

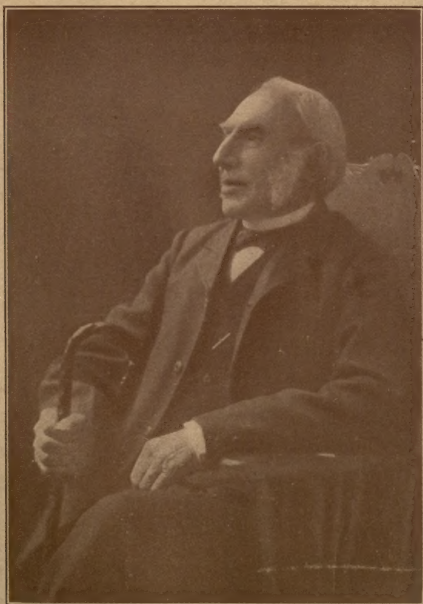
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THOMAS BONE THE SAILORS' FRIEND



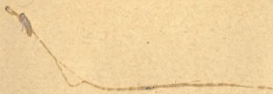
*Yours in Service
Thomas Bone*

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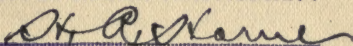
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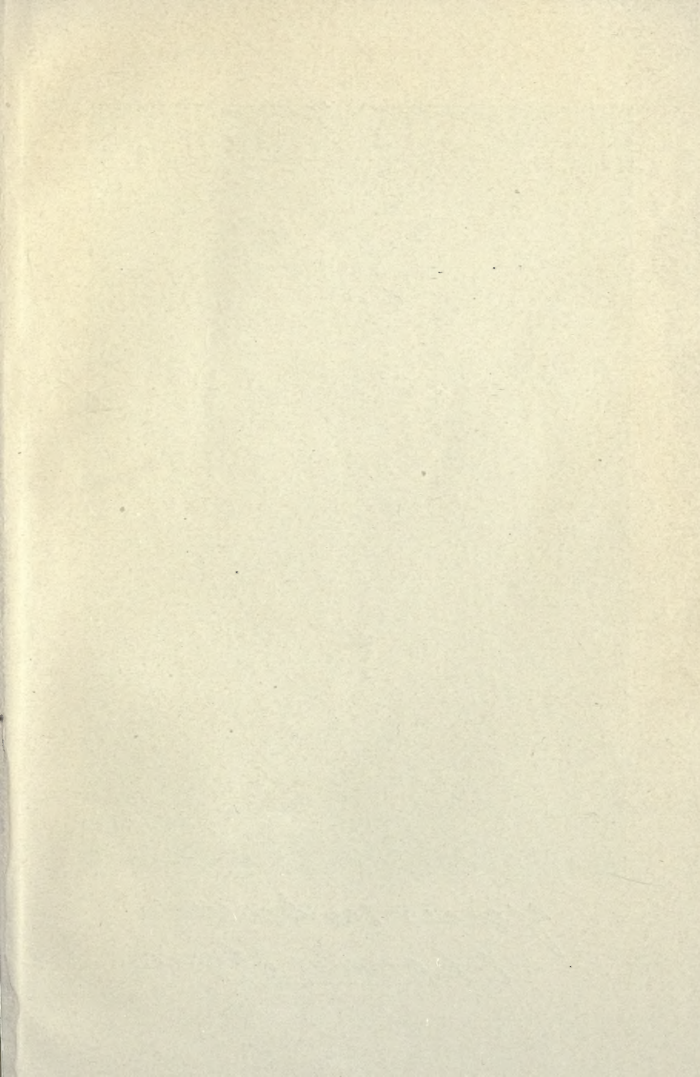
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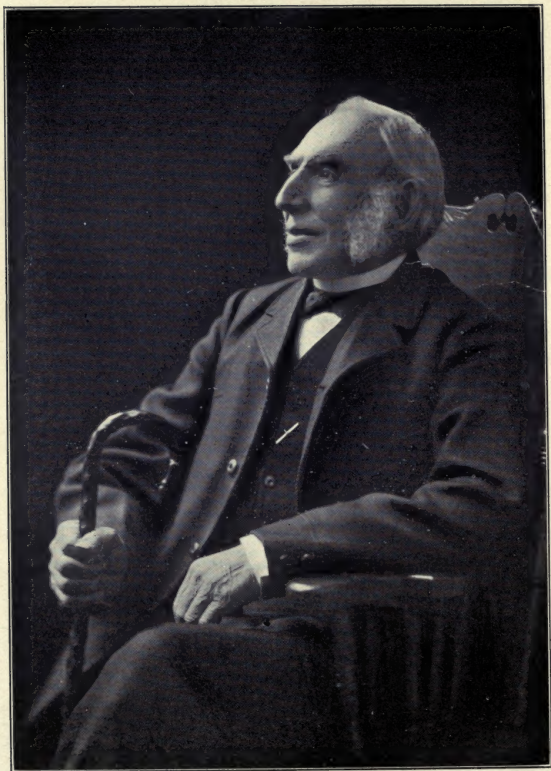


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THOMAS BONE:

THE SAILORS' FRIEND





Yours in Service
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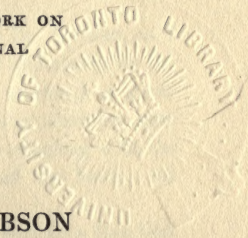
THOMAS BONE:

THE SAILORS' FRIEND

THE STORY OF HIS WORK ON
THE WELAND CANAL

BY

REV. JESSE GIBSON



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TORONTO
THE UPPER CANADA TRACT SOCIETY
102 YONGE STREET

PREFACE

At the funeral of the sainted Dr. Gordon, as I have read, there passed tearfully and slowly by the casket all through that winter morning a great multitude. Strange faces in large numbers were there, the poor and meanly-clad mingling with the wealthiest and most cultured of the land. All were deeply moved.

In that motley concourse was noticed a face that told plainly of "a brand plucked from the burning." This man placed a single rose upon the casket. Suspecting a story, a reporter approached him and asked: "What was he to you?" With choking voice he said: "He was everything to me. When I was down, and out, through sin, lying by the roadside stripped and wounded and half dead, and others passed me by, Dr. Gordon was the Good Samaritan who had compassion, who bound up my wounds, and set me on my feet again. All that I have for time and eternity I owe to him."

When I, myself, was a young, careless, godless sailor, not the least important of the forces which led to my conversion were the earnest words and pointed tracts of Thomas Bone, the Sailors' Mis-

sionary. Long afterwards I had the great privilege of being his pastor for about seven years. For some thirty years he showed to me the loving, prayerful interest that Paul the aged showed to Timothy, and always spoke of me as "his son in the faith." His faithful, untiring, tactful efforts to win the lost made him, next to C. H. Spurgeon, the greatest human influence that ever entered my life, and enabled me to see that the supreme purpose of the minister's life is "that by all means he might save some."

This imperfect sketch of my departed friend, instead of a flower upon the casket, I give to the world as an humble tribute to the man who did so much to make my life what it is. I believe that the reading of these pages, especially the extracts from Father Bone's reports and letters, will be helpful to ministers, Sabbath-school teachers, and Christian workers the world over. It will stimulate them and teach them the noble art of soul-winning, besides furnishing them with scores of pointed illustrations, that will be feathers for their arrows, or windows to light up their temple of discourse. We trust that it will also enable them to see the great work the Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society is doing among the sailors, lumbermen, and others, all over our country.

I wish gratefully to acknowledge my obligation to the Upper Canada Tract Society for material placed at my disposal; to the members of Mr. Bone's family and personal friends of his in different parts of the Province for information freely furnished; and especially to the Rev. H. R. Horne, B.A., LL.B., Secretary of the Tract Society, and W. A. Douglass, Esq., B.A., for valuable assistance in the final preparation of the manuscript for this book.

JESSE GIBSON.

TORONTO, *October*, 1908.

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THE SAILORS' FRIEND

THOMAS BONE

I

THE SAILORS' FRIEND

THERE was but one Thomas Bone. All who knew him regarded him as a man by himself. A stranger in his company for the first time felt, here is a man out of the ordinary class. Like one charged with electricity, you could not touch him without being conscious that there was a subtle power going forth from him. His shining face, his genial manner, his twinkling eye, his quaint sayings, at once attracted the attention, and made an impression impossible to forget.

I well remember my first meeting with him. I was at the time a sailor on the Lakes. A number of us were together at one of the locks on the old Welland Canal, and language, which to say the least was not intended for polite ears, was freely indulged in, when a man with a twinkle in his eye, and a bag of books on his back, joined us. "Well, boys," he enquired, looking around from face to face, "is this a prayer meeting, or a swear meet-

ing? I guess if it were a prayer meeting not so many would be taking part. Let me remind you of one thing, however. There is a Reporter listening, and taking down what you have been saying, and some day it will all be laid before you."

Looking around, we said we did not see any one.

"True," said he, "but He hears and sees you, for it is written: 'Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment.' 'By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.' How do you think your words will read then? When I was a boy I used to write with milk on paper. At the time it was written you could not see anything, but when it was brought to the fire the writing became plain. So what you are saying now may soon be forgotten, as though written with invisible ink. But the record is not lost. 'God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.'"

He then went on to tell us that swear-words are really prayer-words, and pointed out how thoughtlessly they are used.

"Did you ever think, Jack, that when you swear and ask God to damn your soul, or that of some one else, you are really praying? What if God did answer the awful prayer? Man! don't you know

that it is a cowardly thing to swear? You would not dare to go into a graveyard all alone on a dark night and call upon God to damn your soul as you have been doing just now."

He then told us of Jesus and His power to save and to keep, and giving away some of his tracts, passed on to another vessel. I can assure the reader that there was no more swearing that day, and in the mind of one young man at least, there was sown seed that one day was to bring forth fruit.

On the canal Father Bone was a familiar figure. Few men were better known among the sailors, and none better loved. He had remarkable qualifications for the work to which he devoted his life. Possessing tact to an unusual degree, he was able to succeed where another would have failed. He was also endowed with a quick mind and a keen sense of humour, and his readiness at repartee gave him control of many a trying situation. It was his knowledge of the Bible, however, and the atmosphere of love which he carried with him, that most fully equipped him for service, and made him the successful soul-winner he was. Every incident in the Bible seemed to be at his command, and he was able to use Scripture with telling effect. Again and again has the Truth, in the form of a text aptly quoted, gone like a barbed arrow straight to the

heart, and months, or perhaps years, afterwards, men have written to tell how it awakened them, and finally brought them to the full knowledge of salvation.

Not alone on the canal was he known and loved, but also in the larger towns and cities of the Province, where he was an annual visitor. In churches and Sabbath-schools of all denominations he was always welcome. The children loved him, and listened eagerly to his thrilling story, and teachers and ministers took up their work with renewed zeal as they saw how this aged worker packed his days full of loving service for his Master, and seized opportunities which most men would never have noticed. A thorough optimist, he carried sunshine wherever he went. It was a benediction to have him enter one's house, and the best homes all over the Province felt honoured when he became their guest. He will be missed, not only by the sailors, but by many others, whose lives he brightened, and whose hearts he encouraged, as he went from place to place telling of his work on the canal.

Thomas Bone ministered to a moving, floating parish, and he had ever to be on the alert so as to make the most of his opportunities. For example, early in the morning he would go to the telephone at St. Catharines to find out the movements of vessels. Perhaps he would learn that a "down

vessel" had just passed Welland, and by experience would know that by taking a street car he could meet her at Lock 25. Consequently, when the vessel tied up at the brow of the mountain he would step on board. How long he would remain would depend on circumstances,—the number of men accessible, or the number and position of the boats on the canal that day. He might gather a group of deck-hands around him, and for a few minutes speak to them of the great importance of the things concerning the soul, or perhaps he would climb to the bridge, and sitting beside the captain, would watch for an opportunity to speak the word he needed. On a busy day the vessel would not go far before she would meet another coming up, which of course he would board. Sometimes after visiting a boat he would walk back a few locks and meet another vessel which was following. During a lull in the day he would take the opportunity of conversing with the lock-tenders and other employees on the canal, distributing literature as occasion arose.

He could interest a group of men in a remarkable way, but the talk to the group would only be a preliminary skirmish. The real work of his visit would begin perhaps an hour later, when, in some quiet corner he would engage in earnest conversation with one of the group. Possibly he had found

a Christian who needed counsel and encouragement. Perhaps he had met some former enquirer who needed further instruction, or it may be that a sinful heart had been touched. In any case he was ready. He always carried a little book in which the names of those whom he was seeking to help were entered and daily brought before God in prayer.

Neither officers nor men were overlooked. Sometimes the Missionary would meet the captain in his cabin, or dine at his table. At another time he would be found seated beside the engineer or one of the firemen down below. To all alike he was Christ's ambassador. In visiting a ship he was usually made welcome. Nearly every sailor had heard of him. Many, both officers and men, had conversed with him, and not a few had pleasant recollections of his former visits. Here and there was an avowed Christian to whom his visits were an inspiration and a delight. Yet, without courage, resourcefulness, and tact no man could have succeeded in this field. Mr. Bone came in contact with every degree of intelligence and every shade of character. It is not a pleasant thing to face wicked men, when the mask of conventional propriety is thrown aside, and amongst some of the "lewd fellows of the baser sort," who sail the Lakes, wickedness is naked and unashamed. To

attempt to bully the reckless sinner would be as fatal as to blench before him. Nothing but courage, mixed with courtesy, will meet the needs of such a situation. We can pay Mr. Bone no finer tribute than to say that he proved equal to every demand.

Not every sailor can be talked to, but Mr. Bone had other means of reaching his parishioners. Strapped over his shoulder he invariably carried a capacious leather bag filled with literature; fresh, clean, racy, pointed tracts, booklets, papers, and magazines. Copies of the Bible and New Testament, especially the Marked Testament, were always carried, and these, with the other literature, were sold or given away. In addition to books and papers, he carried a supply of comfort bags, made by friends of the society. Rolled up they looked like large woollen wallets; opened they revealed pockets filled with needles, buttons, thread, yarn, and such things. No bag was complete without a New Testament, and frequently a letter from the donor was added. By these means he often gained the confidence and good will of men whom it otherwise would have been difficult to reach, and by means of messages in these bags the Truth often reached the hearts of the men.

He had to be ready for every kind of greeting.

One day a captain saluted him as he came on board, carrying his satchel,—

“What is this you have? Medicines, I suppose.”

“Yes,” he replied; “of the very best kind. I don’t deal in skin diseases, but chiefly in those of the heart.”

“Well, that’s what I need, for my heart troubles me.”

“Then in the fourteenth of John and the first verse you will find the remedy, ‘Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me.’”

“Ah,” he replied, “that is not the kind of trouble I mean. Mine is anxiety. Have you any cure for that?”

“Yes, you will find it in the sixth of Matthew, thirty-first and thirty-third verses. ‘Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.’ They are divine and infallible prescriptions. Try them and know their value.”

Sometimes he himself proposed the first question. Approaching one of the sailors who handle the “snubbing” lines on the shore of the canal, he asked:

“Jack, how many birthdays have you got in a year?”

“Birthdays?” said the sailor in a puzzled manner. “Why, one to be sure.”

“Well, I have two,” said Mr. Bone, “and our preacher says that a man who has not two birthdays will have two death-days. I was born naturally on such a date, and spiritually on such a date. Jack, have you been born again?” Tenderly and lovingly he pressed home the necessity of the new birth.

His work was not without its humorous side. Among the new men there were always some who sought a little amusement at his expense, but they reckoned without their host. His kindly manner never changed. The smile never left his face. There was no venom in the retort, but it seldom failed to silence the interrupter. The laugh raised at his expense made it quite certain that no second attempt would be made.

Seeing him approaching one day, one of a group of sailors announced his intention of having some fun. He stepped forward and removed his hat, revealing a perfectly smooth crown, and asked:

“Can you tell me why my head is so bald, while all my companions have plenty of hair?”

“I don't know,” was the smiling reply, “unless the reason given me the other day by a farmer

would apply, that an empty barn is not worth shingling."

Sometimes the attempts were made with the object of belittling his work and destroying his influence. When earnestly engaged on one occasion in warning a small group of the consequences of sin, a scoffer remarked—"You surely don't believe in hell, do you?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I certainly do. The Bible warns us of hell, and tells us a way of escape."

"But, don't you know that the bottom was knocked out of hell long ago?"

"Don't *you* know," was the ready reply, "that it never had a bottom? It is the bottomless pit."

He was particularly gifted in dealing with men personally. When he got into close quarters with a man, it was useless to try to evade him or to divert him from his purpose. One day in conversation with an officer on one of the boats he was pressing home the importance of accepting Christ. The officer thought it would be a relief to change the subject, so he started on that ever-fruitful theme of church divisions.

"By the way, Mr. Bone," he said, "what church do you belong to?"

"Why, to the first church," was the reply, "to the general assembly and church of the first born."

“ But what section of the church do you belong to? ”

“ Oh, to the high church, the church made up of those whose names are written in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life; there is none higher.”

“ But I don't mean that. I mean what is your religious persuasion? ”

This was his chance. Quick as a flash he replied—“ I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, not things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord.’ That is my persuasion, is it yours? ” The conversation continued without further interruption.

