

THE **DIARY** OF
**GEORGE
MÜLLER**

SELECTED EXTRACTS

by A. RENDLE SHORT



To my dear son
Phil Perkins

from
Uncle Richard

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M.D., F.R.C.S.



ZONDERVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

This edition is issued by
special arrangement with
PICKERING & INGLIS LTD.
the British publishers.

<i>First Published</i>	-	1954
<i>Reprinted</i>	- -	1956
„	- -	1964

Made and Printed in Great Britain

PREFACE

IN my opinion, the example of George Müller's life did more to stimulate active faith in God, amongst people all over the world, than did the work or preaching of any other man, during the second half of the nineteenth century. Reasons for this opinion will be given later. So when I was requested to write up the story in a form which might bring its message home to the present generation, it seemed a very worth-while task. Excellent books have been written about him, but nothing could be so helpful, so arresting, so calculated to bring tears to the eyes, as George Müller's own diary. The Autobiography, besides being out of print, is too large to make easy reading. It seemed best, therefore, to pick out pages and paragraphs here and there, and to supply only a few lines of cementing material, to make the narrative intelligible. It has been a labour of love. I was asked, because my grandfather became a teacher at the Orphanage in 1855; my parents (and countless Bristolians besides) looked up to George Müller all their lives with much the same awe and affection with which the Israelites regarded one of their prophets; and I myself have a few boyish recollections of him, and am well acquainted with his Orphanage.

A. RENDLE SHORT

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CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS

George Müller was born in a village in Prussia on September 27, 1805, his father being a collector of taxes. He was brought up in the small town of Heimersleben.

MY father, who educated his children on worldly principles gave us much money, considering our age; not in order that we might spend it, but, as he said, to accustom us to possess money without spending it. The result was, that it led me and my brother into many sins. For I repeatedly spent a part of the money in a childish way, and afterwards, when my father looked over my little treasure, I sought to deceive him in making up the accounts, either by not putting down all the money which he had given me, or by professing to have more money in hand than was the case, and counting it out accordingly before him. Now, though this deceit was found out at last, and I was punished, yet I remained the same. For before I was ten years old I repeatedly took of the government money which was entrusted to my father, and which he had to make up; till one day, as he had repeatedly missed money, he detected my theft, by depositing a counted sum in the room where I was, and leaving me to myself for a while. Being thus left alone, I took some of the money, and hid it under my foot in my shoe. When my father, after his return, missed the money, I was searched and my theft detected.

Though I was punished on this and other occasions, yet I do not remember that at any time when my sins were found out, it made any other impression upon me than to make me think how I might do the thing the next time more

cleverly, so as not to be detected. Hence it came that this was not the last time that I was guilty of stealing.

When I was between ten and eleven years of age, I was sent to Halberstadt, to the Cathedral classical school, there to be prepared for the University; for my father's desire was that I should become a clergyman; not, indeed, that thus I might serve God, but that I might have a comfortable living. My time was now spent in studying, reading novels, and indulging, though so young, in sinful practices. Thus it continued till I was fourteen years old, when my mother was suddenly removed. The night she was dying I, not knowing of her illness, was playing at cards till two in the morning, and on the next day, being the Lord's Day, I went with some of my companions in sin to a tavern, and then we went about the streets, half intoxicated.

The following day I attended, for the first time, the religious instruction, which I was to receive previous to my confirmation. This likewise was attended to in a careless manner; and when I returned to my lodgings, my father had arrived to fetch my brother and me home to our mother's funeral. This bereavement made no lasting impression on my mind. I grew worse and worse. Three or four days before I was confirmed (and thus admitted to partake of the Lord's supper), I was guilty of gross immorality; and the very day before my confirmation, when I was in the vestry with the clergyman to confess my sins (according to the usual practice), after a formal manner, I defrauded him, for I handed over to him only the twelfth part of the fee which my father had given me for him.

In this state of heart, without prayer, without true repentance, without faith, without knowledge of the plan of salvation, I was confirmed, and took the Lord's Supper, on the Sunday after Easter, 1820. Yet I was not without some feeling about the solemnity of the thing, and I stayed at home in the afternoon and evening, whilst the other boys and girls, who had been confirmed with me, walked about in the fields.

I also made resolutions to turn from those vices in which I was living, and to study more. But as I attempted the thing in my own strength, all soon came to nothing, and I still grew worse.

Six weeks after my confirmation I went for a fortnight to Brunswick, to a sister of my father, where I became attached to a young female, who was a Roman Catholic. My time till Midsummer, 1821, was spent partly in study, but in a great degree in playing the pianoforte and guitar, reading novels, frequenting taverns, forming resolutions to become different, yet breaking them almost as fast as they were made. My money was often spent on my sinful pleasures, through which I was now and then brought into trouble, so that once, to satisfy my hunger, I stole a piece of coarse bread, the allowance of a soldier who was quartered in the house where I lodged. What a bitter, bitter thing is the service of Satan even in this world!

In November I went on a pleasure excursion to Magdeburg, where I spent six days in much sin; and though my absence from home had been found out by my father, before I returned from thence, yet I took all the money I could obtain and went to Brunswick, after I had, through a number of lies, obtained permission from my tutor. The reason of my going to Brunswick was the attachment I had formed eighteen months previously to the young female residing there. I spent a week at Brunswick, in an expensive hotel. At the end of the week my money was expended. This, as well as the want of a passport, prevented my staying any longer in the hotel; but as I still wished to remain at Brunswick, I went to my uncle, the husband of my father's sister, and made some excuse for not having gone to him in the first instance. My uncle intimated, after a week, that he did not wish me to remain with him any longer.

I then went, without money, to another hotel, in a village near Brunswick, where I spent another week in an expensive way of living. At last, the owner of the hotel, suspecting

that I had no money, asked for payment, and I was obliged to leave my best clothes as a security, and could scarcely thus escape from being arrested. I then walked about six miles, to Wolfenbüttel, went to an inn, and began to live as if I had plenty of money. Here I stayed two days, looking out for an opportunity to run away; for I had now nothing remaining to leave as a pledge. But the window of my room was too high to allow of my escaping, by getting down at night. On the second or third morning I went quietly out of the yard, and then ran off; but being suspected and observed, and therefore seen to go off, I was immediately called after, and so had to return.

I now confessed my case, but found no mercy. I was arrested, and taken between two soldiers to a police officer. Being suspected by him to be a vagabond or thief, I was examined for about three hours, and then sent to gaol. I now found myself, at the age of sixteen, an inmate of the same dwelling with thieves and murderers, and treated accordingly. My superior manners profited nothing. For though, as a particular favour, I received the first evening some meat with my bread, I had the next day the common allowance of the prisoners—very coarse bread and water, and for dinner, vegetables but no meat. My situation was most wretched. I was locked up in this place day and night, without permission to leave my cell. The dinner was such that on the first day I completely loathed it, and left it untouched. The second day I took a little, the third day all, and the fourth and following days I would fain have had more. On the second day I asked the keeper for a Bible, not to consider its blessed contents, but to pass away the time. However, I received none. Here then I was; no creature with me; no book, no work in my hands, and large iron rails before my narrow window.

During the second night I was awakened out of my sleep by the rattling of the bolts and keys. Three men came into my room. When I asked them in my fright what it meant,

they laughed at me, continuing quietly to try the iron rails, to see whether I could escape. After a few days I found out that a thief was imprisoned next to me, and, as far as a thick wooden partition would allow of it, I conversed with him; and shortly after the governor of the prison allowed him, as a favour to me, to share my cell. We now passed away our time in relating our adventures, and I was by this time so wicked, that I was not satisfied with relating things of which I had been really guilty, but I even invented stories, to show what a famous fellow I was.

I waited in vain day after day to be liberated. After about ten or twelve days my fellow prisoner and I disagreed, and thus we two wretched beings, to increase our wretchedness, spent day after day without conversing together. I was in prison from December 18th, 1821, till January 12th, 1822, when the keeper came and told me to go with him to the police office. Here I found that the Commissioner, before whom I had been tried, had first written to my uncle at Brunswick, and when he had written in reply, that it was better to acquaint my father with my conduct, the Commissioner had done so; and thus I was kept in prison till my father sent the money which was needed for my travelling expenses, to pay my debt in the inn, and for my maintenance in the prison. So ungrateful was I now, for certain little kindnesses shown to me by my fellow prisoner, that, although I had promised to call on his sister, to deliver a message from him, I omitted to do so; and so little had I been benefited by this my chastisement, that, though I was going home to meet an angry father, only two hours after I had left the town where I had been imprisoned, I chose an avowedly wicked person as my travelling companion for a great part of my journey.

My father, who arrived two days after I had reached Heimersleben, after having severely beaten me, took me home to Schoenebeck, intending to keep me there till Easter, and then to send me to a classical school at Halle, that I

might be under strict discipline and the continual inspection of a tutor. In the meantime I took pupils, whom I instructed in Latin, French, arithmetic, and German grammar. I now endeavoured, by diligence in study, to regain the favour of my father. My habits were, as to outward appearance, exemplary. I made progress in my own studies, benefited my pupils, and was soon liked by everybody around me, and in a short time my father had forgotten all. But all this time I was in heart as bad as ever; for I was still in secret habitually guilty of great sins.

I had now grown so wicked, that I could habitually tell lies without blushing. And further to show how fearfully wicked I was, I will mention, out of many others, only one great sin, of which I was guilty, before I left this place. Through my dissipated life I had contracted debts, which I had no means of discharging; for my father could allow me only about as much as I needed for my regular maintenance. One day, after having received a sum of money from him, and having purposely shown it to some of my companions, I afterwards feigned that it was stolen, having myself by force injured the lock of my trunk, and having also designedly forced open my guitar case. I also feigned myself greatly frightened at what had happened, ran into the director's room with my coat off, and told him that my money was stolen. I was greatly pitied. Some friends also gave me now as much money as I pretended to have lost, and the circumstances afforded me a ground upon which to ask my creditors to wait longer. But this matter turned out bitterly; for the director, having ground to suspect me, though he could not prove anything, never fully restored me to his confidence.

As regards my own feeling, though I was very wicked, yet this desperate act of depravity was too much, even for my hardened conscience; for it never afterwards allowed me to feel easy in the presence of the director's wife, who, like a kind mother, had waited on me in my illness, and on whom

I had now so wilfully brought trouble. How long-suffering was God at this time, not to destroy me at once!

Enters Halle University

I had now obtained what I had fondly looked forward to. I became a member of the University, and that with very honourable testimonials. I had thus obtained permission to preach in the Lutheran Establishment, but I was as truly unhappy and as far from God as ever. I had made strong resolutions, now at last to change my course of life, for two reasons: first, because, without it, I thought no parish would choose me as their pastor; and secondly, that without a considerable knowledge of divinity I should never get a good living; as the obtaining of a valuable curé, in Prussia, generally depends upon the degree which the candidates for the ministry obtain in passing the examination. But the moment I entered Halle, the University town all my resolutions came to nothing. Being now more than ever my own master, and without any control as long as I did not fight a duel, molest the people in the streets, etc., I renewed my profligate life afresh, though now a student of *divinity*. When my money was spent, I pawned my watch and a part of my linen and clothes, or borrowed in other ways. Yet in the midst of it all I had a desire to renounce this wretched life, for I had no enjoyment in it, and had sense enough left to see that the end one day or other would be miserable; for I should never get a living. But I had no sorrow of heart on account of offending God.

Friendship with Beta

One day when I was in a tavern with some of my wild fellow-students, I saw among them one of my former schoolfellows, named Beta, whom I formerly despised, because he was so quiet and serious. It now appeared well to me to choose him as my friend, thinking that if I could

but have better companions, I should improve my own conduct.

This Beta was a backslider. When formerly he was so quiet at school, I have reason to believe it was because the Spirit of God was working on his heart; but now, having departed from the Lord, he tried to put off the ways of God more and more, and to enjoy the world, of which he had known but little before. I sought his friendship, because I thought it would lead me to a steady life; and he gladly formed an acquaintance with me, as he told me afterwards, because he thought it would bring him into gay society. Thus my poor foolish heart was again deceived. And yet, God, in His abundant mercy, made him after all, in a way which was never thought of by me, the instrument of doing me good, not merely for time, but for eternity.

1825—*A Trip with some Friends.*

On AUGUST 18th, with a number of friends, I left Halle on a pleasure trip. It will be enough to say that we went as far as Mount Rigi in Switzerland. Forty-three days we were, day after day, travelling, almost always on foot. I had now obtained the desire of my heart. I had seen Switzerland. But still I was far from being happy. The Lord most graciously preserved us from many calamitous circumstances, which, but for His gracious providence, might have overtaken us. But I did not see His hand at that time, as I have seen it since. Sickness of one or more of us, or separation from one another, which might have so easily befallen us, would have brought us, being so far from home, and having just as much money as was absolutely needed, into a most miserable condition. I was on this journey like Judas; for, having the common purse, I was a thief. I so managed, that the journey cost me but two-thirds of what it cost my friends. Oh! how wicked was I now. At last all of us became tired of seeing even the most beautiful views; and

whilst at first, after having seen certain places, I had been saying with Horace, at the end of the day, in my pagan heart 'Vixi' (I have lived), I was now glad to get home again.

On SEPTEMBER 29th we reached Halle, from whence each of us, for the remainder of the vacation, went to his father's house. I had now, by many lies, to satisfy my father concerning the travelling expenses, and succeeded in deceiving him. During the three weeks I stayed at home, I determined to live differently for the future. Once more the Lord showed me what resolutions come to, when made in man's strength. I was different for a few days; but when the vacation was over, and fresh students came, and, with them, fresh money, all was soon forgotten.

At that time Halle was frequented by 1,260 students, about 900 of whom studied divinity, all of which were allowed to preach, although, I believe, not nine of them feared the Lord.

The time was now come when God would have mercy upon me. His love had been set upon such a wretch as I was before the world was made. His love had sent His Son to bear punishment on account of my sins, and to fulfil the law which I had broken times without number. And now at a time when I was as careless about Him as ever, He sent His Spirit into my heart. I had no Bible, and had not read in it for years. I went to church but seldom; but, from custom, I took the Lord's Supper twice a year. I had never heard the Gospel preached up to the beginning of November, 1825. I had never met with a person who told me that he meant, by the help of God, to live according to the Holy Scriptures. In short, I had not the least idea that there were any persons really different from myself, except in degree.

One Saturday afternoon, about the middle of November, I had taken a walk with my friend Beta. On our return he said to me that he was in the habit of going on Saturday evenings to the house of a Christian, where there was a meeting. On further enquiry he told me that they read the

Bible, sang, prayed, and read a printed sermon. No sooner had I heard this, than it was to me as if I had found something after which I had been seeking all my life long. I immediately wished to go with my friend, who was not at once willing to take me; for knowing me as a gay young man, he thought I should not like this meeting. At last, however, he said he would call for me. I would here mention that Beta seems to have had conviction of sin, and probably also a degree of acquaintance with the Lord, when about fifteen years old. Afterwards, being in a cold and worldly state, he joined me in that sinful journey to Switzerland. On his return, however, being extremely miserable, and convinced of his guilt, he made a full confession of his sin to his father; and, whilst with him, sought the acquaintance of a Christian brother, named Richter. This Dr. Richter gave him on his return to the University, a letter of introduction to a believing tradesman, of the name of Wagner. It was this brother in whose house the meeting was held.

We went together in the evening. As I did not know the manners of believers, and the joy they have in seeing poor sinners even in any measure caring about the things of God, I made an apology for coming. The kind answer of this dear brother I shall never forget. He said: 'Come as often as you please; house and heart are open to you.' We sat down and sang a hymn. Then brother Kayser, afterwards a missionary in Africa in connection with the London Missionary Society, who was then living at Halle, fell on his knees, and asked a blessing on our meeting. This kneeling down made a deep impression upon me; for I had never either seen any one on his knees, nor had I ever prayed myself on my knees. He then read a chapter and a printed sermon; for no regular meetings for expounding the Scriptures were allowed in Prussia, except an ordained clergyman was present. At the close we sang another hymn, and then the master of the house prayed. Whilst he prayed, my

feeling was something like this: 'I could not pray as well, though I am much more learned than this illiterate man.' The whole made a deep impression on me. I was happy; though if I had been asked why I was happy, I could not have clearly explained it.

When we walked home I said to Beta, 'All we have seen on our journey to Switzerland, and all our former pleasures, are as nothing in comparison with this evening.' Whether I fell on my knees when I returned home, I do not remember; but this I know, that I lay peaceful and happy in my bed. This shows that the Lord may begin His work in different ways. For I have not the least doubt that on that evening He began a work of grace in me, though I obtained joy without any deep sorrow of heart, and with scarcely any knowledge. That evening was the turning point in my life. The next day, and Monday, and once or twice besides, I went again to the house of this brother, where I read the Scriptures with him and another brother; for it was too long for me to wait till Saturday came again.

Now my life became very different, though all sins were not given up at once. My wicked companions were given up; the going to taverns was entirely discontinued; the habitual practice of telling falsehoods was no longer indulged in, but still a few times after this I spoke an untruth. At the time when this change took place, I was engaged in translating a novel out of French into German, for the press, in order to obtain the means of gratifying my desire to see Paris, etc. This plan about the journey was now given up, though I had not light enough to give up the work in which I was engaged, but finished it. The Lord, however, most remarkably put various obstacles in the way and did not allow me to sell the manuscript. At last, seeing that *the whole* was wrong, I determined never to sell it, and was enabled to abide by this determination. The manuscript was burnt.

I now no longer lived habitually in sin, though I was still

often overcome, and sometimes even by open sins, though far less frequently than before, and not without sorrow of heart. I read the Scriptures, prayed often, loved the brethren, went to church from right motives, and stood on the side of Christ, though laughed at by my fellow-students.

By the way, I would here observe, that the Lord afterwards, in a most remarkable way, supplied my temporal wants. For shortly after this had occurred, several American gentlemen, three of whom were professors in American colleges, came to Halle for literary purposes, and as they did not understand German, I was recommended by Dr. Tholuck to teach them. These gentlemen, some of whom were believers, paid so handsomely for the instruction which I gave them, and for the lectures of certain professors which I wrote out for them, that I had enough and to spare. Thus did the Lord richly make up to me the little which I had relinquished for His sake. *'O fear the Lord, ye His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him'* (Psalm 34. 9).

He began to read missionary literature, and had a desire to become a missionary himself. His father, who, after spending so much money on his education had looked forward to ending his days comfortably in his son's parsonage, was very upset and angry about this project.

Shortly after this, being still greatly exercised about going out as a missionary, and wishing (according to my natural mind, as I now see) to have the matter settled, in one way or the other, without being willing quietly, patiently, and prayerfully to wait on the Lord, I came to the conclusion to ascertain the Lord's mind by the lot. To this end I not merely drew a lot in private, but I bought a ticket in the royal lottery; and I left it thus with the Lord, that if I gained anything, I should take it to be His will that I should become a missionary, if not, that I should remain at home. My ticket came out with a small sum, on account of which it appeared to me that I should be a missionary. I therefore applied to the Berlin

Missionary Society, but was not accepted, because my father had not given his consent.

Very soon afterwards I was led to see in *some* degree, and since then much more fully, the error into which I had fallen respecting the lot. I ought to have said to myself, "How can an individual, so ignorant as you are, think about being a teacher to others?" For though I was truly begotten again, and rested upon Christ alone for salvation, still I should not have been able to give a clear explanation of even the most elementary truths of the Gospel. How then could I be fit to teach others? The first thing, therefore, I ought to have done, was, to seek through much prayer, and searching the Scriptures, and a holy life, to obtain more knowledge of divine things. Further, as to my impatience in wishing the matter settled, how could I have been fit to endure in that state the hardships and trials of a missionary life, in which my patience, no doubt, would have been much more severely tried?

To ascertain the Lord's will we ought to use scriptural means. Prayer, the Word of God, and His Spirit should be united together. We should go to the Lord repeatedly in prayer, and ask Him to teach us by His Spirit through His Word. I say, by His Spirit through His Word. For if we should think that His Spirit led us to do so and so, because certain facts are so and so, and yet His Word is opposed to the step which we are going to take, we should be deceiving ourselves.

In connection with this I would mention that the Lord very graciously gave me, from the very commencement of my divine life, a measure of simplicity and of childlike disposition in spiritual things, so that whilst I was exceedingly ignorant of the Scriptures, and was still from time to time overcome even by outward sins, yet I was enabled to carry most minute matters to the Lord in prayer. And I have found that *'godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'* Though very

weak and ignorant, yet I had now, by the grace of God, some desire to benefit others, and he who so faithfully had once served Satan, sought now to win souls for Christ.

He found a schoolmaster living in a village near Halle, who held a prayer meeting early every morning for the miners before they went to work.

This schoolmaster asked me whether I would not preach in his parish, as the aged and infirm clergyman would be very glad of my assistance. Up to this time I had never preached, though for fifteen months past I might have done so as a student of divinity; for before Christmas, 1825, I had been mercifully kept from attempting to preach (though I wrote to my father about July that I had preached, because I knew it would please him), and after Christmas, when I knew the Lord, I refrained from doing so, because I felt that I was yet too little instructed in the things of God. The same reason ought to have still kept me from preaching; yet I thought that, by taking a sermon, or the greater part of one, written by a spiritual man, and committing it to memory, I might benefit the people. Had I reasoned scripturally, I should have said, surely it cannot be the will of God, that I should preach in this way, if I have not enough knowledge of the Scriptures to write a sermon. Moreover, I had not enough light or tenderness of conscience to see that I was a deceiver in the pulpit; for everybody supposes that the sermon a man preaches is, if not entirely, at least as to the most part, his own composition.

I now set about putting a printed sermon into a suitable form, and committing it to memory. It was hard work. There is no joy in man's own doings and choosings. It took me nearly a whole week to commit to memory such a sermon as would take up nearly an hour in repeating. I got through it, but had no enjoyment in the work. It was on AUGUST 27th, 1826, at eight in the morning, in a chapel of ease, in connection with which my friend was schoolmaster.

