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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LIVES OF ILLUSTRIOUS SHOEMAKERS ***

LIVES OF ILLUSTRIOUS SHOEMAKERS.

BY
WILLIAM EDWARD WINKS.

NEW YORK:
FUNK & WAGNALLS, PUBLISHERS,
10 AND 12 DEY STREET.

PREFACE.

[iii] Time out of mind *The Gentle Craft* has been invested with an air of romance. This honorable title, given to no other occupation but that of shoemakers, is an indication of the high esteem in which the Craft is held. It is by no means an easy thing to account for a sentiment of this kind, or to trace such a title to its original source. Whether the traditionary stories which have clustered round the lives of Saints Anianus, Crispin and Crispianus, or Hugh and Winifred, gave rise to the sentiment, or the sentiment itself is to be regarded as accounting for the traditions, one cannot tell. Probably there is some truth in both theories, for sentiment and tradition act and react on each other.

Certain it is, that among all our craftsmen none appear to enjoy a popularity comparable with that of "the old Cobbler" or "Shoemaker." Most men have a good word to say for him, a joke to crack about him, or a story to tell of his ability and "learning," his skill in argument, or his prominence and influence in political or religious affairs. Both in ancient times and in modern, in the Old World and in the New, a rare interest has been felt in Shoemakers, as a class, on account of their remarkable intelligence and the large number of eminent men who have risen from their ranks.

These facts, and especially the last—which has been the subject of frequent remark—may be deemed sufficient justification for the existence of such a work as this.

[iv] Another reason might be given for the issue of such a book as this just now. A change has come over the craft of boot and shoe making. The use of machinery has effected nothing short of a *revolution* in the trade. The old-fashioned Shoemaker, with his leathern apron and hands redolent of wax, has almost disappeared from the workrooms and streets of such towns as Northampton and Stafford in Old England, or Lynn in New England. His place and function are now, for the most part, occupied by

the “cutter” and the “clicker,” the “riveter” and the “machine-girl.” The old Cobbler, like the ancient spinster and handloom weaver, is retiring into the shade of the boot and shoe factory. Whether or no he will disappear entirely may be questionable; but there can be no doubt that the Cobbler, sitting at his stall and working with awl and hammer and last, will never again be the conspicuous figure in social life that he was wont to be in times gone by. Before we bid him a final farewell, and forget the traditions of his humble yet honorable craft, it may be of some service to bring under one review the names and histories of some of the more illustrious members of his order.

Long as is the list of these worthy “Sons of Crispin,” it cannot be said to be complete. Only a few examples are taken from Germany, France, and the United States, where, in all probability, as many illustrious Shoemakers might have been met with as in Great Britain itself. And even the British muster-roll is not fully made up. With only a few exceptions, *living men* are not included in the list. Very gladly would the writer have added to these exceptions so remarkable a man as Thomas Edward, the shoemaker of Banff, one of the best self-taught naturalists of our time, and, for the last sixteen years, an Associate of the Linnæan Society. But for the Life of this eminent Scotchman the reader must be referred to the interesting biography written by his friend Dr. Smiles.

In writing the longer sketches, free and ample use has been made of biographies already in existence. But this has not been done without the kind consent of the owners of copyrights. To these the writer tenders his grateful acknowledgments. To the widow of the Rev. T. W. Blanshard he is indebted for [v] permission to draw upon the pages of her late husband’s valuable biography of “The Wesleyan Demosthenes,” *Samuel Bradburn*; to Jacob Halls Drew, Esq., Bath, for his courtesy in allowing a liberal use to be made of the facts given in his biography of his father, *Samuel Drew*, “The Self-Taught Cornishman;” and to the venerable *Thomas Cooper*, as well as to his publishers, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, for their kind favor in regard to the lengthy and detailed sketch of the author of “The Purgatory of Suicides.” This sketch, the longest in the book, is inserted by special permission of Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton.

The minor sketches have been drawn from a variety of sources. One or two of these require special mention. In preparing the notice of John O’Neill, the Poet of Temperance, the writer has received kind help from *Mr. Richard Gooch* of Brighton, himself a poet of temperance. Messrs. *J. & J. H. Rutherford* of Kelso have also been good enough to place at the writer’s service—but, unfortunately, too late to be of much use—a copy of their recently published autobiography of John Younger, the Shoemaker of St. Boswells. In the all-too-brief section devoted to American worthies, valuable aid has been given to the author by Henry Phillips, Esq., jun., A.M., Ph.D., Corresponding Member of the Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia, U.S.A.

In all probability the reader has never been introduced to so large a company of illustrious Sons of Crispin before. It is sincerely hoped that he will derive both pleasure and profit from their society.

WILLIAM EDWARD WINKS.

CARDIFF, 1882.

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SIR CLOUDESLEY SHOVEL

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Sir Cloudesley Shovel,

THE COBBLER’S BOY WHO BECAME AN ADMIRAL.

"Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honor lies.
Fortune in men has some small difference made,
One flaunts in rags, one nutters in brocade;
The cobbler aproned and the parson gowned,
The friar hooded, and the monarch crowned.
"What differ more' (you cry) 'than crown and cowl?'
I'll tell you, friend,—a wise man and a fool.
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk;
Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunella."

—Pope, *Essay on Man*.

SIR CLOUDESLEY SHOVEL.

[17]

On the south side of the choir of Westminster Abbey may be seen a very handsome and costly monument, on which reclines a life-sized figure in marble, representing a naval commander. The grotesque uniform and elaborate wig are of the style of Queen Anne's time. The commander himself has all the look of a well-bred gentleman and a brave officer. He is a capital type of the old school of naval heroes, stout in person, jolly in temper, but terrible in action, by whom our shores were defended, our colonies secured to us, and the power and stability of the British Empire were established for centuries to come. These men had, in many instances, risen from the lowest social status, and had been compelled to begin their nautical career in the humblest fashion, accepting the most menial position the naval service could offer them. When they came to hold positions of command, they had, perhaps, no culture nor general education; the little knowledge they possessed was confined to the arts of navigation and warfare, and this they had picked up in actual service. Such knowledge served them well, and made them equal to any emergency. It made them capable of deeds of valor and enterprise, that brought renown to their own name and honor to their country. They could sail round the world; they could, by their discoveries, add new territories to the British crown, and open up splendid fields for commercial enterprise; they could keep their vessels afloat in a gale of wind, get to windward of the enemy if they wanted, pour a broadside into him, board and capture his vessels or blow up his forts; and, very often fighting against fearful odds, beat him by dint of superior skill in seamanship and greater courage in action. Such a commander was "old Benbow," whose name appears so often in the nautical songs of the last century; and such a commander was his contemporary, Sir Cloudesley Shovel, to whose memory the handsome monument just referred to is erected. Let us pause for a moment to read the inscription. It runs thus:

> "Sir Cloudesley Shovel, Knt., Rear-Admiral of Great Britain, Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet: The just reward of long and faithful services. He was deservedly beloved [18] of his country, and esteemed though dreaded by the enemy, who had often experienced his conduct and courage. Being shipwrecked on the rocks of Scilly, in his voyage from Toulon, the 22d of October 1707, at night, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, his fate was lamented by all, but especially by the seafaring part of the nation, to whom he was a worthy example. His body was flung on the shore, and buried with others in the sands; but being soon after taken up, was placed under this monument, which his royal mistress has caused to be erected to commemorate his steady loyalty and extraordinary virtues."

If a stranger to Sir Cloudesley Shovel's history were to stand looking at this fine monument, admiring the fine figure which adorns it and reading the glowing epitaph, he would no doubt be greatly amazed if the intelligent verger by his side were to whisper in his ear, "That man was once a cobbler's boy; the first weapons he ever used in fighting the battle of life were the awl and hammer and last."

Yet such was really the case. It is true he did not remain long at his humble craft. He left it, indeed, sooner than any of the notable men whose life-story we have to tell in this book; yet he wore the leathern apron long enough to entitle him to a place in the category of *Illustrious Shoemakers*.

Cloudesley Shovel was born in the county of Norfolk in the year 1650, at a village called Clay, lying on the coast between Wells and Cromer. His parents are said to have been in but "middling circumstances;" but it is to be feared that even this modest term describes a better position than they actually held. They were evidently of the humblest class, and had no means of giving their boy either a good education or a good start in the way of business. Cloudesley came by his rather singular name as no doubt thousands had done before his time, and have done since. It was given him in honor of a relative who was in good circumstances, and in the hope that it might probably be a "means of recommending him to this relative's notice." But fortunately, as it proved for him, and proves also for many others, no fortune was left him. His parents were glad to send him to the village shoemaker to learn the art and mystery of making and mending boots and shoes.

Finding the drudgery of a sedentary occupation and the flatness and quietude of village life irksome to his active temperament and aspiring spirit, after a few years' work at shoemaking, he made off to sea. His taste lying in the direction of the royal naval service, he went and joined himself to a man-of-war. [19] Here he had the good fortune to come under the care and command of Sir John Narborough. This distinguished officer had once been in Cloudesley's position as a man-of-war's cabin-boy, and having shown himself a smart sailor and an industrious student of navigation, had been rapidly promoted by his generous captain, Sir Christopher Myngs. Sir John Narborough was therefore well disposed, by his kindly disposition and his own early experience, to favor any youth of promise placed in similar circumstances to those through which he himself had passed. In young Cloudesley the gallant captain seems to have seen his own character portrayed and his own career enacted over again. The lad was smart at seamanship, and uncommonly diligent when off watch in the study of any nautical books he could lay hands on. He seems to have found out very early in his course that the secret of success in life lies in being *ready*, when the time comes, to seize and use the great opportunities of fortune which sooner or later come in every one's way; that fortune waits on diligence and courage; and that the future is pretty secure to the man who, whatever be his position, works hard and does his plain duty every day.

The first incident in his naval career is an illustration of this. He was on board the flag-ship commanded by Admiral Sir John Narborough in one of the most hotly contested battles fought between the English and the Dutch. The masts of the flag-ship were shot away early in the engagement. The admiral saw that his case was hopeless, however bravely his men might fight, unless the English reserve, which lay some distance off to the right, could be brought round to his aid. The thing wanted was to get a message conveyed to the captain of the reserve. Signalling was out of the question, of course; the message must be *carried* to the ships somehow. Yet he saw plainly that in such a hurricane of shot and shell, and with so many of the enemy's vessels close at hand, no boat could hope to reach the English ships. But a man might *swim* to them! Acting on this thought, Sir John wrote an order and called aloud for volunteers to swim with it, under the fire of the enemy, to the neighboring ships. Among the able-bodied sailors who presented themselves for the terrible duty young Cloudesley stood forth. Looking at him with admiration mingled with something like pity, the admiral exclaimed, "Why, what can you do, my fearless lad?" "I can swim, sir," said young Cloudesley, [20] and added in the spirit of a patriot and a hero, "If I be shot, I can be easier spared than any one else." After a moment's hesitation on the part of the tender-hearted admiral, the paper was handed to the boy, who placed it between his teeth and plunged into the water. Cheered by his comrades, he swam on through a perfect hail of shot, bearing, as it seemed, a charmed life, until at length the smoke of battle concealed him from their view. The gallant Sir John and his brave crew held on in the most determined manner until it seemed that no hope was left that the brave lad had reached the friendly vessels in safety and delivered the message. They were beginning to think of him and of themselves as lost, when a sudden and terrific roar of cannon on their right announced that the English vessels were bearing down on the Dutch. In a few hours the enemy was flying in all directions. The cabin-boy was not forgotten when the honors and rewards of victory came to crown the events of that terrible day, for all agreed that he had done a deed that deserved well of his country. When the sun was setting on the sad scene of wreck and ruin, the courageous yet modest youth came and stood once more on the deck of the flag-ship. As soon as the old admiral saw him he spoke to him a few words of generous appreciation and sincere thanks, finishing with the significant remark, "I shall live to see you have a flag-ship of your own." The prediction came true, as we shall presently see.

Not very long afterward Cloudesley Shovel was made lieutenant of His Majesty's navy. The first opportunity he had of distinguishing himself in this capacity was on an expedition sent out by the British to punish the corsairs of Tripoli. These lawless and daring rogues had long infested the Mediterranean, doing immense mischief to commerce and committing sad depredations all along the coast, wherever they found it possible to land with safety. No vessel or port, from the Levant to the Straits of Gibraltar, was safe from their attack. Sir John Narborough was therefore commissioned to bring them to terms or effectually punish them. Arriving before Tripoli, their headquarters, in the spring of 1674, he found the enemy in great strength under the shelter of their formidable forts, and decided, first of all, according to his instructions, to try the effect of negotiations. Lieutenant Shovel, then only twenty-four years of age, a tall thin young man, with little on his face to indicate that he had come to manhood, was sent with a message for the Dey of Tripoli, asking for satisfaction for the past [21] and security for the future. This message was delivered in a spirit becoming a British sailor acting on behalf of the interests of his country; but the Dey, a haughty and imperious man, refused to treat with such a youth, and one, too, who held so subordinate a position, and after treating him with insolence, sent him back to his admiral with an indefinite answer. The wily ex-cobbler, however, had kept his eyes open while on land, and on returning to Sir John, gave him so good an account of the character of the fortifications and the disposition of the pirate fleet, that he was sent back to the Dey with a second message, and instructed to make further observations. He was treated on his second visit with even greater insolence, but took all quietly, not caring how much he was detained by the Dey's abuse, so long as he could look round him and obtain a good view of the enemy's strength and position. Coming back once more to his vessel, he explained the whole situation, and described a plan of attack which he felt confident would be successful in destroying the vessels lying at anchor in the bay. The admiral was so much pleased with his lieutenant's smartness, and so satisfied that his plan was practicable if conducted with skill and courage, that he decided to intrust the execution of it to "his boy Shovel." On the night of the 4th of March the young lieutenant took command of all the boats of the fleet, which had been filled with combustible material, rowed quietly into the harbor under cover of the darkness, made straight for the guard-ship, which he set on fire and thoroughly disabled, thus preventing it from giving orders to the other ships, and, before the enemy could prepare for action, fired and blew up his vessels one after another, and then leaving them in a state of the utmost confusion and distress,

brought all his boats back to the British fleet without the loss of a single man. It was a brave exploit, cleverly conceived and brilliantly executed. As a wholesome castigation of these impudent pirates it was of the utmost value; and more than this, it crippled their power for mischief for a long time to come.

The generous Sir John Narborough fully appreciated the courage and skill of his youthful subordinate, and gave him the most honorable mention in the official letters sent to the authorities at home. He was at once promoted to the rank of captain. This office he held for eleven years, until the death of Charles II. in 1685. During the three years of James II.'s reign, Captain Shovel is said to have been in [22] every naval engagement that occurred. He had therefore ample opportunity of distinguishing himself and obtaining still further promotion. Soon after the accession of William III., Captain Shovel was conspicuous by his daring and clever manœuvring at the battle of Bantry Bay. He was then in command of the ship "Edgar," and the favorable notices he had received from Admiral Hobart brought his gallantry before the attention of his monarch, who conferred upon the brave captain the honor of knighthood. Captain, now Sir Cloudesley Shovel, was held in high esteem by King William III., who intrusted him with the difficult and responsible duty of conveying the troops to Ireland in 1690, on the occasion of the Irish rebellion which terminated in the bloody battle of the Boyne. This duty was discharged with so much ability that the King decided to promote Sir Cloudesley to the rank of "*rear-admiral of the blue*." In conferring this reward upon the gallant commander, the grateful monarch marked his sense of the value of the service rendered by delivering the commission with his own hands. Before the year came to a close Sir Cloudesley added one more item to the long list of his services by giving timely assistance to General Kirke at the siege of Waterford. This town was held by the adherents of James II., and had long defied all attempts of General Kirke to take it. The chief strength of the town lay in Duncannon Castle, on which an attack was made by Sir Cloudesley's ships and men. A surrender was speedily negotiated, and the influential town of Waterford fell into the hands of the English. Two years after this the King declared him "*rear-admiral of the red*," giving him at the same time the command of the squadron which was to convey the King to Holland.

Soon after his return from Holland he was ordered to join the fleet then under the command of Admiral Russell, and bore a very important part in the brilliant naval victory known as the battle of La Hogue. His last services during the reign of William III. were rendered in connection with the bombardment of Dunkirk, which he undertook at the King's express command. The author of the "Lives of British Admirals,"[1] referring to the esteem in which Sir Cloudesley Shovel was held by his king and country at the close of this reign, says, "He was always consulted by His Majesty whenever [23] maritime affairs were under consideration."

His first service in the reign of Queen Anne was performed as "*admiral of the white*." The town of Vigo in Spain had been captured by Sir George Rooke, and Sir Cloudesley was ordered to go out and bring home the spoils of the united Spanish and French fleets, which lay disabled in the harbor. This difficult task was accomplished with a rapidity and dash which made so favorable an impression on the court, that on his return "it was immediately resolved to employ him in affairs of the greatest consequence for the future." In 1703 he was put in command of the grand fleet, and protected the interests of England from the hostile attempts of the French and allied powers in the Mediterranean. At the battle of Malaga in 1704, Sir Cloudesley's division of nine ships led the van, and had to bear the brunt of the enemy's attack to such an extent, that at the beginning of the engagement he was almost entirely surrounded by the French, and more than 400 of his men were either killed or wounded. On his return home he was presented to the Queen by Prince George, and shortly afterward received the appointment of commander-in-chief and rear-admiral of the English fleet. As Admiral Shovel he won great credit for the part he took in the capture of the important city of Barcelona in 1705.

In the month of October, 1707, after bearing an honorable part in the expedition under Prince Eugene against Toulon, he set sail with ten ships of the line, five frigates, and other war vessels for the shores of England. But he was destined never to see again the country he had served so nobly and loved so well. By some strange mischance, which has never been fully accounted for, his own vessel and several others, on the night of the 22d of October, struck on the rocks of the Scilly islands and perished. The brave admiral and his three sons-in-law, who were on board his vessel, besides a large number of officers and seamen, were drowned. The body of Sir Cloudesley Shovel was washed on shore, and having been found by a number of smugglers, was stripped of an emerald ring and other valuables, and buried in the sand. On attempting to sell their booty, the miscreants found that the ring they prized so much betrayed their guilty secret. They were compelled to point out the spot where the body had been concealed. England, of course, could not allow one of her noblest sons to lie in so ignominious a grave. The body was at once removed to London by express order of Her Majesty [24] Queen Anne, and laid in the most honorable grave the nation had to give—

> "In the great minster transept,
> Where the lights like glories fall,
> And the organ rings and the sweet choir sings
> Along the emblazoned wall."[2]

CHAPTER II.

[25]

JAMES LACKINGTON

[27]

James Lackington,

SHOEMAKER AND BOOKSELLER.

Sutor Ultra Crepidam Feliciter Ausus.
—*Latin Motto, Quoted on Frontispiece to "Lackington's Memoirs."*

I. LACKINGTON,

Who a few years since began Business with five Pounds,
Now sells one Hundred Thousand Volumes Annually.
—*From Frontispiece to First Edition of "Memoirs and Confessions," 1791-92.*

"I will therefore conclude with a wish, that my readers may enjoy the feast with the same good humor with which I have prepared it.... Those with keen appetites will partake of each dish, while others, more delicate, may select such dishes as are more light and better adapted to their palates; they are all genuine British fare; but lest they should be at a loss to know what the entertainment consists of, I beg leave to inform them that it contains forty-seven dishes of various sizes, which (if they calculate the expense of their *admission tickets*) they will find does not amount to twopence per dish; and what I hope they will consider as *immensely* valuable (in compliance with the precedent set by Mr. Farley, a gentleman eminent in the culinary science), a striking likeness of their *Cook* into the Bargain.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, pray be seated; you are heartily welcome, and much good may it do you."—*From Preface to Lackington's "Memoirs and Confessions," published 1826.*

JAMES LACKINGTON.

[29]

One of the most successful booksellers of the last century was James Lackington, whose enormous place of business at the corner of Finsbury Square, London, was styled somewhat grandiloquently "The Temple of the Muses." A flag floated proudly over the top of the building, and above the principal doorway stood the announcement, no less true than sensational, "The Cheapest Bookshop in the World." Lackington was an innovator in the trade, and had introduced methods and principles of doing business which at first awaked the ire of the bookselling fraternity, but were at length generally adopted, thus inaugurating a new era in the history of this important business. His name cannot be omitted from any complete history of booksellers, and it is none the less deserving of a place in the category of illustrious shoemakers; for Lackington commenced life as a shoemaker, and for some time

after he had entered on bookselling speculations continued to work at the humble trade to which he had served an apprenticeship.

When Lackington was about forty-five years of age, and had made a considerable fortune in the bookselling trade, he wrote and published a singular book, in which he narrated the principal events in his life, under the form of “Letters to a Friend.” This book bears the title “Memoirs and Confessions,” and is certainly one of the most remarkable autobiographies ever presented to the world. What portion of its contents may be referred to by the term “memoirs” as distinguished from “confessions” it is impossible to say, but certain it is that there are many things in the book which its author would have done well to blot as soon as they were written, and of which he was no doubt heartily sorry and ashamed in after-life. Among the worst of these were his strictures and reflections on the Wesleyan Methodists, to whom he had belonged in early life, and from whom he had received no small benefit, temporal as well as spiritual. When the second edition of his memoirs came to be printed in 1803, his character had undergone a happy change. He then saw things in a different light, [30] and made full and complete acknowledgment of the faults which marked the first edition; expressed in very decided albeit very conventional terms his faith in Christian truth, and his debt of obligation to the religious people whom he had so sadly maligned. But words were not enough to satisfy his ardent, thorough-going nature. His benefactions to the Wesleyan Society were very considerable, and he seemed toward the close of his life to have found great satisfaction in making the best use of the ample means at his disposal. With all his faults he was an estimable man, honest, truthful, and generous. He was never ashamed of his lowly birth and humble apprenticeship, nor turned his back on his poor relations, but ever sought them out and helped them when he had the power to do so. His success in business was owing to his shrewd common-sense, his rare insight into character, his good judgment as to the public taste and requirements, his capital method of assorting and classifying his stock and strict keeping of accounts, his courageous yet prudent purchases, and his strict adherence to a few sound maxims of economy and thrift. None but a man of original and uncommon powers of mind could have launched out on new speculations and adventures as Lackington did with the same uniform and certain success, and none but a man of good sense and lofty feeling would have been proof against the ill effects which so often attend on success. There is a touch of vanity in his memoirs, it is true, but it is not the vanity of a man who is vain and does not know it; he is quite conscious of his egotism, and indulges in it with thorough good-humor as a hearty joke. He was rather fond of display, kept a town-house and a country-house when he could afford it, and set up a “chariot,” as the phrase went in those days, and liveried servants. Yet it was not many men in his position who would have taken for a motto to be painted on the doors of his carriage the plain English words which express the principle on which his business had been made to bear such wonderful results. “But,” he remarks, “as the first king of Bohemia kept his country shoes by him to remind him from whence he was taken, I have put a motto on the doors of my carriage constantly to remind me to what I am indebted for my prosperity, viz.,

“SMALL PROFITS DO GREAT THINGS.”

The Lackington family had been farmers in the parish of Langford, near Wellington, in Somersetshire. They were members of the Society of Friends, and held a respectable position in the locality. For some [31] cause, not fully explained in the memoirs, James Lackington’s father was apprenticed to a shoemaker at Wellington. He made an imprudent marriage, and for a time forfeited his father’s approval and favor; but when the good-wife proved herself to be a very worthy and industrious woman, the old man relented and set his son up in business. This, however, was of no advantage to him; in fact, it proved his ruin. He might have remained a steady and hard-working man, bringing up his children honorably, if he had remained a journeyman. The position of a master presented temptations that were too much for his weak disposition. Lackington’s own words will best describe his unhappy circumstances in youth and the character of his father. “I was born at Wellington, in Somersetshire, on the 31st of August (old style), 1746. My father, George Lackington, was a journeyman shoemaker, who had incurred the displeasure of my grandfather for marrying my mother, whose maiden name was Joan Trott.... About the year 1750, my father having several children, and my mother proving an excellent wife, my grandfather’s resentment had nearly subsided, so that he supplied him with money to open shop for himself. But that which was intended to be of very great service to him and his family eventually proved extremely unfortunate to himself and them; for as soon as he found he was more at ease in his circumstances he contracted a fatal habit of drinking, and of course his business was neglected; that after several fruitless attempts of my grandfather to keep him in trade, he was, partly by a very large family, but more by his habitual drunkenness, reduced to his old state of a journeyman shoemaker. Yet so infatuated was he with the love of liquor, that the endearing ties of husband and father could not restrain him: by which baneful habit himself and family were involved in the extremest poverty; so that neither myself, my brothers, nor sisters, are indebted to a father scarcely for anything that can endear his memory, or cause us to reflect on him with pleasure.”

James, as the oldest child in the family, fared for a time rather better than the rest. He was sent to a dame-school and began to learn to read; but before he could learn anything worth knowing, his mother, who was obliged to maintain her children as best she could, found it impossible to pay the twopence per week for his schooling. For several years his time was divided between nursing his [32] younger brothers and sisters and running about the streets and getting into mischief. At the age of ten he began to feel a desire to do something to earn a living. His first venture in this way showed his ability and gave some promise of his success as a man of business. Having noticed an old pieman in the streets whose method of selling pies struck the boy as very defective, the boy was convinced that he could do the work much better. He made known his thoughts to a baker in the town, who was so pleased with the lad’s spirit that he at once agreed to take the little fellow into the house and employ

him in vending pies in the streets, if his father would grant permission. This was soon obtained. In this queer enterprise young Lackington met with remarkable success. He says: “My manner of crying pies, and my activity in selling them, soon made me the favorite of all such as purchased halfpenny apple-pies and halfpenny plum-puddings, so that in a few weeks the old pie merchant shut up his shop. I lived with this baker about twelve or fifteen months, in which time I sold such large quantities of pies, puddings, cakes, etc., that he often declared to his friends in my hearing that I had been the means of extricating him from the embarrassing circumstances in which he was known to be involved prior to my entering his service.”

Such a story is a sufficient indication of character. It exhibits the two qualities which distinguished him as a man—good sense and courage. Another story of his boyhood is worth telling for the same reason. He was about twelve years of age when he went one day to a village about two miles off, and returning late at night with his father, who had been drinking hard as usual, they met a group of women who had turned back from a place called Rogue Green because they had seen a dreadful apparition in a hollow part of the road where some person had been murdered years before. Of course the place had been *haunted* ever since! The women dared not go by the spot after what they had seen, and were returning to the village to spend the night. Lackington and his father laughed at the tale, and the dauntless boy engaged to walk on in front and go up to the object when they came near it in order to discover what it was. He did so, keeping about fifty yards ahead of the company and calling to them to come on. Having walked about a quarter of a mile, the object came in sight. “Here it is!” said he. “Lord have mercy on us!“ cried they, and were preparing to run, ”but shame prevented them.” [33] Making a long file behind him, the order of procedure of course being according to the degree of each person’s courage, they moved on with trembling steps toward the *ghost*. Although the boy’s “hat was lifted off his head by his hair standing on end,” and his teeth chattered in his mouth, he was pledged in honor and must go on. Coming close to the dreaded spectre, he saw its true character—“a very short tree, whose limbs had been newly cut off, the doing of which had made it much resemble a giant.” The boy’s pluck was the talk of the town, and he “was mentioned as a hero.”

His merits as a pie vender had made him a reputation, and now an application was made to his father to allow James to sell almanacs about the time of Christmas and the New Year. He rejoiced immensely in this occupation and drove a splendid trade, exciting the envy and ire of the itinerant venders of Moore, Wing, and Poor Robin to such a degree that he speaks of his father’s fear lest these poor hawkers, who found their occupation almost gone, should do the daring young interloper some grievous bodily harm. “But,” he says, “I had not the least concern; and as I had a light pair of heels, I always kept at a proper distance.”

At the age of fourteen he was bound for seven years to Mr. Bowden of Taunton, a shoemaker. The indentures made Lackington the servant of both Mr. and Mrs. Bowden, so that, in case of the death of the former, the latter might claim the service of the apprentice. The Bowdens were steady, religious people who attended what Lackington calls “an Anabaptist meeting,” *i.e.*, we presume, a *Baptist* chapel, for the Baptists long bore the opprobrious epithet which was first given to them in Germany and Holland at the time of the Reformation. The Baptists of Taunton in 1760 seem to have been a dull, lifeless class of people, if we may judge from the type presented in the family of the quiet shoemaker with whom James Lackington went to live. Yet they were on a par with the vast majority of churches, established or non-established, in that age of religious apathy in England. The boy accompanied the family twice on the Sabbath to the “meeting,” and heard, yet not heard, sermons full of sound morality, but devoid of anything like vigorous, soul-searching, and soul-converting gospel truth, and delivered, withal, in the flattest and most spiritless manner. The ideas of the family were as circumscribed as their library, and that was small and meagre enough, in all conscience. It may be worth while to give an inventory of its contents. It will cover only a line or two of our space, and will [34] be of some use to those, perhaps, who are apt to mourn their own poverty as regards books, and their small advantages, though, perchance, they may have access to free libraries or cheap subscription libraries, or may be able to buy or borrow all they could find time to peruse if only they had the wish to read. Imagine a youth with any taste for literature living in a sleepy town like Taunton in 1760, and looking over his master’s bookshelves and finding there a school-size Bible, “Watts’ Psalms and Hymns,“ Foot’s ”Tract on Baptism,“ Culpepper’s ”Herbal,” the “History of the Gentle Craft,” an old imperfect volume of receipts on Physic, Surgery, etc., and the “Ready Reckoner.” Bowden was an odd character, evidently. One of his strange customs is thus described: “Every morning, at all seasons of the year and in all weathers, he rose about three o’clock, took a walk by the river’s side round Trenchware fields, stopped at some place or other to drink half a pint of ale, came back before six o’clock and called up his people to work, and went to bed again about seven.”

“Thus,” says Lackington, “was the good man’s family jogging easily and quietly on, no one doubting but he should go to heaven when he died, and every one hoping it would be a good while first.”

The visit of “one of Mr. Wesley’s preachers” led to the conversion of the two sons of Lackington’s employer, and set the young apprentice on a train of thought and inquiry which eventually led him also to cast in his lot with the Methodists. He was then about sixteen years of age, and had so little knowledge of reading that he gladly paid the three halfpence per week which his mother allowed him as pocket-money to one of the young Bowdens for instruction. Yet he had at this time no literary taste, and no thought beyond the limited round of devotional reading, which consisted chiefly of the Bible, and the tracts, sermons, and hymns of the Wesleys. His desire to hear the Methodist preachers was so great at this time, that one Sunday morning, when his mistress had locked the door to prevent his going out for this purpose, he jumped out of the bedroom window, fondly imagining that the words of the ninety-first Psalm, the eleventh and twelfth verses, which he had just been reading, would be sufficient guarantee of his safety in perpetrating such an act of rashness and folly. The last three years

[35]

of his apprenticeship were spent in the service of his master's widow, Mr. Bowden having died when Lackington had served about four years. When he was just twenty-one, and about six months before the expiration of his time, a severe contest for the representation of Taunton in Parliament took place, and the friends of two of the candidates purchased his freedom from Mrs. Bowden's service in order to secure both his vote and his services. The scenes of excitement and dissipation into which he was thrown at this time unsettled his mind, and for a time entirely ruined his religious character. The election over, he went to live at Bristol, and lodged in a street called Castle Ditch, with a young man named John Jones, a maker of stuff shoes, who led him into dissipation. Jones, however, had been pretty well educated, and managed to awaken in Lackington's mind a desire for more knowledge than he then possessed. He was, indeed, wofully ignorant, had no idea of writing, and when he began to feel a thirst for general reading, confesses that he dared not enter a bookseller's shop because he did not know the name of any book to ask for. His friend Jones picked up at a bookstall a copy of Walker's "Paraphrase of Epictetus," which seems to have charmed the young shoemaker immensely, and to have turned him for a time into a regular stoic.

The taste for reading once awakened, he soon grew weary of a life of sin and folly. One evening he turned into a chapel in Broadmead to hear Mr. Wesley, who was preaching there. The old fire of religious enthusiasm was once more enkindled, and burned as fiercely as ever. His companions were soon brought to join the Wesleyan Society, and for a time the little knot of shoemakers working together lived a life of intense religious devotion, working hard and singing hymns or holding religious conversation all day, reading the works of leading evangelical divines during the greater part of the night, and seldom allowing themselves more than three hours' sleep.

The religious was combined with the philosophic mind. He bought copies of such books as Plato on the "Immortality of the Soul," Plutarch's "Lives," the "Morals of Confucius," etc.; and, speaking of this time, he says: "The pleasures of eating and drinking I entirely despised, and for some time carried the disposition to an extreme. The account of Epicurus living in his garden, at the expense of about a halfpenny per day, and that when he added a little cheese to his bread on particular occasions he considered it as a luxury, filled me with raptures. From that moment I began to live on bread and tea, [36] and for a considerable time did not partake of any other viand, but in that I indulged myself three or four times a day. My reasons for living in this abstemious manner were in order to save money to purchase books, to wean myself from the gross pleasures of eating, drinking, etc., and to purge my mind and make it more susceptible of intellectual pleasures."

Leaving Bristol in 1769, he lived for a year at Kingsbridge, Devonshire, where he worked as a maker of stuff and silk shoes. In 1770 he went back to Bristol, and lodged once more with his old friends, the Joneses. At the end of that year he married Nancy Smith, an old sweetheart, whom he had fallen in love with *seven* years previously, "being at Farmer Gamlin's at Charlton, four miles from Taunton, to hear a Methodist sermon." Nancy was dairymaid then, and was accounted handsome; she was a devout Methodist, and an amiable, industrious, thrifty woman. But they were wretchedly poor at the time of their marriage, and had to go and live in lodgings at half a crown a week. "Our finances," he remarks, "were but just sufficient to pay the expenses of the (wedding) day, for in searching our pockets (which we did not do in a careless manner), we discovered that we had but one halfpenny to begin the world with. 'Tis true we had laid in eatables sufficient for a day or two, in which time we knew we could by our work procure more, which we very cheerfully set about, singing together the following strains of Dr. Cotton:

'Our portion is not large indeed,
But then how little do we need!
For Nature's calls are few.
In this the art of living lies,
To want no more than may suffice,
And make that little do.'

"The above, and the following ode by Mr. Samuel Wesley, we did scores of times repeat, even with raptures:

'No glory I covet, no riches I want,
Ambition is nothing to me:
The one thing I beg of kind Heaven to grant
Is a mind independent and free.

'By passion unruffled, untainted by pride,
By reason my life let me square;
The wants of my nature are cheaply supplied,
And the rest are but folly and care.

'Those blessings which Providence kindly has lent
I'll justly and gratefully prize;
While sweet meditation and cheerful content
Shall make me both healthy and wise. [37]

‘How vainly through infinite trouble and strife
The many their labors employ;
When all that is truly delightful in life
Is what all, if they will, may enjoy.’”

Sound sense and true philosophy this; and sorely did the young shoemaker and his much-enduring wife feel the need of such philosophy to hearten and console them when four and sixpence a week was all they had to spend on eating and drinking, and when, as he states, “strong beer we had none, nor any other liquor (the pure element excepted); and instead of tea, or rather coffee, we toasted a piece of bread, at other times we fried some wheat, which, when boiled in water, made a tolerable substitute for coffee; and as to animal food, we made use of but little, and that little we boiled and made broth of.” That the cheerful sentiments with which they set out in life did not fail them under the stress of such hardships as these is sufficiently shown by the statement with which he closes the chapter which deals with this part of his history: “During the whole of this time we never once wished for anything that we had not got, but were quite contented, and with a good grace in reality made a virtue of necessity.”

After three years Lackington resolved to go to London in the hope of meeting with better work and pay. It was indeed dire necessity that drove him to take this step. Incessant suffering and semi-starvation seemed inevitable if he remained in Bristol. His wife had been extremely ill almost from the beginning of their residence in the city, probably owing to the change from country air and active employment to the close atmosphere and sedentary occupation to which she was now accustomed. Her continued illness and his own hopeless state of poverty drove him to make the venture. Accordingly, having given her all the money he could spare, he set off for the metropolis, and arrived there in August, 1774, with half a crown in his pocket.

Once in London, the tide of his fortune turned. He soon found plenty of work and got good wages. In a month his wife was sent for, and the two worked so industriously and lived so economically, that before long Nancy changed her cloth cloak for one of silk, and her worthy husband indulged in the luxury of a *greatcoat*, the first he had ever worn. When he had been in London about four months he received tidings of the death of his grandfather, who had left ten pounds apiece to each of his grandchildren. He was so ignorant of money matters that he had no notion of obtaining the money [38]
except by going down to Somersetshire to fetch it, and the sum was accounted so prodigious, that he at once set off to claim his property; “so that,” he says, “it cost me about half the money in going down for it and in returning to town again.“ ”With the remainder of the money,“ he adds, ”we purchased household goods; but as we then had not sufficient to furnish a room, we worked hard and lived hard, so that in a short time we had a room furnished with our own goods; and I believe that Alexander the Great never reflected on his immense acquisitions with half the heart-felt enjoyment which we experienced on this capital attainment.” Now and then he visited the old bookshops and added a few books to his small library. One Christmas Eve he went out with half a crown in his pocket to purchase the Christmas dinner. Passing by an old bookshop, he could not resist the inducement to turn in and look over the stock. He intended to spend only a few pence on some book; but a copy of Young’s “Night Thoughts,” which he very much coveted, was so tempting a prize, that, without hesitation, he laid down his half-crown for the purchase of it. On returning home, he had no slight difficulty to persuade his wife of “the superiority of intellectual pleasures over sensual gratifications.“ ”I think,“ said he to his patient spouse, “that I have acted wisely; for had I bought *a dinner*, we should have eaten it to-morrow, and the pleasure would have been soon over; but should we live fifty years longer, we shall have the ‘Night Thoughts’ to feast upon.”

In June, 1775, one of his Wesleyan friends looked in on Lackington and his wife as they sat at work making boots and shoes, and told them of a “shop and parlor” which were then to let in Featherstone Street, where it was suggested Lackington might obtain work as a master-shoemaker. He at once fell in with the proposal, and added that “he would sell books also.” He does not seem to have formed any intention of bookselling previous to this interview, but the prospect of having a shop of his own led him to think how easy and pleasant it would be to combine the two kinds of business. He says in his own *naïve* manner: “When he proposed my taking the shop, it instantly occurred to my mind that for several months past I had observed a great increase in a certain old bookshop, and that I was persuaded I knew as much of old books as the person who kept it. I further observed that I loved books, and that if I could but be a bookseller, I should then have plenty of books to read, which was [39]
the greatest motive I could conceive to induce me to make the attempt.” His friend engaged to procure the shop, and Lackington bought “a bag full of old books, chiefly divinity, for a guinea,” which, together with his own little library and some scraps of old leather, were worth five pounds. With this stock he “opened shop on Midsummer Day, 1775, in Featherstone Street, in the parish of St. Luke.”

He borrowed five pounds from a fund which Wesley’s people had raised for the purpose of lending out on a short term to men of good character who were in need of help in business or domestic difficulties. No interest appears to have been required, and he states that the money was of great service to him. At this time they lived in the most economical and sparing manner, “often dining on potatoes, and quenching their thirst with water,” for they could not forget the trials through which they had passed, and, haunted by the dread of their recurrence, were determined, if possible, to provide against them.

After six months his stock had increased to £25. “This stock I deemed too great to be buried in Featherstone Street; and a shop and parlor being to let in Chiswell Street, No. 46, I took them.” His business in the sale of books proved so prosperous, that, in a few weeks after removing to Chiswell Street, he disposed of his little stock of leather and altogether abandoned the *gentle craft*. At this time

his stock consisted almost entirely of divinity, and for a year or two he “conscientiously destroyed such books as fell into his hands as were written by free-thinkers: he would neither read them himself, nor sell them to others.” He makes some curious and sagacious remarks on bargain-hunters who frequented his shop at this time, while his stock was low and poor, and who in their craze after “bargains” often paid him double the price for dirty old books that he afterward charged when he had a larger stock, and had adopted the principle of selling every book at its lowest paying price. These people, he observed, forsook his shop as soon as he began to introduce better order and to appear “respectable!”[3] He had not been long in Chiswell Street, before both his wife and himself were [40] seized with fever. She died and was buried without his having once seen her after her illness. The shop was left in the care of a boy, his house was put in charge of nurses, who robbed him of his linen and other articles, kept themselves drunk with gin, and would have left him to perish. The timely presence of his sister saved his life, and several Wesleyan friends saved him from ruin by locking up his shop, which the nurses and boy together would soon have emptied. Although he wrote the whole story in after-years in a vein of flippant sarcasm and irreverence for religion, he was constrained to acknowledge his great obligation to the friends whose religion prompted them thus to act the good Samaritan to him in his dire extremity. “The above gentlemen,” he says, “not only took care of my shop, but also advanced money to pay such expenses as occurred; and as my wife was dead, they assisted in making my will in favor of my mother.“ ”These worthy gentlemen,“ he adds, ”belong to Mr. Wesley’s Society (and notwithstanding they have imbibed many enthusiastic whims), yet would they be an honor to any society, and are a credit to human nature.”

