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WESLEYAN METHODIST MEMOIRS IN 1823

Compiled and Edited
By Duane V. Maxey

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INTRODUCTION

This publication is a compilation of the 24 "Memoirs" and biographical sketches published in the 12 monthly issues of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine during the year 1823. Most of these were named "memoirs," but not all. However, in this compilation I have given them all this name. The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine from which these memoirs were taken was published by Wesley's Methodist followers in England, and the name Wesleyan Methodist should not be confused with a former denomination in America of that name.

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1

A MEMOIR OF JOHN BROWNELL

By Thomas Jackson

From the January -- April, 1823 issues of
The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine

This very excellent man, and useful minister of Jesus Christ, was born at Altringham, a small market-town in Cheshire, on the 22nd day of January, 1771. From his childhood, he was of a light and trilling disposition; and this continued to be his besetting sin, till divine grace wrought an effectual change in his spirit and temper.

When he was about eight or nine years of age, he was severely afflicted with the small pox. After lingering a considerable time with that dreadful distemper, he recovered his health, but was utterly deprived of sight. He continued upwards of three years in a state of total blindness, when one night his father dreamed, that if he would take his son to a certain well in the neighborhood, and wash his eyes in the water, his sight would be restored. In the morning he arose took his child by the hand, and proceeded with him to the well; and after repeatedly washing his eyes, and filling some bottles with the water, returned home. A second visit was paid to the well, for the same purpose, after which the youth was able to distinguish the light of some red coals on the hearth.

This encouraged him and his anxious parents to persevere, and in a little while his sight was perfectly recovered. Whether this salutary effect was produced by any mineral qualities in the water, I know not; but in the means by which the father was led to adopt this mode of cure, there seems to have been a striking display of that kind providence which watches over men in general, and especially over those who are, or will be, the heirs of salvation, and are designed for extensive usefulness in the Church of God.

At an early period of life, Mr. Brownell was the subject of religious impressions; and at length his conviction of sin became so deep as to occasion many sleepless nights, and often to extort from him the penitential prayer, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake thou for me." In this situation he was noticed by a religious friend in Manchester, who kindly invited him to a class-meeting among the Methodists. He continued his attendance for some time, seeking the pardoning mercy of God with a broken and contrite heart, and with daily prayers and tears, till one evening, while uniting with the other members of his class in singing these impressive lines,

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind; --

he was enabled to believe on the Object of his worship, was immediately justified from the guilt of all his past sins, and found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The love of God was shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which was given unto him; the power of sin was broken; that fear which hath torment was banished from his mind; the world lost all its charms in his estimation; and, in a word, old things passed away, and all things became new. From that time he cordially joined himself to the Methodist society, and became a steady and exemplary Christian.

Early in the year 1794, under the constraining influence of zeal for his Savior's glory, and compassion for the perishing souls of his fellow-men, Mr. Brownell entered upon his career of evangelical labor as a Local Preacher in the Stockport Circuit, where he was generally acceptable and useful. Having employed his Sabbaths for several successive months in preaching the gospel of salvation to the poor, in the more neglected villages of his own neighborhood, he received what he considered to be a providential call to carry the same glad tidings of peace to those outcasts of men, the Negroes in the West India Islands. Accordingly, he bade adieu to his Christian friends in Cheshire, voluntarily sacrificed the endearments of kindred and home, and left Stockport for London, in November, 1794. He now began to keep a regular journal of his religious experience and observations. The following pious ejaculations form the introduction to this document:

"O Lord, I am launching forth into a world with which I have little acquaintance. Be thou my Protector and Guide. Enable me to make such remarks upon the things which may present themselves to my view, as will be conducive to the welfare of my soul. Let me see much of thy goodness; acknowledge thy preserving care; always enjoy a sense of thy love; be useful to mankind in life; happy in death; and crowned with glory everlasting."

Mr. Brownell arrived in London on the 4th of November, and on the following day went to examine his birth on board the Antigua, then lying at Deptford, by which it was intended that he should sail to the place of his destination. On the 12th of the same month he writes,

"I have spent my time in this great city, with as much quiet and retirement early, as if I had been in a desert. I am lost in the multitude of people by whom I am surrounded, and admire the greatness of that God, who can take care of all these creatures, and supply their wants."

Two days afterwards, he and Mr. Dumbleton, another Missionary, were ordained, which he describes as a season of great solemnity; -- on the 15th of November they arrived at Portsmouth; -- and on the 17th, sailed from Portsmouth-Point to Mother-Bank, where, he says, "we got on board our ship, bound for Antigua, joined our fellow-passengers, and wished each other a prosperous voyage. After being detained by contrary winds for several tedious weeks, not far from the British shore, they encountered a dreadful gale from the east, on which occasion Mr. Brownell writes as follows:

"It lasted three days, and reduced almost every ship to a wreck. Two or three were entirely lost, and nearly the whole of them parted with their cables. We lost two anchors, and the violence of the waves broke our tiller four times. The ship sprung a leak, and our Captain, with despair in his looks, informed us, that he expected we should run ashore. I do not imagine, that any thinking man could be in such a situation without fear. To me it was exceedingly awful. The sea roared, and dashed over the ship's bow; the wind whistled through the shrouds; the ships belonging to the fleet were tossed about like corks on the surface of the water; the surge lashed the rocky shore, and returned white like cream; the men labored incessantly at the pump; the ship cracked as if she would fall in pieces; guns were fired as signals of distress in all directions, from the ships belonging to the fleet; and all this was heightened by the extreme darkness of the night. I was unwilling to die; having set my heart upon preaching the gospel to the Negroes in the West Indies, my bosom swelled with hope, and the prospect of contributing to the happiness of my fellow-creatures rejoiced my soul; and with these feelings the fear of death was associated. I trembled and prayed until my spirit failed within me, and then went into the great cabin, and desired my fellow-passengers to unite with me in supplication to God. They were almost dead with fear, and readily consented. We all kneeled down, and pleaded with God for deliverance like men under sentence of death; and then parted to our respective cabins, scarcely expecting to see each other's faces again till the last trump shall sound. I soon felt a strong confidence in that God whom the winds and seas obey, that he would deliver us. About ten o'clock on that evening the wind changed, and I praised God most of the night. Glory be to God for all his mercies. May my life be wholly devoted to him!"

After these disasters the ship in which Mr. Brownell sailed weighed anchor, and stood for Plymouth, where they arrived in safety; their last cable being nearly cut in two. At Plymouth Mr. Brownell and his companion found in the Rev. William Palmer, who was then stationed at that place, an affectionate and sympathizing friend. Having also experienced much kindness from several members of the society during their stay, our Missionaries again embarked. Of their voyage, their arrival in the West Indies, and the commencement of Mr. Brownell's missionary labors there, some interesting particulars will be found in the following extracts from his Journal.

"We left Plymouth," says Mr. Brownell, "on the 16th of February, 1795, with a fair wind, after a delay of seven weeks, mostly spent in great anxiety and trouble. The painful circumstances in which I have been placed, have nevertheless been to me a school of great instruction. I have acquired a greater knowledge of human nature, and especially of my own heart. I feel myself to be comparatively destitute of the requisite qualifications for a missionary life. My knowledge is very scanty; and my mind ever ready to start aside from suffering. Alas! how small is the portion of grace that I possess! O my God, I am ignorant and vile; be thou my teacher, and wash me thoroughly from my sin.

The last place of British ground my eyes beheld, was Deadman's Point. The grand fleet, consisting of thirty-six line-of-battle ships and ten frigates, with about four hundred sail of merchantmen, and their respective convoys, present a truly magnificent appearance upon the surface of the water. For the first four days we had a fair wind, but in crossing the Bay of Biscay I was deadly sick. Never did I experience anything equal to this. A brisk gale, and a heavy head sea, almost took away the little life that remained. I lay in my cabin while the sea washed in upon me, and was unable to rise for several hours. Yet, amidst the roaring of the wind, the tossing of the ship, and the dashing of the waves, I have had some delightful prospects and anticipations of the great work which the Lord will carry on in the West Indies by the instrumentality of the Methodist Missionaries. My soul seems so deeply interested in that work, and so intent upon its advancement, that I think I can consent to live and die among that people, whom I have never yet seen. O blessed Jesus, may my zeal for thy glory be tempered by knowledge, and equal in its intensity to that of the first propagators of Christianity.

"March 2d. -- We have a delightful day. The wind and weather are fine, and we are recovering our health and spirits. How exquisite is the enjoyment of a calm after a storm. We forget past dangers in present comforts; our disagreeable sensations vanish with the events that caused them, and hope prompts us to believe that our severest troubles are past. On the 5th, we had a clear view of the Island of Palma. It appeared at first like a black cloud in the horizon; but when we came nearer, we found that its top was higher than the clouds. The sea was smooth, the sky clear, a gentle breeze wafted us toward our destined port, and all were happy.

"March 30th. -- We anchored in Carlisle Bay, in the Island of Barbados, after a passage of six weeks and one day. I felt strong sensations of joy as we drew near the shore. When we landed at Bridgetown, I was ready to wish myself at home again. The oppressive heat of the burning sun, the total absence of cleanliness from the half-naked Negroes, the offensive effluvia that issued from them, and the death-like appearance of many of the white people, all concurred to inspire me with feelings of discouragement. We soon found the Methodist Chapel, where Mr. D. received us kindly. We stayed all night, and addressed an exhortation to the people who were assembled together.

"March 31st. -- We went aboard our ship again, and saw a large shark, and two whales, play in the water very near to us. The shark raised his head to seize some offal which we threw to him, and presented a terrific appearance. These formidable animals spouted up the water into the air, which, at a distance, appeared like smoke.

We left Barbados on the first of April, and on the third, arrived at Martinique, which has lately come into the possession of the English. This day being Easter Sunday, we went on shore at Port Royal, and visited the Popish Church. Here a new scene was presented to our view. The holy water at the entrance; the ringing of bells during service: the chanting of the prayers; lighting candles in the day time; praying in the Latin tongue; elevating the host; and several quick marches, which were played by the English band, all seemed strange things to me. We preached both on Sunday night and Monday morning, in a large building occupied by invalids and soldiers' wives. The men formed part of a regiment of free Blacks, who had been enlisted in America; and several of them are members of our society. These poor creatures did truly feed upon the word. They wept

aloud for joy. They had left their native land at the conclusion of the war, and had been wandering from island to island ever since. Several of their comrades had been killed in different engagements.

"On the sixth we arrived at St. Pierre's. This is reputed the finest town in all the Caribbean Islands: streams of water run murmuring down the streets; the shops display great brilliancy and taste; and every object reminds one of wealth and affluence. One circumstance occurred in this place, which we shall not soon forget. There was a heavy swell of the sea beating against the shore. We had a large boat, and only two ignorant boys to manage it: and as soon as we approached the beach, we were dashed against it by the surf, and our boat broken. We escaped with a wetting, by which our clothes were spoiled. But our Admiral appearing, and a gun being fired as the signal for our departure, the ships began to get under weigh. Having had the misfortune to lose our companions, we could not make the people understand what we wanted. We searched all around for a boat with the greatest anxiety; but every one was deaf to our entreaties, till a Negro who spoke the English language offered us a little coble. It was too small to allow me and my companion to sit down. In this I seated myself, apprehending no danger. My friend also stepped in; the Negro then put it down into the water, when it instantly filled, and we had a very narrow escape. We leaped into the water, and scampered up the beach; and afterwards got off in the boat belonging to our ship.

"On the 7th, we left St. Pierre's for Antigua, passed by Guadeloupe, and arrived at the place of our destination late at night. Mrs. Baxter, the excellent wife of the missionary there, received us with great kindness. On the 11th, Mr. Baxter came from the country, and received us as an honest Englishman receives his friend. He gave us a hearty welcome, introduced us to many persons who were friendly to the mission, took us into the country, and showed us the kindest attention.

"May the 2d, 1795, I arrived at the island of Nevis, and was affectionately received by the society, who are a few poor and persecuted people. The Planters would not permit any Class-meetings to be held on their estates; those only, therefore, who met in town could be considered as in society: the number of such persons was less than one hundred. The regular contributions amounted to about two dollars per week, out of which I was to keep my horse. The quarterly collection was about four pounds tea shillings; nor was there much prospect of its augmentation. A small apartment, about ten feet square, served as a parlor, a chamber, a storeroom, a study, &c. I felt my need of courage, of fortitude, and of patience; but my God supplied them all.

"March 3d. -- I preached to a small congregation and began my mission by preaching rest to the soul, from Heb. iv. 9. In the afternoon I endeavored to number the benefits which the Lord hath bestowed upon us. -- O Lord God, I perceive that this is a land of wickedness. Sin stalks abroad like Goliath, rears its head, and sets even thee at defiance. Give me wisdom to speak in thy name, and accompany the word with convincing and saving power.

"June 12th. -- I have time to breathe, and to examine the state of the people by whom I am surrounded. If St. Paul had lived seven years in this place, he could not have given a more exact description of the character of many of the inhabitants than he has done in the following words:

'For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' (2 Tim. iii. 2-4.) Ignorance, stupidity, and wickedness, compose the character of the uninstructed Negro.

"Sept. -- I have now been engaged in the duties of my mission for the space of four months, and find that my labors are severe, especially in a climate like this. I preach, or deliver exhortations, twenty-one times in every fortnight; besides riding several miles in the burning sun, and often during the heavy dews of the night. I see that every principle of nature must be laid on the cross, and that contempt from superiors, and insults from others, must be patiently borne.

"Sept. 24th. -- I am now afflicted with an intermitting fever, which has almost taken away my remaining strength. My inability to travel from home has given me an opportunity of observing the conduct of the members of our society, and of forming a more correct estimate of the good which has hitherto been done in this place by missionary exertions. The best of our members cannot, as yet, be considered established Christians. [The reader will recollect that this was written 27 years ago, and at a very early period of the Mission. [Editor.] Their religion seems to consist in the observance of the Sabbath, attendance upon the public worship of Almighty God, a conviction of right and wrong, and some experience of the drawings of the Holy Spirit. These points, however, are great when we reflect upon the degraded state of these people before they heard the truth, the small number of Missionaries that have been employed in this extensive work, and the numerous difficulties they have had to encounter. Alas, how often do worldly customs, and maxims, and persecution for Christ's sake, like a rapid current, carry away much of the good which has been done, and lead the people back again to their former practices and habits!

"Dec. 19th. -- We had this day a smart shock of an earthquake, which lasted nearly a minute. It seemed to threaten us with destruction: but by the tender mercies of God we are spared a little longer. The inhabitants were much terrified; but the impression soon wore off. The President proclaimed a day of public thanksgiving, and led the people to the Church to acknowledge the divine goodness in our preservation."

During the earlier years of Mr. Brownell's ministry in the West Indies, the Wesleyan mission in those islands was but in its infancy; and many persons, actuated by merely secular principles and motives, regarded the instruction of the Negroes in the truths of Christianity as a hazardous experiment and viewed the men who were employed in this laudable undertaking with the greatest suspicion and alarm. In various places, therefore, the missionaries had to contend with the most determined opposition. The field which they were called to cultivate was very extensive. On every hand they saw multitudes of immortal beings perishing in ignorance and sin; and, in a climate unfriendly to European constitutions, they were often impelled, by zeal for the glory of God, and compassion for the souls of men, to exertions which nature was unable to sustain. Their wants, in many instances, were very imperfectly supplied; and, when laid upon the bed of sickness, they had few friends to alleviate their sorrows by sympathy and kind attention. The following paragraphs, extracted from Mr. Brownell's journal, and descriptive of his labors and sufferings, will be read with lively emotion by every pious and benevolent mind:

"Feb. 1796. -- I am now severely afflicted with the fever and ague, and for six or eight weeks have been so ill, as to be seldom able to go out of doors. During this time I have indeed had fellowship with Christ in his sufferings. My afflictions have been very great. I was far from home, a stranger in a wicked country, had few friends, and scarcely any money to procure the necessaries of life. Having no house, I frequently lay all night in the chapel, groaning under the pressure of pain and sickness, without a single attendant, or any kind of nourishment except cold water. However, time Father of Mercies has not forsaken me, but has comforted me in my distress, and at length raised up friends who minister to my necessities. O Lord, remember them for good! -- The society falling off, for want of the means of grace, I have been repeatedly compelled to preach before I was half recovered; nay, sometimes with the fever so strong upon me, that it was with difficulty I could stand in the pulpit."

These attempts to preach in the time of sickness, to which Mr. Brownell was prompted by the intense interest taken by him in the prosperity of God's cause, occasioned several relapses; so that, for the space of six months, he was unable to proceed with regularity in the labors of his mission. Supported, however, by the consolations of that religion, which he was so anxious to propagate among the sable objects of his charge, he says,

"I know not that during this time I was ever disposed to murmur, or once thought of quitting my station. As my days, so was my strength. The Lord gave me fortitude in the time of trial, and often caused me to rejoice in his love. May my lengthened life be devoted to his glory!"

In a letter addressed to Dr. Coke, dated Nevis, April 1, 1796, Mr. Brownell further says,

"Had it not been for the kindness of Mr. Frith, and of Mr. Washington's family, (who took me into the country, and paid me every degree of attention for six weeks), I had possibly been in my grave long ago. But I am far from repining at those afflictions. I have been educated nearly all my life in the school of adversity, and therefore her rugged face has become familiar to me. I bless God that I ever was sent to this place, to approve myself a Minister of Christ in hunger and thirst, in sickness and health, in perils and dangers from various quarters. I am determined to spend and be spent in time Lord's service. Our society is, at present, in a flourishing condition."

Whether those persons, by whose instrumentality Mr. Brownell's life was prolonged, are themselves now living, I am unable to ascertain; but their affectionate attention to this afflicted and destitute Minister of the Lord Jesus shall not be forgotten by Him who hath said, "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." (Mark 9:41.) Christian missionaries are not always able to recompense their friends and benefactors: but those generous persons shall receive their reward at the resurrection of the just.

During his residence in the West Indies, Mr. Brownell experienced many signal interferences of divine providence. One of these, which occurred in the month of May, 1796, he thus describes:

"Yesterday, being at the estate of John Taylor, there fell in the afternoon a heavy shower of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning. The Negroes took shelter in a wind-mill, the top of

which was struck at the time by a large ball of fire. The destructive fluid shivered the neckbeam, descended among the terrified Negroes, killed two of them on the spot, and burnt, scorched, or wounded thirty more. It also penetrated into the dungeon, where was a small cask of gunpowder, and involved Mr. Taylor, his lady, and me, in the sulfurous flame. Had the gunpowder taken fire, we should in all probability, have lost our lives. The cries of the Negroes were dreadful beyond description; and it would have pierced the hardest heart to have seen many of them, to all appearance, dead with fear, and others who had been deprived of the use of their limbs. One of them was so severely burnt, that she afterwards died. The day after this melancholy occurrence, I buried the two men who were instantaneously killed, and then preached on the following impressive text of Scripture: 'At this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of this place. Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth. After it a voice roareth; he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard. God thundereth marvelously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend!' (Job xxxvii. 1-5.)

Three months after this remarkable preservation, Mr. Brownell writes:

"I am just recovered from a severe attack of fever. The pain in my head was almost insupportable. I felt resignation to the divine will, and was kept in peace. Many of those attacks are occasioned by riding on wet or damp evenings; by sleeping in the houses of the Negroes, sometimes without a bed; and by want of proper nourishment."

While Mr. Brownell was ready to faint under the burden of sickness and hard labor, he load not infrequently to contend with riotous mobs, strongly resembling those by which Mr. Wesley and his courageous co-adjutors were assailed in this country in the earlier periods of Methodism. On the 20th of November, he says,

"The rioters, headed by _____, are become very troublesome. They interrupted me in preaching on the 17th of September; and threatened and swore in so shocking a manner, that we were obliged to discontinue that meeting. Not content with this outrage, they were resolved to proceed to other acts of violence. Accordingly, on the 12th instant, four of them came to the chapel in the evening, with a large quantity of squibs, to fire among the congregation. One of these was thrown into the chapel, and caused such confusion among the people assembled, and such horrible swearing among the rioters, as I had never witnessed before. On the next morning, while I was going to a magistrate to apply for protection, I was way-laid, grossly insulted, and severely beaten. The magistrate 'cared for none of these things;' and though I had sworn the peace against Mr. _____, he would not so much as require him to enter into any recognizances, till he was forced to it by the President. We afterwards addressed the Honorable Council, who heard us with patience, and redressed our grievances. Thus we obtained peace, and the designs of our enemies were frustrated. They threatened us with extermination; but this has been overruled to the further establishment of the mission.

The opposition which Mr. Brownell met with from "unreasonable and wicked men," neither led him to relax in his real and diligence, nor diverted his attention from the all-important subject of personal godliness. The pious and truly Christian feelings with which he contemplated

the work in which he was engaged, and the success with which it pleased God to crown his zealous and faithful labors, are strikingly depicted in the following extract from his private journal:

"Jan. 27th, 1707. -- I have just passed my twenty-sixth year. Here I stand as on an eminence, and review my past life. What a scene presents itself to my mind! What mercies and blessings from God; what mistakes and defects in my own conduct; what temptations to evil from my own heart, from ether people, and from the Devil! What joys have I experienced, arising from the hope of future things; what mortification and despair, arising from disappointment! I have had many hair's-breadth escapes from the jaws of death; and many happy moments of delightful fellowship with my Saviour. Here, then, I will raise my Ebenezer: for hitherto the Lord hath helped me. O my God, still be my Guardian: preserve me from temptation: raise my drooping spirit: banish sorrow and dejection from my mind, and cheer me by the light of thy countenance!

"May, 1797. -- We have enlarged our chapel, by adding to it another wing. From this time the society began to flourish.

"July 23d, 1798. -- I was married to Miss Jane Cooper, of the Island of St. Kitt's. We afterwards went to Nevis, where the little society did everything in their power to render us happy.

"1799. -- This year we had a blessed revival of religion. The seed which had been sown in the name of the Lord, and watered with many prayers and tears, sprang up, and yielded a glorious harvest. Many joined our society, and, I trust, were added to the Lord.

"1800. -- The work of God continues to prosper. We have now a large and flourishing society, capable of supporting a missionary and his wife. All glory be to God! Many blessings and trials have I experienced in this island ; but now I must leave this loving and affectionate people.

"On the 1st of May, 1800, I entered upon my labors in the Island of St. Kitt's, with somewhat gloomy prospects. The chapel at Basseterre is in a very ruinous condition. The people are discontented; the society is in debt to the amount of £175; and there is no one to assist me in this extensive field of missionary exertion. My hands hang down, and my heart is ready to faint. But God hath promised to be my almighty helper.

"Feb. 5th, 1801. -- I am more than ever convinced, that a Minister ought to be fully devoted to God, and dead to human praise and censure, in order to his usefulness, and to his personal comfort. Today he is applauded, and elevated to the very skies; and tomorrow he is censured, insulted, and reckoned the worst of men. Help me, Lord, to cease from man, and faithfully to declare the whole truth as it is in Jesus."

The following extract from Mr. Brownell's journal contains a caution of the utmost importance to Christians in general, and especially to Christian Ministers. Even the best of men, in the confidence of private friendship, and of social intercourse, are in danger of animadverting upon the conduct of absent individuals, in a manner which they would find it difficult to reconcile either with the spirit of Christianity, or with those passages in the New Testament Scriptures which describe and inculcate our duty towards our neighbor. Happy are those who, like Mr. Brownell,

seriously survey the conversations in which they have participated, and learn to be more watchful and circumspect, from the conscientious upbraidings of their own minds, before a habit of evil speaking be formed. But happier still are they who, from the commencement to the termination of their Christian course, by the grace of God, keep themselves so as to "offend not in tongue."

"Feb. 6. -- I rode to Old Road, and met with Brother John Taylor, from Nevis. We had a happy meeting at the chapel. After spending much time in conversation, I felt my mind somewhat uneasy. We ought to be cautious of speaking even the truth concerning the conduct of wicked men. It is best to leave them to God. No one was ever improved in his temper and conduct by railing against his neighbor. It is right to bear a public and decided testimony against sin, in all its forms; but not to name the offenders."

Mr. Brownell's prudence and discretion, as well as his Christian firmness, appear to great advantage in the following adventure, which is thus described by himself:

"March 10th. -- In the forenoon of this day, I received a letter from the late commander-in-chief, requesting me to attend him immediately at time council-room. On my appearance before him, an address was presented to me, purporting to be written by the General Conference in America, to time body of people called Methodists, requesting them to petition the Legislature for the abolition of the slave-trade. This address was signed by Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and several others, inserted in the newspapers, and published in the form of hand-bills. The Council imagined that it had originated with the English conference, and by them had been transmitted to the conference in America; and desired to know whether I had received any orders to carry it into effect? I informed the council, that the English conference had no authority over the Methodist societies in the United States of America; and distinctly asserted, that I had received no instructions respecting the matter, and that the English conference had no desire or intention that their missionaries should interfere with the political affairs of the islands, our only design being to bring the people to the knowledge of God. On the following day there appeared in one of the public papers, a vile letter, accusing the missionaries of seditious designs.

"Tuesday the 14th, I waited upon the late commander-in-chief in company with Mr. Shepley. We laid before him a considerable number of facts and arguments, to prove that we had not the slightest intention to interfere with the civil condition of the slaves. We were ready to attest upon oath, that we had never inculcated any doctrine tending to sedition; but uniformly exhorted "as many servants as are under the yoke to count their masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." That no principles contrary to these had been taught by us in any of the society-meetings, we stated to be manifest from this consideration; -- that great numbers of whites, or free people of color, who held slaves, were in religious connection with us, and attended those meetings, as well as the slaves; and yet such people, who would of course be tenacious of their own interests, so far from making any complaint against us, were anxious to prevail upon us to admit their slaves into society. We al so pledged ourselves, that we would rather quit the colonies than disturb the public peace; and farther urged, that if these reasons were not satisfactory to the local government, the affair might be referred to the Duke of Portland, and an explanation required of the English conference. This proposal was acceded to, and here the business ended. I afterwards drew up a reply to the infamous letter which had been published

against us. But the man who had given publicity to the unprincipled defamations of an adversary, had not the honor to print the vindication of the accused."

The following is an affecting record of human depravity, and of the power of divine grace. It is calculated to encourage the prayers and efforts of religious parents on behalf of their unconverted children: for the individual to whom it relates was the son of a pious mother.

"Nov. 1st. -- About a fortnight ago I called at a house in Old Road, to settle some business, and was informed that Mr. _____, the son of a member of our society, lay there very sick. He was brought up an overseer, lived in gross sin, and was extremely wicked. He was so much under the influence of passion, as sometimes to abstain from food for several days together. On such occasions he spent his time in smoking cigars, in drinking rum, in tormenting all around him, and in being tormented himself. God at length laid his hand upon him, and it was evident that he was hastening to the house appointed for all living. This, however, did not appear to give him any concern: and as his flesh and strength wasted away, he retained all his wonted aversion to religion. Thus we found him; while his pious mother lamented that she had brought forth such an enemy to God and goodness. After some conversation, in which he expressed his hope of recovery, we told him, that if he had no objection we would unite in prayer to God for him. He replied, apparently with deep contempt, that he had no objection to the prayers of any persons, whether they were whites, blacks, or yellows. We sung a hymn, and then prayed that God would not suffer him to die in his Sins, but convince him of his sinful and dangerous condition, and incline him to come to Jesus Christ, who was ready to receive and pardon him. In a few days I received a note, informing me, that a great change has taken place in him, and that he earnestly requested me to visit him again. Accordingly the next morning I set off from Basseterre, and met a gentleman on the road, who hastened me forward, saying, that Mr. _____ was dying, and calling for me. I found him indeed extremely weak, conversed with him a long time, set forth Jesus Christ as the only refuge from the wrath to come, and prayed earnestly to God for his salvation. He appeared to be deeply sensible of his sinful state, and that death was at hand; and therefore earnestly desired us to pray that God would pardon all his sins, and prepare him for his removal to another world. In the afternoon I again commended his soul to the mercy of God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, beseeching the divine Spirit to complete the work which he had begun."

When Mr. Brownell labored in the West Indies, the missionaries of different denominations used to meet together at stated times, that they might strengthen one another's hands in their arduous toil, by united councils and prayer. Of one of these social meetings he has given the following account. It is an encouraging circumstance, that the same spirit of unity and love, which actuated the minds of those excellent missionaries, upwards of twenty years ago, is exemplified by their successors of the present age, in every part of the world.

"On the 20th of November, the monthly meeting of the missionaries on this island, for increasing brotherly love, and forwarding the object of their mission, was hold at Palmetto-Point. There were present Mr. John Taylor, Mr. Robert Shepley, Mr. Nanksval, the Bishop of London's missionary to the Negroes of this island, and myself. Our first inquiry was, what is the real state of our own souls, with regard to vital religion? In answer to this question, every one spoke with freedom and simplicity. Notwithstanding the severe temptations by which we had all been exercised, yet each declared that he had faith in Jesus Christ, had been preserved in the way of

holiness by the grace of God, and was determined to spend and be spent in his service. The next inquiry was, What are the principal doctrines upon which we have expatiated in the regular course of our ministry, since our last meeting? The answers were, The fall of man, repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and holiness both of heart and life. The third question was, what can be further done to increase genuine religion in our societies? In reference to this we all resolved, to be more fully devoted to God ourselves; to preach the great truths of the gospel in the plainest manner; to meet as many of the classes as we can ourselves; and to continue our present plan of itinerancy."

Describing the labors of his mission, Mr. Brownell proceeds:--

"May 10th, 1802. -- I went on board a schooner for Nevis, and arrived safe after a short and pleasant passage. I afterwards agreed with a carpenter to build a new Chapel; and in the evening attended a Prayer-meeting, at which were present about forty whites, and many colored people. Their singing was very delightful. I also delivered an exhortation. It was a season of great spiritual profit.

"May 16th. -- I rode to Hog-Valley, and conducted the public worship at ten o'clock. I met the little society, and endeavored to form them into regular classes. The tears ran plentifully down their cheeks; and the heart of one poor aged Negro was so full, that she could scarcely speak. She seized hold of my hand, and continued for a long time to kiss it, till it was with difficulty that I could get it away. Her cry was, "Glad for see massa again.' Great good will certainly be done in this part of the country I returned home about three o'clock, almost melted by the heat, and preached to a large congregation. The chapel being low, and scarcely any air in motion, I had like to have fainted during the service. After the preaching I met the society, and read to them part of a letter I had just received from Dr. Coke. It animated them exceedingly; and many a prayer did they offer up to God, for the prosperity of his work."

The following account of the conversion, the holy life, and the peaceful death of a Negro, will be read with lively interest by the friends of Christian missions. The elevation of this poor African from the guilt and misery of heathenism to the purity and comfort of true religion, and his triumphant entrance into the paradise of God, are worth all the mercy and toil which have been expended upon the West India mission, from its commencement to the present day.

"Having omitted at the proper time to insert in my journal an account of Cato Madan, I think it right in this place to relate some particulars concerning that remarkable Negro. Cato was one of those who received the Gospel soon after it was first preached at Cayon, but it was not till after the chapel was built at that place, that he manifested any particular work of grace upon his heart. He then became very attentive to the preachers, and as they generally lodged in the chapel, he would stay with them after the preaching till eleven or twelve o'clock, asking them questions, and conversing on the subject of religion. He now appeared to be convinced of sin; clear views of divine truth opened upon his mind; he was enabled to believe in Jesus Christ, to love him in sincerity, and to walk in his commandments with holy joy and delight. He began to assist in meeting the classes, learned to read and to write, watched over the people, took care of the children, and was acceptable to all. It pleased God, however, to cut him off in the prime of life, and the beginning of his usefulness. His manager, Dr. D., was at a loss to find out his disorder, and

labored much to save so useful a slave; but Cato said, 'The physic will do me no good: I am going home.' One of the class-leaders visiting him, found him so happy, that he stood amazed, having never conceived that God imparted such a degree of love, and peace, and joy, on this side of death; and he returned greatly instructed and refreshed. He was very anxious that all should come to the knowledge of God; and calling for one whom he had often exhorted in vain, he said, 'I have often warned you to forsake sin, and you would not: kneel down, and say after me, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."' The overseer of the estate to which Cato belonged, came in, and asked him if he knew him; Cato replied, 'Yes, you are my master. God bless you!' The overseer desired to know whether he had any request to make before he died; he replied, 'Only one: and that is, that I may be buried at the chapel.' Having obtained this request, he blessed them and died.

"I was administering the Lord's Supper at Old Road when I received a note, informing me of his death. I immediately rode to Basseterre, and from thence to Cayon; where I found a vast concourse of people assembled to attend the funeral. We proceeded in regular order near a mile to the chapel, two white overseers attending. We interred the corpse with great solemnity, and a deep and lasting impression was made on the minds of most of those who were present. Soon after, I preached a sermon on the occasion, and such was the effect of his sayings and death, that many turned to the Lord, and a revival of the work of God began, which continues to this day. I could not but reflect upon the difference between this poor Negro, who received a few pints of corn as a reward for his weekly toil, and his master in England. By means of the truly Christian experience and triumphant death of the Negro, many were turned to righteousness; and by the writings of his master, in defense of polygamy, many hundreds, if not thousands, in this part of this world, have been hardened in their unhallowed practices. To which of these two men, in the great day of final account, will God, the righteous Judge of all, say, Well done, good and faithful servant?"

It is an important part of a Christian Minister's duty to watch progress of the work of God among the people who are committed to his care: and while he lives in the spirit of his office, nothing will afford him greater pleasure, his own experience of the grace of God excepted, than to witness the conversion of sinners from the error of their way, and the edification of believers on their most holy faith. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth; and in that joy every genuine minister of Jesus Christ largely participates. These remarks are strikingly exemplified in the case of Mr. Brownell. He loved the souls of men with an ardent affection, and was instant in season and out of season, to promote their welfare.

Among other descriptions of sinners, in whose restoration to holiness and peace, his pious and benevolent mind took a lively interest, was that of backsliders; a class of men who, perhaps above all others, are entitled to the tenderest commiseration. On the 6th of June, 1802, he writes:--

"This morning an old backslider returned to the society, who had formerly been a local preacher, and whom Dr. Coke used to call his son. After being very useful for some time; he departed from God; and remained in the practice of sin till about twelve months ago, when the correcting rod of affliction was laid upon him. He appeared to be in the last stage of a consumption, was alarmed at the prospect of death, and called upon the Lord for mercy. Feeling a peculiar affection for those old backsliders, many of whom, by the blessing of God, were brought again to the fold, I went to see him immediately after my arrival at the place where he was. Here I

found a man reduced in a few days, from a state of perfect health and vigor, to a mere skeleton; without hope of life, and suffering all the agonies of a wounded conscience. He was deeply convinced of his folly and sin, stated to me his former conversion and Christian experience, and acknowledged the terrible remorse which he had felt under various sermons. I encouraged him to hope for mercy, and prayed that God would heal his backslidings. At another visit, when Mr. Boocock and I were kneeling by his side, and praying for him, he again received a manifestation of the pardoning mercy of God. I visited him frequently afterwards, and always found him fully resolved to follow on to know the Lord. He began to recover from his illness, went to the continent of America for the benefit of his health, returned safe, and this morning attended the class meeting, and was restored to the society. How wonderful are the ways of God! Mr. Boocock, who was then the very picture of health, is now dead; and this man, who had not to all appearance a week to live, has recovered his former strength! Another person also joined the society this day, and the presence of God was powerfully felt at the Lord's Table."

The violent opposition which, at one period, was raised against the mission to the Negroes; and the trying circumstances in which the missionaries were in consequence often placed, are strikingly depicted in various passages of Mr. Brownell's private Journal. Happily the favorable influence of Christianity upon the minds of the Negroes is, at present, more generally acknowledged in the West Indies; so that by the proprietors and managers of estates; in many of the islands, at least, the Christian instruction of the Negroes is now rather solicited than opposed. One affecting specimen of the persecutions which were formerly experienced will be found in the following Extract:--

"June 12th. -- I visited the sick; and in the evening met classes. The members of one class, which has been lately formed, spoke in a very pleasing manner. One of them in particular informed me, that he was working in the boiling-house, when he felt such joy in God, that he could not forbear to sing aloud. His master instantly seized him, and exercised his horse-whip upon him till he was tired; and then ordered him to be taken out and cart-whipped. But still, said the Negro, 'de rejoicing was in my heart.' This manager had imbibed the strongest aversion to Methodism; and one evening, when Mr. Shepley had gone into the house of one of the Negroes to instruct and pray with them, Mr. _____ came to them in a state of intoxication, attempted to set the house on fire, and threatened the people with the cart-whip. Mr. Shepley endeavored to restrain and pacify him: he at length departed, after dispersing the people with many oaths and threats. The Negroes then held their religious meetings in the night, among the bushes, and in a deep gutter. For the honor of St. Kitt's, I would, however, observe, that there are not many persons who are like-minded with this man; and their number is on the decrease."

Proceeding in the duties of his mission, Mr. Brownell writes:--

"June 15th. -- I went to the Salt-Ponds in about, and sung and prayed with the people in that place. I examined many; gave tickets; and, between the hours of twelve and one o'clock, retired into a sort of pantry, among water-pails, and lay down in my clothes, weary, faint, and hungry. But what is this, if any good may only be done to the souls of these poor neglected people? A few of them are in earnest for their salvation; three or four appear to be believers in the Lord Jesus; but many of them are, as yet, extremely ignorant, though they would suffer any punishment rather than be excluded from the society."

"June 23d. -- I went to visit the sick on _____'s estate. In the sick-house I found several Negroes, and a diseased mule. The stench was intolerable. One paralytic told me, that at the beginning of her affliction, she prayed that God would have mercy upon her, and take her away, for it was better for her to die than live in that state. She was immediately impressed with a conviction that she was not fit to die; and called an aged Negro to pray with her. I prayed with her, and directed her to Jesus Christ.

Another aged Negro, who could not make herself understood by words, made many signs, and laughed heartily, to show me, that her soul was happy in God. At the Point in the evening, I met the class, and renewed the society-tickets. We must be more diligent in catechizing; for many of our people are extremely ignorant, especially in these country places. Preaching does not communicate divine knowledge to them so effectually as might be expected, for want of the requisite elementary instruction. After regular preaching in this place for twelve years, three-fourths of this society are very inadequately acquainted with the doctrines of Christianity. My soul is distressed to find out some more efficient method of conveying the knowledge of evangelical truth to these untutored minds. Can these dry bones live? Lord, thou knowest! The work is thine. Exert thy gracious power!

"Sunday, June 27th. -- We had a love-feast at Basseterre, at the beginning of which I read from the Magazine an account of a religious experience and happy death. The power of God rested upon the people in a surprising manner. The congregation consisted of about four or five hundred persons, two-thirds of whom were Negroes. They spoke in a clear, rational, and scriptural manner of their conversion to God, to the utter astonishment of some white people present, who were constrained to acknowledge that God had granted to these Gentiles also repentance unto life. Many of them described the saving change which divine grace had wrought in their minds with a degree of accuracy which would shame several Europeans; while the rest, by silent adorations, many tears, and heavenly ejaculations, testified how much they felt.

"August 5th. -- I went on board a small vessel with my family; the good hand of God was upon us, and we arrived safe at St. Kitt's. Truly we ought to be more than thankful to God; to sow the seed of his word in hope; and patiently to wait for the joyful harvest. Seven years ago, there were scarcely one hundred persons in this place, (qu. Nevis?) who met in class, and could properly be called members of society; and now there are upwards of one thousand! During this time, five class leaders have died happy in God, besides a large number of private members, whose names I trust are in the Book of Life. The outward situation of the missionaries, at the commencement of this period, was much inferior to that of many of the Negroes. A room, of about ten feet square, was their only place of residence, and they could scarcely appear out of doors without being exposed to public insult and contempt. But now they have a commodious house, a large chapel, a respectable congregation, and a delightful prospect of still greater usefulness. One thing, relating to this place, is worthy of special attention. This, society, nineteen out of twenty of whom are slaves, requested to have a second preacher, and encouraged their ministers to purchase and build to the amount of sixteen or seventeen hundred pounds; and God, in his good providence, has so honored their faith, that they are reducing the debt on the chapel premises at the rate of about three hundred pounds per annum. Farewell, little flock, once more! Peace be within your hearts, and prosperity within your little huts!

"Nov. 27th. -- I was informed by note, that Mr. Debell had been knocked down on the Bay by Mr. _____, who, having been reprov'd by Mr. Debell for behaving ill at chapel, struck him several times, and left marks of violence upon him. The blood was drawn in three places, by a whip, supposed to have been made of twisted cow-skin. I returned immediately to Basseterre, and found that Mr. Debell had taken out a warrant against this persecutor, who was bound to appear at the Court of Sessions.

"The Rev. Mr. Davies called at our house on the 1st of December, and informed Mrs. Brownell, that several gentlemen had interested themselves warmly in this affair, and were determined that pecuniary assistance should not be wanting in bringing this young man to justice.

"Jan. 18th, 1803. -- We attended the Court of Grand Sessions. The grand jury found the bill against Mr. _____, who had disturbed the congregation, and assaulted my colleague. After much debating, the cause was referred to the Court of King's Bench."

Scarcely anything can put the faith of a missionary to a severer test, than the removal of his brethren by death, in the midst of their labors and usefulness. Sojourning in a strange land, hated and persecuted by wicked men, and sustaining an office which involves the most awful responsibility; a colleague engaged in the same work, and actuated by kindred feelings, must be dear to him as his own soul. In the death of such a friend and brother, therefore, an irreparable loss is sustained, and a wound inflicted which must be indescribably painful. The vacancy occasioned by the decease of a missionary cannot often be readily supplied; the congregations mourn when no voice of mercy and salvation is heard from the pulpit; and the work of God languishes for want of the regular discharger of pastoral duties.

