

WESLEYAN HERITAGE Library

Autobiographies/Biographies

**THE LIVES OF EARLY
METHODIST PREACHERS
VOL. III**

Edited By

Thomas Jackson

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

Wesleyan Heritage Publications

© 1998

**THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS**

Chiefly Written By Themselves

Edited, With An Introductory Essay,
By **Thomas Jackson**

Fourth Edition, With Additional Lives,
In Six Volumes

Volume III

London:
Wesleyan Conference Office,
2, Castle Street, City Road;

Sold At 66, Paternoster Row

1872

London:
Printed By William Nichols,
46, Hoxton Square

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS
Chiefly Written By Themselves

Edited, With An Introductory Essay,
By Thomas Jackson

CONTENTS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

Life of John Murlin

Life of John Mason

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS
Chiefly Written By Themselves

Edited, With An Introductory Essay,
By Thomas Jackson

**THE
LIFE AND DEATH
of
MR. THOMAS WALSH:**

With An Appendix
Composed in Great Part
From The Accounts Left By Himself
By James Morgan,
A Member of the Church of England

"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."
-- Psalm cxii. 6 --

"Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation"
-- Heb. xiii, 7 --

"Heaven waits not the last moment, owns her friends
On this side death; and points them out to men,
A lecture silent, but of sovereign power!
To vice confusion, and to virtue peace."

-- Night Thoughts --

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

I have carefully read the following account, and believe it to be strictly true. I think it will need no other recommendation to the children of God.

John Wesley
January 20th, 1763

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

PREFACE

I. we often give thanks to God, for all His servants departed this life in His faith and fear; and pray for grace, so to follow their good example, that with them we may be partakers of His heavenly kingdom. It has been an ancient practice in the Christian church, to represent to the imitation of the living, the lives of deceased servants of Christ, who, though dead, speak in our hearts, in the remembrance of their pious example.

For some ages, most instances of this sort were transmitted to mankind chiefly by monks of the Church of Rome. But their great partiality, and a spirit of emulation which arose among their different orders, ill favor of their founders, and members in general, together with their extreme passion for the marvelous in almost everything, render most of their accounts rather romance, than simple narrations of real facts.

And they are of little solid use. For their numerous accounts of revelations, ecstasies, visions, trances, miracles, and celestial apparitions, rather surprise us, and create scruples, than lead us into true holiness of living. "Our Saviour Himself," as a great man observes, "chose to have fewer instances of wonder in His life, that He might transmit the more of an imitable example." Whereas accounts of this kind are no more imitable than they are entertaining: and there is truth in what Mr. Addison observes, that "there is as much pleasure in hearing a man tell his dreams, as in reading relations of this nature."

Had he who is the subject of the following account continued a member of that communion, and been as unweariedly laborious and successful in promoting the interests of Rome, as he was in promoting those of Jesus Christ, he might probably have stood fair for canonization, and would undoubtedly have increased the number of these marvelous relations.

But be the extravagance of some, and the credulity of others on this head, as they may, they do not make void real facts; nor should they discourage the useful custom of presenting mankind with true characters of the excellent of the earth. There is such a thing as being acquainted with God, and being happy in Him. There are, who know the true God, and His Son Jesus Christ; and who live as becomes persons professing godliness, walking before God in all holiness.

Such an one, it can be truly said, was Thomas Walsh. He led a "life of justice and temperance, of chastity and piety, of charity and devotion: such a life, without which the purity of human society cannot be preserved, and by which, as our irregularities are made regular, so our miseries are not made a mockery. And we find so much reason to address ourselves to an imitation of so excellent a pattern, as justly chides every degree and minute of neglect."

II. "There are many who talk well," said an eminently pious man; "but let us live well." It is indeed but a poor character of a person, that he has said a great many good things; supposing there be not a conversation answerable thereto. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," saith Jesus; "but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven." Then only are we the true servants of Christ, when we do whatsoever He has commanded us.

The present is professedly a time of much religious knowledge; the Gospel is fully preached, and, perhaps, more frequently than it has been since the Reformation. Yet still it must be complained, that among the numbers who love to hear it, but few, comparatively, love to practise it: too many hold the truth in unrighteousness, professing to know God, while in works they deny Him. There are others, who, though free from outward sin, and who even observe religious duties, yet make little or no progress as to inward holiness. The good effects of the grace of God are prevented in many, through mere inattention of spirit, irrecollection, and indolence. We do not sufficiently lay things to heart. We do not live enough at home. We are too superficially acquainted with ourselves, to get deeply into fellowship with God. And for these causes, not to speak of more gross ones, how many are there weak and sickly among us?

It is with a view principally to promote this inward religion, that the following narrative of a person, not lightly acquainted therewith, is presented to the world, but most particularly to such as are truly serious. How far it is calculated to contribute thereto, those who are pleased to read it must judge. This much, however, is certain, that some pains have been taken to render it subservient to so desirable an end.

III. It consists of three Parts. The first contains the most remarkable particulars concerning him, from his infancy to the twentieth year of his age; such as his education; forsaking the Church of Rome; inward conversion to God; and his providential appointment to labor for the salvation of his neighbor.

The second Part contains a variety of incidents relative to his public employments; his great labors; endeavors to convert members of the Church of Rome; the attempts of the Romish clergy to hinder him; his application to study; improvement in Divine knowledge; frequent sickness various temptations; and his improvement by them.

The third Part represents his more internal state with respect to his daily course of walking with God; his attainments in the Divine life; together with his last sickness and death.

My part of the work consisted much in methodizing, abridging, and connecting accounts which he left of himself. The substance of the first Part he wrote principally in Dublin, a few years before his death. Many of the materials of the second, and more of the third Part, I have collected from some thousand pages of his journals; so that the division into chapters, the reducing things distant in the order of time, to the same head, and keeping up the thread of the narrative through the whole, were the chief objects of my attention.

I have likewise taken the liberty to enlarge a thought, and add an observation or improvement, as occasion presented; if haply I might contribute in any degree towards the direction or encouragement

of the children of God. In doing this I have interspersed throughout the whole several verses, which occurred while I wrote; some of which were admitted because they express my sentiments more fully than I could myself; others, because of the deep importance of the sentiments they contain, and therefore the probability of their being useful, at least to some persons, in whatever connection they are found; though in every such insertion there appeared a pertinency to the subject in hand.

I shall not take up the reader's time with giving the reasons which prevailed with me to undertake this work; nor attempt to shelter myself from censure or contempt for its defects, under the commonplace subterfuges, and self-bestowed compliments and apologies, well-known on such occasions. My own conscience acquits me from vanity or self-sufficiency in reference thereto. The long intimacy which I had with him gave sufficient ground to the repeated and importunate requests of several, who knew his manner of life, to engage me in furnishing them with some memorials thereof; and, although I had done something of this kind for my own, and the private use of a few friends, yet it was not till his own papers fell into my hands, that I could prevail with myself to make it public. But among the several motives that were urged, what finally determined was,

Love to the living, duty to the dead:
----- it seem'd profane
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
And cast in shadows his illustrious race."

Considered in one light, he was not, it is true, of that importance, that memorials of him should be transmitted to mankind. There wanted in him those qualifications of illustrious birth, titles, honors, and dignities, which make it somewhat honorable to patronize persons so qualified, and which alone beget the esteem of the generality of people. But to such as form their estimate of persons and things; not according to the maxims of this world, but according to truth, and in reference to eternity; who judge of men by the heart, as being firmly persuaded that "solid glory, which cannot be mutated by pride, nor equaled by pomp, resides in the source of personal qualifications and heavenly sentiments:" to such there will need no apology for presenting them with a character which has for its recommendation only that of being honored and approved of God. In which light

"Titles and honors are laid aside to find man's dignity."

IV. Next to the holy Scriptures, perhaps there are no writings so calculated to answer all the purposes of holy living, as the lives of eminent servants of God, who followed hard and closely after "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession." They speak a powerful, though silent, language to the attentive heart, "Go thou, and do in like manner." They are a full answer to the delusive flatteries of self-love; and to the children of disobedience who assert that it is impossible to live in such a manner. To live as angels, or disembodied spirits, is indeed above the state of humanity. And

'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man."

But are we not the purchase of the blood of Christ? Are we not the objects of His continual love? And has He not promised, and sent His Holy Spirit to prepare, and make us "habitations for God?" What, then, may we not expect from such infinite love, from such infinite power?

"No man too largely from Heaven's love can hope,
If what is hoped he labor to secure."

And it is matter of joy to the servants of God, that whenever it is asked, "Where are the witnesses of these things; of that religion whereof ye speak?" they have it in their power to say, both of the living and the dead, "Come and see."

In the conduct of persons truly devoted to God, we often meet with particular ways of behavior, -- maxims of Christian prudence, or secrets relating to a holy life, -- which, when adopted into our own conduct, often serve in the room of many rules, and are singular incentives to our diligence and fervor. And the force which example has above precept is well known.

"The experience of others," says this servant of God, ^[1] "has been very refreshing to my soul; and has often stirred up my spirit to seek after God most earnestly." Indeed, he esteemed, as an invaluable jewel, everything of this kind which he met with; He had a collection of "Lives," which he generally took with him wherever he went; esteeming them, because of their usefulness to his soul, next to the holy Scriptures. He was seldom a day without reading something of the lives of the children of God.

"These examples," says St. Austin, "excite, and, as it were, joy the heart, lest it should fall asleep in a sort of despair, looking on as impossible what it has not experienced yet." The same father (speaking of himself elsewhere) says, "The examples of the holy servants of God were like hot coals cast into the bosom of his soul, heating, and warming, and setting him all of a flame."

O Jesus, let me and my readers die the death of the righteous, and let our last end be like his.

Canterbury, July, 1762

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

INTRODUCTION

The exceeding riches of the grace of God our Saviour, and the effectual working of His mighty power, have, in all ages, shone most conspicuously in the; holy lives and exemplary conversation of His eminent servants, -- "the excellent of the earth," with whom are His peculiar delights.

And although, strictly speaking, He only is wise and good, nevertheless there is a sense in which goodness is with propriety ascribed both to angels and to men. This consists in their resemblance to Him who is the source and model of all goodness, holiness, and perfection: as proceeding from His fulness, whence life and blessedness flow to every creature, whether in heaven or in earth.

Of this kind the Scriptures furnish us with several examples: Abraham, Enoch, Noah, Daniel, and Job, beside many others, are described in the Old Testament as men walking before God, and perfect in their generation. And the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews contains little else than an account of ancient worthies, eminently remarkable for their faith, sufferings, patience, and glorious end; who, considering themselves as strangers and pilgrims in this world, sought "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God." "And God," saith the apostle, "hath provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

The time would fail to mention particularly the names of all the eminently faithful who have lived, and adorned their profession, since life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel. They are an innumerable company. It is enough for us to know, that if any one loveth God, the same is known of Him. Their "names are written in the Lamb's book of life," and shall at last be numbered amongst His jewels,

"When names, and sects, and parties fall,
And Thou, O Christ, art all in all."

Among the number of persons eminent for their spiritual usefulness and personal holiness, which the present generation has produced, he, a part of whose life is here related, may justly be considered as one; and his example is one which, in some respects, may be said to have its peculiar excellences.

A circumstantial detail of such things as often find a place in this kind of writings -- namely, family, childhood, education, stature, complexion, and a variety of common occurrences -- is judged as well tedious as foreign to the design of the work;^[2] which is to represent principally what passed between God and his soul, in the progress of his conversation and daily walking with God.

And yet neither is intelligence of this sort wholly omitted: he has left a few particulars relative thereto, which will enable the reader to form some idea, as well of the former as latter part of his pilgrimage.

But the descent and character of this servant of God, chiefly regarded in this account, are those which were derived to him as a son of faithful Abraham, one of those faithful of whom he is styled "the father;" yea, as an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ, of all the blessings purchased with His most precious blood. And now,

"By ministerial spirits convey'd,
Lodged in the garner of the sky,
He rests, in Abraham's bosom laid;
He lives with God, no more to die."

Privileges these, which are common to all, (Jude 3,) and in respect of which there is no difference between the prince and the beggar, the Jew and the Greek, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free: all may know, love, and be happy in the One God and Father of all, through the crucified Jesus, who, "by the grace of God, hath tasted death for every man."

His prayer was, "that this little book (meaning what is here called the First Part, great part of which he wrote himself) may be made a blessing to all who shall read it; that the Lord Jesus may make it a means of kindling holy desire in their souls, and of stirring them up to the praise and love of God."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

PART I
CHAPTER 1
His Birth and Education

Thomas Walsh was born in the year of our Lord 1730, at a place called Ballylinn, in the county, and within about ten miles of the city, of Limerick, in Ireland. His father, Edmond Walsh, was by occupation a carpenter; a man of tolerable education, and strong natural understanding. His mother's name was Helena Nougham, born of reputable parents. They were both members of, and entirely bigoted to, the Church of Rome.

When about eight years old, he was put to school to learn English: his mother tongue was Irish. Afterwards he went to school to one of his brothers, of whom he had several, by whom he was initiated into the Latin tongue. Having acquired its rudiments in some tolerable degree, he went afterwards into the neighboring county of Clare, with a design to be put apprentice, his friends intending him to be of his father's trade.

But God, in His adorable providence and unsearchable wisdom, had, as the event showed, other designs concerning him. Disappointed, therefore, in this, he returned to school, and proceeded in his pursuit of learning; applying himself at present to the study of Latin, which he had but lately intermitted.

After he had made some considerable progress in this he applied himself to the study of some parts of the mathematics, for which he thought he had a better genius than for languages. He soon acquired the knowledge of arithmetic, both vulgar and decimal measuring superficies and solids, &c.; and afterwards went to the city of Limerick, in order to perfect himself in writing.

And now, having continued at school till about the nineteenth year of his age, and having acquired such branches of literature as fitted him for being useful to others in the same way, he quitted school, and set up one for himself; wanting neither scholars, nor ability to instruct them, which he did with success, during the time he continued his school.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 2

**His Religion And Struggle Which He Found Between
Nature and Grace, Till The Sixteenth Year Of His Age**

His parents, being, as has been observed, members of and strongly attached to, the Church of Rome, brought him up in the same principles and communion, and took care that his mind should be early furnished with the first and fundamental part of what they judged his duty towards God.

"When," says he, "I was young, I learned the Lord's prayer, and Ave Maria, in Irish, together with the hundred and thirtieth Psalm in Latin, with the Popish augmentation thereto. And now I began to imbibe that uncharitable, antiScriptural opinion, that all dissenters from the Church of Rome were heretics, and in a state of damnation. But now, since the Lord hath enlightened my understanding, I am fully convinced that therein I greatly erred, 'not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God.'

"I cannot but lament the case of those parents who, alas! not knowing what they do, endeavor to instill into the minds of their children such pernicious principles; and I do earnestly entreat all children, as soon as they come to years of discretion, and are capable thereof, to examine, and judge for themselves."

It pleased our gracious Lord to work in his heart very early, striving by the operations of the Holy Spirit to subject him to Himself. He made him to bear the yoke in his youth, and by His terrors restrained him from excess and the great offence. "Even while I was young and ignorant," says he, "God was striving with me, and often terrified my heart; especially when I thought of the day of judgment, and of eternity.

"At those times especially I frequently repeated the prayers I had learned. But, alas! to how little purpose, while I prayed neither with the Spirit, nor with understanding! My heart was hard and stubborn, and my understanding was blind and foolish. I had no just conception either of God or of religion. Nay, so great was my ignorance, that when I named our Saviour in Irish, I thought the name belonged to some woman in heaven.

"While I was thus foolish and blind, 'even as a beast before Thee,' my fallen nature began powerfully to discover itself. The seed of the serpent, working in my heart, broke forth in words and in deeds. Now pride, anger, and self-will, especially, reigned over me. But, alas! I then little knew that those accursed tempers proceeded from that source of universal disorder, and all human miseries, original sin. ^[3] I believed that this had brought temporal death into the world, and great disorder into the whole state of outward nature, the visible creation; but of its subjecting the soul to spiritual, and

exposing it to eternal, death, I had no apprehension. I had, it is true, conviction whenever I did amiss, told a lie, or fell into any other outward sin; (which I could account for from education, and natural conscience;) but the Spirit of God and the holy Scriptures alone, I now plainly see, could convince me that my tempers deserved the damnation of hell. And hitherto I was ignorant of both.

"When I was about eight years old, I began to love play, and divers other youthful and silly pleasures, spending the time I was out of school in catching birds, playing at ball, and the like. My fondness for these occasioned my frequently breaking the Sabbath, which I usually spent either in these vain amusements, or in reading some profane history, or other unprofitable book: and indeed no one so much as told me that these kinds of employment were any violation of the Lord's day; my parents, like the rest of their neighbors, esteeming them innocent diversions, harmless amusements.

"I did not then know that I ought not, on this day, to 'do mine own pleasure, to speak mine own words,' or think my own thoughts; that I ought to spend it wholly in glorifying God, by praying to Him, hearing His word, and reading and meditating therein; 'calling the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable.' (Isa. lviii. 13.) O the curse of ignorance and evil example! How many souls do they lead into the broad way of destruction! How happy would it have been for my poor soul, if I had known and 'remembered my Creator in the days of my youth!' Had I been 'brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;' had I 'known the Scriptures from my childhood;' (Eccles. xii. 1; Eph. vi. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 15;) how would it have contributed to prevent my wrong conceptions, and to regulate, at least in some measure; my whole conduct!

From the tenth to the fourteenth year of my age my corruptions increased, took deeper root, and more visibly appeared in my whole conversation; and yet I was more regular and conscientious in discharging my duty towards God. (So I was taught to call a dull form of words, part of which only were addressed to God, and the greatest part to saints and angels.) My parents, according to custom, brought me at the usual times to the priest,^[4] who examined me concerning the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Credo in Deum, with some other rites of the Church of Rome. But, alas! to how little purpose! It made me neither wiser nor better. Some part, it is true, of what he taught me was according to the word of God; but the greater part entirely repugnant thereto, and to all truth and righteousness. But I knew not then how to distinguish between the truths of God and the traditions of men; having had no knowledge of 'the law and the testimony,' the only infallible touchstone of doctrine and practice. He might, therefore, have imposed whatever he pleased upon me; and the rather, as I was taught to believe whatever he said, and to consider it as coming from the mouth of God. Indeed, I could not help observing, even then, that several of those reverend gentlemen frequently erred in practice:^[5] though still I thought they were infallible as to doctrine.

"After this catechizing, I became more inquisitive, and began to read books of devotion. These, I found, for the present, had their use. Whenever I read of the passion of our Saviour, the love of God to sinners, the joys of heaven, or the miseries of the damned, my heart became deeply affected; and much desire towards God enkindled in my soul." But, alas! it soon died away again, becoming like "the morning cloud, or the early dew." The inconstancy and corruption of his heart, easily prevailing over those Divine but transient impressions, left him to his former hardness and formality.

"From the fourteenth to the sixteenth year of my age, I had more of the form, though less of the 'power, of godliness, than even before. I now attended the public worship, (that is, went to mass,) and every night repeated my prayers, which were, indeed, no better than vain repetitions. But still, pride, anger, self-will, and revenge more powerfully prevailed over me than ever; and I added to these, my former prevailing abominations, lies and evil words. Indeed, I had an entire aversion to cursing and swearing, in the gross sense; but abounded in petty oaths, (so called,) and bad wishes. Of this sort there are legions in the Irish language:" perhaps more, and more wickedly expressive, than in any other language in the known world. "Being at play, I remember, one day, and provoked by one of my play-fellows, I swore (horror to think!) by the great and glorious name of Jehovah! (to the best of my remembrance, I never did so before, nor ever since:) in that instant, I felt I had grievously sinned against God, and deserved His wrath and heavy displeasure.

"To the rest of my evils I joined disobedience to my parents. Indeed, I dared not show it outwardly, to my father especially, whom I so dreaded, as often to tremble for fear of him. But my heart was hard and stubborn." One instance of this he mentions, which wrought him many a bitter reflection afterwards: for years he hardly ever thought of it without being deeply affected with shame and sorrow. Having one day, through his stubbornness, greatly provoked his mother, and given her a wicked and impertinent answer, she said to him, "You have grieved me." "It went like an arrow through my heart. I knew the fifth commandment (the fourth, indeed, I then called it, according to the custom of the Church of Rome) ^[6] strictly forbids disobedience to parents, and that to honor them is 'the first commandment with promise.' (Eph. vi. 2.) Justly, therefore, was I condemned. But, O God, how little is it to be wondered at that I did not rightly love, neither was obedient to, my earthly parents, while I knew neither love nor obedience towards Thee, my Father, who art in heaven! Well do I know now, and praised be Thy love for this knowledge, that such as are froward towards Thee will, while they remain so, never be truly a comfort to their parents." They may, indeed, pay an outward compliance, and a seemingly dutiful subjection, as is often seen even among professed worldlings; but cordially and disinterestedly to love, honor, and reverence our parents can only be the effect of subjection in heart and life to the Father of spirits." So universally true it is, that "a foe to God was ne'er true friend to man."

"This duty to parents is the very firmament and land even of commonwealths. He that honors his parents will also love his brethren, derived from the same loins; he will dearly account of all his relatives, and persons of the same cognation: and so families are united, and of them cities and societies are framed. Then we honor our parents, if, with great readiness, we minister to their necessities, and communicate our estate, and attend them in sickness, and supply their wants; and, as much as in us lies, we them support who gave us being."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 3

**Giving a farther Account of him;
the Corruptions he struggled against,
and the Means he made use of to subdue them,
from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Year of his Age**

Now both his sins and convictions daily increased upon him. The desire of the flesh, in particular, raged in his nature; and it wanted not its frequent and prevalent incitements. Now likewise he began to assume the man, and kept more company than before; which not a little inflamed his besetting sin. Temptations from without were multiplied, and there wanted not opportunities and solicitations from the devil and nature to defile himself before the Lord. But still the preventing grace of God restrained him, Abimelech-like, from sinning against Him in the actual transgression. This, indeed, though it did not, could not, exempt him from guilt, fear, and shame, considering the purity of the gospel law, nevertheless became justly matter of his thanks giving to God. "I do," says he, "praise God unfeignedly for withholding me from my own actual wickedness, and preventing my leading others into the cursed and detestable abomination. But I abhor and condemn myself for the concupiscence and wickedness of my heart, which (with grief and horror God knoweth I speak it!) discovered itself in other respects, such as it is a shame even to mention. Of this no human eye could be a witness." But God, (O Thou Fountain of immaculate purity!) His holy angels, and his own conscience, were more than ten thousand witnesses against him.

And now, at length, his life became a burden to him, almost insupportable. His true character at this time was, "O wretched man that I am!" how, "who shall deliver me " He felt indwelling sin, indwelling hell, and breathed in many a groan, --

"O, what is life without my God?
A burden more than I can bear:
I struggle to throw off my load
Me from myself I strive to tear!"

"The Spirit of God," says he, "deeply wounded me. 'The arrows of the Almighty' stuck fast in me, and my very bones trembled because of my sin. I was persuaded in my heart that this commotion was conviction of my sin; but had little conception that the Holy Spirit was the chief agent in the work: for, alas! so great was my ignorance, that I did not know there was any Holy Ghost for me to receive.

"While I was thus in the midst of my extremity, I confessed to the priest, according to the custom of the Church of Rome. He advised me to say many prayers; (as he termed counting my beads;) but, alas! this did not do: and indeed how should it? I was brought into captivity through the power of

'sin which reigned in my members.' And even my multiplied prayers could be little else than an abomination to the Lord, while neither the form nor the matter of them was according to the will of God; many of them being little else than vain repetitions, and empty babblings to physicians of no value in this respect, which, therefore, left me under the power of 'sin and death.' "

Indeed, how else should it be? while He was yet unthought of, at least unapplied to, who alone could help him; even Jesus, whose name is Salvation: and beside which, in heaven or in earth, there is none other by which a sinner can be saved. He it is that invites, and He only can, and doth, give the weary and the heavy laden to find rest to their souls, and who, at length, did "allay his fever of desire, by sprinkling him with blood."

Hearing the priest preach one Lord's day, and declaim vehemently against a variety of gross sins, the discourse, though (as his words are) "mixed with many falsities," so deeply affected him, that in the anguish of his spirit he resolved never more to return to house or home, till God should show him mercy.^[7] This precipitate and unadvised resolution was, however, of short continuance. In fact, the commotion and disordered state of his soul ill admitted of anything uniformly steady, whether right or wrong, either in purpose or in practice: it therefore soon vanished away, and he again sought, by various ways, to procure some alleviation of his distress.

"I strove," says he, "to divert myself in the best manner I could, seeking rest and peace in the miserable comforts of this world. But my conscience was still restless, and a hell opened in my breast. Not knowing what to do, nor which way to turn for rest, I at length attempted to quiet the clamours of my troubled mind by solemnly resolving how soberly, righteously, and godly I would live the residue of my life. Full of these good purposes, and strengthened as I thought by vows and promises, I hoped all would be well; having all this while no idea of the satisfaction by Christ, and the all-sufficiency of His merits: and therefore, resolving only in my own strength, my resolutions proved as broken cisterns, which could hold no comfort; and as broken reeds, which afforded no strength!"

Struggling on still in the dark, he added fastings to his prayers and resolutions.^[8] But all this did not do. He still felt himself bound as in "affliction and iron." He remained in sore bondage, doing the evil he would not, and not doing the good which he would have done. (Rom. vii. 19.) His convictions became still sharper, and his fear of hell more deeply distressing. Endeavoring, therefore, by some means or other to procure rest for his soul, he had recourse to his former shifts, and says, "I repeated my resolutions and vows against sin; but especially whenever I fell into any outward wickedness; and, above all, the sin that did so easily beset me. Then I was on the rack, and I, through extremity of anguish, have frequently struck myself against the ground, tearing the hairs from off my head."

His light began now to increase with his painful feelings. "About this time," says he, "by reading, and the help of the Holy Spirit, I began to have still clearer notions concerning the nature and consequences of sin, and particularly of those which, by the Church of Rome, are termed mortal sins."^[9]

This increase of knowledge did not, however, mend, much less heal, his heart. No: --

"The sudden ray of heavenly light
Which dimly dawn'd upon his night,
But made his darkness visible,
And left him to a deeper hell."

And even in this respect he found it true, that "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow; " a proposition which is universally true with respect to all the pursuits of the soul after happiness: the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, alone excepted. Struggling therefore in his chains, he resolved upon other measures; and finding that his prayers, tears, resolutions, and vows did not avail, he devised another expedient, and came to this determination, solemnly to swear to the Lord, imagining that then it would not be possible that he should break with Him afterwards, as had been the case with all his former efforts.

Accordingly he bound himself with an oath, that for the time to come he would abstain from, and utterly renounce, all those sins he then accused himself of, and which had hitherto wrought him so much uneasiness. This procedure begot in him, for the present, rather some cessation from torment, than procured his true peace, and left him for a while in deep security. But, alas! it was not long ere he found this band, likewise, was altogether weak, even as the staff of a broken reed; nor better than tow before the flame. He fell into one of those very sins against the commission of which he had so sacredly bound himself; involving by this means his enlightened conscience in the additional guilt of what he called perjury, and thus rendered his anxiety and embarrassment great beyond description.

Who can conceive what his weary spirit now experienced! His wretchedness and confusion; exceeded all the power of words to express: --

"Desp'rate soul, what must I do!
Damn'd I am while here I breathe'.
Who shall now deliver? who
Can redeem me from this death?"

"Plague and curse I now inherit,
Fears, and wars, and storms, within;
Pain, and agony of spirit,
Sin chastising me for sin."

"Weeping, woe, and lamentation,
Vain desire, and fruitless prayer;
Guilt, and shame, and condemnation,
Doubt, distraction, and despair!"

Yea, he gave up all hope; and, in short, became well nigh desperate. He knew not whither to betake himself; or what should be his next step; reasoning thus with himself in the bitterness of his soul: -- Since I have perjured myself in one instance, I may as well commit all my old sins over

again," &c. "Thus," adds he, "I was driven by the devil, allured by sin and corruption, and deceived by my own evil heart."

About this time, likewise, it pleased the Lord to visit him with a fit of illness, in and by which his fears and misery were considerably increased. He often bewailed himself in the uttermost anguish of spirit, with weeping and lamentation, breathing out his soul in moans. "O the guilt of sin! When charged home upon the conscience by the Spirit of God, what an intolerable load! 'A wounded spirit who can bear?'"

Thus, "being ignorant of God's righteousness," the way of becoming righteous, or justified, which He hath appointed, -- he went "about to establish," at least did not know how to be justified otherwise than by, "his own righteousness," or works; (poor "filthy rags," Isa. lxiv. 6;) expecting to be justified "by the works of the law," and not "by the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness which is of God," appointed and approved by Him, "through faith, without the deeds of the law." Little knowing that "to him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness: even as David" (who lived so long ago, to show that it is not a novel doctrine) "describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (See Rom. x. 3; iii. 20-28 and iv. 5-8.)

He became wearied in the multitude of his counsels; and seeking not in God's way, it fared with him accordingly. For still, although he sought for rest, he found it not, because he sought it not aright. These were indeed "the days of" his invincible "ignorance," at which, therefore, the God of love graciously "winked." He knew not, because as yet he had no one to teach him. "How," as he says, "could I do otherwise? I had not the Bible to instruct me; for I never had read it, except a little at school, when I was about eleven years old. Woe to you," he adds, "ye blind guides," (meaning the Romish clergy,) "ye have taken away the key of knowledge, that is, the word of God, from the people. It is this which unfolds the hidden treasures of His will, and free grace towards mankind. While, therefore, I remained ignorant of this, no wonder that I went on in error, and fought 'as one that beateth the air.'"

But now the true Teacher began more powerfully to manifest Himself to him, although as yet he knew Him not. "The Spirit of truth proceeding from the Father and the Son" wrought in him daily a still deeper solicitude about the great business of his salvation. Among others of his reflections and pursuits in reference thereto, he began to think more seriously than ever of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and of his own connections with her; resolving that, whatever might be the consequence,

he would both do, and avoid, whatever appeared to him might, in any measure, contribute to the true life of his soul. Thus, hitherto,

"Draws by a secret power, he flew,
Nor stay'd to prop the Papal throne,
The truth determined to pursue,
And panting for a God unknown:
By works of legal righteousness;
He blindly sought the grace to obtain,
But could not find the paths of peace,
But labour'd through the fire in vain."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 4
Of His Forsaking the Church of Rome

A variety of incidents contributed to this part of his conduct. He was first made deeply concerned about the weighty affair of his own salvation; and then began to think seriously of the influence which his religious connections might have thereon, which prepared him for attending to whatever he, at any time, either read, or had spoken to him, on this head.

That which outwardly contributed most thereto was the instance of his brother, of whom he had learned Latin: "a man," to use his own words, "of tolerable learning, and designed for a Popish priest. But, seeing many errors among them, he renounced Popery." About the eighteenth year of his age, while he was a strict observer of the rites of the Romish Church, this brother, whose relinquishing it was some years before, began frequently to discourse with him concerning the principles of the Romanists. "But I strenuously," says he, "though ignorantly, withstood him; alleging, in my defense, the traditions and canons of the Church; while he, on the contrary, appealed 'to the law and to the testimony.' He often said to me, 'My brother, why do you not read God's Word? Lay aside prejudice, and let us reason together.'

"To the same purpose spake another person in the neighborhood, one Mr. Philip Geyer, a Protestant, and well versed in controversy. 'Mr. Walsh, you are a sober young man,' (so indeed I was generally thought to be, though God knows I was drunk with enmity against Him,) 'and what pity it is that you do not read the holy Scriptures! Why will you suffer yourself to be deceived by the Pope and his fraternity?'"

Reasonings of this kind, which were occasionally made use of with him from time to time, together with hearing the Scriptures frequently read in his brother's school, put him, at length, upon a diligent consideration of both sides of the question. But, as it generally happens in like cases, an attachment to old sentiments, the prejudices of education, shame, or fear of man, with a variety of other considerations, kept him for some time in strong suspense. His breast was moved with contrary and, therefore, conflicting passions. He revolved in his mind, and rejected many a thought on the head, and again resumed and embraced them. Thus, halting between two opinions, he complains of the corruption of his heart, and prejudice of his education, which were as smoke upon his soul, so dimming his understanding that he could see nothing clearly.

"I had," continues he, "a custom of repeating, frequently, as I walked by the way, some prayers or articles of faith, which I had learned in my childhood. And walking one day, in September, 1748, in a pleasant field, I was ruminating deeply on what my opponents urged against the doctrine of the Church of Rome. I said in my heart, 'Perhaps all is not right. Peradventure I have been imposed upon.

But then how shall I know! How can I be certainly assured whether the priest has led me in the right way?' and to this effect. -- Immediately it occurred to my mind, that on God alone I could safely venture my salvation; and that, without doubt, He would lead me by His counsel, if I asked wisdom of Him.

"Then I cried unto the Lord God, and said, 'All things are known to Thee, and Thou seest that I want to worship Thee aright. Show me the way wherein I ought to go, nor suffer me to be deceived by men.'"

The Lord, who apprehended and instructed Saul, when he inquired of Him in astonishment, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts ix.) attended to, and answered, his prayer; which he did not cease, then, to pour out before Him. "The Father of lights," and the Giver of wisdom to all that ask it, did, according to the adorable methods of His working, instruct and determine his choice in this particular.

To this time and occasion may be referred what, he has more than once told me, determined him with respect to the Popish doctrine of merit and had much influence on his entirely renouncing the communion of that Church; namely, the deep impression on his mind of those words of St. Paul, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." This passage, he assured me, he had not remembered ever to have read or heard; and that afterwards, when he met with it, (Gal. ii. 21.) it was to him like life from the dead. Truly, O God, "Thy word is a light;" and by taking heed thereto, this young man's way was cleansed.

Soon after this, he resolved to stand no longer in desponding hesitation, halting between two opinions. "Therefore," says he, "going to my brother, and the other persons who used to converse with me on this head, and, providentially, meeting the two principal ones together, I determined now, once for all, either to convince, or be convinced by them; for I had an unfeigned desire to save my soul.

"Proposing, therefore, my design, they desired me to bring a Bible, and with it 'Nelson's Feasts and Fasts of the Church of England.' Accordingly, we began reading and conversing, and continued together till midnight." The result of which was, he now determined no longer to resist conviction. "I was," says he, "constrained to give place to the light of truth." It was so convincing, that I had nothing more to say; I was judged of all, and, at length, confessed the weakness of my former reasonings, and the strength of those which were opposed to me.

"About one o'clock in the morning I retired to my lodging, and, according to my usual custom, went to prayer; but now, only to the God of heaven: I no more prayed to any angel or spirit. For I am deeply persuaded that there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and men, even the man Christ Jesus. Therefore I resolved no longer to suffer any man to beguile me in a voluntary humility, in worshipping either saints or angels. (Col. ii. 18.) These latter I considered, as they are represented, 'ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.' (Heb. i. 14.) But with to any worship being paid to them, one of themselves said, 'See thou do it not: worship God,' (Rev. xix. 10.) God only.

"All my sophisms on this head were entirely overthrown by a few hours' candid reading the holy Scriptures, which now became as a lantern to my feet, and a lamp to my paths, directing me in the way wherein I should go. I could see no manner of authority, either in the Old Testament or the New, for invoking any saint or apostle whatsoever. God, the triune God, is alone the proper object of prayer, and of all Divine worship." He is likewise "a jealous God," (Exod. xx. 5,) and will not give His glory to another.

"Say, then, ye worms of earth, to whom
Will ye your glorious God compare?
Vainly through all His works ye roam,
To find Jehovah's likeness there.

"The vile idolater belies
His image with a golden shrine;
To counterfeit the Godhead tries,
And stocks and stones become divine.

"Nothing the creature adds to Him,
From whom their borrow'd being flow'd;
Who, self-sufficient and supreme,
Exists, the One eternal God.

"He, high enthroned above all height,
A partner in His work disdains:
In power and knowledge infinite,
The self-directed spirit reigns!"

Before His glorious majesty the hosts of heaven, "angels and authorities, principalities and powers, thrones and dominions," veiling their faces, fall down in lowly prostrations, while they adore Him (whom all should adore!) that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb, that liveth for ever and ever.

Not many days after, he fell into discourse with his father on the head, and informed him, that he was minded to forsake the Church of Rome, being clearly convinced she was not that infallible or pure Church he once esteemed her; "but rather," to use his own words, "an harlot, who had committed spiritual and vile adultery. My father," adds he, was strongly provoked, and produced his strong reasons to overthrow all I had said. I dared not but listen to him, which I did with much attention But the more he argued, the more I was confirmed in my former resolution."

Being now fully satisfied, and deliberately determined, he resolved to omit no becoming method of testifying the same. And, accordingly, (having no temporal interest to serve thereby, as may be undeniably plain to every one,) he, without farther delay, publicly and in form renounced his former communion; abjured the errors of the Church of Rome, and thenceforward regularly attended the service of the Church of England.

He was greatly delighted with the Prayers.^[10] (As was St. Austin, at his first attendance, with the service of the Church in general. Confess., book ix., chap. 6. His heart melted with divine sweetness, and his eyes flowed down with tears of love.) A certain Providence seemed to direct the very matter of the first sermon which he heard there. "The first text," says he, "I heard preached on at church was, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.'" (Mark xvi. 16.)

"Yet, alas! how little did I know of believing! being taught and accustomed to call by the name of faith the peculiar principles of the Church of Rome. But I have now learned a better lesson, and know that rightly to believe is one of the greatest things in the world.

"And now that I have left the Church of Rome, I nevertheless declare," (such was his ingenuity,) "that I think there are many sincere souls among them. For I hear them witness that they have a zeal for God, though not according to knowledge. Many of them have justice, mercy, and truth; and may, (notwithstanding many errors in sentiment, and therefore in practice, through invincible ignorance,) since, as is God's majesty, so is His mercy, be dealt with accordingly."

There have been, doubtless, and still are, amongst them, some burning and shining lights; persons who, whatever their particular sentiments may be, are devoted to the service of Jesus Christ, according as their light and opportunities admit. And, in reality, whatever opinions people may hold, they are most approved of God, whose tempers and behavior correspond most with the model of His holy word. This, however, can be no justification of general and public unscriptural tenets: such, as has been often proved, are those of the Church of Rome.

"It may be asked, then, Why did I leave their communion, since I thought so favorably of them? I answer, Because I was abundantly convinced that, as a Church, they have erred from the right way, and adulterated the truths of God with the inventions and traditions of men; which the Scriptures, and even celebrated writers of themselves, abundantly testify. God is my witness herein, that the sole motive which induced me to leave them was an unfeigned desire to know the way of God more perfectly, in order to the salvation of my soul. For although I then felt, and do yet feel, my heart to be, as the prophet speaks, 'deceitful and desperately wicked,' with regard to God; yet I was sincere in my reformation, having from the Holy Spirit an earnest desire to save my soul, and prepare to meet my God.

"If it should be still asked, But could I not be saved, supposing I had never left the Church of Rome? I answer, If I had never known the truth of the Scriptures concerning the way of salvation, nor been convinced that their principles were antiscritural, then I think I might possibly have been saved in her communion, the merciful God making allowance for my invincible ignorance. But, on the other hand, I freely profess that now, since God hath enlightened my mind, and given me to see 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' if I had still continued a member of the Church of Rome, I could not have been saved.

"With regard to others, I say nothing. I know that every man must bear his own burden, and give an account of himself to God. To their own Master, both they and I must stand or fall for ever. But

love, however, and tender compassion for their souls, constrain me to pour out a prayer to God in their behalf.

"All souls are Thine, O Lord God, and Thou willest all to come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. For this end Thou didst give Thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. I beseech Thee, therefore, O eternal God, show Thy tender mercies upon those poor souls who have been long deluded by 'the god of this world,' the Pope, and his clergy. Jesus, Thou Lover of souls, and Friend of sinners, send to them Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead them. O, let Thy bowels yearn over them, and call those straying sheep, now perishing for lack of knowledge, to the light of Thy word, which is able to make them wise to salvation, through faith which is in Thee!"

This prayer was answered, in part, in himself by whom, not long after, God was pleased truly to convert several of that communion throughout the kingdom.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 5

**Some further Account of his Progress in the Way of Life,
with other Reasons of his Conduct with regard to the Church of Rome.**

The affair of his entirely renouncing all further communion with the Romish Church, and formally declaring himself a member of the Church of England, being now over, he set himself to read, with much diligence, the holy Scriptures, together with the writings of some of the most eminent of our Protestant divines. And hereby he received further light every day, being more and more fully persuaded that his conduct was right, and conducive to his true happiness.

By these means he began, likewise, to see into the nature of the Gospel, and the one only true way which it points out to life and blessedness, grace and glory. "Now," says he, "I begin to discern clearly, that it is 'the blood of Christ' alone which 'cleanseth from sin;' and that 'by one offering' of Himself, once for, 'He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified:' (Heb. x. 14:) perfectly accomplished, without any need of other helps, or repetitions of the same, all that was necessary in order to the justification, sanctification, and glorification of all believers.

I likewise became now more clearly sensible of the errors which I formerly held; as, first, thinking that my own works could merit something from God; secondly, vainly imagining, that there is a place for the purgation of sin after death. When at anytime, therefore, I was asked now, why I had left the Church of Rome, I could answer upon good and solid grounds, Because I am well assured that the doctrines of merit, (to speak of no more,) and works of supererogation, are contrary both to reason and Scripture: -- to reason; it being absurd to suppose that a creature, receiving life, and breath, and all things from its Creator, should be able to love, adore, and obey Him more than is required of him as his indispensable duty to the Proprietor of the universe: -- to Scripture; being flatly contrary to the words of Christ, 'When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say,' that is, take knowledge, 'we are unprofitable servants.' (Luke xvii. 10.)

"Beside, if 'the blood of Christ,' the merit of all he hath done and suffered, 'cleanseth from all sin,' (I John i. 7,) what imaginable need can there be of the fire of purgatory? Surely when all sin is cleansed, or taken away, there can be none remaining." Alas, for those who trust for safety to such a staff of a broken reed! deferring the present opportunities and means of deliverance from sin and death, under the pretense of some future means of purgation from sin in the invisible world. The business of salvation is a now affair. (2 Cor. vi. 2.) It is in this life it must be wrought out, or never. We are accountable, and rewardable, only for "the deeds done in the body." The soul that is holy, leaving the body, will remain so for ever: as, on the contrary, whoso leaves this world in an unholy state, must be unalterably so, and therefore miserable for ever; "for there is no work, nor device, nor

knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave," ([Hebrew] -- that is, the place, or state, of the dead,) "whither thou goest." (Eccles. ix. 10.) Yes,

"The sinner, as he falls he lies,
Shut up in his own place."

"If all the light of this world was to be immediately at once extinguished, all human souls, that were not in some real degree of regeneration, would immediately find themselves but the rage of fire, and horror of darkness." O, then, thou poor sinner, whoever thou art, repent, repent, and turn to God, whilst thou hast flesh upon thee; for, as long as that lasts, the kingdom of God is "nigh at hand." But if thou diest without true conversion, alas! better thou hadst never been born. For then "black lakes, bottomless pits, ages of a gnawing worm, and a fire that never ceases to burn, will stand between thee and the kingdom of heaven for ever."

"To prevent all this, and make thee a son of the first resurrection, Jesus Christ, God and man, the only-begotten Son of God's infinite love, came into the world in the name, and under the character, of infinite pity, boundless compassion, inexpressible meekness, and bleeding love; nameless humility, never ending patience, long-suffering, and bowels of redeeming mercy; called the Lamb of God, who, with all these supernatural virtues, taketh away the sins of the world."

His now increasing knowledge in the things of God, his ability, from the holy Scriptures, to distinguish between truth and error, became daily, and justly, matter of his thanksgiving to God. But yet his unregenerate nature was not, could not be, truly at rest. The word of God was now, indeed, his study and delight. But it served, likewise, by showing him how his heart and life must be, in order to constitute him an approved servant of God, more deeply to distress him. The commandment, in its spiritual and extensive meaning, still dissecting his inward parts, slew him; (Rom. vii. 8-11;) so that he was clearly and distressingly sensible of his death "in trespasses and sins." His conviction and anguish of spirit became, therefore, more affective than ever.

The small cessation from the pain of his inward state, which the interval of his relinquishing Popery afforded, served now only to augment his sorrow, to find that, after all, the great affair was, however, yet to do. And such was his present anxiety, that he even forgot, or neglected, to eat his bread. "My conscience," says he, "still condemned me. There was no rest in my bones by reason of sin," And yet, meaning to make sure work, he desired to know the uttermost of his evil and danger. To this end he read those passages, both Divine and human, which seemed most to condemn him. "For I was willing,," adds he, "to know the worst of my condition: not, indeed, that this was always the case. Sometimes the devil, and the corruption of my nature, so far prevailed as to hush my conscience, and drown my convictions, by a variety of thoughts and things."

The light, notwithstanding, did not cease to shine in his heart; neither were its glimmerings wholly unperceived by him, so that although there were many occurrences and temptations which tended to retard his progress, and which sometimes slackened his endeavors, nevertheless the weighty concern of his soul soon recurred. Conscience, as he says, stood up for God; still calling to, and keeping in, his remembrance the guilt of sin, and the necessity of his true conversion. ^[11]

Thus far did he labor through the furnace of heart-tormenting conflict; assaulted, on one hand, by the Romanists, who still wrought him all the trouble they possibly could, both by calumny and contention; and, on the other, by "the ruler of the darkness of this world," Satan, and his emissaries, seeking to devour him. Our Lord's words, John xvi. 21, (compare with Isa. xxvi. 17,) were literally verified in him; as, indeed they are, more or less, in every one that is truly born again. He travailed in birth, and was in sorrow and pain to be delivered. The agony of his heart frequently extorted from him complaints (not, indeed, in those very words, but) to this effect: "The sorrows of death have compassed me about, and the pains of hell have got hold upon me!" He found trouble and heaviness. In his distress he cried unto the Lord, and said, "O Lord, I beseech Thee deliver my soul! I am oppressed, undertake for me."

And thus he remained for some time, waiting and longing for his God, even as the thirsty ground for showers. His sorrow, it is true, was often interspersed with gleams of sweetly-reviving hope, that, yet a little while, and He whom he sought would come, and would not tarry; while his very pulse still beat, "Make no long tarrying, O my God; make haste, my beloved, and come away. Be Thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether." The Lord did indeed wait to be gracious to him, and was exalted in having mercy upon him. He brought "to the birth, and gave strength to bring forth." For the spirit of heaviness, he afterwards received the garments of praise, and for mourning the oil of joy.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 6
Of some Particulars previous to his Conversion

After having made use of every means which either men or books could suggest, but without the desired effect, (being now in the nineteenth year of his age,) as he returned to his lodging, one evening, in the city of Limerick, March 17th, 1749, he saw an uncommonly large concourse of people assembled in a place called the Parade, adjoining to the main street. He turned aside to see what it meant; and, perceiving a man preaching to the people in the open air, (a thing then exceedingly strange, because quite new in Ireland,) he eagerly stopped to know what he said.

And hearing him, (Mr. R. S.,) from Matt. xi. 29, affectionately and earnestly entreat all persons to "come to Jesus Christ, that they might find rest to their souls;" and withal exhorting them to search the Scriptures, and see for themselves if what he said was not true; it filled him with wonder, and with desire to know more of this matter.

He had of a long time sorely felt the want of rest, that is, happiness in his soul. And, notwithstanding all his endeavors to obtain it, like the poor woman in the Gospel, (Mark v.25, &c.,) "who spent all that she had upon physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse," his case became every day more insupportable. A pressing invitation, therefore, to partake of; and an assurance of finding, the very thing he so wanted, could not fail of being acceptable to him.

