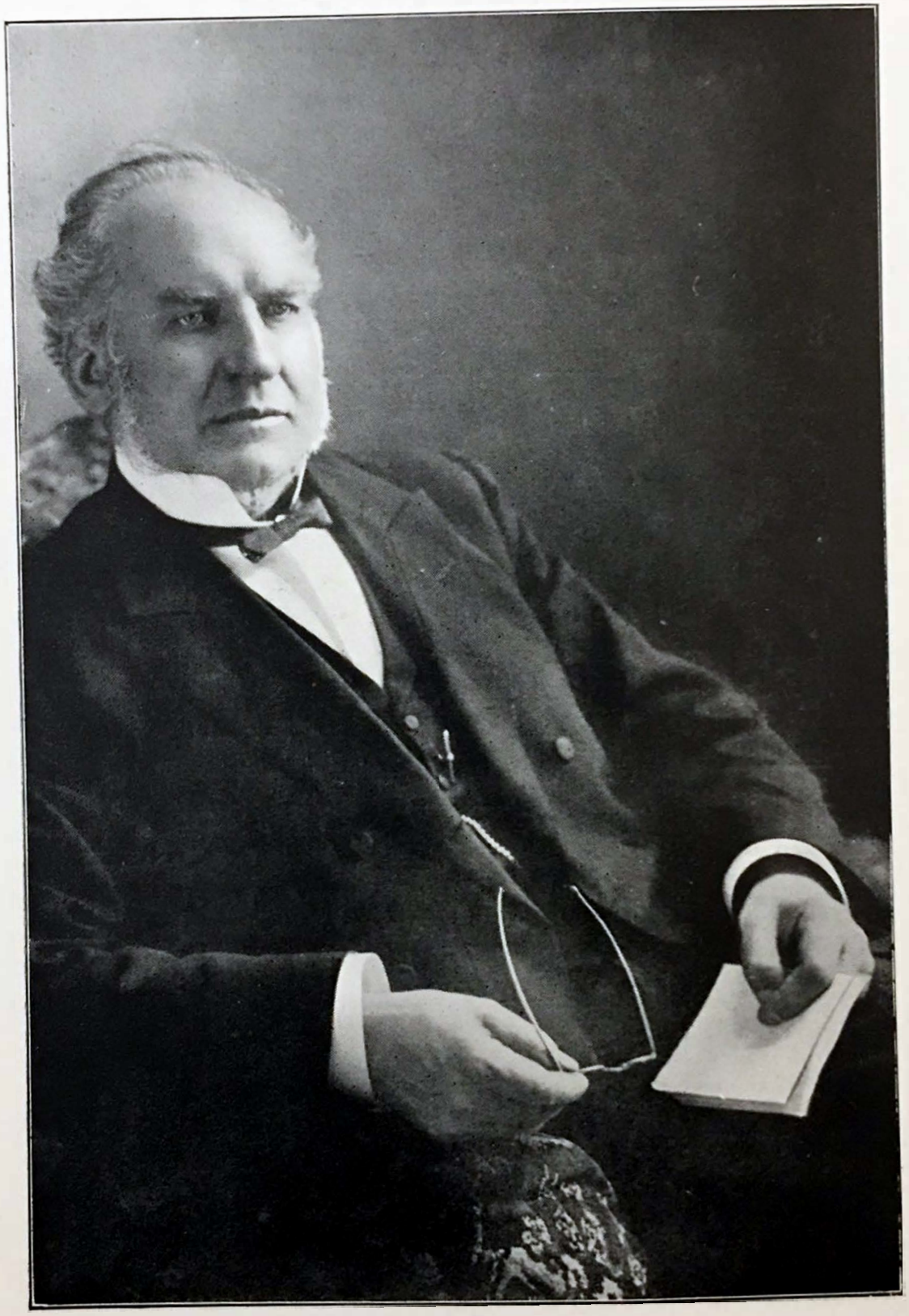
HENRY VARLEY

THE POWERFUL EVANGELIST
OF THE VICTORIAN ERA

BY HIS SON
HENRY VARLEY, B.A.

PICKERING & INGLIS
14 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4
229 BOTHWELL STREET, GLASGOW, C.2



HENRY VARLEY

(*circ.* 1905).

Frontispiece.

Made and Printed in Great Britain

TO

MY MOTHER,

WHOSE SYMPATHY, CO-OPERATION,

SELF-SACRIFICE AND LOVE WERE TO

MY FATHER, DURING NEARLY FIFTY-FIVE YEARS,

AN UNFAILING FOUNTAIN OF

STRENGTH AND JOY.

PREFATORY NOTE

The sources of this brief biography are five :—

1. A collection of my father's letters to my mother, extending from 1854 to 1912.

2. An autobiographical document written by my father in his seventy-third year.

3. Occasional letters from his pen to *The Christian*, descriptive of his travels and missions.

4. Cuttings from various newspapers issued in some of the cities and towns visited by him in the course of his evangelistic tours.

5. My own personal reminiscences and impressions.

I acknowledge with warm thanks the "Appreciations" in Chapter XII contributed by the Revs. F. B. Meyer and William Cuff, and Messrs. George E. Morgan and Alfred Holness.

Mr. Morgan rendered additional kindness by placing at my disposal many bound volumes of *The Christian*, with their respective indices.

H. V.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

1835—1846

Parentage and Early Years

Æt. 1–11

Tattershall—John Varley—The mother—The home—Removal to Lincoln—First religious impressions—The mother's illness and death—Break-up of the home—Henry Varley goes to London.

"The Child is father of the Man."

WORDSWORTH.

I

Parentage and Early Years

1835—1846

IT was in the little town of Tattershall, in the fen-country of Lincolnshire, that Henry Varley first opened his eyes to the light of day. The town was once a place of some importance, with a weekly market, of which the defaced "butter-cross" still stands as the unintentional memorial. It now wears a faded aspect of drab respectability. Its two chief features of antiquarian interest are its castle and its church. The castle, for many years little more than a ruin, but at present in process of restoration, dates from the fifteenth century, and was both taken and retaken in the Civil War two hundred years later. The church, only some eighty yards away, is a venerable structure of grey stone, whose

massive pinnacled tower forms a prominent object in the level landscape for miles around. In its chancel was once what was reputed to be the finest painted glass in all England; but, as John Wesley says in his Journal (November 7, 1781), "the present owner, considering it brought him in nothing by staying there, lately sold it for a round sum of money."

Here, then, in this decayed market-town, Henry Varley was born on October 25, 1835. His father, John Varley, a man of handsome features, fine presence, and vigorous mind, carried on the business of a small brewery and malt-house—a fact which, considering his son's uncompromising and outspoken advocacy of the Temperance cause throughout his life, can be regarded as only one of the innumerable ironies of fate. But the interests of business by no means monopolized John Varley's attention. The sequel will show that it might perhaps have been better if they had. He was something of a philosopher—his son, from his own old age, looking back upon him through the magnifying mists of memory, even goes so far as to call him "a genius." Given to speculative inquiry, he was one of the numerous band who have sought to discover the elusive secret of perpetual motion, and several times believed himself to be on the brink of success.

From an old miniature.

HENRY VARLEY'S FATHER

[To face p. 4.

He was, too, a considerable politician, enthusiastically attached to the cause of Liberalism, and a recognized leader in the political life of the town and neighbourhood.

Of his religion I never heard my father speak, nor is any hint of it to be found in the autobiographical notes which my father put on paper in the latter months of his life. It may therefore be fairly judged, perhaps, that there was but little to tell of this side of John Varley's character. Morally, however, he seems to have been a strong man, and sedulously careful of the ethical training of his family. An instance of his method will be read with interest. Once, when the little Henry was but eight years old, he had been throwing stones at a favourite apple-tree in the garden, and had succeeded in bringing down some of the ripe, red fruit. This was in flagrant disobedience to the father's express command. The boy was caught eating the spoil. "Come with me," said the father, and the two entered the house together. Then, taking an exercise-book, the father wrote at the top of one page in his neat hand, "Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other"; and at the top of a second page, "Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite" (Prov. xxiii. 2). "Write each of these twenty-five times," said he, "and remember them

as long as you live." The son never forgot the lesson, and bore witness how, in after years, many a time when he felt within him the subtle working in any form of the clamorous cravings of the flesh, which war against the health of the soul, the warning words would start up in his mind, "Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite"—and the cravings would be resisted and stilled.

It was, however, as so often happens in family life, the mother rather than the father who had the larger and deeper influence over the growing boy, and to whom the chief devotion of his heart was given. He speaks of her as "one of the noblest types of womanhood." "My childhood's love," he exclaims with enthusiasm, "my boyhood's companion!" Rich in bodily attractiveness and grace, she added to these the higher excellences of a well-cultivated and disciplined mind. Religion of the pronounced Evangelical form was to her a vital reality, and her religious feelings were deep and strong. She trained her children with a firm yet gentle hand. My father tells of an incident which he remembered to his latest days. He had had a sharp quarrel with his brother Albert, his senior by some three years, who in some little matter had endeavoured to assert that mastery which elder brothers often think it their right to

From an old silhouette.

HENRY VARLEY'S MOTHER

To face p. 6

exercise over younger ones. The combative element was fairly strong in both the boys, and neither of them was prepared to give way to the other. The mother, coming upon them as they were quarrelling, took them upstairs to their bedroom. Then, kneeling down by the bed, with Albert on one side of her, and Henry on the other, she poured out her soul in fervent prayer to the God of Peace, beseeching for them His help in subduing their quarrelsome temper. She rose from her knees with the tears trembling in her eyes. As she kissed the lads she bade them forgive each other, even as she forgave them for the pain they had caused her tender mother-heart by their unbrotherly strife. The thought, so strongly suggested by her action, that this quarrel between two small boys was something which had not escaped the notice of the Great God who rules the world, was permanently impressed on my father's youthful mind. He confesses that it brought him to a swift repentance.

This excellent mother, like mothers in general, was not without anxieties and alarms in the up-bringing of her children. Twice in particular she must have experienced them in the care of her little Henry. When he was under two years old, he was severely attacked by typhus fever, and came very near to death. At four, through falling

into the river, he was almost drowned. The later incident he remembered well. Of the earlier he had no remembrance, but had been told that, in consequence of the apparent probability that he would die, the clergyman of the parish had been called in to baptize him, lest, dying unbaptized, he should be eternally lost. When one thinks of such an apprehension on the part of his parents in relation to a little child who grew to be so convinced and conspicuous a Christian, it is difficult to repress a smile.

It was a pleasant home in which, with such parents, and with three brothers and three sisters, he spent the first years of life. In his autobiographical notes, he speaks of the goodly garden, gay with flowers; of the fruit-trees which every autumn yielded their ruddy wealth; of the big poplar which grew at the side of the house, which his father had planted on his arrival at Tattershall, and which swayed in the wind as it swept over the wide fens; of the malt-kilns across the yard, with its coal-sheds and wagons and stables. Close by the house was the winding river Bane, about a mile from the point where it flows into the Witham, which drains the broad acres of East Lincolnshire. Not far away also was the Horncastle Canal, in which, with other boys, my father used to fish for eels, and in the summer months enjoy many a

refreshing bathe. The Castle Keep would ring with their merry shouts as they played their favourite games. And occasional visits to the Lincolnshire Statute fairs, which always attracted crowds of sight-seers, would open to them the doors of a wider world.

But these halcyon days were not to continue. In 1843, when my father was between seven and eight years of age, a change took place in the family affairs. John Varley had not prospered in his business at Tattershall, and he judged it the most prudent course to give it up. Accordingly he transferred his home to the city of Lincoln. There was no railway then in those parts; the journey, household gods and all, was made in a small steamer that plied on the Witham. Arrived in the city, the wife and mother nobly did her best to come to the rescue of the family's failing fortunes. The larger part of what remained of my grandfather's slender capital was invested in the purchase of a ladies' school, of which she acted as principal. Unhappily not for long. Shortly after the settlement of the family in Lincoln, the three elder sons having now left home, and my father, the youngest of the four, alone remaining there, the mother's health began to show serious signs of failure. Three years of suffering borne with the courage,

the patience, and the resignation of the true Christian—and the end had come.

But those three years were momentous years in the life of the young Henry. He made considerable progress at school, indeed; and it is noteworthy, as confirming the truth of Wordsworth's famous line,

"The Child is father of the Man,"

that the future preacher of the Gospel, destined to hold the attention of vast audiences in all the English-speaking world by his impassioned oratory, should have gained, before he was ten years old, more than one prize for elocution. Still, it was in respect of his religious life that the three years of his beloved mother's failing health were of such cardinal importance. Suffering as she was, and knowing that the insidious disease which had attacked her admitted of no cure, she was by no means at first confined to the house. Every Sunday morning she would take her little son to the stately service in the Cathedral, and every Sunday evening to St. Martin's Church. The Church, according to my father's recollection of it, had few pretensions to architectural magnificence. He calls it, indeed, a "homely" place. But crowded congregations gathered there to attend the ministry of a

devoted Evangelical clergyman, who greatly influenced my father's awakening soul. This good man was unlike many modern preachers, who, in the prevailing suspicion of emotionalism, have allowed the passion to die out of their preaching. "I have seen him weep over the audience," says my father, "as he preached the reality of sin and the guilt and danger of the sinner." That preacher's tears, he felt, were made to him, by the blessing of Heaven, a veritable means of grace. What realities must be the Love of God and the Sin of Man when they were evidently so real to a preacher who could not speak of them to his hearers without this overmastering emotion! The impressions thus produced upon the boy in the church were later confirmed and deepened in the home. The time came when his mother was unable to leave her bed. Daily, as soon as he returned from school, he would go upstairs to her room, sit beside her with her thin hand clasped in his, read to her favourite passages of Scripture, repeat to her verses of well-known hymns. Gradually she became too weak for audible speech. But he remembered in his own old age the affecting sight of her lips framing the whispered words to follow him as he read or repeated to her the Scriptures and the hymns she loved, while over

her worn face, drawn with agony, shadowed by advancing death, brooded the ineffable calm that betokened a soul possessed by "the peace of God that passeth all understanding." A gracious, tender, purifying memory for the boy to carry out with him into the world! My father's definite conversion to God was to come later. But there can be no doubt that his religious life first attained self-consciousness in those three momentous years when a suffering mother, marked for the grave, but with a deepening realization of God and His saving grace in Christ Jesus, was the central figure in his environment day by day.

Upon her decease the school was sold for a trifling sum, the home broken up, the family scattered. My father was sent to a boarding-school at Kibworth, in Leicestershire. But his stay there was very short. John Varley's financial resources had by this time become slender to a degree. He found that he was entirely unable to pay for the continued education even of his small son of eleven. The son, at that early age, was driven to take upon himself, as far as might be, the burden and the responsibility of his own support. Without five shillings in all the world to call his own, he was thrust forth, at the spear-point of a sharp necessity, to fight his way and find his footing in the crowded battle-field of London.

1846—1854

A Lad in London

Æt. 11–19

Arrival in London—Finds employment—Assistant to his father—Leadenhall Market—The Farm at Hendon—Deepening religious life—A stand for Honesty—Meets his future wife—His conversion—The Bible-Class—Church-membership—First Christian Work and Public Speaking—Unfortunate in business—Sails for Australia.

"The hidden Force that make
a Life-time strong."
LOWELL.

II

A Lad in London

1846—1854

A COUNTRY boy of eleven, nurtured in comfort and refinement, but suddenly thrown into the heaving sea of London life, without money in his pocket or friends able to assist him, to shift for himself as best he can, is an appealing sight. But such was the sight that might have been seen one morning in the great city in the year 1846. Dependent thenceforward upon his own exertions for his very bread, my father had arrived from Lincoln only the day before, and could not afford to lose any time in making some sort of a start in life. Arrangements had been made for him by his father to be received into a humble household in Camden Town on the footing of a "paying guest." He

spent that eventful morning in looking for work, going from one place to another to enquire "if they wanted a boy." He was successful—after a fashion—in his search. He obtained employment in a blacksmith's shop close by the City Road, at five shillings a week. Practically the whole of this slender sum went to pay for his board and lodging, with the promise to his landlady that he would give her more as his wages increased. But with the best determination and courage in the world, he could not endure beyond a month the painful labour of the smithy, which sorely blistered his little, unaccustomed hands. Accordingly, he set about the task of finding another situation, and after many an anxious enquiry and many a disconcerting refusal, he succeeded in getting a post as errand-boy at a shop in the Strand. His weekly wage was fixed at eight shillings, on which he says he felt himself "passing rich." On the strength of it, he gave his landlady the promised increase—all he earned, indeed, except eighteen pence a week, which he kept for pocket-money. We may be sure that none of it found its way to the publican's till. Shortly before the boy left Lincoln, Father Mathew had carried his famous Temperance Crusade to that city, and Henry Varley had then signed the Total Abstinence Pledge, to which he remained faithful to the last of his days.

He had been scarcely two years in London when his father followed him thither to try if he could mend in the Metropolis the fortunes which had been so badly broken in the country. He started a business in Leadenhall Market. At first it promised well. His son left his situation in the Strand and came to work for him. Once, indeed, for more than a fortnight, the boy, though not yet fourteen years old, had the entire management of the concern suddenly thrown on his hands. It was the time of the great Chartist agitation. There was a large, excited demonstration in Trafalgar Square. Under the influence of strong and bitter speech, the excitement grew to turbulence. My grandfather, on his way to a business engagement in the West End, had been attracted to the Square by the meeting, and wanted to hear what was said. Unfortunately for him, he came into the near neighbourhood of some of the rioters, was hastily judged by the police to be one of them, and was hustled away with them to the lock-up. Next day, before the magistrates, his protestations of innocence proved of no avail, and he was sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment without the option of a fine. During his enforced absence from business, my father was obliged to take the whole charge of it; for there was no one else to whom he could look. The

business does not seem to have suffered through being for the time under such juvenile management. The boy in him was still strong, indeed, as was natural and right. He speaks with glee of the games which, with a little band of other boys employed in the Market, he played among the closed stalls, in defiance of the surly night-watchman. But an old head was growing on the young shoulders through a discipline of life prematurely stern, and through a burden of responsibilities usually postponed to somewhat later years.

For reasons which do not appear, but which one ears were connected with John Varley's seemingly inherent unfitness for business life, the stall in Leadenhall Market was presently given up. His son says it was not a success. Another venture was tried in the shape of a farm at Hendon, in the northern suburbs of the Metropolis. There again, as in the Market, the father had the son's assistance. However, after his experience of the congenial excitement of city life, the latter found work in the country too quiet and tame for his taste. We may also believe that, in view of his father's renewed failure to make business pay, he was beginning to feel, in spite of filial devotion, that the time had come for him to find a standing on his own feet. Through the kindly recommen-

dation of a meat salesman whose acquaintance he had made in the Leadenhall days, he obtained a situation with a small firm of butchers near Tottenham Court Road. He arrived there with his box of clothes and less than half a crown in his pocket after paying his coach-fare from Hendon. He soon made himself at home in his new surroundings. His spirits were buoyant. He was not afraid of hard work, either then or at any time during his long and strenuous life. His days were laborious, from seven in the morning until half-past nine at night. But he worked diligently, and quickly won his employers' esteem and confidence. He kept up contact with the home at Hendon through periodical visits on Sundays. It was more than eleven miles distant, but he used to walk the whole way there and back in the day, considering his fatigue well repaid by the love which awaited him from his father and sisters. These visits to his family circle must have been a real refreshment of the heart for one of so affectionate a nature as his.

On the more numerous Sundays when he remained in London, he attended the ministry of an Evangelical clergyman whose chapel-of-ease was not far from the place of business where he lived and worked. The sermons of this excellent man, so vividly recalling those of the Lincoln

vicar which he had listened to in company with his sainted mother, roused his mind and conscience, as he gratefully acknowledges, to a vital interest in spiritual truth. He came to deep self-dissatisfaction. He began to feel what was much more frequent then than it is to-day—a real, aching, humbling sense of sin. A new charm invested the Bible for him; its pages shone with "the light that never was on sea or land." He was getting to know what it is to hunger and thirst after God. To his increasing aversion, his employers opened their shop for Sunday morning trade until eleven o'clock. But no sooner were the shutters put up, and the lad free for the rest of the day, than he did a hasty toilet and hurried to church in time at least for the sermon.

In this deepening spiritual experience he saw a mother's answered prayers. Who knows but that, behind the veil, she was praying for him still?

But the firmer hold which, by the grace of God, religion was now gaining upon him was making him feel far less comfortable in his situation than he felt at first. One of his employers was much given to betting and gambling; the other was dishonest and addicted to sexual vice, of which he was not ashamed to boast to his young assistant. The Sunday opening of the shop was also by this time weighing heavily upon my father's conscience.

He felt that he could not longer remain in so murky a moral atmosphere. The end soon came, hastened by an incident of which he tells in his autobiographical notes. One Saturday afternoon a well-dressed woman bought a piece of meat for which my father charged her the correct price. As she left the shop with her parcel the dishonest partner asked him how much he had charged. On learning the amount, "Varley," said he, "what a fool you are! Don't you see that she was just the kind of woman from whom you might have got an extra shilling, and she would never have known? You're a fool, I say, and will never be worth your salt." My father replied, "Do you expect me to deal honestly with *you*, sir?" "Certainly I do," said his employer; "you'd soon know it if I found you cheating *me*." "Then, sir," answered my father, "you must expect me to be honest to your customers as well as to yourself." The man turned from him red with anger, but said nothing in reply. It is worth noting, however, that when a few days later the young shopman gave notice of his leaving the firm for another situation in the same line of business, it was this very partner who said to him, "I am sorry you are going. Tell your father of our entire satisfaction with you. And if ever you want it, I will give you a character that will get you any place in London." It is not too much to

infer that the Christian lad's courageous rebuke of the dishonesty he was incited to practise had caused the master's sleeping conscience to stir within him.

Of the year 1851, when he was sixteen—the year of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park—my father writes, "I reach now the momentous year in my youth-tide's experience." It was for him a year of at least two memorable events which exercised a mighty formative influence upon all his future career. First, he met the girl who six years later became his wife. Next, he was irrevocably converted to his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The first of these events followed upon his entrance into his new situation. It was, in fact, the girl's father, Thomas Pickworth, the proprietor of a flourishing butcher's business in Goodge Street, Tottenham Court Road, who had engaged him as an assistant. The work was even harder and the hours even longer than in the situation he had just left. But his new employer was a man of very different type from the two men whom he had lately served. He was a Christian of long standing and mature piety, and of very pronounced High-Calvinistic views, tenaciously held. His interest in my father soon became intimately deep, the more so as "the things of the Spirit" lay very close to the hearts of them both. Many

an evening, when the stress and bustle of the day's work was over, master and servant would stand together in the deserted shop, the open Bible near at hand, talking over its profounder truths. My father gratefully acknowledges the enriching influence which these conversations, coupled with what he saw and felt of the power of a living Christianity in his employer's life and character, exerted upon him. To Thomas Pickworth he undoubtedly owed as large a debt as one human being can owe to another—a deeper and more appreciative insight into "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

But it was not long before he had made up his mind—mere lad as he was—to owe his good employer at some future day a further debt, if so in God's providence it might be. Beside the father and the mother, the Pickworth household consisted of two sons and five daughters. Of the daughters, three were old enough to assist in the business by taking turns at the desk, where the orders were booked and the payments received. As he went about his duties in the shop, my father soon became agreeably conscious of the young women's bright eyes raining influence upon his susceptible heart. The youngest of the trio, a month older than himself, and Sarah by name, particularly attracted him. In less than six months from his first sight of her, he confesses that he was "over

head and ears in love." And this in spite of the fact that, shortly before taking service with her father, he had pledged himself, in company with several other young fellows, members with him of a youths' Bible-class he had lately joined, of which more will be said further on in this chapter, to keep free from all entanglements of the affections, however virgin-pure, since sweet-hearting was a manifest waste of time for serious lads not yet out of their teens! Alas for the watery instability of human nature! My father knew well enough that nothing even remotely approaching the nature of an engagement was possible at the time. But he knew also, even at little more than sixteen, that he had found his other self, and he formed a resolve, unshaken and unshakable, to win Sarah Pickworth for his own.

The one shadow in this rosy dream—to him a very considerable shadow—was that she had not yet come to definite decision for Christ. "The clear word rang in ears and heart," he says, "'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.'" The struggle within him between the soft inclinations of love and the stern demands of conscience was very sharp. He therefore gave himself to fervent prayer day after day that the girl who had grown so dear to him might surrender her budding womanhood to God. A few months, and his

prayers were answered one Sunday evening which neither he nor she ever forgot. But it was several months more before he felt himself free to make, first to her father, then to herself, the avowal of his impassioned love.

As already mentioned, however, the year 1851, so momentous to him as the year in which he first saw his future wife, was even yet more momentous as the year of his decisive conversion to God. That all-determinative event took place about the middle of August. He was returning from a walk in St. James's Park one bright Sunday afternoon, and was crossing Trafalgar Square. Some members of the Young Men's Christian Association were distributing tracts to the numerous passers-by. My father's cousin, John William Kirton, afterwards widely known as the writer of "Buy your own Cherries," was one of the distributors. He had been for some time in London, and the cousins had occasionally met. Now they found themselves face to face at the base of Nelson's Column. When the last of his tracts had been given away, young Kirton took my father home to tea. They went to the evening service at John Street Chapel, Bedford Row, where the Hon. and Rev. W. Baptist Noel was carrying on a powerful and popular ministry. His sermon that evening left upon my father's mind and heart an ineffaceable impression.

"From that day onwards," he writes, "the fear and love of God possessed me." Toward the close of the year he had a personal interview with Mr. Noel, who entered his name as that of a promising candidate for the privileges and responsibilities of Church membership. Meanwhile, he warmly commended him to the fatherly oversight of Mr. John Roberts, the leader of the Young Men's Bible-class at Calthorpe Street Schools, which were in connection with the Chapel. My father never ceased to speak of Mr. Roberts in the most admiring and affectionate terms. By trade he was a working tailor. With no large gift of intellect, but with a keen spiritual insight which enabled him to unfold the great pervasive truths of the Bible to a company of youths and young men week by week for nearly forty years, he fulfilled this valuable ministry in so effective a way that during that period scores, if not hundreds, of the members of his large class were brought into conscious and saving relation with God through Jesus Christ.

With the spiritual help thus furnished him by the preaching of Mr. Noel and the teaching of Mr. Roberts, by his own daily prayers and reading of the Bible, and by the interior ministry of the good Spirit of God, my father grew rapidly in the life of Faith and Hope and Love. The very cart in which, morning by morning, he drove round to

the houses of his employer's customers was sometimes transformed for him into an oratory. Curled up in the space at the front of it, he would snatch a few minutes under the overhanging trees of quiet West End squares to read some verses from his well-thumbed pocket Testament and hold refreshing communion with his Lord. The "joy unspeakable" would flood his soul, and as he resumed his round he would, as he says, feel anew the truth of the lines—

> "Heaven above is softer blue,
> Earth around is sweeter green;
> Something lives in every hue
> Christless eyes have never seen."

Clearly he was being prepared even then, little as doubtless he suspected it, for those long and crowded years of evangelism when he should urge the Living Christ upon the acceptance of multitudes of his fellows throughout the English-speaking world.

Making thus such progress, at once rapid and steady, in the Way of God, he was soon judged by his pastor, Mr. Noel, to be fit for admission as a member of the Church. He was baptized after the Baptist method of administering the ordinance and was received into full fellowship. The charge of a Sunday-school class signalized

his initiation into Christian work. Soon came his first attempt at public speaking for Christ. The superintendent of the school invited him to give one of the monthly Sunday afternoon addresses, which all the teachers and scholars assembled to hear. He was very nervous, which it is comforting to know that Cicero regarded as a good sign in a young orator. My father records that, in spite of the most careful preparation, when he rose to speak his ideas vanished and the labouring words would scarcely come. It was, of course, not a singular experience; many another man has limped and stumbled along the same broken road. He sat down feeling that hundreds of accusing eyes were staring at him as a pitiable failure. But his sympathetic superintendent would not admit that he had failed. Others must have been of the same opinion, for shortly afterwards he was asked to be one of a band of speakers in an open-air Total Abstinence campaign in the sordid neighbourhood of King's Cross. He spoke amid a volley of jeers and sneers. He was scornfully greeted as a "disciple of the pump." But he stood his ground, gave his addresses, won some converts, and found a growing ease and confidence in public speech.

So the months passed by—hard and diligent service for his employer on week-days, regular

attendance at chapel and school on Sundays. He was now eighteen. But as youth ripened into manhood he began to feel the stirrings of ambition quickened by love. Happy as he was in his situation, especially since he had daily opportunities of seeing the girl of his choice, he could discover no prospect as an employee of getting together the money and attaining the position which would justify him in asking her father to consent to a definite engagement between himself and her. Out of his weekly wage of ten shillings, including lodging and board, he had not been able to save more than a few pounds. Love, however, made him adventurous, and he thought that at a pinch those few pounds might perhaps prove enough to allow of his going into partnership with a fellow-employee in a shop of their own. The venture was not a happy one. From the first the business—near Regent Street—scarcely paid its way. The partner made too many visits to a neighbouring public-house, and serious friction soon arose between him and my father. Then came the dread scourge of cholera, which invaded London in the summer of 1854. Its ravages were specially severe in the district where the shop was situated. Trade was practically stopped and the struggling enterprise of the partners came to an unfortunate end. My father

was sorely disappointed at the failure; he had, with his sanguine temperament, so confidently anticipated success. But the word came to him, "Be thou strong and very courageous" (Joshua i. 7).

He resolved, with the help of the Almighty in whom he trusted, to seek in Australia, in a fairer field and under clearer skies, the open road to prosperity which he could not find in London. His eldest brother, John, was already there, in a good position which his intelligence and energy had won. My father had but a few shillings left in his pocket after paying his passage to Melbourne and buying a humble outfit. He sailed on November 1, 1854. He took with him the memory of many regretful farewells and cordial wishes for his success from his affectionate friends at John Street Chapel and its schools. He took with him also what to him meant so much more—the plighted troth of the girl he loved, and the hearty assurance of her father that if and when in three or four years he returned from the Colonies with sufficient capital to buy a business and to provide a home, her parents' blessing would be freely given to her marriage with a young man who so entirely commanded their confidence and so thoroughly merited their esteem. But more even than that—he took with him a treasure which to the last he prized far higher than the worldly

wealth he was leaving England to seek, higher even than the wifely love to which he so eagerly looked forward on his return. He took with him sound principle, Christian character, the fear of God which is above rubies, the personal knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

1854—1857

Seeking Fortune in Australia

Æt. 19–22

"Every man is the architect of his own fortune."

SALLUST.