In 1776 he married Miss Dorcas Turton, a friend of his first wife. It seems to have been her influence, to a large extent, that drew him away from Wesleyanism and religion. She was a woman of considerable education, and a great reader, kindly and affectionate in her disposition, a dutiful daughter to her aged and dependent father, whom she had supported after his failure in business by keeping a school. But she seems to have had no thought of religious truth as a basis for character and an impulse to right conduct, and her absolute indifference to religion soon told on the mind of a sensitive and impulsive man like Lackington. “I did not long remain in Mr. Wesley’s Society,” he writes, referring to this same year 1776, “and, what is remarkable, I well remember that, some years before, Mr. Wesley told his society in Broadmead, Bristol, in my hearing, that he could never keep a bookseller six months in his flock.”

Two years afterward Lackington entered into partnership for three years with Mr. Denis, an *honest man*, as he is emphatically styled, who brought a considerable sum of money into the business, by means of which the stock was at once doubled, and the sales vastly increased. Lackington now proposed the issue of a sale catalogue, to which his partner reluctantly consented. Both partners were employed in writing it, but the larger share fell to Lackington, whose name alone appeared on the [41] title-page. It was issued in 1779, and the first week after its publication the partners took, what they regarded as the “large sum” of twenty pounds. Denis, finding his money pay better in business than in the Funds, invested a larger sum in stock, but when Lackington, who according to the terms of the agreement was sole purchaser, began to buy, as his partner thought, too largely, they had a dispute over the matter and dissolved partnership on friendly terms a year before the term of partnership had expired. Denis, to the end of his life, remained friendly with Lackington, and used to call in every day on passing his shop to inquire what purchases and sales he had effected, and now and then the *honest man* lent his old partner money to help in paying bills.

In 1780 he resolved to give *no credit* to any one, and to sell all his books at the lowest price bearing a working profit. The effect of this new method of doing business was remarkable in many ways. Long credit seems to have been common in the trade in those days, most bills were not paid within six months, many not within a twelvemonth, and some not within two years. “Indeed,” he adds, “many tradesmen have accounts of seven years’ standing; and some bills are never paid”(!) After recounting the disadvantages of the credit system, he says: “When I communicated my ideas on this subject to some of my acquaintances, I was much laughed at and ridiculed; and it was thought that I might as well attempt to rebuild the Tower of Babel as to establish a large business without giving credit.” The offence given to some old customers was very great, and for a time he lost them, but they soon returned on learning how much lower his books were now marked than those of other booksellers. As to others who would only deal on credit, he cared little when he observed their anger, very wisely remarking that “some of them would have been as much enraged when their bills were sent in had credit been given them.” The booksellers themselves were not a little annoyed by the innovations of the dauntless trader, and appear to have said some bitter things about him and his stock. Some of them were “mean enough to assert that all my books were bound in *sheep*,” and he adds, in language that does him credit, “As every envious transaction was to me an additional spur to exertion, I am therefore not a little indebted to Messrs. Envy, Detraction & Co. for my present prosperity, though, I assure you, this is the only debt I am determined not to pay.”

This adoption of the “no credit” system was the first decided step toward Lackington’s wonderful [42] success in business. In five years his catalogues contained the names of thirty thousand books, and these were generally of a much better description.

The most startling innovation he made in the trade of bookselling, and the one which led to the largest amount of opposition on the part of his fellow-tradesmen, was in regard to the way of dealing with what are called “*remainders*.” When a bookseller found a book did not sell well, it was his custom to put what remained into a private sale, “where only booksellers were admitted, and of them only such as were invited by having a catalogue sent them.“ ”When first invited to these trade-sales,“ he says, ”I was very much surprised to learn that it was common for such as purchased remainders to destroy one half or three fourths of such books, and to charge the full publication price, or nearly that, for

such as they kept on hand. For a short time I cautiously complied with this custom." But he soon became convinced of the folly of this practice, and resolved to keep the whole stock of books and sell them off at low prices. By this means he disposed of hundreds of thousands of volumes at a small profit, which amounted to a larger sum in the end than if he had destroyed three out of four and sold the rest at the original retail price. This course made him many enemies in the trade, who tried to injure him, and even did their best to keep him out of the sale-rooms. It was, however, of no avail: his business increased enormously, his customers appreciating his method, whether the booksellers did or not. He often bought enormously; "West says he sat next to Lackington at a sale when he spent upward of £12,000 in an afternoon."[4] It was no uncommon thing for him to buy several thousand copies of one book, and at one time he had *ten thousand* copies of Watts' Psalms and the same number of his Hymns in stock. Of course he found it necessary to sell out rapidly, or business would soon have come to a dead-lock; for, as he justly observes, "no one that has not a quick sale can possibly succeed with large numbers." "So that I often look back," he remarks, "with astonishment at my courage (or temerity, if you please) in purchasing, and my wonderful success in taking money sufficient to pay the extensive demands that were perpetually made upon me, as there is not another [43] instance of success so rapid and constant under such circumstances." It is interesting to notice how trifling a circumstance it was which led him to adopt the plan of selling every article at the lowest remunerative price. "Mrs. Lackington had bought a piece of linen; when the linen-draper's man brought it into my shop three ladies were present, and on seeing the cloth opened asked Mrs. L. what it cost per yard. On being told the price, they all said it was very cheap, and each lady went and purchased the same quantity; those pieces were again displayed to their acquaintance, so that the linen-draper got a deal of custom from that circumstance; and I resolved to do likewise." He admits that he often sold a "great number of articles much lower than he ought, even on his own plan of selling cheap, yet that gave him no concern," "but if he found out that he had sold any articles too dear," he declares that "it gave him much uneasiness." He reflects in his own simple fashion: "If I sell a book too dear, I perhaps lose that customer and his friends forever, but if I sell articles considerably under their real value the purchaser will come again and recommend my shop to his acquaintances, so that from the principles of self-interest I would sell cheap."

The following observations of a shrewd observer are worth quoting as a testimony to the change which had begun to come over the minds of the people of this country in regard to reading, about a hundred years ago: "I cannot help observing that the sale of books in general has increased prodigiously within the last twenty years [1791]. According to the best estimation I have been able to make, I suppose that more than four times the number of books are sold now than were sold twenty years since. The poorer sort of farmers, and even the poor country people in general, who before that period spent their winter evenings in relating stories of witches, ghosts, hobgoblins, etc., now shorten the nights by hearing their sons and daughters read tales, romances, etc.; and on entering their houses, you may see 'Tom Jones,' 'Roderick Random,' and other entertaining books stuck up on their bacon-racks, etc.; and if John goes to town with a load of hay, he is charged to be sure not to forget to bring home 'Peregrine Pickle's Adventures;' and when Dolly is sent to the market to sell her eggs she is commissioned to purchase 'The History of Pamela Andrews.' In short, all ranks and degrees now READ. But the most rapid increase of the sale of books has been since the termination of the late [44] war."[5]

He tells the story of his going to reside in the country and set up a carriage, horses, and liveried servants in his own quaint and self-complacent style. "My country *lodging* by regular gradation was transformed into a country *house*, and the inconveniences attending a *stage-coach* were remedied by a *chariot*." This house was taken at Merton in Surrey. Referring to the captious remarks of his neighbors, he says: "When by the advice of that eminent physician, Dr. Lettsom, I purchased a horse and saved my life by the exercise it afforded me, the old adage, '*Set a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride to the devil*,' was deemed fully verified; they were very sorry to see people so young in business run on at so great a rate!" The occasional relaxation enjoyed in the country was censured as an abominable piece of pride; but when the carriage and servants in livery appeared, "they would not be the first to hurt a foolish tradesman's character, but if (as was but too probable) the *docket* was not already struck, the Gazette would soon settle that point." It appears that some of these wiseacres speculated as to the means by which the fortunate bookseller had made his large fortune. Some spoke of a *lottery* ticket, and others were sure that he must have found a number of "banknotes in an old book to the amount of many thousand pounds, and if they please can even tell you the title of the old book that contained the treasure." "But," he jocosely remarks, "you shall receive it from me, which you will deem authority to the full as unexceptionable. I found the whole of what I am possessed of, in —SMALL PROFITS, *bound* by INDUSTRY, and *clasped* by ECONOMY."

It is curious to notice the frank and simple manner in which he speaks of his profits, and of the way in which he did his business. "The profits of my business the present year [1791] will amount to four thousand pounds," he writes, and goes on to say that "the cost and selling price of every book was marked in it, whether the price is sixpence or sixty pounds, is entered in a day-book as they are sold, with the price it cost and the money it sold for; and each night the profits of the day are cast up by one of my shopmen, as every one of them understands my private marks. Every Saturday night the profits [45] of the week are declared before all my shopmen, etc., the week's profits, and also the expenses of the week, then entered one opposite another; the whole sum taken in the week is also set down, and the sum that has been paid for books bought. These accounts are kept publicly in my shop, and ever have been so, as I never saw any reason for concealing them." He speaks in the same letter of selling more than one hundred thousand volumes annually, and adds, in his own complacent manner, "I believe it is universally allowed that no man ever promoted the sale of books in an equal degree!"

Lackington at length quitted Chiswell Street, and took the enormous building at the corner of

Finsbury Square, which was styled “The Temple of the Muses,” and to which the public were invited as the cheapest bookshop in the world. He declared in his catalogue that he had half a million of books constantly on sale, “and these were arranged in galleries and rooms rising in tiers—the more expensive books at the bottom, and the prices diminishing with every floor, but all numbered according to a catalogue which Lackington compiled by himself.”[6] His profits on the first year’s trade at “The Temple of the Muses” amounted to £5000. He retired from business in 1798, having made a large fortune.

His capacity for business was remarkable. Until he was nearly thirty years of age he had no opportunity of exercising it. But once having given up the gentle craft, in which he was no great proficient, he proved himself one of the smartest and cleverest business men in London. We can readily pardon the simple vanity of the self-made and self-taught merchant prince who writes about his recently acquired *chariot* in the following strain: “And I assure you, sir, that reflecting on the means by which the carriage was procured adds not a little to the pleasure of riding in it. I believe I may, without being deemed censorious, assert that there are some who ride in their carriages who cannot reflect on the means by which they were acquired with an equal degree of satisfaction.” For several years, both before and after he retired from business, he made a journey through different parts of England and Scotland, calling at the chief towns, such as York, Leeds, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Carlisle, Lancaster, Manchester, Bristol, and inspecting the bookshops. His observations are of the [46] most quaint and out-of-the-way character. At Newcastle he found nothing more remarkable to record than “the celebrated *crow’s nest* affixed above the weather-cock on the upper extremity of the steeple in the market-place,” and the famous *brank*, an iron instrument, shown in the town-hall, and used in olden time to punish notorious scolds. At Glasgow the most notable spectacle, and one that calls forth a considerable amount of remark, is that of the washerwomen, whose practice of getting into their tubs, placed by the river-side, and dollying the linen with their bare feet, awoke his profound astonishment. Of his visits to Bristol and the west of England, the scene of his early life, he gives the following curious and interesting account: “In Bristol, Exbridge, Bridgewater, Taunton, Wellington, and other places, I amused myself in calling on some of my masters, with whom I had, about twenty years before, worked as a journeyman shoemaker. I addressed each with, ‘*Pray, sir, have you got any occasion?*’ which is the term made use of by journeymen in that useful occupation when seeking employment. Most of those honest men had quite forgot my person, as many of them had not seen me since I worked for them, so that it is not easy for you to conceive with what surprise and astonishment they gazed on me. For you must know that I had the vanity (I call it *humor*) to do this in my chariot, attended by my servants; and on telling them who I was, all appeared to be very happy to see me. And I assure you, my friend, it afforded me much real pleasure to see my old acquaintances alive and well.” Coming to Wellington, his birthplace and home during boyhood, he says: “The bells rang merrily all the day of my arrival. I was also honored with the attention of many of the most respectable people in and near Wellington and other parts, some of whom were pleased to inform me that the reason of their paying a particular attention to me was their having heard, and now having themselves an opportunity of observing, that I did not so far forget myself as many proud upstarts had done; and that the notice I took of my poor relations and old acquaintance merited the respect and approbation of every real gentleman.”

Lackington’s kindness to his own relatives, and to the poor, was one of his best qualities. In fact, he declares in 1791 that he would have retired from business five years previously if it had not been for the thought of his poor relations, many of whom were helpless, and whom he felt bound to relieve and protect. Besides supporting his “good old mother“ for many years, he says, ”I have two aged men and [47] one aged woman whom I support: and I have also four children to maintain and educate; ... many others of my relations are in similar circumstances and stand in need of my assistance.” He also made provision for the support of the very aged parents of his first wife, Nancy.

On abandoning business he left his third cousin George Lackington at the head of the firm, while he and his wife went to live at Thornbury in Gloucestershire, in order to be in the neighborhood of the Turtons, his wife’s relations. He bought two estates in Alvestone, on one of which was a genteel house, where he lived in good style for several years. Here he employed his time in visiting the sick and poor, and sometimes in *preaching*. For he had now returned to the faith of a Christian, and threw himself with his accustomed ardor into all kinds of religious work. His contrition for the severe and ungracious things he had said of the Wesleyans in the first editions of his “Memoirs” was evidently very deep. He acknowledges in plain terms that he owed to them all his early advantages, and the moral and mental awakening which opened before him a new path in life. He says, in the introduction to his last edition of his book, “If I had never heard the Methodists preach, in all probability I should have been at this time a poor, ragged, dirty cobbler.... It was also through them that I got the shop in which I first set up for a bookseller.”

He built a small chapel at Thornbury on his own estate, where the Wesleyan ministers regularly officiated. In 1806 he removed to Taunton, where he resided for about six years, built a chapel at a cost of £3000, adding £150 a year for the minister.

On the decline of his health in 1812, he went to live by the seaside at Budleigh Sulterton, in Devonshire. Here also he erected a chapel which cost £2000, and endowed it with a minister’s stipend of £150 per annum.

James Lackington died of paralysis in the seventieth year of his age, on the 22d of November, 1815, and was buried in the Budleigh Churchyard. None will deny the successful bookseller the right to the Latin motto with which he has adorned the frontispiece to the first edition of “Memoirs and Confessions,” viz., *Sutor ultra crepidam feliciter ausus*.[7]

CHAPTER III.

[49]

REV. S. BRADBURN

[51]

Samuel Bradburn,

THE SHOEMAKER WHO BECAME THE PRESIDENT OF THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

"I was a poor ignorant cobbler."—*Samuel Bradburn, Life of Samuel Bradburn*, p. 227.

"During forty years Samuel Bradburn was esteemed the Demosthenes of Methodism."—*Abel Stevens, LL.D., quoted on title-page of Life of S. B.*

"I have never heard his equal; I can furnish you with no adequate idea of his powers as an orator; we have not a man among us that will support anything like a comparison with him.... I never knew one with so great a command of language."—*Dr. Adam Clarke.*

"The generous and noble-minded Samuel Bradburn, whose ability as a public speaker was all but unrivalled."—*Rev. Thomas Jackson, President of the Wesleyan Conference.*

SAMUEL BRADBURN.

[53]

In the winter of 1740 the press-gang men were busy at their abominable work in most of the maritime and inland towns of England, and, among other places, Chester seems to have sent certain unwilling recruits to make up the rank and file of the army, and replenish the navy of His Majesty King George II. Many are the tales of cruelty which belong to this miserable period in the history of our army and navy. Thousands of able-bodied men were carried away by main force from their peaceful occupations, from home and friends, and everything that was dear to them, and compelled to do duty for their country in foreign climes. Sons, husbands, fathers of families, steady, honest, industrious, law-abiding

citizens, or worthless waifs and strays, it mattered not—all who might be of service, and could be easily caught, were seized and hurried off to the nearest military or naval depot, and were soon lost sight of by their distressed relations, and were, perhaps, never heard of again until their names were reported in the list of killed and wounded in battle. Now and then the life of enforced military or naval service was tolerable and even pleasant from a soldier's or sailor's point of view and ended happily enough with an honorable discharge and pension. A wretched beginning had not always a wretched course and a miserable ending, for the Briton of those days was a much-enduring creature, and had strong notions about "serving his country," and soon learned to tolerate and even enjoy a condition of things which, to say the least, was unjustifiable and tyrannical.

An incident connected with the life-story of the subject of this sketch will illustrate some of the worst features of the system referred to, and show the sort of hardship and injustice to which "the free and noble sons" of Britain were exposed up to a time almost within the memory of men still living. Two men sat drinking and chatting in a friendly manner in an ale-house in Chester one night early in the year 1740. It does not seem that either of them was the worse for liquor, or that anything unpleasant had passed between them to spoil the pleasure of their intercourse. In fact, the two men had known [54]
each other years before, and both seemed glad to renew their acquaintance. The younger of the two was only twenty-one years of age, and had been married but a few days previously to a young woman of nineteen summers, to whom he was deeply attached. After staying as long as he deemed expedient he rose to go home, when to his amazement the pretended "friend" and old acquaintance turned upon him with the words, "You shall not leave this room to-night; you have now no master but the king, and you must serve him, as you have taken his money." Guessing what was meant, the poor fellow felt in his pocket and found that his companion had secretly slipped three guineas into it as king's bounty. It was vain for the enraged and distracted young man to throw the money on the floor, and declare he would none of it nor the king's service, that he was but just married, and had no wish to be a soldier, for armed men stood round the door and prevented escape. It was vain also to appeal to the magistrates of that day, for though they must have been perfectly well acquainted with the nefarious tricks of pressmen and recruiting officers, they accepted the evidence of the officer against the recruit, and adjudged him a legal soldier, because, forsooth, he had received the king's bounty and so enlisted. Such was the experience of Samuel Bradburn's father, and in two days after the event just narrated he was hurried off to his regiment, without a chance of saying good-by to his friends or making any further efforts for his own release. Their grief, and the agony of mind endured by the young bride, may be imagined. She had no choice but to part from him, perhaps forever; or to get permission to attach herself to the regiment, and follow her husband's fortunes as a soldier. No true woman and worthy wife would hesitate long, and the noble-hearted Welsh girl[8] soon resolved not to leave her husband. The regiment was ordered to Flanders, and took part in several battles, in one of which Bradburn was severely wounded, and on the conclusion of the war in 1748 ordered to Gibraltar, where Samuel was born, 5th October, 1751, and where he spent the first twelve years of his life.

The soldier's family numbered thirteen children, and as his pay was but scanty, it may be supposed that the education of each of its members could not have been a very important or costly affair. In short, we have *another* story to add to those already told of a life of singular devotedness and [55]
usefulness which had no fair foundation of sound and thorough education. Bradburn himself declares that he went to school for only a fortnight during his twelve years' life at Gibraltar. The fee was a penny a week, and on its being raised to three halfpence the boy was removed, for the father's poor pittance would not allow of the extra strain upon it of a halfpenny per week. And so, says the biographer, almost with an air of triumph, "the education of one of the greatest modern pulpit orators cost only *twopence*!"

Bradburn's father appears to have been a remarkably thoughtful and exemplary sort of man for a soldier, in those days. Though he never united with the Methodists, he was much attached to them, and had derived great profit from their preaching at the camp in Flanders. His children were brought up in a strictly religious manner, always going to service on Sunday, and being compelled to read a daily portion of Scripture, and repeat a Scripture lesson from week to week. According to his light, he did his best to bring his children up well; and one of them, at all events, profited by his training, for Samuel became very thoughtful and serious, and was accounted, by his neighbors, one of the best boys in the town.

On his discharge from the army Bradburn went to live in the old city from which he had been so cruelly carried away about twenty-three years before. Samuel was then nearly thirteen years of age, and a situation was soon found for him as an out-door apprentice to a shoemaker, to whom he was bound for eight years. Brought up under the influences of Methodism, and accustomed to listen to a class of preachers who had done more than any others to awaken and keep alive the flames of religious revival and zeal, young Bradburn's mind was always more or less under the influence of deep religious conviction. His history, as a youth, presents the most astonishing contrasts of religious fervor and sinful excess. Yet his worst moods did not last long, and, however far he went in the way of transgression, his consciousness of the evil of sin never left him, and he had always sufficient moral sensibility left to make him profoundly miserable when he dared to reflect. Acts of daring wickedness, and defiant or profane language, only served as a cover to a troubled heart and a restless conscience. The story of his early life, with its alternate seriousness and folly, anxiety about his soul's welfare and mad recklessness, reads wonderfully like that of John Bunyan. How like the records of the life of the [56]
Bedford tinker are these entries in the diary of the Chester shoemaker: "One evening, being exceedingly cast down, and finding an uncommon weight upon my spirits, I went to preaching, and while Mr. Guilford was describing the happiness of the righteous in glory, my heart melted like wax before the fire. In a moment all that heaviness was removed, and the love of God was so abundantly shed abroad in my heart, that I could scarcely refrain from crying out in the preaching-house." ...

”When preaching was over, I went into a place near St. Martin’s Churchyard, which adjoined the preaching-house, and there I poured out my soul before the Lord in prayer and praise, and continued rejoicing in God my Saviour most of the night.” He was then less than fourteen years of age; his companions at the work-room were of a godless sort, and after a few months’ enjoyment of mental peace and joy, their injurious influence began to tell upon him. By degrees he abandoned his prayerful habits, and surrendered himself to the power of evil, until at length he “became acquainted with the vilest of the vile,” and imbibed their spirit and followed their example. To what depths he sank the following sentences from his diary will show: “It is impossible to express the feelings of my mind, on some occasions during this apostasy from God; especially once, when one of the greatest reprobates I ever knew was constrained to own that he was shocked to hear me swear such oaths as I often did.[9] ... For a moment I felt a degree of compunction, but gave away to despair and drowned the conviction.” The reproof which Bunyan received under similar circumstances led him to drop the practice of swearing; but Bradburn went on in his evil ways as resolutely as ever. For several years he seems to have led a reckless life, joining in vicious company, indulging a passion for “gaming,” or gambling, to such an extent that he would even go to bed and rise and dress again when the rest of the household were asleep, in order to go out through the window and join his gambling and betting companions. At last he became so enamoured of sinful follies that he snatched the opportunity, which [57]
a few words of complaint from his father afforded, to take offence and leave home, “in order to go and lodge with some abandoned young men, in order to have his full swing without being curbed by any one.” His wages were but small, and as he took half of them home he had but a small pittance to live upon: yet such was his craze at this time for bad company and “gaming,” that he lived often for two days on a penny loaf, and went in rags rather than confess his error to his parents and ask their aid. One good quality kept him from utter ruin at this time, and it seems to have been the only one that remained in a lively state. He speaks of “the affection he had for his mother, whom he still loved as his own soul.” He could not endure her tears and tender reproofs, and left his home in order that he might not have to suffer the constant reproach of her good character and loving entreaties. To such lengths will a passion for sinful amusements drive even a youth of sensitive nature and generous disposition. Nothing can be more deplorable than the account he gives of his sinful infatuation at this the worst period of his youthful career. “I spent almost a twelvemonth in this truly pitiable way of life, and during that time do not remember enjoying one satisfactory moment. My clothes were now almost worn out, and my wages were not sufficient to supply me with more; yet, such was my folly, I still persisted in the same way, glorying even in my shame, till my life seemed nearly finished, and the measure of my iniquity almost full; and, to all appearance, there was but a step betwixt me and everlasting death.”

At eighteen years of age this miserable course of sin came to an end. Bradburn was led “by the hand of Providence to work in the house of a Methodist.” He had about this time, also, become so weak and ailing in health, as the result of his pernicious habits, that he was compelled to yield to his parents’ entreaties to go and live at home. Good example, kind words, and wise counsel, combined with the beneficial effects of separation from his old companions, soon began to tell upon his conscience. As might be expected, the sense of sin, when once it was awakened in him, was most intense. It was no wonder that such a youth as Samuel Bradburn should have “experiences” which men of a milder temperament are strangers to, and cannot perhaps appreciate. After he had mused for a time, and thought upon his ways, he became suddenly, and, as it seemed then, most unaccountably convinced of sin, and led to cherish the most anxious concern to find peace with God. “One evening,” he writes in [58]
his diary, “at the close of the year 1769, while I was making a few cursory remarks on the season, and looking at some decayed flowers in a garden adjoining the house I worked in, I was suddenly carried, as it were, out of myself with the thought of death and eternity.... My sins were set as in battle array before me, particularly that of ingratitude to a good and gracious God. This caused my very bones to tremble, and my soul to be horribly afraid. Hell from beneath seemed moved to meet me.... The effects of those convictions were such that I could scarcely reach home, though but a little way off. I went to bed, but found no rest. I sunk under the weight of my distress, gave myself up to despair, and for some time lost the use of my reason.” For several days the poor sin-stricken youth lay as if in a high fever, and raved of judgment and perdition. It was three months ere he entered into a state of quiet, firm, intelligent, Christian faith, bringing peace and rest to his mind. His excellent and godly master helped him somewhat during this long and terrible struggle in the “slough of despond.” Several “evangelists,” in the character of gospel ministers, pointed out the way of life to him, but they were not of so much service as might have been expected. A “roll which he carried in his hand,” on which was written, “The Door of Salvation Opened by the Key of Regeneration,” was of great value in showing the way to the blessedness he sought. In fact, it was during the reading of this little treatise on the life of faith that his spirit first seemed to hear the divine words, “*Peace, be still*.” There could be no mistake about the young shoemaker’s conversion. Account for it as men might, the change was marvellous, and infinitely beneficial, as we shall see, no less to his neighbors than to himself; for Samuel Bradburn was intensely social, and bound to influence his friends in one way or another, as well as to be influenced by them. It was impossible for him to remain inactive when a great impulse moved within him. The desire to go out and speak of the joy he had found, and the means by which he had found it, soon became a ruling passion. It is the desire which makes the philanthropist, the preacher, the missionary. The language in which he attempts to describe that indescribable joy of the renewed heart is but another reading of the old gospel truth: “If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”[10] Alluding to the reading [59]
of the little book above mentioned, he says: “Such an unspeakable power accompanied the words to my soul, that, being unable to control myself, I rose from my seat and went into the garden, where I had spent many a melancholy hour; but, oh, how changed now! Instead of terror and despair I felt my heart overflowing with joy, and my eyes with grateful tears. My soul was in such an ecstasy that my poor emaciated body was as strong and active as I ever remember it, and not at that time only, for the

strength and activity remained. I had now no fear of death, but rather longed to die, knowing that the blessed Jesus was *my* Saviour; that God was reconciled to *me* through Him; that nothing but the thread of life kept me from His glorious presence. Now the whole creation wore a different aspect. The stars which shone exceeding bright appeared more glorious than before. Such was my happy frame that I imagined myself in the company of the holy angels, who, I believed, were made more happy on my account, and doubtless those ministering spirits did feel new degrees of joy on seeing so vile a sinner, so wretched a prodigal, come home to the arms of his heavenly Father.[11] O Thou eternal God!“ he exclaims, ”Thou transporting delight of my soul! preserve and support, me through life, that I may at last enjoy the heaven of love which I then felt overpowering my spirit.”

Bradburn at once joined the Methodist Society at Chester. His master’s son, a boy of twelve, and many other young people, began to attend the “class-meetings” about the same time. Among his work-fellows, also, there were some who rejoiced in the light which now filled young Bradburn’s soul, and their conversation and hymn-singing while at work, and their union in prayer before quitting the workroom at the close of the day, made the new time a perpetual Sabbath, and the shoemaker’s room “a perfect paradise.” In March, 1770, after the usual period of probation, he was admitted to full membership, and received what the Methodists call “his first ticket.” He was not long in discovering, as every one else has done in similar circumstances, that the change, though genuine, was not complete. An outburst of passion, and a growing desire after disputation on theological matters, in which he found himself contending for mastery rather than truth, gave him to see that a sound and secure religious character is a matter of growth and culture and can only be maintained by [60] watchfulness and prayer, and the careful formation of habits of piety. And as Thomas à Kempis finely says, “Custom is overcome by custom,” so Bradburn found it, and in order to put a bar between his spirit and possible temptations, changed his way of *living*, his *companions*, and his *books*. One day, when John Wesley was administering the Lord’s Supper in the little chapel at Chester, Bradburn was seized with the idea that he must become a preacher. For a long time he strove hard to drive it from his mind. But the more he did so the more it seemed to possess him. His sense of unfitness for so great an office as that of the preacher, his exalted notions of the sacredness and responsibility attaching to the office, and his own deepening conviction, which nothing could resist, that it was his duty before God to devote himself to the work, made him for a time positively wretched. He tried the effect of change of residence upon his feelings in the matter. He was now twenty years of age, and out of his time. But on visiting his relations at Wrexham, he found that they and their friends of the Wesleyan Society, to whom he was introduced, had a common feeling that such a young man ought surely to exercise his gifts as a speaker. In answer to their entreaties he spoke several times in their meetings, and thus made his first start in public speaking. Still the question of preaching was left unsettled, and disturbed his mind night and day. It became a positive burden to him—“the burden of the Lord,” indeed, and no power of his own could remove it. Six months after this brief visit to Wrexham, he obtained a situation, and went to reside in Liverpool, where he fell in with people much to his mind, who were exceedingly kind to him. They, however, no sooner came to know him than their opinion was strongly expressed to the same purport as that of his friends in Chester and Wrexham. In four months he left Liverpool and returned home, the great life-question still upon his mind. He dare not settle it, in one way or the other; all he could do was to resolve to live as near to God as possible, commit his way unto Him, and submissively wait for the direction of Divine providence. In this condition of mind he passed the rest of the year 1772. At the beginning of the following year he found employment at Wrexham, and there took up his abode in the congenial society of his relations and religious friends. Soon after this the event occurred which decided the severe and agonizing mental struggle to which he had been subjected for the last twelve months, and determined the whole course [61] of his life, and the employment of his rare gifts as a preacher of the Gospel. On Sunday, February 7th, 1773, the preacher for the day failed to appear. Young Bradburn was invited by the leaders of the congregation to take the service. Trembling from head to foot, almost blind with fear and excitement, and casting himself on divine aid, he mounts the pulpit stairs. The opening part of the service gives him confidence, and when the time for preaching comes, he is able to speak with much freedom and fervor to an appreciative and thankful audience. In the evening he is once more asked to occupy the pulpit, and this time he delivers a discourse which is not too long for the hearers, though it lasts for more than two hours. The next week he preaches to the same people three times; and now the question is settled, and settled, as he and his friends are fain to believe, in a providential way: Samuel Bradburn is *called to be a preacher*, and a preacher of no ordinary power. He has not waited all these long months for nothing. He has not run before he was sent. He has not tarried in the desert like Moses, like Elijah, like Saul of Tarsus, to learn the truth and will of God, with no beneficial results. He has been called of the Holy Spirit to the work, and to the work of preaching he must now give himself and his very best powers, or a woe will rest upon him. He and his Methodist friends would not trouble themselves for one moment about the question of his being a shoemaker, or *remaining* a shoemaker, if he is to become a preacher. One apostolic precedent was as good as twelve to them in a matter of this kind, and Paul did not cease to be a tent-maker when the Holy Ghost said to the church at Antioch, “Separate me Barnabas and Saul to the work whereunto I have called them.”[12]

Soon after the events just referred to, Bradburn resolved to go and see the Rev. John Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley in Shropshire, the friend of Lady Huntingdon, and Benson, and John Wesley. Fletcher had a reputation for piety and usefulness which few men in his day could equal and none surpass. He was a great favorite with the followers of John Wesley, not alone because of his friendship with their leader, but on account of his saintly life, his evangelistic zeal, and his rare catholicity of spirit. None worked more faithfully and diligently than he at the College of Trevecca in Wales, of which he was for several years the president. Yet he received no emolument for his labors. “Fletcher was no pluralist, for he did his work at Trevecca without fee or reward, from the sole motive of being useful.”[13] It is [62] said of his apostolic work at Madeley, that “the parish, containing a degraded, ignorant, and vicious

population employed in mines and iron works, became, under his diligent Christian culture, a thoroughly different place. His public discourses, his pastoral conversations, his catechising of the young, his reproofs to the wicked, his encouragements to the penitent, his accessibility at all hours, his readiness to go out in the coldest night and the deepest snow to see the sick or the sorrowing, his establishment of schools, and his personal efforts in promoting their prosperity—in short, his almost unrivalled efforts in all kinds of ministerial activity, have thrown around Madeley beautiful associations not to be matched by the hills and hanging woods which adorn that hive of industry."[14] Bradburn was lovingly received at the Madeley vicarage, stayed for several days with the family, and preached in one of the rooms of the house to a congregation of villagers. If Fletcher could not ask his shoemaker friend to officiate in the church, seeing that he had taken no holy orders, the good vicar had no difficulty or scruple in regard to his guest's preaching the Gospel in the house. On leaving, young Bradburn carried away, as a precious treasure of the heart, a deep sense of Fletcher's holy character, and never forgot the good man's characteristic remark, "If you should live to preach the gospel forty years, and be the instrument of saving only one soul, it will be worth all your labor." Returning home, he went on with his work as a shoemaker, preaching on Sundays in the chapels at Flint, Mold, Wrexham, etc., until the beginning of the following year, when he went to reside with friends at Liverpool. Here his preaching was so much enjoyed by the congregations of the "circuit" that he was pressed to stay and minister to them till July, when it was hoped that some arrangement might be made by the Conference in London by which he would be permanently and officially appointed to labor among them. Although he had become somewhat popular by this time, and was warmly welcomed wherever he went on account of his earnestness and rough eloquence, he was sometimes regarded with distrust because of his youthful and unclerical appearance and manner. One good man, who generally entertained the preacher on his visits, was so annoyed at the sight of "a [63] mere lad" "travelling the circuit, that he sent young Bradburn to take his meals and sleep in the garret with the apprentices." After the morning sermon, however, which surprised and delighted all who heard it, "he was judged worthy to sit in the preacher's chair" at the table of his host, and at night was allowed to sleep in the "prophet's chamber." In September of that year he was not a little surprised to find himself appointed by the Conference as a regular "travelling preacher on the Liverpool circuit." It was about this time he had his first interview with John Wesley. The veteran evangelist's simple and kindly manner affected the young preacher deeply, and his advice was wonderfully like him: "Beware," said Wesley, holding young Bradburn by the hand, "beware of the fear of man; and be sure you speak flat and plain in preaching."

In these early days of Methodism, when the denomination was undergoing the process of rapid growth, it was impossible to wait for men, to meet the urgent need of the churches, who had gone through a regular process of ministerial education and training. Such as had the requisite character and the gift of speech were "called out" and placed over churches in a manner that would not have been tolerated in later times, when colleges had come to be established. Yet the work done by men of Bradburn's stamp was genuinely apostolic, and served, under the divine blessing, to lay broad and deep the foundations of that Wesleyan denomination which, in the present day, yields to none of the so-called "sects" in the culture and moral power of its ministry. It is not to be supposed that the fluent young shoemaker was insensible to his need of education. The first year's work in Lancashire taxed his mental resources severely, and set him wondering many times whether he should be able to go on preparing new sermons in order to preach repeatedly to the same congregation. It was consequently an immense relief to him when the year came to an end, and he found that the Conference at Leeds had set him down for an entirely new field of labor, at Pembroke, in South Wales.[15]

Bradburn felt his poverty in more ways than one. Wesleyan ministers were then but poorly paid, and [64] men of his generous character, who found it easier to give to the needy than to economize and save, were often in great straits for funds. On his way down to Pembroke he was reduced to his last shilling, and, but for this meeting with Wesley at Brecon, might have found it an awkward matter to reach his destination. "Apply to me when you want help," said Wesley to his friend, and very soon proved his sincerity by prompt assistance when the young pastor made known his straitened circumstances. The following story is too good to be omitted. In reply to Bradburn's appeal Wesley sent the following short letter, inclosing several five-pound notes:

> "Dear Sammy: Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.—Yours affectionately, John Wesley."

To which Bradburn replied:

> "Rev. and Dear Sir: I have often been struck with the beauty of the passage of Scripture quoted in your letter, but I must confess that I never saw such useful expository notes upon it before.—I am, Rev. and dear Sir, your obedient and grateful servant, S. Bradburn."

The year spent in South Wales was happy and prosperous, and the churches at Pembroke, Haverfordwest, and Carmarthen were greatly increased and well organized under the care of Bradburn and his colleague. By the Conference in 1776 he was sent to Limerick, and from thence, in four months, such was the severity of the strain upon his health, he was removed to Dublin. Here he had met, on first landing in Ireland, with the young lady who was afterward to become his wife. It was a case of "mutual admiration" and "love at first sight." Bradburn was a passionate lover, and could ill brook the delay of two years which had to pass away before he took the beautiful Miss Nangle to his own home. In one of his anxious moods, when sick of love and hope deferred, he rose from his sleepless bed to pray for divine guidance and favor in regard to the serious business of courtship. It was his custom to pray aloud, and supposing his colleague, who occupied the same bed, to be fast asleep, he did not balk his prayer in this instance, finishing a fervent appeal for divine direction with

the simple words, “But, Lord, let it be Betsey.“ His bedfellow humorously responded, ”Amen,” and [65] broke out into a hearty laugh at poor Bradburn’s expense. John Wesley, who favored the match, and generously interceded in his friend’s behalf, both with a much-dreaded stepmother and the fair one herself, conducted the marriage ceremony in the house of a friend. He had invited the bride and bridegroom-elect, and Mrs. Karr the stepmother, “to breakfast with him at Mrs. King’s,[16] the morning after his arrival, being his birthday; as soon as she (Mrs. Karr) entered he began the ceremony and married us in the parlor. Pride would not let her affront Mr. Wesley, and she was forced to appear satisfied.“ ”Wesley,” says Bradburn’s biographer,[17] “more than once took up cudgels for his preachers when in difficulties of this kind, but not in such a summary manner.”

Relegated to the Cork and Bandon circuit, he had a very trying time of it for about a year. One of his memoranda made at this time gives us a glimpse of his acquirements from his own common-sense point of view, for Bradburn was a thoroughly sensible and humble man, who never yielded to ignorant flattery of his pulpit eloquence, nor gave way, as some self-made men and popular preachers have done, to vanity and conceit. Self-examination was with him a genuine business, conducted in a reverent spirit and an honest and altogether healthy fashion. By this means he came to know himself and act accordingly. Not many men in his position would have written so sensibly as this: “*Cork, March 31st* (1779).—I have read and written much this month, but sadly feel the want of a friend to direct my studies. All with whom I have any intimacy, know nothing of my meaning when I speak of my ignorance. They praise my sermons, and consider me a prodigy of learning; and yet what do I know? a little Latin, a little philosophy, history, divinity, and a little of many things, all of which serves to convince me of my own ignorance!” At this time, and for many years after, he preached forty sermons a month, and sometimes fifty. Even if they were *all* old sermons, which would not often be the case, how could a man so employed find time or energy for close and continuous study? The next four years are spent at Keighley, Bradford, and Leeds in Yorkshire. When at Keighley he “travelled” for a [66] time with Wesley, and had an opportunity of observing the way in which that sainted man wholly devoted his gifts, his time, and his money to the service of God and his fellow-men. Wesley’s stipend from the Society in London was £30 a year, but the sale of books, the generosity of the friends at Bristol, and occasional preaching fees and sundry legacies, brought his yearly income up to £1000 or £1200; yet he rarely spent more for himself than his meagre stipend, and regularly gave away *all the rest*. “Thus literally having nothing, he possessed all things; and though poor, he made many rich.”[18] At Leeds, Bradburn was offered the pastorate of an Independent Church with a greatly increased salary, but the loyal Methodist refused the tempting offer. His next appointment was to Bristol, where he had the misfortune to lose his darling Betsey, who died of decline in her twenty-ninth year. His colleague had suffered a similar bereavement, and the stern yet tender-hearted Wesley, then in his eighty-third year, actually set off from London “in the driven snow” to go down to Bristol and comfort the two sorrowing preachers. Bradburn did not long remain a widower. At Gloucester he met Sophia Cooke, “the pious and godly” Methodist to whom Robert Raikes of Sunday-school fame had spoken about the poor children in the streets, and asked her, “What can we do for them?“ Miss Cooke replied, ”Let us teach them, and take them to church!” The hint was acted upon, and Raikes and Miss Cooke “conducted the first company of Sunday scholars to the church, exposed to the comments and laughter of the populace, as they passed along with their ragged procession.” A better wife for the earnest Methodist preacher could not have been found than the woman who thus showed her good sense, her piety, and her courage, in starting the Sunday-school movement. In 1786 Wesley showed his appreciation of Bradburn’s excellent qualities by getting him appointed to the London Circuit in order to have his assistance in superintending the affairs of the Connection. Here he met with Charles Wesley, and, at the time of his death in 1788, Bradburn stood by the dying man’s bed offering up earnest prayer for him, and calling to his mind the truths of that Gospel which he had done so much to spread throughout the world by his unrivalled hymns. John Wesley himself died three years afterward, 2d March, 1791, and Bradburn, then at Manchester, published a pamphlet entitled, “A Sketch of Mr. [67] Wesley’s Character,” in which he gave a most interesting epitome of the chief points in the history and labors of his father in the Gospel. Bradburn, now looked upon as one of the foremost men in the Connection, united with eight others in issuing a circular giving an outline of policy for the guidance of the Conference at its next session. The utmost care and wisdom were needed in order to keep the various elements of Methodism together; and few men in those days were more conspicuous and useful than Bradburn in guiding the counsels of the assembled ministers. He was elected to preach before the Conference at its next session in Manchester, and so moved his audience by his impassioned appeal for unity and loyalty to the good cause that had now lost its earthly leader, that all in the chapel rose to their feet in response to his stimulating words. In 1796, when stationed at Bath, he was made secretary of the Conference, and held the office three years in succession. In 1799 his brethren showed their esteem for him by choosing him as *President*, and thus giving him the highest honor which they had it in their power to bestow.