At eleven I repeated the same sermon verbatim in the parish church. There was one service more, in the afternoon, at which I needed not to have done anything; for the school-master might have read a printed sermon, as he used to do. But having a desire to serve the Lord, though I knew not how to do it scripturally, and having reason to believe that the Gospel had scarcely ever been preached in that place, I had it in my heart to preach again in the afternoon. But I had no second sermon committed to memory. It came, however, to my mind to read the 5th chapter of Matthew, and to make such remarks as I was able. I did so. Immediately upon beginning to expound, '*Blessed are the poor in spirit, etc.*' I felt myself greatly assisted, and whereas in the morning my sermon had not been simple enough for the people to understand it, I now was listened to with the greatest attention, and I think was also understood. My own peace and joy were great. I felt this a blessed work.

After this encouragement, he preached a good deal, in a simple way. He lived for two months in an orphanage founded in dependence on God by a devoted believer named A. H. Francke, Professor of Divinity at Halle. This left a lasting impression on his mind. He also profited by the sermons of a godly minister named Dr. Tholuck. In the university there was a meeting for students, beginning with half a dozen but growing later to about twenty. They prayed together, read the Scriptures, sang a hymn, and sometimes one or another gave a short address. He tells us that he was greatly stirred up and refreshed in these meetings.

As to the other means of grace I would say: I fell into the snare, into which so many young believers fall, the reading of religious books in preference to the Scriptures. I could no longer read French and German novels, as I had formerly done, to feed my carnal mind; but still I did not put into the room of those books the best of all books. I read tracts, missionary papers, sermons, and biographies of godly

persons. The last kind of books I found more profitable than others, and had they been well selected, or had I not read too much of such writings, or had any of them tended particularly to endear the Scriptures to me, they might have done me much good. I never had been at any time in my life in the habit of reading the Holy Scriptures. When under fifteen years of age I occasionally read a little of them at school; afterwards God's precious book was entirely laid aside, so that I never read one single chapter of it, as far as I remember, till it pleased God to begin a work of grace in my heart. Now the scriptural way of reasoning would have been: God Himself has condescended to become an author, and I am ignorant about that precious book, which His Holy Spirit has caused to be written through the instrumentality of His servants, and it contains that which I ought to know, and the knowledge of which will lead me to true happiness; therefore I ought to read again and again this most precious book, this book of books, most earnestly, most prayerfully, and with much meditation; and in this practice I ought to continue all the days of my life. For I was aware though I read it but little, that I knew scarcely anything of it. But instead of acting thus, and being led by my ignorance of the Word of God to study it more, my difficulty in understanding it, and the little enjoyment I had in it, made me careless of reading it (for much prayerful reading of the Word, gives not merely more knowledge, but increases the delight we have in reading it); and thus, like many believers, I practically preferred, for the first four years of my divine life, the works of uninspired men to the Oracles of the living God. The consequence was that I remained a babe, both in knowledge and grace. In knowledge I say, for all *true* knowledge must be derived, by the Spirit, from the Word. And as I neglected the Word, I was for nearly four years so ignorant, that I did not *clearly* know even the *fundamental* points of our holy faith. And this lack of knowledge most sadly kept me back from walking steadily in the ways of

God. For it is the truth that makes us free (John 8. 31, 32), by delivering us from the slavery of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. The Word proves it; the experience of the saints proves it; and also my own experience most decidedly proves it. For when it pleased the Lord in AUGUST, 1829, to bring me really to the Scriptures, my life and walk became very different. And though even since then I have fallen very short of what I might, and ought to have been, yet, by the grace of God, I have been enabled to live much nearer to Him than before.

In August, 1827, he offered himself to a missionary society to go to Bucharest, but this scheme fell through, and on Dr. Tholuck's advice he applied to a London mission to the Jews. A difficulty which stood in the way was that like all other young men he was liable to serve in the Prussian army. However, he had a severe hæmorrhage from the stomach.

I was examined, and declared to be unfit for military service. With a medical certificate to this effect, and a letter of recommendation from the major, I went to the chief general, who received me very kindly, and who himself wrote instantaneously to a second military physician, likewise to examine me *at once*. This was done, and it was by him confirmed that I was unfit. Now the chief general himself, as his adjutants happened to be absent, in order to hasten the matter, wrote with his own hands, the papers which were needed, and I got a complete dismissal, and that for life, from all military engagements. This was much more than I could have expected. The military gentleman spoke to me in a very kind way, and pointed out certain parts of the Scriptures, which he in particular advised me to bring before the Jews, especially Romans II.

This obstacle removed, he came in the year 1829 to London to the training college belonging to the missionary society.

My brethren in the seminary, most of them Germans, had instruction in Hebrew, Latin, Greek, French, German, etc., scarcely any of them having had a classical education; I read only Hebrew, and was exempted from all the rest. I remember how I longed to be able to expound the Scriptures in English, when I heard a German brother do so, a few days after my arrival. And I also remember what joy it gave me, when a few weeks after, for the first time, I spoke in English to a little boy, whom I met alone in the fields, about his soul, thinking that he would bear with my broken English. I now studied much, about twelve hours a day, chiefly Hebrew; commenced Chaldee; perfected myself in reading the German-Jewish in Rabbinic characters, committed portions of the Hebrew Old Testament to memory, etc., and this I did with prayer, often falling on my knees, leaving my books for a little, that I might seek the Lord's blessing, and also, that I might be kept from that spiritual deadness, which is so frequently the result of much study. I looked up to the Lord even whilst turning over the leaves of my Hebrew dictionary, asking His help, that I might quickly find the words. I made comparatively little progress in English, for living with some of my countrymen, I was continually led to converse in German.

My experience in this particular leads me to remark, should this fall into the hands of any who are desirous to labour as missionaries among a people whose language is not their own, that they should seek not merely to live among them, for the sake of soon learning their language, but also, as much as possible, to be separated from those who speak their own language; for when I was in Devonshire some months afterwards, completely separated from those who spoke German, I daily made much progress, whilst I made comparatively little in London.

In London, he became very ill again, and was sent to Teignmouth to recuperate. Here he met Henry Craik, a Scotsman, a quiet, godly, scholarly man, who after-

wards was his dearest friend and beloved colleague in ministry for forty-four years. He was led to a renewed study of the Scriptures and to learn to take them as his only guide and standard of judgment in spiritual things. In particular, he now came to believe in the Lord's Second Coming. He became unhappy about his connection with the missionary society. They would probably send him to work amongst Jews in Europe, but he knew that unless he accepted ordination he would be able to do very little without incurring serious penalties, and ordination he felt would be a yoke and a bondage. Also, he felt that it was not right to restrict his ministry to Jews only. He therefore sent in his resignation, spite of the fact that this left him without any means of support except the promise of God that if we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all our temporal needs will be supplied.

On DECEMBER 30th, I left London for Exmouth, where I intended to spend my vacation in the house of my Christian friends, who had kindly lodged me the summer before, that I might preach there during this fortnight, and still more fully weigh the matter respecting my proposal to the Society. I arrived at Exmouth at six in the evening, an hour before the commencement of a prayer-meeting at Ebenezer Chapel. My heart was burning with a desire to tell of the Lord's goodness to my soul, and to speak forth what I considered might not be known to most with whom I met. Being, however, not called on, either to speak or pray, I was silent. The next morning I spoke on the difference between *being a Christian and being a happy Christian*, and showed whence it generally comes that we rejoice so little in the Lord. This my first testimony was blessed to many believers, that God, as it appears, might show me that He was with me. It proved a blessing to a Christian woman, who had been in bondage for ten years and who, in the providence of God, had been brought from Exeter to be present that morning.

1830

After I had preached about three weeks at Exmouth, and its neighbourhood, I went to Teignmouth, with the intention of staying there ten days, to preach the Word among the brethren, with whom I had become acquainted during the previous summer, and thus to tell them of the Lord's goodness to me. One of the brethren said almost immediately on my arrival at Teignmouth, I wish you would become our minister, as the present one is going to leave us. My answer was, I do not intend to be stationary in any place, but to go through the country, preaching the Word as the Lord may direct me. On the Monday evening I preached for brother Craik at Shaldon in the presence of three ministers, none of whom liked the sermon; yet it pleased God, through it, to bring to the knowledge of His dear Son, a young woman who had been servant to one of these ministers, and who had heard her master preach many times. How differently does the Lord judge from man! Here was a particular opportunity for the Lord to get glory to Himself. A foreigner was the preacher, with great natural obstacles in the way, for he was not able to speak English with fluency; but he had a desire to serve God, and was by this time also brought into such a state of heart as to desire that God alone should have the glory, if any good were done through his instrumentality. How often has it struck me, both at that time and since, that His strength was made perfect in my weakness.

On Tuesday evening I preached at Ebenezer Chapel, Teignmouth, the same chapel at the opening of which I became acquainted with the brother whom the Lord had afterwards used as an instrument of benefiting me so much. My preaching was also disliked there by many of the hearers; but the Lord opened the hearts of a few to receive the truth, and another young woman was brought to the Lord through the instrumentality of the Word then preached. On Wednesday I preached again in the same chapel, and the Word was

disliked still, perhaps more, though the few who received the truth in the love of it increased in number. On Thursday I preached again at Shaldon, and on Friday at Teignmouth. The effect was the same; dislike on the one side, and joy and delight in the truth on the other. By this time I began to reflect about the cause of this opposition; for the same brethren who had treated me with much kindness the previous summer, when I was less spiritually minded, and understood much less of the truth, now seemed to oppose me, and I could not explain it in any other way than this, that the Lord intended to work through my instrumentality at Teignmouth, and that therefore Satan, fearing this, sought to raise opposition.

On the Lord's Day I preached three times; so powerfully did I feel the importance of those precious truths I had so recently learned, that I longed to be instrumental in communicating them to others.

By this time the request that I would stay at Teignmouth and be the minister of the chapel there, had been repeatedly expressed by an increasing number of the brethren; but others were decidedly against my remaining. This opposition was instrumental in settling my mind that I should stay for a while, at least until I was formally rejected. In consequence of this conclusion I took the following step, which, it may be, I should not repeat under similar circumstances, but which was certainly taken in love to those who were concerned in the matter, and for the glory of God, as far as I then had light.

On the Tuesday following, after preaching, I told the brethren how, in the providence of God, I had been brought to them without the least intention of staying among them, but that, on finding them without a minister, I had been led to see it to be the will of God to remain with them. I also told them, as far as I remember, that I was aware of the opposition of some, but that I nevertheless intended to preach to them till they rejected me; and if they should say

I might preach, but they would give me no salary, that would make no difference on my part, as I did not preach for the sake of money; but I told them at the the same time, that it was an honour to be allowed to supply the temporal wants of any of the servants of Christ.

I preached again three times on the Lord's Day, none saying we wish you not to preach, though many of the hearers did not hear with enjoyment. Some of them left, and never returned; some left, but returned after a while. Others came to the chapel, who had not been in the habit of attending there previous to my coming. There was sufficient proof that the work of God was going on, for there were those who were glad to hear what I preached, overlooking the infirmities of the foreigner, delighting in the food for their souls, without caring much about the form in which the truth was set before them; and these were not less spiritual than the rest: and there were those who objected decidedly; some, however, manifesting merely the weakness of brethren, and others the bitterness of the opposers of the cross. There was, in addition to this, a great stir, a spirit of enquiry, and a searching of the Scriptures, whether these things were so. And what is more than all, God set His seal upon the work, in converting sinners. Twelve weeks I stood in this same position, whilst the Lord graciously supplied my temporal wants, through two brethren, unasked for. After this time, the whole little church, eighteen in number, unanimously gave me an invitation to become their pastor. My answer to them was, that their invitation did not show me more than I had seen before, that it was the will of God that I should remain with them, yet that for their sakes I could not but rejoice in this invitation, as it was a proof to me that God had blessed them through my instrumentality in making them thus of one mind. I also expressly stated to the brethren, that I should only stay so long with them as I saw it clearly to be the will of the Lord; for I had not given up my intention of going from place to place, if the Lord

would allow me to do so. The brethren, at the same time, now offered to supply my temporal wants, by giving me £55 a year, which sum was afterwards somewhat increased, on account of the increase of the church.

That which I have found most beneficial in the public ministry of the Word, is *expounding* the Scriptures. This may be done in a twofold way, either by entering minutely into the bearing of every point occurring in the portion, or by giving the general outlines, and thus leading the hearers to see the meaning and connection of the whole. The benefits which I have seen resulting from *expounding* are these: (1) The hearers are thus, with God's blessing, led to the Scriptures. This induces them to bring their Bibles, and I have observed that those who at first did not bring them, have afterwards been induced to do so. (2) The expounding of the Scriptures leaves to the hearers a connecting link, so that the reading over again of the portion of the Word which has been expounded brings to their remembrance what has been said; and thus, with God's blessing, leaves a more lasting impression on their minds. Expounding the Word of God brings little honour to the preacher from the *unenlightened* or *careless* hearer, but it tends much to the benefit of the hearers in general.

Simplicity of expression, whilst the truth is set forth, is of the utmost importance. It should be the aim of the teacher so to speak, that children, servants, and people who cannot read may be able to understand him, so far as the natural mind can comprehend the things of God.

In April of this year he met some Christian leaders at Sidmouth who invited him to study what the Scriptures had to say on the subject of believer's baptism, and though his first reaction was hostile, he came to the conclusion that it was his Christian duty to be baptized by immersion.

During this summer also it appeared to me scriptural, according to the example of the Apostles (Acts 20, 7) to

break bread every Lord's Day, though there is no *commandment* given to do so, either by the Lord, or by the Holy Ghost through the Apostles. And at the same time it appeared to me scriptural, according to Eph. 4., Rom. 12, etc., that there should be given room for the Holy Ghost to work through any of the brethren whom He pleased to use; that thus one member might benefit the others with the gift which the Lord has bestowed upon him. Accordingly at certain meetings any of the brethren had an opportunity to exhort or teach the rest, if they considered that they had anything to say which might be beneficial to the hearers. I observe here, that, as the Lord gave me grace to endeavour at once to carry out the light which He had been pleased to give me on this point, and as the truth was but in part apprehended, there was much infirmity mixed with the manner of carrying it out. Nor was it until several years after that the Lord was pleased to teach me about this point more perfectly. That the disciples of Jesus should meet together on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread, and that that should be their principal meeting, and that those, whether one or several, who are truly gifted by the Holy Spirit for service, be it for exhortation, or teaching, or rule, etc., are responsible to the Lord for the exercise of their gifts: these are to me no matters of uncertainty, but points on which my soul, by grace, is established, through the revealed will of God.

Marries Miss Groves

On OCTOBER 7th, I was united by marriage to Miss Mary Groves, sister of Anthony Norris Groves.* This step was taken after prayer and deliberation, from a full conviction that it was better for me to be married: and I have never regretted since, either the step itself, or the choice, but desire to be truly grateful to God for having given me such a wife.

About this time, Müller began to have doubts about the way in which the little church remunerated his services.

*See page 1

His salary was derived from pew rents, which seemed to be out of harmony with James 2. 1-6. It might be that the money was given unwillingly, or at an inconvenient time. A salary might tempt him to be less outspoken in his preaching, from fear of man. Accordingly, he not only requested the church to cease paying him a regular salary, but he resolved never to let anyone know, even indirectly, whether he needed help. A box was placed at the door, and gifts for his support might be put into it.

NOVEMBER 18th. Our money was reduced to about eight shillings. When I was praying with my wife in the morning, the Lord brought to my mind the state of our purse, and I was led to ask Him for some money. About four hours after, we were with a sister at Bishopsteignton, and she said to me, 'Do you want any money?' I said, 'I told the brethren, dear sister, when I gave up my salary, that I would for the future tell the Lord *only* about my wants.' She replied, 'But He has told me to give you some money. About a fortnight ago I asked Him what I should do for Him, and He told me to give you some money; and last Saturday it came again powerfully to my mind, and has not left me since, and I felt it so forcibly last night that I could not help speaking of it to Brother P.' My heart rejoiced, seeing the Lord's faithfulness, but I thought it better not to tell her about our circumstances, lest she should be influenced to give accordingly; and I also was assured that, if it were of the Lord, she could not but give. I therefore turned the conversation to other subjects, but when I left she gave me two guineas. We were full of joy on account of the goodness of the Lord. I would call upon the reader to admire the gentleness of the Lord, that He did not try our faith much at the commencement, but gave us first encouragement, and allowed us to see His willingness to help us, before He was pleased to try it more fully.

DECEMBER 31st. With this closes the year 1830. Through-

out it the Lord richly supplied all my temporal wants, though at the commencement of it I had no certain human prospect of one single shilling; so that, even as regards temporal things, I had not been in the smallest degree a loser in acting according to the dictates of my conscience, and as regards spiritual things, the Lord had indeed dealt bountifully with me, and led me on in many respects, and, moreover, had condescended to use me as an instrument in doing His work.

On JANUARY 6th, 7th and 8th, 1831, I had repeatedly asked the Lord for money, but received none. On the evening of January 8th I left my room for a few minutes, and was then tempted to distrust the Lord, though He had been so gracious to us, in that He not only up to that day had supplied all our wants, but had given us also those answers to prayer, which have been in part just mentioned. I was so sinful, for about five minutes, as to think it would be of no use to trust in the Lord in this way. I also began to say to myself, that I had perhaps gone too far in living in this way. But thanks to the Lord! this trial lasted but a few minutes. He enabled me again to trust in Him, and Satan was immediately confounded; for when I returned to my room (out of which I had not been absent ten minutes), the Lord had sent deliverance, for a sister in the Lord, who resided at Exeter, had come to Teignmouth, and brought us £2 4s.

JANUARY 10th. To-day, when we had again but a few shillings, £5 was given to us, which had been taken out of the box. I had, once for all, told the brethren, who had the care of these temporal things, to have the kindness to let me have the money every week; but as these beloved brethren either forgot to take it out weekly, or were ashamed to bring it in such small sums, it was generally taken out every three, four, or five weeks. As I had stated to them, however, from the commencement that I desired to look neither to man nor the box but to the living God, I thought it not right on my part to remind them of my request to have the money weekly, lest it should hinder the testimony which I wished

to give, of trusting in the living God alone. It was on this account that on JANUARY 28th, when we had again but little money, though I had seen the brethren on JANUARY 24th open the box and take out the money, I would not ask the brother in whose hands it was, to let me have it; but I asked the Lord to incline his heart to bring it, and but a little time afterwards it was given to us, even £1 8s. 6d.

JUNE 12th. Lord's Day. On Thursday last I went with brother Craik to Torquay, to preach there. I had only about 3s. with me, and left my wife with about 6s. at home. The Lord provided beds for us through the hospitality of a brother. I asked the Lord repeatedly for money; but when I came home my wife had only about 3s. left, having received nothing. We waited still upon the Lord. Yesterday passed away and no money came. We had 9d. left. This morning we were still waiting upon the Lord, and looking for deliverance. We had only a little butter left for breakfast, sufficient for brother E. and a relative living with us, to whom we did not mention our circumstances, that they might not be made uncomfortable. After the morning meeting, brother Y. most unexpectedly opened the box, and, in giving me quite as unexpectedly the money at such a time, he told me that *he and his wife could not sleep last night on account of thinking that we might want money.* The most striking point is, that after I had repeatedly asked the Lord, but received nothing, *I then prayed yesterday that the Lord would be pleased to impress it on brother Y. that we wanted money, so that he might open the box.* There was in it £1 8s. 10½d. Our joy on account of this fresh deliverance was great, and we praised the Lord heartily.

JULY 20th. A shoulder of mutton and a loaf were sent to us anonymously. I understood some time afterwards, that Satan had raised the false report that we were starving, in consequence of which a believer sent these provisions. I would mention, by the way, that various reports have been circulated, on account of this our way of living. Sometimes

it has been said that we had not enough to eat, and that surely such and such an infirmity of body we had brought on us, because we had not the necessities of life. Now, the truth is, that, whilst we have been often brought low; yea, so low, that we have not had even as much as one single penny left; or so as to have the last loaf on the table, and not as much money as was needed to buy another loaf; yet *never* have we had to sit down to a meal, without our good Lord having provided *nourishing* food for us. I am bound to state this, and I do it *with pleasure*. My Master has been a kind Master to me, and if I had to choose this day again, as to the way of living, the Lord giving me grace, I would not choose differently. But even these very reports, false as they were, I doubt not the Lord has sometimes used as a means to put it into the hearts of His children, to remember our temporal necessities.

NOVEMBER 19th. We had not enough to pay our weekly rent; but the Lord graciously sent us again today 14s. 6d. I would just observe, that we never contract debts, which we believe to be unscriptural (according to Romans 13. 8); and therefore we have no bills with our tailor, shoemaker, grocer, butcher, baker, etc., but all we buy we pay for in ready money. The Lord helping us, we would rather suffer privation than contract debts. Thus we always know how much we have, and how much we have a right to give away. May I entreat the believing reader prayerfully to consider this matter; for I am well aware that many trials come upon the children of God, on account of not acting according to Romans 13. 8.

After we had, on DECEMBER 31st, 1831, looked over the Lord's gracious dealing with us during the past year, in providing for all our temporal wants, we had about 10s. left. A little while after, the providence of God called for that, so that not a single farthing remained. Thus we closed the old year, in which the Lord had been so gracious in giving to us, without our asking any one, altogether, £131 18s. 8d. There

had been likewise many articles of provision and some articles of clothing given to us, worth at least £20. I am so particular in mentioning these things, to show that we are never losers by acting according to the mind of the Lord. For had I had my regular salary, humanly speaking, I should not have had nearly as much; but whether this would have been the case or not, this is plain, that I have not served a hard Master, and that is what I delight to show. For, to speak well of His name, that thus my beloved fellow-pilgrims, who may read this, may be encouraged to trust in Him, is the chief purpose of my writing.

1832

JANUARY 7th. We had been again repeatedly asking the Lord today and yesterday to supply our temporal wants, having no means to pay our weekly rent; and this evening, as late as eleven o'clock, a brother gave us 19s. 6d., a proof that the Lord is not limited to time.

JANUARY 14th. This morning we had nothing but dry bread with our tea; only the second time since we have been living by simple faith upon Jesus for temporal supplies. We have more than £40 of ready money in the house for two bills, which will not be payable for several weeks, but we do not consider this money to be our own, and would rather suffer great privation, God helping us, than take of it. I thank the Lord, who gives me grace to be more faithful in these matters than I used to be formerly, when I would have taken of it, and said, that by the time the money was actually due, I should be able to replace it. We were looking to our Father, and He has not suffered us to be disappointed. For when now we had but 3d. left, and only a small piece of bread, we received 2s. and 5s., the particulars concerning which would take up too much space to relate.