So impenetrable is the abyss of God's judgments! So excellent in counsel, so wonderful in working! "Great things doeth He, which who can comprehend?" He had prepared the soul of His servant to receive with inexpressible joy the Gospel of peace, and sent it him in a way which he least of all expected, and which the wisdom of man would never have made choice of. Thus,

"While yet he toil'd, a sudden cry
Proclaim'd the approaching multitude,
Who told of Jesus passing by,
Of free redemption in His blood:
Up started light; the beggar blind
He sprang the healing touch to meet,
Cast all his filthy rags behind,
And groan'd for faith at Jesus feet."

"But here," says he, "it may be needful, in order the better to understand some particulars which will be hereafter related, to premise a few things relative to this preacher, and the people to whom he belonged. 1. He was one of the people called Methodists, and a member of the Church of

England. 2. This people began to preach Christ, and justification through His blood, about the year 1738, having had their beginning at Oxford, in the Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley; the former a Fellow of Lincoln College, and the latter Student of Christ Church. These two brothers, having obtained mercy themselves, were called of God to publish His love to others likewise, by preaching the Gospel of the kingdom to every creature that would hear the joyful sound. Accordingly, out they go into the lanes and highways, crying in the 'voice of wisdom to the sons of men,' beseeching and compelling sinners to turn to God, to come to that 'feast of marrow and fat things' which He hath prepared for all who will but accept of life and salvation. (See Luke xiv. 16-24; Prov. viii. 1-5; and compare with Prov. i. 24.)

After these servants of God had been thus employed for some time, it pleased their Divine Master to send forth other laborers also into His harvest, to assist in the same blessed work; not, indeed, such human wisdom would have appointed, the great or wise men of this world, but quite the contrary: the poor, (for the most part,) and, as St. Paul says, the base and weak, that thus, leaving no room for boasting or glorying in man, 'whoso glorieth might glory in the Lord.' (1 Cor. i. 25-31.)

Some of these, after preaching the Gospel in the streets and highways to their own countrymen, brought the glad tidings to Ireland also; where, going about from place to place, through cities and villages, they freely declared what they had so freely received, to every one that would hear. And, glory be to God, their labor of love was not in vain. He that sent them, gave their word His blessing, so that many received it gladly; and, having felt its power, to this day bring forth fruit with patience, the fruit of righteousness, to the glory of God."

It was some weeks before he had opportunity of hearing them again, being obliged to take care of his school in the country. On his next return to Limerick he heard another of them, (Mr. T. W.,) and liked their preaching still better. But his fondness for, and attachment to, the word of God would not admit of his taking things of so high a nature upon trust. He therefore compared their doctrine with the word of God, and with the Articles and Homilies (which were now, likewise, his secondary great standards of truth) of the Church of England; and, "I found it," says he, "to be consonant with both. I became daily more and more attached to them, and their manner of living increased my affection for them. They appeared to me to be true followers of Christ and His apostles, adorning the doctrine of God in all things.

"When they had preached the Gospel at Limerick for some time, they came over to New-Market, a village where I then resided, about eight miles from thence. In a little time there was a society formed." (So they called those who met weekly together, in order to sing the praises of God, to pray to Him, and to help each other on to heaven.) "To these I joined myself a member, September 29th, 1749, in order to be more fully instructed in the way of salvation."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 7

**Giving a further Account of the State of his Soul,
particularly of his deep Convictions.**

God had, by this time, made plain His way before his face. His holy word had fully informed his understanding how a sinner can find favor with God. His doctrinal scruples were all removed, and he wanted only the feeling possession of what he believed attainable, and saw as at a distance; to know, by happy experience, "the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed." (Luke i. 4.)

His soul reached out with vehemency of desire to the "mark of the prize of his calling." But yet he could no "lay hold on the hope set before him." He could not break the bondage of unbelief; of which he was now deeply convinced, and under which he groaned continually. In short, he felt what can only be understood in a like manner, and therefore not easily explained: the sorrows and strugglings, as well as joys, of the truly regenerate, being of such a nature, that strangers to that happy change can have very imperfect conceptions of. (I Cor. ii. 11.) His state can hardly be better described than by the following lines: --

"Surrounded by His power I stand;
His work on other souls I see
His love appears on every hand;
But, O! He bides Himself from me.

"The pain of absence still I prove,
Sick of desire, but not of love;
Weary of life, I ever groan,
And long to lay my burden down.

"O, give me, Jesus, -- gives me more;
Thy mercies to my soul reveal:
Alas I see their endless store,
Yet, O, I cannot, cannot feel!"

So it pleased God to suffer him to wait for some time, looking and longing for the beams of His brightness to revive and rejoice his weary spirit.

He particularly describes his state of conviction, the manner in which he perceived himself wrought upon, as follows: --

"1. The Lord convinced me of my bosom sin; that which did most easily beset me; representing the heinousness of it in various circumstances.

"2. All my other abominations, likewise, -- sins in general, of omission and commission, -- were set in array before me, as an army ready to devour me; or as so many devils, ready to tear me in pieces. God wrote them down in large characters, so that I might well say, 'My sins are ever before me.'

"3. I was clearly convinced, that not only my sins, but likewise what I called my duties, were an abomination unto the Lord. My righteousness appeared 'as filthy rags.' The 'corrupt tree could not bring forth good fruit.'

"4. The same Spirit convinced me that I was an unbeliever; that I had not true faith, and, therefore, no part nor lot in the Lord Jesus Christ. As an unbeliever, I was 'condemned already,' and the 'wrath of God abode upon me.' (John iii.) I assented, indeed, to everything revealed in the Bible; yet, I now clearly perceived, I lacked the very true Christian faith. I learned from the Methodists, so called, and had it confirmed to me by the New Testament, that whosoever has true faith, has with it the remission of sins, (Rom. iv. 5; v.1; viii. 1; John iii. 18; Acts xiii. 39; 1 John v.10,) and is at peace with God. I read, that 'whosoever believeth is born of God;' and 'he that is born of God sinneth not.' (1 John iii. 9; v. 1.) But I sinned; and thence inferred I had not faith, neither was 'born of God.'

"5. I was, moreover, deeply convinced that I could not help myself; that I was utterly unable to work, either repentance, faith, or holiness, in my own soul; and that it was by grace alone I could be saved.

"6. I was without comfort, and miserable. My soul was grieved, and my heart fainted within me. I found labor and sorrow beyond expression. Worldly comforts availed nought. I had no rest, night or day. When I prayed, I was troubled; when I heard a sermon, I was pierced, as with darts and arrows. Whenever I either read or conversed, still I was broken and bruised in heart. Thus was I stripped of all, and wretched, and blind, and naked; having neither faith, nor power, holiness, nor happiness. Truly, there was no sound part in me. All was 'wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.' Often I could neither sleep nor eat. The affliction of my soul so affected my body, that, at length, I was obliged to take to my bed.

"7. I saw, by the same light of the Holy Spirit, the ground of all this; namely, original sin. This, I felt, was the source of all my misery and helplessness. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned.' (Rom. v.12.) Here I saw the root of all evil Hence are we 'children of wrath;' banished from God, and the tree of life."

This was his state about the year 1749; and, in substance, I believe, (though all do not so circumstantially attend to it,) agrees with the experience of the children of God.

One would not, however, attempt to fix a determinate point; making the progress of the work of God in one, or a thousand persons, a standard by which to judge of the genuineness of the experience of others. "There are diversities of operations by the same Spirit. But it is the same God who worketh all in all." And these operations are (according to the wisdom that weigheth the states of the children of men) proportioned to their different capacities, complexions, and various circumstances of time, age, education, opportunities, and the like.

With some souls it pleaseth our Lord to deal more gently than with others; as (to mention no more examples) in the case of Lydia and the jailer. (Acts xvi.) The latter, trembling and terrified, "fell down" prostrate before Paul and Silas, and said, in the utmost consternation, "What must I do to be saved?" While the former, without any such previous terror, that we read of; had her heart gently "opened to attend unto" and receive the words of eternal life, "which were spoken of Paul." And there are, no doubt, thousands of resembling instances at this day.

"One way, among the diversity of the Holy Ghost's operations, whereby He cleanseth souls, is, to feast them for some moments with so much of the substance of things hoped for, as shall captivate them for their whole life after; and, in one taste of the sweetness of God, do the work of a thousand arguments."

But, in general, it may be observed, that, with regard to those whom God intends chiefly for the service of other souls, He gives them to feel, as they are able to bear, the uttermost of their nature's death, the bitterness and desert of the sin that dwells in the heart, as well as the wicked works of their life, -- before He shows them His salvation; to the intent, no doubt, that, being feelingly acquainted with the evil nature of sin, and the wretchedness of an unregenerate state, they may be the better capable of sympathizing with, and counseling, others in like circumstances, and be quickened in their endeavors of saving souls from death. So we read of St. Austin, Martin Luther,^[12] Mr. Haliburton, Bolton, (to instance in no more,) and many others, who felt as it were the pangs of hell, and roared through extremity of anguish, before they were enabled to call Jesus, Lord, "by the Holy Ghost;" to appropriate to themselves the redemption that is in His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

But in all who are begetting again to newness of life, there is a deep consciousness of want. And there never has been an instance of true conversion among grown persons, where the soul did not previously feel its poverty, guilt, or danger, in a greater or less degree. Our Savior heals none who have not a feeling want, producing earnest desires of being healed. It is the "weary" and the "heavy laden" whom He calls to come to Him, that they may find rest to their souls. He is the "living bread," and "the water of life," for which only awakened souls hunger and thirst, and with which alone they can be satisfied. Thus: --

"When sorrow wounds the breast, as plows the globe;
And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning showers,
Her seed celestial then glad Wisdom sews,
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil."

Having mentioned St. Austin, with reference to the usual manner of our Lord's dealing with souls, intended for the service of others; and considering the resemblance which, in some parts of his

experience, there is with the experience of him before us; I persuade myself it will not be unacceptable to some readers to subjoin a short account of the travail of his soul, above fourteen hundred years ago, in his own words: "Thou, O Lord, didst turn me about towards myself; and tookest me from behind my back, where I had placed me, whilst I had no mind to observe myself, that I might see how crooked, how ugly, and deformed a thing I was; covered over with scabs and ulcers: and I beheld, and abhorred. But I, then a wretched, very wretched young man, had also in the first dawning of that my youth, begged of Thee chastity; and had said, 'Give me chastity and continency; but yet awhile do not give it.' For I feared Thou shouldest hear me too soon, and presently heal me of that disease and concupiscence which I wished rather might be satiated than extinguished. But now was the day come in which I was laid naked to myself, and my conscience began to reproach me. I was inwardly corroded, and extremely confounded.

"Amidst this great controversy within, which I hotly disputed with my soul in the closet of my heart, troubled as well in countenance as in mind, my eyes, forehead, cheeks, colour, the accent of my voice, more spoke my passion than words could. There was a little garden belonging to my lodging which I had the use of. Thither this tumult in my breast carried me away, where none might hinder the hot contention which was engaged within me, until concluded in that issue, which Thou already knewest, but not yet I. Only I was in a sober rage, and suffering a death that would beget life: well knowing what evil I then was; not knowing what good, within a little while, I was to be. I fretted in my spirit, and raged, with most implacable indignation against myself; whilst all my bones cried out, 'From whence such a monster? and how can this be?' Let Thy mercy enlighten me, and let me inquire, 'Whence such a monster? and how can this be?'

"Thus sick of mind, and thus tormented, I was accusing myself much more severely than formerly, and tumbling and winding to and fro in my chain, till it was wholly broken off; a small piece only of which now held me, yet held me still. And thou, O Lord, pressedst sore upon me in mine inner parts, with a severe mercy, redoubling the lashes of fear and shame. And the point of time, in which I was to become another man, how much it approached nearer, struck in me so much more horror. Yet it did not make me to recoil, or quite turn away; but only to stand in suspense.

"Such was the contest acted within in my heart, only between me and myself. But, as soon as more profound meditation had drawn out, from the very bottom of this sink, and laid on a heap all my misery before the view of my soul, there arose in me a mighty tempest, bringing with it great showers of tears. I, under a certain fig-tree, threw down myself, I know not how, and gave liberty to my tears; and the rivers of my eyes ran apace. And not, indeed, in these words, but to this purpose, I said, 'And Thou, Lord, how long? How long wilt Thou be angry? for ever? Remember not my former iniquities.' (Psalm lxxix. 5, 8.) For I well perceived I was still possessed, and withheld by them, and therefore cast out such miserable complaints, 'How long? How long? Tomorrow, and tomorrow? Why not presently? Why not this very hour an end to my filthiness?'

"These things I uttered as I wept, with a most bitter contrition of spirit: and, behold, I heard a voice, as from a neighboring house, as of a boy or girl, I know not whether, in a singing note, saying, and often repeating, 'Tolle, lege; Tolle lege: -- Take up, and read; Take up, and read.' And presently, my countenance being altered, I began, with much attention, to consider whether children were wont, in any kind of play, to sing such words: nor could I call to mind, that I had anywhere heard the like.

"Whereupon, suppressing the course of my tears, I rose up, interpreting it to be nothing but a Divine admonition, that I should open the book, and read the place I first light upon. So, getting up hastily, I returned to the place where I had been sitting before; for there I had left the apostle's book." (St. Paul's Epistles, which, about this time, he read chiefly.) " I caught it up, opened it, read in silence the piece of the chapter on which I first cast mine eyes: 'Not in rioting and drunkenness; not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' (Rom. xiii. 13, 14.)

"I could read no farther, nor was there need; for at the end of those lines, as it were, with a new light of confidence and security streaming into my soul, the darkness of all former doubting and hesitancy was dispelled.

"O Jesus Christ, my Helper, and my Redeemer! how sweet, on a sudden, became it to me to submit my neck to Thy easy yoke, and my shoulders unto Thy light burden! And what before it was my fear to lose, how was it now my joy to dismiss! For Thou, the true and the supreme sweetness, didst expel them from me. Thou expelledst them, and Thyself enteredst into me instead of them: more delicious than all delights, but not to flesh and blood; more bright and glorious than all light, but to the inward, hidden man, exalted above the heights of all honor, but not to those who exalt themselves. And now my infant tongue began to converse with Thee, my ambition, and my riches, and my salvation, my Lord God!"

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 8
Of His Finding Rest to His Soul

"Truly my soul waiteth only upon God; for from Him cometh my salvation," was the present language of his heart. Although the night had hitherto hung upon his soul, yet he frequently saw the promise of deliverance at a distance. But now the "dayspring from on high" began to dawn upon him. The beamings of the Divine glory, even the glorious love of God, in Jesus Christ, shone around him, and brought at length to his weary spirit the joyous day of salvation; pardon and peace; life, and liberty, and love: the manner of which he describes as follows: "Having given an account of my convictions, I think it may not be improper to relate likewise how the Son of the promise was begotten and brought forth in me. And this also is the work of the Holy Ghost, convincing 'of righteousness' as He doth 'of sin.'

"1. 'He kindled in my soul earnest desires towards God. There was a tenderness in my heart. It began to warm and dissolve after it was broken by the law, and scorched by the wrath of God; and to be a little comforted and encouraged.

"2. Light began to spring up in my mind: I saw at length, not my guilt only, but likewise the all sufficiency of Christ and His atonement. I was convinced that He came 'to seek and to save' lost sinners; that 'He tasted death for every man;' that 'He willeth all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth,' in order thereto. O, what a glorious view had I of the mercy of God, in giving His Son, and of the unspeakable love and pity of Christ in dying for sinners! I was constrained to cry out, 'What manner of love is this, wherewith Thou hast loved us? What is man, that Thou shouldest be mindful of him?' But I could not yet say, that I had 'redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of my sins.' I did not experience the merit of His death, applied to my soul.

"3. But I had strong hope that God would be merciful to my unrighteousness, and blot out my sins for His name's sake. I could, as it were, see the promise and pardon held forth to me, though as yet I was not able to lay hold of them. At certain seasons, indeed, I could be almost confident that there was 'no condemnation' to me; and could venture my soul upon Christ, for life and salvation. But this soon vanished away again; which convinced me it was not justifying faith, else the witness would be in my heart; for 'he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.' (John v.10.) 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' (Gal. iv. 6.)

"4. There was kindled in my soul a still more vehement thirst after Christ. Nothing could now satisfy me short of the assured knowledge, that I had an interest in His blood. My soul was sick with fervent longings. I esteemed all things but dung and dross, for the excellency of the knowledge of

Christ Jesus. He appeared altogether lovely to me. I beheld all glory, all happiness, all riches, and honor in the Savior. I had no desire after other things; all relish for them was gone: 'give me Christ, or else I die!' Sin lost its power, so that no sin had dominion over me. I was so taken up in beholding the Lord Jesus, in reading, and in prayer, that I had no desire of anything else. Neither 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, nor the pride of life,' had any power over me. But yet I could not say, I was then a believer. I had, indeed, an utter hatred to all sin, and power to forsake everything that I believed to be offensive to God, and contrary to the holy will of my Lord Jesus, whom I sought and desired above all things visible or invisible.

"5. And now, about four months after my most deep awakenings, and joining the Methodist society, the clear day began to shine, and the Lord, who 'is rich in mercy,' visited me with His salvation. He brought me out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and set my feet upon the rock, Christ Jesus. The particular manner of which was as follows: --

"Coming into the room where we were accustomed to meet together, to hear the word of exhortation; before preaching began, I sat musing and meditating. My soul was looking out and longing for Christ, as the watchman for the morning, or the thirsty land for showers. The congregation being: assembled, the servant of God (Mr. W. T.) poured out his soul in prayer. And as he prayed, the power of the Lord came down in the midst of us. The 'windows of heaven were opened, and the skies poured down righteousness.' My heart melted like wax before the fire; especially at the mention of those words, 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength?' (Isa. lxiii. 1.) And again, at the singing those words in the hymn:

'Behold the Savior of mankind,
Nail'd to the shameful tree!
How vast the love that Him inclined
To bleed and die for thee!

"Tis done! the precious ransom's paid;
Receive my soul, He cries
See, where He bows His sacred head!
He bows His head, and dies.'

"The former words in the prayer, and these in the hymn, came with such power to my heart, that I was constrained to cry out, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name: for He hath forgiven all mine iniquity, and healed my diseases.'

"And now was I divinely assured that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins. The Spirit of God bore witness with my spirit, that I was a child of God. 'Mercy and truth met together' in my heart: 'righteousness and peace kissed each other.' Yea, so great was the deliverance, and so strong the consolation, that I could not contain myself. I broke out into tears of joy and love. Having obtained such mercy, I could not but join with the angels, (Luke xv. 10,) to sing praises to 'Him that

sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb,' who so loved me, and washed me from my sins in His own blood. A new song was indeed put into my mouth, even of thanksgiving unto my God.

'Honour, and might, and thanks, and praise,
I render to my pard'ning God;
Extol the riches of Thy grace,
And spread Thy saving name abroad;
That only name to sinner' given,
Which lifts poor dying worms to heaven.

'Me in my blood Thy love pass'd by,
And stopp'd, my ruin to retrieve;
Wept o'er my soul Thy pitying eye,
Thy bowels yearn'd, and sounded, Live!
Dying, I heard the welcome sound,
And pardon in Thy mercy found.

'No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness Divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.'

"I had often in private cried aloud to God, yet it was not till now that I did so in the congregation. But, my wound being healed, a necessity was laid upon me to declare what the Lord had done for my soul. In the same hour another, who sat next to me, was filled with joy and peace in believing. We both withdrew to another room, and gave thanks and praise to God together.

'All glory and praise to Jesus our Lord!
His ransoming grace we gladly record
His bloody oblation, and death on the tree,
Hath purchased salvation and heaven for me!

'The Savior hath died for me and for you;
The blood is applied, the record is true;
The Spirit bears witness, and speaks in the blood,
And gives us the fitness for living with God!'

"And now I felt of a truth that faith in Christ is; 'the substance,' or subsistence, 'of things hoped for,' and an 'evidence of things not seen.' " God, and the things of the invisible world, of which he

had only heard before by "the hearing of the ear," appeared now in their true light, as substantial realities, and for him. O, yes:

"Faith lends its realizing light;
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;
The Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.

"The things unknown to feeble sense,
Unseen by reason's glimmering ray,
With strong, commanding evidence,
Their heavenly origin display.

"God through Himself we understand,
When He Himself in us hath shone;
We see His all-creating hand,
And feel a God through faith alone."

"I could now lay hold on Christ, and the promises God through Him. Faith in His blood brought heaven into my breast, and filled me with 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' It gave me to see a reconciled God, and an all-sufficient Savior. And thus was it an evidence to me. Through this faith I could say, 'Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me.' O, this is the gift of God! 'Faith of the operation of the Holy Ghost.'"

And it is a gift which God delighteth to bestow; and which souls, feeling the want of; and asking of Him, are sure to receive. Our Lord is no respecter of persons; "for every one that asketh receiveth; and whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." He rejecteth, despiseth no man, but such as, abusing their own mercies, reject and stay away from Him. He delighteth in the prosperity of His creatures, and not in the death of sinners. Fear not, then, thou poor afflicted one, tossed with tempest, and not comforted: thy God will come and save thee. What, though thou liest among the pots," scorched and black through temptation and sin, yet continue to look to Jesus! He will make thee "as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." Ruined and forsaken, deformed and destitute, as thou seemest to appear, nevertheless, "I," saith Jehovah, "will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." Thy wilderness soul shall be "like Eden," and thy desert heart "like the garden of the Lord. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee. Yea, thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord; and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God!" Only wait at the posts of wisdom's doors. Strive to enter in. Let "One thing I do" be your motto. Determine to know nothing but Jesus, and Him crucified; for it is in Him that all these promises are Yea, and Amen, firm and certain, to every believer. Therefore faint not. Be strong. Yet a little while, and thou shalt prove, to thine eternal comfort, that "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 9

**Of the Confirmation of his Soul in the Grace of God,
and the happy Effects which it produced in him.**

He lived as in another world. "Behold, God is my salvation," went through the whole of his heart and conduct. His soul was delighted with those good things reserved for, and enjoyed only by, such as love God. He so tasted that the Lord is gracious, as left no room at present for evil reasonings, and entirely engrossed his whole body and soul for God. The overflowings of his joy, corresponding in degree with his former sorrow, rendered him happy beyond all description.

And this, as may be observed in the experience of the faithful, is commonly the case; the peace and joy of justified souls being usually proportionate to their previous distress: God in this respect likewise comforting them according to the time wherein He had showed them trouble. And may not hence be accounted for, in some measure, the difference in degree, between the sensible enjoyments of the children of God, and that variety of expression whereby different persons describe their condition, who, notwithstanding, may be equally approved of God? The grand inquiry is, "Am I really converted? Am I now at peace, and in fellowship, with God my Savior?" If so, is not the precise how and when immaterial? Such persons, then, as have been led by slow and gradual steps; who have, by a comparatively easy transition, passed "from darkness to light;" who, being allured and brought "into the wilderness," have been brought out "leaning on the Beloved:" let them give glory to their Deliverer, and not, on this account, perplex themselves with scruples, for having been so gently dealt with. Let them live only for Him, glorying only in His crucified person, in whom they are; and so doing, they shall be finally found approved in the presence of God and His holy angels. His happiness now received daily increase from the undoubted assurance which he continually received of the genuineness of his change. He proved his work, and had therefore rejoicing in himself. (Gal. vi. 4.) He saw every rising sun with renewed pleasure, and the returning night with added strength: when he lay down, the banner over him was love; even while he slept, his heart waked; and when he awoke, he was still with Him. How fair, and how pleasant art Thou, O Love, for delights! In short, --

"He could not believe
That he ever should grieve,
That he ever should suffer again."

He observes: -- "The more I compare my experience with the word of God, and with the experience of His children, I am the more confirmed that it is no delusion, no fancy, but a real work of God; a saving change wrought in my soul by the Spirit of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am persuaded, however, that the 'natural man' (1 Cor. ii. 14) cannot receive the things of the

Spirit of God.' He has neither eyes to see, nor a heart to understand them. A stranger doth not intermeddle with this joy. It is 'the hidden manna,' and the 'white stone,' and the 'new name' (of adoption) written thereon, (Rev. ii. 17,) 'which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it.' Glory, glory be to God on high!

"Now did I find the yoke of Christ to be easy indeed, and His burden light. His thoughts and commandments were sweet to my soul, sweeter even than honey to my tongue. It was my comfort all the day long to praise my Lord, and to walk in the ways which He set before me. He created me unto good works, and I cheerfully walked in them."

The love of God being thus shed abroad in his heart enabled him rightly to love his brother also. His soul was drawn out in good-will and tender affection to every creature; neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. "I could," says he, "unfeignedly love them that hated me, and pray for them that despitefully used and persecuted me!" thus truly evidencing himself to be a child of his Father in heaven.

But he did not stop here. His soul thirsted more and more for the image of God, all "the mind that was in Christ Jesus." He followed after, and longed for, an entire renovation; for nearer and stronger union and communion with the Lord Jesus: nor could he be at all easy, otherwise than in free and near access to Him, and a sweet enjoyment of His gracious presence. His one constant cry was, "Make me holy. Fulfil in me all the good pleasure of Thy goodness, and the work of faith with power." For this he struggled, and pleaded; much with God. He truly agonized to enter in; often saying, in effect, --

With me I know, I feel Thou art;
But this cannot suffice,
Unless Thou plantest in my heart
A constant paradise.

My flutt'ring spirit fatigues my breast,
And swells, and spreads abroad,
And pants for everlasting rest,
And struggles into God."

This was early his mark, and the glorious prize at which he aimed throughout the residue of his Christian race.

His enjoyments were hitherto with scarcely the smallest alloy, having had not so much as a doubt concerning the reality of what had passed in his soul. The fury of the oppressor was so restrained, and the light of Divine truth so abode with him, that he continually set to his seal that "God is love," and taketh pleasure in: the prosperity of His children. All fear of death and hell was removed from him; neither had sin any: dominion over him. "God," says he, "gave me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, whose righteousness was imputed to me, for the remission of my sins!

"Therefore did I know that I was a child of God, 'under grace,' because sin did not reign in my mortal body, that I should obey it in the desires thereof. (Rom. vi. 12.) If so much as an evil thought was at any time injected, or the remains of the 'old man' began to stir in me, I had immediate power to resist and overcome them.

"Tempted, indeed, I was; but in every temptation there was a way made for my escape. Whenever the enemy came in upon me as a flood, Jesus appointed 'salvation for walls and bulwarks' around me. He lifted up a standard against him, and frustrated all his counsels; for 'greater is He that was in me, 'than he that is in the world.'

"I may say, in few words, that the kingdom of God was 'within me.' I fed upon marrow and fatness, and with comfort drew water out of the wells of salvation. Sin, and temptation, and pain, fled before the Lord Jesus, who 'dwelt in my heart by faith.' I 'walked' and talked 'with God' all the day long. Whatsoever I believed to be His will, I did to the uttermost of my power, with my whole heart. Prayer, reading, fasting, watching, communicating, and Christian fellowship, were the joy of my soul. The commandments of God, and His holy laws, were my delight. I not only rejoiced evermore, but prayed without ceasing, and in everything gave thanks; whether I ate, or drank, or whatever I did, it was indeed in the name of the Lord Jesus, and to the glory of God!"

And now, O God, who can enumerate all Thy mercies? who, those which he hath experienced in himself alone? Jesus, Thou faithful and true witness, in whom all the promises are "Yea, and Amen, to the glory of God" the Father, who can ascribe worthy praise to Thee, for Thy wonder working love towards the children of men? How truly dost thou bruise the serpent's head, raising Thy redeemed from the chambers of death and misery to the enjoyments of paradise and glory! Sing, O ye heavens; and shout, all ye lower parts of the earth; for this is our God, that changeth not. Still let thine arrows be sharp in the hearts of thine enemies; till, crying unto Thee for mercy,

"They fall before Thy Cross subdued,
And feel Thine arrows dipp'd in blood:"

that, experiencing the virtue of Thine all-powerful, all-cleansing blood, washing us whiter than snow, we may live only to testify our gratitude to Thee, Thou crucified Lover of human souls, who savest to the uttermost all that come to God by Thee!

The following beautiful lines, with which I profess I am always delighted, are so expressively applicable to him, in this part of his experience, that I must not deprive the reader the pleasure of them

"How happy are they
Who the Savior obey,
And have laid up their treasure above
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

"That comfort was mine,
When the favor Divine
I first found in the blood of the Lamb;
When my heart it believed,
What a joy it received,
What a heaven in Jesus's name!

"Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song
O that all His salvation may see!
He hath loved me, I cried,
He hath suffer'd and died
To redeem such a rebel as me.

"I rode on the sky,
Freely justified I,
Nor envied Elijah his seat;
My soul mounted higher
In a chariot of fire,
And the moon it was under my feet.

"O the rapturous height
Of that holy delight
Which I felt in the life-giving blood!
Of my Savior possess'd,
I was perfectly bless'd,
As if fill'd with the fulness of God."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 10

**His Employment amongst his Christian Brethren,
and the Treatment he met with from the World.**

The treasure of light and love which God had put into the soul of His servant began now to shine clearly to others. They could easily discern an amazing change in his very aspect, as well as tempers and conduct in general. The calm, and at the same time divine, cheerfulness and serenity of his soul rendered him a desirable, as well as useful, member of their religious meetings. And the loving zeal which he felt for promoting the glory of his dying God prompted him to exert himself with much fervor in the service of his neighbor.

Thus, with a heart set on fire to pay, at least, some small returns for all that ocean of mercy and love which he had experienced in himself, he sought opportunities, and embraced every occasion, of imparting all the good which he possibly could to others; till it seemed good to those who directed their religious exercises to appoint him leader of a class (so called): that is, a little company of Christian friends, mutually agreed to meet together weekly in order to their furtherance in the way of godliness; one person of which was styled "leader." ^[13]

This was the little office assigned him at present, in which "my business," says he, "was, 1. To see each person in my class once a week; and if any were absent, to inquire into the cause. 2. Whenever we met together, to sing psalms or hymns, and to pray with them. 3. To examine how their souls prospered, and what progress they had made the preceding week in the way of the Lord." Whether they were unanimously determined to serve God with their whole heart? If any had fallen into sin, they were reprov'd; if tempted, they were comforted and encouraged; and those who ran well, adorning their profession in all things, were exhorted still to press forward, and give glory to God.

After a faithful and friendly examination of each other, (between which and the Popish auricular confession, with which some have erroneously or unkindly paralleled it, there is scarcely the most distant resemblance,) they concluded with praising God, and prayers suited to their several conditions.

But, besides this, he met with the whole society two or three times a week, when, with praises and prayers, there was always a word of exhortation preached or read. And it pleased God to testify His approbation thereof, by the singular display of His presence amongst them; by replenishing their souls with abundance of His grace and heavenly benediction.

And, "O," adds he, "how wonderfully did we experience the power and love of God, whenever we made prayer and supplication to Him! We had a heaven amongst us; a paradise within us! The Lord poured such peace and joy into our hearts, and we were often so happy, that we did not know how to part. We lived as brethren, and strove together for 'the hope of the Gospel.' We were of one heart, and of one mind, in the presence of God. And is not this the communion of saints?"

So dear the tie, where souls agree
In Jesus dying love
When only can it closer be,
When all are join'd above!"

Meantime, his hitherto (since he was justified) undisturbed repose began to be sorely assaulted. His relations now took a second alarm. "They thought," says he, "that I was turned heretic altogether." To forsake the Church of Rome, and declare himself a member of the Church of England, was bad enough, and with them matter of much displeasure; but to become a Methodist beside! ^[14] This they judged the very consummation of apostasy, and gave him up as undone for ever. And it was not only his kindred who so judged of him: "But," adds he, "my neighbors in general were like-minded with my relations; and not those only of the Church of Rome, but several likewise who called themselves Protestants. They were extremely angry that I should, as they called it, 'change my religion.'

"And now did I see plainly, that persons of every denomination, who are yet in their sins, under the guilt and power of them, are at enmity against Christ; and that Protestants, as well as Papists, have naturally a spirit of calumny and persecution," Alas! names and opinions, what are they? They do not, cannot, alter the nature of men or things; and experience abundantly shows how little influence they have over the tempers and life of the generality of mankind. "Reformed and unreformed," adds he, "I found to be just alike; and that many who spoke against the Pope and Inquisition were themselves in reality of the same spirit.

"When I was first converted, I had no notion that people could hate and speak evil of me for fearing God, and working righteousness. ^[15] But experience has taught me otherwise. I soon found the truth of the apostle's words, that 'all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' (2 Tim. iii. 12.) Relations, and acquaintance, and neighbors, rich and poor, old and young, clergy and laity, were all against me. Some said I was an hypocrite; others, that I was mad; others, judging more favorably, that I was deceived. Many that before thought well, yea, highly of me, knew not how to harbor a good thought of me."

But when God speaks powerfully to the heart, the sentiments and words of men, be they never so flattering, censorious, or threatening, make but little impression. He was, therefore, so far from being moved by this treatment, that it became to him rather a confirmation of the doctrine of the Son of God, who says expressly, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you; and blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil of you falsely, for My name's sake."

Of a truth "the world lieth in the wicked one." And they who are after the flesh will hate and persecute them that are after the Spirit; The devil hates Christ and His children. It is the Spirit of Christ in His children which that evil spirit in the "children of disobedience" so violently opposes. The spirit of the world "lusteth to envy." The devil envied Adam; so did Cain his brother Abel: and as it has been of old time, so is it at this day. Light can have no communion with darkness, neither Christ with Belial." In this respect "there is nothing new under the sun;" but "that which hath been is the thing that is." The true worshippers of God, under the Old Testament, and the sincere disciples of Christ, under the New, have been evil treated by those among whom they lived. (See Acts iv. 3, 18, 29; Heb. xi.; 1 John iii. 12, 13.) They hated them, because their works were righteous. And so it is even now. ^[16]

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 11

**His Providential Appointment to labor for the Conversion of his neighbor,
by preaching the Gospel**

He had, from his first thorough awakening, a love to, and concern for, the souls of others, which was quite new to him. The same cause which made him so solicitous for his own salvation could hardly fail of producing in him a tender sympathy for the souls of his neighbors; that is, every one: and the painful apprehensions which he had of his own danger impelled him to warn others also, whom he judged to be in like circumstances. The hand of God was, no doubt, in this, as well as in the whole series of his preceding conversion. His unsearchable and adorable wisdom had appointed him, as the event plainly declared, to become an instrument of saving souls from endless misery; having first prepared him for it, without his knowledge of any such design, by the hell and heaven, so to speak, of his own experience.

Even before he had obtained mercy he began to warn others; exhorting all with whom he had any sort of intercourse to "flee from the wrath to come."

"Thus," as he observes, "while I was in unbelief myself, I sometimes forgot my own condition, through eagerness of desire for the salvation of other souls."

Meantime, it was frequently impressed upon his mind, "You must preach the Gospel. Thou shalt bear public testimony to the truth of God," ^[17] by openly declaring His lovingkindness in the redemption of the world. But he often resisted the thought; urging the impossibility thereof, from a variety of considerations; and saying, in effect, "Send by whom Thou wilt send; but send not me."

"Yes, well Thou know'st I did not seek,
Uncall'd of God, for God to speak;
The dreadful charge I sought to flee,
'Send whom Thou wilt, but send not me.'"

Indeed, though he might have never so much desired it, in submission to the will of God, nevertheless, when the thought first presented itself to him, being a conscious unbeliever, he might have justly said, and it was the language of his heart, --

"How shall I teach the world to love,
Unchanged my heart, unloosed my tongue?
Give me the power of faith to prove,
And Jesus shall be all my song;

It is, indeed, a poor case, when ministers, preaching the Gospel, repentance, and remission of sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, cannot experimentally say of themselves, "We are witnesses of these things."

"Heralds of grace would you commence?
Of this, first, self-experienced be;
First, through those wounds you would dispense,
Yourself be reconciled and free:
When pard'ning love and grace you find,
Then publish them to all mankind."

Influenced by these kinds of considerations, he could not, while he remained himself under the bondage of unbelief, think of publishing peace and liberty to others. But the case was, in some degree, altered, after he had tasted that the Lord is gracious. He was then drawn out more abundantly with love to souls, and his conviction became still stronger, that he must preach Christ Jesus to the people.

This put him upon earnest prayer, and frequent fastings, to know, assuredly, the will of God in a matter which he rightly judged of so great a moment. "I prostrated myself before the Lord," says he, "and entreated Him to show me His pleasure herein; to convince me by His Holy Spirit, whether the thoughts of my heart were according to His holy will, and whether I ought to speak in His name; or, if I was under a delusion, to show me this also, and deliver me from it. I could appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that I desired only to glorify Him, and do His will in all things." He conducted himself in it with all possible secrecy; being even then persuaded, that the affairs of God are to be carried on without noise, and that no ostentation should be used, even in forsaking all to serve Christ, in this or any other way. And yet, to see him employed always for God, spending his time only in reading, writing, exhorting others, and in profound; meditation, it was easy to imagine that he either projected something for God's glory, more than could be executed by him in private; or, at least, that whether he had any such design or not, God meant it concerning him.

He still kept the affair within his own breast, having mentioned it to no one person whatsoever, till, from some words he occasionally dropped one day among his brethren, one of them gathered that he had some thoughts of that kind. At length it became matter of much and earnest prayer among the most serious of his Christian acquaintance, with whom, afterwards, he held frequent conversations on the head; being fearful of taking one step in a matter of so great importance, without the clearest intimations of the Divine good pleasure.

He had a weighty sense of the greatness and awfulness of the work, and wanted not his discouragements from many a quarter, such as, had he conferred only with "flesh and blood," consulted his own ease and secular advantages, would have entirely deterred him from ever attempting a labor exposing him to so many difficulties and temptations. His want of academical education, honor, and dignities, (the only recommendatory ministerial qualifications to the greater part of mankind,) he knew would expose him to the censure of many; and he well knew, that to engage in the endeavor of saving souls from death, was to commence war with Satan, and all the sons of disobedience: nevertheless, being fully persuaded of the will of God, and not knowing how

soon he might be in another world, the great concernment of miserable souls prevailed with him, at length, to engage in it; concluding that if but one or two persons might by his means be won to God, it would easily recompense any treatment he might meet with in the world. He was fully disposed to sacrifice his reputation, as well as life, to advance the kingdom of the Son of God.

He judged that the knowledge of languages, and other branches of human literature, are highly expedient, and in some cases necessary; but that, however, they are not absolutely so, in order to qualify a man for preaching the Gospel with success. He knew that he might understand "sound doctrine," and "hold fast a form of sound speech," without the knowledge of either Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. He, nevertheless, at no time spoke disrespectfully of learning: quite the contrary; but yet he perceived, with adoration and amazement, the signification of St. Paul's words, with reference to the Divine economy in the management of the affairs of His kingdom: "After that in the wisdom of God," according to His wise disposals, leaving them to make the trial, "the world," whether Jewish or Gentile, by all their boasted "wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.)

He well knew by this time, that it is "the inspiration of the Almighty" that giveth heavenly understanding, which only avails here; that the most shining abilities, natural or acquired, without "the wisdom that is from above," and the anointing of the Holy Ghost, are, in the account of God, in respect of "bringing sons to glory," lighter than vanity; nor better than "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." In fact, that the learning of this world, used otherwise than in subservience to the true interests of Jesus Christ in teaching and vindicating simplicity and purity of heart, and subjection in life to Him, rather feeds the pride of human understanding, and makes a person more like Satan than he would be without it; but that, rightly used, it is a good gift of God, and greatly conducive to His glory.

Indeed, from his earliest days, it cannot be learned that he neglected any means that were in his power, for the cultivating his understanding. But he now set himself to this point; impelled as it were thereto, from his still being more abundantly pressed in spirit concerning the matter which he had so long in debate with himself, but which was now every day more plain to him. He therefore applied with all diligence to what he judged the most suitable studies; in which he spent the greatest part of his waking hours. The "word of life" had, however, the chief share of his attention. He made this his one favorite study and delight, from this time especially, till he could work no longer. In truth,

"Above his years
The law of God he read, and found it sweet;
Made it his whole delight, and in it grew
To great perfection."

-- Milton --

He read it much upon his knees, in the spirit of prayer. The following is a specimen only of his continued practice: -- "Lord Jesus, I lay my soul at Thy feet, to be taught and governed by Thee. Take the veil from the mystery, and show me the truth as it is in Thyself. Be Thou my sun and star, by day

and by night!" This was the way in which he sought for wisdom to win souls, and by which his profiting so visibly appeared to all men.

His increasing knowledge in the things of God was an additional confirmation to him of the Divine appointment concerning him. The hidden treasures and depth of truth in God's word, -- His mysterious wisdom in the methods of salvation, -- were every day more and more clearly revealed to him. The sealed book was now opened; and thereby, through the assistance of the " Spirit of truth," his judgment grew clearer and stronger, in the fundamental doctrines of repentance, justification, and holiness. He professes that, if at any time he was in doubt concerning any point of doctrine, or the sense of any passage of Scripture, his Divine Instructor convinced him, that either it was not needful for him to know it then; or, if it was, directed him, either immediately by Himself, through some Divine impression, or the providential provision of some person or book, whereby his doubts were always solved.

The concern which he felt for the salvation of his neighbor still increased upon him, and a burning desire that everybody might be as happy in the Lord Jesus as he felt himself, engrossed all his thoughts, and employed them about the most probable means of effecting his desire. "The Spirit of God," says he, "now convinced me clearly, not only of sin and of righteousness in my own soul, but, likewise, how the work of conversion is to be carried on in the souls of others. I was athirst for Divine knowledge. I desired to be ever in the school of Christ, learning the lessons of His grace. The glory of the Lord often passed before me in prayer, and the light of eternity shone upon my soul, while my Lord fed me as with marrow and fatness!"

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 12
He begins to Preach

What he had done hitherto with reference to the conversion of souls was only as occasions offered themselves, and necessity obliged him to; the peace and perfection of his own soul being his main object of concern, till Providence, having designed him for evangelical use in the ministry of the Gospel, put him upon other and more extensive measures for promoting the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

He began to consider more nearly, that souls having cost our Savior so dear, nothing could be done more acceptable to Him than to prevent their loss; and that the glory of God's majesty did most shine in the salvation of sinners purchased with the blood of His Son. These and such like considerations kindled in him such love to all mankind, that he could no longer refrain from exhorting, first, his Christian brethren, with all fervor, to devote their hearts without reserve to God; and so, indeed, every soul with whom he had any sort of intercourse. His heart bled for poor careless sinners against God and their own souls. The word of the Lord was in him, so that he could not but speak. He knew not bow to forbear publishing, as on the housetop, that infinite love which dealt so graciously with himself. "It is not enough," (as his conduct spoke,) "that I serve our Lord: all hearts must love Him, and all tongues must praise Him."

God touched his heart in such a manner as to leave no doubt whether this appointment of him was from heaven; and the concurrence of outward providences so confirmed his internal persuasion, that he could not, without manifest disobedience, refuse to comply. Thus, freed from all farther wavering and irresolution within himself; he became settled and confirmed in entering upon that employment, (though exempt from ease and honor, exposed to contempt, and irksome to flesh and blood, however,) which he verily believed he should wish he had done at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, when an account must be rendered to God of all human words and actions.

Desirous, therefore, of a more enlarged sphere to exercise his Lord's talent, and the period of time affording a providential provision for it, even out of the ordinary way, he took the opportunity of his present connections, and, without looking farther, pursued the following measures. "I opened," says he, "my mind to that man of God, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley. I spoke my thoughts freely, and without disguise, desiring his advice on the occasion; which he sweetly and humbly gave me: adding, withal, that I might write to him afterwards. I did so, giving him a brief account of my conversion to God, and of what I experienced in my soul concerning preaching. His answer was as follows: --

My Dear Brother,

"It is hard to judge what God has called you to, till trial is made. Therefore, when you have an opportunity, you may go to Shronil, and spend two or three days with the people there. Speak to them in Irish."

Shronil is a village in the county of Tipperary, distant from the place he then resided at (New Market) about thirty English miles. The inhabitants, many of whom were Protestant Dissenters, had some time before gladly received the word of God from the Methodists. Thither he went, accompanied by one of his own brothers, and another of his Christian brethren; having been commended to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ by the earnest prayers of several of the children of God. "We walked it," says he, "and gave ourselves to prayer, conversing of the things of the kingdom of heaven, and exhorting those we met with in the way to fear the Lord, and depart from evil."

They arrived there the next day, which was in July, 1750. The brethren received them kindly in the Lord, though they were unknown to them by face. And having had knowledge of his errand, and informed their neighbors, there were assembled in the evening, in a large barn, a considerable congregation, to whom, for the first time, he preached the word of God, choosing for his first text the words of St. Paul: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. iii. 28.)

He did so again the next morning, on, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v.1.) And, in like manner, morning and evening, during the few days he stayed among them.

And the Lord bore testimony to the word of His grace. For although some (as has always been the case) ^[18] contradicted and mocked, yet others were deeply affected, and some were "turned to the Lord." "So gracious was God," adds he, "to own the labors of His poor creature, and to bless the word of His weakest and meanest messenger. Not unto me, but unto Thy name, be the glory! O God, Thou hast done the work. Thou didst give the word, and didst also apply it; for Thou only canst turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. O my God, stand by me still! and as hitherto Thou hast helped me, never leave nor forsake me. But keep my soul in peace, and give me an humble and a meek spirit. Let me labor diligently in Thy vineyard, and spend my life and strength in the labor of love. Amen, Lord Jesus.

Thus we have brought to a conclusion what was proposed in this First Part; having seen him from his youth, through the various stages of the travail of his soul, the whole process of his conversion, till, his heart being set at liberty by the Son of God, he began to run the ways of His commandments with great joy, and to publish the "voice of wisdom" to all around him. It remains to give some account of his labors, various trials, and success in the Lord's work, together with the general tenor of his life and experience, till God was pleased to call him hence.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

PART II

[I have renumbered the chapters of part 2 so that all of the chapter numbers run consecutively throughout the biography. -- DVM]

"Not more remote from sorrow, than from Him
Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours
So much of Deity on guilty dust."

-- NIGHT THOUGHTS --

CHAPTER 13
Of his entire Application to preaching the Gospel

It being now no longer matter of doubt what the will of God was concerning him, -- trial having been made, and the fruit answering to the design, -- he resolved to defer no longer stirring up the gift of God which was in him. Setting aside, therefore, every other concern and employment, he devoted himself entirely to the work which he believed God had assigned him. He set out with a resolution to give himself up wholly to the dictates of the Holy Ghost, and to be ready to go what way soever the voice of heaven should call him. And that his understanding might not be dissipated, and scattered upon divers objects, and so have less force to enter deep into the things of God, he began his work with applying himself altogether to the study of the holy Scriptures, and to prayer. And the proficiency which, by those means, he made daily in "the wisdom that is from above" quickly appeared. He truly labored in the word, and faithfully and fervently enforced the Divine truths he learned there from. His soul became strangely enlarged in labors of love for the salvation of his neighbors; while he imparted to them abundantly what God had so richly and so freely bestowed upon him.

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ were, in general, exceeding precious to him; and, from his first acquaintance with them, his whole delight and his counselors. The whole of his following conduct, to his death, seemed influenced by those words of Christ, (applicable to all real Christians,) "Ye are the salt of the earth. Ye are the light of the world. A city set upon a hill cannot be hid: neither do men" (much less God) "light a candle, to put it under a bushel," (that is, hide it,) "but on a candlestick," (Matt. v.13-16,) that it may give light to all about it. And St. Peter, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter iv. 10.)

And now, the Divine providence, concurring with his convictions and inclination, made his way clear to put into execution what he had been so long deliberating upon. Conferring, therefore, no longer with flesh and blood, and resolving to deny himself, and take up his cross to follow Jesus, he bade farewell to his kindred, and to his acquaintance in general. Choosing the Lord for his sole portion, he literally left all, ^[19] and went out into the world, entirely unanxious about what he should eat, or what he should drink, or wherewithal he should be clothed, being fully persuaded that an entire reliance on God was all things. He went to spend his life in beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God. Thus, --

"By Christ Himself ordain'd and sent,
A herald of redeeming grace,
Eager to the highways he went,
And fill'd the land with Jesus praise."

