain, The cow ate it and went on her way rejoicing. Brown concluded his prayer, and the old darkey, with a sad face, looked up and said, "She got it." Mrs. B. gave him another piece, and his face brightened up and all passed off pleasantly.

I loved this man Brown and his family,

notwithstanding the fact that he was a Methodist. I soon learned that he had a brother and two sisters, all Methodists and good people, the children of a Methodist preacher. How glad I was to be in company with pious, well-to-do people. I loved to be with them, but I thought if they knew how wicked I was they would not allow me to stay among them. Brown's youngest sister, Mary, was not married, and I delighted to form an acquaintance with her. But I was ashamed while in her company, she was so pure and chaste, and I so defiled with sin. Her brother proposed to me to go with her on Sunday to the Methodist church. God knew I intended to try to do better; and I went, thinking a good sermon would strengthen my intention of mending my ways. The church was very good and Triplett preached again.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CLIFF'S FIRST NOTE TO MISS MARY.

I was delighted with the Methodist preacher and preaching, and still more delighted with the company of Miss Mary B. I had been in the company of quite a

number of young ladies, but never had felt towards any of them just as I did towards her. Now this girl was just the kind of company I had always wanted to keep, and if I could have found and kept such company sooner I would never have strayed so far from the path of right. Mother told me when I left home that I would not stay at Brown's three days, but I stayed three weeks before I went home to see her. She asked me if I was going back. I told her I was. I then told her all about my home and that Mr. Brown had family prayers night and morning, and how I enjoyed it, and that he had a good wife, and she was so very kind to me, and that they were Methodists. Also that Brown had a sister about 17 years old, and she was a Methodist, and that I had gone with her to Methodist preaching the Sunday before, That I thought they were all very good people, especially Miss Mary, and I liked to stay among them.

As I became better acquainted with the young lady the more I liked her. She had another brother named Jim; I worked for Bill. Jim was married and he and his family were very good and kind to me; they were methodists. Their little boys,

Willie and Johnnie, and their cousin Jimmie, were around the shop where I was at work every day. The little boys would bring me large apples from the orchard near by, more than I could possibly eat. I would lay them up and for weeks have plenty of good apples to eat. This extreme kindness caused me to think. I thought surely if these people knew how bad I had been, they would not be so kind, or if they did find out they would turn from me in disgust and I might seek shelter somewhere else. But none of these things came upon me and I kept my position. Right there in the shop I made up my mind that I would never do another mean thing.

One Sunday morning I got out my razor and shaved. Mrs. Brown looked a little sour and asked me why I did not shave Saturday evening. I had always thought up to this time that Sunday was the day to shave. I had a fiddle with me, and I could plainly see that they were not pleased with that. So I sold the fiddle and quit shaving on Sunday, and everything seemed very pleasant afterwards. You see, for Miss Mary's sake, I did not want to do anything that would displease

any of her people for fear it might displease her. But this was not all; I really wanted to be good.

After some length of time I ventured to write Miss Mary a note and sent it by little Will. She answered it in a very pleasant manner. I read it with delight, but was ashamed of myself for writing to her. My note so badly written and worse spelled; her's so beautifully written, correctly spelled and in such good language. I really felt bad. But God knew my heart, that I intended to be a better boy, and I thought to associate with such a girl was the best way for me to accomplish it; and then the association to me at least was very pleasant.

Some time after this I called on her at her father's and had a talk with her concerning my past life and my determination to do better. I told her that my father was dead and my mother was not a Christian; that I was a poor boy and of the chance I had of going to school, and of my mother's objecting to the plan, and how it had hardened me and caused me to do many wrong things that otherwise I would not have done. I also told her that I had neither brother nor sister, and that I



wanted to associate with good people. My story seemed to effect her a good deal. She was sorry for me and told me she would gladly help me in any way that she was able. This helped me greatly in my determination to be good.

I had not been at Brown's many months until I had another chance to go to school. Brown would not let me off to go; he said I was just now beginning to learn my trade, and it would not do me much good to go to school the length of time that I had been offered; unless I could go longer. He did not want to give me up, and said to me, "I will learn you all I can at home." He was a good scholar and did as he promised, and I gave up going to school.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HIS MARRIAGE AND CONVERSION.

I was very fond of Miss Mary's company, and called on her again at her father's which was near by. Her father and mother both treated me very kindly, and I became very much attached to the family, which consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Brown, their daughter, and a maiden lady who had been in the family for twenty-five

years, and who had nursed Miss Mary and was still watching over her charge, and thought indeed she was quite too good a girl to have the "likes of that fellow calling on her." Indeed, she was very much surprised at the father and mother to let him come there at all. I was afraid to call on the young lady very often for fear I might disgust the family, so I often wrote notes and sent them by little Will.

After we became better acquainted she asked me if I would take offense if she should offer some criticisms on my notes. I thanked her and assured her that I would be pleased to have her as a critic and instructor. And I thank God to-day that I ever found that young lady.

As I have said before I was so hard-hearted that I never shed a tear when my father died, but I had not read many of her letters till I began to feel. One evening I received a letter and went to the spring to read it (I remember the very spot), and as I read the great deep of my heart was broken up, and the tears flowed apace. Right then and there I felt in my heart that I loved Miss Mary as I had never loved any one before, and made up my mind at once that I would ask her for heart and hand.

We were both very young to think of marrying, but I felt that I needed the company and help of just such a person all the time. and I determined to propose to her the very first opportunity that I had; and so I did, but got no answer, good nor bad, for two long weeks (and they were long ones, too). I had time to think a great many things. I just imagined that some one had told her father and mother all about me, and that my suit was all in vain. I met her two or three times and received a note from her during the two weeks, but not one word did she say about the question. All that kept me from giving up in despair was that she treated me kindly. When I was just about as blue as a fellow can get in a love affair, the answer came in the affirmative, and I was happy. Her father consented to the marriage, but her mother would not, and I could not blame her. Mary was the youngest of the family and the only one at home. It would have been hard for her mother to have given her up to any one, but especially to a young man whose morals had been very bad,—and she had found it out. Now this was a great trial to me, but I had her father's consent, and I had a hope that her

mother would become reconciled. So we waited a good long while, but the longer we waited the worse matters got. At last I determined to steal the girl if she would run off with me. She said she would if her mother would not consent, and she would not. So, with her father's help, I made my arrangements to steal her; but her mother overheard our plans, and when she found we would marry any way, she said we should marry at home. And on the 24th of November 1868, Rev. T. L. Triplett married us at her father's house, That was 24 years ago last November, and although there are plenty of silver threads among the dark brown tresses, she is the same dear girl to me. It has always been a wonder to me how she and her father could place so much confidence in such a poor, ignorant, bad boy as I was.

I had quit my meanness and come to the conclusion that the Methodists had been badly misrepresented. I now thought they were about the best—instead of the worst—people in the world. One day Mrs. Clay and I were talking about church matters; she said she would like for us both to belong to the same church. She said she was willing to go to the Lu-

theran church with me if I was not willing to go with her. I told her I thought one was as good as the other, and as her father was a Methodist minister it would be better for me to go with her. So I joined with her, but I was not regenerated. My mind was changed but not my heart; but it was not the fault of the Lutheran church that I was not converted. I wanted pure and undefiled religion, but did not want anyone to know when I got it. I thought my wife's brother Jim was the best man I ever saw. We went hunting, fishing, to town and to church together. I thought if I could only be as good as he was I would be sure of the kingdom. So one day when Triplett was preaching on the hill in the old pine field where I heard my first Methodist preaching and the drunk man walk around on his hands and feet, Jim and I were there side by side. He preached with great power, and to my great surprise Jim fell on his knees and began to cry for mercy. I felt that if I did not do the same the devil would get me in less than an hour. So I knelt by his side, and in less than thirty minutes I was soundly converted. All my trouble now was that there were so few present for me to tell it

to. I just wanted everybody to know I had religion, and wanted everybody in the world to feel just as I did. That was twenty-four years ago last August, and I thank God I have never doubted my conversion for one moment from that day to this.

## CHAPTER X.

### HIS MOTHER'S CONVERSION.

We were boarding with Mrs. Clay's father when I was converted. Oh! how different the world seemed to me. The trees, the grass, and the flowers all looked as if they had come out in a new garb. Neither the outside nor the inside of the shop in which I worked looked like it did before. The tools seemed to cut better, and wood was not so tough. And all the folks seemed so different. In fact everything was changed, but the biggest change was in me. I thought I loved Miss Mary (who is now Mrs. Clay) before, but I did not know how to love her until I learned to love the blessed Saviour. And I want to say right here, no one can love their fellow creatures as they ought, until they have given God their hearts and love Him su-

premely. No husband can love his wife, nor the wife her husband as they ought to love each other, without the love of God in their hearts. Parents cannot love their children nor children their parents as they ought without it. The young lady cannot love her lover, neither can the young man love and respect the young lady as he ought without it. We all need it, and must have it if we would make a successful journey through this world of sorrow, and gain Heaven in the end. I had heard so much talk about what folks called religion. I had heard mother speak of it in a slighty way, and a number of others would say this or that one got religion. Then I did not know what it was, but thank God I know the meaning of it now, and my great desire is to sing His praise, and to tell others of His great love.

“Now to the Lord a noble song,  
Now may His love employ my tongue,  
And let me speak His glorious name,  
And all His boundless love proclaim.”

I had heard it preached, talked, sung and prayed, but still I could not understand it, but when God came to me and said, “Son, thy sins are all forgiven, then I understood it, and I have never doubted

that visit. Doubted it, no indeed. When a friend comes and knocks at your door, and you open the door and welcome him in, and he sits down and talks with you, and you with him, you know it, you can't doubt it. Jesus is our best friend. He is a refuge, a strength and a present help in trouble. I shall always thank God that He came to the door of my heart, and that I opened the door and welcomed Him in, and that He dwells in me and walks with me, and His love constrains me and upholds me. Blessed be the name of the Lord. No tongue can express His love, nor can a scribe describe it.

“Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
And were the heavens a parchment made,  
And every single stick a quill,  
And every man a scribe by trade,  
To write the love of God alone  
Would drain the ocean dry.  
Nor would the scroll contain the whole.  
Though stretched from sky to sky.”

The love of God shed abroad in a man's heart makes him love everybody good or bad. I loved all. I loved mean people, but hated their mean ways. Everything seemed so different to me. I used to do things and keep from doing other things to please Miss Mary and her folks. But



when I got on the other side, I saw the thing to do was to serve and please the blessed Jesus, and that would please them. So when father Brown was away from home, I felt it my duty to hold family prayers. Oh, what a cross, but I did the best I could, and the Lord blessed us day by day. Some time after my conversion Rev. Triplett held a protracted meeting near my mother's. Mrs. Clay and I went down to mother's to attend the meeting. When we got to the old home, everything looked as if it had been changed since I was there last. It did not seem like the same place. But there was the same old kitchen, with its wide fire place where mother baked her loaves in the old Dutch oven (for she had no stove then). She had a clay oven in the yard where she baked pies, custards and cakes. There were the same old oaks, cedars, sycamores, fruit trees, and the balm of gilead, where I got the buds from, the cat, all in their places. But they did not look like they used to look. There was the house where the giddy and gay often gathered and stepped to the worldly music that I furnished them. I thought then that was happiness. But as I enter that room this

time, I feel that I am done with such pastime. I can't bear it; I hate it. The old clock from which I had taken the bullet stood on the mantel. When it struck the time of day, the music of the wire seemed strangely sweet. This was my home that I hated and left; here dwelt a mother whose son had hated her and left her alone. But thank God, when he comes this time, his heart is overflowing with love for his mother. She had some sinful ways that I hated, but Oh, how I loved her now. Yes, when I saw her face for the first time after my conversion, how different it looked, and I think the face of her boy looked quite as different to her. O, how I loved my dear old mother now. She went with us to church; she had heard Bro. T. preach before, as he had been preaching at the new Methodist church some time. She seemed to like him very well, though he was a Methodist preacher. He preached that day with great power, the Spirit came down, sinners were convicted, mourners converted, and believers made happy. I was so anxious for mother to be a Christian, and I saw she was weeping. I walked down the aisle to her and asked her if she did not want to be a

Christian; and she said she did. I then asked her to go with me to the altar; which she did. I stayed with, and prayed for her with all my heart, and in a short while she was converted. That was the happiest day of Cliff's life except one, that one you all remember. Now, dear boys and girls, if you have an unconverted father or mother, and you are a Christian, pray for them, talk to them, and lead them to the altar of prayer. God will hear your prayers and bless your efforts.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CLIFF'S SEVERE TRIAL.

Immediately after mother's conversion, she spoke of joining the Methodist church. I told her to study on the matter awhile, and then if she thought she could be better satisfied in the Methodist church, to join it; and if not, to remain in the Lutheran church, where she had been a member for many years. After considering the matter for some weeks, she decided to remain where she was. But I erected a family altar in mother's house before I went home.

We were still boarding with Mrs. Clay's father, and after the meeting we returned

home happy and delighted with the thought that mother was now traveling with us toward the home of the good.

We spent the latter part of the summer and fall in joy and thanksgiving to God for His goodness to us. We had a very pleasant Christmas, But O! how soon joy and pleasure can be turned into sorrow and weeping. On the 30th day of December, 1869, a little daughter was born to us. Mrs. Clay was taken with a violent féver, and the doctor told me she must die; there was no hope; he could do no more. To think of giving her up was more than I could bear; but I had learned to take everything to the Lord in prayer, and I knew he was the Great Physician of Soul and body, and I went to him, and it seemed as if my soul melted as I told him how I loved her, and how much help she was to me. Just to sum it up in a few words, I felt like it would kill me if she died. I had never realized till then how much I did love her. I had loved her as a friend, as a sweetheart, as a wife, all combined. But the crowning climax was put upon all when I loved her as the mother of our precious little one. When I was just beginning to realize this new joy, how

was I to give her up? I held on to her, as it were, with one hand, and on to God with the other. For two long weeks she suffered agonies untold, without any change, only for the worse. On the 16th day of her illness, as we stood around her bed, father, mother, brothers, sisters, friends and doctor, all had given her up. They all thought she was dying, and she thought so too. The anxious father and mother and friends were still praying for her, although it seemed as if all hope was gone. Just about this time our beloved pastor, Rev. Triplett, came in. I asked him to join us in prayer for her one time more. We all knelt and he prayed, and I have never heard such a prayer before nor since. It seemed to me that he took hold of the very horns of the altar and held on till Heaven and earth came together. The room was filled with the glory of God. While he was praying I promised the Lord if he would answer our prayers I would do anything to advance His cause that the Spirit impressed upon me as a duty, no matter how heavy a cross it might be. Before the prayer was ended something said. "Your prayers are answered." and thank God, they were answered; that very

day she took a turn for the better, and slowly recovered her health and strength. And I was just as happy as I could be, with Mary and the little one. Mary! O, what a sweet name. I love that name because it was the name of the mother of the blessed Jesus. I loved my precious wife now more than ever. Some may not think so, but I know I now loved God more than ever before, because in this severe affliction I had been drawn near to Him, and he heard and answered my prayers; and the more you love God, the more you will love your wife and everybody else. As I have already said, it was a great cross to me to hold family prayers. I could do very well now when we were alone, but when we had company I was tempted to omit it, but my promise would come right up before me, and there was no getting out of it. And I would say right here that the promise I made to God beside what seemed to be the death-bed of my wife, has been a great stimilus to me in the performance of my duty. If at any time I feel disposed to shirk duty in ever so little a thing, God's Spirit brings that memorable scene before my mind so vividly that I can almost hear Him say, "You

promised to do your duty in all things if I would spare your wife; have I not done it?" That always settles the question at once.