About this time I repeatedly prayed with sick believers till they were restored. *Unconditionally* I asked the Lord for the blessing of bodily health (a thing which I could not do now),

and almost always had the petition granted. In some instances, however, the prayer was not answered. In the same way, whilst in London, NOVEMBER, 1829, in answer to my prayers, I was immediately restored from a bodily infirmity under which I had been labouring for a long time, and which has never returned since. The way in which I now account for these facts is as follows. It pleased the Lord, I think, to give me in such cases something like the gift (not grace) of faith, so that unconditionally I could ask and look for an answer. The difference between the *gift* and the *grace* of faith seems to me this. According to the *gift of faith* I am able to do a thing, or believe that a thing will come to pass, the not doing of which, or the not believing of which *would not be sin*; according to the *grace of faith* I am able to do a thing, or believe that a thing will come to pass, respecting which I have the Word of God as the ground to rest upon, and, therefore, the not doing it, or the not believing it, *would be sin*. For instance, *the gift of faith* would be needed, to believe that a sick person should be restored again, though there is no human probability: for *there is no promise to that effect*; *the grace of faith* is needed to believe that the Lord will give me the necessities of life, if I first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, for there is a promise to that effect (Matt. 6. 33).

APRIL 12th. Still feel the impression that Teignmouth is no longer my place.

APRIL 13th. Found a letter from brother Craik, from Bristol, on my return from Torquay, where I had been to preach. He invites me to go and help him. It appears to me from what he writes, that such places as Bristol more suit my gifts. O Lord, teach me! I have felt this day, more than ever, that I shall soon leave Teignmouth. I fear, however, there is much connected with it which savours of the flesh, and that makes me fearful. It seems to me as if I should shortly go to Bristol, if the Lord permit.

APRIL 14th. Wrote a letter to brother Craik, in which

I said I would go, if I clearly saw it to be the Lord's will. Have felt again very much today, yea, far more than ever, that I shall soon leave Teignmouth. At last I was pressed in spirit to determine that to-morrow I would tell the brethren so, in order that by the result of this I might see more of the Lord's mind; and that, at all events, I might have their prayers, to be directed in this matter by the Lord.

APRIL 22ND. This morning I preached at Gideon Chapel, Bristol. (Though this sermon gave rise to false reports, yet the Lord was pleased to bless it to several; and the false reports were likewise instrumental in bringing many individuals under the sound of the Word). In the afternoon I preached at the Pithay Chapel. (This sermon was a blessing to many, many souls; and many were brought through it, to come afterwards to hear brother Craik and me. Among others, it was the means of converting a young man who was a notorious drunkard, and who was just again on his way to a public house, when an acquaintance of his met him, and asked him to go with him to hear a foreigner preach. He did so; and from that moment he was so completely altered, that he never again went to a public house, and was so happy in the Lord afterwards that he often neglected his supper, from eagerness to read the Scriptures, as his wife told me. He died about five months afterwards). This evening I was much instructed in hearing brother Craik preach. I am now fully persuaded that Bristol is the place where the Lord will have me to labour.

After consulting the brethren at Teignmouth, Craik and Müller decided to go to Bristol.

APRIL 30th. It was most affecting to take leave of the dear children of God, dozens pressing us to return soon, many with tears in their eyes. The blessing which the Lord has given to our ministry, seems to be very great. We both see it fully the Lord's will to come here, though we do not see under what circumstances. A brother has promised to take

Bethesda Chapel for us, and to be answerable for the payment of the rent; so that thus we should have two large chapels. I saw again, two instances today, in which my preaching has been blessed.

MAY 15th. The brethren assembling at Gideon accept our offer to come under the conditions we have made, for the present to consider us only as ministering among them, but not in any fixed pastoral relationship, so that we may preach as we consider it to be according to the mind of God, *without reference to any rules among them; that the pew-rents should be done away with; and that we should go on, respecting the supply of our temporal wants, as in Devonshire.* We intend, the Lord willing, to leave in about a week, though there is nothing settled respecting Bethesda Chapel.

JUNE 25th. Today it was finally settled to take Bethesda Chapel for a twelvemonth, on the condition that a brother at once paid the rent, with the understanding that if the Lord shall bless our labours in that place, so that believers are gathered together in fellowship, he expects them to help him; but if not, that he will pay all. This was the only way in which we could take the chapel, for we could not think it to be of God to have had this chapel, though there should have been every prospect of usefulness, if it had made us in any way debtors. We had tried to obtain a cheaper meeting place, but could find none large enough to accommodate the hearers.

JULY 6th. Today we commenced preaching at Bethesda Chapel. It was a good day.

JULY 13th. Today we heard of the first cases of cholera in Bristol.

JULY 16th. This evening from six to nine o'clock, we had appointed for conversing in the vestry, one by one, with individuals who wished to speak to us about their souls. There were so many, that we were engaged from six till twenty minutes past ten.

AUGUST 13th. This evening one brother and four sisters

united with brother Craik and me in church fellowship at Bethesda, *without any rules, desiring only to act as the Lord shall be pleased to give us light through His Word.*

AUGUST 24th. This morning a sister in the Lord, within fifty yards of our lodgings, was taken ill with cholera, and died this afternoon. Her husband, also a believer, has been attacked, and may be near death. The ravages of this disease are becoming daily more and more fearful. We have reason to believe that great numbers die daily in this city. Who may be the next, God alone knows. I have never realized so much the nearness of death. Except the Lord keep us this night, we shall be no more in the land of the living to-morrow. Just now, ten in the evening, the funeral bell is ringing, and has been ringing the greater part of this evening. It rings almost all the day. Into Thine hands, O Lord, I commend myself. Here is Thy poor worthless child! If this night I should be taken by cholera, my only hope and trust is in the blood of Jesus Christ, shed for the remission of all my many sins. I have been thoroughly washed in it, and the righteousness of God covers me. As yet there have not been any of the saints, among whom brother Craik and I labour, taken ill. (Only one of them fell asleep afterwards in consequence of this disease). I would observe, that though brother Craik and I visited many cholera cases, by day and by night, yet the Lord most graciously preserved us and our families from it).

SEPTEMBER 17th. This morning the Lord, in addition to all His other mercies, has given us a little girl, Lydia.

1833

MAY 28th. This morning, whilst sitting in my room, the distress of several brethren and sisters was brought to my mind, and I said to myself, 'Oh that it might please the Lord to give me means to help them!' About an hour afterwards I received £60 from a brother, whom I had never seen, and who then lived, as he does still, at a distance of several thous-

and miles. This shows how the Lord can provide in any way for His people, and that He is not confined to places. Oh that my heart might overflow with gratitude to the Lord!

MAY 29th. Review of the last twelve months, since we have been in Bristol, as regards the fruits of our labours. (1) It has pleased the Lord to gather a church, through our instrumentality, at Bethesda, which increased to 60 in number, and there have been added to Gideon church 49; therefore the total number of those added to us within the year has been 109. (2) There have been converted, through our instrumentality, *so far as we have heard and can judge respecting the individuals*, 65. (3) Many backsliders have been reclaimed, and many of the children of God have been encouraged and strengthened in the way of truth. What clear proofs that we were not suffered to be mistaken as regards our coming to Bristol!

In 1834, Müller felt led to found what he called the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, the objects of which were:—

- (1) to receive and distribute moneys to assist Day and Sunday Schools where the Bible was taught by believing teachers;
- (2) to sell portions of Scripture very cheaply;
- (3) to forward gifts to foreign missionaries.

No one was to be asked to subscribe. At a later date this fund completely supported day schools in rural districts in England, and also in Spain and Italy, over a number of years. The forwarding of gifts to missionaries, and the sale of Christian literature, continues to this day (1954).

JUNE 4th. Today a sister called on me, and I felt irritated at her staying, after having given her to understand that I had but a few minutes' time. I sinned thus against the Lord. Help Thou me, blessed Jesus, in future!

JUNE 25th. These last three days I have had very little real communion with God, and have therefore been very weak spiritually, and have several times felt irritability of temper. May God in mercy help me to have more secret prayer!

DECEMBER 10th. Today we found that a departed brother had left both to brother Craik and me £12.

DECEMBER 21st. Since brother Craik and I have been labouring in Bristol, 227 brethren and sisters have been added to us in fellowship. Of these, 125 belong to Bethesda church, and 132 to Gideon church.

The income the Lord has given me this year is £288 os. 8½d.

Mrs. Müller had a brother, Anthony Norris Groves, who in 1829 gave up a lucrative practice as a dentist in Exeter to go to Baghdad as a missionary, without the support of any society and without any guarantee of a salary. He and his family endured incredible hardships from war, floods and pestilence. Later he went to India as a kind of freelance missionary. His Autobiography is almost as remarkable a story of Christian service and devotion as that of George Müller. In 1835 Groves visited Bristol, and George Müller went with him to Germany, in the hope of finding some spiritually-minded workers to return to India with him. Indeed Müller had some thoughts of joining him in India himself. Another motive for the Continental trip was that George Müller was anxious to testify to his father and brother of the joy and blessedness of the Way he had found.

APRIL 5th. Heimersleben. This afternoon a friend of my father called—one who knows not the Lord. After a few minutes the Lord gave me an opportunity of setting before him the fundamental truths of the Gospel, and the joy and comfort they afford, and have afforded to *me*. Thus a way was opened to me of stating the truth more fully than ever I had been able to do before, by word of mouth, *in the presence*

of my father and brother, without saying to them, '*Thou art the man.*' I was assisted by the Lord. May He water the seed sown!

APRIL 6th. I have not on this visit spoken directly to my father about the state of his soul, though he has more than ever heard the truth from my lips. God has indeed been with me, and I believe that I have been led by Him to pursue this course. Different, however, has been the way in which I have dealt with my unconverted brother; for the relationship in which I stand to him is a different one. For this afternoon, I not only pointed out to him his danger, but spoke also respecting his sins, and have done so in my letters, and intend to do so still, if the Lord permit. I spent this evening in relating to my father and brother some of the Lord's dealings with me in England, particularly how He has graciously provided for my temporal wants in answer to prayer, and they both seemed to feel, for the moment at least, the blessedness of such a life.

APRIL 7th. A part of this morning I spent in walking about with my father to see one of his gardens, and some of his fields, because I knew it would give him pleasure; and I felt that I ought in every way to show him kindness and attention, as far as I *conscientiously* could. Tomorrow, God willing, I intend to leave, and to return to England. The Lord in His rich mercy, in answer to my prayer, has enabled me so to walk before my father, and has also impressed what I have said so far upon his heart, as to cause him to say to-day, 'May God help me to follow your example, and to act according to what you have said to me.'

Soon after his return, first his wife's father died, and then their little son, just over a year old, was taken ill.

JUNE 25th. The dear little boy is so ill that I have no hope of his recovery. The disease is inflammation in the chest. I spoke this evening comfortably at Gideon, on Psalm 145. 1-4, thinking it right that neither the death of my father-in-

law, nor my dying child, should keep me from the Lord's work. The Lord's holy will be done concerning the dear little one.

JUNE 26th. My prayer last evening was that God would be pleased to support my dear wife under the trial, should He remove the little one; and to take him soon to Himself, thus sparing him from suffering. I did not pray for the child's recovery. It was but two hours after that the dear little one went home.

JUNE 27th. My dear wife is graciously supported. May the Lord grant that these afflictions may not be lost upon us!

JUNE 28th. I preached today both times comfortably.

JUNE 29th. This morning was the funeral. The remains of our father and infant were put into the same grave.

JULY 3rd. Our taxes are due, and may be called for any day, and for the first time we have no money to pay them, as we were obliged, on account of our late afflictions, to spend the money which we had put by for them. May the Lord in mercy provide!

JULY 6th. I was enabled today, by the free-will offerings through the boxes, and by what I had left, to pay the taxes before they were called for. How kind of the Lord to answer my prayer so soon!

JULY 8th. This evening I had £5 sent from Weston-super-Mare. So the Lord has again appeared. May I praise His holy name for this seasonable help, which came when I had scarcely any money left!

JULY 14th. Today I had again a suit of new clothes given to me by a brother. My clothes were much worn and old, and our late funeral might have given a second reason for having new ones. But I did not order any, because I had no money to pay for them, and thought it wrong to contract debts.

AUGUST 15th. Today dear brother Craik returned from Devonshire, much better in his general health, but not better as regards his voice.

AUGUST 24th. I feel very weak, and suffer more than ever before. I am in doubt whether to leave Bristol entirely for a time. I have no money to go away for a change of air. I have had an invitation to stay for a week with a sister in the country, and I think of accepting the invitation, and going tomorrow.

AUGUST 26th. Today I had £5 given to me *for the express purpose of getting a change of air.*

AUGUST 29th. Today I received another £5 *for the same purpose.*

SEPTEMBER 14th. We are still at Portishead. I am but little better. I am greatly bowed down today on account of my inward corruptions and carnality of heart. When will God deliver me from this state? How I long to be more like Him! My present way of living is also a great trial to me. The caring so much about the body; the having for my chief employment eating and drinking, walking, bathing, and taking horse exercise; all this, to which I have not been at all accustomed these six years, I find to be very trying. I would much rather be again in the midst of the work in Bristol, if my Lord will condescend to use His most unworthy servant.

SEPTEMBER 15th. As I clearly understood that the person who lets me his horse has no licence, I saw that, being bound as a believer to act according to the laws of the country, I could use it no longer; and as horse exercise seems most important, humanly speaking, for my restoration, and as this is the only horse which is to be had in the place, we came to the conclusion to leave Portishead tomorrow. *Immediately after*, I received a kind letter from a brother and two sisters in the Lord, who lived in the Isle of Wight, to go and stay with them for some time. This matter has been today a subject for prayer and consideration.

CHAPTER II

BEGINNING OF ORPHAN WORK (1835-1845)

NOVEMBER 20th. This evening I took tea at a sister's house, where I found Francke's life. He founded the Orphan Homes at Halle and, for a long time now, I have thought of labouring in a similar way, though it might be on a much smaller scale; not to imitate Francke, but in reliance upon the Lord. May He make it plain.

NOVEMBER 21st. Today I have had it very much impressed on my heart, no longer merely to *think* about the establishment of an Orphan House, but actually to set about it, and I have been very much in prayer respecting it, in order to ascertain the Lord's mind.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the need for some such institution. It is difficult for people to-day to realize how grim were the conditions of child life in the slums when Queen Victoria came to the throne. We must delete from our minds the free public education, the dole, or children's allowances, decent houses, Factory Acts and inspectors, and homes like Barnardo's. In a speech delivered in Parliament on August 4, 1840, Lord Shaftesbury reminded the House that in tobacco factories children of seven worked twelve hours a day, and had no education. At the Potteries, they might start at five years of age, and labour from 6 a.m. till 8 p.m., six days a week. In the coal mines conditions were worse still. Girls and boys aged six or seven and upwards crawled, almost naked, in tunnels eighteen inches high, dragging heavy loads of coal on sledges. They were beaten if they slacked off. Orphans who escaped the factories ran the streets, barefoot and in filthy rags, living by their wits, which usually meant

by stealing. They had to sleep out in all weathers. Some children went to the poorhouse, which, as Arthur Bryant has written, offered to the needy poor 'the maximum of deterrent and the minimum of subsistence'. The moral atmosphere was a hotbed of vice and crime. In the 'hungry forties,' as Müller remarks, kindly relatives who dreaded the poorhouse for the orphans starved themselves and the children trying to make their meagre wages feed too many mouths.

It may be well to enter somewhat minutely into the reasons which led me to establish an Orphan House. I had constantly cases brought before me, which proved that one of the special things which the children of God needed in our day, was, *to have their faith strengthened*. I longed to have something to point to, as a visible proof, that our God and Father is the same faithful God as ever He was; as willing as ever to *prove* Himself to be the LIVING GOD, in our day as formerly, *to all who put their trust in Him*. Sometimes I found children of God tried in mind by the prospect of old age, when they might be unable to work any longer, and therefore were harassed by the fear of having to go into the poorhouse. If in such a case I pointed out to them, how their Heavenly Father has always helped those who put their trust in Him, though they might not always say that times have changed; yet it was evident enough, that God was not looked upon by them as the LIVING GOD. My spirit was oftentimes bowed down by this, and I longed to set something before the children of God, whereby they might see, that He does not forsake, even in our day, those who rely upon Him. Also I longed to be instrumental in strengthening their faith, by giving them not only instances in the Word of God, of His willingness and ability to help all those who rely on Him, *but to show them by proofs* that He is the same in our day. I remembered what a great blessing my own soul had received through the Lord's dealings with His servant A. H. Francke, who, in dependence upon the living God alone, established an immense Orphan House which I had

seen many times with my own eyes. I therefore judged myself bound to be the servant of the Church of God, in the particular point on which I had obtained mercy, namely, *in being able to take God at His word and to rely upon it.*

It needed to be something which could be seen, even by the natural eye. Now, if I, a poor man, simply by prayer and faith, obtained, *without asking any individual*, the means for establishing and carrying on an Orphan House, there would be something which, with the Lord's blessing, might be instrumental in strengthening the faith of the children of God, besides being a testimony to the consciences of the unconverted, of the reality of the things of God. This, then, was the primary reason for establishing the Orphan House. I certainly did from my heart desire to be used by God to benefit the bodies of poor children, bereaved of both parents, and seek, in other respects, with the help of God to do them good for this life; I also particularly longed to be used by God in getting the dear orphans trained up in, the fear of God; but still the first and primary object of the work was (and still is), that God might be magnified by the fact, that the orphans under my care are provided with all they need, only *by prayer and faith*, without any one being asked by me or my fellow-labourers, whereby it may be seen, that God is FAITHFUL STILL, AND HEARS PRAYER STILL.

NOVEMBER 28th. I have been every day this week, very much in prayer concerning the Orphan House, chiefly entreating the Lord to take away every thought concerning it out of my mind, if the matter be not of Him; I have also repeatedly examined my heart concerning my motives in the matter. But I have been more and more confirmed that it is of God.

DECEMBER 2nd. I have this day taken the first actual step in the matter, in having ordered bills to be printed, announcing a public meeting on December 9th, at which I intend to lay before the brethren my thoughts concerning the Orphan

House, as a means of ascertaining more clearly the Lord's mind concerning the matter.

DECEMBER 5th. This evening I was struck in reading the Scriptures, with these words: '*Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*' (Psa. 81. 10). Up to this day I had not prayed at all concerning the means or individuals needed for the Orphan House. I was now led to apply this Scripture to the Orphan House; I fell on my knees and asked the Lord for premises, for £1,000 and for suitable individuals to take care of the children.

DECEMBER 9th. This afternoon the first piece of furniture was given—a large wardrobe. This afternoon and evening I was low in spirit as regards the Orphan House, but as soon as I began to speak at the meeting, I received peculiar assistance from God, felt great peace and joy, and the assurance that the work is of God. After the meeting 10s. was given to me. *There was purposely no collection*, nor did any one speak besides myself; for it was not in the least intended to work upon the feelings, for I sought to be quite sure concerning the mind of God. After the meeting a sister offered herself for the work. I went home happy in the Lord, and full of confidence that the matter will come to pass, though but 10s. had been given.

I do not look to Bristol, nor even to England, but to the living God, Whose is the gold and the silver, to entrust with the means me and brother C. whom the Lord has made willing to help me in the work. Till we have *them*, we can do nothing in the way of renting a house, furnishing, etc. Yet, when once as much as is needed for this has been sent us, as also proper persons to engage in the work, we do not think it needful to wait till we have the Orphan House endowed, or a number of yearly subscribers for it; but we trust to be enabled by the Lord, who has taught us to ask for our *daily* bread, to look to Him for the supply of the *daily* wants of those children whom He may be pleased to put under our care.

Respecting the persons who are needed for carrying on the work, a matter of no less importance than the procuring of funds. I would observe, that we look for them to God Himself, as well as for the funds; and that all who may be engaged as masters, matrons, and assistants, according to the smallness or largeness of the Institution, must be known to us as true believers; and moreover, as far as we may be able to judge, must likewise be qualified for the work.

DECEMBER 10th. This morning I received a letter in which a brother and sister wrote this: 'We propose ourselves for the service of the intended Orphan House, if you think us qualified for it; also to give up all the furniture, etc., which the Lord has given us, for its use; and to do this without receiving any salary whatever; believing that if it be the will of the Lord to employ us, He will supply all our need, etc.' In the evening a brother brought from several individuals three dishes, twenty-eight plates, three basins, one jug, four mugs, three salt stands, one grater, four knives, and five forks.'

DECEMBER 18th. This afternoon a brother brought from a sister, a counterpane, a flat iron stand, eight cups and saucers, a sugar basin, a milk jug, a tea cup, sixteen thimbles, five knives and forks, six dessert spoons, twelve teaspoons, four combs, and two little graters; from another friend a flat iron and a cup and saucer. At the same time he brought £100 from a sister. It has since pleased the Lord to take to Himself the donor of this £100, and I therefore give further account of the donation and the donor, as the particulars respecting both, with God's blessing, may tend to edification. Indeed, I confess that I am delighted to be at liberty, in consequence of the death of the donor, to give the following short narrative, which, during her lifetime, I should not have considered it wise to publish. A.L., the donor, was known to me almost from the beginning of my coming to Bristol in 1832. She earned her bread by needlework, by which she gained from 2s. to 5s. per week; the average, I suppose,

was not more than about 3s. 6d., as she was weak in body. But this dear, humble sister was content with her small earnings, and I do not remember ever to have heard her utter a word of complaint on account of earning so little. Some time before I had been led to establish an Orphan House her father had died, through which event she had come into the possession of £480, which sum had been left to her (and the same amount to her brother and two sisters) by her grandmother, but of which her father had had the interest during his lifetime. The father, who had been much given to drink, died in debt, which debts the children wished to pay; but the rest, besides A.L., did not like to pay the full amount, and offered to the creditors 5s. in the pound, which they gladly accepted, as they had not the least legal claim upon the children. After the debts had been paid according to this agreement, A.L. said to herself, 'However sinful my father may have been, yet he was my father, and as I have the means of paying his debts to the full amount, I ought, as a believing child, to do so, seeing that my brother and sisters will not do it.' She then went to all the creditors secretly, and paid the full amount of the debts, which took £40 more of her money, besides her share which she had given before. Her brother and two sisters now gave £50 each of their property to their mother; but A.L. said to herself: 'I am a *child of God*, surely I ought to give my mother twice as much as my brother and sister.' She, therefore, gave her mother £100. Shortly after this she sent me the £100 towards the Orphan House. I was not a little surprised when I received this money from her, for I had always known her as a poor girl, and I had never heard anything about her having come into the possession of this money and her dress had never given me the least indication of an alteration in her circumstances. Before, however, accepting this money from her, I had a long conversation with her, in which I sought to probe her as to her motives, and in which I sought to ascertain whether, as I had feared, she might have given this money

in the feeling of the moment, without having counted the cost. I was the more particular, because, if the money were given, without its being given from Scriptural motives, and there should be regret afterwards, the name of the Lord would be dishonoured.