The outstanding feature of his character was his intense love for souls. This was the all-consuming passion of his life. He found his highest joy, to use his own expression, in “ hunting for heirs.” Many a time has he likened himself to a “ Shepherd's dog,” seeking for lost sheep. Those who were familiar with that bent form, ever on the “ dog-trot,” with his bag of books and tracts, up and down the canal, through the market on market-days, into the prison, the House of Refuge, the hospital of suffering, from house to house, tiring not, resting not, till he had won the object of

his pursuit, will recognise the aptness of the figure. He seemed to live for a single end—the glory of God in the salvation of souls, and to pursue that end with all the ardour and enthusiasm with which the miner seeks gold, the merchant a fortune, the politician an office. This man, in a sense, knew nothing else, thought of nothing else, prayed for nothing else, but this one object. This “one thing I do” was the motto of his life.

“It is the truest test of one’s devotion to his work,” says one, “whether he is reluctant to lay it down when the hour comes for dining and sleeping.” There is a quaint passage on this point in George Eliot’s “Adam Bede.” “I can’t abide,” says the speaker, “to see men throw away their tools i’ that way, the minute the clock begins to strike, as if they took no pleasure i’ their work, and were afraid o’ doing a stroke too much. . . . I hate to see a man’s arm drop down as if he were shot, before the clock’s fairly struck, just as if he’d never a bit o’ pride and delight in his work. The very grindstone will go on turning a bit after you loose it.” Judged by this standard, Mr. Bone certainly loved his work. He was always at it. He did not need to be driven to it, as Cyrus drove his hordes into battle with the whip. He was in no sense an “eye-servant,” but in singleness of heart he gladly served his Master. His work was

to him his very life and being. Even his vacation seasons, which were very rare, in Washington, Boston, New York, Edinburgh, and other places, were spent in hunting for the lost, as an ambassador for Christ, beseeching men, both in public and private, to be reconciled to God.

There is a story told of Uncle John Vassar that always seemed to me to be a picture of Father Bone. One day he was waiting for a gentleman in the parlour of a Boston hotel. A fashionably-dressed and proud-looking lady was also sitting in the room. With great concern, he began to urge the necessity of the new birth and acceptance of Christ upon her. She was thunderstruck, and protested that she did not believe in any of these things. Then followed a most fervent appeal until his friend arrived and they left. Shortly afterwards the lady's husband came in, and she said, "There was an old man here talking to me about religion."

"Why did you not shut him up?" he asked gruffly.

"He is one of those persons you can't shut up," was her reply.

"If I had been here," he said, "I would have told him very quickly to go about his business."

"If you had seen him," was her answer, "*you would have thought he was about his business.*" No finer tribute could be paid to any Christian

than that. Father Bone's business was to close in with a soul, and he was always about it. He reminded me in this respect, more than any other man I ever met, of his Master.

In this way Mr. Bone spent over thirty-eight years among the sailors passing through the Welland Canal. He was one of the few links that connected the old régime with the new. He had seen the towing horse supplanted by the steam tug, and had watched the schooner give place to the large steamer and the whaleback. He had ministered to two generations of sailors, and was making the acquaintance of a third. He had laboured on two canals, and had lived to hear the proposition of a third discussed. "Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing," he gave his days, yes, and sometimes his nights too, to the sailors. Is it any wonder they loved him? Is it any wonder that when he passed away hundreds of them said, "We have lost the best friend we ever had"?

THE MAKING OF THE WORKER

II

THE MAKING OF THE WORKER

To interpret aright any character we must know something of his ancestry. You are able to understand the bird better when you know the nest whence it came, and the man when you know the home where he received his earliest impressions. Napoleon was once asked, "What is the great need of the French nation?" His reply was, "Mothers." Speaking generally, God has blessed the Scotch people with good mothers and fathers. The homes of Scotland, as pictured by Burns in "The Cotter's Saturday Night," have done much to develop those characteristics which have brought Scotchmen to the front, in almost every walk of life all over the world.

Thomas Bone was born and raised in a typical Scottish home. "Bannocks of oatmeal, bickers of porridge, and the Shorter Catechism, were my daily food in my boyhood," he used often to say. Coarse, but wholesome, fare, a severe climate, hard work, the Bible, the home, the church, the school,

the catechism, all conspired to develop in him that gentle, patient, firm, loving, original character that we all learnt to love. His parents belonged to that better class of the common people, who are the back-bone of any country, and whose intelligence, industry, God-fearing uprightness, honest pride, and genuine piety contribute so much to the true prosperity and glory of a nation. He was born in the village of Belhaven, County of Haddington, on the first of January, 1825. He writes: "I cannot boast of what the world calls 'blue blood,' and yet my parents were of the excellent of the earth, and brought me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. My earliest recollections are of a religious character. Mother took pleasure in telling us Bible stories, and teaching us our infant catechism, and when grown to boyhood father would gather us together around the old arm-chair, and hear us repeat texts of Scripture, being proof texts from the Shorter Catechism. Thus I was rooted and grounded in the doctrines of grace at an early age."

From his father he seems to have inherited that ruggedness and fearlessness of character which every one admired in him, combined with the Celtic fire which fused all his powers into one great all-consuming passion; whilst from his mother he seems to have derived the sound common sense, the

irrepressible wit, the sparkling repartee, and the boundless generosity which were among his chief characteristics. To his mother, indeed, as he often remarked to me, he owed more than tongue could tell or pen set forth. Her loving and fervent spirit, her wise and gentle ways made on the warm-hearted and ingenuous boy an impress for good that he never forgot. Her teaching and prayers issued in his conversion early in life, and her lovely character, transfigured in his memory, became a force, mighty in its gentleness, throughout his life. True-hearted mothers, as one has well said, "often live in their strong sons, the little rivulet somehow begetting the great broad river."

His education was limited both as to subjects studied and as to time occupied. It finished when he was thirteen, and he began to learn his trade as a stone-mason with his father. He regarded this as in reality a means of blessing to him, shielding him from evil associations and guarding him from the many pitfalls in the path of youth. He early identified himself with the cause of temperance, by signing the total-abstinence pledge. This brought down upon him the scorn and reproach of his companions, a circumstance which doubtless contributed in no small measure to the development of that independence of character which very largely made him what he was in later life.

His religious awakening occurred when he was about eighteen years of age, as a result of the earnest preaching of Thomas McLean, a lay-preacher. His baptism followed shortly afterwards, and made a deep impression on him. His awakening came to him as a call to service, and he instantly set to work. He waited no formal commission or authorisation. The light had come to him, and in his joy and enthusiasm he must tell others of it. The statue of Memnon is represented as keeping silence through the long dark hours of the night, but bursting forth into mystic strains of weird-like music, just as the first rays of the sun kiss his lips. Like that idol Thomas Bone lived mute and inactive, but when the first beam of the Sun of Righteousness began to play around his heart, he began immediately to speak for Jesus. Would that the call to service came as clear to every convert!

He began work right in his home church, taking part in its services, teaching in the Sabbath-school, holding cottage prayer meetings in neighbouring villages, and in the summer time conducting open-air meetings amongst the fishermen. These varied exercises developed the faculties of his mind, and created a thirst for spiritual knowledge. He became an ardent Bible student, and here was begun the work which gave him that wonderful knowledge

of the Scripture which served him so well years afterwards on the canal.

His marriage took place on the eighth of October, 1847. The union was a very happy one. For over half a century he and his partner were spared to each other, and were permitted to celebrate their golden wedding in 1897, when they received many tokens of love and esteem from a wide circle of friends. In February, 1899, Mrs. Bone was called to her reward.

In the opening of 1849, for the sake of employment, he left his native village for Edinburgh. Here he was fortunate in coming under the pastoral oversight of the Rev. Francis Johnston, a man of the truly evangelistic spirit, who took great delight in training young men to labour in open-air and cottage meetings. His training and experience here, and also at Houghton, England, as assistant to the village missionary, were very valuable to him. His position at Houghton might have been permanent, had he so desired, but the call of the New World appealed to him, and in September, 1852, he sailed with his family from Glasgow, landing in New York on the eighth of October. After a few months with his brother-in-law, Mr. Gardner, at Byron Centre, he crossed to Canada and settled at St. Catharines.

His zeal for Christian work soon manifested it-

self, and he found many opportunities for exercising his gift of speech, now considerably developed. In his own church, the Queen Street Baptist, he frequently officiated, always with acceptance, and when in the autumn of 1855, the pastor, the Rev. E. Ryerson, was compelled, on account of ill health, to go South, a council was called to examine Mr. Bone, with a view to his ordination, so that he might be able to dispense the ordinances in the absence of the pastor. His examination called forth the unanimous approval of the council, and he was ordained pastor *pro tempore*. He continued to labour, as before, at his trade through the week, and on Sabbath took one service, the Rev. Dr. Cooney, a Methodist minister, taking the other. In this way his abilities became well known to the people of St. Catharines, and his services were frequently in demand, not only in the city, but in the surrounding country.

In June, 1867, a special work among the sailors passing through the Welland Canal had been begun by the American Seamen's Friend Society of New York, working through an advisory committee in St. Catharines. The Rev. A. McGlashan, the first superintendent, lived only a few months after his appointment. The Seamen's Friend Society then entered into negotiations with the Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society, To-

ronto, with a view to having them take over the mission as a branch of their work, and arrangements were ultimately made to this effect. Mr. Bone's special gifts having attracted the attention of the advisory committee in St. Catharines, he was by them urged to apply for the position of Missionary to the Sailors. His peculiar fitness for the work was recognised by the Board and he was appointed, entering upon his work on the 24th of May, 1868. His many fine qualities soon manifested themselves. Speedily he got into touch with the sailors, and steadily and surely he won his way into their hearts. By the grace of God he was permitted to spend over thirty-eight years on this field, and in that time developed rare skill in ministering to the men and in winning their confidence, so that in later years he was the best known and best loved man on the Lakes.

HIS FIELD OF LABOUR



III

HIS FIELD OF LABOUR

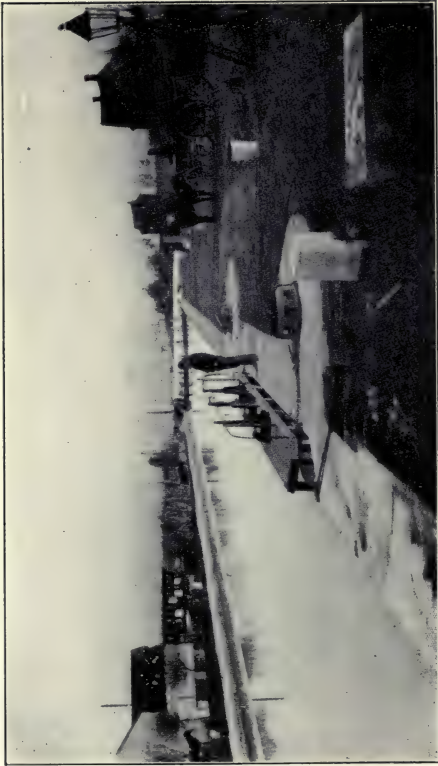
THOMAS BONE's name is inseparably connected with the Welland Canal. It was the scene of his labours and triumphs, and the peculiar character of the field had no small influence in developing the talents and powers which showed to such advantage, not only there, but everywhere in work for the Master.

In the year 1818 the late William Hamilton Merritt, afterwards M. P. for Lincoln and Niagara, was carrying on a milling business on the Twelve Mile Creek, near what is now St. Catharines. Water becoming scarce, Mr. Merritt decided upon carrying out an idea which he had quietly conceived years before, and which ultimately resulted in one of the most important public works on the continent—the connecting of Lakes Erie and Ontario by canal. The first survey was made in 1818, and on Friday, the 27th of November, 1829, the schooner *R. H. Boughton*, Captain Pheatt, and the schooner *Annie and Jane*, Captain J. Voller, got ready to make the first trip

through the canal from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. The *Annie and Jane*, displaying a number of flags, ensigns, and pendants, also a beautiful silk flag with the words "The King, God Bless Him," printed in gold letters, surmounted by a crown erected on her bow, took the lead. The banks of the canal were crowded with people, and the enthusiasm displayed on the occasion testified to the intensity of their interest. The vessels arrived in Buffalo on December 2, and were welcomed with a salute. The first canal went by way of the Chippewa Creek and Niagara River to Buffalo, but afterwards it was cut directly across the peninsula to Port Colborne.

The value of this great work may be seen from the fact that before this canal and the Erie Canal in New York State were constructed, it cost, in 1820, from \$88 to \$100 per ton to get freight from the seaboard to Buffalo, but soon after the opening of the canal the rate was reduced to \$6.50. Travel was facilitated, so that it was possible for immigrants to reach cheaply Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and what is now Western Ontario. Three times has the canal been enlarged since that time, and in all probability it will soon be enlarged again.

Along this canal, ministering to thousands of sailors every year, Father Bone, the youngest old



One of the Locks

man I ever knew; laboured for over thirty-eight years. Tremendously in earnest when he undertook the work, age did not cool his enthusiasm nor "chill the genial current of his soul." With unflagging zeal he followed his chosen calling to the last, and a few hours before he passed away, he was looking forward, thinking, praying, and planning for his beloved work.

At the time Thomas Bone entered upon his work, the canal was not what it is to-day. It twisted around between the shoulders of the hills, following the course of the Twelve Mile Creek until it reached the foot of the mountain between St. Catharines and Thorold, which it ascended by means of a series of small locks huddled closely together. Those were the days of the small wooden steamers and schooners, which were built in the busy shipyards then in operation along the canal. The sailing vessels and barges had to be towed through the canal by horses and mules. Large barns for stabling were built at certain points. On the banks, at almost every lock, taverns and low grogeries abounded. Drunkenness, profanity, and general ungodliness were fearfully prevalent. At that time probably 20,000 persons passed through the canal during the season of navigation, and perhaps the majority of these were without any religious instruction but that

imparted by the Sailors' Missionary. There was one bright feature to the otherwise dark picture. In those days, Sunday traffic was unknown, except during a few weeks late in the fall. At twelve o'clock on Saturday night all shipping in the canal was tied up until twelve o'clock Sunday night. This gave the missionary a chance to make Sunday a great field day. Mr. McGlashan, Mr. Bone's predecessor, had built a Sailors' Bethel Chapel at Lock 17, at Merritton, where the Rior-dan Paper Mills now stand, and for the first thirteen years of his work, Mr. Bone preached there every Sunday during the season of navigation, and scores of persons professed conversion.

Quite different is the work on the new canal to-day. Preaching is out of the question. Nine hours of navigation on Sunday during the summer, and twenty-four hours of navigation on Sunday during the late fall, make the Bethel services of former days impossible.

Vessels passing through the canal of to-day have to ascend or descend 326 feet. This is accomplished by means of twenty-five locks extending from Port Dalhousie to above Thorold, a distance of about nine miles. To pass through these locks takes from ten to twelve hours, which gives the missionary an admirable chance to reach the men while the boats are in the locks. Of this Mr. Bone

took full advantage, beginning early in the day and remaining sometimes till long after sundown.

Speaking of his field on one occasion, he said: "As our mission field presents all varieties of soil, and all degrees of character, from the tender-hearted youth to the hoary-headed sinner, we may expect different degrees of growth and development, and in many cases, 'nothing but leaves.' One class is like the ground, that is often rained upon and brings forth nothing but briars and thorns, which are 'nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.' Another is like the highway, macadamised with broken resolutions. These 'hardened by the deceitfulness of sin,' 'having their conscience seared as with a hot iron,' 'led captive by the devil at his will,' 'work iniquity with greediness.' Another class is like the sluggard's garden with walls broken down, trees grown wild and fruitless from neglect, the poisonous weeds of pride and folly covering the virgin soil of the heart; while still another is like the good ground, with hearts softened by the subduing power of the Holy Spirit. These, through the instrumentality of some sudden bereavement, some painful trial, unexpected danger or deliverance, are sometimes wonderfully prepared to receive 'with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save their souls.' Amid all these varied difficul-

ties and obstacles we labour from day to day; and doubtless, when the great register is opened, and the final report read, it will be said of this one and that one, 'He was born there.' ”

He was accustomed to say, “ There is a slight misapprehension in the minds of some with reference to our mission work, which requires passing notice; that is, they seem to think that it implies that our sailors are a degraded class, even worse than others, when we specially send missionaries amongst them. Such a conclusion betrays ignorance of their peculiar circumstances and character, and is wrong as to fact. Some of the finest men I have known have been sailors. Because a gentleman employs a teacher to instruct his children, that does not imply that they are more ignorant or stupid than others. Neither does our special mission to our brethren of the Lakes imply, in any sense, that they are worse than others. It is not deemed a reflection on the morality of a village of two or three hundred to have a church and a minister in their midst. Similarly, it is no disparagement of our sailors to have a special missionary. When we think that their numbers are reckoned not by hundreds, but by thousands, we ought to have not one, but many. There are advantages gained by special and continuous effort that could not be gained by any other means.”

Again he writes: "I may mention some of the difficulties connected with the work. One is, the very meagre accommodation for the social comfort of the men. A quiet closet for reading the Scriptures, or prayer, is one of the factors of our Christian life, but this the common sailor has not. He has no privacy. Every hour of the day he is in the company of others, and often those of the baser sort. Hence, the Christian who spends his life in foreship must be a hero, and sometimes a martyr, to endure the continual raillery and cruel reproaches of his ungodly shipmates. I have met with cases of this kind. One young fellow told me that his companions not only jeered at him for his religion, but all kinds of tricks were played upon him, even 'to the spoiling of his goods.' If he read his Bible, they would laugh and mock at him; and when he knelt in prayer, they would throw old shoes or boots at him. Yet he was happy and courageous.