III

Seeking Fortune in Australia

1854—1857

THE sailing vessel *Ida*, with nearly two hundred passengers on board, was my father's home for the next three months of his life. Like himself, his fellow-passengers were nearly all of them leaving their native land to take advantage of the larger opportunities for making their way in the world offered by the great virgin continent at the Antipodes. Some of them, in particular, had been attracted by the magnet of the gold-fields of Victoria, where it was said that fortunes might be had for the mere labour of digging. The young man found himself, during the voyage, in congenial company. A large proportion of the passengers were total abstainers. Chiefly at his instigation, the majority

of them formed themselves into a Literary Society, with my father as secretary, charged with the duty of providing lectures, discussions, and entertainments once or twice a week. Every night, moreover, from the time of leaving Gravesend to the time of reaching Melbourne, there was a short, bright meeting for praise and prayer, while on Sundays a service was held morning and evening, with a Sunday School for the children; in all of which a faded letter of my father, still preserved, and written to his betrothed within five days' sail of the Australian shores, shows that he took a prominent part. It was a fine, smooth passage; the captain told him he had not known such a passage before.

Melbourne was reached on February 15, 1855, amid heat and mosquitoes that he found well-nigh intolerable. "There are few comforts here," he writes; "but this is the place for a young man if he is steady and persevering." A week's experience of Colonial life was enough to show him the spiritual perils assailing young men who were no longer under the wholesome constraints and restraints of the Christian homes they had left behind them in the Old Country. Four such young men had been his fellow-members in Mr. Roberts's Bible-class. They had preceded him to Melbourne, and had started a fish and poultry-

store in Collins Street. He called to see them the first Sunday morning after his arrival, expecting to accompany them to church. Imagine his sorrow and disappointment when he found them all in undress, one practising the flute, the others cleaning the shop and the little parlour behind it, none of them with any idea of attending the public worship of the day. The deplorable discovery confirmed his resolve that, at all costs, he would observe his Sundays in the New World as sacredly as he had observed them in the Old. We shall soon see how faithfully the resolve was kept.

The necessity of finding employment was urgent. But for the friendly loan of two sovereigns from a fellow-passenger he would have landed in Melbourne practically penniless. He determined first to try his fortunes on the gold-fields, and made one of a party of four who set out to a place to which a glowing report of rich "finds" had caused a rush of adventurers. Either the report was greatly exaggerated or he and his companions arrived too late. After weeks of exhausting toil, with many privations and hardships in the way of food and lodging, their gleaming vision faded "into the light of common day." But my father's disappointment in respect of the treasures of earth did but make him the more zealous in urging upon the numerous fortune-

hunters all around him the never-unrewarded quest of the better treasures of heaven. In his rough digger's dress he preached to them on Sundays the Gospel of the Grace of God, with its glowing revelation of "the unsearchable riches of Christ." The services were held in the open air, bright with the golden sunshine of an Australian autumn. He used the week evenings, when the day's work was over and the coarse supper of tea, mutton, and "damper" was done, to the same high end. Besides his Bible and his hymn-book, he had taken with him to the diggings a copy of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," published some three years before; and, sitting in the doorway of his tent, he would read each evening, to the little company of diggers who came to listen, some twenty pages of the memorable story that pleaded with such pathetic power for the emancipation of the slave. It must have been a striking scene—the brooding calm of the southern night; the brilliant stars of the Australian skies; the log-fire burning on the ground and casting its light upon the pages of the book; the diggers, of such different social grades, some of them with a past they had come to the Colonies to bury and forget, absorbed in the appealing story as the words fell upon their thirsty ears from the lips of the young reader in his musical

voice. And then, the little volume closed, he would speak to them of mothers and friends and homes in the Old Country far away; and finally, taking his Bible out of his pocket, he would read a Psalm by a Hebrew singer or a parable of Jesus Christ, followed by a familiar hymn and a simple prayer. "The memories of those nights are precious," he says. We can well believe that he was not the only one who found them so.

Gold-digging having thus proved abortive, he hastened back to Melbourne to find employment in the trade he had learned at home. A newspaper advertisement of a likely situation met his eye. He applied at the address given, and was on the point of accepting service with the advertiser when he bethought himself to inquire if he was expected to work on Sundays. "Certainly you are," was the answer; "we have much to do on Sundays till about one o'clock." "That is enough, sir," replied my father; "I cannot come to you." The man assured him that, with such ridiculous scruples, there was no chance for him in the Colonies. It was disconcerting, of course; but he would not swerve from his resolve to keep Sunday sacredly free from secular work.

Yet the pressure upon him was hard. He was practically alone in Melbourne, with less than five shillings as all that was left of the friendly loan

He wandered about the city and its suburbs, silently praying for help and guidance from his God. The answer was already on its way. In the district known as Collingwood a large meat-store arrested his attention. He walked in and asked a man of gentlemanly appearance, who was standing in the desk, if he needed an assistant. The result was that he was engaged at thirty shillings a week with board and lodging, and his Sundays as his own. So well did he acquit himself in his new situation that in two months, with his wages more than doubled, he was appointed manager, while the twelve other employees were put under his entire control.

He speedily came into close friendship with his masters. They were two brothers named Langton, emigrants from England apparently on the grounds of health. Though he stayed with them scarcely six months he had, during that period, with rigid economy, saved enough money to warrant the purchase of a business of his own. On being informed of his intention, they at once offered, if only he would remain with them, to promote him from manager to partner. But this flattering proposal was declined. The temptation to become his own master was too strong, besides which there was the hope that, in a business of his own, he would make money more quickly than

he could make it even as junior partner with the Langton brothers, and therefore would the sooner be in a position to return to London and claim the promised bride who was waiting for him there.

Accordingly, in October, 1855, he bought a business in Geelong, some fifty miles from Melbourne, on the sea-coast. It was an exhaustless delight to him that, as he worked in his shop, he was within sight of the blue waters of the bay. He took with him as his assistant his brother Albert, who, like his brother John, had preceded him to Australia, but had seriously undermined his health by a rough life in the Bush. A sister, Annie, was also in the Colony, a mistress at a ladies' school in Melbourne. The business prospered so rapidly that he writes to his future wife (February 17, 1856), "Now I will tell you what I am sure you will be glad to hear—that in less than twelve months from the receipt of this letter, if God spares us, and all is well, we shall meet again. I intend returning to England." The young lover's eager hope was not to be quite so quickly realized; but the postponement was not long.

Both in Collingwood and in Geelong he gave much of the time when he was free from business to Christian work. In Geelong especially doors of usefulness opened to him which he was not

slow to enter. He associated himself with the Wesleyans. He became the secretary of their Sunday School as well as of their Band of Hope. They saw in him the making of a good preacher, and urged him to devote his life to the Wesleyan ministry. But his unalterable views on baptism were of themselves enough to prevent him from entertaining the idea.

Notwithstanding this active service for Christ, there seems to have been, during his stay in Geelong, some abatement of the spiritual fervour which he had experienced with such joy and gratitude in the two or three years immediately preceding his departure from England. Somehow the altar-fires were not burning with so intense a flame. In the letter already referred to (February 17, 1856), he confesses to a melancholy sense of a lessened life in his soul. "Oh that I could say all has been well! But I would not hide from thee, my beloved, that much unfaithfulness has been evinced, and that, whilst striving to get on in the world, the lamp of the Lord has been oft, in my dull hard heart, a flickering taper. I knew not before that I was so weak. . . . How frail we are!" Even in his autobiographical notes, written more than half a century later, the memory of those days is still darkened with penitential regrets. "There was marked declension of heart,"

he says. "I am sure my Lord would have said to me, 'Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.' I write with great sorrow. . . . The fires in those months burned dimly, and zeal declined. . . . Oh the difference between being half-hearted and being out-and-out for the Lord!" He ascribes this spiritual slackening to several causes—the enervating heat of the Australian summer; his eager pursuit of business success; the loss of his Christian companions at John Street Chapel, whose earnestness and devotion so greatly stimulated his own; the lack of any inducement to mental discipline; the waste, while playing favourite games, especially bagatelle, of precious time which might so easily have been given to the study of the Bible and to prayer. But my father was never the man to rest content, after the fashion of not a few professing Christians, with any conscious compromise in respect of the high demands of a vital and vigorous Christian life. He loathed the Laodicean temper of a lukewarm religion. "He who offers God a second place," says Ruskin, "offers Him no place"—a searching saying with which he would have cordially agreed. And so, no sooner had he really awakened to the fact that he had allowed his spiritual ardour to cool, than he seriously set himself to the task of restoring its

fallen temperature. The endeavour succeeded; the inward fires glowed again with the former intensity; all was once more well with his soul.

At last the day drew near to which he had longingly looked forward from the moment he had first stood upon Australian soil more than two years before. With the good hand of his God upon him, he had done what he had traversed the leagues of ocean to do. He had amassed the moderate capital required for the purchase of a business in London and for the furnishing of a home to which he might take his destined bride. There was nothing now between him and return. He sold his share in the Geelong business to a partner who had joined him in its early days. The price was some £200; but my father never received the money.

He came home in an auxiliary steamer, the *Great Britain*, round Cape Horn. The voyage, which was long and tedious, nearly ended in tragic disaster. Near the Cape Verd Islands the captain found that the coal-supply was running short, and headed his vessel for St. Vincent, one of the Windward Islands, that he might there obtain a fresh stock of fuel. Somehow he got rather out of his course. One night the saloon-passengers held a dance, to which the ship's officers were invited, and at which there was an unstinted cir-

culation of wine and whisky. The orgy was kept up till an early hour of the morning. Suddenly my father, who had been asleep some time in his cabin, was awakened by the violent ringing of the bell in the engine-room below. He put on a heavy overcoat and rushed on deck. The night itself was dark; but it was more than the darkness of the night that met his eyes. It was a horrible blackness of darkness such as he had never seen before. The massive heights of Mount Jago, rising 8,000 feet into the sky, and with deep water to its base, were immediately in front of the ship; and, but for the timely alarm of the sailor on the look-out, in five minutes she would assuredly have struck and have foundered in the depths with every soul on board. The memory of that night, with its ghastly danger and its gracious deliverance, was burnt into my father's brain. On some of his male fellow-passengers, at least, it seems to have made no impression at all. When at length St. Vincent was reached, they hurried off from the vessel in boat-loads to the shore; and when next day they returned on board, it was with stories to tell of a night of swinish saturnalia that filled him with disgust. It is told of Professor Henry Drummond that, during his mission to the students of Edinburgh University, not a few of them made him the con-

fidant of some of the darker secrets of their lives. He came home one evening to the house of his host with a very worn and haggard face. Asked if he were very weary, "No," he answered, "not very. But oh, I am sick with the sins of these men!" It was a sensation which my father intimately understood. Nevertheless, it is a great moral defence for a man to have a soul that turns sick at other men's recital of their sins.

With her coal-supply replenished, the *Great Britain* left St. Vincent, and in due time reached England without further mishap. Writing from Liverpool to his betrothed on August 24, 1857, my father says, "We arrived on Saturday at noon . . . after a somewhat tedious passage of ninety-two days. I cannot express to you in words what I feel in once again treading the land of my birth. . . . But of one subject I will speak, for I am sure it occupies very much of your thoughts. It is our meeting. My intention is to be in London on Friday evening next. . . . I have much to communicate; but your presence will be the prompter of thoughts I could scarce write in a month. Mine is a rambling history, fraught with interest, humbling in many things to myself, presenting many proofs of the inward and quiet influences of the Spirit of God, by whose restraining and constraining grace alone I have been kept from the evil of

my own heart, the dominion of sin, the service of Satan." In the neighbourhood of Liverpool were now living his father and a sister, Matilda. He made a brief stay with them, and then hastened to London, receiving there the warm greetings of his former employer and future father-in-law. The next day saw him with his affianced Sarah at Brighton, where she and her mother were taking a short holiday by the sea. The meeting of the lovers may be left to the imagination of the reader. It had been a long separation; but, as in the tender old-world idyll of Jacob and his Rachel, my father confesses that "it seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her." With such holy magic has its Maker endowed the heart of man.

1857—1860

Marriage—Business Life—Early Ministry

ÆT. 22–25

Marriage — Business and Home at Notting Hill — Christian Work at Notting Dale—Great Success—Formation—A Controversy.

"She doeth him good, and not evil, all the days of her life."

THE PROVERBS.

IV

Marriage
Business Life
Early Ministry
1857—1860

HENRY VARLEY and Sarah Pickworth were married on October 20, 1857. Strongly emotional as he was, possessed of a large fund of intense and at times even passionate feeling, such as forms a part of the spiritual outfit of every public speaker who conspicuously succeeds in moving the heart of the crowd, my father nevertheless instinctively shrank from a public exposure of the sacredest experiences of life. He was not a man of whom Robert Browning could say,

"So, friend, your shop was all your house!"

inviting every passer-by to pause and look at his

store of treasures openly displayed. It was therefore natural that, writing to his bride—the letter, in blue ink, is still preserved—to inquire of her when and where their marriage should take place, he should suggest the suitability of the large front room in her father's house, in the presence only of their immediate friends, to which "impertinent starers," as he calls them, could not come. But he could either not have known, or must have forgotten, that in England the only alternative to being married in a place of worship is being married in the office of the registrar. Ultimately, the wedding was solemnized in the parish church of St. Pancras, London. It was very near being postponed to the following day. Arrived at the church, the bridegroom discovered, to the dismay of the whole party, and especially to his own, that he had forgotten to bring the licence, which had to be placed in the hands of the officiating clergyman before the nuptial knot could be legally tied. He had left it behind at his new home at Notting Hill in the West End. Driving furiously there in one cab, whose horse was too exhausted to make the return journey, and driving furiously back in another, he was able to reach the church just fifteen precious minutes before the clock struck noon, after which hour, in those days, the law would not permit marriages to take place.

The union celebrated on that October day was followed, in the gracious providence of God, by more than half a century of mutual love, which did but deepen and intensify through the lengthening years. The years brought with them many changes. They were chequered with light and shade. As in Robert Louis Stevenson's garden, there were the "gleam and gloom," the "leaping sun" and the "glancing rain." There were business responsibilities, family anxieties, the labours, the sacrifices, the self-denials, without which no man and no woman can hope to take any effectual part in the extension of the Kingdom of Christ and the bringing-in of the Day of God. There were long weeks and longer months of separation between husband and wife, as he went out into the world to do the work of an evangelist, and she, in faithful fulfilment of the claims and duties of a mother, remained at home. But through it all their hearts beat true to each other in an affection, a fidelity, and a devotion which knew no change, save the happy change, if such could be, from less to more. Never was a wedded love more beautiful, more marked by the tenderness and the sympathy which are possible only to two strong, self-reliant, independent natures, that have admiringly found in each other their mutual com-

plement, than the wedded love of Henry Varley and his wife.

The home to which he took her after a brief honeymoon was in Grove Terrace, Notting Hill. It still stands in a fine, open situation fronting the main road that runs through the western suburbs of the metropolis. The business, well appointed and hopeful in all respects, was bought by my father at a very reasonable price, and from the first corresponded with the favourable account of it given him by its former proprietor. It was a somewhat heavy undertaking for a young man not yet twenty-three. But it was his firm opinion that "a large business, well-conducted, is as easily managed as a small one." With his sanguine self-confidence, his thorough knowledge of his trade, his encouraging Australian experiences, his assurance, amply proved, of his wife's capable assistance, and, above all, his faith in God, he felt certain of success. The sequel showed that he was not mistaken. The business prospered exceedingly. He had good assistants, a competent book-keeper, and, later, an excellent foreman, a man of high Christian character. His displays of meat at Christmas-time were quite one of the local features of the festive season, attracting admiring crowds, and never failing to appeal to that instinct for solid and substantial living which

seems inherent in the average Englishman, whose soul loathes the light food of some of his Continental neighbours. Moreover, in the early days of his new venture it meant much to my father to be introduced in the London meat-markets as the son-in-law of a man whose credit and character stood so high as did those of Thomas Pickworth. But it was not long before his own credit and character climbed to a similar altitude.

While, however, his heart was in his business, as was both natural and necessary, it was by no means wholly in his business. Even in those days his cherished ambition was not to become a prosperous and affluent tradesman one-tenth part as much as it was to become an able minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He had tasted the joy of the Christian preacher, passionately pleading with his fellow-men to accept the Great Salvation; and that joy, once tasted, was too sweet and thrilling to be forgotten even in the pressure of business responsibility and the glow of business success. Indeed, on the very eve of his leaving Melbourne for England, friends had urged him to limit his stay in the Old Country to some three years, to devote the time to collegiate study in preparation for ministerial work, and then to return to Australia and fill a pastorate there. This suggestion he seriously considered. It was not adopted, as we have seen; yet the thought of

ultimately devoting his life to the preaching of the Gospel was running as a powerful under-current through his mind even in his earliest years at Notting Hill. As opportunity allowed, he became an earnest and patient student of the Bible, with all such helps from books as he found useful, and built up out of its inspired pages the theology which, in its essential aspects, he held tenaciously to the end of his life. Meanwhile, his young wife and he associated themselves with the Baptist Church at Westbourne Grove, Bayswater, whose minister, the Rev. W. G. Lewis, eminent in his denomination, was then at the height of his influence and his powers.

My father had not been settled in West London more than twelve months when the call came to him to give his leisure hours to a hard and unpromising sphere of Christian service. Little more than half a mile from his home there was a district known as Notting Dale. Charles Dickens is reported to have said of it that "it contained one thousand inhabitants and three thousand pigs." The people lived chiefly by pig-feeding. For the food of these animals they collected the refuse from slaughter-houses, markets, mansions, and hotels. Sunday was the great day for boiling down the unsavoury ingredients into a still more unsavoury mass,

half-liquid and half-solid. The locality was one of the most squalid and degraded that even the London of those days had to show. Most of the inhabitants kept dogs and cocks for fighting purposes. Filth, violence, profanity, drunkenness, immorality abounded on all hands.

In the midst of these disheartening surroundings a mission-school had been planted by the members of the Congregational Church at Allen Street, Kensington, at that time under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. John Stoughton, a conspicuous preacher and writer in his day. Somehow they came to hear of my father. Though he was not one of themselves, and was, indeed, a member of a different denomination of Christians from their own, they turned to him as to a man whom they judged well qualified to undertake the vacant office of superintendent of their mission-school in Notting Dale. He accepted their invitation, and, like St. Paul on his first visit to Corinth, "in fear and much trembling" began his work. He can scarcely have suspected into what a rich and glorious harvest the meagre handful of seed would grow.

The work was almost, if not altogether, limited to Sundays. In the morning and the afternoon there was Bible-teaching for the children; in the evening a preaching-service, principally for adults.

My father preached on one Sunday evening in every three. The other two evenings were respectively taken by two young students from New College, St. John's Wood, a theological school of the Congregationalists. They have since deservedly become distinguished — the Rev. Dr. Llewellyn Bevan, now of Melbourne, Australia, and the Rev. Dr. R. Vaughan Pryce, who filled the office of Principal of New College for several years, and is still living in London.

At the first service conducted by my father, which he never forgot, there were some twelve adults and a few children. It was, indeed, "the day of small things." But it sufficed for a start. With characteristic energy and devotion, he set about the task of increasing the congregation. He gave his Sunday mornings, from eleven o'clock till one, to going about the squalid streets and lanes of Notting Dale, the air meanwhile heavy with the sickening smell of the boiling pigwash, and to chatting with the little groups of men whom he found, dirty and unkempt, standing idly at every corner. Often he spoke to them of the curse of strong drink and the value of total abstinence, oftener still of the Love of God for them and the free salvation of Jesus Christ, and gave them a warm and hearty invitation to the services in the school. He found numerous

disciples of Charles Bradlaugh among them, secularists, free-thinkers, atheists, who denounced religion as "all bosh." Whenever any of the people were willing to admit him, he went into their homes to read the Bible and to pray.

Although at first they could not understand his interest in them, and even suspected the purity of his motives, a few months of this personal intercourse, becoming more friendly and intimate from week to week, began to open his way to their hearts. The congregations rapidly increased; the capacious schoolroom became crowded to the doors. There were numerous conversions, radical and permanent, even in the case of men and women whose lives of hardened sin had seemed to render them most unlikely subjects for the work of the Grace and the Spirit of God. The report of my father's successful ministry in so unpromising a sphere began to be noised abroad, and one result of it was that not a few earnest Christian people, living in the locality, came to help him in his growing work. It does not appear from his autobiographical notes what arrangements had meanwhile been made with the Congregationalist friends at Kensington, to whom, as we have seen, the schoolroom belonged. But evidently permission had been given for the formation of a Church, and a Church was therefore duly formed.

My father became its minister. Members were elected to fellowship. The Lord's Supper was regularly celebrated, and even baptism was administered according to the Baptist interpretation of the rite.

My father and his fellow-workers at Notting Dale took this step in no schismatic spirit and with no schismatic aim. They regarded it as a necessity arising out of the circumstances of the case. The men and women of the poor, unsightly locality who had been gathered into the fold of Christ through his ministry, were not likely to associate themselves with any of the Churches of the neighbourhood, even had they been nearer their homes than they were. Those Churches were all too respectable for them, attended mainly by the prosperous classes, with well-dressed people in their pews. The converted pig-feeders and their wives felt an invincible shrinking from them. And the question therefore became acute as to whether these converts should be denied the privileges of Church-fellowship and the opportunity of remembering at His table the dying love of their Lord. My father could see but one answer to the question, and that answer was No.

The formation of this humble little Church, however, brought him into a painful controversy with the minister and deacons of the Church at

Westbourne Grove. He was still nominally a member there, although his absorbing work at Notting Dale naturally prevented him from active fellowship. In compliance with a request that he would attend a Church meeting and offer what explanation he could of an act that was considered irregular and disorderly by Mr. Lewis and his friends, my father went. He told the assembled members of the encouraging work of Divine Grace of which God had been pleased to make his ministry the centre. He gave an account of the special circumstances which, in his judgment, had made the formation of a Church at Notting Dale an urgent necessity. He invited them to come and see for themselves the good and fruitful work which was being done amongst young and old in a neighbourhood as inhospitable to the spiritual life of its inhabitants as polar snows to tropical flowers. Unhappily, his explanation was of little avail. The honoured pastor of the Westbourne Grove Church felt obliged to tell my father at the meeting that his action was disapproved, even strongly disapproved, whatever the nobleness of his motives and the sincerity of his zeal. It might even be necessary for the Church to clear itself from any complicity with what he had done. My father was both perplexed and grieved. More, it may be, was due to Mr. Lewis as his pastor

than he had given him. He might have taken him into his counsel. But a spirit so self-reliant and independent as his was not greatly given, throughout his long life, to asking counsel of men when once he was convinced that his way was traced out before him by the finger of God. Notwithstanding Mr. Lewis's pastoral censure, he could not see that he had been in error in his action at Notting Dale. But the censure led to his resignation of membership at the Church in Westbourne Grove. Happily, even if temporarily clouded, his personal friendship with his former pastor, for whom he had profound respect, was maintained until the end of Mr. Lewis's honourable and useful life.

It must have been about the time of this controversy—perhaps a little earlier, perhaps a little later—that the interests and joys of my father's domestic life were increased by the birth of his first child in June, 1859—the son to whom is now given at once the sacred privilege and the serious responsibility of writing this little volume as a filial tribute to the memory of one who was thenceforth as good a father as he was devoted as a husband, distinguished as an evangelist, eminent as a Christian, and sterling as a man.

1860—1870

The Free Tabernacle

Æt. 25–35

The Free Tabernacle—Showers of Blessing—Some of the Converts—Offers of Ordination—Preaching for Mr. Spurgeon—Social Service for Christ—The Workmen's Hall—The Butchers' Festival—The Tabernacle Schools—Mr. Offord's Prophecy.

"In labours . . . in the word of truth, in the power of God."
ST. PAUL.

V

The Free Tabernacle

1860—1870

THE rapid and remarkable success granted by the Lord whom he so freely served to my father's ministry at Notting Dale, clearly pointed to the urgent necessity for larger accommodation for the growing work. His fellow-workers and he looked anxiously around to see what was to be done. The way soon opened. Toward the end of 1859 a suitable site was secured at the corner of St. James's Square, Notting Hill, near enough to and yet far enough from the insalubrious neighbourhood of the old mission-school. It had a frontage of more than 120 feet and was 100 feet deep. Here was erected in the following year the meeting-place which was destined to become widely known as "The Free

Tabernacle," or even still more widely known as "Varley's Tabernacle." The cost was some £2,200. My father gave half of it, and gave it with peculiar joy as being "the firstfruits unto the Lord" of his business savings. The other half was given by his father-in-law, who not long afterwards himself came, with his wife and an invalid daughter, to spend in Notting Hill his years of well-earned retirement.

The Tabernacle had ample seating accommodation for a thousand persons. It was a wide, lofty, roomy building, puritanically plain, without any pretensions to architecture, but admirably suited to the purpose for which it was built. As you entered it from the front, you saw at the other end a capacious gallery, in the centre of which was a reserved space for a large choir, with a harmonium in their midst. The remainder of the gallery was for ordinary members of the congregation, as was also, of course, the whole of the ground-floor. The commodious platform — my father was always given to free movement when preaching — was immediately in front of the gallery. Reached by a flight of stairs on either side, it was guarded by a simple rail supported on iron standards, and in the centre of the rail was a large, plain book-board—the whole as unlike the orthodox pulpit as well could be. Below the preaching platform

was the communion-platform, slightly higher than the ground-floor, and in the centre of the communion-platform was the baptistery, covered, when not in use, by boards and a carpet. Underneath the gallery was a large room, which could be made into two by the shutting of folding-doors. There was also a smaller room for the personal use of the minister. The spacious ground-floor of the building was taken up with long, open-backed, movable seats, arranged in four rows with narrow aisles between. Large windows admitted abundant light in the daytime, and at night gas sun-burners, placed at intervals along the apex of the roof, both illumined the building and aided its ventilation. Such, in its absolute simplicity, was "The Free Tabernacle"—not a church, scarcely even a chapel—merely a plain, homely, commodious place, built for the one supreme purpose of preaching the Gospel to still larger numbers of the class of people whom my father had gathered to his ministry in the mission-school at Notting Dale.

The building, whose foundation-stone had been laid by the well-known Christian philanthropist, Mr. Samuel Morley, a generous friend of my father for many years, was crowded from its opening day. Never was the venture of a man's faith more signally rewarded. The people who

flocked to the Tabernacle, walking, some, of them, considerable distances, were mostly of the poorer sort; for such the place had principally been built. But gradually there came with them several men and women of a somewhat higher social grade. At no time, however, was there any hint of that obsequious and even fawning recognition of class distinctions which has long been one of the besetting sins of the Church of Christ, and which an even-handed God, with whom there is no respect of persons, has visited upon the Church by the withdrawal from it, in such mournful measure of the sympathy and support of the masses. In the Free Tabernacle the well-to-do and the ill-to-do had to sit, and were content to sit, side by side. There were no pew-rents, even as there were no pews. Some of the deacons were working-men, whose rough hands betrayed their daily toil and whose lack of education showed itself plainly in their speech. But whether the people had more money or less, came from larger houses or smaller ones, wore finer or coarser clothes, were of a higher station or a lower, all met on the ground of a common interest in that redeeming Cross which is at once the universal leveller and the universal uplifter of mankind.

The work of Divine Grace in heart and life went on in the Free Tabernacle as it had gone on at

Notting Dale. "They were days, months, and years of blessing," writes my father; "the Lord Jesus Christ was glorified in the regeneration of large numbers of souls. . . . The people hung upon the truths spoken, and scarcely a Sunday passed without from ten to twenty of the congregation being brought to Christ. . . . The Holy Spirit brooded over the assemblies. . . . Time after time I have seen the large vestry filled with kneeling, weeping penitents. I had a band of watchers for souls—men and women of strong faith and fervent prayer. . . . The prayer-meetings were wonderful seasons of deliverance. As we waited upon God men, women, and young people were regenerated and passed from the spiritual death of the sinner into the divine nature and life of the sons of God. It was no wonder the people came. The revival was divine in character and enduring in results."

There were some rough diamonds among the converts; but if they were rough they were diamonds still. One man, a bricklayer's labourer, could not read a chapter of the Bible without a mistake in every line. Yet for fifteen years he attended the Sunday morning prayer-meeting at seven o'clock, often conducting it, and praying with such fervour and power that my father felt the influence of his prayers upon his own ministry

to be exceptional, if not unique. A woman, who in the early days of his work among the pig-feeders of Notting Dale held up in his face a quart pot of beer and laughed at him with words of scornful obscenity, was attracted to the Tabernacle, was soundly converted to Jesus Christ, and was thenceforward a living monument of the most winsome Christian goodness. It was with special reference to her that my father wrote: "I believe we had as real and noble a company of praying women as ever they had in the apostolic days." Another woman was a member of a little colony of gypsies who often encamped upon some waste ground not far away from the Tabernacle. Herself led to the feet of Jesus by my father's ministry, she brought several others to hear him preach, and among those of them who were converted were three brothers—the father and two uncles of the now famous evangelist, Gypsy Smith. My father baptized them—I can myself remember the scene—with peculiar and exultant joy.

Still another memorable conversion at the Tabernacle was that of a man to whom he spoke one Sunday night during the prayer-meeting that followed the service. While some one was praying aloud, my father, as was his custom, was walking with hushed footfall up and down the aisles, searching in the seats for any persons whose bearing might

perchance betray their spiritual anxiety. A well-dressed workman attracted his attention. With his hand on the man's shoulder he bent over him and questioned him in a whisper as to whether he were seeking Christ. "No, thank God!" was the answer. "No; I have found Him. I found Him in this place some weeks ago. I will tell you all about it when the meeting is over." A few minutes later, in the vestry, my father heard from the man's lips the happy story of his conversion. He had been a disciple of Charles Bradlaugh, the well-known atheist—for years even a member of some committee of infidel propaganda. He had heard such strong and bitter words used by his friends concerning my father as a conspicuous opponent of Mr. Bradlaugh that his curiosity was aroused and he resolved to go to the Tabernacle to see what kind of man "this Varley" really was. He went. He arrived just as my father was reading as the lesson a chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. The words struck forcibly home to the man's conscience, and the sermon that followed deepened the impression. He returned home that night with the arrow of conviction fixed in his soul, feeling, as he said, "that he was all wrong." He came back to the services time after time. The truth of the Gospel did its work in him and he became an assured

believer and a changed man. His wife also, through his influence, was brought to share his faith. Such instances as these were but specimens of many more—welcome signs that the Word of the Lord was not returning unto Him void. It is scarcely surprising that under such favouring conditions the Free Tabernacle had become in a few short years the home of a fellowship of some seven hundred members.

As the news of my father's enlarging success became more widely known, it gave rise to one result which he considered very strange. He learned that he was troubling the minds of many Christian people by carrying on a ministry and by building up a Church, both of which they regarded as irregular. That ministry was unordained; that Church was undenominational. Since he practised the rite of "believers' baptism," though submission to it was not made a condition of membership, these good people, doubtless with no other desire than to secure for himself and his Church a recognized standing, felt that it would be far better for him to ask admission to the ranks of the Baptist ministry and for his Church to be affiliated to the Baptist Union. This would regularize a work which, evidently owned of God as it was, was nevertheless in their eyes somewhat nondescript and anomalous.

