WOMEN WHO HAVE WORKED AND WON.

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THE LIFE-STORY

OF

MRS. SPURGEON, MRS. BOOTH-TUCKER,
F. R. HAVERGAL, AND RAMABAI

BY

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'FOUR NOBLE WOMEN,' 'NOBLE WORK BY NOBLE WOMEN'

FULLY ILLUSTRATED

LONDON

S. W. PARTRIDGE & CO. LTD.

8 & 9 PATERNOSTER ROW

PREFACE.

IN bringing before our readers the sketches of *Women who have Worked and Won* contained in the following pages, we could scarcely, even had that been our object, have gathered together a group of lives more diverse as to worldly circumstance. The career of Mrs. Booth-Tucker, that Amazon of the Holy War, who travelled half over the world, speaking to crowded audiences, withstanding hostility, and perpetually in the blaze of publicity, affords the greatest possible contrast to that of Mr. Spurgeon's invalid wife, for whom the violet-like seclusion of an unknown girlhood was but exchanged, with a brief interval, for the life-long hermitage of a sick-room. While Frances Havergal, the darling of a refined Christian home, where love that was almost adoration and devout piety shed their combined rays around her from the first to the last hours of her life, seems at the opposite social pole from Ramabai, the heathen-born, the despised widow of India.

Yet the same Spirit was moving in them all. Conscious that the union of the human soul with its Divine Source is the one condition of a happy, useful life, each made it her chief aim to win others to this blessedness. Their methods differed as widely as their characters and surroundings. Probably each would, in some minor details, have failed to approve of the others, but in the higher plane they were

all one. In fields of usefulness so diverse, all were alike loyal followers of Jesus Christ, and lived

> ". . . . through Him
> A new, a noble life,
> A life in spirit with their Lord,
> Above earth's party-strife."

United also were they in their belief in, and experiences of, the power of prayer. Nothing strikes the reader, in studying one after another of these four lives, more than the similarity of their testimony to the readiness of a loving Father to hear and answer whenever His child calls to Him. Every one of these good women could record instances, commonly called marvellous, of unmistakable answers to individual, and often minutely personal petitions. It was mainly this happy assurance of Divine help constantly within reach of the feeblest, that inspired them to be women who worked, and this perpetual drawing upon strength mightier than their own that at last crowned them, despite the difficulties that beset us all, as women who have won.

JENNIE CHAPPELL.

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WOMEN WHO HAVE WORKED AND WON.

Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN 'LOVE TOOK UP THE HARP OF LIFE.'

FOR all the purposes of the biographer, Mrs. Charles Haddon Spurgeon seems to have begun to live only when her existence came first within the orbit of that wonderful personality by which it was destined thenceforward to be inspired and absorbed.

For twenty-one years Susannah Thompson led a life of such uneventful privacy that of her childhood and youth we have little to relate.

She was the daughter of Mr. Robert Thompson, of Falcon Square, E.C., and with her parents was accustomed to attend New Park Street Chapel, Southwark. Here the chief thing that seems to have impressed her childish mind was the cock-robin-like side-view of the senior deacon, as it was presented to her gaze Sunday after Sunday in the open desk immediately below the pulpit! This was owing to the fact that he was a "short, stout man," who still wore the silk stockings and knee-breeches of a previous generation. His "rotund body, perched on

undraped legs, was, moreover, clothed in a long-tailed coat," and "when he chirped out the verses of the hymn in a piping, twittering voice," little Susie thought the likeness complete.

But another object in this memorable place of worship which in the interval between prayers and sermon continually excited the little girl's imagination was, strange to say, that pulpit where hereafter was to rise the sun and glory of her earthly existence.

Without staircase, or visible entrance, this rostrum hung upon the chapel wall like a swallow's nest. "One moment," Mrs. Spurgeon tells us, "the big box would be empty; the next—if I had but glanced down at Bible or hymn-book, and raised my eyes again—there was the preacher, comfortably seated, or standing ready to commence the service! I found it very interesting, and though I knew there was a matter-of-fact door . . . this knowledge was not allowed to interfere with, or even explain, the fanciful notions I loved to indulge in concerning that mysterious entrance and exit."

Thus, unheralded and suddenly, on December 18, 1853, young Charles Haddon Spurgeon stepped into that pulpit, and into "little Susie's" life.

He was to preach both morning and evening, with a view to being chosen as permanent pastor of the then vacant church. But although the friends (Mr. and Mrs. Olney) with whom Miss Susie was just then staying went to the forenoon service, the young lady herself did not accompany them, having somewhat of a prejudice against the "boy preacher" on account of his extreme youth, for Charles Spurgeon was at that time not out of his teens.

The morning congregation, however, was so poor, that Mr. Olney, fearing the young stranger might feel discouraged, did all he could to collect a larger gathering for the later service. The Olney family, of course, went in full force, and their guest could not do otherwise than accompany them.

Once again, as so often before, Susie Thompson's expectant gaze was riveted upon the "swallow's nest"

pulpit, and into her view there stepped a figure that at first sight gave her a disagreeable shock.

The lad's countrified manner and attire, his loose crop of somewhat unkempt dark hair, a physiognomy that inadequately suggested the mental and spiritual gifts which lay behind, his big, antiquated black satin "stock," and the appalling blue pocket-handkerchief with white spots that he grasped in his hand, all more or less offended the maiden's fastidious taste, and diverted her mind from the unmistakable power and earnestness of the address which he delivered.

Only one phrase of the whole sermon remained in her mind, and that because of its singularity; for he likened the body of Christians to "living stones in the Heavenly Temple perfectly joined together with the *vermilion cement of Christ's blood*"—scarcely an improvement, we venture to think, on the more chaste scriptural symbol which evidently suggested it.

However, Miss Thompson was not so unfavourably impressed by the "boy preacher from Waterbeach" but that she was willing to go and hear him again. Introduced by their mutual friends, the Olneys, she became personally acquainted with him. Gradually her prejudice wore away, and his earnestness began to make an impression on her. Indeed, before very long the pendulum of sentiment had swung so far in an opposite direction from the first aversion, that, Spurgeon being settled at New Park Street Chapel, we find our young lady exerting herself most strenuously to collect money for a proposed enlargement of the building. She got together for this purpose no less than one hundred pounds. This speaks volumes.

It was but four months from the date of Charles Spurgeon's first appearance at New Park Street, when his acquaintance with Susannah had become sufficiently advanced to permit of his presenting her with a book—of course, to her great surprise.

This volume was an illustrated copy of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and contained the inscription, "Miss Thompson, with desires for her progress in the blessed pilgrimage, from C. H. Spurgeon, April 20, 1854."

Mrs. Spurgeon in after years declared her belief that the young pastor had at that time no other thought than to help a struggling soul heavenward. But we know how, in pure and ardent natures, the earthly and heavenly love become so readily intertwined and so mutually enkindling that it is ofttimes difficult to perceive the dividing line. We are not unprepared, therefore, to learn that Miss Thompson was "greatly impressed" by Mr. Spurgeon's concern for her, and that "the book became very precious as well as helpful to her soul."

A little later, she was drawn to consult him as to her state before God. Conversations upon her spiritual welfare ensued, and ultimately she is able to record that she was led "through the power of the Holy Spirit to the Cross of Christ for the peace and pardon my weary soul was longing for."

After that, she tells us, she was happier than she had been at any time since the days when, at the Poultry Chapel, her heart had experienced its first stirrings towards the Divine life, and although she little dreamed of the great joy that was speeding towards her, the steady development of a friendship between her and her pastor may have lent its quota to that blessedness of which she speaks.

The intimacy seems to have progressed with fair rapidity. Less than three months subsequent to the gift of *The Pilgrim's Progress* occurred the grand opening of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, when a party of New Park Street friends was made up to witness the ceremony, and included both the young people in whom we are interested.

They occupied some raised seats in a good position for viewing the spectacle, and while Miss Thompson and her companions beguiled the waiting time with talking and laughter, their pastor was seen to be improving his spare moments in dipping into a book. This proved to be a volume of Martin Tupper's *Proverbial Philosophy*, then but recently published.

Suddenly, he turned to Miss Thompson, and handing her the book, with his finger marking a particular page, he

asked, "What do you think of the poet's suggestion in those verses?"

With a deepening flush upon her cheeks, the young girl noticed that the chapter was headed "On Marriage," and the lines especially pointed out to her were these—

"Seek a good wife of thy God, for she is the best gift of His Providence;
Yet ask not in bold confidence that which He hath not promised:
Thou knowest not His good will; be thy prayer then submissive thereunto;
And leave thy petition to His mercy, assured He will deal well with thee.
If thou art to have a wife of thy youth, she is now living on the earth;
Therefore think of her, and pray for her weal!"

As she reached this point, there came a soft, low whisper in her ear:—"Do you pray for him who is to be your husband?"

Thus delicately conveyed, the hidden meaning of this query was not misunderstood. Little of the brilliant procession did Susannah Thompson that day behold, few words of the speeches entered her ears. Her whole soul had been filled with a new and all-absorbing emotion.

"Will you come and walk round the Palace with me?" whispered some one, as the spectators began to leave their seats.

Miss Thompson consented; friends were obligingly oblivious of their disappearance, and the pair wandered long and blissfully through the Palace, round about the gardens, and as far as the lake, where antediluvian monsters placidly witnessed the newest and oldest thing on earth—the first enthralling ecstasies of "love's young dream."

"During that walk, I believe," wrote Mrs. Spurgeon nearly half-a-century afterwards, "God Himself united our hearts in indissoluble bonds of true affection, and, though we knew it not, gave us to each other for ever. From that time our friendship grew apace, and quickly ripened into deepest love—a love which lives in my heart to-day as truly, aye, and more solemnly and strongly than it did in those early days; for though God has seen fit to call my beloved up to higher service, He has left me the consolation of still loving him with all my heart, and believing our

love shall be perfected when we meet in that blessed Land where Love reigns supreme and eternal."

Young men, however, were discreet and maidens demure in those old-fashioned days, and although a unanimous "understanding" was arrived at that memorable June day in the Crystal Palace, it was not until two months later that Charles Spurgeon formally "proposed" to the lady of his choice.

The spot which this incident glorified and endeared for ever to both their hearts was a prosaic little London back-garden, attached to the residence of Miss Thompson's grandfather.

"To this day," writes Mrs. Spurgeon, forty years later. "I think of that old garden as a sacred place, a paradise of happiness, since there my beloved sought me for his very own, and told me how much he loved me." This confession, she adds, was "wonderful," and asks, "Was there ever quite such bliss on earth before?"

Being a truly good, Christian girl, Susannah fully realized her happiness as a gift from God, and kneeling alone in her room, she praised and thanked Him, with happy tears, for His great mercy "in giving her the love of so good a man."

Soon after, Miss Thompson requested baptism at the hands of her pastor and *fiancé*. The confession of faith which she made as a preliminary to this ordinance touched him deeply for its true spirituality of tone. "I could weep with joy (as I certainly am doing now)," he wrote in his reply, "to think that my beloved can so well testify to a work of grace in her soul."

He went on to encourage her with his assurance that she must indeed be one of God's chosen—which at the outset of their acquaintance he had feared she might not be, for, said he, "If the Lord had intended your destruction, He would not have told you such things as these, nor would He enable you so unreservedly to cast yourself upon His faithful promise. . . . Dear purchase of a Saviour's blood, you are to me a Saviour's gift, and my heart is full to overflowing with the thought of such continued goodness. . . . Whatever befall us, trouble, adversity,

sickness or death, we need not fear a final separation, either from each other or from our God."

The baptism of Miss Thompson was performed as quietly as circumstances would allow, but that the actual position of affairs was not absolutely unsuspected by others than immediate relatives was suggested by a rather amusing incident.

Preceding the young lady in the list of candidates for the examination "before the church," was an old man named Johnny Dear. When he had been passed and was departed, an elderly dame at the back of the room was heard to whisper—"I suppose it will be 'sister dear' next!"

It may be a comfort to some young people who read these pages to learn that even such a love as that between Charles and Susannah, inspired and blessed by God as it undoubtedly was, did not run its course with perfectly unruffled smoothness. For both were human, and the thoughtlessness of the young preacher and the sensitive pride of the maiden on one occasion brought about what, with some natures, might have been a serious misunderstanding.

On this occasion, Mr. Spurgeon was to preach in a large hall at Kennington, and Miss Thompson went with him in a cab.

An immense crowd was thronging the entrance and the staircase, through which the preacher himself, in the absence of any private entrance, had to force his way. So great was the crush that his poor little *fiancée* was somehow separated from him, and, terrible to relate, he *never missed her!* Turning in at a side-door, which presumably led to the vestry, he passed from her sight without another word or look, and left her struggling helplessly among a mass of strangers.

Worse still, he was so occupied with the message he had to deliver, that he actually for the time forgot her existence. Hurt beyond expression, bewildered, then angry, the young girl straightway turned back without entering the building, and carried her wounded heart home to her mother.

The slight and only glimpse we at this point catch of Susannah Thompson's mother goes far to explain the sweetness of character possessed by Mr. Spurgeon's wife.

"She wisely reasoned," the latter relates, "that my chosen husband was no ordinary man, that his whole life was absolutely dedicated to God and His service, and that I must never, *never* hinder him by trying to put myself first in his heart."

Susannah, who had already much good sense, was gradually calmed and softened by her mother's soothing words, and by the time Charles returned, in a state of great anxiety about Susie, Susie was ready to forgive his negligence, not unashamed in her inmost heart of having so quickly doubted and taken offence at him, when not the least unkindness was intended. It was a hard lesson, as she owns, but it was learnt then *by heart*, and never again did she seek to assert any right to her lover's time and attention when they were claimed by his service to God.

"The end of this little 'rift in the lute,'" to use Mrs. Spurgeon's own beautiful similitude, "was . . . an increase of that fervent love which can look a misunderstanding in the face till it melts away and vanishes, as a morning cloud before the ardent glances of the sun."

Miss Thompson's next experience was a visit to Colchester to make the acquaintance of her prospective father and mother-in-law, always something of an ordeal to a timid young girl. If, however, Charles Spurgeon's *fiancée* felt any nervousness, her fears were soon dispelled by the hearty and affectionate welcome which she then received. She was entertained, and petted, and taken to see every object and place of interest in all the neighbourhood, but owing to the superlative delight of her lover's society, no distinct remembrance of any incident of that halcyon time was carried away. "The joy of being all day long with my beloved, and this for three or four days together, was enough to fill my heart with gladness, and render me oblivious of any other pleasure."

It is good to see this girl and boy—for they were no more—so deeply and frankly in love with one another, but better still to know that though other earthly joys

were obscured by this overmastering bliss, the young people never lost sight of its Source and Giver.

Shortly after Miss Thompson's return home, her betrothed wrote as follows :—

"My own doubly-dear Susie,

"How much we have enjoyed in each other's society! It seems almost impossible that I can either have conferred or received so much happiness. I feel now, like you, very low in spirits. . . . Let us take heed of putting ourselves too prominently in our own hearts, but let us commit our way unto the Lord. 'What I have in my own hand, I usually lose,' said Luther, 'but what I put into God's Hand, is still, and ever will be, in my possession.'"

The first parting of any length between this devoted pair was when Mr. Spurgeon went on a preaching tour into Scotland—in those days farther off from London than it is now. While he was away he constantly wrote letters, in which, the happy recipient relates, "Little rills of tenderness run between the sentences, like the singing, dancing waters among the boulders of a brook. . . . To the end of his beautiful life it was the same, his letters were always those of a devoted lover as well as of a tender husband: not only did the brook never dry up, but the stream grew deeper and broader, and the rhythm of its song waxed sweeter and stronger."

It was during these pre-nuptial days that Miss Thompson attempted, at her lover's request, her first piece of literary work. This was to compile for him a selection of extracts from the writings of the Puritan Divine, Thomas Brooks. The young girl's critical taste was both tested and trained by the direction to mark every paragraph and sentence that struck her as "particularly sweet, or quaint, or instructive."

This seems simple enough, but so new was the task that to her it appeared most important and difficult. That it was performed with discrimination and to Mr. Spurgeon's satisfaction is proved by the fact that the little volume was ultimately published under the some-

what playful title of "*Smooth Stones taken from Ancient Brooks.*"

Thus pleasantly sped the year 1855. Their favourite meeting-place was the Crystal Fountain in the newly-opened palace of glass on Sydenham Hill. With palpitating heart the young girl would wait for the whispered message in the chapel aisle at the close of the week-night service—"*Three o'clock to-morrow!*" and joyfully would she, when the longed-for hour arrived, set out on her walk from the Brixton Road to keep that happy tryst.

But another appointment was swiftly approaching. The young people's engagement, notwithstanding Mr. Spurgeon's youth, was not unduly prolonged. The wedding-day was fixed for the first week of the next new year.

CHAPTER II.

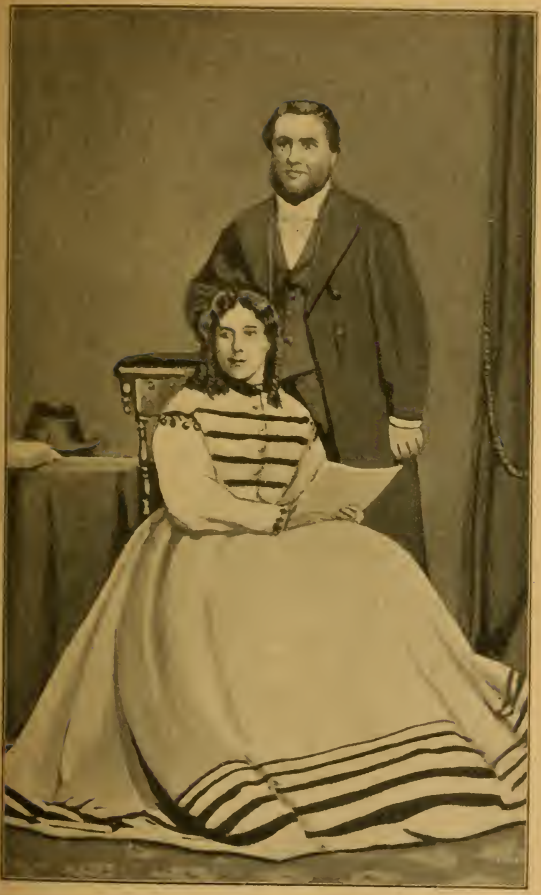
AN IDEAL PASTOR'S WIFE.

IF there were any truth in the adage that "Happy is the bride that the sun shines on," the married life of Mrs. Charles Haddon Spurgeon would not have been among the most blessed, for her wedding-day, January 8, 1856, was, we are told, "dark, damp, and cold."

That was the outward weather. Inwardly "most of its hours were veiled in a golden mist," through which they afterwards looked to memory "luminous but indistinct."

Susannah knelt by her bedside in the early morning, "awed and deeply moved by a sense of the responsibilities to be taken up that day, yet happy beyond expression that the Lord had so favoured her." And there, alone with God, she earnestly sought "strength and blessing and guidance for the new life opening before her."

Multitudes assembled at New Park Street Chapel to witness the interesting ceremony. The building was filled to overflowing, and those who were unable to gain admittance waited in the streets to catch a glimpse of the bride and bridegroom in such numbers that traffic in the



AN EARLY PORTRAIT OF MR. AND MRS. SPURGEON, TAKEN IN THEIR HOME.

vicinity of the chapel was practically brought to a standstill, and the aid of a special body of police was required to prevent accidents.

The young bride, very simply attired, drove to New Park Street in a cab with her father, astonished to find herself gazed at almost as though she had been a royal princess, and wondering if the people all knew what a marvellous bridegroom she was going to meet.

The ceremony was performed by "dear old Dr. Alexander Fletcher," and then amid the enthusiastic cheering of crowds, Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon drove away to start on their brief honeymoon tour.

Some of the sights they gazed upon together during that blissful ten days in Paris are sketched for us by Mrs. Spurgeon's pen, with a grace and vividness which justifies her husband's discrimination in encouraging the development of her literary gift.

Of La Sainte Chapelle, which Mrs. Spurgeon described as "a little heaven of stained glass," she says: "Its loveliness looked almost celestial as we stood enwrapped in its radiance, the light of the sinking sun glorifying its matchless windows into a very dream of dazzling grace and harmony of colour."

In the crypt of the Panthéon, once a temple, now a church, they saw the tombs of Rousseau, Voltaire, and others, and heard, "with something like fear, the thunderous echo which lurks there. . . . It is very loud and terrible, like a cannon fired off, and it gives one quite an uncanny feeling to hear such a deafening roar down in the bowels of the earth."

The view from St. Cloud she pronounces "glorious." "The Seine flowed far below, the suburbs of the city lay beyond; Mont Valérien on the right, Paris straight before one's eyes, with the gilded dome of the Invalides shining in the clear air; St. Sulpice, and the Panthéon, and countless towers and spires forming landmarks in the great sea of houses and streets, the twin heights of Montmartre and Père la Chaise in the background; all these grouped together and viewed from the hill, formed an indescribably charming picture."

As Mrs. Spurgeon was familiar with Paris and spoke French fluently, the delight of both was mutually increased by her ability to act as guide to the various spots of interest, and years afterwards her husband wrote to her during one of his visits alone to the gay capital: "My heart flies to you, as I remember my first visit to this city under your dear guidance. I love you now as then, only multiplied many times."

On returning home the young couple commenced housekeeping in a small residence in the New Kent Road. As is always the case in hearts where God rules, their own happiness made them long to reach out in help and joy to others. From the outset they denied themselves in order to contribute to the support and education of one young man who was being prepared for the ministry. To provide such training for suitable and earnest young men was already a dear dream of Charles Spurgeon's heart, and this first student for whom they so gladly "planned and pinched" was the nucleus of the future Pastors' College.

So real was this self-sacrifice that at times during those early days the young preacher and his wife had a difficulty in making ends meet, and to "tie a bow" was an unimagined luxury.

In a special period of need there occurred to them one of those marvellous supplies which a less sceptical age would have called a miracle, but which we meet in every record of the lives of God's trusting children.

"Some demand came in for payment," writes Mrs. Spurgeon—"I think it must have been a tax or rate, for I never had bills owing to tradesmen—and we had nothing wherewith to meet it. What a distressing condition of excitement seized us! 'Wifey, what can we do? I must give up hiring the horse and walk to New Park Street every time I preach!' 'Impossible!' I replied. 'With so many services you simply could not do it.' Long and anxiously we pondered over ways and means, and laid our burden before the Lord, entreating Him to come to our aid. And of course He heard and answered, for He is a faithful God. That night, or next day, a letter was received containing £20 for our own use, and

we never knew who sent it, save that it came in answer to prayer!"

How happy were the peaceful Sabbath evenings of that first wedded year, when, the labours of the day being over, the weary young preacher would rest in an easy-chair by the fireside, while his little wife nestled on a low stool at his feet, and sought to soothe and refresh his spirit by reading aloud! Sometimes the volume chosen would be Christian poetry, but there were occasions when the pastor's tender conscience (and, we venture to add, overwrought nerves!) sought the self-flagellation of Baxter's *Reformed Pastor*, and he would sob over his shortcomings, while the sympathetic girl cried too, because she "loved him, and wanted to share his grief."

But tears are the heritage of all, and even those blissful months were not wholly undimmed by them. Not indeed on account of any lack of love or tenderness on the husband's part towards his young wife—she had by this time learned to laugh at even the absorption of mind that now and then caused him to ceremoniously shake hands with her in his own vestry, with a cool "How are you?" as if to a stranger—but his frequent absences from home on preaching engagements were a sore trial to her.

How we can go with her, as she paced up and down the little front passage late at night, longing and listening for his return, praying with trembling heart that the train might bring him safely, and rushing to the door in an ecstasy of relief and thankfulness the moment his footstep was heard outside!

Once, when he was leaving her, she broke down and sobbed at the thought of the coming hours of loneliness. But he tenderly reminded her that she was offering him as a sacrifice to God, in thus letting him go from her to preach the Gospel, and must not spoil it by weeping.

She took the reproof at once to heart, and, ever after, the half-bantering query, "What, crying over your lamb, wifey?" would keep back the rising tears, at least until the parting was over.

One very striking incident of Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon's early married life we must not omit.

On a certain Saturday evening the pastor had wrestled long but vainly with the text from which he wished to speak the following day. He was utterly worn out and dispirited. He sat up long past his usual hour for retiring, but his mind seemed completely blank on the subject. Only his wife's promise to arouse him very early in the morning to renew his efforts at length induced him to go to bed and get the rest he so much needed.

In the early hours of Sunday, Mrs. Spurgeon was herself awakened by the sound of his voice. He was preaching in his sleep, and, wonderful to relate, was giving a clear, fresh, and forceful exposition of the very verse which had baffled him the night before!

It was a quaint situation—the preacher himself asleep, the solitary hearer intensely wide awake, listening to his unconscious discourse with trembling eagerness, fearful of letting one precious word slip.

She had meant to keep awake till it was time to call her husband, but while going over and over in her mind the points she was so anxious to remember, she, not unnaturally, dropped off again, and they both slept on until with a cry of dismay Mr. Spurgeon sprang up to find the time he had hoped to spend in preparation already past.

What was his amazement and joy to hear from the lips of his wife the extraordinary result of the "unconscious cerebration" that had been going on while his body was in a state of repose! "Why, that's just what I wanted!" he exclaimed. "That is the true explanation of the whole verse! . . . It is wonderful!"

"And we both," adds Mrs. Spurgeon, "praised the Lord for so remarkable a manifestation of His power and love."

On September 20, 1856, the young people found themselves the parents of twin sons. Needless to say the advent of the babies was hailed with joy. Charles and Thomas were the names chosen for them, and great were the hopes of what, given to God and trained for Him, those precious children might some day do for the world.

Meanwhile, the ever-increasing numbers of those who crowded to hear the famous young preacher suggested

the desirability of finding a larger building in which his powers might have fuller scope. After some negotiation, the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, capable of seating ten or twelve thousand people, was secured for Sunday evening services. And on October 19, just one month after the birth of the twins, Mr. Spurgeon, full of prayerful anticipation of the great task before him, left home to preach in that immense building for the first time.

Alone on her sofa, in the Sabbath evening stillness, his wife was thinking of him, and of the darling little ones asleep at her side —"dreaming," she says, "of all sorts of lovely possibilities and pleasures"—when she was startled by the unaccustomed sound of wheels stopping at the garden gate. It was far too early for the preacher to be coming back, and Mrs. Spurgeon wondered much who the arrival could be.

Soon, a deacon from the chapel entered the room, his grave and embarrassed air portending serious news to the frightened young wife. What could it be? What had happened? She begged him to tell her quickly, her thoughts doubtless reverting to those occasions when the strain of addressing large congregations had reduced her dear one to the verge of fainting.

It was a terrible tale which the good deacon was forced to unfold.

The Music Hall was crammed to overflowing, when, during the hush of the second prayer, wild cries had suddenly rent the air—"Fire!" "The galleries are giving way!" "The place is falling!" "Fire—Fire!"

It is difficult to imagine the scene of awful confusion at once created. People struggling and fighting their way to the doors, some in the excess of terror even flinging themselves over the balconies upon the seething mass below. With marvellous self-possession the young preacher, believing the panic to be groundless, besought his audience to be calm, and tried to go on with the service. But his efforts were unavailing. The tragic result of the episode was the death of seven persons and the injury of many others, while Mr. Spurgeon himself, after being for some time unconscious, was carried home to his wife a mere

SURREY GARDENS MUSIC HALL.

wreck of the buoyant and hopeful young man who had left her little over an hour before. The bitterest drop in his cup was the conviction that, the alarm having been utterly unfounded, the whole disaster was the work of the Evil One, acting either upon the malice or cupidity of his emissaries, and uncontrollable anguish of mind, that at one time seemed to threaten reason itself, overcame him.