Early in the year 1803, Mr. Brownell was thus afflicted by the premature death of the Rev. Philip Debell; who is generally allowed, by those who were personally acquainted with him, to have been one of the most pious and holy of that host of excellent men who have gone as missionaries to the West Indies. The following account of his death and interment, copied from Mr. Brownell's journal, is, the more readily inserted in this place, because justice has never yet been done to his memory in any of the publications of that body of which he was such a distinguished ornament. The name and character of such an extraordinary youth should be generally known, and transmitted to posterity, to the honor of divine grace, and as an example to the Church of God.

"Jan. 22d. -- This is my birthday. I have now reached my thirty-first year. It has been a painful day to me, as I received two notes, informing me that my brethren Bradnack and Debell were both dangerously ill. I left Old Road for Basseterre in the evening, amidst the wind and rain, and found Mr. B. a little better, and Mr. Debell extremely ill. O God of heaven, preserve their valuable lives!

"Jan. 25th. -- Every symptom of approaching dissolution appears in our excellent Brother Debell. I conversed with him, and commended his departing soul to God in prayer. 'I am passing,' said he, 'through deep waters, but the Lord is on my right hand.' He repeated the following line of a favorite hymn,

'Farewell, vain world, I'm going home;'

when a strong convulsion rendered him insensible, and in about ten minutes put an end to all his sorrow and pain. Thus died Philip Debell, after a residence of near ten months in the island of St. Christopher's. He was a man of few words in conversation, grave in his deportment, and fearless in the cause of his Divine Master. As a Christian, he was deeply devoted to God; and as a preacher, he was eminently active and zealous.

These were the peculiar features of his character; and if any of them seemed to predominate, it was fervency in devotion, and in the exercise of his ministry. The intensity of his zeal often led him to preach too loud, and to exert himself beyond what the nature of the West Indian climate will allow, especially to European constitutions. 'Living he taught us how to live, and dying confirmed the truth he delivered. His death is rather to be envied than lamented.'

"On the 26th we committed his remains to the grave. It was indeed a day of sorrow. The Rev. George Nankival, the bishop of London's missionary, read the funeral service: Mr. Pryor, an old member of society, the Rev. Messrs. Schneller and Horman, the Moravian missionaries, our own Brethren Pattison and Bradnack, and myself; were the bearers. The Rev. Robert Pemberton, rector of the parish, and the Rev. William Davies, rector of St. Peter's, attended; together with a large number of ladies and gentlemen. The members of society from Old Road, Palmetto Point, Cayon, and town, made the concourse of people too many for the chapel. The white leaders of classes were ranged on one side of the corpse, the black and colored leaders on the other. The scene was extremely affecting, and more than my mind could sustain. We endeavored to moderate the grief of the people by consoling exhortations. The following hymns were sung, as appropriate to the solemn occasion:

'And let this feeble body fail,
And let it faint and die:' &c.
'Hark a voice divides the sky,
Happy are the faithful dead:' &c.

"At the grave:

""Tis finish'd, 'tis done, the spirit is fled,' &c.

"At parting:

'Farewell, dear friend, a long farewell,
For we shall meet no more,
Till we are rais'd with thee to dwell
On Zion's happier shore.'"

After the death of this excellent man, Mr. Bradnack's illness assumed an alarming aspect, so that he was obliged to leave the West Indies, for the preservation of his life. When thus deprived of help, Mr. Brownell's labors became excessive; but were nevertheless signally owned of God. A revival of religion took place at Sandy-Point, and at Old Road; so that, at the former

place, the society and friends resolved to enlarge their chapel; and at the latter, to build a house for the accommodation of the missionaries. Speaking of Good Friday this year, Mr. Brownell says,

"This has been a day of great weariness. The congregations have been large, and I trust that good has been done. But I am become so weak with excessive labor, and riding in the sun, that I am afraid my time in the West Indies will be short, unless I obtain assistance by the speedy arrival of missionaries from England.

"April 10th, Easter Sunday -- Last night I came to Old Road, and found a class meeting in the chapel. I slept in the pulpit; and on raising my head, between three and four o'clock in the morning, I found the people assembled for public worship. We continued singing, praying, and preaching, till day-light. We had a delightful love-feast at Palmetto-Point; and at four o'clock I preached at Basseterre. The chapel, which is now greatly enlarged, was excessively crowded; and numbers, who could not obtain admission, stood on the outside. How inadequate are my abilities for the instruction of even this vast congregation! Send help, O Lord, send help, that these souls may not perish for lack of knowledge!"

It would be highly interesting and instructive, to follow Mr. Brownell through his various scenes of labor in the West Indies, and to produce extracts from his journal illustrative of the feelings of his mind, of his exertions to promote the interests of Christianity in his different stations, of his attempts to introduce the gospel into the more neglected islands, and of the privations and persecutions by which he was exercised; but the limits prescribed to this memoir will not admit of such lengthened details. I am, therefore, reluctantly compelled to pass over many striking incidents connected with his personal history, and to bring the account of his missionary life to a close.

In the year 1803, he was appointed to labor in Tortola, Spanish Town, and the other Virgin Islands; where he was exposed to the most cruel treatment, while pursuing the duties of his mission with his wonted diligence and fidelity. On the 31st of December, 1805, as he was walking through one of the public streets, he was sternly accosted by a gentleman, who requested him to lend a paper, which he then put into his hand. The gentleman instantly seized him by the arm, dragged him into the middle of the street, and put himself into an attitude to strike him. This behavior was occasioned by a letter which had been just transmitted to the island, containing an extract from a communication inserted in the Methodist Magazine for July, 1805, in which Mr. Brownell had said, "I find religion has made great alteration for the better among the blacks; but among the whites, fornication, adultery, and neglect of all religion, are reigning sins." This letter, the gentleman said, was a libel on the public, and that he would hunt the writer out of the community. Having bestowed upon him the epithets of rascal and scoundrel with no common liberality, he proceeded to strike Mr. Brownell in the face, first with a stick, and then with his fist, to kick him, and to pull him by the nose. He was instantly joined by another, equally furious, who, after pouring forth more abusive language, struck him a violent blow on the breast. Scarcely had Mr. Brownell time to turn himself round, when a third struck him with the butt-end of a loaded horsewhip, which cut his head most severely. "His hand was lifted up," says Mr. Brownell, "to give a second blow; but providentially he did not strike, or it is highly probable that I should have been murdered in the open street, and in the face of day." One of these assailants was a clergyman's son, and another a magistrate. On witnessing this uproar, a crowd soon assembled; and while they were inquiring into

the occasion of the tumult, Mr. Brownell retired into an adjoining house, and was thus preserved from future harm. His adversaries no sooner found that he was gone, than they began to pursue him, urging each other to persevere till they had "finished the business;" and he only escaped the second tempest of their vengeance, by prostrating himself on the floor, while they passed by the window. He was afterwards conducted home by two friendly gentlemen, who became his guard; and was confined to his house for some time, through the wound on his head, and the bruises he had received, attended by two physicians. For several weeks afterwards, Mr. Brownell states, he carried his life in his hands. On the 3d of March, 1806, Mr. Brownell brought the affair before the grand jury of the Virgin Islands, with a number of competent witnesses to attest the truth of his allegations; but the grand jury, instead of finding the bill against the rioters, obliged Mr. Brownell to pay half the costs, for bringing a matter frivolous and vexatious before the court! They immediately asked and obtained leave to present the plaintiff. An indictment was accordingly drawn up; and though they had no other evidence than the extract of a written letter, a bill was soon found, and Mr. Brownell was put to the bar, and tried for writing a libel on the community. Not being prepared for the trial, they endeavored to postpone it till the next sessions, and in the mean time to throw him into prison, imagining that no person would give bail for his appearance. In this, however, they were mistaken. A gentleman who happened to be present, offered to give the requisite security. After considerable debate, five out of seven of the justices were of opinion that the trial ought not to be deferred; and Mr. Brownell's accusers feeling themselves unable to substantiate the charge, the indictment was quashed, to the great mortification of those who sought revenge. The magistrate who assaulted Ms. Brownell in the street, sat on the bench as one of his judges.

The principal inhabitants of Tortola were as far from approving of these outrageous proceedings, as they were from being implicated in the vices which were said to prevail. The chief magistrate observed, that "as the grand jury did not think proper to find a bill for Mr. Brownell, they ought, in common justice, not to have found one against him." There is also reason to believe, that the persons who were the most active in promoting this prosecution, afterwards reflected upon what they had done, rather with shame than with exultation.

Notwithstanding these discouragements, the mission in Tortola continued to flourish. The white part of the congregation visibly increased; for it often happens, by the grace and overruling providence of God, that the opposition which is raised against the cause of Christianity tends to its prosperity and advancement. Mr. Brownell's sufferings, however, were great. His wife was so affected, when she found that an attempt had been made upon the life of her husband, that she never recovered, and he had reason to believe that this was ultimately the cause of her death. The wound in his head rendered him unable to bear the heat of the sun in the West Indies; and his general health being much impaired by frequent attacks of sickness, by hard labor, and by great privations, he could not proceed in the duties of his mission, and therefore returned to the more congenial climate of his native country, and to the society of British Christians.

On his return to England, in the year 1806, Mr. Brownell was appointed to the Lynn circuit, where he discharged the duties of his ministry, as his health permitted him, with fidelity and zeal. After spending two years in that place, he removed to Yarmouth. On the first of September, 1809, he says,

"I have now spent three years in England, since my return from the West Indies. They have been eminently years of mercy, and of severe trials. Little did I imagine, when I returned to my native country, that I should have met with so many of the latter. But thanks be to God, he has been my almighty Helper. I left Lynn considerably improved. By the good hand of God upon us, we succeeded in rebuilding and furnishing the dwelling-house; began the erection of Methwold Chapel; and added one hundred and fifty members to the Society. During the last year, I and my colleagues have labored in Yarmouth with tolerable success. One hundred and ten persons, under religious impressions, have joined our societies in the circuit, for the advantage of Christian communion."

On the termination of his labors in the Yarmouth circuit, in the year 1810, Mr. Brownell says,

"I took leave of my kind friends, whose conduct towards me, at parting, was exceedingly generous. Many are the mercies I have experienced in this circuit. Our labors in the word and doctrine have been blessed by the Lord. We found six hundred and fifty members in society, and leave, to the care of our successors, eight hundred and thirty. The Lord gave me the hearts of the people to the last. Blessed be his name for all his mercies!"

The next scene of Mr. Brownell's labors was the Bedford circuit; where he spent two years with acceptance and usefulness. His mind was often painfully depressed, because the work of God under his superintendence did not make a more rapid progress. On resigning his charge, however, he found, that, after supplying the vacancies in the society occasioned by death and other causes, there was an increase of nearly two hundred members. From Bedford he removed, in the year 1812, to Bolton in Lancashire, where fresh comforts and trials awaited him. His active zeal and pure conduct commanded the general esteem of the society and congregations in that circuit.

During the second year of his residence in Bolton, his amiable wife, who had been the affectionate partner of his joys and sorrows for many years, both at home and abroad, sunk under the power of disease, and was separated by death from him and from her children. The shock which she experienced, when an attempt was made upon the life of her husband in the West Indies, was so great, that she never recovered her former health and spirits. She lingered from that time in a state of debility, till it pleased God to receive her to that world where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. In any circumstances, the loss of such a wife would be severely felt; but to Mr. Brownell the bereavement was exceedingly calamitous. Engaged in the duties of an itinerant ministry, by which he was frequently called from home, he was left with the care of a large number of children, many of whom were in a state of comparative infancy. His sorrow on this occasion was in part alleviated by the affectionate sympathy of the society in Bolton, who formed a correct estimate of his numerous personal excellencies, and of his ministerial abilities and fidelity. They esteemed him highly in love, for his work's sake; and their truly Christian kindness, from the commencement to the termination of his labors among them, made an impression upon his heart, which nothing but death could ever efface. Now that he is gone to his eternal home, and they will see him no more till the last trumpet shall sound, and the earth and sea resign their dead, it must afford them the liveliest pleasure to recollect, that they so cordially co-operated with him for the furtherance of the work of God, while they ministered to the

personal comfort of a man who had suffered more than ordinary privations and persecutions in the cause of Christianity.

After the death of his wife, Mr. Brownell was afflicted with a nervous fever, by which he was thrown into a state of great mental dejection and bodily weakness, which continued for many tedious months. In this condition he removed from the Bolton circuit to Holmfirth in the summer of 1814; and not long after his arrival at that place, he went to Scarborough, for the benefit of sea-bathing. At this time he had passed the meridian of life; his constitution was greatly impaired, and appeared to be rapidly hastening to decay; so that while exploring the romantic scenery of Scarborough and its neighborhood, to him the following impressive lines were strikingly applicable:--

"Health on these open hills I seek,
By these delicious springs in vain;
The rose on this deserted cheek
Shall never bloom again

For youth is fled; -- and, less by time
Than sorrow torn away,
The pride, the strength of manhood's prime
Falls to decay."

At Scarborough Mr. Brownell was greatly encouraged by the Christian sympathy and attention of the Rev. Daniel Isaac, who was then stationed in that town, and whose kindness Mr. Brownell mentions in his journal with grateful emotion. It was not till the spring of the following year that his mind and body acquired their former tone. During this painful season he preached the gospel of his God and Saviour, and attempted to comfort others when his own heart was sad and, in this state of mental anguish, it is a pleasing and an instructive fact, that, in Holmfirth and its vicinity, several people were awakened and converted by the instrumentality of his faithful labors. On the recovery of his former health and cheerfulness, he devoted himself afresh to the service of God and of his Church, and was rendered very useful in his public ministry, as well as in the discharge of those pastoral duties which are of a more private nature.

In the year 1816, Mr. Brownell was appointed to the Sheffield circuit, where the writer of this memoir became acquainted with him, and had frequent opportunities, for the space of two years, of observing his spirit and conduct, and of attending his edifying ministry. During the second year of his residence in Sheffield, Mr. Brownell entered again into the marriage-state, having been a widower nearly four years. In taking this important step, he sought in earnest prayer the providential guidance of almighty God, and was not disappointed.

Mr. Brownell left Sheffield for Nottingham in 1818, where he spent two years with considerable success, though in the midst of great discouragements. The Newark circuit was the last appointment he received from the Methodist Conference: here he was called to lay down his commission at his Master's feet. Having labored one year in this place with his wonted zeal and activity, he went to the Conference at Manchester in 1821, but was so indisposed at the time as seldom to be able to attend the preaching. On his way home, he had some conversation with a

medical friend in Huddersfield, when he was given to understand that danger was to be apprehended, his symptoms indicating an ossification of the heart. His indisposition continued rapidly to increase, so that it was with difficulty that he went through the regular labors of his circuit. To his friends he repeatedly expressed his persuasion that his race was nearly run, and his full determination to employ the remainder of his strength in the work of his great Master.

On the morning of Sunday, September 16th, he arose from his bed, designing to attend a prayer-meeting; but while putting on his clothes, he was obliged to desist no less than three times. After breakfast, however, feeling himself to be somewhat better, he went to the chapel, and preached from, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." When the preaching was over, the pain in his breast returned, so that he was scarcely able to speak to one or two classes who met him for the renewal of their quarterly tickets.

During the succeeding night, he was very ill, but obtained partial relief in the morning by having several ounces of blood taken from his arm. He was confined to his room, and partly to his bed, till the following Sunday, when he appeared to be much better, and requested that the friends might be allowed to see him.

Through the whole of his affliction, his mind was kept in perfect peace, but on this day he was remarkably happy in God. After his death, was found on a slip of paper the following memorandum, which was written on this day, apparently in the absence of his family, and while they were engaged in public worship:

"On Sunday, September 16th, I was taken very ill, and had much pain in the night. I enjoyed great peace of mind, being entirely free from fear and anxious care, and patiently resigned to the will of God. Sunday the 23d, I had a gracious visit from the Lord. My mind is thankfully looking up to him. O how happy my soul is, this afternoon! Glory Glory! Glory be to God!

"Let it not my Lord displease,
That I would die to be his guest!"

On the following day his complaint assumed a more alarming aspect; yet upon his countenance a heavenly placidity rested, expressive of that peace of God which passeth all understanding. he was much fatigued in the evening, and, on retiring to bed, soon began to be much worse. His family and medical attendants speedily assembled, but all their efforts to relieve him were unavailing. His colleague, the Rev. William Dalby, prayed with him, and Mr. Brownell, who was in full possession of his mental faculties, uttered many fervent responses to the petitions which were presented to the Father of Mercies. The difficulty of his breathing rendered him unable to engage in conversation; but he often prayed, "Lord, save me! The struggle was severe, but it was soon over. Addressing his disconsolate wife, he said, "All is peace, though not joy;" and then gently breathed his soul into the hands of his infinitely compassionate Redeemer.

Thus died the Rev. John Brownell, on the 24th of September, 1821, in the fifty-first year of his age, and the twenty-eighth of his itinerant ministry. His remains were afterwards interred in the burying-ground connected with the Methodist chapel at Newark-upon-Trent, where they wait till

the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God.

Mr. Brownell became a happy subject of true religion in his youth, and in the subsequent periods of his life never wickedly departed from his God. When it is said that he was a Christian, it is intended to use that word in its scriptural and only legitimate sense. He placed his reliance upon the merit of Christ for acceptance with God and being justified by faith from the guilt of sin, he enjoyed peace of conscience as the fruit of pardon.

He received also by faith the gift of the Holy Ghost, by whose powerful agency he was not only filled with unutterable peace and joy, but was effectually renewed in the spirit of his mind. Hence arose his victory over sin both of heart and life, his fervent love to God, and intense zeal for the divine glory; and hence arose his melting compassion for the perishing souls of unconverted men, and his conscientious observance of every Christian precept.

His character was formed on the model of the New Testament. The accomplishment of its promises in his own salvation, he sought in the constant exercise of devout and ardent prayer; and the exemplification of its principles in his temper and conduct he made the business of his life.

He was very regular in the discharge of relative duties. In a letter to the writer of this memoir, his widow says:

"Long as memory holds her seat, I shall esteem my union with Mr. Brownell the greatest honor the Lord ever conferred upon me, and for its blessings I believe that I shall praise him in eternity. From my first intimate acquaintance with him, I found him to be a sensible and judicious man; and all my expectations of happiness, in being the wife of a minister of Jesus Christ, have been more than realized. His consistent, uniform, and exemplary conduct, in domestic life, rendered our short union a more than usually happy one."

Mr. Brownell watched over his children with most affectionate solicitude. He regarded them as fallen creatures, but redeemed by Jesus Christ; and his earnest desire was, to correct the evils of their nature, and lead them to enjoy the salvation of the gospel. In his conduct towards them, he carefully avoided improper harshness and severity on the one hand, and criminal indulgence on the other; and, by the blessing of God upon his prudent management, he succeeded in gaining both their respectful reverence, and their ardent affection.

Mr. Brownell was a truly loyal man. He was zealously attached to the British Constitution, was the friend of social order, and opposed to insubordination and anarchy in all their destructive forms. Not long before his lamented death, finding that the apostles of infidelity were actively employed in disseminating the principles of sedition among the common people in the town and neighborhood of Newark, he made arrangements for the delivery of a course of sermons on relative duties, in which the scriptural doctrine of obedience to civil governors was to have formed a prominent part.

Nor was it merely in the latter years of his life, when he enjoyed, in his native country, all the advantages of its paternal government, and when disloyalty became so generally identified with

blasphemy, that he practiced and inculcated the duties of submission. He did the same in the West Indies, even when the civil authorities refused, in some instances, to protect him from open violence, and when he saw men subjected to the most cruel punishment for presuming to worship the God that made them. The following testimony from the late Dr. Coke will throw some light on this subject. It was addressed to the governor-general of the Bahama Islands, and bears the date of October 6th, 1798:

"Permit me to recommend to your Excellency, the Rev. John Brownell. He has been employed by our society as a missionary for the conversion of the blacks for several years in the Windward Islands, &c., with the most unblemished reputation, and with great success. Mr. Brownell is a thorough friend to our gracious sovereign, and to our most excellent constitution; otherwise he should receive no support from us. I only wish that his labors and continuance in the island may depend upon the uprightness of his conduct, and his subordination to the government."

The Wesleyan mission in the West Indies is one of the most successful of those truly benevolent enterprises which have been undertaken in modern times by the zeal of British Christians. Before the Negroes in those islands were brought under the ameliorating influence of Christianity, their situation was truly pitiable. Their outward bondage afforded but an imperfect representation of the ignorance, the superstition, the wickedness, and the misery, by which their minds were bound.

It has been attested by eyewitnesses, that, generally speaking, they were destitute of all knowledge of God, his attributes, or his worship, and of the duties which men owe to him, to each other, and to themselves; and that a superstition by which they imagined themselves to have intercourse with diabolical agency, subjected them to the severest mental horrors. They were addicted to lying, theft, drunkenness, and impurity; and their quantum of daily labor was extorted from them by the terrible lacerations of the whip, and other modes of punishment equally revolting to humanity.

Diligence had no stimulant but the fear and presence of the driver; and fidelity was neither practiced by the slave, nor expected by the master. To these degraded people the doctrines of Christianity have been preached with simplicity and affection, and the result has been glorious. There are this day upwards of twenty thousand persons in those islands, under the pastoral care of the Wesleyan missionaries, as regular members of society, the greater part of whom are Negroes, who have been elevated from the lowest abyss of ignorance, and vice, and misery, to enjoy not only the blessings of civilized life, but also of true religion.

The converted Negroes build themselves good huts in which they reside, obtain decent furniture, and many of them live as comfortably as the generality of poor families do in England. Having acquired habits of industry through the influence of religion, their punishment is lessened, and in many instances entirely done sway; and some have by diligence and frugality saved a sufficiency of money to purchase their freedom. Christianity administers to their minds the richest consolations amidst the toils of life; renders them content with the appointments of Providence; inspires them with cheerfulness and holy triumph in death; and prepares them, on their removal from the land of their captivity, for the blissful presence of God.

This is a subject of delightful contemplation; and the Wesleyan mission to the Negroes in the West Indies will long be regarded by those who believe the Bible, as an extensive work of God, and one of the noblest enterprises of Christian benevolence.

In the accomplishment of this work, Mr. Brownell was one of the most laborious and useful instruments. The spirit by which he was actuated was of a truly missionary character. His heart was intent upon the salvation of those poor outcasts of men to whom he was sent. For this he meekly submitted to endure hunger, reproach, public insults, sickness, personal injury, and perils both by sea and land; but none of these things moved him, nor did he count even his life dear, if the souls of men might only be converted and saved.

With the prospect of death before him, and while his colleagues were sick and dying on every side, he put forth all his strength in the labors of his mission. He was no reed shaken with the wind, but was instant in season, and out of season, preaching the word, visiting the sick, meeting the classes, and catechizing the Negroes in private, that they might be better prepared for the public ministry of the gospel. While he was thus employed, he was often found lamenting his want of zeal before God, and imploring mercy as an unprofitable servant.

A humble missionary, who exposes his life in inhospitable climes, and submits to privations, labors, and persecutions such as Mr. Brownell endured, though often overlooked and despised by worldly men, is a philanthropist of the highest class, and is entitled to universal esteem. His deeds may not appear splendid and dazzling to secular minds, but their substantial value will be manifested and rewarded at the resurrection of the just, when the exploits of the mere warrior and statesman will be forgotten.

There were persons, even in his own country, who were capable of treating Mr. Brownell with disrespect, but he might have addressed them in the language of a Christian apostle, "From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;" the scars of those wounds which I received in his service.

What Mr. Brownell was as a colleague in the ministry, may be correctly ascertained from the following extract of a letter from the Rev. William Hinson. It was addressed to the editor of this magazine when Mr. Brownell's death was first announced:

"I was stationed at Lynn the first year of my itinerancy, where I had Mr. Brownell as my superintendent. This I esteem a gracious providence; for I was treated by him as a brother: indeed I may say that he watched over me with a fatherly care. He was truly concerned for my comfort, and was especially desirous of promoting my usefulness. We prayed together, and often conversed on the subject of the great work in which we were engaged. He gave me excellent instruction relative to preaching; endeavored to impress my mind with the necessity of keeping alive the fire of divine love in my heart, in order to my happiness and usefulness; and urged me, in all my ministrations, to aim at the profit of my bearers. 'Whatever subject you take up,' he would say, 'take care to have some specific end in view; let the profit of your hearers, in one way or another be the object you seek to accomplish; and prosecute every subject with a view to this end.'

"After a separation of twelve months, he was once more appointed to be my superintendent. We again took sweet counsel together, and he renewed his fatherly care for my welfare. My heart glows with gratitude while I write, at the remembrance of his kindness. If I was unwell, as I sometimes was, he discovered all the tenderness of a parent. If I was oppressed with a sense of the importance of the work to which I was called, he would comfort and encourage me. He sometimes heard me preach, and would afterwards converse with me concerning my preaching, with faithfulness and affection. If at any time he saw me improperly elated, he would press upon my attention the indispensable necessity of lowliness of mind, in order that I might preserve a sense of the favor of God, and secure a continuance of his blessing upon my labors.

"I well remember to have met with him at the London conference in 1810, when I was about to be publicly received into full connection. I had a long conversation with him on the subject of devoting my whole life to the duties of the Christian ministry. He saw my distress of mind, which indeed was great, originating partly in a sense of the greatness of the work, and partly in a consciousness of my comparative unfitness for the full discharge of its momentous duties. Such were my feelings, that I had begun to think of giving up the work, and of returning home.

"My dear Brother, perceiving my inward conflict, requested me to walk with him into the burying-ground belonging to the chapel in City-Road, where I freely unbosomed my mind to him. He felt much for me, and endeavored to comfort me. After using a variety of arguments to prevail upon me to give myself wholly to God and his work, he led me to Mr. Wesley's tomb, and directed my attention to the unwearied and gloriously successful labors of that great man. He then spoke of his blessed end, and of his great reward; and thus labored to encourage me by his example. This interview was truly profitable. By it I was strengthened, and led to resolve, that I would go forward in the path which I believed God had marked out for me."

As a preacher, Mr. Brownell's talents were very respectable. His education was indeed unavoidably defective, in consequence of the blindness with which he was afflicted in his youth; and the best period of his life was spent among a people just emerging from a state of barbarism, and who were rather to be considered as catechumens, than as persons prepared for a regular ministry, and for the delivery of systematic discourses. But with him the improvement of his mind, by the acquisition of useful knowledge, was a matter both of duty and delight. He read the best English authors, both in prose and verse; and in conversation, as well as in the pulpit, would often introduce passages from our most eminent poets with considerable elegance and effect.

He obtained some knowledge of the Hebrew language; and when he was in the Holmfirth circuit, he went regularly through the greater part of the Greek Testament with his excellent colleague, who had received a classical education.

In the pulpit he always showed his good sense, by avoiding that affectation of learning, into which men of superficial attainments are apt to fall; but it was often manifest to competent judges, that he had a just view, not only of the general meaning of his text, but of the exact import of the original terms used by the inspired writer. He not only possessed a correct judgment, but often displayed considerable strength and elegance of imagination, by the introduction of appropriate figures, which enlivened his sermons, while they illustrated the subjects which he was pressing upon the attention of his hearers.

The matter of his discourses was always carefully arranged, so that his preaching was never incoherent and rhapsodical. In the pulpit self appeared to be utterly forgotten, and his only object was to promote the glory of God in the salvation of the people by whom he was surrounded. There was an earnestness, and a seriousness, in his manner, which excited a general interest in his favor, and prepared his hearers to listen with attention to his message. Preaching was his delight so that he never had any inclination to plead a slight indisposition, or the inclemency of the weather, as excuses for neglecting his appointments.

Unless unavoidably prevented, he was always at his post, and whatsoever his hand found to do, he did it with his might. As he aimed at the benefit of his hearers in all his ministrations, he was never satisfied with the bare delivery of his sermons, but was always looking for fruit. He was continually inquiring after persons whose minds were under religious impressions, that he might cherish in them every good desire, lead them to the Saviour, and induce them to avail themselves of the advantages of Christian fellowship.

He took a most lively interest in the prosperity of the work of God, and watched over the societies committed to his care in the spirit of a man who saw and felt the value of immortal souls. His death is a loss to the Methodist connection, and to the world, as well as to his family and friends, but he has finished his course, and awaits the decision of his Almighty Judge.

The following epitaph is inscribed upon his tombstone:

Sacred
To the Memory
Of the Rev. John Brownell;
Who having discharged the duties
Of the Christian ministry
With unwearied diligence and extensive success,
For the space of twenty-seven years,
(Eleven of which he spent as a Missionary
In the West India Islands,)
Finished his course in this Town,
In the calm triumph of Christian Faith.
He was eminently distinguished by
The sincerity of his piety,
The firmness of his principles,
The purity of his manners,
And the fervency of his zeal.
He was born January 22d, 1771,
And fell asleep in Jesus, Sept. 24th, 1821.
"The memory of the just is blessed." Prov. x. 7.

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A MEMOIR OF CAPTAIN TRIPP

Author's Name Not Given: To the Editor
From the February and March, 1823 issues
of "The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine"

The obituary of the Methodist Magazine, for March, 1821, contained a short account of the late excellent Captain Tripp, of the twenty-sixth regiment. I sincerely wished that some person, better qualified than myself, would undertake to present to the public a more extensive account of the deep piety and extraordinary spiritual attainments of that gentleman, during the short period of his Christian career. But having enjoyed the privilege of his society for nearly twelve months, and that of a regular monthly correspondence for another year, and being likewise favored by his brother, Mr. George Tripp, with the perusal of his private journal, and with the kind permission to make what use of it I might think proper, I have complied with the earnest solicitations of several very respectable gentlemen, in whose memory he will never die; and have engaged in the pleasing duty of selecting from his journal and letters the following particulars, the insertion of which will oblige many of your readers.

Francis Upton Tripp, Captain in the twenty-sixth regiment of infantry, was born at Petworth in Sussex, Dec. 3, 1790. He was educated at the Royal Grammar-School of Guildford, in Surrey; and entered the army in 1807, as ensign in the sixty-seventh regiment, then at Alderney. His friends afterwards purchased for him a lieutenancy in the tenth regiment of Foot; in which Regiment he served many years in the Mediterranean, and formed part of the Anglo-Sicilian army which landed at Alicant, and acted, under the command of Sir John Murray and Lord William Bentinck, on the eastern coast of Spain. He returned home at the conclusion of the war in 1814; when his friends purchased for him a Captain's commission in the same regiment, from which he afterwards exchanged into the twenty-sixth regiment. From his first entrance into the army, he conciliated the regard of his brother-officers in general, and especially that of those who held superior commands in the places where he served. Indeed his character and conduct were so invariably amiable, as to gain him the respect of all who knew him. From a tract which he wrote, entitled, "Happiness attainable in this life, it appears, that he had been blessed with a religious education, and that from his youth he had been the subject of divine influences; but when he entered into the world, and associated with men whose desires and pursuits were carnal and earthly, his serious impressions were gradually effaced. In reference to this he writes as follows:

"With respect to my conduct, it was neither better nor worse than that of my neighbors. I endeavored to be guided by moral principles, and to be just in all my dealings. But in the various succession of my plans and pursuits, I never could find any pleasures to gratify the unbounded desires of the mind, to fill the great void which exists within, or to beguile many melancholy and tedious hours. I had ample opportunities of knowing the world, by mingling with different classes of society; and was thus able to discern the imperfections and failings of its various characters, and to form a pretty correct estimate of the happiness of men without religion. But I saw no remedy for this state of things, of which I gradually became more weary every day; especially as I could meet with none who professed any enjoyments superior to my own. Thus twenty-seven years of my life passed away, without my knowing the power and comfort of religion. A good education had taught me the propriety (and the conviction ever continued with me) of worshipping God in

sincerity; but, unfortunately for me, this was not fashionable; and, through the fear of man, I was led astray, and followed the example of others older than myself, and my superiors in the world; having no idea that my want of true religion would explain my occasional uneasiness. But because the Lord's mercy failed not, I was spared during this period of ignorance and self-delusion."

In the Spring of the year 1817, Captain Tripp was providentially brought into the way of hearing the truth at Gibraltar. A gentleman, well known in the twenty-sixth regiment as a decidedly pious character, invited him, one Sunday morning, to accompany him to the Methodist Chapel. He was much surprised, and replied, "What will they think of us? -- However, I have no great objection to go for once." Of this circumstance, and of his conversion to God, in which it happily terminated, Captain Tripp gives the following interesting narrative.

"On that Sunday, God, in his mercy, visited my soul. When I saw the minister, and heard him preach, the word came with power to my heart. I could with difficulty contain myself; and thought that all in the Chapel were looking at me. Such, however, were the impressions made on my mind, that I was fully convinced of the necessity of a change of heart, and that the way of the cross was the only way to enjoy real happiness in this life, and to insure eternal felicity. After service, the subjects of our conversation were the sermon we had heard, the impressive manner of the preacher, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the importance of the truths delivered; and we came to this conclusion, that he alone is the happy man, who fears God and keeps his commandments. On the following Sunday, Mr. C. invited me to go with him again. I replied that if I went I should be called a Methodist, a name to which much contempt was attached; and as my family were all members of the established church, I did not think it proper to attend the Methodist chapel. Thus I stifled conviction, and hardened my heart against the Lord. However, my friend soon after again requested me to go with him to the chapel. I at last consented, and went; and with such power did the word of God come to my soul, that I then resolved that 'this people should be my people,' ignominious as they were considered by the circle of my friends and acquaintance, and that 'their God should be my God.' In the beginning of the following year, I determined, by God's blessing, to cast my lot among the Methodists, to devote myself a living sacrifice to the Lord, and earnestly in work out my salvation with fear and trembling. Natural timidity, internal strife, and fears of the world, occasionally rendered my acts of duty, in my new way of life, painful to me; but strength was given me, according to the day of trial; and having resolved to give my whole heart to God in Christ, and used the means which my Bible pointed out, the divine blessing attended my endeavors. Mountains of apparent difficulties and imaginary fears vanished. I found myself, in about three or four months, walking in ways of pleasantness, and had peace and joy in believing. My soul was at length filled, and perfectly satisfied; and the great end of life, which before had appeared to me a perfect riddle, was now clearly unfolded. Though I know not time exact time when I passed from a state of nature to a state of grace, from a state of darkness to a state of light, yet I felt that I had experienced the new birth; I had a sense of the remission of my sins, and enjoyed a happiness which I did not formerly think to be possible, and of which I had not the least expectation. During this period, I had some hard struggles with worldly interest, fleshly reasonings, the maxims of fashion, and the opinions and conduct of friends whom I much esteemed. But I reflected, that if I rendered implicit obedience to the commands of God, he would assuredly make me a conqueror over all; and I have found him ever faithful to his word. The headings of providence, whether in reference to religious or civil

exercises, when pursued with an entire and implicit faith in my Saviour, have always been followed by a corresponding degree of spiritual growth and blessing."

In the account given by Captain Tripp of the means which led to his conversion, we see an instance of the blessed results which may arise from an affectionate concern for the eternal interests of our friends. A kind and persevering solicitation to attend a ministry, by which the truth as it is in Jesus was faithfully preached, at last prevailed; and Mr. C. had the unspeakable pleasure of beholding his friend, not a nominal professor, but a Brother in Christ, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless. O that every disciple of our Lord may be encouraged to "go and do likewise."

Of the reality and magnitude of the charge which had been divinely accomplished in Captain Tripp, the following extracts will afford satisfactory indications:

"For some months, my kind and gracious Master has given me constant peace and joy in believing. How easy are his heavenly commandments, when the Spirit of God witnessed with our spirit that we are his children. Filial love, and reverential fear, can do all things. This I speak from experience. My heart is enlarged to go to the house of the Lord. Though many private devotions are answered with the smiles of my God, yet I have found greater tokens of his approbation and favor in the public means of grace. I can truly say, that it is my meat and drink to do my heavenly Father's will. I can pray for my enemies with delight. O, what happiness is this! The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. I find that I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. I cannot look back on former years without lamentation, when I consider of how much happiness I have deprived myself, by parlaying with sin and the world so long. But mercy, infinite mercy, has found me out; and I am saved by grace. I find it necessary to be constantly on the watch tower of faith, hope, and love; and constantly depending on my Saviour, I am enabled to begin, continue, and end all my prayers with 'Thy will be done.' It is my earnest desire to be fully transformed into his holy likeness, so that whatever I eat or drink, I may do all to his glory. I count all things dross for the knowledge of Christ my Saviour. O may I be a living sacrifice to him who has redeemed my soul! All my happiness is bound up in his glory. O the wonderful effects of grace! humility has now superseded pride, which concealed itself in my heart, in so many ways, for several years. I now feel a pleasure in sitting at the lowest disciple's feet, to bear the wisdom of God, and to witness the triumphs of grace. The more eminent time piety of his saints, time more strongly and spontaneously is the love attracted towards them."

A deep conviction of the great realities of a future world, and of the absolute necessity of personal holiness, confirmed captain Tripp in his resolution to imitate the choice of Moses, who preferred "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." It was not long before an opportunity of evincing his decision of character occurred. Before his conversion, such was the attractive influence of his amiable disposition, and unassuming manners, that his society was courted by a large circle of acquaintance. This was likely to be a source of great temptation, and a hindrance to his spiritual progress; but the event proved, that the grace of Christ was sufficient for him. After he had made a full surrender of himself to God, he received a card of invitation, from a gentleman of high rank, to dine with a large party. In the station of life in which Captain Tripp moved, this was a close trial of his faith and that he might be steadfast and unmoveable, he did not depend upon his own strength, but earnestly

prayed for grace and guidance from above. This prayer was heard. He wrote a card, candidly avowing, that having lately seen the evil of his ways, he had resolved on leading a new life, and therefore declined the honor of joining the intended party. Although he thus openly acknowledged his adherence to the cross of Christ, yet his mind was much exercised with the apprehension of having given offense. But, at this time of painful feeling, he proved that they who trust in the Lord shall never be confounded; for when that gentleman afterwards met Captain Tripp, he behaved to him with his usual kindness and attention.

Captain Tripp was of a delicate constitution which frequently reminded him that the foundation of his earthly tabernacle was laid in the dust; yet, a sure trust and confidence in his Redeemer enabled him to rejoice in the prospect of eternity. In his diary he thus expresses himself on that subject:

"Death does not terrify me. This is the result, not of a presumptuous confidence, but of a humble and sure trust in my Saviour, that He will carry me triumphantly to the mansions prepared for all those who love his appearing."

During the summer-months, it is customary at Gibraltar for some of the regiments stationed there to encamp on the Neutral Ground; a part of the isthmus which unites the Rock to Spain, and which separates the Bay of Gibraltar from the Mediterranean Sea. In the summer of 1818, the twenty-sixth regiment formed a part of the troops selected. At this period, Captain Tripp's mind was considerably exercised: the Garrison-Gates being locked at sun-set, he was deprived of the opportunities of assembling with the people of God, which were by him so highly prized. He earnestly prayed for preserving grace; and, whilst thus engaged, derived much encouragement from the scriptures, especially from the following passage: "For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom." (Job xxxvi. 4,5.) In the course of these months of encampment his mind was frequently grieved on account of those around him, who spent their precious time in vacancy and idleness; while any one who attempted to speak to them of divine enjoyments was likely to be considered as a dreamer of tales. In this solitary situation he could say with the Psalmist, "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" In his diary he strongly expresses his fervent desires on their behalf, that God would convert them from the error of their ways, and bring them to the knowledge of Christ as their Saviour. The following extracts afford a specimen of his feelings at this period:

"Here I am, in solitary meditation on the wondrous goodness of God my Saviour, with no companion to cheer or stimulate me. Yet I am not alone: there is One who smiles on his that, like a sparrow, sits solitarily on the house-top. If the sacrifice of all I have, and all I am, would be instrumental in saving poor sinners, I think, by God's blessing, I could make that sacrifice; for I know that eternal joy, or eternal torment, must be the portion of all. I adore thee, O Lord, for giving me to understand and experience the things belonging to my peace.

"I now read the Psalms of David with delight. Their fervent strains of adoration and praise attune my soul for similar exercises. The Lord wonderfully manifests to me his gracious approbation, and blesses me in all I do. His free grace has gently led me on to fuller light. Time immensity and omnipotence of time eternal and glorious Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I

reverence and admire, with filial fear and trembling; feeling that I am an utterly unworthy and sinful worm of the earth. But it has pleased this great Being, in his unspeakable condescension and love, that I should worship him in the beauty of holiness, and should be permitted to tell all wants to him, as my heavenly Father and best Friend. O! how altogether lovely and gracious is the character of the divine Majesty! On this day, while worshipping with his people, so great was the effusion of the Holy Spirit, that I was quite overcome; and my heart was melted in an extraordinary degree, more than I ever before experienced. How beautiful do holiness, righteousness, and purity, appear to my mind!

During the period of the encampment, before alluded to, the Rev. Thomas Davis, the Wesleyan missionary at that time stationed at Gibraltar, (who, under the blessing of God, had been made the instrument of Captain Tripp's conversion,) preached to the soldiers on the Neutral Ground; and his word was made the power of God to the salvation of many, particularly in the twenty-sixth regiment. Indeed Mr. Davis' general ministry was rendered exceedingly useful in the Garrison; and, by that means, in connection with the singular piety and uniform conduct of Captain Tripp, and of a brother-officer, a most favorable change took place in the circumstances of the Methodist society on the Rock.

In October, he returned to the Garrison. His mind was under a very heavenly influence; he devoutly praised God for the spiritual blessings which he had received whilst in camp; and observed, that the months so spent were the happiest he had ever enjoyed.

Captain Tripp possessed a very strong mind, enriched with various and useful knowledge; but after he embraced religion, it might be said of him, that he was "a man of one book." The Bible was his constant companion. And he bears this testimony to the happy effects of his regular and careful perusal of it: "Great and powerful consolations do I receive from the blessed scriptures."

