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# THE LIFE

OF

## THOMAS T. THOMASON,

MISSIONARY IN CALCUTTA.

COMPILED FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,  
AND REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF  
PUBLICATION.

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*PHILADELPHIA:*

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,  
NO. 146 CHESTNUT STREET.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE young readers of this volume will please to remember, before they begin it, that it has not been written merely to amuse them, or to praise Mr. Thomason. It has been written and printed because it is believed that it may do great good to those who shall thus see how benevolent and active those men are who are true Christians; how humble they are, whatever may be their piety, how anxious to tell men of the mercy of God through the atonement of Christ, and how happy when they are engaged in this work. In publishing the history of pious men, born in different places, and belonging to different churches, our hope is, that the readers of such books will see a proof of the power of religion, and the way in which it is shown to exist; and that this will lead them also to desire to be the disciples of Christ, and to become holy and happy

# THE LIFE

OF

THOMAS T. THOMASON.

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## CHAPTER I.

THOMAS T. THOMASON was born at Plymouth, in England, on the seventh day of June, 1774. Before he was a year old his father died, and in his fifth year his pious mother removed to London, and placed her son in a school in the neighbourhood of that city. This school was taught by a master and several tutors. Thomas was happily put under the care of a pious tutor, who took great pains to give him religious instruction. He gave him lessons in the Bible, and when he examined him, he not only asked questions to know whether Thomas had studied them, but would show him that

he had a great concern in what the Bible taught. He led him to compare his own feelings with what the Scriptures say of the sinfulness of mankind. And when Thomas saw that he was a sinner, the tutor showed him that the only way of being pardoned was by repentance and trusting to God's mercy, through Jesus Christ. The blessing of God attended his faithful instruction, and young Thomas soon began to be affected by these truths. Thomas might have believed that he was a sinner, and that Christ is the only Saviour ; but if this had not led him to repent of his sins and seek salvation, his knowledge would have been worse than useless to him. But he was not so unwise. When he felt that he was so guilty that he must depend on the mercy of God for pardon, he began to seek that mercy. And when he found that God was so holy, excellent, and good, he desired to love and serve him ; so that before he was nine years old he would

rather spend the play-time alone, thinking of God, praying to him, and reading the Scriptures, than join in the amusements of his schoolmates. For this the boys ridiculed him, but, as he said afterwards, "I began to find confidence in prayer; and in proportion as I did so, happiness; this happiness was so great that I bore contempt without murmuring."

I cannot help observing here how much good might be done by teachers of day-schools, if they would faithfully instruct their scholars in the Bible. This is done in Sunday-schools, but every teacher ought to be willing and happy to teach his scholars those truths which may lead them to pardon and everlasting happiness. Let children pray that there may be more teachers like the tutor of young Thomason.

Thomas was also attentive to his other studies, and made such progress, that when he was only thirteen years of age, he became a tutor himself; and when about fifteen, he was so well acquainted with the

French language, that Dr. Coke, a missionary of the methodist church, took him to the West Indies to assist him, as his interpreter. This employment increased his desire of becoming useful to those who are destitute or careless of the gospel.

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## CHAPTER II.

AFTER his return from a short stay in the West Indies, his friends believed that his character for piety and usefulness made it proper that he should be encouraged in his desire to become a minister of the gospel in the episcopal church. His mother being unable to afford him proper education, he was assisted by a society established for the purpose of aiding young men in circumstances like his. He commenced his studies in 1791, being then in the eighteenth year of his age. His teacher was a venerable clergyman, named Clark,

who undertook to prepare him for college without charge. He had one fellow-student who was also studying for the ministry, and who is now the Rev. Charles Jerram. They soon formed an intimate friendship, and found great happiness in studying, conversing, and praying together. Some sentences from Thomason's letters to his mother at this time may be interesting and useful.

“In the evening we heard Mr. Clark expound, when he considered, among many other verses, that one which is a part of our Saviour's prayer for his apostles, ‘I pray not that thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil.’ Ah! thought I, that is the grand point, to be kept from the world, from its evils, its vanities, its snares. The means of grace are very precious: the wearied they refresh, the bewildered they guide, to the mourners they administer comfort, the

careless they awaken ; will they not rise up in judgment against us, unless received in the spirit of thankfulness and prayer ?”

“ *Feb.* 17, 1792.

“ Mr. Clark has been with us and given us some rules which I copied down from his own mouth. Being dressed in the morning, let each meditate on the divine perfections ; his dependence upon God ; his obligations to obey him. Let each recollect his own particular defects or weaknesses, and wherein he is most likely to fail in the duties which he owes to God and man ; remembering his reliance on the Redeemer for the forgiveness of his sins, and for power to discharge every duty. Having meditated on these subjects, let each separately apply himself to God in prayer ; begging that he may have more enlarged views of the extent of God’s laws, and of his own sins, whether in temper, words, or actions ; entreating for an increase of dependence on the



Redeemer in every office, and for ability to discharge every duty, and to suppress every wrong temper. 'Thus runs our preceptor's advice. O that we may be enabled to follow it ! The word of God—our own consciences—our parents—our tutor, unite in teaching us the necessity of meditation and prayer ; and shall we after all neglect it ? May we receive grace to withstand every opposition, and to love the Lord with all our hearts ! May our hearts be submissive and humble ; our actions Christian and becoming ; our words gentle and loving. My dear mother, let this letter put an end to all anxiety on our account. Fear not, we shall be blessed while we are careful to pray for a blessing.'

“ *March 5, 1792.*

“ How ought I to make it my continual prayer, that God would so sanctify my aims, that I may be enabled in all things to behave as becometh a person whose profession is to be sacred. I feel much

the importance of a greater conformity to the will of God. Shall I, who am to stand up between God and man, behave in a manner which shows my contempt of him whose messenger I pretend to be? How dreadful the consequence of this? The profession which a minister makes is very awful; he professes to be called by the common Maker and Redeemer of all, on an errand which concerns the salvation of all; this call he professes to be moved to by the Holy Spirit; this profession presupposes a knowledge of the efficacy of that redemption which he preaches. He professes that he has felt the happiness of God's children, and of a life devoted to the service of God. How careful, then, ought such a person to be not to offend God or man; how vigilant should he be, lest by giving way, and consenting to the evil of his own heart, he should be led into actions disgraceful to him, both as a learner and teacher of good things. Every action of such a per-

son is exposed to peculiar scrutiny ; and every sin, no doubt, will be punished with peculiar weight. His employment makes him as a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid ; his life, therefore, should be such as will bear the most accurate observation and notice, and the principles of his life such as will bear the searching of God's omniscience, who sits as a refiner's fire on every soul of man. O, who is equal to this ? Cleanse thou me, O God, from my secret faults. See what sin there is in me, and dispel it by the operations of thy Holy Spirit. Make me to love thee more and serve thee better, that when thou in thy providence shalt call me to speak in thy name, I may, having myself experienced the happiness which results from being at peace with thee, be enabled to commend this happiness to those whom thou mayest commit to my care.

“I am well persuaded that nothing would tend to make me so truly happy, or so consistent in practice, as a continued

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sense of my own nothingness and sinfulness. Whether it be through the inconstancy of youth, or a temptation peculiarly strong to me, so it is that I am continually forgetting this. Highmindedness will find its way into my soul, and disturb my peace. What have I to boast of? Surely nothing; I have sinned much, and have been forgiven much; I do still sin, and am still forgiven; shall I be proud? My dear mother, do not forget to pray for me, that my strength to withstand evil may be increased, that I may improve in the knowledge and love of God, and that his peace, which passeth all understanding, may enlighten the natural darkness of my soul, and be my safeguard against the world, the flesh, and the devil.”

In October, 1792, Mr. Thomason was sent to the university of Cambridge, where Mr. Jerram joined him a few months afterwards. His feelings and wishes in expectation of this event were thus expressed :

“Indeed the prospect before me requires much circumspection : a false step at my first entrance may imbitter a whole three years’ residence. How easy a matter to forget God ! How easy to connect myself with persons who care not for God, nor the things of God ! How happy will it be if I should find grace, and come off conqueror ! May I be enabled, knowing my Master’s will, to do it ! May my life be regulated by a proper rule and conducted in a proper spirit !

“O that I may be enabled, day by day, to act as a dying creature ! May I improve in the knowledge and love of God, and make every thing subservient to the one great end ! I am determined, with God’s assistance, to begin afresh. I am determined, by his grace assisting me, to devote my powers to Him ; and work, act, think, speak, and live for Him. Nothing is worth a thought but how I may please Him, and this is worth all my thoughts.”

The separation from his beloved teacher was painful ; they took a last walk together, and the pupil received his parting advice. “ Watch strictly,” said he, “ over your heart ; be much in prayer, cleave closely to God. Pray for spiritual discernment, that you may have a clear perception of the path you should walk in. Pray to walk in that way in spite of all opposition ; thus knowing and doing the will of God, you must be happy.”

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### CHAPTER III.

IN the university Mr. Thomason was distinguished by his diligence and success. He gained one of the annual prizes by an essay to prove “ that the Holy Scriptures, rightly understood, do not give encouragement to enthusiasm or superstition.” He was very attentive to the study of the language in which the Bible was written. He had read the New Testa

ment in Greek so often, and with so much care, that it was scarcely possible to mention a passage in English, for which he could not immediately quote the original. He had the Hebrew Bible divided into several small volumes, and was never without one of them in his pocket. He usually read this whenever he could spare time from his other studies, and by this means became familiar with the whole of the Scriptures.

The happiness and advantages of his life in college were much promoted by the society of his friend Jerram, and another Christian student, the late Rev. Mr. Cocker. They lived in the closest intimacy, and spent many happy hours in reading the Scriptures, in prayer, and in singing their favourite hymns. They rose at the same time and met in the same room to study, and made both their duties and their leisure contribute to their religious improvement. They had also the advantage of the friendship of the Rev. Mr.

Simeon, of Cambridge, who is so well known by Christians as a pious author, and as the friend of Henry Martyn.

In a letter to his friend Mrs. Thornton, Mr. Thomason says, "Mr. Simeon watches over us as a shepherd over his sheep. He takes delight in instructing us, and has us continually at his rooms. He has nothing to do with us as it respects our situation at college. His Christian love and zeal prompt him to notice us."

During his last year in college, Mr. Thomason was offered the care of the mission church at Calcutta, which he resolved to accept; but some events in his family obliged him to decline the appointment, and the celebrated Buchanan was sent in his place. In the spring of 1796, having finished his course at college, he became tutor in a private family at Baldock, that he might gain the means of support until he finished his studies for the ministry. In this place he enjoyed much spiritual happiness. "My soul,"



he writes, "has been much blessed, and I have been enabled to live more in a state of prayer than I ever remember to have done. I long to know more of the power of religion, and to realize the things of eternity;—blessed be God for what he has done for me in this respect. My birth-day was distinguished by nothing but a firm determination to give myself more unreservedly to God, with the divine assistance. When I look back and consider what has been done for me, I am like a traveller at the foot of the Alps,—he sees mountains above mountains,—I see mercy beyond mercy."

In October of the same year, Mr. Thomason was ordained to the ministry. His language at that time was: "I earnestly pray God to take me out of the world if his omniscient eye foresees that I shall dishonour him by the unfaithful exercise of so holy a profession.—If I have been hasty and forward in undertaking so holy an office, I pray the Lord

to pardon me, and to qualify me for the work that lies before me; then shall I preach as in the presence of the Judge of quick and dead.”

He was immediately appointed to the charge of a congregation in Cambridge, and another at Stapleford, about five miles distant. A great advantage to him in this situation was that he was assistant to his friend and adviser, Mr. Simeon.

Mr. Thomason had a peculiar fitness for teaching the young, and took a great delight in having them assembled for instruction. Every Sunday morning he went to Stapleford, which he reached by six o'clock, and spent two hours in teaching the children before the service of the church commenced.

But finding that the church at Cambridge was not able to maintain two ministers, Mr. Thomason applied for a situation in the university, and in 1797 he was chosen to a fellowship, and to be an assistant tutor in one of the colleges of which it is

composed. In the next year he was appointed tutor, and had to deliver daily two public and two private lectures, on the studies of his classes; and when Mr. Simeon was absent, he had to preach five sermons weekly.