"Another difficulty is the continual change in the circumstances of the men. Often in bad weather they will be deprived of sleep for nights together. On shore, traps and pitfalls are laid for them on every hand. There is the excitement of meeting companions, and the temptations accompanying this. Afloat, there may be days of comparative idleness, and then, in stress of weather,

days when no one can reckon an hour his own. Such an environment tends to form careless and neglectful habits, especially when accompanied with evil associations."

A third difficulty is the absence of those means of grace which mean much in the life of every man. The sailors have not the privileges enjoyed by those on land. Churches are not within their reach. Organised Christian work, as usually carried on, is an impossibility, and home life, with its refining, sanctifying influence, is unknown. The want of accommodation for congregating them together to hear the Word of God is a serious drawback. The meeting with others in the sanctuary stirs the emotional nature and stimulates the Christian life. On account of the nature of the men's work they seldom have the opportunity of worshipping in the House of God, and there is nothing within their reach which can take its place. It is a great lack and many feel it. In the days of the Bethel Chapel some would walk considerable distance to the services, others avoided them. "Why don't you come to our Bethel Chapel?" the missionary said one day to a young sailor, "we have everything convenient and comfortable."

"Because," he replied, "I do not feel comfortable afterwards." He chose rather to sleep in

the deep slumbers of sin than to know of his peril.

A fourth difficulty is the presence of evil literature. The emissaries of Satan have been at work. Literature of the worst kind is found on board the vessels, and owing to the isolation of the lives of the men, it forms a peculiar peril. There is only one way to save the men from its blighting influence, and that is to give them good literature. The evil can be driven out only by the coming in of the good. The circulation of literature was always an important part of Mr. Bone's work.

To overcome these difficulties required tact, skill, thought, patience, and perseverance. The machinery which wrought well in other places was useless here, conditions were so different. Mr. Bone showed his strength and resourcefulness in discerning clearly the needs of his field and meeting them successfully.

Another department of work, no less interesting, is that of ministering to the children of God. He says, "During the season of navigation, our lake men have comparatively few religious privileges. Rarely have they the opportunity of attending the House of God, or the social prayer meeting; therefore, it is refreshing to them to have a religious service on board, either as a Bible reading, a prayer meeting, or singing some of the songs of

Zion. Often has the humble fore-castle, or more commodious cabin, been sanctified by the realised presence of Him who hath said, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.' On one occasion, when a vessel was lying in port, wind-bound, I was told by the steward that there were two Christians down in the fore-castle, who would like to see me. On going forward, I remarked: 'I understand there is something here about as rare as "white elephants in India."' "

" 'What is that?' they asked.

" 'Live Christians in a fore-castle,' I replied. 'Are there any here?'

" 'Yes,' answered one man, 'I am one.' Another said, 'I can also say I am one.'

" Each in turn gave a noble testimony to the power of the grace of God in their conversion. One said he had been converted seven years before, and that it had taken place in his own house after he had come from a Gospel meeting. He said he had been a filthy sinner, had smoked and chewed tobacco at the rate of a pound a week, and was addicted to profane language and drinking; but, on his knees that night, he had asked God to clean him right out, and take away the very desire for these evil habits, and he added, 'Praise the Lord, He has answered my prayer, and set me free ever

since. More, He has given me, not only a new song, but also a new voice to sing, for I never could sing before I was converted, but now I *can* sing a bit.'

"I said, 'Let me hear you.' He commenced, and we sang together, 'Stand up, Stand up for Jesus, ye Soldiers of the Cross.'

"His shipmate also told how God had heard his cry, and brought him out of the horrible pit of intemperance, placed his feet upon the 'Rock of Ages,' and put a new song in his mouth. He said he was converted in his bunk in the fore-castle, *all alone with God*. His prayer was 'Lord, if there is redemption for me, save me, save me.' Faithful to His promise, God answered his prayer, and for nearly two years he had been walking in the narrow way, with no desire to turn back.

"Turning to two German lads, who were apparently deeply interested in the conversation, I asked them if they had got into the Port of Peace and Rest.

"'Not yet,' they answered, 'but very near.'

"'Then,' I replied, 'here are three tugs; we would like to help you in by a word of prayer.'

"We all knelt at the throne of grace. I offered a short prayer for them, and the two Christian sailors followed, praying with great simplicity and earnestness. On rising from our knees, I spoke a

few kind words, pressing home the claims of Jesus to their immediate confidence and acceptance. We then sung a parting hymn, and I commended them to God to take them in safety to their desired haven. On reaching home one of the sailors wrote me a beautiful letter, expressing thanks for his safe arrival. He also said he would never forget our prayer and praise meeting in the fore-castle, that it had done him so much good, and strengthened him so that he could speak a word for Jesus in any prayer meeting."

It will thus be seen that his field was a unique one. While limited as to size, measured by the opportunities it presented, it was almost without limit. Not every man could have served it. It demanded severe physical labour and toil; it called for an unusual combination of gifts and qualities of heart and mind. Yet for more than a generation Mr. Bone served it well. If to discern clearly a work in any sphere, humble or exalted, and to do that work successfully, is a mark of greatness, Thomas Bone was a great man. The world may not have noticed, but He has seen who has said that even a cup of cold water given in His name shall not lose its reward.

“ SOWING THE SEED ”



IV

“ SOWING THE SEED ”

THERE is a legend that has come down to us concerning Martin Luther when he was imprisoned at Wartburg. In the day of his strength he had braved the devil in Worms; but at this time all the Reformer's powers seemed broken, and his glory departed. He was thrown aside as a “ castaway.” Satan was victorious in his turn, and in the anguish of his soul Luther imagined he saw the accuser of the brethren standing before him, lifting his finger in threatening attitude, exulting with a bitter and hellish sneer, and gnashing his teeth in fearful rage. One day, especially, it is said, as Luther was engaged on his translation of the New Testament, he fancied he beheld Satan, filled with horror at his work, tormenting him, and prowling round him like a lion about to spring upon its prey. Luther, alarmed and incensed, snatched up his ink-stand and flung it at the head of his enemy. The figure disappeared, and the missile was dashed in pieces against the wall. The spot is still shown in the Luther room of Wartburg Castle, where the

inkstand struck the wall. If we view this legend as an allegory, we may take it that Luther saw that the true way to fight the devil and bring about a reformation in Germany was to fling the inkstand at him in the form of the New Testament, and certain tracts and sermons, which he prepared and printed from his "Patmos on the Wartburg."

I remember using this illustration one night in St. Catharines in preaching on "Ways in which we may do Christian Work," and at the close of the service Father Bone said, "Man! yon was a good one. I have been fighting the devil myself in that way for over forty years—throwing the inkstand at his head in the shape of tracts and books."

I suppose that the picture by which Mr. Bone is best known among the sailors is that of the man with a bag of books and tracts, who, with cheery voice and countenance, talked to them of religious things. Certainly dwellers along the canal, farmers in the market-place, sufferers in the hospital, inmates of the poor-house, and prisoners in the jail will ever have hung in memory's gallery the picture of the old man who loved them so that he found his highest delight in scattering among them tracts—"leaves from the tree of life," as he was in the habit of calling them. Mr. Bone always showed good judgment in the selection of his tracts, and great tact in distributing them. With

rare skill he always selected the shot best calculated to bring down the game he was after. It was impossible for him to have made the mistake one hospital visitor is said to have made. It was a sailor's hospital and the visitor gave the sick sailor a tract, which, when he read the title, caused him to burst out laughing and hand it back. It was on “The Sin of Dancing.” The sailor apologised for his laughter, with the remark, “Bless you, sir, I have both my legs cut off!” Or that of another who, visiting the homes of the poor, where they had scarcely a crust of bread to eat, freely distributed a tract on “The Sin of Gluttony.” Or that, described by one of the speakers at the annual meeting of the London Religious Tract Society, who found in the hands of a man on his death-bed a tract on “Church Architecture.” In all these instances good was intended, but sufficient care had not been exercised.

Those who knew Mr. Bone, know how he first studied his tracts, and then the person to whom he gave them. There was nothing promiscuous or haphazard about his distribution. While he knew that the slightest portion of God's truth had power, like the bones of the prophet, to raise the dead, he was always anxious that the most suitable truth for each person might be put within reach. Few men have given away more tracts than

Thomas Bone. Not only did he use them during the thirty-nine years he laboured as a sailor's missionary, but during the whole of his long Christian life. Tract distribution was one of the first forms of Christian work in which he engaged, and it was also one of the last. He could tell, not simply of scores of conversions, but of hundreds through the reading of tracts. He often regretted that Christians of to-day made so little use of this means of advancing the Master's cause. Often has he said to me, "Man! when you plant a seed for God, you can never tell what the harvest will be. You know the seed will grow while you are asleep, and even after you have forgotten that you sowed it. Some day you will be as surprised at the harvest as Robinson Crusoe was when he saw the wheat growing where he had unthinkingly cast forth the rubbish."

Speaking on this question on one occasion, he said: "I believe that a speech and a tract should be very much alike—put into very short compass, fired off warm, and make an impression where it hits. I believe I am the oldest tract distributor here. Over fifty years ago I began. In those days I had a plug hat and I made it my depository. I gave the tracts to people on the road, and many of those tracts were blessed. After I had been engaged in the work a couple of years I visited an

old aunt of my dear mother's, and she began to give me very serious advice. ‘ Thomas, what is this I hear about you? I hear that you are going about the country giving away all your religion; but, for my part, I have little enough for myself, far less to give away to any other body.’ I replied, ‘ Now that just shows to me the truth of what Bunyan said:

“ There was a man, though some would count him mad,
The more he gave away, the more he had ”—

and I can say amen to that: for I am giving it away all the time, and I have more than ever left.’ ”

Continuing, he said, “ The tract distributor is like a man carrying a seed-basket in one hand and a watering-pot in the other. We have to water the plants as well as drop the seed. We are all agreed on the value of tracts, but the great point is to go to work and use them. I know Christians who are afraid to give a tract. They are thought to be very good for women, but for a man with grey hairs to give a tract is thought a small business. A lawyer said to me, ‘ I wonder that you should go round peddling these religious fables; they are all fiction.’ Well, it happened that in the market-square that day was a man from England called ‘ Sammy the Costermonger,’ and that was

the title of the tract I had been giving away. So I went around the square and touched Sammy on the shoulder, and brought him round to where the lawyer was standing. 'Sir, will you allow me to introduce to you the original of one of my tracts, Mr. Sammy the Costermonger, and here is the tract.'

"So Sammy says to him, 'How are you, sir?'

"'I am all right, sir,' was the reply.

"'All right?' said Sammy. 'Why, that is a big word. Are you all right for eternity?'

"'That is none of your business.'

"'Yes, sir, it *is* my business. That is just what I want to ask you. Are you all right for etenity?'

"The lawyer tried to shake him off, but he held on like a little terrier.

"'Now, sir,' I said to the lawyer, 'you have found out whether that tract is fiction or not.'

"A tract often opens up the way for conversation. On a train I took out a tract with the title, 'I Can Dance for Joy Now,' and gave it to a commercial traveller, asking:

"'Do you know anything of that kind of dancing?'

"'Yes,' he replied.

"'Where did you learn it?'

"'I learned it in Talmage's church. I was

once a poor drunkard; I had run through two fortunes, and one morning I had become so despairing of life that I took a vial of poison to my office, but when I held my hand up something held me back, and said, “Oh, don’t, for the sake of your wife and family,” and I didn’t do it. I wandered about until I heard some singing in Talmage’s church, and went in. He preached from the text, “Come now, saith the Lord, and let us reason together.” Now, brother, I want to tell you, instead of taking the poison I took Christ, and I can dance for joy now.’

“Tracts are like the coral insects that work silently, slowly, and surely. They are laying the foundation of character. Silently and surely they are moulding men, for ‘As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is.’ Tracts have been like the Star of Bethlehem. They lead men to the Saviour.

“Take an illustration from our field of labour. Some one was showing us a place where a man had fallen into the water. They tried with the large grappling-irons to draw him up, and made many fruitless efforts. At last one man said, ‘We will get a little triangle of iron and hang it around with fish-hooks.’ They did so, and lowering this, the little hooks caught in the clothing and drew the body up. These little tracts are like the little sharp hooks. They get hold of a man when, per-

haps, a great ponderous book or a great big sermon would not touch him.

“ We need to do a great deal of personal work, to deal individually. After a talk with one sailor he said to me, ‘ I have got more religion into my mind in the last half-hour that I have received in my life before.’

“ ‘ Well,’ I said, ‘ if you took half a dozen little bottles, and, wanting to fill them with rain-water, stood them out in the shower, how much do you suppose you would have in them? ’

“ ‘ Not much,’ he replied.

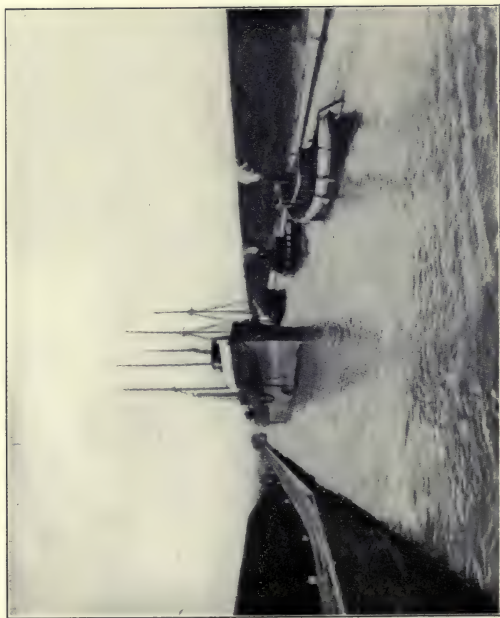
“ ‘ Just so,’ I said. ‘ If you wanted to fill them you would take them by the neck and just pour it in until they were full? ’

“ ‘ Yes sir.’

“ ‘ And I just come and get hold of you here and pour in truth as you are able to receive it? ’

“ ‘ Yes,’ he says, ‘ and you have done it too.’

“ Another advantage is, a tract forms a most excellent introduction, but you require to know what you are recommending. Read the tract, have it imprinted on your own mind, and then, when you are recommending it, you can do so honestly. It requires a good deal of tact to be a good tract distributor. Do not go to men as if you were going to administer a bitter dose. Go to them as if you



Vessels Passing Through the Canal

were giving them something enjoyable. Take this for example:

“ ‘ Jack, do you know there has been a legacy left you? ’

“ ‘ No, sir; how is that? ’

“ ‘ Oh, your best Friend has died and left it in His will, that you are to have a share of the property, a good large share. ’

“ ‘ In His will? ’ he repeated. ‘ Where is it? ’

“ ‘ Oh, ’ I said, ‘ I have got it right here. It reads, “ The gift of God is eternal life. ” ’

“ ‘ Well, ’ he said, ‘ thank God, I have got it. ’

“ I found four sailors once lounging around in the bow of a vessel, spinning yarns.

“ ‘ Boys, ’ I said, ‘ will you allow me to spin a yarn? ’

“ ‘ Oh, yes, sir; come on. ’

“ ‘ Well, lads, you know that once in Scotland there was a time of great persecution in the church, and there was a young woman seen one Sabbath morning running, with her shoes under her arm, on her way to the “ Conventicle, ” as they called the assemblies for Christian worship. She met the soldiers, who stopped her, asking whither she was bound.

“ ‘ “ Sirs, ” she said, “ my elder brother is dead and the heirs are to meet together to-day, the will is to be opened and read, and I am going to get my

share in the legacy." She was going to remember the dear Lord's dying love, and that is the way she put it, speaking of it in such a way that they did not see through it.'

" 'Oh,' said one of the poor sailors, 'I would like to have been there, to have had my share in the reading of the will.'

" 'You may have a share yet, Jack,' I replied, taking out a Bible, 'I have got the will here,' and I turned to the fourteenth chapter of John, and read these words, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you." Have you got it?'

" 'No, sir; but I would like to get that book.'

" He bought one, and so did the others, taking my entire stock. I believe these men would take that word of God and read it, and it would be blessed to them."

When the new canal was opened and it was too far to the Bethel to get the sailors to attend on Sundays, Mr. Bone tried to make up this loss by devoting himself to extra personal work. Great as had been the blessing when he shook the tree in the Sunday services in the Bethel, I believe still greater blessing followed his labours in his efforts to hand-pick the fruit. He writes, "I still find abundant opportunities for sowing the precious seed, and often meet with a piece of good ground

ready to receive it. One Sabbath afternoon, to a young sailor whom I found sitting on a large snub-post, I made the remark:

“‘Jack, you need not be afraid of the bottom dropping out of your chair?’

“‘No,’ said he.

“‘Well, may I ask, do you think you have got as solid a resting-place for your soul as for your body?’

“‘I think I have.’

“‘On the Rock of Ages, I trust?’

“‘Yes,’ he replied.

“‘Then, you will like to have a tract or book to read.’