Accordingly, a deputation of ministers one day came to interview him, but whence it came I cannot discover. Its members pressed him to consent to ordination, which they were willing and even anxious to confer. But he felt compelled to decline their well-meant offer. It seemed to him that he had already received all the ordination he required, inasmuch as the Unseen Hands of the Living Christ, with the nail-prints in their palms, had consecrated him to the work of a preacher of the Gospel, and the consecration had been evidenced by the abundant fruit which his ministry had already borne. Then and always he refused the title of "Reverend." His friend, Mr. Samuel Morley, said to him not long after the opening of the Tabernacle, "I suppose that now we shall soon be hearing of 'The Reverend Henry Varley.'" "No," replied my father; "I have been pressed on that point; but nothing will induce me to accede to it. Plain 'Henry Varley' is all I mean to be to the end of my days." His resolve kept an iron rigidity. While anxious not to be understood as casting any slur on the many thousands of excellent men who accept and use the title, he felt that for him to do so would be to take up a professional position with which his thought of his own ministry had nothing in common.

Moreover, as to the Church at the Free Tabernacle, it appeared to him that it would lose rather than gain by inclusion in any denomination. Its independent standing would be sacrificed; its liberties curtailed. Denominationalism, indeed, even then—and the opinion strengthened with the years—he regarded as unscriptural. As he read his New Testament, he could not find that the Apostolic Churches called themselves Episcopal, or Presbyterian, or Congregational, or Baptist, or Methodist, but simply the Churches of Jesus Christ at Corinth, or Philippi, or Rome. The necessities of centuries of history and of controversy might have rendered unavoidable these denominational names. But my father felt them to be so wide a departure from the practice of primitive Christianity, to which he looked back as the divine norm, that in the case of himself and his own Church he resolved to avoid them, nevertheless. That Church was to be known simply as "The Church of Christ worshipping in the Free Tabernacle, Notting Hill," and he was to be known simply as its pastor. Mr. Spurgeon, the illustrious preacher of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, once humorously twitted him with being "a bad Baptist and a half-bred Plymouth Brother." "Well," rejoined my father, "show me some Scriptural authority for calling

myself a Baptist, and I will fall in at once." "But," said Mr. Spurgeon, "we must be called by some name." "That is so," was the answer; "but how will this do—'a good minister of Jesus Christ'?"

Ordination as a Baptist minister was not the only offer of the kind that was made to him. One day, while he was at work in his shop, an Anglican clergyman called upon him and requested a short interview. It appeared that he had attended some five or six of the Tabernacle services. He had been surprised and impressed with all he had seen and heard. My father's preaching, in particular, had aroused in him the liveliest admiration, nearly as much on account of its elocution as on account of its substance. In no spirit of flattery, he remarked that he had never heard the English language made a finer vehicle of address to a popular audience. "What I have called for," said he, "is to ask whether you will not accept from me an introduction to the Bishop of London, who, I am sure, would gladly ordain you as deacon and priest in the Established Church. For myself, I think that there are few positions in the Church to which you might not ultimately attain." He showed pain at the reply. "I am greatly obliged to you for your kind words," said my father, "but as

the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ I would not change places with the Archbishop of Canterbury."

From this desire, on the part of men so diverse as Baptist ministers and Anglican clergymen, to induce my father to become one of themselves, it must be evident that his natural gifts and spiritual power as a preacher were by this time winning for him very high esteem. The fact was still further proved by an invitation, brought by Mr. Spurgeon himself on his first visit to my father's home, to preach for him at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The invitation caused more surprise than pleasure; to stand in front of the vast congregation at Newington Butts instantly suggested itself as a very trying ordeal from which the younger man, who regarded the elder with equal admiration and awe, instinctively shrank. "I frankly say it was startling," my father writes; "I trembled—or something very like it." But he could not see that the invitation should be declined. The appointed day came. He found that his unconscious fame had gone before him, and had attracted an audience no less numerous than that which the great preacher himself week by week addressed. It numbered at least five thousand. Special sufficiency was given for the special need. At the end of the

day the deacons and elders surrounded my father, showering upon him high compliments, warm-hearted thanks, pressing invitations to visit them again. It must have been all very pleasing to him; but the keenest pleasure was to come a little later. A letter from Mr. Spurgeon told him that more than fifty additions were about to be made to the membership of the Church as the direct result of the services of that memorable day—a day that opened in trembling fear but closed in abounding joy. It proved to be but the first of many occasions on which the Notting Hill pastor preached in the Newington Tabernacle.

Meanwhile, his energetic labours for Christ and men in his own church were not confined simply to the paramount duty of making known the Gospel, which was bearing such plenteous fruit in his hands. One feels no little surprise that he should have accomplished so much, more especially when one remembers that his business, considerably more prosperous and extensive than at the time of his purchase of it, necessitated his constant attention as its head. But idleness was never any sin of his; he was always, in one direction or another, at work.

One form of Christian, human service was the opening of a soup-kitchen at the Tabernacle for

weeks at a time in the hard winter days, when employment was scarce and earnings low with the numerous poor of the neighbourhood, and the growl of the hunger-wolf was heard near their doors. Rich, satisfying soup and large loaves of bread were given away to all who applied, their poverty being the one recommendation required. "It was good," he says, "to be able to take £10, £20, or £50 from the business-exchequer, and expend it amongst the poor." The Romanist priests denounced it as an attempt to proselytize. In vain; their Irish people voted "Mr. Varley as iv'ry inch a gintleman." The Anglican vicar of St. James's Church, which was within sight of the Free Tabernacle, said to him once, in reference, on the one hand, to the large congregations at the Tabernacle, and to the parochial charities on the other, "Well, Mr. Varley, things have come to a pretty pass. It seems that you are the minister of the parish, and I am only the relieving-officer." But the good clergyman had clearly no monopoly of the relieving-officer's work. The Tabernacle tea-meetings were also a notable feature. They were frequently held. The ultimate object was to bring the people within sound of the Gospel; but it was attained through first providing them with a substantial meal, the cost of which was met only in part by

the sale of sixpenny tickets. Month after month my father visited scores of humble homes, inviting men, women, and children to these happy gatherings. The tea over, there would be hearty hymn-singing, a short prayer, and a lively evangelistic address. Many a poor household, also, was the cheerier at Christmas for the clubs he instituted to encourage the weekly putting-by of a little money to be wholesomely spent at the festive season. Many a working-class family had delightful days in the leafy summer-time at Hampton Court or elsewhere when the annual excursion was made, under his personal superintendence, in a long procession of gaily decorated vans. In all these good works he found an untiring helper in my mother.

A further development of what it is now customary to call the "social side" of Christian service took place in the erection and equipping of "The Workmen's Hall," within five minutes' walk of the Tabernacle. This step was taken in association with Captain and Mrs. Bayly, two active Christian philanthropists, who shared my father's eagerness to do what was possible in brightening the lot of the poor. Mrs. Bayly was the authoress of a book which was widely read in its day—"Ragged Homes and How to Mend them." But she did not confine her humane endeavours to her

pen. Together with her husband, she gave much personal ministry to the dwellers in the ragged homes she desired to mend. The Workmen's Hall became the centre of a far-reaching work on Christian Temperance lines. It was intended to be as attractive a place for working men and their wives as any of the public-houses in the neighbourhood, without the debasing attraction of alcoholic drinks. There was a room where the daily and the weekly newspapers might be read; another where draughts, chess, bagatelle, and similar games might be played; a third was set apart for friendly chat over light refreshments at a small charge; while in a large room on the first floor Temperance meetings and penny-readings were frequently held. An annual gathering in connection with this work was more than once, through Mrs. Bayly's influence, honoured with the presence of distinguished visitors, among whom were the Earl of Shaftesbury and even the Archbishop of Canterbury. "We moved in aristocratic circles then," says my father.

But on one occasion his share in the heavy financial responsibility for the Workmen's Hall nearly cost him very dear. I need not enter into the circumstances, of which the failure of the great banking-house of Messrs. Overend, Gurney, and Company was the primary cause. Suffice it to say that one Saturday evening, while my father

was engaged in his shop, a lawyer's clerk entered, and, asking him if he were Mr. Henry Varley, served him with a writ in which he was named as responsible for a loan on the Hall of £900, together with interest amounting to a further sum of £440. The writ was soon overset. But to find oneself, on a Saturday evening, without warning, declared legally liable for a debt of £1,340, occasioned by another's failure, is scarcely the preparation, as my father remarks, which one would choose for preaching to two great congregations on the following day. Like St. Paul, he was "perplexed," indeed, "yet not unto despair"; and he confesses with gratitude that on that Sunday, as was his joyful experience to the end of his ministry, he had but to begin preaching Christ to find Him filling the whole vision of his mind and heart with a glory that, for the time, cast all worldly troubles and anxieties deep into the shade.

It was in the Workmen's Hall that an institution was born which, though now for some years extinct, gave my father's name an enviable prominence among a special class of men. This was "The Butchers' Festival." Attending the new Metropolitan Meat Market at Smithfield at least twice a week to obtain supplies for his business, he had become deeply impressed with the spiritual needs of the men employed in the work of the Market. Their

occupation was not a pleasant one. Nearly every morning they had to be at their labours by four o'clock at the latest, walking to them from homes not infrequently two or more miles away. Arrived at the Market, they had to carry from place to place the heavy, greasy carcases of bullocks, calves, sheep, lambs, and pigs. It was rough and disagreeable toil, and the wages paid for it were small. Not unnaturally, many of these men yielded to the powerful temptations of the surrounding public-houses. Gambling and profanity and godlessness were rife among them. Yet it was for such that the Saviour died, and such that the Son of Man came to seek and to save. And so, touched with the very compassion of Christ Himself, my father yearned to do them some spiritual good, and make them partakers of the Divine Grace which he had himself found so strong a moral defence in the rougher scenes and the more exposed situations of his own earlier career. How could he reach and help these men in their low and perilous estate? He personally invited a hundred of them to come out to Notting Hill one evening to a plentiful meal at the Workmen's Hall, giving them free railway tickets for their journey to and fro. The opinion of many of the employers as to the success of the effort was not encouraging. They croaked failure. "Do what you will," they said to him, "you will

never get men like these to come. We know what they are." Nevertheless, twenty-seven did come, and after tea listened willingly to my father as he told them how, when he was a motherless lad in London, the Grace of God in Christ Jesus had been revealed to him, how greatly he longed that it should be revealed also to them, and how anxious he was that they and their fellows should feel that in him they had a brother indeed. His guests carried back to the Market so good a report of the evening that when, a twelvemonth later, two hundred men were invited to a similar meeting, there were only thirteen absentees. On the third occasion nearly four hundred came, and in two or three years more even the commodious Free Tabernacle could not accommodate the crowd of men who were eager to attend the Butchers' Festival.

An application to Mr. Spurgeon for permission to hold future gatherings in the Metropolitan Tabernacle was cheerfully granted. Year by year some fourteen hundred guests sat down in the vast schoolroom to the substantial tea, the expense of which—more than £150—was now defrayed by the willing subscriptions of most of the employers. The meal over, the men would flock upstairs to the great Tabernacle itself, where many of them were joined by their wives and friends, the employers themselves also attending in large numbers.

Chairmen for the meeting were readily found in the persons of Christian noblemen, statesmen, and other eminent Londoners. Mr. Spurgeon himself was a frequent speaker, addressing the men as the "Royal Blues," and telling them of his respectful admiration for butchers' employees as men "who could get more miles in the hour out of a rocking-horse than any other class of drivers he knew." The Festivals were regularly held for more than twenty years. There were three or four of them from which my father was necessarily absent through his evangelistic work at the time in other lands. Such of them as he personally organized involved him in a mass of work. But it was work he freely gave, delighting in it, and abundantly rewarded for it by the knowledge that the Butchers' Festival was used of God to lead scores, if not hundreds, of the "Royal Blues" of the Metropolitan Meat Market into redeeming and renewing contact with the Cross of Jesus Christ.

As though he had not enough responsibility already on his shoulders, he followed up, in less than three years, the building of the Tabernacle and of the Workmen's Hall by the building of the Tabernacle Schools. They were necessary for Sunday-school purposes; the people whom he had gathered to his ministry were asking that provision might be made for the Christian in-

struction of their children. Hundreds of boys and girls were waiting for a place in which they might be taught the great truths of the Bible. But the need for their secular education was also urgent. It was still some seven or eight years before the beneficent Education Act of 1870 came to provide, at the public expense, elementary schools for the children of the people. The Tabernacle Schools were thus the response of my father and his Church to the demand for larger educational facilities at small fees for the swarming youngsters of the locality. An admirable master, Mr. Cambridge Barber, headed a staff of competent teachers. The Schools, accommodating about six hundred scholars, were speedily filled, and continued to do valuable work until the erection of neighbouring Board Schools, in compliance with the Education Act, rendered them unnecessary, and caused them, save for religious purposes, to close their doors.

So the manifold ministry of which the Free Tabernacle was the centre developed and consolidated. And yet the thought was already stirring in my father's breast that not Notting Hill alone, perhaps not even Notting Hill chiefly, was to be the lifelong scene of his service in the Gospel of Christ. Calls to preach in other places were becoming somewhat numerous, reaching him from the four quarters of the land.

The thought of these wider labours received at this time an endorsement which, in the light of his future years, looks very nearly prophetic. He had formed a close friendship with the Rev. John Offord, the honoured and saintly minister of Palace Gardens Chapel, Bayswater. Mr. Offord was his senior by many years, a profound student and illuminating expositor of the Scriptures, a man to whom my father owed much in the way of spiritual counsel and stimulus. He was in his shop one day when Mr. Offord came in, and expressed a particular wish for a private interview. Just as he was, in blue coat and white apron, my father took his visitor into the drawing-room upstairs. Mr. Offord began by saying how greatly he rejoiced in all that God was doing by my father. Then, suddenly, as the two men stood face to face, the elder, his deep-set eyes glistening with brimming tears, put his arms round the younger man's neck and kissed him. "My dear young brother," he said, "I have a deep conviction that the Lord is going to use you in a yet more wonderful manner. Be sure and go where He leads. Years ago I had the opportunity to give myself to evangelistic work over a large area. But I declined to go. For a long while past I have felt that it was then that I missed my way. It has been laid upon my heart to say this to you. That

is why I have come." The two knelt down, and Mr. Offord, in fervent prayer, commended my father to God, praying that he might at any cost be willing to follow the guiding pillar, were it cloud or were it fire. Succeeding chapters will show the fulfilment of the prophecy and the answer to the prayer.

1870—1874

The Widening Ministry

Æt. 35–39

A Divided Mind—Relinquishment of Business—An "Elective" Age—Seeking New Power—The Believers' Meetings—Campaigns in many Centres—D. L. Moody—R. Pearsall Smith—Enlargement of the Tabernacle—Lectures to Men.

"I wish popularity—but it is that which follows, not that which is run after."

MANSFIELD.

VI

The Widening Ministry

1870—1874

ALTHOUGH, for purposes of convenience and chronology, I date my father's widening ministry as beginning in 1870, it had, as a matter of fact and on a limited scale, begun some three or four years before. So early, indeed, as September, 1864, he had conducted a series of mission-services at Sandgate and Hythe, in the county of Kent, and a letter he wrote to my mother from the latter town speaks of the conversion to "Jesus only" of an elderly Roman Catholic gentleman, who had already been much impressed by what he had heard from my father on the occasion of his preaching there at a still earlier date. No discoverable traces survive of any further missions until October, 1868, when he visited Oxford, where

the hearers in the large Town Hall, for three or four nights in succession, were so numerous that many of them could not find seats.

But we can scarcely doubt that in the four intervening years he had been occasionally doing the work of an evangelist in other places. It is difficult otherwise to account for "the sadly divided mind" to which he confesses in a letter of July, 1867—divided between giving up business and going on with it. "I do not seem able to do two things thoroughly," he writes, "at least, business and the ministry." Again, in the following month, he says, "Oh, this divided heart! Lord, cast me not off, nor take Thy Holy Spirit from me. Christ Jesus says to me, 'Follow Me, and I will make you a fisher of men,' and yet I linger. Oh Lord, guide! I seem to have no heart for anything, through division of purpose, and begin to fear whether I am not the double-minded man of whom James writes, 'Unstable in all his ways.' What a condition! . . . Hedged up and no outlet!" He speaks also of the "many openings for usefulness" that were coming to him, characteristically adding that he hopes they will humble him very much. It seems clear, then, that calls for service away from Notting Hill must have been increasing the heavy burden that rested on him through the claims of his business and the pas-

torate of his Church, notwithstanding the efficient and devoted help which, in both directions, he continually received from my mother.

At the end of 1869 the burden was lightened by the sale of his business to her younger brother. No one who knew my father could have been long in doubt as to which way his "sadly divided mind" would finally incline. It would be hard, if not impossible, to find a man less open than he to the seductive appeal of worldly advantages when the sacrifice of them seemed certain to further high spiritual ends on which his heart was set. He stood at the antipodes of Bunyan's "Man with the Muck-rake"; the muck-rake must go if it prevented his winning and wearing of the crown. He wrote to my mother in the April of 1869—he was then on a mission at Newport, Monmouthshire —"I am quite ready to do anything that shall serve to bring the way of the Lord out of our experience; and if but an indication of His mind reach me, I will give up business directly." Evidently the longed-for indication must have come in the course of a few months. Business, with its responsibilities and its profits alike, was definitely laid down. He took his family to a new house at Shepherd's Bush. This was their home for three years, when convenience necessitated a return to Notting Hill. It was at Shepherd's

Bush that my father and mother first knew the sorrow of parental bereavement, a little son—their sixth child—being taken from them in early infancy. Another son was born to them in 1870, and still another in 1872, completing their family.

The abandonment of business was of course a serious sacrifice. It necessarily meant a considerable diminution of income, which, with increased domestic expenses—he had now three sons and two daughters—he could ill afford. In the twelve years of his business-life at Notting Hill he had indeed done well; but his accumulated savings at the end were far from large. He had given so much away. If there was a sufficiency, it was but a moderate sufficiency; and any golden dreams of affluence that might have danced before his eyes had now to be sternly dismissed.

The serious sacrifice, however, involved in his abandonment of business, was eclipsed by his sense of a happy emancipation. Henceforth, except for the claims of his Tabernacle, which were by this time often reduced to his preaching there on Sundays, he was free to go wherever he was invited as an evangelist of the Living Lord for whose sake the sacrifice had been made. A few years later when, as we shall see, he was on the point of relinquishing the pastorate of his Church, he told Mr. Spurgeon of his intention.

"Varley," said the famous minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, "you are the only man in London I envy." My father was astonished. "Why?" he inquired. "Well," was the answer, "it's like this. You can go where you please, and hold great missions throughout the country, and many souls are won for Christ. Now, I admit my pond is a pretty big one; but I can't keep on catching the same fish over and over again." My father replied that, while as strongly convinced as ever that Churches, with pastors in charge of them, were in the nature of things a great religious necessity, he had himself years before, at the time that "he gave up money-making for soul-winning," resolved, in dependence upon the Will of the Lord, to be a soul-winner on a large scale. As he put it in this same interview with Mr. Spurgeon, the pastor, as a soul-winner, seemed to him to be in the retail business, but the evangelist to be in the wholesale. And it was the wholesale business that for himself he earnestly desired.

He was powerfully impelled in this direction by the clear-cut view of the purpose of God in relation to the present era of the world's history, to which he had been led by his study of the Scriptures. He believed that this age is an "elective" age—an age in which God, through the preaching of the Christian Salvation, is gathering out from

the mass of sinful mankind all those who are willing to respond to His gracious call. When this elective work shall have been completed and the last responsive soul shall have surrendered itself to Jesus Christ, then will come "the consummation of the age," often erroneously termed "the end of the world." The personal return of Christ will immediately follow, and His millennial reign upon this planet will begin. Such was my father's vivid outlook upon the more or less immediate future, in accordance with what he was accustomed to describe as "dispensational truth." And being strongly convinced that "the consummation of the age," if all available signs might be trusted, could not be very long delayed, he felt that it was his bounden duty in the meantime to do his part, such as it was, in helping to take out from humanity, by the widest possible evangelism, a people ready for the advent of "the Great Day of the Lord." Every soul whom he was instrumental in saving meant that the Day was by so much the nearer to its splendid dawn. This conviction of his will doubtless be shared by some readers of this book, and rejected by others. But, be that as it may, never was a man's conviction more operative upon his life and action. To say nothing more, the abandonment of a lucrative business—"giving up money-making for soul-winning"—was surely the

most conclusive of proofs of the tenacity with which the conviction gripped my father's soul.

For the wider ministry for which he was now set free from business-claims, he seems at this time to have received a special spiritual preparation, a fresh anointing with the Holy Ghost, a new baptism of Pentecostal fire. It may have been a little earlier or a little later—I cannot find the exact date—that he had a conversation with his friend, the Rev. John Offord, about the dearth of spiritual power and effectiveness which many ministers and Churches in London were then compelled deeply to deplore. What could be done to secure the needed spiritual renewal? My father suggested a conference with Mr. Spurgeon. The two went to see him, and told him of the burden that was lying heavy on their hearts. "Well," said he, "this is remarkable. It is the very thing that has been oppressing me for some time. I have not known what to do. The Lord's hand is in this." Many other ministers were communicated with. Arrangements were made for three days of fasting and prayer at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Hundreds of earnest men came together. Startling, unreserved confession of sin was poured out; pride, envy, unwillingness to rejoice in others' successes, lovelessness, worldliness, prayerlessness—all were freely acknowledged

"with strong crying and tears" under the searching eyes of God. "The tides of prayer," writes my father, "rolled on hour after hour; human strength—much of it very human—was parted with, as we waited together in the Divine Presence; many were 'strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.'" A further whole-day meeting of ministers was held a few weeks later at the chapel of the Rev. Charles Stovel in the East End. Dr. Landels, of Regent's Park, and Dr. Brock, of Bloomsbury, eminent Baptist leaders, had both undertaken to address their brethren; but the emotions that were surging in their souls were too powerful to permit of more than the most broken speech. The unforgettable day closed with a Communion Service, at which "the tender and plaintive words" spoken by his former pastor, the venerable Baptist Noel, left an indelible impress upon my father's mind. The result of such meetings was a great revival of spiritual power in many a minister and many a Church, and numerous accessions of converts. My father himself, on the eve of his wider ministry as he was, shared freely in the increase of evangelistic efficiency which was then so divinely bestowed.

The "Believers' Meetings" in Dublin, to which he appears to have gone for the first time in August, 1868, and which he regularly attended

for several years, were to him another full fountain of spiritual blessing at this period of his life. The man chiefly responsible for their institution was Mr. Henry Bewley, who lived in a beautiful and hospitable mansion—Willow Park—on the outskirts of the Irish capital. "Dear, sainted Henry Bewley," my father affectionately calls him. Unstinting in his expenditure of money, time, care, and love, Mr. Bewley succeeded in bringing together to this convention summer after summer, from all parts of the kingdom, clergymen, ministers, evangelists, and Christian workers of all kinds. The one great purpose of the meetings was the earnest quest, by prayer, by fellowship, by diligent searching of the Scriptures, of higher effectiveness in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. The quest was signally successful, alike in my father's case and in the cases of hundreds more. He acknowledges that the greatest help he ever received for his ministry was given at these "Believers' Meetings." But it came to him, as powerful and permanent spiritual uplift so often comes to men, through a deep humbling of soul first of all. He reached the heights through the valleys, exaltation through abasement. He writes: "After being present at three of these yearly assemblies, I had such a sense of my ignorance and unfitness for the ministry, that I thought I should never be able

to preach any more. I returned to my work utterly dispirited." But the experience proved to be the assured pathway to a further accession of ministerial efficiency, and his people, as they listened to his preaching, felt that some great thing had happened to their pastor. It had. He had received a new outpouring of the Divine Spirit of Power.

There was special need for this larger measure of the Spirit as he faced the many openings into the wider ministry which now confronted him. The more the preacher of the Gospel has to give out, the more must he first take in. Freely receiving is the indispensable condition of freely giving. It is vain to expect that the great mill-wheel can be driven by a stream that is a mere trickle—nothing more. Well was it, therefore, that my father had obtained the new supplies in readiness to meet the new demands.

His hope, previously mentioned, that the many openings for usefulness which were coming to him might humble him very much, was fully realized. Never does the surprise, the wonder, the amazement, that the glorious ministry of the glorious Gospel should have been committed to his trust, appear more strikingly than in his letters to my mother at this time. Without that emotion, so characteristic of St. Paul and all the

giants of the Christian pulpit, preachers become as Dr. J. H. Jowett truly observes in his recent "Yale Lectures," "like common traders in a common market babbling about common wares. It pulsed continually in my father's breast. "How unworthy am I," he writes from Cardiff at the beginning of 1869, "how vile! Oh that *I* should ever have been permitted to preach Jesus, and tell of His love to many souls! . . . How precious the privilege to preach Jesus! Alas, alas! that I am so little fitted for this work! May grace fill this poor, poor heart!"

The year 1870 showed that his wider ministry, already begun, was now growing wider still. January saw him at March, in Cambridgeshire at Huntingdon, and at Newport Pagnell, Bucks, the home of a married sister of my mother. In February, he was in Dublin; in March, in Birmingham, where he found the people with "no small idea of themselves," a little doubtful whether he would have an audience, and astonished to see the congregations crowding into the chapel, until the very aisles were full of hearers sitting on extemporized seats. Cardiff was visited in May, and Leicester in December, with missions in several other places in the intervening months.

The record for the following year exhibits a series of remarkably successful evangelistic cam-

paigns. At Newcastle-on-Tyne my father was especially pleased with a private meeting he held with twenty-four of the ministers of the town representing the various denominations, in which for the time all ecclesiastical differences were sunk in the realization of their unity in Christ and in the work of bringing men and women to His feet. At Birmingham the scenes of the previous visit were repeated on even a larger scale. "On Sunday," he says, "more were outside than could possibly get in. . . . I had a wonderful season. . . . The Spirit of the Lord was with me indeed, and the whole house seemed full of His glory. . . . Many I have come in contact with are saved." A mission at Derby told the same happy tale. "You will be glad to hear the testimony of some. The first to come last night was an aged man, who said, 'You are my spiritual father. Oh, sir, don't I bless the day you ever came to Derby!' Then a youth about twenty found the Lord last night, and a mother who had been seeking Him with tears. In the chapel this morning a father came. 'Sir,' said he, 'both my children have been brought to the Saviour by you.' Another said, 'Miss —— is now rejoicing in Christ and has joined His people.' Another father said, 'My child has been converted,' and a young man of very good position

here said, 'I am now on the Lord's side.' Very many of the Lord's people have been greatly helped, and not a few sent on their way rejoicing. . . . I am just going again, for service commences at 6.15, and a dense crowd is the order of the night." This was in April, and a second visit to Derby in the following August produced similar results which filled his heart with thanks and joy. Dublin, Belfast, Ballymena, Ipswich, Sheffield, Darlington, and other places were all visited in the course of this year. Everywhere there were showers of blessing, demonstrations of the Spirit, harvests of souls. And yet he was not satisfied. During a second mission in Newcastle a few months after the first, he writes to my mother, "I am longing for a greater fulness of the Holy Ghost, that I may be able to be a soul-winner. My darling, pray for me, that I may indeed receive this hallowed blessing."

It would be monotonous to continue the record. Wherever he went in the two or three following years, whether to smaller centres such as York or to larger centres such as Liverpool, scenes were witnessed in practically all respects similar to those which I have already chronicled. The Grace of God manifestly rested upon him and wrought through him. Yet it would seem that in 1873–4 an even greater accession of power

to preach the Living Saviour and Eternal Life through Him came to my father through his contact with two American brethren who were then visiting this country—Mr. D. L. Moody and Mr. R. Pearsall Smith.

Mr. Moody, with Mr. Ira D. Sankey, his singing colleague, had come to hold evangelistic missions in the great cities of the Kingdom, on the lines which they had already followed with striking success in their own land. No one who in any wise came under the influence of their remarkable religious campaign in Britain during the three years 1872–5 can easily forget it, or fail to ascribe to supernatural power the wondrous wave of spiritual blessing which broke over thousands of hearts at the time. It is not for me to say more in these pages of Mr. Moody's work in the course of that memorable mission, than that my father's letters to my mother, written at this period, reveal the even added power that came to him through his fellowship in service with his beloved American friend.

The influence of Mr. R. Pearsall Smith upon him was stronger still. He was a wealthy manufacturer from Philadelphia, with a wife of considerable intellectual gifts. Both husband and wife had suddenly come, they said, to a level of spiritual peace and joy and holiness and power

which previously they had not deemed possible, through the unreserved surrender of themselves to the Spirit of God. It was this surrender—the surrender that springs from an absolute trust—that was the unsealing of the fountain from which the full stream of blessing flowed. Mr. Smith paid a brief visit to our home. I can remember the occasion well. Closeted with his friend in the study, my father listened to his teachings as to something almost of the nature of an apocalypse. He readily accepted them—accepted them the more readily in that they promised the deeper, fuller, intenser life in the soul for which all his days he was longing, and of which he could never have enough. The more life he had, the more life he craved. There was always to him

> "A depth beneath the depth,
> And a height beyond the height,"

and in what he learned from Mr. Smith he thought he saw a deeper depth than he had yet fathomed and a higher height than he had yet climbed. And indeed, although there were some features of the later developments of "The Higher Life Movement," inaugurated in this country by Mr Smith, with which my father, in common with many others, felt compelled to disagree, it is un-

questionable that his contact with this American brother also was effective in leading him to still further acquisitions of spiritual life and power. The Oxford and the Brighton Conventions, held respectively in 1874 and 1875, were to him occasions of especial blessing.

He felt himself the more at liberty to pursue the widening ministry recorded in this chapter, because during several months of 1872–3 his Tabernacle was closed. It was in the hands of the builders for extensive enlargement and alteration, and the services were meanwhile being held in the less commodious schools. The necessity of increased room for the crowded congregations had for some time been urgent. Notwithstanding my father's frequent absences during the week, as he went on his missions in various parts of the country, he always felt it a debt of honour to his people to be with them on Sundays as often as he could, never permitting himself to be influenced by the fact that he fulfilled among them a gratuitous ministry. But the Tabernacle could not accommodate all his would-be hearers. So the enlargement of the building, giving eight hundred additional sittings, was taken in hand. The place was altered almost beyond recognition. The gallery at the platform-end was taken away. New galleries were erected at the sides and at the

end opposite the platform. Two towers were reared to enclose the stone stair-ways leading to them. Pews were substituted throughout for the old movable seats. A lecture-hall was built on the vacant ground between the Tabernacle and the schools. The chapel was re-named "The West London Tabernacle." Of course, the expense of all this was very considerable—so considerable, indeed, that I think it not untrue to say that it was one of the regrets of my father's life that his people and he ever undertook so burdensome an enterprise. It would scarcely have been undertaken had he foreseen that, a few years after the re-opening of the Tabernacle, he would find himself impelled to go for long evangelistic tours in various parts of the world, impossible to combine with the pastorate of a Church. But it is not granted to a man to see far before him. The enlargement of the Tabernacle definitely appeared the right and necessary step at the time. And, indeed, for the better part of his remaining years as pastor at Notting Hill, the step certainly did not lack justification. Whenever he preached, at least the evening congregations filled all the eighteen hundred seats.