But I had not conversed long with this beloved sister, before I found that she was, in this particular, a quiet, calm, considerate follower of the Lord Jesus, and one who desired, in spite of what human reason might say, to act according to the words of our Lord: '*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth*' (Matthew 6. 19). '*Sell that ye have and give alms*' (Luke 12. 33). When I remonstrated with her, in order that I might see whether she had counted the cost, she said to me: 'The Lord Jesus has given His *last* drop of blood for me, and should I not give Him this £100?' She likewise said: 'Rather than the Orphan House should not be established, I will give all the money I have.' When I saw that she had weighed the matter according to the Word of God, and that she had counted the cost, I could not but take the money, and admire the way which the Lord took, to use this poor, sickly sister, as an instrument, in so considerable a measure, for helping, at its very commencement, this work, which I had set about solely in dependence upon the living God.

George Müller relates, with deep approval, many more gifts made by this sister to the poor, and to God's work. She gave secretly, continued at her daily task, and remained as humble minded as she had been before her money came to her.

Her body became weaker and weaker, in consequence of which she was able to work very little for many months before she died; but the Lord supplied her with all she needed, though she never asked for anything. For instance, a sister in communion with us sent her for many months all the bread she used. Her mouth was full of thanksgiving, even in the midst of the greatest bodily sufferings. She fell

asleep in Jesus in January, 1844. I have related these facts because they tend to the praise of the Lord, and may be instrumental in stirring up other children of God to follow this dear departed sister in so far as she followed the Lord Jesus; but, in particular, that I may show in what remarkable ways the Lord proved, from the very beginning, that the Orphan House was His and not mine.

DECEMBER 23rd. A brother gave this evening a piece of blind line and a dozen of blind tassels. In the evening, a gentleman brought me from an individual, whose name he was not to mention, £4, of which I was allowed to take £2 for the Orphan House, and to give the other £2 to poor believers.

DECEMBER 31st. As regards the way in which the Lord, in His faithful love, supplied my temporal wants, during the past year, I mention that I received in all £285 1s. 1½d.

MAY 18th. So far as I remember, I brought even the most minute circumstances concerning the Orphan House before the Lord in my petitions, being conscious of my own weakness and ignorance. There was, however, one point I never had prayed about, namely, that the Lord would send children; for I naturally took it for granted that there would be plenty of applications.

The nearer, however, the day came, which had been appointed for receiving applications, the more I had secret consciousness that the Lord might disappoint my natural expectations, and show me that I could not prosper in one single thing without Him. The appointed time came, and not even one application was made. I had before this been repeatedly tried, whether I might not, after all, against the Lord's mind, have engaged in the work. This circumstance now led me to lie low before my God in prayer the whole of the evening, February 3rd, and to examine my heart once more as to all the motives concerning it; and being able, as formerly, to say, that His glory was my chief aim, i.e. that it might be seen that it is not a vain thing to trust in the living

God, and that my second aim was the spiritual welfare of orphan children, and the third their bodily welfare; and still continuing in prayer, I was at last brought to this state, that I could say *from my heart*, that I should rejoice in God being glorified in this matter, though it were by *bringing the whole to nothing*. But as still, after all, it seemed to me more tending to the glory of God, to establish and prosper the Orphan House, I could then ask Him heartily to send applications. I enjoyed now a peaceful state of heart concerning the subject, and was also more assured than ever that God would establish it. *The very next day*, February 4th, the first application was made, and since then 42 more have been made.

I rented, at least for one year, the house, No. 6 Wilson Street, as being, on account of its cheapness and largeness, very suitable, and in which, up to March 25th, I had been living myself. Having furnished it for 30 children we began on April 11th, 1836, to take them in, and on April 21st the Institution was opened by a day being set apart for prayer and 'thanksgiving.' There are now 26 children in the house, and a few more are expected daily.

JULY 28th. For some weeks past we have not been able to pay the salary of the masters and governesses *a month in advance*, but have been obliged to pay it *weekly*. Brother C——r and I have lately prayed repeatedly together respecting the funds, but we were now brought so low, that we should not have been able to pay even this *weekly* salary of the teachers had not the Lord most remarkably helped us again today. For besides £1 which was given to us this evening, a brother gave £8 which sum had been made up by a number of his workmen *paying weekly one penny each* of their own accord, towards our funds. The money had been collecting for many months, and, in this our necessity, it had been put into the heart of this brother to bring it. My faith has been greatly strengthened through this circumstance. For, before to-day, though I have never been

in the least allowed to doubt the Lord's faithfulness, I did not understand His purpose in His dealings with us of late, in not sending us more than we have needed just to be kept from stopping; and I have sometimes thought, whether it might not be His will, on account of my want of faithfulness, in His work, to decrease the field; but now I see, that notwithstanding my unworthiness, His allowing us to pray so frequently was only that the deliverance might be felt so much the more when it came.

OCTOBER 1ST. Last Saturday, for the first time, we were so low in funds, that we needed £1 more than we had, to pay the salaries a week in advance; but one sister, on account of the death of her father, as we afterwards learned, was kept from calling for her money, and on the next day we received more than was needed to pay her. On account, therefore, of the many deliverances which we have had of late, we have not hesitated to enlarge the field, as another Boys' School was greatly needed, there having been many applications for admission standing these several months past.

Opening of the Second Wilson Street Orphan House

OCTOBER 19th. Today, after having many times prayed respecting this matter, I have at last engaged a sister as matron for the Infants' Orphan House, never having been able, up to this day, to meet with an individual who seemed suitable, though there has been money enough in hand for some time past for commencing this work, and there have been also applications for the reception of several infant orphans.

OCTOBER 25th. Today we obtained, without any trouble, through the kind hand of God, very suitable premises for the Infant Orphan House. If we had laid out many hundreds pounds in building a house, we could scarcely have built one more suitable for the purpose. How evident is the hand of God in all these matters! How important to leave our concerns, great and small, with Him; for He arranges all

things well! If *our* work be *His* work, we shall prosper in it.

NOVEMBER 30th. On account as I suppose of many pressing engagements, I had not been led for some time past to pray respecting the funds. But *being in great need*, I was led yesterday morning, earnestly to ask the Lord, and in answer to this petition a brother gave me last evening £10. He had had it in his heart for several months past to give this sum, but had been hitherto kept from it, not having the means. Just now, in this our great necessity, the Lord furnished him with the means, and we were helped in this way. In addition to this £10, I received last evening a letter with £5, from a sister whom I never saw, and who has been several times used by God as an instrument to supply our wants. She writes thus: 'It has been so much on my mind lately to send you some money, that I feel as if there must be some need, which the Lord purposes to honour me by making me the instrument of supplying. I therefore enclose you £5, all I have in the house at this moment; but if you have occasion for it, and will let me know, I will send you as much more.' Besides these two donations I received today £3 3s.

Decision to Open a Third Orphan House

As the Lord has so greatly condescended to listen to my prayers, and as I consider it one of the particular talents which He has entrusted to me, to exercise faith upon His promises regarding my own temporal wants and those of others; and as an Orphan House for *boys* above seven years of age seems greatly needed in this city; and as also, without it, we know not how to provide for the little *boys* in the Infant Orphan House, when they are above seven years of age; I purpose to establish an Orphan House for about forty boys above seven years of age. But there are three difficulties in the way which must first be removed before I could take any further step in this work. (1) My hands are more than

filled already with work. I could not in any degree enlarge the field of labour, except the Lord should be pleased to send us a brother, who, as steward, could take from me the work which arises from keeping the accounts, obtaining and circulating the Scriptures, giving advice in *ordinary* matters respecting the Orphan Houses, attending to the applications for admission of children in the Orphan Houses, etc. But whether there is an Orphan House for *boys* established or not, such a brother is greatly needed, even as the extent of the work is now, and I therefore lay it on the hearts of the believers who may read this, to help me with their prayers, that such a brother may be found. (2) In addition to this, it would be needful, before I could take any further step, to obtain a truly pious master for the boys, and other suitable individuals who may be needed to take care of the children. (3) The third thing by which I desire to be assured, that it is the will of God that I should go forward in the Orphan House, is, that He provide the means for such an enlargement of the work. Whilst, on the one hand, I would confess to the praise of God, that he has been pleased to give me faith to trust in Him; yet, on the other hand, I desire to be kept from presumption and enthusiasm. I do not intend to wait till thousands are raised, or till the Institution is endowed; but I must have such a sum given to me as is needed to furnish a house for forty boys, and to clothe that number, and to have a little to begin with; without such a sum I should not consider it to be the will of God to enlarge the field.

1837

OCTOBER 21ST. A few weeks since I had rented a very large and a very cheap house for the Boys' Orphan House; but as the persons who lived in that neighbourhood threatened the landlord with an action, on account of letting his house for a charitable institution, I at once gave up all claim. That which led me to do so, was the word of the Lord: '*As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*' I was quite

sure, when I gave up the agreement, that the Lord would provide other premises. On the same morning when this took place, October 5th, the Lord, to show His continued approbation of the work, sent £50 by a sister, who is far from being rich, for the furnishing of the Boys' Orphan House. Now today, the Lord has given me another house for the orphan boys in the same street in which the other two Orphan Houses are. Thus, in His own time He has sent help in this particular also. Indeed in everything in which I have had to deal with Him alone in this work I have never been disappointed.

DECEMBER 17th. Lord's Day. This morning I saw the 32 orphan girls, who are above seven years old, pass under my window to go to the chapel. When I saw these dear children in their clean dresses, and their comfortable warm cloaks, and when I saw them walking orderly under the care of a sister to the chapel, I felt grateful to God that I had been made the instrument of providing for them, seeing that they are all better off, both as regards temporal and spiritual things, than if they were at the places from whence they were taken. I felt that, to bring about such a sight, was worth the labour not only of many days, but of many months, or years. I felt that it answered all the arguments of some of my friends who say 'you do too much.'

DECEMBER 24th. This is the seventh Lord's Day that I have been laid aside. This day I determine by the help of God, no more to send letters in parcels, because I now clearly see that it is against the laws of the country, and it becomes me, as a disciple of Jesus, *in every respect* to submit myself to the Government, in so far as I am not called upon to do anything contrary to the Word of God.

DECEMBER 31st. There are now 81 children in the three Orphan Houses, and nine brethren and sisters who have the care of them. Ninety, therefore, daily sit down to table. The Schools require as much help as before; nay, more, particularly the Sunday School, in which there are at present

about 320 children, and in the Day Schools about 350. Lord, Thy servant is a poor man; but he has trusted in Thee, and made his boast in Thee before the sons of men; therefore let Him not be confounded! Let it not be said, all this is enthusiasm, and therefore it will come to nought.

This morning I greatly dishonoured the Lord by irritability, manifested towards my dear wife and that almost immediately after I had been on my knees before God, praising Him for having given me such a wife.

This year my temporal supplies have been, in all, £307 2s. 6½d.

1838

JULY 12th. From the commencement of the establishment of the Orphan Houses, up to the end of June, 1838, the hand of the Lord was seen in the abundance with which He was pleased to supply me with the means for maintaining nearly 100 persons. Now, however, the time is come, when 'the Father of the fatherless' will show His special care over them in another way. The funds, which were this day twelvemonth about £780 are now reduced to about £20; but, thanks be to the Lord, my faith is as strong, or stronger, than it was when we had the larger sum in hand; nor has He, at any time from the commencement of the work, allowed me to distrust Him. Nevertheless, as our Lord will be enquired of, and as real faith is manifested as such by leading to prayer, I gave myself to prayer, with brother T—— of the Boys' Orphan House, who had called on me, and who, except my wife and brother Craik, is the only individual to whom I speak about the state of the funds. While we were praying, an orphan child from Frome was brought, and some believers at Frome, having collected among them £5, sent this money with the child. Thus we received the first answer at a time of need. *We have given notice for seven children to come in, and purpose to give notice for five more, though our funds are so low, hoping that God will look on our necessities.* (Observe how

gently the Lord dealt with us, in that when want approached, He helped at once, in immediate answer to prayer, in order thus to increase our confidence in Him; but at the same time, to prepare us for sharper trials of our faith).

JULY 22nd. This evening I was walking in our little garden, meditating on Heb. 13. 8, '*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.*' Whilst meditating on His unchangeable love, power, wisdom, etc., I was led to say to myself, Jesus in His love and power has hitherto supplied me with what I have needed for the orphans, and in the same unchangeable love and power He will provide me with what I may need for the future. A flow of joy came into my soul whilst realizing thus the unchangeableness of our adorable Lord. About one minute after, a letter was brought me, enclosing a bill for £20. In it was written: 'Will you apply the amount of the enclosed bill to the furtherance of the objects of your Scriptural Knowledge Society, or of your Orphan Establishment, or in the work and cause of our Master in any way that He Himself, on your application to Him, may point out to you. It is not a great sum, but it is sufficient provision for the exigency of today; and it is for *today's* exigencies that, ordinarily, the Lord provides. Tomorrow, as it brings its demands, will find its supply, etc.'

AUGUST 18th. I have not one penny in hand for the orphans. In a day or two again many pounds will be needed. My eyes are up to the Lord. *Evening.* I have received from a sister £5. She had some time since put away her trinkets, to be sold for the benefit of the orphans. This morning, whilst in prayer, it came to her mind, I have this £5, and owe no man anything, therefore it would be better to give this money at once, as it may be some time before I can dispose of the trinkets. She therefore brought it, little knowing that there was not a penny in hand, and that I had been able to advance only £4 15s. 5d. for house-keeping in the Boys' Orphan House, instead of the usual £10; little knowing also, that within a few days many pounds

more will be needed. May my soul be greatly encouraged by this fresh token of my gracious Lord's faithfulness!

AUGUST 20th. The £5 which I had received on the 18th, had been given for housekeeping, so that today I was again penniless. But my eyes were up to the Lord. I gave myself to prayer this morning, knowing that I should want again, this week at least £13, if not above £20. Today I received £12 in answer to prayer, from a lady who is staying at Clifton, whom I had never seen before. Adorable Lord, grant that this may be a fresh encouragement to me!

AUGUST 29th. Today sixteen believers were baptized. Of all the baptisms which we have had, this was, perhaps, the most remarkable. Among those who were baptized was an aged brother of above 84 years, and one above 70. For the latter his believing wife had prayed 38 years, and at last the Lord answered her prayers in his conversion.

AUGUST 31st. I have been waiting on the Lord for means, as the matron's books from the Girls' Orphan House have been brought, and there is no money in hand to advance her housekeeping. But as yet the Lord has not been pleased to send help. As the matron called today for money, one of the labourers gave £2 of his own for the present necessities.

SEPTEMBER 6th. This morning the books were brought from the Infant Orphan House, and the matron sent to ask when she should fetch them, implying, when they would have been looked over, and when money would be advanced for housekeeping. I said, 'Tomorrow,' though I had not a single penny in hand. About an hour after, brother T— sent me a note, to say that he had received £1 this morning, and that last evening a brother had sent 29 lbs. of salt, 44 dozen of onions, and 26 lbs of groats.

SEPTEMBER 8th. Saturday evening. I am still in the hour of probation. It has not pleased my gracious Lord to send me help as yet. The evening before last I heard brother Craik preach on Genesis 12, about Abraham's faith. He showed how all went on well, as long as Abraham acted

in faith, and walked according to the will of God; and how all failed when he distrusted God. Two points I felt particularly important in my case. (1) That I may not go any by-ways, or ways of my own, for deliverance. I have about £220 in the bank, which, for other purposes in the Lord's work, has been entrusted to me by a brother and a sister. I might take of this money, and say but to the sister, and write but to the brother, that I have taken, in these straits, £20, £50, or £100, for the orphans, and they would be quite satisfied (for both of them have liberally given for the orphans, and the brother has more than once told me, only to let him know when I wanted money); but this would be a deliverance of my own, not God's deliverance. Besides, it would be no small barrier to the exercise of faith, in the next hour of trial. (2) I was particularly reminded afresh, in hearing brother Craik, of the danger of dishonouring the Lord in that very way in which I have, through His grace, in some small measure brought glory to Him, even by trusting in Him. Yesterday and today I have been pleading with God eleven arguments, why He would be graciously pleased to send help. My mind has been in peace respecting the matter. Yesterday the peace amounted even to joy in the Holy Ghost. But this I must say, that the burden of my prayer, during the last days, has been chiefly, that the Lord in mercy would keep my faith from failing. My eyes are up to Him. He can help soon. One thing I am sure of: in His own way and time He will help.

The arguments which I plead with God are:—

(1) That I set about the work for the glory of God, i.e. that there might be a visible proof, by God supplying, *in answer to prayer only*, the necessities of the orphans, that He is the living God, and most willing, even in *our* day, to answer prayer: and that, therefore, He would be pleased to send supplies.

(2) That God is the '*Father of the fatherless*,' and that He,

therefore, as their Father, would be pleased to provide (Psalm 68. 5).

(3) That I have received the children in the name of Jesus, and that, therefore, He, in these children, has been received, and is fed, and is clothed; and that, therefore, He would be pleased to consider this (Mark 9. 36, 37).

(4) That the faith of many of the children of God has been strengthened by this work hitherto, and that, if God were to withhold the means for the future, those who are weak in faith would be staggered; whilst, by a continuance of means, their faith might still further be strengthened.

(5) That many enemies would laugh were the Lord to withhold supplies, and say: 'Did we not foretell that this enthusiasm would come to nothing?'

(6) That many of the children of God, who are uninstructed, or in a carnal state, would feel themselves *justified* to continue their alliance with the world in the work of God, and to go on as heretofore, in their non-Scriptural proceedings respecting similar institutions, so far as the obtaining of money is concerned, if He were not to help me.

(7) That the Lord would remember that I am His child, and that He would graciously pity me, and remember that I cannot provide for these children, and that therefore He would not allow this burden to lie upon me long without sending help.

(8) That He would remember likewise my fellow-labourers in the work, who trust in Him, but who would be tried were He to withhold supplies.

(9) That He would remember that I should have to dismiss the children from under our Scriptural instruction to their former companions.

(10) That He would show that those were mistaken who said, that, *at the first*, supplies might be expected, while the thing was new, but not afterwards.

(11) That I should not know were He to withhold means, what construction I should put upon all the many most remarkable answers to prayer, which He had given me heretofore in connection with this work, and which most fully have shown to me that it is of God.

In some small measure I now understand, experimentally, the meaning of that word '*how long*,' which so frequently occurs in the Psalms.

SEPTEMBER 10th. Monday morning. Neither Saturday nor yesterday had any money come in. It appeared to me now needful to take some steps on account of our need, i.e. to go to the Orphan Houses, call the brethren and sisters together (who, except brother T—, had never been informed about the state of the funds), state the case to them, see how much money was needed for the present, tell them that amidst all this trial of faith I still believed that God would help, and to pray with them. Especially also, I meant to go for the sake of telling them that no more articles must be purchased than we have the means to pay for, but to let there be nothing lacking in any way to the children as regards nourishing food and needful clothing; for I would rather at once send them away than that they should lack. I meant to go for the sake also of seeing whether there were still articles remaining which had been sent for the purpose of being sold, or whether there were any articles really needless, that we might turn them into money. I felt that the matter was now come to a solemn crisis. About half-past nine sixpence came in, which had been put anonymously into the box at Gideon Chapel. This money seemed to me like an earnest, that God would have compassion and send more. About ten, after I had returned from brother Craik, to whom I had unbosomed my heart again, whilst once more in prayer for help, a sister called who gave two sovereigns to my wife for the orphans, stating that she had felt herself stirred up to come, and that she had delayed coming already too long. A few minutes after, when I

went into the room where she was, she gave me two sovereigns more, and all this without knowing the least about our need. Thus the Lord most mercifully has sent us a little help, to the great encouragement of my faith. A few minutes after I was called on for money from the Infant Orphan House, to which I sent £2, and £1 os. 6d. to the Boys' Orphan House, and £1 to the Girls' Orphan House.

Today I saw a young brother who, as well as one of his sisters, had been brought to the knowledge of the Lord through my Narrative.*

SEPTEMBER 13th. This morning I found it was absolutely needful to tell the brethren and sisters about the state of the funds, and to give necessary directions as to not going into debt, etc. We prayed together, and had a very happy meeting. They all seemed comfortable. There was 12s. 6d. taken out of the boxes in the three houses, 12s. one of the labourers gave, and £1 1s. had come in for needlework done by the children. One of the sisters, who is engaged in the work, sent a message after me, not to trouble myself about her salary, for she should not want any for a twelvemonth. What a blessing to have such fellow-labourers!

SEPTEMBER 14th. I met again this morning with the brethren and sisters for prayer, as the Lord has not yet sent help. After prayer one of the labourers gave me all the money he had, 16s., saying that it would not be upright to pray, if he were not to give what he had. One of the sisters told me that in six days she would give £6, which she had in the Savings' Bank for such a time of need. God be praised for such fellow-labourers! Up to this day the matrons of the three houses had been in the habit of paying the bakers and the milkman weekly, *because they had preferred to receive the payments in this way*, and sometimes it had thus been also with the butcher and grocer. But now, as the Lord deals out to us *by the day*, we considered it would be wrong to go on any longer in this way, as the week's payment might

The title under which the early reports of the work were issued.

become due, and we have no money to meet it; and thus those with whom we deal might be inconvenienced by us, and we be found acting against the commandment of the Lord, '*Owe no man anything*' (Rom. 13. 8). From this day, and henceforward, whilst the Lord gives to us our supplies by the day, we purpose therefore to pay at once for every article as it is purchased, and never to buy anything except we can pay for it at once, however much it may seem to be needed, and however much those with whom we deal may wish to be paid only by the week. The little which was owed was paid off this day. When I came home I found a large parcel of new clothes which had been sent from Dublin for the orphans, a proof that the Lord remembers us still. We met again in the evening for prayer. We were of good cheer, and still *believe* that the Lord will supply our need.