Among Methodists Bradburn is regarded as one of the most eloquent and powerful preachers the denomination has produced. He had all the natural gifts of a great orator, and these, combined with fervent piety and a single and lofty purpose in preaching, invested his discourses with a charm and an influence rarely wielded by public speakers. “Possessed of a commanding figure, dignified carriage, graceful action, mellow voice, ready utterance, correct ear, exuberant imagination, an astonishing memory, and an extensive acquaintance with his mother tongue, he could move an assembly as the summer breeze stirs the standing corn.”[19] This elocutionary power was not gained without much care and diligent labor. He was a hard reader, and a most painstaking sermonizer, for though he never used the manuscript in the pulpit but preached extempore, after the fashion of the times, he nevertheless prepared his discourses with great skill and labor. The following sentences from his biography will sufficiently illustrate this point.[20] “His own bold, easy, and correct English was such

as no man acquires without perseverance in a right use of means. His diligence may be inferred from one of his reported sayings on leaving Manchester—that he had twelve hundred outlines of sermons untouched (not used in preaching in the circuit) at the end of three years' ministrations. The result of such endowments, improved, with such assiduity, amid all the hindrances and discouragements of a laborious and harassing vocation, was, that to be comprehensive and lucid in arrangement; beautifully clear in statement or exposition; weighty, nervous, and acute in argumentation; copious, various, and interesting in illustration; overwhelming in pathos; to wield at will the ludicrous or the tender, the animating, the sublime, or the terrible—seems to have been habitually in his power." The Rev. Richard Watson, author of the "Institutes," "walked twenty miles to hear the far-famed Mr. Bradburn preach; and he never lost the impression which that distinguished orator produced." Watson thus describes his impressions: "I am not a very excitable subject, but Mr. Bradburn's preaching affected my whole frame. I felt a thrill to the very extremity of my fingers, and my hair actually seemed to stand on end." The biographer of the Rev. Jabez Bunting says of Bradburn: "His career was brilliant and useful; and perhaps more men longed, but durst not try, to preach like him than like any other preacher of his time.... Bradburn was without exception the most consummate orator we ever heard." And the author of Bradburn's life concludes the citation of a number of testimonies with the following strongly expressed opinion of his merits as a pulpit orator: "Methodism has produced a host of preachers renowned for pulpit eloquence. The names of Benson, Lessey, Watson, Newton, Beaumont, and others, stand out in bold relief on the page of her history, but the highest niche in her temple of fame belongs, most unquestionably, to Samuel Bradburn." [68]

Like most men of genius he had a strong sense of humor, enjoyed a joke most heartily, was ready and pithy in repartee, and seldom at a loss for spirit and tact in extricating himself from difficulties. Many a good story might be told, did space allow, in illustration of this feature of his character. One or two must suffice. Perhaps the smartest thing he ever did in outwitting the early opponents of Methodism was done in a certain small town, in one of his own circuits, where, in the early days of the movement, the preacher and his friends had often "been driven off the field by a mob, headed by the clergyman." Bradburn understood the state of affairs thoroughly, and resolved to go down to the parish and preach in the open air. Notice of his coming was duly forwarded, and the clergyman ordered constables and others to be in attendance at the time and place appointed for the service. Meanwhile Bradburn having "provided himself with a new suit of clothes, borrowed a new wig of a Methodist barber," and "went to the place, put his horse up at the inn, attended the morning service at church, placed himself in a conspicuous situation so as to attract the notice of the clergyman, and, when the service was closed, he went up to him on his way out, accosted him as a brother, and thanked him for his sermon. The clergyman, judging from his appearance and address that he was a minister of some note, gave him an invitation to his house. Bradburn respectfully declined, on the ground that he had ordered dinner, and expressed a hope that the clergyman would dine with him at the inn. He did so, and Bradburn having entertained him until dinner was over with his extraordinary powers of conversation, managed to refer to the open-air service which was to be held, and the clergyman stated his intention to arrest the preacher and disperse the congregation, and asked Bradburn to accompany him, which he did. On arriving at the appointed place they found a large company assembled; and as no preacher had made his appearance, the clergyman concluded that fear had kept him away, and was about to order the people to their homes when Bradburn remarked that it would "be highly improper to neglect so favorable an opportunity of doing good, and urged him to preach to them. He excused himself by saying that he had no sermon in his pocket, and asked Bradburn to address them, which, of course, he readily consented to do, and commenced the service by singing part of the hymn beginning— [69]

> 'Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
> My great Redeemer's praise,'

and, after praying, delivered an impressive discourse from Acts 5:38, 39, 'And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.' This not only deeply affected the people, but so delighted the clergyman, that although he knew, as the service proceeded, that he had been duped, he heartily thanked Bradburn for the deception he had practised on him, and ever afterward, to the day of his death, showed a friendly disposition toward Methodism."[21]

The same readiness of resource and good humor were shown in the management of the affairs of the society in his capacity as a pastor. On one occasion, when he resided in Manchester, two ladies, district visitors, went to the house of an old woman, a member of the society, who was a laundress, and finding her hard at work accosted her with the remark: "Betty, you are busy." "Yes, mum," said Betty, "as busy as the devil in a whirlwind!" Shocked by such an indecorous speech, the visitors threatened to report it to Mr. Bradburn. Afraid of what she had done, and the consequence, if it should come to the preacher's ears, Betty, as soon as the ladies had gone away, set off by the quickest route to see Mr. Bradburn and relate the whole affair, and thus anticipate the report from the ladies themselves. She found Bradburn "engaged in his vocation as cobbler for his family." "He listened to Betty's simple story, and engaged to put the matter right, if she would try to be more guarded in the future. She had scarcely got clear away when the two ladies arrived with their melancholy story of Betty's irreverence. They were asked into the room, and seeing him at his somewhat unclerical employment, one of them observed quite unthinkingly, 'Mr. Bradburn, you are busy!' 'Yes,' returned Bradburn, with great gravity, 'as busy as the devil in a whirlwind!' This remark from Betty was sufficiently startling, but from Bradburn it was horrifying. Seeing their consternation, he explained how busy the devil was in Job's days, when he raised the whirlwind which 'smote the four corners of the house,' where the patriarch's children were feasting, and slew them. It is, perhaps, needless to [70]

add that the two ladies left without mentioning the object of their visit."[22]

Hating the false pride which leads a man to forget his humble origin, and the canting way in which some men talk of their sacrifices in entering the ministry, he once severely rebuked two young men who made a parade in company of having "given up *all* for the ministry." "Yes, dear brethren," said he, "some of you have had to sacrifice your all for the itinerancy; but we old men have had our share of these trials. As for myself, I made a double sacrifice, for I gave up for the ministry two of the best *awls* in the kingdom—a great sacrifice, truly, to become an ambassador of God in the church, and a gentleman in society!" His ready wit was sometimes displayed like that of Hugh Latimer, Dean Swift, [71] and Sydney Smith, in the selections of texts for sermons on special occasions. Preaching at the opening of a chapel entirely built with borrowed money, he took as a text the words of the young man to Elisha the prophet:[23] "Alas, master, for it was borrowed." On a snowy winter's day, when the congregation was very small, he selected the words which describe the character of the virtuous woman,[24] "She is not afraid of the snow."

That Samuel Bradburn was not perfect none will need to be told, yet it will surprise and pain every one to read that so great and good a man, honored and beloved of his brethren for many years, and useful beyond computation as a preacher, should have been "overtaken in a fault," for which the Conference, in the exercise of a rigorous discipline, saw fit to suspend him for a year. After the lapse of this time he came back again to his old position, penitent and humble, like David or Peter, and like them fully restored to the Divine favor. This singular and melancholy event appears to have been due as much to *mental* as *moral* derangement, and in a short while, such was the sincerity of his sorrow and the blameless character of his after-life, his brethren were thankful to forget it, and to place him once more in positions of high trust and honor in the Connection. The last ten years of his life were spent in the important circuits of Bolton, Bath, Wakefield, Bristol, Liverpool, and East London. He died in London, July 26th, 1816, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. At the time of his decease the Conference was sitting in London. As a token of esteem and affection all its members joined in the funeral service at the New Chapel, City Road. He was buried in Old Methodist graveyard, City Road, by the side of his friend John Wesley, in the last resting-place of many of the fathers and founders of the Wesleyan Connection.

CHAPTER IV. [73]

William Gifford,

FROM THE SHOEMAKER'S STOOL TO THE EDITOR'S CHAIR.

"Not mine the soul that pants not after fame—
Ambitious of a poet's envied name,
I haunt the sacred fount, athirst to prove
The grateful influence of the stream I love."
—*The Baviad; William Gifford.*

"It is on all hands conceded, that the success which attended the 'Quarterly' from the outset was due, in no small degree, to the ability and tact with which Gifford discharged his editorial duties."—*Encyclopædia Britannica.*

"I am not more certain of many conjectures than I am that he never propagated a dishonest opinion, nor did a dishonest act."—*Writer in the Literary Gazette.*

WILLIAM GIFFORD. [75]

The field of literature seems always to have had a special charm for shoemakers. If the reader will glance for a moment at the list of names given at the end of this book, this fact will be at once apparent. Half, or more than half, the names given in that list are in some way or other connected with literature. The connection is but slight in many instances, perhaps, and the reputation it

conferred only local and temporary. Few of our shoemakers, even though we have thought well to style them “illustrious,” can be said to have made a great and lasting name in the world of letters; and none of them it must be confessed have attained to first rank as prose or poetical writers. But there are worthies in our list, associated alike with the humble craft of shoemaking and the higher walks of literature, whose names the world will not willingly let die, and we venture to think that the subject of this sketch is one of the number.

William Gifford was the first editor of the *London Quarterly Review*. The high and influential position held by this journal was mainly due in the first instance to Gifford’s talent and excellent management. The *London Quarterly* was started in opposition to the famous *Edinburgh Quarterly*; George Canning, the celebrated statesman, and Sir Walter Scott, the great novelist, being the prime movers and early patrons of the enterprise, for the *Edinburgh*, under the clever management of Jeffrey, and supported by such writers as Sydney Smith and Brougham, was then too liberal in its tone to suit the taste of the brilliant Foreign Secretary and his Tory friends. It was no slight testimony to the abilities of the man who was chosen as the first editor of the new *Quarterly* that his election should have been cordially approved by the first of Scottish novelists, and one of the most influential of English statesmen.

Gifford was the author of two satirical poems, the “Baviad” and “Maeviad,” directed against the tawdry and sentimental rhymesters of a certain school which flourished in his day.[25] His scathing satire succeeded in putting an end to their trash. Gifford published also a translation of the Latin [76]
poets, Juvenal and Persius. To the latter he prefixed the story of his own early life as a poor cobbler’s apprentice. From this interesting autobiography the materials for the following sketch have been chiefly selected. William Gifford’s best title to fame was, no doubt, his edition of the “Early English Dramatists”—Ford, Massinger, Shirley, and Ben Jonson. His generous and able vindication of Jonson reflects credit both upon the critic and the poet. It should be added that Gifford’s editorship of the *Quarterly* extended over fifteen years, and that during the whole of this period he was the writer of a large number of its most able articles.

Having taken a glimpse of the work accomplished by William Gifford as a critic, a scholar, and an editor in the latter years of his life, let us turn to look at his circumstances in boyhood and youth, when, as a miserable cobbler’s apprentice, he began to yearn after knowledge and to cherish ambitious dreams. The contrast between the first and last scenes in the drama of life could hardly be more wonderful than that which is presented in the history of the man who passed from the cobbler’s stool to the editor’s chair.

William Gifford was born at the small town of Ashburton, in South Devon, in 1757. His father, who was a man of spendthrift and profligate habits, died of the effects of his evil conduct before he had attained the age of forty. In twelve months afterward Gifford’s mother died, leaving William, and a little brother two years old, orphans, and, it would seem, penniless. As no home could be found for the infant, he was sent to the workhouse. William, then thirteen years of age, fell into the hands of a man named Carlisle, who had stood as his godfather, a worthless fellow, who had appropriated the few things left by the mother, on pretence of claiming them for debt. This man put William to school, where he began to show signs of ability; but he was allowed no chance of making progress; for, at the end of three months, grudging the slight cost of his tuition, Carlisle took the boy from his books and playmates, and put him to the plough. It was soon found that he was too weak for such heavy work. His guardian now tried to get the boy out of hand altogether, by sending him off to Newfoundland as an errand-boy in a grocery store. This unkind project, however, being doomed to failure, it was resolved that the troublesome charge should be got rid of by making him a sailor.

We give the account of what happened at this period in his own words: “My godfather had now [77]
humbler views for me, and I had no heart to resist anything. He proposed to send me on board one of the Torbay fishing-boats. I ventured, however, to remonstrate against this, and the matter was compromised by my consenting to go on board a coaster. A coaster was speedily found for me at Brixham, and thither I went when little more than thirteen years of age. It will easily be conceived that my life was a life of hardship. I was not only a ship-boy on the high and giddy mast, but also in the cabin, where every menial office fell to my lot. Yet if I was restless and discontented it was not so much on account of this as of my being prevented reading, as my master did not possess a single book of any description, excepting a Coasting Pilot.”

Gifford was on board this vessel for about twelve months, a time of untold suffering and degradation. In fact, his position was so deplorable that some women from Ashburton, who went down to Brixham to buy fish, shocked to see the boy running about the beach in ragged clothes, spoke so plainly on their return home about the hardship of his lot, that his godfather was compelled for very shame to send for him home again. He was once more put to school, and now made such rapid strides in arithmetic that on an emergency he was invited to assist the school-master. He goes on in his own narrative to say that these encouragements led him to entertain the idea that he might be able to get his own living by teaching, and as his first master “was now grown old and infirm, it seemed unlikely that he should hold out above three or four years, and I fondly flattered myself,“ he adds, ”that notwithstanding my youth I might possibly be appointed to succeed him.” It is worth while to notice that he was but a boy in his teens when he first began to feel the noble spirit of ambition stir within him, and to cherish the laudable desire to rely upon his own efforts for his maintenance. It was this lofty and self-reliant spirit which carried him past all his difficulties; and, truth to tell, no one has ever done anything remarkable in the world without it. The youth who is altogether destitute of ambition, and is ever on the look-out for the help of friends, lacks the first elements of success in life. But Gifford’s bravery and persistence of mind had to be severely tested before meeting with their due reward.

Proceeding with his pathetic story, he says: “I was about fifteen years of age when I built these castles [78]
in the air. A storm, however, was collecting, which unexpectedly burst upon me and swept them all away. On mentioning my plan to my guardian, he treated it with the utmost contempt, and told me he had been negotiating with his cousin, a shoemaker of some respectability, who had liberally consented to take me, without fee, as an apprentice. I was so shocked at this intelligence that I did not venture to remonstrate, but went in sullenness and silence to my new master, to whom I was bound till I should attain the age of twenty-one. At this period I had read nothing but a romance called ‘Parismus,’ a few loose magazines—the Bible, indeed, I was well acquainted with; these, with the ‘Imitation of Thomas à Kempis,’ which I used to read to my mother on her death-bed, constituted the whole of my literary acquisitions.”

The account which follows has few things to equal it in the records of struggling genius. It will serve to show how abject and apparently hopeless was his condition as a student at this time of his life, and will show also, what it may be hoped no youth who reads these pages will fail to learn, how marvellous is the power of energy and perseverance to triumph over apparently insuperable obstacles.

“I possessed,” Gifford writes, “at this time but one book in-the world; it was a treatise on algebra given to me by a young woman who had found it in a lodging-house. I considered it a treasure; but it was a treasure locked up, for it supposed the reader to be acquainted with simple equations, and I knew nothing of the matter.” He then speaks of meeting with a book called Fenning’s “Introduction” belonging to his master’s son, who, by the way, was discovered afterward to have been all through this time a secret rival for the head-mastership. This “Introduction” gave Gifford just the information required to carry him forward into the study of algebra. But he was compelled to study it by stealth, lest it should be taken from him, and he goes on to say: “I sat up for the greater part of several nights successively and completely mastered it. I could now enter upon my own, and that carried me pretty far into the science. This was not done without difficulty. I had not a farthing on earth, nor a friend to give me one; pen, ink, and paper, therefore, were for the most part as completely out of my reach as a crown and sceptre. There was, indeed, a resource, but the utmost caution and secrecy were necessary in applying to it. I beat out pieces of leather as smooth as possible and wrought my problems on them [79]
with a blunted awl; for the rest my memory was tenacious, and I could multiply and divide by it to a great extent.”

Strange to say, although he displayed so much ability and zeal in the study of mathematics, he was not destined to achieve distinction in that department of study. A very trifling incident led to the exercise of new gifts, and turned the tide of his evil fortune. A shopmate had made a few verses on the blunder of a painter in the village who was engaged to paint a lion for a sign-board, and had produced a dog instead. Gifford thought he could beat the verses of his shopmate, and accordingly tried his hand at rhyme. His associates all agreed in pronouncing young Gifford’s verses the better of the two. This encouraged him to try again, and in the course of a short time he had composed about a dozen pieces. He says: “They were talked of in my little circle, and I was sometimes invited to repeat them out of it. I never committed a line to paper—first, because I had no paper; and, second, because I was afraid, for my master had already threatened me for inadvertently hitching the name of one of his customers into a rhyme.” The rest of this account of his poetical adventures would be amusing if it were not for the pathos which underlies it, and the fact that it is the prelude to one of the most painful incidents in the sad story of Gifford’s early life. Referring to these recitals of his poetical pieces he says: “These repetitions were always attended by applause, and sometimes by favors more substantial; little collections were now and then made, and I have received sixpence in an evening(!). To one who had long lived in the absolute want of money such a resource seemed a Peruvian mine. I furnished myself by degrees with paper, etc., and, what was of more importance, with books of geometry and of the higher branches of algebra, which I cautiously concealed. Poetry even at this time was no amusement of mine. I only had recourse to it when I wanted money for my mathematical pursuits. But the clouds were gathering fast. My master’s anger was raised to a terrible pitch by my indifference to his concerns, and still more by my presumptuous attempts at versification. I was required to give up my papers, and when I refused, was searched, my little hoard of books discovered and removed, and all future repetitions prohibited in the strictest manner. This was a severe stroke, I felt it most sensibly, and it was followed by another, severer still, a stroke which crushed the hopes I had so long and fondly cherished, and resigned me at once to despair. Mr. Hugh, Smerdon, the master of the school on [80]
whose succession I had calculated, died and was succeeded by a person not much older than myself, and certainly not so well qualified for the situation.”

Poor Gifford! hard, indeed, was thy lot; an orphan without friends, helpers, or sympathizers, having no proper leisure or means for study or recreation, and even the little pleasure and profit wrung from a few ciphering books and doggerel verses snatched away by cruel hands; trodden down like a worm in the mire, and every particle of talent and ambition threatened with extinction! For six long years this misery lasted in one form or another, while he strove to hope on against hope, and found himself compelled to labor at a trade which he declares he hated from the first with a perfect hatred, and never, consequently, made any progress in. What could be more miserable and disheartening? But to the industrious and patient, as “to the upright, *there ariseth light in the darkness*.” No darker hour occurred in all Gifford’s miserable boyhood and youth than that which is described in the sentences just quoted. And now the light is about to appear. A friend comes upon the scene, to whose generous interference the unhappy cobbler owed the educational advantages he afterward enjoyed. His obligations to this benefactor were always most readily and warmly expressed; for whatever faults Gifford might have, he was never charged with the meanness of forgetting his lowly origin, and the generous friend by whom he had been rescued from a wretched condition and introduced to a happier state of life. He speaks of his benefactor as bearing “a name never to be pronounced by him without veneration.” This gentleman, Mr. Cooksley, was a surgeon in the neighborhood. He had accidentally

heard of the young cobbler's poetry, and sought an interview with him. Gifford went down to the surgeon's house, and, encouraged by the kindness he received, told the story of his attempts at self-culture, and of the hardships he had undergone. Deeply moved by the touching story, and convinced of the young man's natural abilities and desert of encouragement, Mr. Cooksley resolved, there and then, on liberating the youth from the thraldom of his situation. The first thing was to free him from the bonds of his apprenticeship, and the next to give him the advantages of regular instruction. He was then twenty years of age, and he says, "My handwriting was bad, and my language very incorrect." Accordingly, a subscription was started to furnish funds for this twofold purpose. It read as [81]
follows: "A subscription for purchasing the remainder of the time of William Gifford, and for enabling him to improve himself in writing and English grammar." The kindness of Cooksley and a few other friends, whose sympathies were enlisted by his generous zeal for the youth, enabled him to receive two years' instruction from a clergyman, the Rev. Thomas Smerdon, who resided in the locality. Such was the progress made by Gifford, that at the end of that time his instructor pronounced him quite prepared for the university. Again Mr. Cooksley proved a friend. By his efforts and promises of support Gifford was entered at Exeter College, Oxford. Unfortunately his noble patron died before Gifford could take his degree. But he was not suffered to leave Oxford on account of Mr. Cooksley's death. He found a second patron in Lord Grosvenor, by whose aid the grateful undergraduate was enabled to finish his term. The culture which he received in the university must have been very thorough and complete, evincing itself in refinement of manner as well as scholarship of no ordinary degree, for in the course of a few years after leaving Ashburton, we learn that the late shoemaker was taken into the family of Lord Grosvenor as private tutor and travelling companion to his son Lord Belgrave. The circumstance which led to Lord Grosvenor's patronage of Gifford was remarkable, and deserves to be recorded as an illustration of the fact that an accident may lead to the most important events in our history. But we must premise, first of all, as a safeguard against a false inference or false hopes, that *such* accidents are sure to come in the way of *industrious, clever* and *deserving* men. If they occur to men of a different stamp they are of no avail. If William Gifford had not been a hard-working student, such a circumstance as the accidental perusal of one of his letters by a person for whom it was not intended could not have helped his fortunes in the least. It appears that he had been in the habit of corresponding with a friend in London on literary matters. His letters to this friend were sent under covers, and in order to save postage were left at Lord Grosvenor's. One day the address of the literary friend was omitted, and his lordship, supposing the letter to be for himself, opened and read it. The contents excited his admiration, and awakened his curiosity to know who the author could be. He was sent for, and after an interview, in which, for the second time in his life, he told the story of his early struggles to willing and sympathizing ears, he was invited by Lord [82]
Grosvenor to come and reside with him.

It is deeply gratifying to record instances of disinterested generosity of this kind, and to read the glowing language in which the thankful young student refers to the kindness of his noble patron. Referring to the invitation to live with Lord Grosvenor, and his promise of honorable maintenance, Gifford says, "These were not words of course, they were more than fulfilled in every point. I did go and reside with him, and I experienced a warm and cordial reception, and a kind and affectionate esteem that has known neither diminution nor interruption, from that hour to this, a period of twenty years."

In 1794, his "Baviad" was published, in imitation of the satires of Persius, and in the following year the "Mæviad," after the style of Horace. These names were taken from the third Eclogue of Virgil—

> "He may with foxes plough and milk he-goats,
> Who praises *Bavius* or on *Mævius* dotes."

These terribly virulent satires, like those of Boileau and Pope, were aimed at contemporary poets of an inferior order, and like them, too, were most crushing in their effect. The *Della Cruscan School*[26] never smiled, or rather smirked, again after the issue of the Baviad and Mæviad. But it is a rare thing to meet with a critic or a satirist who escapes the danger of committing a fault in condemning one. Gifford did not escape this danger. His lines certainly did not answer to the epigram—

> "Satire should, like a polished razor keen,
> Wound with a touch that's scarcely felt or seen."

His unhappy victims were hacked and hewed in pieces in a merciless and barbarous manner; while the spectators enjoyed the savage sport, and accorded the cruel executioner a wreath of laurel for the vigor and talent displayed in his unenviable task. These satires first made Gifford's name in the world of letters. But his fame as a scholar was established chiefly on his translations of Persius and Juvenal, and his excellent editions, with valuable notes, of the early "English Dramatists." Speaking of Gifford's edition of Ben Jonson's dramatic and other works, John Kemble, the most accomplished actor of his day, says, "It is the best edition, by the ablest of modern commentators, through whose learned and [83]
generous labors old Ben's forgotten works and injured character are restored to the merited admiration and esteem of the world."

The celebrity thus obtained, along with the friendship of the leading Tory politicians of the day, secured for Gifford the position of editor of the *London Quarterly*. It ought to be stated that when Mr. Channing started the *Anti-Jacobin* in 1797, Gifford was entrusted with the conduct of that journal, and had thus acquired a little experience of journalism. His connection with this paper, which came out weekly, lasted only for a year. But he managed the *Quarterly*, as we have said, for fifteen years, that

is, from 1809, the date of its commencement, to 1824, when ill-health compelled him to lay his pen aside.

The plan of this new journal had originated with John Murray, the famous publisher, and had received the hearty support of Walter Scott, Egbert Southey, Canning, Rose, Disraeli, and Hookham Frere. The first number, containing three articles by Walter Scott, was published on the 1st February, 1809, and was immediately sold out, a second edition being called for. Canning wrote for the second number, and Southey became a constant and most prolific contributor. "For the first hundred and twenty-six numbers he wrote ninety-four articles, many of them of great permanent value."[27] At John Murray's "drawing-rooms," where the leading literary men of the day were wont to assemble at four o'clock, Gifford met with a brilliant assemblage of poets, novelists, historians, artists, and others. Murray the publisher delighted "to gather together such men as Byron, Scott, Moore, Campbell, Southey, Gifford, Hallam, Lockhart, Washington Irving, and Mrs. Somerville; and, more than this, he invited such artists as Lawrence, Wilkie, Phillips, Newton, and Pickersgill, to meet them and paint them, that they might hang forever on his walls."[28] It was in reference to one of Murray's "publishers' dinners" Byron wrote the lines in which occurs the following allusion to Gifford:

"A party dines with me to-day,
All clever men who make their way;
Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey
Are all partakers of my pantry.

My room's so full—we've Gifford here,
Reading MS. with Hookham Frere,
Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
Of some of our forthcoming articles."

A writer in the *Literary Gazette*,[29] who had the pleasure of Gifford's personal acquaintance, has made the following interesting notes upon his private character, and his conduct as an editor. "He never stipulated for any salary as editor; at first he received £200, and at last £900 per annum, but never engaged for a particular sum. He several times returned money to Murray, saying 'he had been too liberal.' Perhaps he was the only man on this side the Tweed who thought so! He was perfectly indifferent about wealth, I do not know a better proof of this than the fact that he was richer, by a very considerable sum, at the time of his death than he was at all aware of. In unison with his contempt of money was his disregard of any external distinction; he had a strong natural aversion to anything like pomp or parade. Yet he was by no means insensible to an honorable distinction, and when the University of Oxford, about two years before his death, offered to give him a doctor's degree, he observed, 'Twenty years ago it would have been gratifying, but now it would only be written on my coffin.' [84]

"His disregard for external show was the more remarkable, as a contrary feeling is generally observable in persons who have risen from penury to wealth. But Gifford was a gentleman in feeling and in conduct, and you were never led to suspect he was sprung from an obscure origin except when he reminded you of it by an anecdote relative to it. And this recalls one of the stories he used to tell with irresistible drollery, the merit of which entirely depended on his manner. It was simply this: At the cobblers' board, of which Gifford had been a member, there was but one candle allowed for the whole coterie of operatives; it was, of course, a matter of importance that this candle should give as much light as possible. This was only to be done by repeated snuffings; but snuffers being a piece of fantastic coxcombry they were not pampered with: the members of the board took it in turn to perform the office of the forbidden luxury with their finger and thumb. The candle was handed, therefore, to each in succession, with the word '*sneaf*' (Anglice, snuff) bellowed in his ears. Gifford used to pronounce this word in the legitimate broad Devonshire dialect, and accompanied his story with expressive gestures. Now on paper this is absolutely nothing, but in Gifford's mouth it was exquisitely humorous. I should not, however, have mentioned it, were it not that it appears to me one of the best instances I could give of his humility in recurring to his former condition.... He was a man of very deep and warm affections. If I were desired to point out the distinguishing excellence of his private character, I should refer to his fervent sincerity of heart. He was particularly kind to children and fond of their society. My sister, when young, used sometimes to spend a month with him, on which occasions he would hire a pianoforte, and once he actually had a juvenile ball at his house for her amusement." [85]

Speaking of the spirit he displayed as editor of the *Quarterly*, the same writer says: "He disliked incurring an obligation which might in any degree shackle the expression of his free opinion. Agreeably to this, he laid down a rule, from which he never departed, that every writer in the *Quarterly* would receive at least so much per sheet. On one occasion, a gentleman holding office under Government sent him an article, which, after undergoing some serious mutilations at his hands preparatory to being ushered into the world, was accepted. But the usual sum being sent to the author, he rejected it with disdain, conceiving it a high dishonor to be paid for anything—the independent placeman! Gifford, in answer, informed him of the invariable rule of the *Review* adding, that he could send the money to any charitable institution, or dispose of it in any manner he should direct, but that the money must be paid. The doughty official, convinced that the virtue of his article would force it into the *Review* at all events, stood firm in his refusal; greatly to his dismay the article was returned. He revenged himself by never sending another."

Speaking of his relation to the Tory Government of the day, the writer says: “It is true his independence of opinion might seem to be interfered with by the situations he held, but they were bestowed on him unsolicited, and from motives of personal regard. I am sure every one acquainted with him will admit that he would have rejected with scorn any kindness which could be considered as fettering the freedom of his conduct in the smallest degree. I am not more certain of many conjectures than I am that he never propagated a dishonest opinion nor did a dishonest act.... If the united influence of the *Anti-Jacobin* and the *Quarterly* be considered, we may probably be justified in [86] assigning to Gifford’s literary support of Government a rank second only to Burke.”

William Gifford died worth a considerable fortune, which he left, as a token of undying gratitude, to Mr. William Cooksley, the son of his first generous patron and benefactor.

We append a few selections from Gifford’s poetical works, as samples of his style and quality as a writer. The first is from the “Baviad,” and represents him in the character of a satirist exposing the vanities of the “Delia Cruscan” school of poets; and the second, taken from the “Mæviad,” exhibits him in the more genial light of a faithful friend, commemorating his early intercourse with his companion and fellow-student, Dr. Ireland, Dean of Westminster:

“For I was born
To brand obtrusive ignorance with scorn;
On bloated pedantry to pour my rage,
And hiss preposterous fustian from the stage.
Lo, Delia Crusca! In his closet pent,
He toils to give the crude conception vent.
Abortive thoughts that right and wrong confound,
Truth sacrificed to letters, sense to sound,
False glare, incongruous images combine;
And noise and nonsense clatter through the line,
’Tis done. Her house the generous Piozzi lends,
And thither summons her blue-stocking friends;
The summons her blue-stocking friends obey,
Lured by the love of poetry—and tea.
The bard steps forth in birthday splendor drest,
His right hand graceful waving o’ er his breast,
His left extending, so that all may see
A roll inscribed, ‘The Wreath of Liberty.’
So forth he steps, and with complacent air,
Bows round the circle, and assumes the chair;
With lemonade he gargles first his throat,
Then sweetly preludes to the liquid note:
And now ’tis silence all. ‘Genius or muse’—
Thus while the flowery subject he pursues,
A wild delirium round th’ assembly flies;
Unusual lustre shoots from Emma’s eyes;
Luxurious Arno drivels as he stands;
And Anna frisks, and Laura claps her hands.
* * * * * * *
Hear now our guests:—‘The critics, sir, they cry,
Merit like yours the critics may defy;’
But this indeed they say, ‘Your varied rhymes,
At once the boast and envy of the times,
In every page, song, sonnet, what you will,
Show boundless genius and unrivalled skill.’
* * * * * * *
Thus fooled, the moon-struck tribe, whose best essays [87]
Sunk in acrostics and in roundelays,
To loftier labors now pretend a call,
And bustle in heroics one and all.
E’en Bertie burns of gods and chiefs to sing—
Bertie who lately twittered to the string
His namby pamby madrigals of love,
In the dark dingles of a glittering grove,
Where airy lays, wove by the hand of morn,
Were hung to dry upon a cobweb thorn!
Happy the soil where bards like mushrooms rise,
And ask no culture but what Byshe supplies!
Happier the bards who, write whate’er they will,
Find gentle readers to admire them still!
* * * * * * *
Oh for the good old times! when all was new,
And every hour brought prodigies to view,
Our sires in unaffected language told
Of streams of amber, and of rocks of gold;
Full of their theme, they spurned all idle art;
And the plain tale was trusted to the heart.

Now all is changed! We fume and fret, poor elves;
Less to display our subject than ourselves:
Whate’er we paint—a grot, a flower, a bird,
Heavens! how we sweat, laboriously absurd!
Words of gigantic bulk, and uncouth sound,
In rattling triads the long sentence bound;
While points with points, with periods periods jar,
And the whole work seems one continued war!”

Not less poetical, and certainly much more pleasant in its tone, is this reminiscence of his early friendship with Dr. Ireland:

‘Chief thou, my friend! who from my earliest years
Hast shared my joys, and more than shared my cares,
Sure, if our fates hang on some hidden power,
And take their color from the natal hour,
Then, Ireland, the same planet on us rose,
Such the strong sympathies our lives disclose!
Thou knowest how soon we felt this influence bland,
And sought the brook and coppice, hand in hand,
And shaped rude bows, and uncouth whistles blew,
And paper kites—a last great effort—flew:
And when the day was done, retired to rest,
Sleep on our eyes, and sunshine in our breast.
In riper years, again together thrown,
Our studies, as our sports before, were one.
Together we explored the stoic page
Of the Ligurian, stern though bearless sage!
Or traced the Aquinian through the Latine road,
And trembled at the lashes he bestowed. [88]
Together, too, when Greece unlocked her stores,
We roved in thought o’er Troy’s devoted shores,
Or followed, while he sought his native soil,
‘That old man eloquent’ from toil to toil;
Lingering, with good Alcinous o’er the tale,
Till the east reddened and the stars grew pale.”

The tenderness of his nature is also shown in the lines he wrote for the tombstone of his faithful servant Ann Davies:

“Though here unknown, dear Ann, thy ashes rest,
Still lives thy memory in one grateful breast,
That traced thy course through many a painful year,
And marked thy humble hope, thy pious fear.
Oh! when this frame which yet while life remained,
Thy duteous love with trembling hand sustained,
Dissolves—as soon it must—may that blest Power
Who beamed on thine, illume my parting hour!
So shall I greet thee where no ills annoy,
And what was sown in grief is reaped in joy;
Where worth, obscured below, bursts into day,
And those are paid whom earth could never pay.”

CHAPTER V. [89]

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD

Robert Bloomfield,

THE SHOEMAKER WHO WROTE “THE FARMER’S BOY.”

“Crispin’s sons
Have from uncounted time, with ale and buns,
Cherished the gift of song, which sorrow quells;
And, working single in their low-built cells,
Oft cheat the tedium of a winter’s night
With anthems.”

—Charles Lamb: *Album Verses*, 1830, p. 57.

“I have received many honorable testimonies of esteem from strangers; letters without a name, but filled with the most cordial advice, and almost parental anxiety for my safety under so great a share of public applause. I beg to refer such friends to the great teacher, Time; and hope that he will hereafter give me my deserts, and no more.”—*Robert Bloomfield, Preface to “Rural Tales,”* Sept. 29, 1801.

“No pompous learning—no parade
Of pedantry and cumbrous lore,
On thy elastic bosom weigh’d;
Instead, were thine, a mazy store
Of feelings delicately wrought,
And treasures gleaned by silent thought.

“Obscurity, and low-born care,
Labor, and want—all adverse things,
Combined to bow thee to despair;
And of her young untutor’d wings
To rob thy Genius.—’Twas in vain:
With one proud soar she burst her chain!”

—*Blackwood’s Magazine, Sept. 1823.*

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

[93]

We have now to speak of a shoemaker-poet. The name of Robert Bloomfield, the author of the "Farmer's Boy," is known and held in honor wherever the English language is spoken. All classes of readers admire his poetry, although it is not of the highest order of merit. It has, however, a genuine quality which no one possessed of poetical taste can fail to recognize. Its chief features are delightful rustic simplicity and naturalness, faithful reflection of the beauties of nature, and the charms which belong to rural occupations. The romantic side of the life of a *farmer's boy* is given in the poem bearing that name, as we have it nowhere else in all our poetic or prose literature.

Bloomfield, though surrounded by the most unfavorable conditions, as a writer of poetry seems to have experienced no difficulty in executing his task. His was indeed a case in which the adage is well illustrated—*poeta nascitur non fit*—a poet is born, not made. He was born with the gift of song. It would have been difficult for him to restrain its exercise. He made poetry, as the song-birds sing, by instinct and irresistible impulse. For him the words are quite as true as they are of the greater poet who wrote them,[30]

> "I do but sing because I must,
> And pipe but as the linnets sing."

Robert Bloomfield was born and brought up in the lovely neighborhood of Honington, Ixworth and Sapiston, in the northern part of the county of Suffolk. An idea of the quiet beauty of the woodland scenery of Suffolk may be obtained from the paintings of Gainsborough, another notable man whom this county has produced. Gainsborough, as a boy full of yearnings after art, loved to spend his time in the woods and pastures round Sudbury, sketching trees, brooks, meadow-landscapes, cattle, shepherds, or ploughmen at their work in the fields. He was at the height of his fame as a painter when Bloomfield was a farmer's boy at Sapiston, on the Grafton estate. It is interesting to know that [94] these two Suffolk men were contemporary, "the first truly original English painter," who took his lessons direct from nature, and the first genuine poet of the English farm and field.

Bloomfield's father was a tailor at Honington, near Bury St. Edmund's. Robert was born in 1766. His father died at the end of the following year, leaving Robert and five other children to the care of their mother. She was a worthy, estimable woman, who managed by her own unaided efforts not only to maintain her little family, but to give each of her children the rudiments of an education. This she accomplished by opening a school, and teaching her own children along with the rest. With the exception of a few months' instruction in writing from a schoolmaster at Ixworth, the future poet learned from his mother all he knew when he left his home to earn his own living. This he did at the age of eleven, his mother, who had married again, being no longer able to keep him at home, or put him to a good school. His maternal uncle, a Mr. Austin of Sapiston, agreed to take him as a boy about the farm, and allow him to live in the house with the rest of the family. He appears to have received no wages, his "board" being the only allowance made for the work he did as a farmer's boy; and this could hardly be much at such an age. He remained in this situation four years, until he was fifteen. It was during these four years of boyhood he picked up the knowledge of farm-life, and made the observations on the varied phases of nature and the seasons which are delightfully interwoven in the four books of his well-known poem, "The Farmer's Boy." How observant he must have been, how eagerly he must have entered into the pleasures of rural life, how keen must have been his boyish sense of the beautiful and romantic, may be imagined by those who consider the circumstances in the midst of which, in after-years, he composed that charming poem.