At length, however, light was restored, and the dedication service of the twin babies was performed amid the returning health and hopefulness of the young parents.

The following year they removed to Helensburgh House, Nightingale Lane, Clapham, then a countrified spot, where a large, rambling, half-wild garden was a delight to them both.

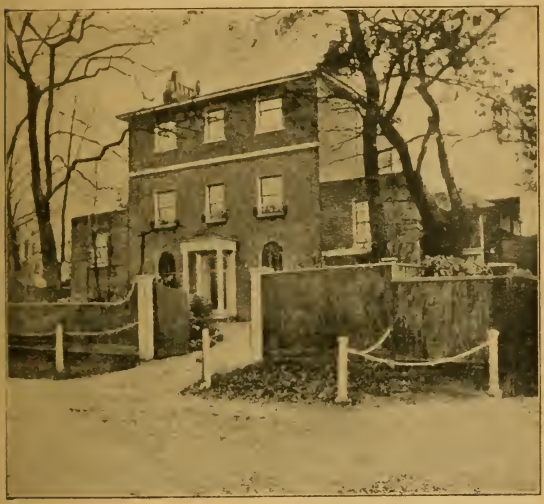
The house was very old, but its quaintness was half its charm, and the grounds were almost unique in possessing a well nearly five hundred feet deep. Some former owner, with both money and perseverance, had had such firm faith that water would eventually be reached, that he persisted in borings being continued down to and through the solid rock, till the efforts of his workmen were at last rewarded by a gush of water, "pure, sparkling, and cold as ice." So delicious was it, that in Mrs. Spurgeon's time neighbours frequently sent jugs to Helensburgh House, begging to have them filled from this spring.

Here, although Mrs. Spurgeon's strength had never been fully restored since that terrible shock of the Music Hall disaster, she passed what she decided, on looking back upon them, were the least shadowed years of her married life. Tending the garden, taming the wild song-birds in which it abounded, and wandering in the pleasant green lanes in the neighbourhood, free from the too great observation, flattering but not always welcome, to which the popular pastor and his wife had in the New Kent Road been subjected, the life of the young couple was at that time an ideally happy one.

The large sale of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, the generous treatment of his publishers, and an increased income from his pastorate, rendered possible the purchase of the free-

hold of Helensburgh House, and the carrying out of improvements which otherwise it might not have been worth while to make.

An amusing incident occurring during the early days of residence in Nightingale Lane, proves that the ability to



HELENSBURGH HOUSE, NIGHTINGALE LANE, CLAPHAM.

keep a gardener and to take holiday trips is not always an unmixed joy.

Returning to their beloved garden, after a short absence, Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon found that the man left in charge had made great preparations to welcome them. But these, to their horror, had included the painting of certain ancient stone vases and stucco work a brilliant combination

of blue and yellow! "Only dear Mr. Spurgeon," writes his fond wife, "could have managed to get them restored to their former purity without hurting the feelings of the well-meaning gardener."

It was at Helensburgh House that the Spurgeons had the pleasure of entertaining John Ruskin. He was a neighbour, and frequently attended Mr. Spurgeon's ministry. On one occasion, when Mr. Spurgeon was recovering from an illness, the great teacher came to see him, bringing the characteristic offering of two choice engravings and some bottles of rare wine.

On seeing the preacher lie weak and prostrate on the sofa, Ruskin flung himself on his knees beside him, and "embracing him with tender affection and tears," exclaimed: "My brother! my dear brother, how grieved I am to see you thus!"

In the pure, sweet air of the Clapham of the "fifties" the twin boys grew and flourished apace. Often unable, owing to the weak state of her health, to attend evening service at the Tabernacle, Mrs. Spurgeon would devote the sacred hour to reading to and teaching her darling children. Her son Thomas directly traces his conversion to these early lessons, and years afterwards she was able with deep thankfulness to write: "Happy mother! whose two beloved sons count it their highest honour to spend and be spent in the service of God!"

But it was in her intense love for her husband that Mrs. Spurgeon then, as ever, found her chief joy. Writing long afterwards, when suffering the deprivations of a confirmed invalid, she says: "I may here record my heartfelt gratitude to God that for a period of ten blessed years I was permitted to encircle him with all the comforting care and tender affection which it was in a wife's power to bestow. Afterwards, God ordered it otherwise. He saw fit to reverse our position to each other, and for a long season, suffering instead of service became my daily portion, and the care of comforting a sick wife fell upon my beloved."

As long as her health admitted, Mrs. Spurgeon faithfully fulfilled the duties of a pastor's wife. Especially was her

sympathy and loving wisdom appreciated by the female candidates for baptism. She would counsel, cheer, and advise them in preparation for that important rite, and when the hour for immersion came, the courtly dignity and inimitable modesty with which she assisted the trembling neophytes was "the admiration of all who beheld her."

"To this day," writes the Rev. Thomas Spurgeon, "many greet me with such glad words as these: 'She led me to the baptismal pool, you know, and I shall never forget her loving words to me.'"

That Mrs. Spurgeon's wifely devotion was fully appreciated, the following inscription in the first volume of a set of Calvin's *Commentaries*, presented by her to the pastor, will testify—

"The volumes making up a complete set of Calvin were a gift to me from my own most dear and tender wife. Blessed may she be among women. How much of comfort and strength she has ministered unto me it is not in my power to estimate. She has been to me God's best earthly gift, and not a little even of Heavenly treasure has come to me by her means. She has often been as an angel of God unto me.

"C. H. SPURGEON."

CHAPTER III.

THE PRISONER OF PAIN.

IT was in the year 1868 that Mrs. Spurgeon's failing health became so alarmingly worse as to cause a complete breakdown. An operation was performed under the direction of the distinguished surgeon, Sir James Simpson, of Edinburgh, but although her life was prolonged thereby, she was thenceforward doomed to the secluded existence of an invalid.

One of the bitterest privations which such a condition entailed was that of being no longer able to accompany her husband on his holiday trips to the Continent. After

thirteen years of married life, the pastor's wife was the same tender-hearted "Susie" who had such hard work to keep from weeping over her sacrificial "lamb," and these partings were a constantly recurring wrench to her clinging affections. Added to this natural loneliness was at one period the torture of nervous terrors at night. Thoughts of burglars, fire, and other imaginations of a similar nature that will occur when body and mind are alike worn by sickness, made the hours of darkness a horror to her.

One night, when dwelling upon the two texts, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee," and "I will trust and not be afraid," Mrs. Spurgeon suddenly realized that "'What time' meant '*now*,' when the creaking of a piece of furniture startles me, and the very thought of the bark of a dog strikes terror to my heart."

"I *will* trust in Thee!" murmured the timid soul, and as she said it deliverance came. "'I will trust, and *not be* afraid.' I surrendered myself and all my belongings to the Father's keeping, and," she writes, "I have had no more gloomy fancies, or midnight watchings. I have laid me down in peace and slept, because 'He only made me to dwell in safety.'"

There is no recipe for nervous fears to be compared with this, and many a one besides Mrs. Spurgeon has proved its efficacy; but this glimpse of weakness makes the subject of our sketch appear very human and lovable.

The silver lining to these separations between the fond couple was doubtless to be found in the lovely letters to which they necessarily gave rise. No wife could possibly have craved more tender outpourings of affection than those which Charles Haddon Spurgeon showered in such lavish profusion upon his suffering "wifey."

Nothing, for example, could be more lover-like than the following, written to Mrs. Spurgeon when, during her absence in Brighton for the operation above named, her husband had been superintending the rebuilding of Helensburgh House—which took place about this time—and the refurnishing of his wife's rooms in particular.

"My own Dear Sufferer,

"I am pained indeed to learn from T——'s kind note that you are still in so sad a condition. Oh, may the ever-merciful God be pleased to give you ease!

"I have been quite a long round to-day—if a 'round' can be 'long.' First to Finsbury, to buy the wardrobe,—a beauty. I hope you will live long to hang your garments in it, every thread of them precious to me for your dear sake. Next to Hewlett's, for a chandelier for the dining-room. Found one quite to my taste and yours. Then to Negretti and Zambra's to buy a barometer for my own very fancy, for I have long promised to treat myself to one. On the road I obtained the Presburg biscuits, and within their box I send this note, hoping it may reach you the more quickly. They are sweetened with my love and prayers.

"The bedroom will look well with the wardrobe in it; at least, so I hope. It is well made, and I believe, as nearly as I could tell, precisely all you wished for. Joe" (Mr. Joseph Passmore had given this as a present) "is very good, and should have a wee note whenever darling feels she could write it without too much fatigue; but not yet. I bought also a table for you, in case you should have to keep your bed. It rises or falls by a screw, and also winds sideways, so as to go over the bed, and then has a flap for a book or a paper, so that my dear one may read or write in comfort while lying down. I could not resist the pleasure of making this little gift to my poor suffering wifey, only hoping it might not often be in requisition, but might be a help when there was a needs-be for it. Remember, all I buy I pay for. I have paid for everything as yet with the earnings of my pen, graciously sent me in time of need. It is my ambition to leave nothing for you to be anxious about. I shall find the money for the curtains, etc., and you will amuse yourself by giving orders for them after your own delightful taste.

"I must not write more; and indeed matter runs short except the old, old story of a love which grieves over you and would fain work a miracle and raise you up to perfect

health. I fear the heat afflicts you. Well did the Elder say to John in Patmos concerning those who are before the throne of God, 'Neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat.'

"Yours to love in life and death and eternally,

"C. H. S."

Mrs. Spurgeon's keen sense of the beautiful in Nature, and her ability to take pleasure in small things, were also a source of much delight to her in her secluded life.

One summer day we find her noticing with something approaching rapture, "on one of the broad-leaved grasses, a rain-drop sparkling like a diamond, and by its side had settled a large and beautiful greenish-blue fly. The safety of the drop was secured by its position on the leaf, and from this crystal goblet so cunningly contrived and balanced the insect was drinking, with full enjoyment and satisfaction. . . . Looking long and lovingly," the invalid thought she learned this lesson—

"Teach them that not a leaf can grow,
Till life from Thee within it flow,
That not a drop of dew can be,
O Fount of being, save by Thee."

Another time she was charmed as a child in having succeeded in tempting a "Red Admiral" butterfly to settle on a bursting egg-plum in her hand, and so be carried down the garden in triumph. "The exquisite contrast of colour," said Mrs. Spurgeon, "was perfect between the topaz-hued fruit and the regal robes of the quivering little beauty upon it, while her fairy-like poise on the plum, and the alternate opening and folding of her gorgeous wings were details which completed the fascination of the beholders." And she realized a fellowship of feeling with the poet Wordsworth, when he writes—

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Thus was a spiritual and poetic nature ever drawn heavenward by the innocent loveliness that lies all around us upon God's earth.

Sometimes the tender lessons drawn from bird or flower were a means of blessing to others, as was notably the case in the story of "The Lark's Nest," which was embodied in one of Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund Reports.

Rambling in a meadow near their home one day, Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon came upon a lark's nest with eggs in it, almost hidden among the long grass. Having carefully peeped at the treasure they went away, determined, if possible, to watch the progress of the hatching brood. But what was their horror next day to see that several cows had been turned into the meadow to graze! This must mean inevitable destruction to the birdies' lowly home; and quite anxiously Mrs. Spurgeon revisited the spot as soon as she could to see how the little family had fared.

Some readers may be able in imagination to share the relief which she felt to find the nest intact, and the nestlings alive and safe! The grass had been closely cropped all round, but the lark's home had, almost miraculously as it seemed, been preserved from the devouring mouths and clumsy hoofs of the huge creatures which had trampled so near it. From this Mrs. Spurgeon's ready pen wove a parable of our Father's providence.

The little story, in due course, was read to a dying woman, whose fatherless little ones lay a heavy burden upon her heart. It came as a message from God, and so cheered her last hours that she died happily confiding in the goodness of Him who has even the falling sparrow in His care.

The widow's faith was justified, her four bairnies were all provided for by a relative, and for years afterwards they all sent tiny donations to Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund, "for mother's sake." Even by and by, from a new home in Canada, came little remembrances from "Birdie No. 1," or "Birdie No. 2," to show that "The Lark's Nest" was not forgotten.

Their story was in its turn related in a subsequent report, and this again reached the hands of another poor mother whom death was calling from her dear ones. In this case, there is every reason to believe that the message of the

birds was the means not only of comforting the dying one's heart, but of turning it towards God. Thus, Mrs. Spurgeon had the happiness of knowing that her little parable was doubly blessed, and how much of unknown good it may have done, eternity only can show.

Possessing such an instinct for beauty, and the spiritual truths of which it is the garment, we are not surprised to find that the subject of our sketch was attracted to the production of literary work.

Mrs. Spurgeon's *magnum opus* was of course the editing, and no inconsiderable share in the writing, of her illustrious husband's Autobiography. This work, in four large volumes, contains many interesting and charmingly written chapters by the pastor's wife. In addition to this, however, she published a series of three little devotional books—*A Cluster of Camphire, or Words of Cheer and Comfort for Sick and Sorrowful Souls*, *A Carillon of Bells*, and *A Basket of Summer Fruit*.

The graceful and poetic touch of the author is well illustrated in the opening words of *A Carillon of Bells*. "'He that spared not His own Son, . . . how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?' Dear Lord, faith's fingers are touching the keys of this carillon of sweet bells this morning, and making them sing jubilantly to the praise of Thy gracious name!

"How shall He not!
How shall He not!
He that spared not!
How shall He not!"

"What a peal of absolute triumph it is! Not a note of doubt or uncertainty mars the Heavenly music. Awake, my heart, and realize that it is *thy faith* which is making such glorious melody. . . . These silver bells have truly the power to scare away all evil things."

The attractiveness of these little volumes was enhanced by their dainty get-up; shape, tint of covers, and outward embellishment being in every respect most artistic. Her husband used to say, with a twinkle in his eye, that her books were much superior to his in taste and finish, but

that he was not without serious misgivings as to the *contents !*

A friend and frequent visitor after the Spurgeons' removal to "Westwood," relates an incident in which the pastor's admiration for his wife's taste led to one of the many witticisms for which he was noted.

Sitting at tea with the pair was one of the Tabernacle deacons, a silk mercer, noticeable for the brilliant auburn shade of his beard. Repeating to the latter a complimentary remark of Mrs. Spurgeon's respecting the artistic arrangement of goods in the mercer's window, Mr. Spurgeon added, "But I can't imagine how a man of your exquisite taste in colours could have chosen red whiskers !"

"Golden, you mean !" rejoined the mercer, good-humouredly.

"*Golden !*" responded Mr. Spurgeon instantly, "then I'll pledge my word it is twenty-two *carrot !*"

Mrs. Spurgeon wrote her cheering words for fellow-Christians out of the wealth of her own experience. Again and again had she proved the Father's loving care for His children in small things as well as great. But in none of the incidents which we might easily multiply is that minute care so wonderfully exemplified as in the story of her wish for "an opal ring and a piping bullfinch."

It was during one of the invalid's serious attacks of illness that she half-jokingly mentioned to her husband her longing for these two luxuries. But even he, tender as he was, and solicitous to gratify her every possible desire, did not seriously consider the question of procuring either the jewel or the bird.

But not long after, he came into her room with a small box in his hand and delight upon his face. "There is your opal ring, my darling !" he said, and then told the astonishing tale of how an old lady he had once seen when she was ill had sent a note to the Tabernacle to say that she wished to give Mrs. Spurgeon a little present, if some one could be sent to fetch it.

Mr. Spurgeon's private secretary accordingly went, and received from the old lady's hands a small parcel, which on being opened was found to contain an opal ring !

As if this were almost, had it stood alone, too wonderful to believe, the gift—to the Spurgeons beyond doubt a proof of gracious indulgence to the sick one from the Lord Himself—was shortly after followed by the arrival of the coveted bullfinch, and in quite as singular a manner.

Mrs. Spurgeon had been removed to Brighton, there to undergo the operation to which we have already alluded. While she was away, the wife of a sick friend of the pastor's asked him to give a home to her pet songster, whose piping was too much for the sufferer. "I would give him to none but Mrs. Spurgeon," she said; "Bully will interest and amuse her in her loneliness while you are so much away from her."

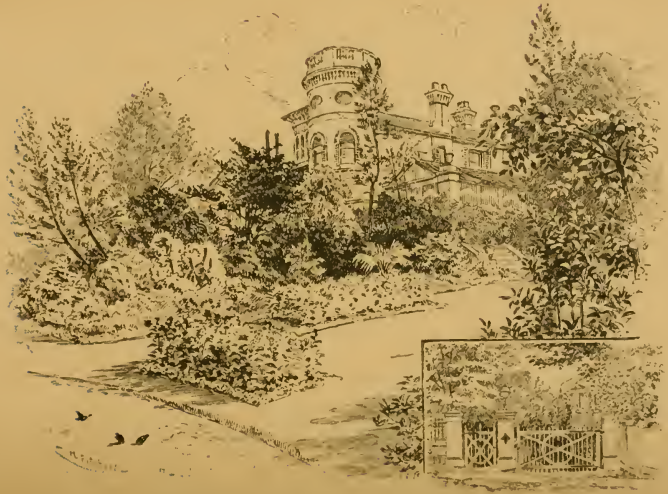
We can imagine the pleasure with which Mr. Spurgeon carried the bird to Brighton, and the joy with which it was received. We can hardly be surprised that the pastor's comment to his wife was, "I think you are one of your Heavenly Father's spoiled children, and He just gives you whatever you ask for."

Allowing that this conclusion bears somewhat hardly on many who are as undoubtedly God's children, but nevertheless do not have every wish gratified, we leave the remarkable story on record for our readers to furnish their own theory with regard to it. Mrs. Spurgeon herself says: "If our faith were stronger and our love more perfect, we should see far greater marvels than these in our daily lives."

On September 21, 1874, Mrs. Spurgeon had the joy of being present at the baptism of her two sons. The ceremony was of course performed by their father at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and an immense crowd of spectators were present.

The thankful and happy mother was presented by the church on this occasion with an illuminated address, commemorating the goodness of "Our gracious Lord that it should have pleased Him to use so greatly the pious teachings and example of our dear sister, Mrs. Spurgeon, to the quickening and fostering of the Divine life in the hearts of her twin sons."

But doubtless the greatest blessing, the most unfailing



WESTWOOD, BEAULAH HILL, UPPER NORWOOD.

solace and alleviation of Mrs. Spurgeon's invalid seclusion which was ever bestowed upon her, was that which arose from her many years of loving service for the Book Fund. The story of this inspired work we must reserve to speak of in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

A TREE OF THE LORD'S OWN PLANTING.

THE inception of the Book Fund scheme dates from the summer of 1875.

In that year Mr. Spurgeon finished the first volume of his *Lectures to my Students*. Lying on the couch in her husband's study, Mrs. Spurgeon eagerly perused the proof-sheets.

"How do you like it?" asked the pastor.

"I wish," was the enthusiastic reply, "that I could place it in the hands of every minister in England."

The author of *John Ploughman* was nothing if not practical. He promptly struck the iron while it was hot by rejoining, "Then why not do so? How much will you give?"

Now it just happened that in a drawer upstairs was a pile of crown-pieces, which it had been a kind of hobby with Mrs. Spurgeon to withdraw from circulation whenever they fell into her hands. She little guessed all through those years for what purpose the cumbrous, medal-like coins were being reserved! She went to her hoard, and counted the money out. There was *exactly* sufficient to pay for one hundred copies of her husband's book. She at once resolved to offer the treasured coins to the Lord, and "in that moment . . . the Book Fund was inaugurated."

The next number of the *Sword and Trowel* contained an invitation to poor Baptist ministers to apply for gratuitous copies of *Lectures to my Students*. They responded so freely, that Mrs. Spurgeon distributed two hundred of the

volumes instead of the one hundred she had at first contemplated.

The next month Mr. Spurgeon inserted in his magazine a brief appeal to friends who would like to help in this work of free circulation. "Cannot something be done to provide ministers with books?" he asked. "If they cannot be made rich in money, they ought not, for their people's sake, to be starved in soul."

This resulted in a generous response, and the scheme was soon officially known as "Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund."

It was an interesting coincidence that just about the time that the pastor's invalid wife was watching the early development of her plan for helping needy ministers, she was also carefully cherishing a tiny lemon-plant grown from a pip placed some months before in a garden-pot. The idea suggested itself that the seedling was a fitting emblem of her embryo Fund, and thenceforward the two were inseparably connected in her mind.

At first this notion was the source of a good deal of merry teasing from the mirthful twins, who would saucily ask whether any lemons had yet appeared. But "You'll see," answered their mother, "the Lord will send me hundreds of pounds for this work yet."

Friends outside were rather charmed with the poetical fancy, and would send donations as "A few drops of water for the lemon-plant," or "Another leaf for your tree."

In little over twelve months the tiny tree boasted no less than twenty-one leaves, and one of the boys, who was clever enough to not only draw but engrave, executed a small picture of it for insertion in the magazine. And the growth of the Fund kept pace with the plant.

The receiving of the gifts of subscribers, the sending out of the parcels of books, and the arrival of the letters of delighted thanks which were evoked, combined to constitute a source of perpetual interest and pleasure to the invalid. "The gold," she wrote, "has seemed to lose its earthly dross when consecrated to Him, and has often shed a light as of Heaven's own golden streets upon my pathway! Coming in seasons of great pain and suffering, these gifts have been like precious anodynes to soothe

my weary spirit and hush my restless thoughts. . . . They have almost charmed away my sorrow, by teaching me to plan for others' joy, and . . . leading to blessed commerce with Heaven, by supplying frequent occasions for prayer and praise."

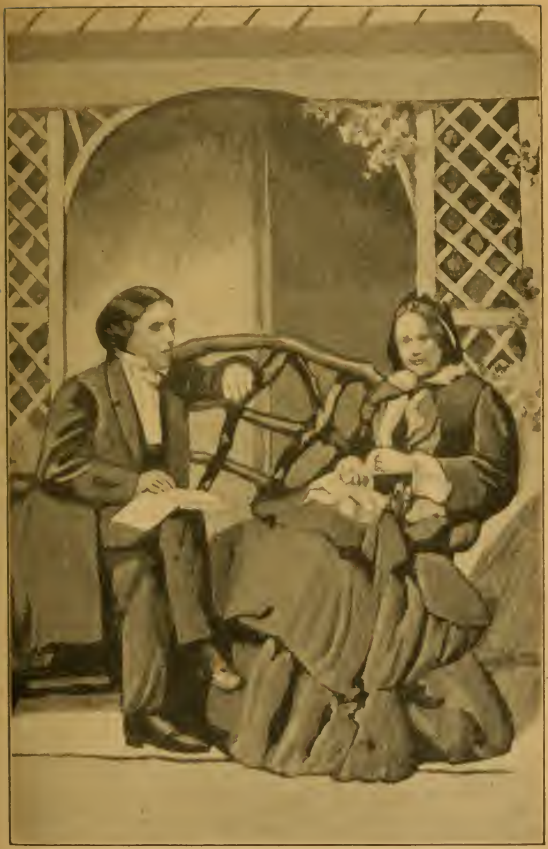
One little girl wrote :—" Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,—I shall be eleven years old to-morrow, and papa says it will be your silver wedding-day. I have not a present worth sending you, but I should like to send you half-a-crown towards a book for some poor minister who cannot buy books for himself. My papa is a minister, and I know how pleased he is if we make him a present of a book, but mamma says there are scores of ministers who have no one to make them presents of books except you. I wish I could send you ever so much more. Papa and mamma hope you and Mr. Spurgeon will live to see your golden wedding. I shall be grown up by that time, and perhaps have more money ; then I can give you what will send more than one book. Yours affectionately, Nellie."

Several times Mrs. Spurgeon was helped by large gifts of books and cards from publishers ; and one friend sent an annual Easter Gift of a generous quantity of note-paper and envelopes, all prettily stamped with initials and address, for the Book Fund correspondence. The same friend subsequently sent parcels of stationery for enclosure with the books for the use of poor ministers.

The year Frances Havergal died, Mrs. Spurgeon decided to send out as long as she could afford it the poetess' beautiful little work on *Consecration*—that " pearl of books," as Mrs. Spurgeon called it—as an extra blessing with every parcel dispatched.

In the year 1880 the lemon-tree was found to have attained a height of seven feet, while the Book Fund had distributed considerably over 20,000 volumes.

Very touching were many of the letters of application and tributes of thanks which found their way to Mrs. Spurgeon's hands. The appalling fact was revealed that many ministers' incomes were far below a hundred a year ! No wonder that such confessions as the following were common :—



MR. AND MRS. SPURGEON IN THEIR GARDEN.

"I have little to spend on books. My salary is only £60 per annum, so that when a new book comes it is like bread to the hungry. I do not say this to make you think I am a martyr—if so I am a very happy one, for I have chosen willingly Christ's service, and my very wants are a means of grace to me."

"Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,—I have this morning enjoyed the almost forgotten luxury of inspecting and handling a parcel of new books. . . . As I sat with your books spread before me, a gleam of the old happiness returned, and I was glad to find that my old love had not been quite starved nor crushed to death."

Another, as warmly, but somewhat less sadly, wrote :—"The parcel of books has arrived safely. No words of mine can express my gratitude to you for so rich a gift. It is the most valuable present I have received during my twenty years' ministry. . . . May the Lord Jesus bless you more and more, and spare you many, many years, and send you friends and give you joy in seeing this noble work growing by your hands! If those who contribute of their wealth only knew the gladness awakened in our hearts, the stimulus and food supplied to weary, jaded minds, the instruction and precious truth which find their way into our sermons, and which in turn cheer and bless many other souls through these noble presents, they would feel themselves more than recompensed even in this world, and before the Master shall say 'Well done!'"

But there were some that suggested, in their very gratitude, needs more urgent even than the want of books. For example, one poor minister says :—

"When I witness the self-denial, and hard, unremitting labour to which my wife cheerfully submits herself to keep our household moving in comfort in the sphere God has given, I cannot with any pleasure add to her difficulty by purchasing the books I often covet, though this doubtless hinders the freshness and variety of my ministry."

Another, with still greater frankness, wrote :—"I never dare now to *think* of a new book. Two or three times I have begun to save a little money towards the purchase of a long-coveted work, but every time it has gone for

something else. John, or little Harry or Walter, *must* have boots, or mother is ill, or the girls' frocks are getting shabby, and so the precious volumes are still unattainable."

Glimpses into the lives of poor ministers as letters such as these afforded suggested to Mrs. Spurgeon's mind the need for another fund. Thus was presently started the Pastors' Aid Society, which, running side by side with the Book Fund, assisted poor ministers with grants of money in times of special adversity, as well as of clothing both new and second-hand.

When it came to be known that sometimes a pastor's children were forced to lie in bed while their clothes were washed because they did not possess a change, friends came forward who thought it a joy to subscribe to this Fund in both coin and kind, as well as to that for providing books.

The letters of thanks these gifts evoked were even more touching than those received in response to the parcels of books, though revealing a most deplorable state of things in some cases.

A friend in Scotland having sent a regular supply of soft woollen shawls, one of these was, said the recipient, "a strangely acceptable present, as you will see when I tell you that last winter I so much needed a large scarf or plaid such as Scotchmen wear, that my wife cut her shawl (of the same kind as the one now sent, but a different colour) to make this said wrap, and now, as the winter is upon us and she requires such a comfort, *it comes!*"

One might indeed devote a whole chapter to incidents showing how marvellously in numberless instances did the presents sent fit in detail the needs of the particular persons to whom they were dispatched.