SEPTEMBER 15th. *Saturday*. We met again this morning for prayer. God comforts our hearts. We are looking for help. I found that there were provisions enough for today and tomorrow, but there was no money in hand to take in bread as usual, in order that the children might not have newly-baked bread. This afternoon one of the labourers, who had been absent for several days from Bristol, returned and gave £1. This evening we met again for prayer when I found that 10s. 6d. more had come in since the morning. With this £1 10s. 6d. we were able to buy, even this Saturday evening, the usual quantity of bread (as it might be difficult to get stale bread on Monday morning), and have some money left. God be praised, who gave us grace to come to the decision not to take any bread today, as usual, nor to buy anything for which we cannot pay at once.

SEPTEMBER 17th. The trial still continues. It is now more and more trying, even to faith, as each day comes. Truly, the Lord has wise purpose in allowing us to call so long upon Him for help. But I am sure God will send help, if we can but wait. One of the labourers had had a little money come in, of which he gave 12s. 6d.; another labourer gave

11s. 8d., being all the money she had left; this, with 17s. 6d., which, partly, had come in, and partly, was in hand, enabled us to pay what needed to be paid, and to purchase provisions, so that nothing yet, in any way, has been lacking. This evening I was rather tried respecting the long delay of larger sums coming; but being led to go to the Scriptures for comfort, my soul was greatly refreshed, and my faith again strengthened, by the 34th Psalm, so that I went very cheerfully to meet with my dear fellow-labourers for prayer. I read to them the Psalm, and sought to cheer their hearts through the precious promises contained in it.

SEPTEMBER 18th. Brother T—— had 25s. in hand, and I had 3s. This £1 8s. enabled us to buy the meat and bread which was needed; a little tea for one of the houses, and milk for all; no more than this is needed. Thus the Lord has provided not only for this day, but there is bread for two days in hand. Now, however, we are come to an extremity. The funds are exhausted. The labourers who had a little money have given as long as they had any left. Now observe how the Lord helped us! A lady from the neighbourhood of London who brought a parcel with money from her daughter, arrived four or five days since in Bristol, and took lodgings next door to the Boys' Orphan House. This afternoon she herself kindly brought me the money, amounting to £3 2s. 6d. We had been reduced so low as to be on the point of selling those things which could be spared; but this morning I had asked the Lord if it might be, to prevent the necessity of our doing so. That the money had been so near the Orphan Houses for several days without being given, is a plain proof that it was from the beginning in the heart of God to help us; but because He delights in the prayers of His children, He had allowed us to pray so long; also to try our faith, and to make the answer so much the sweeter. It is indeed a precious deliverance.

SEPTEMBER 20th. *Morning.* The Lord has again kindly sent in a little. Last evening was given to me 1s. 6d., and

this morning £1 3s. *Evening.* This evening the Lord sent still further supplies; £8 11s. 2½d. came in, as a further proof that the Lord is not unmindful of us. There was in the box of the Girls' Orphan House £1 1s., and in that of the Boys' Orphan House £1 7s. 2½d. One of the labourers, in accordance with her promise this day week, gave £6 3s. About eighteen months ago she saw it right no longer to have money for herself in the Savings' Bank, and she therefore, in her heart, gave the money which she had there to the Orphan Houses, intending to draw it in a time of need.

OCTOBER 2ND. The Lord's Holy Name be praised! He hath dealt most bountifully with us during the last three days. The day before yesterday £5 came in for the orphans. Of this I gave to each house 10s., which supplied them *before the provisions were consumed.* Oh! how kind is the Lord. Always, before there has been actual want, He has sent help. Yesterday came in £1 10s. more. This £1 10s., with 4s. 2d. in hand, was divided for present necessities. Thus the expenses of yesterday, for housekeeping, were defrayed. The Lord helped me also to pay yesterday the £19 10s. for the rent. The means for it were thus obtained. One of the labourers had received through his family £10, and £5 besides from a sister in the Lord; also some other money. Of this he gave £16, which, with the £3 10s. that was left of the above-mentioned £5, which came in the day before yesterday, made up £19 10s., the sum which was needed. This day we were again greatly reduced. There was no money in hand to take in bread as usual, for the Boys' and Infants' Orphan Houses, but again the Lord helped. A sister who had arrived this afternoon from Swansea brought £1 7s., and one of the labourers sold an article, by means of which he was able to give £1 13s. Thus we had £3, £1 for each house, and could buy bread before the day was over. Hitherto we have lacked nothing!

OCTOBER 6th. *Saturday.* The Lord has most kindly helped us. It came to my mind that there were some new

blankets in the Orphan Houses, which had been given some time since, but which are not needed, and might therefore be sold. I was confirmed in this by finding that moths had got into one pair. I therefore sold ten pairs, having a good opportunity to do so. Thus the Lord not only supplied again our present need for the three houses, but I was also able to put by the rent for this week and the next, acting on the light which He had given us this day week. There came in 9s. 6d., besides £7 for the blankets. The School Fund, also, was again completely exhausted, when to-day and yesterday came in so much, that not only the weekly salaries could be paid today, but also above £1 could be put by for rent.

OCTOBER 9th. Through the last-mentioned supplies for the orphans we were helped up to this day; but to-day we were brought lower than ever. The provisions would have lasted out only today, and the money for milk in one of the houses could only be made up by one of the labourers selling one of his books. The matron in the Boys' Orphan House had this morning two shillings left. When in doubt whether to buy bread with it, or more meat, to make up the dinner with the meat which she had in the house, the baker called and left three quarters of bread as a present. In this great need, some money having been given to one of the labourers, he gave £2 of it, by which we were able to buy meat, bread and other provisions. Nevertheless, even this day, low as we had been brought before this £2 was given, there had been all in the houses that was needed.

OCTOBER 10th. The Lord had sent in so much since yesterday afternoon, that we were able at our meeting this morning to divide £2 os. 2d. between the three matrons, whereby we are helped through this day. But now the coals in the Infants' Orphan House are out, and nearly so in the other two houses. Also the treacle casks in all the three houses are nearly empty. On this account we have asked the Lord for fresh supplies.

OCTOBER 11th. The '*Father of the fatherless*' has again

shown His care over us. An orphan from Devonshire arrived last evening. With her was sent £2 5s. 6d. The sister who brought her gave also a silver teapot, sugar basin, and cream jug (48 oz. in weight), having found true riches in Christ. There was also in the boxes 9s. One of the labourers paid for a ton of coals. We obtained £16 16s. for the silver articles. Thus we were helped through the heavy expenses of the following days.

OCTOBER 16th. The day commenced with mercies. I was looking up to the Lord for help early this morning, when, almost immediately afterwards, brother T—— came, and brought two silver tablespoons and six teaspoons, which had been left anonymously, yesterday afternoon, at the Girls' Orphan House. This afternoon I received £12 from Staffordshire. On the seal of the letter which enclosed the money was 'Ebenezer.' How true in our case! Surely this instance is a fresh 'Ebenezer' to us; for hitherto the Lord has helped us.

OCTOBER 27th. *Saturday*. This day we have been again mercifully helped, though our need has been almost greater than ever. But, thanks to our adorable Lord! this day also we have not been confounded; for there was 6s. in the box at the Infants' Orphan House, and 6s. came in for things which had been given to be sold. To this one of the labourers added 18s. By means of this £1 10s. we have been able to meet all pressing demands, and to procure provisions for today and tomorrow.

OCTOBER 30th. This evening a sister gave me £20, ten of which were for the orphans, and ten for the other objects. Thus we are helped for this week.

NOVEMBER 4th. *Lord's Day*. There was given, by a stranger, last Wednesday evening, at Bethesda Chapel, to one of the sisters, a sovereign for the orphans, which I received today. Thus the Lord has again begun the week with mercy, and His love surely will help us through it, though again many pounds will be needed.

NOVEMBER 5th. By means of the sovereign which had come in yesterday, and several small donations today and on the past days, together with £2 10s. which one of the labourers added of his own, £6 2s. 6d. was divided this day between the three matrons, which will supply their need for two days at least.

NOVEMBER 7th. The funds are now again completely exhausted. Today I divided £1 3s. 8d. which had come in yesterday; thus the necessary wants were supplied. The Lord be praised who has helped us hitherto! One of the orphans was sent today to service, and the Lord enabled us to give her a suitable outfit.

NOVEMBER 13th. This morning our want was again great. I have £20 in hand which has been put by for rent, but, for the Lord's honour I would not take of it. Nothing had come in, and the labourers had scarcely anything to give. I went, however, to the Orphan Houses, to pray with my fellow-labourers, and, if it might be, to comfort them, and see what could be done. When I came there, I found that 19s. 6d. had come in this morning. On enquiry, I heard that only 2s. 6d. more was needed to carry us through the day. This one of the labourers was able to add of his own. Thus the Lord has again helped us out of our difficulty. One of the labourers gave some things which he could do without, and another gave a work-box to be sold for the Orphans. Before this day has come to an end, the Lord has sent in £1 2s. 4d. more, so that we have also a little for tomorrow.

NOVEMBER 15th. The money which had come in the day before yesterday, supplied the necessities of yesterday also; but today we were brought again very low. I went to the Orphan Houses, to pray with my fellow-labourers, not without hope that the Lord might have appeared and sent a little help. When I arrived I found that one of the labourers had sold a few of his books, together with two which had been given by another labourer on the 13th, for which he had received 7s. To this one of the labourers added 7s. 9d.

This 14s. 9d. supplied the most pressing necessities. When I came home I found 1s. in the box at my house, and soon after received 5s. for a pair of fire-screens which had been given for sale. There were also three baskets of potatoes sent to the three different houses. A sack of potatoes had been ordered, but the brother, who had been desired to bring them, could not conveniently do so today, and thought, as this present had been ordered from him, there would be no immediate need of them; and oh! how kind of the Lord to order it thus: for had he brought them the payment would have taken away the money which was intended for the usual quantity of bread. But before the day was over, the Lord helped still further. In the afternoon a gentleman from Bath called at the Boys' Orphan House, and gave a cheque for £3. Altogether £4 4s. 9d. has been sent by the Lord this day.

NOVEMBER 17th. *Saturday*. Today above £3 was needed, and as only 15s. 6d. had come in we found it needful to determine to dispose of a few articles of furniture which we conveniently could do without. One of the labourers gave a good watch to be sold, which she had bought some months since, there being then no time-piece in one of the houses. In consideration of these articles to be sold, I took, for the present necessities of the orphans, £2 10s. of the money which had been put by for the rent, to be replaced when the articles could be sold at a suitable opportunity. Thus we were helped to the close of one more week.

NOVEMBER 20th. Today our need was exceedingly great, but the Lord's help was great also. I went to meet with the brethren and sisters as usual. I found that £1 would be needed to supply the necessities of today, but 3s. only had come in. Just when we were going to pray, one of the labourers came in, who after prayer, gave 10s. Whilst we were praying, another labourer came in, who had received £1. Thus we had £1 13s.; even more, therefore, than was absolutely needed.

NOVEMBER 21st. Never were we so reduced in funds as today. There was not a single halfpenny in hand between the matrons of the three houses. Nevertheless there was a good dinner, and, by managing so as to help one another with bread, etc., there was a prospect of getting over this day also; but for none of the houses had we the prospect of being able to take in bread. When I left the brethren and sisters at one o'clock, after prayer, I told them that we must wait for help, and see how the Lord would deliver us at this time. I was sure of help, but we were indeed straitened. When I got to Kingsdown I felt that I needed more exercise, being very cold; therefore I went not the nearest way home but round by Clarence Place. About twenty yards from my house, I met a brother who walked back with me, and after a little conversation gave me £10 to be handed over to the brethren, the deacons, towards providing the poor saints with coals, blankets and warm clothing; also £5 for the orphans, and £5 for the other Objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution. The brother had called twice while I was gone to the Orphan Houses, and had I now been *one half minute* later, I should have missed him. But the Lord knew our need, and therefore allowed me to meet him. I sent off the £5 immediately to the matrons.

NOVEMBER 24th. This again has been a very remarkable day. We had as little in hand this morning as at any time, and yet several pounds were needed. But '*God, who is rich in mercy,*' and whose Word so positively declares that none who trust in Him shall be confounded, has helped us through this day also. While I was in prayer about ten in the morning respecting the funds, I was informed that a gentleman had called to see me. He came to inform me that a lady had ordered three sacks of potatoes to be sent to the Orphan Houses. Never could they have come more seasonably. This was an encouragement to me to continue to expect help. When I came to the prayer meeting about twelve o'clock, I heard that 2s. had come in, also £1 for a guitar

which had been given for sale. The payment for this guitar had been expected for many weeks. It had been mentioned among us repeatedly, that it might come just at a time when we most needed it: and oh! how true. Also the watch which had been given was sold for £2 10s.

NOVEMBER 25th. *Lord's Day.* The Lord kindly remembers us before there is absolute need. A sister who is going to leave Bristol, called on me to bid me farewell, and gave me in parting £1 10s. for the orphans. It is remarkable, that almost every donation given within the last four months and thirteen days, since our funds have been low, has come from unexpected quarters, to make the hand of God so much the more manifest.

NOVEMBER 28th. This is, perhaps, of all days the most remarkable as yet, so far as regards the funds. When I was in prayer this morning respecting them, I was enabled firmly to believe that the Lord would send help, though all seemed dark as to natural appearances. At twelve o'clock I met as usual with the brethren and sisters for prayer. There had come in only 1s., which was left last evening anonymously at the Infants' Orphan House, and which, except 2d., had already been spent, on account of the great need. I heard also that an individual had gratuitously cleaned the time-piece in the Infants' Orphan House, and had offered to keep the time-pieces in the three houses in repair. Thus the Lord gave even in this a little encouragement, and a proof that He is still mindful of us. On enquiry I found that there was everything needful for the dinner in all the three houses; but neither in the Infants' nor Boys' Orphan Houses was there bread enough for tea, nor money to buy milk. Lower we had never been, and perhaps never so low. We gave ourselves now unitedly to prayer, laying the case in simplicity before the Lord. Whilst in prayer there was a knock at the door, and one of the sisters went out. After the two brethren who labour in the Orphan Houses and I had prayed aloud, we continued for a while silently in prayer. As to myself,

I was lifting up my heart to the Lord to make a way for our escape, and in order to know if there were any other thing which I could do with a good conscience, besides waiting on Him, so that we might have food for the children. At last we rose from our knees. I said, 'God will surely send help.' The words had not quite passed from my lips, when I perceived a letter lying on the table, which had been brought whilst we were in prayer. It was from my wife, containing another letter from a brother with £10 for the orphans. The evening before last I was asked by a brother whether the balance in hand for the orphans would be as great this time, when the accounts would be made up, as the last time. My answer was, that it would be as great as the Lord pleased. The next morning this brother was moved to remember the orphans, and to send today £10, which arrived soon after I had left my house, and which on account of our need was forwarded immediately to me. Thus I was enabled to give £6 10s. for housekeeping and to put by £3 10s. for rent.

Should any one suppose, in reading the plain details of the trials through which we passed during the four months previous to DECEMBER 9th, 1838, respecting the Orphan Houses, that I have been disappointed as regards my expectations, as far as the funds are concerned, my answer is, that the reverse is the case. For straits were expected. Long before the trials came, I had more than once stated publicly that answers to prayer, in the time of need—the manifestation of the hand of God, stretched out for our help—was just the very end for which the Institution was established.

I further state that the orphans have never lacked anything. Had I thousands of pounds in hand, they would have fared no better than they have; for they have always had good, nourishing food, the necessary articles of clothing, etc.

There was two years ago a balance of £373 4s. 8½d. in hand, and now the balance is £50 5s. 3d.

1839

FEBRUARY 13th. This afternoon I paid out the last money which we had in hand, and in giving it to brother T—— said, 'We have now again to look to the Lord for further supplies.' This evening £5 was given to me, which had come in under the following circumstances: A gentleman and lady visited the Orphan Houses and met at the Boys' Orphan House two ladies who were likewise visiting. One of the ladies said to the matron of the Boys' Orphan House: 'Of course you cannot carry on these institutions without a good stock of funds.' The gentleman, turning to the matron said: 'Have you a good stock?' She replied: 'Our funds are deposited in a bank which cannot break.' The tears came into the eyes of the enquiring lady. The gentleman on leaving gave to the master of the boys £5, which came in *when I had not a penny in hand.*

JULY 15th. *Monday.* Today £2 7s. 3d. was needed for the orphans, but we had nothing. How to obtain the means for a dinner, and for what else was needed, I knew not. My heart was perfectly at peace, and unusually sure of help, though I knew not in the least whence it was to come. Before brother T—— came I received a letter from India, written in May, with an order for £50 for the orphans. I had said last Saturday to brother T—— that it would be desirable to have £50, as the salaries of all my fellow-labourers are due, the three treacle-casks empty, all the provision stores exhausted, several articles of clothing needed, and worsted for the boys to go on with their knitting. Now the Lord has sent exactly £50. Moreover this money comes very seasonably, as in three days I shall have to leave Bristol for some days, and can now go comfortably, as regards leaving means behind.

In the afternoon of this same day I met at a brother's house with several believers, when a sister said that she had often thought about the care and burden I must have on my mind, as regards obtaining the necessary supplies for so many

persons. As this may not be a solitary instance I would state, that, by the grace of God, this is no cause of anxiety to me. The children I have years ago cast upon the Lord. The whole work is His, and it becomes me to be *without carefulness*. In whatever points I am lacking in this point I am able, by the grace of God, to roll the burden upon my Heavenly Father. Though now (July, 1845) for about seven years our funds have been so exhausted, that it has been comparatively a *rare* case that there have been means in hand to meet the necessities of the orphans for *three days* together; yet have I been only once tried in spirit, and that was on SEPTEMBER 18th, 1838, when for the first time the Lord seemed not to regard our prayer. But when He did send help at that time, and I saw that it was only for the trial of our faith, and not because He had forsaken the work, that we were brought so low, my soul was so strengthened and encouraged, that I have not only not been allowed to distrust the Lord since that time, but I have not even been cast down when in the deepest poverty. We can expect nothing but that our faith will yet be tried, and it may be more than ever; and we shall fall, if the Lord does not uphold us.

AUGUST 22nd. In my morning walk, when I was reminding the Lord of our need, I felt assured that He would send help this day. My assurance sprang from our need, for there seemed no way to get through the day without help being sent. In this our deep poverty, after I had gathered together the few things for sale, a sister, *who earns her bread by the labour of her hands*, brought £82. This sister has seen it to be binding upon believers in our Lord Jesus to act out His commandments: '*Sell that ye have* (sell your possessions) *and give alms*' (Luke 12. 33); and '*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth*' (Matt. 6. 19). Accordingly she had drawn her money out of the bank and stocks, being £250, and had brought it to me at three different times for the benefit of the Orphans, the Bible, Missionary, and School Fund, and the poor saints. About two months ago she brought me

£100 more, being the produce of some other possession which she had sold, the half of which was to be used for the School, Bible, and Missionary Fund; and the other half for the poor saints. This £82 which she had brought today is the produce of the sale of her last earthly possession. (At the time I am preparing the seventh edition for the press, more than twenty-nine years have passed away, and this sister has never expressed the least regret as to the step she took, but goes on, quietly labouring with her hands to earn her bread).

OCTOBER 19th. The Lord is still pouring in bountifully! This morning £10 was sent from Worcester, and a sister brought £7, being the produce of the sale of ladies' baskets, which she and some other sisters are making for the benefit of the orphans. This last case shows what various means the Lord uses to provide for our need; yet all comes, without one single individual being asked to give help; for to the Lord alone we speak about our need. We are now again comparatively rich, i.e. we have means in hand to meet the current expenses of *about eight days*, which has been only two or three times the case during the last fifteen months.

NOVEMBER 16th. A large sea-chest was given by a brother several months since, for the benefit of the orphans, which had never been disposed of, and which, in this our great need, was sold for 15s. Yet this 15s. was needed to pay what was due for washing; and therefore, we had still nothing to take in provisions with. It occurred to one of the labourers, that there might be a little advanced on his watch, of the money which had been laid by for rent, as had once or twice before been done; and that the watch might be sold at quarter-day, in case there should not come in enough to make up the deficiency. Yet even this plan we did not any longer think to be quite Scriptural, as he needs the watch in the Lord's service, and as our Lord is so kind, that He would otherwise send us means were it well for us. In short, it appeared to us quite clear that, while we ought, in

such a strait, to dispose of things *which we do not need*, nothing ought to be disposed of *which is needed*, in order that the Lord's own deliverance might be so much the more manifest. All we could think of for sale was five pewter dishes, which had been given nearly four years ago, but which were never used, as they were not convenient. These we agreed should be sold. About four o'clock this afternoon I received £2 2s. which a brother and sister had brought from Leicestershire. With this I went joyfully to the Orphan Houses. There I found that 9s. 6d. had come in for the pewter dishes; one of the labourers had given 10s. for the orphans and 10s. for the School Fund. We are now brought to the close of one more week. This has been, perhaps, of all the weeks the most trying. So much prayer, and so little coming in, I never knew. Yet, by the grace of God, I was sure that help would come after the trial of our faith was over.

NOVEMBER 22nd. Our poverty had now become very great, greater it had never been. Yet, the Lord be praised! I was as comfortable as ever; for I was sure we were only for the trial of our faith in this state. Had the Lord shut up His hand in anger, He would not have continued to give us, even during this week, from time to time, tokens of His care over us. I said this morning: 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity' is a proverb of *the world*, and how much more may we, *His children*, now look to Him in our great need. I knew we must have help in some way, as now it had come to the greatest extremity, there being in none of the houses anything for dinner, except potatoes, of which we have an abundance. At ten this morning I was informed that a large box had arrived at one of the Orphan Houses. I set off immediately, and found it was from the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton. It contained £12 for the orphans, £1 11s. 10d. for the other funds, several lengths of dress materials, and numerous trinkets to be sold for the benefit of the orphans. The joy which I and my fellow-labourers had when these things lay before us, cannot be described;

it must be experienced in order that it may be known. It was two hours and a half before the dinner time, when the help was granted. The Lord knew that the orphans had no dinner, and, therefore, did He now send help.