“‘I will be obliged to you, sir.’

“‘I selected a little book, the title of which was ‘I am free from Satan’s grasp now.’ In handing it to him I asked:

“‘Can you say that?’

“‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘I was in it for fifteen years, but I am happy to say that I am free from it now, and that for the last two years.’

“‘Do you find Christ’s yoke easy, and His burden light?’

“‘Yes, I do.’

“‘Would you advise any of your companions to come with you?’

“‘Yes, sir, I have just been doing it,’ pointing

to two young men going up a ladder, 'but,' he said, 'they told me they did not believe any person knew that he was saved.' Evidently they were ignorant of God's way of salvation.

"Frequently I have interesting conversations in the fore-castle, which Jack makes his parlour, his reading-room, and bedroom, all together. Sometimes one is chief speaker for the crowd, and will have a budget of questions to ask; some wise, and some otherwise. One young lad said to me on one occasion:

"'I think I can prove to you from Scripture that you are doing wrong in coming here with your tracts.'

"'Well, what does it say?'

"'That you are not to cast your pearls before swine.'

"Turning round to the others, I said, 'Gentlemen, I did not think I was among swine here.'

"'Well, for one, I am an infidel,' said the young man.

"'And may I ask what led you to become an infidel?'

"'It was by reading Robinson Crusoe.'

"'How did that make you an infidel?'

"'It was the question Friday asked Crusoe, 'Why did not God kill the devil?''"

“Looking at a cup on the board, I said, ‘Do you see that cup?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘Could you put that cup into the lake?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘Could you put the lake into the cup?’

“‘No.’

“‘Why not?’

“‘Because it could not hold it.’

“‘Well, your mind is like that little cup. It cannot hold, or comprehend God’s reasons for not killing the devil. Let me tell you one thing, the secret of your infidelity does not lie in “Robinson Crusoe,” or in the Bible, but in your own self, in your anxiety to get rid of personal responsibility to God. But you can’t do it, and all your infidel books can’t help you. I pray that God may in mercy deliver you from “the snare of the devil,” as He has done some others.’”

This sowing of the seed by the scattering of tracts, Mr. Bone thoroughly enjoyed, because, as he often said, he had seen so much fruit from it. It is said that the sweetest fruit is the Alpine strawberry, not larger than a pea. It grows in unlikely places, nursed by the storm and nourished by the snow. So is the fruit of faith which is gathered here and there on our mission field.

“One afternoon, conversing with an engineer on a propeller, I inquired where he was born.

“‘In Canada,’ he replied.

“‘Therefore, you are a subject of this New Dominion. May I ask have you been born again and become a subject of the new dominion of grace?’

“‘Yes, I trust I have,’ he replied.

“‘When were you brought into it?’

“‘Not very long since; only this summer.’

“‘By what means were you brought to Christ?’

“‘Your tracts have had a great deal to do with it.’”

He then stated at some length how he was first awakened by the Spirit of God during a severe storm on the lake. Eternity with its solemn realities loomed up before him, and he felt unprepared to meet it. The storm ceased, but the impression remained, deepening and strengthening. In his perplexity it pleased God to make use of the little tracts, as He did of Bethlehem’s star of old, to lead him to Jesus, and there he found rest, peace, and salvation. He gave a calm and intelligent reason for the hope that was in him, and with great humility spoke of his confidence in God and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The great need of pure literature for the men is borne in upon our missionaries every day. In one of his reports, Mr. Bone writes:

“From our watch-tower of observation, we see the enemy advancing like a flood, rolling wave upon wave of impure literature upon the youth of our land and lakes. This is read, not only by ‘the baser sort,’ but also by those from whom we would expect better things. For example, one Sabbath afternoon, on a propeller I found a well-dressed young woman reading *The New York Police Gazette*. ‘This is my Sunday reading,’ she said, ‘and I find it very interesting.’

“‘Well,’ I remarked, ‘you must have a strange taste. Do you know the difference between a sheep and a hog in its food? The one loves clean, tender grass; the other will eat any offal from the slaughter-house. That paper contains the offal from the moral slaughter-houses in New York, not fit for a pure-minded person to read. You may polish the stove-pipe and make it look bright outside, but inside the smoke passing through, leaves nothing but soot. So it is with that class of literature.’ For the time she laid it aside, and I gave her some of our beautiful Christian magazines instead.”

Many incidents might be given, showing the value of, and the blessing from, Christian literature. An intelligent lady, who for a long time had been harassed with perplexing doubts, said to him one day, as he called with tracts and Gospel books,

“Surely God directed you to lend me that book that you left when you were here before. Oh! it has been such a help and comfort to me. I seem to see and understand things so differently now. I wish to purchase a copy for myself, and also that I may hand it to my friends, whom I am sure it will benefit, as it has done me.”

In ancient times philanthropy found expression in digging a well, building a synagogue, or planting a fruit tree. Now it manifests itself on a higher plane, in providing comfort for the disconsolate, light for the darkened, instruction for the ignorant, and wise counsel for the erring, by writing and publishing a good book. And such are the books Mr. Bone delighted to circulate, and which flow from the fountain of the Tract Society. If ever there was a time when we should be awake to our privilege and opportunity, it is now, when error and vice are rolling in and over our land like a flood. Let us by the power of the Spirit lift up a standard against it.

AMONG THE CHURCHES



V

AMONG THE CHURCHES

WHILE Thomas Bone will always be remembered as "The Sailors' Missionary," especially by the sailors of the Great Lakes, a large portion of his more than thirty-eight years of service was spent in visiting the various churches of the Province, to interest the people in the work of the mission, by imparting information. He gave addresses in churches, Sabbath-schools, young people's societies, in colleges, factories, prisons, and poor-houses. Every one was pleased to see and hear him on these occasions. Those with whom he stayed spoke of his visits as "angel's visits," and were always delighted to place at his disposal the prophet's chamber. His presence in a prayer-meeting brought with it an atmosphere of cheeriness, hopefulness, and expectancy. Like a Chinook wind, he brought with him a breath from another realm, arousing the soul and warming it into sympathy and service. He was very methodical in his work, always arriving about the same time, like the birds, year by year. One old lady, at a certain

place, who had not heard of his death, and with whom he was accustomed to take tea, and then to go to the prayer-meeting on a certain night for years, had tea on the table waiting for him, when his successor, Mr. Judson, called for her subscription.

It was simply amazing what Mr. Bone accomplished when on these trips. He was a tireless worker, and seemed to have muscles of steel and a throat of brass, as he went from house to house collecting all day, and from meeting to meeting at night to speak. Many a person has marvelled at the number of addresses he could deliver on a single Sabbath. When I think of him going to the Central Prison at nine o'clock on Sabbath morning, "to preach," as he used often to say, "to souls in prison"; then addressing two adjacent churches in the morning, two Sabbath-schools in the afternoon, a hospital, home, or refuge before tea, two more church services in the evening, and at the close going to one of the down-town missions to seek for lost sheep; in the intervals talking with a child, or a servant in the house where he had his meals; and when I recollect that he never used the Sunday street-cars, but went from place to place on that little "dog-trot," which will always be associated with him in my mind, I see the picture of no mere time-server, but of a man

full of the Christ-spirit, ever "about his Father's business."

No visitor was more welcome in church, Sabbath-school, or prayer-meeting. People listened gladly because he always had something fresh to tell. I have heard one Toronto pastor say, "All I have to do to get a large prayer-meeting is to announce that Thomas Bone will speak. At our ordinary meetings we may not have more than forty or fifty, but when the people know Mr. Bone is coming the room fills up."

He could adapt himself to any circumstances. If a minister or superintendent said, "I can give you only ten minutes to-day," he filled the time with interesting information, seldom going beyond the limit. Whether his address was a half-hour or a ten-minute one, it was complete. He could hold the attention of children in a wonderful way, his graphic incidents and pictorial language making a lasting impression. Few could equal him in the tender helpfulness of his addresses to the aged or afflicted, and no more welcome visitor ever came to hospital, prison, or refuge.

In travelling from place to place, like Paul, he "became all things to all men, that he might gain some." He never used the same means to win a Lydia as he would to instruct a Philippian jailer; to catch a child as he would to catch a rough man.

Sometimes he assumed the character of a lawyer hunting for heirs; again that of a man selling medicine to cure all diseases, and again that of a commercial traveller, or insurance agent. He would be anything to get a hearing for his message. He was instant in season and out of season; "in the morning he sowed his seed, and at evening he withheld not his hand; for he knew not which should prosper, either this or that, or whether they both alike should be good." When once he became interested in a case, nothing could ever make him loosen his hold until the person was in the Kingdom, or he had lost all trace of him; and even then, if a letter failed to reach him, he never forgot to bring the case before the Lord in that wonderful ministry of intercession for which he was so noted.

Here is a little glimpse of him at his work, taken from a letter written to his son:—"You may like to know how I have been getting along this last month. As a swallow, ever on the wing, with my eyes open, I have been very busy, and very successful. Precious seed has been sown, and here and there sheaves gathered. I spent a very blessed time in Belleville. I had the privilege of meeting two souls who claim me as a kind of godfather, and were still walking in the light. Dear brother Northrup had them and several friends to

tea on a prayer-meeting night. As we adjourned from the house to the prayer-meeting, he invited all to return after service, which they did. I happened to occupy the chair, and gave the keynote of the meeting, namely, 'Stewardship for Christ, treasures for the Lord, receiving out of His fulness not simply to enjoy, but to impart.' God wants all His children to be like Himself, continually dispensing blessings. I remarked some seemed to be simply absorbents, always receiving, but not giving out; receiving grace and knowledge, but keeping it to themselves. I mentioned the case of the woman who touched the hem of the Saviour's garment, like many nowadays, being blest, but too modest or retiring to make it known; but Jesus brought her out to testify for Him. I made the application, that if those present had touched and received blessing, and had not testified, they would now be given the opportunity. Beginning at once, it went around, and each spoke of their being in Christ, till it came to one young lady, and she said that she could not say that she had found rest, though she was seeking. After a season of prayer on her behalf, I asked her to adjourn into the next room, and there she unfolded her difficulties. I was enabled so to present the truth that she received it with joy, and returned to the company praising God for His saving grace.

“On my return from Kingston, I called in at Belleville, and had another Bible reading in Mr. Northrup’s church, and that young lady was there full of life and joy. Truly God is faithful to His promise, ‘Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.’”

As he went from place to place, he loved nothing better, after a hard day’s work collecting from house to house, than to have the privilege of taking part in the numerous revival meetings held during the winter. He went, not merely to hear the sermon, though he was a born sermon taster, and one of the most eloquent listeners that I ever preached to, nor to hear the singing, but for the joy of seeking the lost. I well remember an incident that stands out in my own experience, which is typical of his whole life:—In the beginning of my Christian life, in 1875, in Brantford, I was asked to guide Mr. Bone from church to church. It was late when we got to the third church, and revival meetings were in progress. All around the altar-rail was a crowd of weeping penitents. Mr. Bone knelt beside a strong man, who evidently was in great agony, and asked him what he was crying for.

“Oh, my sins!” he replied.

“How long,” said Mr. Bone, “have you been weeping and seeking like this?”

“Three weeks,” said the man.

“Suppose that Jesus were here, and said to you as He did to blind Bartimæus, ‘What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?’ What would you ask?”

“I would ask Him to save me.”

“But do you not know that that is just what He wants to do when you are willing? Suppose now that I wanted to give you this Bible, and you wanted it, would you pray, ‘Oh, give me the Bible,’ or would you just take it, and say, ‘Thank you?’”

“I would take it, and say thank you.”

“Well,” said Mr. Bone, “that is all God wants you to do now. He died to save you; the gift of God is eternal life. Had you not better say, ‘I will take the cup of salvation, take the water of life freely?’ In other words, trust Jesus, who died for you to keep His promise to save you.”

“Is that all I have to do?”

“That is all God asks from any man. Paul simply said to the weeping jailer, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’”

The man’s face lighted up as he said, “I do believe, I will believe,” and rose from his knees to go from the meeting rejoicing.

His conversations with all classes of people abounded with apt illustrations, cheery remarks, sparkling repartee, pungent wit, but no cant.

Though often biting, his conversation was never baneful. Though sometimes painful, it was always profitable. Though he hurt, it was to heal. He was a perfect master of the art of answering a fool according to his folly.

On one occasion, when Mr. Bone had been speaking on the Bible as the word of God, a young theological student took him to task for the absolute certainty with which he referred to Abraham, Moses, and the other Old Testament characters, and their writings, and said, "I don't think that you ought to speak with such certainty on such subjects. You should remember that your education has been very limited. Now, I profess to know something about these matters, for I have been years in college, and have been educated in the *higher branches*." Quick as a flash came the answer, "So were the monkeys."

In talking with a Unitarian one day, he said, "Why, man, your religion is like an egg with its contents blown out."

One day, as he was going to his work on the canal, a man driving a horse and cart came along, the man singing. Mr. Bone looked up and said, "Will you give me a lift?"

"Yes," said the man, "come up."

Mr. Bone climbed up, and sat beside him, and then said, "You're very happy this morning?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"What makes you so happy?"

"Oh, I was confirmed yesterday."

"Confirmed?" said Mr. Bone, assuming ignorance.

"Yes, you know I was confirmed by the bishop."

"Oh, then," said Mr. Bone, "you'll be a confirmed saint?"

"Me!" exclaimed the man; "no."

"Then," said Mr. Bone, "you must be a confirmed sinner."

One evening, at the close of a service, he had a talk with a young man, and asked him if he were a Christian.

"No," he replied, "I am not."

"Why?"

"Oh," he said, "because there are so many hypocrites."

"You have made a mistake," was the reply, "The hypocrites are all on your side. Christians are not hypocrites, and hypocrites are not Christians, so then if you are not a Christian, you are ranked among the hypocrites. I do not know that you are honest enough to own your leader. Would you wear a band on your hat telling people that you are not a Christian, but that you are following Satan as your leader and commander?"

"No," he replied, "I would not."

“ Then you want to be known among men as different from what you really are. Is not that hypocritical? ” He could not but admit that it was.

Nowhere was Mr. Bone more enthusiastically received than in the factories at the various places he visited. In Hamilton, London, Brantford, Toronto, and other places he gladly spoke to the workingmen as he had opportunity, and always had a warm welcome. Pages could be filled with stories of the good done by these heart-to-heart talks, but one will have to suffice. He says:

“ While visiting a factory in Toronto, and giving tracts to the men as they were leaving at the noon hour, one young man tarried behind. His employer, an earnest Christian, said: ‘ This young man is seeking salvation, but can’t find it. Will you have a talk with him? ’ I first ascertained his position. He was not on the sinner’s ground, but was trying to climb over the wall by the ladder of good works. I used the following illustration: ‘ Suppose while working with bare arms you are stung by a poisonous insect. You brush it off and think no more about it at the time, but before long your arm begins to swell and pain you, and the case becomes so serious you go to the doctor. He says: “ Young man, there is a sting of some kind which is causing all this trouble. You can have

no rest while it is there. If you wish, I will make an incision and draw it out, or you may cover it up and stand the consequences." What would be your decision?'

" 'I would say take it out at once,' replied he.

" 'Then let me tell you that the sole cause of your trouble is the sting of sin, not in your arm, but in your heart, and there is only one Physician who can detect and extract this sting. He is ready to relieve you now. "The Great Physician now is here, the sympathising Jesus"; will you come to Him and have Him take it out at once?'

" 'Kneel down and ask Him to do it now,' said his employer.

" Each in turn engaged in prayer, and the presence of the Lord was realised as the Hearer of prayer. The young man arose and went on his way rejoicing. About a week afterwards he came to a Gospel meeting and confessed Christ with a glad heart and joyful lips. I believe he has decided to stay with his employer to be under Christian influence, rather than accept a more lucrative position elsewhere."

In the factories Mr. Bone found an attractive field of work as he visited the different cities. One thing which gave him great joy and satisfaction was the establishment of a daily morning prayer-meeting in the factory of W. & J. G. Greey, Toronto.

Providentially directed there at a time when the matter was under consideration by the head of the firm, he was largely instrumental in directing its establishment. A special room in the factory was provided, and there every morning since June, 1895, from seven to seven-thirty, the workmen, to the number of about one hundred, assemble for worship. Their time counts from their entrance to the prayer hall. The proprietor himself presides at the meetings and great blessing has accompanied the work. Mr. Bone never missed an opportunity of attending these meetings, and even when he had passed the fourscore mark the hour was not too early for him, summer or winter. It was a great delight to him to meet the men, and an equal pleasure for them to hear his message. He never tired of telling of the blessing from these services, and longed to see similar meetings started in other places.

FISHING FOR MEN





The Fisherman at Work

VI

FISHING FOR MEN

IF ever a man heard the call of Jesus, "Follow me and I will make you a fisher of men," and heartily responded in the words of Peter, "I go a-fishing," it was Thomas Bone. He was a fisherman who knew the habits and haunts of the fish. He was thoroughly acquainted with the locality where he had to work. He knew how to attract the fish, how to bait his hook to catch them. He possessed the indispensable virtues of patience, perseverance, and tactfulness. He had learned "to labour and to wait."