Heretofore he had only been a deacon. According to the church of England, a person is not permitted to perform all the duties of a clergyman until he has passed some time as a deacon. If he is then judged fit for the sacred office, he is ordained as a presbyter. To this rank Mr. Thomason was admitted in 1798, and was settled in the village of Shelford. In the next year he was married to Miss Fawcet, who was an excellent and benevolent woman, and proved in all respects a suitable companion.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE happiness of Mr. Thomason at this period of life may be judged of by his own account of his situation in a letter to his mother.

“Do you remember a very pleasant spot, where there are two bridges, and you have a sweet view on both sides? Close to that spot is our mansion; the walks extend down to the river. A more beautiful place I never saw: it is the garden of Cambridgeshire. When I look around me it seems a dream: I can scarcely persuade myself it belongs to me. If you think of me between the hours of twelve and two, you may imagine me walking in the shrubbery with my little Hebrew Bible in my hand. Should the sun be very hot, depend upon it, I have taken my seat under the shade of a thick chestnut; there I endeavour to collect my thoughts, and stir myself up to

diligent improvement and application of the word of God. But, alas! I find it easier to admire the landscape around me than to raise my heart to Him who made it; easier to thank him for the walks and gardens, than to besiege a throne of grace for spiritual blessings: yet these are what I earnestly long for, and without which my soul cannot be satisfied. Mr. Simeon has a room on the ground floor, which opens into a delightful pleasure-garden, surrounded by a wall, where he can walk privately, in which he so much delights. One door of his room opens into my study, so that we are as near each other as possible. His friendship I must name amongst my chief blessings: he is more and more dear to us, as indeed he ought to be; his kindness to us is wonderful. It quite overpowers me when I think of it. I hope we shall provoke one another more and more to abound in the work of the Lord. O how short is the time! I am sure there is no time for idleness:

would to God that the preciousness of each passing hour might be more deeply impressed upon my mind.

“It has pleased God to send us pious servants ; indeed our domestic comforts are invaluable ; our seasons of family prayer are seasons of refreshment. I have found my own mind stirred up to make them as profitable as possible.”

At this time he resolved to take a few pupils into his house. He was induced to do this, not only to assist in the support of his family, but that he might be able to repay all that had been expended for his education by the society that had supported him at college. This he did by saving nearly eighteen hundred dollars from the pay of his scholars. Of his labours as a pastor at this time Mr. Simeon thus speaks:

“The parishes in which Mr. and Mrs. Thomason were able to exert their influence seemed as their own family,—schools of industry, as well as other schools, were

established by them—the poor and the sick were visited and relieved—all that Christian love could plan and devise was planned and executed with the tenderest assiduity and most unwearied constancy. If I were to fix on one thing more than another, where Mr. Thomason was at home, it was in his Sunday evening and Tuesday evening lectures in his school-room. There the poor were permitted to come, and he was a father amongst his children, or a pastor amongst his flock. In his addresses there was an unrivalled simplicity and divine unction, which left a savour that is not forgotten to this hour.”

He also still preached frequently at Cambridge, and found time to write essays for two prizes in the university, both of which he gained, in addition to the one which he obtained whilst a student. The subjects of his essays were, “That the Christian religion has in its effects been favourable to human happiness,” and “That the differences of opinion amongst Christians.

is no proof against Christianity." Several clergymen were in the habit of holding meetings for devotion and conversation in each other's houses. Mr. Thomason found them very profitable, and opened his own house for this purpose. A venerable minister says, "One of my most pleasing recollections of him is my meeting him about twenty-five years ago, when he was curate of Shelford. At his house a clerical meeting was held once a year, which was attended by about fifteen or twenty clergymen. Being privileged to be one of the occasional visitors, I cannot describe the benefit, instruction, and happiness which I enjoyed. It was the delight of Mr. and Mrs. Thomason to receive their Christian friends, and a spirit of devotion, peaceful serenity, and Christian cheerfulness prevailed in their hospitable mansion, which has left an indelible impression on my mind."

But notwithstanding the happiness of this situation at Shelford, Mr. Thomason



was not satisfied that he was performing his duty to his divine Master unless he was doing all that he could do. He felt that there were many places in the world more in need of the services of a minister than his own happy village. And the comforts he was enjoying there often caused him to think of those who were suffering so many hardships in foreign countries for the sake of spreading the gospel. This was not a new feeling: for, as we have seen, he was near going as a missionary to Calcutta before he had finished his studies at the university. It was now, however, increased in his mind by two circumstances. The first was the consideration of the devotedness of Wesley and Whitefield to the service of the Redeemer. When he thought how much those men had done during their lives to extend the blessings of religion, he felt that he was doing much less than he might do. The other circumstance that led him to reflect much on the subject was the

departure of Henry Martyn from England, to spend his life in promoting religion in Asia. He thus wrote in the beginning of 1805, alluding to the history of Wesley and Whitefield:

“ One good effect has already been produced on my mind,—an increased and painful sense that I am doing nothing to any good purpose. The reading the life and labours of those excellent ministers fills me with admiration of their zeal, and with shame that I am such a blank in creation. My sphere is contracted, and I long for a more extensive field of labour. God has given me an education and a spirit, I trust, which might render me far more useful in the church than I now am. Where my present thoughts will lead me, I know not; but I look round upon this lovely spot with all the indifference of a man who would, with the greatest cheerfulness, part with all, if a situation of greater usefulness, however laborious,

should offer itself. Here I am. ‘Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?’

“But more of this at a future time; in the mean time let us both remember,—you, that you have frequently devoted me to God,—and I, that I have professedly done so for years,—and that, as a redeemed creature, I ought to be presenting my body a living sacrifice to God.”

Accordingly, in that year, Mr. Thomason determined to seek an opportunity of going to the heathen; but upon advising with Mr. Simeon and a friend who had the chief direction of the appointment of missionaries to India, they judged it proper, probably on account of the unwillingness of his wife, that he should give up his design. His own humble account of the reasons for this advice is as follows:

“It appears evident that a minister who is not calculated for usefulness at home, will never become useful abroad; and that change of place or employment cannot of itself quicken the soul which for eight

years has been sleeping over its labours I feel the truth of this more deeply than I can express, but not a thousandth part so deeply as I should. Having now dismissed all thoughts of foreign service, I hope to give myself wholly to the work that is before me. May God enable me to live more to him, lest, after having preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

He was still, however, not satisfied that he was in the situation where he could do the most good, and in 1806 hoped to be placed in the town of South Shields. This was a place of great ignorance and wretchedness: but, he said, “I have looked over the barren hills, and smoke, and dirt, and feel that the consideration of 15,000 souls outweighs every thing.” “Knowing,” as he said, “how arduous it is to become the minister in a town so populous and opulent, where the minds of men were either immersed in business, or degraded to the lowest state of vulgarity

and profaneness ;” he argued thus with himself,—“there are many who are reconciled to live here all their days in the pursuit of wealth, and shall not the love of Christ and the honour of souls engage me in the same self-denial ? When a door is opened for the extension of His kingdom, shall a minister of Christ say, I will not enter it, because the country is dreary, and the place is full of filth and wretchedness ? God forbid ! Here I am ; if it please God to fix me here, I shall be contented to live and die amongst them. These things move me not ; the only thing that moves me, is a fear lest I should not bring a right spirit to the great work.” But those who had the right of placing a minister in this place chose another, and he remained at Shelford ; continuing also to assist Mr. Simeon at Cambridge.

## CHAPTER V.

IN the spring of 1808 Mr. Thomason was again offered an appointment as chaplain to Calcutta. He now believed that it was the will of Providence he should go, and he wrote thus to his mother :

“ *March 4, 1808.*

“ My acceptance of the appointment has not yet come before the court of directors, yet I cannot help feeling that the event will assuredly be brought about. I own that the more I consider the various leadings of divine Providence, and reflect on the unwearied tenor of my former wishes and plans, comparing them with what I now feel, the more am I convinced that such a change of my situation will be accomplished. And I think, my dear mother, when you reflect on the course of my life from the beginning, on the singular manner in which I was led to de-

vote myself to the ministerial work, on the course of providence by which the matter was brought about, and above all, on the earnest and repeated desire I have felt again and again for this particular destination, especially when you think that the work of my heart has been uniformly prevented by one great obstacle, and that this is now entirely removed, I think you will conclude that the time appears to be come. The same person (Mrs. Thomason) who was once decidedly adverse, so as not to hear of it without tears, is now happy in the thought of it. She no longer thinks of the sea, nor of the climate, but counts it a privilege and an honour to be exposed in such a cause. For my own part, it appears to be of great consequence to the work of God, that help should be applied in that quarter where it is most wanted, and that where most lasting good can be done, ministers should labour. Now certainly God is doing a great work in India. The labour-

ers are few, and the field amazingly extensive : they want men who will work, and whose habits are such as to render them useful workmen in a business where application and study are much wanted. In this respect, my habits and inclinations are favourable. It will be a pleasure to me to acquire their languages, which are so much studied in Bengal, the acquisition of which is so important to usefulness, and my heart leans to that part of the world with the same desire it did just before I entered into orders. I consider that what others expose themselves to for lucre and worldly honours, ministers ought to endure for nobler ends.

“ All this, I am sure, meets with corresponding feelings, my dear mother, in your own mind. You have again and again given me up to God, and I have no doubt you will be supported on the present occasion. What an honour and happiness there is in making sacrifices for Christ’s sake ! I am sure the more we are enabled



to do this, the more solid peace shall we enjoy, and the more shall we know him to be a good master. I trust that you will be fitted for every trial, and strengthened to do and suffer the whole will of God.”

His appointment being confirmed, he immediately commenced the study of the Persian language, and other preparations for his departure. He sailed on the 16th of June, 1808, from the isle of Wight, in England, having just entered the thirty-fifth year of his age. His widowed mother's feelings on this occasion were thus expressed :

“ At some seasons I am so oppressed I cannot command myself. I sorrow most of all that I shall see that dear face no more for ever, and only in proportion as I feel a sense of the Divine presence, can my mind bear this deprivation. I see the suitableness of my dear son's character for such a situation. I cannot doubt a moment that whatever the Lord does

must be right, and excellent, and sure, and good—but I exquisitely feel his loss; I wish and desire to call upon myself to look beyond this vale of tears to that celestial hill where God has prepared for himself a city—when once entered there, all tears will be wiped away from our eyes for ever. They expect to sail to-morrow. God's will be done."

She must have received consolation in the views of this trial, which her son gave in the following letter, written when on the point of sailing.

*"Travers, under weigh, June 10, 1808.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER—This morning we were summoned on board. The wind has become fair, and we are proceeding out to sea. Our dear and honoured friend, Mr. Simeon, accompanied us to the vessel, and is now with us. We all retired to our cabin, and united in prayer, desiring to consecrate this spot to God, and to commit ourselves and all the ship's

company to his gracious care. Blessed be God, we know what it is to draw nigh to him, and we feel but one concern—that we may glorify Him in this world, and enjoy him in the next. O it is an unspeakable mercy to part with a good hope that we shall one day meet where sorrow and parting shall be no more.

“I hope, my dearest mother, you still experience the gracious support of our heavenly Father. When I look back at this moment, I can discern innumerable mercies vouchsafed to us both in times past. This is the greatest trial we ever had—who knows what joy we may hereafter find in this trial? Who knows what joy may be reaped by thousands? What abundant cause of thankfulness shall we have, if by temporal sacrifices many should become partakers of everlasting happiness. This indeed will be a rich reward.

“I leave you with many dear and tender friends; above all, with a gracious:

God, who has guided, preserved, and blessed you, from the beginning even till now. To his gracious keeping I commit you, humbly hoping and believing that he will supply your every want out of the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus. May He be your portion, your shield, and your exceeding great reward ! Amen. Amen.”

They had a pleasant voyage of five months, and were expecting daily to see the shore of Hindoostan, when they met with a calamity which can best be told by copying his own account of it in a letter to his mother ; inserting a few sentences from another to Mr. Simeon.

“*Nov. 13, 1808, Off the Sand Heads.*

“ ‘ O be thankful unto the Lord, for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever.’ Let the redeemed of the Lord say so ; ‘ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.’

You will read the narrative of the Lord's mercies to us with tears of joy and thankfulness. Our voyage had been singularly propitious, from Madeira down the coast of South America, to the cape of Good Hope, and from thence to the bay of Bengal. We had fine weather all the way ; no gales to alarm, no calms to detain us. I was chiefly occupied in a diligent study of the Persian language, Mrs. T. in instructing the children : our days passed quickly and profitably. But whatever may have taken place during the voyage, the conclusion of it has been marked by so signal an interposition of divine Providence, that we have neither time nor inclination to fix our mind on any other object. How will your heart be filled with thankfulness, and your lips show forth his praise, when you hear that the unworthy writer of the following narrative, with his beloved wife and children, have been almost miraculously saved from destruction.