1840

FEBRUARY 1st. I have now felt quite sure for several days past, that I should leave Bristol for a season, and go to Germany.

FEBRUARY 2nd. There has come in still further, nearly £9 for the orphans. How kind of the Lord to send this money just now, on the eve of my leaving home.

FEBRUARY 3rd. I left for Berlin.

Last Visit to his Father

I left Berlin on the evening of the 20th for Magdeburg, which I reached on the morning of the 21st, and on the same evening I arrived at my father's house. In all human probability I now see my dear father for the last time. He is evidently much weaker than he was two years ago, and coughs much more. What has the Lord done for me since I lived in the house where I am now! The two rooms where I am now most in prayer, reading the Word, and confessing His name, were those very rooms in which I sinned most, whilst living here many years ago. I have had again opportunity most fully to bring out the truth about the work of the Lord Jesus before my father, whilst conversing a long time with a woman in his hearing, to whom I showed from the Scriptures, that we are to be saved, not by our own works, but simply by faith in the Lord Jesus, who bore the punishment instead of us, and who fulfilled the law in our room.

FEBRUARY 26th. This morning I left Heimersleben. I took leave of my father most probably for the last time. It has been a great pleasure to me, and I consider it a great privilege to have been permitted by the Lord once more to see my father, once more personally to show him filial love and regard, and once more to set the truth before him. He

has been again during the whole of this my stay most affectionate to me, as he was during my two former visits to him since I left the Continent to reside in England. How cheerfully should I have left him this morning, did I know him to be safe in Jesus! But, alas! he as yet is not resting upon Christ, though he is so far religious as to read prayers and the Bible.

MARCH 26th. On the 17th I received the following letter, from a brother who several times helped us, and who also two months since sent £30.

'I have received a little money from ——. Have you any *present* need for the Institution under your care? I know you do not *ask*, except indeed of Him whose work you are doing; but to *answer when asked* seems another thing, and a right thing. I have a reason for desiring to know the present state of your means towards the objects you are labouring to serve, viz., should you *not have need*, other departments of the Lord's work, or other people of the Lord, *may have need*. Kindly then inform me, and to what amount, i.e. what amount you at this present time need, or can profitably lay out.'

At the time when this letter came, we were indeed in need, or at least it was desirable, as far as I had light, to have means, as I was just on the point of establishing an Infant School, and as again Bibles were needed in order to go on with the circulation of the Scriptures. Also in the Orphan Fund there was only 2s. 3½d. Nevertheless I considered that, as I have hitherto acted (i.e. telling the Lord alone about our need), I ought to continue to do, as otherwise the principal object of the work, to be a help to the saints generally, by seeking to lead them to increased dependence upon God *alone*, through this Institution, would be frustrated. I answered therefore the letter, in substance, as follows:

"Whilst I thank you for your love, and whilst I agree with you that in general, there is a difference between *asking for money* and *answering when asked*, nevertheless in our case I

feel not at liberty to speak about the state of our funds, as the primary object of the work in my hands is to lead those who are weak in faith to see that there is *reality* in dealing with God *alone*."

After having sent off the answer I was again and again led to pray to the Lord in this way: "Lord, thou knowest that for Thy sake I did not tell this brother about our need. Now Lord, show afresh that there is *reality* in speaking to Thee *only* about our need, and speak therefore to this brother, so that He may help us."

Today, in answer to this my request, this brother sent £100, of which sum I shall take £20 for the orphans, and £20 for each of the other objects. Thus I have means for establishing the Infant School, and for ordering more Bibles. Also the orphans are again supplied for a week; for when the money came in there was *not one penny* in hand for them.

In the two years August 1838 to August 1840, there were fifty occasions on which they were either penniless, or had insufficient means to pay their way for the day. But the money always came.

NOVEMBER 19th. Since September 18th, 1838, this has been, perhaps, of all the days the most trying. The poverty has been exceedingly great for the last six days. There had come in no money since yesterday. On this account no bread could be taken in, as far as the natural prospect went. Nor was there any money at three in the afternoon to take in milk for tea, when brother B—— came to me. However, we prayed together, and the Lord had mercy. For one of the labourers found that he was able, which he knew not before, to give of his own 10s., so that there were the means to take in the milk, by the time it is usually brought! This evening about six there came in still further 10s. 3d., by the sale of Reports. Thus, by the good hand of our God upon us, we were able to take in bread as usual. How very kind of the Lord that He sent us an abundance of potatoes and

two large sacks of oatmeal, before this season of deep poverty, as to pecuniary means, commenced! May the Lord now in great pity look upon us for we are in deeper poverty than ever, as with every day it increases, whilst there is no full deliverance. Thanks be to the Lord that my mind has been in peace this day also, though our faith has been so very much tried! Thanks to Him that my mind is in peace now, though there is nothing but want on every side before me, respecting tomorrow! Surely the Lord will again, in His own time, more fully stretch forth His helping hand!

NOVEMBER 20th. Nothing more had come in this morning. It was nearly three o'clock this afternoon when Brother B—— called on me to see whether anything had come in; but I had received nothing. I was obliged to go out with a brother from Devonshire, and therefore requested him to wait till I returned. About a quarter past three I came back when, among several persons who were waiting at my house to converse with me there was a sister whom I much desired to see about some church affair. I did so. When I had ended the conversation with her, about half-past three, she gave me £10 for the orphans. More sweet, and more needed, were none of the previous deliverances. Language cannot express the real joy in God which I had. *I was free from excitement.* The circumstance did not unfit me even for a single moment to attend to my other engagements. *I was not in the least surprised* because, by grace, my soul had been waiting on God for deliverance. Never had help been so long delayed. In none of the houses was milk for tea, and in one even no bread, and there was no money to purchase either. It was only a few minutes before the milkman came, when brother B—— arrived at the Orphan Houses with the money. Yet even now it was more than an hour before the usual tea time. The Lord be praised for this deliverance! Such a week of deep poverty as we have had since November 13th, we never had before. Yet, thanks to the Lord! we

have lacked nothing, and we have been kept from dishonouring Him by unbelief.

This way of living brings the Lord remarkably near. He is, as it were, morning by morning inspecting our stores, that accordingly He may send help. Greater and more manifest nearness of the Lord's presence I have never had, than when after breakfast there were no means for dinner, and then the Lord provided the dinner for more than one hundred persons; or when, after dinner, there were no means for tea, and yet the Lord provided the tea, and all this without one single human being having been informed about our need. This, moreover, I add, that although we, who have been eye-witnesses of these gracious interpositions of our Father, have not been so benefited by them as we might and ought to have been, yet we have, in some measure, derived blessing from them. One thing is certain, that we are not tired of doing the Lord's work in this way.

1841

SEPTEMBER 2ND. During the last four months we have had more in hand for the orphans than we needed. Since July 1838, when for the first time the funds were exhausted, we have had at no period so much money in hand. There was, as it were, during these four months, one continual even running of the river of God's bounty, both by presents in money and articles. As we had now for several months abounded in a greater degree than at any previous time of the same length during the past three years and three months, so it pleased the Lord after this period to try our faith more severely than during any time since the work first commenced. Indeed, so sharp were the trials of our faith for more than six months after this; so long the seasons when, day after day, only daily supplies were granted to us, and when even from meal to meal we had to look to the Lord; so long had we to continue in prayer, and yet help *seemed* to fail; that it can only be ascribed to the special mercy of God,

that the faith of those who were engaged in this work did not altogether fail, and that they did not entirely grow weary of this way of carrying on the Lord's work, and go, in despair of help from God, back again to the habits and maxims of this evil world. How my fellow-labourers have felt during all this time, I am, of course, unable to state; but, if I may speak for myself, I joyfully state, to the praise of the Lord, that during all the following months my faith was sustained without wavering, but still so greatly was it tried, that often I had no other petition but that the Lord would be pleased to continue it, and that He would pity me as a father pitieth his children.

NOVEMBER 13th. *Saturday*. This morning I took 1s. out of the box in my house. This one shilling was all there was towards the need of today. Pause, dear reader, for a few moments! Consider that there are more than a hundred persons to be provided with everything they require; consider that there is no money in hand; and consider also that this is the case not once nor twice in the course of the year, but very frequently. Is it not precious, under such circumstances, to have the Living God as a Father to go to, who is ever able and ever willing to help, as may be really needed? And to this privilege every one has a title who believes in the Lord Jesus, being as such a child of God (Galatians 3. 26). For though all the believers in the Lord Jesus are not called upon to establish Orphan Houses, Schools for poor children, etc., and trust in God for means; yet all believers, according to the will of God concerning them in Christ Jesus, may cast, and ought to cast, all their care upon Him who careth for them, and need not be anxiously concerned about anything, as is plainly to be seen from 1 Peter 5. 7, Philippians 4. 6, Matthew 6. 25-34. Under these circumstances of need, a silver watch, which *only yesterday afternoon* had become the property of the Orphan Fund, was disposed of, whereby we were helped through the expenses of the day. The coals are almost gone in each of the houses. Every article of pro-

vision, etc., is likewise much reduced. Truly, we are exceedingly poor; nevertheless there are the necessary provisions till Monday morning, and thus we were brought to the close of another week. This afternoon all the labourers met for prayer.

DECEMBER 9th. We are now brought to the close of the sixth year of this part of the work, *having only in hand the money which has been put by for the rent*; but during the whole of this year we have been supplied with all that was needed.

During the last three years we had closed the accounts on this day, and had, a few days after, some public meetings, at which, for the benefit of the hearers, we stated how the Lord had dealt with us during the year, and the substance of what had been stated at these meetings was afterwards printed for the benefit of the church at large. This time, however, it appeared to us better to delay for a while both the public meetings and the publishing of the Report. Through grace we had learned to lean upon the Lord only, being assured that, if we never were to speak or write one single word more about this work, yet should we be supplied with means as long as He should enable us to depend on Himself alone. But whilst we neither had had those public meetings for the purpose of exposing our necessity, nor had had the account of the Lord's dealings with us published for the sake of working thereby upon the feelings of the readers, and thus inducing them to give money, but only that we might by our experience benefit other saints; yet it might have appeared to some that, in making known our circumstances, we were actuated by some such motives. What better proof, therefore, could we give of our depending upon the Living God alone, and not upon public meetings or printed Reports, than that, *in the midst of our deep poverty* instead of being glad for the time to have come when we could make known our circumstances, we still went on quietly for some time longer, without saying anything. We therefore determined, as we sought and still seek in this work to act for the profit of the

saints generally, to delay both the public meetings and the Report for a few months. *Naturally* we should have been, of course, as glad as any one to have exposed our poverty at that time; but *spiritually* we were enabled to delight even then in the prospect of the increased benefit that might be derived by the Church at large from our acting as we did.

DECEMBER 23rd. This is now the sixth week that the labourers in the Day Schools and Orphan Houses have daily met for prayer. Several precious answers we have already received since we began to meet, as regards pecuniary supplies, fresh instances of conversion among the children, etc. One of our petitions has been that the Lord would be pleased to furnish us with means for a stove at Callowhill Street School-room. But though we had often mentioned this matter before the Lord, He seemed not to regard our request. Yesterday afternoon, whilst walking in my little garden, and meditating and praying, I had an unusual assurance that the time was now come when the Lord would answer our request, which arose partly from my being able to *believe* that *He would* send the means, and partly from the fact that the answer could no longer be delayed, without prayer having failed in this matter, as we could not assemble the children again, after the Christmas vacation, without there being a stove put up. And now, dear reader, observe. This morning I received from A.B. £20, and we have thus much more than is required for a stove.

DECEMBER 31st. The Lord has sent me for my temporal supplies during this year £238 11s. 1½d. I have been richly supplied with all I needed; yea, I have had much more than I needed.

1842

JANUARY 29th. Two sovereigns which came in on the 27th supplied our need yesterday. When I had again nothing in hand, to meet today's necessities, a sister came last evening, and brought me £1 6s., a sovereign from another sister, and

6s. from herself. She said: 'I do not know whether the orphans have a dinner for tomorrow or not, but I had no rest in delaying to bring this money.' I had but just then come home from a meeting, and had on the way to my house been lifting up my heart to the Lord, that He would be pleased to remember our need.

My dear reader, do you indeed recognise the hand of God in all these instances? I have given instance upon instance; I have brought before you not this particular case, nor another particular case; but I have purposely shown you how we have fared day after day in our poverty, in order that you may adore the Lord for His goodness to us, and that you yourself may be led to depend upon Him for everything, should you not have done so before. I affectionately beseech you, not to take these instances as a matter of course. Say not in your heart, This is a charitable Institution; persons know that the maintenance of these many orphans and the support of these Day Schools, etc., costs much money, and therefore they will contribute. Nor suffer Satan to rob you of the blessing which the account of the Lord's faithfulness to us, and His readiness to listen to our supplications, is calculated, with God's blessing, to communicate to you by allowing him to whisper into your ears that because the Reports are read by many, donations will of course be coming in, and that not all at once, but gradually, and that this is the way we are supplied.

Dear reader, it is not thus. Suppose, we have been for some time on the whole bountifully supplied. Suppose, now all is gone. Suppose, the expenses are great but very little comparatively is coming in. What shall we do now? If we took goods on credit, or if we made known our necessities at such times to the liberal Christians who have means, and who are interested in the work in our hands, then, humanly speaking, there might be little difficulty; but we neither take goods on credit, nor do we speak to any one about our need, but we wait upon God. Now, suppose our

expenses are, week after week, £30, £40, £50, or £60. How are the means to come? Persons might still give; yea, many persons might still give, but it might just happen so, that all the donations that are received at the time when our expenses are most heavy are very small donations; how shall we do then? Sometimes the outgoings have been so great that if I had sold everything I possessed I could not thereby have met the expenses of two weeks. What then is to be done? We wait upon God, and He always helps us, and has done so now (i.e. in 1881) for more than forty-five years with reference to the orphans, and for more than forty-seven with reference to other parts of the work.

FEBRUARY 9th. This morning I went between seven and eight o'clock to the Orphan Houses, to see whether the Lord had sent in anything. When I arrived there, He had just two or three minutes before sent help. A brother, in going to his house of business this morning, had gone already about half a mile, when the Lord was pleased to lay the orphans upon his heart. He said, however, to himself, I cannot well return now, but will take something this evening; and thus he walked on. Nevertheless he could not go any further, but felt himself constrained to go back, and to take to the Boys' Orphan House three sovereigns. (The donor himself stated this to me afterwards). Thus the Lord in His faithfulness helped us. Help was never more truly needed, for our poverty was never greater; nor did the help of the Lord ever come more manifestly from Himself; for *the brother was gone on a good distance, it was between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, and it was so short a time before money was needed.* Consider this, beloved reader, and with us praise the Lord. Praise Him particularly, that He enabled us to trust in Him in this trying hour.

FEBRUARY 12th. *Saturday.* Never since the funds were for the first time exhausted, had there come in less during any week, than during this. We were only able to supply the absolute necessities; but this we were enabled to do. When

the meal times came, the Lord always provided what was needful, and, considering the great distress there is now almost everywhere, our dear orphans are very well provided for. Now this day began not only without there being anything in hand, but our stores were greatly reduced, and we had to procure provisions for two days. One of the labourers gave 5s. in the morning, to provide the means to take in the milk. I collected together some pamphlets which had been given for sale, to dispose of them, and they were sold about eleven o'clock for 4s. There came in also by sale of stockings 3s., and 12s. was paid on behalf of one of the orphans. Thus we were provided with means to procure a dinner, and had a *little* towards purchasing bread; but by no means enough. All the labourers were together in prayer from half-past eleven till one, and we separated comfortably, with the purpose of meeting again in the evening. When I came home, there was given to me an old broken silver pencil case which, though worth very little, I took as a fresh proof that our Father was mindful of our need. When we met again this evening we found that 4s. had come in. As all this was not enough, a few old and needless articles were disposed of for 4s., also the broken pencil case for 6d. A labourer was also still further able to give 7s. of his own. To one of the labourers 2s. had been owed by a certain individual for more than a twelvemonth, which being paid just now and given by him for the orphans, came in most seasonably. Thus we had £1 18s. 6d., as much as was needful to procure provisions till after breakfast on Monday morning. However, the Lord helped still further. Between eight and nine this evening, after we had been together for prayer, and had now separated, some money was given to one of the labourers for himself, by which means he was able to give 9s., so that altogether £2 7s. 6d. had come in this day. This had been, of all the weeks, during the last three and seven months, one of the most trying. Thanks to the Lord who has helped us this day also! Thanks to

Him for enabling us already this morning, when we met for prayer, to praise Him for the deliverance, which we were sure He would work.

APRIL 12th. We were never in greater need than today, perhaps never in so much, when I received this morning £100 from the East Indies. It is impossible to describe the real joy in God it gave me. My prayer had been again this morning particularly, that our Father would pity us, and now at last send larger sums. *I was not in the least surprised or excited* when this donation came, for I took it as that *which came in answer to prayer, and had been looked for*. As it was left to me to use the money as might be most needed, I took one half of it for the Orphan Fund, and the other half for the other Funds. We have thus also an answer to our prayer for oatmeal, new shoes, and for means to enable us to have the old shoes mended, means for replenishing somewhat our stores, money for some articles of clothing for the children, and also a little money for the sisters who labour in the Orphan Houses. How precious to look to the Lord! I was always sure He would at last send larger sums, therefore had my heart been kept in peace, though my faith had never been more tried than during the last months.

MAY 10th. The time now seemed to us to have come, when, for the profit of the Church at large, the Lord's dealings with us, with reference to the various Objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, should be made known by publishing another Report. For whilst we, on purpose, had delayed it at this time five months longer than during the previous years, and that during a period when we were in deeper poverty than during any previous time; yet, as from the commencement it had appeared to me important from time to time to make known the Lord's dealings with us, so I judged it profitable still, to seek to comfort, to encourage, to exhort, to instruct, and to warn the dear children of God by the printed accounts of the Lord's goodness to us.

Though our trials of faith during these seventeen months lasted longer, and were sharper than during any previous period, yet during all this time the orphans had everything that was needful in the way of nourishing food, the necessary articles of clothing, etc. Indeed I would rather at once send the children back to their relatives than keep them without sufficient maintenance.

Remarks on Faith

I desire that all the children of God, who may read these details, may thereby be led to increased and more simple confidence in God for everything which they may need under any circumstances, and that these many answers to prayer may encourage them to pray, particularly as regards the conversion of their friends and relatives, their own progress in grace and knowledge, the state of the saints whom they may know personally, the state of the Church of God at large, and the success of the preaching of the Gospel. Especially I affectionately warn them against being led away by the device of Satan, to think that these things are peculiar to me, and cannot be enjoyed by all the children of God; for though, as has been stated before, every believer is not called upon to establish Orphan Houses, Charity Schools, etc., and trust in the Lord for means, yet all believers are called upon, in the simple confidence of faith, to cast all their burdens upon Him, to trust in Him, for everything, and not only to make everything a subject of prayer, but to expect answers to their petitions which they have asked according to His will, and in the name of the Lord Jesus. Think not, dear reader, that I have *the gift of faith*, that is, the gift of which we read in 1 Cor. 12. 9, and which is mentioned along with 'the gifts of healing,' 'the working of miracles,' 'prophecy,' and that on that account I am able to trust in the Lord. *It is true* that the faith, which I am enabled to exercise, is altogether God's own gift; it is true that He alone supports it, and that He alone can increase it; it is true

that, moment by moment, I depend upon Him for it, and that, if I were only one moment left to myself, my faith would utterly fail; but *it is not true* that my faith is that gift of faith which is spoken of in 1 Cor. 12. 9, for the following reasons.

(1) The faith which I am enabled to exercise with reference to the Orphan Houses and my own temporal necessities, is not that 'faith' of which it is said in 1 Cor. 13. 2 (evidently in allusion to the faith spoken of in 1 Cor. 12. 9), '*Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity (love) I am nothing*': but it is the self-same faith which is found in *every believer*, and the growth of which I am most sensible of to myself; or, by little and little, it has been increasing for the last sixty-nine years. [In 1895].

(2) This faith, which is exercised respecting the Orphan Houses and my own temporal necessities, shows itself in the same measure, for instance, concerning the following points: I have never been permitted to doubt during the last sixty-nine years that my sins are forgiven, that I am a child of God, that I am beloved of God, and that I shall be eternally saved; because I am enabled, by the grace of God, to exercise faith in the Word of God, and believe what God says settles these matters (Gal. 3. 26; Acts. 10. 43; Romans 10. 9, 10; John 3. 16, etc.).

Further, when my brother in the flesh, and my dear aged father died, and when concerning both of them I had no *evidence* whatever that they were saved (though I dare not say that they are lost, for I know it not); yet my soul was at peace, perfectly at peace, under this great trial, this exceedingly great trial, this trial which is one of the greatest, perhaps, which can befall a believer. And what was it that gave me peace? My soul laid hold on that word, '*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*' This word, together with the whole character of God, as He has revealed Himself in His Holy Word, settled all questionings. I believed what He has said concerning Himself, and I was at peace, and have been so ever since, concerning this matter.

Further, when the Lord took from me a beloved infant, my soul was at peace, perfectly at peace; I could only weep tears of joy when I did weep. And why? Because my soul laid hold in faith on that word: '*Of such is the kingdom of Heaven*' (Matthew 19. 14). Believing, therefore, as I did upon the ground of this word, my soul rejoiced, instead of mourning, that my infant was far happier with the Lord, than with me.