"You must have been Divinely directed what to send," wrote one grateful recipent. "Only about ten days ago my dear wife said that she really ought to have a waterproof cloak; we both agreed that it was quite needful, but how to get one was the difficulty; when, lo! on opening your parcel, almost the first thing we came across was the very garment we had been talking about, and it fits splendidly!"

"Was this," asks Mrs. Spurgeon, "a mere matter of chance, think you?"

Another time she wrote:—"A mother put on a dress which I had sent her, and found that, if measurements had been taken, its proportions could not have been more correct. Her children were in the room, all delighted to see how nice she looked, when her eldest girl thoughtfully said, 'Mother, what puzzles me is, how Mrs. Spurgeon knows our fit for boots and dresses, and all those things she sends us; it is as if they had been made for us!' 'My darling,' was the answer, 'Mrs. Spurgeon herself could not know, but our God does, and He put it into her heart to send just the things suitable for us.'"

One more instance, and surely our readers will be ready to agree with Mrs. Spurgeon that the Father by whom even the hairs of our head are numbered was specially watching—if there could be such a thing as speciality with the Infinite!—over the distribution of the bounty committed to her trust.

There reached her, on one occasion, a huge package of gentlemen's clothes, the whole of an extensive and valuable wardrobe, sufficient in quantity to supply substantial outfits to six or seven poor pastors. It was unsolicited and unexpected, and at the moment Mrs. Spurgeon felt rather at a loss as to its disposal. But almost immediately after came letters of appeal from six different applicants, disclosing such pressing need that the almoner could but exclaim, "The Lord must have *meant* these coats and vests and beautiful under-garments for these special people!"

One of those who shared in this bounty wrote:—"I had been asking God to send me a pair of new shoes and a pair of trousers, and how to begin to thank Him I do not know."

Besides clothing, the money gifts disbursed amounted to an average of £350 per annum, and represented assistance in every variety of need. Doctors' bills were paid in innumerable cases, food and medicine procured, comforts provided for the new baby and its mother, or the little gathered flower laid decently away under the turf without privation to those who were left. How many heavy burdens were lightened, how many precious lives prolonged

by the timely help of the Pastors' Aid Fund, He only knows from whom its inspiration came.

And still the lemon-tree flourished. "It is brought up to the house, ma'am," said the gardener one day. "It's making a deal of new wood." While to the Book Fund, and the Pastors' Aid Fund, and the clothing supply was added another branch of usefulness, the regular grant of *The Sword and Trowel* to a number of poor ministers unable to afford to buy it themselves; and other off-shoots were still to follow.

The year 1878 was a season of great suffering to Mrs. Spurgeon. Her chronic malady reached a crisis at that time, through which it at one period seemed doubtful if she would survive.

It was during these days of pain and darkness that she who had so often been strangely and sweetly comforted by unlooked-for messages from her Heavenly Father, received one of the loveliest through the simple vehicle of an oaken log burning upon her fire.

After describing her trouble of mind one very gloomy day, as she strove in vain to understand what seemed the hard dealings of Providence in permitting her service to be so often hindered by ill-health, Mrs. Spurgeon goes on to say:—

"For a while silence reigned in the little room . . . . Suddenly I heard a sweet, soft sound, a little clear musical note, like the tender trill of a robin beneath my window. 'What *can* it be?' I said to my companion, who was dozing in the firelight; 'surely no bird can be singing out there at this time of the year and night!' We listened, and again heard the faint, plaintive notes, so sweet, so melodious, yet mysterious enough to provoke for a moment our undisguised wonder. Presently my friend exclaimed, 'It comes from the log on the fire!' and we soon ascertained that her surprised assertion was correct. The fire was letting loose the imprisoned music from the old oak's inmost heart. Perchance he had garnered up this song in the days when all went well with him, when birds twittered merrily on his branches, and the soft sunlight flecked his tender leaves with gold; but he had grown old since

then, and hardened; ring after ring of knotty growth had sealed up the long-forgotten melody until the fierce tongues of the flame came to consume his callousness and the vehement heat of the fire wrung from him at once a song and a sacrifice.

"'Oh!' thought I, 'when the fire of affliction draws songs of praise from us, then indeed are we purified and our God glorified! Perhaps some of us are like this old oak log—cold, hard, and insensible; we should give forth no melodious sounds were it not for the *fire* which kindles round us, and releases tender notes of trust in Him, and cheerful compliance with His will. As I mused, the fire burned and my soul found sweet comfort in the parable so strangely set forth before me. Singing in the fire! Yes, God helping us, if that is the only way to get harmony out of these hard, apathetic hearts, let the furnace be heated seven times hotter than before.'"

Thus did the gracious, poetic soul draw honey from the humblest flowers that bloomed around her path.

Once more the suffering abated, and eagerly did Mrs. Spurgeon resume her beloved work. Year by year was published the cheering record of growing usefulness. Ministers of all denominations were assisted. In one year, amongst thousands of others, applications were received from and granted to Quakers, Waldensians, Irvingites, Moravians, and a Unitarian. Even members of the Anglican section of the Church of England were not loth to avail themselves of the opportunity of enriching their minds with *Lectures to my Students* or *The Treasury of David*, and Mrs. Spurgeon records the fact that some of the most courteous and gracefully appreciative letters of thanks she received were those from clergymen.

The countries to which parcels of books and packets of sermons were dispatched were as diversified and wide apart as the religious views of the recipients—India, America, China, Labrador, Jamaica, the West Indies, Natal, Newfoundland, Buenos Ayres, every corner of the globe was visited by these ever-welcome gifts. The correspondence entailed was enormous, the average number of letters received per month being about five hundred,

and once the total for four weeks reached the amazing number of seven hundred and fifty-five.

As in the annals of every work carried on in childlike faith from the pure motive of love to God and desire to help the needy, the story of Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund abounds in instances of gifts that came, unasked, save of Him; sweet surprises, and timely deliverances from threatened debt which cannot be ascribed to anything but Divine intervention. Donations of £25 or £50 from individuals were comparatively common, and on one memorable occasion a friend called with a cheque for £100, just before the arrival of a quarterly account for expenditure so unexpectedly heavy that a sleepless night of anxiety would have been the inevitable result but for this merciful provision. "Before I called, He answered," is Mrs. Spurgeon's thankful record. "And though trouble was not very distant, He had said, 'It shall not come nigh thee.' O, my soul, bless thou the Lord and forget not this His loving 'benefit!'"

By the close of the year 1880 the lemon-tree had reached the height of seven feet. It had also developed some sharp thorns, which found a parallel in sundry experiences in connection with the Book Fund, causing its owner to exclaim, "Dear emblem tree, are you so true to your mystical character as all that?"

Some of these prickings were inflicted by the donors of books from their own libraries. There were instances, of course, in which most valuable additions were by this means made to the parcels sent out, but there was the usual tendency among the "benevolent" to clear lumber off their shelves by dispatching it to Mrs. Spurgeon.

The lady almoner thought the depths of disappointment from this source had been reached when a *French Grammar*, *Mangnall's Questions*, and *Advice to a Newly-Married Pair* had been received as aids to pulpit preparation. But soon after came *The Complete Housewife and Accomplished Gentlewoman's Companion*, published in 1766.

"After this," she says, "I thought I might have borne anything, but to-day has brought me a sharper experience. . . . I had received an anonymous note, bidding

me expect the arrival of a case of books for the 'Clerical Library,' 'Carriage paid as far as possible.' With much anxiety I awaited the advent of the case. When it made its appearance its size was so imposing that I did not grudge the nine shillings I had to pay for transit, confidently hoping to find many choice treasures in the contents. . . . . But the case was chiefly filled with old hymn-books, works by Unitarians, and books against Believers' Baptism."

Mrs. Spurgeon's justifiable chagrin at such a slap in the face might well be imagined, especially as she was compelled to disappoint several longing applicants, to whom she had promised a share in the hoped-for treasure.

Occasionally, also, painful rebuffs were dealt to her kind heart even by those whom she desired to benefit. A few ministers so strangely misunderstood the spirit of her service that the gifts were either "claimed as a right or disdained as a charity." But, after all, the thorns on the tree were few and far between compared with its foliage and flowers.

The last record we have of the lemon-tree is in 1895, when it had reached a height of eleven feet, while it measured seven feet across. The total receipts of the Book Fund up to the same date were £23,500, in addition to many thousands distributed through the Pastors' Aid Fund, together with the substantial total of the fund "For General use in the Lord's Work," and also the value of books and clothes given by friends.

Writing at the close of twenty years' labour, when a magnificent total of 199,315 volumes had been distributed, Mrs. Spurgeon writes—keeping up the symbolism between the fund and the tree—"The great central stem is, metaphorically, *The Book Fund* itself, out of which all the branches have naturally grown, and with which they all continue to be vitally connected. Springing from the main trunk, and almost rivalling it in strength and usefulness, is the largest limb of the tree, which represents *The Pastors' Aid Fund.* This, in its turn, has thrown out the widely-spreading branch from which the well-filled boxes of *The Westwood Clothing Society* have dropped

into many a poor pastor's home. Peering between the thickly-interlaced foliage I spy a sturdy bough bearing the inscription *Home Distribution of Sermons*, and an equally vigorous off-shoot dedicated to *The Circulation of Sermons Abroad*, while the topmost twigs, on which *I* can plainly read the words *Foreign Translations of Sermons*, bid fair to rival in all respects their older companions."

Perhaps we cannot do better than close this chapter of our sketch with a few verses from the conclusion of a cheerful poem on the Book Fund and the lemon-tree which "darling son Tom" sent his mother when he was in New Zealand.

"From what a very tiny seed
The glorious Book Fund grew;
To what proportions it would reach
Not e'en its planter knew.

* * * * *

And now the Fund Tree firmly stands
With shade, and sap, and scent;
A tree of knowledge—all its leaves
For Pastors' blessing meant.

Live on, live on, dear lemon-tree
Be never moribund,
Fit emblem from the very first
Of Mrs. Spurgeon's Fund."

CHAPTER V.

WALKING ALONE.

OVER the closing years of Mrs. Spurgeon's life space forbids us to linger.

On January 31, 1892, the light of her eyes, the chosen of her youth, and the no less fond lover of her grey hairs, was taken from her. It is not for us to venture to describe the anguish of that bereavement; but many years before, in one of those pictures or parables by means of which this sensitively organized woman so many times received spiritual teaching, a foreshadowing had been given her of

the manner in which her soul should be sustained when the dreaded moment came.

At the time of her great sorrow, Mrs. Spurgeon recalled as almost prophetic the words in which she had recorded a memorable natural phenomenon of the year 1881, during one of her husband's health-seeking visits to the south of France.

"At 3.30 P.M.," she wrote—the exact date is not given, but the circumstance will be in the memory of many of our readers—"midnight had taken the place of day, and spread its sable wings over the earth prematurely. Nothing could be seen all around but black, lowering masses of dense darkness, which hung like funeral palls from the sky, and now and again lifted their heavy folds only to reveal a deeper gloom beyond. Not a ray of heaven's light pierced this dreadful overshadowing, and a stillness more awesome than that of real night hushed all familiar sounds.

"Into this dismal murkiness came two letters from Mentone, telling of a placid sea, warm breezes, and clear, bright skies—letters so full of joy and good news and glad delight, that for the moment the unbidden tears would gather from the sheer longing I had to be in the sunshine too! But when the shutters were closed and the curtains drawn, and the dreary scene without excluded, I found I still had light in my dwelling, for, like a star, better seen from the depths of a well than from higher ground, shone the conspicuous mercy that my beloved was spared this doleful experience. I knew that the fearful darkness could not spread its black wings as far as the Riviera, and I blessed God for the comfortable certainty that 'over there' the beauty and splendour of an unclouded sky were doing their sweet, restful work on a tired heart and brain. So my gloom was dispelled by the light of my husband's happiness, and the sunbeams imprisoned in his precious letters had travelled a thousand miles to turn my night into day!

"I wonder if this is a faint picture of the comfort wherewith God consoles His bereaved children by enabling them to realize the unspeakable blessedness of those who have

'gone before.' Temporary separations by distance are but the foreshadowing of a sterner parting, which, sooner or later, must divide us from those whose love seems to be our very life. Happy they who can look beyond the grim darkness of such a sorrow to the unsullied light and bliss which the hope of eternal reunion affords!"

This was ever the one unbroken string of her harp of joy, in which, like the pathetic figure of "Hope" conceived by Mr. G. F. Watts, the heart-wrung widow still found heavenly music. We see the same thought constantly recurring in all she wrote on the subject of her great loss through the twelve solitary years that remained of her life.

Before long she was able to testify: "In my deep and increasing loneliness I still found sweetest comfort in praising God for His will concerning my beloved and myself, and have even been able to thank Him for taking His dear servant from this sorrowful land of sin and darkness to the bliss and glory of His eternal presence. . . . Many a time, when the weight of my dreadful loss seemed as if it must crush me, it has been lifted by the remembrance that in heaven my dear one is now perfectly praising his Lord, and that if I can sing too, I shall even here on earth be joining him in holy service and acceptable worship."

It had been a source of joy to the devoted couple that on Mr. Spurgeon's last visit to Mentone his wife had accompanied him; thus their wish of many unsatisfied years was granted, and together they gazed upon those scenes of beauty which previously Mrs. Spurgeon had only known through her husband's description of them. But this added poignancy to the grief of the one left behind, when, staying for a while as the guest of Mr. Hanbury in his palatial home at La Martola, she constantly came upon new treasures—something "more rare, costly or beautiful" than she had ever seen before, and her first impulse was to go and tell *him* about it, and bring him to share her pleasure. Then, remembering that he was gone, her grief would awaken again with terrible intensity, till it was borne in upon her that our Lord's estimate of true affection was expressed in the words, "If ye loved Me, ye would

rejoice," and she strove to calm the passionate yearning of her spirit by dwelling on the thought that no matter how she longed to share with him the loveliness all around her, he was " with Christ, which is *far better.*"

In 1895 the balm of Divine healing had so far accomplished its blessed work that Mrs. Spurgeon was able to write: " The thought of my dear one's happiness in Heaven always brings soothing to my heart, be its pain never so fierce. There is a likeness of him in the study just over against where he used to sit—so natural, so life-like, that for these three years I have averted my eyes from it when entering the room rather than have the fountain of tears and grief continually unlocked. But I am now beginning to school myself to look up in his dear face, and say, with hands uplifted to God in praise, ' I give thee joy, beloved, that thou art with Him ! ' "

It was during this year that Mrs. Spurgeon, while visiting Bexhill, learned that the town possessed no Baptist Chapel. It occurred to her to busy herself in establishing one as a memorial of her husband. Soon, through the instrumentality of her prayers and work, a school-chapel was opened, and two years later she had the privilege of laying the foundation-stone of a handsome building, erected "To the glory of God, and in perpetual remembrance of her beloved husband's blameless life, forty years' public ministry, and still continued proclamation of the Gospel by his printed sermons."

In 1899, on February 8, Mrs. Spurgeon held a reception in the basement of the Tabernacle, where, in one day, she received no less than £6,367 towards the Rebuilding Fund.

Thus the years of separation wore on, cheered by the presence of both her sons and the love of a wide circle of friends. Her constant companion was Miss E. H. Thorne, with whom she enjoyed a close and happy intimacy for nearly forty years. As long as strength would permit Mrs. Spurgeon continued to work for her beloved Book Fund, with its many branches, and also to expend much loving care upon the selection of the daily texts for " Spurgeon's Illustrated Almanack," which had been her pleasant

From a photo. by] [*Messrs. Negretti & Zambra.*

MRS. SPURGEON.

task for about thirty years. But the special occupation of her widowhood was, of course, her biography of her husband, to which we have already alluded, a work in four large volumes, in the compilation of which she was assisted by Mr. Spurgeon's private secretary, Mr. Harrald.

In the summer of 1903 Mrs. Spurgeon was seized by the malady, the result of a chill, from which she never really recovered. She did not leave her bed again. Early in September it was believed that every day might be her last, yet she lingered for nearly two months.

Miss Thorne was her constant and devoted nurse. One day, when growing steadily weaker, the invalid asked, "Whom shall I see next?" referring to the many friends who craved the privilege of a farewell visit.

"Whom would you like to see, darling?" inquired Miss Thorne.

Her face radiant with deathless love, Mrs. Spurgeon at once exclaimed, "My husband!"

The weary waiting time was fast drawing to its close. On October 17 the Rev. Thomas Spurgeon received from his dying mother her blessing for himself and his twin brother. "The blessing—the double blessing of your father's God be upon you!" she murmured, and bade him a tender farewell.

Later still, with clasped hands, she breathed, "Blessed Jesus! Blessed Jesus! I can see the King in His Glory!"

In the forenoon of Thursday, October 22, 1903, a notice was placed outside the Tabernacle to announce that "Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon entered Heaven at 8.30 this morning."

The crowded funeral service, which was conducted by the Rev. Archibald Brown and the Rev. C. B. Sawday, was divested, as far as possible, of the usual sombre trappings of grief. No black horses drew the many mourning carriages, no crape or hat-bands were seen, and there was no black border to the special sheet of hymns.

Concluding his touching and appropriate address, Mr. Brown reminded his hearers, in words with which we may fitly bring this sketch of a true woman and devoted worker

to a close, that, in the early days of their mutual love, Mr. Spurgeon's frequent word to his dear one would be—"Meet me at the Palace," and the Crystal Fountain was the appointed spot.

"The phrase," said Mr. Brown, "seemed to glow with prophetic fire. The tryst is kept, and there is glory at the fountain to-day."

Emma Booth-Tucker.

CHAPTER I.

'A SWEET AND PLEASANT CHILD.'

IT seems no exaggeration to say that in the annals of Christian workers, in the history of the rise and progress of the many religious sects and organizations in existence to-day, the Booth family and their achievements are absolutely unique.

Other reformers may have been as enthusiastic and capable as "The General," but none have wielded so mighty and far-reaching a power for the regeneration of the world. Many have been unmarried or childless, or hampered with a partner uncongenial towards their aims and ideals. Thus their influence has been limited to the comparatively few with whom they could come into personal touch, and their work when they were called away passed into other hands and the guidance of different minds. But General Booth, enabled by the perfect sympathy of his wife to bring up his large family in complete accord with the one absorbing motive of his life, has, as it were, extended himself into every part of the world. His own flesh and blood, inspired by his own thoughts and feelings, rendering him as loyal obedience as the very members of his own body, are carrying on his work all over the civilized globe. The Salvation Army resembles a huge banyan-tree, of which every branch springing from the parent stem

strikes roots into the earth and shoots forth branches of its own as an independent tree while still in living connection with the main trunk.

We cannot all be banyan-trees,—God has a place and a use for plants and shrubs of every kind,—but we must perforce admire this colossal and beneficent growth, and one of the most beautiful and fruitful of the offspring stems was the consecrated life of the General's second daughter, Emma, afterwards Mrs. Booth-Tucker, widely known as "The Consul."

Born in 1860, Emma Booth's birth and infancy were singularly coincident with her mother's first printed exposition and personal example of the right of women, if so called, to publicly expound the Scriptures.

A very short time before this little daughter saw the light, Mrs. Booth's mind had been deeply exercised in producing a pamphlet in defence of an American woman-evangelist whose work had been the subject of hostile criticism. When the baby was but three months old, the mother made her début in her husband's pulpit, delivered a sermon, and thus began her own career as a preacher. From that time forward her thoughts were filled with her new work, and if ever an infant may be considered to have imbibed any particular tendency of disposition with its earliest natural sustenance, Emma Booth must have thus drawn into her veins a desire to spread the Gospel.

In common with other members of this remarkable family, little Emma professed conversion at an extremely tender age, and the really serious view which she took of her responsibilities may be judged from the fact that even her dolls were thenceforward condemned to a severely Puritanical style of dress. "I feel that we must be so careful," said the small mother to a friend who vainly tempted her with the offer of a flounce to a doll's frock, "even in trifles like that. We must not even dress our dollies in worldly clothes."

She was exceedingly fond of these said dolls, nevertheless, and one of the handsomest she possessed was given her under very interesting circumstances.

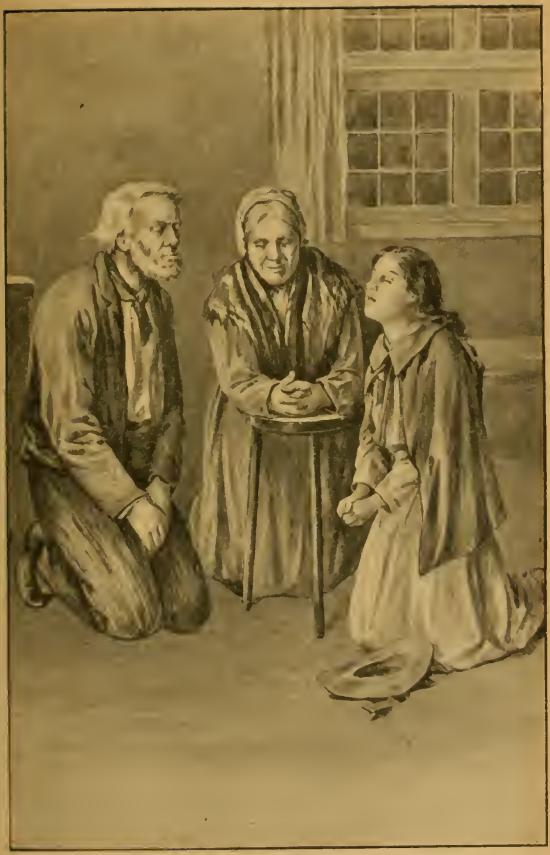
Among Emma's mates at a small day-school which for a time she attended was a motherless child of somewhat deficient intellect, who, because of her general unattractiveness, had become the object of the derision and persecution of her thoughtless school-fellows. It was a touching proof of the maternal tenderness of Emma's heart, and an earnest of her future work among the uncared-for masses, that she soon took this poor little creature under her wing, washed her face, did her hair, and defended her from the teasing to which she had previously been subjected. The large doll above mentioned was a gift from this child's father, in token of his gratitude for Emma's kindness to his little one.

Some years later, but while still in her early teens, Mr. and Mrs. Booth allowed this daughter to have a live *protégé* in place of her erewhile beloved dolls.

To comfort the last moments of a poor woman whom she had been in the habit of visiting, Emma promised to look after her youngest child, a boy of about two years old. Being permitted to have the little fellow in her own care under her father's roof, the young girl spared no trouble in faithfully fulfilling her trust. She even washed his little socks with her own hands, and when he was restless at night would walk up and down the room with him in her arms that no one else in the house might be disturbed. Through her loving tact the child became in course of time a permanent inmate of the General's home, and was treated as one of the family. He is now the "Major Secunda," one of the Army's medical officers in India.

It is needless to say that, when necessity arose, Emma devotedly mothered her own small sisters and brothers. "I can safely leave all the younger children in her and Willie's charge," wrote Mrs. Booth, when the little girl was only about eleven years old.

At this age, being not quite satisfied with the completeness of her earlier conversion, Emma once more gave herself to God and His service. Although, owing to excessive nervousness and timidity, she did not speak in public or to adults until quite grown-up, she began to hold meetings for children in her own home when only thirteen years



EMMA BOOTH PRAYING IN THE COTTAGE WITH THE FISHER FOLK.

old. On these occasions the practical young evangelist of cleanliness as well as godliness would wash and brush up the members of her congregation in the scullery before introducing them to the school-room where the service was to be held.

"I loved children," she said. "I longed to help them. I was not afraid of *children*, but grown-up people."

And, having excluded even the members of her own family with the exception of her younger sister, Eva, she would sing, pray, and talk with the little urchins she thus gathered in, until she absolutely brought them to the penitent form in tears.

But retiring as was Emma's natural disposition, she could be bold and courageous when her sense of duty compelled. There is no doubt that the strong feeling of personal importance and responsibility which the General and his wife appear to have cultivated in all their children was a great support in many crises when young people differently brought up would have failed through a lower estimate of their own powers.

On one occasion Emma actually ventured to separate boys whom she saw fighting in the Park opposite her home, and talked to them until she effected a reconciliation.

Another time, when in the country, she ran after a boy who was driving a donkey-cart and cruelly beating his little steed. Remonstrances proving ineffectual, she seized the reins and stopped the cart. Then, snatching the stick from the angry young ruffian, she soundly chastised him with it about his head and face.

The boy appears to have been too much astonished to make any resistance, and finally he was prevailed upon to kneel down with the little lady in the sandy road, and pray for forgiveness. Then, promising never to ill-treat his donkey again, he offered to drive her home. On the way Emma told him how to bathe the bruises her wholesome beating had caused, and thereafter the reformed lad looked upon her as one of his best friends.

Once when Emma was staying at the seaside apart from her parents, she heard of a fisherman who was in the habit of boiling his lobsters alive. The thought of

such cruelty was agony to her, but instead of suffering in helpless silence, as most children would have done, the future Consul set off at once to put a stop to it. Alone she visited the fisherman's cottage, and prayed and pleaded with him and his wife until they promised, with contrition, never to commit such barbarity again.

A sensitive conscientiousness as well as a tender heart was a marked characteristic of Emma Booth's childhood.

Adjutant Parkins, once the maid "Polly" of the Booth household, testifies that had Miss Emma been sent up to bed supperless as punishment for some childish fault, no amount of persuasion would have induced her to touch a single bite of anything taken up to her on the sly. And Emma herself has said that when her mother was away from home, and she was left more or less in charge of the younger ones, she used to "imagine mamma was in the room all the time, and could see everything that was done."

On another occasion, having been sent with her nurse to have a tooth out, Emma's courage at the crucial moment utterly broke down, and she left the surgery without having had the operation performed.

On the way home, however, it suddenly occurred to her that her disobedience to her parents' wishes might have "hurt the dentist in his soul." Then conscientiousness and that exalted opinion of the weight of her own personal influence which we have before remarked, actually triumphed over natural fear, and the child went bravely back, confessed her anxiety to the dentist, and had the tooth removed forthwith. The gentleman, we are told, was touched to tears by the concern expressed for the well-being of his soul, and assured his little patient that if any harm had been inflicted it was more than atoned for by the prompt and practical repentance which had followed.

But for an absolutely self-oblivious regard for the feelings of another, one anecdote told of Emma Booth when scarcely more than an infant goes beyond anything we have ever heard or read. Mrs. Booth having had occasion to give her little daughter a whipping, the child was anxious for days afterwards lest her mother's own hand should

have been injured by the severity of the blows it had inflicted!

After this, it is needless to assure our readers that as a daughter Emma Booth was conspicuous for devoted filial affection. "If mamma was resting, Emma would keep the house quiet, and would sit on the stair to prevent any one passing the door; if mamma was troubled, Emma would try in every way to help and cheer her. She spent her life in planning and arranging how she could best spare her mother trouble, and bring her joy."

And these loving ministrations were warmly appreciated. Mrs. Booth was aware of the moral superiority of her own carefully-trained children over ordinary young people, nor was she afraid of letting them know her good opinion of them.

Writing on one occasion when away from home, to Emma, who was suffering from one of those attacks of low spirits to which, from nervous weakness, she was prone, Mrs. Booth said:—"I am quite willing to admit that most girls of sixteen would feel very much as you did about Katie coming, my being away, etc. But then, my Emma is not one of these 'most girls.' She has more sense, more dignity of character, and above all more religion. She only got into the dumps, and for once felt and spoke like 'one of the foolish women.'"