“ Whilst events are still fresh in my recollection, and in order that they may ever continue so, I will endeavour to relate that most wonderful deliverance from shipwreck, by which God has been pleased to preserve my wife and family, with many other persons. Early in the morning of the 7th, we approached cape Ne-grais. Soundings were made, which left us no room to apprehend any immediate danger. At half-past four they were twenty-one fathoms ; which, being certified to the captain, he immediately came on deck, and gave orders for heaving the ship to. The words were scarcely pronounced, when the ship struck upon a rock. At this time the Earl Spencer was so near, the captain hailed and cried out, they were amongst breakers. The Earl Spencer providentially escaped, and actually passed over the reef without striking ; but our own ship, notwithstanding every exertion, continued to strike with violence. The first shock brought down the mizen

top-mast ; the wind then blowing fresh. In a moment the cry of distress was raised, which was heard by the Spencer, and which it very soon appeared was not made without reason. The passengers and all the ship's company were soon upon deck, and saw with the deepest anguish the danger in which they were. I had previously gone down and informed Mrs. T. that the ship had struck, and that none but God could save us. The heeling of the ship was now tremendous, and the blows continued, till the rudder was broken with an awful crash, that seemed to portend that the ship should immediately go to the bottom. Who but those who have actually borne a part in such scenes can conceive the dreadful sensations thus produced ? We endeavoured to commit ourselves to the mercy of God, and then Mrs. Thomason, snatching up our dear J., followed by Mrs. —, with O——, repaired on deck. She had nothing on her but a counterpane, and the dear children

each a sheet. We clung together near the round house, and lifted up our hearts to God. It was an awful scene : every countenance was filled with terror and despair. Thus in one short moment they had exchanged their peaceful slumbers for all the horrors of threatening destruction. Through the mercy of God the wind soon moderated ; a circumstance which gave time to take proper measures for saving the crew. The mainmast was first cut down, which fell over the side. After, the foremast was cut away, and we were thus left a mere hull, which was momentarily coming to pieces ; at this critical juncture, the cutter unfortunately went adrift ; the jolly-boat was despatched after it, and in the mean time the crew were all employed in clearing and launching the long-boat. This was a long and difficult operation, but as all our lives depended on its success, the men exerted themselves to the utmost. Before they had fairly raised it from its place the



ship's back was broken, and at this moment I felt that nothing but a miracle could save us. I lifted up my heart to God, and exhorted Mrs. Thomason to do so too. I committed myself and all my concerns to Him. Meanwhile, a squall of wind and rain caused the ship to beat violently ; we all stood on the deck drenched to the skin, looking with anxious impatience to the launch of the long-boat. The ladies and children, having been roused suddenly from their beds, were wet and half naked, and most pitiable objects. I ran down into my cabin to secure something from the wreck which I might preserve, if saved from destruction, as a memorial. In vain I sought in the confusion of the moment for my pocket-bible ; at length, hastily snatching up my Hebrew psalter, with a volume of the Greek Testament, and my mother's last and valued present, the Golden Treasury, I put them into my bosom, and flew to my dear Mrs. Thomason and the chil-

dren on the deck. In passing through the cabin to the ladder, it was painful to hear the rushing of the water in the hold, and to see the decks giving way, and the boxes floating about on all sides. Arrived on the deck, I remained with my dear B——, and had the pleasure of seeing the long-boat launched into the water. The captain then called for the ladies, who were one by one conveyed into the boat by a rope. The gentlemen followed, and the crew, to the number of ninety-one: more could not be admitted with safety. In the cutter were eighteen, in the jolly-boat eleven. A sail was hastily thrown into the boat, and we left the wreck with mingled sensations of joy, regret, and apprehension. New dangers indeed were now before us. Our other boats were out of sight, and though we could see the land from the ship, it was at a great distance; our boat was crowded, the sea high, the weather boisterous, and the shore, when reached, barbarous and inhospitable.

This was a trying situation. How little did we think, a few hours before, that we should in such circumstances cast a longing, lingering look on the Travers. The wreck afforded a distressing spectacle; we turned our heads from the scene, and looked before us, and committed ourselves to the guidance of Providence. Dangerous as our situation was, I found it extremely difficult to realize the nearness of death. I kept lifting up my heart to God, and relied on his gracious protection. We had brought a little sail from the wreck, which, with the help of our oar, kept our boat before the wind. It was about seven o'clock when we committed ourselves to the boat; soon after, a heavy squall of rain came on, which rendered our situation still more gloomy and distressing. At the end of an hour and a half we saw the other two ships at a great distance, and they, after we perceived them, made sail from us. This was a distressing moment, as our

last resource seemed to fail us. Meanwhile a tremendous squall involved us in darkness, and drenched us with sheets of water. The boat shipped much water, and it was extremely difficult, on account of her being so heavily loaded, to keep her before the wind ; at length, however, by the good providence of God, the weather cleared up, and we saw the other two ships heave to, in order to receive us. This was a cheering sight, and with inexpressible joy we looked toward them, and thanked God as we observed the lessening distance. However, a third heavy squall came on, and hid them from our view : through this we were preserved by the same gracious Providence, and as we approached the Earl Spencer, we saw the poop and deck covered with spectators, beholding our progress, and longing to receive us. Passing under the stern, I felt quite overpowered : it was indeed an affecting sight. Above a hundred fellow-creatures, rescued from a watery grave, were joy-

fully received aboard, cheered by the loud and cordial congratulations of their deliverers. It was a feast to the benevolent captain of the Earl Spencer and the crew to be instrumental in the preservation of so many lives, and it was on our part a deliverance never to be forgotten. The continued emotions of joy, surprise, cordiality, gratitude, cannot be described; the thing must be seen to be felt. It was half-past ten when we arrived at the ship, having been three hours and a half exposed in an open boat on a heavy sea, during which time we had sailed about ten miles. Before we arrived, a gentleman on board the Earl Spencer saw the Travers break in the middle, and the fore part go down. It afterwards blew very hard, and there can be no doubt but that before the afternoon, every vestige had disappeared. I have omitted to say that my dear E., awakened by the violence of the shock, immediately fell on her knees, and prayed with much earnestness

that God would pardon her soul. It was with difficulty she could be torn from the bed. On deck she renewed her cries, saying, 'Let me die with papa. Lord, forgive my sins for Christ's sake.' B.'s agitation at first was very great, afterwards it subsided. We stood all by one another, and solemnly gave ourselves up to God: and neither then, nor now, nor at any preceding moment, did we feel the smallest regret at having left our native country. I had almost forgotten to mention the attention of passengers towards us. One of them ran hastily down and recovered my watch, the alarum which you gave me several years ago, and which will be one hundred times more valuable than ever. That, with the trifling articles above mentioned, are all the riches that remain to us. When we were obliged to leave several of our fellow-creatures on board, it was out of the question to encumber a boat already overloaded. One of the servants, seeing Mrs. Thomason

standing in the heavy rain, without shoes or stockings, approached her, saying, 'You have no shoes; take mine.' I never can forget this. Another brought her a coat, a third a blanket for J. and a coat for E. But I cannot convey an adequate idea of the scene."

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## CHAPTER VI.

ON his arrival in Calcutta, he met the Rev. Mr. Brown, the missionary, there.

"We both," he writes, "sat down, but it was long before my tears suffered me to speak. They were tears, as I told him, not of sorrow, but of joy and thankfulness, wonder and praise. He told us to look around the walls—the furniture and the house were ours. It was a house built in faith and prayer as the residence of a missionary, out of the contributions of a number of poor persons, who, many years past, had subscribed towards a fund for

the support of the gospel, and united their prayers that God would send them a minister. Need I say that every chair and table spoke to us with a voice that thrilled through our hearts and overwhelmed us? Truly we could then praise God for our shipwreck. We could see a good reason for the dispensation. It was plain that God had thrown us upon this praying people, that he had cast us from the rest of the world, and laid us under the obligations of Christian love, in order that we may be devoted to the sacred charge of feeding his sheep. He has placed us in circumstances where every thing is actually the fruit of faith and love, in order to teach us that we have but one thing to do. Mr. Brown introduced us into the church and vestry, where many had assembled the evening before, to thank God for our deliverance, and pray for a blessing on the minister preserved to them. Since we came here, we have had nothing to do of a worldly nature ; all care has been



taken from us by our Christian friends Think not of our hardships, losses, dangers, but of the honour He has put upon us in sending us to a praying people—sending us, with loss of all, to persons who supply our wants with tears of thankfulness ; let not a thought of assisting us enter your minds—know all of you, we stand in need of nothing but your prayers : these we implore.”

On the second Sunday after landing, Mr. Thomason preached his first sermon in India. Mr. Brown preached the same day on the duty of thanksgiving for the preservation of so many lives in the shipwreck. It has been often remarked that neither the remarkable judgments nor mercies of God often lead men to repentance. It is generally the case that as soon as their alarm is over, they return to greater sin than before, and forget the Lord that has afflicted and delivered them. This has been observed in our own country when dreadful diseases, such as the

cholera, have prevailed. Then men were afraid for their lives, some left off their open sins, and many went to the churches to pray that the disease might be stopped. But when the sickness was over, very few remembered their resolutions and their prayers, or returned thanks to God for his mercy. So when our Lord cured ten men of leprosy, one only gave glory to God.\* When the day of thanksgiving was held at the church in Calcutta, very few of the hundred and twenty-two who were saved in such a wonderful manner from death were present; and when the Lord's-supper was administered on the same occasion, only four of them, besides Mr. Thomason's family, were present. Nor was he contented with the mere service of thanksgiving. He knew that the event was intended for his good, and often looked back to it, not only with new gratitude, but as a warning that he should be more faithful and zealous in the cause of

\* Luke xvii. 11—18.

his Saviour. Five months afterwards he wrote to Mr. Simeon as follows :—

“I bless God the shipwreck has not been wholly forgotten, though I seem to be only beginning to improve it. If the Lord himself had not been on our side, even such a mercy would have been wholly forgotten. Experience shows us that except he give us grace to improve his dispensations, no judgments, no mercies, no warnings, will avail any thing. In our almost miraculous escape from the deep, God has given us a new and impressive call, for which we have reason to bless his name ; but more especially have we reason to bless him for not having suffered it to escape from our wretched hearts. It has in some measure led us to renewed earnestness and deep humiliation before God, and now, at the end of five months, I feel a growing sense of gratitude to the Lord for having brought us to India in the way he has. Many of our friends at

home have pitied us, but indeed it is a great matter of joy. I value it as a most precious jewel, and would not on any account recover from the deep what we have lost, even were it in my power. The Lord moves in a mysterious way, but all his doings are in faithfulness and mercy. We were coming to India flushed with hope, full of ardour and sanguine expectations, much animal fervour, and an amazing portion of self-sufficiency. He casts us upon a rock ; it was a hard blow, and it spoke loudly, ‘Mind what you are about.’ We were richly furnished with books and stores of various kinds ; he takes them all from us ; sends us here as castaways, completely stripped of every thing but our trust in him and hope in his word. Blessed be his name, I say again and again, that he gives us also a heart to think of these things, and to pray for a right improvement of them. The searchings of heart on this occasion have been very salutary, though painful ; and

we can testify to the praise of his grace, that we are labouring with new earnestness, new zeal, new love, new thankfulness, to live wholly for God. And now, my dearly beloved friend, you have expressed a wish to hear something appropriate, what can I say to you? What can I communicate to you but the actual workings of my heart? You will reasonably expect that such an introduction to India ought to be accompanied with important effects on my own mind, and ought to lead to a new and more devoted surrender of myself to the Lord. I beseech you when you write express freely your views upon this subject. Tell me what effects ought to follow from a dispensation of this nature. I charge you before God, as you value the cause of your blessed Redeemer, and desire to promote it, to put me in mind of these things with authority. Ask whether I am living more nearly to God: remind me of this very request I am now making, that I may be stirred up

to diligent self-examination, lest I be put to shame before God and man. I pray God that his blessing may rest upon you, both in your public and private, and in all your social duties: to all the dear people at Shelford and Cambridge, present my Christian love. I look back upon my ministry amongst them with deep shame and grief of heart. I have injured them all, and I shall never be able to express this to them in person. I cannot but do it before God, and implore God for my innumerable neglects and want of spiritual zeal and faithfulness whilst amongst them. I never loved them so much as at this moment, and never so earnestly desired their spiritual welfare.”