He was always on the watch for openings to speak a word for his Master. He not only had the faculty of seeing opportunities, but the rarer gift of making them. A chance word dropped in conversation or a passing incident might be the occasion, and eagerly he would seize it. In a sentence or two he would lay bare the weak spot in a man's position and then present the saving truth to him by means of some simple anecdote or

illustration, which would carry it to the heart and make it impossible for the message to be mistaken or forgotten. Careless men were aroused, and unfriendly men often won, by the original and attractive way in which he was able to tell the "old, old story."

When asked how he got along with the sailors he said: "I find them the most genial and genuine people I meet. They know when a man is talking from the lips and when his message comes from the heart. One sailor said he thanked God for the 17th of March. 'Before that time,' said he, 'my religion was from the lips. Now I've got it down amidships.' 'That is the right place to have one's religion,' I replied."

The questions of the men often gave splendid opportunities.

"Mr. Bone, how many sailors have you converted since you began on the Canal?" said a sailor to him one day.

"Not one," was the unlooked-for reply.

"Then, if that is so, what is the use of your continuing in the work?"

"Well, Jack, it is like this. It is the work of God's Holy Spirit to save men. The light of the lighthouse does not bring you into the harbour, but it shows you the way. So I cannot save you, but I can show you the way to the Lord Jesus Christ."

Sometimes, to arouse attention, he proposed a conundrum.

“Boys,” he would say, “why is a man like a spider?” On their failing to find an answer he would give it: “Because he weaves his own web and manufactures his own thread. Character is the web, and every man furnishes the material which goes into it. He cannot borrow from another. The present life is the loom. The Christian’s web has three beautiful colours—*faith, love, obedience*, and when taken off the loom it becomes a beautiful garment for the appearing of Jesus Christ. The sinner’s web has three dark colours—*unbelief, ingratitude, rebellion*, and when taken off the loom becomes a garment of shame. Boys, what kind of web are you weaving?”

He always carried a number of cheques on The Bank of God’s Faithfulness, to pay to the person whose name was written in, the promise in John 3:16. These he would get the enquirers to accept by writing their names across the face. Many were interested, and in this way led to decision.

Again he writes: “I try to make the Word interesting to these boys. Sometimes they are like a clergyman’s dress, black right through. I once saw a bookbinder at work in his shop. He had a

rag and was wiping off the little pieces of gold leaf.

“ ‘What kind of a black rag is that?’ I asked.

“ ‘Oh,’ he replied, ‘that is a valuable piece of goods; when I am through with it, it will be worth ten dollars.’

“ ‘What makes it so valuable?’

“ ‘Why, the gold that is in it, of course.’

“ ‘But how do you get it out?’ I inquired.

“ ‘We just burn the rag and the gold is all left.’

“ ‘So,’ I say, ‘boys, you may be very black like that rag; but don’t you know that you are full of gold. It is the spirit within that makes you precious. I do not know but there may be before me to-night a man like Livingstone, once a poor lad, but God raised him up and made him a triumph of His grace and power.’ ”

He had to be ready to meet the men with excuses. One sailor said to him: “I cannot go to your meeting for two reasons. One is, it is too far away; and another is, I am tired and prefer to go and take a walk in the fields.”

“Well,” said he, “you remind me of a man who had what he called ‘horse religion.’ He worked all week, and went to the fields on Sabbath, just like the horses. That must be your religion, and

I am afraid a good many more have the same kind."

Whenever possible, he sought illustrations from the everyday life of the men. One day he asked an engineer on one of the propellers, "How is it you know when to work the engine when you cannot see the way you are going?"

"By obeying the signal from above," was the answer.

"Are you guiding your own course to heaven by the signals from above, in God's Word?"

"I am afraid I am not," he frankly acknowledged.

"Would it not be well to do so?" Mr. Bone asked in his kindly manner, and left the man to his own thoughts. The words took effect. The awakened man sought the light and was not denied.

His time on board any vessel was necessarily limited, so he endeavoured to make all his conversation lead up to the subject he wished to introduce. In most unexpected ways he would accomplish his purpose. In conversation with the captain of a lumbering vessel one day, he asked if the vessel were insured.

"No," said the captain, "the firm owning this vessel own a number more, and they find it easier to pay their own losses than to pay insurance com-

panies to do it. What they would have to pay to insure all their vessels would buy a new one every year, and they do not lose that many."

"Suppose now," said Mr. Bone, "your all were invested in a vessel, would you insure it?"

"Most certainly I would," he replied, "I could not afford to lose my all."

"Then is not your soul your all? Is it insured from sinking in the sea of death?"

He looked serious, and said: "No, it is not."

Lovingly he told him of the fearful risk he ran, and pointed out that there was no excuse, for Jesus had paid his policy, and his soul's insurance was absolutely free. He could get it by complying with God's terms: repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

One afternoon, walking along the tow-path, he overtook a young sailor dragging a heavy snubbing line.

"It is rather tiresome dragging along at that rate," he remarked.

"It is," replied the man.

Presently a voice was heard from the deck: "Let go." He immediately flung the rope from him into the water.

"You very soon got rid of your burden," said Mr. Bone. "Now, suppose you cast your sins

away from you like that rope; would you not feel a great deal lighter?"

"I guess I would," he replied.

"Then why don't you? If you hold to them, they will drag you down to destruction."

Sometimes a criticism of his work gave him an opportunity.

"While sitting one day," he writes, "talking with a sailor in the cabin, the captain entered, smoking a cigar. Eyeing the tracts on my knee, he said:

"'Don't you think it would be better to buy bread for the poor, than to spend money on these things?'

"'Don't you think,' I replied, 'it would be better for you to buy bread with the money you spend on cigars?'

"'That,' said he, 'is a natural want.'

"'It is not,' I replied, 'for I have all the natural wants of a man about me, and I feel no desire for tobacco or cigars.' This was the wedge that opened up the way for more serious conversation, and the captain became one of the warmest friends of the work."

He delighted to bring comfort to the afflicted. He mentions the case of a young woman, who had passed through severe domestic trials, her husband having deserted her. She seemed very discon-

solate. He says, "I pointed her to Jesus as the ever faithful, ever loving friend, who healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds, assuring her that whosoever cometh to Him would receive blessing, with pardon, peace, and eternal life. With much emotion, she said: 'You are the first who ever spoke to me a kind word about my soul.' 'I know,' she continued, 'I am a great sinner.'

" 'Yes,' I replied, 'greater than you think, yet notwithstanding all your sin, I can tell you of a great Saviour, who bore your sins in His own body on the tree, who was delivered for your offences, and raised again for your justification, and He now waits to receive and forgive you.'

"She seemed in some measure to apprehend the truth. I gave her some tracts and left, commending her to God. About a month afterwards I met her again. With joy beaming in her countenance, she said: 'I have found Jesus as my friend; I have something now to live for. I am happy and contented, having everything in Jesus.' "

"One Sabbath morning on going aboard a vessel," he says on another occasion, "the captain invited me into a cabin, and told me to sit down, as he had something to tell me.

" 'Well,' said I, 'I hope it is something good.'

" 'Yes,' he said, 'I have got rid of the heavy

burden of my sins;’ adding: ‘I always thought I had something to do for salvation, but since you talked to me, I see Jesus has done all I need, and I am complete in Him. He has forgiven me all my sins.’ ”

Men were sometimes surprised to find themselves caught in unlikely ways.

“I don’t want that bit of paper,” said an officer one day when offered a tract, “it can’t save anybody.”

“Where are you going this trip, captain?” was the unexpected reply.

“I don’t know yet,” he said. “I won’t know till I get to Port Colborne.”

“How will you know then?”

“I expect a telegram there.”

“But that is only a bit of paper, how can it tell you?”

“By the message on it.”

“So can this, captain, tell you the way of salvation. The message is here.”

His best work was accomplished with the individual. He never missed a chance to faithfully present the truth, even though it might hurt and perchance offend. Seated at the tea-table with a captain one evening he asked: “Can you tell me who is the meanest man on the canal?”

“I don’t know,” he replied.

“ May I tell you who I think it is? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Well, the meanest man I know is the one who turns his back upon his best Friend and neglects Him. Isn't he a mean man? ”

“ He certainly is.”

“ Do you know who your best friend is, the one who loves you best and has done most for you? ”

“ I see where you are coming,” he remarked.

“ Yes, I know where I am coming, I am coming home to yourself. Is not the Lord Jesus Christ your best Friend, who has done the most for you? And what has been your conduct towards Him? Have you given Him the warm love of your heart, or the cold shoulder of neglect? ”

“ To be honest,” he replied, “ I have given Him the cold shoulder.”

“ Isn't that mean? ” I asked.

“ You are right, it is mean.”

“ How do you think your mother would feel if she sent you her likeness, accompanied by a letter expressing her tender love, and her earnest desire for your loving remembrance in return, and you were to return both, saying: ‘ I don't thank you for your likeness or your letter ’? ”

“ Oh! ” he said, “ she would be grieved and insulted.”

“ Well, God has sent His likeness to you in the

person of His Son, Jesus Christ, 'Who is the image of the invisible God,' and 'the brightness of His Father's glory,' and in so doing He commends His love to you, and asks: What do you think of Christ? Does not your conduct prove that you do not think much of Him, when you don't accept Him, nor thank God for Him? Is it not as you say, very ungrateful and mean?"

The man's heart was touched and ere long he found the Friend above all others.

Thus he pursued his work as a "fisher of men," with rare skill, with unflinching devotion, with marvellous patience. Sometimes his labour was promptly rewarded, but oftentimes he saw no return. Yet his zeal never abated, his ardour never cooled. While opportunity was his he used it to the full, and no man can tell what it may mean. He has gone from the scene of his labours, but his work is not ended. "He being dead, yet speaketh."

ON THE PLATFORM

VII

ON THE PLATFORM

THOMAS BONE possessed platform gifts of no mean order. Some, gifted in conversation, lack those qualities of picturesqueness, vividness, concreteness, and terseness which are essential for successful public speaking, but along with his other qualifications Mr. Bone possessed these to an unusual degree. He was at home with any kind of audience. He could be the bearer of tender messages of comfort to the aged or the sorrowing, or he could rouse a large audience to a high pitch of enthusiasm. As an illustration of his power we give a verbatim report of an address at the Christian Workers' Convention in Washington in 1891, which for raciness and effectiveness will bear comparison with most addresses given under similar circumstances.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS: I felt this morning like that fisherman at Cape Breton. When he was going around into the big ocean, he

lifted up his eyes and his heart to God and said: "Oh, God, guide me, for mine is a very little boat, and Thine is a great sea." And so this morning before the sun rose I awoke, and I found nothing but a few loaves and some small fishes, but the Lord said: "Now, just bring them to me and I will bless them, and then you can go and feed the multitude." So I am here.

I was very much cheered when I heard our beloved brother, the Chairman, tell us the other day that this Convention was a Convention of common people, ordinary people, and I thought, "That is a door of opportunity for me." But I have found out that he made a mistake. I have found that it is a convention of uncommon people, and extraordinary people. I have found out it is a beehive, and all the bees are busy bringing their little treasure of honey from the flowers of their mission fields. I find they have gathered from among the wild flowers, and now some are planted like cedars in the courts of the Lord, and they are growing up and bringing forth fruit even to the Lord.

I have a grand subject. I believe I come to represent our International Christian Evangelical Alliance. I labour among the men of the lakes belonging to both sides of the Niagara River. I know no man after the flesh. All countries,

creeds, colours, and characters are fish when they get into my net, and I believe, friends, that one of the grand features of this Convention is that it is like the beautiful lakes that embrace the shore at every point—whether it is straight or crooked, or angular, they can just touch the shore; so we are all one.

I would like to take you for a short time to see where our little mission took rise twenty-three and one-half years ago. A few men in St. Catharines came to me and said: "Brother, won't you go and be a colporteur and missionary among our sailors?" I had been trained from my youth to take out the stones from the quarry and cut them and set them in a building, but they said: "You have got another quarry to work in, and we want you to come and be a builder in the temple of God, to build up living stones to the praise and glory of God for a habitation of God through the Spirit." Then I said, like Isaiah, "Lord, here am I, send me." So I went forth. You see, I have good backing. I have got my Elder Brother with me, and He has never left me alone.

In our mission field we have all grades of character, all kinds of soil. Sometimes I am put into the witness box to witness for the Master, and I find, dear friends, it is one thing standing up in a prayer-meeting, surrounded by God's dear people

and testifying, and it is quite a different thing, when you are put in the midst of the enemies of the King, and a sneering, scoffing infidel comes up and says: "I want to ask you a question." Let me give you an illustration of the kind of men I sometimes meet, and how I have to witness. Such a man once came up to me, and said: "Do you profess to be a Christian?" "Yes, sir." "How do you know? Did you ever see God?" "No." "Did you ever hear God?" "No." "Then how do you know it?" "Well, brother, if you go into a room over there that is dark and cold and find a blind man sitting there and bring him out into the sunshine and then you say: 'Brother, do you see the sun shining?' 'No, sir.' 'Do you know it is shining?' 'Yes, sir.' 'How do you know?' 'Oh, I feel it all over me.' And don't you know when you get the love of God in your heart, you feel it all over you? I have two witnesses, one inside and one outside. The one outside is the Lord's blessed Word: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,' and then the witness on the inside is: 'He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,' and two good witnesses will establish any point in law."

He then said: "I want to ask another question. Do you expect to go to heaven when you die?"

“Why, my dear friend,” I replied, “I don’t need to die to go to heaven, for heaven is coming to me, and I have got two heavens. [*Applause.*] I have got a little heaven down here, and a big one up yonder. [*Applause.*] I want to tell you that my head is in heaven, and my treasure is in heaven, and where a man’s treasure is, his heart is also, and where my head and my heart are, that is the best part of me, and what is outside is only the lower members, the feet. I am like Jacob’s ladder, the foot is on the earth, and the top is reaching to heaven, and the angels of God are coming and going all the time.” He said: “I think you have got a mighty easy job going around all the time peddling religion. I think I would like to do it.” I said: “Well, brother, you cannot do it, because you said you were not saved. How can you tell a man what you don’t know yourself?” He said: “You may go.” [*Laughter.*]

Dear friends, I want to tell you if a man wants to do mission work, he must have his feet planted on the Rock and be able to say something more than “I hope.” He must be able to say: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.”

What is the nature of our work? Well, friends, it is the sowing of the incorruptible seed of the

Word; it is sowing it by the printed page; it is sowing it by the spoken word, in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." I feel I am under a heavy debt to you, as Christian workers, and I owe it to you to give you my experience, that I may be helpful to you in your good work. I have found in the first place that I have got a big book to learn from. I learn not only from the written Word, but God's world is an object lesson, and in the varied occupations of life are many bright illustrations of divine truth. I have learned from ladies at their work. I saw a lady one day threading a needle, and I learned seven lessons from it. First of all, she took one needle in her hand at a time. Remember that. Second, she looked at it straight in the eye. [*Laughter.*] Third, she saw the eye was open, and fourth, she suited her thread to the size of the needle. Now friends, let the thread of your discourse always be suited to the eye of the understanding. Again, I saw another thing, she made it very pointed. [*Laughter and applause.*] And another point, fifth, I saw she made it very personal; she brought it in contact with the eye, and she put it in very gently. And sixth, she drew it through carefully, and seventh, when she had got it in she knotted a big knot in the end of the thread to keep it there. [*Laughter.*] Now, dear friends, I want to tell

you, always put a knot in the end of your thread, and don't let it slip.

I am just bringing you some bunches of grapes from our vinery. I want to tell you that the fish in the sea are as good as any that have been caught out of it, and my fish are very fresh, but they are the Lord's giving. I used to go fishing sometimes, as I say, but I caught nothing till the Master came and said: "Cast your net on the right side of the ship," and I have been trying to get the right side ever since.

I sometimes find the sailors are very amusing in their talk to me. One man said to me: "Mr. Bone, what brings you here? I think a man of your ability could be better employed than peddling these tracts." "Well," I said, "Jack, look here. Suppose you had a father over yonder in Ireland who had half a dozen boys, three in Canada and three in Ireland; the old man makes his will and then he dies. When the will is opened and read, it provides that each of the children shall share in the legacy. But the three boys over yonder say: 'Our brothers in Canada do not know anything about it, and what they don't know won't do any harm. We will keep it all to ourselves.' What would you think of these brothers?" "They would be mean fellows, sir." "Well, do you know our Elder Brother has died

and left such a wonderful legacy, and it is left in His will that those who know it shall make it known, and I am here to let you know that our Elder Brother's will is that you should come to Him and be saved. Don't you think it is right?" "Yes, sir; I had not looked at it in that light before."