At the close of the year 1818, we find him still rejoicing in God, humbly depending on his all-sufficient Saviour, and ardently desirous to promote the salvation of others, especially of his beloved relatives and friends. On the third of December he writes as follows:

"This day I am twenty-eight years of age; but, alas! I am only in the first year (not yet completed) of my spiritual life. Praised be the Father of Lights, my soul keeps its heavenly course; my joy is truly blissful, though silent and calm; my conscience is happy, and free from any condemnation. Yet the warfare is constant; but it appears to me, that in trials and exercises my heart is warmer, and more alive to God, than when I am living with the apparently greater helps of external quiet and ease. In these more promising circumstances, I have found it harder work to maintain the spirit of religion. Nothing but sin and misery can I claim: all the rest belongs to God. The good I do (and, alas, how little is it!) is not mine; and I only love God, because he first loved me. What can I say, when I contemplate so natural astonishing mercy and love! Glory be to God in the highest! In dependence on thine almighty grace, I could exclaim, 'Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' At all times, and in all places, does the peace of God rest upon me; and his love being now shed abroad in my heart, I love every soul of man. Thanks be to God, for putting it into my mind to endeavor to make known this immensity of love to my dear friends in England, and to testify the truth of his promises to those around me."

Captain Tripp commenced the year 1819 by seriously reviewing his past life, with a full determination, no doubt, to profit by the retrospect. On the 16th of January in that year, he observes, in his diary,

"I have my days of sorrow and repentance, on account of my various imperfections and sins; in years that are past. I see my own vileness more than ever; but in Christ, my Saviour, I find a sufficiency even for the chief of sinners. O how great are the mercies of my Lord! My conscience is continually tranquil and happy. I lay me down without fear, and my sleep is sweet."

Many of the gainsayers of our holy religion would persuade the world that there is something connected with it which makes its disciples dull and morose, and casts a gloom on everything around them. But in the case of Captain Tripp it is evident, that religion

"Laid the rough path of peevish nature even,
And open'd in his breast a little heaven."

This was evinced by a pleasing serenity of countenance, and a cheerfulness and suavity of manners, which won the affections of his friends, and commanded respect from the most profane. His enjoyments in the service of God may be further exemplified in the following passages from his journal.

"Feb. 8th. -- Under the influence of religion, how tranquil and joyous is my mind; and with what happiness do I look forward to dissolution. But though I long to die, I am happy to remain here, and, I hope, resigned to the will of God. My mind, however, is weaned from earth; and nothing short of the glories of heaven can satisfy my longing desire. The Bible is my sole rule of conduct; and therein I see that a strict and faithful adherence to its precepts is absolutely necessary for the enjoyment of vital piety. Prayer is as necessary to me as my daily food.

"March 25th. -- To be exceedingly happy we must be exceedingly religious. 'The diligent hand maketh rich,' in spiritual as well as temporal things. Grace is taking a deeper root in my heart; and I enjoy a greater degree of sanctification; being more resigned, more humble, and, I believe, more emptied of self. I have nothing whereof to boast, and can say with the Apostle, 'I am the least of all saints;' but if I had ten thousand tongues they would not be sufficient to praise my adorable Saviour. I am ashamed on account of my comparative coldness in prayer and praise, when I consider that I have so many reasons to magnify the God of my salvation: For thou, O Lord, hast anointed thy servant with the oil of gladness. -- The Christian has meat to eat, and work to do, that the world knoweth not. He has no mighty void in his soul, no dull and idle hours; his hands are full of business; his spiritual faculties are always active, in watching for opportunities of doing good to others, in keeping his own heart in subjection, and in perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.

"May 5th. -- I am well convinced that a work of sanctification has been going on in my soul. Since my conversion to God, it has been in a progressive state. Glory be to my adorable Redeemer! The tranquillity of my soul, and my deadness to the world, and to the temptations which formerly beset me, are astonishing. I have had many internal enemies to cope with, especially a peevish temper; but nothing ruffles me now; all my enemies pass away like the chaff before the wind, when the Holy Spirit works upon me; and I live not in my own strength, but in the strength of

Christ. I bless God, that I find, on a strict examination of my own heart, that I have no wish, not a single desire to live for myself, but only to do the whole will of God. I am in his hands; he has done all things well for me; and I commit all my concerns to his providential care; being assured that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day. -- I know no people who have so many helps to the enjoyment and experience of religion as the Methodists. How excellent is their discipline, which encloses their little flocks from the common of the world."

A change of ministers having taken place at the Gibraltar station, captain Tripp thus expresses his feelings on the occasion:--

"I felt much anxiety that grace, ability, and success, should be the portion of our new minister; I prayed from the heart for him; and his second sermon gave me much comfortable and additional light on my own state. I was brought to a right service of God, through the instrumentality of Mr. Davis, Methodist missionary; and I was so foolish as to think that no other person could greatly profit me. But it has pleased the Lord to show me the contrary. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Captain Tripp's strong views of the importance and possibility of high attainments in piety, will appear from the ensuing, extract.

"July 4th, 1819. -- I believe my Saviour has all my heart. I wish to make no excuses for myself, but to believe and act with all my power, relying on the help of the grace of God. No one need fear, on account of his weakness; the Lord himself is our strength. I bless God, that I do not repent of my total renunciation of myself to him; I can say, I do not seek my own will and pleasure in any one thing, however small, but do many things contrary to both. But, O how great is the happiness I enjoy in this implicit trust, and daily dependence on God. O what free grace and abundant mercy are displayed to me.. The Christian's life, I see, is altogether a life of faith. Who can know the constant happiness of a humble and self-denying believer? Many there are who like the Christian's comforts; but they do not like to tread in his path, by sacrificing all they have to the glory of God. I desire to bless God for bringing me among a people who do not limit divine grace, but expect the fulfillment of all the promises.

"August 24th. -- I desire to give glory to God, that my views of experimental religion enlarge. I find that, in the paths of righteousness, what is difficult one day is easy on the morrow. Many authors write on Christian experience according to their own contracted and limited enjoyments; and their partial and imperfect systems form the creed of thousands: for persons generally like to rest in mere doctrines, rather than to practice God's holy commandments. If ministers and people would sincerely study their Bible without prejudice, or undue attachment to any favorite system of their own, and simply obey its precepts, they would then see how partially men in general explain the life of a true Christian.

"Nov. 3d. -- On reviewing my spiritual state, I have exceeding great cause for thankfulness to God in Christ. I have a clearer discovery of my natural sinfulness, my nothingness, and my imperfections. This brings me low at my Saviour's feet; and I see myself to be an unworthy creature, deserving only hell, on account of my manifold sins; yet am I a monument of his mercy, a sinner saved by grace. I bless my God, I am, and have been ever since my conversion, growing in

grace. I have experienced a more stable peace, a more joyous love, a firmer faith, and a brighter hope; and now, thanks be to my heavenly Father, my heavenly-mindedness is more constant. My experience is not dark and gloomy; neither do I find in the New Testament that the believer is in that slate, or can be so, whilst he lives near to God, and exercises a lively faith in Christ.

Since I began the divine life, I have found all duties of a spiritual nature to be crosses at first; but I can truly say, that according to my day, so has my strength been. My two greatest crosses at present are, praying in public, and collecting money for the Wesleyan missions among the poor heathen. But the Lord has assisted me in these respects, though I am but weakness, and, of myself, unequal to these duties. But if all excused themselves on account of their incapacities, we should have no public extemporary prayers for each other, which are so edifying to Christians; neither would the poor heathen have the Gospel preached to them. O what pleasure do I find in these duties. I am only as a pilgrim on earth; I live not for myself, but to do all this good I can to my fellow creatures. My heart continues to be full of love to God, and to all mankind."

Captain Tripp zealously engaged in the formation of an auxiliary Methodist missionary society on the Rock of Gibraltar, and used all his influence on its behalf with persons whose views were at first unfavorable to the introduction of Christianity among the heathen. Such was the esteem with which he was regarded, that the result of his earnest and persevering applications exceeded his most sanguine expectations. The love of Christ excited others, also, to aid the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom; and great was the success which attended their efforts, -- the amount of one month's subscriptions and donations being £30 sterling! When the money was paid to the treasurers, by the collectors, joy filled the heart of this good man, and he exclaimed, "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." His strong attachment to this missionary society he manifested by a donation of nearly £20 on his leaving the garrison, which took place in the following spring.

In consequence of the insurrection which prevailed in Spain, about the beginning of 1820, a cordon guard was placed on the neutral ground, to prevent any communication with the continent. The night on which it was captain Tripp's turn to mount that guard, was extremely wet and stormy; he took a violent cold, which increased a previous complaint in his chest, and hastened him to an early grave. From that period his health very rapidly declined; and he became incapable of attending to his military duties. Those duties, however, he would not relinquish, until absolutely compelled by increasing debility, lest a reflection on his religion should be cast by the ungodly. The following passages occur in his journal, in reference to this period of affliction:--

"I find a sensible increase in holiness, and a deadness to the world which is indescribable. Sometimes I am very weak in body, and cannot remain long on my knees; yet my prayers are heard and answered in the happiness and peace of my mind, This affliction has been of great use to me; my own will is lost, entirely and perfectly, in the will of God. I walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and enjoy the fruits of the Spirit. Stated renewals of spiritual food from above are as necessary to my inner man, as the usual portions of earthly food to my outward frame. Praised be my God and Saviour, for his wonderful lovingkindness to me. I have been declining in bodily health, and have passed through many seasons of languor and debility, yet through mercy have had temporary returns of strength. I have tried earthly means for the restoration of health, such as changes of place, and medicine, which, in some degree, have been blessed to me. I do not believe

that I have one enemy in Gibraltar. The Lord has made all hearts favorable to me. The colonel has taken a most kind interest in my health; and the governor has granted me different quarters, and given me leave to go to any place I wish for change of air. I pray for them, and entreat the divine favor towards them, and all my friends."

In the month of January, 1820, captain Tripp went to St. Roque, about six miles from Gibraltar. This town is pleasantly situated on a hill, and much resorted to by English families and invalids, on account of the salubrity of the air. In this retreat captain Tripp enjoyed himself much, in solitary morning and evening walks, in reading, meditation, and prayer. The following is an extract of a letter which he wrote to me from thence:--

"The first thing I did on taking possession of my rooms, was to praise God for his goodness, and to ask his blessing; and I found my heavenly Father in Christ present, to hear and comfort his unworthy servant. He filled my mind with sweet peace. Be assured that I did not forget you and yours. This situation pleases me well. Here I enjoy a delightful solitude, a very pure air; and, above all other considerations, the presence of God is with me. I have no will of my own with regard to any thing future. I sometimes think, how the world and I shall agree, if I get strong again; -- we were never at such a distance as we have been lately. Everything in it is felt by me to be 'vanity of vanities.' "

Captain Tripp's health having derived some benefit from the change of air, he returned to the garrison; and indulging the pleasing hope that the Lord would restore him to usefulness in his Church, he was requested to become the leader of a class. To this application he replied, "I have truly a mean opinion of my own ability; but I do not say this from any wish to decline. I am perfectly at your service; and if I may be supposed to be useful, let it by all means be tried." In this labor of love, he was engaged only for a few weeks; as our hopes of his returning health were delusive. Indeed the fatal disease, which had so long threatened to bring him to the tomb, increased daily; and, to the great grief of his friends, he sailed from the garrison on the 18th of March for England, as the only probable means of preserving his life. On the evening previous to his leaving the Rock, he was enabled to take a public part in the prayer meeting, and, with a pathos and energy which affected every one, read that appropriate hymn on the 48th page in the Methodist Hymn Book, --

"The morning flowers display their sweets," &c.

All felt impressed that they should never behold his face again. The suitableness of the hymn, the fervency of his devotion, and his earnest solicitations at the throne of grace for the welfare of that little society of Christians, in the bosom of which he had enjoyed so much happiness, will never be forgotten by me. The Sunday after his arrival in London he heard Mr. Benson preach; on which occasion he writes:-- "Mr. Benson preached delightfully. I sat near the door, and was bathed in tears, -the Spirit shining on his own work in my heart."

The next date his journal bears is that of Fittleworth, (Sussex,) May 19th, under which he writes thus:-- "Since my arrival about five weeks ago, my home has been a home of much comfort to me; and the Lord has been with me from the moment of my departure from my regiment at Gibraltar. My mind has been kept in perfect peace, and all things during my journey have

inexpressibly smiled upon me. The divine presence is ever with me, and there is a charm in every object I see. Yet what a world of sin, pain, labor, and misery I shall leave, in leaving earth!"

The following are a few extracts from letters which he wrote at different periods, after his return to England:--

"Without labor, there can be no fruit; labor and, enjoyment go hand in hand. When you advised me to establish family prayer, little did I think it would be so useful to my own soul; but I have proved it so in a high degree. O how happy am I! Everything, seems to smile on me. O the happiness of a mind full of the peace of God! O the riches of divine grace!"

"I am quite loosened from all earthly things. I hear my friends talk of their affairs and concerns, as if I heard them not; they make no impression on my mind; indeed they hardly affect it with a thought. As I was sitting under the shade of our evergreens, I wished for your society, that we might be mutually happy, by interchanging the recital of those high and heavenly comforts, which our blessed Master gives to his unworthy servants. But those scenes of social delight are reserved for another and a far better world."

"My sickness is scarcely an inconvenience to me; I am full of the love of God, and can leave earth without an inclination for anything in it. My prospects beyond the grave are delightful, cheering, and bright; and though my wishes would often incline me to depart and be with Christ, yet I have no desire either to live or die. I am sunk into the divine will."

"Religion has done all for me. I am altogether the property of my heavenly Father. The prospect of death is sweet to me; this world of sin I am tired of, but not impatient."

Thus, to this excellent man, death had lost its sting, and he welcomed its approach, as that of a friend. His dissolution was not expected to be so near as the event proved; for he was confined to his bed only three days before his death. One afternoon, as his brother was beginning to read to him in St. John's Gospel, (little thinking that night would be his last,) captain Tripp said to him, as soon as he had read the first verse of the tenth chapter, "Don't read that; go to the next chapter; how does that begin?" On reading the first line of the eleventh chapter, he desired him to leave that, and go to the next; and so on, till he came to the first verse of the seventeenth chapter, "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes. to heaven," &c. "Ah," said he, "read that." About four o'clock on the following morning, the nurse summoned the family to his chamber, thinking that his departure was at hand: in about half an hour he became insensible, breathing with great difficulty; and in this manner he lay about two hours, when he expired without a struggle. This was on Feb. 3d, 1821, in the thirty-first year of his age.

The life of captain Tripp was regulated by the principles of the Gospel, and his heart glowed with the influences of its divine and benevolent spirit. His light so shone before men, that some have said, "If any thing would induce me to become a Methodist, it is the conduct of captain Tripp." His conversation was spiritual and heavenly, and from the abundance of his heart he spoke. His charity was only limited by his means; and to, increase those means, he practiced a rigid economy in every thing relating to himself. It may be truly said, that he went about doing good, and that the blessing of him that was ready to perish fell upon him. Nor was his charity

confined to almsgiving; he always administered spiritual instruction, and zealously distributed religious books and tracts. In short, in the strictest sense of the word, he was every man's friend to the utmost of his power. --

Such was the life, and such the death of the righteous: may our last end be like his!

[To the preceding account of captain Tripp we deem it proper to annex the following additional particulars, which are extracted from some brief notices of him in the Methodist Magazine for March and April, 1821.]

The Rev. John Piggott, who visited capt. T. at Frittleworth, a few weeks before his death, thus describes the circumstances of their interview.

"He was apparently in the last stage of a consumption; but exceedingly happy in God. After a little conversation, he took me by the hand, and, with the most expressive countenance, addressed me in nearly the following words: 'Mr. Piggott, I am very happy to see you. I have long wished to see you, that I might tell you what God has done for my soul. When I review the past, I am filled with astonishment at the goodness of God; and, be it spoken to the glory of his grace, I am lost in love and praise. Several years I traveled in different parts of our own enlightened country, a stranger to myself, and to that God whom I ought to have loved and served. But, O! how signally was the mercy of God displayed in sending me to Gibraltar; there I found Him whom my soul loves. Yes, Sir, (he exclaimed with peculiar emphasis,) my soul loves the Lord Jesus; I feel that I am justified, and have peace with God, through faith in his blood. I have not lost a sense of his presence, nor of his favor, a moment, for twelve months past. I feel that I am in possession of that which I once thought was never attainable on earth; I mean that entire sanctification, that holiness of heart, that makes me meet for heaven. I have no particular desire to leave this suffering flesh; no, I am perfectly content to suffer all the will of God; yet I feel that to depart and be with Christ would be far better.' After commemorating the dying love of the adorable Redeemer, though he was almost exhausted, and could hardly articulate so as to be heard, yet, with eyes bathed in tears of gratitude, and a heart overflowing with love to God, he said, 'Once more have I been' permitted to enjoy this blessed privilege on earth, perhaps for the last time.' -- After sitting silent a few minutes, looking at me with streaming eyes, he said, 'O Sir, I have more than heart can wish; here are my mother, my sister, my brothers, and the servants, all uniting their study and endeavors to make me happy; but the best of all is, God is with me, I feel him with me now.' Under the influence of these evangelical sentiments, and in this heavenly frame of mind, he was, when I took my leave of him."

Captain T. bequeathed the following sums of money to the different objects and persons under-mentioned. We record them as proofs of the pious feeling by which he was governed in the disposal of his worldly property, and of his grateful attachment to that Christian society, from which, instrumentally, he had derived the "true riches." The bequests alluded to are these: -To the mission chapel at Gibraltar, £600; the surplus, if any remain after liquidating the debt, to be paid to the Wesleyan missionary society:-- To the Wesleyan missionary society, £50:-- To a missionary who had been made useful to him, £100: To another, £50:-- To a religious friend at Gibraltar, £20: -And to the Strangers' Friend society, £10.]

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A MEMOIR OF JAMES COOPER

By Dr. McAllum

From the April, 1823 issue of

The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mr. Cooper was born in North-Shields, on May 17th, 1742. Very early in life, he felt conviction of sin; and vainly tried to allay the distress of his mind, and to obtain the favor of God, "by the works of the Law." Though he was often and deeply affected by fearful apprehensions of his liability to the wrath of God, and sometimes "scared with dreams," and "terrified with visions of the night," yet he found that his corrupt nature grew more and more strong, and neither his fears nor his wishes enabled him to overcome it. On the contrary, when he "would do good," "evil" was not only "present with him," but prevailed against him. At length, by the good providence of God, he was led to hear the preaching of the gospel by the Methodists. Their number was then very small in North-Shields; and they held their meetings for worship in a blacksmith's shop, -- a place, however mean, that was dear to many, as the scene of their conversion to God. Mr. James Oddy was the first preacher he heard. Before the sermon was concluded, he felt every word come home to his conscience. The impression was very deep; and he was almost driven to despair. He prayed day and night; and often cried aloud in bitterness of spirit, "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."

The sins of his youth were set in battle-array before him; and he says, in an account which he has left of his religious experience, that he wandered in this condition on the seaside, and, taking a handful of sand, tried to count the number of grains. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "if I were sure of happiness after having suffered a thousand years for each grain that is here, there would then be room for hope but now there is none. O Eternity! Eternity! Nothing but the slender thread of life keeps me from falling into the bottomless pit." He found no comfort, for a time, in reading or in society; and the first ray of hope which cheered his desponding mind was enjoyed when partaking of the Lord's Supper in the parish church, and especially during the recitation of those comfortable words of our Lord, "Come unto me, ye that labor and are heavy laden," &c.

For nine months, he went mourning before the Lord, refusing comfort from anything earthly, and a stranger to the love, and joy, and peace, which flow from believing. His mind was severely tempted to doubt the existence of God, the divinity of Christ, and the personality of the Holy Ghost. All this time he had no one to instruct or guide him; for he was too diffident to obtrude himself on any of the members of the society, and no one spoke to him.

His mind was still further convinced and enlightened by a sermon preached by Mr. Story on the parable of the Ten Virgins, from which he was made deeply sensible that he wanted "oil in his vessel." He now more than ever wrestled with strong cries and tears in prayer to Him who is mighty to save; and at length, in July, 1761, while thus engaged, he felt the comforting presence of his Saviour, and heard him, by the ear of faith, say, "Be of good cheer: thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven." He tells us, in the memoir of his experience from which these particulars are

extracted, that his joys now rose as high, as before the tempest of his soul had done. He saw and felt Christ to be a sufficient and a present Saviour; and although, soon after his obtaining the pearl of great price, he had an awful and distressing conflict with the Tempter, this only drew him closer to his Lord, and induced him more implicitly to depend upon him. After this he had a long-continued season of spiritual joy and prosperity, during which he grew in grace, and labored after all the mind that was in Christ.

At first he regarded entire sanctification as a blessing at a great distance from him, to be obtained only at some very remote period: afterwards he conceived of it entirely as a gift of God, promised to such as ask it in faith, and therefore saw that he was at liberty now to seek it with an assurance that he should find. Thus he continued thirsting after an entire conformity to the mind that was in Christ, till, with kindly but mistaken views, he was betrayed into an action that was rather indiscreet than criminal. The affair alluded to, however, occasioned him much uneasiness of mind, broke in upon his habits of devotion, and lessened his peace and joy.

About this time he had completed his apprenticeship; and his master so thoroughly disrelished his religious views as to refuse him any farther employment. A situation was offered him by a person of like occupation in Newcastle. Thither he went, and abode with him for three years. He now united himself to the Methodist society, meeting both in class and in band; and says that he found those institutions to be greatly conducive to his growth in grace, and his comfort in believing. His health having been impaired, a situation as Collector of Salt-duties was obtained for him; and though his appointment was, in the first instance, to Droitwich, yet, by exchange with another officer, he was allowed to take up his abode at Hartley, a place about six miles from North-Shields.

Of his experience in the things of God, after his removal to Hartley, Mr. Cooper gives us very little account. One of his first wishes, now that he had become a householder, was to have a room at the service of the preachers when they visited the place. At first his income was so limited as to prevent him from indulging his wish; and he made it the subject of prayer that God would put it in his power, as he had put it in his heart, to entertain the ministers of the gospel. His income was unexpectedly increased, and he kept the vow he had made. For more than forty years his heart and his house were open to receive them; and he records that his family were greatly profited by their company and conversation. From all that can be learned, he adorned the gospel of Christ, and was not only a support, but an ornament, to the Methodist society in Hartley.

In 1813, he removed with his daughter's family to North-Shields; and from two or three short memoranda, written in the last years of his life, it is evident that the eye of his faith had not waxed dim, nor had his spiritual strength abated. To the experience and wisdom of age he united the simplicity of Christian childhood. He speaks of seasons of peculiar refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power, particularly at a watch-night at the close of the year 1816, and, on another occasion, after he had experienced a shock of apoplexy in 1817. He was waiting for his change, and longed to depart many days before the Lord called him hence. He looked about him with a cheerful smile, was wont to say little, and seemed to think he had nothing to do but to die. At length, after an illness of a few days, during which (notwithstanding a short but victorious conflict with temptation) he was resigned and full of confidence in his Lord. He sweetly fell asleep on July 13th, 1801. In him there was no guile; his was the very spirit of Christianity.

His manners were gentle and retired. He was peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of good works, and without hypocrisy. His Christian course was continued during a period of sixty years.
-- Dalkeith, Sept. 4, 1821

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4

A MEMOIR OF JOHN DEAN

By Rev. William Moulton
From the May, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mr. John Dean was born in the village of Rowton, three miles distant from the City of Chester, in the year 1765. His parents occupied a considerable farm, and lived respectably. It is now between thirty and forty years since I first became acquainted with the family: the aged pair, at that time, feared God, and received the Methodist Ministers under their hospitable roof. They had then three sons and one daughter, who were all members of the Methodist Society; and some members of the family have continued to entertain the preachers of the gospel to this day.

Mr. John Dean was the youngest son. He was called to repentance in his youth, under the ministry of the Methodists; and his religious experience was truly scriptural. When first enlightened by the Divine Spirit, so as to discover the sinfulness of sin, and his own wickedness of heart and life, his distress was great. He would frequently traverse his father's fields, and in secluded spots, pour out his soul in strong cries and tears for mercy, to Him who is able to save. His fervent prayers and earnest wrestlings were not in vain. He was enabled to claim an interest in the Savior's death; believing that our Lord loved him, and gave himself for him. His feelings of exultation were then unutterable; the Spirit of God bearing witness with his spirit, that he was adopted into God's family, and enabling him with filial boldness to cry, Abba, Father. His anguish and terror gave place to confidence and to joy unspeakable.

About the time of his conversion a Methodist society was formed in Rowton; Mr. Dean was one of its earliest members; and, at the earnest request of the rest, he was appointed the leader. By his vigilance and care, the little flock increased while he remained with them, and, I believe, are now in a state of spiritual prosperity.

In the year 1788, our worthy brother began to act as a local preacher, from the fullest conviction of duty; (for his temper was the reverse of bold and self-confident;) but, after surmounting his natural timidity, and being strengthened by divine influence, he proceeded in the work to which he believed himself to be called by God. In those days the local preachers in the Chester circuit were inconsiderable in number, and were therefore generally employed every Lord's day. Mr. Dean having a horse at command, and his situation in life not rendering his attention to business constant and unremitted, he often went to the extremities of the circuit, and to some places in North Wales, where there was then no regular preaching; so that it might be said with truth, that he labored more abundantly than his brethren.

In the exercise of his ministry, he brought before his congregations, their privileges as Christians; the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins; the direct and abiding witness of the Spirit; together with a present, a free, and full salvation from all sin, by faith in Jesus Christ. The late Rev. John Wesley preached these glorious doctrines, and has stated and enforced them in his sermons published to the world; and his fellow-helpers, whose labors were so greatly honored by the Head of the Church, entertained the same views, and insisted on the same truths.

Mr. Dean's temper was placid and unassuming, and his manners gentle and easy; yet his ministry was powerful and practical. He exemplified the Gospel in his life, and was received with Christian affection and esteem, wherever he labored. In every part of the Chester circuit, his conduct and usefulness were spoken of in terms of approbation.

In June, 1790, several persons belonging to our society in Chester, as well as in other places, inferred from what they had heard concerning him, that he was called to more extensive usefulness, than that of laboring in a local sphere; and in order to be fully satisfied, they requested him, in the most affectionate manner, to preach in that city. Here his feelings were put to the severest test. He was desirous to stay at home, and to labor, as he had opportunity, in his own neighborhood: this was also the wish of his parents and relatives: He respected, however, the call of God, and the judgment of his religious friends. I well remember the words which he selected as the foundation of his discourse on that occasion:-- "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," &c. (Isaiah Iv. 1) Having overcome his fears, he treated the subject with clearness and energy. A divine unction attended the word, and a general blessing was felt; so that it appeared evident, that God had called him to the important work of saving souls from death, by the regular ministry of his word. On leaving home, and taking a circuit as an itinerant Methodist preacher, my intercourse with him was interrupted. However, on his short visits to his relatives, I availed myself of his company and converse, and always found him the same man of piety and uprightness.

In the year 1796, Mr. Dean was married to a pious and amiable young woman, a native of Gloucestershire, with whom he lived in a state of connubial felicity for several years; when it pleased the Almighty to take her to himself: her end was peace.

As my worthy brother and I were never stationed together in the same Circuit, nor very near to each other, we seldom met except at our annual Conferences; where we related to each other the merciful dealings of God with us. As he did not keep any regular journal, and as we kept up no regular correspondence, a chasm of more than twenty years must unavoidably occur in this account. By referring to the Minutes of Conference it will be seen where he traveled and labored; and his name is cherished with pleasure in the remembrance of those persons who were favored with his ministry. His character as a Christian, and a Preacher of the Gospel, always stood fair with his brethren, and was always respected; but concerning his walk with God, and the gracious dealings of the Lord with him, little can be said, for want of authentic documents in his own writing, or from those who were intimately acquainted with him. With several of his colleagues I have frequently conversed; and whenever his name was mentioned, it was always with marked respect; expressive of their high opinion of his real worth, of his kindness to them, and acceptableness to the people of his charge.

About the year 1803, Mr. Dean entered a second time into the marriage state. Mrs. Theobald, who resided, at that time, near Diss, in Norfolk, was the object of his choice. This step was highly approved by his friends; and Mrs. T. became indeed a help meet for him.

Mr. Dean's health was in general very good; and his constitution appeared to promise many years of labor and usefulness: but while he was in Manchester, at the Conference of 1821, he experienced a slight indisposition; from which, however, he did not anticipate any serious consequences. Being called soon after to London; on some important business, he felt, while he was there, a difficulty in his breathing, accompanied by other symptoms of ill health. On returning home, he found the complaint increasing; yet he still went on in his work. Having to attend several places in the Lynn Circuit, it soon appeared that walking greatly distressed him; yet still he supposed, that, by the assistance of a horse, he might fulfill his appointments; being very unwilling to relinquish the work in which he had delighted for many years. In the first stages of his complaint, he was not painfully affected by public speaking; but towards the middle of November, he was obliged entirely to desist from his work. He nevertheless still cherished a hope, that he should be able in the spring to resume his wonted labors. When he was first confined to his room, he said but little concerning his views and feelings with regard to the eternal world; being rather reserved in his manner; yet one day when "an aged disciple" called to see him, and made an inquiry respecting the state of his mind, he said, apparently with deep humility and fervent gratitude, "The following lines express my present religious experience:--

'O Love, thou bottomless abyss!
My sins are swallow'd up in thee;
Cover'd is my unrighteousness,
Nor spot of guilt remains on me,
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless Mercy cries!"

From that time he became more communicative, and often expressed his astonishment that he should feel so much at liberty to speak on the faithfulness and condescension of God to him; and that he should dwell so largely and so frequently on the subject of divine love, by which he felt his own heart to be cheered and supported.

During the latter period of his sickness, his soul was indeed filled with the love of Jesus; so that he would frequently sit, and meditate, till he could refrain no longer; and, in an ecstasy of joy, would express the feelings of his exulting mind. For his heart was indeed in heaven, and heavenly subjects occupied his undivided attention. -- One day he requested his wife to read to him a hymn in Mr. Brackenbury's Collection, on the joys of the heavenly world; but when she repeated the following lines,

"Hark, the thrilling symphonies
Seem, methinks, to seize us:
Join we too the solemn lays,
Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!"

he requested her to desist; saying that it was more than he could bear; his cup of joy was full. Thus it was evident, that his Soul was ripening for glory. He remarked more than once, in the time of his affliction, that the Scriptures had been a source of the richest consolation to him; that he had formerly seen beauties in many passages while meditating upon them, but never so clearly as he did then; and that he never so sensibly felt their animating and transforming influence. In these exercises his soul was preserved in peace, and in communion with God. His whole conversation expressed the goodness and faithfulness of the Almighty, and the sure hope of glory which he possessed.

On the 16th of February, 1822, he fell asleep in Jesus, without a struggle or a groan, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-second of his Ministry. "The memory of the just is blessed."

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5 A MEMOIR OF THOMAS SLATER

By Joseph Taylor
From the May, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

The venerable Mr. Thomas Slater, of Shottle, near Belper, was a Local Preacher upwards of fifty years, and preached the first Gospel-sermon I ever heard. He visited Duffield, the place of my nativity, about the year 1770; and met with the treatment which might be expected from an ungodly multitude: but he bore it with patience and fortitude. He came frequently, and preached in the open air while the weather would permit; and then procured a small dwelling-house for the winter season. He formed those of us, who were under religious impressions, into a small society, of which he was the leader; and although he had each week to walk three miles to meet us, and to return, I never knew him hindered by any kind of weather.

But Duffield was not the only place where he planted the Gospel: his love to the souls of men carried him to all parts of the surrounding country. He was a means of beginning the good work of God in more places than any man I ever knew! His constitution was remarkably good and strong; and he never spared it in the least. Some years before I began to travel, I, and a few more young men, used to go with him from village to village, where he preached the Gospel of the kingdom, and we assisted him in singing. He preached some hundreds of sermons at my native place, and had always something to say which was interesting to his hearers; and many persons, during those seasons, were awakened and converted.

When I went out to travel, in the year 1777, he engaged to see me once in two years, unless my Circuit should be more than one hundred miles from Derby. To this promise he punctually attended, and preached in those places where I was stationed, with great acceptance.

I am indebted to his son, Mr. John Slater, who has for many years been a Local Preacher in the Belper Circuit, for some account of his father, at a more early period than when I first knew

him. He says, that his father was born in August, 1738. When only four years old, he had contracted so great a taste for reading, and particularly the holy Scriptures, that the neighbors used to say, he would be a Parson. And from his attachment to the word of God, his parents had some thoughts of giving him an education suited to the Christian Ministry. But as he grew up, he became careless, though not grossly immoral. About the twentieth year of his age, he entered into the marriage-state, and, soon after, heard a Clergyman preach in Duffield church, on the subject of the General Judgment. Under this sermon, God showed him his awful state, and convinced him, that he was not prepared for the scrutiny of that day. His distress was indescribable: but, alas, the Minister showed no way to escape the wrath to come. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, would have been seasonable advice; but it is not improbable that the Minister himself did not know the remedy which God has provided for sin-sick souls. He continued to call upon the Lord for mercy; but often concluded that there was no mercy for so vile a rebel as he felt himself to be. These deep waters through which he passed, taught him to sympathize with people in like circumstances, and he had always suitable words and feelings for the weary and heavy-laden. The Lord, however, would not suffer the spirit to fail before him, nor the soul which he had made. He proclaimed liberty to the captive, and said to his troubled breast, "Peace, be still."

This joyous event he told to his wife, and to another friend; and declared his assurance that all his sins were blotted out. But having no one to speak to, who had received the same blessing, and being ignorant of Satan's devices, he soon began to doubt the reality of what he had received: he unhappily gave up his confidence in God; and thought that all which had passed in his mind was nothing but delusion. He now concluded that his case was desperate. All his peace and comfort were gone; nor had he the least hope of the removal of his distress. He walked in darkness, and had no light, about five years before deliverance came. The day of salvation, however, drew nigh. -- A stone-mason, who was a member of the Methodist Society, came from a distant place, to erect a barn for him. This man, having the love of God in his heart, began to talk about Jesus Christ, and about being converted to God. He sang hymns, and prayed with Mr. Slater; whose drooping hopes of salvation soon began to revive. He also invited him to a place called Crich, where a little chapel had been built, that he might hear the Methodist Preachers. He went, and the trumpet did not give an uncertain sound. He heard the truth, the whole truth as it is in Jesus: and the second time he heard, God set his soul at perfect liberty. This was in the year 1765. The preacher was Mr. Joseph Gilford, and his text was, "Is there no balm in Gilead," &c. Mr. Slater stood all the time the sermon was delivering, and the floor was wet with his tears.

At the close of his discourse, the preacher inquired, why the spiritual health of his congregation was not recovered? The cry of Mr. Slater's heart was, Lord, why is not my health recovered? The Lord gave him all he wanted. His cup overflowed, and such great grace rested upon him, that the change was manifest to nearly the whole congregation. He was so filled with the spirit of prayer and praise, that he could scarcely contain what he felt! At the close of the service, he went through the congregation, shook hands with many of them, and declared what the Lord had done for his soul. He had now five miles to return home; but how to perform his journey, he knew not. His mind was so carried above, that he found it difficult to keep the road. However, that he might give full vent to the feelings of his heart, he turned aside into a piece of waste land, and continued upon his knees, blessing and praising God for about an hour; in which time, his clothes were nearly frozen to the ground. He immediately erected an altar to the Lord in his own house,

and called his family to the sacrifice. He became mighty in prayer. So great a gift for that holy exercise is indeed seldom known.

He found room in his heart for all his neighbors, and ardently desired that every one of them should know the Lord. He invited them to go with him to the place where he had found the pearl of great price; but the distance of five miles was thought too far; many of them soon began to grow weary and faint in their minds. But Mr. Slater continued with increasing vigor, and spared no labor to find food for his soul. He constantly met in class at this distant place, and hardly ever omitted to improve that means of grace for several years together. But having a great desire that his kindred and neighbors should share his happiness, he invited the Traveling Preachers to come to his house, where he kindly entertained them for many years, and counted it a privilege to have a servant of God under his roof. The neighborhood where he lived was full of darkness, ignorance, and strong prejudices against the truth. And all manner of evil was said of him falsely for Christ's sake; but none of these things moved him: he still invited all to come under the sound of the word, and many were convinced of sin, and converted to God; so that a class was formed in his own house.

He lived to see chapels erected in almost all the villages adjacent, and also one raised in his own garden, by a member of his family. The chapel and dwelling-house at Belper stand upon land which belonged to him. One thing in which he particularly excelled, was his attention to the sick. I never knew him decline to visit them on any account. Distance, dark nights, bad roads, contagious diseases, &c.: none of these things could keep him at home, when his help was wanted. And the Lord did great good by him in this way. He always maintained a mean opinion of himself, and of his performances; and he felt a great reluctance to write: on these accounts I am at a loss to mention periods when events connected with his personal history took place. I do not precisely know the year in which he began to preach; but being doubtful that he had run before he was sent, his fears prevailed upon him to decline the work.

Mr. Thomas Olivers, who was in Derbyshire in the years 1770 and 1771, encouraged him to begin again. In dependence upon the Almighty, he took the advice, and labored in his Master's vineyard for more than half a century! He never spared himself in the least; and has sometimes performed what is almost incredible. His domestic concerns were never neglected; for he was diligent in business, as well as fervent in spirit. He has left the harvest-work at the same time that his laborers have done, and has gone to a place at a distance of eight miles to preach, and has been ready to begin with them the next morning. In a conversation with Mr. Meek, he told him that he had preached at Leicester, Nottingham, and Derby, on the same Sabbath, and had performed the journey on horseback. In labors he was indeed abundant; and yet, so sensible was he of his obligations to his Lord and Master, that he always considered himself a debtor.

Being informed that a great degree of affection subsisted between Mr. Slater and Mr. Everett, and that it was probable Mr. E. had preserved some account of him in writing, -- I desired him to transmit to me all he knew which related to my design. A short extract from his letter I here subjoin:--

"Believing that it was his duty to call sinners to repentance, he spoke a few times; but, afraid of running before he was sent, he soon declined, and brought darkness upon his mind, and

distress into his soul. He made it matter of prayer to God, and vowed on his knees, that if God would only impart to him his lost peace, and show him some fruit of his labors, he would preach the Gospel in every town and village throughout Derbyshire. God broke in upon his soul with a flood of light and joy; he went forth, and preached the unsearchable riches of Christ: and in 1809 he remarked, 'Mr. Everett, the covenant which I then entered into with God, I have nearly, if not altogether fulfilled: there may be some places in the county in which I have not preached, but I know of none.' In addition to this, he frequently journeyed into Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire, and Brookshire, to preach; the greater part of which places were in the Circuit, or 'Round,' as it was then termed.

"His conversations relative to the first Preachers were always interesting to me. Mr. Thomas Olivers, to whom he was very partial, preached in his house. So did the late Francis Asbury, who was then a youth not quite out of his apprenticeship, and whose voice Mr. Slater used to compare to the 'roaring of a lion.'"

About the year 1805, in using a tool, he cut into the cap of his knee, which brought on so great a degree of inflammation, that a partial mortification took place. This was not only a time of sore affliction, but also of great darkness of mind. But it pleased the Lord to heal both body and soul together! His medical attendant told him that he would always have a stiff knee; but feeling a great desire one morning to kneel at prayer, the moment he attempted, the joint was set at liberty, and continued so to the day of his death. Nevertheless, his constitution was very much shaken at this period, and never regained its usual strength. Something like a paralytic affection came upon him, and his mind appeared to suffer as much as his body. His recollection has sometimes failed him when going to preach; but after walking backward and forward for a short time, he has recovered himself, gone to his appointment, and preached as if nothing had been the matter.

The last time he preached was in his own house. About the middle of his discourse he made a pause, and said, "You know, my friends, the poor state I am in: I hope you will bear with me." Immediately he recollected what he meant to say, and made a proper conclusion. He often spoke of being cut off from his friends; but his greatest fear was, lest he should dishonor God by his weakness. The last time he was at the chapel was at a Missionary Meeting: he was called to the Chair; with which he appeared to be pleased, because it was another proof that he had still the confidence and affection of his brethren. His strength now began to decline very fast, and he was confined to his bed for near twenty weeks, except about one hour each day. His humility was such, that he ever thought and spake of himself as the most unprofitable of all God's servants.

Once, when speaking severely against himself, because he thought his attainments so small, his son said: "Father, if religion were to be purchased, I think you would sell yours at a very cheap rate: you seem to think it of little worth." He answered, "No; not for ten thousand worlds would I part with it." When his friends called to see him, he would speak with the liveliest pleasure for several hours upon the subject of his pilgrimage, and the way in which he had been conducted. He prayed frequently and fervently, that the Lord would finish the work in his soul, and that he would bless and save all his family. When his friends prayed with him, although his weakness was very great, his responses might be heard all over the room. To the last his mind was remarkably tranquil; and he died in great peace, September 4th, 1821, aged eighty-three years. He left a widow nearly eighty-five years of age, to whom he had been married about sixty-four years;

together with nine children, sixty grand-children and twenty-four great-grandchildren, to lament their loss.

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6

A MEMOIR OF ANN JONES

By William Naylor

From the May, 1823 issue of

The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Prior to her conversion to God, Miss Jones was moral in her conduct, diligent in her attendance upon the means of grace, took great pleasure in visiting the sick, and in reading to them the Word of God. In her dress she avoided conformity to the world, cultivated habits of industry in the concerns of life, and was careful to sanctify the Sabbath-day. This outward uniformity of deportment, though lovely and of good report, falls very far short of a meetness for the kingdom of heaven. Of this our young friend was convinced by the Word and Spirit of God, and made sensible of her lost condition, and consequent unfitness for eternity.

During that period in which the convicting hand of the Lord was heavy upon her, commenced that painful affliction which terminated in her death, by which she was excited to be more in earnest with God for his salvation. The thought of dying without a sense of divine favor, caused sleep to depart from her: thus on her knees, and frequently prostrate on the ground, she wept over her state, and cried unto God for mercy. His ear was attentive to the voice of her supplication; and, faithful to his promise, he manifested himself to her as a pardoning God; fear was then removed, and peace and joy possessed her mind. In reference to this change she observed, "I was filled with love; I was happy; the dread of death was taken away; I was willing, even desirous to die."