And on the return of the day a year afterwards, he wrote thus:—

“The time, and situation, and circumstances of the present moment are all so interesting, that my full heart knows not

how to commence the present communication. It is the day after the memorable 7th of November, which we have been spending together in retirement, six miles down the river, at the house of a friend. Yesterday we endeavoured to recall to our minds the event of that day, and were enabled, blessed be God, to humble ourselves before him in some measure, and to encourage ourselves and our beloved children anew in his service. It was to us a solemn and profitable day. The situation is on the banks of that river to which we came through such a mysterious train of providences, and along which we proceeded naked and destitute to the place of our destination. The circumstances, too, under which I write are peculiar. At family prayer we had renewed our vows of yesterday, and had withdrawn into my study, and were conversing together in the most serious manner, when letters from Europe were put into our hands, containing all the affectionate

congratulations, sympathies, prayers, and praises of our beloved friends. How affecting a close to the profitable scene! My mother's feelings were anticipated—so were yours: but your kind and tender expressions far exceed any thing we looked for, and fill us with an overwhelming sense of the undeserved goodness of God.”

Whilst he was studying the languages of the country, his services as a minister could only be given to the English inhabitants of Calcutta. His congregation was at first not more than two hundred and fifty persons.\* He preached on the

• The first protestant mission in Bengal was established by Rev. John Z. Kiernander, from the society for promoting Christian knowledge, in 1766. He formed a church in Calcutta, which was the only protestant one in Bengal for about thirty years. He was a successful minister in this church until 1787, when the house was purchased and devoted to the purposes of a missionary church. Rev. David Brown was the successor of Mr. Kiernander until about 1811, when he was followed by Mr. Thomason.



morning and evening of every Lord's-day, and on every Thursday evening; and on Saturday he instructed the children, who met in the church with their parents and friends. One evening in the week was spent in meeting at private houses for prayer and the explanation of the Scriptures. His daily employments were thus regulated:

“We rise very early, and return from our morning rides by six; at half-past six we have family prayer; at seven we breakfast. Between that and two, I am in my study; at two we dine; at three I am in my study again till five, then we have family prayer; from six till nine or ten is occupied in riding and visiting friends; in private parties and public duties. I have found it necessary to decline all invitations to dinner, without exception. This has enabled me to be regular, and very retired without giving offence.”

“You have no idea in England (he

writes, after a somewhat longer residence in India) of the peculiar difficulties which oppose the progress of the gospel in this place. They are prodigious, and in the highest degree discouraging; arising partly from the nature of the climate, and partly from the nature of society, and chiefly from the close intercourse with the wretched natives, who are more degraded than you can imagine, and who have the entire charge of children, and management of household matters. The natives swarm around us, and corrupt the minds of children from the earliest years. To an Englishman, the effect of their example, and the contagion of their language and practices, cannot be adequately represented. Some favourable exceptions, but only a few, can be mentioned. Religion alone raises them—this gives a solidity of character—they become trusty and well-behaved. These form a great majority of our congregations. The number of rich people and company's servants

who come to church is comparatively small. The better sort of people send their children home at five or six ; until then, they are under the charge of native servants, and their minds are poisoned as far as they can be at that tender age. The parting from them is heart-breaking. They part with them very often never to see them more. This produces a sad derangement in society. There is no such thing as a domestic circle. The olive branches round the table, so delightful in England, are unknown. The children cannot even speak their mother tongue ; they have to learn English on their way home. There is a dissolution of all the tender, amiable, cheering household virtues. These observations apply to the far greater number amongst us. Some there are who diligently labour against these disadvantages. They live retired, and do all they can to counteract the influence of the native servants. If very conscientious, they may succeed ;

but the instances are very rare—the sacrifices of liberty and pleasure are so great. The business of a minister lies in encouraging those who are making some endeavours for the good of their families; in assisting and presiding over their efforts—but the progress must be slow. It is a fixed rule with us, that the children are always in the presence of one amongst us. We never suffer them, not for a moment, to have any intercourse with the servants alone.”

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## CHAPTER VII.

MR. THOMASON'S congregation soon increased, and his discourses were received with deep and solemn attention, and he knew of several instances in which they were blessed to the conversion of souls. Before he had preached six months the house of worship had to be enlarged, and he found great happiness in his work.

“ You know,” he wrote to Mr. Simeon, “ the nature of regular employment in the pulpit : the word of God does not appear to be very rapidly advancing, yet we hear of much that encourages us. The work of catechising seems to promise good. But we want the outpouring of the Spirit ; and until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, no very great good can take place amongst us : we are praying for this ; without this we may toil all night and catch nothing. O that the preacher may catch the sacred fire, and the people rejoice and be glad !

“ I find our Thursday evenings profitable times. We are going through the gospel of St. John : the congregation does not much exceed one hundred and fifty people. But they come to hear plain truths, and we often find the Lord is with us indeed. We are in the sixth chapter—the bread of life. My subject this evening includes these two verses, ‘ He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood,

dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.' What can a poor empty creature say of the fulness there is in Jesus? what can I say of Jesus dwelling in me, and my dwelling in Jesus? O how we fritter away these passages, if we are not living nigh to God, and enjoying the glorious knowledge of the gospel in daily dependence on the Redeemer. This I want very much, very lamentably, and my people will be meagerly fed. That word 'dwelleth in me, and I in them,' fills my soul with wonder, and abases me to the dust. I would know it, and feel it, but know not how. I would speak of it and recommend it, but have no heart for the marvellous theme. Will God in every deed dwell in this diseased polluted heart? Does He dwell there?—and can I, a vile and wretched sinner, be said to dwell in him? Though I scarcely dare say, Yes, yet I fain would come and

cast myself upon the Saviour. It is my only refuge and hope, and if this reposing of the soul in Jesus be indeed to eat his flesh, and drink his blood, I would now do it, yea, I must do it. Still I cannot lay hold of that word—‘dwelleth in me, and I in him.’ I feel very remote from this; it is too high, I cannot reach it. I feel like a blind man leading the blind. My comfort lies in the freeness and sovereignty of God’s grace; for while it gives strong meat to those who are full grown, it administers milk to the babe.

“My dear and honoured brother, you know not how very far I am from being a minister of the gospel. I am no gospel minister, for I know it not. I sit down and pen some miserable thoughts on Scripture, and occupy a certain portion of time in talking about the love of God, and the sufficiency of Jesus, and the work of the Spirit; but it is sad trifling with myself and my hearers. Surprising is that blindness which hides from me the glory of

the gospel, and that unbelief which puts it away from my soul, and that dishonesty which starts from the presence of a holy God, and excludes me, if I may so say, from the holy of holies : but where am I wandering ?—this is very unprofitable to you. O my brother, pardon me, and weep over me, and pray for me. One good end will be answered by this communication, you will know better how to pray for me. I want, for myself and people, more of the simplicity of the gospel. I want to come to Christ and bring them with me : I long for the time when the glory of the Redeemer and fulness of this salvation shall so occupy my mind, that in studying and preaching I may have no other object in view, but speak always out of the abundance of the heart.

“There are great snares attending our technical mode of sermon-making. Though I speak to a man famous for Helps to Composition, I speak the truth,



and know the danger of this ‘art of preaching ;’ we are apt to chalk out our work, and cut and prune, and then what a judicious, fine, persuasive discourse is this ! And oftentimes our love of Christ and of souls evaporates in our neat exordium, and luminous distribution and close application to the sermon. I am ashamed, and tired, and sick, heart-sick of this. I have smarted for it, and do every day.”

When a ship was taken by the French, by which his friends at home had sent him a number of books and other tokens of their affection, he said : “It seems as though God would complete the weaning he has begun ; and we bless him for it. Every thing by which England could be remembered is swept away : but what is above all price, the bond of love is increased a thousand fold ; we are more one with you in spirit ; more closely united in Christ, more endeared by the common interest we feel at the throne of grace, and the common prospect of glory.”

In the second hot season of his residence in Calcutta, he suffered so much from the climate, that he was obliged to leave his duties for several weeks, and take an excursion up the Hoogly river. His description of the climate shows how trying it must be to persons who come from one that is milder and more regular.

“April: it is the middle of the hot season, we have fiery days and stormy nights. Thus it has pleased a gracious Providence to temper the severities of the climate. If the hot days were to continue long, we should sink at once. When the refreshing winds fail us, the sultriness is almost insupportable. Then comes a storm that cools the air. Then the heat returns. Then the lull. Then again the storm for several days successively. We rise to go forth and inhale the cool of the morning and rejoice. About June comes the rainy season for two months. This refreshes us. From the middle of August to the middle of October, the clouds having

poured forth their contents, the country is soaked. The winter having left us, the heat of the sun draws forth the moisture, and we live almost in a hot bath. All nature seems to droop—man, beast, and vegetable sympathize with each other. Were this season to be prolonged, few could endure it. About the middle of October we have sharp mornings and bracing airs. Thus the years go round.”

He tried to make every occurrence useful to his own heart. Dating his letter Chinsurah, October 1, 1810, he writes —“We are thirty miles up the river : this change has been rendered necessary by the state of my health, which began to suffer during the last rainy season. I have spent a month on the water. I went to the mouth of the river for sea air, and then proceeded up the river. Through the great mercy of God this has been very useful. God only knows what is to be the end of all our attacks, and what the term of our lives. To

be in his hands, who has the keys of death and hell, is an unspeakable privilege. I feel it to be so, and rejoice. The climate has begun evidently to affect me, and it will be necessary for me to contract my exertions of body and mind. The constant employment of mind in this country is unfavourable to health and even dangerous. Before I was laid by, I began to visit the hospital once a week, from which little labour some good has sprung up. But we are all in a low state, our proceedings are slow and infantine. The reflections which have passed in my mind during my excursion on the water have been rather of a discouraging nature. Yet though discouraging—the discovery of the truth, painful as it is at the time, may be an unspeakable blessing. Who knows but that the discovery of my own barrenness and manifold neglects, by the blessing of God, may lead to more enlarged usefulness in his church. I have lately had much to think of, much to mourn

over, much to pray for, and much, very much, to be thankful for. And now, with renewed strength of body, I would fain take up my charge again in a new spirit.

“We are become weaned from all Europe expectations. The losses by capture and shipwreck of late have made the heart sick. You cannot conceive the general mourning that has been produced amongst us. It has been dangerous to mention the missing ships in company, lest the heart of some bereaved parent or husband should be made sad.

“After being laid low from official engagements for six weeks, it was not without the greatest emotion I resumed my labours. It has pleased God to teach me something by shipwreck, but he has taught me more by bodily affliction. The danger and alarm then were temporary, but illness gives many opportunities of serious reflection. I have had long seasons of pain and depression, which have, I trust, through the mercy of God, been sancti-

fied to my soul. I have seen much of the unbelief, pride, impatience, and dishonesty of my heart. Here I am beginning my work as it were again, and I pray God to enable me by his good Spirit to press forward toward the mark of the prize of my high calling.

“We have never yet seen Mr. Martyn, but hope to be gratified in the course of a few months. He has at length determined to try the sea air. He has been brought very low.”

Soon after this, the religious people at Calcutta had the happiness of seeing Henry Martyn, who stopped there a short time in travelling from Cawnpore to Arabia. The interview of the missionaries was full of joy, though mingled with apprehension for Martyn's health. Mr. Thomason wrote to Mr. Simeon.

“He is on his way to Arabia in pursuit of health and knowledge. You know his genius, and what gigantic strides he takes in every thing. He has some great plan

in his mind, of which I am no competent judge. But as far as I do understand, the object is far too grand for our short life, and much beyond his feeble and exhausted frame. Feeble indeed it is! how fallen and changed!—his complaint lies in the lungs, and appears to be incipient consumption. But let us hope the sea air will revive him, and that change of place and pursuit may do him essential service, and continue his life many years. In all other respects he is exactly the same as he was: he shines in all the dignity of love, and seems to carry about him such a heavenly majesty as impresses the mind beyond all description. But if he talks much, though in a low voice, he sinks, and you are reminded of his being dust and ashes.—It would have filled your eyes with tears to have seen dear —— [probably Mrs. Thomason] when she saw him; you know her smile and hearty countenance, and eyes darting good-nature, but you never saw them so called forth. We

were all filled with joy unspeakable, and blessed God for the rich opportunity of loving intercourse.”