Some strange fish get into the net. Sometimes we get the kind of characters that are sort of mongrel, who call themselves free-thinkers, infidels, and so on. One man came to me and said: "I don't want any of your tracts, I am an infidel." I said: "What made you an infidel?" He said: "Oh, it is that book—the Bible." I said: "How did that make you an infidel?" He replied: "Because the Bible contradicts science." "Will you let me know where it is?" I asked: "what does the Bible say that contradicts science?" "It says that the world is flat," was his answer. "Here is a Bible," I said, handing him one. "Find the place and let me see it." He put his hand up to his head, gave it a scratch, and said: "I forget where it is." [*Laughter.*] "You never knew," I said, "and I believe it is your head that is flat and not the world." [*Great applause and laughter.*] "Well," he said, "I want to ask you how it is that you ministers won't take up the challenge of Colonel Robert Ingersoll,

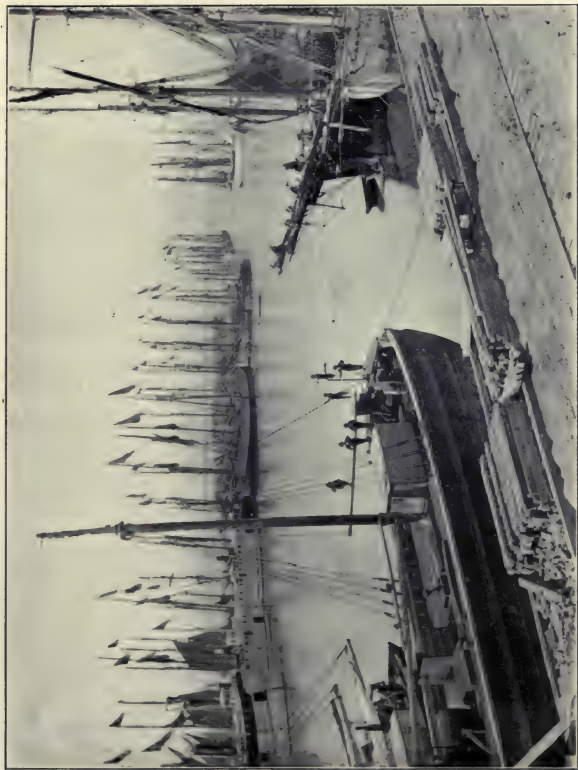
who has challenged you to meet him on the platform, and you won't do it. Can you tell me the reason why?" "Yes," I answered: "suppose you were going along the street and came to a donkey, and, as you passed by, it lifted its hind-quarters and gave you a kick [*laughter*], would you turn and give it a kick and have a kicking match on the street?" [*Laughter.*] "No, sir. I would go along and mind my own business." "Well," I said: "that is what the ministers are doing. [*Laughter.*] It does not pay to kick. You have read of Pharaoh, who was president of a kicking association [*laughter*], and he kicked against himself and against God, and at last he got kicked into the Red Sea and has not got out yet. [*Laughter.*] Now, friend, I do not believe in kicking." "Go about your business," he exclaimed, and I replied: "That is just what I am doing." [*Laughter.*]

I want to tell you, dear friends, our work is highly appreciated by the dear sailors. I go to them brimful of that glorious Gospel, and sometimes, when I go down in the little fore-castle, I say: "Boys, what will you have?" And they will say: "Oh! sing us a hymn." I say: "What will you have?" and they will reply: "Sing us what you like." And I start up and sing in my plain way:

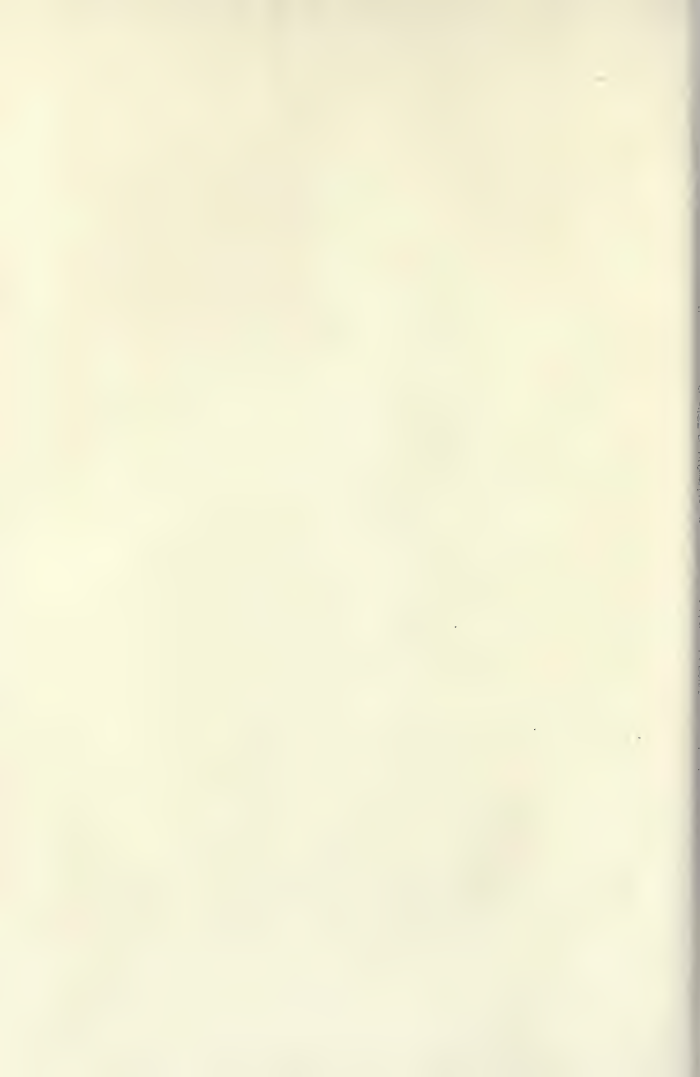
“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.”

Once I sang that hymn and I saw one sailor boy’s eyes moisten, and then the tears chased one another down his cheeks, and when I got through he said: “Sir, let me tell you when I learned that hymn. I was an innocent boy at my mother’s knee, and now I am a poor wanderer and nobody cares for me.” I said: “Dear brother, you have made a mistake. The Lord Jesus cares for you, and good people in Canada care for you, and I am here to express their loving care. Would you like me to pray for you?” “Yes, sir.” Now, dear friends, when you can get down on your knees before the throne of grace you get a direct cut to the heart. When we arose, he took me by the hand and said: “I thank God that He sent you here.” So you see these men appreciate it.

Again, we have a number of American vessels. Some of you may not be aware of the greatness and grandeur of our canal. We have now a depth of fourteen feet of water, and vessels pass through that carry from sixty-five to seventy thousand bushels of grain. Some of these are two thousand tons burden, having from twenty-two to twenty-seven men. Last summer there passed



The Entrance to the Welland Canal at Port Dalhousie



through three new crafts called whalebacks. They were covered all over with steel. I went on board, and whom should I meet there but an old canaller, who said: "Mr. Bone, I knew you ten years ago. Come aboard." I gave the men a little literature, and they were very pleased to get it. One day an American gentleman, the captain, said to me: "Sir, I suppose you come here because you believe we are men who have more temptations and fewer opportunities than you upon the shore. If that is your idea you are welcome. Come down into my cabin, and in a few minutes we will have dinner, and you shall have the best we have." When I was about to go, he remarked: "Look at my vessel and take her name, and when you see us coming, come on board and we will make you welcome."

I have learned another lesson, and that is to catch hold of present things to insert a Gospel truth. One day I heard a number of men talking together, and I said: "Boys, how would you like to spin the rope that you were to be hung with?" One of them said: "I would be a long time doing it." I said: "You are doing it now. Every day you are giving it another twist, and when it is long enough, and strong enough, you will be bound with it and it will hang you, for the sinner shall be bound with the cords of his own iniquity."

“We never thought of that, sir,” they replied. Then I asked: “Boys, where do you want to go?” “To Chicago,” was the answer. “That is where your vessel is going,” I said, “but where are you going?” There is no one who does not want to go to heaven, and, of course, they said they wanted to go to heaven. “I will soon find out,” I said. “I am going to give you a test. I am going to show you the way, the door, the steps unto the door, and your ticket, and then I will give you the time-table, and if you want to go you may start at once. [*Laughter.*] You will find the way in the fourteenth chapter of John and sixth verse. ‘Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.’ You will find the door in the tenth of John and the ninth verse. Jesus says: ‘I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.’ The steps are in Acts xx. 21; they are only two, ‘Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Then the ticket will give you a right to travel. How many are trying to steal their way to heaven without a ticket! You will find the ticket in the eleventh of Matthew, twenty-eighth verse. Jesus says: ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ Now, boys, for the time-table. That

is the difficult point with every sinner who does not know God's time-table. The devil's time-table is always behind time. The time-table is in second Corinthians, sixth chapter and second verse: 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'” One of them said: “I will think about it.” I said: “Now, Jack, if you had fallen overboard, and had gone down once and had come up again, and they threw a rope to you, would you look up and say: ‘I will think about it’?” “No, sir, I would grasp it.” “Now, friend, God has let down the life preserver within your reach; are you sure that it will be within your reach to-morrow?” “No, sir.” “Well, then grasp it now.”

Here, again, are half a dozen careless sailor boys, and I say: “Boys, let me ask you a question. What is the best thing for a man to do when in danger?” One said: “Keep calm.” Another said: “Put on a stiff upper lip.” [*Laughter.*] A third said: “Get out of it.” [*Laughter.*] I said: “Jack, I believe you are right. Get out of it. Let me ask you another question. Is there not danger in a man's neglecting from day to day his salvation, for at any moment he may pass the boundary line?” “Yes.” “Then what is your duty?” “To get out of it.” Then I take an-

other point. I say: "Boys, you are very fond of wages. I hear you strike for wages." You know that is a very tender point—the money question. "When I was a slave to Satan I found out that the wages of sin is death, and I did not care for his wages, so I came out on a strike, and I have been on a strike for forty-seven years and I am not going back." One said, "It is very well for you to be a Christian, for you are well paid for it." I said: "I am well paid three times. I am paid before I begin; I am paid when I am working, and I will be better paid when I am done. Now, how much extra do you get for swearing?" "Oh," he said: "we do that for nothing." "Ah, you don't; your wages for swearing are sure, but you don't want them. I want to ask you another question: Have you signed articles to go the round trip with the devil? If not, you can leave at any port, can't you? You see that railroad over there comes down from Lake Erie, and when they come down the grade, the engine switches off to the turning-table, and is turned to go up the grade again. God has put a turning-table right in front of you, and you can get on the turning-table and go up the grade. Many are going on the down-grade. It is easy to slip down, but it is terrible when you stop. 'The wages of sin is death.'"

Chairman: Time is up.

Voted that Mr. Bone be given all the time he wished of the time allotted to his subject.

Now, friends, I want to give you a little fruit. I do sympathise with that noble lady who is in that mission work in New York. My work is not confined to sailors. I visit the homes of the friendless, and homes of old people, the jails and hospitals, wherever I can find a poor sinner. A few years ago a dear lady in Kingston sent me after a wandering and prodigal daughter, whose name was Miriam. I went to see her, and her little home had every appearance of destitution; her countenance showed lines of deep grief and sorrow, and as I talked to her, I said: "Miriam, look here: a gentleman was in his garden and he saw a little bird picking up crumbs, and, as it came along by a bush, a cat sprang upon the little bird, and was about to kill it, when the gentleman stooped down and rescued the little bird and put it in the hollow of his hand, and kept it there till it had time to breathe. Then he said: 'Now I will see what you will do.' He opened his hand, and where do you think the bird flew? It did not go back to the place of danger and temptation, but flew the other way. Now, Miriam, you have been at a big bush of temptation, and the old enemy has got hold of

you and has been drawing you away to death, but now God's hand, through His dear ministering servants, has taken hold of you, and they have put their kind hands around you, and now where are you going? Will you go back to the temptation, or will you go away from here?" She said: "I think I will go away." Dear friends, my heart rejoiced this summer, when I got a letter from Miriam written from New York, and may I read from it for a moment or two?

My dear Friend and Brother: My husband and myself thank you very much for your kind Christian letter. Such a one seldom comes to us through the mails. God's mercy and patience have been wonderful in my salvation. He sought me over hills and valleys, from city to city, until I yielded to his "Come unto me, Miriam, and I will give you rest." At one time I thought I was past redemption, but my Christian friends thought otherwise. They prayed and wrestled till I accepted the invitation. And now after four years of experience, I can say that I would not give up Christ for all that is in the world. My home is now in New York. I now go to Florence Mission, and I walk six miles every day to learn to play, that I may play there. In these last years my health has been weak. I have lost two children,

who have gone to join the saints around the throne. Now all I have is Jesus. If I cannot work for Him I can write for Him, and though I have lain among the pots I shall be like a dove whose wings are covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold; silver the salvation, and gold the glory. All thanks to those noble Christians who have laboured for my redemption and salvation. We will never be able to measure out the gratitude we feel. I never knew what anxiety and trouble they felt, till I myself tried to shelter some lost sheep that had jumped over the fences and strayed away on the cold mountains of sin, and now I know what it is to worry over lost ones. I wish you could see me now, in my own comfortable though unpretentious home, the Bible on the table. On the tablet of my heart it is written: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." May the Lord bless you in your work.

Now, friends, I want to tell you that the Gospel is not to be put in by the ear only. The temple of the soul has four doors, two front doors and two side doors, and when I cannot get in by the ear I try to get in by the eye. Here are some of the beautiful cards [shows cards] that I circulate and sell among the sailors. I do not believe in giving everything away. A man respects and loves any-

thing he pays for. These are only five cents each, and I have sold in one season over two hundred; and a great variety of beautiful mottoes. Then we have literature adapted to the young. One of the great hindrances to our work is the corrupt literature, not only the foolish, but the filthy, pernicious, and obscene, and what can we do about it? I know of only one way to get darkness out of a room, and that is to let the light in. You cannot sweep it out or drive it out. You must let the light in. Said one young woman, "That is very dry reading of yours." I said: "It is very dry, and you know tea leaves are very dry, but don't you know that the way to get the strength out of them is to put them in the teapot? Now you have got a big pot on the top of your shoulders, and I want you to just put my leaves in it. [*Laughter and applause.*] You take them and try them." Another lady said: "I haven't time to read." I said: "Would you not have time to read a love-letter? I have got love-letters for you. They are the purest love. I have the Epistle of St. John, and his pen is dipped in love." She took them.

There is a great art in tract distribution. It is one of the fine arts [*Laughter*], and you have to be a little student of human nature. Look at the face of your tract and then at the face of the re-

ceiver. I went down into the fore-castle of a boat, into the kitchen, and found a young man peeling potatoes. I said: "Now, Jack, I have got your likeness here." "My likeness," he said: "let me see it." I handed him the tract, and the title was: "What a Rare Fool I have been." He said: "That is my likeness to a dot. May I read it?" [*Laughter.*] I said: "You can be peeling, and I will be reading." [*Laughter.*] I began to read, and after I had read the first page of it, he said: "If a man who knew my life had written it, he could not have given a more accurate description of it." I turned over a leaf, which was the second part, the Christian part. He said: "I have not got there yet." I said: "Then come to the turning point and get over. The best side is the other side." He took the tract, receiving it very gratefully. Another dear man said to me: "What brings you here? I don't want to be bothered with your religion." I said: "My brother, you haven't any religion to bother you. [*Laughter.*] I want to tell you that your sins will bother you. They are like eggs; they are very quiet now, but when they are hatched they come and make a great cackling around your ears. Sin is like chickens when they are hatched. They will always come back to roost where they were hatched."

Now let me give you one year's work. I have a motto that I want to give you. It is: "Always at it." I will give you one season's report. Of visits to vessels and barges I have made 942; visits to houses and factories, 543; gospel services through the summer in the hospitals, poor-houses, city parks, and other places, 73. In the winter time I travel as an evangelist, holding meetings and collecting for the Society, and from the month of January to the middle of last April I delivered 244 addresses. My average in the winter is from nine to ten addresses a Sabbath, and sometimes two or three during the week. I have visited forty-five towns and cities. I distributed during the season 18,355 Gospel and temperance tracts. I distributed 3,845 booklets and 3,700 magazines. Such is a brief notice of our work, dear friends. It is a glorious work, but I will never know till the great book is opened the result of it. My congregation is a floating congregation, and they are spread over the globe. I met with a man who took out a little Testament. He had been round the world and back again, and when I looked at the Testament I saw it was one I had given him, for my name was written in it. I feel for these men. Their lives are exposed to constant peril upon the lakes and, when they come on shore, the land sharks are waiting for them.

I say, "Dear boys, don't you know that Jesus loves you, and that I have come here to try to be a little tugboat to pull you into the harbour of peace?"

Now, dear friends, I thank God I am here, and when I get back from the meetings, perhaps, I will send you some little report. I am like Philip with the eunuch; I catch people in their carriages. I have a number who have been converted on the trains. You know the best time to talk to a man is when you get him alone. Try it, and you will find that God will bless you.

ANECDOTES AND QUAIN
SAYINGS

VIII

ANECDOTES AND QUAIN'T SAYINGS

No one could be long in the company of Thomas Bone without perceiving flashes of his ready wit. The quaint way in which he expressed himself showed his keen sense of humour. All who were brought in closest contact with him know that his wit was as abundant as his wisdom; indeed, full often, his wisdom found its most effective utterance in the witticisms which gained an entrance for the message which otherwise might have been rejected. Even in his most earnest and serious conversation he said quaint things which sparkled with a subdued and chastened humour. He regarded humour in speech as the mucilage on the postage stamp—something to make it stick; as the knot of the thread—something to keep it from slipping. He believed that it was often a Christian duty “to answer a fool according to his folly,” and by the holy use of sarcasm to turn the tables on the enemy. Like the old Puritans, whom he dearly loved, he had a fondness for “apt alliteration’s artful aid.”