We might easily multiply stories of Emma Booth's unselfishness, helpfulness, and remarkably early piety. A lady who was governess to the Booth children for some years assures us that Emma talked frequently about her conversion and religious experience. "Always modestly and unaffectedly, yet with no uncertainty," writes this witness. "One day I said to her, 'Emma, you are a very happy little girl; you look happy, and you are so often smiling!' 'Oh yes,' she replied, gently, 'don't you think it is because I am a Christian child? You have often told me it is the Christian who is happy.' Then after thinking a little she went on, 'Now a child who does not love Jesus cannot really look happy.' Indeed, she had a very sweet smile, though she was such an earnest, grave little maiden. She always felt the responsibility of being an elder sister,

and used to say, 'You see the little ones will copy me.'"

This lady also relates that one of the first steps that led to the ultimate conversion of her own mother was the incident of little Emma and one of her sisters kneeling one on either side of her, holding her hands and praying for her, when one day she called at their home.

"She stands before me," the governess concludes, "just a sweet and pleasant child, always loving, always unselfish, with ever the ready word 'Never mind me.' Surely with the life and character of such a Mother in Israel, her children shall rise up to call her blessed."

CHAPTER II.

'A SORT OF HUNT' FOR THE LOST.

EMMA BOOTH'S public ministration seems to have actually commenced at the age of ten, though shortly afterwards a severe accident to her hand, which shattered her nervous system, interrupted her work for many years.

Her first testimony was given at an experience meeting held after a poor children's tea at Bethnal Green.

After some hesitation, owing to a remembered fault during the day, Emma stood up, and, strengthened by inward prayer, faltered, with the tears rolling down her cheeks—"I cannot say much, but I can say I love Jesus. I have many trials, but—

> 'When fierce temptations try my heart,
> I'll sing, Jesus is mine!
> And so, though tears at times may start,
> I'm singing all the time.'"

She retained to the last a firm belief in the efficacy of tears, having many times proved that a falling tear would do more towards softening a hard heart than many exhortations.

Very soon after this, Emma made her second appearance, and briefly addressed a hall full of the roughest East End children. Following her elder sister and brother, she spoke very simply and lovingly from the words, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." And many children, we are told, sought the Saviour that evening.

For the reason mentioned above, this was little Emma's last platform effort for many a long day, though in private she constantly sought to win souls.

It was about this time that she made her first personal convert—a Jewish child. Having made this little girl's acquaintance one day when out bowling her hoop, a warm friendship sprang up between them, and Emma was allowed to accept invitations to visit at her new friend's house.

Soon after, the little Jewess was called upon to undergo a severe operation to one of her eyes, and so helped and strengthened was she by Emma's earnest prayers on her behalf, that it resulted in a confession of belief in the Christian's Saviour.

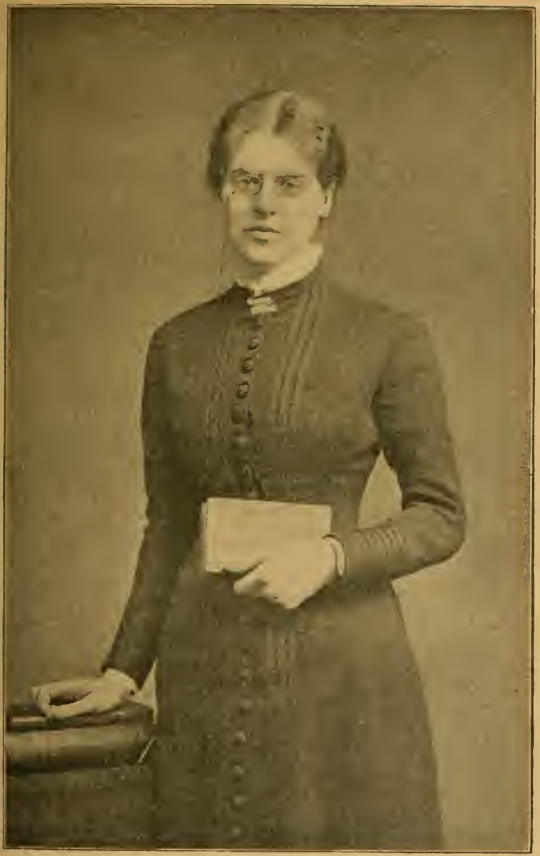
We have already spoken of the meetings which Emma used to hold for poor children in her own home, and we find that she seemed always able to pray with as well as for any one in whose welfare she was interested, and though unable to address audiences at the public Holiness meetings which her brother and sister attended, she was able to lift her voice in supplication for the anxious ones.

When she was about fifteen, Emma had what was probably her first personal dealing with one of the adult "masses."

She was on her way to the Mission Hall in Hackney, where a meeting was to be held, when she noticed a rough-looking man leaning dejectedly against a wall. Something whispered to the young girl that this man's need was very great, and, mastering her timidity, she crossed over to him, and talked to him until she persuaded him to go to the meeting with her.

But, as this episode seemed to mark another decision-point in Emma's early life, we will continue the story in her own words.

"That night that man was saved. I found afterwards



EMMA BOOTH AS A YOUNG GIRL.

that he was a prodigal boy—a boy who had been away from home for years. Though a man now, he had left it when quite young. I asked him if he would like me to go home with him. He was crying very much. He had been telling out the long catalogue of sins at Christ's feet; but a new ray of happiness lit up his face as we trotted off together to find that little mother's home. Of course, not being there you would not understand my feelings, but I shall never forget the impression that little mother's face made upon my heart. She was very short, and her face was very wan. As she lifted her arms to get them round this long-lost boy's neck, I thought she would never have succeeded, for he was a very big man indeed. As he knelt down at her feet she put her arms round him, and their tears mingled together. As she talked to him some of the sentences seemed written upon my heart, never to be effaced. 'With every blessing I have asked at my breakfast I have prayed for you; and every time I have been out in the open air I have looked for you! Indeed, all my life, Ben, has been a sort of hunt after you.'

"As I left them there, weeping and praising God together, and went home, I looked up through the darkness of that night into Christ's face, and said, 'Lord, let that be so with me; whatever I have and am, let that be my experience, known in Heaven, and known amongst all who shall know me down here, that my whole life may be 'a sort of hunt' after those Thou didst die to redeem—whether eating or drinking, single or married, or whatever comes to me—that I may be able to say equally, when I recognize the prodigals whom Thou shalt help even me to bring home, my whole existence has been a 'sort of hunt' after them, and that my supreme joy was in their salvation."

Earnestly, indeed, and strenuously did Emma Booth seek to fulfil this, her girlhood's ideal. Having received from no less an authority than the late Sir Morell Mackenzie the assurance that she was gifted with one of the best throats he had ever known for public speaking, she prayed and strove earnestly for power to overcome her peculiar shrinking from platform testimony. But it was not until she was seventeen years of age—early enough, one may

say, for ordinary mortals, but abnormally late for one of the Booth family—that Emma at length conquered this repugnance and came out boldly in the same kind of work in which her sisters and brothers had already been long engaged.

Her first appearance was at St. Leonards, and astonished her relatives, who were unprepared for so sudden an accession of courage.

As so many times before in her young life, it was love and sympathy for another which wrought the victory. A "good little woman evangelist" was struggling in the poorer parts of that fashionable seaside town with a lot of rough people and insufficient support. Emma Booth promised to help her, but did not go so far as to say she would take a service.

The evangelist was therefore as much surprised as anybody when, on the Sunday evening, Emma, obeying an inward impulse, ascended the rostrum, gave out a hymn, and subsequently announced her text.

This was the third verse of the tenth chapter of Isaiah, and the ice once broken she spoke with a fluency and apparent ease that betrayed little of the "unutterable things" which, she afterwards confessed to her mother, she was feeling inside.

The meeting was a great success, five souls being induced to seek salvation. And from that time forward Emma's rich, persuasive voice, with that originality of ideas and wonderful forcefulness of expression which, her biographer tells us, "combined to mark her out as one of Nature's orators," was heard with increasing frequency at the meetings of the "Christian Mission."

When Emma was eighteen that mission was definitely organized into the Salvation Army of world-wide fame, and it was her taste chiefly that assisted Mrs. Booth in the selection of that becoming "Hallelujah" bonnet which may have had not a little to do with the success and popularity of the whole scheme.

When Emma Booth was twenty years old, it seemed necessary to the General and his wife that some sort of training should be bestowed upon their young soldiers

before the latter could be properly equipped for sending out to fight the world.

The first house devoted to the purpose of a Training Home was the very one in which Emma had passed so many of her childish years, and where her first meetings for neglected little ones were held. And Emma herself, mature in character and religious experience, though so young in years, was appointed Matron of the female department.

One of the earliest "cadets" to come under the girlish "Mother's" influence was the present Mrs. "Colonel" Wilson. She now writes:—"From the first she exercised a Divine influence upon us all; to me she became the ideal of all that was womanly and Christ-like. . . . Her lectures in those days were more like Bible-readings. She clung to her Bible, and taught us from it, giving us whole chapters to learn by heart. . . . Often would we be bathed in tears while she spoke to us on the love of God in Christ to souls, and a passion for sinners was kindled in our hearts that made us willing to go through loneliness and difficulty, fearing nothing.

"She inspired the nervous and fearful with confidence by assuring us that she was praying and believing for our triumph.

"She never discouraged any one, however dark, or tiresome, or wayward. Her life made us detest meanness or selfishness, to hate sin in every form."

It was unceasingly impressed upon these young soldiers that, in the language of St. Paul, the old man with his deeds must be crucified, so that they should cease to lust after the flesh, being delivered from all desire for worldly aggrandizement, pleasure, or ease, from all love of money, care about praise and esteem, and satisfaction in anything which was not fulfilment of duty and honourable to God.

The mornings in the Training Homes were usually devoted to Bible-study and the learning of sacred "songs" from the Army "song-book." The first chapter to be committed to heart was the fifty-third of Isaiah. Miss Booth at this time trained a Songsters' Brigade, which she subsequently took with her on a tour in the north of

England and Scotland to raise funds for the Training Home.

In the afternoons the cadets, under the title of the "Cellar, Gutter, and Garret Brigade," visited the dwellers in the slums. Here the nature of their work may be fittingly described by quoting some simple verses by the pen of the Training Home Mother herself.

"Going down with gladness at the Master's call,
Going down to seek and save the worst of all,
Going down to bid the sinning sin no more,
Going down to point their eyes to Canaan's shore.

. . .

Going down to share the widow's lonely lot,
Going down that I may rock the outcast's cot,
Going down to clasp the orphan to my breast,
Toiling hard that I may bring the toilers rest.

Going down to make the slummer's dwelling neat,
Going down to clothe the children's naked feet,
Going down where eyes of mercy seldom see,
Going down to make the poor a cup of tea.

. . . . .

Going down that I may send the lost ones up,
Going down that by and by with Christ they'll sup,
Going down while life shall last—still deeper down,
Finding precious jewels for my Master's crown."

When one remembers what all this really meant for the girl cadets—dressing in old, shabby clothes that the poorest might feel thoroughly at home with them, sometimes with an old shawl in lieu of a bonnet—tramping weary miles through vilest streets, boldly entering the dens of the worst characters, sitting often upon the floors (and *such* floors!) to wash babies whose rags had not been removed from their poor little vermin-eaten bodies for days—tending the most loathsome and long-neglected of sick persons, facing the return of drunken parents or infuriated husbands—we cannot but heartily endorse Miss Booth's exclamation, "They are real heroines!"

In the evenings came the Home Holiness and Experience meetings, when all shyness, diffidence and reserve as to

even the most sacred and inmost feelings were to be overcome. Not least among the disciplinary severities of the soldiers' training must have been the agonies of this Protestant confessional. But we are assured that it was not uncommon under stress of the emotions then evoked for the young people to stand up, and, bathed in tears, to voluntarily expose their own hidden inconsistencies and failures which no one had previously perceived.

The happiness of the cadets and their affection for the Home was, however, evinced by "spontaneous outbursts of joyous praise to God whenever one of the Staff officers appeared in the midst of an assembled company of them, or when even the name of the Training Home was mentioned."

When the Training Home was removed into much larger and more commodious quarters, Miss Booth still maintained her responsible position; she cared tenderly for the bodies as well as the souls of those under her charge, even to tasting the cadets' food to see if it were of regulation quality, and visiting their dormitories at night to assure herself that they were sufficiently warm in bed.

"Her impartiality was no less remarkable than her individual care for *each*. If there was any danger of a Training Home girl going wrong, Mother would leave no stone unturned to save the tempted one. . . . Her chief thought in those days was undoubtedly for the women she was training for the world's salvation, but she always found time to sympathize with, and pray for, the aged, the poor, and the suffering."

Miss Booth's day's work at that time is thus described by one of her Staff:—

"She used to come in the morning, meet her Heads of Departments, hurry through the most pressing of her letters, and then go into the lecture-room, to use every fibre of her being in the most intense sort of public speaking for an hour; then come out, take a cup of cocoa, and go straight at her 'Personals' (interviews with cadets) for the rest of the day.

"Her lectures were always forceful and original. She has cultivated the art of saying deep things simply, of

making all matters whereon she dwells clear to minds unwonted to close thought. She gathers illustrations diligently from walks of life daily familiar to her listeners."

The same writer testifies to Miss Booth's self-forgetfulness in the interests of those whose spiritual life she felt to be dependent upon her.

"Few Field girls but can recall, for the help and cheer of their own hours of weakness and weariness, more than one day when they saw Miss Booth leaning on a chair, almost too exhausted to stand, through the fiery address she would give them; or some time when they crept into her room for the 'Personal,' grieving silently over the bandaged brow and throbbing temples which she was disregarding in her passionate eagerness for their advancement."

Indomitable energy, that natural combativeness of temperament which resists all opposition whether from within or without, and in any cause makes the victorious fighters of the world, was as strong in this fragile woman as in the other members of her family.

An instance of this trait, though belonging to a later period of Miss Booth's career, may well be given here.

On one occasion she had been invited to conduct a Sunday's Campaign in the town of Reading, where, owing to serious riots which a previous visit of Salvationists had provoked, a bye-law had been framed forbidding processions after dark.

After an arduous day's work, resulting in the conversion of fifty-two men and women, Miss Booth, exhausted as she was, at eleven P.M. proposed a march through the town. Some one reminded her of the bye-law. This clinched the argument. "Oh, bother the bye-law!" she exclaimed. "Let's show the people we are anxious about their souls!"

Accordingly, the band, the soldiers and the converts lined up, and, accompanied by the warlike lady, paraded the streets till one o'clock next morning.

This incident well illustrates the unquenchable zeal and the impatience of secular control which characterized at that time the leaders of the Army movement. This

spirit was readily imbibed by that class of persons from which most of the early converts were drawn, and much stone-throwing and mud-flinging was the result. But the ardour of neither soldiers nor officers was in any way damped thereby.

During the eight years that Emma Booth held the important position of Mother to the Salvation Army Training Home, no less than seven hundred girls and women came under her influence, and she made a separate life-study of every one. Like her father and mother, she evidently included among her many and varied gifts of mind and heart the faculty for reading human nature.

Another who saw her often during those early days at the Training Home writes :—" Her (Miss Emma Booth's) enthusiasm and encouragement were unfailing. How often her smile smoothed away difficulties here as elsewhere, and her cheery words chased away many, many clouds from the young cadets, who often trembled in view of what was expected from them in their singing and musical work as well as in connection with the ordinary work of ' Officers.' "

We are told that the young " Mother " very seldom gave *an order* to any one under her control. She ruled solely by love, and it was necessary only for her to express a wish, and the result was an immediate and affectionate response.

This power is the more remarkable when we consider how strict and unremitting was the discipline maintained among those who offered themselves as candidates for the work of the Army. Miss Booth's own description of the training of these cadets tells us that they were " taught and continually reminded that true religion consists in pure, unselfish love towards God, their comrades, and a dying world. Anything approaching self-gratification was to be spurned, and the utmost and most constant self-denial and the taking up of the cross, however new or painful that cross may be, was daily urged upon them. They were taught to rest on nothing less than the immediate assurance of forgiveness of sins and cleansing from impurity ; that as holy men and women and representatives

of God they must abandon hatred and avoid the appearance of all bitterness, wrath, malice, revenge, harshness, evil-speaking, evil-thinking, tale-bearing, and all that would offend or grieve the Holy Spirit."

The "Mother" soon perceived the weak point of each cadet, and devoted all her tact and wisdom, with love and patience, to remedying it. The private "Personal" talks already alluded to, with their heart-searching questions, elicited confessions, and faithful advice—all absolutely secret and sacred to herself and the one they most concerned —were the principal means to this end. But she also advised them to embroider across their red jerseys the name of the virtue they most lacked—such as "Courage" for the timid, "Faith" for the wavering, a constant reminder to themselves and others of their special failing.

Albeit, whatever the methods which Miss Booth employed for the moulding and strengthening of her cadets in the ways of righteousness and rules of the Army, there seems no doubt that she possessed in general their hearty obedience and most loyal love. So long as it was possible, she kept up a personal correspondence with each "soldier" when the latter left the Training Home for the "field."

Most of these letters were autograph, and were individual answers to special difficulties. But occasionally a circular address would be sent. Here is part of one of them, addressed to "Sisters in the Field," a fair specimen of both matter and style :—

"You remember, dear girls, it was *Goodness* we looked upon as the *one and all-important necessity* when in the Training Home. On that hangs all the rest. Without it you, and any effort you may make, must come to naught ; but while your hearts are perfectly right, and your lives are being lived with the one view of bringing pleasure and glory to Him, it matters not what may come to you before next Christmas. You are blessedly safe in the Master's own keeping, and if He is for you, who can be against you ?

"Only look sufficiently into your own inner lives, which are lived by each one of us openly before Him from whom no secrets are hid. Be *quite* certain that all is as *He* would like it to be in your *hearts*, then, in faith more confident

than you have ever before exercised, lay hold of the strength Heaven ever offers to such as take it by force, and rush into the New Year battles with a heart set upon victory.

". . . God still loves the whole world. He sent His Son to live and die that He might seek and save every creature in it, and to-day He wants daughters who shall so catch that spirit that their entire lives may be lived with no less object than to seek the end of that life—the salvation of all the lost."

With such aims and inspirations as the foregoing words express, Miss Booth wielded an immense power for good over men as well as women who came under her influence. Although she took no pains to promulgate theories as to the equality or superiority of the feminine mind, she proved herself in daily practice an efficient commander of both sexes. The male cadets respected and obeyed her as unquestioningly as did the girls. One who knew her intimately says :—"With a temperament emphatically masterful and militant, she did the things that other women talk about."

CHAPTER III.

'THERE WAS NO ONE LIKE HER!'

STRONG leader, capable organizer, militant officer as she undoubtedly was, Emma Booth was nevertheless a truly womanly woman. In her twenty-seventh year came to her woman's most precious heritage of a good man's love, and she accepted it with joy.

Already there had been working for some years with the Army in India a gentleman of education and refinement, formerly occupying a high position in the Civil Service, by name Frederick Tucker. Convinced of the essential necessity of a closer approach to the Hindoo on the social plane than is usually attempted by Christian missionaries, he had adopted the native costume and subsisted on native food; he walked barefoot like the Indian

MRS. BOOTH-TUCKER AND HER FAMILY.

fakir, and carried the begging-bowl which is a distinguishing badge of the Hindoo holy man. He had also endured a month's imprisonment for obeying what he believed to be the law of God in opposition to a law of man.

In 1887 the splendid donation of £5000 was given by an unknown friend for the furtherance of the work of the Salvation Army in India ; and General Booth decided that fifty additional officers should be at once dispatched. A large proportion of these were to be women, and among them Miss Booth was selected to take a foremost place. Major Tucker came to England to superintend the getting together of this contingent, and then for the first time became acquainted with the young Mother of the Training Home.

The moral, spiritual and intellectual gifts with which Emma Booth was so richly endowed were united to physical attractions of no mean order. Her enthusiasm over this new development of the work in India, and her eagerness to throw herself heart and soul into it, charmed Major Tucker ; her ability as a ruler commanded his admiration, his admiration warmed into "something stronger and more ardent" still, and at length he besought Miss Emma for her love.

Nothing more suitable in every way than such a union could well be imagined, and after a brief period of consideration the engagement was made known.

It is good to find that there was some real and very human love-making between these two. Miss Booth had always been addicted to slipping charming little pencilled notes into the hands of those she specially cared for, telling them what she had no opportunity of saying verbally. One of these found its way into the hand of her *fiancé*, in which she declared that having once let her heart go, his love was nowhere as compared with hers ! Of course, no lover could let such a challenge as that pass. So a few moments later, she was reading the following reply :—

"As taper to the noonday sun,
As seedling to the tree,
As million sand-grains are to one,
As dewdrop to the sea:

Thus measure thou thy love with mine,
And know by these indeed,
That thus much more is mine than thine,
And doth all bounds exceed.
It rises higher than the skies,
'Twill last on after death;
My love thy rivalry defies,
It grows with every breath."

It was on April 10, 1888, that General Booth's birthday and the wedding of his daughter Emma were simultaneously celebrated at the Army Congress Hall, Clapton, in the presence of five thousand enthusiastic sympathizers.

That dramatic touch with which the Salvation Army so well knows how to appeal to a primary instinct of human nature, impressing the spectator through his eyes as well as his ears, was on this memorable occasion supplied by the striking appearance of the bridegroom.

Major Frederick Tucker appeared on the platform in Oriental attire—the calico robe of the fakir, or Hindoo begging friar, surmounted by a scarlet jacket and a turban bearing the badge of the Salvation Army. His feet were bare, as to conciliate the natives of India he had in every respect conformed to their customs, and his begging-bowl lay at his side. The bride was still dressed in her dark blue European uniform, relieved for this one important ceremony by a white sash inscribed with the word "Hallelujah," but it was understood that, once in India, she too had determined to adopt native costume, eat curried rice with her fingers, and walk shoe-and-stockingless over the burning tropical roads. However, love delights to share to the uttermost the life of the loved one, and Emma Booth was supremely happy in all the prospect that lay before her.

In her speech after the ceremony she said: "When they came to ask me what was to be the motto of the day, I took a little time to think and gather up the feelings of my heart, and I could not find a better expression of them than this one word '*Hallelujah!*'"

The only cloud upon the joyful wedding-day of Emma Booth was the serious condition of her dear mother's health. But a short time previously the terrible nature

of Mrs. Booth's illness had been declared by a specialist, and as she entertained the strongest objection to undergoing an operation, her friends and relatives could not conceal from themselves the sad certainty that the days of that precious life were already numbered.

Nevertheless, the brave "Mother of the Army" gave her daughter—the one who had perhaps seemed pre-eminently her own—to the Indian missionary and his far-away work, with an heroic smile. In a touching and eloquent address, she admitted to the assembled thousands that "When the contemplation of this union was first put before me, I confess I found more of the *mother* left in me than I had imagined. I thought the mother was almost swallowed up in the *soldier*. I found, however, that there was much of the mother left. There was a great deal of that natural clinging to my precious child, who has been to me more than a daughter; who in time of sickness and during the absence of her beloved father, and in seasons of family affliction, has been to me as a husband and friend. When this marriage came before me, and I saw at a glance what it involved, and as I thought of her value to the war in this country, and especially to those who are so dear to me and to my principles—our female officers all over the world—I staggered. The first impulse was to resist, and say, 'No, it cannot be!' Then I remembered, 'But she is not yours; you gave her at her birth, and you have given her ever since. You have kept her on the altar, and now God wants to go a step in advance of your notions of what you think will be for her physical well-being, are you going to draw back?' I looked up to Heaven and said, 'No, Lord, she is Thine. Whatever it may cost, Thou shalt have her for this particular service if Thou dost want her.'"

So, the "wedding banquet" over, the wedding gifts, amounting to some £5000 for the carrying on of the foreign work of the Army, received, and farewells uttered, Commander and Mrs. Booth-Tucker departed to their Oriental field.

Arrived in Bombay, the bride took the Hindoo name of Raheeman, which signifies "Mercy," and at once

commenced her new work with all her accustomed enthusiasm.

Before long she left Bombay to visit Ceylon, where she addressed crowded meetings, being received with delight and affection everywhere. From one village, a contingent of red-coated Army soldiers walked out ten miles in the cool of the morning to meet "Commissioner Raheeman's" party. They seated the lady in their village "war-chariot" —an antiquated rush-bottomed chair turned upside down and lashed to two poles—and there was quite a rivalry as to who should have the honour of acting as "war-horses" to carry her.

From Ceylon Mrs. Booth-Tucker travelled to South India, where she held a number of interesting meetings. But her Indian career was for the time being brought to an abrupt close by the sorrowful news from England of the increase of her mother's malady, and her need of the presence and ministrations of her daughter. "Raheeman" therefore returned to England, and remained with Mrs. Booth until the latter was released from her sufferings by death in October 1890.

This period of absence from her husband and the devoted workers in India was a great trial to the Commissioner, but it occasioned the sending of many beautiful and much-prized letters to those she had left behind. In one of these, to a Staff-Captain in the Army, she wrote:—

"I am more and more convinced that in order to do anything in India we must be enthusiastically in love with its people, and I believe God will hear my cry, and make out of my Training Home lassies some of the truest heroines He has ever owned, who shall by His might produce out of their Indian sisters hundreds more. . . . I love you all with a love unspeakable, and look forward, with a longing that I cannot express, to the time when I shall be in your midst, fighting for you and with you all, whether Europeans or natives, as one family."

As soon as possible after her mother's death Mrs. Booth-Tucker sailed back to India, and again was Ceylon the scene of some of her most memorable gatherings.

One of the most interesting of these was a feast given to

fifteen hundred beggars in Colombo, on Commissioner Raheeman's birthday. The guests on this occasion included 500 men, 650 women, and 360 children, of whom many were blind, crippled, lepers, or diseased in other ways. No wonder a spectator wrote : " Somehow, looking at the beggars, it made one feel Jesus Christ's religion more real here than in England." It was truly an ideal feast, surely after our Saviour's own heart. Thus fed and comforted—though the viands were nothing more sumptuous than rice and curry—these poor creatures must have found it easy to believe the assurances of " Commissioner Fakir Singh " (Booth-Tucker), that God loved them and the Salvation Army loved them, and it would be good for them to have food for their starving souls as well.

Mrs. Booth-Tucker's second visit to India was, however, destined to be almost as brief as her first. Landing already worn and wasted by her long period of nursing and her grievous bereavement, the toils and privations of her work in so trying a climate proved too much for her strength. This Christian Amazon was but a woman, and her appetite completely failing, her friends with keen pain saw her grow thinner and weaker day by day. The General was appealed to, and he ordered her immediate return to England. This time, so precarious seemed her condition of health, that both her husband and her sister Lucy accompanied her.

Even then her heart yearned passionately towards the great dark land with its teeming millions. " Cheer up ! " she said to one of the officers she was leaving behind. " I am coming back again, and you will be true."

Short as was Commissioner Raheeman's time of service in India, it was long enough to leave behind an abiding fragrance of love and Christ-like deeds.

" You will scarcely," writes one officer, " find one home or mud-hut Officers' Quarters in India without a photo of the Consul. Again and again some Indian lassie officer has asked permission to cut out from some American or other Salvation Army publication a photo of the Consul, and has carried it away as a treasure ; and the reason why is, that among all the officers in India, European and Indian,

MRS. BOOTH-TUCKER AS RAHEEMAN.

and especially among the lassies, our sainted Consul Raheeman was their ideal saint and woman of God."

Wrote another :—" We had only been a little time in India when the Canadian contingent was to join us, and, oh, how anxious Raheeman was that they should feel thoroughly at home with us!