The story of his widening ministry at this period of his career would be incomplete without a reference to a work, no less salutary than suc-

cessful, which he then commenced, and almost to the last of his life continued, among lads and men. He carefully wrote, repeatedly delivered, and widely published a lecture to each of these classes containing wise counsels on the difficult subject of sexual purity and solemn warnings against the unnameable consequences of sexual sin. To say nothing of the spoken testimonies which were privately given him at the close of his lectures by the victims of vice, thousands of letters reached him from all parts of the English-speaking world, proving at once the need of his lectures and their value. They have been, and still are, used of God to lead back to the paths of purity many a far-strayed youth and man, and to defend the unwary from the "strange woman" whose midnight house is the pestilential way to Hell.

1874—1888

On Both Sides of the Sea

Æt. 39–53

"Plus Ultra"—Missions in Canada—Brantford—New York—Desire to resign Pastorate—Work in Australasia—Hope of Second Advent—The Bradlaugh Controversy—Resignation of Pastorate—The *Christian Commonwealth*—Preaching in America—The White Slave Traffic—Visit to Cape Colony—Emigration to Melbourne.

"The World is my Parish."
JOHN WESLEY.

VII

On Both Sides of the Sea

1874—1888

WITH its increased accommodation and under its new name, the Tabernacle was re-opened in 1873, and the success of my father's ministry at Notting Hill went forward on even a larger scale than before. His preaching excited still wider interest; it was followed by still greater results. As they saw what God was accomplishing through him week after week and month after month, his people's hopes and expectations, if not his own also, must now have been rising to the flood. And indeed, had he been able to content himself with a settled sphere of service, in which so many faithful servants of Christ find their most congenial opportunity, it is difficult to see what more he could

have desired in the way of ministerial usefulness than the Master he served was graciously granting him at the West London Tabernacle. But a settled sphere of service was just that with which he was not content. The evangelist in him had by this time so largely absorbed the pastor. The motto in the Royal Arms of Spain is "Plus Ultra"—more beyond. It was my father's watchword throughout his evangelistic career. And, as in the previous chapter we have seen how he obeyed the calls to service which came to him from the "more beyond" the confines of his West-London home, so in the present chapter we shall see him obeying the first of the calls that reached him from the "more beyond" the island-shores of his native land itself.

For rather more than twelve months after the re-opening of the Tabernacle he went on with his work as a missioner in several of the populous centres of Britain. Usually returning to London, as already mentioned, to spend his Sundays with his own people, he conducted great and successful campaigns in such places—to name no others—as Aberdeen, Dundee, York, Halifax, Leicester, and Norwich. Everywhere the tides of blessing rolled on. From his letters to my mother I take a few sentences practically at random: "No

buildings are adequate to the crowds attending. . . . The work here is simply marvellous; the town is stirred in all parts. . . . The blessing upon the Churches is astonishing. . . . Hundreds of the cool Scotch Christians stood up and testified of the great blessing they had received. . . . The Hall was densely crammed last evening with near three thousand souls. Oh, such times of power—simply marvellous! I never preached like it. It is the Lord. He fills my soul. . . . We have had the most wondrous seasons—the city literally moved each night—the power of God wondrously seen. I believe hundreds have been saved, and brought into the bright liberty of the children of God."

In the meantime, however, my father had yielded to the pressure that had been put upon him to visit Canada and the United States. He agreed to go in the autumn of 1874. Making the best arrangements he could for the supply of his pulpit during his absence, he crossed the rolling Atlantic in September, and stood for the first time on the fascinating soil of the great New World My mother accompanied him. He had asked Mr. Spurgeon for letters of introduction to the ministers in the several towns and cities which he expected to visit in the course of his tour. "My dear fellow," was the answer, "you don't

need any letters; you are your own commendation." The happy experiences of the English evangelist throughout his seven months' sojourn in Canada and the United States amply proved Mr. Spurgeon's kindly estimate to have been nothing but the simple truth. The travellers received an enthusiastic welcome from hosts of strange faces, behind which glowed an eager Christian love.

Within the narrow limits imposed by the brevity of this simple life-story, it is impossible to give an extended and detailed account of my father's missions during these months. In Canada his work lay principally in the province of Ontario. He visited first the larger cities—Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto—in the last of which the success of his ministry was so striking that a further stay of four weeks was urged upon him, which he was compelled regretfully to decline. Then he passed on to smaller places, to Kingston and St. Catherines, to Hamilton and Brantford. Brantford, indeed, like the Battle of Dunbar to Oliver Cromwell, was my father's "crowning mercy" in his Canadian campaign. Situated about fifty miles from Toronto, and at that time containing not more than twelve thousand inhabitants, the whole town received a spiritual baptism which cannot often have been equalled in the history

of revivals of religion. The evangelist's way had been prepared by weeks of united prayer on the part of the ministers and the Churches. He had no sooner begun work among them than the signs of God's abundant answer to their supplications were everywhere seen. Notwithstanding the iron severity of the Canadian winter, with the thermometer below zero, the people flocked to the meeting-places day after day. It was often midnight before the last "inquirer" could be attended to; on one occasion my father and his rejoicing helpers did not get to their beds until after two in the morning. The power of the Gospel over the young men of Brantford was especially remarkable. In one house of business, for example, nearly every young man employed in it was soundly converted to God. The drinking-bars and the billiard-saloons were almost emptied. "Where are the fellows all gone?" asked two or three frequenters who might still be seen in them. "Gone to hear Varley? What does it all mean?" And their curiosity would compel them to go and "hear Varley" for themselves. As one result of the mission, whose influence continued to spread and multiply for months after the missioner had gone away, no fewer than a thousand of the townsfolk of Brantford were led to definite decision for Christ. Nor was that the only result,

great as it was. Seven years later my father met in England the friend who had been his host during his visit to the thriving Canadian town. He asked him whether the work had proved permanent. The answer was emphatic. "Never was a revival more lasting in its effects. . . . You left us with an army of young men converted to God. They carried the Local Option measure, and closed every licensed drinking-house in the place. Our prison is empty; there is not a criminal in it. Poverty, crime, drunkenness are unknown among us. The police have literally nothing to do, and during the whole of last year only one woman applied for pauper-relief." It was the old story—the soul of all social regeneration is the regeneration of the individual soul. Few of the problems which tax the patient thought of the statesman and the practical effort of the reformer would any longer cry aloud for solution if men would but personally receive and obey the redeeming message of the Gospel.

Unable to give more time to work in Canada, my father went on to New York in the following February. My mother had meanwhile returned home, braving the stormy Atlantic in mid-winter, so that Christmas might not come to her children and find her still away. Hearing of the remarkable Canadian campaign of their English brother

Dr. Theodore Cuyler, of Brooklyn, and other friends had sent him a warm and urgent invitation to conduct a mission in the great metropolis of the United States. From the first he had intended to go there, and the invitation did but confirm his intention. He had been labouring in New York but a fortnight, when he was able to write that results had already appeared that promised very richly. "Such meetings have never been known here. The ministers long for my stay, and there is just a long-continued cry going up to God for His richest blessing. . . . Now the tide is rolling gloriously. . . . Surely the Lord is with us in great blessing and power." Beginning his mission on February 14th, he had meant to sail for England thirteen days later; but he felt that he was not at liberty thus to interrupt the stream of success. It was well that he remained. Many trophies were won for the Gospel in the Paris of the New World. Large buildings such as the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association and the churches of Dr. Cuyler and Dr. Talmage, were crowded to overflowing on week-days. Two Sundays had not passed before it was quite evident that for the remaining Sundays of the mission some desperate measure must be tried to accommodate the ever-increasing throngs. The famous showman, Mr. P. T. Barnum, was applied to for

the use of his Hippodrome. "Welcome to the Hippodrome," he telegraphed in reply. With characteristic generosity, he made no charge except for lighting and attendance. For three Sundays, in the white depths of a snowy winter, my father preached in the Hippodrome to some twenty thousand people, with other thousands outside. The roar of the lions and the growl of the tigers, in their cages near by, occasionally broke in upon his addresses with the weirdest effect.

It was undoubtedly a memorable mission. Hundreds confessed their reception of the Living Christ. Many of the Churches broke out into "a blaze of revival." The sympathy of most of the ministers—though some were coldly critical, especially such as did not once attend the meetings—was so warm, and their co-operation was so cordial, that they were unsurpassed in all my father's world-wide experience as an evangelist. He took very kindly to the Americans. "They are a noble people," he says, "if in any sense we may call men so. They are very hearty and abundant in welcome." The secular Press, equally with the religious, gave long reports of the sayings and doings of "Evangelist Varley." They even dubbed him "Doctor." So that, in the light of all this, we can scarcely wonder if, for a few days at least, he prayerfully considered a proposal, in

which several New York friends united, that at their expense, he should send for his wife and seven children from England, and should thenceforth live in America.

But his thoughts were turning homeward. "I am weary with the long-continued work," he writes on April 27, 1875. The letter was written from Boston, Mass., where, in spite of his weariness he was still able to hold a mission "in this cold Unitarian centre." He abandoned the idea of preaching in Quebec after leaving Boston, and sailed for Liverpool on May 1st.

For the next two years his life and work continued in much the same manner as before his American visit. It was a combination of his ministry at Notting Hill and of his labours as an evangelist in many populous centres of his own land.

The great blessing, however, that had attended him as a soul-winner during his American visit had fully persuaded him that he must sever the ties, dear and sacred as they were, that bound him to the West London Tabernacle. The success on the other side of the Atlantic had been wholesale. He had said before going, "If the Lord will, ten thousand souls for Christ in Canada and the United States!" And something like his heart's desire had actually been given him. But the experience, far from slaking the sacred thirst, had

only intensified it. He came home, therefore, resolved that with him, as with John Wesley, his parish must thenceforth be the world. Beneath the eyes of his Divine Master, he registered a solemn vow, to which he often subsequently referred, that, if strength were granted him, he would not rest until he had preached Christ in every English-speaking city on the face of the earth. But where could he find a successor in his pastorate? The question lay heavy on his heart. It was not a question easy to answer. So large a proportion of his people owed their very souls to his personal agency, and his personal imprint upon the entire work of the Church was so deep and strong, that the difficulty of securing another man to undertake the leadership of the Tabernacle was much greater than it would have been if such conditions had not obtained. There were besides certain financial responsibilities in which he was intimately involved—a mortgage-debt of some £3,000, and an accumulation of interest thereon of upwards of £500, for both of which, in the generosity of his nature, he had made himself personally liable. Wishful as he was, therefore, to cut himself free from pastoral ties, he felt, and his people felt, that he must still submit to them, until a suitable successor could be found.

However, for the immediate future, his way was

laid open to accept a pressing and repeated invitation to spend some time in evangelistic work in Australia. An acceptable preacher, willing to assume the charge of the Tabernacle during his absence, was happily met with in the person of the Rev. C. Marsack Day. Mr. Samuel Morley and three other gentlemen were willing to join my father in the legal trusteeship of the Tabernacle. A capable committee was elected from among the members to manage its affairs while he was at the Antipodes. My mother, though shrinking from the long ocean-voyage, was not indisposed to accompany him, the more so as my brother Frank was already in Melbourne, whither he had been sent to make a complete recovery from a dangerous illness, while another brother, Charles, had suffered so seriously from bronchial weakness that for him also the doctors had imperatively urged a sojourn in a warmer clime. At the farewell meeting on April 30, 1877, under Mr. Morley's chairmanship, my father was presented with a purse of sovereigns, many hearty God-speeds were spoken, and by May 5th parents and son were on the sea.

They landed safely in Melbourne before the end of July. One cannot but remember how different were the conditions of my father's arrival from those of two-and-twenty years before when, a lonely youth of nineteen, going forth to try his fortunes in an

unknown land, he had first set foot upon Australian soil. As he contrasted the present with the past, thoughts unspeakable must have thronged and fermented in his brain.

He gave five months of ministry to Melbourne and its vicinity. There is no need to enter into details, even did space permit. Enough to say that, allowing for the differences between the two cities and their people, the success attending his mission in Melbourne was not less than the success which had attended his mission, more than two years earlier, in New York. Again "the whole city was moved." He writes to his father-in-law, December 27, 1877: "Surely we have had a time of wonderful blessing, many thousands, I believe, being both refreshed and quickened into newness of life. How gracious has the Lord been to us in using for His own glory the preaching of His holy Word!" One notable feature of the Melbourne campaign was the witness which many large employers freely bore to the beneficial effect of my father's preaching upon their workmen. Another was the hundreds of children whom he was able to lead to the Good Shepherd of the lambs, and who filled his table to overflowing with the artless letters, fresh and sweet as morning flowers, in which they told him of their love and thanks.

From Melbourne the travellers went to Tasmania, spending the season of excessive heat in the mountain-home of the hospitable and saintly Mr. Henry Reed. Refreshed and invigorated, my father went on to conduct missions in Launceston and Hobart Town, the theatres and public-houses of the latter place being depleted of their frequenters while the services were in progress. Four months he laboured in Tasmania, and the result, it was freely acknowledged, was such a revival of religion as the island had never known. At Adelaide, hundreds could not get into the largest hall in the city. It was the same at Sydney in New South Wales, at Perth in Western Australia, and at Wellington, Dunedin, Nelson, and Christchurch in New Zealand. A second visit to Melbourne so wonderfully confirmed, and even extended, the effects of the first, that the project was mooted to build for him in that city a hall to hold five thousand, where he might labour at least for a further three years. Everywhere the signs that the evangelist most coveted followed the preaching of the Word, as he told of the Risen Lord as the present power of the believer's daily life, rebuked sin with uncompromising plainness of speech, and urged with all the passion of his soul the sufficiency of an Infinite Saviour. Thus in happy, fruitful service

the months sped away, and the late spring of 1879 saw my father and mother, with the two brothers now in apparently re-established health, once more at home.

Five years passed before my father left England again, when, as we shall see, he paid a second visit to America; and busy and crowded years they were. His manhood was now at its meridian; his powers of thought and utterance, alike by voice and by pen, were at their full; the consecration of his forceful and magnetic personality to the manifold service of the Kingdom of God was unreserved and complete. Bearing in mind that, throughout these five years, there was the constant background of his evangelistic activity in various parts of the country, their most outstanding features and incidents may now be noted in rapid review.

To begin with, he gave special attention during this period to the winning of young men for Jesus Christ, conducting several missions for them, to mention London alone, in the City at Aldersgate Street, westward at Exeter Hall, northward at Islington. The voluminous information that came to him, in letters and in personal interviews, as a result of his lectures on sexual purity, opened his eyes even wider than before to the desolating inroads of impurity upon the young manhood of

the land. He yearned to save his brother-men from the corrupting clutch of vice. But he perfectly understood that the one really effective way to do this was by persuading them to yield themselves to the control of Christ. Thus in all his earnest advocacy of purity and in all his withering denunciation of its opposite, personal surrender of heart and life to the Lord was the first thing to which, with the affection of a father for his sons, he urged the young men who flocked to his missions.

During this period, also, the doctrine of the Personal Return of Christ to the earth held an increasing place in his thoughts and assumed a greater prominence in his teaching. He firmly believed that stupendous event to be near at hand. He longed for it with a passion that touched the pathetic. Again and again, in his letters to my mother, he speaks of it as the one radiant hope that sustained him as he looked out upon a world in which he saw so much to perplex him, to distress him, to make him cry, "Lord, how long? Come, Lord Jesus!" The "signs of the times," as he interpreted them, clearly pointed to the speedy approach of a great crisis in human affairs—the failure of governments, the growth in the Churches of grave doctrinal errors, the widespread apathy of pro-

fessing Christians, the indifference of the materialized mass of mankind to all spiritual interests, the universal lust of pleasure, the pride of wealth resulting from unexampled commercial prosperity, the pride of intellect arising from man's conquest of the forces of Nature through scientific research. All these disheartening phenomena more and more seemed to him to call aloud for the personal intervention of the Lord from heaven, in His power and glory, to set right a world in which so many things were manifestly "out of joint." The King must come soon! My father's study of the Scriptures led him to conclusions which confirmed this expectation. He published in 1885 "Christ's Coming Kingdom," a substantial volume in which they were lucidly set forth. It won considerable attention, and speedily passed into a second edition. It is now, however, out of print.

The years 1880–85 found my father prominently engaged in the famous controversy arising out of the election to the House of Commons, as one of the members for Northampton, of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh. Mr. Bradlaugh, as a disbeliever in God, objected to take the oath then required of all members of Parliament, in which there is solemn mention of the Divine Name. He claimed instead the right simply to "affirm."

I need not enter into the numerous incidents and circumstances of a case which has passed into English history. Enough to record that my father threw himself energetically into the protracted strife. He could not see how any man, who openly disavowed belief in God, and therefore recognized no Divine authority over his conscience and his life, was able rightly to fulfil the high and responsible function of one of the law-makers of a professedly Christian nation. In Mr. Bradlaugh's case this essential unfitness was aggravated, in my father's eyes, by his association with Mrs. Annie Besant, a few years earlier, in the publication of the notorious pamphlet, "The Fruits of Philosophy," for which, though the sentence was quashed on appeal, he had been condemned to six months' imprisonment and a fine of £200. Both in Northampton and elsewhere, my father in person strenuously opposed Mr. Bradlaugh's re-election to the House of Commons. He circulated by the thousand "An Appeal to the Men of England," showing Mr. Bradlaugh "to be unfitted to represent any English constituency." He addressed a letter to the members of both Houses of Parliament, urging them to vote against the Affirmation Bill, which the Government of the day had introduced in order to give liberty to "affirm" in the case of

any member who had conscientious objections to taking the oath. The fierce controversy, indeed, came to an end in 1886, when most people were tired of it, and when Mr. Bradlaugh was allowed to take his seat in the House of Commons. But my father had meanwhile availed himself to the full of an opportunity, such as he eagerly welcomed, to make it clear to his fellow-citizens that he, for one, held tenaciously that the legislature of a Christian nation should consist only of men who were ready to acknowledge personal fealty to the King of kings.

In 1882 the ties of twenty years' duration were finally severed by his resignation of the pastorate of the West London Tabernacle. His spirit had for some time, as we have seen, chafed under them as an obstacle to his entire liberty to give himself to world-wide evangelistic work. It is needless to say with what deep and affectionate regret his attached people saw his connection with them thus brought to a close. They could not but accept the inevitable, however, or feel that, in leaving them, he was doing otherwise than obeying the clear call of the Master who gives to every faithful servant of His the work that He sees him best fitted to do. The Tabernacle passed into the hands of the denomination known as "The Disciples of

Christ"—a body of Christians comparatively small and weak in this country, but large and powerful in America. My father's immediate successor was the Rev. Dr. W. T. Moore. He was followed, as the years went on, by other pastors. But from various causes the work gradually declined. The Church, after a brave but fruitless struggle, found its difficulties insuperable. It was at last disbanded. The Tabernacle was closed. Its ancient glories have now faded "into the light of common day." With a sorrow that is no mere sentimental luxury, but is a deep and permanent pain of the heart, one has to record that it is to-day a warehouse for accessories required in the manufacture of motor-cars.

Shortly before resigning his pastorate, my father took part in the launching of a new weekly religious journal, the *Christian Commonwealth*. There was, it seemed to him and some of his friends, a distinct place in the religious journalism of this country for a paper in whose columns social and national righteousness should be boldly advocated from the uncompromising standpoint of the Bible, entirely irrespective of political party or religious sect. The *Christian Commonwealth* was founded to fill this vacant place. My father was joint-editor with Dr. W. T. Moore.

Mr. Timothy Coop, a wealthy manufacturer living in Lancashire, and a generous supporter of "The Disciples of Christ," supplied, in part or in whole, the financial sinews of war. Fairly successful for a while along the same lines on which it had been started, the journal presently began to feel the effects of the cut-throat competition which prevails in the world of journalism, even as it prevails elsewhere. The circulation declined; Mr. Coop withdrew his indispensable support. The *Christian Commonwealth*, though still retaining its name, passed into other hands, and is to-day the recognized organ of the "New Theology." It is one of the curious ironies of life that a paper which my father helped to found, and whose very title he coined, should now be the prominent advocate of opinions which, as they rose upon the theological horizon, he fought against until he could fight no more. But this is sometimes, to appearance at least, a whirligig world.

Toward the close of 1884 he went for his second evangelistic tour in America, my mother and my elder sister, Minnie, bearing him company. This time he visited some of the cities lying far west of New York, such as St. Louis, Springfield, Kansas City, and Louisville, "a great whisky centre," as he describes it. Once more, as in

his first experience of evangelizing in America, nearly ten years earlier, the success attending his efforts as a winner of souls gave him much cause for thanks and praise. He travelled as far south as Augusta, in Georgia, where, after a ten-days' mission to the whites, he held another entirely for coloured people, amongst whom the blessing given to his ministry was remarkable. They warmly appreciated his interest in them, recognizing that it exposed him to no little criticism and even hostility from those on the other side of the "colour-line." My father learned that when, a year before, Mr. D. L. Moody was conducting an open-air mission in Augusta, a fence had actually been erected on the meeting-ground, to prevent the coloured people on the one side of it from mingling with the white people on the other. Much food for reflection there! Seven hundred professed converts amongst his coloured friends were the result of my father's labours in the Gospel of the Christ in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither European nor African, neither white nor black.

He went northward again through Washington and Philadelphia to New York. To Philadelphia he gave three weeks, the keen and widespread interest in his afternoon Bible-readings, particularly

on the Second Coming of Christ, being a special feature of his campaign. In New York, though the weather was "terrifically hot," the services were scarcely any way behind those of his former visit in the numbers attending and in the results achieved. "I do not know," he writes, "what we are going to do with the people this evening. Scores come to tell of conversion and spiritual power received ten years since, and people of all sorts and kinds crowd the meetings." It is not wonderful that an American correspondent of the *Christian* should have written at this time from Philadelphia, "The name of Henry Varley has become very dear to thousands of American Christians."

My father was again in England before the end of August, 1885. In the following October, on the eve of the General Election which took place a month later, he went to Derby to prevent, if it were possible, the re-election of Sir William Harcourt as one of the members of Parliament for that great Midland borough. In the judgment of my father, Mr. W. T. Stead, Mr. Bramwell Booth, and many more, Sir William, as Home Secretary, had been grievously indifferent to his responsibilities in neglecting to deal drastically with persons—and especially a woman whose name was then invested with a repulsive notoriety

Frank Holmes] [*Clifton.*

HENRY AND SARAH VARLEY

(*circ.* 1885).

[To face p. 132.

—engaged in what has since come to be known as "The White Slave Traffic." This was exactly the kind of thing to kindle my father's indignation to red heat. He arrived in Derby with his soul aflame. He addressed meeting after meeting in vehement opposition to Sir William, because of what he regarded as a grave dereliction of public duty. Sir William's supporters were naturally enraged by his attacks, and at one gathering vented their wrath upon him by smothering him from head to feet with the contents of a bag of soot. He took such treatment as only an incident in a holy war. He comforted himself with the knowledge that he was bearing a needed witness "in the Name of the Living God," and was helping to arouse the conscience of the nation, as it had never been aroused before, against deep-dyed sinners who, for a little gold, were trafficking in maiden bodies and souls for whom Christ died.

In the August of 1886, my father broke new ground as an evangelist by a visit to Cape Colony. He went in company with a fellow-labourer, Mr. Joseph Hannington, to conduct a campaign for Christ arranged for him in several places by the South African Young Men's Christian Association and the Christian Workers' Mission. It extended over a period of three months. The evangelists began at Cape Town early in September, and

fulfilled a ministry of four weeks in that important city and its beautiful suburbs. The pleasure of my father's sojourn in Cape Town was considerably enhanced by his appreciation of its picturesque situation; he delighted in fine scenery.

The first meeting of the mission was held in the Dutch Reformed Church, which seats three thousand persons. It was "crammed in every part"—an excellent augury of the success which attended the mission from beginning to end. He found great need for the work that his colleague and he had gone to do. "There is much to grieve over here," he writes, in an exceptionally interesting letter. "Indifference, intemperance, worldliness, and wickedness abound. . . . Large numbers, especially of the coloured people, are drunken and degraded. Yesterday I counted fourteen coloured men in one small public-house, nearly all drunken. It is said a man can get drunk for twopence. . . . Such is one phase of civilization here." But the work, in which he received from Mr. Hannington assistance that called out his warm admiration, soon began to tell deeply upon many hearts and lives. It was no uncommon thing for thirty to fifty persons to be brought into the New Life in Christ at one service. "The drinking-houses are being emptied, the theatres

scarcely able to get an audience, the races badly attended, balls upset, and the heart taken out of the fashionable sinners." From Cape Town my father went to Port Elizabeth, thence to Grahamstown, thence back to Cape Town, thence to Pietermaritzburg, thence to Durban. In every place a success similar to that of his first weeks in the Colony was granted him by the good hand of his Lord. And he returned to England in time for a happy Christmas with his family, full of gratitude that in South Africa, alike among the English, the Dutch, and the natives, he had been permitted to reap a large sheaf of redeemed lives for the garner of Christ.

The autumn of 1887 found him far from well. The damps and fogs of his native land were beginning to render somewhat acute a bronchial weakness from which he had suffered more or less during several years. In this condition the doctors urged him to avoid the risk of spending the approaching winter in England. He decided to adopt their advice, and took the long voyage to Australia round the Cape of Good Hope. Three of his children were already in Melbourne. My brother Frank had gone some time before, in consequence of a renewal of his ill-health. For a similar reason he was followed two years later by my brother Charles. My

sister Minnie went with him to make a home in Melbourne for the two boys, who, it was deemed best, should permanently reside in the genial warmth of Australia. My father was affectionately anxious to see his emigrant children in their new abode.

Three months' sojourn in Melbourne confirmed to some extent the partial benefit he had derived from the voyage. He was so much better that he was able to hold a series of services in the Theatre Royal on Sunday evenings, with excellent results.

He reached England once more in the summer of 1888. At the end of July I was to be married, and, if he were available, it would be a great joy both to father and son that he should officiate at the wedding. But his chief reason in coming home was to make the necessary arrangements for breaking up his household in this country and transferring his residence to Melbourne. He had been forced to the conclusion that he was no longer able, at the age of fifty-three, to endure, without serious risk to his health, perhaps even to his life, the trying ordeal of English winters. And so it came about that, the varied business consequent on this decision having been attended to, and a multitude of loving farewells having been taken of their English friends near and far,

my parents, with my youngest brother, Herbert, embarked early in October for the great southern land—a land whose opulence of sunny skies promised the chief of the trio the renewed vigour that he desired, principally for the sake of renewed activity in that high service of soul-winning which was the vocation and the passion of his life.

1888—1896

Residence in Australia

Æt. 53–61

Melbourne—Religious Condition and Social Evils—Opium-dens—Gambling—Echuca Sanatorium—"There are my Idols!"—The Sydney Panic—Visit to Holy Land—Last sight of Mr. Spurgeon—In England again—Death of elder Daughter—Mission in India—Chicago World's Fair Campaign—Mission in San Francisco.

"Thou who, of Thy free grace, didst build up this Britannick Empire."

JOHN MILTON.

VIII

Residence in Australia

1888—1896

ON getting to the conclusion of the chapter now beginning, the friendly reader may fairly question the accuracy of the title, "Residence in Australia." For it will be seen that, even of the eight years which the chapter covers, my father was in other parts of the world for little short of four. His natural inclinations were all against a sedentary life; my mother used often laughingly to declare that "he was born with his hat on." And with these inclinations, which impelled him, like Tennyson's Ulysses, to be "always roaming with a hungry heart," the consciousness of his calling as an evangelist to as many of his English-speaking fellow-men as he could reach, admirably fitted in.

Nevertheless, it is the fact that, from the end of 1888, for all the twenty-three years still in front of him, it was Australia that he regarded as his home. There, for a considerable time, he was a householder; there lay the larger portion of his family interests; there two of his sons established a business in which he was intimately concerned. A travelling preacher as he was, a nomad for the Gospel's sake, oftener absent from Australia than in it, it was still Australia that, from the date we have now reached in his life-story, onward to the day of his death, afforded him the home from which he went out on his evangelistic tours, and to which he returned at their close.

The ten years which had elapsed since he had held in Melbourne the great mission of which a brief account was given in the previous chapter, had been years of considerable increase for the city with which his name was henceforth to be so closely associated. Its population had grown largely; its suburbs had extended on all sides. Its commercial prosperity had advanced by leaps and bounds, and money had poured into the pockets of the people in a golden stream. Extravagant dreams of the possibilities of their city had led many of them into wild-cat speculations in the purchase of land in its vicinity—so much so

that my father found on his arrival in November, 1888, that enough land had been sold and re-sold for building purposes to afford a site for a city of seven million inhabitants. But it was not long before the painted bubble burst. One bank broke after another. Tens of thousands of the people were financially ruined, and for several years the credit of the entire colony of Victoria was seriously impaired. It may not be too much to affirm that to this day the effects are felt in Melbourne of the wave of disaster which came as the reaction of the ill-fated land-boom of a quarter of a century ago.

Able as he was now to make a closer examination of the religious condition of the city than was possible to him during his brief visit earlier in the year, my father was delighted and grateful to find that much of the fruit of his work ten years before still remained. He was continually meeting with men and women who had then either received a great quickening in their Christian life, or had passed from the dark dominion of sin into the glad liberty of the Kingdom of God. Yet the evils that confronted him wherever he looked showed all too plainly the deep need of the people of Melbourne for the utmost he could do, as a new accession to the Christian forces at work in the city, to win

them for Jesus Christ. Not, indeed, that Melbourne was worse than other cities. "Ah, well, Mr. Varley," said the Mayor one day, when my father was telling him of the wickedness he had met with, which was winked at by the police, "ah, well, we are not worse than Paris." Probably true. But my father could not see in that any extenuation of the evils of which he complained. He saw all around him the hardening greed of gold, the fevered pursuit of pleasure, the besotted worship of Bacchus. He saw the havoc wrought by gambling and licentiousness. And he felt that he had come to Melbourne that he might throw his whole strength into the battle against these forces of darkness and destruction. It was a debt he owed to the city of his adoption, no less than to the Lord who had sent him there. The preaching of the Gospel was indeed the staple of his work; but the necessities of the case, as they presented themselves to his mind, called aloud to him to do something more than preach. "I am more and more persuaded," he once wrote, "that we, as Christian workers, lose a great deal of power by not openly challenging the evils that are ruining our brothers and sisters." The people of Melbourne soon learned that in the person of Henry Varley a new citizen had settled among them who did not shrink from an open challenge of the evils

that were working incalculable harm in their midst.