When the weather became warmer and I thought Mrs. Clay and the little one were able to take the trip, we went to see mother. Now grandmother—on my mother's side—was still living, and lived near mother's, so we concluded to stop awhile with her, and then go to the old home, grandma was blind, and had been for years. She had never seen Mrs. Clay, but she had learned to know her by her voice, but as it had been so long since she had heard her speak we thought perhaps she had forgotten the voice; so I said, "We will not make ourselves known, and see if grandma will know who it is. So Mrs. Clay went in and said, "Good evening, Grandma," and the dear old soul said "Why, if this ain't Mary; howdy, howdy! Where is Cliff and the baby?" I then spoke to her and handed her the baby. She felt over it and said, "It's a mighty little baby." About this time mother came in, and we had a great meeting indeed, even the great-grand-daughter meeting the great-grandmother. They

were all glad indeed that we had lived to meet again on earth. They all looked upon Mrs. Clay almost as one raised from the dead. We spent an hour or two very pleasantly with grandma, and then we took mother with us and went to the old home for a few days.

## CHAPTER XII.

### HOW SHE FOUND IT OUT.

After spending a few days at the old home, we went back to our boarding place and entered upon the duties and trials of life.

We did not remain at father B.'s very long after this. As I had learned a good trade—that of making wagons and buggies—I was now prepared to set up a shop of my own. I could do both the wood and iron work, and also the painting.

The people around my old home wanted me to settle there and run a shop, and as there was no shop of this kind in the community, and mother was alone and had no one to look after the farm, I thought it was the best thing I could do. So I laid the matter before Mrs. Clay, who, after some consideration, decided with me that it was



best for us to go. It was a hard trial for her to leave her father and mother and make her home among strangers. She set great store by her mother in sickness, and well she might; for she was the best nurse in sickness I ever saw. I shall never forget the long weary nights she watched with me at the bedside of my wife in her severe illness. Although she was very much opposed to me marrying Mary, she soon got over it, and was very kind to us.

Some have asked me this question: "Cliff, how came Mrs. B. to overhear you and Mr. B. when you were laying your plans to steal Miss Mary?" It was this way: "Father B. had a shop in his yard, and at one end of the shop there was a chimney, and against the chimney was a little house in which they kept sweet potatoes. The crop of the year had already been stored in this little house. Father B. and I were in the shop laying our plans and setting our time, and Mrs. B. was in the potato house getting potatoes for dinner, and hearing every word we said, but we did not know it at the time. I intended to have Miss Mary if I had to steal her, and her mother found it out there and then that it was a settled fact, and that all of

the family except herself was in favor of the marriage. She told us afterwards that the conversation she overheard while in the potato house caused her to give up for us to marry.

We moved to my old home, and I built shops, and also an L to mother's house. I went to a good deal of trouble and expense to get fixed up ready for work, and had a good custom; but we had no health. We all took the chills. Mrs. Clay and I both took them the same day, and our little girl took them the next day; she had them for six months, and they hung on to us for eighteen months straight along. They did not seem to hurt me so much, but Mrs. Clay's health gave way, and the doctor told me she would never be any better till I moved her away from that place. Now, this was a hard blow on a poor fellow. I had spent a good deal of money and time, and was just now fixed to make money and live happy, if we could have been well. I did not want to lose all I had done, and I thought perhaps the doctor was mistaken and Mary would get well without moving. So we still kept trying new remedies, hoping for better, but getting worse every day. I did not know what to do. Mother

Brown would often come and stay a few days with us, and every time she came she would tell me she was afraid we would never get well there. She did not want me to take Mary there from the first. And just about the time that I had come to the place that I did not know what to do, she came to spend a few days with us. She saw at once that Mary was a great deal worse. She came to me in the shop and said, "Cliff, I hate to think of you losing all you have done here, but I am going to be candid with you; if you don't take Mary out of this sickly place you will be a widower in less than six months." This was enough. I said "Ma, I can give up anything, everything for her, and I will do it." So when father B. came to take Ma home he took my wife and baby also. I rented a house and lot near father B.'s moved to it and set up shop. We had not been there long till we got rid of the chills, and I was well and making money. I rented the house and lot for another year, the year ending the last of March. I paid the rent in advance. With all our afflictions and building and moving I was only thirty dollars in debt, and had sixty dollars' worth of work in my shop. I had

bought five acres of land near by on which to build the next year. On the 4th of Sept. of this year (1873), another daughter was born to us. Our family now numbered six. Mrs. Clay's health was so bad that she was compelled to have someone to stay with her all the time. Mrs. Jane E. and her little boy came to live with us. This was a great community for work and good pay. And as I had more work than I could do, I took a young man by the name of Van P. to learn him the trade. He was a good man, and had married Miss Bettie S., the young lady to whom I had gone to school. We were glad to have them in the community. We had arranged for a big winter's work, to be ready to leave this place the last of next March. But about the tenth of December, one morning before daylight the man who owned the house and lot came in and said to us, "I want this house at Christmas." I tried to reason with him; told him I had rented the place until March, and that he knew I had paid the rent until that time, but all to no avail. He said he must have his house at Christmas. O! how dark everything seemed that morning. What was I to do? In the dead of winter, with an afflicted

wife and little children, and nowhere to go; and yet I must go. I don't think I ever felt the Lord any nearer to me than He came that morning at family prayer. He gave me the full assurance that He would lead me out of this trouble, and He did, though the way was long and dark; and I know it was for my good. That move has always been a mystery to me; for the man that owned the property had always been my friend, and he is a good friend of mine to-day.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### CLIFF TAKES CARE OF THE CHILDREN.

On the 26th of December, 1873, I went to work, with my young man Van P. to help me. With our axes we cleared off a place on my lot, on which we built a very small cabin and lumber house, and on the 27th of January, 1874, we moved into the cabin. That year was one of great affliction. Minnie, our baby, lay at death's door for weeks. But I prayed and vowed I would be a better man if the Lord would spare her life; and He did, and I sought daily to please him. About this time I was called on to superintend a Sunday

school. The church was five miles from where I lived and I had no horse. Now, to stand in my shop every day and walk 10 miles every Sunday was a hard task, and besides all this I did not think I was the man for that place. But I remembered my promise to the Lord if He would spare my loved ones and I was afraid to say no, so I did the best I could and we had a very good Sunday school. This year I built shops and the next year I built a house, paved in a yard and garden, planted vines, fruit trees and flowers. We had a nice little home. I had a custom and made money, and everything moved on pleasantly for a time, in which time two boys were born to us, Jim in 1875 and Tom in 1877. We now had four children. As my shop was near the house I often helped Mrs. Clay to take care of them. I will say right here but few men know anything about the trouble their wives have with the children. I have seen men too lazy to get up to breakfast after their wives had made the fire, dressed the children and cooked the breakfast. I never could see how any true man could treat his wife that way. A wife is a companion, a partner, a part of. "They twain shall be one flesh—

Matt. 18:5." A good wife is God's greatest blessing to man. Young man, if you are thinking of asking the heart and hand of some fair daughter, and you are so fortunate as to win her, O, be true and kind to her! Remember she gives up all for you. Young lady, first give your heart to God and your hand to the church and require the same of your lover. Then, when you marry you will erect a family altar and live happy. You may have trials and afflictions, but you can take it all to the Lord night and morning in prayer. I know a young couple who married and moved to a home of their own. After they got things arranged and ate supper, the wife brought the Bible she had won at Sunday school, laid it on the table by her husband and said we must have prayers, I have always been used to family prayer and cannot retire without it, and if you won't read and pray, I will; and she did. Next morning she got her breakfast ready and informed her husband that she would not eat till after prayers. He took up the Bible, read and prayed, and has never neglected it from that day till this, O, for such wives as this. They are the kind to win the world for Christ. I have a good

wife, but it always makes me feel bad to think of what a sorry husband she has. But I don't think I ever was as bad as some I have seen. I would make fires, wash and dress the little ones for breakfast, and would help my wife cook if it was necessary. I was all right so long as my wife did not ask me for money or to take her somewhere. That always made me nervous. I was always hard up when she wanted money and just wanted me to go with her anywhere. Now this was a long time ago—I do better now—but it makes me ashamed every time I think of it, for my wife was so good and kind to me that it always seemed a pleasure to her to do me a favor. She made my buggy and carriage cushions and trimmings, to save me from hiring it done. Just call on her for help and the answer was always "All right, sir," if she had to put the little one down to come. It takes some men about twenty years to learn how to treat a good wife, and some never learn at all. I know men who have good wives who have no more sense than to think a woman can make, mend, wash and iron the clothes, cook and bake for a large family, clean up the house, take care of half a dozen chil-



dren, and then go to the field and make a hand the whole summer and fall till the corn is gathered and the cotton picked, baled and sold. And then if she is pressed and compelled to ask him for a little money to pay her preacher and get some things for her and the children he will growl out, "You will have to wait till I sell my yaller cotton." The Lord pity the woman that is cursed with such a man as that for a husband. You may think me tedious and extravagant, but I know whereof I speak. I think stinginess was my besetting sin. As I have already said, I helped my wife some with the children, although sometimes when she would ask me to keep Minnie and Jim at the shop so that Baby Tom could sleep and let her work, I would think that was more than my share, but I was ashamed to say so, but I thought I just knew all about a mother's trials and troubles with the children. But I had an experience about that time that did me a great deal of good and taught me a lesson that I never could have learned in any other school. Mother Brown was very sick and Mrs. Clay said to me one evening I want to go and see mother this evening if you will

keep the little ones, Mattie, the oldest one, was at school. I told her I had a buggy to mend and it was promised that evening, and I did not see how I could be bothered with them and get anything done. But as it was nearby, and she looked so disappointed, I told her I would keep them if she would not stay long. I took the children to the shop and went to work. I had not been at work long till Tom fell through an open bench on his face, getting his eyes and mouth full of dirt. I quit work, washed his face, and put him in the cradle and rocked him to sleep, and returned to work. I was under the buggy at work, and told Jim to get me a hatchet, for which he had to climb upon a box and from that to a bench, and as he started back he fell, cutting a great gash above his eye, from which the blood flowed freely. Minnie brought me water and cloths, and I washed and dressed his wound, took off his wet, bloody clothes, put dry ones on him and sat down and held him till he went to sleep. Then I put him to bed and went to work again. Minnie was playing about the shop and was not giving me any trouble. And as I worked I thought of the care of little ones as I had

never thought before. I was getting on nicely with my work and thinking Mrs. Clay would soon come, when all of a sudden I was interrupted by an old hen squalling near by. I looked and saw a hawk trying to get a chick. I sprang from under the buggy, grabbed a shot gun that stood inside the shop and banged away at the hawk. When the gun fired I heard a racket behind me. On looking round I saw Minnie standing on her head in the ditch. Being lonesome she lay down across the wheelbarrow and went to sleep. The crack of the gun frightened her and she jumped and turned the thing over, throwing her on her head. Just as I was pulling her out Mrs. Clay came home. I related and she was so sorry I had had so much trouble with the children. This all happened in less than three hours and I got my work done on time. And I know I have had more sympathy for my wife ever since that evening. I had often kept the children at the shop awhile, but if anything happened to them their mother came and took them to the house. But I had them all to myself that evening and I found out things not thought of before. What we all need, so as to live right, is the

old-time religion in the home. God grant that we may all have more of that kind.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

#### CHRISTMAS STORY FOR BOYS.

Well, boys and girls, I will go back a few years and tell you something of how I enjoyed Christmas and what kind of a time we had on that occasion. That was always a big time with Cliff. Mother would speak of him coming, and we would have fresh meats in abundance—such as sausages, liver hash, back-bone and spare-ribs, etc. Mother would have great big yam “taters” baked; kill, scald and scrape a fat chicken; knock a pumpkin in the head, and then she was ready for him.

One morning quite early I was sitting by my mother, anxiously waiting for Xmas to come. She told me he would come after a short time. Suddenly I heard a loud knock on the door. Mother bade him to come in. He opened the door and there he stood with a big switch in his hand. Children, I tell you he nearly scared me to death. Cliff had been a bad one, and had no time for that kind of a Xmas. Xmas times affected everything in general. We would

have a big time at school about that time, and Cliff generally was the leader. As I was captain I had to have something about my hat or dress to indicate my leadership. At least, I thought so. One evening I told mother that on next day we were going to have a parade, and as I was to take my fife and march at the head of the company, I must have a badge to wear on my hat. I described to her what kind of thing I wanted made, and how to tack up one side of my hat and place the ornament on it. She said she could make it out of cotton. I proposed taking a candle and going up stairs for the cotton, and she should try to make the thing. She objected on the ground that I would set the cotton on fire with the candle. I told her I would be careful. She consented reluctantly. I took the large bunch of white cotton under my arm and caught hold of a small bunch with the hand in which I held the candle. I pulled the small bunch off, but the candle went to the wrong place. I had no trouble blowing out the candle, but I had trouble with the cotton. I called aloud, and mother came to my relief. We succeeded in saving enough cotton to make the captain's badge, and I marched at the head of the

ranks next day. On those days we knew nothing of Xmas trees and Xmas services or exercises.

Time rolled on. After Mrs. Clay and myself had been keeping house for several years, she, proposed that we have a Xmas tree for the benefit of our children and a few of the young people in the community. I agreed to the proposal. Xmas night came, and we had the presents ready. We had the tree in one corner of our room. The children and young people were delighted when they saw it. While we were putting presents, apples, oranges, etc., on the tree an accident happened. We had a lantern hung up so that the light from it reflected on the tree, so as to see the tree to good advantage. Mrs. Clay was on the floor and had charge of presents in a basket, while I was standing on a chair arranging the presents on the tree. Among the presents was a large candy heart that a young man had brought to have put on the tree for his best girl. I dropped an orange, it fell in the basket, struck the fellow's big heart, and broke it in many pieces. This caused Cliff to become excited, and he threw back his head, struck the lantern, and knocked it down. It fell

near Mrs. Clay and scared her awfully. She raised up, jumped over the cradle, ran behind the bed and sat down to wait for an explosion, but the explosion did not take place. We had nothing more serious than breaking the fellow's heart.