Shortly after she received forgiveness, the Lord discovered to her the remains of evil in her heart. At that time she knew not that it was her privilege to be fully saved from sin; but hearing a person, who had obtained sanctifying grace, relate her experience, she was convinced of her need of entire holiness, and was induced to seek the full salvation of God. He at length said unto her, "I wilt be thou clean." This was three years before her death; and, to the close of her life, she never lost her evidence of perfect love.

Many who heard of her great sufferings called to see her, some out of curiosity, and others to be profited by her holy and heavenly conversation; and she availed herself of those visits to speak for God. Of her own religious attainments, she spoke with humble confidence; and never was backward to declare, to both rich and poor, what God had done for her. Her delight was in the company of pious persons, and in Christian conversation; when her language used to be, "I want to know nothing, nor to speak of any thing, but Jesus Christ; I want to love God more, I do not love him half enough; I am not satisfied with myself."

Her sufferings were exceeding great: nights and days were spent in agonies of pain; yet no murmur was heard; but perfect resignation to the will of God was manifested. When visited by her Christian friends, she often observed, "I am worse; but God is all in all. He raises me above my sufferings; so that I scarcely feel them." Great was her rejoicing in the Lord; and the prospect of being with him for ever, cheered her through a protracted affliction. Her desire to depart was a fervent longing after the purity and enjoyment of the presence of God. "Were I going to die," said she, "I should leap for joy; for I have more union with the spirits in heaven, than with saints on earth: yet I am willing to suffer for God." A few days before her death, to one who spoke of her sufferings, she said, "I have not one pain too many; the body is nearly worn out, but the soul is ready for glory; and I shall soon be there. Glory be to Jesus! Victory through the blood of Jesus! It is enough, my Lord! Lord, let me suffer as much, and as long as thou wilt; only let me glorify thee through all."

To her weeping mother she said, "Do not weep; I shall soon be in heaven; and, if you be faithful you will have another daughter to welcome you to the shore." On the Monday before her death, she said, "I am longing to be with Christ; I cannot tell you how happy I am; words cannot express what I enjoy; I feel that, as the body sinks, my spirit rises into God. Glory be to God, my prospects are bright! O help me to praise God! I have no doubt, no fear; not a cloud, nor the shadow of a cloud; all is clear. We shall soon meet above; urge on your way; and never stand still till the Master appear." She then began to sing aloud, observing, "My voice is among thousands."

On Tuesday she was very blessedly supported; and at night, as if heaven appeared open to her view, and seraphic sounds were heard by her, she exclaimed, "Sing louder! Glory be to God, I am more happy than ever: Glory! glory! glory!" On Thursday she was not capable of speaking, but remained sensible, and engaged with God. The following day, August 3d, 1821, while her mother was observing, that the chariot-wheels had been long in coming, but that now their sound was heard, she waved her hand, smiled, and entered into the joy of her Lord.

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7

A MEMOIR OF BENJAMIN LEGGATT

By Barnard Slater
From the June 1823 Issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

In writing Memoirs of deceased and beloved friends, we are somewhat in danger of overcharging their characters by undue coloring, without, however, the slightest intention of misrepresenting one trait. Aware of this circumstance, and conscious of ardent affection to my departed friend, I would cautiously guard against any mis-statement or exaggeration in reference to the venerable subject of this memoir.

Mr. Leggatt was born at a village in the vicinity of Epworth, February 1st, 1761. At the age of two years he lost his father, and was left to the sole care of his mother. By the divine blessing,

the natural death of his father proved the spiritual life of the widow he left behind. This awful bereavement led her to God's house.

When she heard the gospel. She "received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh" in all "that believe." She soon obtained a saving acquaintance with divine things; and continued a very pious and upright member of the Methodist society for upwards of forty years. This amiable and exemplary widow brought up her children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." It was her constant practice to take them with her to God's house. Mr. Leggatt observed, when speaking of his much-beloved mother, that at the age of six years he was powerfully affected in his mind while hearing the word preached, and while hearing his mother speak to the different members of her class.

The advantages arising from a pious education are incalculable. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Instruct a child in his tender years, and the impressions will not ordinarily be erased, but will grow up with him. This was the case with Mr. Leggatt. His pious mother brought her son to God, and diligently imbued his mind with divine truth; and God crowned her labors with his blessing. To show the deep interest which this holy woman took in her son's prosperity, and in the progress of true religion, I will transcribe a few extracts from her letters, addressed to him subsequently to his entering into the Ministry:--

"December 14th, 1788. -- Always lie at the feet of our Lord Jesus, with humble dependence on him for wisdom to direct in all your undertakings; and pray for more faith, that you may be able to quench the fiery darts of our common enemy. As to my own soul, I bless the Lord he is carrying on his good work. O for more faith and love! I hope we often meet at the throne of grace. O, my soul, praise the Lord for the throne of grace; so free of access, through the Redeemer's merits! Your affectionate mother ever prays that God may own the labors of his faithful ambassadors, and that the earth may be filled with the knowledge of the Lord."

"June 21st, 1789. -- I am longing for a full conformity to Jesus Christ in all things. My heavenly Father has given me his Son, and I trust he will with him give me all things. I trust several of us are ripening for glory. It would rejoice our souls to see the work of conviction and conversion carried on with more power among us. My dear son, help me to praise the Redeemer; his love to me is great, though I am the most unworthy of his servants."

"February 13th, 1791. -- I am glad to hear of your welfare in body and soul. I am thankful to hear that Satan's kingdom is falling, and that Christ's kingdom is enlarging. O that all may hear his voice, and live! Nothing would rejoice my soul more, than to see sinners flocking to Jesus the Saviour. My own soul is yet hungering and thirsting after full salvation. O, when shall I awake up after his likeness in all things! You may be assured I cannot forget you, unless I were to forget myself. You have an interest in my petitions every day, and almost every hour."

"January 10th, 1799. -- My dear son, I received your letter containing an account of the death of your dear wife. O what I felt at this awful providence! But I feel great comfort from those sweet and consoling words, 'I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.' (I Thess.

iv. 13, 14.) We shall all meet in glory if we wash our robes by faith in the blood of the Lamb. My dear son, you may safely cast yourself on the Lord in your present trials. He will help you, as he has helped me, the most unworthy of his followers. When I consider what the Lord has brought me through, and what he has done for me, I cry out, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul!' May the Lord make us all ripe for glory. -- I praise the Lord he is perfecting my soul in love, His presence and his love attend me through every day."

"December 24th, 1800, -- The Lord is greatly reviving his work with us. I experience more of his glorious presence to my soul than ever I did; and he provides all things needful for my body. Glory be to God, he is with me.

'Jesus all the day long is my strength and my song;
O that all his salvation might see!'

You wish me to write a sketch of my life. I have only to say that I fear my life would be of no value; and my hand is now very unsteady, so that I can scarcely write; my memory, too, fails very much; hence you must excuse me. But all is known to Jehovah. My dear son, pray that I may stand perfect in love; and have nothing to do but to die when the Lord calls."

"May 6th, 1802. -- I find old age coming on very fast, attended with many infirmities; but the Lord is my support. I am continually looking for my dissolution: then all my tears shall be wiped away, and my sorrows have an end. My dear son, pray that I may be faithful unto death, and then receive the crown of life."

The number of these extracts might have been greatly enlarged. This venerable old woman died at Epworth, July 9th, 1804, aged seventy-five years.

Although Mr. Leggatt was under the restraints of religious influence from his youth, yet it was not till he arrived at the age of about twenty years that he was more fully awakened to a proper sense of his guilt and wretchedness as a sinner. This was effected through the instrumentality of the late Mr. Longden, of Sheffield. Mr. Longden was preaching in the open air; the discourse made a powerful impression on Mr. Leggatt's mind; he was deeply affected; and he wept for his sins before the Lord, and was in an agony of soul. Some time afterwards he obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of his sins.

This infinite blessing he received under the ministry of the Rev. John Wesley, February 5th, 1782. Having now "tasted the good word of God, and " having felt "the powers of the world to come," he longed to impart the word of life to others; and, a few years after his conversion, began to preach the gospel. In the spring of the year 1787, it pleased God to call Mr. John Fenwick, then stationed in the Epworth Circuit, to his heavenly rest. Mr. Leggatt, who lived in the circuit as a local preacher, was called from his secular engagements to assist till the approaching conference. And in the month of September, 1787, his affairs admitting of his leaving home, Mr. Wesley appointed him to the Gainsborough circuit. Here his private Journal commenced, from which some extracts shall be made.

"Gainsborough, March 5th, 1788. -- For some time back I have been longing for a closer walk with God. I have been happy in my soul, but desire greater enjoyments."

"March 24th. -- Upon reflection on my late experience, I find I need more grace. O Lord, give we more heavenly zeal; and open more fully the intercourse between my soul and thee. I want more light, more life, more love, both for my own and for thy people's good. Lord, give me an increase of every grace in my soul; and may a sacred flame glow among thy people."

"Horncastle, August 14th, 1788. -- By the blessing of God I got safely to this place, and have entered on my new appointment. Lord, be with me; and may good be done! O Lord, be mouth and wisdom to thy servant; and thou shalt have the glory. O let we have the unction from the Holy One! Take away every obstruction, that thy work may prosper in this place."

Sunday, 24th. -- Thus far I have found satisfaction. O Lord, thou hast helped me! The week that is past I have found good among thy people; and thou hast given me favor among them."

"Boston, September 28th. -- In concluding the public service this night, a brick-bat came through the window, and took away the candlestick at my left hand, but did me no harm. Thou, O Lord, canst preserve thy servants from the evil designs of wicked men. I thank thee for thy care. -- We applied for justice, but to no purpose; the offenders were not brought to punishment. Defend, O God, thy own cause, and let not thy enemies triumph!"

"February 19th, 1789. -- I held a love-feast this day at Raithby: it was a feast of love indeed to many. The people spoke freely, feelingly, and affectionately, on the things of God. My soul was greatly refreshed. Glory be to God, these are sweet foretastes of heavenly enjoyment. While several friends were talking about the privilege of loving God 'with all their hearts,' my soul was carried out in strong desire for that blessing. I see great beauty in holiness. O my soul, run thou with all speed after this love; it is of God, for 'God is love.' O my God, give me all thou hast to bestow; and let my soul be filled with thee!"

A person entering on the sacred office, deeply convinced that he is called of God to undertake it, and who, when thus called, "confers not with flesh and blood," but with ardent zeal preaches "the unsearchable riches of Christ," will give up himself wholly unto God, to labor where and how he pleases. That this was the spirit in which Mr. Leggatt had entered into his Lord's Vineyard, is most evident from the following short extract.

"Horncastle, August 2d, 1789, After preaching I received a letter from the conference, informing me that I was appointed to St. Austle, Cornwall. As I had given myself up to God, I could say, 'Thy will be done.' I beg, O Lord, that thou wilt go with me, and then all will be well."

"August 3d. -- I rode to Epworth, to take leave of my friends. My mother seemed more reconciled to my going so far from home than at first. O Lord, reward her who has been such a mother to me. Thou hast seen the many tears she has shed, and the ardent and fervent prayers she has put up on my account, while I was living in sin and folly. May I ever remember them with thankfulness to thee."

On his arrival at St. Austle, he writes:--

"I have arrived in safety at this place. Glory be to God, who hath kept me thus far, brought me through many difficulties, provided me with friends on the road, and given me a most pleasant journey. When I consider the small returns I make to thee, I am greatly ashamed. Now, O my God, if it please thee, be with me, and bless me; help me to be faithful; and O make me useful to this people, for Christ's sake, and all the glory shall be given to thee."

Mr. Leggatt labored among the warm-hearted and affectionate people of this circuit with great comfort to himself, and not without being made useful to others; and, towards the close of the year, writes as follows:--

"St. Austle, June 29th, 1790. -- What cause have I to be thankful to thee, my Lord, for thy favors to me, a poor and unworthy creature. I am ashamed before thee, O Lord, for the small returns of gratitude I make to thee. Thou hast said, 'My son, give me thine heart;' but how long am I in fully complying with thy reasonable request! O my soul, why art thou so backward in being wholly given up to, and lost in God? He is more than all the world to me! Yes,

'Jesus, when I have lost my all,
I shall upon thy bosom fall.'
I humbly bless thee that I can say,
'My soul breaks out in strong desire
The perfect bliss to prove
My longing heart is all on fire
To be dissolved in love.'"

At the ensuing conference, Mr. Leggatt was removed to St. Ives, in Cornwall. In this place and neighborhood it pleased God abundantly to pour out his Holy Spirit, and great good was done. The labors of his servants were crowned with success. Multitudes were awakened, and brought to God. "The voice of rejoicing and salvation" was heard "in the tabernacles of the righteous." The Lord both wounded and healed. Who can wonder that God was with Mr. Leggatt, when we reflect on the simplicity and godly sincerity manifested by him on his entering upon this new station, and in the course of his labors in it, as apparent in the following extracts?

"St. Ives, August 5th. -- I am appointed to this place. I feel thankful to God for this; I believe it is for good, as I have no choice, but leave myself in His hands who is able to rule all things for the best. Lord, I desire to be humble before thee, and to depend on thee for all I need. Do thou go with me, and it shall be well. O may I be more useful than ever I have been. Amen."

"January 1st. -- This day we had our Quarterly Meeting. All was peace and unity. It was a good day. We have added this quarter sixty members to the societies. O may the Lord carry on his work, and may we see more good done, for Christ's sake."

"January 4th. -- I had a very good time in preaching at L____. I admitted twelve new members; and twenty-six have been added to the society during the last fortnight. O Lord, do thou keep them to the end!

"11th. -- At L____ I had a glorious time; the Lord was present indeed during the Sermon, but more abundantly so at the love-feast, so that many cried out for mercy; and blessed be God, he doth not wound merely, but graciously heals also. Several found peace with God; and could call God their God. Indeed such a time I have not known for years back. I trust it is the beginning of good days."

"January 15th. -- At P____ many were constrained to cry out, 'Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.' Their cry was not in vain. He heard, and graciously answered; so that they who 'sowed in tears,' did 'reap in joy.' I gave notes to seven new members; all of whom had found peace with God. Forty have been added during the last fortnight."

"Scilly Islands, [then joined to the St. Ives circuit,] March 8th, 1791. -- I have heard the most affecting account of the death of the Rev. Mr. Wesley. How awful is this intelligence to me! And must we part with this venerable man, who has been so useful? O Lord, the care of the Church is great; who is able to bear it? Thou, Lord, knowest. Do thou graciously order all things well, by keeping from us all evil. To this end, may all those who shall rule be men after thy own heart, that they may strive in all things for the good of thy Church and people. May all act in concert; so that we may be a people of one heart, and of one mind. May the seed that has been sown, by him that has been removed from us, grow more abundantly after his death than it has before it, so that we may see a glorious harvest; and when Christ the great Judge shall come, then may our Father Wesley stand forth among ten thousand of his children, -- and, O my God, may I be one, saved by thy grace, through his instrumentality!"

These pious aspirations, so fervently offered to God, were graciously accomplished. The "Rulers," who succeeded Mr. Wesley were indeed "chosen men of Israel." The immense body of people, left by our venerable founder, have been preserved as eminently one body. The separations from it, on different occasions, have been so extremely trivial, as scarcely to be perceived among the many "thousands of Israel." The divine seed sown by Mr. Wesley did vegetate, and spring up, and bear fruit, to the praise and glory of God: and doubtless thousands will be his "crown of rejoicing," in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

After an affectionate parting with his St. Ives' friends, as also those at Scilly, in both of which places he had been made very useful, Mr. Leggatt proceeded to Pembroke, where he spent two agreeable and, I believe, successful years. The contrast between Cornwall and Wales produced, at the first, painful feelings. In Cornwall he had been accustomed to address large and attentive congregations, who received the word "with meekness of wisdom." In Wales the congregations were small, and, generally speaking, the people appeared dull. It appears, however, that in both these respects there was a considerable improvement and good was done. The following are extracts from his Journal, written during this period:--

"October 31st. -- I have had some good times in preaching, the last week. But our love-feast, yesterday, exceeded all the meetings I have had since I came into Wales. The power of the Lord was present; the people spoke freely, experimentally, and scripturally. The whole was a very blessed opportunity. I had an excellent congregation in the evening, and remarkably attentive."

February 5th, 1792. -- This day ten years have elapsed since I first found peace with God. Blessed be God that I am what I am; yet I might have been more holy and happy. I must ask forgiveness for my past slothfulness. O God, may I be more earnest!"

"May. 13th. -- We had a glorious diffusion of blessings at the love-feast this day. Many testified of the power of God. Many were melted into tears; others filled with grief for past sins; and four or five desired admission into the society. In the evening we had a large congregation: it was a time of great solemnity. It is a matter of great joy to see so many seeking after God. The vilest offenders are turning to the Lord."

The two following years this excellent and laborious minister of Jesus Christ spent at Yarmouth, including at that time the Lowestoft and Framlingham circuits. In his way from the Leeds conference he visited his eminently pious and truly excellent mother.

"I found her," he observes, "to all appearance, in dying circumstances, but truly happy in God. Her soul appeared fully ripe for glory, and she often expressed a longing desire to be with Him whom her soul loved. As I had not seen her for the space of four years, I spent nearly a week with her, chiefly in her own room; and I learned many useful lessons. I learned both how to live and how to die; as did many others who came to see her: her conversation was in heaven."

On Mr. Leggatt's arrival at Yarmouth, he found a very cordial reception from that truly affectionate people. Nothing very particular occurred till July 6th, 1794, when he writes:--

"Framlingham, Sunday. -- At nine o'clock I had a large company of people. Many more came at one o'clock; but such a crowd was collected at six in the evening as I had not seen in this neighborhood before. All seemed attentive; and the power of God rested on many. Several are really awakened, and are earnestly seeking the Lord, with strong cries and tears, Some who were great sinners are turning to God; and some self-righteous Pharisees cry for mercy."

"7th. -- I went to Brandeston. I had to stand up in the face of stones, eggs, clods, blowing of horns, beating of old kettles, fighting of dogs, and loud shouting; so that my voice could not always be heard. Yet, I bless the Lord, he kept me from receiving any harm for an hour, excepting some few little blows. Several of the people were hurt during the service. After preaching I went to a friend's house at some distance. I thought I should have suffered, as the mob endeavored to get me down. Some struck me with stones, some struck at my heels, others pushed at my body; but, through the divine goodness, I was kept upon my feet. Some cursed: and swore they would send us all to the devil. One declared if I came there again I should suffer. I told them I did not fear them. When all was still, about eleven o'clock, the mob came again, and broke the windows. May they see the evil of their doings, and turn to God, that he may have mercy upon them!"

On the 28th of May, 1795, Mr. Leggatt was married. The reflections which engaged his mind, both before and after that sacred transaction, are quite characteristic of his serious spirit. In the morning of that day he writes thus:--

"In private, this morning, my mind was much occupied with the thoughts of what I was about to do. I examined my duty, as set forth in the Scriptures. The following were some of the

passages which engaged my attention:-- Luke i. 6; Eph. v. 25; Colossi iii. 19; 1 Pet. iii. 7. Here I discovered the sacred duties of a married state."

In the evening of the same day, he writes as follows:--

"This day I and my dear Mary Rose Newson were united together in the holy estate of matrimony. I trust this union is of thee, O Lord, and for thy glory. O may we ever strive for all the fullness of God; then shall we do thy will. I have considered the solemn step as it really is, -- the most weighty and important matter on which a human being can enter in this life."

The two following years this devout minister spent at Norwich and Lynn; and from thence removed to Walsingham, where his labors were crowned with success. A Christian minister, called to leave one part of his Lord's vineyard, and to enter upon another, naturally feels it to be an important crisis: he takes a solemn survey of the past; considers how he can be more usefully devoted to God, and his good work, in future; and anxiously inquires how he can most effectually promote the glory of his Divine Master. This was sacredly regarded by Mr. Leggatt.

To follow this amiable, zealous, and useful minister of Jesus Christ, through the twenty-two subsequent years of his life, could not fail to be both agreeable and profitable. But aware that lengthened accounts are inconvenient, I hasten to a close. Colchester, Kettering, Banbury, Diss, Bedford, Rye, Bungay, Swaffham, Northampton, and Deal, were each in succession favored with the ministerial labors, and pastoral care, of this excellent man.

For some years past Mr. Leggatt was called to endure extremely heavy and exquisitely painful afflictions. Under them he was very graciously supported; the Lord was with him, and made him to rejoice in tribulation. I have been an eye-witness, more than once, of the sudden and violent attacks of spasm, which he has borne with amazing fortitude. Early in June, 1822, he was taken alarmingly ill. On the 5th of that month I visited him at Deal. The following is a sketch of our conversation.

Inquiring after his views, his feelings, and his prospects on the verge of eternity, he answered: "My sufferings have been great, in consequence of the extremity of the pain and anguish I have passed through; and my joys have not been rapturous; but I have had solid peace, and possess divine assurance in Christ." He then quoted with much force and propriety the passage which occurs in Job xxiii. 2, "My stroke is heavier than my groaning; but added, "I bless God, I do not murmur." -- Knowing as I did his great faithfulness as a laborer in the Lord's vineyard, I observed: "It must afford you pleasure, my friend, on a retrospect of your life, that your heart has been in your work, and that you have labored while it was day; for, to my certain knowledge, you have been often in the pulpit when you ought to have been in your bed."

His reply was: "On that circumstance, my brother, I place no reliance; I depend on nothing but Christ Jesus my Lord. Nothing can be acceptable to God but the blood of the Redeemer; -- that is God's method of saving poor sinners, and it is the best; here I rest with safety." How infinitely important is this truth! How worthy to be received by every fallen son of man! What a solid rock, on which the human race may with safety rest their immortal all!

We had been conversing on the time when he first entered upon the work of the ministry, and on the trials, difficulties, and fatigues, which our preachers had to encounter in the earlier periods of Methodism. He remarked, at the close of this part of our conversation: "Had I to begin the work again, with a clear foresight of all I should suffer, and of all the trials consequent on my work, I would most cheerfully enter upon it. O, my brother, it is a great work; it is the greatest work in the world!"

Mr. Leggatt was a person of genuine humility. He had thoroughly weighed the apostolic counsel, (Rom. xii. 3,) "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Under the influence of this temper, he went on to remark: "I am satisfied that my labors have been far less acceptable than those of many of my brethren; yet such as they have been, they have been offered with a pure intention, and God has graciously, through his Son, accepted of them." Here his heart filled, and tears of gratitude copiously flowed down his happy countenance. The scene was truly affecting.

When at prayer before we parted, and while earnestly interceding that, should we no more see each other in the flesh, we might meet at the throne of God, with a holy vehemence which will not soon be forgotten, and indeed with a kind of ecstatic rapture, he exclaimed, "GLORY BE TO GOD, I BELIEVE WE SHALL!" It was good to be there. I felt unutterable things on the occasion.

For a short time, however, Mr. Leggatt was again restored to his friends and to the Church of God. Desirous once more to see his beloved brethren in the ministry, he repaired to the conference, held in London, in July, 1822; and was greatly refreshed in his spirit. He returned to Deal full of spirit, resolved to begin his ministerial labors afresh. But it pleased the Great Disposer of events to call his servant to his glorious reward.

During his last short illness, I regret to state, I did not see my valued friend. But what I have been able to collect from Mrs. Leggatt, and those who witnessed his final triumphs, is highly satisfactory. His sufferings, however, were of so extremely painful a nature as to prevent his saying much.

On Sunday, the 22d of September, 1822, he preached three times, and met a class. Many were astonished by some of his remarks, both in the pulpit and at the class-meeting. An unusual unction accompanied his word. During several of the following days, he met the classes for the purpose of giving the quarterly tickets to the members of the society. On Thursday the 26th, he met his own class; and it was a time to be remembered. The Lord was present in an extraordinary way. The following day he was attacked by his old complaint, with exceeding violence; and a week of such suffering few persons ever passed through. When he was able to speak at all, it was of good things. One friend asked: "Is Jesus precious to you, sir?" "Precious!" he replied; "and he is here; yes, he is here!" "O," he continued, "pray." "For what shall we pray, sir?" "Pray that you may all be made fit for heaven, that you may be entirely sanctified." While a person was in his room he addressed him thus; "Look," says he, "on me; see a dying man; how unfit is my present situation to seek religion, racked as I now am with excruciating pain; O seek God while in health." He continued to address him at some length with all the sublimity of dying eloquence. Some of his last words were:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Come to Jesus crucified!"

He died on Friday, October 4th, 1822, in the sixty-first year of his age; having just commenced the thirty-sixth year of his labors as a Wesleyan minister.

Mr. Leggatt was a truly excellent man. He was a most cheerful and pleasant companion; yet there was nothing about him light or frothy, vain or trifling. He possessed a warm and generous heart. A more disinterested person I never knew. Nothing selfish, nothing mean, nothing low and groveling, was ever noticed in him. In fact, his social character was highly amiable. Nor was his religious character less distinguished. He was a person of eminent Christian simplicity, and godly sincerity. He possessed unfeigned humility; zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls constantly glowed in his breast.

As a preacher, -- at what is usually called brilliant pulpit oratory he never aimed. He had higher things in view. His talents, however, were not of a low order. He possessed a good share of sound judgment. He saw divine things clearly, and in all their bearings. His manly sense always excluded from his discourses every thing low, fanciful, and foreign. He treated his subjects as one that understood them; and hence he easily made others understand. It ought not to be forgotten that he always aimed at the useful; and he was useful to multitudes. In short, his pulpit talents are admirably described by a truly Christian poet; who, in attempting to delineate a preacher such as Paul would approve, designates him,

"... Simple, grave, sincere;
In doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain,
And plain in manner; devout, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture; much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of peace to guilty men."

I shall close this account by transcribing the following character of Mr. Leggatt, which appeared in the "Kentish Gazette" of Friday, October 11. It was written by a literary Gentleman of Deal.

"The Rev. Benjamin Leggatt, of the Wesleyan Connection -- On Friday last, death closed the earthly career of this exemplary minister, and truly pious Christian. Zealous and correct in the discharge of every duty which the sacred function involves, he approved himself the faithful shepherd of his flock, and by his courteous urbanity of disposition, and unblemished morals, endeared himself to all. Those who had an opportunity of contemplating his character in the bosom of domestic life, can best appreciate his worth; but though the writer cannot boast the experience of that happiness, he is incapable of withholding this tribute to the memory of departed excellence. Mr. Leggatt was a fine picture of the evening of existence, after a life spent in the service of his Master, and the practice of every moral and social duty, which, though sometimes obscured by

clouds of infirmity and suffering, terminated in peaceful serenity. As a preacher, Mr. Leggatt was 'Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.' In his discourses he happily united perspicuity with energy, and familiarity with dignity; his elocution was voluble but not boisterous, impassioned but exempt from vehemence; he clothed the divine truths of Christianity in the fascinating garb of simplicity, and thus rendered them easily understood by every capacity; in short, his enthusiasm for the salvation of his hearers was the ebullition of the soul, which language can never depict, and is only to be known by being felt. S. M."

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8

A MEMOIR OF MATTHEW BLYFORD

By Samuel Easthaugh

From the July, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mr. Blyford was born July 19th, 1758. His parents were respectable, and of the communion of the Church of England, in which he was brought up. His natural temper was lively and active, and his capacity considerable. In the affairs of this world, he showed much ingenuity and diligence. While engaged in those pursuits, he was found in all the gaieties of life. He was fond of his friend, and his bottle; but he never lost sight of what he considered to be "the main chance". In this he was successful. He was engaged in the corn trade, &c.; and with a fair reputation, acquired a handsome property. [This, however, was considerably diminished by his becoming surety for debts. Solomon's advice on this subject is good. "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts." -- Prov. xiii. 26]

Having acquired the above-mentioned property, he retired from business, when he had every prospect of further advancing his fortune. But he had no family, and he thought that he had a comfortable sufficiency for himself and his wife. He bought some premises at Blakeney, where he sat down, freed from the toils of life. But he still continued to walk after the course of this world. He interested himself warmly about political affairs: but so thoroughly was he afterwards changed by divine grace, that I never heard him say to what party he adhered. Our conversation always turned upon more important subjects. How we and others might flee from the wrath to come, was the subject which principally engaged our attention. Not that I think that religious people are bound wholly to abstain from all conversation about national affairs; but there is a great danger of being too much occupied in them. The injury which the souls of men have sustained thereby within the last thirty years, is incalculable.

I remember what an aged minister said, when asked by a friend, how religion prospered in the place where he lived, he answered, "Brother, politics have eaten out the vitals of religion in ____." This was true; and I fear that it has been the case in many other places. Mr. Blyford's politics, after his conversion, were always regulated by 1 Tim. ii. 1-4. He prayed for rulers, and obeyed the laws: and this not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. In this I should be glad if every one that nameth the name of Christ would imitate him; but especially every Methodist. The Jews were commanded to seek the peace of the city wherein they were captives and slaves, and to

pray for it. (Jer. xxix. 7.) We surely then ought to seek the good of our own country; and to pray earnestly and constantly for its peace and prosperity. O that this and all other Christian duties may be strictly attended to!

During the first years in which Mr. Blyford lived at Blakeney, although out of business, he was wholly engrossed in the pursuit of earthly things; seeking only, in one way or other, the gratification of his senses. He read; but his reading was confined to such works as suited the taste of his fallen nature. He had perused many of his books; and was thinking, one day, what he should read next. The Bible was at hand, but he said, he supposed that he had not read fifteen chapters of it in fifteen years! He then thought that he would read a chapter.

He opened the long-neglected volume, and read, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him?" (1 John ii. 15.) These words were like a two-edged sword to his heart. He saw, and felt, and acknowledged, that he had been acting in opposition to this precept of Scripture all the days of his life. He was conscious that he had always loved the world, and the things of it.

This conviction produced feelings of a very painful nature. His whole life of sin stared him in the face. He was like a man wandering in the dark, when a flash of lightning, darting through the thick gloom, discovers to him that he is upon the edge of a tremendous precipice, and knew it not. He trembled, wept, and spontaneously prayed. His cry was for mercy. That cry was heard; and the God of all grace soon answered it. His convictions were deep, but not of long continuance. He was like Levi, Peter, and some others, of whom we read in the Gospel; he promptly obeyed the call of his Saviour; and gave up all for Christ, and was quickly translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. In a few weeks he obtained peace with God through faith in our crucified Redeemer.

I never knew a man that was more thoroughly changed. His very look, his language, his conduct, were all entirely new-modeled. He was no longer the eager politician; the bottle companion; or the worldly wise man; -- he was "Born Again!" This was fully manifested to all that knew him by his subsequent deportment.

This happy change took place on Jan. 8th, 1813, which he ever after called his spiritual birthday. He the boldly took up, and always afterwards firmly sustained, "the consecrated cross." He went to hear the Methodists, and soon cast in his lot with them. He compared the Bible and the tenets of Methodism together. The consequence was, a conviction that the doctrines taught by Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors are scriptural, and have their foundation in "the truth as it is in Jesus."

He examined with great attention and care the controversy between the Calvinists and us. The result was an abiding persuasion that Calvinism is, as to its distinguishing peculiarities, erroneous. This persuasion he conscientiously avowed; and the benignity of the Almighty, manifested in the gift of his only begotten Son to die for the whole human race, was a subject on which he frequently descanted with glowing delight.

After he had tasted that the Lord is gracious, his profiting soon appeared to all. Being planted in the house of the Lord, he began to flourish in the courts of our God. He was not a

cumberer of the ground. He was a tree that bore, not foliage only, but fruit. The love that overflowed his heart was manifested in his concern for others. God had shown him mercy; and he had taught him that the same mercy is free for all the human race. This he labored to make known.

He was soon appointed to the care of a class. In this work he was very diligent and faithful; and he was much owned and blessed therein. He never thought himself called to preach: but he often read sermons in different places; and sometimes read and expounded the Scriptures.

He visited the villages in order to introduce the Gospel. In one village he purchased a building, and set it apart for the preaching of the Methodists. He compassionately yearned over the world that lieth in wickedness. He longed for the salvation of sinners, and was most hearty in promoting every thing that he thought tended to that end.

The Bible and Missionary Societies received his support, and had his prayers. He attended Missionary Meetings; where he sometimes spoke, and always gave his pecuniary assistance. He visited the sick, and was much blessed in that good work. Many have lifted up their languid hearts, and eyes, and hands, when they have heard his voice. He was much owned of God in that office; and had always a word in season given him, to speak to those who were under the rod. He visited a sick woman, (who later died) about an hour and a half before he died.

His desire for the welfare of the rising generation was very fervent. He gathered a respectable Sunday School; in the management of which he was ably and cheerfully assisted by several friends, whose hearts were touched with the same feelings as his own. He had the happiness to see the good effects of these labors.

He had a summer-house in his garden enlarged and set apart for the worship of God. There he met his class; held prayer-meetings; and on Tuesday evenings read a sermon. Many souls have been born again there; and many built up in their most holy faith. His fervor and joy on such occasions were very great. He wept with those that wept, and rejoiced with those that rejoiced. His all was devoted to the cause of God the promotion of which he esteemed above every other object.

When the people became remiss in their attendance on the means of grace, or when any turned back again to folly, he mourned for them in secret places. His life appeared to be wrapped up in the spiritual welfare of the people; and he could truly say, "Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord."

He used to meet the children of the neighborhood in the chapel; to instruct them in the things of God; and to pray with them.

"Each art he tried, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."

I believe Mr. Blyford never left his first love; nor did he ever cease from doing his first works. But at the close of the year 1820, he experienced (as he informed me) a deeper work of God upon his soul, than he had ever felt before. This I shall relate in his own words.

"At our Chapel, (Blakeney,) in class, while singing hymns of praise to Almighty God, he very graciously visited my soul from on high with an abundant outpouring of the sanctifying influences of his ever-blessed Spirit. My soul experienced all the blessed effects of an indwelling Saviour. All was love, peace, and joy! Every promise was mine, and I was enabled to say, 'My Beloved is mine, and I am his.' Blessed be the God of my salvation, who hath thus delivered me from all internal foes. A salvation from all sin! O that I may always be on my watchtower; ever guarding the avenues of my heart against the entrance of its enemies, through the help and strength of Christ alone. Gracious Redeemer! Thanks be unto thee for this unspeakable gift! Thou hast bought me with thy blood.

'Take my body, spirit, soul,
Only thou possess the whole.'

Help me, blessed Lord, to dedicate the remainder of my days to thy praise and glory. And grant, Lord, that I may grow more and more in the knowledge of Christ; continue faithful until death; and finally be admitted into the rest that remaineth for the people of God, to dwell in his presence for ever and ever. Praise the Lord!"

This is Mr. Blyford's own account of what he ever after spoke of as a great deliverance. Different persons will judge differently of it; but surely the Scriptures speak of being made "free from sin;" and this, I think, implies all that he has declared took place in his soul. All must allow that such a deliverance is most desirable; and it is certain that the Scriptures represent it as attainable. O that all Christians would seek it with their whole hearts, rather than dispute about it! O for the destruction of all the works of the devil!

May every one who shall read this, say Amen, from the ground of the heart! Some writers of lives tell their readers that they are not describing perfect characters; intimating that there are none such to be found among the children of men. Yet that there are some who answer the description which David gives in Psalm xxxvii. 37, is certain; or we should never have been called to mark and behold the perfect and the upright man.

That Mr. Blyford received what St. John speaks of in his first Epistle, (iv. 18) his own account declares; and this was shown in his conduct. I have passed many hours with him; I have seen him at home and abroad; but I have never seen or known him to act in a way contrary to the Gospel. That he was by nature a fallen creature, and that he had been a great actual sinner, he readily acknowledged. But he was created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works; and he did afterwards walk in them.

I believe him to have been one of the most holy men I ever knew. I fear that he will rise in judgment against many whom he faithfully and lovingly warned. O that they may remember and turn unto the Lord, that they may meet him with joy in the eternal world! I have heard him mention some of his former companions with deep concern. He was often thinking how he might do them good; and many a prayer did he put up for them. I have frequently witnessed the fervency of his soul in their behalf. Indeed the good of all his fellow-creatures lay near his heart. He was truly a

philanthropist. God taught him to love all mankind. I think all who have known him in his latter years must confess that he was a real Christian.

His death was very sudden, which prevented his displaying the Christian character upon a sick and dying bed. Some friends were at his house at the time. After tea, he and Mr. Revell, the superintendent-preacher, walked into the garden together. They had been engaged in conversation for a short time, when he complained of a great giddiness; sat down upon the garden-chair; and exclaimed, Glory! glory! Heaven! heaven!"

He wished to be removed to a bed. This was quickly done. After he was laid on it, he breathed twice, and breathed no more. -- What a change in a few minutes! What a glorious change for him that was taken; what a mournful one for those that were left!

The consternation and grief which this sudden and awful stroke occasioned was very great. The house was all confusion and tears; and the town and neighborhood soon felt the shock. The feelings and expressions of the bereaved widow were indescribable. She looked; she spoke; she touched; but, O! he was dead!

But the full assurance of his eternal happiness, after recollection returned, was a balm that allayed the anguish of the wound. As his praise was in all the Churches round about, the mournful tidings of his sudden death were soon known far and near. It caused a general grief.

This painful event took place July 21st, 1821. His funeral was attended by a vast multitude of people. Many tears were shed. The dear children mourned as for a father dead; and many cried, "Ah my brother!" The clergyman partook of the general feeling and, on the following Lord's day, preached an affecting sermon on the occasion, in which he made a most respectful and affectionate mention of the deceased. The afflictive providence was also improved at the Methodist chapel in Blakeney, on the evening of the same day, from Psalm xxxvii. 37.

Reader! behold and admire, in the subject of this Memoir, the grace of God. See the gay, worldly man, changed thereby into an humble follower and bold confessor of Jesus Christ. You need the same grace; and it is free for you: for Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. O seek that salvation which is offered to all the world through him. How can you escape from the wrath to come, if you neglect it?

The mortal part of my departed brother rests in the dust, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to eternal life and his immortal spirit is, we trust, now enjoying that glory of which he spoke as he flew! I long to meet him there! May you meet there with us; that we may all be for ever with the Lord. Amen! -- Fakenham, S. E.

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9

A MEMOIR OF JAMES LAKE

By William Worth

From the July, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mr. James Lake, of Broadmain, Dorset, was born in the vicinity of that village. About fifty years ago, several preachers in the connection of the Lady Huntingdon visited that part of the country, and were very zealous in the cause of their Divine Master. They went out "into the highways and hedges" to compel sinners. to come to the gospel feast -- a practice which has rendered most essential service to religion, and which is calculated to revive and perpetuate that zeal for God which should distinguish all that profess to follow the steps" of Him, who came "to seek and to save that which is lost."

Crowds attended the ministry of these preachers, and among the rest was Mr. Lake. Various opinions were entertained of them and of their preaching. The prevailing one appears to have been, that they were the "false prophets" of which they were commanded by Christ to "beware." But while many spake evil of this way, others experienced that "the gospel of Christ," which they preached, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Mr. Lake's mind was very painfully exercised on this subject; he was afraid to go and hear them, and yet could not stay away in peace. Another opportunity offered, and he set out for the appointed place. On his way thither his perplexity became a perfect agony: he fell on his knees, and prayer that if they were, as was reported, the false prophets, rather than be should be deluded by them, some accident might happen to him to convince him that it was wrong to attend their ministry; but that if, on the contrary, they were indeed servants of the Most High God, and did show the way of salvation, the truth might that day come with power to his heart.

God, who knew his sincerity, blessed him under the preaching of the word; and all his doubts were removed. He embraced the truth, and the truth made him free. From that day he became a decided character; and no calumnies or reproaches could shake his attachment to the people of God.

Soon after this, Mr. Lake took a farm in that neighborhood. His capital was very small, and that year almost every crop flailed; so that at the end of it he had not the means of paying his rent. This filled his honest heart with unutterable grief. He made up his mind to attend at the time and place for paying the rents, -- to give a simple statement of his case, -- and to surrender himself and all he had to his landlord. The day arrived, and with a heavy heart he went to Dorchester. All the way, melancholy sat brooding on his mind; he even fancied himself in prison, looking out through the iron grates.

As he was walking, in this pensive mood, through the streets of Dorchester, a person of Weymouth came and addressed him thus: "Mr. Lake, I understand you have lately entered on a farm; and I have thought that a little money would be useful to you. I have with me a hundred pounds, which are at your service."

Filled with surprise at this unexpected offer, he replied, "But I can give you no security for it." "Give me," said his unknown friend, "your note of hand; it is all that I require."

If all who are embarrassed acted on principles like those of Mr. Lake, would not God often undertake their cause; and would he not, as in this case, raise up friends to relieve them, or incline their creditors to have patience with them? And would not much disgrace and misery be thereby prevented? Whereas, on the contrary, various stratagems are too often employed in such cases to conceal their real situation, and to keep up appearances of prosperity, till, having almost deceived themselves, as well, as their creditors, they are suddenly hurled into the lowest state of poverty and disgrace, under the aggravated circumstances of having lost a good conscience, and the favor of God, and "given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme?"

Mr. Lake acknowledged: the hand of God in this seasonable relief, and made a solemn vow that in whatever way, and to whatever extent, the Lord prospered him, it should all be devoted to his service and glory. And perhaps there never was a case in which a man more faithfully paid his vows. For nearly half a century he uniformly acted on Mr. Wesley's celebrated maxim, "Get all you can, -- save all you can; -- and give all you can." He lived in the most frugal way, denying himself the luxuries and many of the comforts of life; and even when more than seventy years of age, very infirm, and frequently chastened with strong pain, "worked with his hands" in his business, assisted by his wife, who was like-minded, "that he might give to him that needed."

What a contrast to this is the conduct of many that profess to be strangers and pilgrims on earth, and yet expend in luxury, and in dress excessively costly, and unbecoming their station, what would enable them to be rich in good works; and when applied to for a subscription to a benevolent institution, however excellent and important, have "nothing to give." Mr. Lake's ear was open to every tale of woe, and his hand was always ready to relieve. He did good to all, but especially to them that were of the household of faith. He was like-minded with his Master, who said, "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." And he invariably acted on this principle.