Having established his home in the pleasant suburb of Kew, my father addressed himself to the task which lay before him. It goes without saying that he was constantly preaching. For many successive Sunday evenings during the first months of his residence in Melbourne, he preached in the Theatre Royal to congregations of three thousand, and held several fruitful missions in the environs of the city. Time after time he gave his "Purity Lectures" to large audiences of youths and men, of which a local clergyman, having heard one of them, wrote to the Melbourne *Herald*, "If any left the building unbenefited, without hating sin and loving purity more than when they entered, their condition must be most deplorable." But it is the open challenge which my father gave to some of the evils that came under his notice, as his knowledge of Melbourne became more intimate, to which a few paragraphs must now be given.

The city is the home of large numbers of Chinese, and he had heard terrible stories of the doings in the opium-dens. He resolved to discover the truth at first-hand. The courteous Chief Commissioner of Police placed at his disposal the services of an experienced detective, in

whose company he visited, one unforgettable night, at least fifty of the small, dark "shanties" where opium-smoking was carried on. The facts, as he had heard them, had not been exaggerated. The opium-smoking was bad enough; but far worse was the open door into a life of vice and shame which these foul haunts afforded to many a poor English or Colonial girl. In that one night my father saw enough of "the social hells," as he described them in a letter to the Melbourne *Age*, "which are burning with their lurid fires in this large and pleasant city," to send him home at three o'clock in the morning "bowed and oppressed with the depths of wickedness to which men and women can descend." He learned on inquiry that "these kennels" were owned by wealthy landlords, who received exorbitant rents for them. Some of these men he publicly denounced by name, and in the summer of 1889 he wrote to his friend, Mr. R. C. Morgan, the editor of the *Christian*, "Many notorious men have been trembling lest they should be the next needed for exposure and denunciation."

Beside the doings in the opium-dens, the infamies of other places of evil resort in Melbourne excited my father's indignation. He set to work to get them exterminated if he could. He forced

them into the publicity which they dread—unclean things that love the darkness and shun the day. He wrote letter after letter about them to the newspapers. He organized large meetings, at which he told the citizens what he had seen with his own eyes. He prodded the conscience of the community to bestir itself in the presence of the social evils it had drowsily tolerated too long. Numbers of the most religious and the most public-spirited of the people of Melbourne—unhappily the one quality does not always imply the other—rallied courageously to his side. And the result was that a measure was introduced and passed by the Government of Victoria similar to the Criminal Law Amendment Act of this country.

The gambling mania was another evil which my father briskly attacked. There was a clamant need for all he could do. It was no secret that, at a moderate estimate, the vast sum of £20,000,000 changed hands every twelvemonth throughout the Australian Colonies over gambling transactions connected with horse-racing and other forms of sport. In Melbourne the evil reached its annual climax of insanity when the races were held in November, the "Cup Day" being the worst day of a bad week. To do what was possible to stem the black current, my father and his friends used to open, some weeks before the races, an anti-

gambling bureau in Collins Street, one of the busiest thoroughfares in the centre of the city. The large windows were covered with bills and placards, printed in bold type, and containing short, striking sentences setting forth the folly and the immorality of gambling. Copies of well-known pictures and cartoons were adapted to fulfil the same useful service. The public were informed that inside the bureau anti-gambling pledges might be taken and information concerning the Anti-gambling Association might be obtained. Two pamphlets from my father's pen—"The Impeachment of Gambling" and "The Bookmaker; or, Turf Secrets Revealed"—were sold by the thousand. A daily prayer-meeting, to which the passers-by were invited, was held during the whole period that the bureau remained open. When at length the race-week came, religious services took place on the course; and on the evening of the notorious "Cup Day" itself a great meeting was convened in the Town Hall and addressed by several ministers and other gentlemen under my father's chairmanship. The gigantic evil was too strongly entrenched to be overthrown by even such strenuous endeavours as these. Nevertheless, welcome proofs were constantly forthcoming that he and his fellow-workers did not labour in vain.

While my father was thus busied with these

works of social and moral reform, my mother, on her part—though here perhaps I slightly anticipate—found a congenial sphere of womanly service in the establishment of a consumptive sanatorium at Echuca, some 150 miles from Melbourne. Her friend, Mrs. Sargeant, and she had been touched with compassion for the sufferers, often of the slenderest means, who had been sent out from England to Australia in the hope of the cure, or at least the relief, of their dread disease. Many of them came from the ship quite unfitted for work, evidently in need of treatment and care. In not a few cases the probabilities were all in favour of their deriving great and permanent good from a sojourn in a sanatorium. But there was no such institution in the entire Colony of Victoria. Echuca, beautifully situated, with an atmosphere exceptionally clear and balmy, and a climate nearly perfect for nine months of the year, was an ideal spot for consumptives. There the home was founded, and my mother became its honorary secretary. Slender as its accommodation was, within the first six years of its beneficent history more than 350 patients had been received, to the lasting benefit of the majority, while some of them happily so responded to the earnest Christian influences always at work upon them during their residence, that they left Echuca the confessed disciples of Jesus

Christ. My father was often able to help the funds of the sanatorium by collections made on its behalf at his missions in various parts of Australia.

He had not been in Melbourne a twelvemonth before he felt that the time had come for him to go farther afield for his evangelistic work. Calls had come to him from Sydney, from Adelaide, from Auckland, from other cities and towns—calls in which he heard the voice of Christ. Readily he obeyed, and, in the various places he visited, rejoiced to find the Word of the Lord, as it was given him to preach, yielding rich results. Even were there space for them, there is no necessity to give details of these missions. The evangelist's work moved along the lines which must have already become familiar enough to the reader of these pages.

One remarkable instance of the converting power of the Gospel must, however, find mention here. My father often spoke of it. It occurred at Broken Hill, a new mining town of South Australia, in which he preached during his tour. After one of the services a man came to him in a state of great mental excitement and spiritual distress. He was an American. "I'm all wrong," he broke out, "all wrong! I don't know what induced me to come here to-night. I suppose I

came to hear a man who had been represented to me as a big religious humbug. Excuse me; I mean no offence. But that's the way I've heard you spoken of. I was up till two o'clock this morning gambling at cards. Gambling and racing have been to me a complete fascination for years. But it's over now. From to-night, by the grace of God, it's all done with. I am staying in the same hotel as you. To-morrow morning I will bring you my idols. Thank God I came here to-night! I'll never forget what I've heard." In the morning he brought his "idols" to my father. They proved to be a set of books for betting purposes, carefully and accurately kept. Every horse that had figured during the previous eight or ten years in Colonial racing was entered in their pages—its pedigree, its varying weights, its several jockeys, its winnings in different events. "There, sir," exclaimed the man, "there are my idols! Take them, burn them, do what you like with them! I have won £900 on the Melbourne Cup the last three years. But from this hour, through God's mercy, I'm a free man." The incident may be commended to the proud pundits of twentieth-century enlightenment who tell us, in tones of scornful superiority, that the Gospel is now a threadbare superstition.

Successful inroads upon the kingdom of vice

and sin, such as my father was privileged to make by the power of the Word, of course aroused the wrath of men who make gain out of pandering to the baser passions of human nature. It was such men that were responsible for the only panic, so far as I know, that ever occurred at any service conducted by my father in all his many years of evangelism. He was preaching to a great crowd in the Masonic Hall, Sydney, in the course of this tour. It was a new building, only partially completed. The deep excavations necessary for the foundations had not yet been filled in at the sides and back. Suddenly two or three miscreants raised a false alarm of "Fire!" The people were thrown into terrified confusion. Some began to press towards the front doors by which they had entered. Others, ignorant of the danger they were incurring, thronged towards the emergency-exits which opened on to the excavations. "Down! down!" roared my father. "Keep your seats! Be quiet, and all will be well. Do you want to trample one another to death?" "They were awful moments," he writes. He knew that if the emergency-exits were forced open, scores of hapless people would have fallen, in the darkness, to a depth of from ten to fifteen feet. Order was at last restored, and no harm

was done. Rather the contrary. For when it was discovered that the alarm had been raised by certain supporters of a disreputable journal which my father had publicly denounced, the dastardly outrage being intended by them as a revenge, the incident did but give impetus to the popular interest in himself and his work.

Meanwhile, his connections with Melbourne were constantly striking deeper roots. My elder sister had become the happy wife of a Colonial gentleman, Mr. William Kitchen, in June, 1889. The home-circle had been enlarged by the arrival of my second brother, Thomas, and my younger sister, Alice, who followed our parents to Australia after an interval of somewhat more than a year. With the one exception of myself, the whole family were now settled in the thriving capital of Victoria, where my four brothers readily found promising openings in the business-world, as well as manifold opportunities of Christian service. Two of them, indeed, Thomas and Charles, were not very long in establishing themselves as "Varley Brothers," a firm of printers and advertising-specialists which became well-known throughout the Australian Colonies, and in which my father was personally interested to the end of his life.

For some years he had cherished the desire

to visit the Holy Land. Most Christians, I suppose, have felt at one time or another the magnetism of the thought of a personal acquaintance with the scenes amid which so much of the Bible had its birth, and which, in especial, are so inextricably interwoven with the earthly life of our Lord. We hear, it is true, of the disillusionment that falls upon the traveller's mind as his eye sees them for the first time. The anticipated glory is not there. Everything is wrapped in dusty decay. And yet it is scarcely possible that what Shakespeare described, in the first part of his "King Henry IV.," as

> "those holy fields
> Over whose acres walked those blessèd feet,
> Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nailed
> For our advantage on the bitter cross,"

should ever cease to exert a spiritual spell, of peculiar power, upon the Christian soul. My father felt that spell, and felt it the more because of his belief that Jerusalem is to be the seat of the Millennial Reign of Christ when He comes again in the splendours of celestial royalty. Both for its memorable past and for its glorious future, the Holy Land strongly attracted him, and he rejoiced as he saw the way opening for him to go.

He left Melbourne at the end of June, 1891, in the company of three friends. One of them, Mr. Joseph Hannington, as already mentioned in the last chapter, had been his fellow-worker in the mission at Cape Colony. The voyage was one of the most enjoyable my father ever made. His letters overflow with the pleasure it yielded him. "It is simply exquisite for rest and delight," he says. "The weather has been lovely in the extreme. . . . The air is balmy, soft, and delicious; the days magnificent; the evenings and sunsets glorious; the nights peerless in their radiance." Calling at Brisbane, the steamer passed through the Torres Straits to Java, and on to Singapore. There, in that important centre, with its strange medley of more than twenty different nationalities, he preached several times to the English residents. The services were so full of blessing that he complied with an urgent request that he would stay for a fortnight longer, and let the vessel proceed on her voyage without him. While at Singapore, he was deeply stirred by the cruelties of the so-called "Chinese Coolie Labour Traffic," which, as he saw it in operation, seemed to him scarcely distinguishable from slavery. On his arrival in England a few months later, he addressed a long letter on the subject to the

Marquis of Salisbury as the head of the Government of the day. In Johore, an independent Malay State at the southern extremity of the peninsula, he had an interesting interview with the Sultan, who had courteously invited him, with a small party of friends, to visit the palace. "There was an air of depression about the Sultan," writes my father, "and in the afternoon I had a long conversation with him on the nature of sin, the Divine forgiveness, and the coming universal sovereignty of Christ. He appeared deeply interested. . . . The Sultan is about my own age, and has been to Germany in quest of health. Poor fellow, so soon to meet eternity! And what a record! What an account of stewardship! . . . I came away saying, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.' "

By September 8th my father had reached Beyrout, where he was joined by the three companions who had left him behind at Singapore. He thus describes the plans of the party: "The Jordan valley we shall traverse right through to the Dead Sea. Thence to Jericho —to which city, when I was young, I have been sent more than once—and on to Jerusalem. From Jerusalem, we shall work our way to Shechem, Nazareth, Cana of Galilee, Mount Carmel, Tyre and Sidon, and back to Beyrout.

We shall try to spend Christmas here; but, seeing we have some six or seven hundred miles before us, we shall have all the time taken up." Unfortunately a painful and prolonged attack of muscular rheumatism detained him at Beyrout, and his friends had to start on their tour without him. But, after an impressive visit to Baalbec, he met them again at Damascus. There, filled with memories of St. Paul, the great evangelist of the first century, he found a special joy in preaching Christ. The party stayed for some days in the exhilarating air of the mountains of Lebanon. They visited Sidon, Tyre, and Acre. At Haifa, under the solemn shadows of Mount Carmel, my father's rheumatism returned so severely that his friends were reluctantly obliged again to leave him behind, and he went back by an opportune steamer to Beyrout. Medical skill and kindly nursing greatly relieved his sufferings. He was able to preach several times, to conduct Bible-readings, and to address the professors and students in the American Mission College. To his deep regret, quarantine difficulties arising from an outbreak of cholera prevented him from visiting Jerusalem and some other places which he was longing to see; and he decided to proceed to England.

Although keenly disappointed at leaving the principal part of his programme in Palestine thus unfulfilled, he was not without compensation of the kind that he prized most highly. "It is simply wonderful," he says, "what an entrance to this Syrian people the Lord has given me." Not without most encouraging results, he spoke to the natives on several occasions, by the aid of an interpreter, of "the salvation that is in Christ Jesus." They called him "a great pasha"; they said he ought to stay among them, and be "chief patriarch" for the whole country; they seized his hand, kissed it, raised it to their foreheads, and then put it again reverently at his side. He left the classic scenes of Bible story with the happy assurance that there, as already in lands by centuries more modern, he had been privileged to gather "fruit unto life eternal."

My father had learned before leaving Palestine that Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon were at Mentone, where the famous preacher, in serious ill-health, was seeking some measure of recovery. He broke his journey that he might visit his old friend. It was the last time that the two, whose mutual admiration and affection had deepened through the years, ever met on earth. Within a few weeks (February 1, 1892) Mr. Spurgeon had passed into the Unclouded Light. But when my

father saw him, there was no suspicion that the end was so near. He found him really better. During the two days he spent with him, there was much to talk about in the hours that passed all too swiftly. The "Down-Grade Controversy," in particular, in which Mr. Spurgeon bore so conspicuous a part, with my father's enthusiastic concurrence and support, was prominent in the minds of both. The great Evangelical beliefs, the foundation of their faith and the substance of their ministry as they were, were being obscured in a cloud of criticism, and the hearts of the two men were at once incensed and sad. My father wrote: "Mr. Spurgeon says that they have numbers of men true enough and loyal to the truth, but they lack in some cases the courage necessary for these days of departure from the faith. . . . He would be so glad if I was back in England for good." Lack of courage in the advocacy of what he held as truth was certainly an accusation which no one ever ventured to lay at my father's door. He was, indeed, sometimes suspected, even by his best friends, of driving his courage to an injudicious extreme.

As always to the end of his career, he came back to England with keen delight after his absence of a little more than three years. "There is no place like Old England," he says, "and

certainly the sphere of influence God has given me there is every way blessed. . . . It is time I was again preaching Christ in England." To meet once more old and dear friends was an inspiration and a joy—Mr. R. C. Morgan, Mr. (afterwards Sir) George Williams, Mr. Richard Cory, Mr. T. A. Denny, the Rev. F. B. Meyer, the Rev. Archibald G. Brown, Mr. W. T. Stead, Miss Annie MacPherson, Dr. T. J. Barnardo, the Rev. William Cuff, Mr. Frederick N. Charrington, Mr. Alfred Holness, and many besides. There were also two small people in my home at Cheltenham who instantly found a warm place in their delighted grandfather's large and loving heart. But while he was glad to refresh his spirit in social pleasures such as these, he remembered first of all that he had come back to his native land chiefly for the purpose of renewed activity as an evangelist, and to that, combined with the vehement defence by voice and pen of Evangelical truth, he gave his strength during the months that he was here. There is no need to catalogue the numerous places he visited in various parts of the Kingdom. Crowded audiences gathered wherever he went, and he confesses, with humble gratitude, that the power given him to preach the Gospel was such as he had not experienced before. He was also very

thankful to find that his Australian sojourn had so freed him from bronchial trouble that he went through the English winter practically unharmed, notwithstanding the severe epidemic of influenza which was then dealing sickness and death among all classes of society.

He was conducting a mission at Weston-super-Mare in the following August when a cablegram reached him from Melbourne announcing that my elder sister's life was gravely imperilled by the birth of her second child. "Oh, how it has unnerved me," he writes, "and made my whole being tremble! Our precious darling Minnie! My Lord, canst Thou not hear this heart's cry, and save our beloved one?" A little later, and the news that the dear sufferer had passed away gave him the greatest shock he ever remembered to have received. It was characteristic that he asked my mother to kiss for him the little one whose coming into the world had caused his daughter's untimely death—"the wee flower, oh, so costly!" He immediately hastened back to Melbourne to give to the sorrowing ones there such comfort and solace as he could, and arrived toward the end of October.

But he was soon away again. While in England he had met the Rev. Dr. G. F. Pentecost, who had recently returned from an exceedingly successful

mission in India amongst the Brahmans and the educated Hindus. The work needed following up, and Dr. Pentecost and others were anxious that my father should go. Mr. T. A. Denny was generously willing to provide the means. Notwithstanding the heavy shadow that had so unexpectedly fallen on his home, my father felt that this new service for the Kingdom of Christ was not to be declined. Sore and stricken as she was, the tears of bereavement scarcely dry upon her cheeks, my mother agreed to his going. My youngest brother, Herbert, accompanied him, and by December 1st the travellers were safely in Bombay.

His letters from India reveal in every page the deep and mingled impressions made upon his mind by that wonderful land, as he looked around him with observant eyes. But, as was natural, what most powerfully appealed to him was India's crying need of the emancipating Gospel of Christ. He saw the people bound hand and foot in the rusty fetters of their superstitions and their idolatries—religion not a blessing to them, but a bane. He formed a high opinion of the missionaries, of whom he met more than seven hundred from all parts of the country at the Decennial Conference in Bombay. "The great bulk of them," he says, "strike me as men and

women of God who are devoted to their work." Still, it seemed to him that Christianity had scarcely touched even the fringe of the vast mass of heathenism. Of the European population his estimate was very low. "They seem to care very little for the natives, and are fashionable, worldly, sensual, and eminently ungodly. Eating, drinking, and every form of luxury hold 'the upper ten.'" These were not encouraging conditions for the work he had gone to India to do. But he had no hesitation as to the one means by which to do it. "Representing His grace who gave His only-begotten Son to be a light to those who sit in darkness—how blessed the opportunity! To be an attraction by presence, spirit, example, and testimony—a sweet savour of Christ! . . . Oh for power in order to meet the deep need of the situation!"

Dr. Pentecost had expressed his opinion that my father would have a wonderful work in India, and the sequel proved that the opinion was right. The mission that Dr. Pentecost had himself conducted had in many cases laid a good foundation on which his successor was privileged to build. Alike in Bombay, in Poona, in Kolhapur, in Bangalore, and in Madras, my father's ministry was attended with great blessing to large numbers of people. The educated natives in particular

were attracted to the services. He found many of them well-read in sceptical books from Europe and America, which had profoundly disturbed their attachment to their ancient faiths, but had also strewn their way with critical doubts of the truth and worth of Christianity. To these distracted souls, hovering

> "between two worlds,
> One dead, the other waiting to be born,"

he gave special attention in lectures on the great doctrines of the Gospel, in public discussions, in private interviews, scarcely ever without the happiest results.

Even where there was no definite acceptance of Christ, a fairer attitude towards Him was frequently adopted. An interesting illustration of this was given by a leading Hindu in Madras. The proprietor of a large business, he supplied for the great tent in which many of the meetings were held, and which had been used by Dr. Pentecost, a very handsome chandelier, with lamps, oil, and the services of attendants. At the close of the mission my father applied for the account. It was not sent, but in its place came the following letter: "In token of my sympathy and appreciation of the great and

glorious work you are engaged in and of the interesting addresses you have delivered here, to which several of my fellow-countrymen and co-religionists, including myself, have listened with much attention, you will permit me to make no charge for the little I have been able to do in assisting your mission." Testimonies such as these were, of course, encouraging, but it was men's personal reception of the life of faith, "the faith which is in the Son of God," for which my father always hungered and thirsted. And this was graciously granted him in the case of several hundreds of educated natives as the choicest fruit of his evangelistic labours in India.

He had intended to visit Calcutta before the arrival of the summer heat, when a mission would be practically impossible. His work, however, in the places above-named had been such that he could not conclude it as soon as he had planned. And so, having seen my brother settled in a business situation with a friend in Madras, he left India for England just as the hot season was setting in, hoping for an opportunity to return in the following year. But the opportunity never came.

Three months of mission-services in England, where my mother had come from Melbourne to join him, and he was *en route* for America toward the end of August, 1893. It was the year of the

colossal World's Fair in Chicago. Ever an astute strategist for the Kingdom of God, Mr. D. L. Moody had seen in the vast numbers of people whom the Fair would certainly attract a magnificent opportunity for an evangelistic campaign of the first magnitude. My father was one of several workers whom he enlisted for an enterprise which, to some men of less courage and narrower outlook, appeared quite quixotic. It was a triumph of organization. Admirable headquarters were afforded by Mr. Moody's great Bible Institute, whose three hundred students zealously aided in various ways the preachers he had gathered to Chicago. The campaign had been four months in progress when my father joined the ranks, and he remained until its close two months later. Twenty preaching centres had been fixed in various parts of the great city, with its population swollen by the hundreds of thousands who came to the Fair from all parts of the world. For most of his weeks of service the centre allotted to my father was a theatre situated in a locality of particularly ill-repute. "More crimes and murders are committed there," he wrote, "than in any other portion of the city. Respectable women scarcely dare venture into it, and my audiences, which are large, are composed eight-tenths of men." He rejoiced in the big

scale on which the campaign was planned, twenty-five thousand persons at least hearing the Gospel-message every week-day and double that number on Sundays. This great evangelistic enterprise issued in a cheering harvest of results for the Kingdom of God. He was humbly thankful to find that the sheaf he had been permitted to gather was not the smallest.

My mother had meanwhile remained in England, and he was anxious to return to her. So, after a three-weeks' mission in New York, which he could not resist undertaking at the urgent solicitation of old friends, he was back in London by the end of the year. The larger part of 1894 was given to strenuous work in various towns and cities of the United Kingdom, among which Glasgow and Dublin stood out as scenes of special blessing attending his ministry.

It was in Glasgow that, on the afternoon of November 1, as the hall was filling for a Bible-reading, and my father and a friend were in the ante-room praying for the Divine Power to accompany the message about to be spoken, a telegram was handed him saying that my brother Frank had been saved from the wreck of the *Wairarapa* off the northern coast of New Zealand, when more than a hundred of the passengers and crew were drowned. This narrow escape from a

second sore invasion of their home circle by untimely death hastened the return of my parents to Australia, and they sailed in the middle of November.

My father found a new home awaiting him. During his absence of more than three years the household had removed from Kew to Hawthorn, and were now living in a charming little homestead which afforded many of the pleasures of country life, together with all the advantages of proximity to a great city. The large garden, the small but fruitful orchard, the adjoining paddock, numerous fowls, and a cow were things in which he took a vivid and delighted interest. His home at Hawthorn held a chief place among his happiest memories.

He was intending to make a considerable stay, and in January, 1895, he began, in the Hawthorn Town Hall, the first of what he proposed to be a series of missions in the suburbs of Melbourne. The weather, however, suddenly became overpoweringly hot for the time of year. The days as they passed brought no change. The meetings were abandoned, and an undesired leisure was thrown on his hands. But he could not be idle. As with the ancient prophet, the Word of the Lord was like a fire in his bones. He must be away again somewhere on his ceaseless search for the

souls of men that he might win them for Jesus Christ. And it was therefore under these circumstances that he resolved to gratify a long-cherished desire to preach Him in San Francisco.

He went by way of Samoa and the Sandwich Islands, among whose peoples he found welcome proofs of the success attending the labours of Christian missionaries. Arriving on March 14, 1895, at the great city of the Californian coast—"the most extraordinary city I ever visited," he says—he made his way to the one person he knew in all its many thousands. This was Mr. McCoy, the secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, one of the finest of such institutions in the world. Utter astonishment showed itself on his friend's face as my father entered the office. "You!" he exclaimed, "Henry Varley! I thought you had been dead many years. I remember being with D. L. Moody at one of his large meetings some years back, when he handed me a telegram stating that Henry Varley was dead, and I've never heard it contradicted." "Praise the Lord!" rejoined my father, "I'm very much alive, never more so than now." He told Mr. McCoy why he had come, and received from him expressions of the liveliest pleasure and promises of the heartiest co-operation. Within a few days, the evangelist was in personal touch

with many of the Christian ministers and people of the city, who threw themselves heartily into the preparations for the campaign.

The work was speedily well under way. More than in any other city in which he ever preached, my father found in San Francisco an astonishing medley of religions, or of things doing duty for religion. He writes: "The religions are legion; Romanism, Unitarianism, Socialism, Spiritualism, Theosophy, Buddhism, Christian Science, Palmistry, Astrology, Materialism—they are all here." Thousands of the San Franciscans seemed to him to regard truth as still in a condition of flux. Like Pontius Pilate, they were asking, "What is truth?"; like him, they were blind to the fact that before them, in the person of the Christ of God, stood The Truth. To souls in this condition my father felt that he had a special mission, on which he had been divinely sent. During the five months of his stay among them, he gave them of his intellectual and spiritual best. He took his stand, as always, square upon the Bible. "Is this Book antiquated?" he cried to them. "Then so are the stars!" The mission was richly crowned with success. "Many hundreds tell me how wonderfully God has blessed the Word to their strength, song, and salvation. . . . A friend who has just been in says that in forty years he has

never seen such a deep, real work. . . . One of the leading judges of the city said to me yesterday, at the close of the Bible-reading, 'I cannot begin to speak to you about this service; it has been wonderful.' . . . Nearly fifty have confessed Christ this week. . . . The services have been with singular power."

Wearied with his arduous campaign, but rejoicing in its results, he turned homeward before the end of August. The following January saw him at work in Sydney, where one of the ministers wrote of him, "He lives and acts as if the world's redemption depended on his exertions." In March he was back in Melbourne, and stayed there for several months, preaching and lecturing at Hawthorn and elsewhere. Yet for all his deep and affectionate interest in the spiritual welfare of the city and land of his adoption, and for all the good he sought to do while there, he felt, as more than once he confessed to me, that it was on the whole but a limited sphere. People were not there in the multitudes that were to be found in England and America. It was to reach the masses with the Gospel given him to proclaim that he regarded as his special calling. His craving was always for the crowd. He asked, if so it might be, for wholesale business as a winner of souls. Moreover the shining success of his San

Franciscan mission was fresh in his grateful mind. Thus it came about that, after weeks of thought, of preparation, and of prayer, he decided to set out, my mother bearing him company, upon the longest period of continuous evangelism which he ever undertook.

1896—1900

A Long Tour

Æt. 61–65

Increasing Appeal to Reason and Conscience—Greater Attention to Revival of Christians—San Francisco again—St. Paul and Minneapolis—Toronto—Boston—Revisiting Canada—Back to United States—Northfield—England—Return to Australia.

"I am willing to go anywhere,
provided it be 'Forward!'"
DR. LIVINGSTONE.

IX

A Long Tour

1896—1900

THE evangelistic tour which it is the purpose of this chapter to chronicle, began at the end of 1896, and finished in September, 1900. Almost three-fourths of it were devoted to Canada and the United States. But before coming to the description of it, the reader's attention is invited to two marked features which indicate a measure of change in the character of my father's later ministry as compared with the character of the ministry which we have seen him fulfilling hitherto.

In the first place, his appeal came to be considerably more to the reason and the conscience than to the feelings and the heart. He was never, indeed, a preacher of the conspicuously

emotional type. In fact, he was sometimes considered to be rather denunciatory and severe. He knew too well how easily emotion may be stirred, and how little the stirring of it may frequently mean—as little as the swaying of a field of standing corn by the wind on a gusty summer's day. He was suspicious of the pathetic anecdotes to which some preachers resort for the express purpose of moving their hearers to tears. He was entirely aware that the application of a handkerchief to the eyes does not necessarily signify the impact of a spiritual influence upon the life. Not that he despised emotional appeals. By no means. The feelings are an integral part of the human make-up, and their enlistment on the side of Christ and the Gospel is at once a legitimate and necessary element in the preacher's total aim. The town of Mansoul must be assailed at every point of its circumference. And never throughout his ministry did my father neglect the endeavour to reach men and women through their feelings. Sometimes there were unmistakable tears in his own voice as he pleaded with them to be reconciled to God. Still, in his later years, the appeal to feeling became even more subordinate than it had been in his earlier years, and the appeal to reason and conscience became paramount. He delighted to

show his hearers how reasonable is the acceptance of the Gospel and how unreasonable its rejection. He would prove to them, for example, that men's unbelief towards God is as fatal to their spiritual well-being as their unbelief toward one another —no man trusting his neighbour's word—would be fatal to their social life. Society is obviously impossible on a basis of universal scepticism. "There are people," he would say, "who feel insulted if their word is doubted; and yet think it manly to make God a liar. . . . A man who is an unbeliever is just as much an outlaw in human society as he is in relation to God." Or, again, he would prove to them that whereas in a thousand ways, from the cradle to the grave, men are in constant need of the saving activities of others—every loaf of bread they eat for instance, illustrating the work of the farmer, the miller, and the baker, to save them from perishing of starvation—it is entirely unreasonable for them to think, as so many of them apparently do think, that they can afford to dispense with the salvation that has been wrought out for them by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second feature which emerges into prominence in my father's later ministry is the greater attention he gave to the quickening and the deepening of the spiritual life in Christian people.

While his efforts to persuade the unconverted to the acceptance of Jesus Christ were no less earnest than in previous years, he seemed increasingly to feel the importance of stimulating persons who had already accepted Him to an intenser and more thoroughgoing Christianity. He saw more vividly the world's need of a revived Church. Wherever he went he found large numbers of Christians in the condition of the lukewarm Laodiceans, worldly-minded, pleasure-loving, prayerless, comparative strangers to their Bibles, making no use of the vast spiritual resources open to them in the Holy Ghost, content with a Christianity, as General Booth once forcibly put it, that "is a kind of Worcester sauce to impart a religious flavour to life," instead of a Christianity that is the daily meat and drink of the soul. He set himself to arouse them to a higher, fuller, worthier life. When Dr. Charles G. Finney, the eminent American evangelist, drew near to death, he said: "If I had strength of body to go through the Churches again, instead of preaching to convert sinners, I would preach to bring up the Churches to the Gospel-standard of holy living." My father, in his later years, seems to have shared that fine ambition. Its importance is immeasurable. There is no greater obstacle to the conversion of sinners than the

drowsy indifference with which multitudes of Christ's avowed followers regard the solemn obligation that they should aspire and endeavour to be saints. To urge and entreat Christian people to walk more worthily of their high calling —this consequently became more and more a marked feature of my father's ministry at the period of his life-story to which we have now come. He was not as disappointed as he would formerly have been if, at the close of a mission, he could report only a few conversions, provided that he had been enabled to lead many professing Christians to seek and to find a fuller life in Christ and a fresh baptism of the Spirit of holiness, of consecration, and of power.