This was about the latter end of August, 1750, when, going from the place of his nativity to Limerick, he had daily opportunity of publishing those glad tidings which he first heard in that city, and which became the power of God to his salvation. At first, he commonly expounded the Scriptures every morning; and after a little while, both evening and morning, with much earnestness, exhorted and besought multitudes, who attended his discourses; to "seek the Lord while He may be found."

And it pleased God immediately; to hear testimony to "the word of His grace" by him. Several persons who heard him, and who, till then, had been careless and utterly unconcerned about the matter, became seriously concerned for their salvation; while in the mean time others, who had been deeply distressed with the guilt of sin and fear of punishment, felt His word both

"Heal and exhilarate their broken heart',
Though plunged before in horror's deepest night."

He was about this time called to bear reproach for his work's sake. The minds of some persons became evil affected towards him. The interests of "the god of this world" had already suffered loss by his zeal and unwearied diligence in promoting the kingdom of Jesus Christ; and they were in danger of suffering yet more. Satan therefore mustered up his wiles, (which God permitted for wise ends,) and by every means endeavored to prevent as much as possible the fruit of his labors.

His unpolished youth; his roughness, both of address and dialect, owing partly to natural temper, partly to having been brought up much in the country, (like, to compare little things with great, another preacher of repentance coming out of the wilderness,) and partly to his having been formerly of the Church of Rome; ^[20] but more than all, his being a native of that neighborhood, gave some persons a pretended fair occasion for being deeply offended at him, who expressed it by their unkind and uncivil treatment towards him. ^[21] This I had from some of the persons themselves, a considerable time after, who mentioned it to their own reproach, that he, whom then they so loved and honored, was nevertheless once the object of their contempt and scorn.

But as he sought not his own things, neither strove to please man, having in view only the glory of God and the good of souls, this did not in the least damp his fervor or retard his progress. As he saw daily the fruit of his labors, so he was not to be hindered or discouraged by any treatment of himself: rather he rejoiced in contempt for his Master's sake, and could feelingly say of it,

"Now, since with Thee my lot is cast,
I bless my God's decree;
Embrace with joy what He embraced,
And live and die with Thee.

Through Thee we tread the shining way
Which saints and martyrs trod;
Shake off the frailty of our clay,
And wing our way to God.

"Present to end the doubtful strife,
Thine aid we timely feel;
Confirm'd by Thee, though warm in life,
Bid the vain world farewell."

He had "put his hand to the plough," (Luke ix. 62,) and, having counted the cost, settled it in his heart not to look back. He waxed still stronger, and grew every day more mighty in the Scriptures, and in conformity to our Lord, as well as more instrumental in bringing others acquainted with "the only true God," and our Savior Jesus Christ.

There are many instances of the good effects of these his first labors. It plainly appeared that the word of God in his mouth was attended with the power of the Holy Ghost. It was not an uncommon case for persons to be so penetrated by his awakening and fervent discourses, as even to resolve not to leave the place till they should find rest to their heavy-laden souls. And the instances were not a few to whom the God of love condescended even in this particular by sending them "the Spirit of adoption into their hearts," testifying, "Thy sins are forgiven;" and enabling them to cry, "Abba, Father."

His time was now wholly taken up in searching, expounding, and enforcing the Scriptures, which he did both in public and in private; in prayer, visiting the sick, and whatsoever other particular employments, occasional or stated, had any relation to his one purpose of spending, and being spent, in the service of his only Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And having been thus employed at Limerick for some time, his inclination led him, and it was judged expedient, that he should go and preach the Gospel in other places also.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 14

**He goes into the Provinces of Leinster and Connaught,
and preaches the Word there.**

His way into those parts had, in some degree, been prepared before him; many having received that Gospel which he preached from others of his brethren. He followed them, flaming with desire for the salvation of souls, and with zeal for the glory of his Master. And God, who is pleased, by seemingly disproportionate causes, to produce the greatest effects, did, by means of this stripling, cause to be called to remembrance the sins of many stout-hearted Goliaths, whom at length the Gospel reduced to "the obedience of Christ."

His labors now were greater than any he had hitherto known; for, beside preaching always twice, (unless when sickness prevented,) and sometimes thrice a day, he often traveled many miles between. But it was rendered pleasant to him, doing it heartily as to the Lord. Where love is, there is no labor; and if there be labor, the labor is loved: yes, it carries a burden without a burden. For a while all his attempts succeeded, and his endeavors were crowned with much success. Multitudes of people, of all denominations, attended his preaching in the towns and villages wherever he came; so that in a little time he was generally known all around the country.

Now, therefore, did the god of this world so stir up his emissaries, that no less than the taking away his life was designed. He has been sometimes waylaid in his journey, and escaped their hands only by remarkable interpositions of Divine providence. It may perhaps be tedious to enumerate all the instances. The following I set down, abridged from his journal: "Thursday, Jan. 4th, 1750. -- With much weakness of body I preached this morning, and soon after set out for Roscrea. About a mile from the town I met a large company, armed with clubs. Seventy eight men were sworn upon the occasion. At the first sight of them I was a little daunted; but I prayed to the Lord for direction, and was strengthened. They compelled me to alight, saying, 'they would bring a minister of the Church of England, and a Romish priest, to talk with me.' I let them know I contended with no man concerning opinions, nor preached against any particular Church, but against sin and wickedness in all. I said, 'Supposing three persons among you, of different denominations, it may be a Churchman, a Quaker, and a Papist, sitting down and drinking to excess, begin to dispute, each affirming that his was the best religion: where is the religion of all these men surely they are without any, unless it be that of Belial. They are of their father the devil, while his works they do. And if they live and die in this condition, hell must be their eternal portion.' This they could not gainsay.

"After some further discourse on the design of my coming to preach the Gospel to them, and appealing to themselves concerning the necessity of it, their rage seemed a little abated, and they told me they would let me go, on condition that I would swear never more to come to Roscrea. But when

I resolutely refused this, they consulted on rougher measures, and, after much debate, were determined to put me into a well, which they had prepared for that purpose. They hurried me away into the town, where I was surrounded, as by so many human wolves. They held a consultation again, and resolved either to make me swear that I would never more come thither, or else to put me into the well. But I refused either to swear or promise. Some then cried vehemently that I should go into the water; but others contradicted, and as positively said I should not.

"After some time the parish minister came, who behaved well, and desired that I might be set at liberty. They consented, provided I would go out of town immediately. From an inn, where they confined me, they brought me out into the street, and, it being market day, I began to preach to the people. But, taking me by the back, they hurled me before them out of town. At length I got on horseback, and, taking off my hat, I prayed for them some considerable time. I then called upon them in the name of God, for Christ's sake, to repent: and told them, as to myself, in the cause of God, I feared neither devils nor men; that to do their souls good was my sole motive of coming among them; and that, if God permitted, they might put me in the well, or even stone me; that, be it how it would, I was content.

"I came off from them, at length, in peace of conscience and serenity of mind. From the first of it to the last, I was not the least disturbed, nor stirred in anger or malice towards them. O God, it is Thou alone that hast wrought this deliverance for me, in restraining the malice of men and devils, not suffering them to hurt me, when they rose up against me. Therefore, with angels and archangels, I laud and magnify Thy holy name; Thy tender mercy and paternal affection towards me, O holy Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

His labors in that place were not, however, in vain: there appeared some fruit to the glory of God He had been there, both before this opposition, and likewise afterwards; by which means, through the blessing of Heaven upon his endeavors, there were gathered together a few who departed from evil; bringing forth the fruits of repentance, and who met frequently together, to strengthen each other's hands in God.

He abode in those parts for some months, and went through much, both evil and good report. While going about daily, he endeavored, by all means, the conversion of their souls. He often wanted proper necessaries for his body, now every day impaired in its health, through the greatness of his fatigues. But this by no means damped the fervor of his spirit, and concern which he felt for perishing sinners, great numbers of whom were present to his view wherever he came. A desire of being instrumental towards opening their eyes, and turning them to God, brought him amongst them; nor could any personal inconvenience, respecting himself, alter his purpose, till Providence directed his way elsewhere.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 15

**Some farther Account of the Troubles he met with
on account of preaching the Gospel.**

Our Savior, on a certain occasion, said of His kingdom, "If it were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered into the bands of the Jews." Satan, on the contrary, is said to be a "prince," and "the god of this world." And, alas, how numerous are his poor vassals! When, therefore, his servants perceive their master's kingdom in danger, they do fight, lest it should be subjected to its rightful Lord.

And this seems to be the true reason of all that opposition which the Gospel of Christ has met with, almost ever since its first establishment. That this did not cease with the heathen persecutions, church history abundantly testifies; as does, in reality, the experience of every child of God. As it was of old time, so it has been ever since: "he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." "He that departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey." And "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," more or less, of one kind or other, (Gal. iv. 29; Isa. lix. 15; 2 Tim. iii. 12,) from every son of disobedience; whose ruler, "the prince of the power of the air," is, always has been, and ever will be, an enemy to the "Seed of the woman," and the propagation of His kingdom. Christ expressly says of His real disciples, "Ye are not of this world: if ye were, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of this world," (your maxims, tempers, and actions are quite opposite to theirs,) "therefore the world hateth you." And again, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." And hence that caution of the beloved disciple, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." Whosoever endeavors to live so as Jesus did must of necessity be treated as He was.

And hence only can be accounted for that frequent opposition which this servant of Christ, burning with desire to promote and see the kingdom of God come with power, met with from those of a contrary spirit, amongst most denominations of Christians, so called, wherever he came. Some, it is true, in almost every place, received the word gladly; while others not only did not regard it, but treated him with unkindness, if not roughly handled him, even to abusive language, blows, or imprisonment.

The following instance, which was the occasion of my first knowledge of him, happened in the town of my nativity, in the county, and about twenty miles from the city, of Cork: --

At the repeated request of some of the inhabitants, he went thither, accompanied by a few friends from the town of Bandon, June 11th, 1752. The magistrate, who was also rector of the parish, the Rev. Mr. William Ellis, was applied to for the use of the market-house to preach in; which after he had with displeasure refused, it was proposed that he should preach at a small distance from the

town. Thither he went, accompanied by multitudes, to whom, under the canopy of the outspread firmament near a spacious strand, and shaded by a spreading tree, he fully and affectionately declared the Gospel of the grace of God.

By the time he had got to the place appointed, the magistrate had sent his sergeants to forbid him preaching. "But being," to use his own words, "of the opinion that, on this occasion, it was better to obey God rather than man," he stepped up upon a table, prepared for that purpose, and, immediately opening his little Bible, read to them Job xxi. 3: "Suffer me, that I may speak: after that, mock on." The seasonable singularity of the very text so excited their (the sergeants') attention, that they permitted him to finish quietly, themselves attending all the while.

From this passage he took occasion to preach "Jesus and Him crucified," and endeavored to set Him forth evidently as crucified before our eyes. The word was, in truth, with power. Several faces were turned to paleness, and wet with tears, while he urged it home upon the conscience, that our sins were the cause of His death, the betrayers and murderers of the Son of God. And, alas! how true!

"Yes, charged with all our guilt, He stood,
Sinners from suffering to redeem;
For us He pour'd out all His blood,
He pour'd it out to cleanse from sin.

For, O! devoid of sin, and free
From actual or entail'd offence,
No sinner in Himself was He,
But pure and perfect innocence.

"Surely for us He humbled was,
And grieved with sorrows not His own;
Of all His woes we were the cause,
We fill'd His soul with pangs unknown.

"Yes, Lord, with our transgressions stain'd,
For my offence Thou wounded wast;
Mine were the sins that bruised and pain'd,
And scourged and nailed Thee to the cross."

On his return into the town, he was seized by the officers, and brought before the magistrate, followed by an astonished multitude. Being asked many and various questions concerning "this way," he answered fully, and without fear. The conversation lasted near an hour, in which he largely explained himself, giving the reasons of his conduct; and alleging, in its behalf, precedents both from Scripture and antiquity.

But Mr. Ellis, having pre-determined what he would do, was not to be moved by arguments. He therefore let him know, that unless he would promise to preach no more in this way, at least not in those parts, he should be committed to prison without delay. He replied, that "as he had been so

earnestly importuned to come there, he could not, in conscience, promise not to come;" and asked, "Are there no swearers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, and the like, in these parts " Being answered, "There are;" he added, that "if, after he had preached there a few times, there appeared to be no reformation for the better amongst them, he would never come thither more." But it seemed resolved, that all he might say should not be regarded; and he was, at length, ordered to prison. He went thither with all readiness; and esteemed it matter of thanksgiving, that his Lord counted him worthy to suffer reproach for His name's sake.

Several persons accompanied him into the prison, where, during the whole time, he, with his friends, sang praises to God, and exhorted the people. The street was crowded, some saying one thing, and some another: in general, however, they were displeased at his confinement, and almost the whole town seemed concerned in his behalf. He still, as far as his voice could reach, preached to them through the window.

The inhabitants showed the utmost civility towards him; and, not knowing how long he might be confined there, they provided bedding and provision for him and his companions. But it was not long before the magistrate sent to let him go. Coming out, and seeing such a number of people, he would fain, weak and fatigued as he was, have preached to them; but was dissuaded by his friends. He then went to a private room, and exhorted till ten o'clock, as many as came to him, which were not a few.

He went thither twice afterwards, and, though still with much contradiction, preached to them that Gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation." His endeavors, however, were not all lost. There are, to this hour, some of the fruit of his labors in that place; persons to whom, because of the blessing which God made him to their souls, his memory will be for ever precious.

The following instance happened in the north of Ireland, some considerable time after the preceding, at a place called Newtown, whither he went on the Lord's day.

At the desire of several persons, he intended to have preached in a place called the Church-green, where were assembled a large company to hear him. But while his hands were lifted up in prayer, there came one Mr. Mortimer, a Presbyterian, and with him several hundred persons, and, taking hold of him by the breast, pulled him with violence to the ground. They hauled him through the mob, and had well nigh choked him, when one Mr. Biers freed him from the hands of him who held him; for which he was soon struck to the ground himself.

Being got free, it grieved him exceedingly to see such a willing multitude disappointed; and being importuned thereto by some who earnestly desired to hear the word, he went to a place at some distance from the former. But here, likewise, by the time he had begun, the same persons pursued him: perceiving, therefore, that it was vain to attempt preaching in the midst of such disturbance, he retired to a little house, in a garden at some distance. But neither here could he be at rest; and, to avoid their fury, he was obliged to wade through wet meadows, and then climb over the mountains, till, "wet and weary, we" (he had a person with him) "came to the house of one Mr. Ambey, who supplied us with all we wanted." His tender, broken constitution could not, however, endure this fatigue without feeling its effects. He was obliged, therefore, in a few days, to take to his bed, where a fever confined him for some time.

It need not be dissembled, that the authors of this outrage towards a stranger, never there before, and chargeable with no crime, save that of endeavouring, disinterestedly, to save souls from death, were a company of Presbyterians: (as are a principal part of the inhabitants of the north of Ireland:) but, alas! what are names? "Liberty of conscience, and right of private judgment," are indeed good and specious words. But how reconcilable they are to such conduct as this, let all the world judge. He professes, that in all his journeying and intercourse among people of most denominations, in the course of his employments for God, he had met with no such treatment; no, not among the most enraged of the Romanists themselves.

The state of his heart, to which in all outward commotions, as well as in his own calm recesses, he constantly attended, he expresses on the present occasion thus: -- "In the midst of it all, my mind was calm. I had no remarkable consolation, or fear, or sorrow: I prayed for them, and do still pray God to forgive them, and not lay this sin to their charge."

I pass over a number of other instances of the opposition he met with, in the exercise of his calling, of a private as well as public nature; and only mention these, as a specimen of the spirit of the world in reference to him, and of the malice which Satan bears to God's kingdom and servants in general.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 16

A short Account of the Endeavors of the Romish Clergy to prevent his Usefulness among their People. The Means he made use of to instruct them, and the Success which he met with therein.

Notwithstanding the strict laws which are in force to prevent the propagation of Popery in these kingdoms, and to restrain the attempts of Romish priests and Jesuits, ^[22] it is no secret, that both in Ireland and England their endeavors are as unwearied as ever. They compass sea and land, all round the globe, and hardly stick at anything that may contribute towards their making proselytes.

The endeavors of this servant of Christ to convert to Him members of that communion stirred up their clergy against him wherever he came. His name was well known in all their churches; and in whatsoever place there appeared but a probability of his coming, the priests took care to render him as obnoxious to the people as they possibly could; insomuch that they stuck at nothing, though never so false, to compass their end. They, however, carefully avoided his having opportunity to talk with themselves. I do not find that from the time of his leaving their communion he had ever any settled, personal interviews with them, although, for the sake of their poor, ignorant people, for whom he had the tenderest compassion, he has frequently desired it; sometimes even in public. One occasional conversation only with one of their priests, on board a ship, in a passage from England to Dublin, he relates as follows: -- "We discoursed on the following particulars: 1. Concerning the Pope's infallibility. 2. Transubstantiation. 3. Invocation of saints. 4. Purgatory. But he could not withstand the force of plain Scripture, and therefore withdrew. The company were greatly pleased to find how little the Romish clergy have to say for themselves, when opposed by arguments taken from Scripture and reason."

Whatever is the motive of endeavoring to detain in ignorance the generality of that communion, ^[23] certain it is, that fear of the contrary occasioned the constant opposition of their priests to his unwearied endeavors among them, for the informing their judgment and reformation of their life. They not only propagated a variety of lying insinuations, to prevent their people's resort to his sermons, for which multitudes of them discovered so great an inclination; but likewise forbade any of them to hear him, under pain of damnation.

In one place (C---l) the priest informed his congregation, (to such low shifts were they driven,) and industriously spread abroad, that he had been an errand-boy to a certain priest; and that, having stolen his master's books, he learned to preach by that means.

The conduct of another of them, at C---k, was still more extraordinary. There was in that place a vast resort of Catholics (so called) to his sermons, which were often under the open firmament, as

well as daily within doors, both in Irish and English; and among the Romanists, who were happily stirred up thereby to a concern for their salvation, there was one elderly woman, who had been in some religious office among them. She entirely forsook their communion, constantly attended his sermons, and thenceforward received the Lord's supper in the Church of England.

The Romish priests became strangely irritated, and labored vehemently to stop the growing evil; to which end, one of them affirmed to the people, that "as to that Walsh, who had some time before turned heretic, and went about preaching, he had been dead long ago; and that he who then preached in this manner was but the devil in his shape."

But their endeavors proved, in great measure, ineffectual; for however a few persons, who cared but little about the matter, might have received ill impressions from such malicious or mistaken insinuations, yet several of their communion, in many places, heard him gladly, and would not be hindered therefrom. Rather, the more the priests urged them, they prevailed the less. His labors, and prayers, and tears, for their poor straying soul, over whom his bowels so often yearned, had on many the desired effect; being thereby not only reformed from Popery, but really converted to God.

Of the common natives of Ireland it has been frequently observed, that of all the natives of the globe, there are none who exceed them for hospitality, good nature, and susceptibility of religious impressions. It might well, therefore, occasion the "yearning of the bowels" of this lover of souls, to see such multitudes of them detained in total ignorance by their priests, to whom they pay the most implicit obedience.

And hence it was that, from the beginning of the concern which he felt for his own soul, he set himself, by all possible means, "to turn them from darkness to light;" and whether in the highways, at inns, in the city or country, he let slip no probable means of instructing them. One circumstance, which is much more common in Ireland than England, I mean the number of street-beggars, furnished him with frequent opportunities of this kind.

His manner of addressing them was easy and familiar, talking to them always in a style suited to their capacity and prejudices. He avoided entirely the difference of churches, and all matters of dispute, speaking only of the dreadful evil of sin, the great affairs of eternal life and eternal death, of judgment, and of the sufferings and sacrifice of the Son of God. And his discourses had often such immediate effect, that falling on their knees, and smiting their breasts, they have wept, and cried for mercy, in the open streets. He always concluded his instructions with giving them money, if he had it; which, indeed, was not always the case.

It would be tedious to enumerate all the conversations and various intercourses which he had with members of that communion, and the good effects which were produced by them. Two or three only may be related, from his own accounts.

"This day _____ came to my room. I asked him, how he hoped to be saved? And having talked together in Irish for some time, he became greatly affected, and said, 'I have saved some money, to leave to some priest or friar, when I die, in order to procure me the forgiveness of my sins; and I am willing to leave it to you, if you will accept of it.' I told him that no man could forgive his sins; that

the gift of God was not to be purchased with money; that only the blood of Christ, our great High Priest, could cleanse from sin; and to this effect. He was deeply wounded, and cried earnestly to God; to whom, after prayer, I commended him."

At another time he writes, "A poor woman, a Papist, came to my room, desirous of salvation. I prayed with her in Irish. She frequently fell on her knees, and cried for mercy, resolving no more to regard the priest's curses, but to seek her salvation according as the word of God directs."

Again: -- "Being on a journey, where I breakfasted, (it was a Romanist's,) I reprov'd the landlord for swearing, and talked to all who were present. I exhorted, likewise, a woman at the door to seek from God repentance and salvation. She cried with amaze to the blessed Virgin and to the twelve apostles to help her. But I taught her to direct her prayers to God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Beside his frequent occasional conversations with them, he went as often and to as many of their own houses as he could get admittance to, where he regarded the children and servants even as the masters and mistresses.

But what most of all contributed to the success of his attempts for their good, was his public preaching, to which great numbers of them frequently resorted, wherever he came; induced thereto chiefly by his preaching in Irish, and such things as they easily understood. There is, in the Irish language, a peculiarly affecting expressiveness, particularly with respect to the things of God; which, being pressed home upon the conscience by his zealous and alarming way of preaching, often left them bathed in tears. I saw a very remarkable instance of this in the town of my nativity: preaching there on a marketday, and many of the country people running with surprise to hear him, they smote their breasts, and wept in such a manner as was entirely new to them, some affirming, that they could go all over the world with him! It may be truly said, he seldom preached a sermon in Irish from which some of them did not receive certain advantage. He briefly mentions a few instances himself, as follows: --

"After preaching both in Irish and English, a Popish woman came to me, saying she came for instruction; for that, as she was a poor woman, she could not have it elsewhere, and she wanted to save her soul. I told her that all which was in my power I would do for her willingly. She wept, and I prayed with her, pointing her, for all her soul wanted, to Jesus, who alone is 'the way, the truth, and the life.'

Again: -- "January 4th, 1751. My soul was delighted to see with what earnestness the poor Irish" (meaning the Romanists) "received the word, being in general deeply affected. O, how did they weep and cry for mercy! May God hear their prayer! Surely this people will rise up in judgment against the Protestants, who, having the light of the Gospel, either neglect or despise it; and also against the pastors of this ignorant people, who hold them in error. O, what have the Romish clergy to answer for before God!"

"April, 1751. -- Many of them professed, after preaching, that they received more benefit from that one sermon, than from all the masses they had attended during their whole life."

At another time, preaching concerning the good Samaritan, (Luke x 30-37,) "two members of the Church of Rome were deeply convinced of their want of a Savior, and thirty-four persons joined themselves together to seek and serve the Lord."

"Friday, May 8th. -- I conversed with a woman who was formerly of the Church of England, but had been seduced by the Romish priests. She was convinced of her error, and returned. To God be the glory."

"After preaching on John i. 17, sinners cried out mightily. One came confessing her deeds, and said she had lived an adulteress, worse than Mary Magdalene: she wept, trembled, and roared, and strove."

The circumstance of his preaching and speaking in Irish, (a thing that multitudes, at least of Protestants, in Ireland cannot do, and among whom the writer, to his grief, is one,) next to the singular blessing of God upon his labors, contributed most to the success of his endeavors among them. Though it is remarkably observable, that, preaching one day on Oxmontown-Green, in Dublin, among those who were affected by the discourse there was one man cut to the heart, although he did not at all understand the language.

In a journey, once, between Cork and Bandon, he fell into conversation with a man, who rode some miles with him, till, as was his constant manner, he began to apply something to his heart, concerning the worth of his soul, and the way of salvation. But he, savoring not the things of God, became grievously offended. "His prejudice, in short, ran so high, that he declared, although he were shot for it, he would have satisfaction; adding, with an oath, 'Thou shalt never deceive another; for I am resolved to be the death of you just now.'

"I was quiet in my mind, being persuaded that the God of Daniel was still the same: I did not feel the least anger or rising of revenge to him; and still reprov'd him whenever he swore. In the midst of his rage, I reprov'd him in Irish. He was instantly amazed; and replied, 'Why did you not speak so to me in the beginning?' The lion became a lamb; and I then let him know, still speaking in Irish, what Christ had done for sinners. He departed with a broken heart."

When some of them once followed him, after preaching, desirous of instruction, "I told them," says he, "as to religion, that it was not a bare profession which would avail any one: that the true way was, to forsake sin, and follow Christ; and that in order thereto, it was needful that a person should, 1. Be poor in spirit; feel that he is a sinner. 2. Mourn on that account, with a broken and contrite heart. 3. Forsake sin, by applying to the Lord for strength. 4. Believe in Christ, and Him only, for salvation; as it is His blood alone that cleanseth from all unrighteousness: and, 5. Obey the Gospel, by conforming to the rules there laid down; living 'soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world.'"

This was the sum of what he taught them from time to time, as the way of salvation, which, explained and enforced by the holy Scriptures, he opposed to every other device, or tradition of men, which they, at any time, objected to him, as a ground of their hope of heaven. It is a summary of his sentiments how a sinner comes to find favor with God. And so zealously concerned was he for

enforcing these truths wherever he came, that once, amidst a great number of Romanists, whose attention some endeavored to hinder, he said, "If my doctrine be not according to the word of God, stone me on the spot. Make a sacrifice of me: only hear for yourselves."

"O that God would call them to the knowledge of the Gospel of peace, and open to them a door of salvation! Open, Lord, the eyes of their priests. Remember the purchase of Thy blood; nor suffer those poor souls to perish, for whom Christ hath died."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 17

He goes to England, and labors there.

The enlargement of soul with which it pleased God so signally to bless him left no bounds to his desires of spreading the savor of the knowledge of Jesus in every place; and his providential connections afforded him a large sphere of action. The people with whom he was more immediately united, and who were, according to the Divine disposals, the instruments of his salvation, had now, through the blessing of heaven, spread the "joyful sound" well nigh all over England and Ireland. And hence arose a necessity for many helpers to the kingdom of God. And such he fully appeared to be.

'A zealous instrument of good,
A vessel fit for use Divine,
God on His church in love bestow'd,
And gave this burning light to shine."

It was therefore judged expedient, that (having been successfully employed between two and three years in his native country) he should go to England likewise: to which only the conviction of its being the will of God could have reconciled him feeling, what was natural on the occasion, "a struggle," as he says, "within himself, on leaving his friends and country."

May 10th, 1753, he embarked at Dublin, with some other friends, and the next day arrived at Park-gate. Concerning this voyage, and his arrival in England, he writes as follows: -- "There were on board several gentry and officers, with a large number of cabin-passengers. They cursed, swore, and blasphemed, as though they were in hell. I reprov'd them again and again; but they still persisted, and said I was mad. O God, if there never was any other damnation in the world to come, than even the company of such wretches, who would not flee from it?"^[24]

"My God, I cannot but admire Thy goodness towards me. I heartily praise and magnify Thy name, for preserving me on the great deep. O Thou Lover of my soul, I beseech Thee come with me hither! Open my mouth in wisdom and in righteousness, that I may preach Christ crucified to the people of England. Jesus, Master, stand by me, and strengthen my body and soul!

'Embolden by Thine outstretch'd arm,
Fill me with confidence Divine;
With heavenly zeal my bosom warm,
That all may own the work is Thine.

'Give them an ear to hear the word
Thou speakest to Thy churches now,
And let all tongues confess their Lord
And let all hearts to Jesus how.

Open my mouth, and utterance give,
Give me a trumpet voice to call
A world, who all may turn and live,
Through faith in Him that died for all."

London was the place where he was appointed chiefly to labor. He arrived there the 31st of May, 1753, and preached his first sermon from 1 John ii. 1.

And now did he, more vigorously than ever, apply himself, both in public and in private, to the labor of his calling; resolving, in a place of such opportunities, and of such dangers, to make the very best use of both. He found himself in the midst of a numerous and well-instructed people, many of whom were deeply experienced in the things of God. This was to him matter of great joy, though at the same time of much carefulness, knowing, that in order to be truly profitable to them, a superficial acquaintance with things would but ill suffice. He therefore "labored" to be a scribe "well-instructed;" to be deeply and judiciously informed, in things pertaining to the kingdom of God. It was his daily and nightly study, how he might best contribute his part towards the feeding them with the sincere milk of the word of God, and the building them up in their most holy faith.

But neither did he here intermit his endeavors for the salvation of his poor ignorant countrymen, (of whom great numbers of the lower sort are constantly employed in London,) still detained in that darkness from which he had so happily escaped himself. He therefore appointed times for explaining, to as many of them as would hear, the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; and preached several times in Irish, in Moorfields and elsewhere; endeavoring, likewise, to have as many private interviews with them as he possibly could.

It was here he first formed to himself a more exact plan for the improvement of his time, with respect to his public and private capacity as a preacher and a Christian; assigning determinate portions of it to certain employments, which, unless when necessity required it otherwise, he punctually observed. He preached constantly twice a day, and visited many of the people in their families; besides frequent attendance on the sick and dying, from some of whom he was rarely a day absent.

The abilities with which God had endowed him, and his faithful improvement of them, considerably increased his work; for it seemed good to those whom the Divine wisdom had honored with the oversight of a multitude of persons here, in their absence, to entrust him with that branch of their work. His exactness and submissive faithfulness therein appeared in many and various particulars, of which a part only may be gathered from the following letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley

"Honored Sir,

"I Thank you for your letter. I longed exceedingly to hear from you. Your account of the good woman in your Journal was refreshing to my soul. What I have to say at present is as follows

"1. Mr. Wesley is gone to Bristol. He met us on Monday mornings, and upon the whole all was well. We parted in much love. 2. Mr. F_____ goes on well. I converse with him when I can. 3. The Lord is powerfully carrying on His work. Sinners are alarmed, and saints edified. This day, in visiting the sick, my soul was greatly comforted by hearing of God's dealings with their souls. 4. Brother M_____ is gone to Bristol; B. _____l to Norwich; and B. F_____ talks of leaving us next week. B. D_____ and the local preachers are with me; and, as Mr. F_____ gives us such assistance, I hope the places will be supplied.

"Mr. B_____, I hear, has preached lately at _____: several are offended. I dare determine nothing; but ask, What shall be done?

5. On Monday I began to change the tickets, &c. God give me integrity, wisdom, meekness, and love. I think, considering these particulars, I cannot leave London yet. It seems Providence keeps me here still.

"You have the prayers of your children. I do not forget you. A son honoreth his father, and a father loveth his son. Let it be so till death, and the devil can get little advantage. Your preaching has been often and exceedingly blessed to my soul. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that the Lord would make me partaker of His holiness.

"Dear sir, I trust your soul will, in time and in eternity, partake of that great salvation you have preached in the name of the Lord. O, may it please God, that we may meet full of holy and happy love! I feel my soul this moment strongly drawn after God; but there is yet something that keeps me out of perfect rest and liberty. Jesus, take my whole heart! Confound, overpower me with Thy grace! Requesting your prayers and counsel, I remain

"Your very affectionate son,
"Thomas Walsh.

"LONDON, April 30th."

His heart being entirely set upon the things of heaven, and taken up wholly with designs of pleasing Him whose providence had disposed of him in this manner, set him upon pursuing, with all the ardor of his soul, whatever he judged might best promote such an end. His genius also fitted him for profiting by the variety of assistances, in point of learning and religion, which his present situation afforded him; so that his advancement in Divine knowledge, and in Divine life, while he remained here, became every day still more and more visible. The fruit of his public ministry was likewise still more discernible; as was likewise the general tenor of his conduct more acceptable to the people. They had abundant evidence of his devotedness to God, and of his truly serving as a son in the Gospel. He was generally blessed to all kinds of hearers. His discourses were always of an

awakening nature, entering into the very heart; and singularly calculated to assist such as were ardently seeking after "perfect love." (I John iv. 17, 18.) And hereby, through the Divine blessing, he became instrumental to such a revival of the work of God as had not been known, as to its depth, from the first union of that Society of which he was a member; and which, blessed be God, has increased with added lustre ever since; nor are there a few in London who bless God that ever they heard his voice, and to whom the memory of Walsh will be for ever precious.

The zealous fervor for God which appeared in his whole conduct, -- the discourses about heavenly things, and present soul-concerns, which he often held at meals to the servants, and frequently in the kitchen, occasioned an elderly woman of known piety, who belonged to the house, to take particular notice of him. She diligently attended to most of his ways which came within her observation; and, without letting anyone know of it, watched even his secret retirements: partly to be fully satisfied of his integrity, and partly to have matter of still greater joy at finding his life all of a piece. She did so several times, and found, as she expected and desired, a happy consistency between the whole of his behavior, public and private. She observed him through the key-hole, or some crevice of the door, and sometimes saw him upon his knees, sometimes prostrate upon the ground. His countenance was commonly, at those times, lifted up to heaven, often as it were inflamed; and often, in tears, would he deeply sigh to God!

Thus did he spend the time of his abode in England, spreading the savor of his good ointment all around him wherever he came; and by his example, as well as preaching, pressing everyone to make sure work for eternity. He perceived clearly it was the good providence of God which prepared his way, and directed him hither, and could bless Him unfeignedly on that account. He came from Ireland to London three several times; the last of which was the longest time of his continuing there, (about two years,) and the most profitable, both to himself and to others. And here especially it was, that through his great and incessant labors, his unwearied application to private study and public ministrations, he laid the foundation of that disorder which, at length, resisting the force of all medicine, removed him to another world.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 18

His Love to Souls, and Zeal for promoting the Glory of God.

Some account of his endeavors for the salvation of his neighbor has already been given. But this, being so considerable a part of his character, deserves a more full consideration; though, in reality, it cannot be told of how many and various expedients he served himself for the conversion of sinners.

The language of his whole conduct was, in truth, what on a certain occasion he breathed out in the following words: -- "O, how does my soul thirst for the salvation of all men! How does my heart bleed with desire, that the fullness of the Gentiles were brought in, and that all Israel might be saved!"

It was this feeling concern for the coming of the kingdom of Christ, in the general conversion of mankind, which raised him superior to whatsoever hardships and difficulties attended his conduct in reference thereto. He watched every opportunity; and was, literally, "instant in season, out of season;" that is, continually, at all times and places, seeking how he might best accomplish the end for which alone he desired to live.

The intenseness of his desire, and his application to this "one thing," kept him continually as on the wing of spending, and being spent, in this behalf; regarding neither reproach, pain, loss, imprisonments, nor death itself. "I have," as he said on a certain occasion, "but one life; and it is a hard case if I cannot readily lose that for His sake, who gave His life a ransom for mine, and for the life of the world. My soul bleeds for the world which lieth in the wicked one."

He seemed to have continually before his eyes that which the Son of God suffered out of love for man. It was the spring whence proceeded his ardent zeal for the glory of his Lord, in the salvation of the purchase of His blood; and he imagined that the best testimony he could give of his love to Him was to suffer something for His sake. It was his desire to give life for life; and to requite Him, as he thought, even by death itself.

It was owing to this, likewise, that he embraced every possible opportunity of crying aloud, in the most conspicuous places of public resort, and of enforcing the voice of Wisdom, saying, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and scorners delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge! Turn ye at My reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known My words unto you." (Prov. i. 22, 23.)

Mountains, market-places, highways, meadows, rooms, prisons, and ships, were the frequent theatres of his publishing the Gospel of peace. And herein there appeared in him something next to marvelous, being a living fire, continually burning in the love of God and man; still mounting upwards, and kindling all that were capable about him; as prone to fervor and activity, as some are to coldness and indolence. He was never weary of well-doing, nor ever spoke slightly, and with an indifferent affection, of the great God, and of the things of religion in general; but with a seriousness and reverence becoming one who, by faith, saw the Invisible, and looked to be shortly with Him.

He was in truth (as is said of Luther) a mighty adversary to the devil's kingdom, and took every possible step which he judged might, in any measure, promote the honor of God, to whose sole glory he sacrificed himself, with all his labors and studies. It is scarcely possible so to represent, as it enable a stranger to him adequately to conceive, the flow of his soul, and energy of his spirit and expressions, on these occasions, while he endeavored, by all means, to save some. To this end he truly imparted, not the Gospel of God only, but likewise his own soul, withholding nothing which he judged might be beneficial to the people. It was this noble object of pursuit which raised him likewise above even that necessary attention to his body which it greatly required. It was truly said of him, --

He scorn'd his feeble flesh to spare,
Regardless of his swift decline;
His single aim, his ceaseless prayer,
To spread the righteousness Divine.

"He truly triumph'd in the Cross,
Its prints as on his body show'd;
Lavish of life for Jesu's cause,
Whose blood for all so freely flow'd."

The fire which burned in his heart never said, "It is enough." And the success with which it pleased our Lord to prosper his labors was a constant motive to his still going forward. His designs of doing good were without limits, esteeming himself, in this respect, a debtor to all, and embracing, in affection, not less than the whole world.

Riding through Wales, at one time, and finding that in many places they did not understand English, he felt great concern on that occasion, and formed a resolution, if his life and health permitted, he would learn the Welsh language for their sakes.

When at another time, in a passage to Ireland, was driven in thither to a place where they understand English, he let slip no opportunity of preaching to and visiting them daily, during his stay there, at their own houses, exhorting them (as he says on the occasion) "to seek the Lord while He may be found." Several were convinced, and took knowledge that they must follow Christ through evil report, and suffer for Him, if they would live with Him in glory.

There were not wanting to him, from time to time, several discouraging circumstances in his progress. It was given him not only to believe, and therefore to speak for God, but also to suffer for

His cause and glory. Col. i. 24 was, in his measure, truly fulfilled in him: he rejoiced in his sufferings, and filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for His body's sake, which is the church.

But the end which he still kept in view, together with his seasonable and frequent reflections on the love of Jesus; the danger of sinners dying without conversion; and the present salvation to which they are entitled, through the blood of the Lamb: these raised him more than superior to everything which either men, or the cruel malice of Satan, could invent against, or inflict upon, him.

His warm heart (Luke xxiv. 32) and fervent courage feared no danger in the discharge of his duty; being well assured, that walking uprightly, he walked surely. He dreaded not the faces of men, but, where occasion offered, boldly reprov'd what he saw amiss in everyone. Wherever there appeared any probability of his doing good, he was never hindered therefrom by the prospect of personal danger: expressing by his whole conduct, --

To leave my calling I disdain;
Behind I will not stay,
Though shame, and loss, and bonds, and pain,
And death obstruct my way.

Secure from danger, and from dread,
Nor earth nor hell shall move,
Since over me Thy hand hath spread
The banner of Thy love."

In one place, having preached to a vast number of Romanists and others, and a prospect appearing of doing much good among them, he intended to go thither again. But a report prevailed, that if he attempted it, a certain great man would either have him stoned, or sent to gaol. "On this occasion I reflected," says he, "what God had done in former times for those who put their trust in Him. And He gave me strength according to my day. I found my faith in Him greatly strengthened, and resolved simply to rely on His protection; not doubting but that He would stand by me. So I went thither, and preached in the name of the Lord.

"The fear of man prevented their giving me entrance into their houses, as before; so I stood on a chair in the street, and thanked God for the privilege. They received the word without disturbance, and with joy. On my return, I prayed at two houses in the way, and the power of God was greatly in the midst of us. Praised be God and the Lamb for ever!

"The love of Christ doth me constrain
To seek the wand'ring sons of men;
With cries, entreaties, tears to save
And snatch them from the infernal grave.

My life, my blood, I here present,
If for Thy truth they may be spent!
Fulfil Thy sovereign counsel, Lord,
Thy will be done, Thy name adored."

His labors were, indeed, much beyond the strength of his dying body, and his fervent zeal would not suffer him to stand still; so that his friends were obliged sometimes (as Origen's mother, to prevent her young son's burning with his father) to hide his clothes, or lock him in his room in the morning.

His whole conversation was like fire; warming, refreshing, and comforting all that were about him, and begetting in their souls a measure of the same zealous concern for the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners, which burned in his own breast. It was not possible to be much with him, and not to hear discourses which bred a detestation of sin, and a love of holiness. "To what purpose is it to live," (seemed the motto of his life,) "and not to live to some good purpose "

His endeavors to do good extended to children also. He first introduced in many places the custom of meeting weekly such of them as could attend, in order to instruct them in such truths, relating to godliness, as their years and capacity admitted of. In doing which, he desired their parents might be present likewise; to whom his affecting manner of address was not less serviceable than to the children themselves, both often weeping together.

While in London, he had several interviews with the Jews, frequently attending their synagogues, and reasoning with them out of their own Hebrew Scriptures. And although I cannot say with certainty that any of them were converted, yet sure I am, from eyewitnesses, that they were not able to gainsay the power by which he spoke.

When, at any time, he met any of his Christian acquaintance in the street, or only just called at their houses passing by, which was frequently the case, he had always something to say by way of a watchword, which he left upon their minds. Such as, "Well, let us hold out a little longer! -- Are we pressing forward? -- Let us hold fast faith, and a good conscience. -- Are we watching now unto prayer, and pressing after perfect love?" and to this purpose. I well remember one instance of the good effects of this, which a person mentioned to me since his death. "I shall never forget," says he, "a word which Mr. Walsh, taking me by the hand one day, spoke to me in my shop: 'Tis worse than death my God to love, and not my God alone.' " It was like a nail in a sure place, and left a useful impression upon the person's mind ever after. The gravity and earnestness with which he delivered these kinds of little mementoes to his friends, carried them, by God's help, to the heart, and left them there. So that I have heard several of his sayings, in this way, called to remembrance since his decease, by several of his acquaintance.

A certain person meeting a brother, one day, who seemed to do what he was about negligently, "Brother," said he, "that which you are about, for whom do you do it?" The brother answered, that he did it "for the love of God." "Certainly," replied he, "if you did it for the love of God, you are highly to blame. The sin is not so great, though it is not commendable, to be a little slack in serving men; but to serve God negligently is intolerable."

This was far from being the case with him. He did whatsoever he did for God with all his might, spending his very life in every action, even as though he should merit heaven thereby; and yet, at the same time, heartily despising and rating himself as an unprofitable servant.

In short, as one truly born from above, (John i. 13,) his soul had a vehement tendency towards heaven, whither he would fain bring the whole world. His heart and treasure being there, this world, with all its furniture, its idle pomp, and fading joys, were as nothing to him; being dead, and "crucified with Christ:" with zeal for whose glory, and for souls, the purchase of His blood, he was, as it were, eaten up continually.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 19

**His Application to Study, Love to the Holy Scriptures,
and Improvement in Divine Knowledge.**

The first materials of his learning were not very considerable: he had acquired some knowledge of Latin in his childhood, but left it off for the mathematics; so that, by the time he resumed his grammatical studies, he had almost all to do again. However, the strength of his natural capacity, and intense application to study, after his conversion, soon recovered to him what he had lost, with vast increase.

From the time of his first deep concern about the business of his salvation, he read, as has been intimated, the word of God with unwearied application; and everything else, only as it had some reference to the truths contained therein: and this practice he continued with increasing diligence and delight, till sickness wholly disqualified him for all study; and to such a degree of eminence did he arrive therein, that I believe it may be said, with truth, he was scarce ever a moment, waking, wherein he was not either talking of, reading, or meditating on, one truth or other contained in holy Scripture.

At first, he read the English Bible chiefly; but his endeavors for the good of many of his ignorant countrymen induced him to read, and get well acquainted with, the New Testament in Irish likewise. His penetrating genius, however, bent upon the best matters, and desirous to enter into the depth of Divine truth, led him, by all means, to search into the true ground and bottom of things. He considered, that to work profitably in the conversion of souls, some parts were required which were wanting in him; and that in the present state of things, without the foundation of some human learning, little could be solidly performed.

The desire which he had of being made useful to his neighbor, aiming herein at God's great glory,. which he now proposed to himself as his only rule,. made easy to him the hardest mental exercises, and overcame in him all repugnancy to close application. He had, it is true, a natural propension to study, which rendered it much more easy to him in his advanced years; and which, together with a kind of impatience to give himself entirely up to the service of souls, made him enter upon and follow his studies with extreme eagerness.

He set himself, therefore, to understand the Scriptures, both of the Old Testament and the New, in their original Hebrew and Greek: the former, indeed, had his chief, though not his first, regard. It was not till after he had acquired some tolerable knowledge of the Greek Testament, that he entered upon the study of Hebrew. This was at London, about December, 1755. He agreed with a Jew to instruct him, at the rate of a shilling an hour. A few lessons served all the ends he needed;

(having known the letters before;) and being fully initiated into the genius of the language, he soon became swallowed up in it, so to speak, making it, ever after, the chief subject of his studies, in respect of human learning.

The matter of the study so endeared the language to him, that he proceeded therein with an almost incredible swiftness of improvement. He discovered every day such a depth of "hidden wisdom" in the writings of Moses and the prophets, (John i. 15,) read in their own original tongue, as he could hardly have conceived from our translation, though, for the most part, deemed the best in the world.

The advancement in Divine knowledge which he perceived in himself, from the study of the holy Scriptures in this language, was matter of his admiration, as well as thanksgiving. He found that the Hebrew Scriptures contain the sum of all we can know in divinity, (considered as a science,) or in natural things. And one may venture to say, "He who attempts to be either a divine or a philosopher, without understanding the great use and benefit of this elucidating sun, of God's forming and fixing up, in the heaven of His most holy word, is just as wise as he who would traverse the mighty ocean without a compass."

"Ignorance of the Hebrew Scriptures has been the next cause of all the jargon published in defence of them, of all the infidelity in the world, of all the false philosophy and errors in divinity amongst us; and in proportion as they are understood, these misleading principles must vanish and disappear. The Hebrew language is stamped with the character of Divinity, whilst all others (the Greek not excepted) wear the badge of Babel. And while other languages must be resolved into that confusion which gave them birth, and whilst these are the channels of all error, that remains the source of all truth; the fountain from whence it springs, the point in which it centres, the garden where it grows, the mine from whence it must be dug."

"There is something," says Mr. Addison, "so pathetic in its diction, that it often sets the mind in a flame, and makes our hearts burn within us. If anyone," continues he, "would judge of the beauties of poetry that are to be met with in the Divine writings, and examine how kindly the Hebrew manners of speech mix and incorporate with the English language, after having perused the Book of Psalms, let him read a literal translation of Horace or Pindar. He will find in these two last such an absurdity, and confusion of style, with such a comparative poverty of imagination, as will make him very sensible of what is here advanced. It has been said by some of the ancients, that if the gods were to talk with men, they would certainly speak in Plato's style; but I think we may say, with justice, that when mortals converse with their Creator, they cannot do it in so proper a style as that of the holy Scripture."

"From its Author, namely, God Himself, we have reason to expect the utmost perfection a language is capable of; viz., the utmost simplicity, certainty, and expressiveness. In a word, what can be imagined more worthy than that which leads us to the saving knowledge of God Himself; which shows the manner of attaining eternal salvation? O truly laudable and worthy study! O industry beyond all praise! whereby a man is enabled, in the same language, knowingly to converse with God, with holy angels, with patriarchs, and with prophets, and clearly to unfold to men the mind of God, from the language of God."