Lastly, let not Satan deceive you in making you think that you could not have the same faith, but that it is only for persons who are situated as I am. When I lose such a thing as a key I ask the Lord to direct me to it, and I look for an answer to my prayer; when a person with whom I have made an appointment does not come at the fixed time, and I begin to be inconvenienced by it, I ask the Lord to be pleased to hasten him to me, and I look for an answer; when I do not understand a passage of the Word of God I lift up my heart to the Lord, that He would be pleased, by His Holy Spirit, to instruct me, and I expect to be taught, though I do not fix the time when, and the manner how, it should be; when I am going to minister in the Word, I seek help from the Lord, and while I, in the consciousness of natural inability as well as utter unworthiness, begin this His service, I am not cast down, but of good cheer, because I look for His assistance, and believe that He, for His dear Son's sake, will help me. Oh! I beseech you, do not think me an extraordinary believer, having privileges above other of God's dear children, which they cannot have; nor look on my way of acting as something that would not do for other believers. Make but trial! Do but stand still in the hour of trial, and you will see the help of God, if you trust in Him. But there is so often a forsaking the ways of the Lord in the hour of trial and thus the *food of faith*, the means whereby our faith may be increased, is lost.

MARCH 25th. After a comparatively great abundance with regard to the orphans, for a whole year and seventeen days,

during which time we were not once in difficulty as to means, which had not been the case for nearly five years previous to the commencement of this period, we are now again quite poor, there being *nothing at all* left in my hands after I had paid out this day more than £50 for rent and salaries. But through the grace of God I am able to trust as heretofore in the Lord, and therefore my heart is in peace. *Evening.* I received this afternoon 11s. 2½d., and 2s. 7d. by sale of articles; there came in £1 19s. 9d., by sale of Reports 3s., and by a donation 2s. 2d.

MARCH 26th. This morning my wife and I besought the Lord unitedly for means, and received, almost immediately afterwards £5 from Birmingham in answer to our prayer.

MAY 23rd. We are still supplied *by the day*. We had received from the Lord during the last days also what we required, but we were poor, having nothing at all in hand. Under these circumstances with reference to means for the orphans, and in as great need for the other Objects of the Institution, two persons, professed believers, called on me to-day, who were going from house to house in the street where I live, to ask money for a chapel debt. I remonstrated with them, and sought to show them how the name of the Lord was dishonoured by them in calling upon the enemies of the Lord for pecuniary assistance towards, what they considered the work of the Lord. I sought to show them that if their work were of God He would, in answer to their prayers, send them help: and if not, ought they not to give up what was not His work and not force the matter by calling promiscuously from house to house upon believers and unbelievers? Their reply was: 'The gold and silver are the Lord's, and therefore we call upon the unconverted for help for His work.' My reply was: 'Because the gold and silver are the Lord's, therefore we, His children, need not go to His enemies for the support of His work.' Now, *at that very moment*, while I was thus speaking for the Lord, having then *nothing at all in hand* for the orphans or the other Objects,

the postman brought a small brown paper parcel and a letter. My conversation seemed, for the time at least, fruitless; for those two individuals, having left, went as before from house to house; but when I came back to my room, I found the blessedness of the Scriptural way, for that parcel, which the postman had brought, while I was conversing, came from Ireland, and contained two Post Office Orders for £5 each, and a worked stool cover; the letter which had been brought, and which was from Seaton, contained £1 for the orphans; and £1 1s. 5d. besides had been sent, having been taken out of the boxes in the Orphan Houses: so that altogether, whilst those two persons were with me, £12 1s. 5d. had come in.

OCTOBER 1ST. This evening I have received a Bank Order for £70, to be used as the Lord might direct me. The donor wishes me to let him know if anything particular should be connected with this donation. There is indeed much connected with it, as it comes most manifestly in answer to prayer, for thus I am able to supply all that is needed in the way of articles of clothing for the orphans, for which I have been long waiting upon the Lord, and as the winter is now drawing near, the winter clothes need to be got ready; further, I am able to have the Boys' Orphan House painted inside and coloured down, which is much needed; I am able to furnish all the labourers in the Orphan Houses with some money for themselves, which, on account of our long-continued poverty, I had not been able to do for six months. Yet, though the donation comes in so seasonably, I cannot write to the kind donor thus, lest he should be induced to give more, by my exposing our circumstances, and lest also the hand of God should not be so manifest, in providing me with means for the work, as otherwise it would. I took of this money £40 for the orphans, and £30 for the other Funds.

1845

MARCH 4th. My heart is not troubled now, whether there

be much or little in hand. I am sure that, in the best time and way, God will send help; and thus it is not only with reference to temporal supplies, but also as regards other things that we may need, or when we may be in peculiar difficulties in other respects. When boys need to be apprenticed, or situations have to be found for the girls, and there are difficulties in the way, as we only send them out to believing masters and mistresses, my soul is yet at peace, because I betake myself to my Heavenly Father. When there have been infectious diseases in the Orphan Houses, whereby, looking at it naturally, many children might be taken away through death, my soul is at peace, because I cast this burden upon the Lord, and He sustains me. When one or the other of my fellow-labourers have left the work, and I needed their place supplied and knew of no suitable persons, I have been looking to God for help, and that has kept my heart in peace, though this is no small difficulty, as not only can no hirelings be engaged in this work, but also, in case the individual is a true child of God, there are yet so many things to be considered as to fitness and call for the work. When all kinds of lying reports have been spread about the work and about myself in connection with it (though they have been very much less than might have been expected), I have committed my case to the Lord; and such things, instead of casting me down, often have greatly cheered me, because they have been a fresh proof to me that God is at work, and that, therefore, the devil is angry, and stirs up these lies.

1847

JANUARY 20th. For the whole of this period since May 26th, 1846, when the accounts were closed, therefore nearly eight months, we have had always an abundance of means, and for the greater part of the time about £200 in hand. The sum of £1,065 has come in for the orphans in less than eight months. Invariably I have thus been able to give to the matrons of the four Orphan Houses in advance, the

money which was required for the necessities of one week.

SEPTEMBER 14th. My dear reader, if you are tired of going on with this account of the Lord's gracious interpositions for us week after week, or day after day, I beseech you to lay it aside for the present. Take it up at another time. This Narrative is not of an ordinary character. It does not contain anecdotes for amusement; it relates no embellished tales; it gives *facts* in which the hand of God is seen stretched out on our behalf, as the result of prayer and faith. Seek to admire God, dear reader, in this simple Narrative of Facts which is related to His praise, and to allure your heart more and more for Him, and which is brought before you in all simplicity to encourage you and to stir you up, if it may please God so to use His servant, to put your whole trust in Him. I judge that it will be the more profitable way to read this account *by little and little*.

DECEMBER 23rd. The need of today was £11, having several expenses to meet besides those of housekeeping, which amounted to £4 for today. This sum the Lord gave me thus: last evening I received £1. But as I knew how much there would be needed today I waited further upon the Lord this morning for help, and, in *one minute* after I had risen from my knees I received a letter from Liverpool with £10 for the orphans. The donor writes: "I have had the enclosed ten-pound note in my drawer for some time, intending to send it to you for the orphans; but my time is so occupied that I have overlooked it. I now, however, enclose it," etc. How seasonable this help? How exactly *to the very shilling* what is needed today! How remarkable that *just now* this donor in Liverpool is led to send the ten pounds which had been, according to his own words, for some time in his drawer for the purpose of sending it! All this abundantly proves *the most minute and particular providence* of God and His readiness to answer the supplications of His children.

CHAPTER III

BUILDING FIVE NEW ORPHAN HOUSES, 1845-1870

FOR nearly ten years I never had any desire to build an Orphan House. On the contrary, I decidedly preferred spending the means which might come in for present necessities. On OCTOBER 30th, 1845, I received from a gentleman who lived in the street where the four Orphan Houses were, a polite and friendly letter, in which he courteously stated to me that the inhabitants in the adjoining houses were in various ways inconvenienced by the Orphan Houses being in Wilson Street. He left to myself the judgment of the case.

This letter I received on Thursday morning, OCTOBER 30th, 1845. Being very much occupied that week, I had scarcely any time to consider the matter. On Monday morning, however, NOVEMBER 3rd, I set apart some hours for the prayerful consideration of the subject, and after I had besought the Lord to guide me to a right decision, I wrote down the reasons which appeared to me to make it desirable that the orphans should be *removed* from Wilson Street, and also the reasons *against removing*. As far as they are suitable for being stated in print, they were these:

I. Reasons for Removing from Wilson Street

(1) The neighbours feel themselves inconvenienced by the noise of the children in the play-hours. This complaint is neither without foundation nor unjust. I should myself feel it trying to my head to live next door to the Orphan Houses on that account. I therefore ought to do to others, as I should wish to be done by. This point has never before appeared to me in so serious a light.

(2) The greatness of the number of the inmates in the houses has several times prevented the drains from acting

properly, and thus has a few times affected the water in one or two of the neighbours' houses.

(3) We have no proper play-grounds in Wilson Street. There is one play-ground, which, however, is only large enough for the children of *one house* at a time.

(4) We have no ground for cultivation, near the Orphan-Houses. By removing from Wilson Street, and obtaining premises surrounded by land for cultivation we should be able to procure a most important moral benefit for the children, by having the opportunity more fully than we now have, of training them in habits of industry, besides giving to the boys occupation which is more suitable for them than knitting, which is now the only employment they have besides making their beds, cleaning the house, and attending to the cooking of their meals. Moreover, this would be occupation in the open air which would bring their limbs into exercise.

There were other reasons for moving. It would be an advantage to have a laundry in the homes, so that the girls might learn to do what they would have to do when they went out into the world later. More space and fresh air were desirable, especially when children were sick. Houses scattered about all over the town would be difficult to supervise, and united prayer with the workers might not be easy. After a period of prayer and meditation, Müller began to see that the Lord would lead him to build, and that He would so enlarge the work that three hundred orphans might be accommodated, with their teachers, and the other overseers and servants needful.

Concerning this latter point, I think it important to remark, that during no period had the number of applications for the admission of Orphans been greater than just before I was led to think about building.

In the afternoon of NOVEMBER 3rd, 1845, I laid the matter before my fellow-labourers in the church (eight in number)

to get their judgment whether I ought not to leave Wilson Street and to build. All judged that I ought to leave Wilson Street, and none saw reasons against building.

On NOVEMBER 4th my dear wife and I began to meet for prayer about this matter, and purposed to do so morning by morning. We asked God for clearer light concerning the particular points connected with the subject; and being assured that it was His will that I should build I began asking the Lord for means.

On NOVEMBER 7th I judged, having considered the matter more fully, that sufficiently large premises to furnish all needful accommodation for 300 children (from their earliest days up to 15 or 16 years old), together with a sufficiently large piece of ground in the neighbourhood of Bristol, for building the premises upon, and the remainder for cultivation by the spade, would cost at least ten thousand pounds. I was not discouraged by this, but trusted in the living God.

DECEMBER 9th. It was now 35 days that I had been praying for means; but nothing had been given to me. Now observe: on the 36th day, after having begun to pray, on December 10th, 1845, I received £1,000 towards the building of the Orphan House. This is the largest donation that I had received up to that time for the Scriptural Knowledge Institution; but when I received it I was as calm, as quiet, as if I had only received one shilling. For my heart was looking out for answers. Day by day I was expecting to receive answers to my prayers. Therefore, having faith concerning the matter, this donation did not in the least surprise me. Yea, if five thousand pounds, or ten thousand pounds, had been given to me, instead of one thousand pounds, it would not have surprised me.

DECEMBER 13th. On the 39th day my sister-in-law, who had been for some weeks absent in London, and who had now returned to Bristol, told me that she had met a gentleman in London, who, having quite recently read with deep interest the Narrative of the Lord's dealings with me, wished to know

as many particulars about the work in my hands as he could. Being told by my sister-in-law that I purposed to build an Orphan House he, an architect, offered to make the plan, and superintend the building, *gratuitously*. Unsolicited he pressed this matter with deep and lively interest. The fact that this offer comes *unsolicited* and from a Christian architect shows especially the hand of God. This is the *second* proof that God will help me in this matter.

It seemed desirable to buy a large piece of ground, at least six acres, and near Bristol. This would be likely to cost about £2,500. The building and fitting up might cost another £9,000. He heard of a piece of land at Ashley Down, just outside the city of Bristol, that might be for sale. He saw it, and thought it very suitable.

1846

FEBRUARY 4th. This evening I called on the owner of the land on Ashley Down, about which I had heard on the 2nd but he was not at home. As I, however, had been informed that I should find him at his house of business I went there, but did not find him there either, as he had *just before* left. I might have called again at his residence at a later hour, having been informed by one of the servants that he would be sure to be at home about eight o'clock; but I did not do so, judging that the hand of God was in my not finding him at either place: and I judged it best therefore not to force the matter, but to '*let patience have her perfect work.*'

FEBRUARY 5th. Saw this morning the owner of the land. he told me that he awoke at three o'clock this morning and could not sleep again till five. While he was thus lying awake, his mind was all the time occupied about the piece of land, respecting which enquiry had been made of him for the building of an Orphan House, at my request; and he determined, that if I should apply for it, he would not only let me have it, but for £120 per acre, instead of £200, the price which he had previously asked for it. How good is

the Lord! The agreement was made this morning, and I purchased a field of nearly seven acres at £120 per acre.

Observe the hand of God in my not finding the owner at home last evening! The Lord meant to speak to His servant first about this matter, during a sleepless night, and to lead him *fully* to decide before I had seen him.

There were delays in getting possession of the land, but encouragement came when the London architect offered to prepare all plans for the building without charge.

JULY 6th. The reason why for several months there had come in so little for the building fund appeared to be this, that we did not need the money at present, and when it was needed, and when my faith and patience had been sufficiently tried, the Lord would send more means. And thus it has proved; for today was given to me the sum of two thousand and fifty pounds, of which two thousand pounds is for the Building Fund, and fifty pounds for present necessities. This is the largest donation I have yet had at one time for the work; but I expect still larger ones, in order that more and more it may be manifest to the children of God, that there is no *happier*, no *easier*, and no *better* way for the obtaining of pecuniary means or anything else in connection with the work of God, than to deal directly with the Lord Himself.

It is impossible to describe my joy in God when I received this donation. I was neither excited nor surprised; for *I look out* for answers to my prayers. *I believe that God hears me.* Yet my heart was so full of joy, that I could only *sit* before God, and admire Him, like David in 2 Samuel 7. At last I cast myself flat down upon my face, and burst forth in thanksgiving to God, and in surrendering my heart afresh to Him for His blessed service.

Between July, 1846, and March, 1849, all the money needed for erecting and furnishing Number One Orphan House was sent in. There were several donations

of one and two thousand pounds, the total sum received being £15,784. The orphans were removed from Wilson St. to Ashley Down in June, 1849. In December, there were 300 of them.

All that year, and the next George Müller was increasingly impressed that it was the will of God that he should build further. He was constantly, but privately, in prayer about this. He learned from an official report that there were six thousand young orphans in the prisons of England. Passages of Scripture such as 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths,' and 'Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established' (Proverbs 3. 5, 6, and 16. 3) seemed to stand out from the page in his daily reading. He carefully weighed the objections. One was, would his mental and physical strength be sufficient? Already he dealt with 3,000 letters a year, without a secretary. He was responsible for the running expenses of six Charity Schools, in addition to the Orphanage. Must there not be a limit? And what was going to happen when he died? To which he replied, 'Let everyone take heed lest in caring what will become of the next generation, he forget to serve his own generation.'

On January 14, 1851, a donation of £3,000 came in. Was not this plain proof that God was able to support an extended work? The reasons for building another Orphan House, for 700 orphans, appeared to him to be as follows.

(1) The many applications for the admission of destitute orphans, which continue to be made, I consider as a call from God upon me, to do all that is in my power to provide a home and Scriptural education for a still greater number of orphans.

(2) The moral state of the Poorhouses greatly influences me to go forward. When writing thus about the Poorhouses, I do not wish it to be understood in the way of reproof; for

I know not how these matters could be altered; but simply state the fact that thus it is.

(3) In this purpose I am the more confirmed, since it is a fact that the Orphan Houses already in existence in the kingdom are by no means sufficient to admit *even the most deserving and distressing cases*, and far less all that it would be well to provide for. Moreover, there is great difficulty connected with the admission of orphans into most of the ordinary Orphan Establishments, on account of the votes which must be obtained, so that *really* needy persons have neither time nor money to obtain them. Does not the fact that there were six thousand young orphans in the prisons of England, about five years ago, call alone for an extension of orphan institutions?

There were other arguments: the help given hitherto, the experience gained, the spiritual benefit to the orphans, and the encouragement given to the unconverted and the converted alike 'to deal with God under every circumstance, and trust Him at all times'.

For a year, not much money came in, and even at the end of 1852, what had been received was only a few thousands.

1853

JANUARY 4th. Day by day I have now been waiting upon God for means for the Building Fund for more than nineteen months, and almost daily I have received something in answer to prayer. These donations have been, for the most part, small, in comparison with the amount which will be required for the completion of this Object; nevertheless they have shown that the Lord, for the sake of His dear Son listens to my supplications and to those of my fellow labourers and helpers in the work; and they have been precious encouragements to me to continue to wait upon God. I have been for many months assured that the Lord in His own time, would give larger sums for this work; and for this I have

been more and more earnestly entreating Him, during the last months. Now at last He has abundantly refreshed my spirit, and answered my request. I received today the promise, that, as *the joint donation of several Christians*, there should be paid to me a donation of eight thousand and one hundred pounds for the work of the Lord in my hands. Of this sum I purpose to take £6,000 for the Building Fund.

See how precious it is to wait upon God! See how those who do so are not confounded! Their faith and patience may long and sharply be tried; but in the end it will most assuredly be seen, that those who honour God He will honour, and will not suffer them to be put to shame.

It was eventually decided to build not one large house, but two smaller ones.

The second Orphan House was opened in 1857, and the third in 1862. The £35,000 needed for this purpose was over-subscribed. There was now room for 1,150 children. But still applications for admission poured in. Up till now, he had been taking girls and infants, but it was painful to receive the girls in a family and have to refuse the boys. The orphanages in Britain were totally inadequate to admit all the children offered to them. In 1864, a gift of £5,000 came in. Great difficulties stood in the way of purchasing suitable land at a reasonable price, but with faith and prayer these melted away. Costs of building were going up, and Müller would never sign a contract until he had the money in hand; but it came. Number Four was opened in 1869, for boys, and Number Five for girls, in 1870.

Why did the money come in, so steadily, just when required, and so adequately? This subject is discussed in a note written in 1856. Certainly it was not the result of begging appeals. (I remember an occasion on which one of George Müller's successors had been addressing a meeting, and the chairman announced that the collection would be for the Orphanage. The Director rose, and very courteously explained that this

proposal was very kind, but it was contrary to the principles of the work, and could not be accepted). Was it, then, due to the Annual Reports? No doubt they helped, but most religious and philanthropic institutions issued reports to show how they used the money; the usual complaint was that nobody read them. True, the Reports issued by Müller's had a quality all their own. They contained more than bare figures of income and expenditure. Extracts from scores of letters written by donors all over the world are included, and these often give an insight into the spiritual experience of ordinary Christian people that would be hard to come by in any other way. Particularly affecting are the many generous gifts from the very poor. Interspersed there are little sermonettes by Müller himself, usually of a very practical nature. Again and again we read that the sum sent in exactly met the need of the moment, even to a penny. Gifts of jewelry and similar articles to be sold, were often sent.

1857

FEBRUARY 21st. Received the following letter:

'Beloved Sir,

'I enclose you £10, as "*The fruit from seed sown.*" I wish it appropriated for the support of the orphans, unless the Building Fund still needs it in which case half to each. In my deep humiliation last year, I consecrated a certain portion of my year's income to the Lord's service, and sent you £10 in anticipation of it, and the result is, that I have nearly £100 to devote to Him during the present year.'

Let us ponder this letter, dear reader. The writer says, that the £10 sent is '*The fruit from seed sown.*' Remember in connection with this that there is such a thing as sowing and reaping in this way, according to 2 Cor. 9. 6. Teaching children; visiting from house to house, for the sake of benefiting persons naturally or spiritually; giving money, bread, clothes, etc., to the poor; using our money in any way for

the Lord's honour and glory, is called, according to this passage, sowing; and, the recompense given by the Lord to him who sows, in time and eternity, is called reaping. The recompense may be, and generally is, more or less, given even in time; often tenfold, yea, a hundredfold, as the Lord repays even in temporal things, through raising up friends for us, or giving His manifest blessing upon our earthly vocation, etc. But suppose that for some particular purposes, the Lord did not allow such reaping to take place here on earth, there will be, most assuredly, the reaping in the world to come. I have moved among children of God above 47 years [in 1874]; I have become acquainted with many thousands of them, and I have known very many, who sowed, and sowed bountifully and I have *not yet met with one single instance* in which, *even as to this life*, the Lord has not acted according to His Word, so that as the sowing was, so was the reaping.

During this period, especially during the last 40 years, I have become acquainted with many thousands of believers, many hundreds of whom I have known intimately, as well as their private affairs. Moreover, many, very many, have honoured me with desiring my counsel and advice in their private and secret affairs. What have I learnt, among other points, by this? That *'there is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself'* (Prov. 11. 24, 25). Many instances have I seen in which the children of God scattered, and yet increased; yea, scattered much, and yet abundantly increased; but far more have I seen in which they withheld more than was meet, but it did tend to poverty. With all the desire to get on, very many were not able to do so, just because they only lived to themselves, they withheld more than was meet, and it tended to make or keep them poor. Bad debts, unexpected and unaccountable loss of custom, heavy family afflictions, etc., took away the money, which

they sought to keep for themselves, contrary to the will of God. (I speak here of the children of God, and not of the world. '*Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.*') The world is judged and condemned at the judgment day (1 Cor. 11. 32). Again it is written: '*Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine*' (Prov. 3. 9, 10). There is nothing Jewish in these two passages. They are as to the principles contained in them, deeply important for the believer under the present dispensation.

1856

OCTOBER 12th. There was sent to me a cheque for £100, with the donor's request to receive this for myself, as the beginning of a fund for my support when advanced in years, and for that of my family. This kind and well-intended proposal by the donor (who since has died), appeared to me as a subtle temptation laid for me (though far from being intended so by him), to depart from the principles on which I had been acting for twenty-six years, both regarding myself and the Orphan Work. I give the account of this circumstance fully, as it may be profitable to my readers.