His mother had undertaken to provide him with clothing while with his uncle at the farm; but this small expense was found to be too much for her scanty means. Robert at that time had two brothers, George and Nathaniel, living in London, and working, the one as a journeyman shoemaker, and the other as a tailor. To them the anxious mother applied for help in her difficulties, stating in her letter that Mr. Austin had said Robert was so small and weakly, it was to be feared he would never be able to obtain his living by hard out-door labor. The brothers at once agreed to take him under their care, [95] find him in food and clothing, and teach him the craft of shoemaking until he should be able to obtain his own livelihood. Full of solicitude for his safety and well-being, the good woman took him up to London herself, and handed him over to the guardianship of her two eldest sons, begging them, "as they valued a mother's blessing, to watch over him, to set good examples for him, and never to forget that he had lost his father."

George Bloomfield and his brother were then living at No. 7 Pitcher's Court, Bell Alley, Coleman Street, in a garret which served both as workshop and bedroom. The place was dingy and gloomy, and presented to the bright, thoughtful Suffolk lad a mournful contrast to the pleasant surroundings in the old farm-house at Sapiston. Nor could it have been a very healthy abode, for *five* workmen occupied the room during the day, "clubbing together," after the fashion of such workmen in those days, to lighten the burden of rent.

At first the new-comer was chiefly employed by the older men as their errand-boy, being rewarded for his trouble by receiving lessons from the workmen in the art of shoemaking. These men, like so many of their craft, were of a thoughtful turn of mind, and very eager for the news of the day. It had been their custom to have the yesterday's paper brought in with their dinner by the pot-boy from a neighboring public-house. Until Robert came they had been in the habit of reading it by turns, but now, as his time was less valuable than theirs, the office of reader was permanently handed over to him. This duty was of much service to him, for the information he gained by reading disciplined his young mind to close and continuous thought, and enlarged his knowledge of his own language. The

simple account, given by his brother George, of these social readings in the cobblers' workroom, and other means of instruction of which Robert availed himself, is full of interest. George Bloomfield says: "He frequently met with words that he was unacquainted with; of this he often complained. I one day happened at a book-stall to see a small dictionary which had been very ill-used. I bought it for him for fourpence. By the help of this he in a little time could read and comprehend the long and beautiful speeches of Burke, Fox, or North." And again: "One Sunday, after a whole day's stroll in the country, we by accident went into a Dissenting meeting-house in the Old Jewry, where a gentleman was lecturing. This man filled Robert with astonishment. The house was amazingly crowded with the most [96] genteel people; and though we were forced to stand in the aisle, and were much pressed, yet Robert always quickened his steps to get into the town on a Sunday evening soon enough to attend this lecture. The preacher's name was Fawcet. His language was just such as the 'Rambler' is written in.... Of him Robert learned to accent what he called hard words, and otherwise to improve himself, and gained the most enlarged notions of Providence."

Bloomfield's reading was not very extensive nor diversified during these early years of his London life, yet it was sufficient to whet his appetite for mental improvement, and give him no small degree of literary taste and skill. The brothers took, in sixpenny numbers, such works as a "History of England," "The British Traveller," and a "Treatise on Geography." These were read aloud to the little company of busy listeners, several hours of the day being occupied with the task. His first poetic impulse was awakened by the perusal of the *London Magazine*, which found its way at this time into the cobblers' garret. Robert always read it with zest, carefully scanning the reviews of books, and never failing to look into the "Poets' Corner." One day he surprised his brother by repeating a song which he had composed after the manner of Burns and so many other graceful songsters, "to an old tune." George was as much delighted as surprised at his young brother's smooth and easy verses, and encouraged him to try the experiment of sending them to the editor. This he did with many fears and hopes, and nervously awaited the issue of the next number. To his intense delight, and the pardonable pride of the whole company, the verses appeared in print. As a specimen of his first literary attempt, every youth will deem them worth recording, and will read them with pleasure. They bear the modest title "A Village Girl," and are signed with the letters R. B.

"Hail May! lovely May! how replenished my pails,
The young dawn o'erspreads the broad east streaked with gold!
My glad heart beats time to the laugh of the vales,
And Colin's voice rings through the wood from the fold,

The wood to the mountain submissively bends,
Whose blue misty summit first glows with the sun;
See! thence a gay train by the wild rill descends
To join the mixed sports:—Hark! the tumult's begun.

Be cloudless, ye skies! and be Colin but there;
Not dew-spangled bents on the wide level dale,
Nor morning's first smile can more lovely appear,
Than his looks,—since my wishes I cannot conceal. [97]

Swift down the mad dance, whilst blest health prompts to move,
We'll count joys to come, and exchange vows of truth;
And haply, when age cools the transports of love,
Decry, like good folks, the vain follies of youth."

Another piece called "The Sailor's Return" found a place in the "Poets' Corner." These efforts were enough to prove his taste and gifts as a versifier. The poetic power was latent in his mind, and only needed sufficient stimulus to bring it into full exercise. This stimulus came, as was natural, from the reading of poetry itself. A copy of Thomson's "Seasons" and Milton's "Paradise Lost" fell into his hands when he was about seventeen years of age. They belonged to a Scotchman who lived and worked at a house in Bell Alley, to which the shoemakers removed about this time. The eager youth read them with the passion of a born poet; and, as he read, the fire burned within. His imagination was now fairly awakened, and it was plain to all who watched him intelligently at this time, that melodies were being awakened in his heart that sooner or later must find their expression in song. The "Seasons" was his favorite poem. He read and re-read its glowing descriptions of nature, committed favorite portions to memory, and never tired of recounting its beauties in the hearing of his sympathetic friends. The "Seasons" struck the key-note of the "Farmer's Boy," though Bloomfield was no imitator of Thomson, nor of any one else, in either matter or manner. The thought and style of these two poets of nature are as unlike as their kindred subjects would allow them to be. Thomson's music is that of a majestic and stately oratorio, while Bloomfield sings a sweet and simple pastoral symphony.

But the young poet was not yet to enter on his great task. Fourteen years passed away before his first and best published poem, the "Farmer's Boy," saw the light. During this time several important events in his history occurred. In his eighteenth year, in consequence of certain disputes in the shoe-makers' trade about the legality of employing boys who had not been bound as apprentices, he went back again to Suffolk for a short time, and was taken into the home of his uncle and former master, Mr. Austin of Sapiston. Here for two months of happy leisure he roamed the fields where he spent so much

of his time as a boy, reviving old impressions, and deepening in his mind that keen sense of the beautiful which city life and the imprisonment of a shoemaker's occupation had not been sufficient to destroy. His companion at this time was still the favorite "Seasons," from which, in the presence of the very charms which Thomson describes, the ardent youth derived new pleasure and inspiration. [98]

The trade difficulty was got over by his becoming an apprentice for the remaining three years of his minority to a Mr. Duddridge, brother to George's former landlord. At the age of twenty he was left alone in London, George having removed to Bury St. Edmund's in his own county, and Nathaniel having married and gone into housekeeping. Robert now took to the study of music, and became an expert player on the violin. At the age of twenty-four he married the daughter of a boat-builder at Woolwich named Church. "I have sold my fiddle and got a wife," he humorously writes to his brother. At first his home was in furnished lodgings, but by dint of hard work and strict economy he managed in a short time to furnish *one* room on the first floor of a house in Bell Alley, Coleman Street, the old quarters to which he had come fresh from the country on his first becoming a shoemaker. His landlord kindly allowed him the free use of a garret to work in during the day. "In this garret," says his brother, "amid six or seven other workmen, his active mind employed itself in composing the 'Farmer's Boy.'" How long his mind was occupied in this task we cannot tell. One could hardly wonder if the process of composition was slow in the midst of such distracting and unfavorable circumstances. The marvel is that it should have been composed at all under such uncongenial and difficult conditions. So hard pressed for time was the poor poet-shoemaker, and so unable to find the proper materials for writing, that he is said to have made up and kept in his mind no less than 600 lines, that is, about the *half* of his poem, before he could manage to write it down. And when he did this, he was glad to lay hold of any odd scrap of paper for the purpose; the back of a letter or a printed bill, the margin of newspapers, pieces of pattern-paper, were seized as they came to hand and covered with writing, and then hidden away in cupboards, and occasionally even in some chink in the wall, until they could be collected and arranged for a fair copy, suitable to go into the hands of the printer. It was indeed a wonderful exhibition of mental abstraction and retentive memory. Few, even among poets, could have wrought to any purpose amid the din and conversation of a shoemakers' workroom, and still fewer, even if the excitement of poetic thought had enabled them to compose, could have treasured up their productions in the memory until they amounted to 600 lines. A friend of Bloomfield named Swan, [99] writing to Mr. Capel Lofft, says, "Bloomfield, either from the contracted state of his pecuniary resources to purchase paper, or for other reasons, composed the latter part of 'Autumn' and the whole of 'Winter' in his head, without committing one line to paper! This cannot fail to surprise the literary world, who are well acquainted with the treacherousness of memory, and how soon the most happy ideas, for want of sufficient quickness in writing down, are lost in the rapidity of thought. But this is not all—he went a step further; he not only composed and committed that part of his work to his faithful and retentive memory; but he *corrected* it all in his head!!!—and, as he said, when it was thus prepared, 'I had nothing to do but to write it down.' By this new and wonderful mode of composition, he studied and completed his 'Farmer's Boy,' in a garret, among six or seven of his fellow-workmen, without their ever once suspecting or knowing anything of the matter!"[31]

Bloomfield was thirty-two years of age when his poem was complete and attempts were being made to find a printer and publisher. These attempts were for a time fruitless. One after another the publishers rejected the "copy" of the unknown writer. At length, it was sent by George Bloomfield, who always had full confidence in Robert's powers, to a gentleman of literary tastes living at Troston Hall, near Bury, in Suffolk—Mr. Capel Lofft. This gentleman had the good sense at once to perceive the genuine merits of the poem submitted to his judgment, and to recommend its publication. By his kind influence and aid a publisher was soon found. Messrs. Vernon & Hood paid the poet £50 for his copy, and afterward, when the poem proved a success, honorably advanced an additional £200, besides giving the author an interest in his copyright.

The success of the poem was immediate and complete. It was warmly received by the public, and praised in all quarters as a masterpiece of natural poetic simplicity and beauty. Twenty-six thousand copies were sold in the first three years of its issue, seven editions having been called for. The position secured by the "Farmer's Boy" on its first publication has been held until the present day. All lovers of poetry read it with delight. It is natural and graceful as the song of a bird "warbling his native [100] woodnotes wild." When the English song-bird sings in captivity there seems to be a touch of pathos in his note; and one can hardly resist the same impression in reading these sweet rustic melodies in verse which came from the lips of the shoemaker-poet imprisoned in a London garret. Yet there is something much more stimulating in Bloomfield's lines than this. They are sweet and joyous, and full of that glowing enthusiasm for beauty which all fine natures feel. Besides the editions sent forth in this country, the "Farmer's Boy" was printed at Leipsic, and was translated into French, Italian, and Latin.

Bloomfield now had many friends as well as admirers. The Duke of Grafton, on whose estate he had been employed as a boy, settled upon him a small annuity, and used his influence to obtain for him a post at the seal-office at 1s. per day. In addition to this, Bloomfield received frequent presents from the nobility, and even from members of the royal family. To the poor shoemaker, accustomed to the utmost obscurity, all this success, and popularity, and patronage "appeared," to use his own language, "like a dream."

In after-years he issued a number of small volumes of poetry, in which are found several shorter pieces of great merit, such as the two descriptive or ballad pieces "Richard and Kate," "The Fakenham Ghost," or the exquisitely simple piece called "The Soldier's Return." The first of these is one of the best modern ballads in the language, as it is certainly among the most, if it be not the most, spirited and original of his compositions. Of the last of the three just mentioned, Professor Wilson says: "The

topic is trite, but in Mr. Bloomfield's hands it almost assumes a character of novelty. Burns' 'Soldier's Return' is not, to our taste, one whit superior."

The titles of the volumes that followed that by which his fame was established are "Rural Tales," published in 1801; "The Banks of the Wye," 1811; "Wild Flowers," and "May Day with the Muses," 1822. "Hazelwood Hall, a Village Drama, in Three Acts," was published 1823, the year of his death. All these poems have since been issued in one volume, to which is attached a short sketch of the poet's life, and the circumstances which attended the publication of "The Farmer's Boy." This account, given by Mr. Capel Lofft, Bloomfield's kind friend and patron, is full of interest. It serves to show the value of a judicious friend to a young aspirant for literary fame, whose talents deserve recognition, but [101] whose position in life prevents him taking the necessary steps to become known to the world.

The last twenty years of Bloomfield's life were embittered by affliction and misfortunes in business. He did not long retain his position at the Seal Office, being obliged to abandon it through continual ill-health. After resuming the trade of a shoemaker for a short time, he was induced to open a shop as a bookseller, but this speculation brought him only disappointment and loss. His son, who was a printer, states that about this time the poets Rogers and Southey took a deep interest in the welfare of their poor suffering brother poet. Rogers, it seems, tried to obtain him a government pension, but without success. At length he removed from London to try the effect of the fresh air and quietude of country life. His last years were spent as a shoemaker at Shefford-cum-Campton, Bed's. Toward the close of his life he was in great want and distress, having reaped little permanent gain from his numerous and popular poems. So intense was the strain of mind he endured from overwork, ill-health, and anxiety, that his friends entertained grave fears of his becoming insane. Death was preferable to such a life the death which is for men of Christian faith and character, like Bloomfield, the gate to a higher and happier life. Providentially for him, that gate was opened when life here had become a burden too grievous to be borne. He died at Shefford, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, August 19th, 1823, and was buried in the Campton churchyard.

Bloomfield's character, unlike that of many of the more celebrated poets of his own day, exhibited a fair and lovely type of moral excellence. He was genuinely modest, affectionate, industrious, and pious. None regarded him with more respect and love than those who knew him most intimately. This fact speaks strongly for his real worth. His own brothers held him in the greatest esteem, and felt the most generous and hearty pleasure in his literary success. His generosity to his needy relatives, who were very numerous, often crippled his resources, and, indeed, left him at times as poor as those he had befriended. We have noticed how much he owed in early life to the loving care and good sense of an excellent mother. Bloomfield never lost sight of this fact. Like all good men, men whose lives are worth study and imitation, he was deeply attached to his mother; and it is well deserving of record that, like Buckle, the eminent philosophical writer, the young poet felt a more exquisite pleasure in [102] placing his first published work in the hands of his mother than in the anticipation of any fame or advantage it might secure for himself as the author. When the first edition was issued a copy of it was sent to his mother, accompanied by these simple lines, which faithfully reflect at once the character of the true mother and the devoted son:

"' To peace and virtue still be true,'
An anxious mother ever cries,
Who needs no *present* to renew
Parental love—which never dies."

Many tributes of esteem, both in prose and verse, were paid to Bloomfield during his life and after his death. None of these was of more value than the brief sentence written by his constant friend and first literary patron, Mr. Capel Lofft, who says, "It is much to be a poet, such as he will be found: it is much more to be such a man." The lines which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, the month after Bloomfield's death, exactly describe the chief features of the poet's life and work:

"No pompous learning—no parade
Of pedantry, and cumbrous lore,
On thy elastic bosom weighed;
Instead, were thine a mazy store
Of feelings delicately wrought,
And treasures gleaned by silent thought.

Obscurity, and low born care,
Labor, and want—all adverse things,
Combined to bow thee to despair;
And of her young untutored wings
To rob thy genius. 'Twas in vain:
With one proud soar she burst her chain!

The beauties of the building spring;
The glories of the summer's reign;
The russet autumn triumphing
In ripened fruits and golden grain;
Winter with storms around his shrine,

Each, in their turn, were themes of thine.

And lowly life, the peasant’s lot,
Its humble hopes and simple joys;
By mountain-stream the shepherd’s cot,
And what the rustic hour employs;
White flocks on Nature’s carpet spread;
Birds blithely carolling o’erhead;

[103]

These were thy themes, and thou wert blessed—
Yes, blessed beyond the wealth of kings.
Calm joy is seated in the breast
Of the rapt poet as he sings,
And all that Truth or Hope can bring
Of Beauty, gilds the muse’s wing.

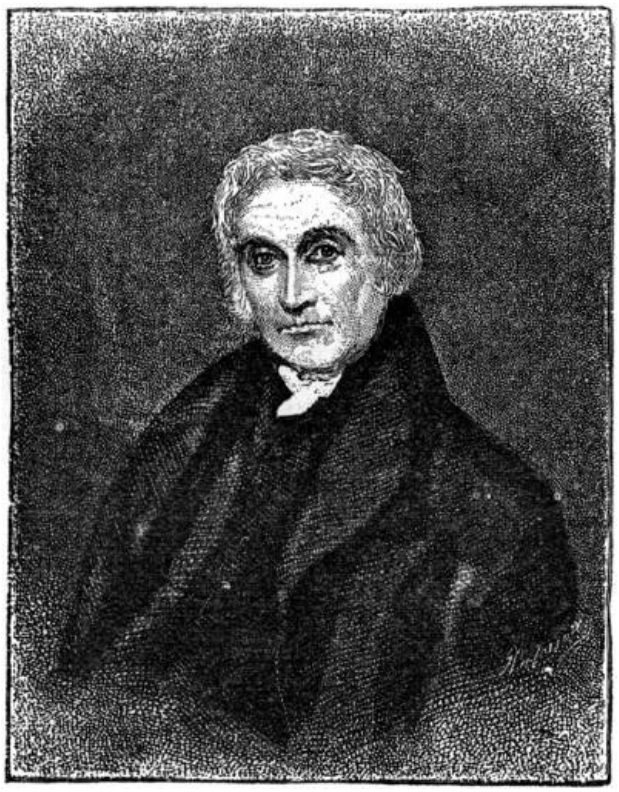
And, Bloomfield, thine were blissful days,
(If flowers of bliss may thrive on earth);
Thine were the glory and the praise
Of genius linked with modest worth;
To wisdom wed, remote from strife,
Calmly passed o’er thy stormless life.”

During the lifetime of Bloomfield, another young and obscure poet, Henry Kirke White of Nottingham, was indebted to Bloomfield’s patrons, Mr. Lofft and Robert Southey, for his introduction to the public. After reading “The Farmer’s Boy” and “Rural Tales,” White wrote the following clever epigram, the sentiment of which all admirers of the shoemaker-poet will heartily indorse:

“Bloomfield, thy happy omened name
Ensures continuance to thy fame;
Both sense and truth this verdict give,
While fields shall bloom, thy name shall live.”

CHAPTER VI.

[105]



SAMUEL DREW, M.A.

[107]

Samuel Drew,

THE METAPHYSICAL SHOEMAKER.

"Secure to yourself a livelihood independent of literary success, and put into this lottery only the overplus of time. Woe to him who depends wholly on his pen! Nothing is more casual. The man who makes shoes is sure of his wages: the man who writes a book is never sure of anything.—*Marmontel*.

"Hereafter, I believe, some metaphysical Columbus will arise, traverse vast oceans of thought, and explore regions now undiscovered, to which our little minds and weak ideas do not enable us to soar."—*Samuel Drew.*

SAMUEL DREW.

[109]

The life of Samuel Drew, the author of a once famous book, "The Immateriality and Immortality of the Soul," is in some respects as remarkable as that of William Gifford,[32] and in others even more so. For Drew, unlike Gifford, received no collegiate training, nor was he ever favored with the rudiments of education in an ordinary boys' school. In his childhood he was sent to a school along with his brothers, but his childish indifference to learning and his removal before he was eight years of age prevented his making any progress worth speaking of. His life, published by his son, speaks of him, with perfect truth, as the "Self-Taught Cornishman."

His reply to Paine's "Age of Reason," and his book on the "Immortality of the Soul," both of which were written and issued from the press during his life as a shoemaker, brought him into notoriety, and obtained for him a name as an acute thinker and able controversialist. He afterward published several theological works of great merit, edited and wrote the chief portion of a history of Cornwall, and finally became an editor on the staff of the Caxton press in Liverpool and London. His contributions to the literature of his own religious denomination, the Wesleyan Methodists, were very numerous; and for many years he was a constant writer in the *Eclectic Review*. From the beginning to the close of his public life he was held in high esteem as a preacher in the "circuits" of Cornwall, Liverpool, and London. The two universities of Aberdeen and London paid him a valuable compliment; the one conferring on him the degree of A.M., and the other, through certain members of the council, requesting him to be put in competition for the Chair of *Moral Philosophy*.

But before all these things he was an earnest, high-souled, useful Christian man, who found his principal delight in diffusing around him the influence of a good example and a benevolent Christ-like spirit. His best memorials were inscribed on the hearts of the people among whom he spent his valuable life. His writings may now be but little read, and his name but little known outside the [110] Christian community to which he was attached, yet he made a record as a faithful servant of God that will never perish, and obtained a memorial for his name that is safe against all the influence of time and change.

The subject of this sketch was born at St. Anstell, in Cornwall, on the 3d March, 1765. His parents were both members of families long resident in Cornwall. They were in but poor circumstances, the father being employed chiefly as a farm-laborer. Now and then he worked in connection with the tin mines of the neighborhood. Hard work, scant fare, and great economy were necessary to enable the parents to bring up their young family respectably. We may judge of their circumstances by the fact that the father found it not at all an easy thing to carry out a worthy determination he had formed to send his three children to school, where the fee for each scholar was only one penny per week. Little Sammy's progress hardly compensated for this small outlay, for he was dull and careless and shockingly fond of playing truant. However, his school life did not last long. He was removed at the age of eight, as already stated, and put to work as a *buddle-boy*. The pits in which the tin-ore is washed after being broken up are called *buddles*, and it was the business of the buddle-boy to stir up the sediment of ore and metal at the bottom of the pit, in order that the stream of water which passed through it might carry off the sandy particles and leave the mineral behind. For this work Samuel was to receive three halfpence a week. But the poor little fellow was early taught the meaning of the terms "bad debt" and "failure in business." His master kept the wages back, intending to pay them, as was customary, to the father. At the end of eight weeks the employer failed, and Samuel never received his first instalment of wages. When another man took the business, shortly after, the boys were paid twopence per week, and for the two years in which he continued at this work, the little buddle-boy never received more than this miserable pittance. It must be confessed that Samuel was a wilful, headstrong fellow. The circumstances which led to his removal from home were hardly to his credit. His own mother died when he was nine years old. She was a good woman, and took great pains to save her boy from the bad influence of low company at the tin-works. Samuel, though young and

reckless, cherished a deep regard for his mother. About a year and a half after her death the father married again, and Samuel, not liking the idea of having a "new mother," made himself as obnoxious [111] to her as he could. This improper conduct could not be permitted, and it was especially wrong in this instance, as the "new mother" was very attentive and kind to the children.

"At the age of ten and a half," says his biographer, Samuel "was apprenticed for nine years to a shoemaker, living in a sequestered hamlet about three miles from St. Austell. His father and family at this time were not far distant, but removing soon after to Polpea, in Tywardreath, the poor lad's intercourse with his relatives was, in a great measure, suspended, and he felt the loneliness of his situation."

Drew's apprenticeship life was well-nigh as miserable and unprofitable as it could be. In an account of the hardships he endured at this time he himself says: "My new abode at St. Blazey and new engagements were far from being agreeable. To any of the comforts and conveniences of life I was an entire stranger, and by every member of the family was viewed as an underling, come thither to subserve their wishes, or obey their mandates. To his trade of shoemaker my master added that of farmer. He had a few acres of ground under his care, and was a sober, industrious man; but, unfortunately for me, nearly one half of my time was taken up in agricultural pursuits. On this account I made no proficiency in my business, and felt no solicitude to rise above the farmers' boys with whom I daily associated. While in this place I suffered many hardships. When, after having been in the fields all day, I came home with cold feet, and damp and dirty stockings, I was permitted, if the oven had been heated during the day, to throw them into it, that they might dry against the following morning; but frequently have I had to put them on in precisely the same state in which I had left them the preceding evening. To mend my stockings I had no one, and frequently have I wept at the holes which I could not conceal; though, when fortunate enough to procure a needle and some worsted, I have drawn the outlines of the holes together, and made, what I thought, a tolerable job."

"During my apprenticeship," he continues, "many bickerings and unpleasant occurrences took place. Some of these preyed so much on my mind, that several times I had determined to run away and enlist on board a privateer or man-of-war." He seems to have had little inclination for reading during these unhappy days; and if he had been disposed for study there were but few books within his reach. Accident put into his hands a few odd numbers of a publication circulated in the West of England [112] called *The Weekly Entertainer*. He read and re-read the histories of "Paul Jones," "The Serapis," and "Bon Homme Richard," until his imagination was inflamed with the thought of joining a pirate, and leading the jolly abandoned life of a sea-rover. Such reading as this did very little good for him. The only other book he seems to have met with during these days of servitude was "an odd number of the 'History of England' about the time of the Commonwealth." But this spell of reading lasted only a short time. The odd volume of history, which charmed him at first, soon grew monotonous and wearisome, and was thrown aside. "With this," he says, "I lost not only a *disposition* for reading, but almost the *ability* to read. The clamor of my companions and others engrossed nearly the whole of my attention, and, so far as my slender means would allow, carried me onward toward the vortex of dissipation."

Much of his time was occupied with wild companions, among whom he was foremost in daring and mischief. Bird-nesting, orchard-robbing, and even poaching and smuggling were resorted to for amusement and profit. On one occasion he nearly lost his life by following sea-birds to their haunt on the edge of a lofty cliff overhanging the sea. At another time, in the dead of the night, when he and a number of men and boys were out on a poaching expedition, he and his companions were nearly scared out of their wits by some apparition, which confronted them with large fiery eyes, and suddenly disappeared.

Spite of these doubtful amusements his life at St. Blazey was becoming intolerable. He compares his position to that of "a toad under a harrow;" and declares that his master and mistress seemed bent on degrading him. At last, when he could brook his degradation no longer, he resolved to abscond, and accordingly, at the age of seventeen, after enduring six and a half years of bondage and cruelty, he ran off, intending to go to sea. But his plans were happily frustrated. On his way from St. Blazey to Plymouth he called at his old home, and as his father was absent his stepmother refused to give him money to assist him in his mad project. He then made off for Plymouth with only a few pence in his pocket. Passing through Liskeard he chanced to meet with a good-natured shoemaker, and entered into an engagement as a journeyman. In a short time he was discovered in his retreat, and persuaded to return to his father's roof. He agreed on condition that he should not be sent back to his old master. [113] This being arranged, a situation was found for Drew at Millbrook and afterward at Kingsand and Crafthole.

It was during his stay at the last place that the event occurred which led to the most important change in his life. He had often engaged in smuggling expeditions during the time of his apprenticeship, these unlawful practices not being regarded as disgraceful in out-of-the-way places on the coast a century ago. The rough villagers were rather disposed to make a boast of their success in evading the law; and few, if any, of their neighbors offered any opposition or remonstrance. One dark night in December, 1784, when Samuel Drew was about nineteen years of age, a vessel laden with contraband goods made signals to have her cargo fetched on shore; and the daring youth agreed to form one of the boat's crew for this purpose. The night was so stormy and dark that the captain of the vessel had been obliged to stand off a considerable distance from the shore. The smugglers were two miles out at sea when one of their number, in attempting to catch his hat, upset the boat. Three men were immediately drowned; Drew, who was a first-rate swimmer, managed by dint of the most violent effort to reach the rocks, and was picked up by some of his companions 'more dead than alive,' and carried to a farm-house, whose occupants were compelled, much against their will, to allow the half-drowned youth to

be brought in and laid before the kitchen fire. A keg of brandy from the vessel was opened, and a bowlful of its contents placed to his lips. He had sense enough not to drink much, though recklessly urged to swallow it *all*! After lying by the fire until circulation was pretty well restored, he was able, with the help of friendly arms, to crawl to his lodgings, a distance of two miles, the ground being covered with snow.

It was a mad adventure, and nearly cost him his life, but proved, instead, the occasion of opening the way to a new life, brighter and better and happier than the one he had spent in thoughtless and sinful amusement. “Alas! what will be the end of my poor unhappy boy?” said his father, on hearing of Samuel’s narrow escape. Very wisely it was resolved to have him removed from his sinful companions at Crafthole, and a good situation was found for him under a steady master at St. Austell.

This little town was one of the numerous places in Cornwall that had derived much benefit from the [114]
ministry of John and Charles Wesley; a “society” had been formed and a chapel built. Drew began to attend the services in this chapel soon after going to live at St. Austell. Here he heard the popular young preacher, a mere stripling, Adam Clarke, afterward well known to the world as the learned commentator, Dr. Adam Clarke. The fervid discourses of this young man, combined with the effect produced by the death of a gifted and pious brother, which happened at this time, brought about that change in Samuel Drew which the Saviour speaks of as the new birth, without which, He tells us, no one “can enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The change in Samuel Drew was complete. Body, mind, and spirit shared and rejoiced in it. The latent faculties of a great mind and noble heart were awakened and developed by the heavenly light and heat which now fell upon them. He felt at once a strong passion for self-culture, and the devotion of his gifts to useful purposes. The first thing was to pick up again his almost lost knowledge of the arts of reading and writing; for describing his accomplishments in this way at the time of his conversion he says, “I was scarcely able to read and almost totally unable to write. Literature was a term to which I could annex no idea. Grammar I knew not the meaning of. I was expert at trifles, acute at follies, and ingenious about nonsense.” As for his writing, a friend compared it to the traces of a spider dipped in ink, and set to crawl on paper. In this respect, sooth to say, it was neither better nor worse than the writing of many men whose education is not supposed to have been neglected. This description of Samuel Drew’s accomplishments, or rather want of them, refers to the beginning of the year 1785, when he was in his twentieth year. It is well to note this fact, as it will show how much of his time was wasted in youth, and how great must have been his industry in the work of self-culture after this date. Practically his education did not begin until he stood on the threshold of manhood, and even then it was not carried on in any thorough and systematic fashion. He had to help himself in the matter as best he could. At first he had no counsellors, no store of books, and no well-arranged course of reading. All depended on his good fortune in borrowing; and, what proved in his case as in so many others the best thing in the world, all depended on his following his own bent and satisfying his own taste in the choice of subjects for study.
This in the majority of cases proves to be the secret of success in life. For our *taste* for a subject is the [115]
result of our having a special aptitude for it. We like to do what comes easiest to us. The born artist, as he is termed, likes to draw and sketch because he can draw and sketch better than he can do anything else; the arithmetician enjoys working out problems in figures; the poet loves to indulge his fancy and clothe his imaginations in the guise of poetry; and the metaphysician is happiest when employed in the task of definition and reasoning.

Drew’s capacity, and therefore his taste, lay in the direction of metaphysics, and it is curious to notice how the future logician and theologian manages to make his most ungenial and untoward circumstances as a shoemaker in an obscure country town serve his purpose and help him forward to the accomplishment of his life-destiny. All this was partly the result of natural gifts and partly the fruit of strenuous application and toil. Men who have done notable things in the world have been spoken of as belonging to two classes. There is the man who “seems to have what is best in him as a possession;“ and the man who ”seems to show that what is regarded as an inspiration may come as the result of labor.”[33] This is but another method of stating the old distinction between “genius and talent.” If Samuel Drew must be classified at all, we should certainly place him in the former category. What was *best* in him was indeed a possession, not an acquirement. Yet, like all men of mark, he owed much to close study and hard work. Without these his fine natural gifts would have been useless.

Drew’s master at St. Austell combined the three somewhat kindred businesses of saddler, shoemaker, and bookbinder. His shop was also a regular meeting-place for the gossipers of the town; and as St. Austell was then in a ferment of religious excitement, most of the talk ran on religious topics. The Calvinist and Arminian divided the field between them, and in their contests, sometimes as arbiters, and sometimes as the champion of a party, Drew was often called in to contribute to the discussion. Here he found the first arena for the exhibition of his natural powers as a debater, and gained for himself no small renown.

About this time also a book came in his way, which seems to have made a revolution in his mind. This was Locke’s famous “Essay on the Human Understanding,” a copy of which was brought to Drew’s master’s to be bound. The young shoemaker had read nothing of the kind. It opened to his mind a [116]
world of thought that was new to his experience, yet one that seemed familiar on account of his natural aptitude for such studies. He read the luminous pages of the great philosopher with the utmost avidity. Henceforth reading became with him an intense appetite. Nothing came much amiss, but such books as led him into the ample domains of philosophy and religion afforded the greatest delight. He says, “This book (Locke’s Essay) set all my soul to think.... It gave the first metaphysical turn to my mind, and I cultivated the little knowledge of writing which I had acquired in order to put down my reflections. It awakened me from my stupor, and induced me to form a resolution to abandon the grovelling views which I had been accustomed to entertain.”

For two years after the change we have noticed Drew continued working industriously at his trade, and filling up all his spare moments by reading such books as came to the shop to be bound, or any others he could borrow from friends. Attracted by one science after another, and finding, as most eager minds do, a charm in each, he finally settled to metaphysics, because, as he sometimes shrewdly observed, among other recommendations it has this, that it requires fewer books than other branches of study, and may be followed at the least expense. “It appeared to be a thorny path; but I determined nevertheless to enter and begin to tread it,“ he remarks; and adds, ”To metaphysics I then applied myself, and became what the world and Dr. Clarke call a METAPHYSICIAN.”

By the advice and help of friends he resolved, in January, 1787, to commence business on his own account. His savings at this time amounted to only fourteen shillings. He was therefore compelled to borrow capital, or remain a journeyman. It was not difficult, however, to find a man in St. Austell who was willing to trust the now steady and hard-working shoemaker. A miller advanced him £5 on the security of his good character, saying, “And more if that’s not enough, and I’ll promise not to demand it till you can conveniently pay me.” Fortunately for him, at this time Dr. Franklin’s “Way to Wealth” came into his hands, and impressed him deeply with its sage maxims and sound principles of business and thrift. On one maxim, though severe, he often at this time acted literally, “It is better to go supperless to bed than to rise in debt.” The account which he gives of the hard work and rigid economy, and the good fruits they bore, during his first year’s experience of business, is highly [117] creditable to him, and will be best told in his own words: “Eighteen hours out of the twenty-four did I regularly work, and sometimes longer, for my friends gave me plenty of employment, and until the bills became due I had no means of paying wages to a journeyman. I was indefatigable, and at the year’s end I had the satisfaction of paying the five pounds which had been so kindly lent me, and finding myself, with a tolerable stock of leather, clear of the world.” This wise resolve to pay his way and to live within his means, so vigorously carried out from the very beginning, was of the utmost service to him all through life, and saved him from the worry and discredit by which so many men of genius and literary gifts have been hampered and thwarted in their work. When once the resolute shoemaker had made a fair start and conquered the difficulties of early business-life, he was always at liberty to devote his mind to his favorite pursuits. He was poor enough, it is true; but he was comparatively independent, for he was free from debt. Nor did he forget others in their need. Many stories are told of his generosity. He was never rash and prodigal in his giving, but acted on the best rules of common sense and high principle. He would not give while he was himself in debt, sticking closely to the rule, “Be just before you are generous,” yet never making that wise adage a cloak, as some do, for stinginess. Nothing could be more characteristic of his wisdom and kindliness than the story told by his sister of his coming home after being invited to dinner with a friend, and saying, “The people at the place where I have been very kindly invited me to dinner; I can now honestly give away my own. Bring out what meat you have left; cut from it as much as you think I should have eaten, and carry it to Alice H.“ At another time he observed a poor woman, ”with an empty basket on one arm and a child on the other, looking wistfully at the butchers’ stalls;“ and adds, ”I guessed from her manner that she had no money, and was ashamed to ask credit: so as I passed her I put half a crown into her hand. The good woman was so affected that she burst into tears, and I could not help crying for company.” Having been enabled to start in business by a loan of money, he showed his gratitude by helping others in the same position, and, strange to say, a change of fortune having overtaken his old friend, the miller, Drew had the satisfaction of helping him in his time of need.

An incident which happened about this time will show to what dangers his social disposition and fondness for debate exposed him, and how slight an incident saved him from the snare. He had [118] become enamoured of political matters, and discussed them very vigorously with his customers and others who made his work-room a meeting-place where they might hear and debate the latest news. Sometimes these discussions drew him from home into the house of a neighbor, and so absorbed his time that he found himself at the end of the day far behind in his work, and obliged to sit up till midnight in order to finish it. One night, however, he received a severe rebuke from some anonymous counsellor, which effectually put a stop to this bad habit. As he sat at work after most of the neighbors were in bed, he heard footsteps at the door, and presently a boy’s shrill voice accosted him through the keyhole with this sage remark: “Shoemaker, shoemaker, work by night, and run about by day!“ ”And did you,” inquired a friend to whom Drew told the story, “pursue the boy and chastise him for his insolence?” “No, no,” replied Drew, who had the wisdom to see that there was more fault in himself than the boy, and had also the moral courage and firmness of character to turn the annoyance to profitable account—“No, no. Had a pistol been fired off at my ear I could not have been more dismayed or confounded. I dropped my work, saying to myself, ‘True, true, but you shall never have that to say of me again!’” Right well did he keep to his resolve, and with what results we shall see.

In 1791, at the age of twenty-seven, he married Honor Halls of St. Austell, and now, fairly settled in his domestic affairs, he devoted his attention and leisure time, such as he could snatch from intervals of work, to careful reading and thought on philosophical and religious subjects. His first literary productions were, according to rule in such cases, in the shape of *poetry*. “An Ode to Christmas,” dated 1791, and “Reflections on St. Austell Churchyard,” dated 1792, appear to have been his earliest attempts. Though he had fine poetic feeling and considerable readiness in expression, he was not destined to shine in this field of literature. His first venture in print was entitled “Remarks on Paine’s ‘Age of Reason.’” This infidel work by the notorious Tom Paine had many readers and great influence among the working class at the close of the last century. It appears that a young surgeon who had been in the habit of visiting the thoughtful and well-read shoemaker, had procured a copy of the “Age of Reason,” and had read and endorsed its atheistic doctrines. He strongly urged Drew to read the [119] book, in order that they might discuss its contents together. The two disputants met night after night, the shoemaker attacking and the surgeon defending the principles of the famous infidel book. At length the discussion came to an end by the surgeon giving up his faith in Voltaire, Rousseau, Gibbon,

Hume, and Tom Paine, and accepting the teaching and consolation of the religion of Jesus Christ. The young man died soon after this occurrence, and confessed to the great service which had been rendered him by Samuel Drew in removing doubt and laying the basis for Christian faith. On showing his notes of this discussion to two Wesleyan preachers then stationed at St. Austell, he was advised to publish them, and did so in 1799. This pamphlet had a rapid sale. It was, as we have said, Drew's introduction to the world of literature, and it brought him no little fame and credit in the religious world of his day. Great was the astonishment evinced when it was known that the writer of what was deemed a masterly piece of argument in good, clear, forcible English was a "cobbler" and an entirely self-taught man. The flattering reception and notice given to this pamphlet emboldened him in the following year to venture on the publication of an ode on the death, by accident, of an influential townsman. A literary friend, who had praised his first attempt very highly, spoke so plainly yet kindly of this production that Drew very wisely abandoned the muse and stuck to metaphysics and prose. In the same year also he wrote a pamphlet which, in the locality of St. Austell, at all events, sustained his fame. This was a reply to some aspersions cast on the Wesleyan Methodists by a clergyman, the then vicar of Manaccan, Cornwall. So completely did the worthy Methodist local preacher disprove the statements of the clergyman, and withal in so temperate a spirit, that the latter eventually not only confessed his defeat in a generous and manly spirit, but very gracefully acknowledged his obligations to his humble antagonist. Drew had now a greater task in hand which was drawing near its completion. For several years he had occupied his mind with the subject of the immortality of the soul, having read every book he could procure on the subject. None of these books quite satisfied him. "He imagined," as he says, that the immortality of the soul admitted of more rational proof than he had ever seen. Accordingly in 1798 he resolved to make notes of his thoughts on this vast theme. In 1801 these were fully prepared for the press and submitted to the judgment of the judicious friend referred to above—Rev. John Whittaker, of Ruan Lanyhorne, in Cornwall. By his advice Drew committed the [120]
work to the press, with the title, "The Immateriality and Immortality of the Soul." It was published by subscription; "the best families" in the county giving their names as subscribers. The first edition numbered 700 copies, of which subscriptions were entered for 640. A few weeks after its publication, Drew received a letter from a publisher in Bristol asking the author to state his terms for the copyright. *Twenty pounds* and thirty copies of the new edition was all he asked, so little did he suspect the popularity his work would attain, and so low did he rate his own abilities as an author. A pleasing circumstance deserves mention here in connection with the appearance of the first edition of this essay. A highly favorable review of it appeared in the *Anti-Jacobin*, which Drew afterward discovered to have been written by no other than Mr. Polwhele, the clergyman whose pamphlet anent the Wesleyans Drew had so resolutely and successfully attacked. Such an act of grace was infinitely creditable to the critic as well as gratifying to the author. In regard to the history of this essay, the following note, written by Samuel Drew's son,[34] is full of interest: "After passing through five editions in England and two in America, and being translated and printed in France, the 'Essay on the Soul,' the copyright of which Mr. Drew had disposed of on the terms just named, and which, before its first appearance, a Cornish bookseller had refused at the price of *ten* pounds, became again his property at the end of twenty-eight years. He gave it a final revision, added much important matter, and sold it a second time for £250."