" She would gather us round her and say, ' Now, there must be no party feeling ; they are mine, just as you are. Commissioner and I do not agree on all points, yet there is no division between us. So you and the dear Canadians will not see eye to eye on everything, yet there need be no division between you. You can be truly united ! ' . . .

" She had wonderful hands. I can feel the touch of her fingers still, as she stroked my face and told me she was going home to Mrs. Booth. . . .

" Ah, *there was no one like her !* "

Thousands were longing and praying for Raheeman's speedy restoration to health and to the work in India, but the General was advised by the doctors that on no account must his daughter again risk her life in a tropical climate, and he therefore appointed her husband to the Foreign Secretaryship at the International Head-quarters in London.

Here, then, for the next few years Commander and Mrs. Booth-Tucker resided, and here were born to them several of the dear children, nine in all, with which their union was blessed.

Three of these precious gifts were recalled to Heaven in infancy, but six still live to mourn their mother's loss. The eldest, a handsome boy, Frederick Kristo Das, is gifted with musical taste. He plays the piano and violin, and also a cornet in the Staff Band. The next, Catherine Motee, is also musical, and at the age of twelve she composed the air for a Christmas Carol of which her father wrote the words. This song has been sung by the Army. Mina is a delicate, " angelic " child, with pathetic brown eyes. Lincoln is a bonny boy, possessing a wonderful crop of curly hair—all the Booths have magnificent dark hair—and is, apparently, more distinctly human than his sister Mina ; for when about five years old he one day

asked his school-teacher if he could tell mamma that he had been "as good as an angel, or *only as good as a good boy?*" John Myron, the youngest boy, has, we are told, "beautiful eyes," which are a birthright. The baby-girl, Muriel, was only five months old when her mother died.

To these children "Consul" Booth-Tucker was a most devoted mother. Although the exigencies of "the War" demanded frequent and prolonged absences from home, she was careful to leave utterly trustworthy persons in charge, who could be relied on to carry out her own wise arrangements and to let her hear of her little ones every day.

Although her training of the children was systematically in accordance with Army principles and the rule of non-worldliness, "she did not consider it superfluous to buy them pretty things," nor wrong to dress them with becoming taste. Whenever at home she delighted to give them their Saturday night tubbing as well as their Sunday evening Bible-reading. She was well adapted for a truly domestic life had not Providence called her to a public career, for "she was an excellent needlewoman, and would cut and make a dress or trim a hat as deftly as she could make a pudding or write an article."

It is needless to add that the children of Consul Booth-Tucker were from their earliest years trained as "Soldiers," and that their mother's highest ambition for them was that they should ultimately become officers in the Salvation Army.

CHAPTER IV.

'DEAD UPON THE FIELD.'

IN the year 1896, painfully memorable in the annals of the Salvation Army for the revolt of Mr. and Mrs. Ballington Booth from the control of the General, and their consequent relinquishment of the posts which they had held under him, Major and Mrs. Booth-Tucker were

appointed in their place to take charge of the work in America.

Mrs. Booth-Tucker at once made a most favourable impression upon the Americans, her intellectual gifts, charming personality, and unbounded energy being all of a quality which they could readily appreciate.

The influence of the Army in the United States had naturally been considerably shaken by the episode above-mentioned, and the first work of Mrs. Booth-Tucker was to travel up and down the length and breadth of the great continent, explaining to crowded audiences the principles and aims of the organization and endeavouring to re-establish public confidence.

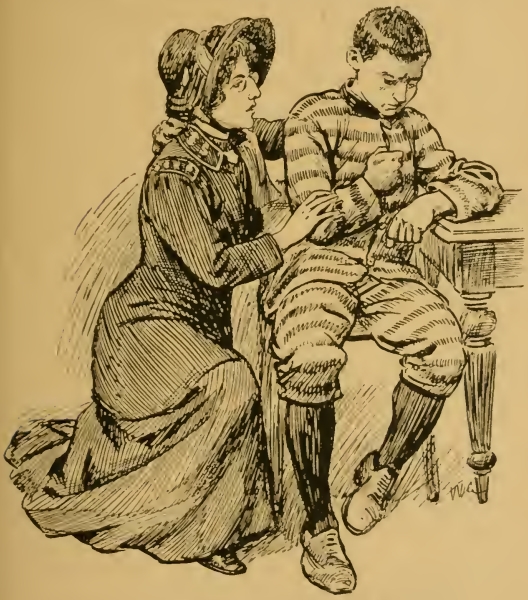
In this task she was more than successful. Her favourite lecture, entitled "Love and Sorrow," was given in half-a-hundred American towns and cities. It was accompanied by illustrations of the work of the Salvation Army as set forth by the stereopticon, living pictures, and descriptive music and songs, and although occupying nearly three hours to deliver, the attention of the hearers was invariably maintained to the last. In many places it was repeated by special request, and its effect was to strengthen the numbers of the Army's supporters and break down prejudice wherever heard.

But whatever public claims there may have been upon her time and strength, the Consul, as we must now call her, never lost an opportunity of personal dealing with troubled souls. Whether in the evangelistic meetings of the Army, on the street car, in the railway train, or visiting the homes of the suffering poor, she was the same enthusiast for winning converts as ever.

Her confidence in her own gift of power over those with whom she came in contact, early developed and encouraged in her childhood's home, was undoubtedly used by God for the blessing of others. She expected to be able to influence even the most hardened sinners, and she was rarely disappointed. The most obdurate were again and again melted to penitence and tears by her appeals.

On one occasion the Consul visited Sing-Sing Prison, expressly to see and soften a young criminal who seemed

utterly inaccessible to good influence. This lad—he was indeed scarcely more than a child in years—had lately been sentenced to the longest possible term of imprisonment for no less a crime than the deliberate murder of a boy



PLEADING WITH THE YOUNG MURDERER.

companion, but nothing seemed able to break through his sullen indifference.

Having obtained permission to visit the prisoner in his cell, Mrs. Booth-Tucker began by telling him about her own dear boy at home, " almost as big as you," and gently

assuring him how much she longed to comfort him. Then she spoke to him of his own mother, who had died when he was a baby.

"Just fancy I'm your mother," she said, "and tell me what is in your heart."

Soon this lad, who had seemed to judge, and warders, and even the prison chaplain, as hard as a mill-stone, was wiping his irrepressible tears on the Consul's own handkerchief. She prayed with him, and promised to think of him and pray for him again at a certain hour that night. She gave him a Testament, and he smiled when she bade him good-bye.

The warder who had witnessed the scene was scarcely less impressed than the boy himself. He willingly promised to try and follow up the good work that had been begun, and there is reason to hope that the unhappy young convict has started, even in prison, a new and better life.

Mourners everywhere, especially bereaved parents, found in Mrs. Booth-Tucker a ready and tender sympathizer. She was never too busy to write a letter of condolence to any among the officers of the Army who had lost a child.

Among the many hymns and sacred songs of which she was the author, none probably were the vehicle of more comfort than some verses which she had specially printed on a card to send to all who were enduring the same kind of sorrow as that which she had already more than once passed through.

From her earliest years, as we know, childhood had held a very tender place in Emma Booth's heart. An orphanage, sheltering at one time between twenty and thirty little ones, had been carried on in connection with the Training Home. In America the Army Orphanages were to the Consul an ever-fresh delight, and she took as much interest in arranging the details of their management as in planning for her own precious children at home.

It is needless to say that the rescue of fallen women was an object for which the Consul felt the keenest solicitude, and one of the last of her public duties was to open a new Rescue Home in Buffalo.

The Working Men's Hotels, where for from five cents

(2½*d.*) and upwards a poor man can be decently and comfortably lodged for the night, the Hotels for Women on the same plan, the Industrial Homes for the Unemployed, the Land Colonies for the establishment of Country Homes for the City Poor, each and every department of the Army's colossal schemes for "Social Relief" received the warmest sympathy and the most intelligent oversight from this gifted lady, who was so eminently adapted to occupy the position of female head of the Army in America.

Travelling North, South, East, and West, to inspect institutions and colonies, encourage the workers, inaugurate new developments, and everywhere conduct meetings for the extension of the Army and the salvation of souls, the day at length arrived when, all unknowingly, Consul Booth-Tucker set out upon that fateful journey from which she was never to return.

Before leaving New York for the last time she conducted a remarkable meeting in one of the largest theatres of the notorious "Bowery," a district of the city given up entirely to the Yankee "Hooligan" and criminal of every shade and type.

Dressed entirely in scarlet, in honour of what was termed the "Red Crusade," Mrs. Booth-Tucker took her stand upon the platform, beside an empty coffin, which had been borrowed for the purpose, and spoke powerfully to the thousands present on the awful certainty of approaching death and judgment. Thirty-one persons on this occasion professed conversion.

This was on Sunday. On the following Wednesday the Consul addressed a Council of Field Officers at the National Head-quarters, and she is reported to have spoken with a freedom and power which even those who have heard her oftenest had seldom known.

On Thursday, October 8, she after breakfast prayed as usual with her children in her own bedroom; then, as the four elder ones started for school, she kissed them "good-bye"—for the last time.

Later in the day, she left New York on that fatal "Western Tour."

During the next three weeks Mrs. Booth-Tucker's life,

as so often before, was a constant round of travelling, visiting, and holding public meetings. Buffalo, Bradford, Du Bois, Punxsutawney, and Titusville were in turn refreshed by the presence and voice of the beloved Consul.

The next halting-place on the list was St. Louis. One of the daily papers of that city welcomed her in the following graceful terms :—

"A light in the window!

"There are many human lights—men and women who by the warm light of love are calling wanderers home. Mrs. Booth-Tucker is such a one.

"A woman whose work of rescue has the approval of both God and man. A woman whose daily life is based on those beautiful lines—

'Brightly beams our Father's mercy from His lighthouse ever more,
But He gives to us the keeping of the lights along the shore.'

"Because of her work on behalf of God's erring ones, *The World* bids Emma Booth-Tucker welcome.

"May her life be blessed, even as she is blessing the lives of many, and may she long remain a light in the window!"

At St. Louis the Consul spoke to business men in the Merchants' Exchange—a distinction never before enjoyed by a woman speaker—and subsequently delivered to a crowded audience in the Odeon Music Hall her great lecture on "Want, Waste, and Work." Her own account of these events was penned to her father when once more on the railroad—the last autograph letter he ever received from her. It was delivered to him some days after the sad news of her death.

"*On the train,*
October 20, 1903.

"My Precious General,

"I am still on the wing. We were at St. Louis on Sunday, where we had in some respects a rather remarkable day. The entire feeling of the city has been distinctly different since your visit. The sympathy is most marked.

I had the big Odeon Music Hall in the afternoon, and the crowd was splendid.

" I spoke for ' fifteen minutes ' (stretched a little) in the Merchants' Exchange, a huge marble structure. No woman, they say, has ever been heard there before. This was on Saturday at noon, and quite a number of leading men turned up at the Odeon the next day.

. . . . . .

" Good-night ! Would that you were here, so that I could *say* it, and *hear* all *you* would like to say, and then start off again to try and carry out your wishes with better success as

" YOUR UNFAILING EMMA."

Surely the devotion of an affectionate daughter to an honoured father, and the loyal obedience of a military officer to the Commander-in-Chief, were never so combined before !

From St. Louis the Consul proceeded to the Army's Land Colony, " Amity," in Colorado. Hither a number of poor city families, comprising a population of some three hundred persons, have been transplanted from poverty and squalor to a healthful, happy life of farming, on a beautiful, fertile stretch of land some 3,500 feet above the sea level. Here, in the " Cherry Tree Orphanage," built by the colonists themselves for city waifs, Mrs. Booth-Tucker held her last meeting, and had the joy of seeing forty-six persons " kneeling at the mercy-seat."

It was at " Amity " Station the Consul stepped into the train which was destined to carry her to the Eternal Shore. She was accompanied by Colonel Thomas Holland, and her own private secretary, Ensign Hester Dammes. In two days she hoped to meet her husband in Chicago, but her journey was to have another and a nearer end.

At Topeka she was met by Colonel Addie, the officer in charge of the South-Western Province, to whom she had wired her desire for an interview. He rode with her as far as Kansas City, discussing the affairs of the Army, and he also sang to her a new hymn which he had recently

composed for an old tune. The subject was sudden death. Two lines of the chorus ran—

"You can never tell when your death-bell's tolling,
You can never tell when your end may be."

And the last verse pleased the Consul so much that she had it three times over—

"Time and place will cease to know you,
Men and things will pass away;
You'll be moving on to-morrow,
You are only here to-day."

The Colonel subsequently said that while with the Consul during these last hours of her earthly life, he was much impressed by "the air of other-worldliness about her." It were rather, he tells us, "the voice, the look, the touch, the words of an angel, than of a human being."

On parting from Colonel Addie at Kansas City, after utilizing the brief stoppage there to visit a new Industrial Home which the Army had lately acquired, Mrs. Booth-Tucker, resuming her journey towards Chicago, busied herself for some time in dictating correspondence.

For the sake of quietness she was seated for the time being in an unoccupied tourist sleeping car near the front of the train, but the coach in which preparations had been made to pass the night was in the rear. After a while she dismissed her secretary, and sat chatting with Colonel Holland only.

At about ten minutes past nine she rose to retire to her sleeper, and was in the act of making her way thither, when the train came to a standstill with an awful crash, and the Consul and Colonel Holland were buried in the débris of the wrecked car.

Emma Booth-Tucker was never conscious again.

Two terrible blows on the head, either one being sufficient to have proved fatal, rendered her condition hopeless from the first, and two hours later she was "promoted to glory."

The accident occurred near Dean Lake, on the evening of October 28, 1903, and the Consul breathed her last at Marceline, Missouri, a few miles further along the line, in the train sent to the relief of the injured. It is not too

much to say that the shock of the Consul's death sent a thrill throughout the whole world. For wherever the Salvation Army has planted its banner, thither the sorrowful news was swiftly flashed, and everywhere it was received with deepest grief.

The anguish of the Consul's own near relations is too recent and too sacred for us to dwell upon; but, true to their convictions of duty, they one and all were able to rise so far above all personal considerations as to make the utmost use of every incident of the funeral arrangements with the object of saving souls. No touching or dramatic adjunct was omitted that might serve to make the tragic death of Emma Booth-Tucker as effective as had been her strenuous life.

Conveyed in its funeral casket from Chicago back to New York, the body lay in state both at the Carnegie Music Hall and at the Assembly Hall of the Salvation Army. At Chicago three thousand persons were present at the memorial service, and listened to Commander Booth-Tucker's heroic address on the work and character of his departed wife. In New York uncounted thousands more filed past the flower-laden bier, where, dressed in full Army uniform, canopied by the Army flag, with her well-worn Bible and Hallelujah bonnet lying at her feet, the mortal remains of the Consul formed the centre of one of the most pathetic and impressive services ever held in that city.

Wreaths and messages of sympathy had poured in from high and low, rich and poor. Persons of every shade of religious opinion and almost every civilized nationality united in their tributes of affection for the dead Consul and sympathy for her bereaved family.

The crowds, the enthusiasm, the manifestations of grief were all repeated a few days later, when the casket was finally consigned to earth. Only the funeral of General Grant could be said to have created more widespread feeling among all classes of society.

At the grave-side, Commander Booth-Tucker was enabled to address the audience at great length, and even the little twelve-year-old daughter, disciplined thus early

in Army fortitude, came forward and sang a hymn over her mother's coffin. The funeral service lasted two hours, and it was estimated that ten thousand persons stood throughout.

In London, the Congress Hall at Clapton was the scene of memorial tributes scarcely less striking than those exhibited on the other side of the Atlantic. Here the patriarchal figure of the General himself was the cynosure of interest and sympathy. Supported by Mr. and Mrs. Bramwell-Booth and his youngest daughter, Lucy (Mrs. Booth-Hellberg), the venerable head of the Salvation Army uttered a heart-stirring speech, in which the brilliant virtues of the departed Consul, as a Soldier, a Woman, a Wife, a Mother, and a Daughter, were eloquently set forth, and her noble example made the text of a powerful appeal.

It is said that La Tour d'Auvergne, the first grenadier of France, is still on the rolls of the fighting strength of the French Army, and at the periodic Roll Call, in answer to his name come back the words, "*Dead on the Field.*"

This incident suggested to an officer in the Salvation Army some touching verses to the memory of Consul Emma Booth-Tucker, and with the first and last of these our brief sketch may fittingly close.

"Warrior Spirit, bold and daring,
Others' hardships ever sharing,
Spirit that would never yield,
Fighting, suffering, on the Field.

. . . .

While our Army Flag keeps waving,
While immortal souls we're saving,
On our Roll shall stand revealed—
'Consul, dead upon the Field.'"

Frances Ridley Havergal.

CHAPTER I.

OUTWARD SUNSHINE, INWARD CLOUDS.

FEW children could be born into more favourable conditions of life than those which surrounded the early days of the little girl who first saw the light at Astley Rectory, in Worcestershire, on December 14, 1836.

Frances Ridley Havergal was the youngest child of the Rev. William Henry Havergal, and Jane, his wife. Her sisters numbered three, and she had two brothers.

Mr. Havergal, physically, is described by one of his early parishioners as "a lithesome man—not a lithesomer in England." He could when young walk three miles in twenty-five minutes, and he "never touched the stiles—he'd go clean over them." Mentally, he was singularly gifted in musical composition, as it is scarcely necessary to tell any one who studies the names attached to the tunes in any of our church hymnals. As a pastor, the same old friend mentioned above testifies that "He do be in and out of the houses all the week, and that fetched them to church on the Sunday; and he do be as frequent to Dissenters as to t'others."

Mrs. Havergal, we are assured by one who knew her intimately during the early part of her married life, possessed great beauty, and was noticeable for "the brightness of her expression and the sparkle of her eye," which little

Frances inherited. That she was also a woman of deeply Christian character, quotations from her correspondence, and the records of her patience and resignation during the long and painful illness which ended her life at a comparatively early age, abundantly testify.

The subject of our present sketch was therefore born to a goodly heritage from both her parents. Her second Christian name was given her by her godfather, the Rev. W. H. Ridley, a lineal descendant of the martyred Bishop, and with it may have come an influence towards that strong Protestantism, linked with a passionate attachment to the Church of England, for which Frances was conspicuous throughout her life. This feeling she expressed in one of her poems :—

"But what the R. doth represent
I value and revere,
A diamond clasp it seems to be,
On golden chains, enlinking me
In loyal love to England's hope,
The Church I hold so dear."

Like so many rarely gifted children, Frances was remarkably precocious, and in accordance with the custom of fifty or sixty years ago, her education was commenced as soon almost as she could speak.

Her eldest sister Miriam was her first teacher, and she describes her two-year-old pupil as an extremely pretty child, with " fair complexion, light curling hair, and bright expression." At that age the little creature could already talk fluently, and learned reading, spelling, and one of Jane Taylor's rhymes for half-an-hour every morning. In the afternoon twenty or thirty stitches of needlework and a text of Scripture were the appointed task.

The play-study of the kindergarten was at that time unknown, but probably to little Frances' quick intelligence those early studies were no hardship, while between times she frolicked in the large Rectory garden with her pet dog.

She was still but an infant when she began to sing hymns, in imitation of her father, who possessed, in addition to musical genius, a " sweet, lovely voice." At three years

ASTLEY HOUSE, WHERE F. R. HAVERGAL WAS BORN; AND ASTLEY CHURCH, OF WHICH HER FATHER WAS MINISTER.

old she could read easy books with sufficient ease to enjoy them, and would frequently take refuge under a table to finish some absorbing tale.

On her fourth birthday, little Frances, strange to relate, was brought down after dinner to dessert crowned with a wreath of *bay-leaves*—singularly prophetic of the poetic fame that lay before her.

Her active brain being always eager for learning, the child acquired considerable knowledge of the German language by taking care to be always in the drawing-room while a professor was giving lessons to her sisters. At seven years old she wrote her first simple rhymes, naturally a reflection of the teaching she was accustomed to receive, and a forecast of the many hymns from her fluent pen which should resound throughout the churches of our land in years to come :—

"Sunday is a pleasant day,
When we to church do go;
For there we sing, and read and pray,
And hear the sermon too.

On Sunday hear the village bells;
It seems as if they said,
Go to the church where the pastor tells
How Christ for man has bled.

And if we love to pray and read
While we are in our youth,
The Lord will help us in our need,
And keep us in His truth."

It will be noticed that the remarkable correctness of the rhythm of these lines is only marred by a syllable too many in line three of verse two. This suggests that the word "father" may have originally occupied the place of "the pastor," which would have been only natural as well as true.

Frances, like her father, was "lithesome," a buoyant, fairy-like sunbeam of a child, "sometimes a little wilful and troublesome from mere excess of animal spirits, but always affectionate and grateful for any little treat." She was intensely fond of Nature—blue sky, sunshine, and the

loveliness of green, waving trees having the most powerful influence over her, often quieting her restless spirit and soothing her with the peace of God when the loving exhortations of her friends had but little effect. She read all the poetry that came in her way, and was scarcely eight years old when she lighted upon Cowper's lines upon the beauty of the varied creations in God's world, ending—

"My Father made them all!"

Instantly there awakened in the child's heart an intense longing to make these words her own. Again and again they recurred to her, haunting her with the idea of an unattainable bliss, and causing her to say to herself a dozen times a day, "Oh, if God would but make me a Christian before the summer comes!" because she so longed to enjoy His beautiful works to the uttermost.

But, alas! the popular theology of that day, ignoring the fact that our Saviour taught His followers that they must be "converted" in order to "become as little children," demanded of the little ones themselves the moral convulsion known as "conversion," and this, for years, stood between the child Fanny and her Saviour's waiting love.

None guessed the spiritual hunger and darkness which often overshadowed that bright spirit, few could have imagined how the young heart was yearning for conscious union with the great Father, and was ever held back by inability to "become a Christian" according to the stereotyped experience on which her parents' creed insisted.

"My general notion," she writes, in her autobiography of these seeking years, "was that I didn't love God at all, and was very bad and wicked altogether; that if I went on praying very much, something would come to me and change me all at once, and make me like many whom I read about and a few whom I saw."

Especially the monthly administration of the Lord's Supper so intensified the child's longing to come to God, that, being forbidden to be present even as a spectator, she would listen to the service through the closed vestry

door, and sob as she felt that it was not for her. But, like so many another sensitive and highly-strung child, Frances could not confide these sorrows to even those nearest and dearest ones, the loveliness of whose lives, in contrast to the severity of their theories, had been chiefly instrumental in arousing the hunger and thirst after righteousness with which her young soul was filled.

When eleven years old, Frances lost her mother. Her sorrow was overwhelming, but she has regretfully confessed that she "did not, *would* not, see God's hand" in the bitter stroke, and that it left her worse than it found her as regards her spiritual condition. Yet this hardened young sinner—as she even in after years sincerely believed herself to have been—wrote at this time in her little book of poems:

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard,
Neither can man's heart conceive,
The blessed things God hath prepared
For those who love Him and believe."

And again—

"Oh! had I the wings of a dove,
Soon, soon would I be at my rest;
I would fly to the Saviour I love,
And there would I lie on His breast."

So the years of childhood passed on. Frances seems to have privately read her Bible and prayed with more than moderate regularity, and not infrequently cried herself to sleep at night over that hopeless conviction of her own great wickedness of heart which even at twenty-two years of age she records with special thankfulness, as an evidence of having been kept from the "deadly error" of daring to think herself "as good as others."

In the spring of 1850 these spasms of secret grief seem to have resolved themselves into an almost settled melancholy. Over the spirit of the young girl just entering her teens there came a strange new sense of the vanity of life and earth and everything but "the one thing," and when alone, she often sat and thought about it all until she wept. Lying awake in bed she spent many an hour

earnestly, and as it seemed to her poor bewildered little mind, vainly, praying for that gift of "faith"—so vaguely understood—without which she had been taught to believe that salvation would be impossible.

In August of that year, Frances for the first time went to boarding-school.

The lady under whose care she was placed—a Mrs. Teed, of Belmont—was a devoutly Christian woman, who knowing that that half-year would be the *finale* of a long course of school-work, was most anxious that it should be a time of great spiritual blessing to her pupils. She constantly prayed and spoke with the girls, both collectively and individually, concerning their souls, with the result that many conversions occurred. The two who were Frances' favourite companions were among those whose hearts were specially touched.

One of these, a girl named Mary, seems to have been the first to show Frances a better way than constantly brooding over her own guilt. She reminded her of the unconditional invitation of the Lord Jesus to every little child, and sweetly begged her, if she really felt that she was still a child, to go straight to Jesus Himself, and tell Him that she desired to love Him, and could not; assuring her that He would teach her. This sound advice Frances acted upon "in darkness and trembling," but the dawn of joy was not yet.

Her other favourite school-fellow, one whom she owns she "loved with a perfectly idolatrous affection," was "Diana." This young maiden—"the sunbeam of the school"—was one who had, like Frances, been wishing and praying for forgiveness a long time. One day, towards the close of the term, a realization of the Saviour's love suddenly burst upon her, and her joy was at once visible in both face and voice.

As soon as possible Diana sought her friend Fanny, and told her all her gladness, repeating the "good news" which Mary had already spoken. "Only come to Him, and He will receive you. Even now He loves you, though you don't know it."

But Frances went home for the Christmas holidays still

"in the dim twilight of miserable and even disappointed longing."

Early in the next year she summoned courage to confide her trouble to Miss Cooke, the lady who soon afterwards became her loving step-mother. The latter hopefully assured Frances of her firm belief that so great a desire for forgiveness was certain to be very shortly fulfilled, and urged her to commit her soul trustfully to the Saviour *at once*.

This suggestion brought the child the first gleam of hope with regard to religion which her fourteen years had ever experienced, and for a few days she was actually happy. A frequent renewing of that giving up of her soul to Christ which had produced the joy was able to recall it, and we may fairly record that the long-delayed "conversion" had at last taken place.

After the summer vacation of that year, Frances went to a new school, but before the term was ended a severe attack of erysipelas in the head and face put a stop to all her studies for many months.

To one with so great a love for learning this was a terrible trial, but Frances was able to write to her friend, Elizabeth Clay:—"Still, I am sure it will all be right; and if I receive good things at the hand of such a Father, shall I murmur at such a drawback, which is only to teach me a lesson I must learn after all?"

CHAPTER II.

GLEAMS OF LIGHT.

IN November 1852, Mr. Havergal's eyesight, which had for some time been failing, became so much worse as to lead him to visit Germany to consult an eminent oculist. His newly-wedded wife and his daughter Frances accompanied him.

As they decided to remain abroad some considerable time, it was arranged that the young girl should attend

the "Louisenschule" in Düsseldorf, while Mr. and Mrs. Havergal travelled.

Among the one hundred and ten scholars at that school, Frances had reason to believe herself the only one who cared for religion. Different indeed from the gospel-saturated atmosphere at Belmont! But, she decided, "very bracing." She earnestly tried to bear witness for Christ and to win others, and a considerable amount of persecution followed, without any *known* good result among her companions.

Still she felt that these ungenial surroundings had made her "come out more boldly and decidedly on the Lord's side" than she might have done for years under other circumstances.

As regards her studies, she came off with flying colours. Her own account of the last examination is given in a letter to the young friend mentioned above. "In the Louisenschule, when a girl has not learnt everything (as you know I did not), she receives merely her testimony, but *no number*. This half-year, however, it seems that all the masters, in council assembled, were so very pleased with the *Engländerin's* (English girl's) papers and conduct, that they agreed to break their rule for once, and honour me with *Numero* I., a thing which they had never done before!"