He ascribed it to a special assistance from heaven that the very study of the tongue, independently considered, became so easy and pleasant as he found it. And I have heard him mention this very particular as an argument (at least to himself) of the regard of heaven to this first, most simple, and excellent of languages; ^[25] in assisting those who, with upright minds, inquire into it after the mind of God. And to this purpose he writes as follows

"December 20th, 1756. I spent the forenoon in my studies, in which God has, and does greatly assist me. About this time twelve-month I could not read a sentence of Hebrew with any certainty, or construe a verse with readiness. But now I can read my Bible through, and understand it, almost as well as Latin or English. This hath God done, enabling me to read His blessed word in the first and best of languages. O, may all my studies and talents be devoted to His glory!"

His application was indeed prodigious. I have known him (strange as it may seem) to spend fourteen hours of the four-and-twenty, in this study, excepting only the intervals of prayer, which he frequently poured out for His blessing, whose inspiration alone teacheth man true wisdom. He often intermixed a verse of praise or petition; and then, turning his face to the wall, and lifting up his heart; and countenance to heaven, with his arms clasped about his breast, he would stand for some time before the Lord in solemn recollection, and then return to his work.

It was a rare thing ever to see him but with a book in his hand, hearing him speak of the things of God, or in meditation. When, in traveling, he at any time stopped at an inn, as soon as he was shown to his chamber, to stay whether for an hour or a night, he would, as though he forgot where he was, or what he came about, take out his little Hebrew Psalter, (which was a peculiarly favorite traveling companion of his,) or some other spiritual book, and fall immediately to his usual work; unless the time was otherwise taken up in exhorting the landlord or servants, or, in short, any he met with. Accommodations for his body were his smallest care; and his attention to these was always, as it were, by-the-by. He, like the tortoise, had his house always with him, and seemed everywhere, and yet nowhere, at home in this world. He pursued his work well nigh equally at all times and in all places, unless when sickness prevented, and seemed ("as the earth produceth fruit of itself") spontaneously to tend to God. Even after preaching sometimes near an hour and a half together, he has immediately resumed his studies, (having books always with him,) and this often where several persons have been talking or otherwise employed, as their occasions required, round about him; he still pursuing his work, as though he were retired in a closet: proceeding on the sentiment, that he had no other business in this world, than to pray, and preach, and study, and live, in every place, and in everything, for God!

Although his study may be considered almost as a continual prayer, being managed in this manner, and being in its nature and design wholly referred to God; nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the frequency of his stated times of prayer was at first especially, much interrupted thereby: but he followed, for the most part, the light which he then had; and, intending all his acquirements for the glory of God, in the interest of souls, he thought he might, in such a case, and on some occasions, (as one expresses it,) "leave God, for God."

He was not, however, without frequent jealousies over himself, fearing lest his so intense application, even to this kind of employment, should in any wise divert his heart from what he most

prized, and most ardently desired, namely, close attention to Jesus. After a while, therefore, having mastered the main difficulties in his work, his application became much more moderate, and uniformly regular. He began to "learn well to know, how much need not be known;" and that

"Knowledge is as food and needs so less
Her temperance over appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain;
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn,
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom; what is more is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us, in things that most concern,
Unpracticed, unprepared, and still to seek."

-- Paradise Lost --

One day he writes as follows: -- "I was all day closely employed at study. But I fear I love my books too much. It is true, my studies relate to the word of God; but I often find my mind carried out in desire after languages, arts, and sciences; yet I see the vanity of everything, when separate from God. To be sure, I prize the knowledge of Christ crucified above all other knowledge: to imitate His wisdom, goodness, meekness, patience, and love. Alas! what are Hebrew, Greek, Latin, logic, metaphysics, everything, to this? What is anything to the love of Jesus? O that sweet peace of conscience, and contentment of mind, which arise from redemption in His blood! O Lord, Thou knowest that I desire to be great in Thy grace; to be armed with Thy armour. My soul longs to rise above these little, transitory things. I fain would rest in Thee; I thirst for the Divine life. I pray for the Spirit of illumination. I cast my soul upon Jesus Christ, the God of glory, and Redeemer of the world. I desire to be conformable unto Him; His end, servant, disciple, and sacrifice! Come now, my Jesus! see the longings of my soul, and finish the work there."

From hence may be gathered, both what was the spirit of the man, and the tendency of his studies. He desired to know; but it was God, and the things of God, which he proposed to himself as the sole matter of his knowledge. For although he read occasionally both logic and metaphysics, history and natural philosophy, yet it was all with reference to his one grand point. Whatever treasures he gathered from abroad, in this or in any other way, like the industrious bee, which, collecting his sweets in various parts, and from different weeds and flowers, deposits all in one hive, -- he reduced, and made all his attainments subservient to the word of God, and acquaintance with Jesus, as his central point of everything.

And his fear, lest in anything he should deviate from this, had much influence on the regulation of his studies. He well knew, that to have a heart always at leisure for God, attentive to His teaching, and obedient to His dictates, is the great thing; to which every design and pursuit must give place, if we mean to be truly great in the grace of God; and that the heart is as capable of being overcharged with things, in some respects lawful and excellent, as with surfeiting and drunkenness, or cares of this life; all of which are, therefore, to be as carefully guarded against.

And, perhaps, there are few things by which the spirit of darkness so serves himself, among the thinking world, as by this very particular; a diverting the mind from proper application to the "one thing needful," not, indeed, by things sensual or immoral, which they abhor, and would perhaps be shocked at the thought of; but by things in some respects innocent and plausible, if not necessary, -- it may be, by curious speculations on government, the works of nature or grace, and ideal pursuits of various kinds.

"More fond to fix the place of heaven or hell,
Than studious this to shun, or that secure.
'Tis out the curious, but the pious path
That leads us to our point.
Humble love,
And not proud reason, keeps the door of heaven:
Love finds admission, where proud science fails.
Man's science is the culture of his heart
And out to lose his plummet in the depths
Of nature, or the more profound of God."

Bishop Taylor mentions it, as a saying of (Egidius, that an old and simple woman, who loves Jesus, may be greater than was Brother Bonaventure. And inasmuch as the giving our whole heart to God is that without which nothing in religion is truly available; if this be not done, is it not the same thing, whether it be through gazing at the stars, catching butterflies, or committing adultery? The death of the body is as fully effected by the prick of a lancet, as by the stroke of a cannon-ball. And to such, alas! as procure the loss of their own soul, how little difference does it make, whether it was done by crimes of the grossest kind, or by what the flattery of self-love, and a mistaken world, call little things! He was thoroughly sensible of his danger in this respect, and began to regulate himself accordingly.

He found, towards the conclusion of his studies in particular, that more true wisdom is obtained from God, by prayer and holy meditation, in one hour, than from the application of years to folio volumes; and therefore esteemed one single sentiment, gained in this manner, of more value than a thousand speculations, acquired by mere dint of study, in the way of human science. He perceived well the difference which there is between studying, barely to instruct others, (which, in its place, is also right and necessary,) and studying to perfect one's self: the former not necessarily implying any more than becoming humanly wiser; whereas the latter tends to make us better, because more holy, and produces that purity and disengagement which are absolutely necessary to receive the true light of the Holy Spirit. "The secrets of the kingdom of heaven are not understood truly and thoroughly but by the sons of the kingdom, and by them, too, in several degrees, and to various

purposes; God herein distributing to everyone severally as He willeth: but to such as know not God, the whole system of this wisdom is insipid and flat, if not totally rejected, dull as the foot of a rock, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue. But so are mathematics to a Scythian boar, and music to a camel."

His settled manner now was to assign the morning wholly to the reading, first, a chapter out of the Old Testament, and frequently some of the Psalms, in Hebrew. Then he read, and digested, some part of his Greek Testament. His manner of doing this took him up great part of the forenoon; and afterwards he read, wrote, or was otherwise employed, as occasions directed. He frequently had some persons to visit him for instruction in some point of learning, chiefly in Hebrew. Two or three young men of Cambridge, at different times, being in town, and knowing him, chose to be initiated by him in the Hebrew tongue. He was constantly as communicative as receptive of instruction, withholding nothing from anyone that he thought might be useful to them.

He read the Scriptures in order; beginning a book, and going through with it regularly; fixing at the same time, upon such parts as had most immediate reference to the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel state of things; which he not only read most frequently, but likewise committed to memory. And the degree of perfection to which he arrived in this particular was really surprising. His acquaintance with the letter of Scripture, and his retentive memory, supplied him as with a constant concordance. And it may be questioned whether there was a remarkable passage, historical, doctrinal, or perceptive, from Genesis to the Revelation, which he could not, on the bare mention of it, turn to immediately.

"Thy word," says he, "O Lord, I have taken for mine inheritance for ever. It is the joy of my heart, and of more value to me than millions of worlds. O God, give me understanding, that I may keep Thy law! But let my whole dependence be on Jesu's merits. He is my Advocate. Only by faith in Him I stand. He is my sure refuge and portion in the land of the living!"

Being at sea one time, and the weather becoming extremely tempestuous, the mariners were apprehensive of certain death. He, in like manner, expected the same, and put into his bosom, with all safety, a small Bible, which he had with him, resolving that what he so loved in life should not be parted from him even in death. Such was his love to, and singular esteem for, the word of God.

In this manner it was that he became, in truth, a scribe well instructed to the kingdom of heaven, and brought out of the treasury of his heart experience the old and new and deep things of the word of Jehovah. It was from this fountain he derived his ideas, sentiments, and expressions, on all occasions; explaining doctrines, enforcing duties, and resolving difficulties, well nigh altogether in Scripture words. The "spirit of wisdom" so rested upon him, that there was nothing of a Divine nature which occurred to his own mind, or was proposed to him by others, respecting doctrines, experience, or practice, of which he could not speak with convincing clearness and satisfaction.

He had a singular faculty for throwing light upon doubtful cases; and it was not unusual with him, by two or three words speaking, sometimes to set right, and entirely quiet, the minds of persons, perplexed before about points of doctrine or experience. A most remarkable instance of this I remember to have known in Ireland A person who was greatly embarrassed in his mind concerning

a point in religion which appeared to him of great importance, and who had received no satisfaction from all his former researches on this head, came to Mr. Walsh, and related the matter to him; which having heard, he only asked one question, requiring the person to answer. And whether it was that God just then shone upon the man's soul, and by His immediate light solved the difficulty; or whether it was through mere rational conviction, resulting from the arguments implied in his question, I know not; but he was instantly satisfied, and, being convinced of his former mistake, had no further uneasiness on the head.

His insight into the invisible world so realized to him things to come, that he spake of them as one who both heard and saw them. And they had their proportionable influence on the whole of his behavior. He acted as in the immediate presence of God; and thus went on, reading and meditating day and night in the law of his God, and devouring, like another Ezekiel, the whole Divine volume.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 20
His Manner of Preaching.

At first, his sermons consisted chiefly of a number of well-chosen texts of Scripture, suited to the particular subject on which he treated; and which he, for the most part, cited, with both the chapter and verse. He had in this manner formed, as it were, a body of divinity in his head, which was a kind of storehouse of his sermons. Time and experience, however, brought him off from the custom of so particularly citing the places of the scriptures he made use of; unless in new and public places, (as fields and market-houses, &c. where he often published the joyful tidings, and) where he judged it singularly use, both for the conviction and satisfaction of the hearers.

A constant course of reading, much conversation with the children of God, and the deep acquaintance which a life of faith, meditation, and prayer gave him with God, and with the motions of his own soul, greatly extended his views into Divine things in general; and furnished him with variety of subjects for the edification and comfort of the church of God: so that in the last two or three years of his course, his sermons had in them a depth and solidity far beyond those of his former years.

The state of his own heart had much influence on the particular subjects of his sermons; as is surely the case with all to whom preaching is not a mere business of course, but, on the contrary, an affair of the weightiest importance in the world, requiring the deepest attention and most circumspect walking in persons exercised therein. He knew that the words of an unfeeling heart are but mere empty sounds; and that although they might please for the present, they, however, rarely profit the hearers. And it was on this account that, attending constantly to the motions of his own soul, he hardly ever preached a sermon without conveying nearly the like sensations to others, whether of deep contrition of spirit, holy mourning, or spiritual joy, which he felt in his own soul.

"When," says he, "I am in heaviness, I am led to speak chiefly of trials; when lively and fervent, I am led to speak of the comforts of believers; and when I am hungering and thirsting after righteousness, I press upon others to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness. And hence I learn, -- 1st, How needful it is for a preacher to be in a right spirit himself, whenever he speaks to others; -- and 2dly, The wisdom of God, in so ordering, that every soul might receive its portion of the milk of the word in due season."

All his sermons might be truly said to be his own, from God. He stole not the word from his neighbor, (Jer. xxiii. 30,) nor caught at trivial incidents to furnish him with an hour's discourse. His heart was a treasury well furnished, insomuch that he was never at a loss for something in season. Even sometimes, when he has been so necessarily taken up with other parts of his calling as not to

have the least time for preparing to preach, but he has gone into the pulpit immediately, yet the pourings out of his feeling soul evinced themselves to waiting hearts to be of God.

There was nothing whining, light, or trivial in his discourses; nothing put on; nothing that could excite an air of levity, much less laughter; but rather, and which was commonly the case, groans, and tears, and cries. His sermons had in them such a depth of Divine truth, confirmed by the word of God, with such a greatness and majesty, as begot in the hearers an awe and reverence, which removed far away all petulancy and thoughtless irreverence of spirit; and produced, in many, a solemnity and attention of soul becoming those who hear discourses for life and death eternal: to all of which his grave and mortified countenance contributed not a little. In short, his whole behavior in the pulpit was such as became a messenger of God, put in trust with the ministry of reconciliation.

His discourses were of a general nature, suited to give a portion to everyone, as their need required; milk for babes, and for stronger men stronger meat: though still they had this one main tendency with regard to all, -- to excite people's hearts to the pure love of God. And, although he preached "faith in Christ," as the only way of obtaining all the good things of grace and glory, yet he did it in such a manner as effectually to guard it against the abuse of libertines, who turn the freeness of the grace of God into an occasion of wantonness; who, while they promise liberty to themselves and others, are, at the same time, servants of corruption. Persons of this character could not, in the least, serve themselves from his discourses; in every one of which he so preached faith in Christ, as to "establish the law" in its true sense; that is, to secure all the interests of genuine holiness, both in heart and life; 'all the fruits of righteousness; the most rigorous regard to men's duty to God, their neighbor, and themselves. When he first began to preach, his chief talent seemed to be for quickening such as were dead in trespasses and sins; to terrify careless sinners with the dread of God's judgments, alarming them, as it were, at their peril, to flee from the wrath to come. It was truly said of him,

"He fierce on the Philistines flies
Compels the captives to come in;
Spoils Satan of his lawful prize,
And tears them from the toils of sin."

His courage and resolution in this were such as are rarely to be found. He judged that there was nothing more likely to pull down the strongholds of Satan, than to lay the ax at the root of sin; and in all his sermons, he ever used to discover its filthy and detestable nature, pressing upon the conscience an entire purgation from dead works. And he did it in such a manner as often pierced the very joints and marrow of his hearers.

It was easy to discover in him likewise the utmost impartiality. Knowing that he was to deliver His Lord's message, he spared no man, from any human or interested regards; but boldly detecting their sin, commended himself to every man's conscience in the "sight of God."

And yet his utmost zeal was tempered with wisdom and discretion; for notwithstanding his pressing vehemently upon the conscience of his hearers, in all his sermons, yet (although some were

sometimes offended, charging him with binding heavy burdens, and the like) they were never able to resist the authority by which he spake.

But it was not as a Boanerges, a son of thunder, only, that he excelled. His own happy experience of the forgiving, healing, and comforting virtue of the blood of Jesus, together with his mighty acquaintance with the promises of life in Him, fitted him for administering comfort, and much encouragement, to the weary and heavy-laden with sin. To such he was, in truth, "a son of consolation;" his lips dropped sweetness to them, as the honey-comb, while they poured forth abundantly

"Thoughts, immaculate and pure,
Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments!"

-- Night Thoughts --

O God, how many a bleeding wound hast Thou made him an instrument of healing, by pouring into the hearts of the disconsolate "the wine and oil" of the Gospel, in a rich profusion of those precious golden promises, which, being ratified to us by the holy blood of Thy dear Son, are all yea and amen in Him, to Thine eternal glory! Yes, --

Refreshing, soft, as vernal showers,
His word on weary sinner falls,
Or like the rapid torrent pours,
While souls to Jesu's blood he calls!"

It was scarcely possible for the most obdurate, icy, and rocky heart, to remain long so, under his moving and authoritative discourses, laid home to the conscience by the sword of the Spirit, which, like the flaming sword in Paradise, he turned every way, to every heart. And, accordingly, it was a very rare thing for him ever to preach a sermon with out sending some away either broken-hearted, rejoicing in God, or increased, more or less, in the knowledge of the Crucified.

Towards the latter part of his progress, the two last years of his life especially, the whole bent of his soul, his reading, meditations, prayer, conversation, and preaching, tended altogether to "the deep things of God," (1 Cor. ii. 10,) the so perfectly loving Him, with all the capacity of the soul and body, as the state of humanity can possibly admit. The entire salvation of God from all sin to all the mind that was in Christ Jesus, was now his constant and most beloved theme, both in public and private. And he omitted nothing which might either inform his judgment, or affect his own, or the hearts of others, in reference to this most interesting concern of the children of God.

His thoughts on this head became, therefore, thoroughly digested; so that there was hardly an objection which either Satan, men, or the heart of unbelief could bring against it, for which he had not a convincing answer. His own heart-acquaintance therewith will be seen from a subsequent account of his experience. The light which he had into the nature, and his fervent manner of enforcing the worth and necessity, of Christian holiness, was one great means of enkindling, in the hearts of many, that fire (Luke xii. 49) of pure love to God and man, which has, since his death,

likewise increased more abundantly, and still burns (O, may it ever burn!) amongst us, to the greater glory of God. Only such as were experimental witnesses of it, having a true relish for things of so high a nature, can rightly conceive of the abilities with which God endowed him for this part of his work; of the manner in which he,

"With strength and utterance from above,
Urged on the saints, through grace forgiven,
To scale the mount of holiest love,
To seize the brightest throne in heaven!"

In all his discourses on the subject, he, as much as may be, carefully avoided his own words, both in explaining and enforcing its nature, extent, and the means of attaining thereto. He did it in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, explaining those spiritual things with spiritual words; (1 Cor. ii. 13;) while, in the mean time, his fervent and affecting manner of urging them, and indeed every other part of the doctrine of salvation, commanded

"Audience and attention still as night,
Or summer's noon-tide air."

-- Paradise Lost --

He had not, it must be acknowledged, at least he made but little use of, the art of preaching: not, indeed, that he was ignorant of such rules as orators lay down for ordering and conducting of public discourses. His knowledge both of logic and rhetoric was far from being inconsiderable. He both read, and in some good degree digested, the principles of both. But the eagerness with which he undertook and proceeded in his work; and the rapid flow of his soul, sending forth its "good matter," not like the distilling of a water-pot, but as a plentiful shower from the heavens, watering deep and wide all around, did not suffer him to attend with exactness to such niceties in composition or delivery; nay, even prevented that moderation, as to the length and manner of delivering his discourses, which would have been much more easy to himself and to his audience, many of whom were often in pain for him.

Though afterwards, when the repeated advice of his friends, and the necessity of his constitution, obliged him to a more slow and deliberate manner, some ascribed it to (what they called) his "want of power;" the loss of what he once had: such is the folly and weakness of many, in their sentiments with regard to this particular. How common is it to imagine, that the presence and power of the Spirit of God, and that influence by which souls are awakened, justified, or built up in holiness, depends upon, at least has some connection with, the loudness of the preacher's voice, the swiftness of his expression, and the like; in other words, upon the strength of a man's lungs, and, it may be, in the assurance of his gesture and utterance! -- a sentiment not more strange to the truly wise, than it is common with many, and which justly deserves to be detected and exploded. As though noise and animal activity should be dignified with the names of spirit and power; and the want of them ascribed to dryness, deadness, and formality! Strictly speaking, indeed, there is no necessary Divine power in any man's manner of speaking, whether loud or low, swiftly or softly. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," and as He pleaseth; and it may be questioned whether effects that have been sometimes

produced by a loud, vehement, and overbearing manner of speaking, were not in great measure merely animal or mechanical, if not sometimes of Satan himself, to cast an odium upon the work of God. In truth, the most substantial, well-wearing, and genuine effects of the Gospel ministry arise, as far as circumstances contribute thereto, from its delivery, not with noise and mere human vehemence, (which often rather call off the minds of too many from the inward life and communion with God,) but with distinct calmness and wise deliberation.

There may be often a strong wind, an earthquake, and fire; but the Lord is in the "still, small voice." (1 Kings xix. 11-13.) And these are only in order to this. His word, it is true, is a sword and a hammer, which wounds and breaks human hearts in pieces; and by how much any one's manner of speaking contributes towards the so doing, so far it is to be commended. But, considered independently of this, (which is too often the case,) the loudness of a man's voice is in reality no better than the blowing of a trumpet, or the sound of a drum. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." What is here intended is nakedly to represent a too common mistake, in order, in some measure, to its removal.

His sermons were seldom less than an hour long; and yet had in them such an agreeable variety, judicious explanation of Scripture, and affecting energy, that they were rarely, if ever, tedious, unless to such as wanted a savor for the things of God. Often might one see, on these occasions,

"Attentive crowds the heavenly words admire,
Hang on his lips, and catch the sacred fire;
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient of the skies."

He was always, at the conclusion, in a bath of sweat. And, the place of preaching being often at some distance from his lodging, his suddenly growing cold again was one reason of the frequency of the fevers which he had from time to time during his whole life of public labor.

He often resolved, before he began to preach, to restrain the rapidity of his spirit; but in vain: "the sword," as he once said to me, when speaking to him on the head, "being too keen for the scabbard." The fervor of his soul broke through all resolutions, rejoicing to spend and to be spent for the Lord Jesus but wasting, at the same time, and cutting away the very springs of his animal life, which although, at the time, he had no apprehension of yet he felt it immediately afterwards.

With regard to the manner of his preparing for sermons, he seemed to keep between the two extremes, of an enthusiastic disregard to, or neglect of, all actual previous preparation on the one hand, and a merely dry scholastic composition of exact materials on the other. To have no regard to the matter and manner of his discourses beforehand, under the pretense of dependence upon Heaven for immediate influence and utterance, he judged to be rank enthusiasm; and often a cloak for a lazy, lounging, indolence of spirit; on account of which, nonsense has been too often dignified with the sacred names of inspiration and power. And yet, on the other hand, he judged it nearly, if not alike culpable, to seek after and trust to mere dry human skill, in fixing upon heads, and taking such measures, as to preach often only one's self, independent, as it were, of the quickening, enlightening presence of the Holy Ghost, without which all preaching and all hearing are equally vain. He prayed

and studied, and studied and prayed again, going always (unless necessity prevented) from his closet, and off his knees, into the pulpit. But when he came there, he gave himself up wholly into the hands of God, to be actuated and used by Him, in all respects, as might; be most for His glory. And it was glorious and wonderful to see the good effects which were produced at those times, by the words of God flowing from his lips, and entering into the heart; without, indeed, the ornaments of studied eloquence, but in their native majesty and simplicity; such as they are in themselves, and as he himself relished them. One circumstance relating to his manner was, that; he almost always began, and in general concluded, his sermons with a text of Scripture; but so judiciously chosen, as seldom failed to touch the heart and frequently to cast light on the whole subject.

One might easily gather from his way of preaching, how sensible he was of a mistake, or error, (though perhaps rarely noticed,) in many preachers, who content themselves, supposing there be but; demonstration in their sermons, that they have spoken things which cannot be reasonably gainsayed. Whereas, if there be nothing more than clearness of demonstration in a sermon, it may indeed be so far said of the preacher, "Thou preachest well. But what then? Who is edified to salvation? who are quicken in their pursuit of God and heaven? who hates his sins, or who loves God, the more for your discourse?" Now, where these are not to be found, may not a sinner as well be hearkening to a mathematician demonstrating Euclid's Elements, as to a preacher only proving a point of Christianity?

It was far from satisfying him that his sermons had in them sufficient demonstration. But still retaining in mind what is the true end of preaching, namely, the bringing souls acquainted with, and building them up in, God; he rated his sermons accordingly: and, for the more effectual promotion of this, he studied to be well acquainted with all the motions and sentiments of the human heart, pointing his discourses there continually; laying hold, as it were, of its very inmost thoughts, and with the sinner's own weapons slaying the enemies of his salvation. He applied to the conscience at every turn; and, after having at any time demonstrated a peculiarly interesting truth, of a general nature, he always took care to make it a personal thing, by questioning the heart of everyone concerning their part therein. He frequently introduced, by way of comparison, many of the incidental occurrences in life, things respecting callings, families, and a thousand little matters, by which the great concerns of the soul and another world entered more deeply and sensibly into the minds of the common people. I have heard a woman, of known integrity, say, that intending one evening to have his judgment, after preaching, on several particulars which were a weight to her mind, he so anticipated every objection, and answered them in the sermon, that she, entirely satisfied, needed no further inquiry.

It was very usual with him in his sermons to propose and answer divers cases of conscience; which was often an inexpressible satisfaction to many. In describing vices, (for which he was eminently remarkable) he did not so much dwell upon the vice itself abstractedly, as he showed the persons to themselves, who were guilty thereof; and represented the unavoidable danger of such as lived and died therein. It was not so much "pride, envy, anger, lust, drunkenness, swearing," and the like, which he painted in their deformed and detestable nature; (though he did this also;) but his drift at such times was, to describe the proud, the envious, the angry, and the lustful man; to alarm the drunkard, and the swearer, &c. as with the voice of thunder, to escape for their lives. The most guilty person can sit and bear his vice described, with composure enough; but the conscience of a sinner

cannot so easily escape, when the preacher, speaking as it were to one person, (though without particularizing any,) charges it home, "Thou art the man." It was in this way that his sermons were, by the grace of God, Effectual to the awakening and converting of so many.

His whole life being one series of holy living and mental improvement, preserved his heart like an ever fresh and overflowing fountain, which on every occasion poured forth its fruitful streams of holy doctrine and persuasive exhortation. It was easy enough to discern that he felt the things he delivered. He gave himself wholly to this one thing; and, which was the crowning glory of all, was himself a pattern of the truths he taught.

"His own example strengthens all his laws;
He is himself the gracious saint he draws."

Indeed this was, first and last, his main concern, that while he ministered to the wants of others, he might not sustain loss in his own soul, nor have to take up that sad complaint, "They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." (Canticles i. 6.) It is a fearful case for a preacher to be only like a channel in a garden, through which the water runs, to cool and moisten the herbs and flowers, but nothing for its own use; if not like the spoils of beavers, sheep, and silkworms, designed to clothe others, and are made the occasion of their own nakedness, if not the cause of their death. This, indeed, is never the intention of God concerning His servants; but men bring it upon themselves, through the abuse of His favors. In this case, perhaps, alas! more frequent than is commonly imagined, what is it but to build a fortune to others upon the ruins of one's own house, while, "after preaching to others, thou thyself dost become a castaway!"

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 21

**Of his frequent sickness, the exercises of his therein,
and the improvement which he made thereof.**

His original constitution was strong, and his make and stature such as, humanly speaking, indicated health and long life. He seemed free from those incumbrances of constitution which some have to struggle with well nigh all their days. His complexion tended rather to the melancholic, than any other, although, from his great fervor of spirit and zeal for God's glory, one would have thought the contrary. But the grace of God is powerful to alter, and even avert, when He pleases, the course of nature. However, the natural temperature of his body seemed well calculated both for the service of God and of his neighbor.

But, in fact, if his bones had been brass and his flesh iron, they must have yielded to the violence which his life and labors offered to his constitution he enjoyed good health till about the nineteenth year of his age, which was the year of his conversion to God. But from the twentieth to the twenty-eighth, which was the last year of his sojourning among men, his life may be said to be no other than a lingering death; as he never was a whole day free from pain or weakness.

A slow fever, and pain at his stomach, were, for the most part, his companions both by day and night. He could in this respect say, literally, "I die daily. I bear in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus." For this his daily martyrdom was brought upon him, and cheerfully endured, wholly for His name's sake. The manner of his preaching, intense study, little rest, and frequent outward fatigues, broke the very frame of his nature, and brought him, in a short time, to such a habit of body as medicines were never after able to remove. An eminent physician once said to him, "Mr. Walsh, I would not use my horse as you use your body." The burning fervor of his spirit in the cause of God, and the deep concern which he continually felt for the salvation of sinners, prevailed over all that either prudence could dictate, or friends and enemies persuade or threaten.

"It is," as he once expressed it, (speaking of his illness,) "in the work of God, in the cause of Christ! Therefore I rejoice; for I count not my life dear to myself, if I may but glorify my Lord God, and only Master Jesus Christ." It is really surprising, that, considering his weakness and habitual disorders, he could possibly go through such daily and nightly labors as he did; nor can it be accounted for otherwise, than that the strength of God was made perfect in his weakness. " Sometimes," says he, "when I begin the labor of love, I am hardly able either to walk or speak; but after I have labored a while, I find new strength, and am even better than when I began!"

As to the use which he always made of his illnesses, it will be best and most satisfactorily gathered from his own words, in which, for the most part, the following accounts and reflections are given. They are related in the order of time in which they occurred.

"Tuesday, Jan. 18th, 1751. -- I preached on Matt. v. 3, but could not finish, being seized with an ague. Immediately I went to bed. I could rest in the will of God, being persuaded it was for the better. True it is, that afflictions are not joyous, but grievous, while they last, though afterwards they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. How great, O my God, are Thy goodness and tender mercies towards me! If I had a thousand tongues, I could not praise my God as He deserves. He remembers me in the time of my trouble, and leaves not my soul comfortless. Lord, there is nothing good in me, that Thou shouldest regard and so remember me. All is of Thy free grace and undeserved mercy. O the ravishing joy that seizes my heart, in meditating on the dying love of my Savior! It raises me above all human things, and carries my soul deep into the mysteries of godliness."

Yet two things he then especially remarked --

1st. How sad an affair it is to leave the work of salvation to a time of sickness. "Experience," says he, "has strongly taught me, that if my peace was not made before such an affliction" (referring to a violent fever, after which he wrote these words) "as this was, it would never have been made: rather distraction, and almost madness, would take up the time; and not repentance. Look, O Jesus, upon those who are putting the evil day afar off!"

2d. That before each of his illnesses, he had had remarkable displays of the Divine goodness toward him. Thus he says, "I cannot but remark the exceeding goodness of God; for before my illnesses, for some years past, He always gives me a clear manifestation of His love."

The following account of himself was after a fever, which lasted nine-and-twenty days, at a place called Tyrrel's-Pass, in Ireland: --

1. I had no joy for twenty days. The severity of my sickness and pain pressed down my soul neither Divine light nor love shone into my heart; yet I prayed often with freedom and fervor.

"2. I had no strong temptations, no fear of death or hell; neither had I any desire to die. On the thirteenth day I had an assurance that I should not die in Tyrrel's-Pass. My greatest uneasiness arose from the place where I lay, which was a narrow room, with a shop adjoining, where was hurry and noise almost continually. This circumstance, through the evil of my heart, often became a temptation to impatience. But I cried unto the Lord, and He made everything more easy to me every day.

"3. About the twentieth day, my soul and body much revived. I could, after a night of heaviness and affliction, rejoice in God. I experienced much of the love of Christ. But yet I felt the 'old man.' Alas, what an evil heart have I! How hard is it to humble me, and wean my desires from earth! Lord, Thou knowest my heart and reins. And is it not my desire to love Thee with all my soul, and serve Thee with all my strength?

'Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with Thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!

"4. On the twenty-sixth day, early in the morning, the gracious Lord replenished my soul with His love. He poured out His Spirit upon me. The intercourse was open between heaven and my soul I loved, and could pray for, all the world, as for myself. O, how does Christ enlarge the heart! What flames of Divine charity does He kindle there! The twenty seventh day I had such a sense of the mercy of God as quite overcame my soul. In the evening, however, I felt a severe struggle: but the blessed Spirit soon delivered, and set my heart at liberty.

"Lord, since it hath pleased Thee to spare me a little longer, make my life useful. Let me be wholly given up to Thee and Thy service, that I may glorify Thee in all things, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen."

It is easy to discern, as through the general tenor of his life, so especially in those times of sickness, that his main concern respected his "inward man," the state of his heart Godward. He carefully attended to all its motions, and regarded its every alteration; and he as freely owned whatever he found amiss, as he thankfully acknowledged the goodness of God towards him.

Times of sickness, if not abused, are commonly, and they are always intended of God to be, times of much blessing. We want often what sickness, among other things, implies, that is, the necessary retirement of such seasons; which gives us opportunity of calling to remembrance, and, as it were, recapitulating, our whole life. In the midst of the world's glare, and the hurry of company and employments, it is an easy matter, and very common, to mistake even slavery for freedom, to overlook our follies, and miscall our vices: but,

"The fruits are few we flatter when alone.
A sick bed is a doctor of the heart."

Then, if ever, persons are obliged to attend to that; deliberate reflection, that self-conversation, the want of which is, without doubt, one great cause of the folly and extravagance of mankind in general. We "know not," because we "do not consider." And how dreadful must the state of that person be, who, being deprived of the life of God, still suffers the crowd of affairs, the noise of his passions, and the delusions of the world, to hinder him from thinking of his present real condition and latter end Alas!

How must a spirit, late escaped from earth,
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
Look back, astonish'd, on the ways of men,
Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves!"

Nothing can be more proper for a person who walks upon the borders of eternity, and is hastening continually to his final audit, than daily to slip away from the circle of amusements, and frequently

to relinquish the hurry of business, in order deeply to consider and adjust the things that belong to his peace. And, in order to this, how true is it, that to a mind intent upon its own improvement, solitude, whether of sickness, or voluntarily chosen, has charms incomparably more engaging than the entertainments presented in the theatre, or the honor conferred in the drawing-room!

Indeed, it may justly seem strange, that man who loves nothing like his own person, nevertheless hates nothing so much as being confined to his own conversation. Solitude, with multitudes, is but another name for misery. And the supreme pitch of worldly greatness is too nice and weak to bear the examination of a thought. Most people dread the knowledge of; and love to be entire strangers to, the secrets of their soul.

"Vain man has measured land and sea,
Fathom'd the depths of states and kings,
O'er earth and heaven explored his way;
Yet there are two vast spacious things,
To measure which doth most behove,
Yet few that find them, -- sin and love."

In reality, whatsoever is without us, is foreign to our true happiness, and therefore deserves our esteem only in proportion as it tends to the regulation of our inward man. Our real goods and evils are altogether of an internal nature: and, in the account of God, our greatest blessings are, what a mistaken world often call the greatest misfortunes; such as poverty, sickness, contempt, and the like. To be conversant at home, to take account of the state of our soul, and pursue our measures universally in reference thereto, is, in truth, the prime wisdom of man. But self-love always blinds us in something or other which regards our own persons, and continually opens to us some secret door, to give us means and opportunity to steal away from our own sight, and to make our escape from ourselves.

"O what a riddle of absurdity!
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
We censure Nature for a span too short; --
That span too short we tax as tedious too;
Torture invention, all expedients tire,
To lash the lingering moments into speed,
And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.
Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot-wheels.
Blest leisure is our curse; like that of Cain,
It makes us wander, wander earth around,
To fly that tyrant Thought. Yet
A moment we may wish,
When worlds want wealth to buy.
O then, for yesterdays to come!"

Alas! to what purpose is it to flee from ourselves, since we cannot possibly avoid either the sight or the justice of God?

Times of sickness are, likewise, often times of trial and sore temptation. The enemy, taking advantage of the weakened powers of the mind, and other painful circumstances, endeavors to serve himself in our low estate; at least to embarrass and perplex, if he can do nothing worse. Then, if ever, does he cast in his fiery darts, and often ask, "Where is now thy God?" And so this servant of God found it, in a measure, with respect to both the one and the other; the blessings and the trials of sickness. What follows may be considered as an instance: --

"Limerick, October 28th, 1755. -- I was seized with a fever, which confined me to my room till Friday, November 7th, and shall remark the following particulars: --

"1. I examined myself what might be the cause of this illness, but could not discern anything in particular. I saw, indeed, that many of my tempers, words, and actions were not truly holy. I was ashamed of my best performances. I saw my best living as a mere blot; yet the guilt of no particular sin lay upon my conscience.

"2. I was more subject to temptation in this sickness than usual: not indeed to think hard of God, or repine at my illness; but I had spiritual conflicts, wrestlings against 'principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places.' The third day, which was Thursday, October 30th, I had the sorest conflict that ever I felt. I was suddenly seized in body, and amazed in mind. I thought every moment would have been my last. I had a vehement thirst. My tongue was dry and turgid, and my soul was in agony. I was overwhelmed with fear, sorrow, and sore afflictions.

"All the sins of my life passed before me, but especially those which were since I had been enlightened, and since I preached the Gospel. I saw and felt myself hell-deserving; that I was nothing, and could do no good work before God. I was really poor, in such a manner and degree as I never felt before. I was stripped, humbled, emptied, laid open, confounded, and afraid of God's judgments; though not afraid of the devil, or hell. Nay, I all the while knew I had redemption in the blood of Jesus, and that all my sins were forgiven. Who can understand? Only such as have felt the same."

How suitable, on this occasion, is that prayer, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord!" Who can stand the test of omniscient purity? of Him who foibles in archangels sees! The life of this servant of God was, from the time of his conversion, remarkably fair, without blemish, and one series of endeavor to please his God alone. Yet now, when God, for wise ends, had let him see what he had been in himself, "laying judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet," how insupportable was the sight!

O Thou Heeding Love! Who can pay Thee raises due? What hast Thou done to become "the Lord our righteousness;" to redeem us from ourselves, and wrath eternal?

"No; our best actions cannot save,
But Thou must purge e'en them;
Yet, since in Thee I now believe,
My worst shall not condemn.

"Whate'er in me seems wise, or good,
Or strong, I here disclaim;
I wash my garments in the blood
Of the atoning Lamb."

"3. In the midst of my troubles, I had liberty in prayer. My understanding and memory remained with me, and abundance of spiritual matter was suggested to my mind. Even passages of Scripture, that I never used before, were brought to me in prayer. I was alarmed in every part, and cried mightily to God. I cried to all about me to pray for me. Surely they saw the bitterness of my soul. God remember them for good who then sympathized with me in my trouble!

"4. It left me gradually, and without any sensible joy. Peace and confidence arose by degrees in my spirit. The very extremity of the combat lasted about a quarter of an hour. It just then occurred to me, that some days before, I heard Jesus, as it were, speak, and say to me, 'Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail.' And now I fully understood it. In so many instances are those words of our Lord true, 'What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.'

"5. I felt (and might it not be the design of God in the whole?) that the name of Jesus alone could avail to bring me to God. ^[26]I had such a deep sense of this, as I never had before. I had, besides, extraordinary evidence of the eternal power and Godhead of Christ Jesus. In all my illnesses this truth has been wonderfully revealed to me, both by the external evidence of holy writ, and the internal evidence of the Holy Spirit. one of the prayers which I made use of, so foiled and drove away Satan, as, 'Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy upon, and save, me from this hour.' Likewise the fifty-third of Isaiah, the twenty-third of Jeremiah, and the sixteenth of St. Matthew, with much of the Revelation, came into my mind: and my prayers ere made up chiefly of passages from these places. I cried out, when I thought I should speak no more, and said, 'Lord, I have trusted in Thee, and I believe Thou wilt raise me up at the last day.'

"I had, at the same time, most earnest desires to be made holy. I saw more clearly than ever the nature and necessity of perfect love; and was fully persuade" of the necessity of preaching Christian perfection, and of declaring that all is of grace.

"6. For four or five days after it was over, I had much of the presence of God and of Christ; many. Scripture truths revealed to me, and strong assurances that God would spare me a little longer, to preach His Gospel to the ignorant and them that are out of the way, and to help forward the faith of His children.

"I write this account November 8th, 1755, being pretty free from bodily pain; at peace with God and all mankind; desirous, and determined, to live wholly to the glory of God; to be a servant of all, giving my life, time, and strength, with every other talent entrusted to me, to God, and the church, which my dear Jesus purchased with His blood, To Him, with the almighty Father, and eternal Spirit, was ascribed the kingdom, power, and glory, [Hebrew] for ever, and to eternity."

The very day on which he wrote these reflections, and the first of his going out after this illness, it; being a day appointed for fasting and prayer, to avert the judgment of God, which seemed impending over these nations; he was taken in a chair to the Preaching-house, and preached for a full hour, having (as he expresses it) "a deep sense of the majesty of God, and joyful confidence that He would defend the real Israelites from the impending evil."

The frequent experience which he had of remarkable escapes from confinement, by disorders which threatened him with a sudden removal hence, and these in times of preaching especially, made it a frequent and felt expression with him, "When I am weak, then I am strong."

"When one knows," says he, on another of these occasions, "that God is for him, that he has redemption in the blood of Christ, then, whether he be rich or poor, in sickness or in health, he is happy, and can rejoice. Have I recovered my strength? and am I freely forgiven my former trespasses? Does the Spirit of God dwell in my heart? and can I, by faith, behold a reconciled God, and an interceding Savior at His right hand? Well, then, welcome sickness, contempt, poverty, and death. If I meet with worldly troubles, it is to make my crown the brighter. If I bear the cross, I shall wear the crown. Is my body cold? I am warmed with the flames of sacred love. Naked? I have a covering of wrought gold, the righteousness of my Savior. Hungry? I have meat to eat the world knoweth not of; 'the hidden manna, and the bread of life.' Let me suffer then with Christ. Men may kill my body; but it would only send me the sooner to heaven."

The following instance, and which is the last I shall mention on this head, is the rather inserted because in it may be seen a true picture of the man, from the feeling, free pourings out of his own heart. It was at Bristol, after recovering from a dangerous fever.

"For three days last past I had much converse with God, and vehement desires to live wholly to His glory. I have inquired into the reason of my affliction; and think, God did it to humble me, that I should not be puffed up with the praises of the people. They cannot indeed too much admire the truths of God, nor be too thankful to Him for them. But the danger was, lest I should think myself somebody. Yet I cannot lay to my own charge the desire of applause, neither did I find it lift me up: on the contrary, it often made me ashamed, knowing my own vileness, and how little I either suffered or did for God.

"And truly I was never more sensible of my unprofitableness than I am at this hour. I blush to see and hear how others live, and have lived, and at how low a rate I yet live. But above all, when I consider the life of the holy Jesus, O, how far short; do I come! I am not entirely dead to myself. I am not altogether free from affection to creatures. I cannot rejoice equally to suffer, as to be comforted. I speak words I ought not. I spend some minutes unprofitably. In short, I do not love God, or my neighbor, as I ought.

"O, was it not for free grace, and the blood of sprinkling, where should I appear? But Thou knowest my desire, or rather the desire of Thy Spirit; within me. Thou knowest that there has never been a saint upon earth whom I do not desire to resemble, in doing and suffering Thy whole will. I would walk with Thee, my God, as Enoch did I would follow Thee to a land unknown, as Abraham

did. I would renounce all for Thee, as did Moses and Paul. I would, as did Stephen, seal Thy truth with my blood.

"Is not this the desire of my soul, O my Savior? O, give me power; give grace and constancy. For unless Thou helpst, all my longings and praying will prove fruitless. But if Thou waterest these plants of Thine own right hand's planting, this grain shall become a great tree, and my soul shall be swallowed up in Thee, my Lord God!

"Jesus was my comfort, and my joy, my life, and my strength. O, if I had not Jesus for my help, I should be miserable. But since I have Thee, my Lord, I am therefore happy in these my afflictions. The lovely smiles of Thy countenance, which shine with glory, revive and raise me. O Divine love! What hast Thou done for me, a poor sinner? 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits!'

"O that my soul was loosened from this body, that I might ascend the holy hill of the Lord! My Jesus, when shall I behold Thee face to face? O that this separate wall was broken down, this partition was but taken away, and that I could even now enter into the celestial courts, there to sing everlasting Hallelujahs to my Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 22
Of his Temptations, Conflicts,
and various Exercises of his Soul.

The proneness which we find in ourselves to extremes, discovers itself perhaps in nothing more than in things pertaining to the kingdom of God. We are apt to allow too much or too little; are for wholly receiving, or wholly rejecting, almost everything; and find that it is one of the hardest matter in the world to keep a proper medium between extremes, indeed of every kind: but we find it peculiarly so, with respect to things that concern the invisible world; the agency of invisible spirits whether good or bad. What is more common, ca the one hand, than to hear people say, of well nigh every occurrence and alteration in their spirit, "The devil has done this;" "The enemy has brought it upon me;" and the like? Whereas, in reality, the difference which we sometimes feel in ourselves, with regard to the sensations of cheerfulness and depression, alertness and languor, arises from the very contexture of our animal frame, in which the body is more immediately concerned than the soul. And very often it is the Spirit of truth and of purity that reproves us, for something blamable in our spirit; or conduct; some instance of omission, unfaithfulness, or actual sin. Cases of Divine visitation are easy enough to be distinguished by such as are truly spiritual.

There are those, on the other hand, who, prone to philosophize almost everything, ascribe most of the occurrences in the world, the difference we find in ourselves, phenomena in nature, to mere natural causes; and so, well nigh exclude invisible beings from having anything to do with the ways of men; living, in this respect, "without God in the world."

It is indeed a point of wisdom, well worthy our pursuit, in order to the true peace of our lives, to know what, in the course of our experience, we ought to ascribe to God, to angels, whether good or evil, and to ourselves. How greatly would it contribute to prevent many evil reasonings and self tormenting consternations! And it is a point of knowledge to which "the children of the kingdom" are entitled, and do actually attain from God, through the aids of faith and prayer. For so hath the Holy Ghost said, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things:" all things that are needful to be known, in order to our walking acceptably, and pleasing God in all things.

The following few particulars, in the course of the experience of this man of God, which are ascribed to the agency of the powers of darkness, are (among an infinity of other instances in the

world) sufficient proofs of the attempts of those malicious spirits to "steal and to destroy," as saith our Lord; to rob us of the grace of God, and to destroy our souls. Yes,

From thrones of glory driven,
By flaming vengeance hurl'd,
They throng the air, and darken heaven,
And rule the lower world:
With rage that never ends,
Their hellish arts they try,
Legions of dire malicious fiends,
And spirits enthroned on high."

The following only are here related, to assist, in some measure, our knowledge of Satan's devices; through ignorance of which many souls are often sadly perplexed and hindered in their heavenly journey.

True it is, that temptations and trials of various kinds are a part of the portion of real Christians in this world. And unless we first be cut and hewn in the mountains, we shall not be fixed in the temple of God; but by breaking and polishing, our roughness may become plain, or our sparks kindled, and we may be either for the temple, or the altar, -- spiritual building, or holy fire; something that God shall delight in, and then the temptations and the severest trials were not amiss. And therefore we must not wonder, that oftentimes it so happens, that nothing will remove a temptation; no diligence, no advices, no labor, no prayers; not because these are ineffectual, but because it is most fit the temptation should abide, for ends of God's designing: in every such case the word of promise being, as to St. Paul, (while he was still continued in the war,) " My grace is sufficient for thee."

"It is a great thing" (as he once observed) "to be acquainted with the invisible world. God is always present; but our eyes are closed, and our hearts hardened, till Christ, the true light and life of men, is revealed within us: then, and not before, we have access to the Father; and the Holy Ghost leads us into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."

Concerning the variety of inward exercises and conflicts which he went through, from first to last, he often took notice, that they were greatest on the Lord's day; and says on the occasion, "Lord, I am more afflicted on Thy day than on any other: Thou knowest the cause. If it be the enemy that afflicts me, do Thou rebuke him: let him have no power over my body or soul. And, O, give me Thy meek and long-suffering mind, to bear whatsoever burden Thou permittest to come upon me.

He observes likewise, "When I have most life and power in preaching, then the devil and sin muster all their force, and thrust sore at me. But hitherto God has preserved me, both from the great offence, and from misery and dejection."