Noting, then, these changes in the character of his work as an evangelist of Jesus Christ, we proceed to follow his footsteps in the extended tour upon which he now set out.

In company with my mother, he arrived in San Francisco on January 14, 1897. Everything that he had seen there on his previous visit, whether encouraging and bright, or dark and depressing, had confirmed his conviction of the greatness of the opportunity afforded to a man entrusted with the Gospel, and proved to be gifted with the power of drawing large numbers of people to listen to it. Nor was the opportunity

limited to the western sea-board of the Great Republic. It extended to the United States as a whole. In an article on "Impressions of the United States," which my father contributed to the *Leeds Mercury*, in June, 1899, he speaks of the marked and disadvantageous contrast between "the architectural, commercial, and monetary prowess" of the American people, and the subordinate place held among them by "the great factors, after all, which represent national strength and permanency"—"righteousness, truth, true liberty, and godliness." He continues: "The disregard for law, the mistaking of licence for liberty, the failure to punish crime, the slow and corrupt processes of the law-courts, the horrible lynchings in the South, the wrongs which pertain to the African race-question, the civic and State corruption, the power, governmentally considered, found in the hands of, and possessed by, many of the most corrupt of the people—these are some of the conditions which evidently imperil the safety, stability, and progress of the Great Republic." What a field lay here for the preacher of the redeeming and renewing Gospel of the Grace of God! In spite of his sixty-two years, my father returned to a prolonged spell of labour in it with strenuous purpose and with eager expectation.

Leaving his friends in San Francisco to make preparations for a mission there a few weeks later, he went south to preach at Los Angeles, Redlands, and Santa Barbara. Los Angeles was the scene of a remarkable work, the people coming in thousands to the services. At a three-days' conference at the close of the mission, the fervent testimonies to the revived life which had come to hundreds of Christian people filled the missioner's heart with unspeakable joy. He was back in San Francisco by the end of March for a month's "Great Truths Campaign." The meetings were held in the Metropolitan Temple. There was issued daily a leaflet resembling a column from a newspaper, entitled, "The Divine Call and Heavenly Bulletin," with striking head-lines, such as "The Father of Eternity's Appeal," "A Builder's Loss," and "The War of the Will." It was widely circulated throughout the city, excited great popular interest, and attracted hundreds to the meeting-place. Yet the spacious Temple was seldom full. There were, indeed, cheering results; but it is clear that the San Franciscans did not respond with the same readiness as the previous visit had aroused but two years before. Doubtless the edge of the novelty had become blunted, though a more adequate reason may probably be found in a sentence of a letter to an English friend in which

my father gave his impressions of San Francisco: "It is hardly possible that the old Grecian or Roman cities exceeded in iniquity some of these modern Western centres." He concluded the campaign somewhat saddened and disappointed, grieved for the hardness of the people's hearts. "What to do I know not; so completely blinded by the god of this world do the people appear to be."

Going eastward, he visited Salt Lake City; then passed northward to Helena, Montana; and again eastward to Minneapolis and St. Paul. In all these places, except the last, the work was very encouraging, and he left behind many who, through his instrumentality, had come into the liberty of the Gospel, as well as many more whom he was privileged to lead into a deeper knowledge of Christ as the Divine sufficiency of their spiritual life. He was greatly struck with the effects of Romanism and of Protestantism on the people of two neighbouring cities as he saw them illustrated respectively in St. Paul and in Minneapolis. St. Paul, where the excessive heat brought the mission to a premature close, is the see of a Romanist archbishop. Priests and nuns abound. Ecclesiasticism is dominant. There is little of the progressive spirit, and civic life moves languidly in a stifling atmosphere. "It is almost like a

little piece of Spain," wrote my father, ". . . dropped down in Minnesota." While in St. Paul he felt himself like a husbandman working on pre-occupied soil, and the results of the mission fell far below the hopes which he and his fellow-labourers had entertained. In Minneapolis, however, all was different, and different greatly for the better. The place is soundly Protestant. The communal life is vigorous. The pulse of progress beats firm and full. The citizens responded heartily to the evangelist's preaching; and, though the fruit of his work showed itself mainly in the revived spirituality of believers, the campaign for Christ in Minneapolis was a distinct and gratifying success.

Six months of continuous missions had somewhat fatigued him. So, towards the end of June, he went with my mother to Lake City, Minnesota, for a brief sojourn in Rest Island, appropriately so named, where, amid the fine scenery of river, woods, and hills, he was speedily refreshed. Thence he took a journey of more than a thousand miles in fulfilment of a promise to speak at the State Conference of Young Men's Christian Associations at Bloomsberg, Pennsylvania. On the way thither he made a short stay at Riceville, Iowa. Here he had the unique experience of a moonlight meeting, at

which he preached to the hundreds of people, some of them having driven twenty miles into the town, who had been shut out from the service in the church earlier in the evening for want of room. At the conclusion of the conference in Bloomsberg he held a mission there; another at Wilkesbarre; a third at Pittston, on the Susquehanna River. Business matters necessitated a flying visit to England, and by August 18th he was in London.

The early days of October, however, saw him again in America, where in addition to my mother, he now had my younger sister for a time as a companion in his travels. In consequence of the great spiritual awakening produced by the mission in Pittston, of which mention has just been made, a second series of meetings had been arranged, which proved even more successful than the first. From Pittston he went north for work in Toronto. He rejoiced in that city as a stronghold of Evangelical Religion, where the ministers and the Churches were standing staunch to the Gospel of the Grace of God, unaffected by the modern critical movement in theology, and where the Christian life flowed with a fuller and stronger stream than he found, to his sorrow, in many other places in America and in England alike. He had little to do in Toronto in the way

of endeavour to dispel the clammy fogs of doubt from the minds of his hearers. While speaking to them, he felt warranted to assume that they and he stood on common ground in the acceptance of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." This gave him, in his Toronto missions, a sense of ease and freedom such as it is impossible for a preacher to enjoy if, at the back of his brain, there is a worrying uncertainty as to how far his audience may be silently disputing every assertion he makes. What preacher can be or do or give his best in an atmosphere charged with criticism and doubt?

Leaving Canada, my father went back to the United States, and by the opening of 1898 was in the thick of a campaign, extending over several weeks, in that "modern Athens" of America, the city of Boston. From the theological standpoint, he knew, by previous experience of both places, the wide difference between Boston and Toronto. Nevertheless, he found to his great and thankful joy that the reception accorded to his message by large numbers of the Bostonians was no less sympathetic than the welcome given to it by his Canadian hearers. The work grew in all directions. Indeed, as the days passed, they disclosed such a widening interest in the mission and the missioner, and brought so many fresh openings

for service and for testimony, that he wrote to an English friend, "I cannot tell when I shall get away from this city." Specially memorable were the noon meetings for men, at which from six to twelve hundred were present every week-day of the four months of his stay. It was doubtless his evidently intense conviction of the absolute truth and the positive certainty of what he preached, that day after day drew crowds of the people of Boston to listen to the evangelist. We are given to understand that on the whole the intellectual atmosphere of Boston is not favourable to the growth of the full assurance of faith. Yet after all, notwithstanding Mrs. Humphry Ward's dictum that "the force of things is against the certain people," men do feel the magnetism of the preacher to whom the things he speaks of are obviously the supreme realities of life, which he himself unwaveringly believes and lives by, and which they also must unwaveringly believe and live by, or else incur incalculable spiritual loss. "For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war?" (1 Cor. xiv. 8).

The Boston campaign ended, the next place to be visited by my father was Springfield, whose arsenal is the theme of one of Longfellow's earliest and most familiar poems. A Springfield

newspaper, giving its readers a portrait and a description of the evangelist, spoke of his resemblance, often noted in his later years, to Mr. W. E. Gladstone, and described him as "a typical Englishman, mild in manner, yet forceful in speech." Short as it was, the Springfield mission repeated on a smaller scale the happy experiences and the fruitful results of the work in Boston.

It had been an essential part of my father's programme, when setting out from Australia for this American tour, to re-visit at least a few of the Canadian cities and towns in which such unforgettable blessing had attended his labours in 1874–5. Numerous friends in those places had eagerly welcomed the proposal, and had made all arrangements for him to come.

Immediately, then, on leaving Springfield, he passed over into Canada, and in March was at work in Brantford, which had grown considerably since he was there nearly a quarter of a century before. There, as on the occasion of his previous visit, the Divine Power outpoured upon the mission stirred the town from its centre to its circumference. This was indeed a great cause for praise. But an even greater cause was the discovery that, as my father remarked at the closing meeting, so permanent had been the work of twenty-three years earlier, so slight had been

any backward movement, so small the ebb of the spiritual tide, that there was then, in March, 1898, but two places in all the town licensed for the sale of intoxicating drink. What a gracious fulfilment of the Master's word: "I . . . appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should *abide*"!

In London, Ontario, where he had preached with great success in February, 1875, he had again an enthusiastic reception from the people, though several of the more prominent ministers held aloof from the mission. Their principal charge against the missioner seems to have been that he was "without ecclesiastical standing"—a charge which would indicate that the sacerdotal view of the ministry still in some measure held their minds in its rusty fetters. The famous line of Milton irresistibly recurs to the memory:

> "New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large."

Those pastors, however, who came to the meetings were warm in their witness to the value of my father's ministry; and one of them, referring to the widespread interest which the mission had awakened among the townspeople, said at the closing meeting that, "for the first time since he came to London, he found that entertainments and general pleasure and business matters had

to stand aside for the work of the Lord." Other Canadian places, visited in his former mission, were now visited again.

In July there was a mission in Centreville, Massachusetts. "One serious word to our people," said a Centreville journal in an article on "The Varley Meetings": "Mr. Varley is proving to be even more than we anticipated. He is a great teacher and a noble man. We are grateful for the generous turn-out to hear him, but the writer knows there are scores of our people who would not miss hearing Mr. Varley did they realize the kind of man and speaker he is. Do not let this golden opportunity pass." Later he was again in Boston for a "Great Truths Campaign" of two months' duration; while towards the close of the year, a mission in New York received gratuitous advertisement from one of the leading journals of that city in an article which called him "the English Moody," and which announced in an arresting head-line, "England's Fluent Evangelist Comes to save New York Sinners."

The earlier part of 1899 found him in Philadelphia. There he preached at the Baptist Temple, and was profoundly impressed with the extent and influence of the many-sided work of its pastor, Dr. Russell N. Conwell. He passed on to Balti-

more, then to Norfolk and Suffolk in Virginia. The work in Norfolk was specially productive of the best results, while of the Suffolk visit the *Suffolk Herald* wrote: "Rev. Henry Varley, of London, England, an eminent theologian, philanthropist, and moralist, has been to Suffolk this week, and literally captured the town. . . . He is a great preacher, and an able and earnest ambassador for his Master." From Suffolk he went south to New Orleans. The mission, extending over more than three months, during which he preached or lectured fifty times, was one of the best he ever conducted in any country. The newspapers of the city were especially kind in the ample and sympathetic accounts they gave of the work as it proceeded day by day.

So the months wore on in happy, fruitful service, until, beginning to flag under the continuous strain, the wearied labourer found a period of rest an imperative necessity. Eager was the acceptance which he accordingly gave to a hearty invitation from Mr. D. L. Moody to visit him at Northfield, Massachusetts. My sister Alice had for some months been on the staff of the workers in that wonderful institution, the creation of the American evangelist's fertile brain and glowing heart, which is yet happily pursuing its prosperous path under the superintendence of his

son, Mr. W. R. Moody. She is still there, with our venerable mother, who has found in Northfield a pleasant haven in which to pass the peaceful evening of her days. Amazed and delighted with all he saw, my father nearly exhausted his vocabulary of admiration whenever he spoke of the manifold works of Christian usefulness that centre in the place with which Mr. Moody's name is immortally intertwined. Alas! as with his visit to Mr. Spurgeon at Mentone recorded in the previous chapter, so with this happy sojourn in Mr. Moody's hospitable home at Northfield. It was the last time that my father ever saw his beloved American brother, with whom, in the service of the Gospel, it had been his privilege more than once to stand side by side. There was then no hint of the coming shadow of separation and loss, and doubtless for both of them it was better so. But before the end of the year (December 22, 1899), Mr. Moody had passed away.

My father and mother were in England at the time. They were anxious again to see their relatives and friends in the country which, during all their travels, still cast over them a spell that never lost its power—the magnetic spell of home. They reached London in June, 1899. In England they stayed for rather more than a twelvemonth,

with their headquarters at Brighton, in the pleasant little hotel looking out upon the ever-changing sea, where my father, nearly thirteen years later, was to breathe his last. Incapable of indolence, he was of course busy during his English sojourn. Among the places in which he conducted missions may be mentioned Northampton, Worthing, Brighton, and Bradford, preaching, while in the last-named city, in the church of which I was then minister. As one of a hundred preachers, he took a prominent part in a six months' evangelistic campaign in Glasgow, under the generalship of the Rev. John MacNeill. He was active with his pen, principally in the defence of the Bible against what he was convinced was the undermining of its Divine authority through the work of the Higher Criticism, and in the impassioned vindication of the Evangelical Faith from the aspersions cast upon it by the New Theology, which was then beginning to emerge into public notice. During the latter half of 1899 he also contributed to the columns of the *Christian* a series of articles on "Resurrection," the ground-work of his volume entitled, "The Evangel of the Risen Christ," and published a few months later. Thus the days passed quickly in congenial activity.

Meanwhile, my parents had now been absent

from Australia more than three years and a half, and the desire to be once again in the beloved home-circle in Melbourne was growing in their minds. As for my father, however, he purposed only a short stay on the other side of the sea. The National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches of England and Wales was planning to inaugurate the new century with a great Simultaneous Mission in London and the country. Such an enterprise was to the veteran evangelist as the blast of the bugle to the seasoned war-horse. He exulted in the idea, and readily agreed to be one of the missioners. "I could not bear the thought," he writes, "of not having some little part in the battle. I long to have some share in the glorious work of bringing the Gospel of Christ before our fellow-countrymen." And so, when a company of dear English friends took farewell of my mother and him at the Noon Prayer-meeting at the Aldersgate Street Young Men's Christian Association on July 16, 1900, it was with the prospect of his near return. The travellers sailed a few days later. On the voyage an incident took place which set my father's heart aglow. One of the passengers, a young man, was definitely converted to Christ while my father was preaching on deck at a Sunday service. He had gone far in sin, and had well-

nigh broken his wife's heart by his evil ways. He was going to the Colonies to escape the shame he could not face at home. "But now," said he to my father, "I shall return to England by the first steamer after we get to Melbourne, fall on my knees before my wife, and implore her forgiveness. I will go back and show her what the Lord has wrought in me." Thus, on sea as on land, whether speaking privately to individuals in a quiet corner on board ship, or preaching to hundreds in crowded halls, this tireless ambassador of Christ was constantly at the work which he counted the noblest form of human activity—the leading of strayed souls to the Good Shepherd who Himself is for ever, by His Church, His Word, and His Spirit, in quest of the lost sheep of the vast human flock He shed His precious blood to save.

1900—1912

A Busy Eventide

Æt. 65–76

The Queen's Death—Simultaneous Mission—Glasgow—Another Campaign in America—Atlanta Conference—Voice Trouble—Winona Conference—Protestant Propaganda in England—Missions in Norway and Berlin—Back to Australia—England again—Golden Wedding—Taking Life more Quietly—Illness at Brighton—Death and Funeral.

"When a noble life has prepared old age, it is not the decline that it recalls, but the first days of immortality."

MADAME DE STAËL.

X

A Busy Eventide

1900—1912

AFTER what he speaks of in a letter as "three months' very gracious work in Melbourne, preaching and teaching Christ," my father sailed for England, and reached London on January 20, 1901, in good time for the Simultaneous Mission. He left my mother in Australia to follow him a few months later. He found all classes of English society in a solemn, brooding hush of sorrowful expectation, their thoughts turned tenderly to the sick-chamber of the palace in the Isle of Wight, where the venerable Queen Victoria was lying under the deepening shadow of approaching death. In common with millions of his fellow-countrymen, he felt her passing as a personal grief. Profound admirer

as he was of the British Throne as an institution ordained of God, his admiration of it was increased tenfold through its occupancy for more than sixty years by so good a woman and so great a queen. It was his fervent prayer that the bereavement thus befalling the nation and the Empire on the eve of the Mission might soften a multitude of hearts, and, to use his own words, "make the removal of the beloved Sovereign life from the dead to many." He always read the happenings of history with religious eyes, and had all a Hebrew prophet's sense of the Hand of God in national events.

The Simultaneous Mission was an evangelistic effort on a scale unknown in England before. North, south, east, and west, all the Evangelical Free Churches comprised in the National Council took part in it. Nine days, from January 27 to February 4, were devoted to a spiritual siege of London and the suburbs. The preceding week was given to united prayer. There was one day in that week which my father never forgot, when for nine hours the Queen's Hall, near Regent Street, was the scene of a great, continuous prayer-meeting. It was in such an atmosphere that his soul always drew delighted breath. Most of the eminent preachers of the Free Churches, and hundreds of lesser note though not of lesser

zeal for the conversion of their fellow-countrymen, acted as the missioners. Gypsy Smith, for example, was allocated to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and the Rev. John MacNeill to the City Temple. The centre allotted to my father was Bloomsbury Chapel. "In ten days," he writes, "I preached twenty-three times, and we have had most gracious seasons. Many have received Christ, and the Lord's people have been, in large numbers of cases, revived, built up, and established in their most holy faith." It is a joy to record that similar results were reported from nearly every centre. Yet he was strongly of opinion that much more might have been accomplished throughout the metropolis had the Mission been continued longer. "I see that Hugh Price Hughes thinks the Mission far too short. This is so, I am sure. What is nine days for London? A little interest comparatively is excited, and then the work ceases. I am certain it is a mistake."

After London came the turn of the country, where the work proceeded on similar lines for the whole of the last week of February. My father was appointed missioner at Gainsborough, in his native county of Lincolnshire. The feature of the mission from which he seems to have derived most pleasure lay in the special services

arranged for the benefit of the three thousand men in the employ of a great engineering company. Twice a day, by the courtesy of the managers, he preached to them in the mess-rooms, in the half-hour allowed for breakfast and the hour allowed for dinner. With regard to the mission as a whole, a Gainsborough minister wrote to the local newspaper: "It is without doubt that Christian hearts have been deeply stirred during this week. . . . I can testify that my own mind has been illuminated, my soul refreshed, my hope brightened, my zeal animated anew, and the spiritual earnestness of my own Church quickened." How well worth a week's labours to accomplish that!

Before leaving London my father had accepted a pressing invitation from his valued friend, the Rev. D. J. Findlay, of the St. George's Cross Tabernacle, Glasgow, to hold a month's evangelistic services there. He went north from Gainsborough to fulfil the engagement. For the larger part of the time the weather was far from favourable. "Here I am," he writes, "in the city of hail, snow, thunder, lightning, and tremendous winds." When he saw how such conditions prevented people from coming to the mission—though they do not, as a rule, prevent them from doing their business or visiting the theatre—he was

sometimes tempted to ascribe them to the malignant activity of "the prince of the power of the air." On this occasion, however, hundreds and even thousands of the good people of Glasgow suffered no stress of weather to detain them at home, and flocked to the Tabernacle day after day. The extensive preparations for the mission which had been made by Mr. Findlay and his fellow-workers, and the earnest prayers that had been offered for its success, secured an exceeding great reward. On Sunday afternoons and evenings the spacious St. Andrew's Hall was crowded to the doors. Conversions were numerous, and the testimonies which came to the missioner from Christians who had felt the quickening breath of a new spring-time in their souls were such as to prove the reality of the Divine Power that had been outpoured. He writes in another letter: "I think at the close of the mission it is felt that nothing more blessed or successful has been known in the city for years. We are filled with joy and praise. Twice this week we have been out in the streets with a band, torches, and large boards announcing the services. . . . You would smile to see five or six of us . . . leading the procession. It is dark at 7.30, and the flaming torches . . . quite wake things up. We look as though we were going forth to meet the Bridegroom, and

so we are. . . . Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!" The enthusiasm aroused by this visit to the great city on the Clyde was such that my father felt it impossible to resist the appeal to return for further work after conducting missions in Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, and some other places to which he was pledged to go. So he re-visited Glasgow in September, and again copious blessing was given.

Meanwhile, he had been gladdened by my mother's arrival from Australia. Notwithstanding his frequent absences from her—absences extending over weeks and months at a time, as this life-story but too plainly shows—it is difficult to find one of his letters to her in which he does not bemoan the separation, and eagerly anticipate, like the lover-husband he was to the last, the hour when they should meet again. With her, then, once more at his side, he crossed the Atlantic toward the end of the year, to conduct in America a fresh series of missions which he had undertaken in response to numerous requests. Save for a brief absence, occasioned by an unexpected return to England, which will find mention in its place, he was in the United States for about a year—his last sojourn in the great Republic of the West.

Re-visiting former scenes of ministry, such as

New York and Brooklyn, Boston and Baltimore, there were other places in which he preached for the first time, and in which he was welcomed with the cordiality he had grown accustomed to expect from the American people. Among these was Atlanta, in Georgia, where Dr. Len G. Broughton, now settled in London, was then the pastor of a large church, itself the pulsating centre of a many-sided Christian activity. He had organized a great conference at Atlanta, to be held during the first days of March, 1902, and had invited to it several of the most prominent preachers of England and America. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, Dr. A. C. Dixon, and my father were of the number. It was a time of severe storms and destructive floods. Delays in arrival were numerous, owing to broken bridges and other hindrances. Still, the travellers all reached Atlanta in safety, and spent some memorable days in the work of the Lord. There were three sessions daily, at which between four to six thousand persons were present. Rich results in many hearts and lives called forth the deepest gratitude to the God who had clothed the word of the preachers with what was felt to be peculiar power. The Atlanta Conference long remained a green spot in my father's memory.

When at Hartford, Connecticut, a few weeks

later, in the midst of a mission that was marked with great blessing, an experience befell him which happily he had never known during all his many years of public speaking up to that time. His voice suddenly failed him, and for nearly a fortnight he could but whisper. Sorely disappointed at this interruption of his work, "I suppose," he wrote, "I must be getting older after forty-five years' ministry, but I frankly say I do not like to acknowledge it. Preaching Christ is such a glorious business, and it is the highest enjoyment. . . . I hope I may never be a supernumerary, or unable to preach the Lord Jesus Christ." Speaking to his fellow-men about the Great Salvation had become even more than a second nature to him; he could as little face with a smile the prospect of years of silence as though he had been a musician finally bereft of his instrument, or an artist of his brush. Dr. J. H. Jowett tells of a minister, personally known to him, who, as he walked home from his church on Sunday nights, would almost invariably say to the deacon at his side, in prospect of the following Sunday's demands for further sermons, "Two more wanted! Two more!" He would say it with shaking head and melancholy tones. One may confidently assert that to such a feeling my father was an entire stranger. He gladly anticipated every

opportunity of preaching. He rejoiced "as a strong man to run his race." The chief value of life would have vanished with the loss of the power to preach. Sent by the doctor to Nantasket in the hope that the sea air might restore his voice, he watched and waited day after day for its return. But the trouble proved obstinate. He was recommended to take a short voyage, followed by a period of rest. This brought him to England at the end of May. Happily he was soon restored by this treatment, and went back two months later to resume his interrupted work, and to enter once more what he spoke of as "the wide door of service open to me in the Great Republic."

He was one of the speakers at the well-known Northfield Conference in August, though to him, with his affectionate nature, it was impossible, "in looking on the happy autumn-fields," to avoid the feeling of what Tennyson too truly calls the "Death in Life—the days that are no more." Mr. D. L. Moody had gone, the brother greatly beloved, and to my father's eyes Northfield was no longer apparelled in "the glory and the freshness of a dream." From Northfield he hastened to Winona, in Indiana, to attend another conference there. He met hundreds of ministers and evangelists, reviving old friendships and form-

ing new ones. "Many of the brethren here know me," he says, "and show great kindness in their words and ways. . . . If my Lord can be glorified in me by such testimonies, it is well; but I care for them only as they may bring Him honour and praise." The item in the Conference-programme in which he delighted most was an all-night prayer-meeting, when nearly a hundred and fifty servants of the Kingdom spent seven memorable hours in the fellowship of supplication at the feet of God. "We need much more prayer. . . . Oh, so much speaking on the part of man—talk, talk, talk! But so little waiting upon God in prayer." The feeling that utters itself in these words must have been experienced many a time by earnest souls at conferences, congresses, and conventions, from which they have returned to their homes and their work glutted with human eloquence but hungering for the heavenly manna which the crowded days had left them no time to gather in quiet communion with the Lord. Much refreshed in spirit, my father went eastward from Winona to Boston, where he preached for several Sundays at the Tremont Temple, recently bereft of its pastor, the well-known Dr. G. C. Lorimer, through his removal to New York.

This was the last of his ministry in America.

Urgent private business required his presence in England at the end of October, and the opportunity never again came to him to re-enter the wide field in which, from 1874 onward, he had laboured at various times with so much happiness, acceptance, and success. Arrived in his native land, he felt a special obligation to remain for a while, notwithstanding that he had left my mother in the United States. The obligation arose principally from the untimely death of his friend, Mr. John Kensit, the uncompromising opponent of Ritualistic practices in the Church of England, and the stalwart champion of an aggressive Protestantism. Mr. Kensit had died as the result of injuries received from the mob-violence of some Roman Catholics in Liverpool. In my father's eyes, he was as truly a martyr as Ridley and Latimer in the days of the Marian persecution. Opinions may differ as to the discreetness of some of his methods; but of the intensity of his Protestant zeal there can be no doubt. My father regarded his death as a clarion-call to himself to attempt the arousal of the minds and the consciences of his fellow-countrymen in regard to the grave dangers, social, political, national, and religious, which were likely to ensue from the insidious working of Romanism in their midst. Henceforth, to the end of his life, he gave much

time, thought, and energy to a strenuous Protestant propaganda. He wrote many articles and pamphlets. He addressed numerous meetings. He sent open letters to Members of Parliament urging them to vote against Home Rule for Ireland, which he feared was but Rome Rule in disguise, and against the removal from the Declaration made by English Sovereigns on their accession, of the phrases in which certain distinctive tenets of Roman Catholicism were denounced. And he did all this because he was profoundly convinced that Romanism is essentially not only a powerful foe of Evangelical Christianity, but also, as history and experience amply demonstrate, a blighting influence upon a nation's greatness, freedom, and prosperity. It was at once as a New Testament Christian and as an ardent patriot that he fought for Protestantism and combated the Papacy.

Until the summer of 1903 he was busy with his preaching and his pen, chiefly in London. Then, in August, responding to a pressing request which had been personally brought to him by a Norwegian pastor, he went for a month's evangelistic work in Norway. A sheaf of fifteen full and graphic letters both indicate his delighted appreciation of the splendid scenery of the country and describe what was undoubtedly a remark-

able mission. Bergen and Christiania were the two principal centres of the work. The largest available buildings were crowded by eager listeners, who received with evident delight the words of the English evangelist as the interpreter translated them into their own tongue. Many were the decisions for Christ. My father chafed a little under the restraints imposed upon him by the linguistic difficulty. "Bother Babel! I say. Those builders didn't reach to heaven, and they have caused a lot of confusion on earth." Yet he felt—and, indeed, the issue proved—that here was a peculiar opportunity for reliance upon the Holy Spirit in His immediate appeal to the hearers minds, since the appeal of the speaker was necessarily less direct through the interposition of an interpreter between him and them. Nor was that all. My father learned from his Norwegian experiences how triumphantly the consciousness of union in Christ of men whose hearts are His, soars, as on eagle-wing, far above the sense of separation occasioned by the diversities of race and speech. Compared with a living Christianity, music itself, often extolled as a universal soul-language, is weak as a bond of union between people of different nations. With gratitude my father wrote: "It was wonderful to note the effect produced by the Word of God. I spoke in a tongue unknown to the

great majority; yet our hearts were stirred and knit together in a manner and measure such as I have seldom known or seen."

His visit to Norway was not the only experience of a foreign land which came to him during this year. At the end of November he was in Germany, for a few days' mission in Berlin. The grandeur of the city amazed him; his letters overflow with admiring surprise. He was quickly on good terms with his German audiences, who took kindly to the "reasoning style" which in these latter years more and more characterized his public addresses. He returned to England happy and grateful, assured by the friends who had arranged his visit "that no more successful series of services had been held in Berlin for many years."

From the standpoint of his health, however, his stay in Germany, brief as it was, did him no little harm. The wintry weather was at its worst—bitterly cold, with leaden skies and frequent snow and rain. The trouble with his voice returned; his throat became seriously ulcerated. He did not seem able to realize, and the friends anxious to secure his services as an evangelist scarcely allowed him to realize, that he was now verging on seventy. "Doctor Brighton," as Thackeray was wont to call the famous watering-place, partially restored him, and he was able to conduct

two missions in Bath and another in Glasgow, and to preach occasionally elsewhere. But the medical men were urgent in their advice that he should return to Australia.

He was the more disposed to listen to them because at the time the Australasian Colonies presented to him a field of special usefulness. Numerous converts had been made there as a result of the protracted Torrey-Alexander Mission. There was urgent need for all the available help in establishing them in their new-found Christian life, so that they should not fall back into the worldliness and irreligion from which happily they had been won. The prospect of such work was magnetic to my father, and he sailed with my mother at the end of June, 1904.

He spent the rest of the year chiefly in Melbourne, though there were missions also in Ballarat and Geelong. Early in 1905 he undertook several weeks' preaching in Tasmania. The old power, graciously renewed, was still upon him. Of a fortnight's campaign in Sydney, the *Southern Cross*, in whose editor, Dr. W. T. Fitchett, he always found a friend, spoke in enthusiastic terms: "Hundreds of hearers testified to the blessing and help received at this remarkable mission." Later in the year he broke fresh ground in Brisbane. His work there achieved only a moderate success.

"The mass of the population in Queensland," he wrote, "have their portion in this world, and they appear well satisfied with it." But he found compensation for his disappointment in the discovery that a gentleman, one of two brothers, the Messrs. Young, both of them earnest Christians, had been led to Christ by his ministry in Australia more than a quarter of a century before. They were now the proprietors of an extensive sugar-plantation at Fairymead, some three hundred miles from Brisbane, with a great number of Kanakas in their employ. Directly owing to the efforts and the influence of these two gentlemen, hundreds of them had become sincere Christians. Thus, with profound joy, my father learned that one life into which he had been permitted to bring the saving power of the Gospel had in its turn passed on the blessing to many more.

His seventieth milestone had now been passed in the pilgrimage of the years; and finding himself, through the mercy of God, well re-established in health, his thoughts turned again toward England. While strength remained, he was anxious once more to evangelize in his native country. The coveted opportunities must now necessarily be few. He writes to Mr. R. C. Morgan, in a letter which appeared in the columns of the *Christian* on April 12, 1906: "With Mrs.