The summer of 1853 found Frances at Obercassel, boarding with the Pastor Schulze-Berge and his wife, the former being for the time her tutor. With him she studied French and German Literature, the poets, and Universal History. She was exceedingly happy with this good pastor and "frau pastorin," and as a noble German family resided at Obercassel, to whose "court" the brilliant and charming young English girl was frequently invited, she had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with many members of the German aristocracy. Pastor Schulze-Berge's report of his interesting pupil, written to her sister many years afterwards, declares that "she showed from the first such application, such rare talent, such depth of comprehension, that I can only speak of her progress as extraordinary. . . . What imprinted the stamp of nobility

upon her whole being, and influenced all her opinions, was her true piety, and the deep reverence she had for her Lord and Saviour, whose example penetrated her young life through and through."

At the age of eighteen Frances was confirmed. She had long been thinking of and preparing for this solemn time, and a detailed account of the ceremony and her own emotions was found among the sealed papers left to be opened by her sister after her death. In her manuscript book of poems, under date of that memorable day, she wrote—

> "Oh! 'Thine for ever,' what a blessed thing
> To be for ever His who died for me!
> My Saviour, all my life Thy praise I'll sing,
> Nor cease my song throughout eternity."

Notes and verses found among her papers prove that she was in the habit of renewing this vow—to her so deep and real an act of consecration—every year until her death.

Returning home, Frances not only continued her studies with unabated energy, but began to contribute poetic enigmas and charades to those little publications of the period called "Pocket-books" and "Keepsakes." Up till past the middle of the last century these annuals afforded almost the only available opening to the young aspirant for the honours of literature, and the prizes which they offered, Frances, under the pen-name of "Sabrina" or "Zoide" (for no budding poet in those modest days ever dreamed of blazoning out his own real identity), often obtained. If the reward took the form of money, Frances, in imitation of her father's custom of devoting the proceeds of his musical compositions to God's work, sent it to the Church Missionary Society.

In the spring of 1856 came her first visit to the home of her married sister, Ellen, now Mrs. Shaw, of Celbridge Lodge, County Kildare, Ireland. Here she took all hearts by storm.

A young Irish school-girl, invited with others to spend an afternoon with the English visitor, describes the en-

trance of Frances into the drawing-room. "Carolling like a bird," she "flashed into the room! Flashed! Yes, I say the word advisedly—flashed in like a burst of sunshine, like a hillside breeze, and stood before us, her fair, sunny curls falling round her shoulders, her bright eyes dancing, her fresh, sweet voice ringing through the room. I shall never forget that afternoon—never! I sat perfectly spellbound as she sang chant and hymn with marvellous sweetness, and then played two or three pieces of Handel, which thrilled me through and through. . . . As we walked home down the shady avenue, one and another said—'Oh, isn't she lovely? and doesn't she sing like a born angel?' 'I love her, I do; and I'd follow her every step of the way back to England, if I could!' 'Oh, she's a real Colleen Bawn!'"

Another of the class felt all the time that there must be the music of God's own love in that fair singer's heart, and that so there was joy in her face, joy in her words, joy in her ways. And the secret cry went up from that young Irish heart—"Lord, teach me, even me, to know and love Thee too."

This living yet unspoken gospel, this "good news" of a glad heart, beaming through the whole personality, is the most powerful of all preaching. But Frances Havergal, believing intensely in the definite, verbal utterance of one's own confession of faith before others, and of direct appeals to them, deplored very sadly in after years that she had not spoken out more freely to those impressionable young Irish girls. On a subsequent visit a singing-class was formed, which she and they mutually enjoyed, but a few years after, as she sat by the sick-bed of the most gifted of them all, the girl confessed that in those happy summer evenings when their young leader used to walk down the avenue with them after class, she had lingered, longing and hungering for a word "about the Saviour," instead of "pleasant, general remarks about the nice hymns and tunes." Others, eventually, led the seeking soul to God, but, "Ah, Miss Frances," she said, "I ought to have been *yours!*"

This was a lesson which the young lady never forgot.

In after life she strove earnestly to let no opportunity slip, to allow no one who came even for a few minutes within the range of her speech, whether in the way of business or pleasure, to pass on without some plain words on the subject of salvation and the state of the soul before God.

With this decision came also the resolution never to use her beautiful voice—one of the many gifts of this richly-endowed nature—for any purpose but "singing the Gospel." "You cannot be all for Him," she writes, "as long as your voice is not for Him. Which shall it be? *All* for Him, or *partly* for Him? Answer that to Him whom you call Master and Lord."

Taking the view that everything not distinctly and obviously in the service of the Lord must be more or less on the opposite side, all secular music became *taboo* to her. Even "mildly sacred songs" seemed unsatisfactory, and as life advanced she adopted the rule of singing the words of Scripture almost exclusively. She even endorsed with delight the belief of one enthusiastic young friend, that a severe cold on the chest, caught the very evening that the latter, after some doubts, had consented to take part in a secular concert, was a direct sign that such a performance was unpleasing to God.

Although outwardly so brimful of life and spirits, Frances Havergal appears to have never possessed really good health. After reading of the impression of joy and radiance which her looks conveyed, it is strange to find her experiencing a morbid thrill of delight at fancying, from the flushed appearance of her face in the glass one evening, that she might possibly be the victim of consumption!

The strong common-sense of the present day has routed the feeble sentimentality of "the fifties." Now, as good a Christian girl as Frances would rejoice at the prospect of a long life of useful service, but the religious literature and thought of half-a-century ago set forth the superior attractiveness of early death and a speedy entrance into the realms of bliss.

Of course the subject of our present sketch was an earnest

Sunday School teacher. She kept a sort of diary of her scholars, whom she dearly loved, and as this is dated from 1846 to 1860, it would appear that she first undertook so responsible a position when between nine and ten years old! In this age of constantly advancing efficiency in all who attempt to instruct the young, such a state of affairs seems inconceivable, but other instances could be mentioned of well-brought-up children of that period, especially clergymen's daughters, beginning to teach the small villagers in their neighbourhood at a remarkably early age. Presumably, all that was required was instruction in spelling out the Bible, and committing to memory verses of Scripture and hymns. We should have further supposed the discipline difficulty to have been unheard-of in those primitive and well-ordered days, but the young teacher herself says, "At one time I had desperately up-hill work, for mine was then the worst class in the school, and, out of fourteen, only a small minority were even hopeful." But surely, when this experience was reached, Frances herself was past childhood.

In 1860, Mr. Havergal, after fifteen years' work at St. Nicholas, Worcester, removed to the little country parish of Shareshill. This was chiefly for the benefit of his own health. One of the first improvements his coming effected was the abolition of the Sunday post. This was a question on which Frances always felt very keenly that many Christian people did not realize their responsibilities. "'No manner of work,'" she wrote, shortly before her death, "must include postal delivery, and it is not right to ignore it."

About this time she was at last able to say that she had "lost that weary bondage of doubt, and almost despair, which chained me for so many years. I have the same sins and temptations as before, and I do not strive against them more than before, and it is often just as hard work. But, whereas I could not see why I *should* be saved, I now cannot see why I should not be saved if Christ died for all. . . . His death is really my confidence, and I have tasted the sweetness of one new thing—*praise!*"

Yet, before long, we find her "borne back into all the

old difficulties of the way, with many sin-made aggravations." "I think," she adds, in her autobiographical record of all her inner life, "the great root of all my trouble and alienation is that I do not now make an unreserved surrender of myself to God, and until this is done I shall know no peace. I am sure of it. I have so much to regret; a greater dread of the opinion of worldly friends, a loving of the world, and proportionate cooling in heavenly desire and love."

She had been singing in the Philharmonic Concerts, and feared that the pleasure which public applause gave her was hindering her spiritual progress. Therefore, when ill-health interrupted these performances, she accepted it as a sign from God. "No one," she declares, "professing to be a Christian at all, could possibly have had a more cloudy, fearing, doubting, sinning, and wandering heart-history than mine has been through many years."

The comment of her sister and biographer, Maria V. G. Havergal, upon these confessions is: "Deep borings, even down into darksome depths, often precede the supply of unfailing springs of refreshing water. Thus my dear sister knew much of doubt and gloom, so that she might be able to comfort others and reveal to them God's deep teachings in the darkness."

It was Frances' custom to pray in private three times a day. She kept a paper in her Bible, with the subject of each prayer-hour carefully arranged. Those of the earlier devotions were mainly for spiritual gifts and graces; those of the evening for pardon, for a vision of her own sinfulness, and against the special weakness of drowsiness in the morning, to which her delicate health and need of rest rendered her liable. Had she been granted wisdom to substitute for the latter petition a prayer against her tendency to over-work, a valuable life might have been prolonged. As it was, her feverish energy impelled her to drive a fragile body to its utmost limit of endurance, distressing a kind old servant, and doubtless many another who loved her, by getting to her Latin books long before breakfast, and using up every odd minute in some kind of work or study.

Frequent breaks-down in health and the enforced idleness of being "laid up" were the natural result. It was a poor economy of life, at best.

CHAPTER III.

WITH VOICE AND PEN.

HAVING dwelt at length upon the inner, spiritual development of Frances Havergal from childhood to maturity, we will now turn our attention to her intellectual career.

Her first accepted contribution to a real magazine appears to have been her well-known hymn "I gave my life for Thee." It was suggested to her during a visit to Germany in 1858, through casually sitting down to rest opposite that picture of the Crucifixion which usually bears this motto. The verses flashed upon her like an inspiration, and she at once noted them down on a scrap of paper. But she was not pleased with the result, and tossed it into the fire. As, however, the paper fell out unharmed, she decided to keep it. Some time after she showed them to her father, who was so favourably impressed that he wrote the tune "Baca" specially to go with them.

These verses subsequently appeared in *Good Words*, and occasioned a request from the editor for further poetical contributions from the same pen.

The first cheque the young authoress received she characteristically devoted entirely to sacred uses. The bulk of the money she gave to her dear father (he accepted the love, but not the cheque), hoping to further some one or other of the religious objects he had always at heart, and the remainder she divided between similar works.

The delight of this first achievement was, however, but the forerunner of a keen disappointment. Not from any failure of literary success, but because the over-taxed mind was too much for the frail body. The doctor's

fiat was, "She must choose between writing and living. She can't do both."

Thus for nine years the pen was laid aside. When, after this interval of waiting, Frances published her first book, *The Ministry of Song*, she regarded the delay not as the result of any error in self-management, but as the direct interposition of the Divine Will, "because He knows best what will really ripen and further His work in us."

The precise date when Frances first discovered her wonderful gift for musical composition does not appear, but it was evidently somewhere between '60 and '65.

Towards the close of the latter year she revisited her friends in Germany, and took the opportunity of obtaining the opinion of the German musician, Hiller, on the merits of her work. This was at the earnest desire of her former tutor, Pastor Schulze-Berge, but sorely against her own inclination, because, she modestly confesses, "I expected nothing but utter quenching from such a man."

Her father and step-mother were at that time staying at Bonn, and the latter accompanied Frances to an appointed interview with the great composer.

He received them kindly, and then in silence proceeded to examine the volume of melodies which the young lady had submitted for his verdict.

When about three-quarters through, he suddenly asked, "What instruction have you had?"

"I told him," Frances relates, "of Hatherley's having corrected my first six songs, and my having a musical father, to whom I occasionally referred difficult points, and with whom I had musical talk in general. 'I do not care anything about that,' said he. 'I mean, what regular musical course have you gone through, and under what professor?' I told him I had done nothing of the sort. He looked very hard at me, as if to see if I was telling the truth, and then turned back to my music, saying, 'In that case I find this very remarkable!'"

The professor subsequently told Frances that although he saw no sign of great creative power in her melodies, he was astonished at her harmonies. "It is something singular," he said, "to find such grasp of the subject, such

power of harmonization, except where there has been long and thorough study and instruction; here I can give almost unlimited praise."

On being asked whether there was promise enough in her efforts to make it advisable for her to devote herself to music as a life-work, he replied that he could sincerely and unhesitatingly say that there was.

Hiller recommended to Frances a book of exercises, which she conscientiously determined to go through before attempting any more composition. Of course she had, in an amateur way, studied harmony years before—chiefly by reading as much of a treatise on the subject as she could grasp last thing every night before going to bed, and working out the exercises in her head before falling asleep—but the amazement and almost scepticism of the great man on hearing that she had been through no regular "academical course," was an immense compliment.

Needless to say, this gifted musician-poetess was an exquisite pianist. Her sister says: "Often she sang for me her recitative and air to the words in Isaiah xii. . . . The third verse, 'Therefore with joy,' etc., was real water-music; the notes seemed sparkles of water dropping gladly, and the illusion was so perfect that one's soul seemed refreshingly sprayed with joy."

We may here mention that this elder sister, Maria, had often anticipated she might have Frances to play and sing to her when she was dying, little thinking the younger one would be called first. Yet, during the long and painful months that Maria lay sick unto death, the memory of those lovely melodies again and again returned to her with such extraordinary vividness that it was sometimes difficult for her to realize that she was not listening to them with her outward ears. It seems scarcely fanciful to imagine that the blessed spirit of the departed was allowed thus to communicate with the mind of the dear one left behind, and soothe her sufferings in the very way that they had been wont to promise one another should be. Many an hour of pain was beguiled to Maria Havergal by these wonderful mental reproductions of her sister's music.

Frances' touch, we are told, was instinct with soul, as

was also her singing. A pupil of Beethoven once pronounced her rendering of the Moonlight Sonata "perfect"; and her memory was such that she would play through Handel and much of Beethoven and Mendelssohn without any notes.

The Rev. W. H. Havergal died on Easter Tuesday morning, 1870, aged seventy-seven. It was quite unexpectedly, from apoplexy.

> ". . . There was no last word of love,
> So suddenly on us the sorrow fell;
> His bright translation to the home above
> Was clouded with no shadow of farewell;
> His last Lent evening closed with praise and prayer,
> And then began the songs of endless Easter there."

It was soon after her father's death that Frances began preparing *Havergal's Psalmody* for the press. This book was afterwards largely used in connection with the Rev. C. B. Snepp's Hymnal, *Songs of Grace and Glory*, to which compilation Frances herself contributed several original compositions.

In nothing did she miss the comradeship and counsel of her dearly-loved father more than in his advice about her music. One morning, shortly after her bereavement, she was puzzling over some difficult point which he could at once have made clear to her, when there flashed into her mind the words, "Thou art the Helper of the fatherless." This was instant comfort to her, and she formed the habit of seeking Divine help in both her musical and poetic composition, accepting the thoughts and ideas that came to her as sent direct from God.

"Writing is *praying* with me," she told a friend; "for I never seem to write even a verse by myself, and feel like a little child writing. You know a child would look up at every sentence, and say, 'And what shall I say next?' That is just what I do; I ask that at every line He would give me, not merely thoughts and power, but also every *word*, even the very *rhymes*. Very often I have a most distinct and happy consciousness of direct answers."

Of course it was a deep joy to this consecrated young

genius to hear of her poems or music being used and blessed by God, and she fully realized the high privilege that was hers.

"*Literal* 'singing for Jesus,'" she wrote, "is to me, somehow, the most personal and direct commission I hold from my beloved Master; and my opportunities for it are often most curious, and have been greatly blessed; every line in my little poem 'Singing for Jesus' is from personal experience."

In this connection it may not be out of place to relate one instance of the kind of work for her Master which she was able so often to accomplish, and also of a strangely granted prayer.

Frances Havergal, than whom a more loyal soul never lived, was accustomed to pray especially for our dear Queen Victoria's youngest child, and one day, when revising the proofs of her elegantly got-up volume *Life Mosaic*, with its exquisite coloured illustrations of Alpine flowers and scenery by the Baroness Helga von Cramm, she exclaimed, "Oh, I should so like to send one to the Princess Beatrice!"

There seemed, however, to be no means of approach to her Royal Highness, and Frances made the matter a subject of special petition.

During a subsequent visit to London, she was present at an amateur musical evening, where she was much interested by the beautiful singing of an Italian lady.

Presently Frances herself was invited to sing, and after rendering one of Handel's compositions, was persuaded to give the company a song of her own.

She chose, "Whom, having not seen, ye love." "She always sang so rejoicingly," says her sister, "the words 'Though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice,' up the scale of joy, and then the deep adoring thrill, 'With joy unspeakable and full of glory.'"

As she left the piano, the Italian lady, her eyes full of tears, whispered, "Miss Havergal, I envy you! Your words and face tell me you have something I have not."

A pleasant correspondence followed this interview, and when it transpired that the lady was well acquainted with

the Princess Beatrice, Frances ventured to make her the intermediary of her longed-for offering to her Royal Highness. The book was graciously accepted, and in return the Princess sent the poetess her photograph, with her autograph written beneath it, and a pleasant assurance that she admired the poetry.

Long after, the surviving sister was gratified to see an extract from Frances' lines on "September," enwreathed by the same Princess in heather and autumnal leaves, in her artistic Birthday Book.

Frances' intense sense of what we may almost call "verbal inspiration" as regarded her compositions, enabled her to take all experiences connected with them in a spirit of complete submission, believing everything, good or bad, to be equally an ordering of the Divine Will.

Thus, when a fire occurring at her publisher's totally destroyed the results of six months' labour, of which she had no copy or even a memorandum to assist her memory, she took it that she had been too anxious to get the book done (it was an Appendix to *Songs of Grace and Glory*), that she might hasten on to other work of her "own choosing and planning." Therefore she thanked God for mercifully giving her another opportunity of doing these hymns more patiently and more *for Him*.

In the same spirit she regarded as an especial mark of Divine favour a relapse after the serious attack of typhoid fever which had almost proved fatal in '74 and '75. Lamenting that in the earlier part of her illness she had not "glorified Him in the fires," because "after I had lost all my strength, I could not bear the pain without moaning and crying out, and showing eagerness for remedies," she felt that a recurrence of illness was a proof of God's pardon and a gracious opportunity of learning the "turned lesson" over again.

In the limited space at our disposal, it would be impossible to give extracts from the melodious poems which have made the name of Frances Havergal so widely known and dearly loved both in this country and across the seas. We must content ourselves with mentioning a few of her works.

The Ministry of Song was, as we have already indicated, her first volume of poetry, and was published in 1869. This was followed by companion volumes, *Under the Surface* and *Under His Shadow*, in all of which the heart-experiences of the writer as well as her spiritual revelations and inspirations are set forth, as one reviewer expressed it, "with truth, delicacy, and sweetness." "Each poem," said a well-known religious weekly, speaking of *Under the Surface*, "is a life-song and a heart-story," and every one breathes that profound devotion to a personal Saviour which was the joy of the writer's radiant life. The power for good of these books can be hardly over-estimated, for they have reached a circulation of hundreds of thousands, and no one can read them without being spiritually uplifted.

But, perhaps, in the devotional world, Miss Havergal's prose works have had even greater popularity than her poems. *Kept for the Master's Use*, a little book, which it is hardly necessary to remind our readers has for its text the twelve couplets of F. R. H.'s own universally sung Consecration hymn, is a Christian classic, endorsed in its noble aspirations by the most devout souls in every denomination. *My King, or Daily Thoughts for the King's Children*, is scarcely less widely appreciated; this, and three companion volumes of the same series—*Royal Commandments*, *Royal Bounty*, and *Loyal Responses*—show most wonderful typical meanings in innumerable little-noticed passages of the Old Testament, particularly in the history of King David. Miss Havergal displays striking insight—sometimes one is almost tempted to call it ingenuity—in discovering hidden allusions to the relation of Christ's servants to their Lord. *The Royal Invitation* and *Starlight through the Shadows* are also somewhat on these her favourite lines.

A tender lover of children, Miss Havergal could not be content to leave them without a share in the Divine feast. *Little Pillows, being Good Night Thoughts for the Little Ones*, has had great vogue; *Morning Bells, being Waking Thoughts for the Little Ones*, scarcely less so, and *Morning Stars, or Names of Christ for His Little Ones*, follows them

closely. *Bruey*, the story of "a Little Worker for Christ," has been much liked, and *The Four Happy Days* is a pretty story in which under the name of "Annie" the authoress tells the experiences of her own child-life, especially those relating to the death of her mother.

Of the hymns, sacred songs, innumerable articles for magazines, the booklets and the papers on all kinds of religious topics which flowed from Miss Havergal's untiring pen, we can only speak in passing. Her private correspondence was also voluminous, and it is in letters to individuals that her sweetness of manner, intense earnestness, and bright, practical piety are ofttimes seen at their best.

CHAPTER IV.

'ONLY FOR THEE!

FRANCES HAVERGAL'S life was not only richly dowered with natural gifts, but her circumstances were in every way of the most happy and favoured. She was an illustration of the truth that from those to whom much is given much will be required; nor did she disappoint Him who had so lavished blessings upon her that she might as abundantly impart to others.

In addition to the privilege of being surrounded by relatives and friends of a high degree of Christian excellence, and persons of all classes who regarded her wherever she went with loving admiration, she possessed the advantage of complete freedom from all the sordid and depressing cares of lower middle-class life, and the opportunity of frequent travel in delightful company.

In girlhood, as we have seen, she enjoyed a long stay in Germany, visiting several interesting spots. This was followed by visits to her sister's home in Ireland. But a greater event was Frances' first sight of Switzerland, whither she journeyed, in May 1869, with her brother-in-law, Mr. Crane, his wife and eldest daughter. As usual,

she carefully wrote in her diary of every scene she looked upon, and all the emotions to which it gave rise. Some of her descriptions are gems of word-painting.

Thus she describes the Rhine Falls:—"It was fascinating to look down on the wild rapids, sheets of glass-like transparency, flowing swiftly over rock tables; then a sudden precipice below water, which might go down to any depth, only that you are not looking down into darkness, but into emerald and snow mingled and transfused marvellously. . . . You look up, and see masses of bright water hurled everlastingly, irresistibly down, down, down, with a sort of exuberance of the joy of utter strength; you look across, and see shattered diamonds by millions leaping and glittering in the sunshine; you look down, and it is a tremendous wrestling and overcoming of flood upon flood, all the more weirdly grand that it is half hidden in the clouds of spray."

During this tour Frances enjoyed the realization of her childhood's dream and longing, and beheld snow mountains for the first time. She was deeply impressed. "I never saw anything material and earthly," she writes, "which so suggested the ethereal and heavenly . . . and one could better fancy them to be the visible foundations of the invisible celestial city, bearing some wonderful relation to its transparent gold and crystal sea, than only snow and granite."

From Switzerland she soon after travelled back to the Highlands of Scotland, the scenery of which pleased her greatly.

In 1871 Frances again visited Switzerland with her friend Elizabeth Clay. They had a most delightful tour of several weeks' duration, and our poetess rapturously pictures an Alpine dawn and sunrise:—"When we came out we saw the 'daffodil sky' which Tyndall describes—in the east a calm glory of expectant light as if something positively celestial must come next, instead of merely the usual sun. In the south-west the grand mountains stood, white and perfectly clear, as if they might be waiting for the resurrection, with the moon shining pale and radiant over them, the deep Rhone valley dark and grave-like in

contrast below. As we got higher, the first rose-flush struck the Mischabel and Weisshorn, and Monte Leon came to life too; it was *real* rose-fire, delicate yet intense. The Weisshorn was in its full glory, looking more perfectly lovely than any earthly thing I ever saw. When the tip of the Matterhorn caught the red light on its evil-looking rocky peak, it was just like a volcano, and looked rather awful than lovely, giving one the idea of an evil angel, impotently wrathful, shrinking away from the serene glory and utter purity of a holy angel, which that Weisshorn at dawn might represent, if anything earthly could."

1872 finds our mountain-clamberer on the top of Snowdon. Wales, she declared, no more suffers in comparison with Switzerland "than a forget-me-not beside a rose." Her favourite mountain verse was, "Unto Thee, O Lord, do we give thanks, for that Thy name is near Thy wondrous works declare."

In 1873 Frances was back again in her beloved Switzerland, this time with her friends Mr. and Mrs. Snepp, and their daughter Emily. It was during this visit that her high spirits and delight in physical activity nearly led to sad disaster. She had a perfect passion for "glissading" down icy slopes, and excitement on one occasion getting the better of discretion, she and her guide were all but precipitated into a fathomless abyss. It was Mr. Snepp's presence of mind that saved their lives.

In 1874 Switzerland was again revisited, in company of her niece and other friends. A word-picture of "Sunset on the Faulhorn" was the gem of her "circular letters" home during this tour, but it is too long to be quoted here.

1875 was the year of Miss Havergal's serious illness, and subsequent relapse, already alluded to, and she did not leave England, but appears to have had a pleasant autumnal sojourn at picturesque Whitby. The following summer, however, found her escorting her sister Miriam to the beauties of the Alps.

It was during this sojourn that, at Champéry, Frances became acquainted with the Baroness Helga von Cramm,

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

a gifted artist, in collaboration with whom she soon after published an exquisite series of cards, bearing Alpine views and verses. This seems to have been the last glimpse of Switzerland.

In 1878, Somersetshire, Devonshire, and Wales were all visited. It was from the lovely "Welsh nest," at Caswell Bay, Swansea, that in June of the following year her soul winged its way to the glories of the Heavenly Land.

During all these journeys, wherever she went and whenever she stopped, this zealous evangelist seized every opportunity of speaking of the Saviour to all around her. The sunny beauty of her countenance, so often remarked, the unaffected joyousness of her manner, and her merry laugh, were ever the greatest possible recommendations of the religion she preached.

She was always ready to give, not only the little books and papers she invariably carried with her for the purpose, but her own time and energy—herself, in fact—to any whom she felt she might by any means help.

At Ormont Dessus, during one of her Swiss tours, she willingly gave up best part of a morning which she had intended to employ in writing a poem, to talk to a labouring man and his sons who crossed her path. This opportunity was a direct answer to her prayer to be made "just as willing to do any little bit of work for Him . . . simple and unseen, as this other piece of work which might win something of man's praise."

Soon after her return from this holiday, Frances, though actually in the first stages of typhoid fever, put herself to considerable inconvenience to see, during a railway journey, a young stranger whom her sister had written her was needing help. "It will be well worth *any* fatigue," she said, "if I can comfort her."

When visiting at the houses of relatives or friends it was the same thing. The servants of the family and the cottagers around alike adored the sweet-voiced, sunshiny lady who spoke to them so winningly about higher things. "Bible-readings in the servants' hall, kind talks alone, and helpful prayers, are all remembered."

F. R. H.'s own account of how she came to write her most popular hymn—

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

is a fair instance of the way in which she worked for her Master when enjoying the hospitality of friends.

"I went for a little visit of five days. There were ten persons in the house, some unconverted and long prayed for, some converted but not rejoicing Christians. He gave me the prayer, 'Lord, give me *all* in this house!' And He just *did!* Before I left the house every one had got a blessing. The last night of my visit I was too happy to sleep, and passed most of the night in praise, and renewal of my own consecration, and these little couplets formed themselves and chimed in my heart one after another, till they finished with, '*Ever*, ONLY, ALL for Thee!'"

Again: "I was at a large regular London party lately, and I was so happy. He seemed to give me 'the secret of His presence,' and of course I sang 'for Jesus,' and did not I have dead silence? Afterwards I had two really important conversations with strangers; one seemed extremely surprised at finding himself *quite easily* drifted from the badinage with which he started into a right-down personal talk about *his* personal danger and *his* only hope of safety; he took it very well, and thanked me."

In her correspondence, Miss Havergal of course found abundant opportunities for introducing the one paramount topic of interest; both in communicating to other Christians the helpful revelations and rich Biblical "finds" which were sent to her by her Master, and in urging the blessedness of the consecrated life upon those who had not yet tasted its joys. To her own large circle of nephews and nieces she was indeed a guiding, guardian angel.