Whilst in Calcutta, Martyn preached his sermon for the Bible society, which was followed by so much blessing, and his other labours during his short stay were highly useful.\*

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## CHAPTER VIII.

THE institution of the Calcutta Bible society gave great joy<sup>3</sup> to the friends of religion. It caused inquiry among the people, and the opposition that was made to it only caused the subject to be more talked of, and the Bible to be examined. Mr. Thomason said, “It is impossible to describe the joy I feel in contemplating the probable harvest of knowledge, piety, and happiness which will arise from this

\* The life of Henry Martyn has been published by the American S. S. Union, in a volume of 246 pages.



institution in this quarter of the globe. It gives greater stability to our proceedings than the most splendid conquests.”

Shortly after this, Abdool Messeeh, a native of Hindoostan and a Mohammedan, was baptized at Calcutta. His first religious impressions had been received whilst hearing Mr. Martyn, and he became a useful missionary to his countrymen.\* Mr. Martyn's translation of the New Testament into Hindoostanee was finished and about to be published. In addition to these causes of encouragement, Mr. Thomason's own ministry was greatly blessed. “It would fill your heart with joy,” he tells Mr. Simeon, “to see us here. Whatever reason we have had formerly to see the hand of God in our coming to India, has been greatly increased of late. New scenes of usefulness open ; my hands are now quite full, and through

\* An account of Abdool Messeeh, and of his ministry, with a portrait, is given in an appendix to the life of Martyn, published by the Am. S. S. Union.

mercy, I see the gradual operation of a gospel ministry. Some persons of late have been brought to a serious concern for their souls. Those who were once scoffers hear and weep, and endeavour to promote the cause they formerly despised; and our own people, which is a great mercy, and received as an answer to prayer, are more united amongst each other."

His views of his own insufficiency for the great work that was before him, though perhaps just, show that he was not forgetful of his own heart, in trying to do good to others. "I feel the necessity of a close and diligent reading of the Scriptures. It is impossible to occupy the teacher's chair with advantage to our hearers, except we are very much engaged in experimental reading of the Scriptures ourselves. O what treasures are to be found in the word of God! Blessed be God for a little sense of them!

-would that I could give my whole

heart and soul to them. But I am as yet only on the surface of things ; this at the age of thirty-seven. God knoweth I deplore my ignorance, and count myself to be a mere novice, and feel unspeakably unworthy to preach Christ to lost sinners. I want to have my heart warmed with his love. But oh, my exceeding vileness and hardness of heart!" At the same time the difficulties and discouragements that he had to meet ought to be remembered. "The state of society here, and the state of the climate, oppose difficulties which you can hardly appreciate if described. The climate has influence upon one's natural sloth in a thousand ways ; and society is so constituted, that we are opposed at every step by the pride of rank, and office, and colour, to a degree surpassing all conception. Had I chosen to live here in the state and dignity of chaplain, my path would have been easy, but in the attempt at a parochial line of labour [that is, not only preaching, but visiting his

congregation, &c.], the difficulties are prodigious. I find my heart sick sometimes, and learn the drift of that verse in Ecclesiastes, 'that which is crooked cannot be made straight.' In England, different classes mingle easily: here, even after religion has its decided hold on a man, he remembers his little insulated sphere, and finds it hard to be cordial with those who are above him, or with those who are beneath him: not with those above him, the pride of the great produces a reaction in the lower order; not with those below him, for obvious reasons. To relieve myself from such painful inconsistencies, I find the best practical remedy is to be much in company with the most wretched, the diseased, the poor, the sick, and dying. These are thankful to hear the words of life. I have much comfort at times with the poor invalid soldiers in the hospital. About fifty attend, and I visit them twice, on Tuesday and Friday evenings. With respect to the sick—the miserable sick peo

ple in this truly miserable place—I mourn over myself and them ; I go rather with the hope of good to myself than to them. So rich is the mercy of God, and so precious the service of our master, some of the happiest moments I enjoy are in going to, or returning from, these unhappy creatures.”

Several disastrous events occurred in the year 1812. The printing office of the baptist mission at Serampore, fifteen miles from Calcutta, was burned on the 11th of March. There were in the house at the time of the fire two thousand reams of paper, and types in fifteen languages, all of which were destroyed. Nine editions of the New Testament, and five of the Old, in various Eastern languages, were in the progress of printing at the time, besides various other works of the missionaries. The loss was immense. Mr. Thomason went to Serampore as soon as he heard of the fire. “I could scarcely believe the report ; it was like a

blow on the head which stupifies. I flew to Serampore to witness the desolation. The scene was indeed affecting. The immense printing office, two hundred feet long and fifty broad, reduced to a mere shell. The yard covered with burnt quires of paper, the loss in which article was immense. Carey walked with me over the smoking ruins. The tears stood in his eyes. 'In one short evening,' said he, 'the labours of years are consumed. How unsearchable are the ways of God! I had lately brought some things to the utmost perfection of which they seemed capable, and contemplated the missionary establishment with, perhaps, too much self-gratulation. The Lord has laid me low, that I may look more simply to him.' Who could stand in such a place," he asks, "at such a time, with such a man, without feelings of sharp regret, and solemn exercise of mind. I saw the ground strewed with half consumed paper, on which, in the course of a very few months, the

words of life would have been printed. The metal under our feet amidst the ruins was melted into misshapen lumps—the sad remains of beautiful types consecrated to the service of the sanctuary. All was smiling and promising a few hours before—now all is vanished into smoke and converted into rubbish!—adding with self-application,—‘Return now to thy books, regard God in all thou doest. Learn Arabic with humility. Let God be exalted in all thy plans, and purposes, and labours; he can do without thee.’”

Dr. Marshman, in writing an account of the calamity to England, says, “Poor Mr. Thomason wept like a child on hearing of it. He begs us to make a minute statement of our loss, and says he will use all his interest in our behalf.”

Another affliction was the sickness and death of his friend, the Rev. Mr. Brown, who had laboured in Calcutta without compensation, and deserved the tribute which is inscribed on a mar-

ble in the church: "To the poor the gospel was preached in this church by the Rev. David Brown, during a period of twenty-five years." This was followed by the death of Henry Martyn, in Persia, in October, 1812. "Few," he exclaimed, "have reason to mourn individually as I have: with him I hoped to spend my days in mutual deliberation and united labour. Here in a short time he would have been fixed, and hence we neither of us would have wished to stir a foot. He has often said it to me. I fondly counted on his return full fraught with health and Arabic. On this his heart was set, though not for itself. It has pleased God to remove him to the rest for which he had been panting, and from which nothing but the love of his work here would willingly have detained him. With his presence in Calcutta, the Persian and Arabic versions would have proceeded with spirit; he was so eminently qualified with all needful endowments



for a good translator. The great Head of the church lives, that is our consolation. I have learnt more than ever what that Scripture means, 'Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.' "

"We are deeply wounded," are his words in another letter; "his walk was so grand, his labours so important, his attainments so rare! O how fondly we counted upon his future labours! how the heart leaped for joy at the thought of Martyn's successful career in Persia, and hoped-for return to Calcutta. Here he hoped to return and spend his days, having often said to us there was no spot in the world so dear to him as Calcutta; we responded with affection to his notes of love, and panted with eager desire to see him. Often have our petitions been offered up at our social meetings for his preservation and success. Once especially the conversation at table was wholly engrossed with Martyn, and the prayers which followed were unusually

fervent. The very next day we heard of the termination of his career.

“You can judge of the extent of my disappointment and depth of my sorrow. Here I had hoped to spend the remainder of my days with that honoured minister, participating his labours, administering to his comforts, and roused by his example. But it has pleased the great Head of the church to take him to himself—it hath pleased Him, and dare we repine? No event within my recollection has filled me with so much sorrow, and caused so hard a conflict between faith and unbelief, from which I have learnt much of the idolatry of the heart, and of its rebellious opposition to the will of God. We idolized this rare creature : so the Lord has removed him, and taught us more simple dependence upon himself. The experience has been bitter, the ultimate fruit I hope will be sweet. Our great Head remains, and He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. If He is

satisfied we may well be so ; who knows how He may bless us in our bereaved state ?

“ Where are all those zealous young men who assembled in your town-hall, and helped forward your Biblical associations ? O that they would take the map of India in their hands. O that the Lord would dispose their hearts to look upon this immense country with Christian tenderness and compassion.—The labourers must be disposed to cheerfulness—a melancholy turn of mind is highly unfavourable in India. The climate itself depresses more than you can conceive. In all your estimates of characters let cheerfulness be considered an essential requisite.”

From the time of Mr. Brown's death until the end of 1813, Mr. Thomason's labours were unusually great. Until that time he had no assistant in the church, and considering his duties to that congregation as first in importance, he did not neglect them for any thing else. Besides

these duties, he was engaged in revising the Arabic version of the Scriptures, and in conducting through the press Mr. Martyn's Hindoostanee New Testament. He executed, also, at the desire of the government, the office of examiner in Arabic, in the college at Fort William ; and as if this were not enough, he was preparing further work for himself by inviting the Church Missionary Society to place two missionaries in his house, whom he undertook to instruct gratuitously in oriental literature. But the project that, of all others, lay nearest his heart, was the establishment of native schools ; and, as a preparatory step, a school for schoolmasters.

Of the plan of native schoolmasters, Mr. Thomason said, " This school would be a noble establishment. I despair of seeing any great good done in a place where the objects of ignorance and vice are innumerable, until some such institution has been formed. But I fear it would

not suit the adventurous and grand and dashing spirit of the age. The good people of England would suppose that a free school containing 1000 children, must be tenfold more productive than one containing 24 children, not considering the great importance of having one schoolmaster, they would suppose the money almost wasted. Schoolmasters must be made here, not in England. Those in England expect more pay, and can bear less fatigue, and must be formed here after their arrival. Much is to be learned before they can labour here efficiently. The thing to be most earnestly prayed for is, that government would support this establishment. It would be a noble item of expenditure. The benefit would be distant, at present scarcely perceptible, but future generations would arise and call us blessed. This plan has been long in my mind. It is far from being new, but in this place the application of it to practice is very difficult, arising partly from

localities which it is not easy to explain to an European, and partly from the indolent spirit of the place, and partly from the great paucity of efficient labourers. The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; sure we are, that the good that is done upon earth, he doeth it, and when he acts, none can stay his hand."

In the year 1812, Messrs. Judson, Newell, Nott, Hall, and Rice sailed from the United States as missionaries to India. A few days after their arrival in Calcutta, an order of the British government was read to them, directing them to leave the country. Mr. and Mrs. Newell accordingly sailed for the isle of France, in the Indian ocean, where Mrs. Newell died soon after her arrival. Mr. and Mrs. Judson and Mr. Rice soon joined Mr. Newell.\*

\* The American S. S. Union have published the life of Mrs. Judson, prepared for that purpose by Rev. Mr. Knowles, in a volume of 266 pages; and the life of Mrs. Newell, in a volume of the same size.

These proceedings caused Mr. Thomason great pain, and it was a severe trial to him and the friends of religion everywhere to see these men, who had devoted their lives to the welfare of a nation of idolaters, driven by a Christian government from the land. Whilst the American missionaries were still at Bombay, the earl of Moira, the new governor-general of India, arrived in Calcutta. Mr. Thomason and his friends were consulting at the moment of his arrival what could be done to change the sentence of the missionaries. "Our new governor-general," he said, "is arrived. Hope is revived. His language will not, I hope, be altered by the climate of India. He comes with noble intentions and great promises. What he will do cannot be conjectured; but he is about to be put to a hard trial. The late governor having peremptorily ordered all the missionaries away who came from America, they went to Bombay. There a government order followed them,

commanding sir Evan Nepean to send them off by the first opportunity. Sir Evan is their friend, but cannot resist authority. Mr. Udney, Dr. Carey, and myself are about to prepare a memorial to the new government on the subject, entreating permission for the missionaries to reside quietly in the country. We should not have chosen so early and strong a test of lord Moira's principles, if we had been left to our own judgment. But the ship in which the dear missionaries are ordered away is on the point of sailing. If speedy exertion be not made, they will be gone. May it please God to touch the heart of the governor-general, and incline him to comply with our request ! They are good men, full of zeal, ripe for usefulness—the harvest great. The expense of their journeying already is enormous—what a reproach that a Christian government should turn them back, and sport with the best interests of its subjects !”