Now, dear children I have since learned that Christmas means Christ-born, and that the 25th day of December is celebrated as Christ's birthday. Oh, how pleasant it is to think that Christ who died for you was once a little child. Dear children, parents, and all, when you give gifts at Christmas remember that God so loved you as to give His son to die for your sins. Now cannot you give yourself to him as a Christmas gift this year? If you do so you will spend the happiest Christmas of your life. I have spent 44, and have spent them in various ways, but none so happy as when spent in the service of my blessed Lord. May the good Lord help you to try it this year, dear reader.

Well, dear friends, I hope you all have had a pleasant Christmas, and that many of you have said, Lord, I give myself to thee. Since I gave myself to God He has been so extremely good to me and mine that it seems to me I can never

do enough for His cause. I attended to my Sunday school, and quarterly Conference elected me steward, and I was doing the best I could for the preachers and the Methodist church generally. About this time there was a very poor family moved into the little cabin near our house, and as we had no Sunday school in the winter I said to Mrs. Clay one Sunday morning, "Let us go and see this poor family." She of course agreed at once, and in company with a few friends, among whom was Mrs. Ellen E., a very sweet singer, we went—about eight in number. They seemed very glad to see us and I was very much impressed with the family. They seemed to be very good people. I proposed reading God's word, singing a hymn and having prayers with them, to which they readily assented. I read from Matt. 19, beginning at the 16th verse. I made a plain, simple talk on the life of the young man mentioned in this chapter, and wound up by saying that he was like a great many young men today that want to do some great thing, that is something that the world calls great, and then if they are called upon to do something for the relief of the poor, some little act of kindness,



and preached ten of his very best sermons for us. We had about fifty conversions and twenty-three accessions to the church. Bro. T. is a good preacher and one of the greatest men in prayer I have ever heard pray. His worth to the conference has not, nor never will be, realized this side of heaven. May his reward be great in the end is my prayer. Our people at Chestnut Hill all fell in love with him at first sight. The crowds that came to hear him preach were immense; our large church would not hold near all of them. Our people here will be glad to have him for their pastor at any time. The church is now completed with the exception of a bell, and when a sixty dollar bell is put in, the church, with all its furniture, seats, stoves, bell and all will cost less than sixteen hundred dollars. The membership of this church is about 160, and the Sunday school numbers about 225.

On the 24th day of Novembr, 1894, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of our wedding day. All our children and grandchildren and special friends took supper with us. After supper quite a number of young people came in and entertained us with good music for an hour. God grant

that every one of this little company, with hosts of other friends may join us at the marriage supper of the Lamb. I closed up my work for the year '93 with a debt of about \$700 on the church for which I was personally responsible, but had it in a shape to be paid out in 1904. I went to Conference in 1893, at Charlotte, not knowing whether I would be returned to Chestnut Hill charge or not. The people of Chestnut Hill had asked for me and my Presiding Elder told them he would send me back if he could, and he thought it probable as it had been a work only three years. I was willing to go back there or to go anywhere else. But as I had refused to join conference and had completed the work at Salisbury, the conference had nothing more for me to do. So I went home disappointed and sick, still being responsible for the church debt. But that was all arranged when our new Presiding Elder came. I got a clear receipt and thus closes the work of Clifton Clay as a pastor in Rowan county, N. C.

I said I would refer to my associates again. Jake C. and Lock S. are both farming and doing well. Jake S. was killed by a drunk man, the killing was thought to

be accidental. Mose B., a cousin of mine, went to making whiskey and brandy and is a great sinner. David L. is gone and I know nothing of him. Dan C., another one of my cousins (the one that was with me when the preacher talked to us and we had our coat tails in our pants), went to Georgia. He wrote me that he was converted, and had joined the M. E. Church, South. The last I heard from him was that he was preaching the gospel of the Son of God. I hope this is true. This closes the life of Clifton Clay in Rowan County, for the present, at least, and may be forever. God bless you all.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

##### CLIFF LEAVES HIS NATIVE COUNTY.

As my work was now done in Rowan County as a pastor, and I could not get employment at anything else, I thought best to sell my house and lot at Salisbury, and strike for a job somewhere else. I felt at this time that the Methodist church had not treated me fairly—giving me no work at all. Right here I had battle with the devil; he actually tried to persuade me to leave the Methodist church. He came at

me in this way: "As much as you have done for the Methodist church, working hard as a preacher, and also as a contractor, and now they have left you without work, and without your pay as a contractor. If I were in your place I would go to the Presbyterians; they have been good and kind to you, and have helped you in your work. Now, you go to them, they will help you in this time of trouble."

I had been very sick and was still weak in body and mind, and was very easily fretted, and said and did some things about that time that I am very sorry for, and I hope all who are concerned in the matter will forgive me. Now, I dearly loved the Presbyterians, God bless them! but when I got well and came to myself and began to think what the Methodist church was, and what she had done for me and mine, that she had taken me in out of the cold world, and that it was at her altars that God spoke peace to my soul, at her altars all of my precious children were converted and took upon themselves the vows of the church; and my dear Mary, who has been so true to me through all these years of trial, was born and reared in the Methodist church; and last, but not

least, my mother was converted at its altars at an old age. And I do thank God to-day for all the blessings that have come to me and mine through this grand old church. And I told the old deceiver that whether the authorities of the Methodist church gave me work in Conference or not I expected to live and die right by her altars, and he has let me alone on that subject ever since.

In January, 1894, I advertised my house and lot for sale, but received no bids. About this time a good brother sent me word that he would swap me a good plantation in Montgomery county for my house and lot. Some of my children were anxious for me to make the trade, but I could not see out that way. I wanted to sell my property for the money, but as I could not I told my wife and children that I would pray over this offer one week, and if I had no other offer till the end of the week—if they were willing to it I would accept it as God's plan, and make the trade whether I could see my way out or not.

Well, I waited patiently till the end of the week and had no other offer, so I told my family that the trade was made, and

that the Lord had made it, and I was satisfied that it was a good one. In a few days the brother and I went and fixed up the papers, and then I saw the place, and found it much better than I expected. Reader, if you want a good bargain let the Lord make the trade for you every time.

It was hard for us to leave our comfortable home and many kind friends at Salisbury, to cast our lot among strangers in a strange land; but it was especially hard to say good-bye to three of our precious children, whose homes are at Salisbury. But I felt assured that this was God's plan, and that he would lead me aright.

On the 12th of February, 1894, my youngest son and myself left the town of Salisbury, and reached our pine-pole cabin in Montgomery county on the 13th, and on the 16th, we were joined by Mrs. Clay and the two little girls.

Dear reader, I shall not attempt to describe our surroundings; I will just leave you to imagine how you would feel to move out of a good ceiled house with nine rooms into one of two that was neither weather-boarded, ceiled, chinked, nor daubed. With all this, my wife was sick—had not been up all day for ten days—when she

took the train for this place. The trip did not seem to hurt her, and although we were not very comfortable we were happy, for we felt sure the Lord had sent us here; and the best of all was, we felt that He was here with us.

Dear readers, it is not what we have, nor where we are, but it is WHAT WE ARE that makes us happy.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

#### THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

Dear readers, I have moved many times. Moved three times in one year, but this was the toughest place we ever struck. We had a little flour, one piece of meat, six pounds of lard and one dollar and thirty cents in money left, when we paid our freight and dray bills. Now we had come to this place to farm. The Lord had given us this farm and we wanted to work it. Here we were, five of us to feed, and I have told you what we had to go on. This farm contains one hundred and nine acres of good land, with a river running through it. It has twelve acres of good bottom on it, of which ten acres are in cultivation. We had no horse, no cow,

dog, cat nor chickens. We had neither wagon, plow, harness, corn, nor anything of the kind, and no money to buy it with. And not one person did we know in the county when we came here, but as I have already said, we were contented and happy, feeling sure that the Lord had sent us here and in some way or other would provide for us, and He did. This year has been marked with more special providences of God than any one year of my life. God has seemed nearer to me in this lonely place than any where I have ever lived. The first few Sundays we spent here seemed very dreary to me, my mind naturally went back to Chestnut Hill church that the Lord had enabled me to build, and in my imagination I could see the many smiling faces that had greeted me every Sunday morning for three years. But with Sunday night came the trying time to me. There are no words in any language that can express what I felt. I could not help listening for the bell, away back at Chestnut Hill, that had called me twice every Sabbath for three years, to go and deliver a message for my blessed Master. It seemed to me as if my heart would break. Oh! how I loved that church and those dear



people, no one but a pastor can tell. But I loved my blessed Savior more than all things else and he came right close to me in this hour of trial and said, son this is for your good. At this point I made a full surrender, I freely gave up all for Jesus.

We have a good church building near us here, and a few, very few gathered there every Sunday morning and had Sunday school. We have preaching but once a month, and very few people attend then. The people here, as a rule, seem to take but very little interest in church work. Soon after we moved here a woman sent me word that she wanted me do some work. I went to see her at once. She wanted a dwelling house and a mill house built. She said, I am going to have a new mill put in and I want you to run it when it is completed. My son and myself went to work at once on the dwelling house, and this kind woman let us have corn and wheat and some money. As I have already said the Unharrie River runs through my plantation and I have a good fishery on the river. In March we began to catch fish and soon caught more than we could use. We sold the surplus for a good price,

which was a great help to us. We caught about six hundred during the spring and summer, some of them very fine ones. I took four out of one of my traps at one time that weighed thirty-one and a half pounds. The Lord was so good to us, bless His holy name. We soon gained many friends in this county. One good old Bro. knew that I wanted a horse, and he also knew that I did not have the money to buy one. He said to me, I have a horse at my house that will be sold at the court house door, whatever he brings is coming to me, and if you want him, go and bid him off, whether you have any money or not. So I thanked the Lord and this good Bro. and went and bid the horse off for twenty-five-dollars and seventy-five cents. My son raised a good crop with him and he is better now than when I bought him. Another Bro. brought us a cow and we had the use of her all summer for fifty cents a month. Another Bro. brought us a hog and put it in the pen, and told me to pay for it whenever it suited me. Quite a number of our new friends gave us chickens, molasses, potatoes, etc. Mrs. Clay and I went to visit a family one day and when we were getting ready to start home the good man

of the house caught a nice pig and gave it to Mrs. Clay. She was very proud of her little black pig and has taken good care of it, and it is now a nice little hog. As for cats and dogs we had to use powder and lead to thin them out. This county seems to have an overplus of cats and dogs. While my son was working our crop, my sons-in-law, Mr. Kluttz and Mr. Watson, of Salisbury came and helped me on the house that I was building. I did but little work on the mill house. I was taken sick with diptheria in June and came near dying. While I was sick we run out of money and rations. A man in the community owed me a few dollars and on hearing of my sickness sent it to me. Now before I was taken sick I had subscribed to our pastor's salary, and also had subscribed three dollars missionary money. While I was sick our quarterly conference came on. I told Mrs. Clay we would divide with the preacher. As I had been a pastor myself I knew how important it was that the money be raised. We now had but little money left to buy us some bread and medicine. I was now at my worst with my throat. Just at this time there came a note from a man in the com-

munity who I was owing a few dollars, saying he must have some money. I told my wife to go and get my pocket book, and send him what we had and she did so, not knowing where money or rations were to come from, but we felt sure that the Lord in His own time and way would provide for us if we trusted in Him. At one time during the summer we had neither meat, meal, nor flour but Mrs. Clay said, thank the Lord we have some shorts to make bread, and we will not starve. The good people at several of the churches on this work had invited me to preach for them saying they would pay me for my services. But now I could neither work nor preach. But by and by my throat got well, and I preached some at Ophir, Macedonia, Zoar and Prospect, in this county and at Stoney Hill and Dicksville school house in Stanley County. At all of these places I administered to the people as best I could in spiritual things, and at every one of these places the good people administered to me in temporal things. May God bless every one of them. By this time we had plenty of beans and potatoes and salad and some flour, but no meat. But just at this time a kind sister of Macedonia

church gave us a nice fat piece of bacon, and then we were all right for a while. I now thought I was well enough to go to work at the mill again and could make some money, and we would soon get the mill to running, and then we would have plenty of bread at least. But, alas for human hopes, when I went to the mill to go to work, the boss workman told me he had nothing for me to do. And at the same time I found out that the owner of this mill had contracted with another man to run her mill, saying she was afraid I would not be able to run it. My friends, this was a stunner—turned out in the cold again without a dollar—and by this time meat, bread, horse and cow feed were all out. It seemed to me that this was more than I could bear, and indeed I broke clear down and cried like a whipped child. I felt as if everybody had gone back on me, but when I came to myself I found Mary my dear companion, who has stood right by my side for more than twenty-five years still standing there, and with her soft hand she wiped away my tears, saying, the Lord has not gone back on you. I said, O, it is so dark, so dark, so dark. She said, yes, it is dark now, but this is for our

good, and the Lord will provide. So I thanked the Lord and took courage.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE LORD DID PROVIDE.

A good brother let me have an old carriage, out of which I made a wagon for myself. I took the wagon and went to a brother who had meat to sell. He gave me the privilege of hauling off some meat to sell. I got one cent more on the pound than I paid, and thus gained enough to get us a small ham, to the great delight of Mrs. Clay and the children. But their joy was soon turned into sorrow. We had used but a small portion of it, when some sneak thief went into the kitchen and stole it. This was very hard on Mrs. Clay's religion, for she is particularly fond of ham. Now came my time to console. I told Mrs. Clay and the mortified children that I was very sorry for them (I care nothing for ham myself), and for them not to worry about it; that the Lord would provide, but neither they or I could see another ham in the provision. But a kind friend, who had bought three hams of me, when he heard of our loss gave Mrs. Clay

a ham in place of the stolen one. And when the good old brother from whom I got the meat heard of our calamity he gave me a dollar, so you see the Lord did provide.

Now, dear reader, I shall soon close this little book. In it I have strived to tell you something of God's goodness to me and mine. And I will say right here that we raised a good crop of potatoes and have killed a nice fat hog and have plenty to eat. So you see the more I tell the more I have to tell. Many will read these lines that will never see me in this world, but I hope, trust, and pray that this little volume may be the instrument in God's hand of leading some poor erring souls into the light and liberty of God's children.

As I have already said, we have plenty to eat, but no money to get clothes or anything else with. But as you have already seen, and will see as I proceed, the Lord always provides for us just at the right time.