The literary reputation of the metaphysical shoemaker was now established. Journals and reviews spoke in terms of high praise. Literary men, clergymen, and ministers of various denominations, wrote in congratulatory terms, and proffered friendship and assistance. The best libraries in the locality were placed at his service, and invitations or visits came so thick upon him, that the modest shoemaker was at times fairly bewildered by them. A little book, issued in 1803, the year after Drew's essay appeared, brought his circumstances before the public. It was entitled, "Literature and Literary Characters of Cornwall," and was edited by the above-named Mr. Polwhele. To this book Drew, by request of the editor, sent a short autobiographical sketch. "His lowly origin," says his son, "and [121]
humble situation being thus made public, the singular contrast which it presented to his growing literary fame attracted much attention. St. Austell became noted as the birthplace and residence of Mr. Drew, and strangers coming into the county for the gratification of their curiosity did not consider that object accomplished until they had seen 'the metaphysical shoemaker.'" Referring to those flattering attentions, he once shrewdly observed: "These gentlemen certainly honor me by their visits; but I do not forget that many of them merely wish to say that they have seen the cobbler who wrote a book."

The following picture of the literary shoemaker during this period of his life must not be omitted here, for it gives us a glimpse of his method of working at this time when employed on his double task of making *boots* and *books*. It recalls the sketch given in the life of Bloomfield, much of whose poetry was composed under similar conditions. Indeed, it were hard to say who had the worst of it, the poet in the crowded garret or the theologian in the noisy kitchen. The first paragraph is written by Samuel Drew himself, and the second by his son.

"During my literary pursuits I regularly and constantly attended on my business, and I do not recollect that through these one customer was ever disappointed by me. My mode of writing and study may have in them, perhaps, something peculiar. Immersed in the common concerns of life, I endeavor to lift my thoughts to objects more sublime than those with which I am surrounded; and, while attending to my trade, I sometimes catch the fibres of an argument which I endeavor to note, and keep a pen and ink by me for that purpose. In this state what I can collect through the day remains on any paper which I may have at hand till the business of the day is despatched and my shop shut, when, in the midst of my family, I endeavor to analyze such thoughts as had crossed my mind during the day. I have no study, I have no retirement. I write amid the cries and cradles of my children; and frequently when I review what I have written, endeavor to cultivate 'the art to blot.' Such are the methods which

I have pursued, and such the disadvantages under which I write."

"His usual seat," adds his son, "after closing the business of the day, was a low nursing-chair beside the kitchen-fire. Here, with the bellows on his knees for a desk, and the usual culinary and domestic matters in progress around him, his works, prior to 1805, were chiefly written."

Samuel Drew's life as a shoemaker came to an end with the year 1805. It will not be possible for us to [122] give in detail the events which fill up the remainder of his honorable career. Nor is it needful; the chief interest of his history lies in that portion of it which shows us the self-taught Cornishman plying his lowly craft while he lays the foundation for his fame as a theologian. His preaching engagements were very numerous from the time when he was first put on the Wesleyan preachers' "plan," and they were never suspended until within a few weeks of his death. His status as a local preacher was of the very best, and frequently brought him into the company of the leading men of his denomination. His friendship with Mr., now Dr., Adam Clarke, one of the leading men among the Wesleyans, had been maintained from the time when Clarke was on the St. Austell circuit. The good name acquired by Drew as a literary man, and his high standing among his own religious society, led to his appointment under Dr. Coke, the founder of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions. The shoemaker now abandoned the awl and last for the pen, and devoted himself, as a secretary and joint-editor, entirely to literary work. He assisted Dr. Coke in preparing for the press his "Commentary on the New Testament," "History of the Bible," and other works. In 1806, through Dr. Adam Clarke's influence, Drew began to contribute to the *Eclectic Review*. Before he had abandoned the shoemaker's stall the materials for another theological work had been collected and partly prepared for publication. Having treated the question of the Immortality of the Soul, he had wished, and was strongly urged by several clerical friends, to take up the subject of the "Identity and Resurrection of the Human Body." A work bearing this title appeared in 1809, having been submitted in manuscript to his old friends the Revs. Mr. Whittaker and Mr. Gregor, and to Archdeacon Moore. It was not a little remarkable that men of this class should have been the foremost to patronize and aid the Methodist shoemaker in his literary enterprises, and that one of them should call himself "friend and admirer," while another spoke of feeling "a pride and pleasure in being employed as the scourer of his armor." The most extensive work Drew ventured to publish was entitled "A Treatise on the Being and Attributes of God." This was undertaken at the earnest solicitation of Dr. Reid, then Professor of Oriental Languages at the Marischal College, Aberdeen, as a competition for a prize of £1500 offered for the best essay on that subject. Though this [123] work failed to gain the first place in the list, it stood very high, and, certainly, it was no small testimony to its worth that it should have been deemed worthy to rank as a close competitor with the successful works of Dr. A. M. Brown, Principal of Marischal College, and the Rev. J. B. Sumner, afterward Bishop of Chester and Archbishop of Canterbury. Drew's treatise was not published till 1820, when it came out in two octavo volumes. In 1813 he published a controversial pamphlet on the Divinity of Christ, which had a large sale, and for which, such was the value now set on his writings, his publisher, Mr. Edwards, paid as much as he had previously given for the Essay on the Soul. Under the direction of F. Hitchens, Esq., of St. Ives, Drew now took up a laborious task which had been in that gentleman's hands for several years, and brought it to completion. This was the publication of a History of Cornwall. It appeared in 1815-17, and consisted of 1500 quarto pages, all of which "was sent to the printer in his," Drew's, "own manuscript." At the request of the executors of Dr. Coke, Drew published a memoir of his friend, which appeared in 1817. This task made a visit to London necessary. Here the learned shoemaker met with the Rev. Legh Richmond, author of "The Dairyman's Daughter," and with Dr. Mason of New York. He was, of course, asked to preach in several London "circuits," where his fame as a writer had preceded him. His "uncouth and unclerical appearance," for he wore top-boots and light-colored breeches, excited no small curiosity; but his excellent preaching and delightful simplicity and modesty of manner awoke universal respect. The preacher was fifty years of age (1815) when he paid this visit to the metropolis, and it was the first time he had travelled more than a few miles from the locality where he was born.

But a journey of more importance still was taken in 1819, when he went down to Liverpool to negotiate for the editorship of a new magazine to be issued from the Caxton Establishment, then in the hands of Mr. Fisher. Drew was finally engaged as permanent editor on this establishment, and the publication of which he had the management, bearing the title, *The Imperial Magazine*, became a complete success. Though sold at one shilling, it had a circulation of 7000 during the first year. The destruction of the premises by fire compelled the removal of the Caxton Establishment to London, where Drew remained at the post of editor for the rest of his life. In 1824 the degree of A.M. was [124] conferred on him by the Marischal College, Aberdeen. We have alluded to the request made by some members of the Council of the London University, that he would allow himself to be nominated for the Chair of Moral Philosophy. This request was made in 1830; but Samuel Drew, who was now sixty-five years of age, was beginning to feel the effects of his long life of hard work, and to sigh for rest. His chief wish was to end his days in his native county, among the scenes of his boyhood and youth, and amid the associations that clustered round the place where he had first learned to think and write, and make for himself a name in the world of letters. This wish was hardly fulfilled; for, holding on to his daily routine of office work from year to year in the hope of retiring with a competence for himself and his children, he was at length compelled on 2d March, 1833, the last day of his sixty-eighth year, to lay down his pen. His life-work was now over. Within a few days he left London for the home of his daughter at Helston in Cornwall, where on the 29th of March he died. It was his comfort, during the last days of his life, to be surrounded by a circle of deeply attached relatives, and on several occasions, when his head was supported by one of his children, he repeated the lines of his favorite poem, the "Elegy" by Gray:

"On some fond breast the parting soul relies:

Some pious drops the closing eye requires.”

His faith in the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, which he had so ably advocated, afforded him profound consolation in his last hours. On the day before his death he said, with all the eagerness of keen anticipation, “Thank God, to-morrow I shall join the glorious company above!”

Monuments to his memory were erected over the grave in Helston Churchyard, and in the Wesleyan chapel and parish church at St. Austell. On each of these the inhabitants of his native town and county bore strong testimony to the affection and regard felt by all who knew him for the “self-taught Cornish metaphysician.”

CHAPTER VII.

[125]

WILLIAM CAREY, D.D.

[127]

William Carey,

THE SHOEMAKER WHO TRANSLATED THE BIBLE INTO BENGALI AND HINDOSTANI.

“No, sir! only a cobbler.”—*Dr. William Carey.*

“I am indeed poor, and shall always be so until the Bible is published in Bengali and Hindostani, and the people want no further instruction.”—*Dr. William Carey, Letter from India, 1794.*

WILLIAM CAREY.

[129]

Between the years 1786 and 1789, when William Gifford, just liberated by the generous interference of a friend from the yoke of apprenticeship to a cruel master, was receiving instruction from the Rev. Thomas Smerdon, when Robert Bloomfield, a journeyman shoemaker in London, was preparing in his mind the materials for the “Farmer’s Boy,” and when Samuel Drew, the young shoemaker of St. Austell, was reading “Locke on the Understanding,” and learning to think and reason as a metaphysician, there lived at Moulton in Northamptonshire a poor shoemaker, school-teacher, and village pastor, who was cherishing in his great heart the project of forming a society for the purpose of sending out Christian missionaries to the heathen world. This poor young man, in spite of his

obscure position, his meagre social influence, his limited resources, and his lack of early educational advantages, became the originator of the great foreign missionary enterprises which constitute so remarkable a feature in the religious history of this country at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century. He was the first missionary chosen to be sent out by the committee of the society he had been the means of establishing. His field of labor was India, where for more than forty years, “without a visit to England or even a voyage to sea to recruit his strength,” and without losing a vestige of his early enthusiasm for his Christian enterprise, he toiled on at the work of preaching the gospel and translating the Sacred Scriptures. From 1801 to 1830, he was Professor of Oriental Languages in a college founded at Fort William by the Marquis of Wellesley, Governor-General of India. As an Oriental linguist he had few equals in his day, and few have ever exceeded him in the extent and exactitude of his acquaintance with the languages of India. He compiled grammars and dictionaries in Mahratta, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Telugu, Bengali, and Bhotana. But his chief work was the translation of the Scriptures into Bengali and other languages. No less than twenty-four different translations of the Bible were made and edited by him, and passed through the press at Serampore under his supervision. One account speaks of “two hundred thousand Bibles, or portions thereof, in about forty Oriental languages or dialects, besides a great number of tracts and other religious works in various languages;“ and adds that ”a great proportion of the actual literary labor involved in these undertakings was performed” by this prodigious worker. A truly noble life-work was this for any man. It may be questioned if more work of a solid and useful character was ever pressed into one human life. What monarch or ruler of a vast empire, what statesman or judge, what scientific or literary worker, what man of genius in business or the professions, has ever thrown more energy into his life-work or achieved more worthy results for all his toil than this humble shoemaker and village pastor from Northamptonshire, who first gave to the various races of Northern India the Bible in their own language? [130]

No one who is at all familiar with the work of the Christian Church in the present century, will need to be told that we are speaking of the famous pioneer missionary to Bengal, Dr. William Carey. And surely no list of illustrious shoemakers would be complete that did not include the name of this good man. His experience of the “gentle craft” was somewhat extensive. He was bound apprentice to the trade, and afterward worked as,a journeyman for more than twelve years. When he became known to the world, he was often spoken of as “the learned shoemaker.” Indeed, he was not always honored with so respectful a title as this. More often than not he was alluded to as “the cobbler,” and his own strict honesty and modesty of spirit led him to prefer the latter epithet. His humble origin and occupation were sometimes the occasion of an empty sneer on the part of men whose class feeling and religious prejudice prevented their appreciation of his splendid mental gifts and high purpose in life, and who consequently endeavored, but in vain, to bring his grand and Christ-like undertaking into contempt. That famous wit, the Rev. Sydney Smith, sometime prebendary of Bristol and canon of St. Paul’s, tried to set the world laughing at the “consecrated cobbler.” It was a sorry joke, and quite unworthy of a Christian minister, and must have been sorely repented of in after-years. One would have thought that Sydney Smith’s undoubted piety, and natural kindliness of heart, let along his strong bias in favor of all that was liberal in religion and politics, would have saved him from such a cruel and flippant sneer. But wit is a brilliant and dangerous weapon, and few men know how to use it as much as Sydney Smith did without injury to their own reputation or the feelings of other people. [131]

Carey, as we have said, did not object to being called a “cobbler,” although the term did not accurately describe his degree of proficiency in the trade. It was reported in Northamptonshire that he was a poor workman, the neighbors declaring that though he made boots, he “could never make *a pair*.”[35] In a letter to Dr. Ryland he contradicts this report and says: “The childish story of my shortening a shoe to make it longer is entitled to no credit. I was accounted a very good workman, and recollect Mr. Old keeping a pair of shoes which I had made in his shop as a model of good workmanship.“ He cautiously adds, ”But the best workmen sometimes, from various causes, put bad work out of their hands, and I have no doubt but I did so too.”[36] This is more than likely, for he was subject to long fits of mental abstraction as he sat at the stall:

“His eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away.”

He pined for the field of missions and chafed against the cruel “bars of circumstance” that kept him in his native land. While engaged in shoemaking, he was so intent on learning Latin, Greek, and Hebrew that he often forgot to fit the shoes to the last. No wonder if shoes were not “a pair,” and were sometimes returned; no wonder that while he became one of the first linguists in the world in his day he was spoken of by his neighbors as nothing more than “a cobbler!” With reference to his poor abilities in the craft a good story is told of the way in which he silenced an officious person whose “false pride in place and blood” had betrayed him into some disparaging remarks about Carey as a shoemaker. His biographer[37] says: “Some thirty years after this period, dining one day with the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, at Barrakpore, a general officer made an impertinent inquiry of one of the aides-de-camp whether Dr. Carey had not once been a shoemaker. He happened to overhear the conversation, and immediately stepped forward and said, “No, sir; only a cobbler!” [132]

In the brief story we have to tell of the life of this remarkable man, we shall, as seems most appropriate to our purpose, confine our remarks almost entirely to the work he accomplished before he ceased to be a shoemaker. His father and grandfather held the position of parish clerk and schoolmaster at Pury, or Paulersbury, in Northamptonshire, where William Carey was born, 17th August, 1761. His only education was received in the village school, and this was very slight and rudimentary; yet it was sufficient to give him a start in the work of educating himself. As a boy he was

always fond of reading, and chose such books as referred to natural history. Botany and entomology were favorite subjects. His bedroom was turned into a sort of museum, chiefly remarkable for butterflies and beetles. Of books of travel and accounts of voyages he never seems to have wearied; the history and geography of any country also afforded him special delight. He was a bright, active, good-looking, intelligent boy, by no means a recluse and bookworm, caring nothing for out-door exercise and sports. He was as fond of games as any boy in the village, and as clever at them, and so became a general favorite. His quickness of intellect and perseverance with any hobby he took up often led the neighbors to predict success for him in future life. The perseverance and courage, which were such marked features of his character as a man, were shown in his boyhood by a curious incident. Attempting to climb a tree one day, he fell and broke his leg, and was an invalid for six weeks. As soon as he could crawl to the bottom of the garden, he made his way to the very tree from which he had fallen, climbed to the top of it, and brought down one of the highest branches, which he carried into the house, exclaiming, “There, I knew I would do it!”

At the age of twelve he showed the first signs of a taste and capacity for the acquisition of languages. A copy of Dyche’s Latin Grammar and Vocabulary had come into his hands, and he at once set to work, of his own free will and choice, to study the introductory portion, and to commit all the Latin words, with their meanings, to memory. Such an incident as this was quite enough to show that he was a boy of no common mind, and that he would well repay any outlay that might be made in giving [133] him a classical training. But that was out of the question; the village school could not afford such a training, and anything better, in the shape of grammar-school or college, was not to be had, for his friends were poor and had no patrons to assist them. What he might have done in an university it is idle to suppose. Undoubtedly, he would have distinguished himself, but it may be reasonably doubted whether he would have been led into the path of Christian philanthropy and usefulness which the stress of circumstances at Moulton led him to think and adopt. It must have been painful for his parents, with their sense of the boy’s merits and ambition as a scholar, to see him languishing at home, unable to find sufficient food for his hungry and capacious young mind, while they also were unable to satisfy his passion for books, or send him to a school adequate to his requirements. And doubly painful must it have been for him as for them, when they felt that the time had come for him to learn a trade, and the thought of further schooling must be given up.

One can imagine his feelings when told that he must be apprenticed to a shoemaker. Not that such an occupation was necessarily a bugbear to a boy in his position, for thousands of village lads would not have regarded it in that light; but it was so to *him*. His heart had been set on a very different kind of occupation. He was eager for study, and felt within him the movement of an impulse to do something great in the world, and this apprenticeship was a bitter disappointment, saddening his young heart, and quenching for a time all his bright hopes. But only for a time did he lose heart. He was one of those who are no friends to despair, who do not understand defeat, and whose spirit and determination rise in the face of difficulties. It was not to be expected in his circumstances that life could offer him any position of greater honor or advantage than a cobbler’s stool. He would not, therefore, murmur at his necessary lot. He would rather take to it with as good a grace as possible, and make the best of it. He would use every means and chance of self-improvement, and if he could not have his heart’s desire in the way he had intended, he would have it in some other way; anyhow he would have it. A broken purpose should no more stand in the way of his climbing the “tree of knowledge” than a broken leg had prevented his climbing to the top of the tree in his father’s garden.

So he settled to his work with Charles Nickolls of Hackleton at the age of fourteen, with no prospect but that of being bound to wield the awl and bend over the last until he had come to be twenty-one [134] years of age. Soon after entering the shoemaker’s room he found a copy of the New Testament, in the notes to which occurred a number of Greek words. This opened up another field of study, and he determined to enter upon it. Copying out the words, he took them for explanation to a young man who was a weaver in the village where his father lived. This weaver came from Kidderminster, had seen better days, and had received a good education. He assisted young Carey, then fifteen years of age, in mastering the rudiments of Greek. With such a start he did not rest until he had procured and could read the Greek New Testament. In the second year of his apprenticeship his indentures were cancelled on account of the death of his master, and Carey became a journeyman, of course at very low wages, under Mr. Old. At this time there lived in the neighborhood a clergyman who was one of the lights of a dark period in the religious history of this country—the Rev. Thomas Scott, the popular evangelical preacher, writer, and Bible commentator. His own career was very remarkable. From the position of a laboring man he had risen to occupy good rank as a clergyman, and with very meagre advantages in early life he had become, or was rapidly becoming, one of the best sacred classics in the country. The man who had laid aside the shepherd’s smock for the clergyman’s surplice, and who on one occasion doffed his clerical attire, donned the shepherd’s clothes again, and sheared eleven large sheep on an afternoon, was not likely to neglect or overlook a youth of more than ordinary intelligence and application to study because the youth happened to spend his days at the shoemaker’s stall. Mr. Scott on his visiting rounds now and then turned in at Mr. Old’s, and was struck with the boy’s bright look and rapt attention to any remarks that the visitor might make. Occasionally young Carey would venture to ask a question. So appropriate and far-seeing were his inquiries that Mr. Scott discerned his young friend’s uncommon powers, and often declared that he would prove to be “no ordinary character.” In later years, when William Carey was known throughout England as a pioneer in mission work, as a great Oriental linguist, and the first translator of the New Testament into Bengali, Mr. Scott, as he passed by the old room where the thoughtful and studious young shoemaker had once sat at work, would point to it and say, “That was Mr. Carey’s college.”

But with all this mental activity and zest for knowledge there was no moral purpose in his life, and as [135] he grew older he became more and more loose and careless in his habits, and, as he himself would

have it, even vicious, until he came to be about eighteen years of age. But there is no proof of any evil conduct to justify the use of such a term as “vicious” in describing his life at this time. He spoke of himself, no doubt, after the religious fashion of the age, and judged his early conduct by the severe moral standard adopted by his co-religionists. His complete mental awakening, like that of Samuel Drew, seems to have come as a result of the moral change wrought in him at the time of his religious conversion. A variety of causes, as is the rule, led to this crucial event in his life, “that vital change of heart which laid the foundation of his Christian character.” First of all he was indebted to the good example of a fellow-workman, then to the earnest preaching of the Rev. Thomas Scott. Mr. Marshman says, “It was chiefly to the ministrations of Mr. Scott that Carey was indebted for the progress he made in his religious career, and he never omitted through life to acknowledge the deep obligation under which he had been laid by his instructions.” Brought up as a strict Churchman, he was confirmed at a suitable age, and regularly attended the services at the parish church. But at the time we are speaking of, when personal religion became the chief subject of his thoughts, he sought light and help by every available means. The little Baptist community, among whom he had many friends, showed him much sympathy: he began to attend their meetings for prayer, and eventually cast in his lot among them. They encouraged him to become a preacher, and his first sermon, delivered at Hackleton when he was nineteen years of age, was delivered in one of their assemblies. For three and a half years he was on the preachers’ plan, and regularly “supplied the pulpits” in this village and Earl’s Barton as a kind of pastor. “It was during these ministerial engagements,” says his biographer, “that his views on the subject of baptism were altered, and he embraced the opinion that baptism by immersion, after a confession of faith, was in accordance with the injunctions of Divine Writ and the practice of the apostolic age. He was accordingly baptized by Dr. John Ryland, his future associate in the cause of missions, who subsequently stated at a public meeting that, on the 7th of October, 1783, he baptized a poor journeyman shoemaker in the river Nene, a little beyond Dr. Doddridge’s chapel in Northampton.”[38]

During these years he was diligently prosecuting his studies, and read the Scriptures in Hebrew, [136]
Greek, and Latin. Like many another poor student, he was fain to borrow what he could not buy in the way of books, and “laid the libraries of all the friends around him under contribution.” Notwithstanding his extraordinary abilities and diligence, he does not seem to have displayed any marked qualities as a preacher. It was with difficulty he got through his trial sermons before the church of which he was now a member. The very decided “personal influence” of the pastor, the Rev. John Suttcliffe, was required to enable the modest young shoemaker to obtain the church’s sanction to his receiving “a call to the ministry.” The church to which he ministered at Earl’s Barton was poor, and scarcely able to keep its pastor in clothing, much less provide for his entire maintenance. For this he was dependent on his trade, and as the times were now very bad he was obliged to travel from village to village to dispose of his work and obtain fresh orders. Nothing but the assistance of his relatives saved him at this time from destitution.

And here we are bound to pause and notice the greatest mistake Carey made in all his life. We refer to his marriage at the age of twenty to the sister of his former employer. “This imprudent union,” it is said, “proved a severe clog on his exertions for more than twenty-five years.” The match was about as unfortunate and unsuitable as a match could be. Mrs. Carey was much older than her husband, ill-educated in mind and temper, and quite incapable of sympathizing with her husband’s studies and projects. How he came to contract such a miserable union passes comprehension, for he was remarkably sensible and business-like in common affairs. But there are those who can cultivate another man’s vineyard while they neglect their own, wise for others and simple for themselves; and in regard to this particular business, as Froude the historian has well said, some men are apparently “destined to be unfortunate in their relations with women.” The judicious Hooker was judicious in everything else but the choice of a wife, for he married a jade who was wont to give him the baby to nurse and stand and scold him into the bargain, as he sat writing the works that were destined to make his name illustrious for all time. Molière, who exposed in the most masterly manner in his plays the follies and foibles of the women of Parisian society in his day, married, to his bitter regret, as weak and vain a woman as any that figures in his own works. Milton’s second wife went home again within [137]
three months of their wedding-day; and John Wesley’s wife left him a short while after their marriage. But if these good men made a mistake in their choice, they one and all acted with good sense and feeling in their treatment of their ill-matched partners. Nothing could be better than the common-sense of stern John Wesley in his reply to a friend who asked him if he would not send for his truant wife home again. He answered in Latin, but this is what his words mean, “I did not send her away, and I will not fetch her back again.” Carey acted with much kindness and discretion toward his miserable partner; but he found it harder to transform her into a sensible woman than to transform his own Baptist Conference into a missionary society.[39]

In 1786, he took the pastorate of a small church at Moulton; yet, even here, he was obliged to eke out his poor living by shoemaking, and even to add to his other labors the task of teaching a school. For this task he was utterly unfit. However well he might teach himself, he could never teach boys. He knew this, and was accustomed to say, “When I kept school, it was the boys who kept me.” His circumstances at this time ought to be fully stated in order that the reader may form some idea of the hardship Carey had to endure and the absorbing personal duties and cares in the midst of which he began to cherish his great purpose “to convey the gospel of Jesus Christ to some portion of the heathen world.” His ministerial stipend from all sources and the proceeds of his school would not together put him in the position of Goldsmith’s ideal village pastor, who was “passing rich on forty pounds a year.” So that he was obliged, even at Moulton, to have recourse to shoemaking. A friend of his at the time remarks, “Once a fortnight Carey might be seen walking eight or ten miles to Northampton, with his wallet full of shoes on his shoulder, and then returning home with a fresh

supply of leather."

The time spent at Moulton was, in spite of its many cares and hardships, a time of great progress in study. It was during these years he adopted the plan of allotting his time, a plan to which he rigidly adhered all through his life, and by means of which he was able in after-years to accomplish tasks [138] which seemed to onlookers sufficient for the energies of two or three ordinary men. Now began also the acquaintance with men whose friendship was of the greatest service to a man like Carey, and largely influenced and helped him in his life-work—Mr. Hall (the father of the eminent pulpit orator Robert Hall), Dr. Ryland, John Suttcliffe, and Andrew Fuller. All these lived within a few miles of each other, and belonged to the same association of Baptist churches, called the Northamptonshire Association. It was at one of the meetings of this association that Fuller first met with Carey and heard him preach. So delighted was Fuller with the devout thoughtfulness and Christian catholicity of Carey's discourse, that he met the preacher as he came down from the pulpit and thanked him in the warmest manner. In this cordial meeting commenced a friendship and fellowship in Christian work which lasted for twenty years until Fuller's death, and which proved a source of untold blessings to the heathen world.

Carey's first thought of missions came into his mind when reading Captain Cook's account of his voyage round the world. He was in the habit of blending study with his task as a shoemaker, or while sitting among his boys at school. This book impressed his imagination, and stirred his compassion to the utmost, as he contemplated the vast extent of the world and the large proportion of its inhabitants who were living in ignorance of the true God, and of the Saviour of mankind. In order to realize the facts more vividly, he constructed a large map of the world, and marked it in such a manner as to indicate the numerical relation of the heathen to the Christian nations. This map was fixed on the wall in front of his work-stool, so that he might raise his head occasionally and look upon it as he sat at his daily toil. While he mused on the map and the facts it represented, "the fire burned." It was the means of inspiring in him the purpose never to tire nor rest until he and others had gone out to convey the good news of the Gospel to his suffering fellow-men in distant lands. It was to this circumstance that William Wilberforce alluded, in a speech made in the House of Commons twenty years after, when, urging Parliament to grant missionaries free access to India, he said: "A sublimer thought cannot be conceived than when a poor cobbler formed the resolution to give to the millions of Hindoos the Bible in their own language."

With this purpose in mind, Carey went to the meetings of his brethren, longing for an opportunity of [139] expressing his thoughts and calling forth their sympathies. But he had to endure a terrible trial at the outset—a trial which only Christian faith and love could endure. The older men, who ruled in an almost supreme manner in these councils, sternly rebuked his presumption, as they deemed it, and called him an "enthusiast"—a term employed very recently by a noble duke in the House of Lords in the same connection. No term could have described Carey more correctly. It was a term of honor, though meant in reproach and condemnation. The word means one inspired by God, and surely Carey's Christlike thought and zeal for his fellow-men was an inspiration. He was an enthusiast of the type of Robert Raikes of Gloucester, who only six or seven years before[40] had begun the work of Sabbath-schools in that city; or John Howard, whose great work, published within a year or two of this time,[41] on the condition of the prisons in Europe, and especially in England and Ireland, created a merciful revolution in the treatment of our criminal class; or Thomas Charles of Bala, whose pity for the Welsh girl who had no Bible of her own, and had been unable to walk six or seven miles to a place where she could have access to one, led him to take steps which resulted in the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The founder of the Baptist Missionary Society was a man of this type, and such men are the greatest benefactors of their race, no matter whether they be clergymen like Charles, or country gentlemen like Howard, or cobblers and Nonconformist village pastors like Carey.

At the first meeting in which Carey ventured to submit the subject of Christian missions, the senior minister present spoke in the following oracular manner: "Brother Carey ought certainly to have known that nothing could be done before another Pentecost, when an effusion of miraculous gifts, including the gift of tongues, would give effect to the commission of Christ, as at the first; and that he (Mr. Carey) was a miserable enthusiast for asking such a question." And then, as if to settle the whole question once for all, and shut the mouth of Mr. Carey forever, the stern old man turned to the humble young pastor and said, "What, sir! can you preach in Arabic, in Persic, in Hindostani, in Bengali, that you think it your duty to preach the gospel to the heathen?" Little did the speaker imagine that he was addressing the very man who would subsequently hold the office of Professor of [140] Oriental Languages, at Fort William for twenty years, become one of the greatest proficients the world has known in two of the very languages he had named, and not only *preach* in them but translate the Scriptures into them, as a boon and legacy of love to the people of Hindostan. When on another occasion Carey, nothing daunted by his first repulse, and willing to forgive and forget his rebuff for the sake of the cause he cherished, asked his brethren once more to consider the question of missions, the same stern voice exclaimed, "Young man, sit down; when God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine."

But the old man was not a prophet. God did not choose to work without the aid of William Carey, though the time was not yet. The undaunted moral hero had other battles to fight before he stood on the field of missions.

In 1789 Carey became the pastor of a church in Leicester. For four years he labored zealously at his ministerial duties, studied with great diligence, availing himself of new and valuable friendships for this purpose, and never failing to bring up his favorite theme for discussion at the meetings of the

Baptist ministers. Before he left Moulton, as we have seen, he began to raise the question in the public assemblies. On one occasion the debate ran on the question he had introduced, “Whether it were not practicable, and our bounden duty, to attempt somewhat toward spreading the gospel in the heathen world?” Not satisfied with the result of such discussions, the village shoemaker and pastor sat down to write a pamphlet on this subject, entitled “Thoughts on Christian Missions.” When he showed this pamphlet to his friends Fuller, Suttcliffe, and Ryland, they were amazed at the amount of knowledge it displayed, and deeply moved by Carey’s zeal and persistence in the good cause; but all they could do in the matter was to put him off for a time by counselling him to *revise* his production. It appears that at the time this *brochure* was penned the poor shoemaker with his family were “in a state bordering on starvation, and passed many weeks without animal food, and with but a scanty supply of bread.”

In the year 1791, at a meeting held at Clipstone in Northamptonshire, Carey again read his pamphlet, and was requested to publish it. This was a decided step in advance, and prepared the way for the events of the following year, when the desire of his heart was accomplished in the formation of a missionary society. In May, 1792, he preached the famous sermon which is said to have done more [141] than anything else to consummate this missionary enterprise.[42] The two main propositions of this discourse have passed into something like a proverb on the lips of missionary advocates: “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.” Although the discourse made a deep impression, Carey was distressed beyond all self-control when he found his friends were about to separate without a distinct resolution to form a society. He seized Andrew Fuller’s hand “in an agony of distress,” and tearfully pleaded that some steps should at once be taken. Overcome at last by his entreaties, they solemnly resolved on the holy enterprise.

After this the history of the Society is a record of meetings, committees, travels, and labors, of deputations to the churches, difficulties and embarrassments, in the midst of which no one was more devoted and useful in bringing the plans of the young Society into working order than Carey’s valuable friend, Andrew Fuller. The first subscription list was made up at another meeting of the Association, held at Kettering, in Carey’s own county, in the autumn of the same year. Its promises amounted to £13 2s. 6d. This little fund was the precursor of the tens of thousands which have since flowed into the treasuries of our modern Christian Missionary Societies. In twenty-nine days after the fund was started at Kettering, Birmingham followed with the noble gift of £70.

The Society was now fairly started, with the resolution formally recorded on its minute-books “to convey the message of salvation to some portion of the heathen world.” On the 9th of January, 1793, Carey and a colleague were appointed by the Committee to proceed at once to India. Carey’s colleague was a man of extraordinary missionary zeal, who had “lately returned from Bengal, and was endeavoring to establish a fund in London for a mission to that country.”[43] He was a Baptist, and on [142] hearing of the schemes of his brethren in England, he readily fell in with their proposal that he should accompany Carey to India. But the question of finding a berth on an English vessel was not easily settled. No English captain dare take them out without a government license, and to obtain a license as missionaries was not to be thought of. Having at one time gone on board a vessel with all their baggage, they were obliged by the captain, who felt that he was risking his commission in taking them on board, to land again and return to London. They were compelled at length to have recourse to a Danish vessel, the *Cron Princessa Maria*, whose captain, an Englishman by birth, though naturalized as a Dane, looked favorably on their enterprise. On the 13th of June, 1793, Carey and his companion set sail from the shores of England, their expedition as ambassadors for Christ as little heeded by the world at large as that of the Cilician tentmaker and his little band of preachers who set sail seventeen centuries before from the port of Alexandria Troas for the shores of Europe.

The story of Carey’s life and work in India cannot be followed in detail. We have come to the close of that portion of his history which properly belongs to these brief sketches of illustrious shoemakers. A few sentences must suffice to give a picture of his labors as a missionary and the result of those labors. For six or seven years Carey and his friends had to endure much hardship, and their proceedings were hampered by difficulties of various kinds. To begin with, they had no legal standing in the country, and were forced at length to take up their quarters under the Danish flag at Serampore. “Here they bought a house, and organized themselves into a family society, resolving that whatever was done by any member should be for the benefit of the mission. They opened a school, in which the children of those natives who chose to send them were instructed gratuitously.”[44] The funds supplied from home were but scanty, and they were compelled to resort to trade for their livelihood and the means of carrying on their work. “Thomas, who was a surgeon, intended to support himself by his profession. Carey’s plan was to take land and cultivate it for his maintenance.“[45] At one time, when funds were exhausted, Mr. Carey ”was indebted for an asylum to an opulent native;” at another time, driven to distraction by want of money, by the apparent failure of his plans, and the upbraidings of his unsympathetic partner, he removed with his family to the Soonderbunds, and took a [143] small grant of land, which he proposed to cultivate for his own maintenance; and, later on, he thankfully accepted, as a way out of his difficulties and a means of furthering his missionary projects, the post of superintendent of an indigo factory at Mudnabatty. This post he held for five or six years. No sooner had he got into this position of comparative independence than he wrote home and proposed that “the sum which might be considered his salary should be devoted to the printing of the Bengali translation of the New Testament.” This generous proposal is a fair illustration of his self-sacrificing spirit from the beginning to the end of his missionary life. To the work of translating and circulating the Scriptures in the languages of India he devoted not only all his time and his vast mental powers, but whatever private funds might be at his command. As the work proceeded, and he became known and employed by the government in various professorships, these funds were often

very considerable. In 1807, when Carey held the Professorship of Oriental Languages at the Fort William College, at a salary of £1200 a year, Mr. Ward, one of his colleagues, wrote, in reply to some unfriendly remarks made in an English publication, that Dr. Carey and Mr. Marshman "were contributing £2400 a year," and receiving from the mission fund "only their food and a trifle of pocket-money for apparel."

In 1800 the missionary establishment, now strengthened by the two worthy colleagues just named, was removed to Serampore, a Danish settlement about fifteen miles from Calcutta. A printing press and type were purchased, and the work of printing the Scriptures commenced. Carey had been quietly but most diligently going on with the translation of the Scriptures into Bengali during the previous years of anxiety and varied missionary labor. Whatever cares weighed on brain and heart, the true work of his life, to which he had devoted himself, was never relinquished.

On the 18th of March, 1800, the first sheets of the Bengali New Testament were struck off, and on the 7th of February in the following year, "Mr. Carey enjoyed the supreme gratification of receiving the last sheet of the Bengali New Testament from the press, the fruition of the 'sublime thought' which he had conceived fifteen years before." It is not surprising that we should read the following record of the manner in which these humble missionaries expressed their devout gratitude to God on the [144] consummation of this part of their Christian labors: "As soon as the first copy was bound, it was placed on the communion table in the chapel, and a meeting was held of the whole of the mission family, and of the converts recently baptized, to offer a tribute of gratitude to God for this great blessing." In 1806 the New Testament was ready for the press in *Sanskrit*, the sacred language of India, the language of its most ancient and venerated writings, and the parent of nearly all the languages of modern India. Simultaneously with this were being issued proof-sheets of the New Testament in Mahratta, Orissa, Persian, and Hindostani, besides dictionaries and grammars, and other publications for the use of students. It is well-nigh impossible to form a correct idea of the amount of religious zeal, mental energy, and physical endurance involved in labors like those of Dr. Carey, extending over forty years in the climate of Bengal. He is said to have regularly tired out three pundits, or native interpreters, who came one after the other each day to assist him in the correction and revision of his translations. A letter written in 1807, when the degree of D.D. was conferred on Mr. Carey by the Brown University, United States, gives a graphic sketch of the ordinary day's work performed by him at this period: "He rises a little before six, reads a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and spends the time till seven in private devotion. He then has family prayer with the servants in Bengali, after which he reads Persian with a moonshee who is in attendance. As soon as breakfast is over he sits down to the translation of the Ramayun with his pundit till ten, when he proceeds to the college and attends to its duties till two. Returning home, he examines a proof-sheet of the Bengali translation, and dines with his friend Mr. Rolt. After dinner he translates a chapter of the Bible with the aid of the chief pundit of the college. At six he sits down with the Telugu pundit to the study of that language, and then preaches a sermon in English to a congregation of about fifty. The service ended, he sits down to the translation of Ezekiel into Bengali, having thrown aside his former version. At eleven the duties of the day are closed, and after reading a chapter in the Greek Testament and commending himself to God he retires to rest."[46]

Strangely enough, about this time a controversy was going on in certain English journals as to the [145] value of the work that Carey and his coadjutors were doing in India. We have no wish to speak bitterly of the satire and severity of the articles written by Sydney Smith in the *Edinburgh Review*. They were not simply sallies of wit, but serious essays, written in a spirit of deliberate hostility to this missionary enterprise. What else can be thought of an article commencing with words like these: "In rooting out a nest of consecrated cobblers, and in bringing to light such a perilous heap of trash as we are obliged to work through in our articles on Methodists and missionaries, we are generally considered to have rendered a useful service to the cause of rational religion." Such articles condemned themselves; and it is fair to add that their author himself lived to regard them as a mistake, and to express to Lord Macaulay his regret that he had ever written them.[47]

But even in that day Carey and his heroic band of Christian fellow-laborers had plenty of sympathizers and supporters both in the Church of England and the Nonconformist denominations. Robert Southey the poet came forward with generous enthusiasm in their defence, and in a carefully-written article in the *Quarterly Review*[48] vindicated their character and labors. Among other remarkable statements in their behalf, he was able to say: "These 'low-born and low-bred mechanics' have translated the whole Bible into Bengali, and have by this time printed it. They are printing the New Testament in the Sanskrit, the Orissa, the Mahratta, the Hindostani, the Guzerat, and translating it into Persic, Teligna, Carnata, Chinese, the language of the Sieks and the Burmans, and in four of these languages they are going on with the Bible. Extraordinary as this is, it will appear still more so when it is remembered that of these men one was originally a shoemaker, another a printer at Hull, and the third the master of a charity-school at Bristol. Only fourteen years have elapsed since Thomas and Carey set foot in India, and in that time these missionaries have acquired the gift of tongues. In fourteen years these 'low-born, low-bred mechanics' have done more to spread the knowledge of the Scriptures among the heathen than has been accomplished or even attempted by all the world beside. A plain statement of fact will be the best proof of their diligence and success. The first convert was baptized in December, [146] 1800,[49] and in seven years after that time the number has amounted to 109, of whom nine were afterward excluded or suspended, or had been lost sight of. Carey and his son have been in Bengal fourteen years, the other brethren only nine. They had all a difficult language to acquire before they could speak to a native, and to preach and argue in it required a thorough and familiar knowledge. Under these circumstances the wonder is, not that they have done so little, but that they have done so much; for it will be found that, even without this difficulty to retard them, no religious opinions have

spread more rapidly in the same time, unless there was some remarkable folly or extravagance to recommend them, or some powerful worldly inducement." This liberal Tory an evangelical High Churchman goes on to say: "Other missionaries from other societies have now entered India, and will soon become efficient laborers in their station. From Government all that is asked is toleration for themselves and protection for their converts. The plan which they have laid for their own proceedings is perfectly prudent and unexceptionable, and there is as little fear of their provoking martyrdom as there would be of their shrinking from it if the cause of God and man require the sacrifice."