To one little child she writes:—

"DEAREST 'LITTLE THING,'

"*Let* the Lord lead you, *let* Him have you *altogether*. And, dear pet, blessing hardly ever comes alone; if He

has the joy of winning you altogether for Himself, He won't stop there; He will do more, He is doing so here. . . . I feel most deeply for you. Keep very close to Jesus, my darling, and ask Him never to let you take back what you have now given Him. Be His entirely, without any reserve, and He will be yours entirely." . . .

Of course, so widely-popular a writer received shoals of letters, from shoals of persons, on all possible subjects, both relevant and irrelevant, especially from would-be authors, who calmly asked to have their MSS. carefully read and criticized, without the least regard to the time and labour that must be expended upon them.

The following is a specimen of the multifarious requests that reached her, *by one post*:—

"Request for contribution to *Irish Church Advocate*. Hymns for special New Year Services wanted. To write cards suitable for mourners. For set of six more 'Marching Orders.' Request for poems to illustrate six pictures. For prayer, sympathy and counsel (two sheets crossed). Two sheets from a septuagenarian, requiring thought. Request to write a book suitable for Unitarians. Sundry inquiries and apologies from one who had been printing her verses with another author's name. Request to reprint an article, with four explanatory enclosures. Also to revise a proof, and add my opinion. To revise many sheets of musical manuscripts. Three requests to supply cards for Bazaars. Advice wanted how to get articles inserted in magazines. To recommend pupils. To promote a new magazine. To give opinion on an oratorio. Some long poems in manuscript to revise and advise thereon. Besides packets of leaflets and cards wanted."

To partially meet such overwhelming pressure, a circular was printed, giving numbered answers to the most constantly recurring queries, which could be marked according to the correspondent's particular question or questions. But even with the relief this afforded, many hours a day were unavoidably occupied in replying to individuals whose special needs could not be brought under any general heading. Of course, appeals for spiritual

advice were always answered personally and at full length. The amount of Bible-noting and marking, and also of diary-writing which Miss Havergal's marvellously active pen also accomplished is simply astonishing. At the beginning of the last year of her life a friend sent her a little *Journal of Mercies*, in which she took great delight in entering whichever "mercy" seemed uppermost in her mind for each day, "not one in a thousand, though!" she characteristically comments.

It often happens that the pen and the needle are not equally favoured by the same hand. One is therefore rather surprised to find that Frances Havergal was an accomplished needlewoman. Her work, we are told, "was exquisite, from the often despised darning to the most delicate lace-work and embroidery." She actually confessed, "I do like getting a whole pile of socks to mend when I visit busy mothers; and at missionary working parties it amused me to see my plain-sewing handed round." But, as we once heard a gifted lady remark—"If a woman has brains, she ought to be able to do *everything* better than one who has not!" And records of the varied accomplishments of feminine geniuses seem to bear this out.

The mention of embroidery and lace-work suggests the inquiry as to how much of outward adornment this apostle of entire consecration deemed allowable to a Christian.

Speaking on her couplet "Take my silver and my gold," she said: "As He has entrusted to me a body for my special charge, I am bound to clothe that body with His silver and gold so that it shall neither suffer from cold nor bring discredit upon His cause! . . . If the King's daughter is to be 'all glorious within,' she must not be outwardly a fright! I must dress both as a lady and a Christian. The question of cost I see very strongly, and do not consider myself at liberty to spend on dress that which might be spared for God's work." (This latter remark would certainly apply as well to *time* as to *money!*) She adds: "By dressing unremarkably, yet with a generally pleasing effect, no attention is distracted. . . . But I shall always ask for guidance in all things."

Her jewellery Miss Havergal had long ago given up to

be sold for the benefit of a missionary society, with the exception of one or two brooches for actual use, and sundry small memorials of departed friends, which she "redeemed" for their value in cash. But the fact that she brought as a gift for a friend when returning from one of her Swiss tours a locket of "crystal and amethyst," with the remark that "The very words 'crystal and amethyst' are like a far gleam from the heavenly city," shows that she did not consider the wearing of precious stones to be an inherently sinful thing.

Temperance work ever claimed the warmest advocacy of F. R. H.'s tongue and pen. She appears to have realized increasingly the imperative need of total abstinence among Christian workers, for while, when visiting Switzerland in 1871, she records the mutual drinking in "red wine" of a toast with some friendly Italians who lunched one day at the same spot as she and her companion, her chapter on "Take my lips" in *Kept for the Master's Use*, which was completed not long before her death, concludes with these words:—"I only say here, you who have said, 'Take my lips,' stop and repeat that prayer next time you put that to your lips which is binding men and women hand and foot, and delivering them over, helpless, to Satan! Let those words pass once more from your heart *out* through your lips, and I do not think you will feel comfortable in letting the means of such infernal work pass *in* through them."

It was Temperance work, indeed, that was uppermost in Miss Havergal's mind during the very last weeks of her life, and it was her enthusiasm in this particular cause which prompted the indiscretion as regards health that directly brought on her fatal illness.

It was at Caswell Bay, on May 21, 1879, that Frances Havergal fulfilled an engagement to meet some men and boys on the village bank, to speak to them on the subject of taking the pledge.

Ever since her serious illness in '74 and '75, her health, never robust, had been more delicate than ever, and what were termed "feverish attacks," and supposed to arise mainly from debility, were of frequent occurrence. The

greatest care should have been taken that she was never exposed to the risk of catching cold. But on this particular occasion a most unfortunate spot was chosen for the meeting, it was a day of rain and mist, and after standing a long time in the damp, Miss Havergal returned "wet and chilly."

Next day she felt poorly, but not bad enough to remain indoors; the day after, however, as the sense of chill increased, she was seen by a doctor. On May 24 she was confined to her bed, yet no one suspected that this attack of indisposition was to prove any more serious than many of apparently the same sort which had preceded it.

On the 26th she used her pen for the last time, to correct a proof of *Morning Stars*. Still she was not suffering, and even her doctor did not anticipate danger. Not until the eighth day subsequent to the fatal chill did distressing symptoms make their appearance. Then "fever and internal inflammation came rapidly on, and all the symptoms and agony of peritonitis."

From that time forward there was little relief from pain, and "all remedies failed."

Her brother and sisters were sent for, and quickly came. They sang to her and prayed with her as she could bear it during the succeeding days, and she thanked them, and all about her, most sweetly for their kindness. But her constant thought was of rapturous joy that the meeting with her King, for which all her life she had been longing, was actually at last drawing near.

"Beautiful! Too good to be true!" she said, when one of her doctors told her that probably she would go that very day; and she was heard to murmur, "So beautiful to go!" again and again during the last hours.

At length, early on Whit Tuesday, June 3, release came. A few minutes before the end, she was able to sing, "clearly, though faintly," a verse of the hymn, "Jesus, I will trust Thee!" to her own tune "Hermas."

And then, to quote Miss Maria Havergal's description of the closing scene:—"For ten minutes we watched that almost visible meeting with her King, and her countenance was so glad, as if she were already talking to Him. Then

she tried to sing, but after one sweet, high note, 'HE——,' her voice failed, and as her brother commended her soul into her Redeemer's hand, she passed away. Our precious sister was gone—satisfied—glorified—within the palace of her King!"

The remains of the "sweet singer" were carried to Astley, to be buried beside those of her beloved father. A golden star, of Banksia roses, and a poet's wreath of laurel and bay were conspicuous among the many floral tributes laid upon her grave. It had been a dark and stormy day, but just as the burial service was ending the hearts of the many mourners were comforted by a gleam of June sunshine, and the birds burst into melody all around.

Upon the north side of the family tomb, under the branches of a fir-tree planted by her father, is the inscription:—

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL,

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF THE REV. W. H. HAVERGAL,
AND JANE HIS WIFE.

Born at Astley Rectory, 14th December 1836. Died at Caswell Bay, Swansea, 3rd June 1879. Aged 42.

By her writings in prose and verse, she, "being dead, yet speaketh."

"*The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.*"—1 John i. 7.

Photo. by] THE GRAVE OF FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL. [*H. R. Hemsworth.*

Pundita Ramabai.

CHAPTER I.

A FOREST CHILD.

RIGHTLY and fairly to judge the character of any human being, one should be well acquainted with his family history for several generations before he was born. This being in most cases impossible, it is better, obviously, to judge very mercifully, or not at all. Concerning the subject now before us, the almost unique personality of the Hindu lady, Pundita Ramabai, we must, to discover the earliest perceivable trace of her mental and spiritual origin, go back to the beginning of the last century.

At that period, a young Brahmin student at Poona, Ananta Shastri by name, chanced—"eternal God that chance did guide"—to have for his tutor in Sanskrit a gentleman who was also tutor to one of the royal Princesses. How it came about that this little lady was thus taught we are not informed, for at that time it was a thing almost undreamed-of in India for a woman to learn so much as to read and write. However, Ananta Shastri was much impressed by the fact that a girl actually could be taught as well as a boy, and conceived the wild and revolutionary idea that he would like an educated wife!

His own course of study completed, the young Brahmin returned to his home in the Mangalore district, full of a generous enthusiasm to impart to the girl-bride who was

waiting for him all he himself had attained. But neither the maiden herself nor Shastri's mother was inclined to give him any encouragement. "He will be wanting to teach a primer to the chickens next!" they derisively said.

So he was forced to relinquish his hopes.

In course of years, Ananta Shastri's children grew up, and his wife died. At about forty years of age, being an earnest and devout man, he undertook a pilgrimage to one of the sacred rivers of India. Bathing one morning in its waters, he met with a fellow-pilgrim of his own caste. The latter was a man with several daughters to dispose of, who, having learned a few particulars as to the clan and position of the stranger, agreed, gladly enough, to give him in marriage a fine little girl of nine years old.

Needless to say, the wishes of the child or her mother were not deemed of any account whatever. She was soon prepared for her journey of nine hundred miles to her future home, and Ananta Shastri set out to return, all his blighted hopes of an educated wife springing once more into life.

This time, although he bargained with his mother that he should teach his little bride to read, he still found the opposition of relatives and fellow-Brahmins so great that at last he carried her off to a rude home in the forest, where they could pursue their studies unmolested. Here many a night the tiny wife lay under her quilt, shaking with terror at the howls of the wild beasts that prowled around, while Ananta Shastri, like a true knight, kept guard with drawn sword outside. He seems indeed to have treated her with a tender and chivalrous solicitude that invests the strange story with the beauty of true romance, and must have taught love to the child's young heart while her mind was imbibing the Puranas' sacred lore.

As time passed on, and the girl bride became the mother of a son and daughters, their father, now an old man, adhering to his enlightened views with regard to education, caused them all, impartially, to be instructed in reading, writing, and the sacred learning of the Brahmins. His wife gladly aided him in teaching her children, but so utterly did his friends disapprove of such revolutionary

proceedings, that Ananta, finding himself socially ostracized, took up a permanent abode in the forest.

Here, in April 1858, was born to this singular pair their youngest child, a little girl, who was given the name of Ramabai. This means "sister of Rama," the goddess of light—an unconscious prophecy of her future life, for truly has Ramabai been a light to those who for ages had sat in impenetrable gloom.

The child was unusually bright and intelligent. Early taught by a fond mother in the scriptures of Hinduism, she at the age of twelve years had committed to memory no less than eighteen thousand verses from these sacred writings. Sanskrit, the language in which they are written, thus became perfectly familiar to her. From hearing her parents speak Marathi, she became fluent in this dialect also, as well as Kanarese, Hindustani and Bengali, which she acquired during the wanderings of the family.

Along with Ananta Shastri's advanced ideas on the subject of female education, he held opinions differing from those of his co-religionists as to the child-marriage of girls. Therefore, we find Ramabai at fifteen or sixteen years of age still living with her parents, sister, and brother at home. On other points, however, the family observed the utmost strictness in regard to Brahminical usages. On one occasion, during a sea-voyage of three days' duration, when meals prepared in accordance with their own caste codes could not be obtained, they all not only fasted totally from all solid food, but did not relieve their thirst by a single drop of water, lest it should contain ceremonial defilement.

In advanced age the good old pundit was overtaken by poverty, infirmity and blindness, the first-named affliction resulting more or less from too lavish hospitality towards religious pilgrims and students. Then came the terrible famine of 1874–77. The family of Ananta Shastri, though so well versed in the sacred learning of the Brahmins, possessed no secular education by which money might be earned, and to engage in any kind of manual labour would involve loss of caste—to them, an inconceivable degradation. So, believing their misfortunes to be the punish-

ment for some unknown sin, there was nothing left for them but to endeavour to propitiate the gods, and so secure "a change of luck."

This they essayed by spending a large proportion of the little money that remained to them in alms to Brahmin priests, and in pilgrimages to sacred tanks and streams; also in gifts to astrologers, from whom they hoped to learn the mind of the gods concerning them. Their constant prayer was for wealth, learning and renown, which they believed would be showered upon them from heaven, without any more practical efforts on their own part. Yet, though the gods of brass and stone were dumb, the cry of these poor, earnest, sincere people had entered the ears of Him who alone could help, and the answer was already on its way, though only to be received in this world by the youngest of the group.

To human sight things went from bad to worse. Clothing, jewellery, silver-ware, even the cooking vessels of copper and brass were sold—not to procure food, but to give yet more alms to the obdurate deities, while the family lived sparingly on grain of the coarsest kind. Ramabai's brother, a fine young fellow a few years older than herself, fasted so continuously in the hope of winning divine favour that his constitution was injured beyond recovery.

At length the last coin was spent, the last handful of rice gone, and this sad little group of five who so helplessly loved one another realized that the time to die of starvation had indeed come. They decided to meet the end hidden in the depths of the forest, and thither they accordingly retreated.

But release from suffering was tardy. For eleven days and nights they lingered, subsisting miserably on leaves, water, and a few wild dates. At length a voluntary death by drowning in a sacred tank, which is regarded as a meritorious rather than a sinful action by the Hindus, was decided upon to put an end to these hopeless and protracted sufferings.

The dear old father resolved to die first, and bade a solemn farewell to his children one by one. The turn of

his youngest, the girlish Ramabai, came last. That touching scene can be described in none but her own simple words :—

"I shall never forget his last injunctions to me. His blind eyes could not see my face, but he held me tight in his arms, and stroking my head and cheeks, he told me in a few words broken by emotion to remember how he loved me, and how he had taught me to do right, and never to depart from the way of righteousness. His last loving command to me was to lead an honourable life if I lived at all, and to serve God all my life. He did not know the only true God, but served the—to him—unknown God with all his heart and strength ; and he was very desirous that his children should serve Him to the last. 'Remember, my child,' he said, 'you are my youngest, my most beloved child. I have given you into the hand of our God ; you are His, and to Him alone you must belong, and serve Him all your life.'"

But the God whom he thus ignorantly worshipped, and the movings of whose Spirit he in darkness faithfully obeyed, preserved the good old man from suicide. Ananta Shastri's son at this critical hour rose up and bravely said he would renounce all caste pride, and do any honest work that he could find to support his parents. The old Brahmin was persuaded to give up his idea of death in the sacred tank, and though almost too weak to move, the pitiable little group made their way out of the jungle and once more sought the abodes of man.

In a village at the foot of the mountain, which they reached after two days' weary and painful journeying, the family at first took refuge in a temple, but the priests, whose religion teaches little pity for the weak and suffering, turned them out. The next day they found temporary refuge in a ruin, and a young Brahmin gave them some food.

Here, after a few days' illness, Ananta Shastri's release came. Alone, his son carried the body out beyond all human habitations, and buried it according to the directions of the sacred code.

The same day the mother was taken ill, but she lingered

for some weeks. Though the young man found himself by this time too weak to work even if he could have obtained employment, they were still too proud to beg, and lived wretchedly on what was given them by kind-hearted neighbours. Once, towards the last days of her life, the sick woman suffered so terribly from hunger that she sent Ramabai to the house of a Brahmin lady to beg a piece of coarse cake.

Although kindly received, the young girl could not force her tongue to frame the humiliating request; but her silence and irrepressible tears spoke for her, and the bread was given. Alas! it was too late to be of any service to the dying woman. A few days later the three young wanderers were orphans indeed.

Ramabai feels not a shadow of doubt as to the salvation, through God's loving mercy, of both her parents. Speaking in America, years after their death, she said, "If any one wishes to say that my father, so eager to learn of God, and my mother, so tender and sweet, have gone to hell because no Christian ever reached them with the glad tidings of Christ, I have only to tell you never to say so in my presence, for I will not hear it, and I cannot bear it."

We will not linger longer over this saddest part of Ramabai's life. The elder sister was the next victim of starvation, and Ramabai and her brother were left to struggle on alone. They travelled on foot, without shelter from the cold at night or the heat by day, to the northern boundary of India, then back to the east as far as Calcutta. Sometimes the young man got work to do at wretchedly low wages, but even this was most precarious, and most of the time the pair were still on the verge of starvation.

Two results, however, that were good came of these weary trampings—the sister and brother gradually lost faith in the Hindu religion, and gained, through what they saw and heard, increased enthusiasm in the cause of the down-trodden Hindu woman.

They began to speak publicly on the subject, endeavouring to enlist the sympathy of their co-religionists. Ramabai herself, so young and so gifted, attracted such attention among the Brahmins of Calcutta, which city they eventu-

ally reached, that she was invited to appear before a solemn conclave of Pundits. These wise men were so much amazed at the girl's learning—mistress of seven languages, as well as of the sacred books—that they conferred on her the title of "Sarasvati," or "Goddess of Wisdom," and permitted her, the only woman ever so honoured, to be called "Pundita."

Thenceforth poverty and privation were of the past. Together Ramabai and her brother travelled throughout Bengal, holding meetings on the education and emancipation of woman. Notwithstanding the opposition their father had endured, and the scepticism of the Brahmins of his day as to the possibility of cultivating female intellect, a concrete example of what could be done in the person of the Sarasvati was everywhere received with enthusiasm and generously supported.

But the mutual happiness of this devoted pair was all too short-lived. Ramabai's brother was taken ill in Calcutta, and his strength, wasted by years of privation and hardship, soon succumbed. His last thoughts were for his young unprotected sister. "God will take care of me," she said, to comfort him.

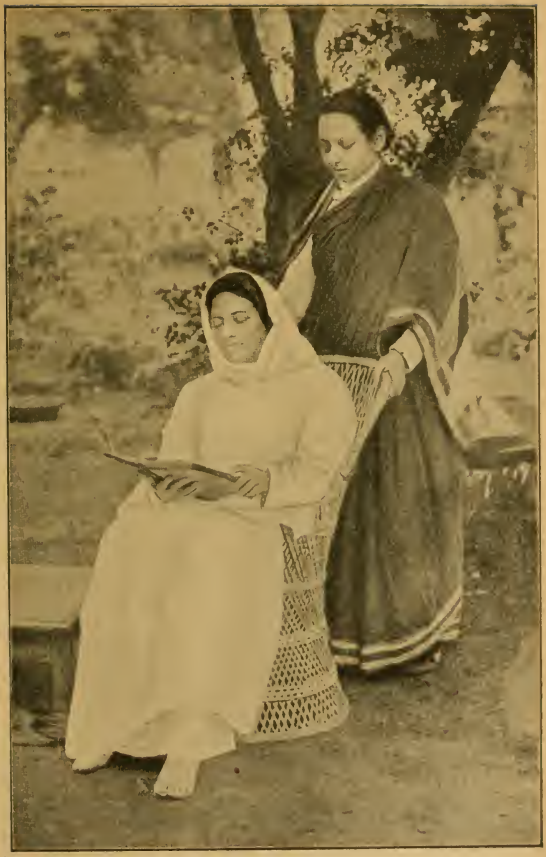
"If God cares for us," said he, "I fear nothing."

So he passed away, and Ramabai was left alone.

CHAPTER II.

THE HINDU WIFE AND WIDOW.

TO the fact that Marathi women are not confined in the zenana, as are most of their sex in the North-West and other parts of India, is chiefly owing the liberty with which Ramabai Sarasvati moved among the Brahmins of the more southern provinces. But she showed herself of so independent a mind as to assert her freedom from the bonds of caste, by remaining unmarried until she was twenty-two years of age, and then uniting herself to a man of her own choice.



RAMABAI AND HER DAUGHTER MANORAMA.

Ramabai's husband was a Bengali gentleman, a graduate of Calcutta University, Bipin Bihari Medhavi, M.A., whom, to the scandalization of the women round about, she dared to call by his first, or as we should say, his "Christian" name. Such familiarity with the exalted being whom a Hindu wife is taught to regard as "like unto a god," was surely enough to make their hair stand on end.

For less than two years the pair led a happy life in the husband's home in Assam, during which time a baby girl was born to them. She was a welcome gift—not disliked or despised, or regarded as a misfortune, as a first-born daughter usually is in India. And she was named Manorama, or "Heart's Joy," to signify her parents' love for her.

Before little Manorama was twelve months old, her father was stricken down by cholera, and once more Ramabai was called to suffer the agony of bereavement.

This time her loss placed her in what, under ordinary circumstances, would have been the most painful condition imaginable to a high-caste Hindu woman—that of a widow without a son. But the Sarasvati's education, her emancipation from the tyranny of caste, and her knowledge of the world gave her a tremendous advantage, and rising bravely above her own grief, she set herself to alleviate the sufferings of her sisters in sorrow.

Often as we have heard of the extreme sadness of the lot of the Indian widow, the reasons which have brought about this deplorable state of things are not clear to all our minds. It is naturally a puzzle to many how the "mild Hindu," whose Vedas teach him to "consider the life of every animal as precious as his own," and who has actually founded a hospital for disabled horses, dogs, bullocks and monkeys, can be so inhumanly cruel to infants and women of his own race.

The cause lies in the calumniation of women by the Hindu Scriptures.

In most Oriental countries woman is regarded as immeasurably the inferior of man. Even the Jews before the time of our Lord were not untouched by this idea,

though it never reached the pitch of absolute brutality as in India at the present day. The Hindu is taught by his sacred writings that man is everything that is noble and good, but woman, his temptress, as naturally prone to all evil. No doubt it is the sin of our first mother that has borne bitter fruit in the misery of countless millions of her daughters. Woman, according to the Hindu Vedas, is vain, immodest, unfaithful, and her heart "more deceitful than that of a viper."

Therefore the urgent need of every possible restraint to keep her fairly within the rules of decent behaviour. Hence, the early marriage, and the subsequent imprisonment in the zenana. A gentleman who allows his daughters to remain unmarried after ten, or at the utmost twelve years old, is thought to have disgracefully neglected his duty towards them. Vast numbers are consequently married as mere infants, sometimes to boys of their own age, but often to men of mature years. To get a girl married to a Brahmin is considered so specially meritorious an act, that some unscrupulous youths of that sacred caste go about the country marrying all and sundry, accepting bridal gifts from parents, and departing to be heard of no more. Occasionally one of these much-married beings will have over a hundred nominal wives, all of whom are plunged in the horrors of widowhood should he untimely die.

As a rule, the betrothed girl goes away to her husband's home long before she reaches a marriageable age, that she may be prepared for the duties of wifehood by her husband's mother. Then her troubles begin. Sometimes the mother-in-law is considerate and kind, but too often she is tyrannical and hard to satisfy, and occasionally, especially if it should happen that her son is not pleased with the bride chosen for him, she treats the poor little creature with bitter cruelty. In any case, the loneliness of the child-wife, torn from her mother and all whom she loves, and sent perhaps hundreds of miles away to a home among strangers, may be imagined.

Yet marriage is looked forward to with more hope than terror by most little Hindu girls, for they know it will be a

time of feasting and merriment, of sweetmeats, fireworks, and the donning of gay clothes, when each one for a brief, bright season is a centre of interest and petting, and reigns as a little queen. Of the long years of misery that may follow their innocent young hearts know nothing.

The position even of the most beloved wife is to our Western minds one of humiliating servility. Her main business is to prepare her husband's food and to serve him with it, meekly standing by till he has finished, then gratefully making her own meal from what he has been pleased to leave upon the dish. A current Mohammedan tradition sufficiently pictures the Oriental ideal of a good wife.

"A woman was one day seen sitting half in the sunshine and half in the shade. By her side was a vessel full of hot water and another of cold. Also, close by, was a stick, a piece of rope, and a small heap of broken bricks.

"On being asked the meaning of all this, she replied: 'My husband is a grass-cutter, and I know not whether at this moment he is at work in the sunshine or in the shade. I want to sympathize with him whichever it may be. And I know not whether, on his return, he will need hot water or cold, so I have prepared both. Also, should he be in a bad humour, it is impossible to say whether he will choose to chastise me with a stick or a rope's end, or if he would prefer to throw bricks at me. So I have got them all ready for his hand.

"When Mahomet heard this, he said here was indeed a good woman, who deserved to go to heaven."

The one way in which a Hindu woman may raise herself in the general estimation is by becoming the mother of sons. Having "looked upon the face of a living son" is to a man a passport to future blessedness, while a husband having died sonless has no right to heaven or immortality. Therefore the wife who confers this boon on her husband places him under an obligation which he is free to reward by gifts of sweetmeats, jewellery, and fine dresses, these being the only goods which the inferior mind of a woman is supposed to appreciate. He is indeed commanded by

the Vedas to take care that she is made happy, that his welfare and that of the children she bears him may not suffer. She may even, after giving her husband one or two sons, venture to present him with a daughter, without fear that the helpless mite will be cradled in the nearest well, or "accidentally" furnish a meal for the night-prowling beasts of prey.

Should her sons live to man's estate, the lot of the Hindu woman reaches its highest possible pinnacle of bliss, for she rules supreme over them, and their wives and families. A son is commanded always to honour his mother.

But even a favoured wife has not for a moment her husband's trust. She is believed to be always liable to betray him unless closely watched. Hence the excessive severity of her seclusion. Ramabai relates the story of a lady, who, seeing from a window that her little son—her only one—was in imminent peril in the street, impulsively rushed out to save him. If anything could have excused the violation of purdah rules it was surely such an emergency as this. But although the husband, on hearing of the incident, did not openly blame her, *she was seen alive no more.*

Another wife was killed by her jealous husband simply because a glimpse of her back had been accidentally seen by another man through an open door, she herself being wholly unconscious of the circumstance.

Such then is the condition of the happy wife in India—she who by securing the eternal bliss of her lord has won the approval of himself and his relations—classed by Hindu Shastras among the valuable female properties of her husband, such as "cows, mares, she-camels, slave girls, she-goats and ewes;" and, say they, "Let a wife who wishes to perform sacred ablution, wash the feet of her husband and *drink the water!*"

But on the reverse side of the picture is the fate of the sonless wife; and that of the sonless widow is darkest of all. Nothing can be more sad than the wholly unmerited sufferings of the child-widow whose husband has died before the consummation of their marriage. This, gravest of all misfortunes, is very liable to occur when the betrothal of

mature or even elderly men to mere babies is not uncommon.

To be thus left a widow is considered a sure sign that in a previous state of being the poor little girl committed some fearful crime, for which not she alone but the man who was unlucky enough to marry her has had to suffer—he being hurried, sonless, to a hopeless doom on her account. The feelings with which she is regarded by his relations can therefore be conceived.

Some sad day the child is suddenly snatched from her companions, her pretty clothes and ornaments all stripped off, and her rich dark hair shorn close to her head. This disfiguring shaving is repeated by some castes every two weeks, for they believe that the widow's long tresses would "bind her husband's soul in hell!" She is then clad in a single coarse, ugly garment, to mortify her vanity; her tinkling silver bangles and sparkling gems are confiscated to humble her pride, while the scantiest food and frequent fastings are ordained for the subduing of the evil passions with which her young soul is believed to be filled. The hardest work, the vilest names, and the most brutal blows are henceforward her daily portion—for is she not in essence a murderess? She may never again join in any festivity, she may not even be seen at a family gathering, for her touch is pollution, the sight of her an omen of ill-luck. And this as long as her life lasts, for remarriage is strictly forbidden. No wonder that many of the unhappy creatures seek relief from their miseries in suicide.