As the year 1894 was drawing to a close two things troubled me. One was, What shall I do next year, and the other was, where am I to get the money to meet my obligations. I wanted to work in the Con-

ference if I could get it; if not, I wanted to sell my plantation, pay my debts, and have this little book printed. I could not sell my place, and could not pay my missionary money, and the time was almost here for me to go to Conference to be ordained Elder, and I had no money in which to go. So I told my wife I could not go to Conference, but she said, "You must go!" and with that same unshaken trust she said, "You will go: the Lord will in some way provide for it.". I said no more.

Now, dear reader, I am going to relate one of the most wonderful manifestations of God's goodness that has ever come to us. I had told my wife some time before this that if the Lord did not send fish into our traps to pay our missionary money I could not see where it was to come from. "Well," said she, "let us hope and pray for the fish." Well, sure enough they soon began to come. One morning I got five, the next morning nine, the next nineteen, the next twenty-seven, and the next forty. By this time I had one-half of my money. Just at this time I had to make a trip to the town of Albemarle. The night before I was to start my wife said to me, "I wish the Lord would send you 150 fish to-night."



they turn away sorrowful or mad. I then turned to the two old people, the father and mother of the family, and to the best of my ability told them of the precious Son of God, who was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor; that He had not where to lay His head; and that He was the friend of the poor and loved to dwell with them and bless them if they would serve Him. We had a prayer and Mrs. E. led us in singing. She sang some of the most soul-inspiring songs I have ever heard. The Spirit came down. The old man and his wife got happy and clapped their hands and shouted aloud the praises of God. After the service the old man came to me and laid his hand on my shoulder and said to me, I am so glad that the Lord sent you here this day. Oh, I am so happy; bless the Lord. He then said, I tell you right now, young man, that you will have the gospel horn to blow before you die. These words came like a clap of thunder from the clear sky. I was almost speechless. It seemed as if God himself had spoken to me. We bade the family good-bye and I left with these burning words still ringing in my ears: "You will have the gospel horn to blow." On our way home Mrs. Clay

asked me when I was licensed to preach. I told her I had no license. She said, well I think you had better hold up then. I felt that I would like to be a good preacher and be able to tell the sweet story of the cross to dying men. After this I visited this poor family often, and always left them feeling that it was good to be there.

Time rolled on, and another boy was born to us. We named him Will. He was only lent to us a very short time. His short life was one of intense suffering. We had five doctors with him, but they could do nothing for him. He had an open heart and that rendered his case hopeless. For sometime before he died his little fingers, toes and lips were blue as indigo. At the age of eight and a half months Jesus took him from a world of pain to one of rest and peace. All this time Mrs. Clay had no rest night or day. No one but a mother can have any idea of the anxiety and sore trouble that Mrs. Clay passed through all these weary days and nights. Her health had been bad for some time and this trouble completely prostrated her. She was now afflicted with serious heart trouble. Her doctor

said to me one day, you need not be at all surprised to find your wife dead in bed any morning. But I plead with my heavenly Father to spare her to me, and thank God, she is still spared to me. The sound, "you will have the gospel horn to blow," still kept ringing in my ears. But I had no education, and was a poor man with a family, and I thought it was impossible for me ever to preach, but still I could not get rid of the impression. I talked to Mrs. Clay about my trouble. She said if the Lord wants you to preach he will open the way for you. I told my pastor, R. N. T. Stevenson, how I was troubled. He advised me to take out license to exort, which I did, and this relieved me for a short time. I had a large custom, and my young man Van P. was still with me. He was a good fellow. We worked together through the week, held prayer meetings at night and often on Sunday in the winter time, when we had no Sunday school. But with all I could do, the "gospel horn" impression was there. About this time Bro. Creasy was sent to our circuit. I told him about my impression and he said, brother, you had better take up the horn." I loved my trade, but the Lord

afflicted me so I was compelled to give up the furnace and hire a blacksmith. My eyes were so affected that I could not bear the fire. I suffered with them day and night. The doctors told me I was compelled to give up my trade or my eyes. I had already seen that I could not afford to hire a smith, as it took just about all my profit. Now these were trying times to me but the Lord brought me out. Bless His Holy name.

## CHAPTER XV.

### SELLS HIS HOME.

We had a pleasant home, and we were very much attached to it, but my impressions were that the time had come for us to give it up. My eyes were some better, but I was afraid to go back to the furnace, and I could not afford to keep a blacksmith, as so many buggies and wagons were shipped to this State from the West, and reduced the price of home work. So that under the circumstances I could not make a living, as our family was still increasing. We now had another little girl. We called her Mary.

Now, Mrs. Clay's mother was sick, and in a few weeks died. After her burial Mrs. Clay said, "Now I am ready to go with you anywhere."

Mrs. Clay had truly lost a mother. Her mother was one of the right type. I didn't know her worth and how much I did love her until she was gone. I was with her in her last days and hours of sickness, and she was truly resigned to the will of the blessed Lord, and was patiently waiting for Him to come and meet her at the shore. I was at home one day at dinner, and Mrs. Clay came in. I inquired about her mother, and she said she was worse. I went back with her to her mother's bedside. As soon as I entered the room she looked me in the face and said, "There comes Cliff. He will help me across;" and I stayed by her side with her husband, children and friends until she peacefully passed away. Our little home had cost us \$335. I thought it was the best thing I could do to sell it and go to a farm. So I took it to the Lord in prayer, and asked Him if it was the best for me to give up my shop and leave this place (I only had  $5\frac{1}{4}$  acres of land, and it out in the country) to send a buyer with the money. So in a few days a man came and said, "I hear you

are talking of leaving. Now I don't want want you to leave, but if you are determined to go I will give you \$150 in cash for your house and lot." I saw if I took it, it would be a sacrifice of \$185, but I was offered no more by anyone else, and I believed the Lord had sent that man in answer to prayer and we made him a deed and got the money.

My mother came to see me about this time, and learning what I had done, said I could get a place close to her; and father stated that there were  $21\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land under mortgage adjoining our place and would be sold soon. I went and bought that for \$123.50, so I had  $21\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land and \$26.50 of my money left. I was disappointed in the house mother spoke to me about, but I rented a parsonage on a plantation that belonged to the Reformed Church, and moved there January 29, 1881. No one had lived there for some time, and the rooms were cold when we moved, and little Mary was sick indeed. It came my time to watch over her in the after part of the night, and as I sat watching alone through the long lonely hours of the night I was thinking of the past; what a nice, comfortable home we had left; and the

strong tie that had bound A. Van P. and myself together was severed, and the presence and help of Mrs. Van P. to Mrs. Clay in sickness was no more, and Mrs. Clay away from her father and sister that we had long lived by the side of, was no longer in calling distance.

Thinking of all these and many others, and what a great change had been made in such a short time, at this moment the devil made his appearance and wanted to make a speech. So as I "was in a strait," and things seemed dark and mysterious, I let him take the stand and he began by saying: "You see how the God in whom you have trusted has treated you. You know you asked Him if it was best for you to break up shop and sell your home for him to send you a man with the money to buy, and you would know that was the thing for you to do, but you see now where you are. You see you are here with an afflicted family, you have neither bread nor meat for your family, and nothing for your stock, and but little money. You have no home, no shop in which to work, away from your friends, your wife away from her father and a father's people. Now sir," continued the

devil, "do you think if you were a child of God He would have led you out and treated you thus? and do you suppose He would call on any one to blow his gospel horn, and then, treat them as He has treated you? Never! He has deceived you. No one that loves his children will treat them as you have been treated." Now the speech was ended and I was left to think again. I thought the old fellow had made a pretty fair speech, and showed up his side reasonably well. I thought perhaps I might have made a mistake inasmuch as I had sold my home at a great sacrifice, as I had coveted a home so long. So after a few moments' study I turned to the old devil, who was still hard by, and said: There is a way to settle this matter, and I am going to do it. So about four o'clock one morning in the month of February, 1881, I went and got the Bible, God's Word, and I expected Him to speak to me through the Word that morning. I felt that this was one of the times that I needed Him most. I knelt down by the side of my chair and the cradle in which lay the little afflicted one, and said: Oh, Heavenly Father, in this trying hour, manifest thyself to me. Father, I may have done wrong in selling



my home, but I believed that I did as I was directed by Thee; but here is Thy Word, now I take it in my hands to let it open where Thou wilt direct. Now, if I have done wrong in selling my home and coming here, direct me to a text that will condemn me and I will repent and retrace my steps; but if I have done right and followed the direction of thy Spirit, direct me to a text that will console me, and I will never doubt Thee or Thy Word as long as I live. So I let the Bible fall open, and in this trying moment my eyes were directed to the 5th verse of the 13th chapter of Hebrews. Oh, listen! No one but a kind, loving Father can speak that way. Here is the message: "Let your conversation be without covetousness: and be content with such things as ye have; for I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Now, dear reader, this was more than twelve years ago, and I have gone through some very dark places (and am in the midst of one now) and the God in whom I trusted that night has led me out, and He will lead me out of this. No, when men forsake and turn their back, God never forsakes his children. Dear reader, it pays to lay your plans before the Lord. Try it.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### FEELS CALLED OF GOD TO PREACH.

Well, little Mary got well, and we were all well except Mrs. Clay. The doctor attended her for some time, and her health was much better when spring opened. I had built a little blacksmith shop, and had put up my wood tools in an old house in the yard and was doing some work. So when planting time came I needed help, and sent for a young man named Honeycutt that had come to me the year before to learn his trade, but had not completed it. He came and stayed with me a short while, and then married and left. We had everything to buy in the spring and nothing to buy with; so when fall came on our bills were large and as the shop work had not amounted to much, I had but little left after paying the young man. The crop year was bad, and the storm blew out the cotton and destroyed it, until we could not pay our bills; so Mrs. Clay, who was always ready and willing to do all she could, said, "If I can get some cloth I will make the children's clothes for winter, and then I will teach the school they want me to teach, and by that means

can pay my doctor bill. So I saw the merchant and stated the facts, and he said he would let her have the cloth without the money. So I took him a bale of cotton and paid on our bill as far as it would go, and I still had some more cotton at home, but when he got the bale he says, "I can't let your wife have the cloth I promised you the other day; your bill is too big now." Indeed it was a sad message, and I drove on home thinking, how shall I deliver it to my wife? She had devised and planned, but, alas, all in vain! But I remembered my text—Hebrews 13:5. So when I went into the house Mrs. Clay said; "Where is my cloth?" With a sad heart I sat down and told her how the merchant had treated us. Our feelings could not be described, for we thought we had been mistreated; but we knew if men did turn their backs that the Lord would not forsake us. So we saw what could not be cured would have to be endured, and we knew that the Lord would provide in His own way; and, though the way was dark at that time, we were determined to trust Him.

Mrs. Clay had to give up her school, the only hope of our getting a little money. We had no winter clothes, and had no

wheat or flour, but we had a good cow, and some corn for bread, and we could get a little flour from mother on Saturdays to do over Sunday, and have some biscuits on Monday morning for Mrs. Clay and the children. But one day when we had calculated this way, our pastor, Brother Creasy, stopped with us one Sunday for dinner, when the Monday morning flour that just made seven small biscuits had to be brought out. Cliff always enjoyed corn bread—or anything else—when Brother C. was around, but I acknowledge that I felt sad when the biscuits were gone, and nothing but corn-bread for Mrs. Clay's breakfast. But in a few days I received a call to go and repair a mill, with the understanding that I then run the mill, and pay myself out of the wheat and corn it made. The mill was two miles from home, but I took my tools and went and repaired the mill, but the corn mill first, and took charge of them the 4th of November, 1881. I was then more hopeful and cheerful, and would come home singing or whistling at night. The children would watch for me, and when they heard me they would come running (I often brought a little sack on my shoul-

der), and they would say, "Papa, what is in that sack?" And if I said flour they would go running and shouting back with glad hearts; but if I said meal, they would go walking back, thinking corn bread for breakfast. This state of affairs did not last long.

I succeeded with the mills and got pay for repair work by the last of December, 1881, run them until the 4th of March, 1882- and had plenty of wheat-bread for Mrs. Clay and the children, and made some money, and Mrs. Clay and the children got their clothes also. Oh, dear reader, the Lord has been so good to me! Bless His holy name!

But I had to go back to the farm that I had charge of, and the impression to "blow the gospel horn" was still ringing in my ears. So I talked to Brother T. W. Smith, who was then my pastor, about it, and he brought it before the church, and I was recommended to the quarterly conference, held by Dr. W. S. Black. I there and then stated my case, told them I was uneducated, and was not ready for an examination; and they decided as I had license to exhort, and I could preach with them, that it would be best not to license me to preach

at that time, but advised me to get the necessary books and study, for they believed I would have it to do. I was well pleased with the brethrens' decision at that time, and for the advice they gave me. I felt very much relieved, and continued holding prayer meetings whenever an opportunity was afforded.

We remained on the same farm, and on the 10th of February, 1883, another daughter was born to us. We called her Edith. She was very sick the next summer, a protracted spell of about eight weeks, and just as she was getting better I cut my finger with a grain scythe. About the middle of June I took blood poison and came near losing my life. I did nothing more in my crop. Mrs. Clay and the little boys and girls plowed, and harrowed and hoed, and with the help of some kind friends took care of the wheat, and oats, and growing crop.

My health was bad and I could not stand hard work, so I applied to the American Bible Society for work, and got it. I bought another horse and entered the work in January, 1884, at a salary of \$1.50 a day. This was a grand work, but it was very trying to be seperated from my family,

but I felt like I could do some good work for my blessed Lord, that had done so much for me. In this work I had a chance to study God's Word and human nature as I had never studied it before. I hired a black man the next spring, and Mrs. Clay superintended the farming, and they made the best crop that we had made since we were here.

I had many lonely hours traveling, some pleasant ones, some sad. Sometimes I had trouble to get a place to stay at night, and other times had very pleasant places. I drove a little pony that I loved dearly, and that pony loved her master. If either had to do without something to eat it was myself. Josie had to have something, let it cost what it would. One summer day I stopped with an old man and family on the side of a hill. It was about 11 o'clock. They had all been out in the field at work, but had beans and bacon on cooking. I told the old brother that I wanted to feed my pony, and rest awhile under the big shade tree. I had feed in my buggy, but he said "That is not enough." He said we would have dinner soon, and told the boys to go and get what he called "tops," but there was a good deal of corn on his tops. The

boys gave Josie a large bunch, and she was up to her knees in them; a good feed indeed. We were sitting under the oak talking about religion and church matters, and he said that he had been a member of the Lutheran church, but had married a Methodist and then joined her church. I told him I had done the same thing. He says, "Are you a Methodist?" I said, "Yes, sir." He then turned around to the boys and said, "Boys, give that horse more tops!"