But nothing could be obtained favourable to the missionaries, and they departed, leaving with the governor of Bombay a vindication of their character and intentions.

In 1814 the governor-general requested Mr. Thomason to propose a plan for the education of the natives, a subject which was of the greatest importance to the country and to the progress of religion, for, as he observed, "If we would reform effectually, we must instruct, and if we would instruct effectually, we must have institutions in which instruction holds the principal place." He also appointed him to perform service statedly at Barrackpoor, his country residence, and as his chaplain to accompany him on the journey he was about to take through the provinces of his government.

"Public and private duties," he writes "increase upon me. Where there is too much burden, part must be neglected, and very much imperfectly sustained. I see

so many things undone, and so many things ill-done, I am continually sighing for help. Relief I trust is near. This important field of labour will not, I hope, be left unprovided with labourers. It seems strange that young men have not been more ready to follow up the work of God in India. Perhaps the danger of the sea and climate are overrated. They are not so formidable as timid people consider them. But even if they were, when we see them continually encountered in the pursuit of honour and wealth, it is somewhat reproachful that pious students of the ministry should be deterred. Last Thursday I finished my lectures on St. John ;—I have been four years and a half in going through that edifying gospel ; and I may add, with thankfulness to the great Head of the church, not without many cheering tokens of his presence. Our congregation on Thursday evening evidently improves. On Sunday evenings too we are well filled, in the mornings we

have a regular congregation. Whilst the power of religion is progressive among Europeans, it is a matter of great joy to see that the work prospers in different parts of the country. The Scriptures are in continual motion, in different languages and with increasing success. To God be the glory. It is surprising how all domestic arrangements on your side of the water and ours dwindle into insignificance. It seems a matter of unspeakable indifference whether our children are in town or country, in India or in England, or what becomes of them and ourselves, provided we are all at our posts, serving the Lord in our respective spheres, living to his glory, and labouring for his cause. Then all prospers. We sometimes feel however as if we should like to have all things our own way—many Martyns—a host of Corries—daily conversions.”

## CHAPTER IX.

IN the summer of 1814, Mr. Thomason left Calcutta in company with earl Moira, the governor-general, on his tour. As this was expected to occupy nearly a year, the length of the journey being upwards of two thousand miles, he felt great anxiety about undertaking it. But he left his church in the care of a faithful minister, and thought that he could not have a more favourable opportunity of attaining information to assist him in preparing his plan for the education of the people; he also thought he could by this means be more able to engage the governor's attention to the moral condition of the ignorant and depraved inhabitants, than he would be at home. "Whilst Mr. Robertson takes care of my church, I am proceeding on a new work, under very new circumstances. The governor's party is very large; near 500 boats at-

tended him. He is splendid and stately, and his march through the country will be more magnificent than that of any preceding governor. The opportunity of seeing the country, and conversing with every person of intelligence and piety may be highly important. I mean to keep the grand object in view, the formation and execution of school plans. Sabat, the translator, accompanies me; our Arabic version therefore continues, and the proof sheets follow us up the country. My public ministerial work will be one service on Sundays, in the family boat of the governor-general, to which the party will have access. Corrie [the principal European clergymen] has been again attacked with his old complaint. He wrote to me a fortnight ago, begging my advice as to his going home. I could not hesitate to recommend the measure; strongly as we shall feel and mourn, yet forasmuch as the work of Christ is the most blessed of all works, it is fit that he

should flee, that his precious life may be prolonged for future good. I expect we shall meet on the river; when we come to his widowed church at Agra, we shall find sorrow, where we looked for joy. Corrie goes, who is the leader, the pattern, the father. O, when shall we see more labourers arrive in our vineyard! Yet we rejoice in the Lord's presence, and believing that he acts in a manner to us invisible and inscrutable, we can look to him through the gloom, and go forward with hope. I felt much at parting with the dear people; the affection of many was called forth. On the last two Thursday evenings, I have been taking leave, conceiving that the important concern for us all is to see that we have the grace of God in truth, and walk consistently with such a profession, I spoke on the parable of the virgins for the former subject, on that of the talents for the latter, concluding on Sunday with a sermon on following peace and holiness. On these occa-

sions I have delivered my whole soul, and now looking back on my ministry, I mourn over its unprofitableness. O that the blessing of God may come down on Mr. Robertson, and prosper his ministry! Separate in body, I am still with him and his flock in spirit; if spared to return to my charge, may I come to it in more life, and love, and earnestness."

Shortly before setting out he sent his eldest son to England. "The bracing air of Europe, we hope, will do him good; how greatly shall I rejoice, if he should prove willing and qualified to follow his father to India, and labour here in the gospel. But this is with the Lord. I dare not plan; but blessed be God, I can pray. I cannot convey to you what his poor mother felt; my own pangs seem to have been forgotten in hers. O it was a bitter parting! However, it is now over, and we both acquiesce in the step as wise and proper. It is one of the greatest

parental duties to send him home—can a parent then hesitate?”

The first eight hundred miles of the tour was by water, most of the rest was overland. Mr. Thomason's letters will furnish the best history of his employments and feelings during the time.

“At Monghir I was asked to preach in the evening for the benefit of the station. A few invalids attended, and a band of eight or ten European residents. We were detained a week, the weather wet and gloomy, and all beginning to feel the effects of a very unwholesome spot. We were anchored in a low marshy place, at a distance from the hills. I can ill describe the vexation, and discontent, and complainings of almost all in the fleet. It was indeed a sufficiently dull week, where there were no resources. What a mercy to be relieved from the tedium and disgust to which we find so many a prey. Here we are in one little cabin, cheerful



and happy, and constantly employed. When we are engaged in our morning and evening readings, the heart overflows with thankfulness for the distinguished blessings God confers upon us, in having given us a love for his word, and a desire after a remembrance of his name. We sung together this morning the hymn ———, and could rejoice in the thought that the fountain is opened to us guilty polluted sinners. The defilement of sin is not more felt, because the glory of God is not more seen. One glimpse of his holy character will make us lie low in the dust. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee ; but fallen man is without God in the world ; how great is the blessing to have his authority in some measure restored, and his throne set up in the heart. I hear Mr. Robertson is not quite well, pray tell me the truth ; he must not be overworked. I am within call—whenever you say ‘it is time to come back,

the church wants you,' I shall apply for dismissal.

“ In ascending the Ganges, and visiting the towns and villages on its banks, we see the enormous population of degraded beings with our eyes. The first place of importance was Moorshedabad, the once famous metropolis of Bengal, an immense city, swarming with inhabitants, but exhibiting the sad marks of decayed greatness. Oh, it was an affecting sight to look around at the countless throngs, and observe moral, political, and religious degradation, without one cheering symptom of improvement. We have destroyed the political importance of the natives, stripped them of their power, and laid them prostrate, without giving them any thing in return. They possess neither learning, nor emulation, nor power. Every spring of action seems deadened ; they wallow in the filth of a senseless and impure religion, without any prospect of deliverance. You can conceive no-

thing more wretched than Hindoo towns and villages. Nothing like architecture, except in their temples ; the streets narrow and dirty, the houses inexpressibly mean, filled with inhabitants whose appearance is disgusting in the extreme. At Benares, I ventured to visit the shrine held so sacred. It was an oppressive sight. I hastened from the place, and thanked God for the gospel. If I do not return to my charge with more of a missionary spirit, it will be my own fault. To behold such a mass of putrefied matter, and not be concerned about providing the means of life and health, is criminal in the extreme. Blessed be God for some little zeal. Had I obtained nothing more than an increased sense of the importance of ministerial labour, I should be richly repaid."

But notwithstanding this proof of the necessity of instruction, Mr. Thomason was distressed to find that the governor

appeared to take little interest in providing the means.

At Cawnpore, which Henry Martyn had left to go to Arabia, the governor met one of the natives, of great wealth and rank, who was encamped on the bank of the Ganges. A bridge of boats was made across the river, and trains of elephants and rich presents were constantly passing from one party to the other. But another object filled more of the missionary's thoughts than all the splendour of that scene. "In these sandy plains I have been tracing again and again the days of Martyn. Close by me is the house that dear minister occupied, leading to which is the gloomy line of aloes spoken of by Mrs. Sherwood.—O for Martyn's humility and love (he afterwards wrote): those who knew him can bear testimony to the truth of his Christian walk. His standard of every duty was the highest, and his feelings of joy, sorrow, love, most intense;

whilst his conversation was always in heaven, the savour of his holy disposition was as ointment poured forth. Many parts of his experience can only be appreciated by those who enter deeply into the divine life. In proportion as we discern what is spiritual in its excellence and glory, we shall understand his lowly self-abasing reflections on what he observed within. He was transported by a glory, of which common Christians only obtain a glimpse. And O how is all explained, when we behold him entering his closet, and holding communion with God with such delight, such unwearied constant enjoyment! Wo unto us if we do not pray more, live more above the world, and deny ourselves more, and love Christ more. Are we not hoping to see him in a happier state? the Lord quicken us, and enable us to go forward: 'laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us.' "

Leaving Cawnpore, Mr. Thomason began what to him was a novel and strange mode of life; marching and living in tents. The party proceeded by easy stages twelve miles a day, rising by gun fire, when it was quite dark in the morning, they arrived at their ground a little after sunrise. "Conceive," as he says, describing his journey,—“an immense plain, on which are scattered thousands of villages, a few principal towns without variety, and a vast multitude of inhabitants: when you have seen one village or town, you have seen all; they are without any of those marks of opulence, civilization, or elegance which delight the English traveller. Those persons who are distinguished for their wealth are few, and they shun the presence of Europeans: their manners and their dress are similar to those of their inferiors: the effect of English superiority is of the most gloomy nature.”

Mr. Thomason was grieved to find that

the governor intended to continue his land-journey without stopping on the Lord's-day. As his chaplain, he felt it to be his duty to remind the governor of his obligation to keep that day holy. When he found that this had no effect, and that on Saturday the usual preparations were making to proceed on the next day, he remonstrated against it. The consequence was that he was ordered to leave the camp; but he was given to understand that if he would make an apology, the sentence would not be executed. Mr. Thomason could not apologize for doing what he believed to be his duty, and wrote to the governor, expressing his surprise at this order, but his readiness at the same time to comply with it; adding that he felt as strongly as ever the importance of the subject, and thought it the duty of a minister of religion to explain his views when the honour of God and interests of religion were concerned; but that he lamented, that any thing should have ap-

peared in the expression of his sentiments that was thought disrespectful. Upon receiving this note, the governor not only permitted him to remain, but for a time observed the day of rest.

Amongst the native troops who attended the earl on his journey were a few pious men who had been under the ministry of Mr. Corrie, at Calcutta. Mr. Thomason did not know them until they had been many weeks on the route, when they came to his tent to join in prayer and hear the Scriptures. He said, "even in this jungle, we could rejoice together in remembrance of the love of Christ. All the places (he added) where troops are usually stationed, are empty. There is nothing to amuse a traveller who does not hunt: however, I hope my time is not wholly lost; my little Hindoostanee church has lately received an accession by one of the converts from Agra, a pious humble Christian: we are now a little company, and spend many a happy hour together



over the Scriptures. With these beloved fellow-travellers, I am often solaced amidst the sickening frivolities of the camp. Since we left Hindostan, Sunday has not been observed as a day of rest; yet the governor halts to get ready for a tiger hunt. The kingdoms of this world will have their own pursuits and enjoyments, they are not those of the kingdom of Christ. The experience I have had of this will, I trust, be useful to me, and certainly, intercourse with native schools, and daily Hindoostanee preaching, have contributed much to enlarge my heart towards the perishing heathen. Corrie's fatherly attention to his flock was truly lovely. Nothing of an abiding nature can be done without love, that love which arises from Christian principles, and is kept up by close walking with God. I pray for more of it. By love God works with us, and by love we must work with others. Enoch's walk was a walk of love. Sometimes I try to examine, in

a practical way, this one word, love, and find it full of affecting truths. We know little about it. Humility, holiness, faith, hope, gratitude, all these, working in their degree, enlarge the contracted heart. In proportion to the intenseness of them, is the intenseness of our love. Where there is nothing of them, all that looks like love is selfish, depraved, earthly principle. I could prove this, and do so to myself every day. I see a vast quantity of rubbish, spurious love, animal warmth, sanguine self-complacency, self-righteous exertion, usurping the place of love, wearing its garb, talking its language. Is this wonderful, when there is so much pride? The first step in the ladder is humility. The Lord help us to gain it, and to go step by step, till we have got to the region of love.”