Varley, I am returning to the homeland for what may prove to be a final campaign." The travellers arrived in London as soon as the letter itself. As before, they made their headquarters at Brighton, the home of several of my mother's near relatives. With a vigour and an intensity that recalled to many minds his work in previous years, the old campaigner went on service for his Captain to various centres throughout the land. He was still fertile with his pen; still unsleeping in his opposition to Romanism, and to the Ritualism which is its cousin-german; still strenuous in his defence of the Evangelical Faith against the critical movement of the times; still unwearied in the cause of chastity amongst youths and men.

In this way the months passed rapidly until the autumn of the following year brought with it an event to which he had looked forward with keen expectancy and delight. This was the celebration of my parents' Golden Wedding. The happy anniversary, October 20, fell on a Sunday, when he preached twice to overflowing congregations in his old Tabernacle at Notting Hill. The next day, at the Noon Prayer-meeting, a company of friends, abundant in their affection, their congratulations, their good wishes, and their prayers, crowded the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association in Aldersgate Street. It was no in-

considerable element in the full cup of joy which that day held to the lips of husband and wife, that the president of the meeting was their beloved friend, Mr. R. C. Morgan. His affectionate greetings to them at this jubilee of their wedded love were followed by similar expressions from several other comrades in the service of the Gospel. In the evening there was a large gathering in the Tabernacle, with Mr. Alfred Holness as the chairman. Congratulatory speeches were given by representative men; kindly messages came from numerous absent friends near and far; an illuminated address, accompanied by handsome gifts, was presented by the office-bearers of the Church at the Tabernacle and other well-wishers; and my father, responding out of a full heart, bore grateful and touching witness to the surpassing worth of the wifely love, the judicious counsel, the tender sympathy, the unwearying co-operation in all good works, which had been freely given him during fifty golden years.

> "Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
> Her husband also, and he praiseth her."
>
> PROV. xxxi. 28.

He had intended to remain in England until the summer of 1908. But the English winter was proving too severe an ordeal, and again my mother

and he were forced to leave hurriedly for Australia. It was a home-circle shadowed with deep anxiety that received them on their arrival in Melbourne early in April. My brother Thomas had been heavily stricken with typhoid fever, and the more dangerous period of the disease was even yet not passed. Happily he recovered, though the recovery was slow; and the nervous tension which his son's long illness occasioned my father somewhat retarded his own renewal of strength. Still, even at the age of seventy-three, he possessed astonishing recuperative resources; nor was it many weeks before he was able to write to England saying that he was "all well again, strong and ready for work." The thoroughness of his restoration was proved by his conducting a mission in Geelong, where he gave twenty addresses in eight days.

However, disinclined as he was to admit it, the necessity of taking life more quietly was gradually being driven into his mind. The Sundays on which he did not preach were indeed only few; but his brief diary for 1909, with its entries here and there of "Fishing, 10 to 1," and "Croquet at home," notwithstanding two or three missions in the course of the year, shows a considerable relaxation of the strain under which he had so long borne up. Mean-

while, he was hungering for the homeland, and my mother, perhaps, was hungering for it even more. Deep as the roots of their interests were in Melbourne, it was still the love of England that flowed in their veins as the blood of life. Even so recently after their return to Australia as January 4, 1909, I find in my father's diary under that date the words: "In town, inquiring as to steamer for England." It is, moreover, extremely likely that his hunger for the homeland was increased by his sense of the growing uncertainty of life, now that he had come to seventy-three. He told me that he did not take kindly to the thought of dying and being buried in Australia; it was "dear old England" where he desired to lay his bones. Thus it was not surprising that yet again the aged travellers, unable any longer to resist the call of the mother-country, echoing in their hearts from across the sea, set out upon the long voyage, and in due course arrived in London in April, 1910.

This life-story is now nearly told. They pitched their tent once more at Brighton, where, in various places, especially the Connaught Institute and the Glynn Vivian Miners' Mission Hall, my father frequently preached during the next two years. He was often in London for a day's business or a Sunday's services. But the charm of London

had greatly weakened through the passing of so many dear and honoured friends. Some were still left, indeed, and these he highly valued; but the places vacated by such men as Sir George Williams, Mr. M. H. Hodder, and Mr. R. C. Morgan, who was sitting in his study writing to him when the fatal seizure befell him, could not be re-filled. A glory, incapable of renewal, had faded from the city he had familiarly known so long. His strength was sufficient even to hold an occasional mission, as in the church at Bowes Park, of which I am minister, and in Bolton, Preston, Glasgow, and elsewhere. The ease and energy of his preaching were at times amazing; it was a notable example of "the old man eloquent," and eloquent on the great themes of the Faith which he had found inexhaustible during more than half a century of continuous ministry. There seemed at such times no reason, either bodily or mental, why he should not go on preaching for a further ten years. The fountain was still full; the stream still freely flowed.

But in September, 1911, while in Brighton, he had a serious attack of pleurisy, and was for twenty days in bed. It was a strange experience for him; he had never been so ill before. Though he made a remarkable recovery, which surprised even the doctor, his strength had permanently

sunk below its former level. Yet he was well enough to preach several times in December and January, and toward the end of February even ventured as far north as Glasgow for services there. He wrote to my anxious mother an encouraging account of his health in the great Scottish city, saying that he found the air of Scotland beneficial to his distressing shortness of breath. The sequel proved, however, that the demand on his slender store of strength had been too large. A day or two after his return to Brighton he became seriously unwell. During the month that followed, the tides of life were obviously ebbing toward the Infinite Sea. The heart's action became alarmingly fitful and irregular. On Saturday, March 30, as the wearied worker was sitting in his chair beside the bedroom fire, it suddenly ceased. There was no time for any dying testimony; none for any "sadness of farewell" to my mother and the friend who watched him embark to "cross the bar." But if ever any man, in that inexpressible moment, saw his "Pilot face to face," it was assuredly to him that the rapturous revelation was given. The reward was ready for him, and he was ready for the reward. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3).

Four days later, under blue skies radiant with the sunshine of an early spring, all that was mortal of him was given to the ground in the Brighton Extra-mural Cemetery. A brief service in the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel, North Street, preceded the interment. It was appropriate that the Rev. Charles Spurgeon, the son of his beloved and illustrious friend, should fulfil the last tender offices of Christian faith and hope. In the memorial address, which admirably blended insight with affection, he said that my father desired to be known by no other title than that of "Henry Varley, Evangelist." It was true. He wore the title as proudly as other men wear the purple of empire or the insignia of nobility. In the flush of young manhood he had prayed that, through the preaching of the Evangel, the Good News of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus, he might be made a wholesale winner of the souls of men and women in the English-speaking cities of the world. In an old age whose leaves still hung green upon the bough, he could look back with thanks unspeakable, and see what an abundant answer had been divinely granted to his intrepid prayer. For him the ministry of the Christian preacher was the grandest of all forms of human activity, unique, transcendent, unapproachable. "Henry Varley, Evangelist"—he

asked and coveted no more. It was the summit of service; it was the limit of honour; it was the climax of renown.

The son of one dear comrade had officiated at my father's funeral; the son of another, Mr. George E. Morgan, M.A., editor of the *Christian*, unveiled six months later a tablet to his memory. It is affixed to the outer wall of the Glynn Vivian Miners' Mission Hall, in Union Street, Brighton, within full view of the passers-by. It was the loving gift of the officers, congregation, and friends of the Mission, led in their generosity by the Superintendent, Colonel James Philips. Surmounted by the words, "To the Glory of God," beneath which, in low relief, are two clasped hands as the symbol of the brotherhood in Christ which death itself finds indestructible, the inscription on the plain white stone is at once comprehensive and true.[1]

In St. Paul's Cathedral there is no florid sculptured memorial to the illustrious architect, Sir Christopher Wren; but a simple tablet, setting forth the fact that the Cathedral was built by him, contains the words, "Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice" (If you are seeking for his monument, look around you). The devoted friends at Brighton, who erected their kindly memorial

[1] This inscription is given in Appendix I, on p. 281.

to God's glory and my father's honour, would be the first to acknowledge, with thousands of others the world over, that the great evangelist's truest monument is not in chiselled stone, but in the multitude of the souls who, through God's rich blessing on his ministry, owe their salvation to him. Many of them are still left to cherish a grateful memory of him on this side the veil that men call death. Many others had gone before to welcome him when he himself, worn and wearied with five-and-fifty years of world-wide service in the Gospel, passed through that veil to his coronation and his throne.

Characteristics

Physical Characteristics—Intellectual Power—Strength of Will—Courage—Deep Sense of Sin—Tenderness—A Good Man—Prayerfulness—A Real God—Religious Certainty—Spiritual-mindedness—Rare Consecration—"This one thing I do."

"He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest,
acts the best."

P. J. BAILEY.

XI

Characteristics

IN the foregoing chapters I have told my father's life-story with all the succinctness and simplicity at my command. It lies now before the reader, "a round, unvarnished tale." I indulge the hope that the mere perusal of it has been scarcely possible without his catching some glimpses of my father's personality; for a man's work is always in a measure a revelation of the man's self, and what he does is some index to what he is.

Nevertheless, it has seemed to me that my filial task as my father's biographer would not be complete were I not to attempt, before laying down my pen, a delineation of his personal characteristics. It is doubtless a difficult and a

delicate thing to do, and I cannot anticipate more than a very partial success. Chiefly because of the painter's conscious incompetence, the portrait will be no work of art. Yet such as it may prove to be, with all its poverty of drawing and crudity of colouring, something will be gained if it at all enables the beholder to see the beloved subject of it for the manner of man he was.

Henry Ward Beecher was wont to insist upon the importance of "a good animal" as an indispensable foundation for the superstructure of a forceful, influential, serviceable Christian life. He did well in his insistence. It is true that there have been chronic invalids whose output of work has been both large and fine. It is true also that sickliness and saintliness have sometimes gone hand in hand. But invalidism is obviously rather a hindrance to work than a help, and the saint who is burdened with a sickly body has but one weight the more to carry as he slowly climbs the heights of holiness. My father happily knew little of this experience. There was "a good animal" at the basis of his being, for which he never ceased to be grateful to God. He speaks in his autobiographical notes of "coming of strong and healthy parentage" as a "native inheritance" than which "no greater earthly blessing can be known." And of this priceless inheritance, while

satisfying to the full the incessant demands of a life of large activity, he still took all possible care. He felt it a religious duty so to do. To him, as to St. Paul, the body was a temple of the Holy Ghost, and its members were to be presented to God as "weapons of righteousness" for His wielding in the age-long fight for the triumph of His Kingdom. Its powers were therefore neither to be squandered in sin, enervated by luxury, nor weakened through neglect. Accordingly, though he had nothing of the ascetic about him, and enjoyed physical comforts as much as any man, my father was a strong believer in simplicity of habit and of life. He was throughout his career an abstainer from alcohol and tobacco. He was a convinced disciple of fresh air and cold water. He could not endure dirt or disorder—how often have I seen him clearing the hearth of its cinders, or the garden of its fallen autumnal leaves! His very handwriting betrayed the neatness which was one of his primal instincts. He was fond of exercise, and, if it were possible, would let no day pass without a walk. He was a good sleeper, easily composing himself for rest after the excitement of great evening meetings, and awaking the next morning thoroughly refreshed. When his busy life left him leisure for amusement, certain games yielded him great delight—croquet,

bagatelle, and especially draughts, in which victory usually fell to his side. Puritan as he was to the core of him, ever mindful of the seriousness and the earnestness of life, always hearing at his back, as did Andrew Marvell,

"Time's wingèd chariots hurrying near,"

he would be gravely misread were he regarded as a man who frowned on innocent trifles, whose laughter was thin and rare, and from whom iron doors grimly shut out life's lighter aspects.

Intellectually, his personality was undoubtedly strong. When he was twenty-nine, he was persuaded to visit a well-known phrenologist of the day, who said, in the written account he sent my father, setting forth the results of his examination, "You have a large brain, of harmonious and massive construction, the highest and best type. . . . You should be strong on all sides, as every region of your brain has received an equally uniform development." Without undertaking to say how far phrenology is a trustworthy and accepted science, one may be permitted to regard this statement as substantially true. It can have been no common intellect that enabled my father to attain and to keep so prominent a place in the religious world for so many years. Especially should it be borne in mind how slender

were his early opportunities of mental culture. His schooling ceased when he was eleven; at that tender age, as we have seen, he was sent out to fight life's stern battle for himself. He was denied the intellectual discipline, at college or university, which is the privilege of the great majority of the men who dedicate their lives to the Christian ministry. He had the merest margin of time in which to furnish his mind from the precious stores of the world of books. But this doubtless makes only the more remarkable his powers of thought, as it certainly left larger room for the working of his native vigour of intellect. He was not a closely consecutive thinker; he had never been trained to think. It was not often that, in speech or sermon, he put a tight rein upon his tendency to digression. Much of his thinking was done on his feet, as he stood before great audiences with his open Bible in his hand; and one thought started another so as to compel him to swift pursuit, not seldom with little regard to their relevance to the subject with which he was dealing at the time. Still, this was but a tribute to the fertility of his mind, notwithstanding that one felt his addresses would have gained in intellectual force by greater concentration.

By universal consent, however, what he said was always said in clear, nervous, vigorous English, which never left the simplest hearer in doubt as to

what he meant. He often spoke with great rhetorical power, whose art was the art of nature, free from all artifice, innocent of all premeditated effect upon the minds of his audience. There was no smell of the lamp about any of his public utterances. His sermons were invariably preached from the briefest of notes.[1] I think that to have written a sermon would have been to him a great impossibility. Certainly there would have been only one impossibility greater—to read it, when written, to the congregation.

As is generally the case, this native vigour of ntellect was coupled in my father's personality with a rigid determination of will. Not that he was self-willed, which is often a sign of weakness rather than of strength. He would seek advice when in perplexity from those whose judgment he had learned to trust and value, and was always willing to listen to advice, even when it was given unsought, and even when he could see nothing in it to dissuade him from the course upon which he had decided. Especially would he seek advice from God, in whom his confidence was as implicit, as simple, and as touching as the confidence of a little child—the God on whose immediate guidance he absolutely relied, and whose perfect Will he was always and in all

[1] Some specimens will be found in Appendix II., p. 277.

things, small and great, sincerely solicitous to know and to do. But when once he was assured of the path in which God would have him go, then from that path, though it were infested with lions, and though it appeared certain to lead to unpopularity, to opposition, to odium, to loneliness, and even to personal sacrifice and loss, he would suffer nothing to turn him aside. To apply the lines of John Bunyan, in the second part of "The Pilgrim's Progress,"

> "Hobgoblin nor foul Fiend
> Could daunt his spirit."

No doubt his strength of will sometimes laid him open to the charge of masterfulness, and it is undeniable that he had the strong confidence in his own judgment, in his own way of doing things, which usually lies at the basis of the charge. I have more than once tried to imagine what would have happened had he been a pastor dependent on a congregation for his salary, with church-officials able to stuff his pillow with thorns —an art in which it is an open secret that church-officials are sometimes experienced adepts—if his words and acts and ways were not according to their mind. The imaginary prospect is full of exciting possibilities. Happily for him, he was never exposed to the difficulties, the discomforts, and the disturbances of such a situation. Would

that his fortunate lot in that respect were the lot of all the ministers of Jesus Christ! But if he were masterful, it was simply the result of his force of intellect conjoined with force of will, and no man can escape the defects of his qualities.

There were, indeed, occasions when even his best friends, even his nearest and dearest, could not see the wisdom of what he felt divinely led to do, and when they thought the end he desired to achieve was capable of achievement in a discreeter, if less direct, way. So certain was he, however, that it was the Lord's will for him that he should do this and not that, and do it so and not otherwise, that to yield to their representations savoured to him of disloyalty to the Guiding Light and of disobedience to the Heavenly Vision. It was his simply to follow at all costs whithersoever they led. His mind was made up; his will was fixed. And, indeed, well was it for him that he was thus a man of such strong determination. No one can read his life-story without seeing that, from the day when, a mere child, he entered the crowded arena of London, onward through manhood to old age, he could never have done what he did, especially in his shining and successful service of the Gospel and the Kingdom of Christ, had his blood been without the iron of which it was full.

This great strength of will was doubtless one of the sources from which he drew the courage that was among his most pronounced characteristics. In that heroic virtue he was unsurpassed, and might unfalteringly have taken his stand beside men of the stuff of Martin Luther and John Knox. He feared nothing and nobody in his championship of right and truth as he saw them clear before him, or in his denunciation of what he deemed to be error and wrong. On occasion, his courage touched the level of the magnificent. He spoke and acted "in scorn of consequence." To be in a minority never troubled him; he knew that "one and God always constitute a majority." He was only a young man of twenty-nine when, at the annual meeting of the local branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, he rose from his seat in the audience, and protested against the occupancy of the chair by one of the great London brewers, who was drawing his wealth from his five hundred "tied houses," scattered over the city, that were open every Sunday throughout the year. "Sir," he cried to the agitated secretary, standing aghast at the chairman's side, "how was it possible for you and your committee to invite as president over a meeting such as this, one of the greatest Sabbath-breakers in the metropolis?"

The courage displayed in that protest remained with him to the end of life, inflexible and unimpaired. As an old man of seventy-three he took the lead in denouncing the visit to Australia, for the purposes of his brutalizing profession, of a notorious English prize-fighter. "I do this," said he, "in the defence of righteousness, and in the interests of all that is humane, moral, and peaceable in the Commonwealth."

Courageous and unshrinking, when occasion demanded, as my father thus was in the presence of men, never, on the other hand, did a man walk more humbly with his God. He had an intense perception of the Divine Holiness; its awful splendours burned themselves into his soul. Whatever he may have taught during one short period of his ministry concerning the possibility of sinless perfection for Christians even in this world—and some of his best friends, Mr. Spurgeon, for instance, considered certain of his utterances open to grave misconstruction—his consciousness of his own deep-seated unworthiness as a sinner, though a sinner redeemed, forgiven, cleansed, renewed, was continually with him. He abased himself in the dust at the Pierced Feet. With the ancient Psalmist, he would confess, "I am a worm, and no man." What faithful self-dealings were his! What mistrust of his own

goodness! What a sharp sense of the serpentine subtlety of sin! Sins that many Christians regard as peccadillos, infirmities from which nobody can be expected to be free, ill-temper, pride, envy and the like, were to him as abominable in their measure as the grosser sins of the flesh. When he discovered them in himself, it was with positive affright, as a man might discover in himself the incipient signs of cancer. In one pathetic passage of his autobiographical memoranda, there is mention—though I suppress the name—of a neighbouring pastor at Notting Hill, specially gifted and qualified as an expositor of the Scriptures. His ministry was attracting some members of my father's congregation. He missed them frequently from their seats in the Tabernacle. "Henry Varley did not like this," he writes. To his intense self-loathing, he found that the "green-eyed monster" of jealousy had its claws upon his soul. "I shall never forget," he continues, "the sense of guilt and sin that possessed me over that business. . . . I was miserable. . . . Was I practically saying to the Lord Jesus, 'Unless the prosperity of Thy Church and people comes in this neighbourhood by *me*, success had better not come?' Was I really showing inability to rejoice in another worker's service? I felt that it was sin of a very hateful character.

I never asked the Lord to take away my life either before or since; but I did then, unless His grace gave me victory over this foul image of jealousy." The suggestion inevitably arises of the possibility of vacant pulpits if preachers jealous of other preachers' success were to pray to die, and their prayer were answered.

It has been shown that my father was every way a strong man; it would, however, be a very great mistake to suppose that in his nature there was any disproportion between his tenderness and his strength. Far from it. Strong as he was, a tenderer man never breathed. Glimpses of his tenderness have appeared here and there in the preceding chapters. Many more might have been seen had I felt free to print even a few of the more intimate passages of his love-letters to my mother during the long period of five-and-fifty years. But the seemly reticences of biography are too often violated nowadays to satisfy a public curious to see human souls in undress; they shall not be violated here. Suffice it to say that there is not one letter that does not exhale a tenderness which would probably surprise people who knew my father only on the platform when he was sternly denouncing sin and speaking of the Divine Wrath which broods upon it like a thunder-cloud, or only through some controversial

pamphlet on the Deity of our Lord or the Authority of the Bible, in which, with no smooth words, the assailants of these doctrines are themselves assailed by him. A very soft heart, almost maternal in its softness, throbbed at the centre of his strength. Our mother knew it; so did we, their children; so did his dearest and most intimate friends. If my memory is correct, it is Dr. Benjamin Jowett, the illustrious Master of Balliol, who says that St. Paul's love was a *caressing* love; such a love was my father's. I have heard him plead with men on behalf of Christ with such tender yearning as to fill one with amazement that any could resist the appeal. "Oh, my brother," he would say, "how gladly would I put these arms around you, and look into your eyes, and, with an affection I have no words to express, entreat you to receive my Lord!" He had a large fund of compassion. Many a time did he act the Good Samaritan to persons in distress and need, freely giving them such help as he was able, and getting further help for them from others whose purses were heavier than his own. It was the same emotion that lit the fires of his indignation against the exploitings, the cruelties, the oppressions suffered by whole classes of men and women—the midnight sisterhood of Piccadilly, the Chinese

coolies of Singapore, the miserable out-castes of India.

From what has been said in the foregoing paragraphs, it is easy to see how genuinely good my father was. The goodness which St. Paul mentions as a component part of "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22, 23), and which, difficult as it is to dissect and define, we instinctively recognize when we see it, characterized him in a very high degree. Yes, he was good—thoroughly, genuinely, unaffectedly, transparently good. This was the clear-cut, ineffaceable impression he left upon the minds of all who knew him, however partial and imperfect their knowledge of him might be. Those who knew him best were most sensible of his goodness; in the intimacies of private life, it showed itself even more fully and winsomely than in his public relations and activities. When once my elder sister was travelling with him in America, their kind host in one city gathered a party of friends for a picnic at Niagara Falls. Powerfully moved by the majesty of the scene, my father suggested that they should turn aside to a secluded spot for a few moments of prayer. The prayer over, the party were again moving on, when my sister suddenly clasped the arm of the gentleman at her side, and earnestly exclaimed, "Oh, isn't my

father good?" "Yes, indeed he is," said he. "Ah," she rejoined, "but it is only we who live with him who know how good he is." The daughterly tribute was the simple truth. It has happened before now that a man has been, in the strong line of the poet,

"A household devil and a causeway saint."

Never was there any such contradiction between what my father seemed to the world and what he was in reality at home. There were no skeletons in his cupboards, no hidden chambers in his life into which he would have been afraid for any one to enter. To the very core of him, he was a good man, courteous, sympathetic, considerate, one of "God's gentlemen," known as such by all his friends; and not even his enemies—and inevitably he made some enemies for righteousness' sake—ever brought his goodness into doubt.

The goodness that characterized him was, however, distinctively Christian goodness, fed from supernatural sources, the fruit of the Spirit, the outcome of the mutual inter-abiding of himself and his Lord. A truth on which he was never weary of insisting, at least during the latter half of his ministry, was the entire dependence of the believer, for all the gracious and attractive excellences of Christian character, upon the Living

Christ indwelling the soul. He was somewhat shy of the idea of "the imitation of Christ"—a phrase which Thomas à Kempis' great devotional book has made so popular. He considered rather that if a man by his faith in Christ receives Him into his interior nature, Christ thus becoming henceforward the basis of his renewed personality, Christian character will infallibly develop in him, as the plant develops from the seed and the organism from the germ. Certainly it was in the light and the power of this great truth that my father himself lived. It was from the Life of Christ within him that his goodness came.

He was most diligent in providing the Divine Life in his soul with its necessary condition of activity and growth, by maintaining a fellowship with God as close and as constant, I believe, as was ever maintained by man. His spirit was continually steeped in the heavenly dews of prayer. For prayer he was always ready. One had the impression that it was as easy and as natural for him to pray as to breathe. He usually prayed aloud, even when alone; he may have found in audible prayer some preventive of that wandering of the mind which is but too well known to most of us in the hour of private devotion. Memory recalls days and nights, now lying far back in childhood's opalescent past, when a

deep, musical, resounding voice was heard from behind the locked door of study or bedroom, and a boy, subdued for the moment by a sense of awe and mystery, would say to himself, "It is father praying!" And how intimate were his prayers, how particularizing, how trustful, how spiritual, how intense! The whole circle of life's interests and concerns, great and small, children, relatives, friends, servants, were brought to the feet of God that His blessing might descend and rest upon them, while the chief petition was frequently that some mission for which he was on the point of leaving home might result in large accessions to the ranks of the people of the Lord.

My father prayed thus continually because God was to him so great and vivid a reality—the Reality of realities. But prayer—such is always its beneficent reflex action—helped to make God to him a greater and more vivid reality still. The more he prayed, the more real to his perception did God become. To him, God was not a hundredth part as much a luminous postulate of the reason as a vital experience of the heart—his atmosphere, his sunlight, his very breath, his very life. I venture to think it difficult, if not impossible, that God should ever be more real to man or woman than He was to him. Doubt-

less there were fluctuations in the degree in which he realized the Divine Presence. Like the sea, the soul has its tides—the ebbs and flows of spiritual feeling. Yet the impression left on the minds of those nearest to him was that his God-consciousness was always at the full.

I imagine it was chiefly on this account that he found it so hard to understand how any man could be a disbeliever in God. The atheist and the agnostic were in his eyes not so much to be compassionated as to be condemned. He regarded their unbelief or their disbelief as in large measure culpable; they *would* not open their eyes and see the Light which was shining in full radiance around them, as the sun pours down his glory from the skies of June. Archdeacon Farrar, it is said, once asked Robert Browning whether there were any lines in all the wide range of his poetry which most completely expressed what was fundamental in his thought and life. "Yes," replied the poet, "and they are these:—

> 'He at least believed in soul,
> Was very sure of God.'"

My father also was very sure of God, and was convinced that every man might enjoy a similar certainty if he really wanted to, and if he would

tread the common road, beaten by the feet of generations of the pilgrims of faith, by which it may be reached.

This religious certainty, which I do not think was ever disturbed by intellectual doubt, was of course of inexpressible value to him in his ministry of the Gospel. Confirmed as it was by his own daily experience of the Grace and Power of God in Christ Jesus, it naturally imparted to his utterances that flaming intensity of conviction which so deeply impressed his hearers everywhere, and which was assuredly one great element in his evangelistic success. "Here is a man," they felt, "who thoroughly believes every word he says. To him at least, the things he is speaking of are things that matter—matter supremely, matter infinitely. No other things compare with them for their practical importance. It is life and salvation to receive them; it is death and destruction to reject them." There was never any hesitancy, or misgiving, or reserve, or qualification in his delivery of the momentous message given him to proclaim. He spoke as one entirely sure that he was telling men the absolute truth.

This was particularly noticeable in his treatment of the Bible. The Bible was to him, from cover to cover, the very Word of God. It was the authoritative revelation of the Divine Mind, the

perfect unfolding of the Divine Will, the one certain and sufficient philosophy of human history, the infallible standard by which all the thoughts of men are to be tried. Upon the Bible my father always took his stand, as upon a rock, adamantine, immovable, in the tossing sea of time and change. He steeped himself in its inspired teachings; its very words were stored in his mind; his power to quote text after text from any part of it, to confirm or to illustrate what he was saying, was often an amazement to his hearers. He was emphatically "the man of one book," and that book the Bible; and of the absolute truth of the Bible he was as sure as of the sun in the sky.

One may admit that, in consequence of this positiveness of conviction, he sometimes forgot that truth has more than one side, and did not appreciate the lesson taught by centuries of religious controversy, namely, that men of equal learning, and insight, and sincerity, and goodness of life, and devotion to Christ, have differed, and not seldom differed widely, in their opinions. One may admit, also, that he was not always able to understand the position of brethren in Christ with whom he did not agree, and that he failed to see their point of view as it appeared to themselves. But no one who holds that the Christian preacher, of all men, should be sure of what he says, and say

nothing of which he is not sure, keeping his doubts for home-consumption, will allow these defects to outweigh the sterling excellence, which our own times so urgently require, of a ministry remarkably characterized by the certainty of the Apostles and of the Lord: "We believe, and therefore also we speak" (2 Cor. iv. 13); "We speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen" (John iii. 11). And after all, as Emerson says, "It is the affirmative class that monopolize the homage of mankind." No great and influential ministry was ever built up on negations.

Intense in his theological convictions, based, as he held them to be, on the Infallible Word, my father was also intense in his spirituality of mind. With him, spiritual interests were primary, spiritual considerations predominant, spiritual standards supreme. No man was ever less influenced by worldly motives and worldly ambitions. They were mere ciphers in his arithmetic of life. I do not believe he ever allowed himself to be moved by the thought of monetary gain or loss in anything he said or did; he was ruled by principle, not by pocket. Nor do I believe that he was ever affected by the subtler appeal of popularity; he coveted the approval of God, not the applause of men. If, for the sake of truth and righteousness, he gave offence and made enemies, it was with real

regret and sorrow. He was no fire-eater. But in so sacred a cause, sooner than trim and compromise, and admit that though, indeed, black is not white, it may still possibly be grey, the offence must be given, and the enemies made. The one question was, Was he doing what he believed his Lord would have him do? If the answer of his conscience and his heart was Yes, then, irrespective of all worldly considerations, he must unfalteringly go on.

It was his own intense spirituality of mind that made him impatient, sometimes even scornful, of the anæmic life of worldly compromise which he saw so many professed Christians living as he travelled about the English-speaking lands. These descendants of Mr. Facing-both-ways at once puzzled and pained him. He thought that if Christ were anything to a man, He should be all to him; if the Christian life were in any wise worth living, it was worth living outright. He could not understand, therefore, the Anglican vicar who can administer the Holy Communion one day, and act as stage-manager at a parochial pantomime the next; or the Nonconformist official who is shy of prayer-meetings, but who is entirely in his element at a whist-drive or a dance. They were, so to say, a piquant dish which his spiritual palate had not been educated to appreciate. Some

persons, perhaps, may pity him for what they consider to be his Puritanical narrowness; but it may conceivably be time enough for them to pity him when they show themselves aflame with his enthusiasm for Christ, and partakers of his consuming zeal for the salvation of his fellow-men. What has been expressively called the "out-and-outness" of the Christian life was an ideal to which he continually aspired and endeavoured to attain, laying aside every weight likely to hinder him in its attainment. Calvin's motto was, "I burn for Thee," underneath the figure of a heart in flames. My father's passion for the spiritual, his thirst for God, his devotion to Christ and His Kingdom, were little short of a consuming fire.