## CHAPTER XVII.

### CLIFF IS LICENSED TO PREACH.

In Dec. of 1885, I rented a farm two and a half miles east of China Grove, Rowan county, near Harris' Chapel church, and moved my family to it. Rev. H. M. Blair was pastor at that time. We did not lack for good preaching. We also had a good Sunday school, superintended by J. M. Maxwell. He was one of these monkey kind of fellows (in short, he was Sankey the second) that everybody, old and young liked. And in fact there was a young lady in Concord who liked him so well that she left her father and mother and cast her lot



with him. One word now about his wife. I consider her one of the salt of the earth, and my wife thinks there was never another such woman—and I believe my wife is a woman of sound judgment. It is a perfect show to see these two women meet and hug and kiss and talk. They both talk just as hard as they can all the time. I never could see how one could tell what the other one said, but they seem to understand one another perfectly. Well, they are women, that accounts for it. Mrs. Clay and I spent many pleasant hours with Mrs. Maxwell and family in their home. We also found many other kind friends in that community.

Brother Blair lived near us, and I studied under him. He was very kind to me—gave me lessons free of charge. I was still traveling for the A. B. S. I made a trip down in what is known as the Rocks country, in Rowan county. I there met with the hardest case I have ever seen among the thousands that I have visited. The family, which consisted of an old man and two daughters, lived in a little hut down in a field. The old man was not at home when I called on them. I told the girls that I was traveling, and giving

Bibles to those who had none and were too poor to buy them. One of the girls told me they had no Bible and had no money to buy one. So I told them I would give them one, but I always prayed in the house where I left a Bible, if the family did not object. One of them said you can read and pray if you want to. But the other one did not approve of it. She was carding and did not mean to be interrupted. She would not quit carding, nor I would not quit reading. She at last raked across her face with the card and cried out, "I believe I'm poisoned." But still I read on. She got some cotton off the card in her throat, got choked, threw her cards down, ran out in the yard, coughed and spit and cut all sorts of monkey-shines; but I paid no attention to her at all, thinking as many devils as you have I would rather you were in the yard than in the house. She saw it was of no use—she could not break up the service. When she got the cotton out of her throat she came back in the house, took up her card and set in with all her might to card. In a few moments I ended the chapter and said, "Let us pray." When she saw that I was determined and that she was beat

out, she kept quiet while I prayed. After prayer I handed them the Bible and said, "Take this, read and obey it. I leave the Bible and my prayers with you. In the judgment we shall see what good they have done." I then bade them good bye, and went on my way. After I left she stormed and raved and cursed and swore, swearing that neither Bible nor my prayers should remain in the house, that she would kick my prayers up the chimney and the Bible out the door.

After traveling a day or two in that part of the country, I decided I would have a church built in that community if possible. There was no M. E. S. S. anywhere near this place. They had a union Sunday school at a school house in the neighborhood. The people wanted me to preach for them, but I told them I was not a preacher, but I would get some one else that could preach for them if possible. Soon after this they had a Sunday school celebration, and invited me to come and bring Mrs. Clay. I got Brother Triplet to go down with us. We had a big crowd, a big dinner, and a nice time. Bro. T. talked church on Saturday and preached to a large congregation on Sunday. Bro.

Blair promised to go and preach for them in January, but when the time came the weather was so bad that he could not go, so they did not get any more preaching that winter.

I continued to study under Bro. Blair. and on the 3rd of July, 1886, I was licensed to preach, Rev. H. M. Blair being my pastor and Dr. W. H. Bobbitt my P. E. I preached my first sermon at Love's Chapel, Stanley county, N. C. When I went to preaching I could not keep the "Rocks" and the bad woman out of my mind, but O! how I dreaded it. It was almost a Jonah case. But my monkey Sankey fellow went with me down there one Sunday (he had heard me a time or two at Harris' Chapel), and he told them I could preach and would preach for them if they wanted me to. Some of them seemed very anxious for me to come. So I thought I would risk it. I left an appointment and went and filled it as best I could. They seemed to be well pleased and wanted me to come back, which I did, But I want to tell you, some of these people eyed me closely. Some were superstitious, some were wicked and ignorant, while others were good, clever people. I preached at

a school house for some time, and they wanted me to hold a protracted meeting. I told them we could not hold a meeting in that school house, as it was too small, but if they were in earnest about the matter to go to work and clear off a place in the grove and build a stand, and I would hold a meeting to the best of my ability. Well, when I came to my next appointment the grove was nicely cleared off, the stand built and the seats all ready. I made the appointment for the meeting and met it. I will tell you in my next how I came out.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE MEETING IN THE GROVE.

I had an appointment at Harris' Chapel every two weeks, and at Cowan's school house once a month, near Bro. W. A. Brandon's, who was one of the stewards at Harris' Chapel.

Well, the time rolled round for the meeting at the "Rocks," and I went. The people had gathered up every piece of plank that could be found in the neighborhood, and an old darkey near by gave them all the slabs out of his barn to make seats of,

but every seat was full and many were standing when we got there. My father-in-law, Rev. D. Brown, was with me and preached a soul-stirring sermon at 3 o'clock p. m., and went home. I preached at night, and set in for a week, day and night. Tuesday it began to rain, but the people said we could not afford to close the meeting. So they cleared out an old shop, and I preached in it, and God blessed our efforts, and souls were saved. When the rainy spell was over we went back to the grove and began with renewed energy and zeal. The spirit came down in great power. Sinners wept and cried for mercy, mourners were converted, and we had a wonderful stir in the community. After the first week I preached only at night, it being a busy time with farmers. The people had to work in the day time, and so did I as I was a farmer also, I would work hard all day and drive down there, four miles, every evening and preach.

One night when I drove up to the grove an old man about six feet and three inches high came up to me and said, "I want you to quit preachin' here. The people are a doin' sights of harm' shoutin' and hollerin' as they go home from this place, and I

tell you now, your preachin' is a doin' more harm than good." I told him in plain English that I would not quit, because there was a class of people come to hear me that would not go anywhere else, and that I believe our meeting was doing good. He then said, "If you won't stop this meetin' I want you to preach in daytime and not at night." I said, "That I cannot do, as both myself and this people have to work for a living and this is a busy time with us all, and I intend preaching at night just as I have been doing, and if the people do not behave, you just give me the names of those who do not and I will settle with them." I then said the time is up and the people are waiting. I left him, entered the stand and began my service. I had no help except Mrs. Clay and my little daughter Minnie. They went with me every night, and sometimes we would stay there in that grove and sing and pray for penitents till 11 o'clock, and then drive home four miles. There were some young people that attended my meeting that were faithful to sing for me, but they were not Christians.

This same night that the old man wanted me to stop the meeting the Holy Spirit

came down with great power and many were convicted, among them the old tall man's son. I had heard of such conviction, but had never seen anything like it. Some were crying aloud for mercy, others were prostrate on the ground, apparently dead. This state of affairs created great excitement among the people. One woman said to Mrs. Clay, "I have noticed something wrong with my sister's mind for sometime, and now it is clear gone." The old man's son fell backward as though a ball had gone through his heart, his head striking an old slat bench so hard you could have heard the crack one hundred yards. He lay as still as death and if he breathed it could not be discovered. The old man walked up and stood with his hat on. He looked at me as much as to say, "You have done it now, sure enough." but I don't know what he thought, for he did not speak a word. I went and spoke to the seemingly dead man, but all to no purpose—he paid no attention to me at all. The scene was truly awful and the power great. While I was standing by this man another one fell. I caught him and laid him on a bench against the stand. Mrs. Clay was



talking to the ladies, and my little girl was talking and singing. She would talk awhile and then break out with some sweet song. She went to the old man's son, fell on her knees and began singing in her sweet, childish voice, "I am so glad that Jesus loves me." This was a new song to those people. Tears flowed from many eyes. She sang as no one but a child can do. And Jesus came and blessed that man's soul. He sprang right straight up, it seemed without any effort, and cried out, "I see him! I see him! glory, glory, glory," and started to run right through the congregation, I thought he would run over Mrs. Clay and the prostrate ladies, so I caught him by the coat-tail, but could not hold him. But no one was hurt, and the old man has been my friend ever since. The other man that fell was converted also, but was very quiet. The ladies all came to themselves, and to the astonishment of many, were in their right minds.

We organized a society of ten at the close of the meeting, and went to work without a cent to build a church. After receiving the lot—which was donated by Brother Jim Ludwick—I said, "We will be-

gin a church on this lot on the 9th of January. Meet me at this place on that day ready for work.”

On the morning of January 9th, 1887, I took my axe on my shoulder, got on my horse and rode down there, and found three white men and a negro on the ground. The negro was the one that gave us the slabs from his barn to make the seats of. I took my axe and struck the first lick for the new church. On the 6th of February we raised the frame. The rock foundation, framing, lumber work all had cost us 20 cents in money up to date. I tell you those people worked with a will. They were poor and had but little money, but they made it up in work. The building was 25x40 feet. I preached in it in May. It was finished that year, and paid for in a short time. For my first year's services at this place they gave me \$2.90 and a one horse load of pumpkins. This was a hard country, indeed.

On one occasion I preached to a congregation of about twenty at eleven o'clock one Sunday, and in less than a week one-fifth of that congregation was in Salisbury jail.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### TAKES WORK IN CONFERENCE.

As I was a local preacher, I had no regular charge. So the Rocks church that I had built was put on the Rowan Circuit, Salisbury District. Rev. G. W. Fisher was in charge of said circuit at this time. He was a noble young man and a good preacher. I was still preaching once a month at the Rocks church, and when anything went wrong at that place he would say, "Cliff, you will have to go down there and get things straight; I can't do anything with those people." I would go cheerfully for the Brother, and generally succeeded in getting matters settled to all concerned. I was still preaching at Harris Chapel and Cowan's school house. About this time some people about four miles south of Salisbury wanted me to preach for them at a school house in that community and I agreed to do so. They made the appointment. I was to preach at Cowan's school house on Saturday night and at this place on Sunday morning. I filled my appointment at the school house and stayed with Bro. Brandon the remainder of the night. My monkey Sankey Bro. was on hand,

and in company with Bro. Brandon and Sankey I put out across a rough country for the appointed place. On reaching the place I found that the word had been circulated that the committeemen would not let us have the use of the school house and so but very few were present. Bro. B. C. Elrod, Bro. J. Fesperman and two of his children, Tommy and Jennie, Bro. Brandon and Sankey composed the congregation. I said, well, we will have a service before we part and we will not become discouraged because we are locked out, so we carried three old railroad sills out into a dogwood thicket for seats. I read a chapter from God's Word, we sang a hymn and prayed. After prayer we talked a little on the lesson I had read and of how we had been treated by the committeemen. I said let us not despise the day of small things, but thank God for this service and take courage. Sankey said, "No one knows but what we may go from this place into a brick church some day. I left no other appointment for this place, but like Mary of old I kept this service and Sankey's saying and pondered them in my heart. I will refer to this again.

In 1888 I told Bro. Bobbitt, our P. E.,

that I would take work the next year if he had anything in his district that I could do. I had been helping some of the brethren in their protracted meetings, among whom were Brothers Stone, Fisher, Rowe, Gault and Franklin. I was still in the Bible work but could not be satisfied without preaching. At the next session of the annual conference the Rowan Mission was made. It was composed of Zion church, my new Rocks church, and an appointment at Dry's school house, Cabarrus county, nineteen miles southwest of Salisbury, and I was assigned to the Rowan Mission. Not very far from the place we held the service in the dogwood thicket lived an old man by the name of Brown who was sorely afflicted and could not attend church. He was a member of Harris Chapel and as he could not go to church, I often preached for him at his home, quite a number of people came out there to preaching and they wanted me to preach for them regularly, which I agreed to do. The house in which Bro. Brown lived was very large, and the man to whom it belonged gave us the privilege of holding services in a large upper room. A kind friend by the name of B. Ludwick furnished lumber and nails and some of the

brethren made seats and fixed up the room for us. We now had both preaching and Sunday school regularly at this place, and Sankey taught a singing class here also which was a great help to the Sunday school. There were a few Methodists in this community, among them were B. Ludwick's wife and daughter, B. C. Elrod and wife and daughter. Bro. Elrod's daughter married a Presbyterian who was an excellent man and was our Sunday school superintendent (he has since joined the Methodist church). Bro. Elrod was our steward. He was a Methodist of the old type; he married a daughter of Daniel Sullivan, who was also a staunch Methodist and one of the best men I ever knew. I visited him and his widowed daughter, Mrs. Wincoff, very often in his last days; he was a great sufferer for many days, but his death was one of triumph and victory. He now rests in peace, and may God's richest blessings rest upon his widowed daughter, who is now blind. The time had come for my protracted meeting at the Rocks church, and I went into it with all my heart expecting the Lord to bless us. You will remember that this church was in a pretty bad place, that is, there were some very bad people in

this community; and I told some of them before I began my meeting that I was going to have order in that church and on the grounds, and if they did not behave some of them would land in prison. But as you know wherever good is being done the devil's agents are always on hand, and so it was on this occasion. One fellow furnished the liquor and got another one to get drunk and go and break up Cliff's meeting. He was on hand that evening sure enough, so drunk that he could not walk. Just as I drove up to the church he fell backward from a seat in the yard. Brother A. Gannt was to preach for me that night and I told him to go in and go ahead, that I was going to clean up the yard. I took the harness off my horse and another one, and sent two men after a warrant; they got the warrant, the drunken man was arrested and found guilty, but gave bond. Two or three others had to do the same thing in the next day or two. But still the meeting went on and God was with us in great power. One day while I was inviting penitents to the altar a young man in the congregation jumped up and ran out of the house leaving his hat and umbrella. He ran up the public road for

some distance, left the road and ran around a rock mountain and hid. He said the devil was after him, right at his heels. Next morning he was at church and was very penitent, I talked to him before we went into the church and told him to go in with me and take a front seat, and when I called for penitents for him to come to the altar instead of running. He did so, and poor fellow, I have never seen anything to compare to the agony he was in. He jumped, he yelled, he prayed, and confessed. He said to me "I have cursed and swore, lied, cheated and got drunk, but that running yesterday was the worst thing I ever did, and I don't believe the Lord ever will forgive me," and then he yelled till you could have heard him half a mile, "O Lord do have mercy on me, poor me." He would say "the Lord has forgiven me for all my meanness but that running and I don't believe He ever will forgive me for that." I told him the Lord did not forgive a part of a man's sins, but when he forgave one he forgave all, and that God would have mercy on him if he would believe it, He then became a little more quiet and in a few minutes he was happily converted. There was one very



amusing incident which occurred during this meeting. One day after the sermon the altar was crowded with weeping penitents and the whole congregation seemed to feel the power of the Spirit. Some were weeping, some singing, some praying and others shouting. At this point Bro. Gannt noticed a lady in the back part of the church who seemed to be in very great distress she was going through queer contortions of the body, wringing her hands and weeping. Bro. G. went to her and said: "My friend, if you feel that you are a sinner, just take the trouble all to the Lord in prayer, he will help you." She said "O Lordie, I have a felon on my finger and it is about to kill me; O Lordie."