On one occasion, when welcoming a new Presbyterian minister to one of the St. Catharines churches, Mr. Bone was called on to speak. He said: "I will address the members of the church. All church members may be divided into three classes, the *shirkers*, the *jerkers*, and the *workers*."

In a prayer-meeting talk he said "that he had fed so long on the sincere milk of the Word that it had turned to cream, and he was feasting continually."

On another occasion, speaking on the power of God to save and to keep, he made this statement, "I have no doubt Noah stumbled many a time after he got *in the ark*, but he never fell *out of it*."

His ready wit was never cutting or critical, but always helpful and encouraging. On one occasion he was coming home with a brother minister from one of the meetings during the week of prayer. It was winter, and they were walking on St. Catharines' proverbially slippery sidewalks. "Take care, Mr. Bone, or you will fall," was spoken in kindly caution. "Fall?" he replied, "I have not yet recovered from a dreadful fall I have had." "When was that, Mr. Bone?" "The fall that I suffered in old Father Adam," he replied.

One day, going along the canal with his bag of tracts and books upon his back, and his staff in his hand, he met three giddy girls, who asked him if he

could tell fortunes. "Tell fortunes! to be sure I can, that's easy," and taking out his Bible he seized the opportunity of telling them of the *fortune* of the righteous, and the *misfortune* of the sinner, in a manner that left his young hearers no means of escape.

"Do you know," he said on one occasion, "the best bank in which to invest your money? *The Canal Bank*. If you put your gold and silver there it will always bring full value, far better than in any chartered bank. I believe the Bank of the Canal is far more solid for the purpose of investment than any of them, and if you want to lay by treasure where it will be secure, you can invest in it. Moreover, you will find your treasure waiting for you 'over there.' I never met the man yet who said he regretted giving a dollar to this work. Just to-day an old sailor caught hold of my hand. If it had not been genuine *Bone* he would have squeezed it to a pulp. He out with his purse and gave me two dollars. It came so heartily and so genuinely it made my heart glad. If we want to keep in advance let us honour God. God says, 'Him that honoureth Me I will honour, but they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.'"

On another occasion, speaking on giving, he said, "Some give according to their *means*, and others according to their *meanness*."

Again, "Some are like sponges. To get anything from them you have to squeeze them. Others, like flint, must be hit, while others are like the honey-comb. Without pressure or compulsion they give to all good causes freely and cheerfully."

Sometimes when on his tours men whom he approached would say, "So you are begging again, are you?" To these his reply would always be, "Begging? No, sir. I am not begging, I am *giving*. I am giving you a fine opportunity to take part in a great work for the Lord. I couldn't give you anything better." This seldom failed to bring a response.

Going down Yonge Street early one winter's morning, he walked awhile with a workingman who carried his dinner pail. The snow was falling, and he said to the man: "The snow is beautiful; do you know what is whiter than snow?" "No," answered the man. "Well, the Psalmist says: 'Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.' When we are washed in the blood of Christ we are made whiter than snow."

Once while speaking seriously to a sailor on the canal, he referred to the statement Christ makes of standing and "knocking at the door," saying that He stood at the door of every man's heart knocking, desiring to enter. The man replied petulantly: "He never knocked at *my* door." "Yes,

He did," said Mr. Bone. "He is knocking at your door now, and *He is using my tongue for a knocker.*"

Mr. Bone loved his little joke as much as any man I ever met. On one occasion he came in at the close of a day's work, and as the children gathered around him, he said: "I saw a strange sight to-day on the main street—a man with a shining crown on his head and a palm in his hand." The children had seen the Salvation Army uniform, the Catholic priest in his gown, but to think that any man would walk down the street with a shining crown on his head, and a palm in his hand, was too much, so they asked: "Was he crazy?" "Oh, no," said Mr. Bone, "he only had a bald head (shining crown) and a palm (not a palm branch) in his hand, as you have in yours."

To express what religion might be to a man he said: "Dear friend, your dinner in your dinner pail is just like religion: when you have it outside it is a burden to carry and may be lost; but when you have it inside, it is a power, and no one can take it away from you."

On one of his tours, at a certain place he had been most hospitably entertained, and given the guest chamber in the highest part of the house, which was very cold, it being winter. His indomitable humour was seen as he came downstairs

next morning humming "From Greenland's Icy Mountains."

To a group of sailors he said: "Boys, do you know where we get our three cheers from?"

"No, Mr. Bone."

"Well, listen, and I will give you three good cheers. The first is the *cheer of forgiveness*, as our Saviour said: 'Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.' The second is the *cheer of companionship*. Jesus said: 'Be of good cheer. It is I, be not afraid.' And the third is the *cheer of victory*, and, boys, you know how men cheer when they win a game or a battle. The Captain of our salvation has won the victory over the great enemy of our souls, and says: 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,' and now we be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. These are the best three cheers I have ever heard."

He knew when to argue with a man, and when, by ridicule, to expose the folly of his position. One day a crowd of sailors met him at the locks, and one was determined to have some fun at the missionary's expense. He said: "Mr. Bone, you believe in the resurrection, don't you?"

"I certainly do," was the response.

"Well, I heard of a man who did not believe in God or the resurrection, and before he died had a tomb built of great blocks of granite, firmly held

together with cement. When he died his body was placed in this tomb and a huge stone put over all, and made fast with cement and iron bolts. Now, how are you going to get that man *up* on the morning of the resurrection?"

With a look of pity in his eyes, Father Bone patiently heard him through, and then in his kindest tone said: "Don't you worry about that. If he was the kind of man you describe, he is not *coming up*, but *going down*, and the stone will be no hindrance, but a help."

He could, when occasion demanded, administer a stinging rebuke. Crossing the lake one fine summer day on the "Empress of India," from Toronto, there were on board a goodly number of passengers. Amongst them was a well-dressed young man, rather foppish in style, in the middle of a group of young people, some of whom were ladies. In his conversation he was frequently heard to use profane language. Mr. Bone stood it as long as he could, and then, touching him on the shoulder, said: "Sir, may I ask you a question?"

"Yes, sir," he replied.

"Is it any mark of a gentleman to use profane language in company?"

He turned round rather sharply and said: "Sir, it's none of your business."

“It is my business,” said Mr. Bone. “A man has rights when he is travelling as well as when he is at home. Suppose you were travelling in a first-class carriage of a train and you took out your pipe or cigar and began to smoke, what would the conductor say to you when he came along? Would he not tell you that was not the place to do your smoking, annoying the passengers? If you *must* smoke, you must go to the smoking-car. Now, sir, let me tell you that I am as particular about my ears as about my eyes or my nose. If you have no right to annoy your fellow passengers with smoke, you have far less right to annoy them with profane language. If you *must* swear, why don’t you go to a quiet part of the boat, sit down and do your own swearing by yourself and not annoy other people with it? I never knew a swearer who was not a coward. He would not dare go and swear alone, with no one but God to hear him, as he would swear in company.”

The man made no reply, but no more of his profane language was heard during the trip.

Speaking of the passing years he likened them to milestones on life’s journey, only marked on one side, telling us how many we have passed, but nothing of what are to come. Of the purpose of life he used to say: “It is a good thing to make a

living; it is better to make a life—a life like a moral mirror, reflecting the beautiful character of Him who is altogether lovely.”

His readiness shone on all occasions. On receiving the gift of a silk umbrella, in 1900, he said: “It is appropriate, and suggestive, reminding me that I should ever be ready to extend my influence to shelter the defenceless, or to be used as a staff to support the weak, and that I should also be content, when not needed, to be set aside in a corner. My loved ones are like the ribs of the umbrella, all firmly attached to the centre, and to each other, true as steel, through weal or woe.”



FAMILY LIFE AND CLOSING
DAYS



IX

FAMILY LIFE AND CLOSING DAYS

It has been said that one of the truest tests of any man's life is the way he lives at home. When we are abroad among our fellows we are on our guard, but at home restraint and reserve are thrown aside. Rowland Hill used to say, in his quaint way, that he did not think much of any man's religion that did not make even the cat's and dog's life in his home better. When a man is a "saint abroad and a devil at home," there is something wrong with his piety. "Is such a man a Christian?" was once asked of Whitefield. "How should I know?" was the answer. "I never lived with him." Having spent many a day and night beneath the roof of Father Bone, I want to bear this testimony, that his Christlike character was nowhere more in evidence than in his home. Tupper sings:

"O happy lot, and hallowed, even as the joy of angels,
Where the golden chain of Godliness is entwined with
the roses of love."

In the home of Thomas Bone was found this happy lot. He was blessed with a good wife. She was a true helper in every sense, thoroughly in sympathy with all his work, ministering with loving thoughtfulness to his comfort, and strengthening his hands by prayer. Mr. and Mrs. Bone seem to have fitted into each other's lives and worked together like the blades of a pair of scissors, and in no small measure is the success of his long and fruitful ministry due to her. Every one who knew Thomas Bone wondered at his princely giving, but those of us who had a peep behind the scenes knew that there could have been no "princely giving" if there had not been a princess partner in the person of an economical housekeeper.

Mr. and Mrs. Bone were married in Haddingtonshire, Scotland, on October 8, 1847. God blessed them with seven children. George Jamieson, the eldest son, born in Scotland, was drowned at Port Dalhousie, Ont., in his thirteenth year. This was a sudden, heavy, and mysterious blow to the parents' hearts. Some seven years previous to this bereavement, they had been called to pass through their first great trial in the loss of their little babe, Alexander. Mr. Bone often referred to this event, and told how they watched the little life ebbing away, and how lonely they felt when it

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was gone, far from home as they were, strangers in a strange land.

On October 6, 1888, they were again called to pass through the deep waters of sorrow, in the death of their beloved son, Thomas Gardiner, at twenty-six years of age. In one sense Mr. Bone's brightest hopes seemed to centre in this son. He longed, like so many Scotch parents, to have a son in the ministry. In 1880 Thomas obtained his diploma as a druggist; but at length, deeply impressed that the Lord was calling him to other service, he gave up his position as a druggist, and entered upon mission work with his brother-in-law, Rev. A. E. de St. Dalmas, near Peterboro. At the end of the year he entered Woodstock College to prepare for the ministry. In the spring of 1887 he took charge, for the summer, of the mission field of Palmerston and Harriston. Owing to a cold which affected his throat, he was compelled to leave this field in July, much to the regret of the people, and was never again able to use his voice. Partially improved, he returned to Woodstock College, to resume his studies, but with the New Year his health declined, and he came home to wait his Master's will. In the fall of that year he passed peacefully away. These three losses did much to mellow the character of Mr. Bone, and to fit him for his wonderful ministry of comfort to the suffering.

In October, 1897, Mr. and Mrs. Bone celebrated their golden wedding. The celebration was an almost purely family affair. All the members were present except the eldest daughter, Mrs. R. D. Shanks, of Edinburgh, Scotland, who celebrated the event in her own home, sending a cablegram of congratulation. Many valuable gifts were received from a wide circle of friends. Among them was an enlarged crayon portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Bone set in a handsome gilt frame, from the members of the Queen Street Baptist Church, St. Catharines. Rev. J. E. Trotter made the presentation on behalf of the congregation, testifying to the esteem in which the honoured couple were held.

A very strong bond of affection united all the members of the family, and their home life was sanctified by the recognition of the gracious presence of God in all their experiences, joyous or sorrowful. When the family were gathered together exchanging gifts at New Year time, Mr. Bone's birthday, not a string was untied until they stood and sang, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and at the close of the day a circle was formed, and with hand joined in hand they sang, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love."

In February, 1899, Mrs. Bone contracted a



Mrs. Bone



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severe cold which seemed to undermine her strength, and although in the springtime she revived somewhat, the improvement was only temporary, and on July 14th she entered into rest. Three daughters and one son still survive: Mrs. R. D. Shanks, Edinburgh, Scotland; Mrs. F. Proctor, St. Catharines; Mrs. (Rev.) St. Dalmas, Dixville, Que., and Mr. Francis Carey Bone, of New Rochelle, N. Y.

Mr. Bone said many bright original things in his public addresses and talks with individuals; but some of his choicest thoughts were given to the members of his own family. In a letter written May, 1905, sending birthday wishes, he says:

“As we climb the heights of Beulah land, the air is purer and our vision clearer, so that we can see the land that is afar off, and behold the King in His beauty. You are travelling now on the Midland line of human life to that famous territory styled ‘old age.’ Do not let this alarm you, for I am in that territory now. As you ascend its hilltops, you will find observatories with windows all around. At one window you can look backward, and see all the way that the Lord hath led you, with its ‘Marahs’ and its ‘Elims.’ At another window, which looks on the present, you see ‘As thy day so shall thy strength be.’ At the window looking into the future, you may take the

telescope of faith, which is always at hand, and see, beyond the swelling flood, fields dressed in living green."

Thomas Bone was permitted to see a ripe old age. When he passed his eighty-first birthday he was still in active service, but the Board felt that he should not be asked, at that time of life, to bear unaided the full burden of the work, increasing as it was every season, and decided to give him an assistant. They recognised that it would be invaluable to any worker to have a season's training under one whose ripe experience fitted him to give instruction for this work which no college could impart, and therefore they sought for a helper. The choice fell upon Mr. James Judson, Kingston, a young man who had, in his own church and in other Christian organisations, given proof of his zeal in the Master's service, and the appointment was made.

Mr. Judson had heard Mr. Bone speak, and knew of him and his work, but up to the time of his going to St. Catharines, in the Spring of 1906, to begin work on the canal, they had never met. When they did meet they drew to each other at once, and throughout that season, so long as Mr. Bone's health permitted, like father and son, they worked together, "sowing the seed." These were great days for both, particularly for Mr. Judson,

who not only saw the work under the guidance of the one who had initiated it, but who caught the spirit of it in a remarkable way. They were days of inspiration to him. We are sure that no one will be more ready to acknowledge this than Mr. Judson himself.

When at last Mr. Bone was, by illness, laid aside, never again to return to the canal, it was a great comfort to him to know that the work, so dear to his heart, was going on without interruption. Nearly every night Mr. Judson reported to him, and in this way he was kept in touch with the field right to the last. I have heard Mr. Judson say that as he would tell of the day's incidents the old veteran's eyes would sparkle, his wonderfully expressive face light up, and every fibre of his body express animation as he seemed to live over again the familiar scenes. He literally died in the harness.

In his last illness his repeated request to those who entered his chamber was to plead with God for his restoration, that he might labour on in the Master's service. During the days of waiting, again and again he requested to have sung to him the "Glory Song," "Saved by Grace," and "The Sands of Time are Sinking," and his loved ones heard him repeating at different times the words of the hymns, "My Faith Looks up to Thee," and

“How Firm a Foundation.” There were two passages of Scripture specially precious to him at this time, 1 John iii. 2: “Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is”; and Eph. iii. 14-19: “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God.” A few hours before he passed away, a friend called and repeated the Twenty-third Psalm. As the verse “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death” was spoken, he repeated triumphantly “I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.” As each evening of the last three days approached, his request was, “Children, come and have worship before I go to sleep.” This was done. But on the evening on which he died, November 22, 1906, as they gathered in the room, all realised that it was the

last season of worship they would have with their father on earth, and that he would soon join the worshippers before the throne. Of this sacred hour, his daughter, Mrs. St. Dalmas, writes:

“Yea, we are rich in tokens rare
 Of God’s sustaining wondrous grace.
 His glories were revealed and shone
 In radiance sweet o’er father’s face.
 And as with tearful eye we dwell
 In memory o’er that precious sight,
 We see God’s promise verified—
 ‘At eventide it shall be light.’”

The report of his death was received with sincere expressions of sorrow in all parts of the Province. The daily papers referred to the great service he had rendered, and the influence for good he had been to the men on the Lakes. In a number of churches touching reference was made to his devoted life, while among the sailors his death was regarded by many as the loss of a personal friend.

On the day of his burial, November 26th, though the heavens seemed to weep in sympathy with the bereaved, a large company of the leading citizens of St. Catharines gathered in the Queen Street Baptist Church to pay their tribute of respect to one whom they honoured and loved. The Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society, for which he had laboured so faithfully and effi-

ciently, was represented by a large delegation. The service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. Bates. The Rev. J. H. Ratcliffe and the Rev. N. I. Perry, St. Catharines, and two former pastors, Rev. J. J. Ross, London, and Rev. Jesse Gibson, Toronto, also took part. J. K. Macdonald, Esq., the President, spoke for the Society. All paid high tribute to the beautiful character and devoted service of Mr. Bone throughout his long and wonderfully fruitful ministry, and expressed the great sense of loss felt by a very wide circle when the news had gone forth that he had passed away. All seemed to feel that a great and good man had fallen, and that the world should not soon look upon his like again.

These lines were learned by Mr. Bone in the later years of his life, and he loved to recite them to aged saints. He repeated them with his failing strength, just as he was crossing the river.

The Aged Pilgrim

“ I am kneeling at the threshold, weary, faint and sore,
I am waiting for the dawning, for the opening of the
door;

I am waiting till the Master shall bid me rise and come
To the glory of His presence, the gladness of His home.

“ A weary way I've travelled, 'mid darkness, storm and
strife,

Bearing many a burden, contending for my life;
But now the morn is breaking, my toils will soon be o'er,
I am kneeling at the threshold, my hand is on the door.