At the Conference in 1817, I was appointed to the Weymouth circuit. I soon heard of this blessed man, and became acquainted with him; and never did I meet with a person more warmly interested in everything relative to the work of God at home and abroad. A statement was just then publicly made, that it was computed that in the small county of Dorset there were two hundred villages destitute of evangelical preaching. This statement filled his soul "with mournful care."

Having heard that I had commenced preaching in several of these villages, he felt deeply interested, and offered to subscribe largely towards the support of an additional preacher in our circuit, if one could be obtained. I informed him, that, under all the circumstances, without greater prospects of usefulness than that neighborhood then presented, we could not be justified in recommending that such an increase of expenditure should be permanently brought on the connection; but that we had it in contemplation to keep a circuit horse, which would enable us to supply more of the distant places than we otherwise could. He was delighted with this proposal, offered to subscribe towards the expense, and named it -- the Missionary Horse.

There was no preaching by the Methodists in the village where he lived. As it was supplied by the Independent minister from Dorchester, of whose church Mr. Lake was a member, we directed our attention to other villages that were not visited by any denomination of Christians; but in my monthly journeys to that neighborhood, I made a point of calling on him, and spending a

few hours with him. These visits generally proved times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Often have I seen joy "speak and sparkle in his eyes," while hearing of the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom; and he was most ready to assist in promoting it. When a sudden increase of children in our Sunday School at Weymouth, from thirty to two hundred, constrained us to look out for a larger school-room, and a part of the barracks was taken and fitted up for that purpose, he was one of the first to come forward with an annual subscription to pay the rent.

The same liberality was manifested when we had to put side galleries in our chapel at Weymouth; and when he heard that two of the members for the borough had given handsome subscriptions towards this, as well as the school, he rejoiced as one that had found great spoil. As soon as he heard of our schools for educating the preachers' children, he became a liberal subscriber, and made provision that this, and several other of his subscriptions, shall be continued after his decease.

When it was considered desirable to have a small chapel in one of the newly-visited villages, he gave five pounds towards purchasing the ground; and when it was requested that each of the trustees would, if possible, lend ten pounds on interest, instead of doing this, he generously gave twenty; at the opening of the chapel he gave one pound; and afterwards, when the trustees needed help, thirty pounds more.

In the state of the heathen he felt deeply interested. He subscribed liberally to the Bible society, and to several missionary societies. No less than three different times in one year, when talking and feeling warmly on the subject, he paid a subscription to our mission-fund. "The Wesleyan missionaries," said he, "are very zealous and active, and God abundantly blesses their labors. I have made provision for your Missionary society to have one hundred pounds at my decease."

This appears to have been the time when he made a new will. It is said that in the former will the Wesleyan Methodists were not mentioned. The reason doubtless was, that though he had married a member of our society, yet till then, as he lived at a considerable distance from every place we supplied, and had but very little contact with us, he knew comparatively little of Methodism. And our missionary reports, notices, &c., had obtained but a very limited circulation in that neighborhood, compared with those of other denominations. When he regularly received and read these, he was astonished and delighted.

To circulate them still more extensively would certainly render most essential service to our missionary society. And this, as I have proved by repeated experience, would rather serve than injure our other funds, instituted for purposes of domestic charity.

It was a subject of mutual regret, that, after enjoying for three years such pleasant association, we were prevented from having an interview on my leaving the Weymouth circuit: but we anticipated the pleasure of seeing each other in Weymouth at the missionary meeting in October following. This expectation, however, was not realized; for it pleased God to take my dear friend to himself on the 30th of September, 1821, after about a week's illness.

From his bereaved widow, and from a friend in Weymouth, who was with him in his last sickness, I learn that he died as he lived, deeply interested in everything connected with the work of God, trusting, not in himself, but in the living God, -- and feeling and confessing himself "a feeble thing of naught," "an unprofitable servant." Unable to say much during this illness, what he did say, showed that his faith and hope were in God, and that the hope which sustained him in life did not make him ashamed in death, but was as an anchor to his soul, both sure and steadfast.

Within a few hours of his death, the friend alluded to came to see him. There was some hesitation about admitting him into the room, as Mr. Lake appeared too weak to converse with him; but the dying saint heard the voice of his friend, and his spirit revived. He desired to see him, and requested a little water to assist him in articulation. Referring to the state of his soul, and the foundation of his hope, he said, "I have not rapturous joy, but I have peace. My whole dependence is on the mercy of my God, and the merits of my Saviour, -- and this is sufficient." He added, "I did anticipate the pleasure of meeting Mr. Worth next month, at the missionary meeting in Weymouth, but God is pleased to disappoint my expectation; give my love to him, and to all the preachers at the meeting."

After making some remarks to this friend about his property, he said to him with great emphasis; "Mind the missionaries! Mind the missionaries! Mind the missionaries! Your missionaries want money!" These appear to have been the last sentences he uttered. Thus in death as in life he was deeply interested in the cause of evangelizing the heathen. May thousands catch his mantle, -- receive a double portion of his spirit, -- and imitate his example!

In the disposal of his property, he has acted on the same principle which regulated his whole life. After making provision for his widow, (having no other near relative,) and bequeathing a sum of money "to be distributed among the poorest of Christ's members" in that neighborhood, he has given one hundred pounds to each of the following societies:-- viz. the British and Foreign Bible Society; -- the Tract Society; the Jews' Society; the Church, the Moravian, the Wesleyan Methodist, the London, and the Baptist Missionary Societies: and he has directed that whatever remains, when legacies, &c.. are paid, shall be equally divided among these societies. And may not the words of our Lord be properly applied to everyone whom God has entrusted with riches, and who would be considered by him as a good and faithful servant, -- "Go thou and do likewise." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

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10

A MEMOIR OF SARAH HARRISON

By Her Husband

From the August, 1823 issue
of The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Sarah Harrison was born at Morley, near Leeds, on the 26th of May, 1762. Her parents were members of the Methodist society; and I have often heard her say, that she experienced the

powerful visitations of the Spirit of God, at different times, when she was taken by them to hear the gospel of Christ. These early convictions, however, were not permanent. Having naturally a great flow of spirits, she no sooner went from home, than she entered into the foolish pursuits and practices of the world, whereby she grieved the Holy Spirit, lost her former impressions, and became, to all appearance, an entire stranger to the fear and love of God. So true is that Scripture, which saith, "Whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

In this awful state she continued till the year 1782, when that truly pious minister, Mr. Valton, was appointed to the Birstal circuit. She, with many more, went to hear him preach, and his word came with power to her heart, mightily convincing her of the sin of loving the present evil world. Some of the congregation were offended, and said they would go no more. But she determined, by the help of God, to go again, that she might get lasting good to her soul.

From that time, she separated herself from all her old companions, who would not go with her to the house of the Lord, and also gave up her fondness for gay apparel, and every other thing which she thought did not become a true follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. She sought the Lord, day and night, with weeping, with fasting, and with much prayer, refusing to be comforted, until God should speak peace to her soul. Her anguish of mind increasing, she was more and more in earnest for that blessing.

One Sunday evening, after attending a prayer-meeting, in which she received a token for good, -- a degree of confidence in God, -- she went into secret, and sought in fervent prayer a manifestation of the divine mercy to her soul. Then and there it pleased God her Saviour to give her believing views of Christ, and to fill her heart with a sense of his love. Her sorrow was now turned into joy; and she could not sleep in the night, so engaged was her whole soul in praising that God, who pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin.

Having thus tasted that the Lord is gracious, she began to invite all around her to come and partake of the same blessing. Her cry to young and old was, -- "Come with us, and we will do you good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

In this manner she went on her way rejoicing, until it pleased God to show her the necessity of a farther work of grace in her soul. She felt her need of that entire sanctification, of which St. Paul, praying for the Thessalonians, makes mention, when he says, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." This great blessing she sought and found, walked in the enjoyment of it; and her conduct adorned her profession.

She was an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile. So true was she to her word, when she had promised any work to be done, that I have known her sit up almost the whole of the night, rather than break her promise. And she would always abide by the truth, whether it were for or against her temporal interest. Being diligent in business, fervent in spirit, and serving the Lord, she was no backbiter, nor talebearer, nor busybody in other men's matters.

She was diligent too in visiting the sick. As soon as she heard of any being thus circumstanced, she would go to them without delay: and let the disorder be what it might, it never intimidated her, because she considered the soul to be of infinitely greater importance than the

body which is appointed to die. Many have praised God on their death-beds, that ever she went to converse and pray with them.

Whenever she was informed of persons with whom she was acquainted, who were beginning to be serious, she would soon make it in her way to visit them, in order to converse with them on spiritual things, and to point them to the Saviour of the world. But before she did this, she was careful that they should see and feel their lost estate by nature; for then she feared not that the Lord would be found of them, if they only sought him with all their hearts.

When a revival of religion took place among us, she used to meet a company of young persons, one night in a week, and sometimes oftener, that she might encourage them in their way to heaven. And she spoke to them in so close and affectionate a manner, that they both loved and feared her. Her usefulness in this way caused her to be much respected by the people of God in general.

But she was not exempt from trials; and some of them were heavy ones indeed. Neither was she without her infirmities; for she was a woman of like passions and sufferings with others. She was, therefore, liable to err in judgment, and, by consequence; in practice. There never was a proof, however, of her willfully departing from our rules, though she had been a class leader for a length of time, and a member of the Methodist Society for nearly forty years.

In the month of December, 1810, she had a severe paralytic stroke, which took away her speech, and the use of one side, which, however, were mercifully restored in a few weeks. After this she comfortably went on her way, visiting the sick, and watching over her little class, until another stroke took away the use of her other side. Of this also she got better, but never became so active as before.

In April, 1816, she was visited with a third stroke, which not only took away her speech again, but greatly affected her whole frame. She remained for about five years and a half in a very helpless condition; but continued for the most part perfectly sensible. And when the preachers and other Christian friends called upon her, to sing and pray with her, I have seen her, many times, like one ready to take wing and fly away; and have heard them say, that they could see, as it were, the light of heaven in her cheerful countenance.

Her sufferings, however, for the last eighteen months, were of a most distressing nature. Two days before she died, I asked her if she possessed a well-grounded hope of glory. She strove very hard to speak in reply, but could not. I proceeded, "If you have that blessed hope, lift up your hand," -- which she did, as high as she could, and repeated the same sign whenever the question was proposed to her. On the 9th of October, 1821, in the sixtieth year of her age, she took her flight to the regions of immortality. -- February, 1822, William Harrison

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By Thomas Stanley
From the August, 1823 issue
of The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

The venerable subject of the following memoir had been for fifty-two years a member of the Methodist society, and for more than fifty a class leader, and a popular local preacher. He was well known to all the old traveling preachers who were stationed in this neighborhood; as his house at Edwick-Cregg had been occasionally a home for them, in the course of their itinerant labors, for more than half a century.

He was born at Hawshaw, in Nether-Dale. The place of his birth is mentioned, to introduce the notice of a gracious dispensation of providence, which brought him and his father's house into this part of the country; a dispensation which excited gratitude in his mind to the day of his death.

The place of his nativity was then in a state of moral darkness, without any one to direct the attention of the inhabitants to the important subject of religion. The whole of their time was taken up by the things of this life. The principal difference between the Christian Sabbath and other days, was, that on that day they did not plow and sow; but the whole of their conversation was about worldly things.

His father occupied his own estate, and was a man of property. It pleased the Lord greatly to cross him in his undertakings. If he had a fine horse ready for sale, or oxen or sheep for the market, something was sure to happen to reduce them in value; and this occurred from year to year, till he could no longer keep his estate. He resolved therefore to sell the property, pay every man what he owed, and "leave the place" (to use his heathenish expression at the time) "in which he had no luck."

But where to go he knew not. At Otley he made inquiry after a farm, and was told of one to be let at Edwick-Cregg. He went to see it, and took it, though contrary to his judgment at the time, as the land was not good. The house belonging to the farm was not ready for him; he therefore took lodgings with a neighbor for a short time. To this neighbor's house the Methodist ministers came; and under this roof the father and mother of the subject of this memoir were both convinced of sin, during the same sermon, preached by Mr. John Skirrow, in the year 1759.

They united themselves to the Lord and his people. Mrs. Martha Whitley witnessed a good confession for many years; she was a nursing mother to some of our first ministers, who were kindly entertained at their house; and her end was glorious. Mr. John Whitley became an active local preacher, and exercised his talent in this neighborhood till the year 1774, when our great founder, Mr. Wesley, called him out to fill a circuit, and give himself up wholly to the work of the ministry, leaving his son Francis on the farm.

Francis was present when the word of God proved powerful to the salvation of his parents. It does not appear, however, that any particular impression was made upon his mind at that time; nor for some time after, though he enjoyed all the means of salvation. On the contrary, he opposed divine things; and the decided part which his parents had taken, in professing religion before the world, met with his entire disapprobation.

In 1769, he entered into the marriage state; soon after which, his wife was deeply convinced of her lost condition as a sinner, and led to apply to Jesus Christ as the only Saviour. Like all who come to him aright by faith, she obtained an application of his precious blood to her soul, and felt her sins forgiven. She was filled with joy and peace, and could now say, "My fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Remembering her Lord's command, "Enter into thy closet, and shut the door, and pray to thy Father who seeth in secret," she engaged in that important duty; deeply impressed with a sense of the divine presence. The place she often chose for the purpose, as being the most retired within her reach, was the Turf-house. Into this she had one day entered, and was engaged in prayer; when her husband, who knew where she was, and what she was doing, opened the door violently upon her, while she was on her knees behind it; and in so doing hurt her much. His object was to drive her out of "that way;" and he calculated that if he could only put her out of temper, he should succeed. But instead of being angry, as he hoped, she looked upon him with great pity and compassion, and expressed those feelings with much affection. Such was the happy state of her mind in converse with the Lord, that she was prepared for this severe trial. With her all was love and peace within; while her poor disappointed husband went away, full of remorse and shame.

This event, instead of turning his wife out of the way of God, was one means of bringing him into it. On his going into the fields, he had many serious reflections which gave him pain. "My father and mother," he thought "are in the way to the kingdom of heaven; my dear wife also is going in the same way; and I, poor wretch, am going to hell, and, not willing to go alone, I want others to accompany me! Conviction now laid hold upon him; his distress of soul became very great; and from that time he too resolved to be on the Lord's side.

Accordingly, he accompanied his wife to the means of grace, and with great humility sought the Lord. The place which he had selected for private prayer in this early stage of his Christian journey, was a corner of his own barn. His distress of mind increased upon him; his earnest prayer to God was for pardoning mercy; and nothing but a sense of the divine favor could satisfy him.

One day, when at work in the field, he came to a determination to make an immediate and direct application to God, through Jesus Christ, for that blessing. He was on his way for this purpose to his chosen spot for prayer; but some difficulty intervened, and he could not get the door open. Such was his anguish of spirit, that he was constrained to fall down at the outside of the barn, and, with uplifted heart and voice, stated his case to God; who graciously looked upon him, and set his soul at liberty from unbelief and guilty fear. His joy in the Lord was now unspeakable, and full of glory; and his song was

"My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for his child,
I can no longer fear;

With confidence I now draw nigh,

And Father, Abba, Father, cry !"

This was a happy day to him and his wife; for "salvation" had "come to their house." From that day to the day of his death he was a truly devoted servant of the Lord.

After a time, he began to take a part in meetings appointed for prayer; and such were his piety and talents, that most who knew him thought that he was called to bear a public testimony for God. Many urged him to give occasionally a word of exhortation to the people, and, in process of time, he was requested to officiate as a local preacher. To these engagements he felt great reluctance; but, after repeated solicitations, at last consented.

The Lord greatly assisted him, and gave him seals to his ministry. Some were awakened; others were comforted; and believers were edified. In most such cases, the voice of the Church is the voice of God. When the pious unite in urging any man to undertake such labors, he should be careful how he refuses; especially if he have any corresponding conviction of duty in his own mind.

His work soon became laborious; as he was planned in what are now the Keighley, Colne, Skipton, Addingham, Woodhouse-Grove, and Bradford Circuits, and in other still more distant places. But neither the distance of the place, nor the severity of weather, could induce him to neglect his appointments. He made it a point of conscience always to attend.

This was not without much self-denial. Frequently in the winter season, he had to cross the cold moors, hours before daylight; and was put to what could not but be felt to be hard service to nature. But often, after exercises of this kind, the Lord greatly assisted him in his work, gave him to see some fruit, blessed him in his own soul, and made him return, late at night, praising God who had condescended to use him for his glory.

His close application to the study of the Holy Scriptures, in order to his preparation for the pulpit, was rendered peculiarly useful to himself. His great punctuality, in attending the places where he was appointed to preach, was such, that he never, during his long labors, neglected one. It is also a fact worthy of notice, that, in the space of fifty-two years, he was not absent from his class-meeting three times; and that he had, during the whole of that period, attended at the times of the quarterly visitation by the minister, and from his hand received his society ticket. It may be added, that his attention to all the other means of grace harmonized with his punctuality in these particulars. He was always in his seat at the proper time; and his regularity extended to all his worldly engagements.

The few last years he spent at Bingley; having retired from business. Old age had brought on many infirmities, which prevented him from being so extensively useful as in the earlier part of his life. No change, however, took place in his views of the infinite importance of religion, or in his desire to be useful according to his ability, by recommending it to others.

He preached occasionally in this and the neighboring places as long as he was able. He also devoted much of his time to visiting the sick; and to him the young members of the society applied for advice, when they met with difficulties in their way. For this work he was well

calculated, as his mind was richly stored with scriptural knowledge, which enabled him to speak a word in season to all.

But no subject had a greater share of his attention than the conversion of the whole world to Christianity. The prophecies relative to this great event were familiar to his mind; and on these he used to converse freely and fully. His faith in the accomplishment of God's word was firm; and the means to be used in order to the fulfillment of the Divine promises on this subject were also well understood by him. "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel."

He felt that the gospel must be preached; and that of course men should be sent to preach it. When the new plan of bringing the state of the heathen world before the public, and of raising money for the support and enlargement of our foreign missions, was first adopted by us, it met his entire approbation; and as he could do little for the Lord in the preaching of his gospel, owing to his increasing infirmities, he came forward to offer his services as a collector for the mission fund, in order that others, who were young and strong, might be sent to proclaim to a lost world the glad tidings of salvation.

In this work he took great delight; and was very successful. At our last missionary meeting he told us, that if going down upon his knees before the people would bring another half-guinea to the fund, he could and would do it gladly.

The affliction which terminated his earthly existence was severe and protracted. His strength, however, was according to his day. On my first visit to him, he said:

"The Lord has blessed me with many years of good health: now that he has laid his afflicting hand upon me, I trust he will help me to glorify him in this affliction. I never have been a complaining, murmuring Christian; no, God has greatly blessed me. I have felt it my duty to be cheerful and grateful. O, the loving-kindness and condescension of my God! How good and kind he has been to me! And now he is going to take me to himself to be eternally with him. Glory be to God my Saviour. There I shall praise him!"

To all who visited him, he spoke a word in season, as he thought they needed. For his family he expressed the greatest concern; for them he prayed, and entreated others to pray. He lamented over those who were still found in the ways of sin. After speaking much about them, he exclaimed, "Glory be to God, three of my children are in heaven; and all the others are out of hell! This is a great mercy."

His end was such as might be humbly expected to terminate a life so holy and useful. It may be said of him, as of David, "After he had served his own generation by the will of God, he fell on sleep." He died, November 27th, 1821, In the seventy-eighth year of his age. -- T. S. Bingley

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By Her Husband, Joshua Fearnside
From the August, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mrs. Fearnside was born January 21st, 1787, at Doublerstones, near Keighley, Yorkshire. Her parents believed it to be their imperative duty to bring up their children in the fear of God; which duty they performed with great diligence and perseverance. They labored not in vain; for the blessing of God attended their pious endeavors. The subject of this memoir received nearly the whole of her education in her father's house; from which circumstance she derived great moral advantages. She was well acquainted with almost everything useful for a young female in her situation; and of things ornamental she was far from being ignorant.

She was brought under religious impressions in early life, which impressions she never lost or sinned away. It may be safely said of her that, from her infancy, she had the fear of God before her eyes, though she did not find peace with God until she was near twenty-two years of age. Her conduct from her childhood had been morally strict before men; and her tempers had been, in many respects, amiable and becoming. Yet she was certain that her state was not good; for she knew that she was a sinner in the sight of God, and that to be safe, her sins must be forgiven. She felt that she was a fallen and depraved creature, and must be regenerated and made holy, before she could see the face of God with comfort. These views produced genuine and deep repentance, which repentance was followed, on her believing in Christ, by great peace and lasting comfort. The account which she has given of her experience at this time is in the following words:--

"January 6th, 1809. I bless the Lord for his kindness to me a poor unworthy sinner. Shall I let it pass unnoticed? Surely not! Out of the depths he has heard my voice, and given me to see that he is a God able to save. He has shown me how amiable are the smiles of his countenance, and made me taste of his pardoning love.

"For many months I have seen the need of being interested in the Saviour's blood. I have perceived that without this, I shall be exposed to the wrath of God. I have seen myself a sinner, and have been very unhappy on that account. I knew that it must be by a simple act of faith in Christ that I must be saved; but, alas! I felt an evil heart of unbelief. I knew not how to believe. I wished to be better before I believed, or to bring something to recommend myself to favor. But, thanks be to God, I now see that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; and no man cometh to the Father but by him.

"Last night, while reading the late Mrs. Athore's Letters to her Sister, I observed that she recommended a present Saviour, and entreated her to come to Christ for mercy just as she was. I took the advice. I retired, I prayed, and agonized with the Lord. I saw myself wretched, and poor, and guilty, and that if I received pardon, it must be through the alone merits of Jesus Christ, and vile as I was, I saw that his blood was able to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.

"That gospel promise, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,' was repeatedly pressed upon my mind; but my unbelieving heart could not lay hold of it for myself. I seemed as though I was in an agony of spirit, till these words of Scripture came with power to my heart,

'There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' I then felt my soul calm and serene, peaceful and thankful, and I bless the Lord, that now I can experimentally say, 'I love him, because he first loved me.' I know, I feel that he died for me, and paid the price of my redemption?"

From this time she made religion the great business of her life. She had paid some attention to it before: but now, to please her God, and find her way to heaven, became her first, her chief, her constant care. To promote and secure these all-important objects, she felt a desire to unite with the people of God.

She believed it to be both her interest and duty to bear her share of their reproach, and to avail herself of the helps and ordinances which they enjoy. With these views she became a member of the Methodist Society; and she thus recorded her feelings on the occasion:--

"Thanks be to the Lord, for his abundant goodness to me, in having inclined me to unite with his people. I have long had a partiality for the Methodists, and for their ministers. At length I came to the resolution to make this people my people, and their God my God. And when I view the kindness with which I am treated by them, I am constrained to say, 'Lord, why such love to one so unworthy!' I am visited, owned, and encouraged by them. I desire to be thankful, also, for the faithful preachers who labor among us. With what affection and condescension did Mr. R. receive me, and give me a society ticket. How comfortable were his words to my soul! O may I prove myself worthy of a name and a place among the Lord's people."

This prayer was fully answered. She did prove herself worthy of a place in the church of Christ; for she profited much in it; she was made useful to some of its members, and it is not known that she either stumbled or gave pain to any of them. From this time she seems to have been particularly anxious to make progress in the divine life. With this view she watched narrowly over her spirit, and tempers, and conversation, and conduct. With this view too, she kept a diary, or journal, for many years; from which it appears that she was frequently a subject of much fear, and strong temptation; but fear gave way to faith, and temptation was overcome by firm resistance.

She often speaks, too, of having received much comfort in the public means of grace; the word of truth was frequently "spirit and life" to her soul; but she seems to have profited most in retirement; she loved solitude, and there she enjoyed the greatest nearness to God, and the sweetest foretastes of heaven. She also indulged a laudable desire to improve her mind, and to grow in useful knowledge, as well as in grace. From a child she was fond of books; and it was her good fortune to be pretty well supplied with them. She had within her reach books of amusement, and books of science, as well as books of piety and devotion: and she both regarded reading as a duty, and enjoyed it as a very high gratification.

She had perused, with considerable care, many of the British Poets, and was able to relish their beauties. She was also pretty well read in ancient and modern history, but religious books had excited her chief attention, and to works of this character she had devoted the greatest part of her leisure. With the Bible she was familiarly acquainted. That holy volume, and Mr. Wesley's sermons, were her constant companions on the Lord's day, for some years, when affliction kept her from the house of God; and she often spoke in high terms of the pleasure and edification with

which she perused those admirable sermons. In such exercises she was unwearied. If her hands were without her work, they were scarcely ever without a book. And for many years she habituated herself to analyze in writing parts of what she read; that she might understand and retain it the better.

In August, 1814, she was married, on which occasion the following entry was made in her journal:--

"This day I shall be united for life to Mr. Fearnside. O God, make me an helpmeet sufficient for thy servant! Assist me to do the things I ought to do; and give me grace to serve thee all my days. I beg, merciful Saviour, who, in the days of thy flesh didst once honor with thy presence a marriage in Cana, that thou wouldst also honor us with thy presence! Then, all will be well. May we look to thee, and may realizing faith bring thy blessings down! I trust, a degree of sacred light shines upon my path. I have ever desired to acknowledge God in all my ways, and I hope he has directed my steps. Thou, Lord, hast been a stronghold for me in the day of trouble. Still be with me, and save me to the end."

In this spirit she became a wife, and in this spirit she continued all her days. During the first two years after she was married, she enjoyed a good degree of health, and had some reason to expect many happy days on earth. But the clear day was soon beclouded. Her health declined, and she became a subject of great affliction. In 1816, we spent part of a year in an extremely damp house, which seemed to injure her very considerably; and in 1817, she had a dangerous fever, from which she never fully recovered. A disease in the spine was discovered, and her suffering became very great, but her patience, fortitude, and resignation, were still greater.

She was willing to try the most painful remedies, but she never seemed to be elated by the prospect of relief and cure, nor much disappointed when the means failed. Her expectations from them were never high, nor was the event much different from what she anticipated.

For nearly twelve months she was entirely unable to walk; and her pain was usually so great that the smallest motion added much to her suffering; but she was still content, cheerful, and happy. She considered her situation as permitted for the trial of her faith, and other graces; and she endeavored to bear it, and profit by it, and was greatly assisted in so doing.

I often conversed with her about death and heaven, and always found that these, and other religious topics, were to her more than welcome. She loved to talk about Jesus Christ; -- his character, his work, his offices, and his glory, were subjects upon which she delighted to dwell, and from which she received much comfort.

Her confidence in Him was evidently strong; and in reference to her salvation, she had no other dependence. To her, death had lost his sting; his aspect was not terrible nor alarming; and nothing on earth but her infant children possessed charms sufficiently powerful to prevent her from ardently desiring the moment of her dissolution.

The day before her death she became extremely ill; and during the day on which she died, our conversation with her was almost prevented by her great sufferings: but when I had the

opportunity of speaking to her, I found her in great pain, yet calm, comfortable, and free from fear. She fell asleep in Jesus, on the 2d of December, 1821, in the thirty-fifth year of her age.

In reviewing her general character, it is but just to say, that in her conduct towards her parents, she was affectionate and dutiful. She thought them entitled to esteem, love, confidence, and obedience; and she has recorded in her journal, with great severity of condemnation, one slight instance of disobedience to them; perhaps the only one of which she was ever guilty.

As a wife, she had learned her duty from the Bible; and to do it was one of her daily cares and comforts. As the wife of a minister of the gospel, her deportment among the people was uniformly proper. There was nothing in her dress, her conversation, or her conduct, which ever made her husband blush, or gave him pain.

As a friend she was cheerful, intelligent, communicative, and faithful. By some she might be thought improperly reserved; but that reserve was never felt by those who enjoyed her confidence, and whose conversation was serious and instructive.

As a religious person, her character not only stood fair, but high. From her heart she believed Christian doctrines, and practiced Christian duties, and aspired to the enjoyment of high Christian privileges. She thought religion the most important thing in the world, and as such she attended to it. She was religious at all times; and though she did not make a very great profession, her pious enjoyments were considerable and constant.

During the whole of her Christian life, she was distinguished by her meekness, patience, fortitude, and charity; but, perhaps, as much by her diligence as by any other virtue. In this she relaxed but little, even when her strength failed; though she was often desired and affectionately exhorted to do it. This was particularly exemplified in the considerable number of books which she read, besides attending, as far as possible, to her domestic affairs, during the last three months of her life; the whole of which were spent in great pain.

She was, even in the hours of sickness and suffering, resolved to make the best use of her short life. During that period, besides many other works perused by her, the whole of the New Testament, with Mr. Wesley's Notes, was read to her, by which she was much instructed and comforted; and her husband, who read it to her, feels unable to express the opinion which he then formed of its inestimable value. -- J. F.

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Mr. Joseph Hawkins was born at Axminster in the year 1762. Among other marks of the goodness of God towards him, is that of his descent from pious ancestors. His father was truly serious; and from a very early age, when he was only about twenty, till he arrived at the advanced age of eighty, was occasionally employed in preaching the gospel.

From such a parent he received the best instructions; the good effects of which were manifested by his being preserved from gross immoralities. Some, however, of his first serious impressions, he attributed, through the grace of God, to the kind attentions paid to his spiritual welfare by his grandmother. She was eminently pious; and her concern for the salvation of her grandchild led her frequently to take him aside, to converse with him on serious subjects, and to pray with him. He has often been heard to mention with gratitude the good he received by these means.

He became, however, more deeply convinced of his sinful and lost condition, and of his unfitness for heaven, by hearing a sermon preached at Taunton by Mr. Watkins, a traveling preacher of the Wesleyan connection. From that time he earnestly and diligently sought the Lord in all the means of grace, and became a member of the Methodist society, when he was about twenty years of age.

He received a knowledge of the remission of his sins, while hearing a sermon preached by Mr. Drew. From this period he manifested the genuineness of his conversion to God; and adorned his profession in all the relations of life. His deep and genuine piety, and his zeal for the welfare of others, and the glory of God, led him at the earnest entreaty of the ministers, to take upon him the office of a class leader; and there are numbers who can bear witness to his faithfulness and zeal in the discharge of this duty.

While thus employing himself among the people in the town where he resided, his heart burned for more extensive usefulness; and knowing how many of his fellow creatures in the adjacent places were perishing in their sins, he exercised his talents wherever there was an open door, in preaching to them the gospel of salvation. On most Sabbaths, when in health, he was thus employed, till the Lord by affliction laid him aside.

From about the year 1802 till 1804, Mr. Hawkins resided in London; and from thence he removed to Southampton. Here he devoted all his leisure to those duties which he owed to God and to his fellow creatures; and his labors as a class leader and local preacher were attended with the divine blessing. He was distinguished by his affection for his family, and his concern for their salvation; and by the strict propriety of his general conduct towards all with whom he was connected.

He was remarkable also for his benevolence to the distressed, his liberality in supporting the work of God, his regular attendance on the means of grace, his solicitude for the salvation of others, his anxiety for the prosperity of the cause of religion, and his constant zeal for the glory of God.

I frequently visited him during his long affliction, and always found him comfortable in his mind, perfectly resigned to the divine will, and full of confidence relative to his eternal happiness.

In one of my last visits, he informed me that he had passed through a very trying night. Satan was permitted to assail him with powerful and reiterated temptations. Great was his conflict with the enemy; but great also was his victory and triumph. He was wonderfully strengthened by his Divine Master. Many promises of Scripture were sweetly applied to his mind, and the animating words of one of our excellent hymns were exceedingly useful to him. In the midst of this painful conflict he exclaimed,

"Jesus is my sevenfold shield,
Jesus is my flaming sword;
Earth, and sin, and hell, shall yield
To God's almighty word."

He observed to me, "I have been thinking that you will, perhaps, be saying something about me after I am gone. I am a poor unprofitable servant. You must not say too much about me; and to prevent too much being said, I have thought on the following portion of Scripture as the most suitable for the occasion, and the most descriptive of my state of mind, 'The righteous hath hope in his death.' Here," said he, "you will be prevented from saying too much."

From this period he was no longer the subject of fierce temptation; but gradually and quietly sunk into the arms of death. For some hours before his dissolution, he appeared to know nothing on earth. The last words which he spoke in the hearing of his afflicted wife were, "I am perfectly happy." He died on the 31st of December, 1821, in the sixtieth year of his age, after having been for thirty-nine years a member of the Methodist society.

Thus closed the mortal career of another of our religious friends: and here we have an additional proof of the superlative excellence and importance of personal piety. The infidel may sneer at all this, and the mere philosopher may treat it with contempt; but till infidelity can produce such effects, till philosophy, unaided by the truth and grace of God, can calm the guilty conscience, and reconcile men to death, let not their wretched devotees put forth their unhallowed hands to snatch from us the only book in the world capable of showing us the way to heaven, and of making us wise to salvation. It was the blessed gospel of Christ which filled our departed friend with light and peace, consolation and hope.

Mr. Hawkins was a Wesleyan Methodist both in principle and practice. He was exceedingly attached to our religious system, which he conscientiously believed to be unequalled by any other. From the twentieth to the sixtieth year of his age, he was an ornament to Christianity, a blessing to his country, useful to his neighbors, and an excellent member of civil and religious society.

* * * * *

December 28th, 1822, aged ninety-six.

[In the department of Recent Deaths, in our Number for February last, pp. 133, 134, we inserted a short notice of the decease of Mrs. Charles Wesley, written by Miss Wesley. The same lady has obligingly favored us with the following additional particulars, respecting the early life and general character of her venerable mother; and we are persuaded that our readers will, on many accounts, feel a peculiar interest in their perusal. -- Editor]

Mrs. Charles Wesley was the daughter of the late Marmaduke Gwynne, of Breconshire, South Wales. -- From her childhood she evinced a deep sense of religion; and received the Lord's Supper when she was only fourteen years old.

Mr. Gwynne was an upright, pious man, strenuously attached to the Church of England. He was eminently kind to his tenantry, beneficent to the poor, and exemplary in all the relations of life. He retained a chaplain in his house, who daily read the morning and evening service in it; the church being distant, and only open on Sundays.

When Mr. Howel Harris began his itinerant preaching in South Wales, (which was some years before the Wesleys visited that part of the country,) Mr. Gwynne was alarmed at reports of an innovation in the church; and imagining that this Howel Harris might hold the tenets ascribed to the Independent Dissenters under Oliver Cromwell's reign, and be an incendiary in church and state, he, being a magistrate, determined to put an end to these portentous irregularities.

For this purpose he sallied out one day, but said to his lady on going, "I will hear the man myself, before I commit him." Accordingly he made one of the congregation, with the Riot-Act in his pocket. The sermon was so truly evangelical, so calculated to arouse the careless, to alarm the wicked, and to encourage the penitent, and the preacher's manner was so zealous and affectionate, that Mr. Gwynne thought he resembled one of the Apostles. He was so convinced of the purity of his doctrines, and of the benevolence of his motive, that, at the end of the discourse he went up to Howel Harris, shook him by the hand, told him how much he had been misled by slanderous reports, avowed his intention of committing him, had they been true, asked his pardon, and, to the amazement of the assembly, entreated him to accompany him back to Garth to supper.

Mrs. Gwynne, his lady, was a worthy woman, endowed with a superior understanding, and distinguished by her love of the poor, whom she supplied regularly with food, clothing, and medicine; but she had the strong prejudices of birth and fortune. She was one of six heiresses: each of whom had £30,000 for their portion, and had married into suitable families of high descent and splendor. She was a violent enemy to all Presbyterians; and when her husband returned, introducing to her Howel Harris, -- a man of the inferior class, (for in Wales there are but two classes of society,) an innovator in the Church, and a rebel to the king, -- when she heard Mr. Gwynne himself, in the presence of his whole family, entreat his forgiveness, acknowledge his error, and pay him as much respect as he would pay to a bishop, she thought that her poor dear husband must have lost his senses; and in grief and consternation she quitted the room, nor would return to it till after supper, and till Howel Harris had departed.

The authority and countenance of Mr. Gwynne was of much importance to the ministry of this good man, who would have suffered persecution from the higher orders, had he not been so strenuously supported by one of them, who valiantly stood forth in his defense, regardless of public and private censure.

It is worthy to be recorded, that if the same scenes of outrage and barbarity through which the John and Charles Wesley, and many of their preachers, passed, (scenes promoted by some of the clergy, and often unchecked by the magistrates of that day,) did not occur in Breconshire, South Wales, it was, under the divine blessing, solely owing to Marmaduke Gwynne.

His young daughter, Sarah, delighted to accompany him to hear Howel Harris, whom he constantly attended; her mind was open to receive all good; and she was particularly blessed under his sermons. Her pious dispositions exposed her to the raillery of her lighthearted brothers and sisters; and her partiality to this itinerant preacher incurred the displeasure of her mother, who passed much of her time in tears at the infatuation of her family. Nor was she reconciled to Methodism till she had perused the "Appeals" of John Wesley, and heard the character of the two brothers from some of their colleagues at Oxford, which convinced her that their intentions must be good, and, at last, that their usefulness was great. Indeed, till then she would not hear Howel Harris.

On the arrival of John Wesley in South Wales, Mr. Gwynne invited him to Garth, where he was most cordially welcomed by Mrs. Gwynne also. Her remaining prejudices were conquered by his conversation; and he preached in the hall, where the audience was great. There were seldom less than ten or fifteen guests residing in the house; and there were eight sons and daughters, and twenty servants, besides neighboring tenants, who were admitted to hear him.

It was two years afterwards that Charles Wesley came there, to whom the whole family seemed immediately united. The servants were deeply affected by his discourses, which he delivered every day while he stayed, either in the hall or the churches. The nurse, Grace Bowen, (always a serious person,) became eminently useful; and zealous in the cause. It was for her funeral that the funeral Hymn Number 13, of Wesley's Funeral Hymns was composed, which begins:

"Stay, thou triumphant spirit, stay,
And bless me, ere thou soar'st away,
Where pain can never come."

Grace Bowen's character and happy death are fully described in the remaining verses of that hymn, which contains a true portrait of a Christian, and one of the Old Methodists.

It was two years after this visit, that Mr. Charles Wesley, with the entire consent of both her parents, espoused their daughter Miss Sarah Gwynne; who, without reluctance, sacrificed earthly splendor, and the distinctions of wealth, to become the wife of a pious minister. She had never cause to regret, nor was she ever known to regret, her change of situation and habits of life. In the affection and society, the example and protection, of one of the best of husbands, she deemed

herself richly remunerated for the loss of worldly honors; and she ever highly estimated the privilege of being acquainted with eminent Christians in lower states, -- those "of whom the world is not worthy."

During the first years of their marriage, she accompanied Mr. Charles Wesley in his travels to the North, where their accommodations usually formed a striking contrast to the luxuries in which she had been bred. She would sometimes speak of them with a smile; always dwelling on the tender attentions of her husband on these occasions, who, she said, "felt for her so much more than she did for herself."

In Norwich, a violent mob collected, through which it was deemed advisable that she should pass with a lady who came with her, rather than with her husband, who was the object of their vengeance, while he braved it. Happily (she said) her insignificance secured her; (she was low in stature;) but her poor friend, (Colonel Galatin's lady,) of majestic height and appearance, being taken for the wife of Mr. Wesley, was separated from her side, and sorely annoyed by the rabble. But all providentially arrived at their lodgings unhurt. It was pleasing to witness the satisfaction with which she related these hardships, as others would term them.

When they hired a house in Bristol, where Charles Wesley became stationary, they entertained the preachers; and often she remarked, that "she had never met with persons better behaved, or more agreeable guests. They were so many eminent proofs how well divine grace could supply the fictitious aid of education and high breeding. They were most humble, obliging, simple-hearted men, who lived above the world." John Nelson and John Downes were among her guests.

She caught the small pox four years after her marriage, in which disease the late Countess of Huntingdon came to attend her; which confirmed a friendship they had formed before, and of which she never spoke without the most lively gratitude. It ended but with life. During her illness, Charles Wesley was with his brother in London, who was then supposed to be near death. It was a trying season to both; for he could not, on the first information, leave the chapels and the congregations; and every post, he feared, would bring him intelligence that his beloved wife was no more.

She was for twenty-two days in imminent danger. He rode down to visit her twice, at the risk of his own health, and returned to serve the public. His first babe, a lovely son under two years, took the infection from his mother, and was buried before his next return home. Some of his affecting Funeral Hymns, written on this occasion, describe a father's sufferings, and express his tender gratitude for the spared life of the mother.

When Mrs. Wesley recovered, the alteration of her features was so great, that no one could recognize her; which, she would sportively say, "afforded great satisfaction to her dear husband, who was glad to see her look so much older, and better suited to be his companion." There was nearly twenty years' difference in their ages. Never did a female less regret her loss of beauty; -- a circumstance indicative of no common mind. She was then twenty-six. But over her first-born child, she mourned in deepest sorrow. Four children, after this, she buried; and then raised an earnest prayer to the Almighty, that she might never live to see the death of another. Three she had

after; and when any of them fell sick, she was wonderfully supported by the hope and trust that her prayer had been accepted, and that she never should weep over the grave of another child. She never did.

In the eighty-seventh year of her age, she was required to give her testimony in a law suit, commenced by a lawyer, on an unjust claim upon her son. Her statement on that occasion was so clear and satisfactory, that, corroborated by other witnesses, it gained the cause -- so unimpaired were her faculties at that advanced age. Had the cause been tried in Westminster Hall, the expenses would have wholly devolved on the lawyer; but hearing that he would have been struck off the rolls for his conduct, the family preferred arbitration. Some time afterwards he was struck off the rolls, for similar dealings, and when she heard it, in the most fervent manner, she thanked God that she had not been the cause of his ruin.