The practice of burning alive the widow on her husband's funeral pyre was put an end to, as is well known, as far back as 1829, but "cold suttee," as a leading reformer has well named it, still remains. Said a Hindu widow to a European friend: "The English have abolished suttee, but, alas, neither the English nor the angels know what goes on in our houses, and the Hindus not only do not care, but think it good."

Another widow touchingly said: "Bruised and beaten, we are like dry husks of sugar-cane from which the sweetness has all been extracted."

THE FIRST OF RAMABAI'S CHILD-WIDOWS.

This then was the class to which Ramabai herself now belonged, and whose earnest champion she had become.

It was years before, when a mere child herself, that the Pundita's sympathies had been first aroused on behalf of the victims of Hindu notions about women.

In part of her father's house there lived a man with his mother and his young wife of sixteen. The poor girl's heartrending cries when brutally beaten for some trifling fault filled the happier child with an indignation that after nearly thirty years was keenly remembered. She believes it was her first call to the service of her ill-used sisters.

Later, the troubles of a friend, a high-caste young lady named Rukhmaibai, confirmed the Pundita in her longing to see Indian women placed in a less unfair position with regard to marriage.

Rukhmaibai was a well-educated girl, betrothed in her childhood to a boy of her own age on the understanding that he was to receive education equal to her own. Her relations must have been among the few who sympathized with the enlightened views of Ananta Shastri, for she was also allowed to remain at home till she was nineteen years of age. Then, when her young husband claimed her, it was found that his parents had neglected their part of the contract. He was illiterate, and in many ways quite repulsive to his bride.

Rukhmaibai appealed against the union, but even an English judge was compelled to come to the decision that as the law stood there was nothing for it but to order the girl to join her husband, or endure six months' imprisonment. She chose the latter alternative, but subsequently a compromise was effected, and by bearing the cost of the trial, and paying the disappointed bridegroom 2000 rupees wherewith to marry another wife, she was released.

But Ramabai's first real *protégée* was a poor little arab of the streets, a Brahmin child cast out by her husband's relations after his death, and who had been able, chiefly owing to extreme lack of physical beauty, to lead a virtuous if starving life, up to the age of twelve years.

This homeless wanderer Ramabai took under her pro-

tection, and she is now leading a happy and useful life as a Christian Bible-woman.

But there were myriads of others—in 1891 the number of widows in India was estimated at 23,000,000—many of them quite young girls and children, in similarly wretched case, and Ramabai could not rest till she had wrought some practical work for the alleviation of their lot.

CHAPTER III.

A BOLD PROJECT.

ALL this time, though, like her father, Ramabai was in her loving sympathy for sufferingunconsciously following "the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," she knew not the source of her good impulses nor who was guiding her. But she had already heard of the Christian religion, and was deeply interested in it, insomuch that she procured a Bible and began to study its teachings.

For a while, after her husband died, Ramabai supported herself and her little daughter by lecturing on the Education of Women. Her intimate acquaintance with the Hindu scriptures enabled her to assert that their most ancient teaching enjoined that women should be taught, and this the Brahmins were unable to deny. She was so favourably received, especially in Poona, that a society of high-caste Marathi ladies was actually formed, with branches in various cities, for the avowed purpose of encouraging the education of girls and postponing marriage to maturity.

In 1882 Ramabai spoke on these subjects before a British Commission on the question of Education in India; and the President was so much impressed by her views, and the clear and able way in which she stated them, that he had them translated from Marathi and printed in English.

Soon after this, the Pundita conceived the idea of further improving her education, and acquainting herself with the English language and literature by a visit to these islands.

A Christian mission at Poona recommended her and her little daughter to the hospitality of an Anglican Sisterhood at Wantage. Here she was received, and remained for a year, studying English and the Christian Scriptures, with the result that before leaving she had embraced the Christian faith, and with her little Manorama was baptized according to the rites of the Church of England.

After this twelvemonth's preparation, Ramabai accepted the post of Professor of Sanskrit at the Cheltenham Ladies' College, which she held for a year and a half, continuing her own studies at the same time.

It is interesting to learn that, even in our cold, damp, and variable climate, this Brahmin lady faithfully adhered to the rules as to diet in which she had been brought up. Never did she taste fish, flesh, fowl, or even an egg, for that contains the germ of life which is so sacred in the estimation of Hindus. Nor can we suppose that this was any great piece of self-denial, for the sight and smell of meat is most disgusting to those who have never tasted anything but fruit and grain. She was also a strict abstainer from alcoholic beverages.

When Ramabai had been at the Cheltenham College a year and a half, she was invited by a fellow-countrywoman, Anandibai Joshi, of Poona, to go and see the latter receive her medical degree in Philadelphia. Thus was another new world opened before the Pundita's eager gaze.

The late Miss Frances Willard's picture of our heroine in early womanhood is as graphic and graceful as one might expect. After stating that Ramabai can trace her Brahmin ancestry for a thousand years, she tells us that the Pundita has "dark grey eyes, full of light, a straight nose, with a tiny tattoo between the brows, mobile lips, close-cut blue-black hair, and perfect white teeth." She dressed, we are told, in grey silk, very simply made, with a boyish, turn-down collar, and a white "chuddah" or native shawl draping her head and shoulders.

In personal characteristics she is " full of archness and repartee, handling our English tongue with a precision attained by but few of us who are to the manner born." Yet in disposition she is "incarnate gentleness, combined with celerity of apprehension, swiftness of mental pace and adroitness of logic."

To which fascinating description Miss Willard's mother, in her diary of that memorable visit, added :—" Pundita Ramabai is a marvellous creation. She has a surprisingly comprehensive intellect ; is as open to perceive truth as a daisy to the sun ; with face uplifted, she marches straight into its effulgence, caring for nothing so she find the eternal truth of the eternal God—not anxious what that truth may be." Tenderness towards all living creatures is also one of Ramabai's winning traits ; " even of flowers she thinks we ought to let them grow and to admire them in their bright living beauty rather than to pull them from their stems. The wearing of birds on bonnets seems to her a pitiable vulgarity."

This, then, was the woman who took to America, the land where above all others our sex is crowned with honour, her harrowing story of the Hindu wife and widow.

Ramabai at once found a true friend in Rachel Bodley, A.M., M.D., the Dean of the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia, and the early death of Dr. Bodley's former Hindu pupil, Anandibai Joshi, soon after her graduation, seemed to draw the American lady's heart the more closely to this second freedom-seeking Asiatic.

The Pundita's sojourn in America extended to three years. During that time she took every opportunity of studying the educational methods of that country, and especially the kindergarten system, which greatly aroused her interest. She also travelled much, with a view to enlisting public sympathy in the important scheme which was now definitely shaping itself in her mind.

This was nothing less than the founding of a school where Hindu widows of high caste could be received and educated by their own countrywomen in such a way as to enable them to earn their own living when their school course was

finished. Especially did Ramabai hope to train teachers who might be received into native homes, and even penetrate the seclusion of the zenana itself with the light of knowledge and truth.

With this end in view she addressed drawing-room meetings everywhere, and larger audiences whenever she could, evoking enthusiasm and gaining supporters among the most cultured and intellectually advanced of American women in all sections of the Christian Church.

While with Dr. Bodley, Ramabai also wrote her deeply interesting book, *The High-Caste Hindu Woman*, which is unique, as throwing light upon the existing condition of things from the inside, which could only be done in an absolutely accurate and reliable manner by one who had actually lived from childhood in the midst of the abuses of which she so graphically speaks. To this volume Dr. Rachel Bodley added an admirable preface.

This work further aroused the sympathies of American women, and as the profits arising from the sale of it were—and still are—devoted to the cause which Ramabai had at heart, she was able to start at once on the production of educational material for her projected school. Before leaving America she had sufficient money to purchase about six hundred electrotype plates for the illustration of her complete series of books, which were to comprise a primer, five graduated reading-books, a geography, and a natural history—the first series of the kind for girls ever published in India.

But perhaps the most valuable fruit of Ramabai's visit to America was the formation in 1887 of the "Ramabai Association," to which is almost entirely owing the Pundita's ultimate ability to realize the dream of her life. The head-quarters of the Association were in Boston, the President and Vice-Presidents included representatives of five religious denominations, the Board of Trustees secured some of the best business intellect of that city, and the Executive Committee was composed entirely of women. The object of the Ramabai Association was the formation of "circles" in every part of the States, which should pledge themselves to provide a certain sum annually for

ten years, to start and maintain a home and school in India for high-caste widows.

After travelling and speaking throughout Canada and in most of the cities on the Pacific coast, Ramabai bade good-bye to her generous Transatlantic entertainers in November 1888, and set out for her Indian home, *viâ* San Francisco and Hong Kong.

Parting from her true friend, Dr. Rachel Bodley, the Pundita begged her to remind the readers of her book that "it was out of Nazareth that the Blessed Redeemer of mankind came; that great reforms have again and again been wrought by instrumentalities that the world despised. Tell them to help me to educate the high-caste child-widows, for I solemnly believe that this hated and despised class of women, educated and enlightened, are by God's grace to redeem India."

Ramabai's personal humility (indelible mark, perhaps, of her race and sex), notwithstanding her courage and high aspirations, is well illustrated by her own comparison. "Christ," she once said, "came to give different gifts to different people. Some He made prophets; some He made preachers; some He made teachers. Since I have become a Christian I have thought He has given me the gift of being a *sweeper*. I want to sweep away some of the old difficulties that lie before the missionaries in their efforts to reach our Hindu widows."

After making the most of her opportunities whilst journeying to still further enlarge the circle of her sympathizers, the Pundita landed in Bombay early in the year 1889.

Here was awaiting her the welcome of her little Manorama, now about eight years old, who had arrived in India from England a short time before in the care of one of the Sisters from Wantage. Asked by a friend why she had not left the child to finish her education in England, Ramabai said, "I want her to grow up among her people, to know them as they are, and to prepare herself for the work there is before her. If I left her in England, she would grow up to be an English girl, and not one of us."

So truly does this pioneer of female education in India realize that to make culture and Christianity really acceptable to the Hindus, it must be shown to be perfectly compatible with the retention of native customs in regard to both food and dress.

In this spirit, therefore, and with the broadest ideas upon most subjects, Ramabai, in the spring of 1889, opened her Widows' Home in the busy Anglo-Indian city of Bombay.

CHAPTER IV.

ITS WALLS 'SALVATION' AND ITS GATES 'PRAISE.'

SHARADA SADAN, or "Abode of Wisdom," was the somewhat high-sounding name, attractive to Oriental ears, which Ramabai gave to her boarding-school.

She commenced with two pupils, one of whom was a poor young widow who had three times essayed to put an end to her own wretched existence, and was only deterred by the fear that even if she did so she might again be born a woman. An efficient helper was found in Miss Soonderbai Powar, another Hindu lady reformer, who has visited England in the interests of a suppression of the Opium Traffic, and an elementary study of three languages, Marathi, Sanskrit, and English, was at once commenced.

As to the ground which the Sharada Sadan was to take with regard to the delicate and difficult question of religion, Ramabai had definitely made up her mind. Strict neutrality she believed to be the only practicable position.

Already it had been proved that Christian missions were of small avail as affording refuge for the high-caste widow. Their avowed object being the conversion of the heathen, no Hindu woman with any regard for the faith of her fathers would be willing to place herself under

proselytizing influences for the sake of material comforts. If we substitute the term "loyal Brahmin" for that of "obstinate idolater," which is too often used to describe faithful souls who are not ready to at once embrace a, to them, new and false religion, we shall be the better able to sympathize with their position. The worthiest are not the soonest won; it is the thin rock-soil which produces the quickest crop.

Ramabai felt that to make her school an institution for the promulgation of Christianity would defeat its primary object. Therefore, she pledged herself to her Brahmin friends that the utmost liberty should be accorded to all inmates of her Home to maintain their own religion, and facilities afforded for the performance of all sacred rites and for the strictest observation of the customs of caste. And although she claimed equal liberty for herself and her assistant to worship in accordance with their own Christian belief, she promised that no pressure whatever should be brought to bear upon the minds of her pupils.

Certain well-intentioned persons were disposed to find fault with this arrangement, as we know there have been teachers foolish enough to promise non-interference with the religious ideas of Hindu pupils, and then break their word!—a course which must inflict more injury upon the cause they wish to serve than the work of many missionaries can undo. But Ramabai was faithful.

The school increased rapidly, and in 1892 the "Abode of Wisdom" was removed to Poona, as being in every way a more desirable locality for the purpose.

A delightful description of this new home is given by Mrs. Helen S. Dyer, who visited it on the occasion of the opening ceremonies, and to whose charming book, *Pundita Ramabai; the Story of Her Life*, we are indebted for much of the information contained in this sketch.

The bungalow, she tells us, stands in a garden, which is "dotted here and there with fine shade trees, the gold mohur, the plumeria, and others, which are covered with gorgeous flowers in their season. Roses and lilies, jasmine and elemanta, variegated crotons, caladiums, bougainvillea, and the hundred and one tropical shrubs that are cherished

greenhouse plants in our colder atmosphere, luxuriate in the beautiful climate of the Deccan of India. . . . A shaded fernery planted around a fountain close to the house affords a cool retreat for the heat of the day. . . . The pupils came and went everywhere, learned their lessons in groups in the drawing-room, or walked in the garden by twos and threes, gathered roses and lilies for each other and the visitors, made wreaths of jasmine, and decked each other's hair."

A glimpse of Paradise indeed to the child-widow, whose portion had previously been that of a hated outcast, to whom everything pleasant was to be rigorously denied!

"I wish them," said Ramabai, "to see the contrast in everything where love rules. I wish them to become acquainted with as many good people as possible; to learn what the outside world is like from pictures and books; and to enjoy the wonderful works of God, as they ramble in the garden, study with the microscope, or view the heavens from the little veiandah on the roof."

No wonder that the girls followed their dear friend and teacher all about the bungalow, and "clustered around her like bees!" No wonder that her good-night kiss was a boon on no account to be missed, but to be claimed twice over if a little innocent scheming could compass it! No marvel, either, that the religion which was known to be the source of all this sweet motherly kindness should ere long begin to attract some of the young hearts thus within the range of its tender influence.

It was the custom of Ramabai to meet with her companion-helper, Soonderbai, and her little Manorama, for Bible-reading and prayer every morning before the duties of the day were begun. If any of the pupils voluntarily chose to join them, they, of course, were not forbidden. As time went on not a few did so, and by the spring of 1893 quite half the widows in the Sharada Sadan had formed the habit of attending this family worship, several apparently being deeply impressed.

When the Brahmin supporters of the school heard of this they were indignant. They wished the pupils to be

DAILY SERVICE FOR THE LABOURERS AT RAMABAI'S COLONY, CONDUCTED BY A CONVERTED BRAHMIN.

kept to the strictest observance of the Hindu religion, but not to be free to attend Christian services. This, Ramabai pointed out, was not that absolute *neutrality* which had been laid down as one of the fundamental rules of the institution. She appealed to the parent committee in America, and was of course upheld by them.

About twenty-five girls, however, were withdrawn from the school by those in authority over them, and bitter tears were shed. Ramabai knew that many were going back to hardship and ill-usage which would seem more unendurable to the poor things than ever, and some even to the imminent danger of moral ruin. The case of one girl, a Gujerathi, whom Ramabai had adopted as her own, was so desperate that the principals of the school had recourse to unusual stratagems to rescue her.

These, which never overstepped the bounds of strict legality, were successful, and so enraged the leading Hindus of the Bombay Presidency that the extinction of the Sharada Sadan seemed at one time imminent. But Ramabai was staunchly supported by her American friends, and the storm was weathered.

Meditating much upon plans for the continued support of her school, the Sarasvati hit upon the idea of starting a fruit farm. A suitable piece of land having been found at Khedgaon, about forty miles south of Poona, the trustees of the American Fund were applied to for help. This they were reluctantly compelled to refuse, as such money could not legally be used for the purchase of land. Copies of Ramabai's appeal were, however, sent round to several friends.

Greatly disappointed at this refusal, Ramabai went to Bombay to try and raise money on her own life insurance, but without success. Returning to Poona, heavy-hearted, she noticed, as the train rushed along, a tiny bird sitting on the branch of a tree, undisturbed by the fiery monster with all its smoke and noise. Then she " thought of what the Bible said about the sparrow, and felt ashamed of her lack of faith."

On reaching home she reminded her teachers that although she had so failed they had a rich Father in heaven

who would yet give them that farm; and she and her friend Soonderbai agreed to pray together, remembering our Saviour's promise, for the money wherewith to purchase it.

"Not long after," she writes, "I was awakened very early in the morning, and a cablegram from America put into my hand. I trembled, fearing I knew not what, but raised my heart in prayer to God to help me bear whatever the cablegram contained. I opened it, and *the farm was mine!*"

Half-a-dozen American friends had responded to her appeal with sufficient generosity to start a special fund for the acquiring of the longed-for farm; other contributions were subsequently added, and in 1894 the purchase of the land was an accomplished fact.

By degrees the spot was cleared, and planted with fruit trees and various crops, but one rocky portion still remained unutilized. What it was reserved for was presently to be seen.

The terrible famine of 1897 aroused in Ramabai a passionate desire to do something for the rescue of the hundreds of young widows whom she knew to be exposed to even worse perils, in such a crisis, than those of starvation only. The difficulties in the way were tremendous, but at length she resolved to travel to the Central Provinces, where the distress was the greatest; and money for her needs began to flow in.

Having found shelter for the first sixty girls and women she gathered in, Ramabai told their pathetic story in a letter to the *Bombay Guardian*, and this, being reprinted in pamphlet form, was circulated largely not only in India, but also in England and America, with the result that still more support was given.

An outbreak of bubonic plague, however, put a stop to the reception of famine victims at the Sharada Sadan, and arrested the erection of new premises at Poona for their accommodation.

At once Ramabai's thoughts turned to the piece of unoccupied land at Khedgaon. Permission from America was cabled for, and promptly obtained, and grass huts

were speedily built to shelter the poor outcasts. The pupils at the Sharada Sadan were as enthusiastic as their dear teacher on behalf of these poor sisters. They willingly denied themselves food to help to provide for the famine-stricken, and when Ramabai appealed to them for volunteer mothers for several very tiny children who had been brought in along with older ones, the response was ready and tender.

At a camp-meeting, some six months before the famine was thought of, Ramabai had felt strangely prompted to ask God for the apparently impossible boon of an increase of the fifteen spiritual children (converts) which up to that time He had given her, to two hundred and twenty-five! It seemed almost madness to dream of obtaining, let alone of providing for so many, yet the desire was urgent, and the words coming into her mind, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for Me?" convinced her that it was to be granted.

Now the way was made open. When the famine was over, and Ramabai had placed in various mission orphanages all of the rescued ones that she could, she found herself with just three hundred girls to whom she was free to teach the Gospel. In less than ten months from the commencement of her famine-campaign, ninety of these rescued ones were baptized as Christians.

About this time, after ten years' existence, the original school was able to report that fourteen pupils had been trained as teachers, nine of whom were occupying good positions, two having opened schools of their own. Of eight trained nurses, five were in employment. Seven girls had become matrons, two were housekeepers, and ten had happy homes of their own. Of the three hundred and fifty widows who had been in the home a longer or shorter period, forty-eight had become Christians through the unconscious influence of the principals, twenty-three of whom were voluntary Christian workers, all retaining their Hindu customs and dress.

Ramabai's hope, however, that at the expiration of these ten years of support pledged by the Boston Association

the Hindus themselves would be sufficiently enlightened to take up the work, was not fulfilled.

In 1898 she therefore paid a second visit to America, the result of which was that the Ramabai Association was re-organized, and started afresh on a satisfactory basis.

Meanwhile a new building at Khedgaon was being erected to accommodate the great increase of scholars; a new friend, a Miss Abrams, an American missionary, being in charge of the settlement there.

After a busy time of mingled trial and encouragement, and a brief visit to England, Ramabai reached India again in time for the dedication of these new premises. They are called by their foundress, "Mukti," which means "Salvation"; while "Praise the Lord" in Marathi characters is inscribed over the principal gate. A large number of missionaries and Christian friends were gathered on this occasion, as well as the entire establishment from the parent school at Poona. To this building was added a special rescue home for those women who had been injured and deserted by wicked men.

Mrs. Helen S. Dyer, who, with her husband, visited Khedgaon in 1899, describes the flourishing state of the Mukti home, both as to its temporal and spiritual work, and the many industries which were being carried on; dairy-work (promoted by a special gift of money to buy cows, from a lady in England), oil-making, the cultivation of grain and red pepper, and the weaving of sarees upon hand-looms, being among the most profitable. The undertaking is thus to a large extent self-supporting, but it has been from time to time greatly helped by those almost miraculous gifts, arriving exactly when most needed, which the history of every good work can record.

Another clever stroke of business carried through by Ramabai's practical wisdom was the purchase of a farm hard by the Mukti settlement, which belonged to a liquor-dealer, and was in danger of becoming the site of a liquor-shop. On this vacant spot Ramabai invited the hawkers from the surrounding country to establish a weekly bazaar. This has been a great success, and quite a boon to the neighbourhood, the nearest having previously been

eight miles away. When the people are assembled here to buy and sell, a splendid opportunity is afforded of telling them the story of the Gospel.

In 1900 a recurrence of famine once more taxed Ramabai's resources to the uttermost, but many of the converted girls who were themselves rescued in the preceding famine gladly helped to tend the poor victims that were brought in, many of them suffering from loathsome diseases resulting from starvation and neglect.

Among the older native women who helped at this distressing time, were three whose love and zeal their leader specially records with warmest praise. They were named Gangabai, Kashibai, and Bhimabai. These travelled hundreds of miles on foot and unprotected, enduring great hardships in their search for starving girl-outcasts, to gather them into the shelter of Ramabai's home.

Not least among the difficulties in the way of rescuing the poor young creatures was the almost unconquerable suspicion and fear with which they often regarded their would-be benefactors. Ignorant heathen acquaintances, as well as those who wilfully planned their ruin, had filled their minds with horrible stories of the selfish and cruel purposes to which they would be sacrificed if once they fell into the hands of the Christians. It was the work of months, and sometimes years, to make them believe, for instance, that they were not being fed and fattened that oil might by and by be extracted from their bodies by roasting or grinding in a mill! Nothing is more eloquent of the usual social condition of the child-widow, than the fact that it seems almost impossible for her to conceive the idea of being cared for and loved. But this is the heavenly lesson which, above all others, Ramabai's school was founded to teach.

With a few extracts from the Report issued in that year we must draw to a close.

Ramabai says:—"Five hundred and eighty girls in the Mukti Sadan, and sixty in the Kripa Sadan (Rescue Home) are being trained to lead a useful Christian life. . . . Including the hundred girls of the Sharada Sadan, I have altogether nearly seven hundred and fifty girls under

CHUNDRABAI,
THE HEAD TEACHER AT RAMABAI'S COLLEGE.

training. . . . The Sharada Sadan has trained seventy teachers and workers in the past eleven years, and the Mukti school has trained nearly eighty girls to earn their own living in the past three years; eighty-five of the old and new girls have found work in their own mother institutions, and sixty-five of the old girls are either married or earning their living as teachers and workers in different places. . . . I have had a hundred requests from missionaries and superintendents of schools to give them trained teachers, Bible-women, or matrons. I have had quite as many, perhaps more, requests from young men to give them educated wives. It will not be difficult to find good places and comfortable homes for all these young girls when the proper time comes. . . . My aim is to train all those girls to do some work or other. Over two hundred of the present number have much intelligence, and promise to be good school teachers after they receive a few years' training. Thirty of the bigger girls have joined a training class for nurses. . . . More than sixty have learned to cook very nicely. . . . Forty girls have learned to weave nicely; and more than fifty have learned to sew well and make their own garments. The rest, small and large, are learning to do some work with 'the three R's.'

"Most of my helpers have joined the Bible Training Class taught by Miss Abrams. . . . Out of this Bible Training Class I hope there will rise a trained band of Bible-women, who will take the Gospel to their sisters in their own homes. Some girls have already begun to go about in the villages around here. They are working as Zenana Bible-women and Sunday School teachers in their spare time."

Chundrabai, Ramabai's head teacher, whose portrait is given on page 155, was herself a widow at twelve years old. But being singularly favoured in possessing a mother wise and strong-minded enough to insist on sending the child, first to a mission school in Bombay, and subsequently to the Sharada Sadan to be educated to support herself, her life was preserved from much of the suffering that would otherwise have been her lot.

A recent visitor to the colony of rescued ones reports

that Ramabai's family now consists of no fewer than eighteen hundred widows. Most of those preserved from the last great famine will bear the traces of that terrible time to their lives' end. Many were already beyond possibility of rescue when brought to Mukti, and only the five hundred small graves in the cemetery there bear witness to the efforts unavailingly made to save them.

Ramabai begs every friend who visits her from this favoured land of ours to remember her in her immense work and responsibility with their sympathy and prayers. So impressive is the sight of her needy children and the loving care she bestows on them, that she rarely appeals in vain.

Writing quite lately to one of her supporters in England, the Pundita says :—"Try as I will I cannot maintain this large company of eighteen hundred people with less than 150*l.* per week; this works out at less than threepence per head per day. To try to do with less is to starve the children, and send them about almost naked." But surely one-and-ninepence a week—less than the cost of maintaining many a pet animal in England—seems marvellously little with which to feed, lodge and clothe a child; 4*l.* 10s. per annum only, to save a girl-widow from despair and admit her into the paradise of a loving Christian home.

In the midst of all her cares and responsibilities, Ramabai, the trusting child of a loving Father, keeps always sunny and young. A recent gift from England, coming at a time of great necessity, enabled her to dispense new sarees, long needed, to her huge family. The little widows received the bright new garments with rejoicing, but Ramabai's heart was so light and glad that she playfully dressed herself up in one of the smartest of them, a bright green (her own dress is usually of pure white), and thus disguised, and with her head covered, paid a surprise visit to the room of one of her teachers, who for several minutes did not guess who the stranger was! The peals of laughter among the tiny widows who shared in this innocent joke must have seemed like the music of heaven to those who heard.

It was while these new sarees were being distributed that one of the elder girls said to Miss Abrams, "We don't want sarees, or anything else; we only want Bibles. Do give us a Bible!" "Wouldn't you rather," asked one of the helpers, "have a big feast instead of a Bible?" "No," replied the girls, who were inmates of the Rescue Home; "for that would be only one day's pleasure, but this food for our soul will take us to heaven."

Soon after, through the kindness of a member of the Society of Friends, their wish was gratified. Twelve hundred copies of the Word of God in Marathi, neatly bound in cloth, arrived as a present to Khedgaon. On the following Sunday the platform of the Mukti Church was decorated with green leaves and pot plants, and given up to the precious books. Nine hundred were presented that day to girls who were able to read them, and, we are told, "The delight of the children knew no bounds."

In June 1900 Ramabai's daughter, Manorama, who was educated at the expense of one of her mother's many friends, at the Chesbrough Seminary, North Chili, New York, returned to India to relieve her mother and learn the details of the work. She has been appointed Vice-Principal of the Sharada Sadan. We are sure that all who read this brief sketch of the gifted Sarasvati's noble undertaking will wish for both mother and daughter many years of happy comradeship in their blessed work.

THE END

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