The instances of the resistance he found in the time of preaching, from invisible powers, permitted of God to exercise him then, were highly remarkable; and are, perhaps, best accounted for in 2 Cor. xii. 7. He has sometimes started in amaze at horrible injections, concerning God or Christ, or some

fundamental article of the Christian religion; even then, while he has been powerfully asserting, proving, and enforcing it. I have often heard him say, in effect, that there was not a single Divine truth, in the which he was then established, for which he had not fought, resisting as it were unto blood. For he would take nothing upon trust; nor see with the eyes of others. He derived his sentiments from the fountain-head. His best things came from God, in the way of labor and striving.

He has been sometimes deprived of the use of some of his senses during the very time of preaching. Once in particular, May, 1751, in the midst of his discourse, he, in an instant, lost his eye-sight, and fell back in the pulpit, yet retaining, during the whole time, the perfect use of his understanding: he, however, soon recovered, and finished his sermon. He believed, and was not confounded.

"I know the devil hates me," was a frequent saying with him on these occasions: and often, when he has been disturbed in the silence of the night, in ways more than natural, and well knowing the cause, he has, with much confidence, in the name of Jesus, commanded the adversary to be gone, and found it always according to his faith.

Riding one day with a friend, and talking, as he was wont, of the goodness of God, and of the confidence which he found in Him, that He would preserve him unto everlasting life, -- "Just then," says he, "my horse, on a plain place, threw me over his head. As I came to the ground, it was, as it were, sounded in my ears, 'Will you trust God now?' 'Yes,' I said, 'for ever!' Through the mercy of the Lord, I was not hurt. I saw an enemy had done it. I was thankful, and felt no contrary emotion in my heart!

'With holy indignation fill'd,
When by the princes of hell withstood,
Firm I resist, I grasp my shield,
And quench his fiery darts in blood!
Having done all, by faith I stand,
And give the praise, O Lord, to Thee!
Thy holy arm, Thine own right hand,
Hath got Thyself the victory!'"

One particular, which ought perhaps to be reduced to this head, and which to some, no doubt, will appear singular, was a frequent, painful, and well-nigh distressing apprehension which he sometimes had of dying. The thought of dissolution had always in it something terrible to his nature. And what renders it the more observable is, that it was so even at those times when he could truly triumph in Christ, knowing in whom he had believed, and that he should be with Him for ever. Of this we have the following account from himself: --

"Saturday, December 1st, 1753. -- After preaching, I studied closely till ten. I found infinite sweetness in God; and much power breathed into my soul after all 'the mind of Christ.' At present I am tempted chiefly with the fear of death. I believe my pardon is sealed by the blood of the covenant. I have no fear of hell; and yet I am sorely apprehensive of death." Again: --

"Monday, 22d. -- I was this day, as I have been frequently of late, much perplexed at the thought of dying. I believe my Redeemer liveth, and that I have an interest in His blood; and yet, notwithstanding, I am sore amazed at the thought of dissolution."

To a person, indeed, "at rest in his possessions," (Eccles. xli. 1,) one to whom this world is all, and in whom gaiety well nigh forgets it is to die, -- it is not to be wondered at, that death should be the terrible aversion of such. ^[27] For, O eternity! thou pleasing dreadful thing,

"At thought of thee, each sublunary wish
Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world"

And in the just approaching prospect of this, to know not whither one is going; to take a leap in the dark; to be unacquainted with Him, the knowledge of whom alone disarms Death of his sting, and so smooths our passage to the grave; and this too, perhaps, after the known neglect of blessed opportunities of salvation, resistance of conviction, and, it may be, a violent smothering the light of God within us, intended to lead from the darkness and death of nature to the life and liberty of love: in such a case, how terrible to die! For, alas!

"What is hell?
'Tis nothing, but full knowledge of the truth,
When truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,
And calls eternity to do her right."

That such a even fear God, and, though earnestly seeking Him, yet not having the faith which is the victory; (although, continuing to seek Him aright, they cannot miscarry;) that even these should shudder at the thought of death, is not so much to be wondered at. But that true believers, in whom are found both the witness and the fruit of the Spirit, as in the case of him before us, should have any uneasy apprehensions at thoughts of putting off this tabernacle, is not a thing so easily accounted for on the maxims of the Gospel. A philosopher, indeed, would say, that "nature is, of necessity, averse to dissolution." But it is the prerogative and glory of faith to triumph over the fears and follies of nature; and, in short, over everything that can happen; to be more than conqueror "through Him that hath loved us." So that, on the whole, although true believers may, through diversity of causes, receive the message of departure with different emotions in the degree of joy, or peace, or resignation; yet, in a ll of them, it is deeply rooted, that "to die is gain;" that to depart, and to be with Christ, is best of all.

And thus, in reality, it was with this servant of God; so that the uncomfortable apprehensions which he sometimes felt, even till near his end, in regard of dying, must needs be ascribed, chiefly, to the permission of God to Satan to exercise him in this manner; and may be considered as a "thorn

in his flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him;" perhaps partly for the easement of other tempted souls; and, with regard to himself, thereby more fully"

To prove him, and illustrate his high worth,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whatever Satan's malice could invent."

-- Milton --

He studied deeply the nature of the Christian warfare, and was well practiced in the use of its weapons. His thoughts on "the whole armour of God" ^[28] were the genuine result of his own experience. The combats which he met with, needed not less than the whole; and he both tried, and proved, that every part thereof is indeed effectual. Something very different from the preceding particulars he relates as follows:--

"Friday, August 2d, 1750. -- I talked with one today who was sorely tempted (how mysterious!) to kill me; and for no other reason, than because she was awakened under my preaching, to feel herself a poor lost sinner." Again:--

"September 16th. -- After preaching, a young woman came to me, and said, that some time before, she had brought a knife with her to preaching, intending to kill me; but was so terrified under the last prayer, that she durst not attempt it. The devil suggested, that if she did but take away my life, the burden which she felt through my preaching would immediately depart. And now, Satan," adds he, "if thou art not a liar and a murderer, let Christians, yea, heathens, and even thy companions in hell, judge. But, thou old serpent, dost thou not; know that; the God whom I serve is able to deliver me? A hair of my head cannot perish without His knowledge and permission. Ah, Satan, the Lord rebuke thee!"

I shall conclude this chapter with a few other particulars relating to this bead of trials, taken from his own words.

"This day I was sorely tempted. Satan threw many of his fiery darts at me. I never before felt such agony in resisting what are commonly called blasphemous thoughts. I cried unto the Lord, and He delivered me."

In the evening," (not of the same day,) "I was in great distress. My soul was much weighed down. I felt grievous horror in my spirit; and yet I was resolved, although the Lord should slay me, to trust in Him. In the very hour that I came to this resolution, my burden was removed, and the Lord gave me to rejoice in spirit."

"This day (April, 1754) I had conversation with some Christian friends concerning temptations, and the general experience of the saints. And however Satan may be permitted to trouble their body or soul, I always believed, that God doth not hide His face, unless to punish us for commission of sin or omission of duty. And the more I meditate upon this subject, the more abundantly I am confirmed in my judgment."

"I had most severe temptations this day. Sore conflicts with the devil." Again:--

"Thursday, 21st. -- I had a most miserable night. Some time after I went to bed, I was sorely assaulted of the devil. I attempted to compose myself, but, alas! could not. I was suddenly seized with a weakness and cold sweat. My heart failed me. My soul was afflicted; my spirit was grieved, and sore vexed. The eye of my faith was darkened; the sense of God's love departed; and the anger of the Lord seemed revealed towards me. I could see nothing but thick darkness, and hear nothing but thunderings from Sinai! It seemed to me as though there was a struggle between justice and mercy concerning me. But, although I was in such confusion and perplexity, I saw that mercy got the victory, and triumphed over judgment.

"My strength so failed me, that it seemed as though I had not an hour to live. I rose, however, and dressed myself; but could scarcely pray one word. I cried, 'Mercy, mercy, mercy!' I stretched myself upon the floor, and could weep only a few tears. I had gone through sore trouble and darkness before this time; but such a night as this I never had before. (And, O my God, may I never see such another!) After being for some time on the floor, I got up, and walked a little about the room; and then threw myself upon my knees. Being a little revived, I went to bed again. During the little while I slept, I had before me the cause of my trouble. I soon got up; and my head was now as water, and my eyes a fountain of tears.

"My confidence returned, so that I could look up, and believe the Lord was mine. I went and preached on Zech. iv. 7: 'Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.' And my soul was humbled unto the dust. My praying and preaching was from my very heart and soul. Let it be for ever remembered, to the honor and glory of the great God, and my Savior Christ, that I was not suffered to be long in this condition. In about half an hour I received some confidence, and in the morning my faith was increased.

"Let it be also remarked, that the Scripture promises were of great comfort to me, particularly Hosea xiv.; 1 John ii. 2, 3. And likewise the words of our Lord to Peter, Luke xvii. 3, 4; for I was sure He would be a great deal more merciful than what He even required of Peter. Moreover, I opened my Bible on these words, Isaiah lx. 19, 20, which were applied with power to my soul; as was also Job xi. 13-19. Glory, honor, praise, worship, and dominion be ascribed unto Thee, O Lord! Ye angels of God, bless Him on my behalf! Let all in heaven, and all in earth, join to worship the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!"

The following was some time after

"Tuesday, 21st. -- I had a sorrowful morning. My soul was in heaviness through manifold temptations. The enemy came upon me in my sleep, and grieved my soul. Although I had joy at night, yet sorrow attended me in the morning. I had intended to have preached on the beatitudes; but, finding myself full of troubles and temptations, I changed my purpose, and preached from Hebrews iv. 14-16. O my God, must I perish? Hast Thou brought me thus far, and shall I be cast off? O, forbid it, Savior! Forsake not the work of Thine own hands. Come, and destroy the works of the devil! My God, my God, do not forsake me! Thou knowest that sin is hateful to me. Have I not a love to

righteousness? Do not my soul and flesh cry out for the living God? Am I not willing to go even through the fire, rather than offend Thee? Why, then, should the enemy prevail against me?

"Jesus, hast Thou not bought my soul? Am not I Thine? O that my head were waters! O that I could even weep tears of blood! Lord God, let not Thy loving-kindness depart from me. Where art Thou, Jesus, Thou Son of God? My great High Priest, where is Thy atoning blood? Where is He that was tempted in all points like unto me? Is there no help for me in my God? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? O that I could yield my last; breath, if nothing else will end the strife! O, the languishments of my soul for an absent God! How does my spirit faint within me! How do I pine! O Sun of righteousness, arise upon me with healing in Thy wings! Come, Lord Jesus, O come, and save me for Thy mercy's sake! Where are the soundings of thy bowels? Dost Thou not see my laboring breast? Is not my pain worse than even strangling? Return, O Lord; see my gasping, longing, aching heart. Am I not an object of pity? Have I not need of Thee? Now answer me by fire! Get Thyself the victory! I want the seal of Thy Spirit, the earnest of my heaven."

The Lord did hear his prayer. I find it therefore added soon after: "O, how plentifully did the Lord pour His love and consolation into my soul! I am amazed at the goodness and long-suffering of God towards me. And I observe, in general, that after great heaviness and conflicts, come extraordinary joy and consolation. O, may I husband this precious gift of God!"

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 23
His communion with God

Under, this head is comprehended the whole of his conduct and experience, as a Christian, considered in his private capacity. And for this especially we are furnished with the most ample materials, both from the general tenor of his conversation, and from the memorials of himself, contained in his diary

He truly lived for this one thing. All his actions and employments had this single tendency and he considered everything else with reference thereto; making his estimate; of the good or evil of every intention, action, exercise, and undertaking, according as it tended to promote or hinder this best of pursuits, and noblest enjoyment of the human soul.

"Heaven bade the soul this mortal frame inspire;
Bade Virtue's ray divine inspire the soul
With unprecarious flows of vital joy;
And, without breathing, man as well might hope
For life, as without piety for peace."

Without regarding the fondnesses and inclinations of nature, he embraced, or rejected, every occurrence and thing, with a view altogether to the promotion of the holy and happy fellowship of his soul with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

I am aware how much more easy it is to say great things on this head, concerning one's self, or others, than, in so doing, to say nothing but the truth. And it may be questioned, whether the greater part of the shining accounts which some past ages have produced of persons, in reference thereto, are founded in simple truth; the writers, by their eulogiums, often showing rather what they could say, than discovering what the persons whom they describe really were. It is a fruitless expectation to look for more in men than the state of humanity really admits. Things in practice rarely rise as

high as men's speculations upon them. And not knowing, or attending to, "what our mortal state admits," we are too apt; to forget, that

"God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets it proper bounds
The bliss of man, could pride that blessing find,
Is not to think or act beyond mankind;
No powers of body or of mind to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear."

-- Pope --

Everything that exists, whether rational or irrational, animate or inanimate, has a perfection proper to itself: a lily, a sparrow, a blade of grass, an elephant, a worm, a man, an angel, have all a completeness or perfection suited to their different natures, capacities, and uses; and are then perfect, when they arrive to that state which God has provided for each. God alone is absolutely and independently perfect. The perfection of human kind is therefor such a state of mind and body as their nature admits of, and as God has provided for them, in the ocean of His love, and treasures of His grace. And even this has its degrees: there are less, and there are more, perfect Christians. The sum of Christian, scriptural perfection is, that, being saved from all our enemies, (that is, sins, including all wrong tempers, as well as words and actions,) we love God with all the powers of the soul, and serve Him with the whole capacity of both our soul and body. And whoever has attained to this (which whoso denies the possibility of, rejects the counsel and word of God) is a perfect man, according to the Scripture manifold infirmities, necessarily connected with a dying body, notwithstanding.

This servant of God had his infirmities, properly so called, which often made him weep in secret places. And yet so powerfully did the grace of our Lord work in him, to the destruction of sin; and to such a degree of victory did he attain over himself, the world, and Satan, that to many he seemed more than human; being, in truth, a man of another world, in whom dwelt richly the Spirit of the living God.

To such as were witnesses of his fervent zeal, mighty prayer, steady seriousness, and habitual heavenly-mindedness, I shall not wonder if all that follows seems far short of a full description of him. And yet I am aware, on the other hand, that to many others it may all have the stir of mere ideal flight, or enthusiastic folly, -- to persons who, cold themselves, think ardour comes from hell.

"Themselves men make their comment on mankind,
And think nought is, but what they find at home."

The deep and genuine acquaintance with God to which he attained was, in truth, beyond that which the generality of Christians arrive at; although all are, without doubt, equally entitled thereto. He truly "put off the old man with his deeds," and became "renewed in the spirit of his mind." He fully experienced the significancy of those words, "Sin shall not have dominion over you;" and, "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin" as also, "Ye are dead; and he that is dead is freed

from sin." And from hence it was that there appeared throughout his whole carriage such fruit unto holiness, -- acceptable fruits of righteousness, to the glory of God. In him might be seen how great things; God doeth for His children who simply follow Him, even in this world; not less than making them complete before Him in love: that, being perfect and entire, lacking nothing, they might anticipate "that eternal life which is with the Father and the Son;" while

"Meridian evidence puts doubts to flight,
And conqu'ring faith anticipates the skies.
O, wherefore is the Deity so kind?
Astonishing beyond astonishment!
Heaven our reward -- for heaven enjoy'd below!"

My first acquaintance with him began soon after the mercy of God had stirred me up to seek His face. From a studious regard to the holy Scriptures, it was soon given me to understand what manner of person a Christian approved of God must be; and thenceforward, I both read, conversed, and thought of little else. And in him I saw clearly, what till then I had only conceived; in him my conceptions were truly exemplified. Much had been reported, both of the gifts and graces with which our Lord had enriched Mr. Walsh; yet, with the utmost truth and soberness it is spoken, I found in him much more than I had either conceived or heard or did the long intimacy with him, with which I was afterwards privileged, alter in the least my sentiments. There is much truth in the observation, that it is dangerous to dip, in most men, below the surface, lest our curiosity should rob us of an good opinion of them. But it was not so with him: rather, the more thoroughly he was known, the more one could not but admire him; so powerfully did the grace of God work in his soul.

It might perhaps be thought tedious minutely to describe all the particular graces and special exercises which adorned his life. And, indeed, to conceive of the excellencies which appeared in him, they need not be attended to one by one; for neither so could they be fully comprehended. But he "walked before God" in such a manner as abundantly included them all. He was a person of a surprising greatness of soul, for which the whole circumference of created good was far, far too little. He found in God

"That something still, which prompts the eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, nor fear to die."

The love of Jesus filled up in his soul that mighty void this whole creation leaves in human hearts.

His exactness in all those particulars which comprise men's duty to God, their neighbor, and themselves, was such, and so well known, that it would be easy to swell this chapter, by enlarging on each of them, to an enormous size. But, passing over the greater part of them, I shall only point out a few particulars, relating chiefly to his internal state, and more secret carriage towards God, which were within my own certain notice; referring the reader for a larger and more satisfactory picture of him to the following collection from his diary in which are represented those secret transactions of God upon his soul, to which himself alone could, be privy and in which, I judge, the life of this kind of history consists.

"The private pith, the secret acts of men,
If noble, form the noblest of their lives."

The particulars I premise are,

I. HIS PRAYER

From the earliest dawn of the grace of God in his soul, to which he attended, he was remarkable for constancy and importunity in prayer. He was early a wrestler with God, and prevailed, to the obtaining that eminency in the knowledge of God, for which he was apprehended in Christ, and which is here related in part. The more he got acquainted with Divine things, so much the more did he increase in this soul-enriching exercise. "He that has never prayed can never conceive, and he that has prayed as he ought can never forget, how much is to be gained by prayer."

Beside the daily, and often public, pouring out of his soul in general intercession, and occasional addresses to God in behalf of needy souls, (groaning under the guilt of sin or body of corruption, or whatever was the cause,) who often came to him for that purpose, he had his own stated times for approaching God in secret; in which it was far from sufficing, barely to present himself, and wait, whether in silence or in discourse, before the Lord. He accounted the work still to do, unless he felt his spirit affected with sentiments suitable to his condition; whether of holy mourning, self-reprehension, recovery, or increase of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, or some establishment in faith, meekness, patience, hope, and love.

"Praying with all prayer" seemed the business of his life; for the doing of which, he waited neither for postures, times, nor places. A heart so disposed rendered holy to him everything of this kind, of which may be said, as of places,

"God attributes to place no sanctity,
If none be thither brought by men who there
Frequent, or therein dwell.
Doubt not but in valley, and in plain,
God is as here, and will be found alike
Present,
Still following, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, His face
Express, and of His steps the track divine."

-- Paradise Lost --

Prostrate upon his face, kneeling, standing, walking, eating, in every posture, and in every place and condition, he was a man mighty in prayer. In sleep itself, to my certain knowledge, his soul went on

(Cant. v.2) in groans, and sighs, and tears to God. His heart, having attained such a habit of tendency to its Lord, could then only give over when it ceased to beat; expressing, by its every motion,

"O may I breathe no longer, than I breathe
My soul in prayer to Him who gave my soul,
And all her infinite of prospect fair,
Cut through the shades of hell, great Love! by Thee."

The enjoyment of the Divine sweetness which God imparted to him in secret, and the nearness of access to the Divine Majesty with which he was favored, were indeed amazing, and much better felt than can be expressed. He has been sometimes, as it were, lost in glorious absence, on his knees, with his face heavenward, and arms clasped round his breast, in such composure that scarcely could one hear him so much as breathe:

"Calm and unruffled as the summer sea,
When not a breath of wind flies o'er its surface."

His soul seemed absorbed in God, and enjoyed a calmness and transport, which can here be well enough reconciled. From the serenity, and something resembling splendor, which appeared on his countenance, and in all his gestures afterwards, one might easily discover what he had been about. Yes,

"A soul in commerce with her God, is heaven;
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,
The whirl of passions, and the strokes of heart.
Prayer ardent opens heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity."

It was especially towards the conclusion of his Lord's work that he was favored with such near fellowship with Him. He approached the throne of grace with much of the reverential boldness of faith, believing that whatever he asked, he should have the petitions he asked for; the Holy Spirit making intercession in his heart according to the will of God. And to such a degree of confidence in Him did he arrive by this means, that in the greatest straits of his life (and he met with some things which came home to him with the deepest sensibility) he was more than kept up, so that he seemed to fear nothing, even where, to all human apprehension, everything was to be feared. He so abandoned himself to God, in the discharge of his duty, that his very friends were sometimes ready to charge him with being a little rash or imprudent. Although he endeavored to use his understanding, as far as ever it would go, yet, acting in view of "those things which are not seen," and from motives referring to eternity, he was not, it is true, so attentive to the decorums among men, as mere human prudence would have dictated. And, in reality, it is a truth, which is learned from a series of experience, and confirmed by numberless examples, that whoever would do much for God should take care of being (in a right sense) too wise. There is reason to think, that if the apostles themselves had consulted the directions of bare human reason, they never had undertaken the conversion of the world.

An habitual spirit of mortification served as wings to his prayer. And, perhaps, the want of this is, much more than is commonly thought, a grand cause of that indisposedness to, and weariness in, prayer, which is so generally complained of among Christians; many of whom are, often, even glad of a pretended occasion to avoid the duty. "Something is amiss in us, and it wanted a name, till the Spirit of God, by enjoining us the duty of mortification, hath taught us to know that want of mortification of spirit is the cause of all, at least of many, of our secret and spiritual indispositions. The excellencies of heaven cannot be discerned, but by a spirit disrelishing the low appetites of the world, and of flesh and blood. Unless our spirit be mortified, we neither love to pray, nor does God love to hear us." We find, all the way through our heavenly journey, that to be "carnally minded," in the least degree, is a proportionable degree of death; and that a mind truly spiritual alone has true life and peace.

"Minds elevate and panting for unseen,
And defecate from sense, alone obtain
Full relish of existence undeflower'd."

It is hard to say, positively, which he was most remarkable for, the spirit or the gift of prayer, though it need not be told which he most esteemed His public character made it right and necessary for him to desire and endeavor after "spiritual gifts." And the eminence to which he arrived therein, in general, is too well known to need a particular relation. To hear him, on some occasions, pour out his soul to God, made one often think, Whence hath a man these things? Such a sluice of Divine oratory ran through the whole of his language, on religious subjects, as is rarely to be met with. His public addresses to God were, commonly, well nigh altogether in the words of the Holy Ghost. It seemed as though he turned the whole Bible into words of adoration, confession, petition, supplication, thanksgiving, and glory; while, at the same time, his expressions glowed with the love of God; and all this, with such ardour, intention, pertinency, and faith, that it has seemed sometimes (one time in particular was peculiarly noticed) as though the heavens were burst open, and God Himself appeared in the congregation. Something of that, Acts iv. 31, was often conceived while he prayed. But he made no account of this, with regard to the perfection of his own soul. He made it his chief aim to follow after love, and to live in a momentary spirit of watchful prayer.

He has sometimes had very remarkable answers to prayer. One only I shall mention. A number of religious societies, both in England and Ireland, appointed a public fast, for the imploring God to restore to health an eminent servant of the church, who had been some time under languishments of body. Mr. Walsh was then in Dublin, and, pouring out his soul about noon, he spoke aloud, in a manner which showed it not to be of himself, and said, "He shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." And, blessed be God, the event showed the prediction to be of God.

Towards the latter end of his progress, and before his last sickness in particular, his prayer had less of labor in it than formerly; and consisted, for the most part, of a passive receiving the impressions of the Divine Spirit; God acting rather in him, than enacted himself. And so still and recollected did he frequently appear herein, that it was as if God was visible before him, and that he spoke to the Divine Majesty with such nearness of access, and child-like familiarity, as the Scripture expresses by speaking with God "face to face." Indeed, every object and occurrence spoke to him of

God: nor could there be wanting to him, at any time or place, incentives to raise his heart in prayer or praise to Him whom his soul loved.

One particular which he learned in the course of his experience was, that although the lights which are received from God in the way of prayer are, of all others, to be most faithfully attended to, yet nevertheless, that one ought not to act upon every appearance of this kind; that the enemy of men's salvation can, and often does, mimic the Spirit of God; and, as an "angel of light," imposes upon the servants of God, by representing as from Him that which is often no other than Satan's illusions or our own imagination: on account of which some persons have, in most ages, been led into grievous mistakes, and improprieties of conduct. He perceived danger with regard to himself from this quarter, and was therefore very sparing in mentioning much of what he often felt. He weighed everything by the word of God; avoided precipitancy of conduct, and making haste; and, at the same time, labored continually to abandon himself, as it were blindfold, to the teaching of the Spirit of truth and of purity.

II. REDEEMING THE TIME

In order to do this the more effectually, his manner was, to draw up a plan in writing (till use made it familiar to him) of the manner in which he judged it most profitable for him to spend the day. He distributed it into certain portions, and assigned to each its particular employment, which he punctually observed; allowing only for occasional interruptions in the business of his profession. Reading the Scriptures, times of stated prayer, and visiting the sick, had the grand places in this division of the day. He could never find any leisure for mere ceremonious visits, or unnecessary conversation of any kind. Even at meals, and, indeed, in every little incidental matter he had to do with, he ceased not to pursue his main end of living; namely, to get an to do good in his generation.

It was really surprising to see his thriftiness in this particular. He even deprived himself of such indulgences as nature absolutely required, in order to her performing the offices he imposed upon her continually; such, for example, as abstaining from all study immediately after meals; when, notwithstanding he ate exceeding sparingly, more relaxation would have been better for his health: likewise, his not using a sufficient quantity of proper exercise; but most of all, not allowing himself a sufficiency of proper rest, refreshing sleep, --

"Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,
That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play
The various movements of this nice machine,
Which asks such frequent periods of repose."

He was often up late at study; and his general time of rising was four o'clock, or a little after, sometimes between three and four. He was often urged to take more rest. I remember once to have heard a gentlewoman compassionating the wasting, dying. condition of his body, saying, "Sure, Mr. Walsh, you may, at least, lie longer in bed on Sunday morning, when the preaching is not so early." To which he replied, with his usual zeal and abrupt plainness, "Should a man rob God?" He was commonly up earliest on the Lord's day, for which he had the highest veneration. He has sometimes

said, he thought there was something peculiarly sacred in the very air, and the whole structure of nature, on this day.

During the long intimacy I had with him, I do not remember to have known him spend a minute in discourses about national occurrences, politics, worldly diversions, or anything of that sort. He knew that these were not his affairs, and that his business was one. And the same may be said of what is called free and pleasant conversation. So provident was he of time, and so bent upon the pursuit of that "immense revenue which every moment pays," that, in whatsoever company he was, unless something relative to the one thing needful was read, or discoursed of, he either took out a book, (impolite as it may seem,) or continued in profound silence, save when he answered a question. And if, at any time, anything vain, or tending to levity, was spoken, so as to occasion the least appearance of approbation in his looks or gesture, he severely reprehended himself for it afterwards, and prayed for strength for the time to come.

Persons both studious and religious, who sometimes visited him, and finding him always diligently employed, have afterwards said to me, "What, is he never tired? always at it? Surprising!" No, he was never weary of his work; never had a moment at the mercy of an intruder, to spend unnecessarily; never had any time hanging upon his hands, which he did not know what to do with; and under the weightiest pressures of mind, was never

"Blundering spilt on idleness, for ease."

The ignorant, the indolent, the self-indulgent, and the effeminate, (he has sometimes said, in effect,) all die: how much better is it, although one's life be the sooner ended thereby, to live to some purpose for God and man, than thus to die like fools!

"Bless'd son of foresight!
Whose yesterdays look backward with a smile;
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly,
That common, but opprobrious lot!"

And yet, notwithstanding all his caution, care, and diligence, he frequently lamented his not improving the time better. "I do not use every moment to the best purposes," was a frequent reflection with him against himself. And a truth it is, that,

"On all-important time, through every age,
Though much and warm the wise have urged, the man
Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour."

III. DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE WORLD

Although it is true that, without this, all pretensions to the character of being religious are vain; and although what has been said of him already necessarily implies his just contempt of every earthly thing; yet his eminency therein deserves to be taken particular notice of His indifferency to this world was such as even bordered upon abhorrency; and the rather, as he could not but observe, what a gulf

to souls it is, and how many are lost for ever through their undue attachment to this life. His heart and treasure were, in truth, in heaven.

"Bless'd with the scorn of finite good,
His soul was lighten'd of its load,
And sought the things above."

He kept at the utmost distance from what worldly men most ardently court, and earnestly sought what they most abhor. The folio wing descriptive lines, expressive of what is intended on this head, were literally applicable to him: --

"The things eternal I pursue;
A happiness beyond the view
Of those that basely pant
For things by nature felt and seen;
Their honors, wealth, and pleasures mean,
I neither have nor want.

"No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness;
A poor wayfaring man,
I lodge awhile in tents below;
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.

"Nothing on earth I call my men
A stranger, to the world unknown,
I all the goods despise;
I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a country out of sight,
A country in the skies."

The vain things, riches, honor, and pleasures of this world, were too poor and inconsiderable for so generous a heart: he showed the greatness of his soul by despising all that was beneath it. He had the most generous contempt of money; esteeming it (unless to bestow on the poor, or procure a book sometimes) as the pebbles in the street. In truth,

"An empire, in his balance, weigh'd a grain."

He had that reliance on the providence of God, and found a happiness therein, which infinitely surpassed all the enjoyments and treasures of the universe. Yes, --

"His hopes, immortal, blew them by, as dust
That dims the sight, and shortens the survey,
Which longs in infinite to lose all bounds

IV. RECOLLECTION OF SPIRIT, AND GOVERNMENT OF HIS THOUGHTS

His carriage, aspect, words, and, indeed, the whole of his behavior, spoke the solemnity and profound recollection of his soul. Nor can a stranger better conceive of him, in regard to this particular, than by forming to himself an idea of a person returned from the happy dead conversing with men. And it was nearly in this manner that some have expressed their surprise at him. A gentlemen said to me one day, with some degree of admiration, "I met Mr. Walsh in the street," (or to this effect,) "and I declare he seemed to me like a person returned from the other world." So emaciated a countenance, such fixedness of thought, and serenity of deportment, as appeared in him, towards the conclusion of his race especially, were indeed surprising in so young a man, and discovered a something very different from the busy ways of men. One needed only to look on him, to perceive that there was something in him more than common. And if, as the son of Sirach says, "a man may be known by his look, and one that has understanding may be perceived by the marking of his countenance;" they must be indeed superficial observers, that could not discern, in his very aspect, the excellencies that dwelt within him. An air of wisdom and piety appeared in him continually. There seemed to be something peculiarly distinguishing in the very features of his countenance. Some have taken him to be little less than forty years of age, at the time he was but about five-and-twenty. But,

"Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
That life is long, which answers life's great end.
The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name;
The man of wisdom is the man of years.
In hoary youth Methuselaha may die;
O how misdated on their flatt'ring tombs!"

His uniform composure was the rather to be noticed, as his life was not of the recluse, but of the popular kind. He had to do with multitudes; and, unless on special occasions, was seldom above six hours together out of company. It is true, indeed, he seldom appeared in public, unless to speak of the things of eternity, in some respect or other. But he was so shut in with God, that all places became alike to him; and he retained the same attention to God in the most thronged streets of London, which he could have had in the most sequestered wilderness. Curious sights, elegant furniture, in shops or houses, magnificent buildings, fine shows, the ringing of bells, firing of guns, with everything of this kind, were no more to him than the chirping of a sparrow, or the buzzing of a fly.

To all which, the constant government which he had over his senses greatly contributed. The difference of tastes, harmony of sounds, and whatever his eyes could behold, were as nothing to him. He was, in this respect, truly crucified to the world, and the world to him. Even in traveling through the most pleasant parts in the country, and in the pleasantest seasons, when the stupendous beauties of the creation, the spacious firmament, the verdure of the country, (nature's loveliest universal robe,)

the music of the groves, and all the joint beauties of nature, might have furnished him with laudable and delightful contemplation, ^[29] yet he seemed insensible to the whole, enjoying a

"Paradise within him, happier far;"

and feeling, what is beautifully described in these lines: --

"With Thee conversing, I forget all times
All seasons, and their changes, please alike."

When he at any time adverted to the works of God in the creation, (and he had a mind capable of the deepest researches,) he was delighted chiefly with the heavens, paved, as it were, with those living fires, the spangled stars. But the use which he made of everything was to get more acquainted with God, and so

"By this stupendous scaffolding,
Creation's golden steps, to climb to Him!"

He was, in truth, loosed from earth's enclosure, and from the contracted circle of the sun his heart was set at large. Christ and the Scriptures, with things; pertaining to them, were the only and uniform objects of his attention; and every thing, place, or person, which did not serve to promote, in some degree, his knowledge and love of these, had, with him, the estimate of trivial and insignificant.

And hence it was that the presence of God became so exceeding familiar to him as it was. He could not be content a moment without it And hereby was he fitted, likewise, for more glorious and more frequent, Divine communications of which he had not a few, in the course of his progress. Several times has he been quite lost to himself and insensible of everything about him, being left in the visions of God. Two instances, in particular are related in his diary, in which he seemed as though he was out of the body for some time. One day, I remember, going to visit a person who was ill; as soon as he got to the staircase, being in his usual composure, "Did you see that light?" said he with a sudden low voice. To which I answered partly with a sigh, having seen nothing. He said no more. But it was easy to discern in him the rest of that day and night, a very peculiar solemnity of soul.

In places of public worship he hardly ever saw anybody, so as to distinguish them; and in every means of grace his grand aim was; to find more of God within him. He waited for this in lively, earnest composure; and thus approaching the Lord's table, in particular; he ate the flesh, and drank the blood, of the Son of God indeed. "My heart burned; was in a flame? O, what a fire of Divine love was there!" were the frequent memorials which he left in his diary; after communicating. Those heavenly sweets, which often overflowed his soul at the altar, spread their inundation over every other part of his holy living. His recollection carried itself into the midst of all his labors, in which he was still preserved without dissipation, notwithstanding their multiplicity, and sometimes intricate nature. It was very usual with him to express what he felt of God by the simile of fire, to which the operations of the Holy Ghost are frequently compared in Scripture. He often felt, in prayer, and preaching, and walking, a kind of scorching within him, from the love of God. And from the

abundance of the heart his mouth generally spoke Words of life and fire issued, as it were, out of his lips; which were no other than the sparks of a burning heart. And, often, he could hardly refrain from expressing the holy raptures of his soul out aloud; as "O holy God! Glorious Jehovah! Blessed Jesus, Son of the living God! "He used frequently to stand up, and sing,

"O love, how cheering is Thy ray!
All pain before Thy presence flies!
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
Where'er Thy healing beams arise
O Jesu, nothing may I see,
Nothing hear, feel, or think, but Thee!

Give to mine eyes refreshing tears
Give to my heart chaste, hallow'd fires;
Give to my soul, with filial fears,
The love that all heaven's host inspires;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite!"

There was, at first, an eagerness in his spirit, that the success of his labors might be, in some sort, proportionable to his zeal and endeavors; but he in time learned otherwise, and became unanxious on the head, being taught of God, that, having done his part, he should think no more about the matter; but still go on straight forward, keeping himself in repose with God: in imitation of the angels, who continually watch over the souls which God has given them in charge; but who lose nothing of their tranquillity or happiness, even then when their utmost care is unsuccessful.

Well knowing that confusion of ideas, and desultoriness of thought alone, greatly impairs the orderly state of the "inward man," he took particular care to stop them in the beginning; never allowing his mind to wander he knew not whither. Not, indeed, that he aimed herein at a chain of regular thinking, but rather avoided such impertinences and roving of thought, as prevent a calm composure of soul, and waiting upon God: though his diligence and watchfulness, in this respect, brought his thoughts, at length, into a kind of military discipline, so that he has been known, sometimes, to remain recollected for hours, in such a manner as rendered him, in appearance, motionless, and still, almost, as a statue. In reality, if as the Platonists say, the soul may be dislodged from the body by thinking, it might have been expected to have fared so with him; for sure never was man more prone to intensesness of thought, and abstraction of ideas.

And from hence, partly, arose that extreme tenderness of conscience which was so remarkable in him, and which gave him a constant holy jealousy over himself, in everything he did; so that not a word, motion, or look could escape him unexamined, or censured, if it deserved it; resolving to do better for the time to come. Hence, likewise, it was that he had so very peculiar regard to all his words; speaking either to the purpose, that is, when occasion required him to speak, or not at all. And yet, notwithstanding his utmost circumspection, he was deeply conscious how far short he still came

of that rectitude and entire renovation, becoming a person in fellowship with the God of purity and unspotted holiness.

"On human hearts He heeds a jealous eye,
And marks, and in heavens register enrolls,
The rise and progress of each option there:
Sacred to doomsday! That the page unfolds,
And spreads us to the gaze of God and men!"

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 24
Some farther Particulars relating to the
Head of his Communion with God.

V. IMITATE THE LORD

His great rule was, to imitate our Lord Jesus Christ, in the most perfect manner he possibly could. The whole tenor of his conduct plainly discovered, that he sought nothing but God. There was in the chastity of his manners a purity next to angelical; and a circumspection in his every step of proceeding which declared, that to him "to live was Christ." He kept at the utmost distance from sensual indulgences of every kind. His senses were kept under the closest custody, and he examined his conscience almost continually. Nor could it be observed at any time, that he acted otherwise than within the rules of the utmost decency. The constant, lively sense which he had of invisible things was a standing proof of the purity of his heart. "For a pure heart penetrates heaven and hell."

VI. A MAN OF SORROW

He was a man of tears, and sighs, and groans. He wanted not, indeed, the joy of a good conscience; and knowing continually in whom he believed, he enjoyed the benefits resulting therefrom. And yet, this notwithstanding, the whole of his Christian pilgrimage was interspersed with much weeping; (see Acts xx. 19,31; 2 Cor. v.2,4; Rev.. vii. 17, and xxi.4;)

"Sorrowing, yet still in peace."

He seldom had a dry handkerchief a whole day together; his eyes being, for the most part, in private especially, as opened fountains, and which did not cease to flow in the night season. How often have I known him water his pillow with those briny rivers! sometimes lamenting his too great estrangement from his Beloved; sometimes mourning for the mourners; but oftener than all he was sick of love, -- love to the Crucified!

To some, indeed, there seemed in him something, at least, bordering upon an unyielding austerity of spirit: and so much is true, that, with regard to men and evil angels, he was undaunted, as courageous as a lion, in the Cause of God and of a good conscience: yet, in other respects, he was a man of the keenest sensibility and tenderest affections. He was, in the presence of his invisible Observer, pliant as melted wax, and clothed with dove-like meekness. He was often, as it were; deluged in tears, prostrate before the footstool of his Lord's majesty, and overwhelmed with a sense of His glory.

VII. HUMILITY

He was, without affectation, a man of humility; not, indeed, so as to disown, or not to make use of, the gifts and graces with which God had endued him; this would have been to lie against the truth: but, notwithstanding all that he had, yet taking the knowledge whence it came, he esteemed himself as; nothing; but was truly diffident of and heartily despised, himself. And the only use which he made of the superior qualifications which God bestow upon him, in the use of proper means, was, to consider himself as obliged thereby to devote himself more abundantly to the service of God and of his neighbor. The praises of others served only to abase him at the sight of his own nothingness "Lord, I am vile! a worm! O, deliver me from this evil man, myself! Thou only art worthy!" were the frequent expressions of his lips and pen. If any person at any time gave him but the smallest hint, by way of reproof he received it either with silence, or expressions of thankfulness, according to the manner and occasion thereof. And, supposing it to be a matter in which he was really without blame, yet the reproof was not lost upon him. He thereby took occasion to enter more deeply into himself, making the strictest scrutiny into the whole of his; tempers and behavior. He often said to God, on these occasions, "Lord, though Thou knowest I am clear in this matter, yet, alas! how many things are there for the which I stand reprov'd before Thee! My God, I adore Thee in this which Thou hast permitted." He often repeated, as a lesson of instruction to himself, those words of Kempis, "Thou dust, learn to obey. Thou earth and clay, learn to demean thyself. Thou oughtest to be such a little child, that everybody might trample thee under their feet in the streets."

VIII. EXERCISES OF PRAYER, MEDITATION, PREACHING

There was the utmost steadiness in the whole of his religious conduct. The course of the sun and the seasons are not more regular than were his successive exercises of prayer, meditation, preaching, and study: so that, from knowing how he spent one day, may be gathered his manner of spending whole months or years; allowing only for the difference of circumstances and occasions. Thus it was in things pertaining to God and His service; though, at the same time, his attention to himself his ease and conveniences, were such, that some have accounted it not less than blameworthy negligence; so truly did he live, not to himself, or the will of man, but to God.

IX. LOVE OF GOD

"The love of God" was the fountain, whence issued forth those fruitful streams, which rendered his own soul flourishing as the garden of the Lord and extended their salutary influence all around wherever he came. It was to this he reduced every thing. All his things were done in love, and therefore wrought in God. It was a debt he was ever paying, and from which he was never to be discharged.

Indebted still, its highest rapture burns
Short of his mark, defective, though Divine."

"My God, let me love Thee! Jesus, Son of the living God, Thou knowest that I love Thee! O love Divine, what hast Thou done! O that all the world did but know Thee! How would they then love Thee, Thou 'altogether lovely!' " To this effect he often breathed out the warm emotions of his heart;

so deeply was he penetrated with the love of God his Savior. He was always exceedingly pleased with, and frequently repeated, those lines,

"Eternity too short to speak Thy praise,
Or fathom Thy profound of love to man!"

And again, without regarding their connection, but overwhelmed with the thought of the dying love of Jesus, he would utter, sometimes abruptly, and with astonishment,

"Sensations new in angel-bosoms rise,
Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss.'

X. HIS FAITH

Lastly. "By faith I stand," was his concluding point, after all that God had done for him. And it was not unusual with him to say, on the closest examination of all he was, and all he did, "If Christ forsook me but for a moment, I should fall and perish after all." Yes, it was from His fullness he received all his good things, and, with the dependent helplessness of an infant, he had recourse to Him continually for light, and strength, and love; for everything, in short, which he wanted. He trusted only in His passion, and was inviolably attached to His crucified person. He could be happy only in conversation with Him; delighted peculiarly in those parts of Scripture which describe and endear Him; and, from the fullness of his whole soul, repeated often, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ. To Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be the glory, both now and to eternity!"

To sum up this head. He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else in this; world; and, from the desire he had to redeem the time, he employed great part of the night, as well as the day, in prayer, meditation, study, and laboring for the good of his neighbor. He was profoundly serious, and always recollected at home and abroad. He watched over every motion of his soul, keeping his thoughts in subjection to Christ continually. He proposed to himself "the man Christ Jesus" as his great model and rule in everything; imitating Him especially in the purity of his body, and in the chastity of his affections. Walking in deep humility before God, he was patient of reproof, nor ever retorted anything with heat or prejudice. There was a steadiness in his proceedings for God, and in reference to eternity, which not all the powers of earth and hell were able to interrupt. He ate but little, wept much, loved more, received all by faith; and rarely opened his mouth but about heavenly things.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

PART III

"The spirit walks of every deceased,
And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
And ask them, what report they hove to heaven;
And how they might have borne more welcome news.
Their answers form what men experience call."

-- Night Thoughts --

CHAPTER 25

**An Extract from Mr, Thomas Walsh's Diary,
relating chiefly to the Experience of his own Soul,
in his Course of "Walking with God."**

Concerning the extract which here follows, it may be premised, -- 1. That, although there was the utmost uniformity in the whole series of his progress; nevertheless, few persons were so sensible of various alterations in spirit, with respect to the sensations of joy and sorrow, delight in God, and complainings for the want of it; owing, in great measure, to a singular tenderness of conscience, and the close attention which he had to all the movements of his inward man; so that things which some overlook, or entirely disregard, were esteemed by him, with regard to himself at least, as capital defections from the law of perfect liberty and love.

"He felt an idle thought
As actual wickedness;
And mourn'd for the minutest fault
In exquisite distress."

His diary consists of the feelings of his own heart, throughout every part of his Christian race, with scarcely a single hour of the whole omitted. He always wrote down reflections upon himself, as either the pressure or felicity of his soul at that time suggested; adding any spiritual observation or maxim which his own experience confirmed to him.

2. It will be easily discerned, that the peculiarity of his writing is a certain sententious abruptness; owing, in part, to the genius of the Hebrew tongue, in which his latter studies wholly terminated: though what most contributed thereto was the rapid flow of his soul on the subjects of which he either spoke or wrote, which raised him above attending to that accuracy which writings, at least of

a public nature, require. In many places there is, therefore, a manifest deficiency, both as to words, particles, and stops; in short, like the writings of the ancients, without period or paragraph, in most places: so that liberty has been necessarily taken to add, retrench, or alter, sometimes a word or sentence, to render the sense intelligible, though still retaining his sense entire.

The inserting the precise date of every day's experience is judged unnecessary. Moreover, the experience of several days, sometimes distant from each other, (though rarely above a week,) are thrown into the same paragraph for the sake of brevity. The series of particulars, as to the order of time, are related as they occurred; and every paragraph begins with the experience of a distant day.

The reader being advertised of these particulars, we proceed to the extract itself: --

"At the close of this last day of the year," (1750 the year in which he began to preach,) "I examined myself how I had lived the past year; and could only say, I had not wickedly departed from my God: but was heartily ashamed that I had not glorified Him better, resolving to watch for the time to come.

"I prayed to God for quietness and humility of mind; and found assistance against 'this evil man, myself.' O for a heart constantly fixed on God! I was reprov'd this day in spirit for an idle word.

"The Lord was with me all this day. I desire to be with the Lord continually, that my communion may be stronger with Jesus than ever. O, it is heaven upon earth to have Christ in ones heart! It is the beginning of the glory of God to receive the lovely Jesus; and with Him the joy of the Holy Ghost. O that I had the tongue of an angel, to praise my Lord! Hasten, Lord, the glad hour, when I shall see Thee as; Thou art.

"When shall that long expected hour
Of sacred vision be,
When my ascending soul shall make
A near approach to Thee!"

"I preached this morning on the great and precious promises; Ezekiel xxxvi. My soul aspired to have them accomplished; for I feel the evil of my nature, and especially the evil heart of unbelief that is within me.

"Friday, February 22d. -- I preached this morning on Solomon's; Song, ii. 8; but was both dark and weak, having scarcely any power to explain anything. O, what a grief it is for one to preach, when he is left to himself; when the Lord is not his present strength and teacher! to preach consolation to others, and feel none himself! This exposes one to great temptation.

Saturday, 23d. -- My soul enjoyed sweet repose in the blood of the Lamb, while my heart was engaged in meditation on His dying love. O, where can we find an instance of such love as that of God to men on Calvary! when the innocent died for a guilty world to bring them to God!

"What are all mysteries to love like this!
Should man more execrate, or boast, the guilt
Which roused such vengeance? which such love inflamed?
A wonder in Omnipotence itself!
A mystery no less to gods than men!"

"Wednesday, 27th. -- I was not alive to God today. Unnecessary talk brought deadness upon my soul.

"Great part of this day I lived as in heaven. Heaven was within me. God was in my soul. The influences of His Spirit wrought so powerfully upon me, that my joy was beyond expression. O the length, and breadth, and height of the love of God! Well may it be said to pass knowledge. The spiritual man may discern it, but cannot set it forth in the manner he feels it. Those words; of Isaiah, lxi. 10, lifted up my soul, as in a fiery chariot, above the fabric of this world: 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments; of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; as; a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.' I could say, that the Lord had so done for my soul. O, what enemies are the children of men to their own souls! They deprive themselves of happiness here, and of eternal glory hereafter; imagining that earthly enjoyments are above what religion can afford. But, alas! it is because they know not this religion, which brings such happiness to the soul.

"They part with all for that which is not bread
They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power;
And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.
To beings of sublime immortal make,
How shocking is all joy, whose end is sure!