The same spirit of lenity characterized all her actions: she had been cheated by a confidential servant to the amount of thirty pounds. Her drawers were broken open, and her plate stolen; but her whole anxiety was, lest she should be called upon to prosecute the thief, -- who ran away, to the heart-felt satisfaction of her kind, though injured mistress.

Her amiable manners and cheerful spirits endeared her to all with whom she had any dealings. Her hospitality was unbounded, and verged to excess, and her tenderness led her to an extreme of indulgence in the education of her children, yet, on the most trying occasion to maternal sensibility, she manifested the Christian, for no murmur escaped her lips.

St. Paul's advice, "Wives, honor your husbands," was never better observed by any wife. She was so jealous of the honor of her beloved husband, so sensible of anything which she conceived a slight, or omission of due respect, that her displeasure was marked towards any person whom she thought to have failed in this point: and often would Mr. Charles Wesley, whose humility was a striking virtue in his character, gently expostulate with her by saying, "Enviest thou for my sake," and condemn what he called, "her excessive partiality."

Her reading had been confined to religious books: she relished no other. History, she said, was only a narration of the wickedness of man, without any reference by the writers to the remedy provided. Controversial works she detested; yet in theology she was well versed; and could enumerate the errors of various sects with admirable sagacity. Love for the poor, and pity for the wicked, were prominent features in her character; indeed, such was her tenderness to the fallen, that many rigid moralists supposed she leaned to antinomianism. Yet nothing could be further from her principles; as her words, and her whole blameless life, attested.

When she heard of a crime, and the relators of it expressed their abhorrence and indignation, her usual remark was, that the heart of every human being would be capable of the same, if divine grace did not prevent it. She was indeed of an humble mind, and of a timid nature. The fear of God, reverence for his Word, and delight in his sanctuary, were the prominent characteristics of her religion. Hers was "the trembling hope;" but it was founded on the Rock.

No symptoms of the fear of death appeared in her last illness. Her nights were painfully restless, though she had no disease. She seemed (she said) to be harassed by the enemy; and her

prayers were affectingly fervent to our Saviour to be delivered from him. Yet she would complain that she could not pray; and urged all the pious who visited her, to besiege the throne of grace in her behalf. She would repeat the litany in a manner so impressive and collected, as astonished her attendants; and at that passage, "By thy precious death and passion, Good Lord, deliver us," no one could behold her feeble hands clasped, and her eyes uplifted, without emotion.

The last night she continued for an hour to exclaim, "Open the gates! Open the gates!" -- as in a struggle of soul; and then falling into a slumber, a composure so visible appeared on her countenance, for some hours, and she awoke so smiling and refreshed by it, that her servant had almost a hope she might recover. She asked her if she had found Jesus precious to her. "O yes!" was the reply. And you are happy? She answered, "Yes!" She continued, with this serenity of countenance, chiefly silent, till the afternoon; gently breathing, till, without a struggle or a groan, her blessed spirit was taken into the regions of eternal rest; where, through the merits of that Redeemer in whom she ever trusted, she is now rejoicing in his love.

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15

A MEMOIR OF ELIZABETH FOWLER

By Her Husband, William Fowler
From the September, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mrs. Fowler (formerly Miss Warren) was the daughter of respectable parents in the county of Somerset. She remembered her Creator in the days of her youth, and followed the dictates of conscience both in the great and small affairs of life; having been deeply impressed by a charge which she and her sisters received from their father at the period of their mother's decease:-- "My children," said he, "whatever you do or suffer, never tell a lie; and never sin against your conscience?" This admonition was often her shield in the hour of temptation.

In 1804, she became acquainted with the Methodists, and joined their society at Taunton. She now bent her whole soul to the important concerns of salvation. The Sabbath was most religiously regarded by her. Part of that sacred day was spent in instructing the children of a Sunday School, in whose welfare she felt a lively interest. No company could ever keep her from the means of grace. She had sat down and counted the cost, and was resolved to deny herself, take up the cross, and follow Christ.

When she commenced business at Taunton, the God of Providence smiled upon her efforts; and, feeling her obligations to the Lord, she manifested her gratitude in her kind attention to his indigent followers. She felt a pleasure in visiting the sick, and relieving the distressed; and "walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

When, after much consideration, consultation, and prayer, she had made me the promise of her hand, some of her friends were desirous that we should settle in Taunton; but she solemnly declared that she would not, for the whole world, induce me to abandon the itinerant ministry. At

the period of our marriage, she entered upon the duties of her new station under a deep sense of her louder call to dedicate herself to God. In the scene of action to which she was now introduced, she bore the cross with invincible courage; and was a pattern to believers "in word and doctrine," in Spirit and general carriage. Her mind was naturally strong; her knowledge of life extensive; and her feelings of religion solemn and influential. The grand object at which she aimed was the honor of God. She would often say, "We should seek the divine glory, and leave consequences with the Lord."

She had a high sense of religious honor: of backbiting and slander she had the greatest abhorrence; and advocated, as far as she could, the cause of an absent party when attacked in her presence. Often has she grieved over the conduct of some who indulged themselves in the spirit of meddling and inquisitiveness. She thought it to be as mean and degrading, as it is repugnant to the spirit and precepts of the gospel.

She was easy and affable in her deportment: in company, the lowliest as well as the most respectable shared in her attentions. She was a lover of spiritual conversation, and often sorrowed to think that social life should be so thinly sprinkled with the salt of grace. She never breathed with so much ease and pleasure as in a truly religious atmosphere: here she found herself at home, and tasted of the grapes of Eshcol on her way to the Promised Land.

When we were stationed at Northampton, she was desired to act as a class leader: she complied, though with fear and trembling. She considered her class as a solemn charge, for which she must one day give an account; and generally went directly from her closet to meet the persons committed to her care. The duties of this office she prosecuted with solemnity, care, and affection. Not content with meeting and counseling such members as could attend her, she felt it an imperious duty to visit the absentees, and to inquire into the cause of their absence, and the state of their souls. If any case of difficulty as to doctrine, experience, or practice, occurred in the class, she was careful to state it on her return, that she might obtain instruction or advice upon the subject. It was her plan to examine her members thoroughly, and probe every wound to the bottom; that when they were weighed in the balance, they might not be found wanting.

She loved the public as well as the private means of grace. She had a discriminating mind; but was careful never to say any thing to the prejudice of the weakest ministers of the gospel. She thought that the sacrifices made by many of them were great, and their labor hard; that they did their best; and that they should be "esteemed highly in love for their work's sake." I have had reason to bless God a thousand times for the kind and judicious comments which she has made to me upon my sermons. She would say, "I may take greater liberties with your discourses than with those of any other person; but I do so for the glory of God, and for your advantage."

The sweetness of human kindness flowed from her heart; and she "put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies." It was a feast to her soul to be able to provide something for the afflicted poor. Often, when sitting down to dinner, she would say, "I could willingly resign my personal gratification, that the hungry poor might have their wants supplied."

Mrs. Fowler was long the subject of very heavy afflictions; but through them all she was supported, and frequently much cheered by the gracious presence of God. When wading through

the deepest waters, she justified the ways of God to her. Sometimes she said, "I have been refractory, and have not duly improved the painful scenes through which I have had to pass; they have not been so sanctified to me as they should have been; and therefore God adds weight to the affliction, because he sees that nothing less will bring me fully to himself." A richer display of habitual patience I never witnessed. She had strong faith in the doctrine of universal Providence; and firmly believed that " all things work together for good to them that love God."

Considering the strength of her conjugal and maternal affection, her resignation was great. She felt herself dead to the world, and would say, "I have no wish to live any longer in it but for the glory of God, my spiritual prosperity, and the good of my family." Her soul appeared to breathe the spirit of that prayer of our Divine Master, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Her last affliction was tedious and severe, and rendered her, for months, incapable of attending the public means of grace. Sometimes, like David, she appeared to envy the birds their access to the sacred altar, while sickness imprisoned her at home. But she always felt a pleasure in inquiring into the state of the cause of God, and in praying for the prosperity of Zion, and for such as are "set upon the walls of Jerusalem," that they might not "hold their peace day nor night, till the righteousness thereof should go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Her faith in Christ was of rock-like firmness; but her joy was never ecstatic. She delighted in the Lord with supreme affection; but often grieved that her love was not more ardent. The word of God had been, for many years, her counselor. It was her pleasure to read therein by day, and meditate by night. Some of its promises she "rolled as a sweet morsel under her tongue." That which is found in Heb. xiii. 5, was applied with peculiar power to her soul: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

In the last fortnight of her pilgrimage, the fifteenth verse of the 50th Psalm was a prop and a cordial to her mind: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." The nature of her final affliction, however, was such that she was incapable of searching the Scriptures according to her wish. "The spirit indeed was willing, but the flesh was weak."

The evening preceding her death: in conversation with a friend, she was cheerful, but serious; and occasionally uttered prayers. She mentioned with grateful feelings the promises of God which had been applied to her mind and appeared blessedly to "lean on Him on whom archangels lean." The next morning, January __, 1822, she fell asleep in Jesus. -- William Fowler

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16
A MEMOIR OF WILLIAM SOUTHALL

By John Aikenhead
From the September, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

William Southall was born at Woodside, in the parish of Dudley, April 30th, 1737. His parents were religiously disposed, and, previous to their acquaintance and union with the people called Methodists, were regular hearers at the Presbyterian meeting-house in Dudley. Their children were early taught to read the Scriptures, and to get by heart Dr. Watts' hymns for children. This, through the divine blessing, laid the foundation of those early religious impressions, which ultimately led to their saving conversion.

Mr. Southall, in some papers which he left concerning his Christian experience, writes thus:--

"When I was very young, it pleased God to give me an earnest desire to seek the salvation of my soul, and I was frequently drawn by a sweet, yet powerful influence to prayer, and other means of grace, in which I was often greatly blessed."

About this time, while his heart was soft and tender, "it pleased God," he informs us, "in his providence, to send that extraordinary messenger of heaven, the John Wesley, to Dudley, who preached in the street, and whose sermon was made a blessing to my father, who was one of his hearers." Our venerable founder and his coadjutors had, before this time, formed societies at Wednesbury, and at Tipton, a populous village about two miles from Dudley, where there was preaching regularly every Lord's day.

To the latter of these Mr. Southall's parents regularly took him, whatever might be the state of the weather, or condition of the roads; and of those opportunities he observes,

"I found the singing, prayer, and preaching, a source of joy and exultation to my soul; I thought the place a little heaven; and longed for the return of Sunday, as a hungry boy for his food. So gently did the Lord draw me with the cords of love, from my youth."

He had an elder brother, who was brought to God about the seventeenth year of his age, and whose soul, filled with the love of God, longed for the salvation of his neighbors. A prayer-meeting was opened at the house of his father, and another at that of a neighbor. One evening, as the meeting was about to be held, a number of colliers [coal-miners] came to the house, and when the people had kneeled down to prayer, with a fury bordering upon hellish, broke the window in pieces with stones and brick-bats, and aimed at doing some grievous bodily harm to the brother of Mr. Southall, who was engaged in leading the devotional exercises. Yet so mercifully did Providence defend him and all present, that no one received any injury; although the mob proceeded to break the chamber window, and threw large stones upon the tiling with an intention to destroy the roof of the house.

"We were much alarmed," observes Mr. Southall, "and began to make our escape. Some departed by the back door; but my father went out by the front way, myself following close behind, when the mob divided to the right and left, leaving us a way to pass through; only saluting us with many bitter oaths and curses."

These were indeed days of trial and reproach to the followers of Jesus; yet were they days rich in consolation; for as their sufferings for righteousness' sake did greatly abound, so their consolations in Christ did much more abound. Many of the first Methodists were enabled to imitate the primitive Christians, who not only took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, but rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer any thing for the name of Jesus. None of these things moved the father and family of this worthy man. They were not to be terrified out of their Christian profession, or compelled to abandon that spiritual ministry, and those divine ordinances, which they greatly loved; finding them as "marrow and fat things" to their souls.

They continued to visit Tipton regularly on the Lord's day as before, though exposed to violent opposition; "a Methodist being," as Mr. Southall observes, "accounted worthy of no better treatment than a mad dog." At length a door was opened at Dudley for preaching on the Sunday evenings. This was matter of great joy to this pious family, as it lay more convenient to them, and gave hope of the further enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

A few years afterwards, Mr. Southall's father and family removed to Baptist-End, another hamlet of Dudley parish. Here he opened his house for preaching, and it became the place of spiritual birth to many of his neighbors, who were savingly brought to know the Lord; and here the subject of this memoir became a partaker or justifying faith, with its consequent privileges. His former experience was only that of a sincere seeker of salvation, favored with the drawings of the Father.

The account of this great and important change, so rich in blessing, and so productive of permanent excellence, shall be given substantially in his own words:--

"When I was about eighteen years of age, as I was returning home from the preaching at Dudley, I felt a spark of holy love begin to kindle and burn in my soul. Hope of pardon sprang up in my heart. I had a persuasion that God was about to manifest himself to me as my reconciled Father and Friend in Jesus Christ; and at every step, as I went on, the heavenly flame increased, till I was so filled with the love of God and with unutterable joy, that I scarcely knew whether I was in the body, or out of the body. Indeed I thought that if the enjoyment of heaven itself yielded only an equal degree of bliss to that which I then experienced, it was worth the sufferings of a thousand lives to attain it."

Unhappily, the bliss of Mr. Southall was of short duration. The subtle adversary of God and man whispered in his ear, "You have had no particular passage of Scripture applied; your happiness must therefore be a delusion." He listened, and I need not say what was the consequence. The Spirit of God was grieved, his comforts were withdrawn, and, to use Mr. Southall's own words, "he durst not call himself a child of God."

Many have, like him, lost the evidence and comfort of their acceptance for a season, through giving heed to the temptations of satan, who have nevertheless soon recovered their loss, and learned wisdom from the things they have suffered. Mr. Southall did not give place to despondency, or abandon his pursuit of the blessing; but in the diligent use of all the means of grace, waited for the return of God his Saviour.

A class having been formed at Baptist-End, of which his eldest brother was appointed the leader, he gratefully embraced the privilege, and improved it diligently. Speaking of one of their meetings, not long after the gracious visitation before mentioned, he says in his memoranda:--

"I felt my soul powerfully drawn up to God; and when the leader inquired into the state of my mind, I replied, 'I feel my soul sweetly going out after God and heavenly things, and believe He is about to visit me with a fresh manifestation of his mercy and love.' I felt immediate power to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and cried out in ecstatic joy, 'He is come! But, O, how did my heart burn with the love of God, while all present seemed to feel

'The sacred awe that dares not more,
And all the silent heaven of love.'

Never, certainly, did any soul enjoy, on this side of eternity, a fuller assurance of the love of God, than I did on that blessed night."

This language of Mr. Southall is strong; but it is the language of truth and soberness. It is proper I should inform the reader, that the preceding account was not written when the event took place, but when Mr. Southall was far advanced in life. Yet so deep and permanent was the impression made on his mind and heart, that, upwards of fifty years afterwards, he writes of it in language expressive of the warmth and glow of youthful experience. I may add to this the further consideration, that few in the Church of God placed in a situation similar to that of Mr. Southall, had better opportunities of observing and comparing the circumstances connected with the birth of immortal souls into the spiritual world, and of judging on the weakness or strength of the evidence which such persons possess of their admission into the divine favor.

He was a most acceptable and useful class leader for upwards of fifty years, and not less useful and acceptable as a local preacher, for nearly an equal length of time: and they who knew him best, when his judgment was in its vigor, are ready to bear testimony to its excellence, and that it is by no means likely that he was deceived in respect to himself, or mistaken in others.

The fact is an every-day occurrence. Men are brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, and obtain remission of sins, with an inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in Christ; and they receive the Spirit which is of God, that they may know the things that are graciously given to them of God.

This was the commencement of a new era in the life and experience of Mr. Southall. Old things were passed away, and all things were become new. He could now cry "Abba, Father," with an unflinching tongue. Christ was precious to him, as his atoning and indwelling Saviour; sprinkling his heart from an evil conscience, and subduing all his powers to the government of grace and truth. The peace of God ruled his conscience; and the love of God was shed abroad in his heart.

With the communication of the divine treasure, a command is given to "occupy;" and no man receives it for his own exclusive benefit, but for the glory of God, in the salvation of his fellow men. As, in the great change which had been effected in his mind and heart, he became a

vessel meet for the great Master's use, so a field of labor was provided for the honorable exercise of his gifts and grace. Soon after he had "tasted that the Lord is gracious," a society of two small classes was formed in Dudley; one of which was placed under his care as leader. A dispensation of the gospel was also committed unto him, and he believed it to be his duty to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Relative to his call to this work, he writes as follows:--

"It was impressed powerfully on my mind, that the Lord had chosen me, the unworthiest of his servants, to preach the gospel. But when I considered the awful importance of the work, and my own inability, O what inward conflicts did it cost me! I was compelled, like Moses, to say, 'O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send, but send not by me.' Yet so condescending and gracious was the Lord to me, that very often, when I was at work, He so filled my soul with his love, and so powerfully excited my bowels of compassion towards perishing sinners, that I was inwardly constrained to say, 'If thou wilt be with me in this blessed manner, shouldest thou command me to go to the gates of hell, I would gladly go; were it possible that I could thereby do good to perishing sinners.' Nevertheless, when that sweet constraining influence was withdrawn, I strove against the conviction of my call to the work, with all my might."

But the great Head of the Church knew how to remove his doubts, and to overcome his reluctance; and he was led onward by gradual and easy steps, until his path became perfectly plain, and he yielded a ready compliance with the divine will. To the inward call of God was added the voice of providence, in the call of the Church, and in the circumstances of the Christian societies with which he was connected.

At that early period in Methodism, the regular itinerant preachers were few in number, and their visits to the smaller societies could not be frequent. This was the case at Dudley. Hence Mr. Southall was requested, in their absence, to read one of Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and to lead the devotional exercises of their religious meetings; and he continued the practice till he had no more sermons to read. He then read a chapter from the Bible, and made such observations upon it as occurred to him. After laboring for some time in this way, he at length, through the earnest entreaties of friends, ventured, with fear and trembling, to take a text.

When Mr. Southall was called by Divine providence to this holy service, the number of pious and faithful ministers of Christ was few indeed, in this part of the country; hence his sphere of action was extensive, and his Sunday labor heavy. He visited Birmingham, Wednesbury, Darlaston, Walsal, Buston, Wolverhampton, and many other intervening places; and in some of them met with considerable persecution, yet never received any serious injury.

Like others who have been many years acceptably and usefully employed in preaching the word, he was subject to various painful exercises of mind. But, generally, it pleased God to strengthen his weakness; and to give him favor in the eyes of the people, and (what he more highly prized) many souls as the fruit of his labor. So abundant were the outpourings of the Holy Spirit with which he was sometimes favored, while speaking to the people, as made him willing, if it had pleased the Lord, to have left his body in the pulpit, and to have taken his triumphant flight to glory.

Such were the excellencies of Mr. Southall's character as a Christian, and his talents as a preacher, that his services were greatly desired, and highly successful, in every place where he

was called to labor. He was, for many years, the attentive and affectionate nursing father of the society at Dudley; visiting its members in their afflictions, directing them in their perplexities, reconciling them when at variance, and striving in every possible way to promote their interests and happiness. His attention was not confined to the society. He visited others, both rich and poor, in their sickness; being often requested to assist them by his pious counsels and fervent prayers; and, through divine mercy, he had good cause to believe that his labors of love proved a blessing to many.

Soon after Mr. Southall became a preacher, he entered into the married state; and became the father of a family. In taking this step, which was to lay the foundation of his future domestic comfort or misery, he was influenced by that prudent caution, and regard to the divine glory, which had marked his previous conduct in life. After satisfying himself on the religious character and experience of the object of his affections, he communicated to her his views, and observes:--

"We agreed to make the subject a matter of mutual, earnest, and solemn prayer to God; that we might be directed to that issue, which should be for the glory of God, and for our benefit."

He remarks, that his wife was naturally of a timid and diffident disposition, and followed the Lord with trembling steps; but was truly upright in heart and life. She loved the Lord Jesus Christ with sincerity and fervor, and was hearty in the support of his cause. All who bore the image of her Divine Saviour were objects of her esteem and affection; but especially the preachers of God's Word, both itinerant and local.

In the house of Mr. Southall was an altar to God. Around this altar, his family were regularly collected, while he read to them the sacred Scriptures, and offered up for them supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings to that gracious Being, who is the God of the families of the whole earth, but especially of the families of the pious. In this religious exercise he was joined by many of his neighbors, who frequently acknowledged the pleasure and profit which they derived from his domestic devotion.

Diligence in business is characteristic of the Christian, as well as fervor of spirit; and the two were admirably united in the conduct of Mr. Southall, and his excellent wife. Industry, frugality, and contentment, were their constant inmates; and the blessing of the Lord was upon their persons, habitation, basket, and store.

Unmixed outward happiness is, however, incompatible with a state of probation. This excellent man was tried in the furnace of affliction. After frequent sufferings from ill health, his beloved wife was removed to a better country, that is, an heavenly. In her last illness, which was of five months' duration, she was powerfully supported by the consolations of religion. Mr. Southall records an affecting conversation which took place a little before her removal, and which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of relating, as it reflects honor on them both. Mr. Southall said to her:--

"We have lived together nearly forty years, but it seems that we must soon part: if you have anything in your mind against me on account of my behavior towards you, tell me what it is, and forgive me."

She looked earnestly at him, and with mingled emotions of surprise and tenderness, answered:--

"I have anything against you! How can I? You have been a most loving and indulgent husband to me, and a most affectionate father to our children, and have done your duty to both God and us; how then can I have anything against you? Let me, therefore, hear no more of this!"

Just before she expired, she said, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, for by thy grace I am ready?"

"I believe," says Mr. Southall, "a happier, or more agreeable pair were scarcely ever united together. Our tempers, by the hallowing power of divine grace, were admirably suited to each other. We loved God supremely, and each other cordially and affectionately."

Two minds so constituted and united, and, under the direction and influence of divine truth, and of the love of God, urging on their way to everlasting life, would not be cast down or discouraged by the afflictions, temptations, and trials of life. Like Moses' bush, they endured the fire, retaining their verdure, and producing the fruit of holiness and righteousness. Their union, founded on the firm basis of scriptural piety, yielded them a thousand sweets, of more than sufficient strength to enable them to rejoice in tribulation also; knowing that their light and momentary afflictions were working for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Mr. Southall lived twenty-two years after the death of his amiable wife; and saw not only all his first companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus removed to the church triumphant, but the greater part also of the succeeding race of Methodists in Dudley laid with their fathers, before Divine providence saw good to take him to his reward.

For the last twelve years of his life he preached but seldom, owing to great lameness. As long as his strength permitted, he came to the chapel, and, on the week evenings, occasionally preached a short sermon. In the autumn and winter of 1819, he came several times to a class meeting, and seemed much to enjoy the privilege of Christian communion; but on his last visit he unfortunately fell down, on his return home, and became from that time incapable of attending. When I visited him, I invariably found his mind calm and tranquil; having an unshaken confidence in the mercy of God through the merits of the Divine Redeemer, and a lively hope of eternal life, but greatly desiring a deeper baptism of the Holy Spirit, and a richer foretaste of heavenly felicity. Though his physical and mental strength were much impaired, and I saw him rather in his second childhood, yet his sweet resignation to the divine will, and sometimes his intelligent and animated cheerfulness, especially if we conversed about his former experience, labors, and trials, were such as gave me a high idea of his excellent spirit, and of his superior mental attainments when in the prime of life.

On my last visit I found him speechless, but evidently sensible. He made several attempts to articulate something in answer to my questions, but exhausted nature was unequal to the effort. When I knelt down and prayed for him, he succeeded two or three times in saying "Amen" to petitions offered up to God for himself and family. This was late on Saturday evening; and before

the light had ushered in the hallowed day of the Lord, his happy spirit had left the body, and all the sufferings of mortality, and winged its way into the blissful presence of God, there to enjoy an eternal Sabbath in the more perfect services of the heavenly sanctuary. This event took place on February 17th, 1822, in the eighty-fourth year of his age.

I add nothing to this narrative of Mr. Southall in the way of eulogy of him; but I desire to magnify the grace of God manifested in him, and which made him what he was in excellence and usefulness. It was that grace which gave a heavenly direction to his mind, and a holy bias to his will and affections, in early life; preserved him, in a blessed measure, from the corruption that surrounded him; opened to his view the true state of his heart; and deeply affected him with the discovery. It gave an edge to his appetite for spiritual ordinances and vital religion. It led him to that City of Refuge, which God has provided for the guilty and the perishing; it filled him with holy admiration and gratitude for the infinite wisdom which planned, and the mercy and power which executed, the scheme of human salvation. It inspired him with unspeakable joy in the contemplation of his own safety, honor, and happiness, as a partaker of the high privileges consequent upon being "found in Christ."

It entered deep into his soul, purifying his principles, tempers, and affections; and producing a spiritual and moral renovation which raised him into the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. It taught him to walk circumspectly, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world. It gave stability to his principles and pious resolves; and kept him "unmoved by threatening or reward." It inspired him with holy courage to declare the whole counsel of God, and preserved him from being ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It filled his heart with tender compassion to the perishing souls of his fellow mortals; and led him to endeavor, by unwearied efforts, to win them to Christ, and bring them to the fold of God. It taught and disposed him to feed with affectionate tenderness the lambs and sheep of Christ. It was his counselor in his perplexities; his support in his adversities; his comfort in his distresses; his defense against his enemies; his never-failing source of joy through life; his hope and ground of triumph in the hour of death. In short, it consummated the work of God in him, and the designs of Providence by him; and finally introduced him into glory. -- John Aikenhead

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17

A MEMOIR OF ELIZABETH RUSSELL

By Joseph Reeves

From the October, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Elizabeth Russell, the daughter of Thomas and Ann Russell, of Portsea, was born March 27th, 1798. As she grew up, modesty and meekness were the distinguishing traits of her character. At about eleven years of age she appears to have been impressed with the necessity of heartfelt and earnest prayer. Favored with a religious education, and under the guidance of parents who knew the importance of the charge committed to them, she happily escaped many errors into which she might otherwise have fallen; and her days glided peaceably away, occupied in assisting her

mother in domestic affairs, and in endeavoring, to the utmost of her power, to promote the harmony and happiness of the family.

When about fourteen years of age, she was received into the Sunday School of St. Peter's chapel as an Assistant Teacher; where her affable manners, and excellent disposition, soon secured for her general esteem. In her sixteenth year, under a sermon preached by the Rev. W. Beale, she was convinced of her lost state by nature. She saw and felt herself to be a sinner; and discovered that, though she had lived an externally moral life, and had been, in some degree, attentive to the means of grace, and to what she conceived to be her duty towards God, none of these things could give her a claim to his favor, or supersede the necessity of a change of heart. On the contrary, she felt that she was exposed to the just displeasure of the Almighty, as a transgressor of his law. A view of the spirituality of that law, and of its just and extensive demands, humbled her as in the dust; and though she did not despair of finding mercy, yet she was convinced that her salvation must be of grace alone.

In the early part of the year 1816, she was invited to attend a class meeting by a pious female friend, who wished her to be more closely united with some part of the Church of Christ. This invitation she accepted, from a full conviction of the necessity of becoming a decided Christian; and soon became a member of the Methodist Society.

Her religious experience was of the most genuine description. She lamented deeply the depravity of her nature; and feeling her need of mercy, ardently implored it of her heavenly Father. Her petitions were heard and answered. By the illumination of the Holy Spirit, she discovered the evangelical way of salvation through the atoning blood of Christ. She understood how the Almighty could be "just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus," and, relying on his merits and intercession, she obtained peace of conscience, and went on her way rejoicing.

Her subsequent tempers and conduct were such as adorned her profession. Indeed, diffident and modest, she said but little; and seemed desirous that her actions should speak louder than her words. To her duties, as a teacher, she attended with punctuality; and there was no class in the school that exceeded hers in good order, and attention to learning. Steady and regular in her attendance on the means of grace; particularly kind and affectionate to her relatives; loving and obedient to her parents, and ever most anxious to serve and please them, she cheerfully passed on her way, bringing forth the fruits of good living to the honor and glory of God.

A short time before her last illness, in a letter, dated Feb. 23d, 1821, she mentions having entered into a solemn engagement with God to live more closely to him, and to set apart some portion of time thrice every day for private prayer. During the summer of 1821, she complained of indisposition; and her countenance too plainly told, that the fears of her friends concerning her were not without cause. Yet, cheerful and serene, she endeavored to bear up against her disorder, and not till it became impossible for her to go out, did she relinquish her attendance in the school, and on the public ordinances of religion.

In October, her illness much increased, and a friend inquired of her what were her views of divine things, now that she was afflicted. She replied, "Since I have been worse, I find my confidence in God stronger than ever: pray that I may be supported, and resigned to the will of

God." From this time, her disorder continued to gain strength, but she did truly manifest the most exemplary resignation.

"Amidst accumulated woes, .
That premature afflictions bring,
Submission's sacred hymn arose,
Warbled from every mournful string.

When o'er thy dawn the darkness spread,
And deeper every moment grew;
When rudely round thy youthful head
The chilling blasts of sickness blew;

Religion heard no 'plainings loud;
The sigh in secret stole from thee
And Pity, from the dropping cloud,
Shed tears of holy sympathy."

In the visits paid to her by the writer of this account, he always found her enabled to converse on death and eternity without terror. Her language was, "If I live, it will be well; if I die, it will be well." And when her enfeebled frame was racked with acute pain, her spirit was calm and tranquil; no murmur escaped her lips; her trust was in God; to Him her prayers were offered; and from his bounteous hand she received supporting grace. Her principal concern was, not for herself, but for her affectionate mother, whom, with the greatest tenderness, she entreated not to grieve for her. "O my dear mother," she frequently exclaimed, "do not grieve for me: your tears distress me."

On one of these occasions, a friend observed to her, "Perhaps your mother's giving vent to her grief may give her some relief; she must feel; she has a mother's heart:" "Yes," she replied, and I have a daughter's heart;" -- her countenance at the same time glowing with filial love, and her tears of affection mingling with those of her much-loved parent.

About a fortnight before her death, conversing with a friend, she entered largely into an account of her religious experience, and observed how gracious the Lord had been to her. "Indeed," she remarked, "I often felt what I could not express. For some time I suspected that I was suffering my attention to be engaged too much with the concerns of this world, so that I did not enjoy religion so much as I did before. I am surprised that this should have been the case, but it was so: but it pleased God, previously to my illness, to give me an increasing desire of himself. I was again led by the gracious influences of his Holy Spirit to cleave more closely to him." She then spake with much pleasure of the comfort she had felt in her class meeting, and observed, "While we have sometimes been singing,

'There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains,'

I have felt my heart lifted up above itself." -- From the whole of her conversation it appeared that she had not sat under a plain and heartsearching ministry in vain; the glorious truths of the Gospel had reached her heart; she had treasured them there, and in this, the time of need, she felt their gracious influence to support and comfort her while she passed through the valley of the shadow of death. To all who saw her she uniformly discoursed on the subject that lay nearest her heart, namely, the love of God to fallen man.

On Monday evening, January 28th, it pleased God to give her so powerful a manifestation of his favor towards her, through Christ, as rendered her for some time unable to communicate it. Her feeble frame was ready to sink beneath the weight of love and gratitude which she felt; but at length she burst forth in fervent expressions of praise.

On Thursday the 31st, a friend spoke to her of the happiness she would soon possess in the kingdom of God. "Ah," she exclaimed, "I am utterly unworthy of the least of his mercies. If he were to spurn me from his presence for ever, it would be no more than just!" "True," replied her friend, "but behold' the cross of Christ; there hangs all human hope!" A short interval of mental prayer now took place, when suddenly, with a loud voice, she exclaimed, "Blessed Jesus, I believe! Lord, I believe! I love thee, O yes, I do love thee! I now can resign all to thee!" -- continuing to repeat the same words with great fervency several times.

On Saturday, February 2d, conceiving herself to be near eternity, she requested that the family might be assembled in her room; and then in the most affectionate manner addressed them, solemnly admonishing them to guard against sin, and, with many tears, entreating all to live to God, that they might meet her again in heaven.

On Sunday the 3d, she said to those around her, in a most sweet tone of voice, "He says he will come and take me to glory. My Saviour has said so; he will come and take me to glory; this is better than all!" From the whole of her remarks at this time, it appeared that her faith in Christ was strong and vigorous; although very ill, yet she retained the powers of her mind unimpaired; with the fullest conviction that her earthly race was nearly run, her confidence was unshaken. Thus, while death and eternity, with all their important consequences, were at hand, was she divinely supported: no distressing fears, no awful forebodings of what might await her in the world of spirits, harassed her in the prospect of approaching dissolution; although just about to "say to corruption, Thou art my mother, and to the worm, Thou art my sister," yet she was not dismayed. The cold dark grave alarmed her not; death had lost its sting, and the grave its victory.

How was it that a young woman in the bloom of youth, lovely and beloved, and whose prospects of happiness were as bright as those of most; -- how was it, that one whose connections were such as to promise her a full share of earthly bliss, could without a murmur resign all? How was it, that where philosophers, kings, and heroes, have failed, a humble, timid young woman triumphed?

The answer is plain. It was salvation! It was her faith in Christ, and a sure and certain hope of a blissful immortality, which made her more than conqueror over death.

"Her God sustained her in the final hour!"

On Monday the 4th, she was considerably revived, and expressed her thankfulness for having been supported by divine grace, during her severe sufferings on the preceding day. On being asked, how she felt her mind, when she seemed so near eternity; she replied, "All is peace, trusting in God." Her father and mother standing by her bedside, she said to her father, "I am going to glory." Looking earnestly at her mother, and putting her arms round her neck, in an affectionate tone, she exclaimed, "O my dear, dear mother! I wish you were going with me. I think we shall meet again. O my dear mother, live piously, and we shall meet never again to part!"

From this time she continued to wait the approach of death, in a state of mind truly enviable. Her mother observing how hard it was to give her up, the sound caught the sufferer's ear, and she "Not give me to Jesus, my dear mother! To whom would you give me?"

On Friday morning, February 8, 1822, it became evident that the moment of dissolution drew near. Of this she was fully sensible, and while her friends were endeavoring to render her every assistance, she sweetly smiled and said, "It is of no use." "No," my dear," replied her weeping attendant; "but we wish to smooth your passage." She again smiled, and said, "Very well!" Her father coming into the room, she took an affectionate leave of him, and observed, "The storm will soon be over; I shall soon be in heaven."

It was a solemn hour; earth was receding; its joys and sorrows pleased and pained no more. The immortal spirit was about to quit its tabernacle, and take its flight, to appear before the tribunal of the Judge eternal, and receive its everlasting reward; yet she did not shrink, but with holy confidence exclaimed, "I shall soon be in heaven." She requested to be raised up in the bed. This was done; she then reclined gently back, and, without a struggle, left her friends below, and joined her kindred spirits in the skies.

Thus, in the twenty-third year of her age; she was taken as a shock of corn fully ripe, and fit for the garner of heaven. In her life she felt and evidenced the truth of our holy religion; in sickness and death she experienced its supporting power.

"Her name, not graven in the polished plane,
On lofty pedestals, with labored art,
Nor high emblazoned in the gorgeous fane,
Lies deeper sculptured in the feeling heart.

Friendship with tears bedews her honored dust,
And twines this wreath around her nobler urn:
Her name in memory's ever sacred trust
Shall live, till memory into sight return.

But, wandering Muse! why mourn, in plaintive strains?
A happy soul that sings in realms above,
And, sweetly echoing through the heavenly plains,
Tells the loud triumphs of redeeming love!"

-- Portsea, Joseph Reeves --

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18

A MEMOIR OF JONATHAN HAY

By Corbett Cooke

From the October, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mr. Jonathan Hay was born at Epworth, in the county of Lincoln, in the year 1746. His parents had but recently come to reside there. He thought they were natives of Scotland. They both died when he was very young; so that he was left in a strange place and country, without a relative or an earthly friend, to taste all the bitterness and endure all the sorrows of orphanage:

"For him no father's bosom
Throbb'd to soft sympathy and fond alarm;
No mother's arms preserved his tender blossom,
Or screened his weakness from life's gathering storm."

But he had a Friend in heaven, who, when the natural guardians of his youth failed, took him up, and watched over him with more than a parent's care. For he inclined a person in the parish of Epworth, who had no children, to take him under his protection, to adopt him, and treat him as his own son, and, at his death, to leave him all the property he possessed.

Mr. Hay continued to live without any saving knowledge of God, or serious concern about religion, till he was twenty-five or twenty-six years of age. Yet he was mercifully restrained from every practice of a very vicious or openly scandalous nature but his disposition being naturally volatile, and his temper cheerful and agreeable, his company was generally esteemed and sought after by persons of his own age and circumstances; and being fond of society, he became much attached to the vain sports and amusements which were commonly practiced in the neighborhood where he resided. At the above-mentioned age, however, the Spirit of God strove powerfully with him; and led him to reflect upon his course of life, to see the folly of his favorite pursuits, and deeply to feel their utter insufficiency to make him happy.

He began to think, to inquire, to reform, and earnestly to seek the salvation of his soul. And while he was one day crying to God for mercy, under a deep sense of his guilt and misery, it pleased the Lord to grant him a comforting manifestation of his pardoning love. This important change was effected without the instrumentality of the usual outward means; for he had seldom, if ever, heard the gospel faithfully preached before this time. But having "tasted that the Lord was gracious," he sought out for serious people; became a regular attendant upon the ministry of the Methodists; and, having given himself to God; determined to "give himself" to the Church "by the will of God." He therefore joined the Methodist society, of which he continued a very steady and worthy member to the day of his death -- a period of forty-eight years.

Soon after this time, Divine providence directed his way to Great Carlton, a village six miles from Louth. At that period, Methodism was but little known in this neighborhood. There was a small society at Manby, (a village about a mile distant,) which contained six or eight persons, who came (as I have heard him say) from almost as many parishes; but nearly his first care was, to get the preachers to visit Carlton.

This he did, and stood by the cause when there was no one else to support it. And when, through the blessing of God upon the labors of the preachers, a considerable society was raised, and the number of hearers was so increased that the room in which they used to worship became too small, he exerted himself in getting a chapel erected; and, with the assistance of another friend or two, raised a house for God, which has been since enlarged, and in which the name of the Lord is still recorded. Mr. Hay was the leader of a class for many years; which office he filled with great punctuality, diligence, and affection, and much to the edification of the people committed to his care.

After residing at Carlton for a number of years, he purchased an estate at South Reston, a village about two miles distant, and went to reside upon it; where, still intent upon spreading the gospel, and doing what he could to promote its permanent establishment, he built a neat chapel nearly, if not altogether, at his own expense, and settled it upon the Methodist plan, in order that legal provision might be made for the preaching of the gospel in it for generations to come.

About seven years since, he retired from business, and came to live at Louth; where he remained till it pleased God to remove him to "a better country." During his residence here, he particularly interested himself in the prosperity of the work of God. He was remarkably diligent in attending all the means of grace. His place in the house of God was seldom empty, during the hours of public worship. And when we enlarged our chapel, and purchased new houses for the preachers, he greatly promoted that important object by contributing very liberally towards the expense, and by taking a most active part in the management of the alterations.

Nor was he less attentive to the spiritual and internal, than to the secular and external affairs of the Church. When it pleased God to pour out his Spirit among us, and to bring a number of persons to the knowledge of the truth; though laboring under many infirmities, he almost forgot his years, and appeared to be inspired again with the ardor and vigor of youth.

As a man of business, Mr. Hay was remarkably conscientious and upright in all his dealings. He "laid aside all guile and hypocrisy," all false coloring and misrepresentation. He would on no account take the advantage of the ignorance or necessity of any man. He was very "diligent in business," as well as "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord?" And it pleased God to bless him in his basket and his store, as he acknowledged to me with great gratitude on his death-bed, beyond his most sanguine expectation.

As a master, he was just and equitable; always wishing to give his workmen a fair remuneration for their labors: he would on no account oppress the hireling in his wages, nor fraudulently keep any part of them back. As the father of a numerous family, he endeavored to walk

before his house "with a perfect heart," and duly to blend natural affection and tenderness with the authority of a Christian parent.

His moral character was unimpeachable, for the long space of almost half a century. So circumspect was he in his walk before men, that, though I have conversed with a number of persons who knew him well -- with servants who lived in his house, with men with whom he was in the habit of transacting business, and with laborers who have reaped down his fields -- yet I never heard one of them attempt to fix a blot upon it.

As a Christian, he was orthodox in his creed, which he drew from the Bible, his favorite book, and the subject of his daily study and meditation. His experience in the things of God was sound, clear, deep, and uniform. He had received the sentence of death in himself, that he should not trust in himself, but in him who "raised the dead," and he had believed to the salvation of his soul.

He was remarkably clear in "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins," and the direct witness of the Spirit. Whenever any persons conversed with him on the subject of religion, he used to take care to press this point upon them. He was, in his spirit, conversation, and deportment, so completely brought under the influence of Christian principle, that though I have known him for several years, and sometimes seen him a good deal tried, I never saw him manifest any thing like an improper spirit, or an unholy temper.

His piety was remarkably uniform. He was not sometimes high, and sometimes low -- at one time rising to rapture, and at another sinking almost to despondency. He had so learned to live by faith in the Son of God, as to acquire the happy art of passing through "outward things below, from all distraction freed." The changes continually taking place, in this unsettled world, affected him very little; for he lived above them. This uniform character of his religious experience, I attribute, chiefly, under the blessing of God, to his diligence, his sobriety of spirit, and his steadfast faith. His mind was always occupied, either about his lawful calling, or the concerns of his soul. Perhaps there are very few persons of whom it might be more truly said,

"With him no melancholy void,
No moment lingered unemployed,
Or unimproved below."

He was also remarkably sober-minded, and very much opposed to speculation, both in worldly and religious concerns, but especially in the latter. He knew in whom he had believed, and felt himself happy in God from day to day. The peace of God kept his heart, through Jesus Christ; and the joy of the Lord was his strength.