Having lived to see his desire accomplished in the establishment of many other missionary societies besides his own; having been the means of translating the Sacred Scriptures in the languages spoken probably by two hundred millions of people; this good man, working up to the close of his life, died at Calcutta on the 9th of June, 1834. As he lay ill, Lady Bentinck, the wife of the Governor-General, paid him frequent visits, and good "Bishop Wilson came and besought his blessing." He instructed his executors to place no memorial over his tomb but the following simple inscription:

WILLIAM CAREY,
BORN AUGUST 1761; DIED JUNE 1834.
"A wretched, poor, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall."

Mr. Marshman, who had the best means of knowing Carey and his work,[50] says: "The basis of all his excellences was deep and unaffected piety. So great was his love of integrity that he never gave his confidence where he was not certain of the existence of moral worth. He was conspicuous for constancy, both in the pursuits of life and the associations of friendship. With great simplicity he united the strongest decision of character. He never took credit for anything but plodding, but it was the plodding of genius." In all his work, however successful, however honored by his fellow-men, William Carey was modest and simple-hearted as a child. His unparalleled labors as a translator of the Scriptures were performed under the prompting of sublime faith in Divine truth, warm unwavering love to souls, and an assured confidence in the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. The shoemaker of Northamptonshire will be remembered till the end of the world as the Christian Apostle of Northern India. [147]

CHAPTER VIII. [149]

John Pounds,

THE PHILANTHROPIC SHOEMAKER.

"His virtues walked their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the Eternal Master found
His single talent well employed."
—*Dr. Samuel Johnson.*

"A young lady once said to him, 'O Mr. Pounds, I wish you were rich, you would do so much good!' The old man paused a few seconds and then replied, 'Well, I don't know; if I had been rich I might, perhaps, have been much the same as other rich people. This I know, there is not now a happier man in England than John Pounds; and I think 'tis best as it is.'"—*Memoir of John Pounds*, p. 12.

"As unknown, and yet well known; ... as poor, yet making many rich."—*The Apostle Paul.* 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

"Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."—*Our Lord Jesus Christ.* Matt. xxv. 40.

JOHN POUNDS. [151]

In 1837 there lived at Landport and Portsmouth two notable shoemakers. The Landport man combined with his daily task as a shoemaker the delightful occupation of sketching and painting, and obtained a local fame as an artist. The Portsmouth man found in the work of teaching poor ragged children to read and write and cipher his greatest relaxation from the drudgery of daily toil and his purest enjoyment, and has become known, we may safely affirm, throughout the Christian world, as a philanthropist, and one of the first men in this country who conceived and carried out the idea of Ragged Schools. The shoemaker-artist had a great admiration for the shoemaker-philanthropist and painted a picture representing him in his humble workroom, engaged in his double occupation as shoemaker and schoolmaster, with a last between his knees and a number of children standing before him receiving instruction. The artist's name was Sheaf, and his interesting picture represented John Pounds occupied in his benevolent work as a gratuitous teacher of the neglected children of his native town. Sheaf sold his picture to Edward Carter, Esq., of Portsmouth, a warm admirer of John Pounds, and one of his best friends and helpers in his work. This picture was afterward engraved by Mr. Charpentier of Portsmouth, and it is to a copy of the engraving the renowned Dr. Guthrie of Edinburgh refers in the following story:

"It is rather curious, at least it is interesting to me, that it was by a picture that I was first led to take an interest in Ragged Schools—a picture in an old, obscure, decayed burgh, that stands on the shore of the Firth of Forth. I had gone thither with a companion on a pilgrimage; not that there was any beauty about the place, for it had no beauty. It has little trade. Its deserted harbor, silent streets, and old houses, some of them nodding to their fall, give indications of decay. But one circumstance has redeemed it from obscurity, and will preserve its name to the latest ages. It was the birthplace of Thomas Chalmers. I went to see this place. It is many years ago, and going into an inn for refreshments, I found the room covered with pictures of shepherdesses with their crooks, and tars in [152]
holiday attire, not very interesting. But above the chimney-piece there stood a large print, more respectable than its neighbors, which a skipper, the captain of one of the few ships that trade between that town and England, had probably brought there. It represented a cobbler's room. The cobbler was there himself, spectacles on nose, an old shoe between his knees, the massive forehead and firm mouth expressing great determination of character, and below his bushy eyebrows benevolence gleamed out on a number of poor ragged boys and girls who stood at their lessons around the busy cobbler. My curiosity was excited, and on the inscription I read how this man, John Pounds, a cobbler in Portsmouth, taking pity on the poor ragged children, left by ministers and magistrates, and ladies and gentlemen, to run in the streets, had, like a good shepherd, gathered in the wretched outcasts; how he had brought them to God and the world; and how, while earning his bread by the sweat of his brow, he had rescued from misery, and saved to society, not less than five hundred of these children."[51]

The biography of some of the best and most useful men the world has known may be written almost in a sentence. In the Old Testament there is a biography of this kind in the words, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."[52] In the New Testament there is another of a similar character in the brief sentence, "There was a certain man in Cæsarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian *band*, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway."[53] The life-story of John Pounds is told in the last sentence of Dr. Guthrie's narrative; yet a few farther details of the life and work of this noble-hearted man will be read with interest by all who venerate true worth and take pleasure in contemplating acts of Christ-like charity and mercy.

John Pounds was born at Portsmouth on the 17th of June, 1766. He was only twelve years old when his father, a sawyer employed in the government dockyard, had him bound apprentice as a shipwright in the same yard. He was then a strong active boy, and worked with his father in the yard until an accident maimed him for life, and made him incapable of working as a shipwright. He fell into a dry- [153]
dock and broke one of his thigh-bones, at the same time dislocating the joint. Whether the fracture was neglected or not we do not know; but, from some cause or other, poor Pounds went lame ever after. From the art of making ships he was now fain to turn to that of making shoes, and finding an old man in High Street, Portsmouth, who was willing to give the needful instruction, John Pounds, at the age of fifteen, became a *shoemaker*. Indeed, he would scarcely have claimed that title of dignity for himself; for his chief thoughts were given to other affairs, so that he was never an adept at his craft, and would in all probability have preferred to be set down as "only a cobbler." It was not until 1804, when Pounds was thirty-eight years of age, that "he ventured to become a tenant on his own account of the small, weather-boarded tenement in St. Mary's Street." It was in this humble abode that John Pounds lived and worked and carried on his benevolent labors for thirty-five years. The room appears to have been about the size and shape of an open third-class railway carriage, and the entire tenement had more the appearance of a shanty or hut than an ordinary dwelling-house. Yet it was amply sufficient for the poor cobbler's purposes, and served as the field of operations in all his benevolent enterprises.

Pounds lived alone in his snug little home; and as his earnings, though small, were more than enough to meet the requirements of a bachelor, he felt it right to do something to assist his poor relatives. He had a brother—a seafaring man—whose family was large and stood in need of assistance. John accordingly proposed to take one of his brother's children and clothe, board, and educate him as if he had been his own. With characteristic generosity of spirit, he selected a poor little fellow who was a cripple. The child's feet turned inward, and, as he walked, he had to lift them one over another. The tender-hearted cobbler could not endure to see the deformity, and soon devised the means of remedy. A neighbor's child who suffered in the same way had been provided by a surgeon with a set of irons which straightened his feet and enabled him to walk properly. Unable to purchase irons for his own

little charge, Pounds set to work to construct something in lieu of them to answer the same purpose. His apparatus, made out of old shoe soles, answered admirably, and he soon had the gratification of seeing the little fellow entirely cured of his defect. This boy grew up under his uncle's care, was put [154] apprentice to a fashionable shoemaker, and lived with Pounds till the time of his death.

When his nephew was old enough to begin to learn to read, John Pounds resolved to do the work of a schoolmaster himself; and, thinking that his little pupil would get on better if he had a companion, he began to look round for some one to share the benefit of his instructions. He selected a poor little urchin, "the son of a poor woman who went about selling puddings, her homeless children, unable to accompany her, being left in the open street amid frost and snow, with no other shelter than the overhanging shade of a bay-window."[54] Other pupils were added in course of time, and the shoemaker soon began to take great delight in the work of teaching. It was not very difficult in Portsmouth to find plenty of children whose education and training were entirely neglected by their parents, and who were suffered to run about the streets in the most ragged and destitute condition. The sight of these children moved him to pity; and, once embarked on the enterprise of reforming and teaching them, Pounds could not rest content with having half a dozen or a dozen of them under his care, but went on gathering them into his room until he had, in the later years of his life, an average of forty poor children under his charge at a time. He loved his work all the more because it was entirely gratuitous, and because he knew that if these poor children were not thus taught they would never be taught at all, but grow up in ignorance, misery, and vice. No amount of pains, self-sacrifice, and anxiety was too much for this true disciple of Christ to pay for the satisfaction of doing such children good, and enriching and ennobling all their future lives.

The editor of the "Memoir of John Pounds" thus describes the cobbler in the midst of his scholars: "His humble workshop was about six feet wide and about eighteen feet in depth, in the midst of which he would sit on his stool, with his last or lapstone on his knee, and other implements by his side, going on with his work and attending at the same time to the pursuits of the whole assemblage—some of whom were reading by his side, writing from his dictation, of showing up their sums; others seated [155] around on forms or boxes on the floor, or on the steps of a small staircase in the rear. Although the master seemed to know where to look for each and to maintain a due command over all, yet so small was the room, and so deficient in the usual accommodation of a school, that the scene appeared to the observer from without to be a mere crowd of children's heads and faces."[55]

The smallness of his room made selection necessary when the number of candidates for instruction became unusually large. In this case he always chose the worst and most desperate cases, preferring to take in hand "the little blackguards," as he termed them, and turn them into decent members of society. At other times, "he has been seen to follow such to the town-quay, and hold out in his hand to them the bribe of a roasted potato to induce them to come to school."[56] On fine warm days the school "ran over" into the street, the children who behaved best being allowed to sit near the door, or on a bench outside.

His method of teaching was of the simplest and most graphic character, and seemed, although John Pounds, of course, knew nothing of such things, to combine the features of the Pestalozzian and Kindergarten systems. He would point to the different parts of the body, get the pupil to tell their names, and then to spell them. Taking a child's hand, he would say, "What is this? Spell it." Then slapping it he would say, "What did I do? Spell that."

With the older pupils he went as far as his knowledge would allow of, teaching them to read by means of handbills, or making use of such old school-books as he had been able to beg, or buy cheap. Slate and pencils only were used for teaching writing, "yet a creditable degree of skill was acquired, and in ciphering, the Rule of Three and Practice were performed with accuracy."

Pounds made efforts to clothe and feed as well as educate his destitute pupils, many of whom were in a deplorable condition of rags and dirt. He was anxious to take them with him on Sundays to the meeting-house which he attended, and would have them decently clad and properly washed. "In one corner of his room was a bag full of all sorts of garments for girls and boys, which he had begged and mended, to be worn by his scholars on Sundays, and when they went with him to the house of God. [156] The garments took the place of worse ones; for John took pride in the decent, clean appearance of his pupils. Imagine him on a Sunday morning, with his children round him, and his big bag open, and his handing the garments round, with the soul of kindness in his eyes and the joy of God in his heart!"[57] He might often have been seen on Saturday nights going round to the bakehouses to buy bread for his poor children to eat on Sundays, gathering it into his huge leathern apron, and, when his money was all spent, standing still with a troubled look, searching in all his pockets for a few more coppers in order to secure yet one more loaf to add to his store.

When he was in need of books for his pupils, he did not hesitate to go to the houses of well-to-do citizens and explain his case, and ask them for aid. For the most part, he met with much kindness and sympathy, for many of the inhabitants of Portsmouth and the neighboring towns knew the benevolent cobbler of St. Mary's Street. But now and then he met with rebuffs from those who did not know him, or from churlish souls who could not feel for the sufferings of the poor. If he alone had suffered from these rebuffs, the brave and sensible old man would have borne them calmly enough; but a word spoken against his helpless little scholars was enough at any time to rouse his warmest feelings. Once he called on a gentleman of considerable means to ask the favor of a few old disused books for the use of the pupils in reading. "Let them *buy* books!" was the only response he got to his generous appeal. "Poor little beggars!" he exclaimed; "they can scarcely get bread, let alone books," and turned away with ill-concealed disgust from the *gentleman's* presence.

Pounds taught his pupils many other things besides “the three R’s.” Many of the boys received instruction in the useful arts of shoe-mending and tailoring, so that when they grew up they found their little knowledge of great practical utility. He even went so far as to teach the lads and lasses how to cook their plain food, and make the best of everything. In fact, nothing that children required to make them happy and comfortable, and to fit them for the duties of after-years, did the good cobbler overlook or neglect. He made their playthings—bats, balls, crossbows, shuttlecocks, kites, what-not; went out with them on holiday and festive gatherings; got them gifts of tea and cake, and had them [157] assembled in a neighboring schoolroom for public examination; saw that they were included at the public dinners, such as the celebration of Her Majesty’s coronation in 1837; and from year to year had the satisfaction of seeing them grow up and take honorable and useful positions in society. *This*, in fact, was his reward—all he looked for, all he ever had, except the approval of Him who said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”

It was no uncommon thing during the last years of John Pounds’ life for some fine, manly fellow, soldier or sailor on furlough, or workman passing through the town, to turn in at the old room, where the good cobbler was still going on with his good work, in order to shake hands with him, and thank him, while the big tears stood in the eyes of both master and pupil, as the latter spoke of his rescue from starvation, poverty, or crime, and of the fair start in life which he had received at the hands of the worthy cobbler. And to this day there are men and women by the score, in respectable and comfortable positions, who can tell the same tale. “During the seven years I have been minister here,” writes the pastor of the chapel in the graveyard of which John Pounds was buried, “I have seen paying a pilgrimage to his tomb a number of those who were taught by him, and who, passing through the town, or coming for a short time to Portsmouth (as they belonged to the army or navy), thus showed their grateful feeling toward their venerated teacher and friend. They have told me in touching language, and almost sobbing the while, of the debt of gratitude they owed him.”

The useful life of this philanthropist came to an end on New Year’s Day, 1839. A few days previously he went to the house of his friend Edward Carter, Esq., who then lived in High Street, Portsmouth, to acknowledge certain acts of kindness done in behalf of his little scholars. While there, he saw the painting referred to at the beginning of this sketch, which that gentleman had purchased of Mr. Sheaf, the shoemaker-artist. The simple-minded man, whose love for dumb animals and domestic pets was one of the most amiable features in his character, seemed to be more pleased by finding his favorite *cat* included in the picture than by any other part of the painting. He then showed Mr. Carter the writing and ciphering lessons of one of the pupils, and asked for aid in procuring copy-books. A day or two after this John Pounds again called on his friend, and while conversing with him on matters [158] connected with the school, fell down as if fainting. Medical aid was called in, but John Pounds was dead before the doctor arrived. The body was conveyed to the little room in St. Mary’s Street, where about thirty children were waiting for their teacher to come and commence the day’s work, and “wondering what had become of him.” Terror and grief seized upon the minds of the children when they saw the lifeless body of their kind teacher borne into the room and laid upon the bed. On the following day a group of children might have been seen standing at the door weeping because they could not be admitted. Day after day “the younger ones came, looked about the room, and not finding their friend, went away disconsolate.”

Mr. Martell, the physician who had been called in when Pounds was dying, asked the favor of being allowed to pay the expenses of the funeral. John Pounds was buried in the graveyard of the chapel in High Street where he had been a constant worshipper. A large number of people gathered round the grave, among whom the most conspicuous and sincere mourners were the children now bereaved of their teacher and best earthly friend.

A tablet was placed on the wall of the High Street Chapel bearing the following inscription:

Erected by Friends
As A Memorial of their Esteem and Respect

FOR
JOHN POUNDS;

Who, while Earning his Livelihood
By Mending Shoes, Gratuitously Educated
and, in part, Clothed and Fed,
Some Hundreds of Poor Children.
He Died Suddenly
On the First of January 1839,
Aged 72 Years.

“Thou Shalt be Blessed:—For they cannot
Recompense Thee.”

Over the *grave* a monument was erected, the cost of which was defrayed, as the inscription states, “By means of penny subscriptions, not only from the Christian Brotherhood with whom John Pounds [159] habitually worshipped in the adjoining chapel, but from persons of widely differing religious opinions throughout Great Britain, and from the most distant parts of the world.” Another memento took the form of a library for the use of the poor people of the neighborhood in which the philanthropic shoemaker lived and labored. A Ragged School has also been built which bears his name, and in which

the good work he inaugurated in Plymouth is now carried on. In 1879 the “John Pounds Coffee Tavern” was opened. Happy are they who can say with Lord Shaftesbury, in the closing words of his speech at the opening of this institution—

“I am a Disciple of John Pounds.”

CHAPTER IX.

[161]

THOMAS COOPER

[163]

Thomas Cooper,

“THE SELF-EDUCATED SHOEMAKER” WHO “REARED HIS OWN MONUMENT.”[58]

“I consuming fire
Felt daily in my veins to see my race
Emerge from out the foul defiling mire
Of animal enjoyments that debase
Their nature, and well-nigh its lineaments efface.

I burned to see my species proudly count
Themselves for more than brutes; and toiled to draw
Them on to drink at Virtue’s living fount,
Whence purest pleasures flow....

Canst thou blame
My course? I tell thee, thirst for human laud
Impelled me not: ’twas my sole-thoughted aim
To render Man, my brother, worthy his high name!”
—*Empedocles, in “The Purgatory of Suicides,” Stanzas* 35-37.

“Few shrewder, kindlier men have fought the battle of life.”—*London Quarterly Review.*

“He is a man of vast reading, and indomitable courage. His Autobiography is a remarkable book, well

worth reading."—*Editor of "Charles Kingsley's Life and Letters*."

THOMAS COOPER.

[165]

"The Lord's will be done! I don't think He intends thee to spend thy life at shoemaking. I have kept thee at school, and worked hard to get thee bread, and to let thee have thy own wish in learning, and never imagined that thou wast to be a shoemaker. But the Lord's will be done! He'll bring it all right in time." Such were the words with which the worthy and excellent mother of Thomas Cooper gave her consent to her boy's proposal that he should go and learn "the art, craft, and mystery of shoemaking." He had no particular love for the craft, but he was anxious to do something for a livelihood, and desirous of helping his widowed mother; and, above all, he was ashamed of being pointed at by his neighbors as "an idle good-for-nothing." That never was true of Thomas Cooper either in school or out, at work or recreation; and now that he had left school and was turned of fifteen years of age, he could not brook the insinuation that he was unwilling to work; so, good scholar as he was, and zealous for learning, and not without ambition, he resolved on doing *something*, however humble, to earn his bread, in order to shut the mouths of tattling neighbors. His mother had tried to get him apprenticed as a painter or a merchant's clerk, and failed for want of a premium; and he had made a brief experiment at sailoring down at Hull, and had come home again utterly loathing the cruelty and abuse to which a sailor-boy of those days was subjected; so there was nothing for him now but to take the first chance of learning any trade that came in his way. He was an only child, and his mother had been a widow eleven years, getting her living as a dyer, in which occupation she had assisted her husband during his lifetime. In the pursuit of his trade as a dyer he had moved about from town to town, and had met with his wife at Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. Not long after their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Cooper removed to Leicester, and took a house in Soar Lane, conveniently situated by the river Soar. Here Thomas, their only child, was born on the 20th of March, 1805. Twelve months afterward they went to live at Exeter, where the father died when his little boy was but four years old. After this his mother at once went back to old Gainsborough, where she would be near [166] her relatives. Here she remained for the rest of her life, and here the first twenty-nine years of Thomas Cooper's life were spent.

The signs her boy had given of mental powers above the average were quite enough to warrant Mrs. Cooper's pathetic speech when he sought permission to become a shoemaker. His memory was remarkably retentive, and dated from a period which must be regarded as exceptionally early. On the day that he was two years old he fell into a stream that ran in front of his father's house, and was nearly drowned. He declares that he distinctly remembers being led by his father's hand over St. Thomas's Bridge on the afternoon of that same day, and how the neighbors "chucked him under the chin, and said, How did you like it? How did you fall in? Where have you been to?" Writing in 1871 he says, "The circumstances are as vivid to my mind as if they only occurred yesterday." Reading came to him almost by instinct, and at three years of age his schoolmistress set him on a stool to teach a boy more than twice his own age the letters of the alphabet. At the same age he could repeat several of Æsop's fables. On their removal to Gainsborough he was seized with small-pox, which fearful complaint marred his visage for life. This was followed by other complaints which kept him an invalid for a year. On his recovery he had to bear the annoyance, so bitterly painful to a child, of being either scouted or pitied for his altered looks. But the kindness he failed to find out-of-doors was more than doubled at home. The heart of a true mother and a right noble woman warmed toward the child in his weakness and sad disfigurement. Never had needy child a more devoted parent. It was hard work for the solitary woman to make a living and pay her way, yet she bore up bravely and did the best she could for her child. The picture which is given by Thomas Cooper in his Autobiography of his home at this time, and of his own and his mother's position, has a pre-Raphaelite simplicity about it, and well deserves a moment's attention. "Within doors there was no longer a handsome room, the cheerful look of my father, and his little songs and stories. We had now but one chamber and one lower room, and the last-named at once parlor, kitchen, and dye-house: two large coppers were set in one part of it; and my mother was at work amid steam and sweat all the day long for half of the week, and on the other half she was fully employed in "framing," ironing, and finishing her work. Yet for me she had [167] ever words of tenderness. My altered face had not unendeared me to her. In the midst of her heavy toil, she could listen to my feeble repetitions of the fables, or spare a look, at my entreaty, for the figures I was drawing with chalk upon the hearthstone."[59] Returning to school again, he was, at five years of age, his teacher's favorite pupil, for he could "read the tenth chapter of Nehemiah, with all its hard names, like the parson in the church, as she used to say, and spell wondrously." Wandering through the woods with his mother, or going with her on her country business rounds when the weather was fine; poring over Baskerville's quarto Bible with its fine engravings from the old masters, when compelled on wet Sundays to stop indoors, the sensitive mind of the eager child received its first impressions of the beautiful in nature and art. When he was eight years of age his mother succeeded in getting him admitted to a new Free School, recently opened in the town, and little Tom was placed upon the foundation as a "Bluecoat" scholar. The course of instruction at this school was neither varied nor profound, consisting entirely of Scripture reading, writing, and the first four rules of arithmetic; but its frequent repetitions of spelling and ciphering lessons were good as a beginning,

and laid a fair basis for future learning. Obliged to attend the parish church with the rest of the "Bluecoats," he became enamoured with the stately service of the Church of England, the superior singing, and the grand old organ; and great was his delight when he was chosen, on account of his good voice and musical ear, to sit with six other boys in the choir by the organ up in the gallery of the church. During these three years, from the age of eight to eleven, he began to read for pleasure or profit such books as the immortal "Pilgrim's Progress," or Baines's "History of the War," "Pamela," and the "Earl of Moreland," and to revel in such ballads as "Chevy Chase," which were committed to memory and repeated when alone, and served to stir up in his young heart the poetic or the warlike spirit. But these were years of severe trial too, for the great wars were then raging on the Continent; taxes pressed with terrible weight on all classes, but especially on the poor; and, added to these troubles, were the evils of bad harvests and winters unusually severe. It was hard indeed for his mother to make a living in such times, and to provide the barest subsistence for herself and child. "At [168] one time," he says, "wheaten flour rose to six shillings per stone, and we tried to live on barley-cakes, which brought on a burning, gnawing pain at the stomach. For two seasons the corn was spoiled in the fields with wet; and when the winter came, we could scoop out the middle of the soft distasteful loaf, and to eat it brought on sickness. Meat was so dear that my mother could not buy it, and often our dinner consisted of potatoes alone." In three years the little Bluecoat boy had grown weary of the monotonous round of teaching at the Free School, and got his mother's consent to attend a better class of school for boys, kept by a man who was known among his pupils and the neighbors as "Daddy Briggs." Here there was talk of such abstruse subjects as *mensuration* and *algebra*; "Enfield's Speaker" was used for reading, and the scholars went deeply into the histories of Greece and Rome and England, led on by that profound and original historian, Goldsmith! However, the school was an immense advance on the one just left, and offered certain opportunities of intercourse with boys of better position and culture than Tom had known before.

The boy must have made good use of his time at the Free School, for, it seems, he went to Daddy Briggs' academy as much in the character of a teacher as that of a pupil; and he says of this good-natured but not very accomplished master: "He took no school-fees of my mother, but employed me as an assistant, for about an hour each day, in teaching the younger children. He treated me less as a pupil than as a companion, and I became much attached to him. Yet he was never really a teacher to me. I made my way easily without help through Walkinghame, part of Bonnycastle, and got a little way into algebra before I left school." By this time he had acquired an intense thirst for reading, and eagerly sought out every book within reach. Now he borrowed the school-books of his companions and read them through, and now he resorted to the "circulating library," at the shop of an old lady who supplied him with writing materials, and, as a great favor, was allowed to read such books as were not immediately required for circulation; or, again, he seized upon the cheap issues of educational works which were beginning to make their appearance about this time, and were sold at the doors of the good Gainsborough folk by that important personage "the number man." At twelve years of age he had thus made the acquaintance of the classic English poets, had read "Cook's Voyages," the "Arabian [169] Nights," the "Old English Baron," besides "a heap of other romances and novels it would require pages even to name."

At thirteen years of age the poetry of Byron made a deep impression on his mind. Nothing in poetry but "Chevy Chase" had ever moved his heart before. Of "Childe Harold" and "Manfred" he says, "They seemed to create almost a new sense within me." Poetry was henceforth a passion with him; but few subjects came amiss: he read everything he could lay hold of.

About this time, too, he showed tendencies in two directions, which were strongly developed subsequently, and, in fact, formed the main features of his character in after-years. The conversation of certain working-men politicians in a neighboring brush manufactory, and the loan of "Hone's Caricatures" and "The News," set him off in the direction of *politics*, and made him, of course, a disciple of Radicalism. But the other change in the current of his thoughts, which came a little later on, was more important, if not more profound and lasting. Deeply emotional and imaginative as a child, having also a strong sense of moral right and wrong, he was easily moved by religious appeals. A band of Primitive Methodists having come to the town, he was caught up by their enthusiasm and zeal, and resolved to join them. After much religious emotion, ending in no very settled state of mind, he left them and united with the Wesleyan Methodists, whose services and preaching were more to his mind. This brings us up to the time of his leaving school at the age of fifteen, and his entrance on the sterner work of life as a shoemaker. True, he had not done anything very marvellous at present, but he had fine abilities, a warm emotional nature, a rare poetic taste, a thorough craving for books, and no little perseverance and industry. Good Mrs. Cooper, therefore, showed something more than a mother's fond fancy when she said, "The Lord's will be done; I don't think He intends thee to spend thy life at shoemaking."

The society in John Clarke's garret, where young Cooper sat down to learn his trade, was, like that of many similar places, rather literary. This man Clarke, true to the reputation of the followers of St. Crispin, was thoughtful and fond of reading. The conversation ran on the poetry of Shakespeare and Byron, and the acting of Kemble and Young and Mrs. Siddons—the stars of that day in the theatrical world. One of the fruits of this new poetic impulse was Cooper's first poem, made one spring morning [170] in his fifteenth year, as he walked in the fields near Gainsborough. Quoting this short piece in his Autobiography, he says: "I give it here, be it remembered, as the first literary feat of a self-educated boy of fifteen. I say self-educated, so far as I was educated. Mine has been almost entirely self-education all the way through life." Great merit or promise is not claimed for these lines, yet they are worth quoting, if only for the sake of comparing them with the first attempt of another young shoemaker, Bloomfield.[60]

A MORNING IN SPRING.

"See with splendor Phœbus rise,
And with beauty tinge the skies.
See the clouds of darkness fly
Far beyond the Western sky;
While the lark upsoaring sings,
And the air with music rings;
While the blackbird, linnet, thrush,
Perched on yonder thorny bush,
All unite in tuneful choir,
And raise the happy music higher.
While the murmuring busy bee,
Pattern of wakeful industry,
Flies from flower to flower to drain
The choicest juice from sweetest vein;
While the lowly cottage youth,
His mind well stored with sacred truth,
Rises, devout, his thanks to pay,
And hails the welcome dawn of day.
Oh, that 'twere mine, the happy lot,
To dwell within the peaceful cot—
There rise, each morn, my thanks to pay,
And hail the welcome dawn of day!"

Cooper stayed with Clarke for a year and a half, and, after a brief interval, went to work with a "first-rate hand," who was known in the shoemaking fraternity as *Don* Cundell. Here the youth, more expert at his craft than many of his companions, learned before the age of nineteen to make "a really good woman's shoe."[61] During this period he seems to have settled in good earnest alike to his daily [171] occupation and the work of self-culture. Under the guidance of a friend named Macdonald, who lent him books, he read such works as Robertson's "Histories of Scotland," "America," and "Charles the Fifth," Neale's "History of the Puritans," and a little theology. Like multitudes of youths in a position similar to his, Thomas Cooper derived much benefit from a Mutual Improvement Society which was started in Gainsborough about this time by a friend of his, a draper's assistant named Joseph Foulkes Winks. In this society papers were read and discussions held on all imaginable subjects, literary, historical, and religious. "This weekly essay-writing," he says, "was an employment which absorbed a good deal of my thought, and was a good induction into the writing of prose, and into a mode of expressing one's thoughts." On one occasion a prize was offered for the best essay on "The Worst King of England." The tug of war lay between Winks, who chose as his subject James II., and Cooper, who eventually was adjudged the victor, and had taken William the Conqueror as his ideal of a bad king. The friendship thus commenced in amicable rivalry lasted, as we shall see, through life. Not content with self-improvement, these youths, with Macdonald and Wood, banded themselves together in a resolve to instruct others less favored than themselves, and an "Adult School" was formed. This was one of the first if not the first school of the kind in Lincolnshire, and must have proved a great benefit to the illiterate poor of the town, for by the end of the following year, when this branch was admitted into "The Adult Schools Society," the numbers on the books were 324. Friendships with two other young men brought such books in his way as Sibley's famous illustrated work on astrology, over which he wasted much valuable time, Volney's "Ruins of Empires" and Voltaire's "Philosophical Dictionary," over which his time was worse than wasted. But the best piece of good fortune in the way of reading came to him in the discovery that one "Nathaniel Robinson, mercer," "had left his library for the use of the inhabitants of the town." It seems that this boon had been neglected or forgotten by the good folk of Gainsborough. Once known to the ardent young shoemaker, it was not neglected nor forgotten, at all events as far as he was concerned. He pounced upon it with the avidity and excited joy of a naturalist who lights upon a new or rare specimen. We must let him speak for himself in the matter, and describe this precious "find" in his own words. He says: "I was in ecstasies to find the [172] dusty, cobwebbed shelves loaded with Hooker, and Bacon, and Cudworth, and Stillingfleet, and Locke, and Jeremy Taylor, and Tillotson, and Bates, and Bishop Hall, and Samuel Clarke, and Warburton, and Bull, and Waterland, and Bentley, and Bayle, and Ray, and Derham, and a score of other philosophers and divines, mingled with Stanley's 'History of Philosophers,' and its large full-length portraits; Ogilvy's 'Embassies to Japan and China,' with their large curious engravings; Speed's and Rapin's folio Histories of England, Collier's 'Church History,' Fuller's 'Holy War,' Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs,' the first edition, in black letter, with its odd rude plates, and countless other curiosities and valuables."

Cooper now settled to reading in desperate earnest, and with something like a fixed purpose to become a scholar, and perhaps a writer, or a great political or religious orator, or, more probable than all things else—for the poetic fervor was very strong just now—a *poet*! Yet he had no very definite notions of what he was to be. All he was certain about was that he must and would study, and fit himself for some higher walk in life when the time came to enter on it. Let the reader keep this fact in mind while reading the story we have to tell of close application to study, lofty aspirations, and great attainments as a scholar. *Thomas Cooper during his shoemaker's life, in which he laid the foundation of rare scholarship, never earned more than ten shillings a week*—scarcely enough to buy food and clothes. He had not become an apprentice, and therefore the laws of the trade prevented the best masters employing him. One "Widow Hoyle, who sold her goods in the market cheap," was his only employer, so long as he remained at the trade. If he was not, in these days of lowly toil and lofty thoughts,

"Checked by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,"

he well knew what it was to feel the restraint of

"Poverty's unconquerable bar."

Yet he had *courage*, an indispensable quality in a youth so situated, and it was the courage that "mounteth with the occasion," and all these bars to self-culture only acted as a stimulus to more resolute toil. Strange to say, one of his greatest incentives to study at this time was an account of the life of Dr. Samuel Lee, Professor of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge, which the young student [173] had read in the *Imperial Magazine*, then edited by another of our illustrious shoemakers, Samuel Drew. Lee had been a carpenter, ignorant of English grammar, had bought Ruddiman's Latin Rudiments, and having mastered the book, had learned to read Cæsar and Virgil, and had taught himself Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac by the time he was six-and-twenty years of age! Cooper said within himself, "If one man can teach himself a language, another can." So he went to work, following in Lee's steps so far as to take Ruddiman's book and commit "the entire volume to memory—notes and all!" Then came the study of *Hebrew* with the help of Lyon's small grammar, bought for a shilling at an old bookstall; and a year after he was busy at *Greek*, and created for himself a pleasing diversion by the comparatively easy task of mastering *French*. All this time his general reading was not neglected. By the advice of a valued friend, John Hough, he fortified his mind against the sceptical thoughts which previous reading had awakened by going carefully through the chief works on Christian evidences. Few divinity students at the end of their course have read more carefully or extensively than this occupant of a cobbler's stall had done by the time he was twenty-three years old. Paley's "Horæ Paulinæ," "Natural Theology," and "Evidences," Bishop Watson's "Apologies," Soame Jenyns' "Internal Evidences," Lord Lyttleton's "Conversion of St. Paul," Sherlock's "Trial of the Witnesses," besides profounder works like Butler's "Analogy," Bentley's "Folly of Atheism," Dr. Samuel Clarke's "Being and Attributes of God," Stillingfleet's "Origines Sacræ," and Warburton's "Divine Legation of Moses," were as familiar to him as the "Paradise Lost" and most of the plays of Shakespeare were to his companion Thomas Miller.[62] The labors of this period, from 1824 to 1828, were tremendous, or, as one of Sir Walter Scott's characters was wont to say, "prodigious." Cooper had left Don Cundell's, and now worked at home, so that he could arrange his time for study and work as he pleased. Like Drew, he had learned to do a fair day's work and not to neglect the means of earning his daily bread for the more fascinating occupations of reading and study. But if ordinary work was not neglected, it must be confessed that the work of the scholar was overdone. No one can [174] live as Cooper lived from the age of nineteen to twenty-three without incurring fearful risk to body and mind. Rising at three, or four at the latest, he read history, or the grammar of some language, or engaged in translation till seven, when he sat down to his stall. At meal-times he attempted the double task of taking in food for the body and the mind at the same time, cutting up his food and eating it with a spoon that he might not have occasion to take his eyes off the book he held in his hand; at work till eight or nine, he was all the while committing to memory and reciting aloud passages from the poets, or declensions and conjugations, or rules of syntax; and when he rose from his stool, it was only to pace the room, while he still went on with his studies, until at last he dropped into bed utterly exhausted. This was his method in spring and summer, but even in winter his hours were just as long, and study in the early morning was not accompanied by the invigorating influence of walking exercise and fresh air; for he says, "When in the coldness of winter we could not afford to have a fire till my mother rose, I used to put a lamp on a stool, which I placed on a little round table, and standing before it wrapped up in my mother's old red cloak, I read on till seven, or studied a grammar or my Euclid, and frequently kept my feet moving to secure warmth or prevent myself from falling asleep."[63] In this way Latin was so far mastered that Cæsar's "De Bello Gallico" could be read "page after page with scarcely more than a glance at the dictionary," and the "Eneid" of Virgil became an intellectual love that lasted for life. We have no space to describe the vast amount of historical and miscellaneous reading done at this time. It was surely no small feat for a shoemaker, working hard for twelve or thirteen hours in the day, to go in a few years through Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," Sale's "Preliminary Discourse to his Translation of the Koran," Mosheim's "Church History," all the principal English poets from Shakespeare to Scott and Keats; to read the "Curiosities of Literature," "Calamities" and "Quarrels of Authors," Wharton's "History of Poetry" and Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," Boswell's "Life of Johnson" and Landor's "Imaginary Conversations," Southey's "Book of the Church," and Lingard's "Anglo-Saxon Antiquities," besides a host of books of travel, and quarterly and monthly magazines innumerable.

We have said that Cooper *overdid* the work of study. Like Kirke-White, he was so completely absorbed [175] with the passion for learning, that he set all the laws of health at defiance, and had to pay the penalty. Having a stronger constitution than the Nottingham youth, Cooper managed to escape with his life, and, after a period of bodily and mental prostration, with all his old vigor restored to him; but it was a narrow escape. These excessive labors, coupled with the effects of scanty fare, brought him to a state of extreme weakness. He says, "I not unfrequently swooned away and fell all along the floor when I tried to take my cup of oatmeal gruel at the end of my day's labor. Next morning, of course, I was not able to rise at an early hour; and then very likely the next day's study had to be stinted. I needed better food than we could afford to buy, and often had to contend with the sense of faintness, while I still plodded on with my double task of mind and body."[64] At length, after many premonitory symptoms, came a crisis. One night he had to be carried to bed in a dead faint, and for nine weeks he left his bed but for a short time each day. The greatest fears were felt for his safety; the doctor had little hope, and once he was so prostrate, that a friend who was called in sadly told his mother that the pulse had ceased to beat, and *he was dead*! This was at the end of 1827; by the spring of the following

year he had recovered sufficiently to begin to think of going to work again. A brief spell at his old occupation was enough to satisfy him that it would not suit him in his altered state of health; and, after a short rest and more complete recovery, he took the welcome advice of two friends and agreed to *open a school*. He had now done forever with the trade of a shoemaker, after giving to it eight years of the best part of his early life. These he confesses to have been, on the whole, most happy years, and of the last four he says with enthusiasm, "What glorious years were those years of self-denial and earnest mental toil, from the age of nearly nineteen to nearly three-and-twenty, that I sat and worked in that corner of my poor mother's lowly home!" He had certainly made wondrous progress as a self-taught scholar, and now he was prepared to enter the world and make his own way in it, with such a stock of learning and culture as few young men in England, in his position, could boast of. We scarcely dare venture to estimate his acquirements at this time. The reader can easily judge from our account [176] of his studies how considerable they must have been. In English literature, from Spenser and Shakespeare to the essayists and poets, such as De Quincey, Hazlitt, and Charles Lamb, or Byron, Campbell, and Moore, he was well versed. He had read extensively in history, philosophy, theology, and Christian evidences. As to mathematics, he had gone pretty deeply into algebra and geometry; and in the languages, besides his "easy" French, he had done something in Hebrew, could read his Greek Testament, and found delight in the Latin authors, such as Cæsar, Virgil, Tacitus, and Lactantius. This is no mean story to tell of the accomplishments of a self-taught shoemaker, who has never earned more than ten shillings per week.

School-teaching was a congenial employment for one so fond of study and so apt to teach as Thomas Cooper. He threw his whole soul into the work, and succeeded in establishing a first-rate school of its class; and *that* class of school was certainly a vast improvement on the Free School of his own early days. Everybody in Gainsborough knew the studious shoemaker who had learned four languages at the cobbler's stall, read as much, or more, than any one in the town of his own age, had a marvellous memory, and could repeat the whole of *Hamlet* and the first four books of the "Paradise Lost!" Besides all this, he was known and esteemed for a steady young man, who, though he might incur a little suspicion among the strictly religious folk by his neglect of public worship, was guilty of no waste of time or money in vicious company and riotous living. And so pupils flocked in; a hundred names were entered on his books by the end of the first year, and the school prospered to his heart's content. Nor was the confidence of parents misplaced; never, surely, did a teacher give himself more completely to his work. He gave even more than was bargained for, drilling all the boys in Latin grammar, and carrying them on as far as possible in the higher branches of arithmetic. Five years were thus spent most usefully and happily at Gainsborough, after which he removed from the old town and settled in the cathedral city of Lincoln.