The governor having determined to stop some time at Agra, on his return home, Mr. Thomason obtained permission to leave the camp, and on the 6th of

March, 1815, arrived again at the Ganges, and took boat for Calcutta, where he arrived in May, after an absence of eleven months. In looking back upon this journey, Mr. Thomason remarked :—

“To have once taken the tour of the Bengal provinces, will be of great advantage in future operations. But there is nothing to tempt a second visit. To a feeling heart, the prospect of desolation is most distressing. The country affords much to gratify a naturalist and an antiquary ; but the pursuits of such persons require time and leisure. We only passed through, and saw the immense plains of Hindostan, in all their nakedness, the dire effects of those contentions which, for centuries, have depopulated the country, and covered its face with ruins. The ruins of Delhi are of surprising extent, reaching sixteen miles or more ; a sickening sight ! O it makes us sad to go through the awful scene of desolation. Mosques, temples, houses, all in ruins ;

piles of stones, broken pillars, domes, crumbling walls, covered the place. The imperial city presents nothing but the palace to give an idea of its greatness, and only appears grand from the magnificent wall with which it is surrounded, which still retains its beauty—being built of hard stone. Within is poverty and departed grandeur—all is going to decay. The famous hall of audience remains, built of marble, richly inlaid with stones sufficiently beautiful to realize all our expectations. We saw in the gardens the reigning prince, the poor representative of Timur's house. He was taking an airing, carried on a tonjoh (a chair borne on shoulders), preceded by a train of attendants bawling out his titles; he bowed to us, and appeared an intelligent man. The courts of the palace—the attendants—the offices of the servants—all gave an appearance of wretchedness one could not behold without a sigh.

“We had a pleasant parting with his

lordship ; he expressed his hope to me that something would result from the information we had collected on the journey, and that the hints which had been furnished would be gathered up and become productive of some beneficial plans of instruction, of the need of which he felt as much assured as ever. On the whole, I felt as if my connexion with this party had not been without its use. I have had frequent opportunities of suggesting what appeared advisable, and now part from them with a promise of communicating from time to time what may be interesting in my department. Having now seen all the principal stations and principal people in the parts, I return much better qualified to judge of many things than I could have been if I had continued in Calcutta. But schools have not yet been formed. The prospect indeed has become darker rather than otherwise. For want of the true rallying point, philanthropic benevolence sinks before the opposition

and indifference which oppose efficient plans of usefulness.”

During his absence Dr. Middleton, the new bishop of Calcutta, arrived, and his hopes were raised that he could gain his influence in promoting the moral welfare of the people.

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## CHAPTER X.

ONE of the first acts of Mr. Thomason after his return was, to use his influence for the establishment of an asylum for the female children of the English soldiers who died in India. These children were not only left in poverty, but exposed to the worst example, and were almost certainly brought to ruin. Mr. Thomason obtained subscriptions for the asylum, and a large house was built, in which seventy orphans were soon comfortably placed.

In 1816, the plan, which was so dear to him, of finding means for the educa

tion of the natives, was commenced by the natives themselves establishing a school and college. The object was that which he had so strongly recommended to the governor, the instruction of the people in the English, as well as in their own language and sciences. This college they maintain at their own expense, and the professors are Hindoos.

Mr. Thomason was also active in the formation of the School-book Society, the design of which was to furnish proper books for the instruction of the natives in the English language. In 1817 he became secretary of the Church Missionary Society in Calcutta, which greatly increased his labours. He established a monthly missionary prayer-meeting at his church, on the plan of the concerts for prayer on the first Monday of every month, which are now observed by Christians in all parts of the world. In addition to these duties, he translated the book of Psalms into Persian, not knowing,

probably, that Henry Martyn had done this at Shiraz; he revised the Old Testament in Arabic, and superintended the printing of the New Testament in Arabic and Persian. "I am filled with astonishment," he said, "at the opening scenes of usefulness: send us labourers—send us faithful, laborious labourers. Being obliged to undertake so many departments renders me sadly inefficient. Preaching, translating, writing letters, attending committees, all is feebly and unprofitably done."

In 1818, bishop Middleton engaged with great zeal in promoting the efforts to instruct the people. This animated Mr. Thomason to still more diligence.

"To the joy of many," he writes, "our bishop has come forward in behalf of the heathen. The public was moved—a school committee formed—a noble fund raised for school purposes! What could the heart desire more? We are not straitened for means or for patronage, we want



only instruments. As a member of the school committee, I have felt it my duty to rise to the great occasion, and have laid my shoulders to the work, and have for some time past been busily employed in learning the Bengalee language, organizing schools, examining classes, looking out for teachers. The bishop's chaplain is the only one who takes an active part in our committee. He is in fact the secretary ; but as he always travels with the bishop, he leaves me to act for him as secretary to the diocesan committee ; and thus I have for months together the concerns of the society for promoting Christian knowledge upon my hands. Now that they have come publicly forward in the cause of the heathen, I rejoice, and feel it an honour to serve them. By throwing in all my little influence, and using all my exertion for them, I am enabled to help forward a mighty instrument of good ; and truly it is a matter of rejoicing that the great and gay amongst us have been

forward to give their silver and gold at the call of the bishop.”

The next employment of Mr. Thomason was to revise the translation of the Old Testament into Hindoostanee, which Henry Martyn had left in an unfinished state. About this time the bishop proposed the establishment of a college at Calcutta, for the education of missionaries. This was carried into effect, and the institution is called Bishop's college. Its principal objects are to prepare native and other Christian youth to be preachers and schoolmasters, to teach useful knowledge to the Hindoos and Mohammedans, and to translate the Bible and tracts. The government now made a grant of nearly fifteen hundred dollars yearly to the orphan asylum.

Bishop Middleton died in July, 1822, and bishop Heber succeeded him in the next year. On the arrival of the latter, Mr. Thomason was appointed as a minister in the bishop's church, but continuing

to preach in the mission church once a week.

In 1825 the health of Mrs. Thomason had become so weak, that the only hope of her recovery was in her leaving the climate. Her husband felt compelled to take her to England on this account, and having seen a minister settled in his place in whom he had great confidence, he prepared for his departure. Before he left Calcutta he received a long letter from members of the congregation whom he had faithfully served for fifteen years, thanking him for his labours, and mentioning many sermons in particular, which they remembered as having been instrumental in doing good. One of these, which had been preached on new-year's day, ten years before his departure, they quoted in the letter, and it may be profitable for the readers of this book to have part of the letter copied, not only as containing solemn thoughts for their reflection, but as an example of the attention

that should be paid to sermons and all other instruction. The letter said:—

“We shall in this place advert more particularly to one of your affectionate addresses to the old church congregation, delivered on new-year’s day, 1816, as being quite suitable to our present purpose, and to the avowed object of this address. The text was taken from the 4th chapter of Amos, and the 12th verse, ‘Prepare to meet thy God.’ You said, ‘My dear brethren, we have often met together in this house: the years roll round, and life sinks apace; our connexion together as minister and people has subsisted now more than seven years; I feel my own heart deeply impressed with the importance of the relation which unites us, and hope you will bear with me in saying this, on an occasion when, by the providence of God, we are assembled to consider how we may best improve the year which this day opens upon us. Can we better improve it, than by carrying

our thoughts forward to that great day when we shall meet together at the bar of judgment, when minister and people shall meet their God? The thought of this meeting, which we are quite sure must take place, ought to lead us all to inquire into the preparation we have made for it. I say, we are quite sure of it, we cannot get rid of the thought if we would. Every day hastens forward that solemn event. It will be a meeting without any disguise on either side—a meeting in which we shall be perfectly known to God and to each other—a meeting in which every soul will be deeply interested, and unless we are prepared for it, it will be a meeting of unutterable anguish. Two questions I would propose for present consideration: First, with what feelings shall we meet each other on that day? Secondly, with what feelings shall we meet God? Again, ‘Many a precious hour of our lives has been spent in this place; many a precious passage has been

brought before us out of the word of God : promises, warnings, exhortations, threatenings, precepts, exhortations, have been the subject of our meditations. Some of your ministers, dear and honoured servants of God, have been removed by death : others have laboured amongst you, and are now absent at their respective posts. Inroads have been made in the congregation by death, and now we, who are spared to consider the lapse of years, should consider ourselves called upon to serious self-examination, and faithful dealing with ourselves.

““ Are there not many who must testify, if they would speak the truth, that they have received no profit ; as ignorant of divine things, as much strangers to the power, as much in bondage to sin and the world as they were? Surely, your meeting with your ministers must be a painful one. They will be a swift witness against you in that day, if you die in your present condition. Are there not others who

have declined from the ways of God, who neither have the comfort they once enjoyed, nor do they manifest the same fruitfulness? I am sure there is a marked difference in their attendance at the house of God. They used to attend both on Sundays and week days. Now they only come on Sundays, and very often but once on that blessed day.' ”

Among the services which his congregation remembered with gratitude, they mentioned the following:—“On your first arrival amongst us, you commenced a round of pastoral visits to the families of many of the old church congregation. These parochial visits led to the adoption of social worship amongst families where such a practice had not been observed before, whilst they added fresh fervour and earnestness amongst those with whom family worship had been already established. And we have heard that your first visit of this kind to one of your old

church congregation and his family,—on an occasion when you selected, for the meditation of the evening, the fourth chapter of St. John's gospel, wherein is recorded the story of the woman of Samaria coming to Jacob's well, to draw water, and the conference she had with our Saviour,—has been remembered with thankfulness in that family to this day.

“We cannot omit noticing another branch of your early labours on your first arrival in Calcutta. We allude to your catechetical lectures to the younger part of your flock, on a Saturday evening. Numbers of your juvenile disciples (most of whom have now grown to years of discretion) have profited by your instructions to them, and through Divine grace the good seed sown has not been unproductive, but brought forth fruit unto repentance and to a godly life; some a hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty. You have been a foster-father to them,



and they duly appreciate your tender solicitude towards their spiritual welfare and eternal interests.”

In the conclusion of the letter his people said :—“ And now, beloved and dear sir, we bid you an affectionate farewell a farewell which is poignantly felt in the very inmost recesses of our hearts. In the year 1808 you came to us, and now in this year 1826, you are about to depart from us! May he who ‘manages the seas’ conduct the *Thomas Grenville* with safety to her destined haven, and may yourself and your dear wife, who has verily been a *Dorcas* amongst us, full of good works and alms-deeds which she has done, be conveyed speedily into the bosom of your revered mother, and all near and dear to you in your native land. Should you again come back to us (which God grant that you may) how many will you not miss! Many who have walked with you in the house of God, and taken sweet counsel together, will have gone

before us to the heavenly Jerusalem, where ministers and people will one day all surround the throne of Him that sitteth upon the throne and of the Lamb for ever. Should it be otherwise, we entreat your prayers for us, that 'our conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether you come and see us, or else be absent, you may hear of our affairs, that we stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together in the faith of the gospel.' "

The congregation also lost a valuable friend in parting with Mrs. Thomason. She was kind and affectionate to all, and spent much time in works of benevolence. She took great interest in the orphan asylum, and had the principal charge of the management of the house, and it was remarked that no institution existed anywhere in which the arrangements were more excellent for the comfort and welfare, both temporal and spiritual, of the inmates.

## CHAPTER XI.

MR. THOMASON left Calcutta with his wife in February, 1826, but they had not been many weeks at sea before her illness increased so much, that it was evident she could not reach her home. She died in the vessel, and was buried in the sea.