His chief care was to cleave to God with full purpose of heart, and to follow on to know the Lord. He was remarkably steadfast in his religious profession and attachments, and he deeply lamented that indecision of character, which he saw exhibited by some professors, and which he thought proceeded from their want of any fixed principles in religion, or of a more deep and experimental acquaintance with divine truth.

The affliction which terminated his mortal career, lasted for about ten weeks, during which period I had opportunities of visiting him very frequently, and always found him in a perfectly happy frame of mind. I have, indeed, visited many, who were full of peace and confidence, but I never met with one so cheerful in the near approach of death as he was. When I called one Sabbath morning, immediately on my entering the room, he said, "No change has taken place in my religious views and feelings.

'In vain I have not wept and strove;
His nature and his name is love.'"

At another time, after he had been making arrangements for his funeral, I said, "Sir, is there any particular passage of Scripture that you wish to be made the subject of a funeral discourse for you? He said, "No; you may take what you please. But you need not say much about me, but exhort the people to live to God, and to prepare for death."

"But," I replied, "I may tell them, that the Lord has been very good to you for many years, and that he has dealt very bountifully with you, and blessed you abundantly in your soul, your family, and your circumstances."

He said, "Yes, you may tell them that mine has been a happy life, for I always endeavored to make religion my principal business, and to live near to God; and if at any time I went a little wrong, I did not stay there, but I came to God in the same way in which I came at first, and sought him till he again caused his face to shine upon me. This is a very good world, if people would use it aright. I have no fault to find with this world; but I am going to a better."

At another time he said, "I am surprised at the uninterrupted peace which I enjoy. I wonder that some of the powers of darkness do not trouble me; but they seem not to be permitted to hurl a dart at me. I have not a cloud, not a doubt, not a fear. All is peace, and joy, and love. Praise the Lord! My pillow is not full of thorns; it is all down: Glory be to God! Glory be to God!"

In this frame he continued, perfectly sensible even to the last. And when, through extreme debility, his voice failed him, he testified the very happy state of his soul by expressive smiles, and sometimes by looking upwards, and clapping his hands, in token of complete victory.

On April 2d, 1822, he exchanged mortality for eternal life, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

Louth, June 24th, 1822, Corbett Cooke

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19

A MEMOIR OF THOMAS POTTER

By Charles Hawthorne

From the October, 1823 issue of

The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mr. Thomas Potter was born at Cheltenham, October 14th, 1736. His father was a pious member of the Baptist Church in that town. He paid every attention to the spiritual welfare of his rising progeny; and the "bread" thus "cast upon the waters," was "found many days," and even years, "afterwards." Thomas was, from his childhood, the subject of religious impressions; and, when very young, often lisped simple, yet sincere prayers to God for the salvation of his soul.

As Mr. Potter grew in years, however, he felt in himself a propensity to evil; "not," he says, "that I was led to commit those abominable crimes into which many fall; but still I found that my heart was desperately wicked, and, but for the preventing grace of God, should no doubt have run to the same excess of riot as others did. O to grace how great a debtor!" A tender conscience, about this time, through the goodness of God, operated in restraining him from many evils; and when he did venture on any thing which he knew to be forbidden in the word of God, he always felt condemned, and was often the subject of frightful agitations of mind, arising from a conviction of his guilt before God.

At the age of fourteen, he was apprenticed at Gloucester, in a religious family, and to the honor of his master, he observes, that "he watched over the morals of his apprentices and servants with becoming circumspection." Of the period of his apprenticeship he says, that "it was nothing but a life of sinning and repenting." Often did he make fair promises of amendment, and yet was overcome by the next temptation. In his experience at this time there were violent struggles between nature and grace. When he "would do good," or be good, "evil was present with him."

So weak and insufficient is man, while unrenewed by the grace of God! During this conflict, he observes, "On the commission of evil, I was racked with the terrors of a guilty conscience; I was afraid to walk, lest I should step into hell, afraid to sleep, lest I should awake in endless misery, and afraid to look up, lest God should curse me." In this distress he sought comfort by reading, by prayer, and by attending the public worship of God; but although relieved for the time, he was again overpowered by the next temptation, and plunged into deeper distress.

At the close of his apprenticeship, he returned to Cheltenham, in the twenty-first year of his age, and soon afterwards engaged in business. About the year 1761, he entered into the marriage state. Of the partner of his joys and sorrows, he speaks in the highest terms; but still he was a stranger to that happiness which flows only from a personal interest in Christ.

In the beginning of 1765, he was invited by a young man, who belonged to the Methodist society, to join with him in prayer. He again and again refused, but after repeated invitations, he accompanied his friend, and found it good to his soul. The more he went, the more benefit he obtained. His mind became more fully enlightened respecting the nature of vital religion, and the way to obtain it; and in the month of March, while he was earnestly engaged in prayer, God "spoke peace" to his soul; and that text was powerfully applied to his heart, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

He now became a member of the Methodist society, and for a while, rejoiced in God his Saviour. Unbelieving fears, however, began to arise afresh in his mind; when, in the month of June,

under the preaching of Mr. Mather, he was again blessed with peace and joy through believing, and his soul was filled with the peace of God.

By these gracious communications, the Lord seems to have been preparing his servant for an approaching trial, which, but for the grace of God, would, in all probability, have quite overwhelmed him. In his family circle, consisting of Mrs. Potter and three lovely boys, he felt himself one of the happiest of men. But on the 26th of August, 1765, it pleased God, in his unerring wisdom, to take from him his beloved wife. On the 14th of October he lost one of his sons; on the 25th of the same month he lost a second; and on the 7th of November he was bereaved of the third. Thus, within the compass of twelve weeks, he was deprived by death of all his family!

Under these painful events, his mind was peculiarly supported by reading the Holy Scriptures, especially some portions of the book of Job, and like that ancient sufferer, he was enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Mr. Potter, about this period, applied for a situation in the Excise, and obtained his request. In reference to this occupation, he observes in his diary, that he had now new difficulties to encounter: for in the prosecution of his calling he had to associate with irreligious persons, some of whom ridiculed him, and others reported him to the supervisor, through malice, for pretended neglect of duty. In the midst of all opposition, he held fast his integrity; was faithful as an officer; and as a Christian, was a pattern of piety, and zeal for God. Forgetting the things behind, he reached to those which were before; and was enabled to testify, to the honor of divine grace, that the blood of Christ cleansed him from all sin.

Mr. Potter was sent, on the service of the Excise, to Stratford. Finding religion at a low ebb, he thought it his duty to do something for God, and for the souls of his neighbors. He began to visit the sick, in which work the Lord blessed his labors; and ten persons joined with him to pray and serve God.

From thence he went into Wales, and was stationed at Caerphilly. "Here," he observes, "religion was out of the question; the people, in general, had no fear of God before their eyes. Feeling in my own soul the value and excellence of true piety, and constrained by the love of Christ, I now began to preach Jesus Christ, and for five years endeavored, according to the best of my power and abilities, to lead my neighbors to God. But who am I -- 'a worm and no man!' Yet the Lord was my help in time of need."

From thence he removed to Bristol, and in that city and neighborhood spent ten years. In 1786, he came to Chepstow, where he remained till his spirit returned to God. On his arrival here also, he found most of the inhabitants strangers to vital godliness. The Methodist preachers had visited Chepstow occasionally, but little fruit had appeared. Mr. Potter set to work immediately, and by preaching, exhortation, prayer, and an upright deportment, was eminently useful. The Lord revived his work, and a few were soon united in Christian fellowship, of whom "some are fallen asleep," and some "remain unto this present."

The preachers began to visit the town more frequently, and the Lord was with them, and prospered the work of their hand. Mr. Potter was not one of those who solicit "more preaching,"

without counting the cost, or providing means to defray the necessary expenses. His heart and purse were both open in the service of God, and of the souls of men.

After some years, the society and congregation increased so much, that the room which they occupied became "too strait." and Mr. Potter formed the project of "building a house for God." The way opened before him; and with a little assistance from a few friends, his wishes were realized. The chapel was finished, and set apart for the worship of God, and of many souls it can be said, "This and that man was born there."

So long as this house stands upon its foundation, the name of Potter will be deservedly had in remembrance, and succeeding generations will say with gratitude, "He built us a synagogue." Under God, he may properly be considered as the father of Methodism in Chepstow, having labored for the long space of nearly forty years to promote scriptural religion among the inhabitants of this ancient town.

It appears from Mr. Potter's diary, that from the time of his conversion to the close of his very useful life, he enjoyed a sense of the divine favor, walked steadily in the light of God's countenance, and was a pattern of eminent devotedness to Christ and to his cause. Since my appointment to Chepstow, I have been in his presence many times, and it was peculiarly pleasing to hear him relate the dealings of God with his soul. His whole conversation was of a spiritual and heavenly nature, and his exclusive dependence for eternal salvation was on the merits of our crucified Saviour.

On the Friday before he died, I spent nearly the whole of the day with him, and I shall never forget his holy breathings after heaven, and his exclamations of praise and thankfulness to God for the help communicated to him in this trying hour. He said to me in the course of the day, "Why do not you let me go to Jesus? Why do you keep me here so long? Why are thy chariot wheels so long in coming? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Jesus is my Rock, my Saviour, my God, my All in All. The Lord is my portion."

He continued in this blessed frame of mind, exhorting all who came to see him to love and serve God with all their heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, till Sunday evening, April 14th, 1822, when he gloriously entered into rest, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, and the fifty-sixth of his Christian pilgrimage. I shall only add a few sentences, respecting his character.

Mr. Potter, in all the relations of life, exhibited the marks of a true disciple of Jesus Christ:

1. As a husband and father, he was kind and affectionate.
2. As a public officer, he studied to keep a conscience void of offense towards God and man.
3. As a Christian, he was a man of prayer, and of zeal mixed with prudence. He did not live in the frigid zone of a mere profession, but he enjoyed the vital principle of religion, Christ in the heart, the hope of glory. His faith in God, in Christ, and in the promises and precepts of the gospel, was lively and strong. His uniformity of conduct and conversation, in the world, in the

Church, and in his family, gained him the universal respect of all classes of the community; and such was his holy life, that he was generally called "good Mr. Potter." Thus, like Enoch, he walked with God. May we follow him as he followed Christ!

4. As a preacher, he was a man of sound judgment, and much reading. He preached with admirable clearness the fundamental truths of the gospel, as believed and taught by the Methodists. In the propagation of these truths he was indefatigable, attending regularly to his appointments on the Lord's day, and in every respect observing the Apostle's advice, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

5. As a class leader, he watched over his little flock, as one who was to give account, and with meekness reproofed, admonished, comforted, and exhorted, as circumstances required.

Thus lived and died Mr. Thomas Potter. May the mantle of this departed saint descend upon those who survive, and may those who are gone before, and those who are following after, meet at length, "where death shall all be done away, and bodies part no more!" -- C. Hawthorne

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20

A MEMOIR OF MARY ALICE BUCKLEY

Author's Name Not Given

From the November, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Mary Alice Buckley, eldest daughter of the Rev. James Buckley, was born at Diss in Norfolk, June 16th, 1799. She not only enjoyed from infancy the outward means of religion, and the privilege of progressive instruction in the great things of God, according to her capacity and circumstances; but manifested, in many instances, their gracious influence on her mind, while yet a child. When about nine years of age, she was so far enlightened, as to see the natural depravity of her heart, the turpitude of sin, and the necessity of an inward change, under a sermon preached by her father, which led her, for a season, to serious reflection, and to seek the Lord by prayer. Her mind, however, was soon diverted from the chief good by the little playful amusements which generally attract the attention of children; though she never entirely lost the impressions then made on her heart by the Spirit of Truth.

Through succeeding years she was often the subject of the drawings of the Father; and would frequently confess her faults, and mourn because she was not more devoted to the service of the Lord. She was diligent in her attention to the ordinances of God's house, and sincerely esteemed those who excelled in knowledge and virtue. She always felt a lively interest in the cause of religion, and particularly in that of missions; and early became an active collector, in which office she continued as long as health would permit, deeply deploring the miserable state of the heathen, and rejoicing in the extension of evangelical light. She had cultivated a taste for reading, and an ardent desire for mental improvement.

Few persons of her years had read more books on various subjects. She was not satisfied with mere cursory reading, but assiduous to acquire a correct knowledge of useful science. During her residence in Bath, her intense application to these pursuits led her to what should be carefully avoided by young people, namely, night reading. This was, in a great measure, concealed from her parents, till her health was materially injured. The consequences were, repeated colds, an inflammation of the chest and lungs, and a severe cough, which threatened her speedy dissolution.

This at once led her to review her life, to look with godly jealousy into her heart, and scrupulously to weigh herself in the balances of the sanctuary; that she might ascertain her spiritual state, and form a just estimate of her preparation for eternity. Deep conviction overwhelmed her mind; though she had not to repent of any particular outward immoralities, having been restrained from these by education and preventing grace. She saw, however, that she "must be born again."

Her language was, "I have only had the form of godliness, and have neglected the power, in the midst of the greatest privileges, and facilities to attain it. My sin is great. I have been inattentive to the oft repeated calls of God; have quenched the convictions and drawings of the Spirit; and have not duly appreciated the love of Jesus my Redeemer. Have I not in thus doing, sinned against the Holy Ghost?"

Under these impressions, she was distressed by desponding fears, and agonizing sorrows; "for peace" she "had great bitterness;" and her "eyes" often "failed her with looking upwards." Her parents and friends endeavored to administer encouragement by almost incessant prayer, and by directing her to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to look for a present salvation through faith in him.

Her bodily affliction bore but a small proportion to that of her soul. A letter which she received, at this period, from her kind and highly esteemed friend, the Rev. Thomas Roberts, who was prevented from visiting her for a season through indisposition, had however, a consolatory influence on her mind. This letter she ever afterwards esteemed as a treasure; and, as it describes the feelings of her heart, and exemplifies an appropriate application of the only remedy for wounded spirits, it may not be unacceptable to give an extract:--

"I am prevented by the sovereign act of providence from offering you, personally, the assistance of my tender sympathy. I therefore take the pen, to convey to you that which I cannot have the satisfaction of mentioning in the way of verbal communication. And has the Lord of all his creatures visited you, your body with affliction, and your mind with sorrow? Has He, the Great, the Good, indeed visited you? Then, be it in whatever manner it may, is not a visit from the God of Heaven to be looked upon as a favor? Yea, as a certain dispensation of mercy for hope to look at, for faith to rest upon, and for love to rejoice in?"

"Let me put a question. If he had pleasure in your destruction, might he not (I will not say have hurried you, without a moment's previous warning, into the world of endless woe, but might he not) have withheld this dispensation, and abandoned you to health, which might have led to neglect of your soul's interest, and then, perhaps, to consequent judicial hardness of heart, and at length to inevitable and profound ruin?"

"By an act of infinite mercy, will not all this be prevented? For this gracious purpose he afflicts; and has seen it fit, necessary, and best, to chasten and scourge, that he may receive you now to the bosom of his mercy, and hereafter to the throne of his glory. Everything in your case warrants you to be thoroughly persuaded, that the Lord pities you with the compassion of a Father, and wishes to put you among his children, and to bless you with all the fruits of adoption. While the subject of an alarming illness, which has suddenly brought you so low, it is not strange that you should feel your mind under a mighty excitement, on account of your spiritual concerns.

"Surely such a season is particularly calculated to rouse the spirit, and to put us on serious inquiry into the grounds of our faith and hope towards God. Indeed it would be awfully surprising, and very lamentable, if in apparent danger of dying, we could be indifferent about the one thing needful. But however distressing the view of ourselves may be, shall not the dispensation of Heaven that opens our eyes to behold life and death, time and eternity, each in its own proper colors and due proportions, be estimated as an important acquisition, as entirely gain, and as a mighty cause of joy and rejoicing?

"O yes! The immutable word of Him who cannot lie supports me in the affirmation; and, my dear friend, it will support you too, if, in the simple reliance of faith you suspend your all upon it. Permit me to ask, Do you feel yourself stripped of all imagined good? He then hath said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,' theirs in promise, in currency, in possession. Do you indeed find that you have cause not for laughter, but for weeping? He hath declared 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' Are you hungering, thirsting, perishing at mercy's door? The same Divine Saviour pronounces you 'Blessed,' and promises that you shall be filled, satiated with righteousness.

"Write whatever bitter things you may against yourself, He against whom you have sinned is still better acquainted with them all than you can possibly be. Nay, you have obtained a view of them, only because he has poured a ray of his light into your understanding. Now after all, to whom shall we go? After all, what shall we do? My dear friend, there is one argument that meets, and is sufficient to annihilate, every objection that fear and unbelief can muster, -- 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' And will any individual after this hesitate, and doubtfully inquire, 'But will he admit me to that purifying fountain?' O boundless pity to human weakness! Himself affirms, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' He hath blotted out the handwriting against us, and taken it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. And are you and I thus providentially put at the foot of the cross?

"Here then, is the fountain of life. Oh, as the Lord opened the eyes of the distressed wanderer in the wilderness of Beersheba to behold the fountain of water, so may he open the eyes of your faith! May you now, even now,

"Sit beneath the Cross,
And gladly catch the healing stream.'

May the Lord make your redeemed spirit the blissful partaker of his promised and purchased inheritance!"

God was soon graciously pleased to grant her the consolations of his Spirit, through faith in the atoning blood of Jesus. It also pleased him, contrary to human expectation, very considerably to restore her to health, so that, in the course of a few months, she removed to Plymouth. From this time, though she had still an ardent thirst for reading, the Bible became, as she expressed it, her "favorite book." "There is," she exclaimed, "none like it." She read it daily, with deep attention, and fervent prayer. It was her constant companion in retirement; always found by her bedside, or under her pillow.

During her last affliction, she diligently perused its pages; and, when faint and weary, she would often say, "My dear mother read for me; let me hear what Jesus Christ did and suffered; read to me the gospel of St. John, and his Epistles, particularly our Saviour's affectionate conversation with his disciples at his Last Supper." Such was her veneration for the Sacred Word, that she would not eat, or take any thing, while it was read, but sat in solemn silence; assigning as the reason, "Its truths are so awful and important, that they demand the most serious and devout attention."

At the commencement of her final sickness, which was a pulmonary consumption, she experienced some severe and painful conflicts. Naturally timid, she suffered much from the fear of death; and was strongly tempted to doubt whether the work of grace which she had experienced was genuine. She would often complain of her unbelief, saying, "Lord, increase my faith. I know that all is to be received by simple faith. How shall I, how can I fully believe? I do believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he was incarnate, and lived, and suffered, and died for me; but I want that faith which receives the application of his merit. I want the witness, the assurance, that tells me I am born of God; that believing with the heart unto righteousness, which will enable me to say, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;' that faith 'which works by love. Lord, I do believe; -- increase my faith. O pray, pray for me; remember me in the congregations."

To the fervent intercessions of the people of God she received several gracious answers; but she had set up a particular standard of experience, and looked for an extraordinary, and, in some sort, a miraculous manifestation of God's mercy. This is too often the error of young and timid seekers of salvation, and Satan by it held her for a season in a degree of spiritual bondage. Yet she was not without some "token for good;" but said, "I know that I love Jesus, and Jesus loves me; he seems to be always about me, and near to me, particularly in the night season; but I want a deeper work of grace, a brighter evidence, and more of the joy of believing."

About eight weeks before her death, she was favored with that more copious baptism of the Spirit for which she had so anxiously prayed. To her parents and friends she thus expressed herself on the occasion: "O how good and kind the Lord is! He knew my weakness; he has condescended to my weakness! While I was meditating on the love of God in Christ Jesus, I was enabled to put my whole trust in him, and to believe that he would receive me to himself. Now I know that I love him, and that I shall be his to all eternity. I have felt much at the thought of being left behind in Plymouth; but I have got over that now. I love my parents most dearly, but I love God better than father, or mother, or brothers, or sisters. I love God supremely!" Filial affection was one of her strongest feelings but to a friend she expressed her entire resignation in reference to that point. "I am calm;" she said, "I feel repose in Jesus; I love the Lord Jesus, and can give up all for him."

Expressing her tender affection for her brothers and sisters, which she often did, she said, "I fear lest they should be too much influenced by the attractions and vanities of the world, and be drawn from the great things of God. I have endeavored, as far as my influence extends, to inculcate right principles on their minds. I wish I could write to them on the importance of religion, and exhort them not to trifle, but to serve God with all their hearts in their youth. O tell them to fear and serve, Him that they may meet me in heaven."

About six days before she finished her course, she expressed to the Mr. Brooke her unshaken reliance upon Christ for salvation; adding, "I feel the Lord Jesus to be very near to me, and I know that I am near to him." Looking at her weeping mother with the most tender sympathy, she said, "My dearest mother, our separation will be but for a short time," and then, with great fervor, added, "and I shall be in glory! in glory! -- ready to hail and welcome my dearest parents and friends to the blissful shore!"

Her father coming into the room, she said, "Come, let us sing my favorite verse," which she gave out, and though extremely weak, began the tune

"There is my house and portion fair;
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home;
For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come!"

She then added, "Let us sing the next verse, which was evidently the ardent language of her soul,

"I come, thy servant, Lord, replies;
I come to meet thee in the skies,
And claim my heavenly rest!
Now let the pilgrim's journey end
Now, O my Saviour, Brother, Friend,
Receive me to thy breast!"

As she proceeded through the valley and shadow of death, it appeared to be increasingly illumined by the reflection of approaching glory. She would often whisper, "Yes, God will take me! God will receive me to himself! I love Jesus!" For some hours before her decease, she appeared more free from pain, but it was evident that her departure was at hand.

Calling her mother in haste, she said with great serenity, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me," and, as though the plenitude of mercy had descended into her soul, she exclaimed, with a most heavenly smile, "My Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!" -- the words gently dying upon her lips, while her spirit was conveyed by ministering angels into the paradise of God, without the least expression or appearance of pain, or even a sigh.

It was for a short time thought that she had only fallen into a sweet sleep. But she slept in Jesus, and thus joyfully finished her earthly course, May 9th, 1822, in the 23d year of her age.

Her amiable temper and conduct gained her the love and esteem of her friends; but, from her retired and domestic habits, none could form a just estimate of her real worth, but her parents, in whom she placed implicit confidence, and whom she honored and tenderly loved even in death. As a sister, she was anxious to promote the harmony, the mental improvement, and the best interests, of her brothers and sisters. As a friend, she was open and ingenuous, ever regarding the sacred maxim, "Let your love be without dissimulation." Anything contrary to this she despised. Those who knew her best, loved her most. During her long affliction she was a pattern of meekness, patience, and humble resignation to the will of her heavenly Father. She considered herself a Methodist, not only by birth and education, but from principle; and was never ashamed to acknowledge it, but rather counted it an honor. Her class leader observes:--

"From my first knowledge of Miss Buckley, I have loved and highly esteemed her, and I have found her conversation to be edifying. Her serious and superior mind could not delight in frivolous converse. She read much, and to good purpose; but all her attainments were, I believe, no source of glorying. She valued her Bible, and gloried in the cross of Christ. About three months ago she called upon me, and expressed a wish to converse freely on experimental religion, saying,

"I fear I shall never get over my timidity so as to be able fully to express myself in class. I used to be indulged by my dear leader in Bath with private interviews, and I found much comfort in conversing with her. I can meet in band with you. I am a Methodist decidedly, and long to experience more of the love of God shed abroad in my heart. I do at times enjoy much of his love, and can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but am too apt to allow my mind to be drawn off to the trifles of time. When I look to some professors, and see inconsistency, it staggers me; and again the blessed walk and experience of others whom I know, or of whom I have read, lead me sometimes to conclude that I have no religion. I long to enjoy what they did: nothing less than this can satisfy me. I want a full assurance that I am a child of God."

There is no doubt, but that at this time she enjoyed, in some degree, the peace of God; but the Lord afterwards filled her with that perfect love which casteth out all fear. Thus, in the bloom of youth, through the merits of her great Redeemer, she obtained the victory, and entered into the joy of her Lord.

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21

A MEMOIR OF ANN SKINNER

By C. E. W. (Name Not Given)

From the November, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Ann, the wife of Mr. William Skinner, Banker, of Stockton-upon-Tees, was the second daughter of James Walker of that place, where she was born July 11th, 1797. Through the kind

providence of God, who wisely appoints the "bounds of our habitation," the lines had fallen to her in pleasant places, and she enjoyed a goodly heritage. She was blessed with a disposition affectionate, lively, and grateful; and with parents who cultivated it by religious instruction. The precepts and principles of divine truth were early engrafted in her mind; and, as soon as reason dawned, she was called to associate with serious persons. But, above all, her parents neglected not to bring her under the preaching of the gospel. Here it was (according to conjecture bordering on certainty) that her mind was enlightened to behold her natural alienation from God as a fallen child of Adam, convinced of her own personal transgressions, and brought to feel the need of a Saviour. This was about the fifteenth year of her age.

While her mind was influenced by these impressions, she was often encouraged by her elder brother to persevere in her application to God, till she had an assurance of his favor, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ. This she very soon obtained; and then her joy was so great, that, late in the night season, she awoke a younger sister to join her in praising the Lord for his abundant mercy.

In the summer of 1815, she went to London for the completion of her education. She was committed by her judicious friends into the hands of those who possessed, not only superior ability to direct her youthful mind in a course of useful studies, far above the fashionable and superficial plan adopted by many, but also superior piety, and who therefore regarded as of the highest importance the improvement of the heart.

Here she enjoyed many religious privileges; but, although for a while she continued to use them, it is much to be feared that some degree of negligence in her private communion with God, and of forgetfulness to "keep the heart with all diligence," had prepared the way for her further and subsequent departure from him. A lax observance of the duties of private devotion too generally precedes their entire neglect, and soon induces a proportionate indifference to the more public means of grace. And when these two mighty bulwarks of piety are enfeebled, the Christian becomes an easy prey to his spiritual enemies.

In this unarmed state, Miss Ann Walker was often visited by some of her fashionable relatives in town. Their kindness won on her affections; and, as the vacation drew near, she received repeated solicitations to pass it with them. It was not without misgivings of conscience, that she acceded to the proposal; but having done so, she ventured into a sphere where everything was calculated to flatter the pride of human nature, and to allure her soul from things invisible and divine. In this situation, the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to "convince of sin," frequently warned her of danger, in order to preserve her from it. Yet alas! it is obvious in her case, as it has been in that of many of even longer experience in the things of God, that the smiles of the world, and the kindness of its votaries, have a paralyzing and a disarming influence on the undecided mind.

Here, therefore, on various occasions, she violated her awakened conscience and enlightened judgment, nor can it be wondered at, considering her previous disregard of the unequivocal command of God, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." During the intervening months of her continuance in the metropolis, her mind became more indifferent to serious subjects, and her heart increasingly obtuse to religious feelings. So effectually had the

world turned her aside from God, that forbidden objects chiefly engrossed her desires and affections.

In the month of June, 1816, she returned home, when her change of disposition and deportment sufficiently corroborated the apprehension that her relish for spiritual enjoyments had become nearly, if not totally, extinct. Such, however, was the amiable flexibility of Miss Ann Walker, that the same sincere desire to please those who strove to give her pleasure, which, when improperly directed, and indulged to a sinful excess, had led her back into the world, now induced her, though reluctantly at first, to accompany the other members of her family, as formerly, to the ministry of the word among that people of whom she had lately felt ashamed.

It was not long before the Lord again vouchsafed to bless the means of his own appointment, and awakened afresh that conscience, which had been so fatally lulled into insensibility by the opiates of worldly enjoyment. The "sword of the Spirit" penetrated with mighty force into her heart. She experienced now, not the "still small voice," or the gentle drawings of divine love, but the "whirlwind and storm" of infinite displeasure, "the wormwood and the gall" of bitter repentance.

She saw from whence she had fallen, and trembled to behold the awful consequences if she remained in such a state. In a private prayer-meeting, held in the evening of the 20th of June, 1817, she was overwhelmed with a full perception of her perilous condition and her desire for salvation proportionally increased. After the conclusion of this meeting, she retired to her own room with a female friend, where they joined in fervent supplication, until, casting herself on the blood of Atonement, the secret voice of God said with power to her soul, "I am thy salvation."

Her servile fears were given to the wind, and she bounded into the liberty of the children of God, exulting in the plenitude of his manifested mercy. The subsequent state of her mind will be best developed by the following extracts from communications to the excellent friend above mentioned:--

"Thursday afternoon. A few minutes will I spend in conversing with my dear friend, before the bustle of a party comes on, and will be my companions this evening: however, I trust, through Christ strengthening me, I shall be enabled to keep my mind and thoughts above this vain world. I take up the cross as one that I am obliged to undergo. This morning, being rather engaged in the things of this life, I found it difficult to keep a constantly recollected spirit. Private prayer at noon was an unspeakable blessing. My heart and desires were fixed on eternal realities. I have prayed earnestly for a deadness to the world; and I hope my prayer is, in some measure, answered. I want deep humility, that I may be truly willing to be any thing, or nothing, in any circumstances of life, satisfied if only I be the Lord's. O that I could live altogether for another world, above earthly comforts, and desiring only those which are heavenly and divine! I hope my dear friend does not forget me at the throne of grace, and that she particularly implores for me the Christian grace of humility.

"O may I pray ardently, that the hand of God may lead me in every step of my pilgrimage, especially in the circumstance to which you will perceive that I more particularly allude. What amazing condescension is it in the Almighty, to look down on such unworthy creatures as we are,

and deign to be the guide of the minute actions of our lives, as well as those of most moment! Will not eternity be too short, even when we shall be endowed with angelic powers, to express all our gratitude to our heavenly Father? Well does it become us, dependent beings, to spend our short span of life in his service. The world surely has no longer charms for us. Let us then endeavor in every circumstance, however trivial, to do all to the glory of God. It is clear from the Apostle's words on this point, that there is a possibility in every instance of life of promoting it, either directly, or indirectly. How thankful we ought to be, that he makes us (though vile) instruments of advancing his honor. I feel ashamed that I am so inactive a Christian, and that I do so little for him who hath done so much for me.

"After being in the society of worldly people, how delightful is it to enter the closet, and pour out our hearts before the Lord, who is ever ready to hear the cry of his tempted followers! This has been my privilege tonight. How totally insufficient are earthly pleasures to satisfy the immortal spirit; and yet how much precious time have I lost in pleasure and self-gratification!"

At another time, she writes thus: "I shall not have much time to spend with you, my beloved friend, this evening. The little I have shall be devoted to Jesus, and his matchless love. I often feel a want of words to express my meaning on this inexhaustible subject. The language of my heart will be best understood in the words of the blessed Psalter: 'What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?' I am blessed with health, and every other comfort, and above all with a measure of love to God, and with a desire to love him better, and to serve him with all my ransomed powers. Have we not a never ceasing fountain of supplies, from whence we may derive solid happiness? Then, let us never be backward in applying to it. Only let us ask, and we shall receive.

"We have had a very good prayer-meeting this evening: I wish my dear E____ had enjoyed the privilege. Perhaps you have had a similar one. I trust my dear Sister M____ is under divine impressions. I have had her company in my own room. O that we were all a family deeply devoted to God! How much happier we should be, by endeavoring to promote each other's spiritual welfare."

To the same person, she writes as follows:--

"I have not had my mind so completely stayed on things of a heavenly nature for a long time, as I had all yesterday. I think I am growing a little stronger, and I trust to 'win the day, though death and hell obstruct the way.' During the love-feast, a solemn sense of the divine presence, I believe, was felt by most present. _____ spoke as a bold champion of his Lord. Dear _____, also, testified the Lord's goodness to her soul; and surely you would not have had Ann sit silent, who hath received so much at the hands of her compassionate Redeemer. Call to mind the circumstance of the two debtors. Did not he who had most forgiven, love most and should not I testify my love and gratitude? I know you did not wish me to speak, and I know your reasons; but they were not sufficiently forcible to prevent me from declaring my Saviour's unremitted lovingkindness to so heinous a sinner against light and knowledge. It was done with a trembling body, owing to the recollection of my past unfaithfulness. I often find a want of enlargement of soul to love God more, that I may serve him better."

On the 6th of July, 1820, Miss Ann Walker entered the marriage state with Mr. William Skinner, under auspices which seemed to promise a sum of conjugal felicity equivalent to their utmost wishes. But, alas! though the enjoyment might, in its degree, be equal, if not superior, to their anticipations, yet its duration has been transient as a passing vapor, and swifter than the wind. Yet passing and fleeting as it has been, in reference to time, as their earthly joys were so highly sanctified, the heart of her bereaved husband may surely apply the balmy consolation contained in the persuasion that they shall, ere long, be restored in endless perpetuity.

It is a painful, though an evident fact, that the tender plant of spiritual religion too frequently degenerates in the rich soil and sunshine of prosperity. Even the sacred records present very rare instances of individuals who served the Lord as faithfully and zealously during their prosperous career, as when passing under the cloud of humiliating providences. But who can doubt the sufficiency of divine grace for every situation; and does it not arise from the palpable negligence of those who possess earthly good, if, instead of having their mercies sanctified, they, in truth, afford sad exemplifications of that remarkable threatening, "I will curse their blessings?"

It would be a dishonor to the grace of God, and a disparagement to the dear subject of this memoir, not to state that, for nearly two years, she exhibited a lovely spectacle of a different kind. It may be confidently asserted, that her augmentation of temporal comforts tended rather to increase than diminish her devotedness to God. Mrs. Skinner had learned useful experience from what she suffered in her early failure through indecision; and now, in her new and important situation, decision was a prominent feature in her character. The line of separation from the world was drawn, and never passed. In the sphere in which she had to move, it was impossible to avoid, on some occasions, coming in contact with those whose views and opinions that differed from her own; but she was not ashamed of her Lord and Master. In such unsought contacts, she stood forth His dauntless champion, and advocated with peculiar energy the cause of that people, whose doctrines she had embraced from investigation and firm conviction, and to whose community she had heartily united herself in love and fellowship.

She was not an indifferent Methodist. Every privilege enjoyed among us she highly prized. Many times has she left pleasing and profitable company, contrary to the rules of ceremonious politeness, to attend the means of grace, especially her class meetings. Her manner of using such meetings was calculated to profit herself, and those who attended.

There was nothing equivocal in her expressions. She spoke frankly of her temptations, and unreservedly acknowledged the ascendancy which they had at any time obtained over her; and frequently has she been drawn out in a strain of earnest and agonizing prayer, during these heart-searching meetings, for entire deliverance and final conquest.

Notwithstanding her accession of cares, as mistress of a large family, she attended with undiminished assiduity (often beyond her bodily strength) to her duties as a collector for the Bible and missionary societies -- assisted in the adult and Sunday Schools -- and visited the sick and indigent whose cases uniformly impressed her sympathizing heart, and obtained from her benevolence ample alleviation.

One proof, among others that might be adduced, of the happy effects of her zeal and courage in this "labor of love," was the conversion of a young woman, who lived in one of the most wicked parts of the town, and who was a member of as wicked a family. When Mrs. Skinner heard of her illness, she courageously entered the miserable abode, to converse with and pray for the sufferer, who lingered for many weeks. A little before her death, two members of the society called to see her. On asking the state of her mind she burst into tears, and exclaimed, "I am happy in Jesus! But, O what a wretch was I before Mrs. Skinner came to see me! I did not know even that I had a soul to be saved." She died two days after.

Not content with what she herself administered, it was often Mrs. Skinner's custom to solicit the pecuniary aid of others, in order to mitigate the diversified sufferings of man. Nor was it in external duties alone that her piety was exemplified. In all these she steadily persevered, without intermission; but, to those who had most intimate converse with her, it was evident that, for many months previous to the event of her dissolution, she was loosening from earth, and ripening for eternal glory.

To a person who visited her in the month of February, 1822, she spoke forth her whole heart, and the remarkable spirituality of her views and feelings made a deep and lasting impression on the mind of that valuable friend. The fire of holy love which burned in her soul burst forth in flames of ardent concern for the salvation of all around her. The state of many members of her family, who continued impervious to serious impressions, often drew from her eyes tears of painful regret. The servants of her household shared her fervent prayers and pious solicitude.

One sentiment prominently expressed itself in all she said, or did: -- To do, or leave undone, was not a matter of neutral import to her; for she felt that every action bore a momentous connection with eternity. She was exquisitely alive to the effect which her example and influence had on all within her sphere. But the grace that most strikingly indicated her increasing proximity to the celestial assembly was that of thankfulness. The following short extracts from her correspondence with a dear relative, and with the friend before alluded to, will confirm this pleasing circumstance.

"August, 1821. -- How many blessings, my dear H____, have you and I enjoyed, since we became acquainted with divine things! But, alas! for myself, how I have to lament their misimprovement; and yet the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, is still extended towards me. For some months past, I have been, at times, overwhelmed with the sight of my own worthlessness, and at the same time filled with love and gratitude for my mercies. My afflictions, though trifling in their nature, have been graciously sanctified, and I am enabled, in some measure, to live detached from the present world, and to keep my heart fixed on spiritual objects. This morning I felt my mind, in private, much drawn out in prayer that may be made altogether what God would have me to be; and I sensibly experience that my will is yielding to the will of my heavenly Father. You have seen me weep sometimes; but they have been tears of gratitude to my God, for his love manifested to me in private."

Dec. 1821. -- We generally find great love mingled with our heaviest trials; and we have a Friend, my dear Mrs. Middleton, that sticketh closer than a brother, who never will lay upon us more than he will enable us to bear. What a blessed confidence this inspires in God's omnipotence

and love! It is worth more than thousands of gold; -- indeed, what can we possibly compare with it? And yet how short of constant thankfulness do I frequently feel my heart! I am astonished at the condescension of my heavenly Father, in bearing with my weaknesses and shortcomings. Daily, yea, hourly, have I need to fall into the dust of self-abasement, for the non-improvement of my unnumbered privileges; and my best performances are not to be offered up, till washed in the atoning blood of Jesus. O may I ever be enabled to live at the footstool of Him who hath purchased with his own blood eternal redemption for us, and who lives at his Father's right hand to plead the cause of guilty, lost, and condemned sinners. I feel thankful for the seasons I sometimes enjoy at a throne of grace; and I trust that my desires after a full conformity to all his righteous will are increasing. O how desirable is it to have my heart ever full of the love of God."

It is now necessary to refer to the closing period of Mrs. Skinner's valuable life. For some time before her removal to a better world, her state of health was frequently such as detained her from the public means of grace; but she carefully improved the appointed seasons by reading, prayer, and spiritual converse.

On Sunday, April 28th, 1822, she manifested an unusual degree of pleasure while recognizing her possession of the direct witness of the Spirit, and prayed that she might ever retain it. On the following Sunday the symptoms of her case became more alarming than they before had been; and some indications of occasional delirium induced her medical attendant to wish that the aid of a physician should be called in.

The knowledge of this circumstance led her at once to conclude that considerable danger alone could prompt her friends to such a measure. Her intellectual powers, previously somewhat irregular in their exercise, now became still more affected. And it was very apparent to those at all acquainted with the devices and machinations of satan, that the invisible adversary was permitted to work on the bodily and mental weakness of this suffering child of God.

The appalling accusation that she was a hypocrite, rent her enfeebled spirit with indescribable anguish. It was to her "the hour, and power of darkness." To many who witnessed this scene, it was, no doubt, a matter of astonishment that one who had devoted herself to God, as she had done, should be thus exercised. But such conflicts with the apostate angel are not uncommon, even in the dying experience of those who have been eminent for holiness.

The Lord, for the manifestation of his own faithfulness and power, is sometimes pleased to give satan leave to try what he can do. The experiment answers many good purposes. The tempted saint is humbled, yet approved. Surrounding friends are instructed. Satan, in the issue, is confuted and disappointed, and the wisdom and mercy of the Lord, in his darkest dispensations towards his people are gloriously illustrated.

These blessed effects were strikingly exhibited in the case of Mrs. Skinner. On the morning of the succeeding Tuesday, this tremendous storm subsided into holy calmness and serenity; but her weakness was too great to allow of her then expressing much of what she felt. On the following Thursday she appeared better, and being raised out of bed for a few moments, one of her kind attendants said, "My dear, you are much better." She replied, "Yes; 'it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.'" She afterwards added, "I have had such promises, such sweet promises!"

Being laid again in bed, she repeated the same, and recited the words of David with solemn composure, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." A little after, she quoted our Saviour's delightful words to his disciples:-- "In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you."

From this time to the day preceding her death, she constantly spoke of the clear manifestations of God's love towards her. At one period, her strength was sufficient to warrant her conversing a little with her beloved friends. They uniformly found her in the spirit of praise and thanksgiving; and, at times, she hardly appeared to have language to express her feelings. But their anxiety for her recovery induced them often to impose silence upon her, when her grateful soul would gladly have expanded upon the mercy of God. On one occasion she briefly said, with benign composure, "I have learned to hang upon Christ," and emphatically repeated, "simply to hang upon Christ." In this exercise of holy confidence, notwithstanding some occasional efforts of the Tempter to distress her, she was enabled habitually to persevere.

Notwithstanding the temporary improvement in Mrs. Skinner's health, she retained a fixed persuasion of her speedy dissolution, and was preparing for heaven every day. The first indications of the recurrence of serious symptoms took place on Tuesday, May 29th. On Friday the 31st she became still worse, but her mind was all serenity and peace. On the following Sunday she said to her eldest sister, "Will you find the chapter which has that delightful promise, 'Arise, shine for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.' It has been impressed on my mind with power."

In the evening, when Mr. Skinner and her sister H____ were on the point of leaving her, she said, "We must pray." After they had accordingly commended their beloved invalid to God, she herself broke out in prayer. The subject and manner of her supplications greatly impressed their minds. Every expression bespoke intimate communion with the Father, through the Son, by the eternal Spirit. Every request terminated in perfect acquiescence to the will of God, Thus sweetly did she close her last Sabbath on earth; brightly exemplifying her preparation for that endless bliss, on the threshold of which she seemed already to have entered.