But before quitting Gainsborough a vital change had taken place in his thoughts and mode of life. Brought face to face with death in his recent illness, the most serious thoughts had been aroused within his mind, and on his recovery he was not the man to abandon or drown such thoughts because the immediate fear of death had passed away. The earnest conversations he held with the young [177] curate of the parish, "the pious and laborious Charles Hensley," and his two former friends, Hough and Kelvey, strengthened his resolve to seek for peace of mind in the belief of gospel truth and entire devotion to a religious life. In January, 1829, he joined the Methodist Society. The perusal of Sigston's "Life of William Bramwell" fired his soul with a passion for holiness, and such was his intensity of religious fervor for a time, that he is constrained to say in his Autobiography: "If throughout eternity in heaven I be as happy as I often was for whole days during that short period of my religious life, it will be heaven indeed. Often for several days together I felt close to the Almighty—felt I was His own and His entirely. I felt no wandering of the will and inclination to yield to sin; and when temptation came, my whole soul wrestled for victory till the temptation fled." Entered on the local preachers' plan, he turned his rare gifts to good account in ministering to the congregations which formed the Gainsborough "circuit," and developed that faculty of eloquent speech which in later years has delighted the thousands who gathered to hear his political orations as an advocate of the "People's Charter" or his grand lectures on the evidences of the Christian religion. Driven away from his old home by unhappy disturbances in the Wesleyan Society, he went, as we have said, in November, 1833, to live at Lincoln, where once more he occupied himself as a schoolmaster.

Just before leaving Gainsborough he was constrained to gather a few pieces of his poetry together and publish them by subscription in a small volume, with the title, taken from the first piece, "The Wesleyan Chiefs." The book fell flat on the market, and seems to have had very little merit. Its publication was chiefly remarkable for bringing the author into the company of James Montgomery, who kindly undertook to read the proof sheets. Only one of these selections seems to have called forth a word of commendation from the veteran poet. Against the lines addressed to "Lincoln Cathedral" he wrote: "These are very noble lines, and the versification is truly worthy of them."[65] Montgomery was then over sixty years of age, and had published all the poems by which his name is known to fame.

Soon after going to reside in Lincoln, Cooper married Miss Jobson, sister of Frederic James Jobson, afterward well known as Dr. Jobson among the Wesleyan Methodists, and at one time their honored [178] President of the Conference. The religious troubles at Gainsborough followed the local preacher to Lincoln, for the superintendent with whom he had disagreed at the former place would not suffer him to rest in his new home; and at length, soured and wearied by what he could not but deem ill-usage, he threw up his appointment on the plan, and finally cut himself off from the Methodist connection. Free to devote his energies to other pursuits, he now flung himself very zealously into the new Mechanics' Institute movement, took a class in Latin, sought to perfect himself in French pronunciation, and to acquire a knowledge of Italian under the tutorship of Signor D'Albrione, "a very noble-looking Italian gentleman, a native of Turin, who had been a cavalry officer in the armies of Napoleon, had endured the retreat from Moscow, was at the defeat of Leipzig," etc., and had become

”a refugee in England on account of his participation in the conspiracy of the Carbonari.” German, also, was studied for a time; but very soon a new attraction arose in the formation of a Choral Society, of which the zealous schoolmaster became the secretary and chief manager, collecting its funds, enlisting by his persuasive powers the best singers in the city, and arranging for its meetings and public performances. His attendance at the lectures of the Institute incidentally led to a new employment, in which undoubtedly Thomas Cooper might have excelled and gained no mean emolument and renown had he chosen to devote himself exclusively to it. Having sent a paragraph report of one of the lectures on chemistry to the *Lincoln*, *Rutland*, and *Stamford Mercury*, he was waited upon by the editor, Richard Newcomb, and requested to supply intelligence weekly of any affairs of importance in the city, and promised £20 a year for his trouble. This was in 1834. In two years he gave up his connection with the Choral Society, cultivated the newspaper correspondent business to such an extent that he was advanced to £100 per year, and so gave up his school. Having put his hand to the work of newspaper correspondence, he did not do it by halves. He exposed the abuses, as he deemed them, then rife in the city, wrote sketches of the “Lincoln Preachers,” and created such a stir by his lively and racy articles on municipal and political matters, that the paper rapidly rose in circulation, and he found himself for a time the most notorious man in the city, feared by many, hated by not a few, and courted by those who had favors to win or help to secure from the lively correspondent.

In 1838, at the urgent request of Mr. Newcomb, he removed to Stamford, under a verbal promise that [179]
when the editor retired, which he intimated would be very soon, Cooper should have the sole management. After remaining for a few months in the position of clerk to Mr. Newcomb, and finding to his chagrin that the old editor gave no sign of keeping to his agreement, he very rashly threw down his pen and gave notice to leave. A little patience might have sufficed to gain his end, but his mortification was extreme, and so a good situation, worth, in all, £300 a year, was sacrificed. “On the 1st of June, 1839,” he writes, “we got on the stage-coach, with our boxes of books, at Stamford, and away I went to make my first venture in London.”

The six years spent at Lincoln had been a time of literary activity in more ways than that of newspaper correspondence. Many minor pieces, such as are found at the end of the collected poems, were written, and the title and plan of his best poetical work, “The Purgatory of Suicides,” was decided upon. But he had done more in the way of prose. The first volume of a historical romance was finished ere he left Lincoln, and now that he had come to London, he hoped to make his way with this as an introduction to the publishers and the reading world. But he very soon discovered, as thousands besides have done, that he had little to hope from patrons, even though, like Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer, they might be men to whom he had rendered some political service in days gone by, and that his unlucky manuscript was a poor broken reed to lean upon. After nine months’ bitter experience of fruitless attempts to find employment, and when all his stock of five hundred books, the dear companions of the last ten years of earnest study, had been sold, and even his father’s old silver watch and articles of clothing had been carried to the pawnshop, he was fortunate enough to make an engagement, at £3 per week, as editor of the *Kentish Mercury*, *Gravesend Journal*, and *Greenwich Gazette*, of which Mr. William Dougal Christie was the proprietor. He had held this office but a short time when disagreement as to the management of the paper led him to give notice of retirement from his awkward position. Strangely enough, at this very juncture a letter reached him from a friend in Lincoln enclosing another from the manager of a paper in Leicester, asking to be informed of “the whereabouts of Thomas Cooper, who wrote the articles entitled ‘Lincoln Preachers’ in the *Stamford Mercury*.” Dropping the letter, he exclaimed to his wife, “The message has come at last—the message [180]
of Destiny! We are going to live at Leicester,” thus expressing a thought he had secretly cherished for years, “that he had something to do of a stirring and important nature at Leicester.“ And so it proved, but that ”something” was very different from what he had ever anticipated. Answering the inquiry in person, he agreed with the manager of the *Leicestershire Mercury* to accept a reporter’s place at a small remuneration, and in November, 1840, he went to reside in his native town and prepare himself for his “destiny.” In London he had met with his old friend Thomas Miller, who was then writing “Lady Jane Grey;” and here at Leicester he discovered another Gainsborough youth, Joseph Winks, who had been his companion and rival in the Improvement Society, and was now “a printer and bookseller, a busy politician, Baptist preacher, and editor of three or four small religious periodicals.”[66]

Sent one night by the manager of the *Mercury* to attend and report a Chartist lecture, he was introduced for the first time to those poor but desperately earnest politicians who were at that time making their pathetic and passionate voices heard throughout the Midland and Northern Counties. From that night Thomas Cooper was a Chartist; and for the next three years his best powers were devoted to the cause of the suffering operatives and his life-interests bound up in the Chartist movement. Nothing could be more pitiable than the condition of the Leicester “stockingers” at this time. The average weekly wages of a man who worked hard were four-and-sixpence! Ground down to the point of starvation by “frame-rent,” payment for “standing,” for “giving-out,” and for the “seamer,” and, worst of all, obliged to pay the full week’s rent when working on half-time, it is no wonder that his spirit was galled to madness, and that he looked to something like a political revolution for a redress of his wrongs. Lord Byron, in the only speech he ever delivered in the House of Lords, had spoken eloquently and generously in behalf of these suffering operatives of the Midland Counties.

One cannot wonder that a man like Cooper, who had known the pinchings of poverty, should have felt his soul stirred within him. His sympathies and views soon drew him into writing and speaking for the [181]
Chartists. This was an offence in the eyes of his employers of the *Mercury*, and led to his severance from them. He now, at the request of the factory hands of Leicester, became their political leader, and the editor of their paper, the *Midland Counties Illuminator*, which fell into his own hands after a few weeks, and was changed in style and title, and made a new appearance as the *Chartist Rushlight*, and

afterward as the *Extinguisher*. In the midst of the dispute between Whigs and Tories, Cooper was "nominated" by the Chartists as their candidate, not with any hope of being carried at the poll, but rather as a means of spiting the Whigs, against whom the working-men were intensely bitter, on account of their unwillingness to support "The People's *Charter*." Endeavoring to turn his leadership of the Chartists to some account apart from politics, he added to the task of regular addresses in the open air the conduct of a Sunday adult school and Sunday-evening meetings; and, when the winter came on, gathered his friends together, and sought to lift their thoughts above their daily care, and awaken in their minds a desire for reading, by a course of lectures on literature and science. But the bad times of 1842 put a stop to all this. The condition of the stockingers grew worse and worse, and Cooper took to supplying bread on sale or loan, to meet the wants of the poor starving creatures, and ran into debt by so doing. The poorhouse, or *Bastile*, as the working-men always called it, was crowded to excess, and riots broke out now and again; but with these neither Cooper nor the Chartist Association had anything to do. In August of the same year he was appointed by this body as a delegate to the Chartists' Convention at Manchester. On the way thither he lectured or spoke in the open air at Birmingham, Wednesbury, Bilston, Wolverhampton, and at length came to Hanley, where he addressed a vast crowd of men at "the *Crown Bank*." His subject was the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder," in which he spoke of the violations of this law by conquerors and legislators, and by masters who oppressed the hireling in his wages. The men were now out on strike, and the excitement produced by this and another address on the following night was intense. He counselled perpetually "peace, law, and order," and bade the men hold out in their strike until the People's Charter became the law of the land. Riot and incendiarism broke out in a short time, for which Cooper was in no way directly responsible, but had, on the other hand, distinctly endeavored to [182] dissuade them from. He was taken prisoner on his return from Manchester, and having been tried for the crime of arson, was acquitted, having pleaded his own case so eloquently that the judge was evidently affected, and the ladies present at the trial were even moved to tears. Tried again at the Spring Assizes on the charge of sedition, he cross-examined the witnesses from Monday to Saturday at noon, and then proceeded to sum up his defence in a speech which altogether (Sunday intervening) lasted ten hours. "I do not think," he remarks, "I ever spoke so powerfully in my life as during the last hour of that defence. The peroration, the Stafford papers said, would never be forgotten; and I remember as I sat down, panting for breath and utterly exhausted, how Talfourd and Erskine and the jury sat transfixed, gazing at me in silence, and the whole crowded place was breathless, as it seemed, for a minute." The case being removed by a "writ of *certiorari*" to the Court of Queen's Bench, was tried on the 5th of May, 1843. In his defence Thomas Cooper again delivered an eloquent speech, five and a half hours long, and was again acquitted of the charge of felony. Judge Erskine's notes of the trial had "*mistake*" written alongside the evidence on that part of the charge. But the eloquent Chartist orator was convicted on the charge of *sedition* and *conspiracy*, and sent to Stafford jail for two years.

There are few chapters in the Autobiography so full of interest and so graphically written as those which describe Thomas Cooper's prison experience. Galled to the quick by the treatment he received —for he was kept on low, miserable fare and denied "literary privileges"—he determined to break down "the system of restraint in Stafford jail, and win the privilege of reading and writing, or die in the attempt." After many manœuvres he managed to get pen, ink, and paper, and write a petition to the House of Commons, which was handed in at the bar of the House by Mr. Duncombe, M.P. for Finsbury. All that he could reasonably expect was now granted in answer to his appeal, and the remainder of his time was filled up with literary work. He revelled in the English poets from Shakespeare to Shelley; read again the "Decline and Fall," Prideaux's "Connexion," White's "Selborne," etc., etc.; fell passionately in love with the study of Hebrew, and almost raved about the glories of the sacred language of the Old Testament; and read two thirds of the Hebrew Bible, copying out verbs and nouns as he went along. One day he was visited by Lord Sandon, afterward Earl of [183] Harrowby, who fell into conversation with the learned prisoner about the poetical books of the Bible in the old German edition which lay open before him on the table. A short time before his release the chaplain told him that the way was open for him to go to Cambridge if he would; but the conditions were such as did not suit the independent mind of the political martyr. Cooper had a shrewd suspicion that the visit of the nobleman had some connection with this generous offer.

Cooper's best work in Stafford jail was the composition of the well-known poem, "The Purgatory of Suicides." This poem, he tells us, was the working out of a thought which occurred to him ten years before, when he was sitting as a reporter in the assize court at Lincoln. The historical romance, the first part of which he had carried to London in 1839, was also completed during his imprisonment, and he wrote during the same period a volume of tales, afterward published under the title, "Wise Saws and Modern Instances." "These," he says, "I took out of prison with me as my keys for unlocking the gates of fortune."

On his liberation, May 4th, 1845, he went up to London, shedding tears of gladness and gratitude on the way as he looked once more on the green fields and hedgerows of the Midland Counties. His first care was to find a publisher for his prison rhyme and tales. As soon as he was able he sought out Mr. Duncombe, to thank him for his generous help in the matter of the petition to the House of Commons, and to ask for counsel in seeking a publisher. Duncombe sent him to Mr. D'Israeli, with the following note:

> "My dear D'Israeli,—I send you Mr. Cooper, a Chartist, red-hot from Stafford jail. But don't be frightened; he won't bite you. He has written a poem and a romance, and thinks he can cut out 'Coningsby' and 'Sybil.' Help him if you can, and oblige yours, T. S. Duncombe."

It is gratifying to read of the kindness with which the shrewd statesman, then a Tory of the Tories,

received the “red-hot radical.” “I wish I had seen you before I finished my last novel,“ said he; ”my heroine Sybil is a Chartist.” With the kindly help of Douglas Jerrold the “Purgatory” was at length published by Jeremiah How, Fleet Street, who undertook to bear the cost and risk of printing. It came out in September, 1845, and the five hundred copies of the first edition were sold off before [184] Christmas. Cooper now began to write for Douglas Jerrold’s “Shilling Magazine.” The volume of tales called “Wise Saws,” etc., and a short poem, “The Baron’s Yule Feast,” were issued about the same time. The “Purgatory of Suicides” had been dedicated, without leave asked, to Thomas Carlyle, to whom the author sent a copy, and from whom he received in acknowledgment a characteristic letter, in which, among other kind and wise things, that greatest of all the literary men of his age said, “I have looked into your poem, and find indisputable traces of genius in it—a dark Titanic energy struggling there, for which we hope there will be clearer daylight by and by;” and along with the letter came a copy of “Past and Present,” with Carlyle’s autograph. In 1846 Cooper was at work on Douglas Jerrold’s weekly paper, visiting the Midland and Northern Counties as a sort of commissioner, and writing articles on the “Condition of the People of England.” Passing through the Lake District, he called on Wordsworth, and was most kindly received by the “majestic old man.” Great, however, was the Chartist’s amazement to hear the “Tory” Wordsworth say with reference to the Chartist movement, “You were right; I have always said the people were right in what they asked; but you went the wrong way to get it.” On his return to London, Cooper engaged to lecture on Sunday evenings at South Place, Finsbury Square, and continued the work of public lecturer for the next eight years. During this time he lectured through the winter for various political and socialist societies in several large halls in London, such as the John Street Institution and the “Hall of Science,” City Road, and filled up the time during the summer by lecturing tours throughout the kingdom. He had now become a *sceptic*, *i.e. doubter*, and confined himself in his lectures exclusively to secular topics, political or literary. The misery he had witnessed in Leicester and the Potteries, the failure of all his efforts to benefit the suffering poor, and the long imprisonment he had endured as a disinterested champion of their cause, had sorely shaken his faith in Divine Providence and driven him to the verge of downright atheism, but only to the verge: he declares that he was never an atheist, nor ever “proclaimed blank atheism in his public teaching.”[67] Yet it must be confessed he went far in this direction. The worst period of his life in this respect was the winter of 1848-49, when, having become a disciple of Strauss, [185] he engaged to give a series of lectures on Sunday evenings in the “Hall of Science” on the teachings of the “Leben Jesu.” He says: “There is no part of my teaching as a public lecturer that I regret so deeply as this. It would rejoice my heart indeed if I could obliterate those lectures from the realm of fact.”[68] But for the most part his addresses were on purely literary or historical subjects, and marvellous indeed was the versatility and extent of learning they displayed. The enumeration of topics alone would occupy several pages. Every one of the chief English poets and their poems, the history of every European country, the lives of great reformers, statesmen, generals, inventors, discoverers, men of science, musicians, ancient philosophers and modern philanthropists, negro slavery, taxation, national debt, the age of chivalry, the Middle Ages, wrongs of Poland, the Gypsies, ancient Egypt, astronomy, geology, natural history, the vegetable kingdom—these and scores of other topics were treated during these years of lecturing life in London and the provinces. In addition to these duties he had other cares and toils. In 1848-49 he edited a weekly paper called the *Plain Speaker*, and in the following year *Cooper’s Journal*. His “Triumph of Perseverance” appeared in 1849, “Alderman Ralph” and “The Family Feud,” two novels, in 1853 and 1855 respectively.

Returning from a lecturing tour at the end of 1855, he was conscious of a great and vital change which had for some time been going on within his mind, and when he attempted to recommence his work at the City Hall in January, 1856, he found it impossible to go on along the old lines. On a certain memorable night, when announced to speak on “Sweden and the Swedes,” he could not utter a word. He turned pale as death, and as the audience sat gazing and wondering what could have come to the bold and fluent speaker, whose tongue was ready on every theme, his pent-up feelings at length found vent. He told the people he could lecture on Sweden, but must relieve his conscience, for he could suppress conviction no longer. He then declared that he had been insisting on the duty of morality for years, but there had been this radical defect in his teachings, that he had “neglected to teach the right foundation for morals—the existence of a Divine moral Governor.”[69] In the storm which followed he [186] challenged them to bring the best sceptics they could muster in the metropolis, and he would meet them in debate on the being of God and the argument for a future state. He kept his promise, and for four nights maintained his ground against *Robert* Cooper[70] and others in the City Hall and the John Street Institute.

But though the battle was fought out bravely in public, he had yet another conflict to wage and win ere his mind enjoyed rest and peace in the faith of a true *Christian*. In this conflict he received valuable aid from the Rev. Charles Kingsley,[71] and his old friend and relative, Dr. Jobson. Through the kind interest of the Rev. F. D. Maurice, W. E. Foster, M.P., and W. F. Cowper, President of the Board of Health, Cooper obtained employment for two years under Government as a copyist of letters. Returning to the City Hall, he now began a series of Sunday-evening lectures on Theism, and advancing stage by stage, he took up such themes as the Moral Government of God, Man’s Moral Nature, the Soul and a Future State, Evidences of Christianity, Atonement, Faith, Repentance, etc. But his return to the truth of Christ and Christianity was gradual, though sure. As he says, “I had been twelve years a sceptic; and it was not until fully two years had been devoted to hard reading and thinking that I could conscientiously and truly say, I am again a Christian, even nominally.” Saved in an extraordinary manner from death by a railway accident as he was travelling to Bradford on the 10th May, 1858, he finally and fully resolved to dedicate his powers to the service of God, saying within himself as he stood looking on the mournful sight of the ruined train and the dead and wounded lying around, “Oh, take my life, which Thou hast graciously kept, and let it be devoted to Thee. I have

again entered Thy service; let me never more leave it, but live only to spread Thy truth!”

He began at once not only to lecture on the evidences of Christianity, but to preach, and received many solicitations to join different religious societies. Dr. Hook of Leeds generously offered him an appointment as head of a band of Scripture-readers, with freedom to go out on his own mission as a [187] speaker when he pleased. This offer he declined, with grateful thanks to the worthy vicar. In the spring of the following year he decided to join the Baptist denomination, and writes, “Reflection made me a Baptist in conviction, and on Whitsunday, 1859, my old and dear friend, Joseph Foulkes Winks, immersed me in baptism in Friar Lane Chapel, Leicester.”

From that time to the present—twenty-two years—Thomas Cooper has devoted his great powers to the work of preaching and lecturing on the evidences of the Christian religion. The energy and ability displayed in this noble work by the veteran orator have been remarkable. For months together he has been known to travel long distances by rail, and lecture four or five times in the week, and preach three times on Sunday. After a two hours’ lecture he was wont, during the first few years of this period, to recite the first two or three books of Milton’s “Paradise Lost.” Few, if any, that ever heard his preaching can forget its rich spirituality of tone and delightful purity and simplicity of style. The lectures it is hard to describe without seeming to exaggerate their rare merits. The best testimony to their worth has been given by the hundreds of thousands who have come together to listen to them as delivered in all the chief towns of England, Scotland, and Wales for more than twenty years, and by their rapid and extensive sale when published. Crowded with facts of history or science which are clearly arranged and pressed into the service of logical argument, delivered extemporaneously in language of the truest and homeliest Saxon type, and often marked by passages of great eloquence, these lectures may be taken as ideals of what popular lectures on religious evidences should be. Of his present employment, Thomas Cooper, writing in 1872, says, in his own simple fashion: “My work is indeed a happy work. Sunday is now a day of heaven to me. I feel that to preach ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ’ is the most exalted and ennobling work in which a human creature can be engaged. And believing that I am performing the work of duty—*that I am right*—my employment of lecturing on the ‘Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,’ from week to week, fills me with the consoling reflection that my life is not being spent in vain, much less spent in evil.” Happy close of a strangely eventful and checkered life! May the stalwart old laborer of *seventy-five* be spared to scatter many a handful of the seeds of truth before he hears the summons which shall end his labors.

We have spoken, in the title of this chapter, of Thomas Cooper as “The self-educated shoemaker who [188] reared his own monument.” This sketch cannot be closed more appropriately than by giving the titles of the works published during the last eight years—the stones which form the chief part of that monument:

The Bridge of History over the Gulf of Time (1872), twentieth thousand.
Plain Pulpit-Talk (1872), third edition.
The Life of Thomas Cooper, written by Himself (1872), twelfth thousand.
The Paradise of Martyrs, or Faith Rhyme (1873).
God, the Soul, and a Future State (1873), eight thousand.
Old-Fashioned Stories (1874), third edition.
The Verity of Christ’s Resurrection from the Dead (1875), fifth thousand.
The Verity and Value of the Miracles of Christ (1876), fourth thousand.
The Poetical Works—Purgatory of Suicides, Paradise of Martyrs, Minor Poems (1877), Evolution, the Stone Book, and the Mosaic Record of Creation (1878), third thousand.
The Atonement and other Discourses (1880).

CHAPTER X.

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A Constellation of Celebrated Cobblers.

“This day is called the feast of Crispin:
* * * * * * *
And Crispin Crispian shall ne’er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered:
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.”
—*Shakespeare. King Henry Fifth’s Address to the Leaders of the English Army on the Eve of the Battle of Agincourt. Act v. Scene 3.*

Archbishop Whately once amused a clerical dinner-party by asking the question, “Why do *white* sheep eat more than *black* sheep?” When none of his friends could answer the question, the witty Archbishop dryly remarked that *one* reason undoubtedly was that “there were more of them.“ The question is often asked, ”How are we to account for the fact that shoemakers outnumber any other handicraft in the ranks of illustrious men?”[72] Perhaps this question may be answered in the same way. At all events, the answer “there are more of them,” will go a long way toward a solution of this interesting social problem. The sons of Crispin are certainly a very numerous class, and it is but natural that they should figure largely in the lists of famous men. But inquirers on this subject are not generally satisfied by an appeal to statistics. It is felt that something more is required in order to account for the remarkable proportion of shoemakers in the roll of men of mark. In addition to this, it [190] must be borne in mind that the reputation of shoemakers does not depend entirely on their most illustrious representatives. They have, *as a class*, a reputation which is quite unique. The followers of “the gentle craft” have generally stood foremost among artisans as regards intelligence and social influence. Probably no class of workmen could, in these respects, compete with them fifty or a hundred years ago, when education and reading were not so common as they are now. Almost to a man they had some credit for thoughtfulness, shrewdness, logical skill, and debating power; and their knowledge derived from books was admitted to be beyond the average among operatives. They were generally referred to by men of their own social status for the settlement of disputed points in literature, science, politics, or theology. Advocates of political, social, or religious reform, local preachers, Methodist “class-leaders,” and Sunday-school teachers, were drafted in larger numbers from the fraternity of shoemakers than from any other craft.

How are we to account for such facts as these? Is there anything in the *occupation* of the shoemaker which is peculiarly favorable to habits of thought and study? It would seem to be so; and yet it would be difficult to show what it is that gives him an advantage over all other workmen. The secret may lie in the fact that he *sits* to his work, and, as a rule, sits *alone*; that his occupation stimulates his mind without wholly occupying and absorbing its powers; that it leaves him free to break off, if he will, at intervals, and glance at the book or make notes on the paper which lies beside him. Such facts as these have been suggested, and not without reason, as helping us to account for the reputation which the sons of Crispin enjoy as an uncommonly clever class of men.

ANCIENT EXAMPLES IN ASIA AND AFRICA [191]

THE COBBLER AND THE ARTIST APELLES.

“Let the cobbler stick to his last.”

The reputation of the shoemaker class is not confined to our own country or to modern times. It is pretty much the same in all countries, and reaches back to very ancient times. The proverb, “*Ne Sutor ultra crepidam*“—”Let the cobbler stick to his last”—is one of the oldest in existence. Few proverbs are more universally and frequently quoted. It is based on a story which comes down to us from the times of Alexander the Great. Even if the story, as it is told in our Grecian histories, be not authentic, it serves to show that even in times preceding the Christian era cobblers were regarded as a shrewd and observant set of men. But there is no reason that we know of to doubt the story, which is well worth repeating. It is told of Apelles, one of the most celebrated of the old Greek painters, who flourished about 300 B.C. He was the friend of Alexander, and the only artist whom the great warrior would allow to paint his portrait. Apelles, we are told, was not ashamed to learn from the humblest critics. As Lord Bacon says, he did not object to “light his torch at any man’s candle.” For this reason, knowing that a good deal may sometimes be learned from the observations of passers-by, he was in the habit of placing his pictures before they were quite finished outside his house; and then, crouching down behind them, he listened to the remarks of spectators. On one occasion a cobbler noticed a fault in the painting of a shoe, and remarking upon it to a person standing by, passed on. As soon as the man was out of sight Apelles came from his hiding-place, examined the painting, found that the cobbler’s criticism was just, and at once corrected the error. Once more the picture was exposed, while the artist lay behind it to hear what further might be said. The cobbler came by again, and soon discovered that the fault he had pointed out had been remedied; and, emboldened by the success of [192] his criticism, began to express his opinion pretty freely about the painting of the *leg*! This was too much for the patience of the artist, who rushed from his hiding-place, and told the cobbler *to stick to his shoes*. Hence the proverb, which for more than two thousand years[73] has expressed the common feeling, that critics would do well not to venture beyond their legitimate province.

TWO SHOEMAKER-BISHOPS—ANNIANUS OF ALEXANDRIA, AND ALEXANDER OF COMANA.

If the shoemaker has found a place in classic history, it must not be forgotten that he has a place in ecclesiastical history also. In two instances a shoemaker is said to have been taken direct from the

stall and elevated to the episcopal chair. No doubt many shoemakers have been endowed with sufficient piety and learning for this sacred and dignified office, and probably not a few have deemed themselves fit, whether they were so or not, to discharge its high functions; but the instances here given are, we believe, quite unique. The first is that of Anianus or Annianus (A.D. 62-86), who is said to have been appointed by St. Mark to assist him in the government of the Church at Alexandria. On the outbreak of persecution under Nero, Mark fled from the city; and, as Eusebius says, "Nero was now in his eighth year, when Annianus succeeded the Apostle and Evangelist Mark in the administration of the Church at Alexandria." The historian adds, "He (Annianus) was a man distinguished for piety, and admirable in every respect."[74] He died in the fourth year of Domitian, 86 A.D. He was the first Bishop of Alexandria, and filled the office twenty-two years.[75] To these simple statements of the historian are added the stories which found a ready acceptance in later times. To the fact that the worthy Alexandrian was a *shoemaker* tradition added the account of the miracle wrought upon him by St. Mark. One account tells us that the Evangelist, on passing along the street, burst his shoe and turned in to get it repaired, and so became acquainted with Annianus. Another version of the story declares [193] that the cobbler, having hurt his hand with an awl, uttered a not very pious exclamation, which Mark overheard as he passed by, and going in to inquire the cause, took the opportunity not only to heal the wound, but to speak to the impatient workman of the true and living God whose name he had taken in vain. Annianus is commemorated in the Roman Martyrology with St. Mark on the 25th April.[76]

The other appointment of a shoemaker to the episcopate was due to the piety and wisdom of Gregory Thaumaturgus, the pupil and friend of Origen (220-270 A.D.). Gregory was then Bishop of Neo-Cæsarea in Asia Minor, and when a vacancy occurred in the bishopric of Comana in Cappadocia, he defied all conventionalism and prejudice, and appointed "a poor shoemaker named *Alexander*, despised by the world, but great in the sight of God, who did honor to so exalted a station in the Church."[77] He was chosen in preference to scholars and men of good social status on account of his extraordinary piety. This Alexander justified the choice thus made by reason of his excellent discourse, his holy living, and a martyr's death. He is honored in the Roman Calendar on August 11th.[78]

THE PIOUS COBBLER OF ALEXANDRIA.

Quite as good a man, no doubt, if not as fit to fill the episcopal chair, was *the pious cobbler of Alexandria*, of whom we read that St. Anthony paid him a visit in consequence of a voice from Heaven which said to him, "Antony, thou art not so perfect as a cobbler that dwelleth at Alexandria." The pious anchorite was in the habit of hearing such voices and obeying them. All the leading events of his life were accompanied by a similar message from heaven, as he deemed it. Accordingly he took his staff, and leaving his secluded retreat in the desert, came down to the great city in search of the pious cobbler. Arriving before his door, where the good man sat at work, Antony asked him for an account of [194] himself and his mode of living. "Sir," answered the cobbler, "as for me, good works I have none. My life is but simple, seeing I am but a poor cobbler. In the morning when I rise, I pray for the whole city wherein I dwell, especially for all such neighbors and poor friends as I have; after that I sit me down to my labor, where I spend the whole day in getting my living; and I keep me from all falsehood, for I hate nothing so much as I do deceitfulness; wherefore when I make any man a promise, I keep it and perform it truly; and thus I spend my time poorly with my wife and children, whom I teach and instruct, so far as my wit will serve me, to fear and dread God; and this is the sum of my simple life."

RABBI JOCHANAN THE SHOEMAKER.

Speaking of Alexandria reminds us of another worthy of that city, the famous Jewish Rabbi Jochanan *Sandalarius*, or the shoemaker. Learned Rabbins were common enough in Alexandria from the time of its foundation by Alexander the Great, 332 B.C., down to its capture by the Arabs in the seventh century A.D. And as it was the custom with even the most learned Rabbins to learn a trade, it can be no matter of surprise that many of the most eminent leaders of thought among the Jews were employed in what are now regarded as very humble occupations. The Delegate Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, in an interesting article in the *Nineteenth Century*,[79] tells us that "in the grand basilica synagogue of Alexandria, separate portions of the building were assigned to the silversmiths, weavers, and other trades.... The Rabbins, the authorized expounders of the law, deemed it derogatory to receive any reward for the exercise of their spiritual, doctrinal, or judicial functions, and maintained themselves by the labor of their hands. And thus in the Talmud we meet, in curious juxtaposition, the Rabbi and his trade in such phrases as these: "It was taught by Rabbi Jochanan the shoemaker." This illustrious Rabbi came from Alexandria to Palestine, attracted by the great name of Akiba Ben Joseph, the famous Rabbi, who was the chief teacher of the rabbinical school at Jaffa at the close of the first century and the beginning of the second. In this school there were said to be no less than 24,000 [195] pupils. Akiba sided with Bar Cocheba in his revolt against Rome, 132 A.D., acknowledged him as the Messiah, and became his armor-bearer. On the death of Bar Cocheba and the destruction of his army, Akiba was taken prisoner, and remained in the hands of the Romans for a long time, until his cruel death under Severus. During his imprisonment Jochanan managed to get access to his cell, and receive instructions from him on questions which had not been settled. Through Jochanan and Meir, Akiba greatly influenced the teachers of the next generation. Jochanan was certainly one of his most illustrious pupils, taking a leading part in the theological discussions of the Tanaim, the authors of the Mishna and Gamara, where his opinions are frequently quoted. In the Mishna Aboth[80] "Rabbi Jochanan the shoemaker" is reported to have made the following sensible remark, which reminds one of the counsel of Gamaliel to the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem:[81] "An association established for a

praiseworthy object must ultimately succeed; but an association established without such an object cannot succeed."

EUROPEAN EXAMPLES.

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FRANCE.

SS. CRISPIN AND CRISPIANUS, THE PATRON SAINTS OF SHOEMAKERS.

Undoubtedly the first shoemakers who obtained anything like a general reputation were the famous brothers Crispin and Crispianus, who are said to have lived in the third century of our era. These saints have been regarded almost ever since that early time as the tutelary or patron saints of shoemakers, who are, to tell the truth, not a little proud of their romantic title, "the sons of Crispin." We must be careful how we speak of these saints, for it seems to be an open question whether the story of their holy self-denying lives and martyr-deaths be true or false. If the main features of the story be true, they have been greatly distorted by fable. We give the story as it is generally reported.

SS. Crispin and Crispianus were born in Rome. Having become converts to Christianity, they set out with St. Denis from that city to become preachers of the Gospel, travelled on foot through Italy, and finally settled down at a little town, now called Soissons, in the modern department of Aisne, about fifty or sixty miles to the north-east of Paris. Here they are said to have devoted their time during the day to preaching, and to have maintained themselves by working during most of the night as shoemakers. This they did on the apostolic model of Paul, who, while he carried on his mission as a preacher, maintained himself by his trade as a tent-maker, that he might be "chargeable to no man." Very little more can be told of the life of these saintly shoemakers than this; but this, surely, is a great [198] deal. The story goes that they suffered martyrdom by the order of Rictus Varus, governor or consul in Belgic Gaul, during the persecution under Diocletian and Maximinus, on the 25th of October, 287. The 25th of October is still kept in honor of these saints in some parts of England and Wales, and in other European countries. The shoemakers of the district turn out in large numbers and parade the streets, headed by bands of music, and accompanied by banners on which are emblazoned the emblems of the craft.

It is difficult, as already intimated, to tell how much of pure legend has been imported into the history of the saints of Soissons. One tradition declares them to have been of noble birth, and to have adopted their humble trade entirely for Christian and charitable purposes. Another story relates how they furnished the poor with shoes at a very low price, and that, in order to replenish their stock, and as a mark of divine favor, an angel came to them by night with supplies of leather; while yet another fable, not very creditable to their morals, avows that *Saint* Crispin *stole* the leather, so that he might be able to *give* shoes to the poor. Hence the term *Crispinades* to denote charities done at the expense of other people. To crown all, it is averred on one authority that after suffering a horrible death by the sword, their bodies were thrown into the sea, and were cast ashore at Romney Marsh.[82] Such tales are worthless, except as indicating the wide extent of popularity the shoemakers of Soissons secured by virtue of their piety and benevolence.[83]

Mrs. Jameson, in her interesting work on "Legendary Art,"[84] says, "The devotional figures which are [199] common in old French prints represent these saints standing together, holding the palm in one hand, and in the other the awl or shoemaker's knife. They are very often met with in old stained glass working at their trade, or making shoes for the poor—the usual subjects in shoemakers' guilds all over France and Germany. Italian pictures of these saints are rare. There is, however, one by Guido, which presents the throned Madonna, and St. Crispin presenting to her his brother, St. Crispianus, while angels from above scatter flowers on the group. Looking over the old French prints of St. Crispin and St. Crispinian, which are in general either grotesque or commonplace, I met with one not easily to be forgotten. It represents these two famous saints proceeding on their mission to preach the gospel in France. They are careering over the sea in a bark drawn by sea-horses and attended by tritons, and are attired in the full court-dress of the time of Louis XV., with laced coats and cocked hats and rapiers!"

Probably many of these curious prints may still be seen in the library of the cathedral at Soissons, famous for its rare MSS. and books. But a better memorial of these patron saints than any of the absurd representations of legendary art was the church erected in their honor in the sixth century, and the religious house which stood on the traditionary site of their prison. This house was afterward transformed into a monastery dedicated to St. Crispin, and in the year 1142 received the sanction of Pope Innocent II.[85]

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THE LEARNED BAUDOUIN.

The eminent French antiquary, *Benoit Baudouin*, is by far the most learned man who has risen from

the ranks of the shoemaker class in France. A native of Amiens, he was born somewhere about the middle of the sixteenth century. His father, who was also a *cordonnier* in that city, taught him the art and mystery of the craft; but the clever youth soon rose above his lowly circumstances, and became first a theological student, and afterward the principal of the college in the old town of Troyes. Here the ancient and extensive library delighted him, and his studies as a historian and antiquary were determined to some extent by his former occupation as a shoemaker; for, besides a translation of certain ancient tragedies,[86] he is not known to have written any original work excepting his "Chaussures des Anciens," or "The Shoes of the Ancients." Baudouin never blushed to own his former vocation,[87] and in writing this remarkable work he was evidently moved by a desire to do it honor.[88] A strange book indeed it must be, full of the most curious and out-of-the-way learning and singular notions; for, not content with describing the various kinds of shoes worn by Roman and Greek and other ancient peoples who have flourished within the historic period, the enthusiastic and daring scholar pushes his inquiry back to the days "when Adam delved and Eve span," until, at length, he discovers the origin of the foot-covering in the communication of the secret by the Almighty Himself to "the first man, Adam!" Spite of its preposterous speculations, the work of the ex-shoemaker of Amiens is learned and valuable, contains a vast amount of curious lore in regard to a not unimportant subject, and helps to confirm his claim to the ambitious title of "the learned Baudouin." The first edition of this work seems to have been published in Paris, 1615.[89] It was afterward issued at Amsterdam, 1667, and at Leyden, 1711, and Leipsic, 1733, in Latin. A writer in the *Biographie Universelle* says that Baudouin held at one time the office of director of the *Hotel Dieu* at Troyes. This illustrious French shoemaker died and was buried in that town in 1632.

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HENRY MICHAEL BUCH—"GOOD HENRY."

Whether the story of the shoemaker-saints of Soissons be regarded as apocryphal or not, it has undoubtedly had considerable influence for good, either directly or indirectly, over the minds of those who call themselves sons of Crispin. Much of this has been due to the character and work of a man who was evidently inspired by the story of St. Crispin. Through the agency of this man a very important movement was begun in the middle of the seventeenth century, which ultimately issued in a widespread religious and social reform among the shoemakers and other operatives of Western Europe. We allude to the foundation of a society called "The Pious Confraternity of Brother Shoemakers," having as their patrons and models the saints Crispin and Crispianus. The founder of this society was Henry Michael Buch, who was known throughout Paris, in his day and long after, as *Good Henry*.

Henry Michael Buch came from the Duchy of Luxemburg, where he had been born, and where his parents, who were day-laborers, had brought him up in a very simple manner. As a child, Buch was remarkably gifted and very pious. He was early apprenticed to a shoemaker, and was accustomed to spend his Sundays and holidays in public worship or private devotion. During his apprenticeship he began the work of reform among the members of his own craft, for his young heart was grieved to see them living in ignorance and vice. Enlisting the help of the more serious among them in his good work, he endeavored to instruct the apprentices of the town in the doctrines of religion, to draw them away from ale-houses and vicious company, and to persuade them to spend their time in a sensible and profitable manner. Taking the patron saints of the trade for a model, he cultivated habits of self-denial and beneficence, went always meanly clad, abandoned luxuries in food and clothing, and frequently gave away his own garments in order to clothe some poor brother shoemaker. While at Luxemburg and Messen, he lived chiefly on bread and water, so that he might be able to feed the hungry and destitute.