'Dear Sir,

'In admiration of the services which you have rendered to poor orphans and mankind in general, I think it right that some provision should be made for yourself. I think it right to send you £100 as a beginning (which I hope many good Christians will add to), to form a fund for the maintenance of yourself and your family, and I hope you will lay out this as a beginning accordingly. May God bless you and your labours, as He has hitherto done in everything connected with your Institutions.

'I am, dear Sir, * * * *'

By God's grace I had not a moment's hesitation as to what to do. While most fully appreciating the great kindness of the donor, I looked upon this as a temptation, permitted by God, to put my trust in something else than Himself, and I therefore sent the following reply:

'My Dear Sir,

'I hasten to thank you for your kind communication, and to inform you that your cheque for £100 has safely come to hand.

'I have no property whatever, nor has my dear wife; nor have I had one shilling regular salary as Minister of the Gospel for the last 26 years, nor as the Director of the Orphan House and the other Objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad. When I am in need of anything I fall on my knees and ask God that He would be pleased to give me what I need; and He puts it into the heart of some one or other to help me. Thus all my wants have been amply supplied during the last 26 years, and I can say, to the praise of God, I have lacked nothing. My dear wife and my only child, a daughter 24 years old, are of the same mind. Of this blessed way of living none of us is tired, but we become day by day more convinced of its blessedness.

'I have never thought it right to make provision for myself, or my dear wife and daughter, except in this way, that when I have seen a case of need, such as an aged widow, a sick person, or a helpless infant, I have used the means freely which God has given me, fully believing that, if either myself or my dear wife or daughter, at some time or other, should be in need of anything, God would richly repay what was given to the poor, considering it as lent to Himself.

'Under these circumstances I am unable to accept your kind gift of £100 *towards making a provision for myself and family*; for so I understand your letter. Anything given to me, unasked for, by those who have it in their heart to help to supply my personal and family expenses, I thankfully

accept; or any donation for the work of God in which I am engaged, I also thankfully accept, as a steward for the orphans, etc.; but your kind gift seems to me especially given to *make a provision for myself*, which I think would be displeasing to my Heavenly Father, who has so bountifully given me my daily bread hitherto. But should I have misunderstood the meaning of your letter, be pleased to let me know. I hold the cheque till I hear again from you.

'In the meantime, my dear Sir, whatever your letter meant, I am deeply sensible of your kindness, and daily pray that God would be pleased richly to recompense you, both temporally and spiritually. I am, dear Sir, yours very gratefully,

GEORGE MÜLLER.'

Two days later I received a reply, in which the donor desired me to use the £100 for the support of the orphans, for which object I gladly accepted this sum. The day after, I received another £110 from the same donor, and four days after, £100 more.

1857

Towards the end of NOVEMBER I was most unexpectedly informed that the boiler of our heating apparatus leaked very considerably, so that it was impossible to go through the winter with such a leak. Our heating apparatus consists of a large cylindrical boiler, inside of which the fire is kept, and with which boiler the water-pipes that warm the rooms are connected. Hot air is also connected with this apparatus. The boiler had been considered suited for the work of the winter. To suspect that it was worn out, and not to do anything towards replacing it by a new one, and to have said, I will trust in God regarding it, would be careless presumption, not faith in God. It would be the counterfeit of faith.

The boiler is entirely surrounded by brickwork; its state,

therefore, could not be known without taking down the brickwork; this, if needless, would be rather injurious to the boiler than otherwise; and as for eight winters we had no difficulty in this way, we had not anticipated it now. But suddenly, and most unexpectedly, at the commencement of the winter, this difficulty occurred. What, then, was to be done? For the children, especially the younger infants, I felt deeply concerned, that they might not suffer, through want of warmth. But how were we to obtain warmth? The introduction of a *new* boiler would, in all probability, take many weeks. The *repairing* of the boiler was a questionable matter, on account of the greatness of the leak; but, if not, nothing could be said of it, till the brick chamber in which it is enclosed, was, at least in part, removed; but that would, at least, as far as we could judge, take days; and what was to be done in the meantime, to find warm rooms for 300 children? It naturally occurred to me, to introduce temporary gas stoves; but on further weighing the matter it was found that we should be unable to heat our very large rooms with gas, unless we had many stoves, which we could not introduce, as we had not a sufficient quantity of gas to spare from our lighting apparatus. But what was to be done? Gladly would I have paid £100 if thereby the difficulty could have been overcome, and the children not be exposed to suffer for many days from being in cold rooms. At last I determined on falling entirely into the hands of God, who is very merciful and of tender compassion, and I decided on having the brick-chamber opened, to see the extent of the damage, and whether the boiler might be repaired so as to carry us through the winter.

The day was fixed, when the workmen were to come, and all the necessary arrangements were made. The fire, of course, had to be let out while the repairs were going on. But now see. After the day was fixed for the repairs, a bleak north wind set in. It began to blow either on Thursday or Friday before the Wednesday afternoon when the fire was

to be let out. Now came the first really cold weather which we had in the beginning of that winter, during the first days of December. What was to be done? The repairs could not be put off. I now asked the Lord for two things, viz., that He would be pleased to change the North wind into a South wind, and that He would give to the workmen '*a mind to work*'; for I remembered how much Nehemiah accomplished in 52 days, whilst building the walls of Jerusalem, because '*the people had a mind to work*.' Well, the memorable day came. The evening before, the bleak North wind blew still; but on the Wednesday, the South wind blew; exactly as I had prayed. The weather was so mild that no fire was needed. The brickwork was removed, the leak was found out very soon, the boiler-makers began to repair in good earnest. About half-past eight in the evening when I was going home I was informed at the lodge that the acting principal of the firm whence the boiler-makers came had arrived to see how the work was going on, and whether he could in any way speed the matter. I went immediately, therefore, into the cellar to see him with the men, to seek to expedite the business. In speaking to the principal of this, he said in their hearing: 'The men will work late this evening and come very early again tomorrow.' 'We would rather, Sir,' said the leader, 'work all night.' Then remembered I the second part of my prayer, that God would give the men '*a mind to work*.' Thus it was: by the morning the repair was accomplished the leak was stopped, though with great difficulty, and within about 30 hours the brickwork was up again and the fire in the boiler; and all the time the south wind blew so mildly that there was not the least need of a fire. Here, then, is one of our difficulties which was overcome by prayer and faith.

1859

JANUARY 1st. I cannot tell you how happy this service makes me. Instead of being the anxious, careworn man many

persons think me to be, I have no anxieties and no cares at all. Faith in God leads me to roll *all* my burden upon Him; for many are my necessities, apart from those connected with money. In every way I find God to be my helper, even as I trust in Him, and pray to Him in childlike simplicity, about everything. Be encouraged, dear fellow-believer, to go this blessed way yourself, and you will see what peace and joy it affords.

CHAPTER IV

PERSONAL MATTERS

George Müller wrote very frankly about his personal and private affairs, but only after a long lapse of years. His income, derived from gifts, rose year by year. In 1850 it was £402 13s. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., 'of which we gave away £220.' In 1860 it was £1,054 9s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 'out of which we gave away £800.' In 1870, out of £2,067 9s. 9d. received, he gave away £1,713 11s. 7d.

This account of my income leads me to make the following remarks. The reader of the previous pages would be mistaken, if he supposed that, as soon as the Lord has sent me means, my aim is, to seek to get rid of them as fast as possible, as if it were a crime to possess a ten pound note. That is not at all my way of acting. All I seek after is to have grace, not to hold anything as my own but as belonging to the Lord; so that, whether I have much or little, I desire to look on the much or the little as a steward would, and not as an owner. I seek, therefore, for grace, to be willing, to give of that which the Lord has given to me, a part or, if He would bid me, all. Often the Lord brings before me needy saints; or some needy unbelievers; or special claims in His work; and then I seek to be ready to give as His steward, out of that with which He has entrusted me. This is the explanation how £1,739 os. 7d. could be given away by me between January 1st, 1874, and May 26th, 1874, when my income during that time had been only £1,204 19s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., and yet my expenses had been far greater than ever, on account of the illness of my beloved wife.

I have no doubt that most of the Christian readers will say. This is a blessed way! It is delightful to be allowed to

give away so much! How I should like to be able to do the same. My reply is, Yes, it is a blessed way! It is delightful to be allowed to give away so much. Will you not then try this way for yourself? Give, as God prospers you. Begin with little if you have not faith enough to begin with much; only give that little, constrained by the love of Christ, heartily, faithfully, steadily. Do not begin and after a few weeks leave off; but go on steadily, under all circumstances, and you will find that you will be so blessed in your own soul, besides so prospered in your circumstances, as that you will more and more take delight in giving and have also the ability for so doing. There is one thing additionally to be observed. Do not, as stewards, waste your Lord's means. Though you were to give much if you lived in an unbecoming way, spending too much on yourself in the way of luxury or otherwise you would not be entrusted with much. I have not only allowed to myself and family all the necessities, but even the conveniences of life; I do this still, if not even more, as I am increasing in years; but I have ever guarded against extravagance in any way; lest my stewardship should be taken from me.

His total income up to 1885 was £66,463 7s. 4½d., out of which he gave away £57,000. There is no record of his personal receipts during the last twelve years of his life, but it is known that his benefactions amounted to £24,490 18s. 8d. When he died, his personal estate was sworn at £160 9s. 4d., of which furniture and books contributed £100, with about £60 in cash.

He tells us a little about his daughter Lydia.

After our daughter had been at school for half a year I asked for the account, when it was stated to me by the Christian lady in whose establishment she was that she had a pleasure in educating her gratuitously. However, as I pressed the matter I obtained the account. It was paid, but the exact sum was returned to me anonymously which, of course, I found out at once to be from the Christian sister

at whose school my daughter was. From that time I could never more obtain the account, though my dear child was about six years longer at school. I refer to this point for this special reason: God had laid it on my heart to care about poor destitute orphans. To this service I had been led to give myself; He, in return, as a recompense even for this life, took care that my own beloved child should have a very good education free of expense to me.

1853

In JULY it pleased the Lord to try my faith in a way in which before it had not been tried. My beloved daughter was taken ill on June 20th. This illness proved to be typhus fever. On July 3rd there seemed to be no hope of her recovery. Now was the trial of faith. But faith triumphed. My beloved wife and I were enabled to give her up into the hands of the Lord. He sustained us both. But I will only speak about myself. Though my only and beloved child was brought near the grave yet was my soul in perfect peace, satisfied with the will of my Heavenly Father, being assured that He would only do that for her and her parents, which in the end would be the best. She continued very ill till about July 20th, when restoration began. On August 18th though exceedingly weak, she was so far restored that she could be removed to Clevedon for change of air. It was then fifty-nine days since she was first taken ill.

While I was in this affliction, this great affliction, besides being at peace, so far as the Lord's dispensation was concerned, I also felt perfectly at peace with regard to the cause of the affliction. Once, on a former occasion, the hand of the Lord was heavily laid on me in my family. I had not the least hesitation in knowing that it was the Father's rod, applied in infinite wisdom and love, for the restoration of my soul from a state of lukewarmness. At this time, however, I had no such feeling. Conscious as I was of manifold weaknesses, failings, and shortcomings, so that I too would

be ready to say with the Apostle Paul, '*O wretched man that I am*'; yet I was assured that this affliction was not upon me in the way of the fatherly rod, but for the trial of my faith. Persons often have no doubt the idea respecting me that all my trials of faith regard matters connected with money, though the reverse has been stated by me very frequently. Now, however, the Lord would try my faith concerning one of my dearest earthly treasures.

Well, the Father in heaven said as it were, by this His dispensation, Art thou willing to give up this child to Me? My heart responded, As it seems good to Thee, my Heavenly Father. Thy will be done. But as our hearts were made willing to give back our beloved child to Him who had given her to us, so He was ready to leave her to us, and she lived. '*Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart*' (Psa. 37. 4). The desires of my heart were, to retain the beloved daughter if it were the will of God; the means to retain her were, to be satisfied with the will of the Lord.

Of all the trials of faith that as yet I have had to pass through this was the greatest; and by God's abundant mercy, I own it to His praise, I was enabled to delight myself in the will of God; for I felt perfectly sure, that, if the Lord took this beloved daughter it would be best for her parents, best for herself, and more for the glory of God than if she lived.

1854

DECEMBER 31ST. The Lord has been pleased to give me during this year £697 11s. 5d.

Some of my readers may be ready to exclaim, £697 11s. 5d. What a large sum! Not one out of a hundred ministers has such a large salary, nor one out of twenty clergymen such a good living! Should you, esteemed reader, say so, my reply is: Indeed mine is a happy way for the obtaining of my temporal supplies; but if any one desires to go this way he must not *merely* say that he trusts in God, but must *really*

wish for some very great evil, instead of some very great blessing. They forget that they desire a time, when, for want of regular occupation they will be particularly exposed to temptation.

(3) But great as habitually our occupation was we never allowed this to interfere with the care about our own souls. Before we went to work we had, as an habitual practice, our seasons for prayer and reading the Holy Scriptures. Should the children of God neglect this, and let their work, or service for God, interfere with caring about their own souls, they cannot, for any length of time be happy in God; and their conjugal happiness must also suffer on account of it.

(4) Lastly and most of all to be noticed is this: we had for many years past, whether twenty or thirty years or more I do not know, besides our seasons for private prayer and family prayer, also habitually our seasons for praying together. For many years my precious wife and I had, immediately after family prayer, in the morning, a short time for prayer together, when the most important points of thanksgiving or the most important points for prayer, with regard to the day, were brought before God.

These seasons for united prayer, I mean in addition to the family prayer, I particularly commend to all Christian husbands and wives. I judge that it was in our own history the great secret for the continuation not only of conjugal happiness, but of the love to each other, which was even more abundantly fresh and warm than it had been during the first year, though we were *then* exceedingly fond of each other.

As one reads on, how he told of her last illness, and of their conversations together, one wonders how any man could so speak without completely breaking down, or how any audience could listen without sobbing. In case the reader thinks Müller must have been a cold-blooded man, we relate an incident which has never previously been made known. When the funeral was

over he asked his old friend John Pocock to come back with him to the vestry at Bethesda Chapel. He sat, with his head bowed over the table, without a word, till nearly midnight.

Not all his trials are told in the Autobiography. One of these was the second Mrs. Müller, to whom he was married in 1871. It is only charitable to suppose that as she got older her mentality and disposition underwent some unforeseen and progressive deterioration. However, even this was overruled for good. She liked foreign travel, so they both went abroad on many occasions. He was invited to preach wherever he went, and the years 1876 to 1892 were almost entirely spent in preaching tours. He visited most of the countries of Europe, where of course his German and French stood him in good stead. He also went all over the United States and Canada, India, Australia and New Zealand, with brief visits to China and elsewhere. Speaking of the States, he writes,

In many of the largest cities I addressed, by particular request, the pastors and ministers of such cities and the neighbourhood, and had seventeen meetings of this kind, which were attended not only by 100 or 200, but once by about 300, and on another occasion by 500. To these meetings came the pastors and ministers of the various evangelical denominations. I addressed the ministers generally for an hour or more, and then they asked me questions afterwards. These meetings I reckon to have been the most important part of all my service on this preaching tour.

I addressed also, by the particular request of the presidents and professors, the students of fifteen Universities, Colleges, or Theological Seminaries. For this important service, which I was permitted to render, I desire to be especially grateful to my Heavenly Father. In addition to these Universities, Colleges, and Seminaries, I gave addresses in five other higher educational establishments by request of the Principals. I had also in several large cities special meetings

for Christian workers, who varied in number from 500 to 2,500. In all I preached during this tour 299 times, and we travelled, by land and water, above nineteen thousand miles. My preaching was not confined to the English-speaking population, but I ministered also many times among the natives of Germany, of whom there are several millions in the United States; nor was my service merely amongst the white population, but often I ministered also to the coloured people, and had generally then also immense congregations. I did not labour among particular denominations but, as I love all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, and as I habitually seek more and more to promote union amongst all the children of God, I preached among so-called Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopal Methodists, Lutherans and Baptists. I had among them all many open doors, which I gladly entered, as nothing was required for me by any one, which I could not do with a good conscience.

While I was absent from Bristol all went on most satisfactorily, so that when we returned I could only admire the kindness of God.

The statements which have appeared in some public papers that I have obtained very large sums for the Institution in America, are entirely false; for all the donations handed to me for the Institution would not meet one half of its average expenses for *one single day*, as I did not receive as much as £60.

Three years later.

At New Haven, Connecticut, we arrived on the 27th of NOVEMBER. This place is famous as the seat of the Yale College (or rather University) founded in the year 1700, and containing 859 students. Through the courtesy of the President and University Chaplain I had twice an opportunity of addressing a considerable number of the students, a service in which I take the deepest interest, from having been converted myself while a student at the University of Halle. These my labours amongst the students of Colleges,

Theological Seminaries and Universities, both in Europe and America, the Lord has condescended to bless greatly in several instances, which have since come to my knowledge. In this place I had also a precious meeting with about fifty pastors from the city and neighbourhood.

The greatest trial of all is not mentioned in the Autobiography. In 1848, and for many years after, the church at Bethesda, and its leaders, were vehemently attacked in a pamphlet warfare for supposed laxity in admitting persons to the Lord's Table who came from meetings where doctrinal error was tolerated. Those who remember those days tell us that their whole lives were embittered by this controversy. It is evidence that the most godly of men are not always immune from the bitterest accusations.

It might have been supposed that when the Orphanage had become well known and honoured all over the world its financial support would have become stronger than ever. But it was not so. The expenses had risen to about £500 a week. There were 2,000 children to be cared for, besides teachers and helpers. Again and again, between 1885 and 1898, we read in the diary entries like this: 'Our money is entirely gone,' or 'We have nothing at all left.' One entry, in 1887, says, 'During this year, in our need, the Lord has been pleased particularly to help us by means of legacies.' Money often had to be prayed out of Chancery.

In 1892, the expenditure overspent the income by £1,951. This was not going into debt, because there were legacies due amounting to £3,000, and the buildings were worth at least £100,000. Still, it was very trying, and in 1893 it was decided to sell some land in front of two of the Houses, which was not strictly necessary. It fetched £10,000.

1893

MARCH 4th. *This very day* God begins to answer our prayers, as we have received a very good offer for the land we have to sell, even £1,000 per acre. The beginning of the

day was darker as to outward appearances than ever: but we trusted in God for help. The first three deliveries of letters brought us only £4, and the remaining three brought us so little, that the whole day's income was only £8 instead of £90, the amount we require every day to meet all our expenses. But God has now helped us. We have been able this evening to sell ten acres of land and two-fifths of an acre at £1,000 per acres, and shall receive £10,405 altogether for the whole of one field. The contract was signed at 8 o'clock this evening.

The last entry in the diary is under the date March 1st, 1898.

For about twenty-one months with scarcely the least intermission the trial of our faith and patience has continued. Today the Lord has refreshed our hearts. This afternoon came in, for the Lord's work, £1,427 1s. 7d. as part payment of a legacy of the late Mrs. E.C.S. For three years and ten months this money had been in the Irish Chancery Court. Hundreds of petitions have been brought before the Lord, regarding it, and now, at last, this portion of the total legacy has been received.

The end came suddenly and unexpectedly. In spite of his great age, George Müller retained full mental and physical vigour to the last, and was preaching regularly in and around Bristol. He died in his sleep.

The crowds lining the streets of Bristol and following the coffin were the largest the town has ever seen at a funeral before or since, and the tributes to his memory were of a warmth and respect that are very unusual. They came from all classes and conditions of men, as may be seen in the Autobiography.

CHAPTER V

COMMENTARY

IT may be that some readers of the second and third chapters of this record will say to themselves, 'This is either grossly exaggerated and over-coloured, or it is downright lying.' They will find it difficult to convince any Bristolians, old enough to remember George Müller, of the one or the other. There still stand the five Orphan Houses on Ashley Down. Visiting parties week after week saw the 2,000 orphans in the homes. That £1,500,000 of money was donated is an undeniable fact. Most people do not find it at all easy to lay hands on so much. No one can produce any begging appeals. If it did not come in the way in which George Müller and his numerous helpers say it came, how did it come?

Nor will it do to attribute everything to the personal magnetism, whatever that may mean, of one man. He died in 1898. The work goes on, with the basic principle unchanged in 1954. True, there are changes. A hundred years ago orphanages were few and small. Today they are large and plentiful. Then, the public authorities offered nothing but the hated poorhouses. Now, every County Authority provides cottage homes run under good conditions, for needy children. So the inmates at Müller's are fewer, and average age is younger. Illegitimate children, and children deprived of only one parent are now admitted. Just at present the children are in process of being removed from the old, rather barrack-like premises on Ashley Down and are being placed out, with a house mother in ordinary houses, well appointed and nicely furnished, in groups of about fifteen. The new home for infants is larger. The

confess my transgressions unto the Lord,' the forgiveness is granted before the verse is finished, and in the parallel line of the Hebrew poetry. I remember another Sunday morning address, when he gave us the five conditions of answered prayer (John 16. 23; Psalm 66. 18; 1 John 5. 14; Mark 11. 24; Luke 18. 1). He finished by telling that he had been praying for a certain thing for forty-six years and three months (the period varied with the date) and that he had not seen it yet, but he was as sure that it would be granted as though he already saw it. Then just before his preaching days were concluded, there was a week-night service at the Y.M.C.A., and the old gentleman gripped the bar in front of him on the platform and said solemnly, 'I know God, yes, I know God.' We several times heard him say that he prayed he might not disgrace the Lord in his old age, and become a wicked old man, but rather that he might finish his course with joy, and be like a ship with all sails set, coming into harbour at sunset, at the end of her voyage. And so it came to pass.

About this Book

THIS is the story of the FAITH of this man of God. Against the dark background of a dissolute youth, Müller's subsequent faith and integrity stand out in bold relief.

While it is not a biography of George Müller, these connected excerpts from the annual Narrative of the Lord's dealings impress, not by the spectacular element in this man's faith, but by his utter sincerity and childlike simplicity. There was nothing forced about his faith—it was something perfectly natural, workable, and truly real.

The growth and development of the Ashley Down Orphanage was a corporate activity as the FAITH of George Müller imbued all his godly helpers in the early days of trial, struggle, plodding, courage, hope, and triumph.

As we read we feel inspired, and the challenging words, 'Whose FAITH follow', ring loudly in our hearts.