At this meeting we had forty-three converts, thirty-one of whom I received into the church at one time, among them the fellow that got drunk to break up the meeting. Near the church lived a good brother with whom I often stopped, who owned a little black dog whose business it was to catch a chicken when the preacher came. This time I had been in the community two weeks and had been at this place so often that the dog had learned to know me and my horse. After the meet-

ing closed and I was on my way home I drove up to this brother's house to get some fruit, not intending to stay for dinner. In fact, could not stay. Just as soon as I drove into the yard that dog made a rush for the chickens and killed two in less than four minutes. I could tell you more about this dog, but this is sufficient. These are facts. See Bro. Triplett—he has served this church. May God bless all of these kind Rocks people is my sincere prayer.

## CHAPTER XX.

### MY MOTHER'S DEATH.

In the year 1887 Miss Jane E. left our house to make her home with her son, who is now married and doing well. Miss Jane lived with us fourteen years. She was indeed a mother to us all; she was so kind and helpful to Mrs. Clay and so good to the little ones. Every one of the children would go to her for everything they wanted, and they were sure to get it if it could be had; and to this day we all love her as we have never loved any one else outside of our immediate family. May God richly bless her and hers is my prayer.

In 1889 we left the farm near Harris Chapel, and moved to Dunn's Mountain, four miles east of Salisbury, where we were kindly received. Some of the good neighbors had come in and cleaned up the house. Others had come in bringing baskets filled with good things to eat that lasted us several days. May God bless all these kind people.

In May of this year my mother visited us for the last time. Her health was then failing. She grew gradually worse during the summer, and by the first of September was so much worse that Mrs. Clay and I left our children and went and stayed with her until she died. She suffered more than human tongue can tell, but her faith was strong in God. She had no desire to get well, and told us she would never be any better in this world, but said, "I shall soon be at rest where there will be no more suffering."

On the 24th day of September, 1889, she peacefully passed away. None but those who have lost a mother can have any idea of my feelings at this sad parting. Oh! how sad and desolate I felt; but thanks be to God for the sweet assurance I had of meeting my precious mother in the happy

home above, where parting will be no more.

### MY MOTHER WAS A SWEET SINGER

A song, sung by a mother dear,  
Who sang to me from year to year;  
Who knows the depths of a mother's love?  
Who now sings in heaven above.

Mother's voice I remember well,  
Oh! such music, no tongue can tell.  
Some mothers still live, some are gone,  
And we are left to sing alone.

Earth's work done, them we hope to see,  
Sing with them and in glory be  
Above with Christ, the Christian's home,  
Mother nor child will sing alone.

We'll rest from sorrow here below,  
Mother nor child shall know a woe;  
Then there with Jesus our great King,  
Mother and child will ever sing.

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Composed and written by Cliff and dedicated to the  
Memory of His Mother.

I closed up my work, went to conference, and was returned to the same work with another mission point added to it. A large cotton mill was in course of construction at Salisbury. and the people here wanted and needed a church. This mission point was called Chestnut Hill. We had no church, school, members or money; nothing but open air. We were now living at the old home place where my mother died. It

was too far from my work, so I had to look out for a place nearer it. Our kind-hearted friend B. Ludwick offered to furnish the material to build a house for me to live in. It was to be located on his plantation, one and a half miles from Chestnut Hill. I gladly accepted his very kind offer, sold the old home place, and moved into a rented house on the first day of January, 1890. On the first day of January we began work on our new home. B. Ludwick, B. C. Elrod, J. A. Fesperman and others, helped us with the house, and on the 4th day of February, of the same year, we moved into our new house of five rooms neatly furnished.

In a very short time after we moved to our new home Bro. B. C. Elrod died and went to his home in heaven. Peace to his ashes

Bro. J. J. Wrenn was Presiding Elder of the Salisbury District at this time, and we began to look around the cotton mill at Salisbury for a lot on which to build a church. Previous to this time two lots had been deeded to the Methodist church for the purpose of building a church. One by B. C. Elrod, the other by B. Ludwick, but it seemed that neither of these was the

place that God intended us to build, as we could not succeed at either.

As I have said before we had nothing but a name to begin with at Salisbury. In looking around we found a man by the name of Myrick who was a Methodist, and who was also superintendent of the cotton mill. I found him busy at work. I introduced myself to him, and told him my business. He seemed to be very much interested in me and my work. He was a man of fine sense and good judgment, and a first-class Christian gentleman. In a few days we found a lot that suited us, belonging to the Episcopal minister at Salisbury. His price for the lot was \$100, "But," said he, "if you want this lot for the purpose of building a Methodist church, I will deed it to you for \$66 $\frac{2}{3}$ ." We gladly accepted his very liberal offer. The lot being secured, the next thing was to raise money to build a church. Now we wanted to build a nice, good sized church at this place; so I went to work with a will to raise money for this purpose, but had poor success. I soon abandoned the idea of building a large house, for the present at least; and concluded to make an effort for a small chapel to be used for preaching, and also for

school purposes, there being no school house in the district; and in this we succeeded. Bro. J. Knox, a good Presbyterian, had told me he would give me \$25 toward our church, and he gave us the \$25 on our little chapel. Samuel Wiley, another Presbyterian brother, gave us \$25. Mrs. Cole, Edwin Shaver, the McCubbins, and others, came to our help liberally. We built a chapel 22x36 feet, twelve feet high, seated and painted it for \$325. I preached in this little chapel for the first time the second Sunday in September, 1890.

Previous to this time I had organized a little society at old Bro. Brown's called the Davis Mine Society. By the time that we moved into our new houee at B. Ludwick's old Bro. Brown had gotten better and had moved near us, so we moved the preaching place to our house, and preached there every two weeks till our chapel at Salisbury was completed. My Davis Mine people—as you will see further on—nealy all joined this church. Reader, mark our steps; remember the Davis Mine Society was an outcome of the service in the dogwood thicket. and we are on the forward march and have gotten this far toward Sankey's brick church, and by the grace of

God we expect to go all the way.

We organized a Sunday school at once in our new chapel. Bro. Myrick was elected superintendent; it was success.

I now held a protracted meeting which resulted in about fifty conversions; and on the first Sunday in October, 1890, I organized a society with thirty-six members. I bought a lot adjoining the church lot, had a good house built on it, and moved into it the 11th day of November, 1890. We were very warmly received at this place. About forty people—representing every denomination in the place—called on us the first night we spent in our new home, and every one brought something. I will not attempt to name the articles we received that night; I will just say we had plenty of good things to eat for days to come. May God's richest blessings rest and abide on these good people now and forever. I went to conference feeling good over our move.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### BEGINS WORK ON THE BRICK CHURCH.

At the Conference in Concord in 1890 they made a station of Chestnut Hill, though it was a mission, and it received an



appropriation of \$325. Nearly all of the Davis Mine members joined this church—in fact the two appointments became one—and I was sent back to the work. Our good Presbyterian brother, J. A. Fesperman, joined our church, and is as true as steel to his church and pastor. We had a very pleasant year; had quite a number of conversions and accessions to the church. I had made myself personally responsible for the lumber used in our chapel, and we still owed about \$38. But in order to encourage our Sunday school we thought best to buy an organ, which we did; and our church and Sunday school work went on nicely.

We had quite a number of good workers in the church. Among them was a young lady who was one of the best workers in a revival meeting I have ever seen. She was always ready and willing to do anything and everything she could for the salvation of souls, and to help her pastor in his work.

Just here I will mention a little incident that occurred during one of my meetings at Chestnut Hill. After the sermon I called for penitents, and they came till they were about three deep around the altar.

As I was talking to the penitents at the altar I was wondering in my mind where Miss Della M. was. (That is the name of the young lady referred to in the foregoing paragraph.) On looking around I saw her at a window, talking to two young men. They were up on a pile of wood that was stacked up under the window. They were afraid to come inside, for fear she would get after them; and yet they wanted to see what was going on on the inside. When she saw them at the window she pressed through the crowd to them, and began talking to them about their souls' salvation. She pressed the matter so earnestly that they both got down on their knees on that pile of wood, and she knelt down inside of the window, and prayed with and for them, pointing them to the Lamb of God, the Saviour of Sinners.

We had a young men's prayer-meeting every Tuesday night, and when the time came you would see Bros. Myrick, Odell, Hartman, Bro. R. Leonard, and others; but those mentioned were always present unless sickness prevented them.

We worked hard and prayed earnestly for the success of Zion at this point. The time had now come when the \$38 due on

the chapel lumber had to be paid. The man was pressing me for it, and I could not get it. I told Brother Wrenn, my Presiding Elder, about the press, and asked him if he could help me. He told me to wait until the District Conference, and he would make a statement of my work and take up a collection to pay off the debt. But he failed to do either, so I went home very much disappointed, and drew my money out of the building and loan association and paid the debt; and I have not gotten it all back yet.

Well, we closed the year pleasantly, and I went to conference at Asheville in 1891, and was returned to Chestnut Hill. We agreed this year to build a good brick church at Chestnut Hill. The people were poor, but willing to do all they could. We could not get a contractor to build it for less than \$2000. I told the people I was confident it could be built for \$1,700. So with that understanding we went to work, trusting in the Lord.

As I have already said, we had a good Sunday school. Bro. Myrick was our superintendent; Sister Annie, his wife, was our organist. Our Sankey was on hand, of course, and he—with all the rest—did all he could to help us, and his work did a great deal of good.

The majority of the Methodists up town were not in favor of us building, and gave us but little help. But in this church, as in the building of our chapel, the Presbyterians came to our relief manfully. God bless every one of them! Mrs. Cole gave us \$15; Bro. Edwin Shaver gave us \$50, and then made us a present of a fine Bible for the pulpit; Bro. John Knox gave us \$150 worth of brick; Bro. Samuel Wiley sent us a check for \$150. You will remember that the above named contributed liberally to our little chapel. All this kindness we appreciated very much, and felt very much encouraged to press on. I had received two carpenters and a brick-mason into the church, and they were good fellows, too, and I knew that I could depend upon them for work. So I drew the plan and specifications of the church, and we went ahead, getting only fairly started in 1892. At the Conference at Winston I presented an application to the Extension Board, and they granted me \$120. I was again returned to Chestnut Hill.

As the winter was extremely bad we did nothing more to the church till in the spring of 1893.

On the 27th of March, 1893, I had all my

upper teeth extracted. That stopped me from preaching for some time, but my appointments were filled by the following brethren: Groom, Miller and Brown. Bro. Groom preached for me once, to the delight and edification of my people. Bro. Miller, who is a Presbyterian and the secretary of the Y. M. C. A. at Salisbury, filled my appointment several times. He was an excellent speaker—so earnest and persuasive in his manner that my people were always glad to hear him. Mrs. Clay's father, Rev. David Brown, preached for me twice, with great power and acceptability. His presence and preaching did us all good. Bros. Myrick and Odell—two of the leading bosses at the cotton mill—said if they could always have such preaching as Father Brown gave them they thought they could stand their daily trials much better. I had to preach a time or two before I got my teeth, but it was a mighty flat preach.

In April of 1893 we began work on the church again. We concluded to make our building some longer, so we took out the rear end and added 11 feet to it, which made the building  $38\frac{1}{2}$ x63 feet, with a recess of 5x12 feet, and an open vestibule in

front 10x10 feet. I had good backing. Bro. Myrick was strong spiritually and financially, and as I was contractor he told me to go ahead and buy the material. I did so, making myself responsible for the debt. I never saw a building go on better in my life, and everybody seemed to be in good heart.

In July of 1893 when the building was nearing completion, we had a corner-stone service. Our Presiding Elder, J. J. Wrenn, gave us a good talk, and Rev. Dr. Ruple, of the Presbyterian church, gave us a very encouraging talk. Then the trustees placed the corner-stone, and we were dismissed.

Our monkey Sankey was at this service, and after we were dismissed he turned to me and said, "Brother, do you remember the meeting in the dogwood thicket? Didn't I tell you that we might walk from that place into a brick church some day?"

## CHAPTER XXII.

### OUR BEST MAN DIED.

But with all our success and pleasure and great anticipation all our hearts were much saddened by the death of our good

brother, Joe Myrick. As I have already said, he was a very strong man spiritually, and by far the strongest man financially we had. Everybody loved and respected him; in fact he was one of the best men I have ever met. His judgment was good, his mind clear, his heart right and he always had a smile and a kind word for everyone he met. Although he was superintendent of the cotton mills and always very busy he never neglected the work of the church; when the bell rang he was at his post. But, alas, on the 5th day of August, 1893, he passed out of this world of sorrow into one of joy and peace. His death was the most triumphant I ever witnessed. But Oh! how we all did miss him! It was a hard stroke on the community at large, but especially hard on the church. I felt as if I could not bear to hear the whistle blow at the mills, and O, how sad when the church bell would ring, to think he was gone never more to return. But this was God's plan, and as His children we bowed to His holy will. Bro. Odell took his place in the Sunday school, and we went on trusting in the Lord and completed our church and walked into it for the first service on the second Sunday of Septem-

ber, 1893. We started at the dogwood thicket in October, 1887, and reached the brick church in September, 1893. And every one that was present in the dogwood thicket when the first service was held, was present at the first service in the brick church except one, Bro. B. C. Elrod, whose death I have already mentioned. It seemed to me that it would have been the happiest period in my life if only Brother Joe Myrick and Brother Elrod could have lived to have been with us in this service. But thanks be to God they are now in the church triumphant above. I often think of the pleasant times we had in the little chapel when Bro. Myrick was superintendent of the Sunday school and his wife, sister Annie, was our organist; we had good music and I did enjoy it. But I am now looking forward to the time when we shall all be gathered around the great white throne of God, to join in the song of redemption's story with our loved ones who have gone on before, and chime in with the angelic hosts as they strike their harps of gold and cry, "Worthy is the Lamb who was for sinners slain." We held a protracted meeting in our church soon after its completion. Bro. T. L. Triplett came



I said, "Why do you wish me such a calamity as that? Don't you know that that many fish would break my traps all to pieces? Very early next morning I went down to the river, not expecting many fish as it was very cold, but to my great surprise I found what has never been known in the history of the river at this season of the year. There were 174 fish in my trap, some of them weighing three pounds; and my trap was not broken, either. I took them to Albemarle and sold them.

I now had my missionary money, and money to carry me to Conference. I said to my wife, "Now I have the money to go to Conference, but what are you going to do while I am gone? Our children are away from home, and no chance to get any of them home now, and I don't know of a soul that I can get to stay with you while I am gone." She said, "Don't trouble about that. When the time comes I will have some one to stay with me."