This is, of course, but another way of saying that he was a man of rare consecration of life. Whenever he sang it, he literally meant every word of the famous hymn—

> "Take my life, and let it be
> Consecrated, Lord, to Thee,"

whose saintly authoress, Miss Frances Ridley Havergal, acknowledged the great spiritual blessing that came to her through reading his little tract, "Trust in the Living Father," perhaps the most widely circulated of all the productions of his pen. His life, his time, his hands, his feet,

his voice, his lips, his money, his intellect, his will, his heart, his love, his very self—he saw the consecrating touch of Christ upon them all, claiming them for His own. He rejoiced to live in constant recognition of the claim. It was his deep conviction that the very partial consecration with which many Christians are content, forms the chief obstacle to their usefulness in the service of the Lord's Kingdom. Once, when strolling with Mr. D. L. Moody, not then the world-famous man he afterwards became, on the lawn of Mr. Henry Bewley's garden at Willow Park, Dublin, my father remarked, "My dear brother, I believe that the world has yet to see what God can do with a man who has wholly surrendered himself to Him. We are not used more than we are because our surrender is so incomplete." More than once in later years he spoke of the look with which his dear American friend received the words, and of the impressive silence in which he appeared to be pondering them in his heart. To be himself fully surrendered—that, without question, was my father's own sacred ambition. Nor is it too much to believe that his conspicuous measure of world-wide usefulness in the service of the Gospel was the heavenly seal upon his self-surrender, body, soul, and spirit, to the Lord who surrendered Himself for him.

At the same time, the consecration which was so conspicuous among his characteristics was not a thing of the cloister, remote from the busy ways of men. It was no visionary "other-worldliness." He was a keen and interested observer of what was going on around him, in which he himself, whenever he heard the inward call to action, tried to take such part as he could. He was a diligent reader of his newspaper, with a sensitive appreciation of public events and the tendencies of the times in their bearing upon his view of the coming Kingdom of Christ. He lived, indeed, the consecrated life, but he lived it conscious that he was in a world whose multitudinous murmur was always in his ears.

Nevertheless, it must be clear to every reader of the story which, in the foregoing pages, I have attempted to tell, that my father recognized that he himself was in the world for one great business and no more. With perfect truth he could say, "This one thing I do"—the one thing that gave concentration to his powers, directness to his aim, and unity to his life. It was the salvation of his fellow-men through the ministry of the Gospel of the Grace of God in Jesus Christ. In that consisted his calling, his passion, his joy, and his reward. In the utterness of his devotion to it lies, perhaps, the chief value of his example to

all who are privileged to share in "the travail that makes the Kingdom come." Notwithstanding its very real virtues, the Modern Church, having so largely lost the power to convert, is now, alas! seeking a pitiful substitute in the power to amuse. If we are impotent to save men, at least let us entertain them! So Nero fiddled while Rome burned. But it will not do. The lost power must be regained, and it *can* be regained if it be sought in the right way. Sir John Seeley, certainly no enthusiast for Evangelical Christianity, still declared years ago, in his famous "Ecce Homo," that the article of conversion is the article of a standing or a falling Church. In the present-day pressure of the many-sidedness of human life, and of the wide variety of human interests, it often looks very much as if the Church had forgotten the supreme business for which it is here. Above its function as a nursery of the Christian life, above its function as a school of Christian character, rises clear and luminous its function as an agency of Christian conversion—the turning of men's far-wandered feet into the Way of God. As I close this brief biography of my beloved and sainted father, I feel how imperfect, how meagre, how unworthy it is. But if it may prove to be even a feeble voice recalling the attention of any workers in the Kingdom of

God to-day to the Church's primary purpose, beside which all else is secondary—the definite, decisive, irrevocable conversion of human souls to the Redeemer who died to make them His own—these simple pages will not have been penned in vain. For at least they will have fulfilled the chief object for which he whom they commemorate, nobly careless whether his name and fame survived or perished, whether they were graven in marble or written on sand, would have desired the story of his life and labours to be told.

Appreciations

"You may depend upon it that he is a good man whose intimate friends are all good."

LAVATER.

XII

Appreciations

I

BY THE REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A., D.D.

Pastor of Regent's Park Chapel, London, and Honorary Secretary of the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches.

MY knowledge of Mr. Varley dates back to my teens. How well I remember the late John H. Gladstone—who was closely related to me, and one of whose daughters is known throughout the world as Margaret Macdonald—speaking of him in our home on Clapham Common! My boyish curiosity was highly excited by the story of the man, whose reputation for honesty and fair-dealing in business was paralleled by his fame as an evangelist. It

was quite a new idea to the young mind, then busy revolving its own ideals of the ministry, that a good tradesman could be an equally good preacher.

So the years passed, and I ventured to ask him to conduct a brief mission in York, the scene of my first pastorate. But the vestiges of that mission have been obliterated from the sands, and the most permanent records are associated with my ministry at Melbourne Hall, Leicester. He was very intimate with the Carryer family, who became my ardent helpers and very dear friends; and many were the evenings I spent in his company under the hospitable roof of "The Chestnuts." He was a delightful companion; full of incident and anecdote; able to tell a "darkie" story to perfection; courteous and dignified; and never so pleased as when he was able to lead the conversation, as he generally succeeded in doing, to the themes dearest to the Christian's heart. I never heard him say an uncharitable word, or one unworthy of his high calling as the servant of Jesus Christ.

In those days he had come into close contact with the Movement for the quickening of spiritual life, which eventuated in the Oxford and Keswick Conventions. He spoke frequently at the meetings convened at Broadlands and elsewhere. His

"Trust in the Living Father" was widely circulated, and served to bring the spirit of that wonderful "freshet" into thousands of lives. His own experience received at that time a marvellous uplifting, and, though he might express his experiences in terms which expert theologians could challenge, no one could question the genuineness and power of the experiences themselves. The glory of the Second Advent also irradiated his soul, and led him to expatiate on the circumstantial details of the Millennium, the rosy radiance of which his soul seemed to have caught.

At this time he often spoke from my pulpit. He had a fine presence, a melodious and powerful voice, a copious vocabulary, and at times a terrific intensity into which he flung the full strength of his manhood. He was an Evangelical of Evangelicals, an ultra-Protestant, a fearless denouncer of the sins of the flesh, an evangelist whose appeals brought crowds to the feet of Christ, and a teacher of the principles of the Devout Life, of which his own character was the truest exposition. No one could handle a vast crowd with more facility than he, and none would be more winsome and humble in guiding the individual seeker to the Redeemer.

As I write, happy memories come trooping

back—summer days at Foxton, a tiny village in Leicestershire, with him as the inspiration of a chapel-festival; happy winter evenings in Leicester, when he unfolded the Scriptures to the group of friends gathered in the spacious drawing-room; great evangelistic missions or meetings for men only, when he would reason of self-control and judgment to come, till his hearers trembled.

He was the first, so far as I know, who dared to speak to men, and especially young men, of the sins by which they are most frequently seduced. His pamphlets on this subject went everywhere, and brought him a vast correspondence. It is quite possible that in the vehemence of his holy indignation against wrong-doing he may have been carried to an excessive strength of statement; but there was need for plain speaking, and he was not the man to mince matters. The pioneer in such questions must run the risk of misrepresentation and dislike, and of these he had his share; but he inaugurated a much-needed innovation on the conspiracy of silence, which had too long prevailed, and in the shadow of which vast numbers of souls were being hurried into fatal courses of evil.

He was an ardent patriot. Whatever touched

the honour or fair fame of Britain wrought on him as the clarion on the war-horse. Hence his "open letters" to public men. I am not sure that these were well-advised, or that they achieved the purpose which he desired to advance; but they were at least evidence of the purity and vehemence of his love for "whatsoever things are pure, honourable, true, and of good report."

Of his long residence in Australia, other pages of this memoir will speak. My knowledge of his movements became intermittent, though my attitude towards him was unchanged. It was a pleasure to grasp his hand from time to time, and to hear him speak of his deepening experience of God. One was always impressed, too, with his devotion to his dear wife, whom he watched over and cared for as a lover for his beloved. He was truly admirable as husband and father. His worst enemy could not drag from these domestic relations the smallest justification for his venom. He was sweet and pure and true as sunlight.

In his last illness, I was privileged to see and pray with him. It was a very memorable farewell, of which we two only hold the secret; but we will keep our tryst in the presence of the Lamb of God, once slain, now enthroned. There is

room in the Scripture for Amos with his strong, terse eloquence as for the richly poetic utterances of Isaiah; and amongst the great evangelists of the Victorian era, few will shine with greater brilliance than my beloved friend, Henry Varley.

II

By the Rev. WILLIAM CUFF,

Pastor of the Shoreditch Tabernacle, London.

As I sit in my study, I recall my dear friend, Henry Varley, as he was in the early 'sixties. He was in business then, and so was I. Both being of the same trade, as a matter of course there was a feeling of comradeship and sympathy. When men handle the same tools it somehow makes them feel akin, and strange things pull them closer together. It was this that drew me to Henry Varley at the first. True, we were then converted young men, and just beginning to preach Christ and seek souls. That touched everything that was in us, and moved us to a higher plane of friendship. To-day I can see him as he was then, a fine robust man. He was formed, framed, built every inch a man—a man not to be trifled with. This made me admire and respect him at once.

He had not only a well-developed body, but also a soul, a great, a flaming soul, when stirred and moved to anything he strongly felt. I have seen him stand before great audiences when his eyes flashed fire and his whole being quivered with emotion.

In the early days of our friendship he was much more definite in all his Christian experience and views than I was. This, I think was because he was a little older and had been better taught. But everybody who knew him knows he was always decisive and definite in all he thought and did.

Dr. Parker's description of his own father would almost fit my dear friend, Henry Varley. Here it is, just as it stands in "Tyne Childe" (p. 3):—

"A strange figure, that old stone-squarer, both as man and master, with the strength of two men and the will of ten; fierce and gentle, with passionateness burning to madness, yet with deepest love of prayer; no namby-pamby speaker weighing words in troy scales and mincing syllables as if afraid of them; hating lies as he hated hell itself. With him every known man was an angel or a fiend. A lie was no slip of the tongue; it was notorious, scandalous, diabolical, infamous, and infernal—adjectives going for nothing in the swell and rush of his emphasis. A terrible man

to people who lived in another zone and spoke a soft and milky language; but a very Hercules and hero to those who could play with tigers and hunt wolves. I see him now, with sloe-black eyes, fist of iron, chest that needed no smith-made mail, and with a gait that might have suggested the proprietorship of the entire solar system." That is just like Dr. Parker; but I do not think that every word of it would fit Henry Varley. Still, that is the sort of a man he was, and, as I venture to think, the sort of men we badly need to-day.

I have always said that my dear friend was the most powerful evangelist I have ever known. Up to a certain period of his life I do not believe there was one equal to him. He had a very intelligent and clear-headed grip of the Bible, and a well-packed memory of its words and phrases. He could quote the Word of God with the greatest ease, and, what is more, correctly quote it. I have seen great audiences in London, Dublin, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other places quail and melt into tears and prayers before the tender pleadings of the man. He could woo like a lover, and plead as man only can plead when he pleads for God and souls. This made him so eminently a winner of souls.

There came a time when, in some matters, his views altered, but not in anything vital or funda-

mental. In all this, he never swerved, faltered, or changed. To the last he was out-and-out Evangelical in all his teaching. As late as 1903, he writes in the introduction of his book, "The Evangel of the Risen Christ," this: "The test between the true and the false is the Gospel of Christ's Resurrection. There is not a single fundamental verity of the Christian faith but must be interpreted in the light of the Evangel of Christ risen. He is 'the Light of the World.' His risen life is everywhere. Every ray of light, every particle of truth in the world, every sound moral precept in the teachings of Buddhism and Brahmanism, in the writings of Confucius, the Zend-Avesta of the Persians, the Koran of the Mohammedans—all are emanations from the Lord of Glory. Before all time, behind all knowledge, Christ's glory as 'the Wisdom of God and the Power of God' stands for ever. 'This is the True God and Eternal Life.'" Surely, that is orthodox enough even for ultra-orthodoxy, if there be such a thing.

Notwithstanding this, I venture to say that, after a certain crisis in his life, my dear friend was not exactly the same man. He seemed to me as though he had lost some of his fascinating and marvellous power as an evangelist, just because he insisted upon other teachings with undue emphasis.

He lost nothing as a teacher. The last time I heard him was in my own place, and most certainly the sermon was overwhelming in freshness and force. It was really a very spiritual and powerful deliverance. We were two old men then, and, when we got from the pulpit to the vestry, he asked me with the deepest emotion and with tears, if I thought he had lost any of his power in preaching. "No!" I said, "not a bit of it in one sense. There is the old note and the old intensity. But you brought other matters into the sermon that, in my judgment, rather weakened it." I might have been altogether wrong; but that is what I felt, and feel now.

As I look back over all the years, through which I knew and loved my dear friend, I cannot help saying what a splendid man he was, what a useful life he lived, what a multitude of men and women he led to Jesus Christ. Oh, for a whole army of men such as Henry Varley was from first to last!

I have written this of him just as I knew him, and I think I knew him better than most men did. So I have written freely. I did not always agree with him; but he was a man to be trusted and loved, for I always found him true to his convictions, even when he knocked mine to pieces. I knew him as a husband, and what an affectionate

gentleman he was to his beloved wife! I knew him as a father, and his sons learned almost to worship him when they were boys, and sacredly treasure his memory now that they are men in the business struggles of life. One who bears his father's full name—Henry Varley—is in the ministry, and the author of this book. I am glad to add—honoured and beloved by all who know him. If I could, I would fain weave a garland of unfading flowers, and entwine it round the memory of my dear friend; for in private and in public, he *was* my friend and brother in the Gospel of Christ. I bid him a gentle and hopeful farewell, till the day dawn, and the shadows flee away. Then, ah, then, we shall both be perfect in the presence of the Lord.

III

By Mr. GEORGE E. MORGAN, M.A.,
Editor of "The Christian," *London.*

It was my privilege to know Mr. Henry Varley for something like forty years—that is, from my early childhood—owing to the close friendship that existed between my own father, R. Cope Morgan, and himself. That friendship had its rise in the wave of Evangelical zeal which followed the Great Revival of 1859. They were men of a like spirit, to whom the work of God in the reclamation of the lost was, as it were, a second nature. Thus they stood side by side in Christian service with hearts knit closely together as those of David and Jonathan.

Indeed, the larger part of my knowledge concerning him is due to that friendship, and the information that naturally came to me by that means. I can well imagine the fervour with

which my father, were he still alive, would pay his tribute to the memory of his beloved friend, whose counsel he freely sought, as his own he freely gave. I remember alsc in the 'seventies how my childish imagination was quickened as I heard related this or that stirring episode of Mr. Varley's fearless evangelism.

Thus my early impressions of him were of "a giant in those days"—a giant in physique, of whom I stood in appropriate awe; a giant in public work, bold to carry the spiritual war into the enemy's camp, with a fine air of defiance and disregard of consequences; yet with a tenderness ever manifested toward sin-convicted souls.

Evangelism in those days was not a matter of kid-gloves and polite phrasing. It was rather of the old "electioneering" type, when epithets and missiles vied in their rapid flight to reach the speaker first; and Henry Varley was a prominent target for both. But he was seldom, if ever, worsted. Physically sure of his ground, and spiritually sure of his message, he would face scenes from which others shrank, and he generally brought back spoils to his Lord.

A man of purpose, blessed with boundless energy, keen insight, and quick power to assimilate facts, he would have been a success in any career wherein such gifts could have free scope. As a

thorough man of affairs, he could grasp a difficult situation with ease, and act with promptitude. Thus in commercial life, his force of character became a valuable asset, which enabled him to build up a business of no mean dimensions; ever keeping in view, however, that his prime work in life was to win souls to Christ.

But his "heart was in the highlands" of spiritual thought and desire, so that he ultimately broke loose from all that bound. He became an evangelical and evangelistic pastor. For such congenial work he possessed a wealth of sound common sense, combined with a wide knowledge of Scriptural truth; and in this way his practical experience of men and things gave him an influence over many—otherwise difficult to reach—who sought his counsel because they felt he was familiar with their difficulties and understood their case.

Intellectually he possessed a considerable share of mental power, and kept himself informed of the trend of things theological that was a surprise to some. He was a keen controversialist, but only with the supreme purpose of combating error and maintaining truth. True, he sometimes "got into hot water"—occasionally at well-nigh boiling point—but he generally emerged without a blister! He was adamant to compromise, and had the

sublime faculty of never knowing when he was beaten, if, indeed, he ever was. Knowing his Bible from end to end, he knew what to expect with regard to the latter-day declension from "the faith once for all delivered to the saints"; and his magnificent optimism in the ultimate victory of the Cross steered him clear of all despondent sloughs and carried him over all hills of difficulty. He knew that none could scotch the chariot-wheels of the Lord.

Thus he laboured, instant in season and out of season; ever ready in spiritual emergencies; recognizing no limits of time or place. This side of the ocean or the other, both were alike to him; for on either side were to be found souls needing the Gospel of Salvation; and where they were, he was ready to go. Varied as was his ministry, his messages resolved themselves essentially into two: to the sinner, "Prepare to meet thy God"; to the saint, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

But, giant as he was in his public activities, in private he was as a little child, gracious, accessible, and affectionate. Loyal to his Master, he was also loyal to his friends; and time and again he fought the good fight of friendship as well as that of faith.

During the last ten years of his life, owing to

my father's partial retirement from editorial responsibility, it fell to my lot on many occasions to benefit by the mature counsels of Mr. Varley; and the close association with him thus enjoyed gave me to learn for myself something of those robust and sterling qualities of which I had heard long years before.

The last meeting between those two spiritual stalwarts, R. Cope Morgan and Henry Varley, was at San Remo, when, in 1896, Mr. Varley journeyed thither to pay what he felt sure would be his last farewell to his "beloved brother in the Lord." And so, indeed, it proved, thus closing, on this side the veil, a heart-to-heart intimacy that had existed with never a shadow for more than fifty years.

IV.

By Mr. ALFRED HOLNESS, F.R.G.S.,

Editor of the "Springing Well" *and Publisher.*

I am glad to be privileged to place on record my very sincere tribute to the memory of this truly good and great man—Henry Varley.

It is more than thirty years since I was brought into close association with him as a fellow-worker and a friend ; but it is between forty and fifty since I first heard him speak, and felt personally the magnetic power of his wonderful testimony for God. His clear, decided presentation of the Gospel then greatly impressed me, and his noble personality as a man, appealing to the highest faculties of young men, added weight and dignity to the message from his lips.

I have always felt very thankful that as one quite young in the faith of Christ I was present at the Y.M.C.A. in Aldersgate Street on a certain Sunday

afternoon when Henry Varley was one of the speakers. In many respects it was a memorable and unique gathering. Mr. (afterwards Sir) George Williams was there, with Mr. Edwyn Shipton, Mr. R. C. Morgan, Mr. M. H. Hodder, Mr. T. A. Blest, Mr. Harley Mason, and many other well-known, splendid men of God, who took the deepest interest in the spiritual welfare of young men.

The subject under consideration was the Transfiguration of Christ. The two special speakers, Mr. H. Bowker and Henry Varley, gave impressive and magnificent addresses, and their words left a lasting impression on the minds of the great company assembled, mainly composed of young men like myself.

But it was in later years that I was permitted to know Henry Varley, not only as a man of God, but as a true personal friend. With his customary generosity of heart he had noticed some little public expression which had fallen from me as to the absolute inerrancy and Divine inspiration of the Scriptures of Truth, and as to the Deity and Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. This occurred at the time when the influence of German Rationalism and the Higher Criticism began to be felt in our own land. I remember very well Henry Varley calling with his friend Mr. R. C. Morgan and saying, "I should

like to count as a friend any man speaking about MY LORD as you have done." From that day until the time of his home-going I have regarded it as a great honour to be on terms of Christian intimacy and fellowship and friendship with such a noble servant of God as I considered Henry Varley to be.

He was a nobly-courageous man. Nothing could daunt him in his purpose to stand for that which he believed to be true and right. He was a bold and a brave man, and was prepared to battle for God and His Word at all costs. Christ Himself was the very centre of his heart-belief, and he was bound to exalt his Lord under all and any circumstances. Anything that in any way appeared to derogate from the honour and glory of His adorable Name, aroused the very passion of his soul in vindication and in earnest protest.

He was a tender-hearted man. Bold as he was when occasion demanded, he was naturally as gentle as a child. The very compassions of Christ seemed to quiver through his soul. How often have I known him bend his massive head upon his hands, while the swelling tears would burst forth as he prayed and wept over those who rejected the Gospel, or who, in his estimation, dishonoured the name of his Lord by their writings or their public utterances!

He was a generous-hearted man. Over and over again has he unburdened his soul to me, not about his own needs, for he never appeared to have any, but about the needs of some poor, struggling brother who found it hard to fight the continuous battle. No sooner had the story been whispered into Henry Varley's ears than he would start himself practically to help and to induce others to do so too. Sometimes, alas! it is to be feared that the very generous impulses of his loving heart were taken advantage of, and he was made the subject of a measure of imposition.

He was a noble-hearted man. To the poor and the rich he was ever the same, the polite, courteous, considerate, true gentleman. To observe him when returned to this country, after perhaps a prolonged absence, was an actual delight. How he loved to meet and to welcome old friends! He could scarcely contain himself for joy and gladness of heart. He never seemed to forget any little kindness shown him by any one. The humblest subordinate met with his kindly smile and recognition; and how he loved to enter our office to talk about the Lord's work during his absence from London!

He was a lovingly-affectionate man. Those who knew him best and were acquainted with his devotion to his beloved wife, regard their lives as almost

a record for united affection and long-continued love. Who is there that has seen them together but has been struck by his courtly grace towards her? His gentleness, his quiet, manly testimony to her worth—how beautiful they were! Had it not been so real, the love of Henry and Mrs. Varley would seem like a romance; but their trust and affection and splendid lives may well be a pattern for the husband and wife of every true Christian household.

He was a patriot indeed. He loved his native land. He earnestly desired that Great Britain should stand high in the roll of nations, and be truly great, not simply in wealth or fame or Imperial military power, but in the principles of righteousness and truth, which in his view alone truly "exalt a nation." He felt that our country had been grandly favoured by God to send forth His Word to the ends of the earth, and therefore a solemn responsibility rested upon the Anglo-Saxon peoples to maintain the eternal verities of justice, liberty, and peace.

He was in his heart a humble man. No one was more conscious of failure than he. Grand man though he was, he very often confessed his own shortcomings. He sometimes appreciated the unwisdom of his great impulsiveness, but his motives were pure and splendidly sincere. At

times he tried to enforce his own judgment with inconsiderate determination; but through it all he was as true as steel, and even those who opposed him were ready to acknowledge his absolute sincerity of purpose. If ever it might be said of any one, it surely might of him that

"E'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side."

The supreme object of his life and work was to exalt Christ his Lord, and this surely he endeavoured to do with all the high gifts and powers with which God had marvellously endowed His faithful servant, Henry Varley.

Appendix I

On the opposite page is given in full the inscription on the memorial tablet mentioned on page 220.

In Loving Memory

of

HENRY VARLEY,

THE GREAT EVANGELIST WHO LABOURED FOR OVER 50 YEARS IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD AND WAS THE MEANS OF WINNING THOUSANDS OF PRECIOUS SOULS FOR GOD'S GLORY.

MR. VARLEY WAS BROUGHT TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AT THE AGE OF 16 IN 1851, AND ALTHOUGH IN BUSINESS FOUND TIME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL. — IN 1860 HE BUILT THE WEST LONDON FREE TABERNACLE WHICH HELD 1700 PEOPLE. — IN 1868 HE GAVE UP BUSINESS AND DEVOTED HIS WHOLE TIME TO EVANGELISTIC WORK, TAKING MISSIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD, VISITING SOUTH AFRICA, INDIA, THE UNITED STATES, AUSTRALIA & CANADA, PREACHING CHRIST WHERE EVER HE WENT. HIS CREED WAS SIMPLE:—

RUIN BY THE FALL.
REDEMPTION BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.
REGENERATION BY THE HOLY GHOST.

THE LAST 3 YEARS OF HIS LIFE WERE SPENT MOSTLY IN BRIGHTON, AND HE OFTEN PREACHED IN THE ADJOINING HALL, NEVER WITHOUT GOD'S SEAL ON HIS MINISTRY.

MR. VARLEY'S LAST 3 SERMONS ON SUNDAY EVENINGS IN BRIGHTON WERE PREACHED IN THIS HALL A SHORT TIME BEFORE HIS DEATH, AND THE TEXT OF THE LAST IS GIVEN BELOW, SO THAT HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

MR. VARLEY PASSED AWAY PEACEFULLY AT BRIGHTON ON SATURDAY, THE 30TH OF MARCH, 1912, IN HIS 77TH YEAR. THIS TABLET IS ERECTED TO HIS MEMORY BY THE OFFICERS, CONGREGATION AND FRIENDS OF THE GLYNN VIVIAN MINERS' MISSION, UNION ST. HALL, IN TOKEN OF THEIR LOVE AND ESTEEM FOR ONE TO WHOM THEY OWE SO MUCH.

COMMITTEE
- COLONEL JAMES PHILIPS, SUPT. G.V.M.M.
- J. RIDGE, SUNDAY SCHOOL ,,
- W. WHEATLAND, ,, SEOY.
- MISS HOLFORD, BIBLE WOMAN.
- E. VOKE, MISSIONARY.
- C. ROBSON.

Appendix II

Outlines of Sermons

I THINK it not unlikely that readers of this volume will be interested to see the subjoined outlines of sermons, transcribed from my father's own MSS., and affording some idea of his method of preparation for preaching.

H. V.

I.

"AND HE COMETH TO BETHSAIDA" (Mark viii. 22–4).

They bring unto Him, and besought Him to touch.

What the Lord did. He took hold of the blind man, led, brought him out of the town. Woe to Bethsaida! He spat on his eyes, and laid His hands on him. Then asked him, "Seest thou ought?" Christ's inquiry.

He looked up. "I see men, and behold them as trees walking." Singular comparison: men likened to trees. Imperfect vision. Light very little, dim, obscure. But it was that he had never seen before.

A result of contact with the Lord. It was light. His perception, slight and very imperfect.

What we would have said: "Poor fellow! he cannot see much, that uses such words." That is just like us.

It was an admirable illustration, after all. Why?

In the early stage of spiritual experience this is how men talk. Perception very imperfect. They see truth darkly. They cannot distinguish. The natural man and spiritual discernment. That is of the Lord.

What is needed? "Then again the Lord laid His hands and made him look up, and he looked steadfastly and saw every man clearly (all things clearly)."

A second contact with Christ's ability to make men see clearly. This is an exceptional case, but very necessary.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John x. 12). "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isa. ix. 2). Again, xlii. 16: "And I will bring the blind by a way they know not, in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do, and not forsake them."

This is not seen clearly:—

1. That salvation is of the Lord.

2. That we have been saved by His death in the past (Rom. vi. 10).

3. And we are to be saved by His life in the future (Rom. vi. 10).

4. That full salvation is of faith in Christ Jesus (John v. 24).

5. Not by the work of the Spirit of God in us.

6. We are saved by the work of Christ for us.

The former work is unfinished and going on.

The latter is finished, complete and eternal.

II.

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES (Matt. xiii. 24–30, 36–43).

"An enemy hath done this."

Mixed conditions to the end of the age.

The illustration given by the inspired Apostle, clearly pourtrayed in 2 Cor. iv. 1–6.

{The two Workers. The god of this age, this world.
{The God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Intense and real opposition. In the same field. Acting with and upon the same men and women. Satan the god of this world. Christ's testimony. The prince of this world, three times. Great Mind-blinder. Murderer, Liar, Thief, and Destroyer. His success with the Unbeliever. Those who believe not. The mind: "Lest the light of the glory of the Gospel of Christ should shine unto them" (Illumination, Gk.).

Opposition to Christ, His Word, His Work, His Person.

Hinders the Light. Prejudice. Counterfeit Lights. Angel of Light. The lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life.

Satan's policy in the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Temporary or immediate advantage. "It is written." Appetite, Pleasure, Theatre, Racing, Gambling, Dress, Novels, Friendships, Love of Money, Religion, Church, Priest, Sacraments, Self-righteousness. This world's portion.

To prevent the light, the illumination, the Knowledge of Christ.

The god of this world blinding, preventing the knowledge.

The God and Father enlightening, giving the knowledge.

Should not dawn upon them (R.V. preoccupied).
Should see clearly the Christ of God.

The god of this age darkens the mind and hinders the vision of God.
The God of the Bible revealing the Saviour.

The god of this age seeking the fashioning and growth of the tares.
The God and Father using His Word for the production of the wheat.

The god of this age working for the destruction of men.
The God and Father working for the salvation of men.

The god of this age working against Christ Jesus the Lord.
The God and Father revealing Christ and shining into the hearts of men in the great harvest-field (the world).

The god of this age, the Premier Unbeliever, busy preparing men for perdition.
The God and Father preparing the believer for glory.

The god of this age the deceiver, alluring to eternal wrath and death.
The God and Father, the Saviour of men, drawing with the strong cords of grace and love, to the incorruptible inheritance, the children of God.

Perdition and separation from God; the outer darkness.
Eternal glory with God in the Father's blessed home for the ages to come.

Read Matt. xiii. 37–43.

III.

"YE HAVE NOT CHOSEN ME, BUT I HAVE CHOSEN YOU, AND ORDAINED YOU, THAT YE SHOULD GO AND BRING FORTH FRUIT, AND THAT YOUR FRUIT SHOULD REMAIN" (John xv. 16).

Love, Joy, Friendship, Choice. Preference, Selection.

Election (1 John iv. 10; Ephes. i. 2–4; 1 Pet. i. 2).

Turn our thought. Reason for His choice.

Chosen, Called, Justified, Glorified. Chosen to Salvation (2 Thess. ii. 13). Life.

The purpose of His choice. To impart.

1. To receive His love, joy, and friendship.

2. Ordained to go and bring forth fruit. Christ Jesus sent of God. The Fruit-Bearer. Our Lord sends for same results.

Luther characteristically says: "That ye sit not still without work and fruit, but show yourselves publicly that other people may have the good of you." Fruit-bearers.

Christ's answer to the Father: "Here am I and the children Thou hast given Me." "All that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition" (Apōleia, Gk. Mark xiv. 3; "waste," John xvii. 12).

"Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephes. i. 3–4). Blemish. Bespeaks the closest possible unity. Fickenscher well says, "He who is united with Christ obtains thereby the true independence and stands before God as a personality pervaded by Christ."

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. i. 11).

That we should be (1) holy; (2) without blemish; (3) before Him; (4) in love.

1. Quality. 2. Condition. 3. Position. 4. Perfection.

(1) "The man the Lord doth choose shall be holy" (Num. xvi. 7). "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one" (Heb. ii. 11).

(2) Ephes. v. 27; Col. i. 21, 22; Cant. iv. 7; Psa. xlv. 13; Jude 24, 25.

(3) Position, "in Him before God." "I will be surety for him" (Gen. xliii. 9).

(4) Perfection of love. Glory of partnership. Character. Partnership in His Glory (John xvii. 23).

"In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits" (Job. xx. 22).

I

Index of Persons

II

Index of Places

UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS, WOKING AND LONDON