"O, how sweet was Jesus to my soul! The rose for sweetness; the lily for whiteness; the apple-tree for fruitfulness what are they all to Thee? Entering into my closet, the moment I bowed my knee the Lord poured down a blessing into my soul. O, what a heaven upon earth did I experience for some moments! Tongue cannot express the goodness of God to my soul. O, where shall I find words to praise? How am I lost in the ocean of the immensity of Thy mercy! Lord, I know not how to give Thee thanks. Where to begin I cannot tell. O my soul, fall into silent amazement. Let all I have, or am, drop into nothing!

"March 8th, Friday. -- This was; a day of much temptation; but God, for my support and confirmation, was pleased to give me a fresh manifestation of His love.

"Reading and prayer today were of little comfort to me. If it were not that I find the abiding witness of the Spirit in my soul, my bondage would be very great. It is the goodness of God which preserves me in the faith. The enemies of my salvation are thrusting sore at me from day to day. Defend and keep me, O my God, for Jesus sake.

"In prayer, I saw the great difficulty of being a Christian in reality. There are many who 'eat their own bread, and wear their own apparel,' (Isaiah iv.1) and are willing 'to be called by the name of Jesus,' to take away their reproach, -- the abomination of being called heathen. But they love, notwithstanding, the ways of death and darkness, rather than light; and do what heathens would not do. The ninety first Psalm was made a great blessing to me; the ninth verse especially.

"This morning the Lord gave me language that I knew not of, raising my soul to Him in a wonderful manner. After preaching, however, in the evening, at my return to my room, I felt no life in my soul, but a spirit of slothfulness. O, what a poor creature! How incapable of thinking a good thought, or doing a truly good action! Sinful dust and ashes!

"Friday, 22d. -- In the morning I had an earnest desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. I wanted to see Jesus who bore and suffered so much for me.

"Monday, 25th. -- My soul was very dull. I had a desire to pray, but could not, through the deadness of my heart, and wandering of my thoughts. This is a thing I have to complain of, in general; namely, wandering in prayer, want of earnestness and fervor.

"Tuesday, 26th. -- I cannot say that, till three o'clock, I had true communion with God; but then the Lord clearly manifested Himself to me.

1751. April 6th. -- I had not much of the presence of God, nor of the comfort of the Holy Ghost; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God!

"O, what an aversion I had this morning to study, and following the Lamb! If it were not for the promises which the Gospel affords, I should be often brought into bondage. Very often is my soul cast down, and my spirit disquieted within me; so that I must needs utterly faint, if it was not that I firmly hope I shall yet praise God for the health of His countenance. I felt neither comfort nor power in preaching. O, what a poor creature am I, when left to myself! how dark of conception! how slow of heart and speech! It sometimes; happens; that while I am thus; writing down my condition, the Lord appears to my help: so it is now; for God has been pleased to manifest Himself to me! And, O, what a welcome guest! At His coming, my reins and my heart rejoice; my troubles are done away; my soul is greatly refreshed, my faith strengthened, my hope confirmed, and my love increased. Glory be to God most high!

"God and His ways were sweet to my soul this morning. Great was the peace of my mind, and the joy which arose from considering what the Lord had done for my soul. O, how did I long to be altogether like Him, in righteousness and true holiness! Throughout the day I enjoyed sweet repose in the blood of the Lamb. In the evening I preached on 1 Cor. i. 30. And God did indeed pour of His gracious Spirit into my soul. Truly we had a heaven upon earth! O that I had the tongue of an angel, to glorify Thee for all Thy benefits!

"Thursday, May 23d. -- I was in great trouble, going to preaching this morning. My temptations were sore, and my trials exceeding great; occasioned partly by the condition of some, who for a time

ran well, but are turned again to the fleshpots of Egypt. While I preached, however, on Psalm xxiii. 1, my Shepherd gave me to feed upon His 'hidden manna.'

"I found it hard work to be wholly set apart for God this day. I preached comfort to others, but could lay hold on little of it myself. I am often like a day in spring, the sun shining bright for a little while, and soon withdrawing again. The 'Sun of Righteousness;' often shines upon me with His bright beams; but, alas! the light is soon clouded, and the joy vanishes away. Yet still, blessed be God! my heart stands fast, believing in the Lord. For I take it for granted, that the want of strong light and joy no more argues want of faith, than the absence of unclouded day argues no sun in the firmament.

"An unusual fondness for company brought deadness upon my soul. The vanities of the world importunately intruded upon me. If God were not on my side, I should have been long ago "as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah.' Such vanities crowded in upon me at prayer, that even I forgot what I was saying. I am a man sorely distressed with the wandering of my heart. I arose from prayer, and read, and prayed again. The Lord at length met me, and instantly released me from my sorrow, and gave me power to wait upon Him without distraction.

"Saturday, June 12th. Great was the comfort which I had in God. I had the full assurance of faith, that God was my God, and Christ my Saviour. O the happiness of knowing this!

"Friday, 17th -- The Lord was in all my thoughts: I had not felt so much comfort for three days. I had communion with God all the day, though chiefly in the evening.

"Tuesday, 28th. -- I was; deeply convinced of my depravity. O my God, I see the impurity of my heart in such a manner as frightens me. I know that Christ can have no communion with Belial, neither righteousness with unrighteousness. Lord, break not the 'bruised reed,' nor quench the 'smoking flax.' Rather send down Thy Holy Spirit, and set me free from the power of indwelling sin. Consume it, O God! Cast out the spirit of uncleanness, for Christ's sake.

"This afternoon I walked in the fields; and had a sweet meeting with my Lord. He gave me His love.

"Sunday morning. -- I was so stupid, that I could scarcely pray. Wandering thoughts crowded in upon me. O for a heart to pray! I find, in general, that, under the most afflictive trials, when I can in fervent prayer pour out my soul before the Lord, He gives; me instant relief. But when I cannot pray, O then is my life burdensome to me; I cannot bear myself.

"The word, this morning, was sweet to the souls of the people. They seemed to drink of the fountain of the water of life. I had a glorious manifestation of the love of God to my soul. My delight surely is in the Lord, and His Son Jesus Christ. Thou art my God, my love, my joy, my help, my health, and my all in all! Blessed be Thy name. Amen.

"Too much given to talk. I had not the usual longing after prayer and meditation. Yet the Lord helps my infirmity.

"I had great joy in my soul, and longing desires to be with Christ. O that even now I could behold His lovely face and amiable countenance!

"Friday, July 9th. -- I had a lively sense of the Lord's having blotted out my former transgressions; and that He had promised to give me 'a pure and a clean heart.' I had great peace, my soul being filled with the love of God.

"Saturday, 10th. -- I was exercised this morning by false accusations. My only concern was lest it should hinder the work of God. But in the consideration of His overruling power and providence, I rested patiently on His will. My Jesus was made perfect through sufferings. O that I may be enabled to follow my Master in the way of the cross!

"Walking in a garden this day, God made it an Eden to my soul; pouring His love into my heart. I partook of the water and the tree of life; and the hidden manna was rained from heaven into my soul.

"Monday, 19th. -- All the day my soul thirsted for the living God. It was transported, and exceedingly rejoiced, in reading some Divine meditations. O my God, what shall I say? Angels cannot praise Thee worthily. What then shall I, who am a worm of the earth, do? O that I had wings like a dove! Lovely Jesus, when shall I see Thy face, joining the rest of the redeemed to celebrate the wonders of Thy redeeming love! O that this were the moment! My soul shall, ere long, take its flight to the mansions which I firmly believe my Savior is preparing for me. O my God, my Savior, my all!

"Thursday, 25th. -- I had but little light or power. The Lord humbled, and showed me my own weakness; but did not leave me to it. He showed me clearly, that it was neither to my graces, humblings, desires, doings, nor sufferings, I must trust for happiness and salvation, but in Christ alone.

"Ah, Lord, who is sufficient for these things? O, let me die, that I may see Thee! Whither is my Beloved gone? Return, Lord, return! I am a feeble and helpless creature. Yet rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! for though I fall into temptations, heaviness, and trials, I shall rise again. O proud Philistines, deceitful Delilahs, inbred sin, pride of heart, anger, and folly, who can remove you? Lord Jesus Thou canst, and Thou alone.

"At the sacrament, O, how did my soul banquet in Jesus! What Divine Consolation did I feel in God my Saviour!

"Wednesday, 23d. -- I was tempted to laugh on my very knees. O Lord my God, be my Rock. Hide me in Thy wounds and deliver me from myself. O Jesus I cry out of the deeps: hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before Thee.

"Sure I am, that if my salvation depend on aught but the changeless love of God my Savior, I never should see the Lord. Alas! I am all weakness, unbelief, disobedience, and darkness. My soul was weighed down with inbred sin. But I no sooner began to complain, and bewail myself before Him, than He poured His love upon me, and gave me sweet access to Him.

"1752. January 6th. I could hardly account to myself how my thoughts had been employed this day. O that they were every moment taken up in the contemplation of Thy wondrous love and compassion to me, and all the fallen race! O for an humble, lowly, simple, pure, and perfect mind! What shall I say to Thee, Thou delight of my heart? How much fairer art Thou than the sons of men!

"When I look back upon my life, I can see nothing that does not need to be washed with the blood of Christ. My best actions are imperfect. I have need to fly to my Savior, that from Him I might receive that robe which is pure and complete. My whole desire is to be devoted to Thee.

"Ashamed to lift my eyes; to heaven, I fell down before the Lord my Maker: and I may well say that He waited to be gracious; for before I could utter many words, His love filled my heart. I could then look up with confidence, and see my Father, God, smile upon me, and my dear Redeemer at His right hand, full of grace and truth for me. O, how sweetly did the ever-blessed Trinity join to bless; me! Help me to praise Thee, O Thou strength of Israel!

"This morning, at breakfast, the Lord left such a Divine impression upon my heart, as I think, will never wear off.

"God was much with me in private. O, what a heaven upon earth is it to commune with Him in prayer, holy reading, and Divine meditation! Jesus is a well of life. How blessed is it to hold intimacy with Him! This; is paradise indeed.

"Sunday. -- It was a glorious Sabbath to my soul. The light of heaven shone upon me.

"Part of this day was the happiest I ever yet saw. I could freely depart to be with Him whom my soul loveth. Truly I seemed to antedate the sweetness of the celestial felicity which the glorified spirits enjoy above! My song was praises to my God.

"I had calm repose in God. It was a day of sore temptation. I was kept, but through momentary watching unto prayer. O, what am I? How weak, how blind, how poor! As to strength, a bruised reed; for love and zeal, as the smoking flax. But Thou, O God, art strong, and in Thee is my hope.

"I was ill in body, dark in mind, dead in affections, and sorely troubled with temptations. Yet I was preserved from inclining to iniquity with my heart.

Sunday. -- My soul agonized to enter into the rest of the people of God. I saw Him by faith, and the promises were strongly brought to my remembrance; especially, 'Ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.'

"Friday, 20th. -- I was surrounded with various temptations;. O the levity of my spirit, weakness; of my faith, and deceitfulness; of my heart!

"Saturday, 30th. -- My soul tasted of the sweets of paradise this day.

"1758. March 7th. -- In the morning there was open free intercourse between God and my soul, which for some hours remained undisturbed. About noon I felt sore war between nature and grace, so that I was; brought low. Nature would have me manage for myself; grace was for casting all my care upon God. O Thou Author of every good gift, send me help from Thy holy place, to subdue the old man! Take away the perverseness of my own natural will, and make me lowly and patient as Thou, my Lord, art. Thou art the source of grace and of goodness. In Thee, O Lamb of God, is all I want.

"Thursday, 8th. -- I poured out my soul before the Lord, who gave me to feel hearty contrition, with earnest desires to be sanctified wholly. For

'O how wavering is my mind,
Tossed about with every wind!
O how quickly doth my heart
From the living God depart!'

Son of God, set me free, and knit my soul to Thyself!

"Saturday, 10th. -- The Lord sweetly refreshed my spirit. I was strongly moved to pour out my soul for my enemies, and all that forget God. There was a burning in my heart after all the life of God. Nothing appeared so desirable as holiness. O God, take the whole capacity of my soul, and possess it by Thy Spirit.

"Sunday, 25th. -- I have a proof today of the vanity and uncertainty of human friendship. Some who loved and greatly esteemed me when I left Dublin, about ten weeks ago, will now, at my return, hardly speak to me. O that I may seek friendship, and all good, in God alone! Yes, --

'For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,
Of neither shall he find the shadow here.'

"Some words; I heard this morning pierced me to the very soul. Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord. I fly to Jesus, the 'just One,' to hide me in His wounds. He is my sanctuary, the ark of the covenant, and the true altar. Come, my life, my treasure, and my God, shine into this drooping heart. Have I not an interest in Thy blood? Am not I a child of Thine, O God? Hast Thou not said unto me, Live? O that Thy powerful voice would now speak to my soul, and bless me, O my Father!

"How little do I know of God, or of myself? O, what a mystery is man! How difficult to find, and then to lose himself! Lord, I long to be settled and fixed in Thee. O, how does this mortal body press down the soul!

"Saturday, April 21st. -- I was; strengthened in the hope of full redemption. Jesus, forsake me not; or I shall be of all men most miserable!

"Wednesday, May 4th. -- I woke with the presence of God. Jesus; was amiable, and altogether lovely to my soul. My heart was carried out in praise to Him for redeeming me, and making me His own for ever, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

"I earnestly longed after inward holiness; the image of God brought into my soul for then only shall I be truly happy, when self-love, self-will, and all other roots of bitterness, are rooted out of my heart, and the pure love of God overflows my whole soul. When Jesus is the supreme and sole Governor, and all things within are subdued by His grace, then the heart rests in peace, and all things move in their proper time and manner. The soul is retired, though in the midst of hurry, and sweet peace and joy flow from Jehovah, their source. This is the victory, the salvation, the liberty, the deliverance from sin, which very few believe, and which no one can know, save he that receiveth it. But it is the privilege of the children of God; and every one who sincerely seeks, and with all his might strives for it, shall surely attain, by the Spirit of the Lord; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

"At the Lord's table, the bloody sacrifice was impressed on my heart. The fruit of the tree of life was sweeter to me than honey and the honeycomb.

"Friday, 31st. -- After preaching, I gave myself to my usual study. O freedom of heart, and contempt of the world, how great blessings are ye! Plentifully did the Lord shower His love into my soul this day, in our public meeting. Verily Thou art the pleasure of my soul, the hope and desire of my heart.

"This day God prepared me for a sore trial, by giving me sweet repose in His love. I lived, as it were in heaven. My soul was ravished with His sweetness. So was I enabled to bear, with calmness and patience, the abusive language of one who came to my room, breathing out threatenings against me. Alas! how many are there who are great friends in profession, but not such in reality!

O the unspeakable comfort of having an assurance of the love of God!

"Saturday. -- I was very happy in my soul, and read God's holy word with great delight.

"I cried unto the Lord, to make me 'holy as He is holy.' This is the thing which I long for. Lord grant me my heart's desire. Answer Thy Spirit's cry for liberty.

"Saturday, August 29th. -- In the night I was grievously tempted of the devil. He injected such blasphemies, and threw such fiery darts, as I never experienced before. I was sore amazed, and cried unto the Lord Jesus. He heard my cry, bruised his head, and delivered my soul from his rage and fury. Lord, Thou upholdest me, or I should fall. O, stay with me, till I arrive safe in Thy kingdom!

"Sunday, September 1st, was a day of feasting and rejoicing to my soul. I had sweet converse with my Beloved, while I joyed in His salvation. I proclaimed His name to thousands, from Jeremiah vi. 10; and never felt more freedom to preach my Saviour. O my Lord, Thou art precious to my soul, and Thy service is my reward!

"1754. Sunday, March 3d.- At the Lord's supper this morning, my soul was dissolved with Divine love. I could bless God that ever I was born to so happy and glorious an end, as to love, and praise, and serve my Redeemer. Yes, Jesus, Thou art precious to my soul. Thy yoke is easy, and Thy commandments holy, and just, and good. I desire to keep them with my whole heart.

"The more I see of the world, the less happiness I can discern in it. Happy are they who are well out of it. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. It is a great thing to be a Christian in truth.

There's not a day, but to the man of thought
Betrays some secret, that throw, new reproach
On life, and makes him sick of seeing more.'

"I used the means of grace today as usual, but cannot say that I had communion with God in them. Alas;! what are means, when Christ is absent? How often do I find heaviness and deadness succeed much joy and freedom of spirit! 'Poor, alas! beyond expression poor!'

"I wept and rejoiced that God had given me a soul capable of loving Him. In reading and meditating in the open air, my soul tasted of the joys, in part, which those spirits enjoy who behold His face continually.

"My soul vehemently groaned and longed for full redemption, while it enjoyed sweet converse with my lord Jesus.

"I removed from amongst us some who walked disorderly. Alas! how few are willing to do and suffer all the will of God!

"Tuesday, 12th. -- Although my body was much afflicted, my soul was greatly comforted.

"Sunday, 17th. -- I heard a sermon today at church, in which my Lord Jesus was not so much as named. Alas! that 'the way, the truth, and the life' should be entirely forgotten!

"Friday, 22d. -- I was heavy and ill all the day; yet I strove to do the will of my heavenly Father.

"Saturday, 23d, -- I had intercourse with heaven all the day. I thirsted for the salvation of all men, as for my own soul. I was also deeply humbled before the Lord, seeing myself the most vile and unworthy of all His creatures. He likewise made me willing to be despised and evil spoken of by others. And I cannot but admire the wisdom and goodness of God, in so preparing me for what soon after followed. One of my acquaintance, that went with me to the house of God, laid to my charge things which I knew not. I sent for him; but he could say nothing to my face. His mouth was stopped, and he seemed quite ashamed. I felt much patience and pity towards him. Lord Jesus, give him repentance, and take prejudice out of his heart.

"Saturday, April 20th, was a day of joy and sorrow by intervals. O, how did nature and grace strive in my soul! What conflicts with myself do I daily experience!

"Friday, May 3d. -- I had a feeling sense of the treasures of grace and glory, which are laid up for me, both here and in heaven. O, what a heaven did I experience in being able to call God 'my God, and my Father!'"

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 26
The Extract from his Diary continued

The account of his experience, given in the preceding chapter, begins with the first year of his conversion; in which likewise he began to labor for the good of his neighbor. And it may be observed that, in his progress, the experience of his heart had its certain progressive stages, resembling, in some degree, that of the "shining light," or sun. A day, suppose, whose early dawn is clear and promising, and whose light and heat still increase, ere long is overcast with clouds, and disturbed with tempests; the sun, however, keeps his course, and still goes on to the "perfect day." Such, likewise, is "the path of the just:" and such was the experience of this servant of God.

The first display of the Divine goodness to his soul, in justification, was so clear, and his joy thereupon was so strong, that he had then no expectation of seeing war any more. And he was, indeed, carried on sweetly for some considerable time.

The heavens distill'd their sweetnesses,
And strew'd with flowers his way;
Some tastes he had of paradise,
His every joyous month was May!"

But, whatever was the cause, or whether there was, according to the Divine disposals, a needs be for it; however, so it was, that he afterwards felt otherwise, and that chiefly

"Commenced now the agonizing strife,
Previous to nature's death, and second life."

And hence we find him often groaning under a body of sin and death; complaining of struggles between nature and grace, and of inconstancy and weakness in general; with ardent pourings out of his soul to God for complete deliverance. And his thirst after it was considerably augmented by the transient tastes, with which it pleased God to favor him from time to time, of the heaven of loving Him alone, with all the powers of his soul.

The feeling of his heart in reference thereto, the methods which he pursued in order to attain it, and the progress which, by the grace of God, he made therein, are the subject of this chapter. Only for the sake of some, who desire to have the fullest information concerning him on this head, I shall prefix a letter he sent me to Bristol, from London, in answer to some inquiries which I made concerning his then state of soul, occasioned by the following circumstance: -- Some months before he left London the last time, a report prevailed amongst his brethren, (it seems; from some things he

spoke chiefly in his preaching,) that he professed to be "cleansed from all sin." When I parted with him, not many weeks before, I knew he was earnestly following after "perfect love," weeping and praying almost day and night. And, on my hearing that he had attained, I wrote to know it from himself. To which inquiry he sent me the following answer, concerning the state of his soul: --

"LONDON, June 17th, 1757.

"My Dear Brother,

"What you mention concerning me, I answer thus. 1st, I feel the constant witness of the Spirit of God, that I am forgiven, and that I love God and my neighbor. 2dly, I do not feel any evil tempers. 3dly, I firmly believe that God will eternally save my soul. But whether all sin is taken out of my heart, and the possibility of grieving the Spirit of God, I do not determine; neither do I think, that I love either God or my neighbor as I ought, or as I shall. I am helpless; but God is my strength. I live by faith. I am ashamed. I have no wish that anyone should believe I am saved from all sin. Indeed, I ought to justify everyone that believes, the contrary, supposing it was so. But, alas! if Christ did not pray for me, and keep me every moment, I should go to the devil. I understand Gal. iii. 10 as I never did before; and Gal. ii. 19 is what I feel. Jesus Christ is all in all.

"I have written simply: make the best use you can of it. But say nothing of it to anyone. This I request. ^[30] O, let me be forgotten: not of God, or of His children in prayer; but, as I desire no good to be said of me, I would not have anyone sin against God, in thinking or speaking the evil which my heart abhors. It is much to the glory of God, to save a proud, angry, self-willed, fearful, and unbelieving sinner: therefore I almost say, that I glory in mine infirmities, that the strength and grace of Christ may rest upon me, and save me from them all; and this He will do as sure as He is faithful and true. I would not have Mr. _____ to mention anything about me; but as Providence permitted it, I am not concerned, leaving myself, and the event of all, with God.

"I expect to hear from you quickly. I am
"Your affectionate brother,
"THOMAS WALSH."

His struggles, sentiments, and attainments partly before and partly after this letter, even to his death, are farther represented in the following extracts;

"London, Sunday, June 2d. -- All this; forenoon I was raised above myself, and lost in God. Heaven as it were, came down into my soul, and I saw glory of the world to come! I beheld all the glory of this world as the mire in the streets. But, O! the views which I had of heaven, and the foretaste of those ravishing joys that flow there, so transported my soul, that I could bless God that ever I was born.

"Tuesday, 4th. My soul was transported this day to such a degree, as greatly affected even my body. I do not recollect that I ever before felt such a sense of the presence of God. Surely, if He should manifest Himself a few degrees more to me, I could not live in the body.

"Sunday, 9th. -- I gave myself up to God. I heartily desire to give my whole heart, cheerfully and without reserve, to Thee, my Lord! Many things; would alienate it from Thee. But, O my Saviour, keep Thou my every desire. Knit me closely to Thyself, and suffer no false fire to abide in my heart. I acknowledge, O my God, that it is an amazing instance of Thy love, that Thou hast made me a child of Thine. Let, I beseech Thee, Thy goodness be the strongest tie to keep my heart stayed upon Thee.

"Tuesday, 18th. -- I was; so low in body, that I could hardly speak or think. O, how does this corruptible body press down my soul! Yet I can praise God for His dispensations towards me. He afflicts me, that I may be partaker of His holiness.

"At the Lord's table I was in an agony for holiness. My soul, and even my body, were ready to faint with desire, and longed for all the mind that was in Christ Jesus.

'With me I know, I feel, Thou art;
But this cannot suffice,
Unless Thou plantest in my heart
A constant paradise!

"Saturday, July 20th. -- O, how my soul labored with God in secret prayer! I said in my heart, 'If I am indeed a child of God, why have I not greater desires to depart, and be with Christ?' I prostrated myself before the throne of grace, and cried to God to answer me as by fire: and He soon silenced my despondencies by answering in my heart, 'My son, thou art Mine.'

"Wednesday, September 21st. -- I longed to be dissolved, and yet more to be made holy.

"God overpowered my whole frame, so that my body fainted under the pouring out of the Spirit of Christ.

Saturday, September 26th. -- My heart was quite melted with a sense of the goodness of God, and of my own vileness. I think I now begin to repent; to have a godly sorrow for my sins. Of this I am well assured, that thoughts which were in my mind a year ago, are now a grief to me: the Spirit of God brings the sins of my whole life to my remembrance. ^[31] I read them all, but more especially whatever has been wrong in me since I was converted. My spirit within me mourns, and my heart feelingly says; 'O that I had never sinned! O that my soul and body had been always; pure before Thee! O that I had always the same light and power that God has given me now!' But, although I am vile, yet this, blessed be God, I know, there is now no condemnation to me: the blood of Christ hath washed away all my sins. I have the Spirit of adoption, and the peace of my God. I love Him, and all His dear children; yea, and my enemies likewise. I hunger and thirst after righteousness. I rejoice in my God, and delight in doing His will. I know in whom I have believed. My name is written in heaven. Hallelujah!

"Friday, Nov. 22d. -- I enjoyed a fulness of God in my soul; and had infinite sweetness in communion with my Saviour. Lord, I am not worthy of these manifestations; but I see all is of 'free grace.' I receive all through Christ the righteous. He drank the bitter cup, that I might drink the cup

of consolation. Lord, I would love infinitely, if I were able. My whole soul cries out for power to do Thy will perfectly.

"Monday, December 2d. I feel I am a mere nothing; and that if God withdraw His grace from me but for a moment, I should do nothing but sin.

"I felt much shame before the Lord today, for my unfaithfulness and unfruitfulness. O God, enter not into judgment with me for my sins of omission!

"Sunday, July 4th. I was ; troubled in my spirit, because of lightness of heart, and speaking 'my own words.' (Isa. lviii.) How many idle words do I speak! It ill becomes a Christian, much more a Preacher, ever to laugh.

"I lay down in peace, because I have an Advocate with the Father.

"October 6th. -- I arose with much sorrow and concern; and with shame, and much brokenness of heart, bowed my soul before the Lord. My heaviness endured, as it were, but a moment, and the Divine light shone transcendently bright upon my soul. Praying with a few friends; my joy in the Lord overcame my feeble body. And it proved to be a preparation for a trial, which came soon after. (See and compare Matt. ix. 16, with chap. iv. 1.) I had sweet communion with Jesus; and three of His; redeemed ones this day. In the evening I pressed upon the people the necessity of 'inward life,' from Acts v.20.

"Sunday, 22d. -- All the day long my Lord was wonderfully present with me in every ordinance. Truly my soul longed vehemently to be, and live, like my Saviour, the holy Jesus. This indeed is the thing I aim at: and I believe, according to the sure word of promise, I shall attain. O, what depths and heights of holiness do I discern attainable in this world!

"My soul was mightily encouraged, while I expounded John xiv. 21-23. Inward and constant liberty is what I want; to be always recollected, having my mind stayed upon God. I would live like an angel below. For some moments, indeed, I often love and rejoice in a wonderful manner: but, alas! how soon it dies! I become comparatively cold, and can neither pray with freedom, nor rejoice with reverence.

"Prayer, and reading the Scriptures; are my daily delight.

"O Jesus, Thou holy Lover of my soul, unite me more closely to Thyself. Be Thou my glory, my joy. Thou art my all in all.

"Still, nature, the devil, and grace, are striving with me. Christ, however, has the upper hand; but I want Him 'to live and reign, the Lord of every motion of my soul.'

"I prayed with my kindred at taking my leave of them.^[32] My brother and sister were ill, and my mother weeping after me. I found a great struggle, and believe I should have stayed, but for those scriptures: 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me:' (Matt. x. 37:) and,

'Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.' (Luke ix. 60.) My heart felt pain and sorrow; but I took up my cross; and went immediately to Ballygarane, (where were a colony of Germans,) and preached that night. O, what is needful for a minister of Jesus! what faith, love, purity, Divine light, life, and strength, to finish his course with joy!

"Meeting the penitents; I could hardly speak in the last prayer, I was; so overpowered with the presence and majesty of God.

"I arose early this morning, after watering my pillow with my tears more than ever I remember to have done before.

"Throughout the various exercises of the day, I had strong assurance that the Lord would eternally save me; especially as I sat at dinner, conversing with my brethren on the things of God.

"Having this evening to myself, without preaching," (a rare thing with him,) "I shut myself up, and sought the Lord with prayers and tears. Show me, my Lord, Thy glory; or let me die that I may see Thee! If I cannot perfectly love Thee, and do Thy will upon earth, send for me, and take my soul to heaven. But, Lord God, hast Thou not spoken by Moses, Deut. xxx. 6; and by Ezekiel, chap. xxxvi. 23-32? If these are Thy words and promises, I pray and plead that they may be fulfilled in me, according to their utmost extent. O, come, and baptize me with fire!

"At prayer with some friends, the Lord applied powerfully to my heart, 'Go, and sin no more.' Now the Lord has answered for Himself. I believe it is His will, that I should sin no more, and that I should have such a faith, as never to depart, from this moment, from Christ, in thought, word, or deed; that so, being inseparably one with Him, I should walk in the Spirit, and sing and praise Him evermore! Angels, praise my Saviour!

"Sunday, 1757. -- All the day I was happy in my Lord, rejoicing in confidence that He would save me eternally. I could pray, and love, and weep.

"It was a day of great blessing, and of great trials. I came home through much snow and rain. But it was all sweet with Christ. I called on the Strong for strength; and, after meditation, lay me down in peace.

"I employed all the day in reading the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures; save some time which I spent in endeavoring to convince a man, (who contended much,) that there is salvation for a person, though he does not make use of the Church of England's Liturgy. I had many comforts, with strong temptation.

"With a heart full of matter, I preached on Eph. vi. 11. I could truly say, that the law of Thy mouth is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

'Wide as the world is Thy command!
Vast as eternity Thy love!'

"At dinner my soul was sweetly drawn out after God. I felt such an assurance of eternal salvation as I never had before; not with such a degree of clearness of evidence.

"I wept and prayed before the Lord, that He would make me entirely pure in heart, and bless all His; children. It was a happy day.

"I felt great love to all mankind. My soul pleaded with God in their behalf. O Jesus hasten Thy kingdom. Come, and put a period to sin and misery! O my God, suffer not a vain thought to live in me. I never can rest, till Jesus has poured His humble, pure, and happy mind into my soul. For some moments I did taste of the felicity of heaven; but, through pain and unbelief, it was of short continuance.

"Friday. -- It being the public fast, I preached on Isaiah lviii. 3, It was a day of feasting to my soul. With great delight I rested in my God; and it seemed to me, that the people of God were not yet to suffer. Hereafter it will be; but at present the grand controversy is with Antichrist. ^[33] Jesus will avenge the quarrel of His covenant.

"I seek perfection, and uninterrupted communion with the blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. True, I am not worthy of the crumbs under Thy table; yet I look, through Thy rich grace, for all the precious and eternal blessings of the new covenant.

"Sunday. -- This was a glorious day indeed. Great and marvelous were the blessings which God bestowed upon me. He blesses me in every duty all is useful: all works together for my good. I go on my way singing the hundred and thirty-eighth Psalm: 'They shall sing in the ways of the Lord; for great is the glory of the Lord.'

"Jesus was with me in all I did. He gave me light, love, help, joy, peace, and strength in all. In His Spirit I went to rest.

"Wherever I was, and in whatsoever I did, my soul delighted in God: never had I deeper, or more sweet, manifestations of His gracious presence. I could not but praise Him, and thirst for more perfect union with Him! Surely this is the foretaste of glory! O, if Christians did but rightly understand the nature, power, and extent of 'the kingdom of God' in the soul, I am persuaded they would not rest satisfied with the bare pardon of sin, and some joy and peace, when they may have perfect and uninterrupted rest! If once sin be totally destroyed, and the spirit filled with the light and love of God, it is then neither hurt nor hindered by any person or thing; but steadily goes on its heavenly journey, uniting to Christ more and more daily. 'It does not yet appear what we shall be,' even in this world.

"O Christ! what hast Thou done for me? What shall I say of or unto Thee? This I say, that I love Thee! O, let it be with all my heart, and soul, and mind, and strength! At intercession, I felt such a degree of the presence of God as utterly amazed me. O glorious Lord, how shall I bless Thee?

"My heart continually rested in God, and drank of the living waters yea, my very body was supported by the joy wherewith my soul was refreshed: so that after preaching three times today, beside visiting the sick and well, my strength was more than when I arose in the morning.

"Friday. -- A day of fasting." (A frequent practice of his.) "At prayer with brother M____n, my soul was greatly humbled before God. Entire resignation, without much joy, was the state of my heart this day.

"Saturday, March 2th, 1757. -- Preparing for a short journey today, and laying up my books, I felt some little distraction. I could bless God, however, that I had not money to lay up. Alas! for the rich of this world! How are they to be pitied! How hardly can they be saved! Jesus, make and keep me poor in spirit; nor suffer this world ever to defile me. Suffer not my soul to cleave to the dust, but cause all my affections to flow towards Thyself. I would not live upon earth. I desire, pray, and labor, that my heart may be in heaven, with Christ my Head.

'Each act, each thought, he questions, What its weight,
Its colour what, a thousand ages hence
And what it there appears, he deems it now;
Hence pure are the recesses of his soul.'

"Sunday, 13th. I conversed with one today who told me, that for fourteen years last past she never found any unhappiness but always rejoiced in the love of God. Before and after sacrament, I found such desire as almost made my heart break. My soul and flesh cried, mourned, and wept for the perfect love of God. There is a beauty and excellence in holiness, which has quite won my heart.

"I felt a deep necessity of constant and habitual preparation for death.

"All day, both in reading, prayer, and conversation, I felt something of that promise, John iv. 14. I look for religion to possess and entirely to change, me. I see and feel that Christianity is something Divine, living, generous, powerful, and internal. It is God dwelling in the soul of man. (2 Cor. vi. 16.)

"Friday, 18th. -- I prayed and read till twelve. My body began then to complain. It does not like fasting; but my soul did banquet on the rich delicacies of the love and promises of God. I am in the way to heaven; but I want a heavenly nature, heaven within me. My soul can be satisfied with nothing less than God. Jesus, my blessed Jesus, let me ever esteem Thy blood and righteousness above the whole world! Through Thee I come to God. By Thee I enter heaven; Thou art heaven.

"From the labor of this day I was truly tired in body; but thankful and serene in spirit. I had no ravishing joy nor overflowings of love.

"My heart was penetrated with the goodness and love of God. I see still more clearly, that love is the fulfilling of the law, -- supreme, constant, and perfect love of God, and pure benevolent love to the whole of human kind.

'Happy soul, when once renew'd,
God in thee, and thou in God,
Only feel'st within thee move
Tenderness, compassion, love.
Love immense, and unconfined,
Love to all of human kind;
Love, which willeth all should live;
Love, which all to all would give;
Love, that over all prevails
Love, that never, never fails:
Stand secure, for thou shalt prove
All the eternity of love!"

"There is, there can be, no higher, no better, no sweeter divinity than this, 'My Beloved is mine, and I am His!' O my soul, rest in this! Be satisfied and safe in the protecting, sanctifying, and reviving love of Immanuel, God with us.

"The 33d chapter of Exodus came in my course of reading today. And, O, what pleading and communion between Moses and his God! Happy man! who conversed with the glorious Jehovah face to face. ^[34] And yet St. John seems to express something higher and sweeter than even this: 1st Epistle i. 3. For, certainly, eternal Union with God, and a fullness of His Spirit, are more excellent than any external manifestation can be.

"This was one of my blessed days, wherein I had a foretaste of the powers and glory of the world to come.

"I retired a few minutes after five, to wait for the coming of Jesus. My soul is all desire after Christ. I am resolved to love and serve Him so as I have never yet done. Come, Holy Ghost, and kindle the fire within my breast.

"From a quarter after four this morning till ten, I spent in prayer, and reading the Scriptures and such humiliation of soul, such a sense of my vileness, I hardly ever felt. It was genuine, godly sorrow, indeed; with a clear sight of the odiousness of sin. I believe the first time I ever sinned was brought to my remembrance. My head was as waters and my heart as wax before the fire. But all the time, I had a clear sense of the love of God; a witness that I was accepted in the Beloved; and all the day after, my soul delighted itself in the Lord.

"I ought to esteem myself unworthy of any comfort; my sins having justly deserved damnation. The blood of Christ is of infinite value and efficacy; otherwise I should never be saved. Infirmities, so called, which once I passed over without much remorse, now appear heinous black, and damnable; and if God did not bear witness with my spirit, that they are all forgiven, they would sink me into misery. People are seldom sufficiently sensible of the odiousness of pride, anger, internal concupiscence, or an inordinate love of the creature; together with the neglect of self-denial, and bearing the daily cross. These are overlooked; yea, some even plead for, and attempt to justify, them. Lord, let me never be an advocate for the devil. Give me grace heartily to love those who tell me of

my faults. Search out my sin, till Thou find none. My whole trust is in the blood of Jesus. I have no other plea; for this one is enough: it will, it doth prevail with God, and bring my soul to glory.

"In my closet the former part of this day, it was made indeed a time of love. I felt such sweetness and Divine felicity in my soul, and by faith beheld the glory of God in such a manner as words cannot describe. I saw and tasted God in all things. My Lord Jesus Christ appeared wonderful to me indeed. (Isaiah ix. 6.) Praise, blessing, honor, glory, and thanksgiving be ascribed to the holy and adorable Trinity! What could I have believed, what understood of Thee, unless Thou, my Lord, hadst revealed it to me. ^[35] O love Divine! O the wisdom and power of God! Human tongue cannot express, nor angel minds conceive, how great and wonderful ye are in the saints by whom God is glorified, and in whom Christ is justified by the Spirit; (1 Tim. iii. 16;) to whom heaven is, as it were, let down, and whom eternal glory momentarily awaits! They now drink of the rivers of pleasure, of the well of life; and are warmed with the beams of the Divine Sun! They are delighted with praises, allured by pleasures, clothed with light, and filled with God. Hallelujah! Amen."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 27
The Same Subject continued

The continued and progressive advancement of his soul in the knowledge of God is very discernible in the preceding sketch of his experience: although in the expression of it, and of what follows in particular, he seems often at a loss for words; human language falling so far short of those things of God, which can only be spiritually discerned. In those collections we see a soul peculiarly remarkable for a daily, serious, steady, exact, and uniform course of walking inwardly with God, and attending outwardly on all the precepts of the Gospel. He poured out simply his thoughts from the standing treasury of his heart, for his own sole use; for the more effectual promotion of his intercourse with God, and for the better adjustment of all his spiritual concerns.

"That ready, his last debt may pay,
He summ'd his life up every day."

"1757. -- I was up before five; read and prayed till I went to chapel. I felt much. The Lord knows what! In the evening we (the Society) met together, in order to devote ourselves to God afresh, by renewing our covenant with Him. My soul was greatly humbled before God, and felt that for my backslidings He might justly have cast me off; for although I have not wickedly departed from my God, yet for my blots and short-comings I was made to blush. Jesus, however, I know, stands my Advocate; and because He lives I live also.

"I rose early; and, after prayer and the sermon, communicated. The adorable Saviour gave me a taste of His sweetness, and a sight of His glory. I read, prayed, and conversed with Christian friends the rest of the day; waiting for perfect love, and exhorting others earnestly to seek after the same. Surely nothing is so desirable as this, -- God in us and the very perfection of Gospel holiness. No man can be thoroughly blessed, till this unmixed love of God purifies his heart and fills his whole soul.

"Although my employment is various, yet I refer all things to God.

"In all I did all day, God was my life, my joy, and my strength. His love was as fire within me. I never felt such a burning in my heart before: O Jesus, what hast Thou done for me!

"I saw this day, on a very trifling occasion, the necessity of having supernatural light, and a witness from God in all things even of the common affairs of life, that I please Him. Some things occur which seem to be 'in equilibrio', so that one may reason for hours, and not be able to turn the scale. O, may I never want light from God, whereby I may clearly discern what I ought to do, and

what avoid! And, O, let me leave Thy strength also; or the light that is in me will be turned to darkness for, alas! I often see my way, but am lame, or drag on heavily. Yes,

'Experience but too plainly shows
That man can act against the truth he knows.'

"Happy the man who gives up all for Christ; who, having discovered that the favor and enjoyment of God is the 'pearl of great price,' sells all earthly loves and longs that he may buy -- freely receive the unspeakable gift of God.

"Soon after ten, I lay down, but could not sleep, through a deep and comfortable sense of the love of Christ. His Spirit rested upon me, and made my heart flame with love to my God, and my All. It never entered into my heart to conceive the loving Him with all the heart, till He revealed it to me by His Spirit.

"Throughout the whole of my progress I feel that Satan is my enemy, but Jesus is my friend. I fear not then: my Lord will save me from every evil work, and preserve me to His heavenly kingdom.

"The fire of Divine love burned incessantly in my soul. Yet I perceive I must still wear some of the marks of my captivity; namely, sickness, infirmity, and death. My soul would fain fly up to God; but I am yet detained. I conversed with some eminent Christians and Jesus fulfilled His word, being with us of a truth.

"This day was as yesterday, and much more abundantly. Indeed, I can declare how greatly the Lord abased my soul, and broke me as it were in pieces. I could not perceive that any sin had place in me; but I wait for a stronger evidence that I am made pure in heart. O God, show me what by grace I am. Show me if there be pride, anger, or unbelief in my heart. Jesus Son of the living God, send down the Holy Ghost from the Father to bear me witness, and so to shine upon Thy own work. Humble and prove, but strengthen and comfort me too. I am Thine. There is not one doubt in my heart but Thou wilt save me for ever. I sing praises! Te Deum is sweet to me; so is the Magnificat, and the Nunc Dimittis. O, what has God wrought for me! Jesus, Thou art my strength and righteousness! I am safe in Thee; Thou art my rock! Salvation is unto me for walls and bulwarks.

"Having preached on 'obtained promises' and having met the society, I retired about ten. It was a festal day to my soul. I do feel from experience and Scripture, that God has indeed changed my heart, and destroyed the works of the devil. My heart cried for humility and love, -- the whole mind of Christ.

"The love of God still increased more abundantly than ever; the fire burned vehemently within me. I saw more clearly that God had confirmed me in His favor; and that all was quietness and assurance for ever. I am astonished at the gift of God; and am willing, if it pleaseth Him, to be hated of all nations for His name's sake. I will sing of mercy and judgment.

"This day I was sorely tempted Lord Jesus, Thou knowest what my temptations are. I would rather die, than deny Thee by sinning against Thee. Thou seest my simple heart. O, guard and cover my

head! My enemies are many, subtle, and powerful, and malicious but Thou art greater than they all. O God, Thou art my friend and strong helper. I, will trust, and not be afraid.

"I sensibly felt the Lord impressing His image on my soul. O perfect love! It is all in all in religion. I want it above everything, even this fulness of God in Christ.

'O shed it in my heart abroad,
Fulness of love, of heaven, of God!'

"The Lord gives me to drink of His love, as out of a river. All things work together for my good. May everyone that is godly praise Him for this and trust in His name for ever!

"I took to my bed, through violence of pain in my head, and other symptoms of a fever. I resigned myself to God, and was unmoved. I wept with gratitude to my good God. My fever soon abated; and in the night I got rest. So graciously does He deal with me!

"At the Lord's table, I had not only a clear witness that all was forgiven me, but likewise strong assurance, that God had purified my heart by faith. My soul was deeply affected with His love. The blessed Jesus is present with and precious to me. O, let my soul adore the Lord, and tell of His works with gladness. Let this be written for the generations to come.

"I love, rejoice, and give thanks. I can truly say, that Thou, O Lord, art my God for ever and ever.

"I cannot be truly content, but when I feel my heart penetrated with Thy goodness. I would be always praising Thee, and telling of Thy love, O Jesus. Thou makest my cup to run over.

"I wept with a sense of the goodness of God to me, and found all my dependence on Christ, -- Christ alone! He makes me to rejoice in His salvation. His blood, and not my holiness or usefulness, is the only cause of my acceptance, and final justification. O, who can bear praise, and rejoice in contempt? Only he that is fully crucified with Christ. This is my aim, to burn and flame with pure love to God. Nothing less than the full enjoyment of Him shall ever satisfy me. Thy presence makes my heaven. O, praise the Lord, ye servants of the Lord, all ye that do His pleasure! Why am I not lost in astonishment and love? O the goodness; and condescension of the blessed Jesus;!

"I was this day extremely ill in body: there was a burning all over my flesh. But God was the rest and life of my soul; who, notwithstanding my sickness, enabled me to continue in prayer and reading His word; yea, there was a burning of love in my heart. O, may I sink into this boundless sea, and lose myself in God!

"Trials being just at hand, that word was remarkably applied to my heart, 'I will be with thee in trouble.'

"This afternoon, taking a view of my whole life, from my infancy, the manner of bringing me up, &c. I could not but admire and adore, with weeping, the goodness of God for His dealings with me. I was an ignorant, poor sinner; having no knowledge of God, and little of this world. But the Lord

looked upon me, and said unto me, Live! My soul doth praise and magnify His name for ever! O for an enlarged heart! Jesus, Thou art my strength.

"I believe great things are at hand for me. This was one of my best days. Nothing will satisfy me till John xiv. 23 is more fully than ever fulfilled in me: 'And My Father will love him, and We will me unto him, and make Our abode with him.'" Jesus saith, 'I come quickly.' Lord Jesus, come! My soul burns with desire: I pant for the living God. O, strengthen me to do always the things that please Thee. I believe Thou wilt fully and finally save me.

"O, what a mystery is the love of Christ. How sweet a banquet! how delicious a wine! 'Lord, Thou hast ravished me with Thy love! Death is now sweet to me; and eternity affords me a most blessed and glorious hope, O, what has God done for me! Holy Lord, accept of my heartiest praise, and the most perfect love that I at present can give.

"I feel the life which never shall have an end.

"Both my body and soul were affected with the great power of God resting upon me this day. My whole nature bowed before the present Deity; and His high praises were in my mouth. He said unto my soul, 'Thou art made whole.' I replied, 'Lord, I believe.'

"In the midst of a variety of critical circumstances, my conscience was kept pure. 'He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.' 'And what can harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?'

"My soul longs for fuller union with God; for more of the root and fruit of holiness, faith, and love. O, let me lean on Thy breast, and kiss Thy feet! Keep me, my Lord, in Thy bosom.

"Humility was my delight this day. I feel within me that power of love which shall never fail. Jesus will be my full, my everlasting Savior.

"All day my cup ran over. I came to my room both wet and weary, and lay down happy. My spirit still magnifies the Lord. I rest in Him. He giveth His beloved rest.

"To rejoice evermore is my portion under the sun. My heart dissolves with the goodness of God. Truly Thou art unto me 'a place of broad rivers.' (Isa. xxxiii.) Blessed be the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! A stranger intermeddled not with the happiness which I feel. The half cannot be told. O, it is heaven upon earth! After several exercises of faith, love, and prayer, I lay down in peace. My heart is full; and yet,

'A point my good, a drop my store;
Eager I ask, and pant for more;
So strong the principle Divine!'

"O, how sweet is it to retire from the world; yea, even from converse with the holiest Christians to wait upon God alone; and to get closer acquaintance with the blessed Jesus! Happy the man that

can go to God at any time, praying to Him with faith and fervency. My God, all my soul cries aloud for more of Thy light and love. Manifest Thyself more fully within me!

"Lord, I know not that there is anyone living that has greater cause to love, and serve Thee in truth, than myself; for Thy ways of love towards me have been, and still are, very wonderful. O, how many sins hast Thou forgiven me! How many snares of the devil hast Thou broken and delivered me from! How many pains and afflictions hast Thou supported me under! How many fears and sorrows hast Thou, from time to time, banished from my heart! Thou hast given me also of Thy gifts and, with reverence I speak it, Thou hast given me Thy grace. Thou hast sent me to preach Thy word, and given me favor in the eyes of the people; neither have I spent my strength in vain. I believe, Lord, Thou hast given me Thyself; and that Thou wilt give me, in and with Thee, both grace and glory!

'Come, Lord, Thy Spirit bids Thee come;
Give me Thyself, and take me home
Be now the glorious earnest given.
The counsel of Thy grace fulfil,
Thy kingdom come, Thy perfect will
Be done on earth, as 'tis in heaven.'