On Sunday before the Conference met on Wednesday a good lady walked four miles to hear me preach. She came home with us from church, and spent the night with us. Before she left Mrs. Clay said to her, "Could I get you to come and stay

with me while my husband is gone to Conference?" She said, "Yes; I will come and stay with you, and glad to do it," and she came and stayed, and was a great help and comfort to my wife in my absence. God bless her and hers.

I went to Conference and was ordained Elder, but got no work. But while I was gone the Lord sent me to a man by the name of A. F. P., who is very wealthy. He asked me if I got work in the Conference. I told him I did not, and also told him that I wanted to have my book printed, but was not able. Now, I had never seen this man till I went to Conference. I was a stranger to him; but with great kindness he said to me, "You get your book ready, and I will see you out." God only knows how thankful I am to him for his kindness to me. God bless him and his! God's richest blessings upon his noble sons and daughters in their home and church work. I spent two nights with this model family, and shall never forget their kindness to me. All of this family are Methodists and great workers in the church. May they all live long to be a blessing to God's church and the poor is my sincere prayer.

This is Christmas night. Mrs. Clay and

myself have spent this day at our cabin in this lonely land all alone. Our dear children are all away from home. We have had some disappointments to-day, but thank God we feel that "He who sticketh closer than a brother"—or even a mother—was still with us.

One incident connected with my trip to Conference I forgot to mention when I was on that subject, and will mention it here. I had to go twenty miles to get to the railroad at Candor, so I decided to ride my horse down to Candor, and get some one there to keep him for me, until I got back. I went as far as Troy the first evening; there I met with a kind lady who kept me all night free of charge. When I got to Candor I found kind friends [who said they would keep my horse. When I came back they gave me a good dinner. I then called for my bill for the care of my horse. The lady of the house—Miss B. C.—said "We will take that out in prayer," and I shall strive to give them good measure.

#### CHAPTER XXVI.

As the reader will remember, the preceding chapter of this little volume closed

about the end of the year 1894. Now the writer wishes to add to this some incidents that occurred in the time that intervened between 1894 and June 18, 1908. I am now seated under two Magnolia trees in the beautiful cemetery, in the city of Charlotte, N. C., to write this chapter.

We moved from Montgomery county in February, 1895, and went back to Salisbury. That year I was employed by some of the churches and by the Y. M. C. A. of that town, to preach once every two weeks at the Rowan County home. They offered me five dollars per month, and I accepted. I told them I could not preach to these people without a church, and I talked the matter over with the chairman of the County Commissioners. He said he never had heard of such a thing as a church that belonged to a county. I told him that the purpose for which Christ came to the world was that the poor might have the gospel preached to them, and that it was wrong to take the poor people away from their homes and churches and not give them a church in which to hear the gospel. He saw the point, and the county gave me one hundred dollars on the church building fund. All of the white

people in Salisbury gave me money for this purpose; and I preached at all of the churches for the colored people, and they helped me also (as there are colored people at the County Home as well as white people), and I appealed to the bar-room men of Salisbury for help, for as they had helped to make people poor, I thought they should help to care for them, and they all contributed. Other men and women gave or sent me money, so we built, painted and furnished a nice little church that year, and when all was paid for, we had some money left. Now this little book may be read in a county where there is no County Home church; if so, I hope the reader will do his duty and see that one is built. But you may forget. Did you ever forget? I have forgotten. Upon one occasion I was to meet two young ladies at the station who were coming to visit my daughters. The train arrived at 11:55 A. M., and at 1 P. M. I thought of it. The same day I was to meet a committee on special business, and never thought of that meeting until two and one half hours after the time appointed. The same day I was to take a bank book to a Charlotte bank to have some

money matters adjusted. I reached the bank forty-five minutes after the bank had closed, but they unlocked the door, and let me in. That was a lost job, though, for when handing my book to the cashier I found that I had brought him a book on the Lexington bank that was three years out of date. So I just gave up and went home and waited until after Sunday to attend to that business. But the minds of old folks do get off sometimes, when burdened and care worn. And sometimes the minds of young folks get off a little. I remember when I was much younger than I am now that my surroundings were such as to get me off my proper bearings. I went one evening to take supper with my very best lady friend, and while at the table with her and three other young ladies, I became so bashful that things on the table lost their proper taste. I wore out a biscuit or two trying to get the molasses off of my plate, and when I came to myself I found that I had put in much of my time trying to rub a red flower off, and that I had no molasses at all. I just could'nt taste molasses in that crowd. Now these things come along in the lives of the young, the middle aged, and the

old. We all have our days of fun and pleasure. I don't want to get so old as to forget the children and young folks in their days of innocent pleasure and not be able to chime in with them. But let us all, old and young, never forget to keep our hearts right in the sight of God. Let us do all the good we can while the days are going by.

#### CHAPTER XXVII.

There was a petition sent up to conference for my services again at Chestnut Hill M. E. Church, South for the year 1896. The reader will remember something of the past history of the writer and that church. I had almost made up my mind that I never would serve that or any other Methodist church again, but I knew that it was wrong to manifest such a spirit. I loved that place, and I want to say this just now: The first meeting that I held at that church, in 1890, our dear young brother Rev. J. A. J. Farrington, was converted. He is now finishing his fourth year as pastor of that church. The Lord bless John and make him a blessing; he is one of our best young preachers.

I decided to go back to that church, though men of other denominations had made me good offers if I would leave the M. E. Church, South, but that church had done too much for me and mine for me ever to leave it. I was appointed to Chestnut Hill church again, and I still held on to my little country church as it was only two and one half miles away. I found the Chestnut Hill church in bad condition financially; it was in debt about four hundred and seventy-five dollars, and the little chapel that I had built there had been sold. The Board of Church Extension had promised us three hundred dollars, but we could not get that until we had secured a sufficient amount that added to that amount would pay of all indebtedness and have the church insured for one thousand dollars, and pay the premiums for five years. The creditors were about to sell the church, so we went to work, one and all. I knew that I could not get much salary that year, and I did not look for or expect it. All the debt on the church was paid, it was insured for one thousand dollars, and the premiums paid by the last of March that year. I received for my services as pastor that year



one hundred and ninety dollars, and there was no appropriation from the conference. I worked what I could in the buggy and wagon shops when not engaged with my pastoral work. There was a great deal of sickness among the members of my church that year. One day between 2 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon I went to see fifty-two sick people, and I conducted the burial services of thirty in twenty-eight days. Three young men and one young lady died in one family about the same time, and I buried the four bodies at one time. Our own daughter, Mamie, was sick with typhoid fever for seven weeks, and we thought she would die, but she was spared to us. My wife was very sick at the close of the year, but with it all I stopped my work in the shop and built a seven room house, for which I received seventy-five dollars. I held a meeting in which there were one hundred and sixty professions of conversion; the meeting continued for four weeks and until conference, which was held in Salisbury that year. Bishop Galloway, who presided over the conference that year, dedicated Chestnut Hill church at that time. We had received one hundred and twenty

members into the church that year, and the church asked for my return and I was appointed there for another year, 1897. That year I gave the church all my time; I did not work in the shop or build any houses. I received much more on salary, and on my birthday, July 25th, I was presented with a handsome watch which has never failed me.

I had rented my plantation in Montgomery county, and had made several trips down there during the two years since I returned to Chestnut Hill church. I held on to my country church the second year as I had done the first, and the next year I did not take work in the conference. I had borrowed six hundred dollars from the Building and Loan Association, and could not sell my plantation. I was still owing most of that amount, but my son-in-law, Walter W. Kluttz, assumed the debt and took charge of the property.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

After conference I rented a store house at Woodleaf, ten miles from Salisbury. The people at Woodleaf offered to come to Salisbury and haul our furniture, etc., there

free of charge; it was kind of them and the thing to do if they wanted us there as they seemed to want us, and as I believe they did. I was in debt and had no money, but the Lord has been so good to me and mine. I had married many couples in and around Salisbury, and was considered somewhat of a "marrying preacher." Some of the people heard that the "marrying preacher" was going to leave on Thursday of the next week, so on Wednesday at 7 P. M. a couple came to be married; I performed the ceremony and received five dollars. At 1 o'clock the same evening I married another couple and got one dollar and a supper; and while I was out another called me in and I married them and got another dollar and another supper, so I went home feeling much better, but I did not sleep much that night. That was the 15th of December and it was cold weather, and thinking of leaving the nice warm room I was then in and going up into an old, cold storehouse was almost more than I could stand. Wife and I shed many tears that night, but we were up and ready for the trip early the next morning. After the wagon was loaded, a young man came up and

asked me if I could marry him. I asked him when, and his answer was, now. So I told my family to drive on and that I would be on later. I went and officiated at the marriage, and the young man asked me my price. I told him that I made no charge, and he asked me if a dollar would satisfy me. I told him that it would, and he turned to his wife and asked her if she would lend him a dollar to pay the preacher, so I got my dollar, but no supper that time.

We remained at Woodleaf about two months and found many good friends there, among them Rev. R. S. Abernethy and family, Hubbard Bailey, and Dr. Reitzel and wife. We were waiting there for something for me to do. I hoped to get work in Salisbury, but there was at that time no available house there which we could get, and while we were at Woodleaf our "marrying fees" had been exhausted, and I did not know what I should do, but the Lord has always provided for His children, and I had not forgotten the "fish catch" in Montgomery county, and I knew that in some way and in His own good time He would provide. So one morning before it was light I went down stairs and

opened the front door, and there scattered on the ground was a handful of silver money. I gathered it up and went and told the two men who had stores in the little village what I had found and told them if anyone called to know if money had been found to tell them that I had it, but no one ever called for it, and I am sure the Lord intended that money for me and mine.

It will be remembered that I could handle tools as well as preach, so a very dear friend of mine, W. W. Lowery, a man who was employed in the shops of the Southern Railway at Spencer, and who was a very active member of my church at Chestnut Hill recommended me to railroad company at Spencer and an offer was made me which I accepted. The company wanted me to help work up the Railroad Y. M. C. A. at Spencer, and I was engaged in this work for twenty-two months. In that time I did much hard work, prayed many prayers, and shed many tears, and wondered often why the Lord led me along that way, but I believe that I did some good while there, and I am sure the work did me much good. The company was very kind to me, and sent

me on a nice trip, with my expenses all paid, to the National Y. M. C. A. Convention, held in Fort Wayne, Ind.

When I went to Spencer I had no money with which to rent a house, but I borrowed some, and the railroad men gave me some, and they brought to our house many good things to eat, for which we were very thankful, and their kindness never has been forgotten. No set of men stick closer together than railroad men, and they are always ready to help other people who need help. A railroad man is always faithful to his duty. He may have gone with some one from Jerusalem to Jericho, or he may have felt the pulse of the man who defends his country under the flag of the red, white, and blue; or he may have been with Hiram's men taking the rounds to see what tools were necessary to carry on the work to complete the temple, but all this only makes the true railroad man a better man. Did you know that thousands of lives depend upon the faithfulness of railroad men in the discharge of their duty? Study the various departments of the work of railroad men, and see. Study the work from the president of the road down to the flagman, and you will find

that the flagman is the most important man in the service. I tried to be faithful to every interest intrusted to me, and I did not know that anyone was watching me. At the close of the year 1899 I was asked to take charge of the Pilot Mountain circuit, and I decided to do so. So on the 5th day of December I told my foreman I wished to work a notice, but he said that was not necessary in my case, as he knew why I was going to quit. He told me the Master Mechanic, Mr. Hudson, wanted to see me in his office, I went to his office and he said to me: "I understand you are going to leave us." I told him that I was. "Well," said he, "I am very sorry you are going, but I know it will be better for you. While we hate to give you up, still we don't think this is the place for you. And I want to tell you that on account of your faithfulness while with us, I am going to give you a pass to your future home." My dear reader, I never shall forget that expression of Mr. Hudson, and coming from a man in his position, it made me think this: Now if my work in this world was done, what joy it would give me to hear my Lord say to me: "Now for your faithfulness I will give you a pass to your

future mansion." O God, help us all to be faithful.

I was not in a very good shape financially to leave Salisbury; I still owed about one hundred and fifty dollars in one debt, and some other debts besides, for which my land was standing. While I was in the railroad shops the man who held the mortgage sold the plantation unlawfully and knocked me out of about three hundred and fifty dollars. I just let him knock on, and I told him that my wife and I would die in the County Home before we would sign such papers as he had drawn up. This matter is still in the courts. I am ready to settle my part in heaven. At the proper time I may have a little more to say about this transaction.

On the morning of December 15th, 1899, my wife and I left Salisbury for Pilot Mountain, Surry county, to take charge of the Pilot Mountain circuit. We went by way of Greensboro and reached our destination about ten o'clock that night. It was certainly a cold night, and not one person did we know in all that country. No one met us at the train, but through the kindness of a man at the depot we were directed to a hotel which belonged to



one of my members, Bro. H. G. Whitaker, and he made us very welcome. The man we had met at the depot said we could have his room, so we were put in that room and our things were placed there, and we were cared for, without cost to ourselves, for several days. I entered upon my work at once; it consisted of six churches, three in Stokes county and three in Surry county, and there was another one to build in the latter county, at Pilot Town. We had no horse and no buggy, but Brother H. G. Whitaker, Brother Press Rendleman, and Dr. Bob. Flip-pin were very kind to help me along that or any other line. I had one church fifteen miles from Pilot, near the Virginia line, and quite a number of my members lived in Virginia. I found the people at Pilot very much discouraged; they had started to build a church, but stopped after propping up a part of the frame. I got the men and the good women together and looked into the matter, and I saw that with such men and women we could soon build the church, so we went to work at once. Press Rendleman is a good man and a fine workman, and we all went to work with united efforts. I had said after

my experience at Salisbury that I never would do again as I had done there, but I wanted to help these good people, as I saw they were willing to help themselves. Mrs. Dr. Flippin, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Rendleman, Mrs. Davis, and other ladies made a nice silk quilt and they wanted to sell it and use the proceeds on the church. Their husbands offered them five dollars for the quilt, but I told them they could get forty dollars for it. The ladies announced that on New Year's night they would hold a voting contest for the quilt, and that all who would could vote for Rev. J. Key, the Primitive Bapstist preacher or for Clifton Clay, the Methodist preacher, by paying five cents every time they voted, and that the quilt would go to the preacher receiving the larger number of votes, and that all the money was to go to the new Methodist church building at Pilot. The Baptist preacher got the quilt, but the Methodist preacher got seventy-four dollars and seventy-five cents for his new church. Remarkable, wasn't it? This money paid for the material to cover the church. The same ladies, with the help of many others, made another quilt, on that one they made seventy-two dollars for the church, and

the Methodist preacher and his wife got that quilt. We built one of the best little churches to be found in all that country, and it was completed in time for me to preach in it the fifth Sabbath in April of that year. We rented a little cottage in which to live that year, and we got along very well, and the people asked for my return for another year. I was glad to stay, and there were but few who knew that it would have been hard for me to have moved that first year. I left Salisbury with only ten dollars, and during the year I had to buy a horse, buggy and harness, and had to pay forty-three dollars house rent. I had my wife and two daughters to support, and I received from the seven churches on the circuit the first year only two hundred and sixty-three dollars and sixty-five cents. That was the year 1900. The conference paid me one hundred dollars that year, but seventy dollars of that had to go to the bank in Salisbury. I served the circuit another year, and we got along much better.