Three days before her death she expressed to her husband a hope that God would spare her, that she might continue to be a comfort to her husband, and to bring up her children: but when Mr. Thomason said, "But what if it should please him to dispose otherwise?" she answered, "Then his will be done!" Before she was confined to bed she was fond of reading hymns aloud. Reading the hymn beginning—

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home,

she was very much affected ; but when she came to this verse,—

In every scene of life and death  
Thy promise is our trust,  
And this shall be our children's song,  
When we are cold in dust,

she was overcome. She thought of the children she was going to leave behind her. Who can describe the love of a mother? Who of the readers of this book feel that they have loved and honoured their mothers as they ought? Who are following their pious advice, and seeking the blessing of God?\* She became so low that it was difficult to converse. All that her husband could do was to read to her short portions of Scripture, and pray with her. When asked if the Saviour comforted her, she answered, "He does." Her countenance showed

\* If any reader wishes to see the tenderness of a mother illustrated, and the dreadful nature and consequences of disobedience and want of affection shown, let him read "The Only Son," published by the Am. S. S. Union.

that she spent much time in earnest prayer. "On Saturday evening," said Mr. Thomason, writing to his son in India, "her precious remains were committed to the deep. The evening was still, and all was solemn ; the service was read by dear S——, whose brotherly tenderness and sympathy I cannot adequately describe. Being myself overwhelmed by the bereavement, I was unable to perform that last service ; but I saw from a distance the coffin dropped into the sea, and heard the words, 'We commit her body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body (when the sea shall give up her dead), and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who at his coming shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.' O, my beloved boy, I cannot tell you the consolation afforded by that hope. I earnestly

trust it will be as a healing balm to your own heart.”

On his arrival in England, Mr. Thomason found his mother still living, and she had the happiness of seeing her son, from whom she had been separated eighteen years. After visiting his friends, Mr. Thomason, finding that he might be usefully employed in Cheltenham, took charge of a church there. All his children were once more collected around him ; his son having also returned from India. Whilst at Cheltenham, he was active in his efforts to promote the interests of the people of India. He held a monthly meeting in aid of the missionary society, and was engaged in other ways in endeavouring to spread the gospel through the whole world

But he found that he could not do as much good in this way as by living among the heathen themselves, and felt it to be his duty to return to Calcutta. It was, indeed, a severe trial to leave his moth

and friends once more, and probably never to see them again, and to take his children from the comforts and advantages of home ; but he knew he must not let such feelings prevent him from doing his duty, and accordingly offered himself, in 1828, to be sent to his former station. As he observed, "I clearly see the path of duty. If God be our God, he can and will make up every loss. I desire to make him my dwelling-place, and to expect all happiness and strength from him." He paid a visit to Cambridge, the scene of so many interesting events in his life, and a person who was in the university at the time has given the following account of it.

"During Mr. Thomason's last visit to Cambridge, about twenty under-graduates were invited to join a farewell party to him at the Rev. H. Farish's rooms. After breakfast he spent an hour in giving us a view of the preparatory studies, the duties, privations, and joys of a chaplain and of a missionary in India. Most of us, I be-

lieve, must date any distinct ideas we may have on the subject from that conversation. His graphic views of the necessities of India—his statements from experience of the blessedness of the work, kindled a missionary flame in many; whilst his solemn warnings against secularity of motive, and unadvised hastiness in deciding, were well fitted to damp any thing of mere animal fervour, or temporary excitement.

“When about to part, the Rev. W B—— took his hand and said, ‘Christian brother, we bid you God speed,’ and gave him a parting blessing. Mr. T. shook each of us by the hand, and said, ‘I know not your faces, but I shall be glad to see you in India; or, if not in India, I shall hope to meet and recognise all of you in that great day.’

“Few of us will forget his countenance at the close of our meeting. Two of the party have since gone to India as chaplains; but they did not see Mr. Thomason”



He left England in the summer of 1828, two years after his arrival there, taking with him a wife whom he married there. After a passage of about four months, he reached Calcutta.

But soon after his arrival, he began to suffer from the dropsy. He appeared to be cured of this disease, but was reduced so low by the remedies that it was necessary for him to take a voyage to recover his strength. He accordingly sailed for Mauritius, in the isle of France. The use of sickness and suffering to a Christian may be seen by reading Mr. Thomason's expressions at this time. They are in a letter to his mother written from the ship in which he was sailing from Calcutta.

“Through these painful months I have been much exercised in mind ; and when in the near prospect of eternity, could at no time rise to any great joy. My soul, through the mercy of God, could cast itself upon the Saviour, and there repose. But oh ! how in the retrospect of my

past life, did I see cause to weep ; and in what an affecting manner were the sins of my youth and more advanced age set before me ! How was I shocked at the foolish chattering, and the defiled superficial statements with which the deep things of God had been handled ! Very great and glorious they then appeared to me, and I pray that the impression may be deep and permanent. I seemed to have heard of God only with the hearing of the ear, and now that mine eye saw him more nearly, I abhorred myself. During this whole season of suffering, great was the mercy of God to me. The attendance of my wife and children was most touching ; and the keen solicitude expressed by the members of the congregation was soothing to the heart. Though I felt myself to be utterly unworthy of their love, yet I could not but consider it as an evidence that my labour had not been altogether vain. I could appeal to the heart-searching God as to the sincerity

of my heart, in desiring rather to be taken away at once, than to go on in the same superficial, unprofitable way I had hitherto done. If it please him to restore me to work, I pray that the fruit of this visitation may appear. Little did I think when I last wrote from this neighbourhood, that I should so soon be compelled to retrace my steps. It seemed on reaching the sand-heads, and hearing of the state of things, that I had come back to Calcutta in the very moment of time, that nothing could be more seasonable, nothing more indicative of providential guidance; that I was, in short, just the person that was wanted to fill up the gap. Thou blind fool, said God, go back again, and know that my work wants you not. So I interpret the providence by which I am sent back from the place to which my heart had clung. God will do his work with hallowed instruments. I pray that he may sanctify and make me meet for his work, and feel that he is righteous in

all his ways, and holy in all his works. In the retirement of this cabin, I trust the Lord will deepen his work in my heart.”

The voyage lasted nine weeks, and appeared to be of service. From the pen of Mrs. Thomason we have this narrative of his employment and state of mind during that time :—“ He read twice over the Harmony of the Gospels, which, as he intently perused, he frequently said, ‘I have been feasting on the bread of life.’ He appeared sometimes to be absent from all earthly scenes ; so elevated was his soul with meditation on the boundless love of God in Christ, which was heightened by a deep sense of his own vileness : indeed, this characteristic much increased as he ripened for glory : he lamented his great defect in every relative duty, in his ministerial office especially ; and in deep humility of heart used to break out in the publican’s prayer, and frequently said, ‘I cast myself on the boundless mercy of God. I throw my

self at my Saviour's feet; if I perish, I perish there.'

“He was very earnest in his petitions at the throne of grace for the spiritual welfare of India, for the coming of Christ's kingdom, and the fulfilment of those prophecies relating to it. He left an affectionate farewell to those most dear to him, in the following words,—‘To my dearest mother, give my most affectionate love, and may her last days be her best days. To my very dear Mr. Simeon say, I feel unworthy of the great love he has at all times honoured me with. O may his bow abide in strength, and may he be, if possible, still more useful in his age.’”

They landed at Mauritius on the 7th of June, 1829, on which day he entered the fifty-sixth year of his life. From that time he became worse. “On Saturday morning, the 20th,” says his wife, “he requested me to read the appointed psalms for the morning (as was my frequent custom), the first of which being the

102d, he said, 'How descriptive of my case.' On Sunday he had a very suffering day, but his mind was composed, he was quite sensible his end was approaching, and his frequent prayer was for patience : yet indeed he was an example of patient suffering : towards the evening I perceived evident signs of approaching dissolution, and therefore requested a Christian friend to be with me at the closing scene ; he can bear witness with myself, to the firm faith and strong hope which disarmed death of its sting, and shed a holy quiet and peace around.

“Many sweet expressions we heard from his dying lips, in the midst of severe bodily agony, such as the following : ‘This is a dark valley, but there’s light at the end.’ ‘Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.’ ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ ‘Lord give me patience, may patience have its perfect work.’ ‘When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the king-

dom of heaven to all believers.' About three o'clock in the morning, he inquired what time it was, and when told, he replied, 'I thought I should have been far away before this.' " The last words that he uttered were in reply to his wife, who, observing that his last moment was near, said, "The Lord is coming quickly," when he said, "I hope so." He died on the 21st of June.

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AND now that my young reader has finished the book, I would ask, has it done you any good? Do you love the character of Mr. Thomason? Do you love him because he was a Christian? If so, why do you not love Christ, who was the author of all that was good or lovely in him, and therefore ought to be loved most?

Do you think that if you were very ill, you would be glad to be told that you

were about to die? Would you be willing to say, "I hope so?" Do you think you would go to Christ if you did die?

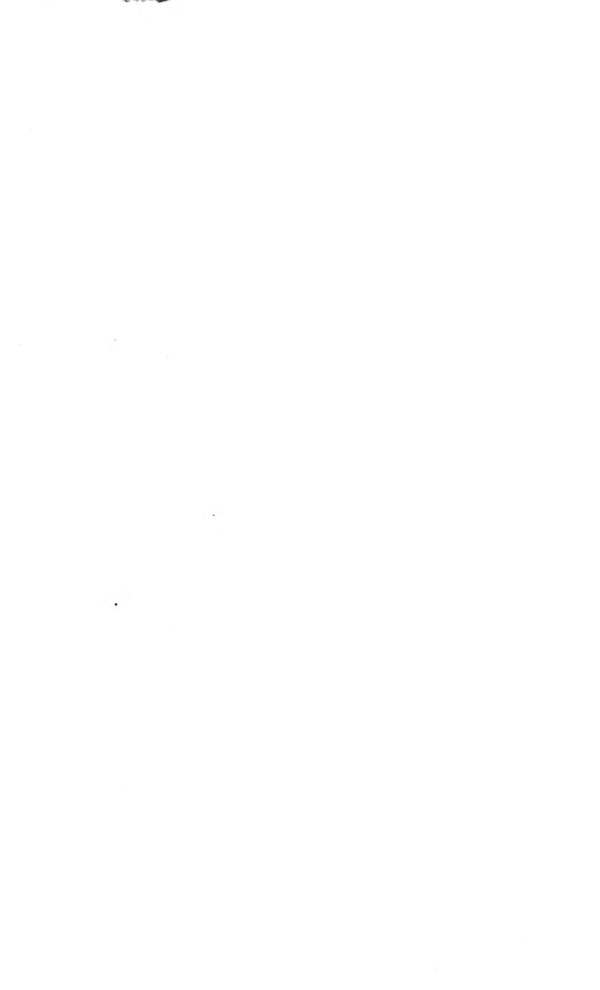
These are solemn questions, and God knows how you do, or ought to, answer them in truth. Mr. Thomason began to serve God in his childhood. Before he was nine years old he loved prayer better than amusement, and desired that others should be as happy as himself. With these feelings he grew up, and the Lord enabled him to be useful to many souls, and although he is now dead, he may be useful to your souls by this life that you have read. Pray to God that it may be so! May he grant your prayer, for Jesus' sake.

**THE END**







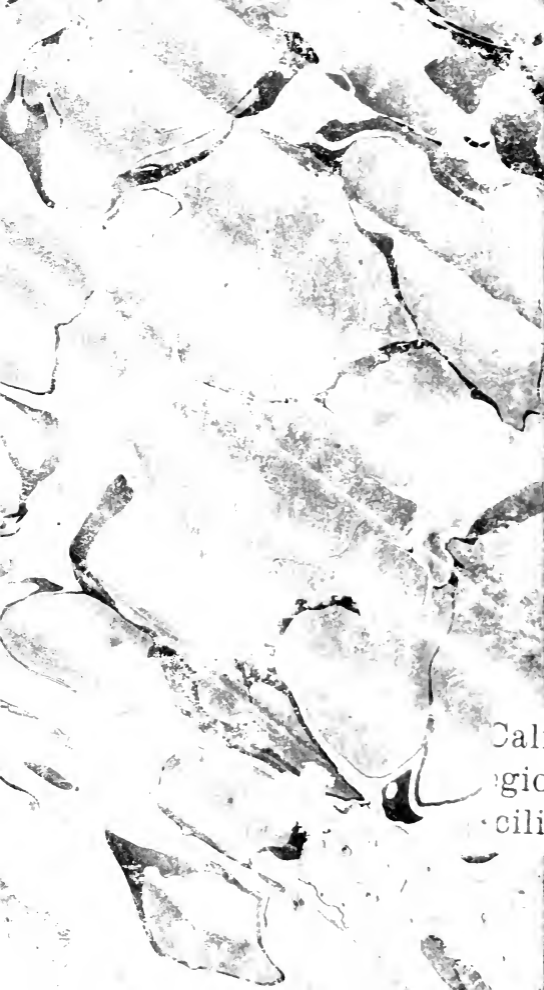












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