"I retired to fast; and poured out my heart for my own soul, for the church of God, and for mankind in general; that God would reform the whole world. Days of fasting become sweet to me. I find more and more delight in them. But by grace I am saved. Jesus is my righteousness. Through faith in His blood, I offer myself, and all I do, to Him. The favor of God I obtained by His death; the image of God is stamped upon my heart by His Spirit; and through His intercession I obtain everlasting life. And yet will He reward every man according to his works.

"I was this day sensibly convinced of the danger of following impulses of any kind, unless supported by the express authority of Scripture. Nature and Satan suggest a variety of things which, having a show of truth and goodness often lead persons into extravagance and error. It seems, however, a sure rule, that whatsoever promotes or increases purity and meekness, love towards God and our neighbor, must be from heaven. And whatsoever does not tend to this ought to be rejected. But, O, what need is there here of spiritual discernment, to distinguish between the real graces of the Holy Ghost, and the Counterfeit appearances of the devil and self-love! God of truth and love, lead and establish my soul in the paths of justice, mercy, and truth, and humility. Make me of quick understanding in Thy fear; nor leave me a moment to my own wisdom or strength. My help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

"I adore Thee, O my God, that Thou hast made it lawful for me to pray to Thee. O, how great is Thy condescension, to regard such a poor creature as I! I will extol Thy goodness, O Lord, my King.

"All day long my heart burned with the love of God. My desires were unutterable; but He who knows the mind of the Spirit will grant me all my petitions.

"I had close trials but the consolations of God were so many, and so strong, that I was borne above them. My body and soul were exceedingly strengthened by the Divine grace. The baptism of fire I experience more than ever. But still I am a poor Creature.

"O, how soon will this dream of life be ended! Lord, I long to see Thee as Thou art. Give me patience, gracious Lord.

"For about two hours in my room, I found such Communion with God as my pen cannot write. No, it is beyond the power of words to describe the happiness which I felt. Alas! that men should be so ungrateful to God, and such enemies to their own souls as not to seek happiness in Jesus. O the delight of a soul fully united to God!

"At His table the Lord met me this day in a wonderful manner. My whole frame was so affected and overpowered, that I was ready to resign my soul into His hands.

"I was still more deeply sensible of God's presence. My desire was so strong, that it even pained my breast exceedingly. Indeed, I cannot tell what I then felt. It was the work of God; but He knows in what manner and degree. The fire spread; the light shined; and the power wrought: in short, 'God within me lived!' Sing a new song, O my soul; sing with a mighty voice. Proclaim to angels and men the goodness of the Lord Jesus, help me to praise Thee yet more and more!

"I met with several trials today; but it was given me to bear them cheerfully, and to praise the Lord, who has given me integrity of heart, and simplicity of intention, in all my ways. Lord, I love Thee. I will praise Thy name yet more, even for ever and ever!

"O, how plain it is that God reveals to babes those gracious things which are hidden from the wise and prudent! so doth He magnify His mercy, and stain the pride of human glory. In my closet, I wept much, that I may be more filled with God than ever.

"I thirsted and prayed this day to be with Him. My whole soul was in a flame for God. O for more faith, to see Him continually!

"Lord, I am sorely tempted; but Thou comfortest me.

"I am happy in Thy love. Still open Thy kingdom more fully and powerfully within me.

"In all things I come short; but I have the testimony of a good conscience.

"I stand as in the presence of God. The awe of God, I feel, rests upon my soul. O, how dreadful, and yet how joyful, is this place! Lord Jesus, Thou art Immanuel, God with me!

"I mourned for the sins of the people, and found a willingness even to lay down my life, if that would save them from hell. Many wept and trembled. O the depths of love in God!

"I felt this day an ardent desire to suffer for His name's sake, though I am conscious of my own weakness.

Being much disturbed by dreams I rose early, and called upon God. I continued reading, praying, and weeping, till seven in the evening. I was mollified, and deeply humbled. My soul adored Immanuel, and desired to die, rather than offend Him. O Holy Ghost, abide with and in me for ever! A short sentence which occurred this day in reading, and which I made the subject of discourse, deeply affected me; namely,

[Hebrew here: omitted]

"O God, Thou art my God. Blessed be Thy majesty, and exalted be Thy name. Let the earth and heavens praise and proclaim Thy greatness and glory. Jesus, I love and adore Thee! My soul's delight is in Thee!

"I was told of some who talked evil of me. I prayed for myself and for them and truly the love of God was as a mighty fire in my soul. O, what heaven is this!

"Although love and joy lived and flowed in me, yet I wept and made supplication, being strongly tempted by the devil. Ah, Lord, Thou knowest my state and trials. My desire is before Thee, and my groanings are not hidden from Thee. Hast not Thou made me pure, and sealed me Thine for ever. Shine on Thy work, and bear Thy witness with my heart. Suffer not Thy servant to be of a doubtful mind.

"I had a most comfortable morning: God did indeed bless, comfort, and establish my soul. And I continued in this fervor of love all the day.

"I see that I ought to be much in prayer for the Holy Ghost. I plainly perceive that to be taught by Him for one hour is more profitable to the soul than many days spent in reading.

"I was extremely ill with pain in my bowels. However, I visited and exhorted the people; and God gave me entire resignation.

"I spent several hours in private, begging of God to enable me to fulfil the law of love. I feel, so as I cannot write, the extent of Christian obedience. How deep, how wide!

"O, what a day of trial and consolation was this!" Deliver me, O Lord, from the strife of tongues and from the ungodly, who are a sword of Thine. I found in retirement this day sore struggles, and deep consolation.

"O, how great is the profit of simple prayer, and diligent reading of the holy Scriptures! They are, I find, of singular service to me. My soul is calmed, sweetened, melted, invigorated, and sensibly strengthened, in the exercise of these holy duties. I weep and pray, and give thanks yet still I want deeper repentance, and much more humility. I would be penetrated with the sense of my own

helplessness and I do not find power equal to my will. I live, however, by faith, and find God unspeakably and continually present.

"My soul was solidly happy, and longing for humility this day. I desire to be simple, and filled more abundantly with love to God and my neighbor.

"I never felt such gratitude to God, as I did this day, for bringing me from the idolatry of the Romish Church. My heart was grieved in reading some of their horrid doctrines,^[36] about saints and images. O God, Thou hast done this for me; and Thou hast done many thousand things beside for me; and now I beseech Thee, do this for me, -- give me an humble, thankful, and penitent heart.

"This was a feast and a fast day to my soul. All the ordinances of God are exceedingly precious and profitable to me.

"I was all day deeply engaged with God: I wept much, and prayed earnestly, yet I had not much joy. I had a full and firm confidence that He would fulfil His word of promise to my soul. My weakness can do nothing without Thy power. I lay hold of Thy strength, and offer myself to Thy holy will. O, let me glorify Thee, as well by suffering as by doing.

"This morning I met with a woman, where I breakfasted, who was exceedingly happy in God. A few weeks ago, I met her in the same place; but she was then utterly dead and careless. I spoke plainly to her; and at parting, after prayer, said, I pray God, you may never rest till you rest in Christ.' The words were applied to her heart, and her burden increased every day, so that she was brought almost to black despair, when God revealed His love in her heart. She could now scarce tell it, through weeping. O, what a God is the God of the Christians!

"In prayer my soul was happier than ever in the thought, 'I shall live with God for ever.'

"Dulness and wandering would creep upon me, but prayer scatters every obstacle.

1758. Sunday, January 1st. -- We met at four; and after prayer, I preached on Psalm xc. 12. We had the good Mr. _____ at the chapel, whose humility and fervor more than compensated for the irregularity of his sermon. I have had much more happiness on other days than on this Sabbath, though not more sincerity and resignation. I feel my weakness, and confess my ignorance; and implore the wisdom and power of God.

"After being some hours in my room, the fire from heaven went through me, and I could praise the Lord continually for His goodness to me. I find such an impression of His power and love, as cannot be expressed in words.

"This whole Sabbath was both a delight and honourable to me. Such revelations of God's goodness such manifestations of His Spirit, and such operations of His love, I never felt. My very outward man was affected and refreshed. It cannot be declared what I then felt. O, there is much in these words, 'Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.' Whatsoever I did, the Lord made it to prosper. O holy Father, let all the host of heaven praise and adore Thy name!

"As I walked through the street, He inflamed my heart with desire to live to Him more than ever I had done.

"God is love. This is the foundation of all my hopes. I feel much shame because of my infirmities but I have also sweet consolations.

"My joy has not been today as much as the last Lord's day; but my faith is more confirmed.

"I was seized with a violent pain in my stomach, and was exceedingly ill. However, by the mercy and power of God, I went through the duties of the day with delight; and I could thank God for pain, so as I never could before.

"As I read my Greek Testament this morning, my soul magnified the Lord for the description and progress of His work, contained in the Acts of the Apostles. And while I am now writing, my soul is so cheered with the fire of love, as I cannot describe, unless to such as experience the same.

"Lord, I have not publicly preached for Thee this day;" (which was indeed an unusual thing with him;) "but I have had many blessings from Thee, and my heart has been in Thy work. I beseech Thee, bless the labors of Thy more faithful servants whom I have heard.

"I have great cause to praise God, that I am free from worldly care. Surely I was appointed to this work in which I am engaged. O that I may obtain mercy of the Lord, to be found faithful! O Jesus, plead Thou my cause in the heavens, and fill me with Thy grace here upon earth. All my hope of heaven stands in Thee! O, show me, if there be aught in me which Thou abhorrest. And let me hear Thee say, 'Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.'

"O that I could love and obey, as fast as I learn. Truth appears to me every day with new lustre: new springs are opened, and the best wine kept until the last.

"On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves
In that for which they long for which they live.
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heavenly hope,
Each rising morning sees still higher rise
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;
While nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel,
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,
Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour;
Advancing virtue in a line of bliss

"When, blessed God, shall I worthily magnify Thee!

"February 18th. -- This was a day of close trial. But my God doubly comforted me.

"Sunday, 19th. After asking help from God, I preached my farewell sermon" (farewell indeed! it was the last he preached in London, and the last day of his being there) "at the Foundery, from Acts xx. 32: 'And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.' And in the evening I bade them farewell at the chapel in West-street, from Col. ii. 6: 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.' In all the duties of the day, public and private, God was exceedingly gracious to me. I believe I never felt such strength of love. I was in truth 'sick of love.' I could not sufficiently praise Him. All words came far short of what I felt. Lord, Thou hast given me much favor in the eyes of this people. They show it by words and deeds yea, prayers and tears! Reward them a thousand fold. Bring me safe to Bristol, that there I may show forth the praises of the Lord, and declare Thy righteousness and Thy salvation. Amen, Lord Jesus.

"Monday, 20th. After prayer with our family, I set out in the machine. I read my Hebrew Psalter, and the Christian's Pattern. I found great tranquillity of mind, and my spirit was refreshed with the goodness of God. I conversed with three gentlemen, my companions in the coach, on Divine subjects. I prayed earnestly to God before I set out, that my fellow-travellers might not swear or curse: and the Lord heard me; for so it was, they rather approved of Scripture subjects and studies. O the joy of a good conscience, and the rest which the soul finds in the love of God! The Lord supplies the absence of friends, and all things that are dear to us. His presence makes our paradise. It is not where, but what, we are, which is the great matter.

"Thursday, 23d. -- At Bristol, I met Mr. W. T., under whose preaching" (as has been related) "God gave me the clear witness of His forgiving love. Our meeting was for the better. 'As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.' We remembered the years of the right hand of the Most High; and how the Lord filled our mouths with laughter, when He brought back our captivity. Lord, bless this man, and make him faithful in all things! And now that I am come to this city, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom, and spend my life and strength in Thy service, assist me, O Lord, and make Thy goodness known to me. Give me wisdom and strength. O, help me, Lord Jesus to glorify Thy name. Amen.

"The Lord is my life and my salvation. He is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

"I read through today the Epistle of St. James. And I do not wonder that the proud, the sensual, and the lovers of the world, yea, all the ungodly of the earth, should find fault with it. In prayer with the family, the Spirit was poured out from on high upon us, and great grace rested upon us all.

"After prayer this morning, I began and read through, in Greek and Latin, the 2d Epistle to Timothy, and found much instruction and reproof for my soul. O, what a man ought a minister to be! how holy, and how wise! What courage, zeal, patience, and temperance are necessary for him in an especial manner, in order to give account of himself and others to God with joy!

"O God, my life, make me fully a partaker of my hope.

"Preaching on 1 John iv. 15, my mind was more clearly enlightened than ever, to see that 'perfect love' is Christian perfection. By simple, but powerful faith, I desire to attain it; and to live and grow in this love, till my spirit returns to God."

With such desires and in such meditations as these did he spend his days and nights longing and sighing for the sight of God continually; and in his prayers, the violence of his affections did not a little increase the weakness of his body.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

CHAPTER 28
Of his last Sickness and Death

His state of body, in general, (as has been related,) was that of a lingering death; which, however, being interspersed with intervals of comparative health and strength, admitted of his still going on, exercising himself in the work of his calling. But by his last sickness is meant, that degree of disease which admitted of no such interval; and at last took him off entirely from all mental or bodily labor, and ended in his removal hence.

This his last illness, may be dated from February 24th, 1758, a few days after his arrival at Bristol, from London, in his way to Ireland. After preaching twice as usual, and studying hard all day, he was seized with violent pains in his head, and in all his bones. He, however, rose the next morning at his usual time, and preached; retiring afterwards to his daily exercises but still feeling the pressure of the disorder. "My body," says he, "trembled with weakness but my soul was happy in God!"

He avoided yielding to his pains, and proceeded in his Lord's work as usual for several days till at length he was constrained to take his bed. Here he was confined for several days and taking exact notice (as his disorder admitted) of the state of his heart, according to his constant custom, and growing something better, he wrote, from the fulness of his heart, his state and sentiments, during that time, as follows: --

"Saturday, March 4th." -- (This day he took his bed.) "Good is Thy will, O Lord. Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. Thou reignest in righteousness; though no man can know love or hatred by all that is before him. (Eccles. ix. 1.) "Thou givest account of thy ways to none: but assurest the righteous that "it shall be well with him;" and that thy corrections are with this design, that we might partake of Thy holiness. I am in Thy hands, O my God: work Thy perfect will in me, and sustain me in this trial. I call upon Thee in the day of trouble; and believe Thou wilt deliver me, and that I shall glorify Thee, and praise Thee yet more and more. Thus" (as he concludes,) "I went to bed very ill, and happy."

"Sunday, 5th. -- My illness continued and increased. I had not much consolation, but was graciously preserved from buffetings. Monday, 6th. -- I continued in soul as yesterday, only with more examination. Tuesday, 7th. I had scarcely any alteration in body or soul. I cried to God, and He heard me; but the sweet and usual returns of prayer were not. Wednesday, 8th. God gave me to weep for the sins of my whole life. Thursday, 9th. My pains and pleasures, corporeal and spiritual, were as the day before. Friday, 10th. I had more consolation of soul. Saturday, 11th. -- The spirit of prayer was plentifully imparted to me: I could plead the mercies and promises and merits of God my Savior; and His love and joy were more plentifully poured into my soul. Sunday, 12th. -- I had gracious intimations of the good-will of God towards me in this sickness.

"Monday, 13th. -- I was able to read and pray and advise friends to love God, and seek Him in good earnest while they had strength. Tuesday, 14th. -- I was better still, and prayed for the increase of holy love in the children of God, and for the propagation of the faith in all nations."

Besides this brief and daily minuting down the state of his soul, he on a general review (as was his constant manner on these occasions) of the whole, has, among several other particulars the following observations which I mention the rather, since, beside other uses which may be gathered therefrom, it is consistent with the design of the work, the best means of conceiving of the man as he really was.

"I had a constant witness from the Holy Ghost, that I was a child of God. However, the sins of my life were really brought to my remembrance; particularly those of my heart; the manifold backslidings known only to God. For although God preserved me from falling, even once, into those sins in which I lived in the days of my ignorance; nevertheless I saw my pride, desire, self-will, self-indulgence, levity, and mis-spending time. ^[37] I may add to these, my want of love to God, charity to my neighbor, and more serious concern for my own soul. I saw how wonderfully the Lord had dealt with me, raising me from the dust, and giving me so many and invaluable blessings so that I ought, more than all men, to serve and love Him.

"I was moreover, deeply convinced how possible, yea, easy it is for a person, after having received great light, love, power, and joy, to fall, notwithstanding, into a certain dulness of soul; and that holy desires, vehement thirstings after God, and the spirit of prayer, may be lessened, and lost. Truly, we can keep nothing, unless the Holy Ghost help our infirmities continually.

"But the grand lesson of all, which in this little interval I learned, was, the absolute necessity of being free from persons, things and places. I saw what a tendency the soul has to rest in something beside God. I saw, that even when we give up our beloved sins, and all temporal things we are never-the-less apt to rest in the gifts and graces of God; making them, as it were, our Savior and Comforter, instead of Christ. Abraham's dwelling in tents (Heb. xi.), was explained to me in a manner which I never before conceived.

"I saw farther, how deeply the love of life and learning had been rooted in my heart; and that God saw it necessary to correct me often, to show me the vanity of both.

"I believe He is resolved to save my soul to the uttermost; and He uses various ways to accomplish, this end. I believe this sickness will be of great service to my soul; and perhaps of more use to the church of God than my labors could be. My desire is only to live wholly to Him, and to get more of the love and life of Christ. Lord, look upon me, a weak and inconstant man, and strengthen and stablish my heart with Thy love.

"In exhorting the believers, I found much of Divine consolation. O, how sweet were these two hours and how short! Love is a wonderful thing.

"Sunday, 26th. -- I was in a high fever yet when I got with the family, I forgot my pain, while we conversed of the love of God. It being Easterday, I examined what I had gained since last Easter. And I trust God has given me more humility, patience, and likeness to Himself."

He was detained at Bristol, through his illness longer than he had intended; and was but slightly recovered, when he was told of a ship just ready to sail for Cork. Being resolved on the journey, and willing to embrace the very first opportunity, weak as he was, he embarked at Pill, on the 3rd of April. The passage was extremely dangerous insomuch that the mariners themselves looked for nothing less than perishing, so boisterous were the winds and seas. But see the blessedness of being Christians indeed; true believers in Christ! Though they expected every moment to go to the bottom of the great deep; yet God," says he, "gave me more faith, and patience, and joy, than ever I felt before. I could not see death terrible to me. I prayed, and praised God incessantly: for I could not sleep an hour while on board; and neither could I eat. But Christ was with me in all, and supported me. I pleaded with the Lord in behalf of the passengers, beseeching Him that He would not take them away in their sins. They cried out vehemently, 'We are not fit to die.' On their account, I did not desire to sleep. I cried aloud to God in prayer, in the cabin; and they gladly attended then. On Saturday the wind abated; and the next day we landed safe in Cork."

On my hearing of his arrival, (being then in the county, and it being many months since we parted at London,) I hastened to see him; and can never forget the idea which the first sight of him gave me, of a man in deep "fellowship with God." On my opening his room-door, and just appearing, he got up from his chair, being in deep contemplation; and, with a spirit and countenance composed and solemn as the grave, he said, with a low voice, "God bless you." We embraced each other with tears after which, kneeling down, he prayed, as to a present God indeed! with such melting and moving expressions, and with such reverential confidence, as surpassed all that I had known and admired in him before; and plainly discovered his having entered, since we parted, much further into "the holiest, by the blood of Jesus."

During the time he stayed here, I was a daily witness of his manner of life; and saw with much concern his swift approaching end. He had most of the symptoms of a consumption in its last stage; which increased upon him every day. "The silver cords of life began to loosen, and the golden bowl," the whole of this wonderful and curiously wrought machine, to "be broken." He had an intermitting fever, which returned regularly every day about eleven o'clock; an habitual cough, and most profuse night sweats; all which had now so emaciated and weakened him, that the marks of death already appeared upon him. And yet, notwithstanding this he still so desired to discourse of the things of eternity, that, while he was at all able to stand, or speak, he could not be persuaded from preaching: and although he brought into the pulpit the very image of death upon his face, so that it could hardly be expected he should speak ten minute, he has nevertheless preached a full hour, to the astonishment of all who heard him. One would have thought he must have dropped down dead immediately after.

His internal state, still the object of his close attention, during his continuance at Cork, where there is reason to believe he began first to think this sickness would be unto death, he summarily expresses thus: --

"Saturday, April 29th. My soul truly waiteth upon God. My body feels pain and weakness but my soul enjoys the living fire of the Holy Ghost! O, may I die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! I wait for Thy salvation, O Lord. Weak I am, but cannot be removed while Jesus is my strength. O that every pain may but increase my love to God! I am supported by the fire within, and by believing that Jesus is at the right hand of God."

The time being come which he had appointed for leaving Cork, and going on to Limerick, being attended by his own brother, another friend and I accompanied him a dozen miles on the way. At the inn where we stopped, he discoursed to us at dinner of the things pertaining to the life of a Christian, respecting particular instances of conduct; but his weakness prevented him from saying as much as we could have desired. I shall never forget our parting. The other persons being gone down stairs, after he had said some particular things to me, we kneeled down and prayed together, for the last time. We then took our final farewell of each other in this world. He went on his way, and I went mine; each of us expecting to meet no more, till we meet in happier climes, and in a better world.

I do not find that from this time he kept any further account, in writing, of the daily state of his soul; owing, I am inclined to think, to the violence of his disorder, which increased now almost every hour, and which weakened and impaired the faculties of his mind, as well as the strength of his body. Hence, beholding things through so defective a medium, he became, in reality, an unfit judge of his own state. The influence which this kind of disorder, in particular, frequently has upon the powers of the mind, is well known, even to the representing things, which concern one's self and others, often directly contrary to what they really are.

He had the judgment and advice of the best physicians, wherever he came; who, on the slightest intimation, offered their assistance with all cheerfulness, neither expecting nor desiring any other gratuity than (as one of them once expressed) "the prayers of Mr. Walsh." They generally agreed, that his disorder was brought on through excessive labor, frequent and loud preaching, intense application to study, want of proper and sufficient rest; and fatigue in general. They likewise judged that his case was now past all remedy.

It was however, judged advisable that he should be removed from Limerick to the more free and open air of the country. He went thither accordingly; where he had the tenderest and most affectionate attendance, with whatsoever was judged most proper to alleviate the rigour of the disease, and restore him, if God should so please, to health. But it was now too late! And his friends perceiving that neither air nor physic availed anything, they, according to his own inclination and desire, removed him to Dublin. His next remove was to the city of the Great King, the paradise of God!

Concerning the state of his soul for a few months before his death, as he wrote nothing on the head during that time, we can speak with less certainty than of what has been already related: and, embarking for England soon after we parted, I neither saw nor heard anything particularly concerning him, till a letter brought the tidings of his being no more in this world. But from the accounts of persons of undoubted veracity, who attended him during that time, we learn, that his state was not indeed joyous but grievous. He drank of his Lord's cup of sorrow, and was, in truth, deeply baptized with His baptism. He was immersed in affliction's furnace, and plunged in the deepest waters.

His flesh chastised with torturing pain
His soul, and sickness clave his bones
Keen anguish dwelt in every vein,
And sadly turn'd his breath to moans.
Sorrow was all his soul; he scarce perceived,
But by the pains he suffer'd, that he lived!"

He was tempted, and sorely buffeted of the devil. The nature of his disorder exposed him to a degree of precipitancy and discomposure, which he was more than superior to while in better health. In short, so did the wisdom of God permit, that through the malice of Satan, the extreme violence of the disorder of his body, and the concurrence of several other circumstances this servant of God was brought to the utmost extremity of spiritual distress and anguish of soul, consistent with keeping the faith at all; insomuch that it was but few degrees removed from despair of his salvation.

"His agonizing soul sweat blood!
With Christ he fainted on the tree,
And cried in death, 'My God, my God,
Ah! why hast Thou forsaken me?' "

His great soul lay thus as it were, in ruins, for some considerable time; and poured out many heavy groan, and speechless tear, from an oppressed heart and dying body. He sadly bewailed the absence of Him, whose wonted presence had so often given him the victory over the manifold contradictions and troubles which he endured for His name's sake. A heart so sensible of the visits of its Lord, so restless at His smallest absence, as his was throughout his warfare, must needs be deeply afflicted when left, seemingly, altogether to its own poverty, and surrounded, as it were, with hosts of infernal fiends seeking to devour him. The intervals which he had of cessation from the conflict, and of comparatively quiet confidence in God, are not perhaps so well known: but that he had such, may well be supposed; for otherwise his soul and flesh must needs have failed before God.

It was, however, not until a short time before his complete and eternal deliverance, that his Lord appeared to his help; and by making Himself know as Jesus, his well-known Savior, entirely eased the anguish of his oppressed soul. The beams of His brightness dispersed the clouds and the smiles of His countenance more than compensated for all his night of sorrow. He spoke, and said unto him,. "The winter is past; arise, my love, and come away!" What then,

"Though the sickle, sometimes keen,
Just scars us, as we reap the golden grain;
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound."

The manner of his deliverance was as follows: -- A few friends being at prayer with him, on Sunday evening, as soon as they concluded, he desired to be left alone, in order, as he said, "to meditate a little." They withdrew; and he remained deeply recollected for some time: just then, God dropping into his soul, no doubt, some lively foretaste of the joys to come, and spreading the day of eternity through the regions of his inward man. He at length burst out in transport, and pronounced, in a dying voice indeed, but with the joy of angels "He is Come! He is come! My Beloved is mine,

and I am His! His for ever!" and, uttering these words, he sweetly breathed out his soul into the arms of his Beloved, on the 8th day of April, 1759, and in the twenty eighth year of his age.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

THE CONCLUSION

We cannot sufficiently admire and adore the unsearchable counsels and impenetrable secrets of God our Savior, with respect to the management of His kingdom, and the disposal of His servants. Two things are natural to reflect, on considering the preceding account in general.

1. To see a man delivered from the blindness of error and superstition, and brought into the light and enjoyment of truth, the knowledge of the true God, and of His spiritual worship; to see him brought out from the obscurity of retirement, and that by the remarkable interposition of Divine Providence, in order to spread the savour of the knowledge of God among mankind in the most public manner to consider him as singularly fitted for this by knowledge, by the word of truth dwelling richly in him, by purity, by zeal for God's glory, by the armour of righteousness and by the power of God attending his word: to see such an one cut off from among men, in the prime of life, just fully furnished for promoting the kingdom of the Son of God, to which he was entirely devoted, is a thing which will be acknowledged to nonplus human understanding, too prone to think, on such an occasion, "How is. this?"

Without entering deeply into the matter, one may easily learn herefrom, at least a confirmation of that weighty truth, "that God is not worshipped, or served by men's hands, as though He needed any person or thing." He leaves no persons any room to say or think within themselves, as though the cause and glory of God needed them, or at least had some connection with our standing or being removed. He is at no time at a loss how to serve His own glory, and the necessities of His creatures. Hereby, moreover, He would stain the pride of human glory; and teach us what can never be too fully learned, to walk humbly with our God; not to judge according to appearances and to learn to conceive of things and persons not according to bare human estimation, but according to the will of God. O that we may learn from every occurrence to fly to Him in all our affections and desires! Then, whenever our change comes, we shall be welcomed by superior beings and not much missed by men, who delight in novelties.

Whatever secret reasons might be the cause of such a procedure, in the Divine disposals whether ingratitude, or something bordering upon idolatry, in the people; or whatever was the cause, certain it is, that we need never fail to reap instruction and advantage from such awful providences as the decease of our dearest friends, since

"For us they languish, and for us they die."

2. But what may seem most strange is, that a person so laborious for God's glory; so exemplarily religious in the whole of his conversation; so useful to others; in a word, so entirely and unreservedly

devoted to Christ, should, in the time of his greatest necessity, be so destitute of spiritual comfort. And it must be acknowledged, in great measure, to be a part of those ways of which God giveth account to none. "His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out. His way is in the sea, and His paths in the great waters and His footsteps are not known. And who shall say to God, What doest Thou?" "What I do thou knowest not now," is indeed applicable to the general course of God's providences, and to much experience of Christians in particular: and perhaps this is the best footing on which to rest the present case; namely, the mysterious counsels of God, with respect to His dealings with His servants -- with him we are considering in particular.

Who can account for that providence which left the life of so holy a person as John the Baptist in such infamous bands? which permitted it to be sacrificed to the malice of an abandoned harlot, the petulance of a vain girl, and the rashness of a foolish, perhaps drunken, prince, who made a prophet's head the reward of a dance? The same reasoning has weight with respect to the treatment which He has permitted His most eminent servants in all ages to meet with. It is the fixed decree of heaven, concerning the righteous, that through much tribulation (outward or inward, or both) they must enter the kingdom of God. And the most part of ecclesiastical story is in a great measure no other than a comment on this great truth; which likewise receives abundant confirmation from numberless parts of holy Scripture.

There may be, for aught that can be known by us, a certain resemblance, in some particulars between his case of whom we speak, and that of Job. (See chap. ii. 36.) But in both, and, indeed, in all resembling instances the hand of the Lord is visibly seen; that He is pitiful, and of tender mercy, and afflicts His children only for their profit, that they might partake of His holiness. And we are well assured, that He will repay His servants in another world for whatever they suffer in this even of such as 'fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ,' in their flesh.

As to the difficulty of reconciling with his former enjoyments and professions such a state of conflict and discomfort as this his last stage was accompanied with, it may be considered, that although it was uncommon, yet the case is not singular: to recite examples would be endless.

It is true, that God has given us multiplied and various instances, in the last stages of His servants, in most ages, both of triumphant superiority to sickness, pain, and death, in some; of holy mourning, deep abasement, and patient resignation in others: and there have been those, likewise, whose last sicknesses have been such times of painful purgation from human foibles, and sore conflicts from diabolical temptations, that the utmost they have been able to do has been to abide in the furnace; till, patience having had its perfect work, they just stepped from the cross to the crown! witnessing only with their parting breath, Victory! victory! And all this it is impossible to account for by appearances.

Thus we hear one in his last sicknesses saying, "I am, by the wonderful mercy of God, as full of comfort as my heart can hold. I feel nothing in my soul but Christ, with whom I heartily desire to be." Another, "I am like a bird upon the wing; and would fain be upon Immanuel's land, where the tree of life is. Here I am, a weak man, in the hands of the king of terrors, rejoicing in hope of the glory that shall be revealed; and that by the death and resurrection of a despised Christ. All these soft cloths are like sackcloth, and yet I have perfect rest of spirit." Another, "O, how does the love of God

wipe off all pain! The servants of God suffer nothing. Their trials are but for a moment; their joys are eternal!" Ten thousand instances of this sort might be alleged, in the present generation; (to look no farther;) persons who, throughout a course of pains and wants, evidenced the victorious conquest which faith gives over all our enemies, and over death, the last of all.

There have been those, on the other hand, who, after a course of useful and holy living, of eminency in wisdom, and in favor with God, have, nevertheless, towards the setting of their sun, wanted those joyous beams of triumphant light and life; and who approached their seat of repose with many tears and sighs, with shame, and confusion, and hopes, and dependence; and, even at the last, left nothing particularly memorable for the discourse and joys of the survivors ^[38]but who, notwithstanding, have attained their wished-for port, and enjoy the pleasures of those peaceful mansions, (John xiv. 2,)

"Where conflicts past redouble present joys."

Diversity of complexions different periods of grace or Divine dispensations, with a thousand particulars, known best to God, may be taken into consideration, in attempting to account for this difference in the Divine disposals concerning His servants. But I forbear attempting to solve that of which I am free to profess my ignorance, and wait for that light which will infallibly

"Throw full day on darkest scenes of time."

It may be farther observed concerning this servant of God, that, although his comforts had been exceeding great throughout most part of his experience, yet he had frequent and violent encounters with the enemy: so that sometimes we find, in the same paragraph, acknowledgments of the great joy and peace which he felt, and complainings of grievous temptations and trials. Take an instance or two, among a thousand, in his own words: --

"I found in retirement sore struggles and deep consolation." And again: "Although love and joy lived and flowed in me, yet I wept and made supplication, being strongly tempted of the devil. Ah, Lord! Thou knowest my state and trials and my groanings are not hid from Thee! What conflicts with myself do I daily feel!"

Some are tempted most in the beginning of their conversion, and some towards the latter end; and others there are, who are sorely tempted throughout their whole life. The latter was his case. But now, especially, his natural faculties, weakening in proportion to the decay of his bodily strength, rendered him the fitter mark for Satan to attack with his last and most violent assaults which therefore he plied to purpose. He could not, however, make him let go his integrity; nor did he alter his sentiments concerning any part of Christian doctrine, or retract anything he had formerly said relating thereto. And as to the course of his most secret walking, although, on the whole, he saw nothing whereof to glory in himself before God, but rather was continually filled with holy shame and deep abasement at the disparity which he still perceived between himself and his holy Lord; yet there was no particular sin, since his conversion, with the cherishing of which he could charge himself. To which may be added, that, in the midst of this "hour and power of darkness," he never

once charged God foolishly; but, on the contrary, he sought to Him with groans, and tear, and cries, without ceasing.

His sufferings both of body and mind were great beyond description: but when we consider, thus did God permit concerning him, it puts to silence every doubtful evil reasoning on the head. By constituting him a perfect sufferer, God thereby made him the more conformable to His suffering, Conquering Son, -- "that Man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs" and rendered his condition not that of a bastard, or base-born child, abandoned of God, and rejected; but, on the contrary, that of a beloved son, scourged and purified by his heavenly Father, that he might thereby more eminently partake of His holiness and glory. And should heaven permit his conveying to us his present sentiments concerning his momentary afflictions we should certainly hear him pronounce to this effect: --

"For all I bless thee; most, for the severe;
Amid my list of blessings infinite,
Stand this the foremost, that my heart has bled."

He had hope in his end; and therefore ceased, not to cry to Jesus, who was with him in reality all the while in the furnace, and finally appeared his Friend and his Beloved.

"Tried to the last, but not forsook;
But honor'd with distinguish'd grace,
Heavenward he cast a dying look,
And saw ones more his Saviour's face.

'He's come! my well beloved,' he said,
'And I am His, and He is mine!'
He spake, he gazed, he bow'd his head,
And sunk into the arms Divine!"

On, the whole, I profess that, although, on my first hearing, of the afflictive scene through which he passed, I was more astonished than at anything I ever remember to have happened to myself or others; remaining in dumb suspense at what could be the cause of so unexpected a procedure; nevertheless I am now inclined to consider the whole affair as an argument rather of his strength than the contrary. His supporting at all, under such extreme sufferings, not a little demonstrates his great soul, and nearness of conformity to God his Saviour,

"Who drank, in His sad days of flesh,
The potion by His Father given;
And bids His members feel afresh
The fierceness of the wrath of Heaven."

"If thou faintest," Solomon saith, "in the day of adversity, thy strength is small:" and, by parity of reason, to stand in a time of sore trial argues proportionable strength. Avert, my God, avert from my soul, ill able to bear it, such a time of trial! O Jesus, by all Thou hast done and suffered; by Thine

agony and bloody sweat; by Thy cross and bitter passion; by Thy meritorious death, Thy resting in the chambers of the grave, Thy triumphant resurrection and ascension, and by Thy coming again in glory; in the time of sickness, in death, and in judgment, deliver my soul, I beseech Thee!

"In Thy fair book of life Divine,
My God, inscribe my name;
There let me fill some humble shrine,
Beneath the slaughter'd Lamb!

"O might I, with my parting breath,
Thee in Thy bloody vesture see,
And cast me on Thy sacrifice!
Jesus, my Lord, remember me!"

The thoughts of being quickly loosed from the fetters of the body had often filled his soul with the most sensible delights, desiring nothing so much as to see his God; and the approaches of eternity did often so inflame his desires that he was sometimes in a degree of transport. But after all that can be said on the head of this his last scene, and indeed of the methods of God's providential dispensations in general, concerning nations or individual persons, it seems the wisest and best method to rest in that sentiment; namely, not curiously to scan them, but rather to adore, in humble silence, His unsearchable judgments and impenetrable secrets, Since,

"Not deeply to discern, not much to know,
Mankind was born to wonder and adore,"

Whatever is permitted to befall them in this world, we are well assured "it shall be well with the righteous." All things, whether prosperous or adverse, shall work together for their good. He that liveth for ever saith, "I come quickly," -- to put a final period to the whole of mortal things, and to determine the states of all the children of Adam for ever! His reward is with Him. We shall see Him as He is. Though now we see Him not, yet, believing, we rejoice! O Jesus, work in our hearts that conformity to, and resemblance of, Thyself, that we may seek nothing, but night and day think of, long for, and joyfully wait for, Thine appearing.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

APPENDIX
Further Particulars Illustrative of Mr. Thomas Walsh's
Life and Character

His Biblical Knowledge

"I, knew a young man who was so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New, Testament, he would tell, after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place. His name was Thomas Walsh. Such a master of Biblical knowledge I never saw before, and never expect to see again." -- Wesley's Sermons.

The Occasion Of His Dying Conflicts

Soon after his ordination, Mr. Fletcher preached a sermon at West-street chapel, in which he made some remarks on the dying hours of good men. He supposed that some comparatively weak believers might die most blessedly; and some strong ones, for the further purification of their faith, or for reasons inscrutable to us might have tremendous conflicts. At the meeting of the bands, that excellent man, Mr. Thomas Walsh, opposed this doctrine, and told him, he thought it bore hard against God's justice, faithfulness and covenant love to His servants. Mr. Fletcher modestly observed, that God's wisdom was sovereign and inscrutable; and though he was sorry he had given offence, yet he could not, with a good conscience, retract what he had said. With some degree of warmth, (the constitutional failing of Mr. Walsh,) he replied, 'Be it done unto you according to your faith, and be it done unto me according to mine.' Here the matter rested. In about two years Mr. Walsh died; and so very severe his dying conflicts. That they produced a very strong sensation among his brethren and in none more than in Mr. Fletcher. In April 1759 he wrote thus to Mr. Charles Wesley: -- "With a heart bowed down with grief, and eyes bathed in tears; occasioned by our late heavy loss, I mean the death of Mr. Walsh, I take my pen to pray you to intercede for me. What! that sincere, laborious, and zealous servant of God! was he saved only as by fire? and was not his prayer heard till the twelfth hour was just expired? O, where shall I appear?, I who am an unprofitable servant? Would to God my eyes were fountains of water to weep for my sins! Would God I might pass the rest of my days in crying Lord, have mercy on me! All is vanity, -- grace, talents, labors if we compare them with the mighty stride we have take into eternity!" . .

"His own sermon, Mr. Walsh's remarks, and distressing end, made a lasting impression on Mr. Fletcher's mind. Often, did he speak of it with amazement to Mrs. Fletcher, and would conclude with saying, 'Be it our care to lead holy lives: the comfort of our deaths we must leave with the Lord, who will do all things well.'

"I need not advert to the triumphant end with which the Lord saw good to crown his humble faith; but in justice to that wonderful man, Mr. Walsh, who, in the short space of nine years, from nineteen to twenty-eight, ran a race of piety and ministerial labor which shames ninety-nine out of a hundred of Christ's ministers I must undraw a veil, which, for certain reasons, Mr. James Morgan thought prudent to draw over the closing hours of his friend, that some clue may be given to what appears inexplicably mysterious. And, no doubt, the knowledge Mr. Fletcher afterwards had of the causes which led to, and in some degree explained, the conflicts his friend suffered, did greatly lessen his astonishment.

"Mr. Walsh had offered his hand to a pious woman among the Methodists, whom he considered as a widow. She respectfully declined it, saying, though she had not seen her husband for seven years, and had some reason for thinking him dead, yet, until she had better authority to go on, she deemed it her duty not to alter her state. In this very sufficient reason, Mr. Walsh cheerfully acquiesced. And here the business should have rested. But unhappily the good woman could not keep her own secret. She imparted it to Mr. Wesley, who hated all secrets, and could keep none. Michael Fenwick spread it abroad; and circumstances were so misrepresented, that Thomas Walsh fell into great and undeserved reproach. His preachings, fastings, hard studies, and the incessant labors of a mind, which, like a sharp sword, cuts its scabbard, had brought him far into a consumption. He wished to breathe his native air, and for a while to repose, until he could again resume his labors. He was to embark at Bristol: after preaching till he was bathed in perspiration, Mr. C. Wesley, to whom every exaggerated report had been made, took him out to walk in private, in a keen east wind. There he got a violent cold, and was distressed beyond measure to be told, that his conduct, in the transaction I have reported, had done more harm to religion than his life and labors had honored it. Under these trying circumstances of mind, and dangerous state of health, he embarked for Ireland. There he found very unkind family friends who would dispute with a dying man. His physicians proved unskillful; and as they could do nothing for him, they declined doing what he proposed. Depressed by disease, laboring under unmerited reproach, severely judged by some he best loved, and grieved to the soul to think that religion should be stabbed through his side, his faith fainted, his patience forsook him, and he complained bitterly, 'his physicians were ignorant and his friends cruel.' Now was the hour of the power of darkness. Satan, who had often fallen before the lightning of his doctrine, and who could not stand against his praying faith, rallied his broken powers and led them, reinforced by the black troops of death, to a final conflict.

"The God of patient Job permitted his malice to accuse, and his subtlety for a while to stagger, his dying servant. Driven to the brink of despair, his eye was still raised to Him 'who was lifted up to draw all men to Him.' Again joy beamed from his eye, and lighted up his ghastly countenance: he sprang up in his bed, clasped his hands together, and exclaimed, 'My Beloved is mine, and I am His!' thus died this brave soldier of Jesus Christ." -- Melville Horne.

Such is Mr. Horne's account; and, in the absence of contrary evidence, its general accuracy may be admitted, especially as Mr. John Wesley says, "There were some circumstances, not commonly known, which easily account for the darkness he went through before he went to paradise." But the view which it gives of Charles Wesley's Conduct in the affair is unquestionably at variance with fact. The most fastidious censor could not find in the part which Mr. Walsh acted any just ground of blame. He understood that the lady was a widow; and when he was told that he was in error, he

immediately acquiesced in her decision, and withdrew his suit. What could he do more? To reprove a dying man, who had long given proof of the utmost purity of character, for a mere mistake, as if he had been guilty of immorality, would have been an outrage upon every principle of charity, justice, and humanity. Happily for Mr. Charles Wesley's memory, we have direct proof that he did not treat his afflicted friend in the cruel and unfeeling manner which is imputed to him. On the contrary, as might have been expected, considering the kindness of his heart, he did everything in his power to soothe and cheer the suffering man, whose extraordinary abilities, and high moral worth, he duly appreciated. During Mr. Walsh's stay in Bristol, he showed him every mark of attention and tender sympathy; he corresponded with him in the same spirit after Mr. Walsh had gone to Ireland; and, by his affectionate letters, he greatly alleviated the pain and anguish which he could not remove. Of this we have the most unexceptionable proof, -- the testimony of Mr. Walsh himself. Two letters, written by him from Ireland, and addressed to Mr. Charles Wesley, have been preserved, as if on purpose to disprove Mr. Horne's injurious allegation; and, as they illustrate this part of Mr. Walsh's personal history, as well as that of his friend, they are here given entire. The first was written just after the afflicted man had left Bristol; the other, six months later.

"CORK, April 17th, 1758. "Rev. and Dear Sir,

"God has all power; therefore we arrived safe here on the Saturday next after I left Bristol. We were tossed with tempest; I may say, a day and a night in the deep; for the sea ran over the vessel. But, as you prayed, Jesus was in the ship. He was my support, and did strengthen and comfort my heart. O that I could praise and love Him, and live more to the glory of His name! Trials make Christ precious to us.

"Dear sir, how shall I sufficiently thank you for all your kindness? I know it is God that gave us union and love. To the prayer of faith nothing is impossible. I trust love will abound.

"Mr. Hopper is here, and is well, and God has prospered him. Mr. Wesley is still in Dublin, but intends to leave it next week.

"It would give me a singular pleasure to hear from you, and to hear dear Mrs. Wesley and the child are well. When you write to her, I request you would give my best respects, and to any of those good friends I saw at your house, especially Mrs. Grinfield. I find such union with Bristol people as I never found before; and as to London saints, they are written in my mind. Yet it is very uncertain whether I shall see them till the resurrection of the just. If you please to write to me, direct for me at Mr. Thomas Jones's, merchant, in Cork.

"Dear sir, requesting your prayers and service, I am your truly affectionate and dutiful son."

"Rossmead, October 9th, 1758. Rev. and Very Dear Sir,

"Your letter was very refreshing to me; and while I read it the power of God rested on me. But truly I am ashamed that you should speak in such language to me. It is certain I pray earnestly for you, being moved thereto, not by a mere sense of duty, but by hearty love, and a remembrance of your kindness.

"My spiritual state is this: First, I have a constant assurance of the favor of God. Secondly, a steadfast confidence that my present afflictions will work together for my good. Thirdly, that whenever God calls me hence, Jesus will receive my spirit, Fourthly, I am tried to the uttermost. All the grace God has given me can hardly bear the pains I feel. Indeed, my soul is often sorrowful. I grieve, though not enough, that my love to God is so little; and that I do not desire more earnestly to be with Christ. Yet I live by faith, and constantly pray for submission and thankfulness. In prayer my soul is often enlarged; and I am led much to pray that the God of patience and consolation would give all His children to be likeminded: I mean, chiefly, that they should love one another. Ah, Lord! why do not Thy children love and agree, as Thou hast given them commandment, and even prayed that they should? When will Thy prayer be answered? Well, blessed Jesus, we shall agree in Thy presence.

"It is long since I wrote a letter; but you have constrained me. I am worse and worse as to my disorder. I have a violent cough, profuse night-sweats, a high and almost continual fever, wind in my stomach. Finally, every part is pained in its turn. But to this day the Lord has not shown me clearly whether this sickness be unto death. O that I may be always ready!

"My strength fails me. I can only add a thousand loves and respects to my friends at Bristol. Upon you, my dear sir, and the kind wife of your bosom, and all that belong to you, may the blessing of God for ever abide! Shall I hear again from you?

"I am, Rev. Sir, your affectionate son.

"P.S. -- Dear Sir, Excuse me for putting you to cost. I could not get a frank here; and I was afraid, if I sent the letter by London, you would not receive it for a long time, if at all. O, forget not to pray for me! I believe really you do make intercession for me. I often, with pleasure, told my friends Mr. Charles Wesley prays for me; yea, and sings a verse for me too."

Such was the grateful and devout language of this great man, drawn forth by the Christian affection and sympathy of Mr. Charles Wesley. The statement of Mr. Horne, viewed in connection with these letters affords a striking illustration of the uncertainty of oral tradition, especially when various parties are concerned in the transmission of a report. That Thomas Walsh's distress, in his last illness, was at all occasioned by any severity and unkindness of Charles Wesley, is here positively disproved. He was one of the truest friends on whom Thomas Walsh could rely in the hour of trial; and the high estimate that he formed of Walsh's character is further shown in the subjoined hymns, which he wrote on the occasion of Mr. Walsh's death.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

Life and Death of Thomas Walsh

HYMN I

PART I

1 God of unfathomable grace,
Unsearchable to mortal sight,
Faithful and just are all Thy ways;
Whatever is from Thee is right.
In wisdom and mysterious love,
Thou hast revoked the blessing given;
Thy will be done beneath, above,
Thy name adored in earth and heaven.

2 A zealous instrument of good,
A vessel fit for use Divine,
Thy mercy on Thy church bestow'd,
And gave the burning light to shine:
Thy grace had first prepared his heart,
Dispelled the Babylonish gloom,
And bid his early youth depart
The camp of Antichristian Rome.

3 Drawn by a secret power, he flew,
(Nor stay'd to prop the Papal throne,)
The truth determined to pursue,
And panting for a God unknown:
By works of legal righteousness
He blindly sought the grace to obtain,
But could not find the paths of peace,
But labor'd through the fire in vain.

4 While thus he toil'd, a sudden cry
Proclaim'd the approaching multitude:
They told of Jesus passing by,
Of free redemption in His blood:
Upstart'd, like the beggar blind,
He sprang the healing touch to meet,
Cast all his filthy rags behind,
And groan'd for faith at Jesus feet.