“ Methinks I hear the voices of the blessed as they stand
Sweetly singing in the sunshine of that unclouded land;
O would that I were with them, amid the shining throng,
Uniting in their worship, rejoicing in their song.

“ The friends that started with me have entered long ago,
Ah, one by one they left me to struggle here below;
Their pilgrimage was shorter, their triumphs sooner won,
How lovingly they'll hail me when my work, too, is done.

“ With them the blessed angels who know no grief or pain,
I see them at the portals prepared to let me in;
O Lord, I wait Thy pleasure, Thy will, Thy way is best;
I am wasted, worn and weary: dear Father, bid me
rest.”

REV. DR. ALEXANDER.

HIS LEGACY OF INFLUENCE

X

HIS LEGACY OF INFLUENCE

IT is the atmosphere a man carries with him which determines his influence. The most powerful influence exerted by any life is that which silently, secretly, often unconsciously goes forth. By reason of this, obscure, humble lives are sometimes rich in influence, while others much more favourably situated, and more widely known, count for little. "I cannot hear what you say for listening to what you are," was the reply one received from another whom he sought to win to his side. It explained much. Labour counts for little where the atmosphere of love does not abound.

Intimate friends of Mr. Bone know the atmosphere of love he carried with him. There was sunshine where he went. It was the sunshine which overflowed from a heart where Christ reigned, and which was, therefore, unbroken and uninterrupted. Who ever saw him ruffled? Who ever saw him discouraged? Who ever heard him complain?

Discouragements he must have had. Rebuffs were doubtless of daily occurrence, but he never showed by his manner that he had any acquaintance with either. He lived continually in the sunshine, and sunshine radiated from him. His message was always one of hope and cheer to those weary in life's conflict.

What was the secret of it all? Undoubtedly it was his close fellowship with God. He was pre-eminently a man of prayer. His whole life was a ministry of intercession. Like his Master, he rose a great while before it was day, to pray. He literally wrestled with God in the night watches. Like Israel of old he had power with men because he had power with God. Prayer was his strength; his very life and being. He knew how to use "the golden key that can open the wicket of mercy"; how to "touch the slender nerve that moveth the muscles of Omnipotence," as few men know. Like Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Daniel, and Paul of old, he was always ready to "stand in the gap, and hold the buckler of security over ungodly souls and an unthankful land." Few realise what a debt the world owes to such men. "The salt preserveth the sea, and the saints uphold the earth. Their prayers are the thousand pillars that prop up the canopy of nature." "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of

. . . for so the whole round earth is every way bound by gold chains about the feet of God." Prayer is the one power on earth that commands the power of Heaven. It is at once indispensable and irresistible.

Thomas Bone believed this, and cultivated the prayer habit. He was constantly in touch with God by the wireless telegraphy of prayer; he was for ever pulling on the rope of intercession, that causes the bell to be rung in Heaven. This habitual prayerfulness was something so wonderful that I wish to emphasise it as furnishing the true secret of his life. He believed, as he often remarked to me, that God had peculiarly called him to exercise the ministry of intercession. He frequently called my attention to the words of the sainted Frances Ridley Havergal, which seemed to him to be very precious.

“There are ministers unlettered,
 Not of Earth's great and wise,
 Yet mighty and unfettered
 Their eagle-prayers arise.
 Free of the heavenly storehouse,
 For they hold the master-key
 That opens all the fulness
 Of God's great treasury.
 They bring the needs of others
 And all things are their own,
 For their one grand claim is Jesus' name,
 Before their Father's throne.

“There are noble Christian workers,
The men of faith and power,
The overcoming wrestlers
Of many a midnight hour;
Prevailing princes with their God,
Who will not be denied,
Who bring down showers of blessing
To swell the rising tide.
The Prince of Darkness quailleth
At their triumphant way,
Their fervent prayer availleth
To sap his subtle sway.”

I remember the first occasion on which he stopped with me overnight. We had a long talk together over the Lord's work, and then we went to bed. I was awakened just after midnight by what seemed to be sobs and groans coming from Mr. Bone's room. I thought he must be ill, and went to his room. Gently pushing open the door, I saw at once that I was intruding into the audience chamber of Heaven, into the very Holy of Holies. There knelt the good men with his tear-stained face lit up like the face of an angel, pleading with God. He spent many a night in my home since then, and I could always hear him breaking forth in the darkness “with strong crying” unto God. His intercession continued “night and day with tears,” for the thirty-two years I had the honour of knowing him.

Nor am I alone in this testimony. Others have repeatedly called my attention to the same fact. A lady at whose house he spent many a night told me that one morning her servant came down with an expression of astonishment on her face, and said, "I believe that old man was praying all night; anyway, he was praying when I went to sleep, and when I awoke this morning he was still at it." It was with him as with the devoted John Welch, of whom Fleming says that he used to make his nights such Gethsemane seasons that his family had often to remonstrate with him for losing his sleep, when he would reply: "Ah, but I have the souls of three thousand to answer for, and I know not how it is with many of them."

Through the day also as he went about his work, he was always praying. If he met, as he often did, with sneers, rebuffs or discouragements in his work of trying to win men, or to collect money for the sailors' mission work, he would gird up the loins of his mind with a silent prayer, and then press on undaunted. "Man!" he would say, with glowing face, "a little talk with Jesus takes away the sting, and makes you strong to meet the next one." If he was left alone, perhaps while waiting for dinner, he would refresh his soul with a few verses from the Bible, and then close his eyes and lift up his heart to God in prayer. Such was for

years, I believe, the unbroken tenor of his life. It furnishes us with the secret of his power.

He had the habit of writing down in a little book the names of those with whom he talked, or for whom he was asked to pray, and when he went to his room he remembered each case before the Lord. Often when special blessing came down on my own work, he would meet me at the close of a service, with a glowing face, and say "Man! I knew it was coming. I had great liberty in the closet this morning when I was praying for you." Blessed is the minister who has such an intercessor at the court of the King.

He left a rich legacy in the influence of his life. That lives on. It was an influence widely exerted, not only because his work brought him into contact with large numbers of people, but because it went out along various lines. He reached many through his addresses. He had the ability to express himself in striking and original ways which at once arrested attention and impressed the memory. For example take the following:

"I want to give you four phases of the Christian life to-night. Every Christian should be like the New Jerusalem—four square. I want to give you four words to-night, and I will put them into a form that you can remember. I am going to give

you two pairs of mits, and you can take them with you and wear them whenever you like. The first mit is 'admit,' the second is 'submit,' the third is 'commit,' and the fourth is 'transmit.'

"The first thing any poor sinner has to do is to *admit* the King of Glory, who knocks at the door of his heart, and says: 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him.' Now I will tell you what you will get. Turn to John 1-12: 'But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.' Friends, come into the royal family. But you can only come by receiving the King of Glory in your hearts.

"Second, *submit* to the King of Glory. The Lord Jesus comes always to take the place of leader and commander. When I was coming to this country forty years ago, as we drew near New York, the pilot came out in his little boat, and the first thing the captain did was to admit him, and the second was to submit to him. He gave him charge of the vessel, and everybody from the captain down had to submit to the directions of the pilot. Dear friends, when you have Christ, as pilot, on board, He will bring you safe to the port of Glory.

"Third, *commit*. 'I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto

Him.' Friends, the Lord Jesus is the best banker; for He will not only give you security, but He will give you interest, yea, compound interest. I made an investment fifty years ago, and I have been living on the interest since. It is getting bigger every day, and I have never touched the principal. It will all be there for me when I get to glory.

"The last mit is *transmit*. That is, let the light out. Some Christians are like the picture of that moon on the blackboard this afternoon, a little piece of light and a great piece of dark. We want to be like the full moon, looking always to Jesus, and then the light will shine upon the dark world, or be transmitted. I would like you to be like that little boy's mother who, when his teacher asked him if he could tell the meaning of transparent, said 'Yes, sir.' 'What is it?' 'My mother is transparent.' 'How do you make that out?' 'My father says he can see through her.' Now we want to be transparent Christians, that the world may see, through us, the Lord Jesus. Oh, dear friends, be transmitting. Now, as you go away from this convention, gather up all you can here and go home and give it out, and I will tell you what you will find. The more you give away the more you will have. Let the Lord Jesus get the use of your tongue and use it wherever you

have an opportunity. What you sow in tears you shall reap in joy.

“ My earnest prayer is that we may all be Christians, and that we may be alike on Sunday and on Monday, alike in the kitchen and in the prayer-meeting. I don't like these Christians that are like a piece of carpet, only pretty on one side, and when you turn it over it is all blank. May the Lord bless you, and may to-night's meeting be a wonderful success.”

Truth expressed in such form is not soon forgotten.

Many have been influenced by his writings. He believed that the pen, as well as the tongue, could be a God-honoured instrument for winning souls to Christ, and confirming faint-hearted believers in the truth. His two tracts, “ Hunting for Heirs ” and “ The Two Commercial Travellers,” have been helpful to large numbers, and greatly blessed. They have passed through several editions and are still in constant demand.

His letter-writing, however, has been even more fruitful. By means of letters he reached a very wide circle. Individuals with whom he conversed were written to, to clinch the nail driven by conversation; and frequently he addressed those whom he had never seen. He was a most indefatigable

letter-writer. I suppose that in his long Christian life he must have written thousands of letters. He said to me once, when talking over this matter, "I was saved to serve, and when I was first converted I gave myself wholly to the Lord, saying with Paul: 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' He soon showed me that consecration not only included the voice and the purse, but the pen as well. I prayed year after year that God would make me the means of saving souls, and He has answered that prayer by guiding my pen in writing the right message." He has left behind hundreds of letters from those who have been blessed by his correspondence. Letters are there from young and old, from far and near. Individuals themselves, who have been helped, have written to thank him for the timely message which reached their hearts, and grateful parents on both sides of the Atlantic, whose wandering sons he has found and led to the Saviour, have written to bear testimony to the fruitfulness of his work. Many whom he never saw have felt the power of his life and are ready to acknowledge their great indebtedness.

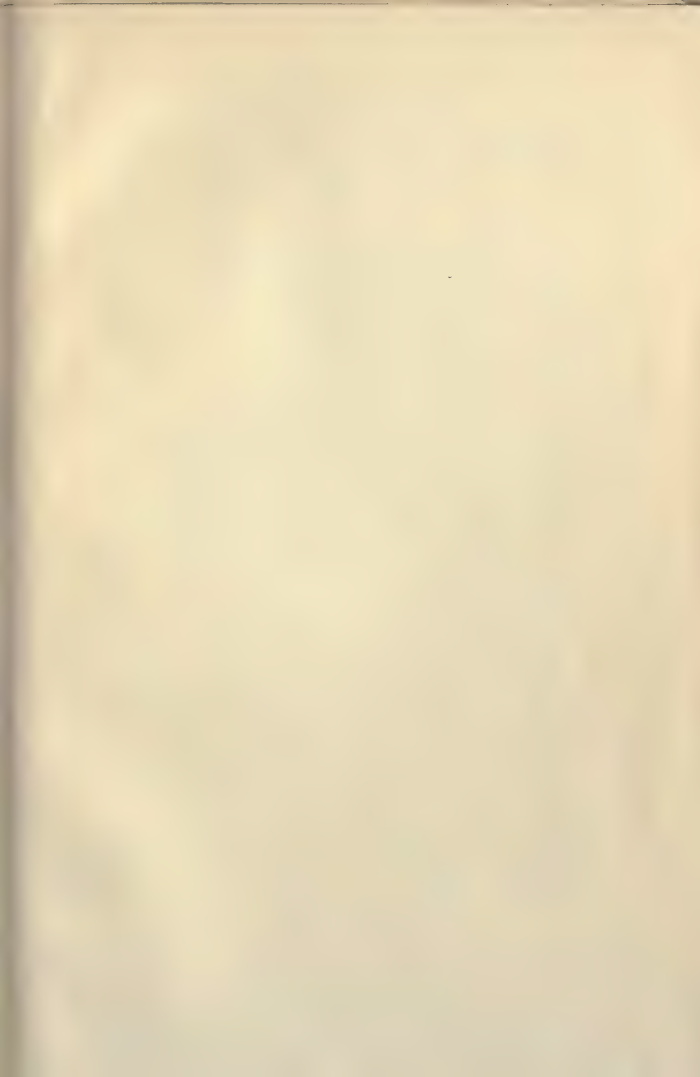
His influence was always in support of every movement which had for its object the uplifting of the fallen, the amelioration of suffering, the destruction of evil, and the establishment of right-

ousness. When the question of opening the canal on Sunday was mentioned, he did his utmost both with voice and pen to stir up public opinion against it, and although not wholly successful his efforts undoubtedly helped to save as much of the day as is preserved.

But, after all, the strongest influence of his life was that which emanated from his personality, and which went forth in his personal touch with men. How he loved to speak to men of the Saviour! One of Toronto's leading business men says: "His delight in being able to speak a personal word for Christ, was one of his most remarkable qualities, and the 'word in season' seemed to be always ready. The last time I saw him was on Yonge Street, just after he arrived on the steamer from St. Catherines, and after a few words of greeting he said: 'Man! I had a fine time coming over to-day. A dear fellow was all alone in the cabin, and I soon found out he was not a Christian, but before I got across I had my lasso about him.'" That is characteristic of the man. More than any other person I ever met he had the faculty of getting into touch with men in all walks of life, and making spiritual things very real to them.

The real influence of such a life is beyond one's power to estimate. Like a refreshing stream it flows on and on, dispensing blessings on every

hand, and gathering volume as it goes. Something of its scope may be seen in lives stimulated and inspired, homes brightened and sanctified, hearts strengthened and purified, and talents unreservedly consecrated to the service of God, all over the Province. Something of what it means we know, but the greater part no man knows. Some have written of blessing received, and others have spoken; but the many to whom he brought sunshine and cheer, and to whom the influence of his life came as a great benediction, have never declared it. Enough is known, however, to stir our hearts with gratitude, and to make us devoutly thankful to God for His great gift to our land of this man of large heart and great soul; whose tireless industry and unwearying devotion have been a constant rebuke to indolence and indifference; whose life has been "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" to hundreds beset by sin and overwhelmed by evil; whose unfaltering faith has been an inspiration and a strength to many on the verge of despair; and the light of whose life has guided many a shipwrecked mariner on life's tumultuous sea into the harbour of peace. To many the Christian religion will always be a more real and vital thing, because they have known Thomas Bone.



The Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society

102 Yonge St., Toronto

This Society, undenominational in character, exists for the purpose of supplying attractive Christian literature to the people of Canada. While working amongst all classes it gives particular attention to those deprived of the privileges which mean so much in the life of every man—the home, the church, and Christian society.

It works amongst the sailors on the Great Lakes—the only Society in Canada which does—of whom there are considerably over 25,000. For months at a time these men know nothing of home life, and are cut off from all church privileges.

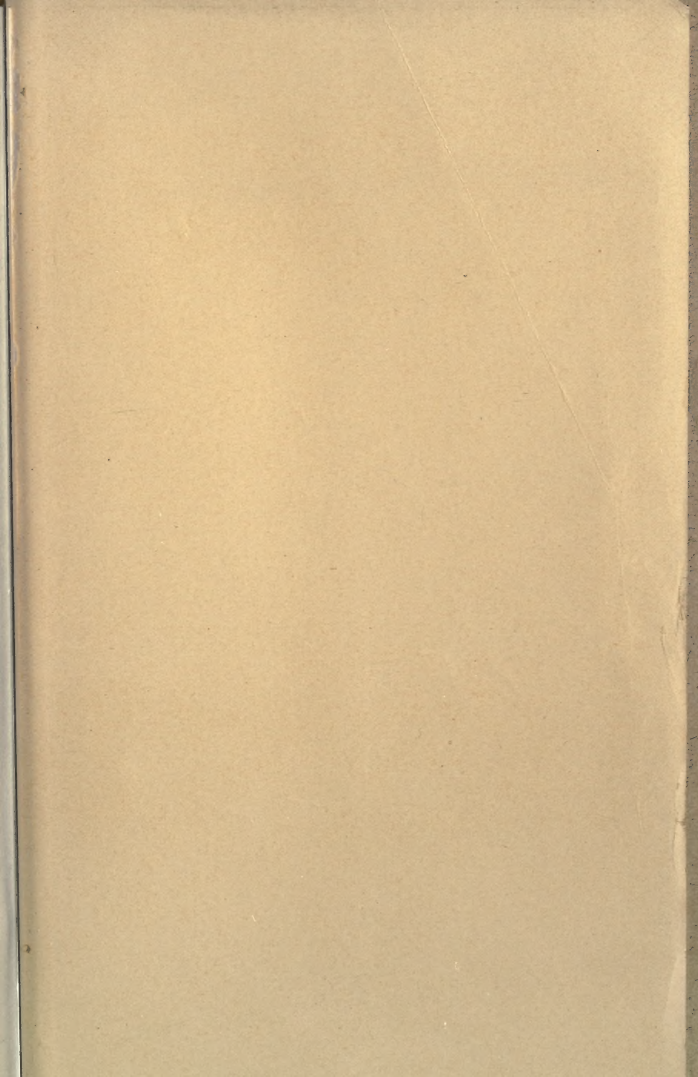
It brings attractive and helpful literature to the thousands of lumbermen, miners, and railway construction men, isolated in their camps in the wilds of our Dominion.

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