On Wednesday her mind was elevated above all earthly things. She observed, "I am afraid of looking to the world. Heavenly things are every thing to me." The grateful disposition, which so strongly characterized her in life, shone with lovely radiancy in her last request, that all her dependents might be amply recompensed for their toil and care. The Holy Scriptures, and some portions of Mr. Fletcher's Works, (especially his Letter on Recollection,) were now, and had been through her whole illness, most salutary to her mind. In the evening of this day, one of her sisters, when sitting beside her, observed to her that she seemed better. Mrs. Skinner replied, with sacred ardor, "But the best of all is, the Lord draws nigh."

June 7th, the day on which she died, she said, -- "These light afflictions, which endure but for a moment," -- here she sunk upon her pillow, when a near relative added, -- "shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "Yes," she faintly replied, "for me." After this it was apparent that the pins of the earthly tabernacle were fast loosening. Delirium prevailed; and her speech became inarticulate. In the afternoon she struggled to speak, but the power of

utterance had almost failed. A sister beside her asked, "Is Jesus precious to you?" With difficulty she answered, "Yes, yes," and a little after distinctly said, "I shall get to heaven!"

While several promises and passages of divine truth were repeated, she listened with deep attention, and when the following lines met her ear,

"Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!"

she just repeated the word "My." This was the last word she was able to articulate, and at the solemn midnight hour, just as the clock struck twelve, her happy spirit made its escape to endless rest. Thus terminated the short but useful life of Mrs. William Skinner, one month before twenty-fifth year of her age.

Stockton-upon-Tees -- C. E. W.

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A MEMOIR OF MARY DOLBELL

By William Toase

From the December, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Miss Mary Dolbell was naturally of a mild and gentle disposition; and was much beloved by all who knew her. Like most young people, who are strangers to the power of religion on the mind, and whose circumstances enable them to enjoy the world, she was, however, fond of fashionable amusements; and, having the means at command, she mixed much in gay parties, and sought happiness in vain and fleeting objects.

When she was about seventeen years of age, her father, Mr. J. Dolbell, then a respectable and affluent merchant, experienced a change in his circumstances, as painful as it was unexpected. To this trying dispensation of Divine providence, Miss Dolbell submitted with becoming fortitude, and with a degree of resignation. She was often the subject of great bodily weakness and pain; and frequently, in her affliction, certain passages of the Holy Scriptures occurred to her mind, which convinced her that she was not in the way of peace and salvation.

After some time she began to attend the ministry of the Wesleyan preachers, then stationed in Jersey. She did not long sit under the Word of the gospel before she was gently drawn to seek the Lord: nor did she rest till she obtained a clear sense of God's pardoning love by faith in the Lord Jesus. In reference to this great blessing, she writes as follows:--

"January 17th, 1819. -- The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered; and it was truly a blessing to my soul. Previously to my receiving it, I was full of doubts and fears; but during that ordinance, they were all removed. The justifying and cleansing blood of Christ was applied; and I had reason to cry to my Almighty Father, to enlarge my faith's capacity 'wider and yet wider still.' Since that time, I have felt more settled peace; and those things which once troubled and irritated my mind, have not now any power over me."

Not long after Miss Dolbell had experienced this blessed change of mind, she was seized by a dangerous illness, occasioned, partly, by attending a poor neighbor, who was laboring under a typhus fever. She suffered much, and long; but was happy in the enjoyment of religion, and in the prospect of eternal felicity. Her affliction was the means of stirring her up to seek higher attainments in piety, and her profiting appeared to all.

Contrary to expectation, she, for a time, recovered, and the following extracts from her papers will show the state of her mind about this period:--

"Jersey, April 20th, 1821. -- Let all that is within me shout the praises of my God! O what a depth of love! God only knows the love of God! I, a miserable sinner, have experienced that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin! Lord, make me faithful to the grace already given! Let me seek after more of thy lovely likeness! O my soul, live in the presence of thy Lord, -- dead to every thing below!"

Hearing of a few individuals whose unscriptural and mystical notions, connected, no doubt, with a state of lukewarmness in religion, had led them to absent themselves from the means of grace, most absurdly imagining that they had attained to "a higher dispensation," and no longer needed the ordinances of God's house, -- she writes, at another time, as follows:--

"O Lord, keep me from the company and influence of those who have no pleasure in the means of grace! Thou, Lord, hast showed me that my soul cannot live without the means which thou hast appointed."

The principles and conduct of all such persons are at variance with the plainest and most positive declarations of the Word of God, and in direct opposition to the practice of all well-informed and pious men from the beginning. Let them consider this, and take care lest the laxity of their principles should lead them again into the world, and lest they should be shorn of their little remaining strength, so as to become like other men.

Some further extracts from Miss Dolbell's papers will illustrate the decided and steadfast devotedness to God, by which her subsequent life was distinguished:--

"October 10th. -- Having had a conversation respecting dress, I went to prayer, and after asking direction of God, I was led to the following conclusion. Religion alone can make us happy:-- there is nothing in it of a gloomy or melancholy nature:-- we did not receive the Spirit by the works or the law, but by the hearing of faith. Avoiding then the endless variations in apparel, and the frippery of tinsel ornaments, let me, by a modest and becoming decency of dress, as well as in everything else, endeavor to glorify my God, and do honor to his cause. If dress, whether

extremely plain, or foolishly gay, be put on through affectation or vanity, it is sin:-- While at class this evening, the importance of laboring more for the soul, which must exist for ever, was deeply impressed upon my mind. O for a closer walk with God!

"November 20th. -- On reading the fourteenth chapter of St. John's gospel, my soul was truly blessed. God has revealed himself afresh to me, as he does not unto the world. 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.' Religion is not a cunningly devised fable, but a glorious reality. Were I called to testify that the Lord Jesus is faithful to his word, I could seal that truth with my life. But it is all of grace! I am weaker than a bruised reed! O to grace how great a debtor!

"November 28th. -- Fearing lest I should not be faithful, I went to prayer: the Lord graciously visited me with the sweet consolations of his Spirit, and this promise was applied to my mind, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' I wonder why I do not love God more. O Lord, I pray thee let me adore thee more and more, for thou art worthy! -- Hearing of the 'precious blood of Christ,' I had a delightful manifestation of my adoption. I trust I am a member of the mystical body of the Lord Jesus, and enjoy the indwelling of his Spirit, who will raise me up at the last day.

"December 6th. -- Being much exercised with outward trials, I humbled myself before the Lord, and though called by his providence to pass through the fire and through the water, Jesus is still with me. I should be afraid of having my own will. May I abide in thee, -- may I do and suffer all thy blessed will, O Lord most high, most gracious! Though friends may love much, no earthly friend has 'given himself' for me. But Jesus suffered the death of the cross for my soul! O then, my soul, be content with thy lot of privation and pain!

"December 8th. -- I am, through grace, enabled to thank my God for all things. 'Jesus and Love are one.' I hope I shall love, praise, and glorify God to all eternity. I can thank my God for all my sufferings. I have not one too many. May I never again have temporal prosperity, if that would draw my soul away from God! I am a brand plucked from the burning. Jesus, the King of Glory, washes me clean. O, may he keep me clean!

[On another occasion] "While reading today of the utility of distributing religious tracts, my soul caught a spark of that sacred fire, which leads me to wish to be active in promoting my Redeemer's kingdom. Could not a small society be formed, and this good cause be supported by the work of our own hands? Could not a few friends, by taking each a small portion of work weekly, or monthly, procure by their earnings tracts for distribution? Redeem the time, O my soul! Let not my days be spent in idleness, for there is no work nor device in the grave whither thou goest."

Miss Dolbell's last illness continued for nearly eight months, during which time she was confined to her bed. Though she suffered much, and was often severely tempted, she never lost her confidence in God. From the beginning, she was calm and resigned, and often exclaimed, 'The Lord is here.' The last words she was heard to utter were, 'Thy kingdom come.'

Thus departed this amiable and pious young lady, June 23d, 1822, in the twenty-fifth year of her age.

I cannot conclude this sketch without distinctly noticing the following traits of her character:--

1. Her amiable and affectionate manners. -- Possessing naturally a considerable degree of sensibility, refined by education, and highly improved by the enjoyment of that love "which thinketh no evil," and "doth not behave itself unseemly," Miss Dolbell was an agreeable companion, and always left the social circle with the esteem and respect of her Christian friends. In her there was no attempt at display; all was simple, natural, and easy.

2. Her zeal for the cause of God. -- Deeply affected with the wretched state of the heathen, she took a very active part in the establishment of a Ladies' Missionary Association in the town of St. Helier's, which has already been productive of much good. This association is now in active operation; -- the members meet every Monday evening to settle their accounts, and to work for the missionary cause. She often acted, also, as collector to the Ladies' Bible Society. And she seldom walked out without furnishing herself with suitable tracts, which she gave to persons whom she met on the road, with a word of advice on the important subject of religion.

3. Her charity to the poor. -- As far as her circumstances would admit, she was truly liberal. Not only did she visit the poor, and relieve them at their habitations, but she also taught them to read the word of God; and in many instances invited them to her house, that she might instruct them privately. In visiting the sick, as long as her strength was equal to the task, she was diligent and useful.

4. Her exemplary resignation. -- The change she had experienced in her circumstances was as great, as it was sudden and unexpected. But religion supported her; and she never murmured against God. "In patience she possessed her soul.' Having an inheritance in heaven, she could cheerfully forego all earthly things, and "set her affections on things above."

5. Her steady and truly Christian friendship. -- Miss Dolbell was what she appeared to be; hence her friendships were sincere and lasting. This she manifested, particularly towards the people of God, and the ministers of religion. She abhorred nothing more than evil speaking; and never failed to reprove it in whomsoever she perceived it. Addressing some of her religious friends, she once wrote, "Whenever you meet to work for the poor, let your work lead you to profitable conversation; or when you spend an afternoon with a friend, let it be improved as much as possible. Our time is not our own. We are responsible for every moment!"

I might easily multiply traits of the excellence that shone in her character; but enough has been said to preserve in remembrance the memory of one of the excellent of the earth, and to stimulate others to copy an example so worthy to be followed. -- Bristol, W. Toase

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From the December, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

William Stephens was born in the parish of Widdicombe, near Ashburton, in the year 1742. Of his family, his education, and the employment of his early years, no distinct recollection is preserved; but from his confirmed habits it may be fairly presumed that a laudable concern to eat his own bread, and to provide things honest in the sight of all men, "grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength." His memory was naturally very tenacious; his understanding was capable of considerable improvement; his judgment was sound and discriminating, on those subjects with which he was conversant; and his imagination was vivid.

When he was between twenty and thirty years of age, he was engaged for some considerable time in the service of a clergyman at Stoke, near Dartmouth. During this period, he formed an acquaintance with one of his fellow servants, and was just about to marry her, when a dark cloud suddenly arose, and sadly obscured all their hopeful prospects.

In the course of the year 1771, when about twenty-nine, he was called to attend his master on a journey to London, faithfully purposing to make Mary his own, on his return. As he had never been in the metropolis before, and had heard that there were, at that time, kidnappers in London, he greatly dreaded the idea of being kidnapped, but being unacquainted with the practices to which such unprincipled villains resorted, the evil which he so much dreaded actually befell him.

Walking one day in a street not far from the Thames river, he was met by a person, who at once accosted him as an old friend whom he had known in the country, and under the pretense of great regard, enticed him into a public house, to take a pot of porter with him, as he said, "for old acquaintance' sake." The miscreant, having thus far prevailed, left his unsuspecting victim in a back room by himself: and while William waited for the return of his pretended friend with the porter, suddenly a trap door was unbolted, on which he had been inadvertently standing, and he was let down into a dark cellar; where he was seized, bound hand and foot, silenced by the most dreadful threats, and at night, forced with some others on board a ship then in the river, and sent to serve as a soldier in the East Indies.

In this hazardous employment, during about six succeeding years, William was greatly favored by the care of Divine providence: for though he was in deaths often, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often; -- though he was in journeyings often, in perils from the sword, in perils from wild beasts, in perils from a burning climate, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, being three times shipwrecked, and what was still more alarming, in perils from his own countrymen; -- yet, after an absence of seven years and a few months, he was restored to his native land, in good health, and improved circumstances.

Enjoying a happy disposition to turn even the most disastrous events to some advantage, it appears that, while in the army, he was careful to please his officers, and was much respected by them; and by uniform courtesy toward the natives, he, in a considerable degree gained their affection and confidence. Having also a good capacity for acquiring languages, he became

sufficiently acquainted with three or four Indian dialects, to act, in many cases, as an interpreter, and, in some instances, as a teacher of them to a few young Englishmen of respectability.

Though at this time destitute of vital godliness, yet he was preserved from many gross immoralities, which were shamefully prevalent in the British army. Indeed, so notorious and shocking were these enormities, that the heathen natives themselves used to say in their simplicity, "Your Englishman's God is a very good God; for he not kill Englishmen, though they be so wicked."

At the same time, he was a more attentive observer of the works of God both in nature and providence, than might be expected from his avocations and connections; and was particularly much affected by seeing almost all the large army, which he at first joined, consumed either by fatigue, the sword, the climate, or their own vices, in the space of about six years.

On his return to England, he landed at Plymouth, and most promptly bent his course towards his old master's house, where he found his faithful Mary still resident, and married her a few weeks after. For some time after their marriage, the hand of providence seemed to be against them, though, no doubt, the briars and thorns of the wilderness were employed to teach them some salutary lessons.

At first, they settled on a little farm in the south of Devon, but by loss of cattle and failure of crops, in the course of a year or two, they were obliged to quit this speculation, with the loss of almost all they had before accumulated. They then kept a garden at Dartmouth; but this also failed of answering their expectation, chiefly through the frequent depredations of a privateer's crew, who appeared to think every thing a lawful prize that they could conveniently appropriate to their own use.

After this, about the year 1784, while employed in the gardening business at Exeter, he heard that a gentleman, near St. Austle, wanted a gardener; and thinking that the situation might suit him well, he sought it, obtained it, and filled it long, much to the satisfaction of his employer. Though for a year or two after his removal to St. Blazey, he still remained without God in the world, yet here it was, that he was visited by divine mercy, and plucked as a brand from the burning.

Some time about the year 1786, he was deeply convinced of sin, under a sermon preached by John Rosevear, a plain, zealous, useful local preacher, whose praise still remains in all the churches where he was known -- a man, who "his single talent well employed," and who is worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance.

To call the subject of this memoir "The Gardener," especially from this period, seems most appropriate, for during the subsequent years of his life, he was generally thus denominated, and many who knew him well, and often made mention of him, scarcely knew that his name was Stephens.

It appears that the Gardener, after his settlement at St. Blazey prior to his conversion, besides attending to the gentleman's gardens and plantations, cultivated a little spot on his own

account, and raised fruits and vegetables, which he did not scruple to sell on the Lord's day, when his neighbors on that day applied for them. In the sermon above referred to, the preacher made some strong and pointed observations on Sabbath-breaking, which by the application of God's good Spirit, fully convicted the Gardener as a transgressor.

He was self-condemned, burst into tears, and thus deeply affected, he went home, and said to his wife, "We will never again sell things on a Sunday." To this she most readily and cheerfully consented, having before felt some compunction of mind on the same account. This resolution, therefore, they most conscientiously kept, from that time, to the great displeasure of many around them, who could not forbear exclaiming in the bitterness of their resentment, "Here is another good fellow spoiled by these Methodists!"

However, this worthy couple being united in firm purpose to fear God's name, trusted him with the event, and in the result proved that it turned to their advantage, for when their neighbors found that they could not get the articles they wanted on the Sunday, they applied for them on the Saturday evening, in greater numbers, and with more regularity than before.

In the meantime, the Gardener, with his faithful helpmeet, went on seeking, and soon found, rest for their souls in the "Friend of Sinners." On hearing that the Master was come, and called for them, they arose quickly, and came unto him, and having joyfully received Him into their hearts, they soon became desirous of receiving his ministers into their house. This, therefore, subsequently proved a comfortable "Pilgrim's Inn," where the men of God were kindly constrained to eat bread, and as oft as they passed by, were sure to find a decent little chamber, a bed, a stool, and a candlestick, ever ready for their accommodation.

No commodious house being at that time attainable for preaching at St. Blazey, the Gardener, chiefly at his own expense, and by his own exertion, very promptly fitted up his barn, which remained, during several succeeding years, a place of divine worship, no less manifestly acceptable to God than that which was anciently the threshing-place of Ornan the Jebusite. (I Chron. xxi. 26)

In a few years after the Gardener's conversion to God, as he advanced in the divine life, his concern for the salvation of immortal souls proportionally increased, and he began to exhort his neighbors to flee from the wrath to come. About the year 1792, he was regularly planned as a local preacher in the St. Austle circuit and from that time to the end of his life, he was in labors abundant. The work of divine grace being deeply and distinctly wrought in his soul, he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, knowing it to be the power of God unto salvation.

He searched the Scriptures diligently with great attention, and well recollecting the stores he had laid up, he brought forth, out of this sacred treasury, things new and old: for he possessed the happy skill of generally bringing the word of God, from Genesis to the Revelation, to bear on whatever subjects he had before him. His zeal for the honor of God was the pure flame of love, which no waters could quench, nor floods could drown.

Though his voice was strong, his discourses copious, and his services frequent, yet he was favored with lungs so almost "adamantine," that no exercise appeared to injure them. Being a man

of much prayer, both in the pulpit and out of it, his public services were attended with much of the divine unction, and the blessing of many who were ready to perish is frequently pronounced on him, as the honored instrument of saving their souls from death.

Towards the close of his life, he enjoyed the happiness of seeing the congregation and society at St. Blazey so increased, that their favorite place of worship became considerably too small for them. To obtain, therefore, a new and much larger chapel, he prayed much for the divine blessing on the project, employed his influence among his neighbors, and set them the example himself, by cheerfully subscribing forty pounds towards it, fully proposing to do much more, if God should be pleased to prosper him according to the hopeful prospects which lay before him. The very spot which he had desired, and even prayed for, was specified and presented by the proprietor of his own accord, and the venerable man witnessed the full accomplishment of his heart's desire, some years before he departed in peace from the temple below, to serve his Maker in the temple above.

For about thirty years after his conversion from sin to God, his excellent wife remained by his side, doing him good, and not evil, all the days of her life, being in the judgment of those who best knew her, every way worthy of her husband. In deep, unaffected piety, she was considered not at all his inferior -- in unfeigned love, she was his equal: for of both it might be truly said, "They did faithfully whatever they did, to the brethren, and to strangers." She was eminently adorned with a meek and quiet spirit, and in all the relations sustained by her, she was exemplary.

"The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
Her frame was firm, her powers were bright,
Though now her eightieth year was nigh.

Then, with no throbs of fiery pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed her soul the nearest way."

For in the month of October, 1816, when retiring one morning, as it is supposed, to her accustomed spot of secret devotion, she was suddenly deprived of her senses by an apoplectic seizure; and soon awoke to the conscious felicity of those who are with Christ in Paradise.

Her bereaved husband survived her six years and two months; still bringing forth undiminished fruit in his old age. To the very last, his zeal and labors remained unabated; while his deadness to the world, his heavenly-mindedness, and his pious comforts, visibly grew with his years. Thus he remained ready for every good word and work, blessed, and made a blessing, thankful for the past, and full of good purposes for the future -- till the night of Friday, December 6th, 1822, when he was seized much as his late wife had been, only he retained the use of his reason and speech, long enough to say to those around him, "My body and soul are given up into the hand of the good Physician, and it will be well with me."

Shortly after this, he sunk into a state of apparently insensible slumber, and remained thus till the next evening; when he was removed from the toils of earth to the rest of heaven. On the Tuesday following, his funeral was attended by a numerous multitude, who testified their profound respect for his memory by their very serious attention, while the solemn occasion was improved by a sermon on those words, "For he was a faithful man, and feared God above many." (Neb. vii. 2) After the sermon, a paper was read, the following extracts from which shall conclude this account.

"Of our late esteemed Friend, it may be affirmed also, with great truth, that 'He was a faithful man, and feared God above many.' He was a 'faithful' man: for what God reveals in his word, he cordially believed on God's testimony; and being strong in faith, he sought, and found, and retained the great salvation of the gospel; a salvation not only from the love, the guilt, the power, and the practice of sin, but also from its last remains; happily proving that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. As God's covenant servant, he most cheerfully devoted himself to his Maker, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

"As God's steward, he was diligent in improving his talents by serving his generation according to God's will. As God's soldier, he was indeed valiant for the truth, both in its defense and its propagation. In steadfast adherence to his heavenly Master, he was truly exemplary. He never denied Christ through fear of suffering. Worldly allurements never seduced him from his allegiance to the Prince of Peace, and he remained unwearied in the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labor of love, till he came down to the grave, as a shock of corn in its season.

"By his close and habitual walk with God, by setting the Lord always before him, by keeping in view the great day of decision, and the eternal recompense of reward, he realized the things that are not seen, and gloriously overcame both the smiles and the frowns of the world. Hence it follows, that 'He feared God above many.'

"His excellent piety was very conspicuous in the careful redemption of his time, in his giving himself unto prayer, in his uniform acknowledgment of God, in the choice of his recreations, in his holy and edifying conversation, and in the vigorous consecration of his talents. His distinguished piety was also manifest in the variety of his experiential communications, for he had almost always something new to say for God in his great usefulness, and in the rich abundance of his spiritual consolations.

"In life, he rejoiced evermore, prayed without ceasing, and in every thing gave thanks; and in death he could exclaim in effect,

'What though the sickle keen
Just scars us, as we reap the golden grain?
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.'

Thus, he walked with God, and is not, for God took him.

'The soul has o'ertaken his mate,
And found her again in the sky;

Advanc'd to his happy estate
Of pleasure that never can die!

Where glorified spirits, by sight,
Converse in their holy abode;
As stars in the firmament bright,
And pure as the angels of God."

-- St. Austle, Francis Truscott --

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24

A MEMOIR OF SAMUEL HILL

By John Holland & James Montgomery
From the December, 1823 issue of
The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine

Samuel Hill was born in Sheffield-Park, March 7, 1775, of poor but honest parents, who attended the worship of the Established Church. At the usual age he was admitted into that excellent institution, the Boy's Charity School in Sheffield: there he was taught to read the Holy Scriptures, and regularly attended Divine service at the parish church. After the expiration of the time allotted for a maintenance in this school, he was apprenticed to a shoemaker, with whom he experienced such hardships, that the disobedience which followed, though very foolish and culpable, was not surprising. With a strong natural capacity and warm passions, he became a ringleader of mischief among the youth of his own age, neglecting alike the Word, the Sabbaths, and the worship of God.

After the term of his apprenticeship had expired, he enlisted, became a serjeant in the York Fencibles, and consequently left his native place. The army was a school not likely to mend his heart, or improve his morals: religious soldiers were then exceedingly rare, and it was not probable that he would either seek or find those services in the regiment which he had forsaken at the church. In fact he now became a persecutor, and being quartered in Ireland, it used to be his delight to head a party of the soldiers to ridicule the ceremony of performing mass in the Catholic chapels, but especially for the purpose of disturbing the worship of the Methodists. Dr. Coke, in particular, whom he considered as having left the Established Church, became an object of his annoyance; for while living in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity, he was always proud of his education at the Charity school, and stoutly maintained his respect for that church whose worship he had been taught to attend in his youth, and whose services he could not forget.

The rough native energies of his character were concentrated by discipline; and he had seen so much that was strange, and learned so much perverted ingenuity, during his brief campaigns of soldiership, that, on his return to Sheffield-Park, when the regiment was disbanded, during the peace of 1803, his company became doubly desirable at the ale-house. Yet truth obliges

me to add, that however criminally he then neglected the true interests of his family, and his own soul, he could not be charged with dishonesty, or with what the world regards as gross immorality.

It happened that a young man whom he accommodated with a corner in his own little shop, was in the habit of attending the Methodist Chapel, in consequence of which he was subject to all the invectives and attacks of his companion. Conversing on this subject one day, about the beginning of 1805, among other things he said, "These Methodists pretend to know that their sins are forgiven." The other replied, he was sure they did, and proceeded to prove the fact from such texts of Scripture, and arguments, as he recollected. This, it was contended, was impossible. At length the young man observed: "You profess to belong to the Church of England, and must therefore believe the Prayer-books," quoting, at the same time, a passage where the doctrine is stated.

This unexpected and undeniable refutation so exasperated Samuel, that he was very near proceeding to blows, -- but it was a nail fastened in a sure place. Arguments he continued to bring against his opponent, but they did not convince himself, and he now began to suspect that the Methodists might be right, in which case he, of course, was dreadfully wrong.

On Easter Monday, in the afternoon, he went as usual to the ale-house, but it was not to enjoy his usual pleasures, for it was at this time, on the ale-bench, and with his cup before him, that he began to reflect seriously on the life he was leading, and the disgrace he was bringing upon his family and upon himself. He sat several hours in extreme misery, with only one pint of ale, and would fain have gone home, but felt such a sense of shame that he could not quit the house till dusk.

His wife, surprised at his look, and at seeing him return so unusually early, said, -- "You have come home very soon tonight." "Aye, Love," he replied, "and by the help of God, I will never again do as I have done."

He now felt in his own mind a desire to go to the Methodist Chapel, but his fear prevented him from going alone, and his pride would not suffer him to go with any one else. At length, during the time of the Conference, which was that year (1805) held at Sheffield, there was much talk about the New Chapel then opened in Carver-Street, the different preachers, conversions, &c., and many, as well from curiosity as from better motives, attended to hear. He now resolved to venture among the crowd, and hear for himself.

The preacher was Mr. Averall, under whose discourse he was convinced that he was "living without God and without hope in the world," and he resolved to attend at the next service. He did attend; and when he had sat awhile, what were his feelings to see Dr. Coke, whom he had insulted in Ireland, enter the pulpit!

His conscience smote him sorely, and he thought that the Doctor saw, remembered, and addressed every word to him. The subject of the discourse was "The witness of the Spirit," and toward the end of the sermon, his convictions increased to such a degree, that the stouthearted sinner trembled through every limb, and shook the pews, by which he, with both hands, prevented himself from falling.

He was noticed and known by some persons, who directed his mind into the right way, he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and soon found redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of his sins; -- and this evidence of his acceptance with God he never lost, from the moment of his spiritual birth to the time of his death.

Having thus given himself to God, it now became his duty to renounce the world, and his old companions. The danger which he apprehended here distressed him exceedingly: he was aware of the deceitfulness of his own heart, and of the taunts and mockery which he must expect to endure from his old associates; and he dreaded to meet them, lest he might be tempted in any way to commit sin, and injure his own soul.

One of these companions was a professed Deist, and a fluent talker against religion: this man and his sneers he dreaded to encounter more than all the rest. One Sunday morning, soon after his conversion, on his way to the chapel, he saw four or five of his old acquaintances coming together along the road: meet them he must, -- and trembling for the attack which he anticipated, he lifted up his eyes and his heart to heaven for divine assistance, when, to his great astonishment, the whole party, as they met him, hung down their heads, and passed him in silence.

Some time afterwards, the man above mentioned accidentally hurt his heel, his life was brought into jeopardy; and the amputation of his leg was deemed necessary. Mr. Hill, hearing of his danger, and feeling for his soul, resolved to go to see him, and pray with him. He went, and found him as captious, and as eloquent in ridiculing divine things, as ever; nor would he by any means allow the good man to pray with him.

"Well," said Mr. Hill, "if you will not suffer me to pray here with you, you cannot prevent me at home from praying for you." He took his leave, much depressed in spirit; but he began and continued to pray for him some time. One morning, after having felt great liberty in prayer for his friend, it was strongly impressed upon Mr. Hill's mind, that he should again visit the man.

He accordingly went, and found him not only less disposed to cavil, but evidently under some concern; and he not only permitted him to pray, but thanked him for his visit. Before he could go again, the sick man sent for him. After some conversation, he strongly exhorted him to repent, and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who would then cleanse him from all his sins; and immediately engaged in prayer. After having prayed for some time, and the man not finding peace, Mr. Hill, who was induced by some peculiar circumstances to suspect that all was not quite right, told him that he was sure there was some secret sin which he was unwilling to give up.

At length the man confessed, that he never had been able to forgive one who had injured him, but that now he felt he could forgive him. They again united in prayer, the man found peace with God, and in a few days, he who had so lately been the scoffing Deist, died rejoicing in the Lord.

After his own conversion, Mr. Hill became anxiously solicitous about the salvation of his neighbors, his aged parents, and the members of his own family. His zeal and fidelity in searching out and reproofing sinners, made him in one sense the terror of the neighborhood; for while with undaunted courage he entered their houses, his address was so endearing and affable, that it was

difficult to withstand his entreaties. There was one man who invariably ran out of his house whenever Mr. Hill entered it, and he was thus prevented from speaking to him about his soul.

One day, while Mr. Hill was at work, there came a very heavy shower of rain: the thought came suddenly into his mind, -- "Now I will go and see this man; he will not run out into the rain." He laid down his work, and away he went to the house of the man; immediately he engaged in prayer, and the man, as he had expected, did not run away. After he had prayed, he exhorted the man to repentance; and it is pleasing to add, that this interview was followed by the conversion of the person, who afterwards died happy in the Lord.

Respecting his parents he used to say, "We cannot indeed convert our parents by our advice, nor by our prayers give them grace but it is our duty to pray earnestly for them, and to trust that God will save them." This was his practice, and when both his father and mother died, well stricken in years, there was hope in their end.

His wife began to serve the Lord soon after her husband's conversion: she was a member of his class; an humble and pious woman, and her end was peace.

Of the value of a religious education he entertained the highest sense, nor did he ever cease to feel the sincerest gratitude towards that institution which had fostered him in his youth. He always considered it a sacred duty to attend the parish Church, when sermons for the benefit of the Charity School were preached, in order to contribute his mite to the assistance of that valuable charity.

He had two children, both of whom he took to the Sunday School; and the superintendent, who had known him in his worst days, observes, that he shall never forget the striking change which was manifest in his appearance and expressions. "Blessed be God, it is not with me now as it once was, and as you have known me, Mr. C____," said he: "I have felt the value of religion myself, and now I wish my children to enjoy the same blessings."

His hopes, however, in later years appeared to be disappointed, and his spirit depressed, by the conduct of his son, who, after grieving his father by every transgression of filial duty, enlisted for a soldier, and left the country. He left his father's house, and his father's counsels, disobediently, and, as it has proved, forever. But the good man pursued him with his prayers; and see the mercy and the mystery of God's providence!

That reform of character which his father was not permitted to witness in England, was produced instrumentally in the East Indies, by the death of a comrade in arms, who had received his religious instruction in the Sunday School of which Samuel Hill was the superintendent!

When he communicated this intelligence to the parents of the children taught in that school, as an encouragement for them to pray for their offspring, -- the writer of this sketch, who was then present, can never forget the ardent expression of his gratitude. With his hands lifted up, his countenance beaming with heavenly benignity, and the tears rolling down his cheeks, he exclaimed, "Glory, -- glory be to God, for these blessed tidings respecting my child!"

This occurred only three months before his death; and thus, by a merciful dispensation, he was permitted to know, before he went down to the grave, that the desire of his heart was fulfilled upon his son.

He was a founder of the above mentioned school, containing at present almost three hundred children, over whom he continued as superintendent till the time of his decease.

About fifteen years ago he established a prayer-meeting, soon after formed three persons into a class, and subsequently began a Sunday School, in the midst of a few poor houses called "The Manor," about a mile from Sheffield: and it is an interesting fact, that at present there is a class of forty-seven members, and a neat and recently erected school-room, capable of holding upwards of two hundred hearers, in which children are taught, and the gospel preached every Sabbath, all on the site and within the very embrace of the ruins of the ancient manorial residence of the Talbots, Earls of Shrewsbury and Lords of Hallamshire; -- and this good has sprung up from a seed sown by Samuel Hill.

In 1815 he again entered into the marriage state. [Apparently his first wife died. -- DVM] Those who knew him best can testify with what ardent supplication he sought the guidance of Divine wisdom, in a matter of so much importance; and his subsequent matrimonial happiness was a proof that his prayers had been answered. This, indeed, was his practice in all his worldly affairs, being persuaded that "the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow therewith;" so that while he labored with prudence and industry, as if prosperity depended wholly on his own endeavors, he prayed as one who knew that it was God alone who could make the work successful.

He was always noted for his generosity; and after his conversion his benevolence knew no limit, but that of his means. He was but a poor man, yet his heart and his hands were always open; and he used to give many a crown, of which even his family only occasionally heard.

But it is time to close this record. He had long been subject to an asthma. During the very foggy weather at the beginning of December, he felt a return of his complaint, and hearing of the sudden death of a brother class leader, from the same cause, he was much affected, and said, "I think I shall be slipping out of life myself, some day soon."

Through the succeeding fortnight he was much indisposed, yet continued to attend to his regular business till within a few days of his death. On the Sabbath afternoon, after having met his class, Mr. Wilkinson stayed with him some time; and it was to this venerable saint that he last spoke on the state of his mind. He felt quite comfortable in the full assurance of the hope of the gospel. "All is well," said he, "between my soul and God, and I feel no fear, either respecting this world or that which is to come."

He continued singing and praying alternately most of the night; and his friends did not think him dangerously worse: towards morning he fell into a sweet sleep, and his wife watched him with the delightful anticipation that he would awake considerably refreshed, but he was to awake no more in this world!

Gently, and unperceived even by those who were looking upon him, his happy spirit departed from the world of sin and death to the presence of his Redeemer, December 23d, 1822. He was in the forty-eighth year of his age.

His funeral took place on Christmas day, amidst hundreds of spectators, who had known his worth, and now lamented his death. His eulogy might have been collected from the crowd; almost every individual expressing, by some brief apostrophe, a tribute of sorrow. On the evening of the same day, at a meeting of Sunday School teachers, and the night following, at the anniversary of the Methodist Tract Society, Mr. Montgomery bore his testimony to what, from personal association, he had known of the character of the deceased. That testimony shall conclude this memoir; the statements made at the two meetings being incorporated, for the sake of unity, in the following Document.

Further Particulars, Illustrative
of the Character of Mr. Samuel Hill

By James Montgomery

This day have been committed to the grave the mortal remains of one of the most upright, diligent, conscientious, and successful Sunday School Teachers that ever engaged in such blessed service. Late yesterday night a messenger out of the Park came to invite me to the funeral of Samuel Hill. I had heard nothing previously either of his illness or decease, and had seen him only a few days before in his usual health, strength, and activity of usefulness.

He had called upon me on an errand of mercy; and indeed I never met him except on occasions of doing good. He wanted a recommendation to the Sheffield Infirmary for an orphan youth, who was apprentice to him, and whom he could not help and nourish at home so well as the case required. In the course of our conversation it came out, that this was not the first fatherless and motherless child, to whom he had made himself a foster parent with the benevolent purpose of training him up both for this world and the next.

I mention this incidentally, as indeed he himself did, without the slightest boast, and as mere matter of fact, though the disclosure exhibited his noble but unpretending generosity of character in a new light to me, -- and it was the last light in which I saw it.

The annunciation of his death, therefore, was awfully bewildering and affecting to me. I was prevented from following his corpse to its long home, but he was abundantly honored in death by those who knew best how to estimate his worth, -- his Christian friends and neighbors. The procession through the streets realized the scene of the interment of the first martyr, Stephen, -- "Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."

I speak of the deceased as I believed of him while living, -- as one, who had given all the evidence which man can give to his fellow, that he was truly and savingly converted, by a walk and conversation worthy of the gospel. I speak of him as he appeared to me; and I have not a doubt, though I knew him but partially, and only met with him after long intervals, that he was what he appeared. I was wont to watch him closely whenever he came under my view. There was a

simplicity and godly sincerity about all that he said or did, which irresistibly fixed my attention. I may add too, that with uncommon warmth of zeal, be united a tenderness of feeling, a meekness and lowliness of heart, like his Divine Master, which filled me with esteem and veneration for such manly, and yet such gentle goodness. I never met a fellow creature in whose presence I felt myself less; and yet to be thus humbled was more delightful, than to be elevated with my own vanity, or the applause of others.

It is just ten years since I first became acquainted with him on the committee of the Methodist Religious Tract Society. On many a cold, and dark, and bitter morning have I met him and a few other disciples of the same class, in that vestry; and though too much accustomed to indulgence, I found it both pleasant and profitable, at what to me was an unseasonable hour, thus to deny myself, for the sake of Christian converse with such a little band, engaged to spread the knowledge of the truth among the poor and the ignorant, who would not of themselves come to hear the preaching of the gospel.

What our late friend's hand found to do in this work, he literally did with his might. He distributed his portion of Tracts himself, accompanying the gift with a word in season, and following it in due course to inquire after its effects. He not only sowed this cheap seed; but after watering it with his tears, and waiting with patience, he went to the spot to look for the harvest, and often did he return rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

This is too little the practice of those who give away tracts; they indeed sow, and, perhaps, by the side of many waters, but they do not seek after the increase; and then, because the fruits, which they have been too negligent to gather, are not brought home to them, they come to meetings like this, and cry, "All is barren:" -- and all may be barren for such unthrifty cultivators; while those who act like good Samuel Hill, not only reap plenteously on good ground, but find that under the dew of God's blessing, and the influence of his Spirit, the highway, the rock, and the thorny soil, yield rich produce to reward their faith and toil.

I remember that, about the time of which I am speaking, the Devonshire Militia were quartered in this town. Samuel obtained from the committee a quantity of tracts, bound up in small volumes. These, with the permission of the officers, he placed in the Town Hall, which was used as a guard room, for the soldiers to read when they were on duty, or occasionally assembled there in small companies. Great blessing crowned this simple plan, for many of those within whose reach the bread of life was thus laid, tasted the good word of God; and of some there was reason to believe that they were thoroughly converted.

On another occasion, having a considerable number of tracts, (printed at Liverpool,) concerning a dreadful explosion at Felling Colliery, whereby nearly a hundred men and boys were plunged as in a moment into eternity, I put the bulk of the copies into his hands, knowing that he would resolutely and faithfully distribute them among persons, in this neighborhood, of the same calling as the unhappy sufferers in that catastrophe.

There is a street in the Park near his late residence, consisting of nearly eighty houses, called Colliers' Row, inhabited by families of that description. Here he was wont to go from door to door, sometimes with tracts, and sometimes only with a word of warning, instruction, or comfort

to the hardened, the ignorant, or the distressed; and so successfully did our friend labor on this station, in spite of mockery and insult to which he was occasionally exposed, that he first established a prayer-meeting at six o'clock on every Sunday morning, (it is now held at five o'clock,) and afterwards formed a Methodist class out of those whose hearts the Lord had opened.

He went unfeeringly into the houses of those who were most hostile to the profession of religion, exhorting them to attend the means of grace, and flee, while they might, from the wrath to come. Such were the meekness and courage with which he thus visited and admonished sinners, that some who affected to despise his counsels were glad to get out of the way to avoid him. Fruits of his labor, however, he did see from time to time; and many of those fruits remain to this day.

Two men, in particular, who were accustomed to spend their Sabbaths in bird catching, but who are now walking in the way of righteousness, attribute their change of life and heart to "the faithful word" which he taught them; though they liked it so little at first, that they used to watch his coming, and cry, "Yonder is Samuel Hill, we must be off:" -- and then they would secretly quit the houses in which they happened to be, to go into others which he had left in the progress of his visit.

I may mention one more instance of his zeal in distributing tracts. He got some large bills, on which were printed the words, "Know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." These he not only posted privately along the road leading from Sheffield to a neighboring village, on the evening before the annual Feast there; but afterwards he went openly into the place, and fixed up one of these placards close by a public house, though the landlord raged, and threatened him with violence if he persisted. He did persist; and having done his work, he dared the other to pull down God's Word from where he had placed it. The man did not dare; and Samuel himself told me, that he knew that the warning had not been in vain.

He was, indeed, one whose energy was almost as overpowering as his tenderness was persuasive:-- at once a Boanerges and a Barnabas, a son of thunder and a son of consolation, he spoke the terrors of the Lord to obdurate offenders with a power that made them tremble or retire from his rebuke; but to the poor and brokenhearted he had only words of healing, and while he told them of the love of Christ, his soul would beam through his countenance, and his heart flow in affectionate tears from his eyes.

It is true that Samuel Hill was an unlearned man, and one whom the great and the proud might despise, but his Master did not despise him. He may have had only one talent, but, O, how he employed it! -- those who imagine that they have ten, may blush to think what unprofitable servants they have been in comparison with him to whom so little was given.

He was cut down, however, in the midst of his years and of his usefulness, like a tree in its perfection, flourishing with vigor, and loaded with fruit. But the Lord's time is always the right time. Our friend and brother is at peace. One thing may, perhaps, have given him anxiety on his death-bed, how his family were to be maintained when he was removed; and yet he, who had been accustomed ever since he became a new creature, created unto good works, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, could not but take comfort to himself on account of those whom he was leaving behind, when he heard the still small voice of the word of God, which liveth and

abideth for ever, saying, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me."

I said, that I never met the deceased, except upon some errand or in some work of mercy. Several months ago, in consequence of a case of particular distress which he mentioned to me, I furnished him with a guinea, out of a small fund which an anonymous benefactor had placed at my disposal. He made that sum relieve various sufferers. Some weeks afterwards he called on me, and said, with a tone and look of animation that I shall never forget, "O, I could tell you such things about that guinea, as would make your heart glad!"

Unfortunately I said, "I cannot hear them now;" -- the opportunity was lost forever. I only saw him once again, and that was when he applied for the Infirmary -- recommendation in behalf of his orphan apprentice. When we parted, either on that or the former occasion, I forget whether, I said to him, "Do not be afraid to do a little more good, in the same way as before, to your afflicted neighbors; my stock is not quite exhausted; I have another guinea at your service whenever you want it."

He never returned to claim it. I fear that his family may now want what, if he had been spared, he might very well have given away in alms to others. That guinea shall be theirs, and I am sure it cannot be more worthily bestowed, since he has not lived to distribute it.

* * * * *

THE END