5 The incarnate God his sight restored,
With faith the heart-felt pardon gave;
And raised him up to preach his Lord,
So willing all mankind to save:
By Christ Himself ordain'd and sent,
A herald of redeeming grace,
Eager to the highways he went,
And fill'd the land with Jesus praise.

6 But lo! the soul-ensnaring fiend,
Soon as the stripling's course began,
Urged him for trifles to contend,
And turn'd aside to janglings vain.
Not long: for soon his upright heart
Retrieved its momentary loss,
Resolved its utmost powers to exert,
And only glory in the Cross.

7 His course impetuous who can tell,
While battling with the infernal foe?
He puts forth all his strength and zeal,
He spends his life at every blow!
Or fierce on the Philistines flies,
Compels the captives to come in;
Spoils Satan of his lawful prize,
And tears them from the toils of sin.

8 Refreshing, soft, as vernal showers,
His word on weary sinners falls
Or like the rapid torrent pours,
While souls to Jesus blood he calls
With strength and utterance from above,
Drives on the saints, through grace forgiven,
To scale the mount of holiest love,
To seize the brightest throne in heaven.

PART II

1 While Christ with all his heart he sought,
And all his gifts from Christ received,
A witness of the truths he taught,
A pattern to the flock he lived;
Them by his bright example lived,
The power of godliness to prove,
In word, in converse, and in deed,
In faith, in purity, and love,

2 Did he not labor day and night,
In ministerial works employ'd?
His sweet relief, his whole delight,
To search the oracles of God;
To listen at the Master's feet,
To catch the whispers of His grace,
And long for happiness complete,
And gasp to see His open face!

3 Did he not triumph in the Cross,
Its prints as on his body show,
Lavish of life for Jesus cause,
Whose blood so free for him did flow
He scorn'd his feeble flesh to spare,
Regardless of its swift decline;
His single aim, his ceaseless prayer,
To attain the righteousness Divine.

4 Impatient to be truly great,
Ambitious of a crown above,
He coveted the highest seat,
He ask'd the grace of perfect love:
He ask'd, alas! but knew not then
The purport of his own desire,
How deep that cup of sacred pain,
How searching that baptismal fire!

5 The Lord allow'd his bold request;
The servant is call'd forth to share
That anguish of a wounded breast,
Those pangs which only God could bear;
Who drank, in His sad days of flesh,
The potion by His Father given,
And bids His members feel afresh

The fierceness of the wrath of Heaven.

6 A taste of that mysterious cup
His faithful follower now received,
And fill'd his Lord's afflictions up,
While grief beyond conception grieved:
His agonizing soul sweat blood,
With Christ he fainted on the tree,
And cried in death, "My God, my God,
Ah! why hast Thou forsaken me .

7 Tried to the last, but not forsook,
But honour'd with distinguish'd grace,
Heavenward he cast a dying look,
And saw once more his Saviour's face:
"He's come! my well-beloved," he said,
"And I am His, and He is mine!"
He spake; he gazed; and bow'd his head,
And sunk into the arms Divine.

8 Shout all the first-born church above,
His full triumphant entrance there;
Shout, all on earth, whom Jesus love
Hath call'd His cross and crown to share.
Our calling, Lord, we calmly see,
Our burden joyfully sustain,
And die through one dark hour with Thee,
With Thee eternally to reign.

* * * * *

HYMN II

1 Glory, and thanks, and love,
And everlasting praise,
Ascribe to God, who reigns above,
Supreme in power and grace;
To His co-equal Son,
The dear-bought sinners' Friend,
Jesus, who freely loves His own,
And loves them to the end.

2 To God the Comforter,
The earnest and the seal
The witness of our sonship here,
The gift unspeakable:
To the great Triune God,
Be ceaseless honors given,
Till Christ, descending on the cloud,
Turns all our earth to heaven.

3 He bids us now partake
Our fellow-servant's bliss,
Whose soul returns in safety back
From life's tempestuous seas
Who, driven and tossed no more,
No more o'erwhelm'd, opprest,
Claps his glad wings, escaped to shore,
To the Redeemer's breast.

4 He sees the trial past,
He leaves the storm behind,
To his triumphant Head at last
Inseparably join'd
Shout all the host's above,
When Jesus saith, "Well done,"
And deigns His servant's faith to approve,
And seats him on the throne.

5 Thanks be to God, who gave
The victory and the prize!
Join, all who own His power to save,
The triumph of the skies
The church of the first-born,
To them by faith we come,
And conquerors of the world, return
To our celestial home.

6 We know in whom we trust,
We haste to His embrace,
Mix'd with the spirit's of the just,
The perfected in grace;
Their ripest joy to share,
Exulting we ascend,
And grasp our old companions there,
And our eternal Friend.

* * * * *

HYMN III

1 'Tis finish'd, 'tis past
His conflict below,
The sharpest and last
He ever shall know!
The fiery temptation
Hath spent all its fires,
The heir of salvation
With triumph expires.

2 The buffeting fiend,
Who push'd him so sore,
And bruised to the end,
Shall bruise him no more:
He trod on his bruiser,
And more than subdued
Our hellish accuser,
Through Jesus' blood.

3 Depress'd by the cross,
He mounted the higher,
He left all his dross
And tin in the fire;
He brought, by his mourning,
The Comforter down,
And Jesus returning
Presented the crown.

4 All praise to the Lord!
All praise is His due;
His merciful word
Is tried, and found true:
Who His dereliction
On Calvary bear,
And share His affliction,
His kingdom shall share.

5 O Saviour, to Thee
Our souls we commend,
If nail'd to the tree,
We bleed to the end:
We bear the full anguish,
The uttermost load
But give us to languish,
And suffer like God.

6 Remember us, then,
And answer our call,
When turning with pain
Our face to the wall;
In trouble stand by us,
Till all is o'erpast,
And chasten, and try us.
But save us at last.

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

THE LIFE OF MR. JOHN MURLIN
Written by Himself

I was born in the parish of St. Stephen, in Cornwall, in the year 1722. I was mostly employed in the farming business till I was twelve years of age. My father died before I was thirteen; and I hope died in peace.

I was then desirous to learn the business of a carpenter; and, accordingly, at Michaelmas, 1735, was bound apprentice to one. My master lived utterly without God in the world; he was much given to swearing, and taking God's name in vain; and I too readily followed his bad example, and was much addicted to that vice.

At Michaelmas, 1742, my apprenticeship expired. I then wrought with another master three or four years, with whom I made some progress both in my business and in my learning; applying myself in the day-time to my trade, and in the evening to writing and accounts. But all this time I was an enemy to God and to my own soul. Indeed, at times I had convictions of sin, and some concern about my future state. But being surrounded by those who had no thought of God, and having no one to direct me, I quickly stifled my convictions, and became worse than I was before. To cursing and swearing I soon added gaming, and, soon after, drunkenness. Lord! how great is Thy mercy, in sparing those that live in open rebellion against Thee!

In February, 1749, I heard the Methodist preachers. I was soon brought under deep conviction on account of my numerous sins: the remembrance of them was grievous to me; the burden of them was intolerable. I grudged myself the food I ate; I thought a burned crust was too good for me. "The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me, and His hand pressed me sore." I frequently kneeled at my bed-side, and wrestled with God in prayer till midnight; and sometimes I was afraid to lie down in bed, lest I should awake in hell. At other times, I fell on the ground, and roared for the very disquietness of my heart. Yea, and when I heard the preachers speak of the love of Christ, and of His willingness to save poor lost sinners, it fixed my convictions the deeper, to think I should be such a rebel against so loving a Saviour.

In April I heard Mr. Downes preach on part of the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke. Under this sermon I found a great deliverance. My burden was taken away. And from this day I never found that distress which I had felt before. But I was not fully satisfied that my sins were forgiven, though I read and prayed, and used all the other means of grace at all opportunities.

I had now a calm serenity in my soul, and often much peace and joy; but I wanted a clearer manifestation of the pardoning love of God. And this He was pleased to give me soon after, under the preaching of Richard Trather, a local preacher. I could then indeed say, "Lord, Thine anger is turned aside, and Thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." And although,

since then, I have met with sore trials, and sometimes have been brought very low; yet, blessed be God, I have never lost my confidence, and I trust I never shall.

Sometime after this, Mr. William Roberts, then the traveling preacher in our Circuit, told me I must take care of the little class which met near the place where I lived. I was struck with fear, and went out of the room, telling him I could not undertake it. But he insisted upon it, and, as the people desired I should, I at last complied; and yet with fear and trembling, as I thought there were some in the class whose abilities were far superior to mine.

In order to qualify myself a little better for the employ, I bought a large Bible, with some other books, and applied myself to prayer, and reading, chiefly the holy Scriptures. And it pleased God to open my understanding more and more, to see the wondrous things of His word.

But about this time I was often beset by some disputatious Anabaptists, endeavoring to prove unconditional election. I asked them, "Can this stand without absolute reprobation? And if God from eternity determined the end, namely, the damnation of the reprobates, did He not also determine their sins, as the means to it. But, in saying this, do you not make God the author of all the sin that ever was committed? And, if so, is He not the author of all the sins of devils, as well as of men?"

I now met my class constantly, to whom I sometimes gave a word of exhortation. And I never found myself more happy than when I was among the children of God.

There were at this time in the neighborhood several local preachers but they had more places to preach at on a Sunday than they could possibly supply. One of them, Thomas Randall, came to me, and said, "The people are starving for want of bread; and can you withhold it from them? The Lord has put it into your hand: but you are not a good steward; otherwise you would dispense to all their portion of meat in due season." His words made a deep impression on my mind; and though I put him off for the present, yet I could not shake off a continual fear lest I was burying my talent in the earth.

Some time after this, preaching had been appointed at a neighboring place, and no preacher was at liberty to go. I was in a strait, not knowing what to do. At length I came to this resolution, "I will go this once, and see whether I am enabled to speak to the people or not; and then I shall be better satisfied, either to speak again or to be silent." So I set out with a trembling heart. When I came to the place, there were more people than the house would contain: this obliged them to carry out the stand. I got upon it with fear and trembling, gave out a hymn, and went to prayer, wherein I found unexpected liberty. I then read those words, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts iii. 19.) It pleased God to give me to speak with a free heart, and with a ready tongue. The people gave great attention to the word, and tears ran down many cheeks. I hope the good impressions were not soon effaced; for when I was last in Cornwall, (in July, 1777,) some of the people remembered what they heard that day.

Not long after, I was appointed to labor in conjunction with several other local preachers. And though my abilities were not large, yet God gave me favor in the eyes of the people; and it pleased Him to make the plain words I spoke a blessing to many souls.

At this time the world began to smile upon me. Living with my mother, my board cost me nothing; I got much money at my business and I had a rich uncle, who always expressed a peculiar regard for me; and it was expected, whenever he died, he would leave me the greatest part of his substance. Being in so agreeable a situation in the midst of my Christian friends, I built me a house in the parish of St. Mewan, in order to fix my tabernacle.

Just then I received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Wesley, inquiring if I was willing to be a traveling preacher; and, if I was, desiring me to go into the west of Cornwall. I wrote back my objections: 1. That my aged mother desired I would not leave her. 2. That not only my relations, but my Christian friends, were unwilling to part with me. And, 3. That, though I might be of some use among my neighbors, yet my abilities were not equal to so great a work. Mr. Wesley soon sent me a second letter, which fully answered all my objections. So, after a short struggle in my mind, I resolved to give up all for Christ; and, accordingly, on October 12th, 1754, I took my horse, and, without delay, rode away into the west of Cornwall.

I labored in various parts of England, from this time till September 15th, 1756. Then I embarked with Captain Davis for Ireland, with four other preachers two of whom, I trust, James Massiot and Nicholas Gilbert, are safe landed in paradise.

The next year I embarked at Dublin with Lawrence Coughlan, landed at Parkgate, and rode up to the Conference in London. Thence I went to Whitehaven, where I was much blessed, both in my soul and in my labors. Here I met with a companion, who for three or four years was inseparable from me. His name was Benjamin Biggs, a favorite servant of the late Sir James Lowther: with him I embarked in July, 1758, for Liverpool. But the captain deceived us, and carried us to the Isle of Man. Here we stayed a week. The second evening I preached in a large barn. But on Sunday it would not contain the congregation; so I was obliged to preach abroad. The people in general behaved well, and gave great attention. After I left them, some of them sent to Whitehaven, desiring to have another preacher. But it was some years before another preacher went, there being so little probability of doing any considerable good, while the whole island was a nest of smugglers. The Duke of Athol was then king of the isle; but the case is now widely altered. Since it has been purchased of the duke, and united to the crown of England, that detestable trade is rooted out. A considerable part of the island is cultivated. At one part of it, a herring-fishery is established; at another, a large linen-manufactory. And we now see the fruit of our labors there, in the conversion of many sinners to God.

From August, 1767, to August, 1768, I was in the Bristol Circuit. There was this year a very remarkable increase of the work of God Kingswood. Above an hundred and sixty members were added to the society; and thirteen or fourteen children at the school were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. But which of these will endure to the end?

When I look back on the many years I have now spent in testifying the Gospel of the grace of God, though I have not made that advancement in His ways which I might have done, yet I can say, to His glory, He hath so kept me, that none can lay anything to my charge with regard to my moral conduct, since God first spoke peace to my soul, in April, 1749.

I am clearly convinced that God has called me to preach His everlasting Gospel. And the more, because it has pleased Him by His Spirit to confirm the word of His messenger. Indeed; I am fully persuaded that He does confirm the word of all whom He hath sent, by turning sinners, through them, "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

And I believe that Christ "is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto God through Him." I cannot credit them who are continually telling the people that the Canaanite must dwell in the land to humble them; that is, Belial must be a partner with Christ in His work; as though Christ was not sufficient to humble the souls of God's children, without calling in sin and the devil to His assistance.

I bless God, my heart is engaged in His work; and there is nothing gives me greater satisfaction than to hear of the prosperity of Sion. Yet how much longer I shall be able to travel I cannot tell, as I have a settled rheumatism in my knee and thigh, and am far past the meridian of life. But, in all circumstances, I have chosen God for my portion, and the lot of my inheritance for ever. He hath been my helper hitherto; and I trust He will help to the end. O Lord! forsake me not in my old age. Lay Thine everlasting arms beneath me; and give me a safe and comfortable passage through the valley of the shadow of death; and bring me to Thy holy hill, to praise Thy name for evermore!

Meantime, I bless God, I can say to His glory, I do find constant communion with Him. And I pay no regard to those who tell us, "You must come from the mount; and you must not mind your frames and feelings." No! If I have the peace of God, do I not feel it? If I do not feel it, I have it not. And if I do not feel joy in the Holy Ghost, it does not exist. And shall I not feel it more and more, if I go on from faith to faith; if I daily "grow in grace," (as I trust I shall,) "and in the knowledge our Lord Jesus Christ?"

August 1st, 1779

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

AN ACCOUNT
Of The
DEATH OF MR. JOHN MURLIN,
Minister of the Gospel

To the Editor of the "Methodist Magazine

Leeds, October 4th, 1799

My Dear Friend,

We are exhorted in the sacred Scriptures, to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" and, accordingly, we not only see their exemplary faith, piety, and zeal described in the word of God, but also much of their experience is recorded there. In them we behold the mercy and lovingkindness, as well as the truth and faithfulness, of the blessed God, wonderfully manifested; and hence we are encouraged to believe that, as He is no respecter of persons, He will deal with us in the same gracious manner that He dealt with them. It is also matter of great consolation, that the Lord hath not left Himself without witnesses in our day, that "His mercy endureth for ever, and His faithfulness and His truth throughout all generations." Very many have, through His infinite mercy and love, been enabled to testify His goodness both in life and death.

I make no doubt but thousands can heartily praise the Lord for the many scriptural and rational accounts published in the "Methodist Magazine," of pious persons who, in life and death, had experienced the accomplishment of the promises of God, in giving them, not only a clear sense of His pardoning love, but also an earnest of eternal glory; so that death, though justly called the "king of terrors," was not terrible to them, but, on the contrary, was a messenger of peace. I am likewise well persuaded, that our people in general have read with pleasure and profit the accounts in the Magazine of the Lord's gracious dealings with the preachers of His blessed Gospel; as they see, in those plain narratives, that He not only made them ministers of His Word, but witnesses of those important truths which they have with diligence and zeal enforced upon the people.

For my own part, I heartily praise God on account of those preachers who, with a single eye to His glory, have favored us with their Christian experience, as I am well assured that it has been attended with a peculiar blessing. Indeed, some of our brethren object to this, and tell us, that it will be soon enough to publish their experience and manner of life when they have finished their warfare, lest they should fall away from their steadfastness, and bring a reproach on their profession. It is certain, that there is no necessity for any one to fall away. And I greatly rejoice in this, that very few of those persons whose experience has been published have, since that time, given us cause to be ashamed of them; but, on the contrary, we have good reason to bless the Lord on their behalf who has enabled them, with their latest breath, to bear witness to the truth which, through life, they had published in His name.

In the Magazine for 1779, page 530, we have some particulars of the life and ministry of Mr. John Murlin. He hath now finished his earthly course, and entered into the joy of His Lord; and, as I was intimately acquainted with him for many years, I make no doubt but it will be acceptable to thousands, who formerly attended his ministry, to hear some farther account of him.

I first became acquainted with Mr. Murlin in 1765, when we labored together in the Birstal Circuit. Afterwards we were stationed in London, in 1770; in Bristol, in 1771; in London again, in 1779; in Bristol, in 1781; and in Manchester, in 1784: so that I knew him well. During all these years I saw nothing in him that I could reprove. His truly Christian temper, as well as his exemplary conduct, bore witness that he walked with God. The more I knew him, the more fully I was satisfied of his sincerity, integrity, and uprightness of mind. He certainly had the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, very much at heart, or he would not have continued his public labors as an itinerant preacher so long as he did. I am inclined to think that very few who have it in their power, as he had, to retire, and live comfortably upon the property which God has given them, would continue to struggle with the heavy afflictions which he endured, in traveling in all sorts of weather to preach the Gospel: but he had an affecting view of what his Lord and Saviour had suffered for him, and was satisfied of his call to the ministry; he therefore resolved to labor in this blessed work, till by hard necessity he should be obliged to leave it. About the year 1786, being no longer able to keep a Circuit, he retired to HighWycomb, where he spent the remaining part of his days. Here he faithfully labored in preaching the word of life, as opportunity and his strength would permit. The Lord made him a blessing to many, and he was much esteemed by the people.

Having been for many years greatly afflicted with a rheumatic complaint, the disorder continued to increase very much upon him, attended with such stiffness in his joints, that it was with the utmost difficulty he could walk at all, or get up into the pulpit. But he bore all his afflictions with humble resignation, and patiently waited for that great and solemn change which the men of the world so much dread. Last winter he came to London, and preached, for the last time, a very useful sermon, in Great Queen-street chapel, where I had the satisfaction to hear my long-tried and faithful friend once more bear a faithful testimony for his blessed Master.

Soon after his return home, (about February,) at his earnest request, I visited him, and found him in a dying state. He had had a stroke of the palsy, which deprived him of the use of all his limbs, except his right hand, which he could use a little and but a little. He was exceedingly happy in the love of God, waiting in joyful expectation of being speedily called to the full enjoyment of everlasting happiness. He wanted to settle a considerable sum of money, for the benefit of that Society; and when he had done this, he could say, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word." It was a very affecting sight, to see his amiable partner, on the one hand, quite turned into a child, by a paralytic stroke; on the other hand, Mr. Murlin deprived of the use of all his limbs, by the same disorder. Lord, what is man? How weak, how helpless! Who can tell what he may be called to suffer, or to what a low estate he may be reduced before he leaves this world? O, how needful to improve our health and strength, and our understanding, while we are blessed with them!

Helpless as he was, he had not much pain, but was very cheerful, and perfectly sensible. He said, "I bless the Lord, I have not the shadow of a doubt;" and added, before I left him, "I begin to fear that

death is not quite so near as I expected:" and so it proved, for he lived till July following. He conversed very freely with me respecting the state of our Connection, and expressed the most affectionate concern for its prosperity. When I was coming away, he called me back, and desired that I would take care of his corpse when he should be brought to London. This was done according to his request; and he was buried in the same vault with Mr. Wesley, at the City-Road chapel.

He bore his affliction (which greatly increased upon him) to the last with great patience, and continued innocently cheerful, and exceedingly happy, till it pleased God to sign his release, and to call him to the regions of everlasting rest and peace.

Thus died Mr. John Murlin; having faithfully labored in the vineyard of the Lord about forty-six years. Of him it might be said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." As I labored with him six years, I knew him well, and think it my duty to bear this testimony of his uprightness, integrity, and zeal for the glory of God and salvation of precious souls, his diligence in the work unto which the Lord had called him, and his faithfulness in fulfilling the important duties of that high and honorable station in which Providence had placed him. He was a Methodist of the primitive stamp, in heart and life, in doctrine and discipline. He was an instrument in the Lord's hand of turning many to righteousness: for, as his heart was in the work, he was generally so deeply affected with the truths he delivered, that he seldom could refrain from tears and this frequently had a good effect upon many of his hearers. During the time that we were stationed together, we labored in perfect harmony, and never had the smallest jar respecting anything; but the more intimately we were acquainted with each other, the more closely we were united in the bonds of Christian love. As he labored long, and suffered much, so now he receives a full reward in the kingdom of immortal glory; and no doubt he has met with many in those peaceful regions who were brought to the knowledge of the truth by his ministry, who will be his crown of rejoicing for ever.

Thus we see one and another of our highly esteemed brethren gathered to their fathers in peace. May we follow them as they followed Christ, till we also finish our course with joy! So prays your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN PAWSON

"The saints who die of Christ possess
Enter into immediate rest
For them no farther test remains,
Of purging fires and torturing pains.

"Who trusting in their Lord depart,
Cleansed from all sin, and pure in heart,
The bliss unmixed, the glorious prize,
They find with Christ in paradise.

"Close followed by their works they go,
Their Master's purchased joy to know:
Their works enhance the bliss prepared,
And each hath its distinct reward.

Yet glorified by grace alone,
They cast their crowns before the throne,
And fill the echoing courts above
With praises of redeeming love."

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

THE LIFE OF JOHN MASON
Written by Himself

LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY

Motcomb, Near Shaftesbury,

August 31st, 1780

Rev. Sir,

I am a person who has neither ability nor inclination to say much of myself; being desirous to be little and unknown.

Nevertheless, if this short account of the mercy of God to a sinner may be of the least use to any, all the praise shall be given to Him, by whose grace I am what I am: for I always desire to bear in mind that testimony of St. Paul, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." (Tim. i. 15.)

I was born in the year of our Lord 1733, in the parish of Hambleton, about eight miles from Portsmouth. When I was about four years old, my father died; and, soon after, my mother. Such was the order of Divine Providence, that I had but little knowledge of, or help from, them; but almighty goodness provided for me.

When my mother died, I was removed to Portsmouth Common, by the care of her own sister, the wife of Mr. Richard Libbard, who had lived there in good credit for many years and I was to them as their own child.

I believe my aunt lived in the fear of God, and, according to the light she had, endeavored to breed me up in a religious manner. I have great reason to be thankful to God on her account. Many of her instructions I remember to this day with much comfort; and I have not a doubt but that she is now in Abraham's bosom.

Yet, notwithstanding all the care that was taken of me, I gave way to evil, and did many things contrary to the word of God; on account of which I remember to have felt many sharp convictions before I was ten years of age. I was often alarmed with the fear of death and judgment. I trembled at the thought of being cast into the fire of hell. At those times I frequently went alone, and prayed that God would have mercy upon me, and save me from my sins. As I grew up, I saw more and more into the evil of sin. But although I truly hated sin, I was often overcome by it, which abundantly increased my pain and sorrow.

But it was by hearing a sermon of Mr. Whitefield's, and those of a pious minister whose congregation I now attended, that my convictions deepened. I began to see myself as I never had done before, and to know I was a fallen child of Adam. I felt the burden with deep distress. My sleep departed from me, and I neglected to take my necessary food. I cried to God night and day. I longed for His salvation. But I was afraid Christ did not die for me. When this persuasion prevailed, it cut me off. I was as one that had no hope. I cannot describe the anguish that tortured my poor soul. Sometimes I wished I had never been born; at other times, that I had been an idiot from my birth. And many times, such was my ignorance and the force of temptation, I complained against God for making me what I was.

While I was exercised in this gloomy, dejected manner, I one evening took up the New Testament to read; and I hope never to forget the time or place. As I read, I felt, I cannot tell how, an unusual going out after God and Christ. At once my eye, and all the powers of my soul, were fixed on those words: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. (Heb. ii. 9.) The deep silence that rested on me gave way, and I broke out as in an ecstasy of joy, not regarding who might hear,

"For me He lived, and for me He died."

In a moment, all my burden of pain and sorrow fled away, and all my soul was filled with peace and joy. I was all love to God and man. Truly, my delight was in the Almighty; and I began to sing aloud,

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!"

Happy would it have been for me, if I had been careful to grow in the grace of God. But I gave way to a curious spirit, and puzzled myself with doubtful disputations and by this means I gradually damped the grace of God, and cast the blessing away I had been entrusted with.

Soon after this, the Methodist preachers came to Portsmouth. I went to hear them, and the word was made profitable to me. I felt new desires, and was often much comforted; and I once more resolved to give up my body and soul a sacrifice to God. I was admitted into the society, by Mr. James Oddy. I continued to meet with them for some time; and many were the blessings I thereby received. But after a time a stumbling-block was laid in my way and I left the society. But it was chiefly owing to my inexperience and want of patience. I ought to have minded one thing, whatever others did, and to have pressed on to the prize of our high calling.

After this I went on for five years in darkness, misery, and distress, yea, many times almost in despair; yet I constantly attended the preaching, and sometimes was permitted to stay at the meeting of the society. But when my much-esteemed friend, Mr. Robert Roberts, came into the Circuit, he was informed of me; for I believe both the preachers and people had a regard for me. He gave me a note of admittance again. May I never forget this mercy!

It was not long after, being at a prayer-meeting; with a few friends, that I recovered the peace and love of God. My soul was humbled in the dust; I became solidly happy in God my Saviour. I was watchful, and spent much time in prayer; the word of God was my daily companion, and it was spirit and life to my soul. My faith was now strengthened; my love to God and man increased abundantly. The Lord held me by my hand, and fed me with the bread of life. He gave me to drink of the water of the river of life, and I was happy all the day long. Such was the blessing I continually enjoyed. I lived near to God, keeping Jesus in my view, as my life, my pattern, and my all.

When Mr. Francis Gilbert appointed me to take care of a class, it was a great trial. But so much the more did the Lord make it a blessing to me. For while I prayed for my brethren, and labored to help them forward in the way to the kingdom, He gave me great consolation in my own soul; and I began to feel a stronger desire for the salvation of poor sinners. I reproved, advised, and comforted, as opportunity served; being, at the same time, particularly careful over my own behavior. Meantime, by the desire of my friends, I sometimes read a sermon, or some part of the "Christian Library." I did this first in our own society, and afterward in that of a neighboring town. Sometimes also I ventured to give a few words of exhortation; and the people not only bore with my weakness, but urged me to do it more frequently. Some time after, I felt a strong conviction, that it was my duty to preach. I did so occasionally; and though it was with much weakness, fear, and trembling, the Lord owned my feeble attempts the people were profited, and my own soul was helped forward in the grace of God. I advised with the Assistant and the other preachers and, being encouraged by them, I went on therein, relying upon God, who giveth strength to them that have no might.

But I was not long satisfied with this. I found a stronger and stronger conviction, that it was my duty to give myself wholly up to the work of God, and to commence an itinerant preacher. But I shrunk from the thought. I wept, and prayed, and strove against it with all my might, till I had well nigh lost all the life and peace of God out of my soul. Yet I did not comply; it was so contrary to the plan I had just laid down, having, as I supposed, settled myself for life. It was my desire and design to live and die amongst my first religious acquaintance, and then to lay my bones by the side of my dear and only brother, just torn from me by the hand of death.

But not being able to resist any longer, I laid the matter before Mr. Furz and the other preachers in the Circuit. They advised me to fight against God no more, but prepare myself against the next Conference. I did so, and attended at Bristol, in August, 1764. I can truly say, I had no other end in view but the glory of God and the good of souls. With regard to this world, I had all I wanted, and to spare. And I had a prospect of easily gaining much more, had I remained in my business, which was steady, and continually increasing. But this I gave up freely; nor have I repented of it one moment since. And if it were to do again, I believe I should do it with the same cheerfulness. For He is worthy of all my service who has bought me with His precious blood.

You, sir, were pleased to appoint me to labor in the York Circuit, with Mr. Furz and Mr. Pool. It was a year of much peace and comfort; and I resolved, in the strength of Christ, to continue spending, and being spent, in the blessed work to my life's end.

It is of little use to say in what parts of England, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, I have labored; or how many persons have been convinced of sin, or converted to God, or how many have been added

to the societies, in the Circuits wherein I have labored. Let it suffice, that this, and all I am, will be fully known in that great day. But I believe I may be permitted to mention, in the fear of God, that after sixteen years' labor, I do not know that either my principles or practice have given you, sir, or any of my brethren, cause to repent, for a moment, that you received me as a fellow-laborer in the house of God. And in this I am the same at this day as at the first: I still esteem it no small privilege to act with you, as a son in the Gospel, to be directed by you where, when, and how to act.

I bless God, I still daily enjoy a measure of His peace and love. But I am ashamed when I consider how little improvement I have made. I long to have everything taken from me that is not agreeable to the mind that was in Christ.

For many years I have been fully satisfied with regard to the doctrines of the Methodists and in them I hope to live and die. But from the time that I recovered the favor of God, I have always been averse to disputing. I remember how much I suffered thereby in the beginning of my turning to God. And I believe it would be happy, if all the children of God would strive to agree as far as possible, and live in love as brethren, and strive to help each other in fighting the good fight of faith. This is the one desire, and I hope it will be the continual labor of, Rev. Sir,

Your dutiful son in the Gospel,
JOHN MASON

The following account of Mr. Mason was given by the Methodist Conference in the year 1810.

John Mason died in the seventy-eighth year of his age. He continued to labor with great usefulness, approbation, and unblemished character, till the year 1797, when, owing to increasing infirmities, he was obliged to desist from a more active life, and confine his labors within a narrower sphere. He settled at West-Moon, a village near Portsmouth, from whence he used to visit the neighboring societies, and supply the lack of the traveling preachers, when called away on necessary business: on these occasions his sermons were remarkably blessed to the people, and particularly those of his latter days. On April 22d, 1810, being Easter Sunday, whilst worshipping in West-Moon church, he was taken ill, and continued to languish till the Friday following, when his spirit entered into the kingdom of God. A person who was intimately acquainted with him in all the relations in which he stood to society, and to the church of Christ, speaks of him in the following manner: -- "When I say that Mr. Mason was a man, I use the word in its noblest sense. He made it the study of his life to maintain this character by cultivating his mind in every branch of useful knowledge within his reach; and his profiting was great. In the history of the world, and the history of the church, he was very extensively read. With anatomy and medicine he was well acquainted; and his knowledge of natural history, particularly of botany, was very extensive. In the latter science he was inferior to few in the British empire. His botanical collections would do credit to the first museum in Europe; and especially his collections of English plants, all gathered, preserved, classified, and described by himself. But this was his least praise. He laid all his attainments in natural sciences under contribution to his theological studies nor could it ever be said, that he neglected his duty as a Christian minister, to cultivate his mind in philosophical pursuits. He was a Christian man, and in his life and spirit adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour. The decency, propriety, and dignity of his conduct, through the whole of his life, were truly exemplary. And his piety towards God, and his

benevolence towards man, were as deep as they were sincere. I am constrained to add, 'He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again.'"

THE LIVES
OF
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS

ENDNOTES

1 His words are all along enclosed with commas.

2 -- Poem below:

"This is true glory and renown, when God,
Looking on the earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through heaven
To all His angels who, with true applause,
Recount his praise." -- Paradise Regained

3 St. Austin, Bishop of Hippo, in Africa, who lived in the fourth century, is said first to have given this name to what the Scripture calls the "old man, which is corrupt;" the "sin which dwelleth in us" the "carnal mind, which is enmity against God;" -- and our Reformers, "the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

4 So the Romish clergy in general are called in Ireland, and so distinguished from those of the Established Church.

5 The lives of many of the Romish clergy in Ireland are lamentably scandalous.

6 The second commandment, which forbids the worship of images, it has seemed good to that mistress of all Churches" (so she styles herself: compare with the Holy Ghost's description, "The mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth," Rev. xvii. 5) to leave out of the Decalogue; because no doubt, of its interfering with their too-idolatrous regard to images. But, in order to keep up the number ten, they divide the last into two commandments. This is what he refers to.

7 One may observe here, that when the Spirit of God effectually convinceth of sin, the distinction between a great and a little sinner has, with regard to the person's self, no existence. He had been guilty of nothing so notoriously bad as to occasion all this trouble nor had he then any knowledge of those persons who are said to trouble people with unnecessary scruples about their salvation. No; but his fig-leaves were cast aside. The fountain of his fallen and corrupt nature was discovered. He

was not "born again!" Conscious therefore of this, he could not but be unhappy for the present. True it is in such a case, that

"Sorrow, and wretchedness, and pain
Are all that here on earth we see;
Restless we pant for ease in vain,
In vain, till ease we find in Thee!
Nor is there in this low creation
What can man's wretchedness remove;
All is misery and vexation,
Anguish all, but Jesus' love."

8 It is by no means intended to insinuate, as though these were light and insignificant things. Far from it. They are, in their proper place, and rightly used, acceptable to God, and profitable to men. And whoever designs to know the Lord should go and do in like manner. They are "fruits meet for repentance." But the mistake is, the putting these, and the means of grace in general, in the place of that blood and those stripes, by which alone a sinner can be healed; a making anything matter of the soul's dependence, save Jesus, and Him crucified.

"Fruitless, till He Himself impart,
Must all our efforts prove:
They cannot change a sinful heart,
They cannot purchase love.
I trust in Him who stands between
The Father's wrath and me:
Jesus, thou great eternal Mean,
I look for all from Thee!"

9 The distinction between mortal and venial sins, so famous amongst the Romanists, may on this occasion be observed to be vain. For although there can be no doubt but some sins are of a more heinous nature, and incur more aggravated guilt, than others, yet all sin is properly mortal, that is, renders the committers of it liable to eternal death, according to the words of the Holy Ghost by the prophet, "The soul that sinneth" -- sinneth, without restriction or distinction, that lives in any violation of that "law, the transgression" of which "is sin" -- "shall die." And an apostle, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all."

10 This brings to my remembrance a passage not quite foreign to the occasion, in "A short History of the Attempts that have been made to convert the Popish Natives of Ireland to the Established Religion: " (printed at London, 1731:)

The Rev. Nicholas Brown, a rector in the diocese of Clogher, applied himself with great zeal and industry to the conversion of the Irish, in the year 1702. Understanding the language thoroughly, he appointed public meetings, and contrived to be with them just when mass was ended, and before the congregation was dispersed. He then read our Prayers, and preached to them in Irish in the open air. Upon due of these occasions, the priest, being much troubled at seeing his congregation attending

with so much pleasure and devotion, told them with a loud voice, "that our Church had stolen those Prayers from the Church of Rome." To which a grave old native answered, "that truly if it was so, they had stolen the best, as thieves generally do."

11 The following lines, concerning conscience, and her office, shall be their own apology for inserting them on this occasion: --

"Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,
Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys.
The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame,
Loudly convinces, and severely pains:
The sly informer minutes every fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.
At the gross act alone employs her pen:
She reconnoiters fancy's airy hand
A watchful foe!
Our dawning purposes of heart explores.
And steals our embryos of iniquity:
Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied;
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass
Writes our whole history: which Death shall read
In every pale delinquent's private ear;
And Judgment publish, -- publish to more world!
Than this and endless Age in groans resound.
--Such that sleeper in thy breast!"

12 Of Luther (with whose condition that of Mr. Bolton was nearly parallel) It is said, "The very venom of his convictions drank up his spirits, and his body seemed dead, so that neither speech, sense, blood, nor heat, appeared in him at one time for a whole day."

13 Those who would be fully informed of the rise, nature, and design of those classes, and concerning the people called Methodists in general, may, perhaps, receive satisfaction from the "Plain Account" of them, mentioned in the Catalogue of their books.

14 In reality, this is no alteration of the case it is in this respect no more than a name; a true Methodist (for "they are not all Israel who are called Israel") being no other than a true Churchman. They make not so much as a pretence to be a distinct, independent body of people. They are properly a Religious Society, (not a new thing in England,) consisting, for the most part, of professed members of the Church of England; whose only design is to promote amongst each other, and mankind in general, the genuine religion of Jesus Christ; and may therefore be properly considered as a seasonable assistant in an age not the most religious, and as a faithful servant to Protestant churches in general.

15 This is not indeed the avowed reason of the opposition which the world has in all ages made to the servants of Christ. But that it is the true one, the Scriptures abundantly testify.

16 The opposition he met with, partly from those of his own household, and partly from many others of different denominations, together with that which he saw was made to the people called Methodists in general, then in Ireland, (their preaching-houses burned, goods rifled, persons persecuted, and even Scriptures profaned, by ballads in one hand, and the Bible in the other, singing profanely through the streets among the baser sort of people; prompted thereto even by dignified persons,) gave occasion to these observations. But what inexpressible reason have the inhabitants of these nations to bless God that those kinds of outrages are not authorized; and that our government has so effectually provided against injuring the innocent of every denomination!

17 Is this kind of impulse, or anything resembling it, what our Church means in her solemn Form of Ordination, by that weighty question (O that it were duly attended to!) to all her candidates for holy orders? -- "Do you trust you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take this office upon you?"

18 "Some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people." Some believed, and some contradicted and blasphemed. So it was in the days of our Lord, and of His apostles and will it not be so to the end of the world?

19 Whoever considers the instance mentioned Mark xii. 41-44 -- the estimate which the Judge of all passes upon the lost specious outward actions -- will easily perceive, that it is not the greatness of a work, or the quantity and value, in human estimation of what any one forsakes for Him, which God regards but rather the spirit and principle whence an action, great or small, proceeds. Many that were rich cast in much. And a certain poor widow threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they who have cast into the treasury."

20 There is in some parts of Ireland a very remarkable difference between the dialect of the Protestants and Romanists, even of the same county or parish. What is called the brogue, in its excess, is a sort of Shibboleth for the latter; and, among the younger sort of Protestants especially, a term of reproach. I remember it was a very common objection to him, when he preached first in the town of my nativity.

21 "It generally holds, that a teacher sent from God is not so acceptable to his neighbors as to strangers. They cannot suffer that he, who was before equal with or below themselves, should now bear a superior character." -- "The reason of man cannot comprehend how God should abase Himself for his sake. His pride will not own and receive the wisdom of God, unless it be accompanied with His greatness and glory. In short, a preacher of the Gospel ought to be as a Melchizedek, of whom we know nothing, but only that he is a servant of Christ, who preaches His truth, and is the first to put it in practice."

22 In the reign of King William and Queen Mary there were several acts of parliament made for checking the growth of popery in Ireland one of which made provision that after the death of the their Popish clergy, there never should be an ecclesiastic of that religion in the nation. And these laws are yet standing in the statute-books of that kingdom. Yet it still swarms more and more with popish

priests and friars. It has been computed, that there are not less than two thousand emissaries, dependent on Rome, employed continually in England, Ireland, and Scotland.

23 An order of friars in Italy were professedly called *Fratres Ignorantia*, the ignorant brethren." They were bound by oath neither to know learn, or understand anything at all, and answered all questions with "Nescio, I know not."

24 The thoughts which the following lines suggest seem natural on the occasion; and will not, I presume be unacceptable to some readers: --

Virtue, for ever frail, as fair, below,
Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
Nor touches on the world without a stain,
We see, we hear with peril; safety dwells
Remote from multitude; the world's a school
Of wrong and what proficients swarm around!
We must or imitate, or disapprove:
That stains our innocence; this wounds our peace.
From nature's birth, hence, wisdom has been smit
With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade."

25 "The Hebrew," says Archbishop Usher, is the first tongue of the world, and the most orderly speech; in comparison of which all other languages may be condemned for barbarous confusion."

The Latins are said to drink out of pits, the Greeks out of streams, but the Hebrews out of fountains.

"The pre-eminence or excellency of this language," says Bishop Walton, "is demonstrated by its antiquity, Divine origin, sanctity, perfection, (under which is comprehended its purity, elegance, energy, and apt significances of words,) and lastly, by its usefulness, and easiness to learn. It expresses things themselves properly and descriptively, so that no language can be compared with the Hebrew in this respect. It hath its peculiar beauties, which no other language can express."

Amongst the statutes drawn out of the Provincial of the Jesuits' Rules, one is, "He shall not suffer any to learn the Hebrew tongue, unless he be well persuaded first of their steadfastness in the Jesuitical divinity, and humble enough to make a right use of it."

"Sure I am," says an eminent writer on the subject, "that it ought to be the first language we are taught, after we have learned to lisp our own; and were I worthy to advise, the Oriental dialects should follow the Hebrew; the Greek should follow the Arabic; and the Latin be acquired by conversation and reading, in the same manner as the modern languages of Europe are acquired."

26 Frequent mention is made in holy Scripture of receiving all our good things from the Son of God, through His name, as that which performs for us everything we need. That there is salvation in no other His name, through faith in His name, hath done so and so. Men are said to be condemned

because of not believing in His name; and again, to "have life through His name;" and for His "name's sake," the little children's sins are said to be forgiven them; with much to the same purpose. This is the name Jesus, "a name above every name," and of which the children of God have been ever peculiarly fond. It occurs, I think, not less than four hundred and fifty times in the New Testament. Ignatius spoke of it as though engraved on his inward parts, and not to be erased by death. St. Austin could no longer relish the writings of Cicero, (though he once so admired them,) and for a while wondered what was the cause. But he found it was, that the sweet name of Jesus was not to be found in them: and as Job says, "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?" So, a true believer in Jesus can relish nothing, esteeming unsavoury as the white of an egg whatever has not something of Him mingled therewith. In short, with Jesus everything is acceptable to a gracious heart; without Him nothing. It is a heaven to be with Him, a hell to be without Him!

To the true lovers of Jesus, a name which was of necessity so precious to the person before us, one can hardly say too much of Him. I therefore willingly take occasion to subjoin a little extract concerning this precious name: --

"Jehovah hath changed the ineffable name into a name utterable by man, and desirable by all the world; the majesty is all arrayest in robes of mercy; the adorable mystery of the patriarchs was made fit for pronounciation and expression, when it became the name of the Lord's Christ. And if Jehovah be full of majesty and terror, the name Jesus is full of sweetness and mercy. It is God, clothed with circumstances of familiarity, and opportunities of approaching Him. God could not be received or entertained by men, till He was made human and sensible, by the adoption of a sensitive nature. Thus was His person made tangible, and His name utterable, and His mercy brought home to our necessities, and the mystery made plain, at the naming 'the holy child Jesus.'

"And then was God's mercy at full sea; then was the time when He made no reserves of His benignity. To patriarchs, and persons of eminent sanctity and employment, in the elder ages of the world, God, according to the degrees of His manifestation, or present purpose, would give them one letter of His ineffable name. For the reward that Abraham had in the change of his name was, that he had the honor done him to have one of the letters of Jehovah put into it; and so had Joshua, when he was a type of Christ, and prince of the Israelitish armies and when God took away one of these letters, it was a curse.

"But now He communicated all the whole name to this holy Child, and put a letter more to it, to signify that He was the glory of God, the express image of His Father's person, God eternal; and then manifested to the world in His humanity.

'This heaven-assumed majestic robe of earth
He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
With azure bright, and clothed the sun in gold.'

"And thus all the world who expected blessedness, and had treasured all their hopes in the ineffable name of God, found them all, with ample returns, in the name of Jesus.

"This miraculous name is above all the powers of magical enchantments. This is the name at which the devils did tremble, and pay their enforced and involuntary adorations, by confessing the Divinity, and quitting their possessions and usurped habitations. If our prayers be made in this name, God opens the windows of heaven, and rains down benediction. At the mention of this name, the blessed apostles, and many other lights, who followed hard after the Sun of Righteousness, wrought great and prodigious miracles: 'signs, and wonders, and healings, were done by the name of the holy child Jesus.'

"This is the name which we should engrave in our hearts, and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon, and place our hopes in, and love with the overflowings of charity, and joy and adoration. And as the revelation of this name satisfied the hopes of all the world, so it must determine our worshippings, and the addresses of our exterior and interior religion: it being that name whereby God, and God's mercies, are made present to us, and proportionate objects of our religion and affection." -- Now "if any man love not" this name, even "the Lord Jesus Christ," -- O God, what shall become of him! (1 Cor. xvi. 22.)

"This mighty name salvation is,
And keeps our happy souls above;
Delight it brings, and joy, and peace,
And life, and everlasting love:
To me, with this dear name, are given
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven!

"What though a thousand hosts engage,
A thousand worlds, my soul to shake;
I have a shield shall quell their rage,
Shall drive the alien armies back;
Portray'd it bears a bleeding Lamb,
And shows the lovely Jesus' name!"

27 -- Poem below:

"To him, alas! to him, I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flattering his sensual pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Doth not himself, when he's a dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go!"

-- Cowley --

28 There is a sermon of his printed under this title.

29 On such a prospect, how natural it is to reflect, --

"Needs must the power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good; and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite,
That raised us from the dust, and placed us here,
In all this happiness?

"These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: Thyself how wondrous then,
Unspeakable! Who sitt'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these Thy lowest works yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power Divine!

30 And his request was then carefully observed. The present case and occasion will perhaps, be thought reason sufficient for publishing it.

31 "True believers are humbled all their lifetime, even for the sins which they committed before they were converted." [Humbled by their remembrance, but as often as not it is satan that calls them to remembrance, not God -- DVM]

32 He was then going to England the third, and which was the last time.

33 For some considerable time before, and during a great part of his last sickness, his thoughts entered deeply into the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. He calculated the times with great exactness, and spared no labor and pains to be fully informed concerning the great things which those passages insinuate still await the world. In short, he was rapt up in those future scenes, "hastening to the coming of the Son of God," in His kingdom of grace and glory. His opinion was, that great and amazing things were at the very doors and he has frequently said to a young man, "My brother, if you live to the years of a man," (meaning threescore and ten,) "you shall see these things." I avoid inserting particularly his calculations and sentiments, because so many wise and good men before him have been mistaken on this head, for some generations past. Our Lord is welcome, when, and however, He shall be pleased to come. He says Himself, it will be at a time when the generality of people, at least, think little about the matter. He bids His children to be always ready; and lets them know the way: "Watch and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man! Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing."

34 That is, with a degree of familiarity and access which was not allowed to any of the other patriarchs or prophets. For, strictly speaking, "no man hath seen God at any time."

35 He seems to refer to some particular communication from God of His triune majesty.

36 He was, about this time, employed partly in reading Bishop Usher's famous Disputation with the Jesuit in Ireland. And of this book he says, "I cannot think that a Papist who has learning, and the fear of God, can, after reading it, remain in the errors of popery."

37 So severe a judge was he of himself; while, in the judgment of all who knew his manner of life, he was exemplarily remarkable for the direct contrary of what he here charges himself with. But "the highest flames" (to use the words of the great and pious Bishop Taylor) "are the most tremulous and so the most holy and eminent religious persons are more full of awfulness, and fear, and modesty, and humility. And it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity, any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater also be the humility of the man."

38 St. Austin is said to have had the penitential psalms written in large characters, and pinned to the inside of the curtains of his dying bed, desiring to die as he repeated them, with weeping.

Bishop Usher followed the same example, and prayed earnestly to God to pardon his sins of omission.

END OF VOLUME III