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

I wrote the preceding chapter yesterday while in the cemetery. This is the 19th of June, and O such a lovely morning. There is not a cloud to dim the beautiful

sky, and I am seated in the pavilion in Vance Park. This is a beautiful place, with its fountains, fish, birds, and squirrels playing around. The shade trees are of the most beautiful type, and flowers were not forgotten in making up the scene; they are here to cheer the eye of the tired man, and to add to the beauty of the smiling woman as she carries sunshine from place to place. As I sit here my mind goes back to Pilot Mountain. The little town was of about seven or eight hundred inhabitants, and was named for the old, noted Pilot Mountain, the mountain deriving its name from the Indians who were piloted over the surrounding mountains for years by the peak on the top of Pilot Mountain, which peak is called the Pinnacle; it is more than one hundred feet high, there is an acre of land on the top of it, and the distance around it is one mile. This Pinnacle is solid rock. The mountain contains about two thousand acres of land, and is about four miles from the town in which I lived. One must see the grandeur of this mountain to know it. Reader, when you go to see this mountain, go in May or June; in May the mountain is covered with the most beautiful flowers I

have ever seen, and in June is the time for Huckleberries, and you can find them by the bushel. The Methodist church in the town of Pilot was called "Pilot" for the town, and I had another church five miles from the town, East, that was called "Pinnacle," for the peak; this church was in a smaller village than Pilot, but we had some good people there, among them the Wall, Edwards, Ziegler, Rendleman, and Savage families. One of the members of the last named families was the wife of Brother A. M. Long, who is one of the best men I ever knew; he travelled and preached for more than twenty years, filling some of the hardest places in the mountain country.

I have made mention of the church at Pilot and that at Pinnacle. The Sunday School Superintendent at our new church at Pilot was old Brother Green, who could not be surpassed in his Christian qualities. We received into the church that year Brother Snider and his wife; he was a man of means, and was a great help to us financially and spiritually. And I want to say that while the Methodist people were very kind to us, so also were the Baptists, both Primitive and Missionary, and their

kindness, with that of the Methodists, never will be forgotten. At Chestnut Grove, the church in Stokes county, were the Edwards, Wall, Ham, Gentry and Shultz families, and this was one of our strongest churches financially, and these were good people. Little Yadkin, dear old Brother Long's church, was a small congregation, but it was composed of splendid people; in this church were the Lambert, Savage, Gordon and other good families. No preacher could be treated better by any people than I was treated by that congregation. I never will forget the good things that were given me to eat and the good things that were given me for my horse also. And when I was ready to start home, my buggy was filled up with other good things for my wife and daughters to eat.

Fairview church was on the Arrarat river and its membership was composed principally of the Marion families; this church was not as strong as the others, but the people were just as good and kind to the preacher and his family as were those of any other church. New Hope church was also located near the Arrarat river, and this was known as the Needham

church in honor of old Father Needham, who died in his 99th year. He was the oldest Methodist preacher known in the United States. He had a son, William, who was a preacher, and William had three sons who were preachers. It is easy to see what an influence for good went out from a church of such good people. Mount Hermon church stood on the top of a high mountain, fifteen miles from Pilot, the home of the preacher, and was within one and one half miles of the Virginia line. In this church were the Johnson, Brim, Pike, Lewis, and many other good families, all of whom were good to the preacher and his family. Brother Thomas Brim said to me during the second year: "Brother C., are you not in debt?" I told him that I was. He then said: "Sell your horse, and pay your debts, and I will furnish you another good horse until your four years are out on this work." I took his offer, and he stood by me. His wife was a Missionary Baptist, but I had no better home anywhere than with them, and my wife, daughters and myself had no better friends than they were. Talk about something good to eat; I will mention only one case, and that was at the table of the

Johnson family over on the other side of the Dan river, in Virginia, and 23 miles from Pilot. My wife was to have gone with me one time when I was going over there, but she was not able, so they said that little woman must have something to eat, so they gathered together to send her something. The family consisted of an old blind mother, one bachelor, one widower, one grand-child, and five old maids, the youngest 43 years old. They put in my buggy, for my wife, sweet potatoes, corn meal, dried and green apples, cabbage, turnips, a box of mutton, three kinds of fall grapes, chincapins, chestnuts, cloth and I can't remember what else. They all gave me a piece of money, and left me room in the buggy to sit, but left no room for my feet. This is a fair sample of the people on the Pilot Mountain circuit. Dr. R. E. L. Flippin and Brother Snide, at Pilot, had good plantations, and they never let the preacher's horse suffer for rough food. I also want to mention the names of Dr. Woltze and wife who we received into the church at Pilot. Dr. Woltz was also very good, kind and thoughtful of the preacher and his family. Mrs. Woltze is an excellent Christian lady and a great



church worker, and today stands in the front in the Woman's Home Mission Work.

We bought the house at Pilot that was rented for us for a parsonage. And Trinity College owned a school building at Pilot in which the town, church, and college were interested, and I undertook to settle the matter and secure the building for the town to be used as a graded school building. I succeeded, but I had overworked myself, and a blood vessel burst in my head. I consulted Dr. Wakefield, of Charlotte, and he stopped me from preaching for awhile, but I served my fourth year with the Pilot people. Before I left there the new church was built and paid for, the parsonage was bought and paid for, and an old debt of seventy-seven dollars, of seven years standing, on the church at Pinnacle, was paid. And through the faithfulness of some of the good people at Pilot, and with the help of Dr. J. C. Kilgo and Brother J. H. Southgate, of Durham, the school building was secured for the town and a graded school established.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

The reader will remember that when I left Salisbury for Pilot Mountain I was one hundred and fifty dollars in debt. I am so

glad to say that while I was with the good people of the Pilot Mountain circuit I was able through the goodness of God and the kindness of the people, not only to pay that debt, but also to lay up that much ahead. While on that work I saved three hundred dollars. While there one of our daughters married, but she got a husband large enough to take care of her. The years I spent on the Pilot Mountain circuit were the best four years of my life.

Not being able to take work the next year, on account of the condition of my health, we decided to go to Salisbury and spend at least a year with our children there. We have two sons and two daughters who have homes there. About the first of February, 1904, I took charge of a work near Salisbury. I preached at Mt. Tabor, Gray's Chapel, and a new church on North Main street; the last named church had twenty-seven doors, twenty-seven windows, and seventeen rooms. I think this church is doing well now.

At the close of the year there was an incident in my experience worthy of note. In a previous chapter I made mention of my land in Montgomery county and my debt. As I said then, it was in the hands

of men who could have saved it for me, but they did not do so. One of them, to whom I was owing about three hundred dollars, finding that he had not done his duty, said to me one day in Salisbury: "If you will give me ten dollars, I will give you your papers". I gave him the ten dollars. So with the wonderful success that the good Lord had given me, while I went to the mountains one hundred and fifty dollars in debt, I came away one hundred and fifty dollars ahead, and I never received over four hundred and ninety dollars. During these four years many souls were saved and added to the church, and we saved three hundred dollars in money. I cannot understand it, but I know this and it makes me satisfied that God's hand was in it all. God never has been more kind to anyone than to me and mine, and to Him be all the praise now and forever.

I was sent to Lexington, to serve the West Lexington charge, for the year 1905. My wife being an invalid, I could not do the work there that should have been done. We found some very warm friends there, and I trust some good was done. Among our friends there were the Jenkins,

Crouses, Perry, Sink, Bell and Shoat families, and others. A Baptist brother, by the name of Holt, engaged me to preach for the Baptists twice a month. I never can forget a good old colored woman there, Aunt Mariah Parker. I don't see how I could have gotten along had she not come and stayed with my afflicted wife as she did. She, with the rest, will get her reward in due season. This Lexington work was a tough proposition. Connected with the West End church was a territory of four hundred square miles, ten miles from Lexington. I had to go out there every first and third Sabbath, at 3 P. M. I preached at West End at 11 A. M., then went ten miles and preached at 3 P. M., and then came back to Lexington and preached at night. I had to hire one of the best horses in Lexington to make the trips. The cost of the hire for the horse for the year was about seventeen dollars. I paid seven dollars and fifty cents of that amount myself, and at the end of the year I received one dollar and thirty-six cents for the conference collections and five dollars and twenty-five cents for myself. We had fourteen members there, one of them said to be worth more than three

thousand dollars. When I left for conference, I wondered who would be the next man appointed to that charge.

While at Lexington I held a meeting for Rev. Scales at Winston-Salem at Salem M. E. Church. I never found a better people than those Salem folks were. They were so kind to me, paid me well in kind words, beautiful flowers and things more substantial and I think much good was done at that meeting. Rev. W. H. Willis is founder of that well located church. I had the pleasure of being with those dear people again last April. God bless them all and keep us until we meet again.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

At the session of the Conference held in Greensboro in 1905, I was sent within the bounds of the Charlotte district, and was put in charge of the Epworth and Seversville churches. I served these two churches as best I could, 1906 and 1907. No people anywhere can be kinder to a preacher and his wife than were those in those churches to my wife and myself. Their kindness has been burned into our memory and will remain forever. My dear wife is

sick all the time, but she is not forgotten. One bunch of flowers scarcely fades away in her room before another is brought to her. I met a very dear old friend of mine at Epworth church one night, Joe Meisenheimer. He and I joined the Lutheran church in 1866; in 1867 we separated, he going east and I going west, he finding a Methodist girl for a wife, and I doing the same. Joe is a good engineer, a faithful member of the Methodist church, and like myself, succeeded in getting a good wife. After forty years we met again. Joe says I can out "lip" him, but that he can out "look" me. O how good the Lord was to us boys.

In February, 1906, I was severely afflicted with shingles. My wife was very ill at the time, but the good people never neglected us through it all. While we were in Salisbury in 1905, our last child, Edith, married Mr. Watson; they were married in November and moved to Charlotte to live; and Mr. Brown, who had married our daughter, Mamie, in Pilot Mountain, was connected with *The Charlotte Observer*, and they also lived in Charlotte. They bought a home on West Fifth street, and my wife and I are boarding with them.

The church at Seversville is composed of the Severs, Lawing, Duckworth, Webb and Frazier families. Mrs. Cora Frazier was one of the most faithful members any preacher ever had. Epworth church, though unfortunately located between two railroads, had some of the salt of the earth among its members. In this number were members of the Powell, Fisher, Harris, Perkins, Traywick, and Elam families. Mr. and Mrs. Jim Kimbrel, their boys and their wives, Mrs. Andrews, Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Robeson, Mrs. Millersham, Mrs. Weber, and Mrs. McLemore were also very faithful members. Some sad experiences came to us while on this charge; in 1906 Mrs. C.'s brother Will died and also her dear old father passed away in his 92nd year. He has gone to his last resting place, but the dear, good old father still lives in the homes of his children and grandchildren.

Our children are all married, and my wife and I live with them, and no father and mother have children who are more careful to parents than are ours to us. We are glad they have homes of their own here, and we are so glad to know they are all on their way to the home of the good, where we all can have homes together.

I was appointed to the Dilworth and Big Springs charge for the year 1908. At Dilworth I met W. W. Cole and wife. He is Superintendent of the Sunday School, and she is organist. Mrs. Cody, Mrs. Butt, Mrs. Garnes, Mrs. Redfern, are members here, as is Miss Lillie Chick, who is an excellent worker and a leader in the work of the Aid Society. With these and Brothers Cole, Fite, Stillwell, Forbis and sons, Nivens, Furr, and old Brother Faulkner (the coon hunter) and the faithful driver of the jar head, to take the preacher to Big Spring, the work moves on. Brother Freeman and Brother Sing at Big Spring are doing a great work, and the new church built there is a wonder to all. This is said to be one of the oldest preaching places in North Carolina, if not the oldest. At the conference held in Salisbury in 1907, an appropriation of one hundred dollars was made to the new church at Big Spring. The law of the church requires the signature of the Register of Deeds of the county to certificate accompanying the application before the money can be obtained from the conference. Upon examination, we found we had no deed to the land upon which the church was built. So by order



of Attorney C. W. Tillett, we secured the affidavits of Dr. Walker, S. H. Hilton, Esq. and Brother Sing, to the effect that Big Spring had been a preaching place unmolested by anyone for more than forty years. We also had a surveyor to run off the adjoining lands, with satisfaction to all owners. So we have in possession for the M. E. Church South, five and three quarter acres of land, on which Big Spring church stands. By the side of the church stands a good district school building. The members of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian and the Presbyterian churches at this place have been so good to the Methodists. May God's richest blessing rest upon them all is my prayer. I am well pleased with this work, and all the people are so kind to me and mine. I had the pleasure on the first Sabbath in June of going back to the home of old Father Brown, where I first met my wife, and of preaching in an elegant new church within three quarters of a mile of that home. This Methodist church was built in 1906, and is another building that is a wonder in the history of Methodism. Father Brown was a local preacher; he preached for more than sixty years and lived to see this

church built, but was not able to preach in it. He will, however, live in it, in the lives of his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. The Edwards family in the community and the Brown family, of Mooresville, did much to help in the building of the church. And the Miller, Shin, Steel, Davis families, in the community, and many others of other denominations, helped to its completion, giving liberally of their means. The only daughters of Father Brown, Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Clay, gave a nice large Bible for the pulpit. May God's richest blessings rest upon them all.

Now I am going to close this little book, but before I close it I want to say one thing more, and that is that in the year 1881 I took my stand for Prohibition, and through all the twenty-seven years that have passed since then no one can say truthfully that Clifton Clay slackened his hold of this great principle, and no one rejoiced more than he, when on the night of the 26th of May, 1908, the wires brought the glad news to him in the city of Charlotte, of the great victory won. I am so glad I lived to see it. Bless God for such a victory. And let all the people say, Amen.

Now, as you have read my little book you will be ready to say, Surely the Lord has been good to Clifton Clay. My God is not a partial God; He will be just as good to you as He has been to me, if you will trust Him.

Before I bid you farewell I want to say to you that I am on God's altar, and there to stay till He shall say, "It is enough; Come up higher."

Now, I close by praying God to bless this little book to the good of all who may read it, and if it does good, to God be all the praise, both now and forever. Amen and Amen.

Farewell until we meet again.

The real name of Clifton Clay is

A. L. COBURN.

Charlotte, N. C., July 3rd 1908.