Having removed to Paris, his good deeds soon attracted the attention of Gaston John Baptist, Baron of Renti, who was so much impressed by the shoemaker's simplicity of manner, intelligence, and missionary zeal, that he persuaded Buch to establish in that city a confraternity among the members of his own humble craft for the purpose of instructing them in the principles and practices of a holy life. With a view to strengthen his hands for such a task, the freedom of the city was purchased for him, and means were supplied him for starting in business as a master shoemaker, "so that he might take apprentices and journeymen who were willing to follow the rules that were prescribed them."[90]

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Seven men and youths having joined him on these terms, the foundation of his Confraternity was laid in 1645, Good Henry being appointed the first superior.[91]

Two years after this, the *tailors* of the city, who had noticed the conduct of the shoemakers, and had been delighted with the goodly spectacle presented in their happy and useful lives, resolved to follow the example. They borrowed a copy of the rules, and started a similar society in 1647.

These brotherhoods, but notably those of the shoemakers, were spread through France and Italy, and were the means of doing an immense amount of good among the members of the two crafts.

The rules of the fraternity founded by Buch were assimilated to certain monastic orders. They enjoined rising at five o'clock and meeting for united prayer before engaging in work, prayers offered by the superior as often as the clock strikes, at certain hours the singing of hymns while at work, at other times silence and meditation; meditation before dinner, the reading of some devotional work by one of the number during meals; a *retreat* for a few days in every year; assisting on Sundays and holy days at sermons and "the divine office;" the visitation of the poor and sick, of hospitals and prisons; self-examination, followed by prayer together at night and retiring to rest at nine o'clock.

Henry Michael Buch, the founder of this remarkable society with its offshoots all over Western Europe, succeeded in making the title *Sons of Crispin* something more than a name in the case of thousands of his brother workmen. Bearing in mind his humble birth and training, his scanty means, his social position, the unpromising materials he had to work with, it will be allowed that the moral reform he inaugurated among working-men deserves to be classed among the best things of the kind [203] of which we read in history. Buch died at Paris on the 9th June, 1666, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Gervaise.[92]

GERMANY.

HANS SACHS, THE NIGHTINGALE OF THE REFORMATION.

Before Good Henry's day two famous shoemakers had appeared in Germany, whose names are now much better known than his: *Hans Sachs*, the shoemaker-poet of the Reformation, and *Jacob Boehmen*, the mystic.

Hans Sachs was the son of a tailor at Nuremberg, and was born November 5th, 1494. At the age of fifteen he was put apprentice in his native town. His schooling had been but slight, but he managed after school-days were passed to retain and add to the little he had learned. His studies as an apprentice soon lifted him considerably above the level of his class. All his spare time was given to poetry and music, in which arts he was greatly assisted by a clever fellow named Nunnenbeck, a weaver in the city. On attaining his majority, Sachs, after the fashion of the time, travelled as a workman from town to town throughout Germany, in order to learn his trade perfectly and see what he could of the wide world around him. In this expedition he seems to have thought as much of poetry as of shoemaking, for he never omitted, wherever he went, visiting the little poetical and musical [204] societies which then existed in nearly every town in Germany. These societies were formed by the various trades guilds, and their members were called *meistersingers*.

On his return from this tour, Sachs settled down to work in Nuremberg, and proved himself both an expert shoemaker and a first-rate meistersinger. In fact, he outshone all his compeers of the guild to which he belonged, and it was not long before he earned the reputation of being the first German poet of his day. The Reformation movement, led by Martin Luther, was then in full vigor, and found a hearty sympathizer and vigorous supporter in this "unlettered cobbler but richly gifted poet," who was counted among the friends and admirers of the great Reformer. Luther had few more valuable supporters in his work than the shoemaker of Nuremberg, whose simple, spirit-stirring songs were rapidly learned and readily sung by the humbler sorts of people all over the country.

Sachs' writings were very numerous, both in prose and verse. Few poets, indeed, have ventured to write and publish so much. He averaged more than a volume a year for over thirty years. On an inventory being made of his literary stock in the year 1546, when he was about fifty-two years of age, it was found that he had written 34 volumes, containing 4275 songs, 208 comedies and tragedies, about 1700 merry tales, and secular and religious dialogues, and 73 other pieces.

His best writings are said to be the "Schwanke" or merry tales, the humor of which is sometimes unsurpassable. His collected works were published by Willer, 1570-79, in five folio volumes.

Exactly two hundred years after Hans Sachs' death, Goethe, who was a warm admirer of the shoemaker-poet, published a poem entitled *Hans Sachs Erklärung eines alten Holzschnitts, vorstellend Hans Sachs' poetische Sendung* (Explanation of an old woodcut representing Hans Sachs' poetical mission). This tribute from the pen of Germany's greatest poet brought the shoemaker of Nuremberg again into notice, and put him in the right place in the temple of fame. Since the date of Goethe's poem, Sachs' works have been published in various forms, and are now as much read and as warmly appreciated as when they were first published. Nuremberg, his native town, is proud of her humble yet illustrious poet, and treasures up in her museum every relic connected with his name, MS. copies of his writings, poetical fly-sheets issued during his lifetime, or early editions of his works. In [205] the libraries of Zwickau, Dresden, and Leipsic similar relics of the poet may be seen.

No testimony to his merit could be higher than that of Goethe, the prince of German critics in literature. It may be of value, however, in addition to this, to give the opinion of two very different men respecting Sachs. Dr. Hagenbach in his "History of the Reformation" says: "A happy union of wholesome humor and moral purity meets us in Hans Sachs of Nuremberg;" and Thomas Carlyle, in his own style, which happily is "inimitable," speaks of him as a "gay, childlike, devout, solid character —a man neither to be despised nor patronized, but left standing on his own basis as a singular product, and legible symbol, and clear mirror of the time and country where he lived."

He died on the 25th of January, 1576, at the age of eighty-two, in full mental vigor. He was busy writing verses and tales almost to the last days of his life. His grave is still shown in the churchyard of St. John's, Nuremberg.

JACOB BOEHMEN, THE MYSTIC.

Jacob Boehmen, or Boehme, was born at the village of Altseidenberg, near Gorlitz, in Prussian Silesia, about a year before the death of Hans Sachs. A shoemaker for the greater part of his life, Boehmen devoted the powers of a remarkable mind to philosophical and religious speculation, and produced works which, notwithstanding their mystical and well-nigh unintelligible character, are declared by some of the best authorities in Germany and England to have laid the foundation of metaphysics and philosophy. It is impossible to give a true idea of the writings of this extraordinary man except by a complete review of his philosophy and its influence on German philosophical writers. The most contradictory opinions have been expressed in regard to the value of his productions. By some critics he is set down as a rhapsodist who wrote nothing but mystical jargon, and by others as a profound philosopher whose thoughts and dreams are full of inspiration. Mosheim, *e.g.*, says: "It is impossible to find greater obscurity than there is in these pitiable writings, which exhibit an incongruous mixture of chemical terms, mystical jargon, and absurd visions." On the other hand, it is curious to read the opinions expressed by our own King Charles I., who of all the Stuarts, not excepting his own father, [206] James I., that "so learned and judicious a prince," was most capable of being a judge in such matters. Charles is reported to have said of the writings of the shoemaker of Gorlitz: "Had they been the productions of a scholar and a man of learning, they would have been truly wonderful; but if, as he heard, they were the productions of a poor shoemaker, they furnished a proof that the Holy Ghost had still a habitation in the souls of men."

Sir Isaac Newton was a student of Boehmen, whose dissertation on "The Three Principles" is said to have furnished hints to the philosopher which put him on the track of some of his great discoveries; and Blake, the half-mad, half-inspired poet, painter, and engraver, frequently spoke of him as a divinely inspired man. Before Blake's day the writings of Boehmen had been translated by William Law, author of "The Serious Call," and published by Ward & Co. in two quarto volumes (1762-84). Law's writings had immense influence over the minds of John and Charles Wesley, and their followers, the Methodists. Law, who was no mean judge of the worth of Boehmen's writings, held them in high esteem.

But of more value than these opinions is the estimate formed by philosophers themselves as to the works of this great mystic. Spinoza frequently studied them, and acknowledged their influence on his own mind. Schelling, the idealist philosopher, bears testimony to Boehmen's great merits as a thinker. Hegel speaks of him as the "Teutonic philosopher," and adds, "In reality, through him, for the first time, did philosophy in Germany come forward with a characteristic stamp." S. T. Coleridge in his "Literary Remains"[93] says: "I have often thought of writing a book to be entitled 'A Vindication of Great Men Unjustly Branded,' and at such times the names prominent to my mind's eye have been Giordano Bruno, Jacob Boehmen, Benedict Spinoza, and Emanuel Swedenborg." In the library of Manchester New College, London, is a copy of the works of Spinoza with marginal notes written by Coleridge,[94] and among them is the following note to Epistle xxxvi.: "The truth is, Spinoza, in common with all metaphysicians before him (Boehme perhaps excepted), began at the wrong end," etc., etc. Coleridge frequently spoke of Boehmen in the warmest terms of admiration.

At a very early age Jacob Boehmen showed a disposition to pious meditation and fancied himself [207] inspired. He was poorly educated as a youth, and nearly all his knowledge was self-acquired. His first work was published when he was thirty-seven years of age, and was entitled "Aurora," or *the morning dawn*. He was severely attacked by the religious leaders of his day, but the court at Dresden patronized and protected him. His death took place November 27th, 1624. His works have been frequently published in Germany, Holland, and England, where they are much more warmly appreciated now than they were in his own lifetime.

ITALY.

GABRIEL CAPPELLINI, IL CALIGARINO, OR THE LITTLE SHOEMAKER.

If it be characteristic of Germany that one of her illustrious shoemakers should be a *poet* and another a *philosopher*, it is no less characteristic of Italy and Holland that several followers of the gentle craft in these countries should have distinguished themselves as *painters*. We take three examples from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Gabriel Cappellini of Ferrara in Italy was more generally known by the appellation *Il Caligarino*, or the *little shoemaker*, a name derived from his original occupation. He is said to have been led to throw down the awl and take to the brush in consequence of a compliment paid to him one day by one of the great family of painters called Dossi, who told the shoemaker that a pair of shoes he had just made were so elegant that they looked as if they had been painted. He became a scholar of Dossi, and made a fair name as an artist in the sixteenth century. He is praised by Barotti for "the boldness of his design and the sobriety of his color." Several of his paintings may now be seen in the city of Ferrara, the best of which is in the Church of St. Giovannino. This is an altar-piece representing the Virgin and

Child with infant saints attending upon them. In the Church of St. Francesco is a painting of SS. John and James. There is also an altar-piece ascribed to him in the Church of St. Alesandro at Bergamo, representing the Last Supper. A small painting of the same subject is in the possession of Count Carrara.[95] [208]

FRANCESCO BRIZZIO, THE ARTIST.

Francesco Brizzio (or Briccio) was the most eminent of the three painters we have to name who began life as shoemakers. He was born at Bologna in 1574. Up to the age of twenty he worked as a shoemaker, and then, being free to follow his bent, became at first a pupil of Passerotti, who taught him design, afterward of Agostini, who initiated him in the engraver's art, and finally of Lodovico Caracci, under whom he became so proficient that "by some he has been pronounced the most eminent disciple of Caracci;" and it has been affirmed of this son of Crispin that of all Caracci's pupils except Domenichino he was gifted with the most universal genius. In perspective, landscape, architecture, and figures, a competent critic, Andrea Sacchi, the famous Roman artist, says, "Brizzio surpassed all his rivals." Guido speaks highly of the beauty of his cherubs. His extant paintings are an altar-piece entitled "The Coronation of the Virgin," which is very rich in coloring, and the "Table of Cebes," a grand painting executed for the Angellili family. Numerous engravings of his are known to connoisseurs, and highly prized as the work of an artist "who often approaches Guido." "His pictures were not only admired for the truth of the perspective and the beauty of his coloring, but also for the grandeur of his ideas, the majestic style of the architecture, the elegance of the ornaments, and the noble taste of the landscapes which he introduced to set off his buildings." Brizzio died in 1623 at the age of forty-nine.[96]

HOLLAND. [209]

LUDOLPH DE JONG, THE DUTCH PORTRAIT-PAINTER.

Ludolph de Jong, was the son of a shoemaker at Oberschic, a village near Rotterdam, and was born in the year 1616. His father intended to bring his son up to his own humble trade, but having been treated with great severity, Ludolph ran away from home and bade good-by to the cobbler's stall, and became soon afterward a pupil of Sacht Coen. After two years spent with this master, he also studied under Palamedes at Delft and Baylaert at Utrecht. Seven years of his life were spent in France, where he gained renown as a portrait-painter, in which branch of art he showed his best hand. From France he returned to Holland and settled at Rotterdam, where his skill and fame gained him much patronage and a handsome fortune. His best work is at Rotterdam in the *Salle des Princes*, and consists of portraits of officers belonging to the Company of Burghers.

De Jong the younger, the clever etcher of battle-scenes, who signs himself IMDI (Jan Martss de Jong), is generally thought to be the son of the well-known painter.[97]

SONS OF SHOEMAKERS.

Before leaving the continent of Europe to come to Great Britain for examples, we may here mention one or two instances in which boys who have been brought up amid the humble surroundings of the shoemaker's home have become illustrious in the field of literature, or science, or theology.

Pope John XXII. (1316-1334), whose popedom was distinguished by the existence of an *anti-pope*, was the son of a shoemaker living at Cahors in France.

Jean Baptiste Rousseau (1670-1741), the French poet, author of "Le Cafè," "Jason," "Adonais", "Le Flatteur," etc., was the son of a well-to-do shoemaker in Paris. The poet was always rather ashamed of his origin, and on one occasion treated his father in the most heartless manner because he stepped forward at the conclusion of the first performance of a play to offer his warm congratulations to his clever and popular son. "I know you not," said the proud poet, waving his father off. The poor fellow retired in bitter grief and uncontrollable anger. [210]

Johan Joachim Wincklemann, the eminent art-critic and writer, was the son of a humble member of the craft, who lived at Stendal in Prussia. His father gave him as good an education as lay within his reach, and was rewarded by the progress his son made in the study of languages. From the position of teacher of languages in the College of Seehausen he passed on to that of librarian to Count Bunan, and finally to the curatorship of the Vatican Museum at Rome, where he published his famous works, "Ancient Statues," "Taste of the Greek Artists," "History of Art," and "Antique Monuments." He died by the hand of an assassin at Trieste, 1768, aged fifty-two.

Hans Christian Andersen was born in 1805, at Adense in Denmark, where his father worked as a shoemaker. While a mere boy he went to Copenhagen in the hope of getting his living as a singer and

writer of plays, and eventually became known as the writer of incomparable fairy tales, the joy and wonder of children, young and old, all over the world.

The name of Dr. Isaac Watts, the hymnist, has sometimes been set down in this category, on the authority of a line in Dr. Johnson's "Lives of the Poets." But Johnson speaks only of "common report," making the father of Isaac Watts a shoemaker. Johnson says he "kept a boarding-school for young gentlemen." He may have done so and followed the gentle craft as well; there is no knowing to what occupation the shoemaker may aspire!

If we go far enough back, we may find a very striking example of ability displayed by a shoemaker's son in military affairs. *Iphicrates* (4th cent. B.C.), one of the most capable and trusted Athenian generals, rose from this humble position to the highest offices of command and trust in the armies of Greece. His reforms in the arms, dress, and tactics of the soldiers, formed an "epoch in the Grecian art of war." He distinguished himself in battles fought against the Thracians and Spartans, and in the service of the King of Persia in his Egyptian campaign.

GREAT BRITAIN.

"YE COCKE OF WESTMINSTER."

Coming now to Great Britain, we are able to select from the records of history and biography illustrations for our purpose which represent pretty nearly all the varieties of English life. Practical philanthropy all men will allow to be one of the most prominent and honorable features of the national character, and to this shoemakers have contributed a good share. Our readers will remember the [211]
good work done by Drs. Carey and Morrison, the pioneer missionaries to India and China, and noble old John Pounds, one of the founders of ragged schools in this country. Two examples, in a different field, may be given here. One can easily understand how shoemaking would pay better before the invention of machinery than it does now, yet it appears strange to us to read of men making anything like a fortune by so humble a craft. So it was, however, after a certain modest fashion; and shoemakers, like men whose fortune has been made on a larger scale, have shown themselves veritable philanthropists in the use they have made of their money. The two instances we refer to are wide apart as to time, but closely related as regards the benevolent spirit they exhibit. Holinshed has very properly thought it worth his while to chronicle the good deed of a benevolent old shoemaker who lived in Westminster in the reign of Edward VI. This true son and follower of Crispin bore the name of *Richard Castell*, but was still better known, in his own day, by the sobriquet, *Ye Cocke of Westminster*, not only "because he was so famous with the faculty of his hands," but on account of his early rising; for every morning, all the year round, saw him sitting down to his work "at four of the clock." His skill and diligence in the craft brought him in a considerable sum of money, which he invested in lands and tenements in the neighborhood of Westminster, yielding a yearly rental of £42—not at all a poor living for a retired shoemaker three hundred years ago. It appears that Castell greatly admired the generosity of his monarch, Edward VI., who had recently endowed Christ's Hospital, and the shoemaker having no family to whom he could bequeath his property, and being blessed, moreover, with a wife as generously disposed as himself, resolved to leave his property to the endowment fund of this public charity. It is much more than probable that the fame of the kingly founder of the hospital has totally eclipsed that of his humble subject, and for this reason it seems right for us to find a place in our list of illustrious shoemakers for a worthy man whose industry and benevolence are bearing good fruit to this day, and who once, it may be, was not a little proud of the honorable nickname of *Ye Cocke of Westminster*.[98]

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TIMOTHY BENNETT, THE HERO OF HAMPTON-WICK.

It would be hard to find a name more worthy of being enrolled in our list than that of the public-spirited and courageous shoemaker of Hampton-Wick in Surrey named *Timothy Bennett*,[99] who, early in the last century, undertook, at his own cost, to rescue a right of road from loss to the public. This road ran from Hampton-Wick to Kingston-upon-Thames through the well-known Bushy Park, belonging to the Crown. Bennett was grieved to see the right of way infringed by the Crown authorities, and to observe the consequent inconvenience to thousands of his neighbors. He determined, therefore, to go to law about the matter, and, if possible, put a stop to the high-handed and unjust proceedings of the "Ranger of the Park." He went to a lawyer and inquired as to the probable chances of success in his project, and as to the cost, saying, "I have *seven hundred pounds* which I would be willing to bestow upon this attempt. It is all I have, and has been saved through a long course of honest industry." Satisfied on both points, he resolved to carry out his plan. Lord Halifax was then Ranger of Bushy Park, and having heard of Bennett's intentions, sent for him. "Who are you, sir," demanded my lord, "that have the assurance to meddle in this affair?" "My name, my lord, is Timothy Bennett, shoemaker, of Hampton-Wick. I remember, an't please your Lordship, when I was a young man, of seeing, while sitting at my work, the people cheerfully pass by to Kensington

market; but now, my lord, they are forced to go round about, through a hot sandy road, ready to faint beneath their burdens, and I am unwilling“ (using a phrase he was very fond of) ”to leave the world worse than I found it. This, my lord, I humbly represent, is the reason of my conduct.“ ”Be gone! You are an impertinent fellow!” said the Ranger of Bushy Park. After thinking the matter over in a calmer mood, Lord Halifax saw the equity of the shoemaker’s claim, and the certainty of his own failure to justify his conduct, and gave up his opposition. The road was opened, and remains open to this day, and is used not only by those who pass on business between Hampton and Kingston, but by thousands of pleasure-seekers from the busy and smoke-laden metropolis, who run down by rail in the spring and [213] summer to enjoy the sight of one of the finest avenues of chestnut-trees in the world, or to breathe the sweet country air, and rest beneath the refreshing shade of the trees of the park. The good people who make constant use of the road, which the worthy shoemaker has secured to them and their descendants forever, can hardly be ignorant of the story of Lord Halifax the Nobleman nonsuited by Timothy Bennett the Shoemaker; yet the stranger who goes down to the Park in May to see

> “The chestnuts with their milky cones,”

will probably never have heard of this

> “Village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
> The little tyrant of his fields withstood.”

Bennett died an old man in 1756, having had his wish, at least, to leave the world no worse than he found it. Assuredly many who have more fame have done less to merit it.

MILITARY AND NAVAL HEROES.

“THE SOUTERS OP SELKIRK.”

The old Border song, sung at public dinners “when Selkirk folks began to be merry”—

> “Up wi’ the souters of Selkirk,
> And down wi’ the Earl of Home;
> And up wi’ a’ the braw lads
> That sew the single shoon.
>
> “Fye upon yellow and yellow,
> And fye upon yellow and green,
> And up wi’ the true blue and scarlet,
> And up wi’ the single-soled sheen.
>
> “Up wi’ the souters o’ Selkirk,
> For they are baith trusty and leal;
> And up wi’ the men o’ the Forest,[100]
> And down wi’ the Merse[101] to the deil,”

has made the “Souters of Selkirk” famous throughout Scotland. The origin of the song seems to be [214] lost. Whether it has reference, as the common tradition in Selkirk goes, to the part which a gallant band of Selkirk men played at the battle of Flodden Field, 1513, “when the flower of the Scottish nobility fell around their sovereign, James IV.,” which Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Plummer assert,[102] or to “a bet between the Philiphaugh and Home families“ on a match of football ”between the souters (or shoemakers) of Selkirk against the men of Home,” as Mr. Robertson in his “Essay on Scottish Song” declares, it is not easy to determine. At any rate, whether the song points to the historical event or not, the event itself is beyond dispute. Selkirk did “certainly send a brave band of eighty or a hundred men to Flodden Field to support the cause of James. No doubt a large proportion of these men were veritable *souters*, for the chief trade of the town in the sixteenth century was the making of “a sort of brogues with a single thin sole.” This local manufacture seems to have given a name to the inhabitants of the burgh, who were called *souters*, pretty much as natives of Sheffield might be called *blades*, or Birmingham folk *buttons*. The people of Selkirk are not ashamed of the designation, but rather glory in perpetuating the name and the tradition on which it rests. “A singular custom,” we are told, is observed at conferring the freedom of the burgh. Four or five bristles, such as are used by shoemakers, are attached to the seal of the burgess ticket. These the new-made burgess must dip in his wine and pass through his mouth, in token of respect for the Souters of Selkirk. This ceremony is on no account dispensed with.[103]

WATT TINLINN.

That the souters of that time knew how to fight and win renown by their valor and skill may be gathered from the story which the author of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" tells us anent the reference to Watt of Liddelside in the fourth canto of the "Lay":

"Now loud the heedful gateward cried,
'Prepare ye all for blows and blood!
Watt Tinlinn from the Liddelside
Comes wading through the flood.
Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock
At his lone gate and prove the lock;
It was but last St. Barnabright
They sieged him a whole summer night,
But fled at morning; well they knew
In vain he never twanged the yew.'"

This Watt was a shoemaker and a soldier, and if he had no large field for the display of his skill and valor in the Border skirmishes of his time, he nevertheless deserves a place among his more illustrious brethren of the craft, if only for the sake of the following note respecting him. "This person was in my younger days," says Sir Walter Scott,[104] "the theme of many a fireside tale. He was a retainer of the Buccleuch family, and held for his Border service a small tower on the frontiers of Liddesdale. Watt was by profession a sutor, but by inclination and practice an archer and warrior. Upon one occasion, the captain of Bewcastle, military governor of that wild district of Cumberland, is said to have made an incursion into Scotland, in which he was defeated and forced to fly. Watt Tinlinn pursued him closely through a dangerous morass; the captain, however, gained the firm ground, and seeing Tinlinn dismounted and floundering in the bog, used these words of insult, "Sutor Watt, ye cannot sew your boots; the heels risp and the seams rive."[105] "If I cannot sew," retorted Tinlinn, discharging a shaft which nailed the captain's thigh to his saddle—"if I cannot sew I can yerk."[106]

COLONEL HEWSON, THE "CERDON" OF "HUDIBRAS."

In the turbulent days of the Stuarts and the Commonwealth, when the lofty were laid low and the lowly were set in high places, it can hardly be matter of surprise that the shoemaker should have had his share of the favors of fortune. The circumstances of the time had led to the adoption of the rational rule of granting promotion by merit. In an army commanded by Cromwell it is not likely that any other rule would be adopted. His two chief requirements were military capacity and moral character. With men of this class he made up his invincible *Ironsides*. One of his colonels was John Hewson. "This man," Grainger says,[107] "once wore a leather apron, and from a mender of old shoes became a reformer of government and religion. He was, allowing for his education, a very extraordinary person. His behavior in the army soon raised him to the rank of a colonel; and Cromwell had so great an opinion of him as to intrust him with the government of the city of Dublin, whence he was called to be a member of Barebones'[108] parliament. He was a frequent speaker in that and the other parliament of which he was a member, and was at length thought a fit person to be a lord of the upper house. He was one of the committee of safety, and was, with several of his brethren, very intent upon a new model of the republic at the eve of the Restoration." Rugge, in his "Diurnal," 5th December, 1659, says that Hewson "was a very stout man, and a very good commander;" and adds, "But in regard of his former employment, they (the city apprentices) threw at him old shoes and slippers, and turnip-tops and brickbats, stones and tiles." He was the object of no end of lampooning on the part of the Royalists. Pepys, in his "Diary," 25th January, 1659-60, has an interesting memorandum in regard to the notoriety of the cobbler-colonel: "Coming home, heard that in Cheapside there had been but a little before a gibbet set up, and a picture of Huson (Hewson) hung upon it, in the middle of the street."[109] One of these squibs bore the title, "Colonel Hewson's Confession; or, a Parley with Pluto," and referred to his removal of the gates of Temple Bar. Lord Braybrooke informs us that Hewson "had but one eye, which did not escape the notice of his enemies." Nor did the burly cobbler-colonel escape the notice of Dr. Butler, who makes him a conspicuous figure in the first part of "Hudibras"[110] under the nickname of *Cerdon*:

"The upright Cerdon next advanc'd,
Of all his race the valiant'st:
Cerdon the Great, renowned in song,
Like Herc'les, for repair of wrong.
He rais'd the low, and fortify'd
The weak against the strongest side:
Ill has he read that never hit
On him in Muses deathless writ.
He had a weapon keen and fierce,
That through a bull-hide shield would pierce,
And out it in a thousand pieces,
Though tougher than the Knight of Greece his,

With whom his black-thumb'd ancestor
Was comrade in the ten years' war.
* * * * * *
Fast friend he was to reformation,
Until 'twas worn quite out of fashion;
Next rectifier of every law,
And would make three to cure one flaw.
Learned he was, and could take note,
Transcribe, collect, translate, and quote."[111]

Later on,[112] Hudibras describes the scene at the bear-gardens when Hewson and the Puritan party endeavor to put a stop to the savage sport of bear-baiting. The mob turn on the Puritans, but as for the fat colonel—

"Quarter he scorns, he is so stout,
And therefore cannot long hold out."

One of the squibs alluded to above was entitled "A Hymn to the Gentle Craft; or, Hewson's Lamentation."[113] The reader will observe that Hewson's *one eye* "does not escape the notice of his enemies." This piece was sung as a ballad in the streets:

"Listen awhile to what I shall say,
Of a blind cobbler that's gone astray
Out of the Parliament's highway.
Good people, pity the blind!

"His name you wot well is Sir John Howson,
Whom I intend to set my muse on,
As great a warrior as Sir Miles Lewson.
Good people, pity the blind!

"He'd now give all the shoes in his shop
The Parliament's fury for to stop,
Whip cobbler like any town-top.
Good people, pity the blind!

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"Oliver made him a famous Lord,
That he forgot his cutting-board,
But now his thread's twisted to a cord.
Good people, pity the blind!

"Sing hi, ho, Hewson!—the state ne'er went upright,
Since cobblers could pray, preach, govern, and fight;
We shall see what they'll do now you're out of sight.
Good people, pity the blind!"

Having been one of the men who sat in judgment on King Charles I., the Colonel was with other regicides condemned to be hung October 14th, 1660;[114] but he is said to have escaped hanging by flight, and to have died at Amsterdam "in his original obscurity," 1662.[115]

SIR CHRISTOPHER MYNGS, ADMIRAL OF THE ENGLISH FLEET.

Christopher Myngs (or Minns), "the son of an honest shoemaker in London, from whom he inherited nothing but a good constitution,"[116] is said to have worn the leathern apron for a short time before he went to sea. Speaking of the men of humble origin who, toward the end of the seventeenth century, made their way to high office by their skill and bravery, Lord Macaulay says: "One of the most eminent of these officers was Sir Christopher Mings, who entered the service as a cabin-boy, who fell fighting bravely against the Dutch, and whom his crew, weeping and vowing vengeance, carried to the grave. From him sprang, by a singular kind of descent, a line of valiant and expert sailors. His cabin-boy was Sir John Narborough, and the cabin-boy of Sir John Narborough was Sir Cloudesley Shovel. To the strong natural sense and dauntless courage of this class of men England owes a debt never to be forgotten."[117] Myngs knew how to be familiar and friendly with his men, and yet to keep his position and authority. Seamen learn to love bravery, and of this they saw enough in their gallant Admiral. They had additional reason for their devotion in the care he always took to see them well paid and fed, and the justice he did them in the distribution of prizes. It was in the great four days' [219] fight off the English coast, June 1st-4th, 1666, between the English and Dutch fleets, that this brave man met with his death. The English fleet was commanded by the Duke of Albemarle and Prince Rupert, and the Dutch by De Ruyter and Van Tromp the younger. The battle was one of the most memorable on record, both for its length and the valor displayed on both sides. "On the fourth day of

the famous battle that began on the 1st of June, he received a shot in the neck; after which, though he was in exquisite pain, he continued in his command, holding his wound with both his hands for above an hour. At length another shot pierced his throat and laid him forever at rest."[118]

The portrait of Sir Christopher Myngs is now in the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital. It is a half-length by Sir Peter Lely, and came from Windsor Castle, having been presented by George IV. in 1824. [119]

ASTROLOGERS AND OTHERS.

[220]

DR. PARTRIDGE, ASTROLOGER, PHYSICIAN TO HIS MAJESTY, ETC.

In the same age lived another noteworthy man, whose connection with the gentle craft was much more intimate, and, indeed, of almost life-long duration. This man was an astrologer, and blended with his study of the subtle influences of the stars over human affairs the study of medicine. What relation there is between these two things it were hard to tell; but certain it is, that for many years men who were not otherwise fools and knaves believed in this relation; and, combining the two "professions," found very often that success in the one gave them a certain prestige in the other. A lucky hit in "casting the nativity" of a notable person, brought the "astrologer and physician" endless patients and no small fortune. Probably an appointment as physician to the king was due to no better cause; and, with such an appointment, of course the practitioner's position was secure for life. This seems to have been pretty much the case with *John Partridge*, who is spoken of as a shoemaker in Covent Garden in 1680, and in 1682 is styled *physician to His Majesty Charles II.* Here is a case, then, of a cobbler who ventured *ultra crepidam* to some purpose, and who might very well have taken James Lackington's motto for his own.[120] Partridge, it must be allowed, was a scholar of no mean attainments, whatever he may have been as a physician, and his scholarship was self-acquired. During his apprenticeship to a shoemaker he began the study of Latin with a copy of Lilye's Grammar, Gouldman's Dictionary, Ovid's Metamorphoses, and a Latin Bible. Having got a sufficient knowledge of Latin to read astrological works, he betook himself to the study of Greek and Hebrew. Then came *physic*, with the grand result of royal patronage. Partridge was a considerable author or editor, and the list of his works shows the strong bent of his mind toward the occult science. He published a "Hebrew Calendar" for 1678; "Vade Mecum," 1679; "Ecclesilegia, an Almanac," 1679; the same for 1680; "The King of France's Nativity;" "A Discourse of Two Moons;" "Mercurius Cœlestis," being an almanac for 1681; "Prodomus, a [221] Discourse on the Conjunction of Saturn and Mars;" "The Black Life of John Gadbury," in which a brother astrologer is roundly abused; and shown to be, as a matter of course, a rogue and impostor; and a "Translation of Hadrianus a Mynsicht's Treasury of Physic," 1682.

The inscription over Partridge's tomb is in Latin, as becomes the memorial of so learned a man and so eminent a physician! The visitor to the churchyard of Mortlake in Surrey may still learn—if the great destroyer has dealt gently with the record—how

> JOHANNES PARTRIDGE, ASTROLOGUS
> ET MEDICINÆ DOCTOR,

was born at East Sheen, in Surrey, on the 18th January, 1644, and died in London, 24th June, 1715; how he made medicine for two kings and one queen, *Carolo scilicet Secundo, Willielmo Tertio, Reginæque Mariæ*; and how the Dutch University of Leyden conferred on him the diploma *Medicinæ Doctor*.

Partridge seems to have given his MS. of the "Conjunction of Saturn and Mars" to Elias Ashmole, who presented it in 1682, with other curiosities, to the University of Oxford, where it may still be seen in the Ashmolean Museum.[121]

Partridge is alluded to in Pope's "Rape of the Lock," where the poet speaks of Belinda's "wavy curl," which has been stolen and placed among the stars—

> "This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
> When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;
> And hence the egregious wizard shall foredoom
> The fate of Louis and the fall of Rome."

"What sacrifices," says the author of "The Book of Days," "would many a sage or poet have made to be connected through all time with Pope and the charming Belinda! Yet here, in this case, we find the almanac-making shoemaker enjoying a companionship and a celebrity for qualities which, morally, have no virtue or endurance in them, but quite the reverse." Swift, whose satire stung many an abuse to death, made endless fun of Partridge and his absurd prophecies based on astrology. In 1708 Swift

published a burlesque almanac containing “predictions for the year,” etc., etc., the first of which was about Partridge himself. Fancy the astrologer’s feelings when he read the following awful announcement:—“I have consulted the star of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die on the 29th of March next of a raging fever; therefore I advise him to consider it and settle his affairs in time!” [222]

After the 29th of March was past, Partridge positively took the trouble to inform the public that he was *not* dead! This he did in his almanac for 1709. Whereupon the cruel Dean took the matter up again and tried to show Partridge his error. He was dead, argues Swift, if he did but know it; but then there is no accounting for some men’s ignorance! He says, “I have in another place and in a paper by itself sufficiently convinced this man that he is dead; and if he has any shame, I don’t doubt but that by this time he owns it to all his acquaintance.”[122] Not content with this, Swift wrote an “Elegy on the supposed Death of Partridge, the Almanac-maker,” and wound up the *painful* business by writing his epitaph too.

THE EPITAPH.

“Here, five foot deep, lies, on his back,
A cobbler, starmonger, and quack,
Who to the stars, in pure good-will,
Does to his best look upward still.
Weep, all ye customers, that use
His pills, or almanacs, or shoes;
And you that did your fortunes seek,
Step to his grave but once a week.
This earth, which bears his body’s print,
You’ll find has so much virtue in’t,
That I durst pawn my ear ’twill tell
Whate’er concerns you full as well,
In physic, stolen goods, or love,
As he himself could when above.”

THE BROTHERS SIBLY.—EBENEZER SIBLY, M.D., F.R.C.P., ASTROLOGER, ETC.

Here also may be mentioned the once famous *Dr. Ebenezer Sibly*, the physician and astrologer, and his brother Manoah, who by turns was shoemaker, shorthand reporter, and preacher of the “heavenly doctrines” of the New Jerusalem Church. However great a figure these men may have made in their day, they have managed to drop so completely out of notice that no encyclopædia, biographical dictionary, or magazine[123] the writer has met with contains any account of them. They are said to have been born in Bristol, and to have been brought up to the gentle craft.[124] The first edition of Ebenezer Sibly’s “Astrological Astronomy” was published in 1789, in three vols. 8vo, and was entitled “Astronomy and Elementary Philosophy,” being a translation of Placidus de Titus. The various editions of this work contain a collection of remarkable nativities, and among them Sibly includes that of Thomas Chatterton, “the marvellous boy” of Bristol.[125] Of course the astrologer sees in the horoscope of Chatterton sure signs of remarkable genius. Sibly was frequently consulted both for astrological and medical purposes, the two professions, astrology and medicine, being regarded as having a certain necessary relation. At all events, it answered the purposes of men like Sibly and Partridge to associate them in their practice. Human credulity dies hard, the race of fools seems to be endowed with wondrous vitality; even as late as 1826 Sibly’s “Celestial Science of Astrology,” in two bulky 4to vols., was published in a twelfth edition, and at that time there must have been many readers of his costly works[126] on the “Occult Sciences, comprehending the Art of Foretelling Future Events and Contingencies by the Aspect and Influences of the Heavenly Bodies.” This work was accompanied by a key to physic and the occult sciences. “Many of my readers,” says the author of “Crispin Anecdotes,” “otherwise indebted to Dr. Sibly, may remember his solar and lunar tinctures, and may probably have experienced their efficacy in transmuting gold coin into AURUM POTABILE!” In his astrological works and his edition of “Culpepper’s Herbal,” Sibly signs himself “M.D.,” “Fellow of the Royal Harmonic Philosophical Society at Paris,“ ”Member of the Royal College of Physicians in Aberdeen,” etc., etc. The “Herbal” is dated in the year of Masonry 5798, and is written from No. 1 Upper Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London. We have no record of the death of this illustrious son of Crispin, who, perhaps, had better have stuck to his last. He is called “*the late* E. Sibly, M.D.,“ in the 1817 edition of his ”Celestial Science.” [223] [224]

MANOAH SIBLY, SHORTHAND WRITER, ETC.

Manoah Sibly appears to have been a man of more varied and certainly of much more useful gifts than his brother “the doctor;” but it may well be doubted if he made as much capital out of them. He was born August 20th, 1757.[127] If the writer above quoted be correct in saying that Manoah was a shoemaker, he must have made good use of his spare time, and even of his working hours, for at the age of nineteen he is said to have been teaching Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Syriac. During the greater part of his life he was a prominent preacher in connection with the New Jerusalem or Swedenborgian community. For fifty-three years, from the time of his ordination in 1790, he held the pastorate of the

congregation for which the Friars Street Chapel, London, was built in 1803. This congregation is now represented by the well-known Argyle Square Church, King's Cross, where a tablet to his memory has been erected. Manoah Sibly does not seem at any time to have been wholly occupied with the work of preaching, although he delivered two sermons a week for forty-three years, and one a week for the remaining ten of his ministry. "Whether he dabbled in the muddy waters of astrology or no, it is rather hard to tell; probably he left the task of reading the stars, for the most part, to his more astute brother, Ebenezer. At any rate, a translation of Placidus de Titus is set down in certain lists as having been published in his name in 1789;[128] and when he opened a shop as a bookseller, he dealt chiefly in works on occult philosophy. In 1795 he is styled shorthand writer to the City of London on the title-page of the published reports from his own notes of the trial of Gillman and of Thomas Hardy, the [225]
political shoemaker, whose trial and acquittal created so great an excitement throughout the country. Two years after this he obtained a situation in the Bank of England, which he held for no less than forty-three years. In addition to all this multifarious work, he found time for writing and slight editorial duties. In 1796 a volume of sermons preached in the New Jerusalem Temple appeared in his name, and in 1802 he edited a liturgy for his own church, and wrote a hymn-book. If in no other way, his memory will be perpetuated among his coreligionists by the hymns that bear his name. His first published work was a critical essay on Jeremiah 38:16, issued in 1777; and his last, a discourse on "Jesus Christ, the only Divine object of Praise," delivered on the forty-fifth anniversary of the promulgation of the "heavenly doctrines," appeared fifty-six years after, viz., in 1833. Manoah Sibly's long life of fourscore and three years came to an end December 16th, 1840.

MACKEY, THE LEARNED SHOEMAKER OF NORWICH, AND TWO OTHER LEARNED SHOEMAKERS.

In this connection we may mention a curious instance of learning in lowly life, mentioned in one of a series of interesting articles in the *Leisure Hour*, already alluded to. The writer says: "In that most entertaining miscellany *Notes and Queries* (No. 215) we find an interesting account of a very poor Norwich shoemaker named *Mackey*, whose mind appears to have been a marvellous receptacle of varied learning. He died in Doughty's Hospital, in Norwich, an asylum for aged persons there. The writer of the paper found him surrounded by the tools of his former trade and a variety of astronomical instruments and apparatus, and he instantly was ready for conversation upon the mysteries of astronomical and mythological lore, the "Asiatic Researches of Captain Wilford," and the mythological speculations of Jacob Bryant and Maurice, quoting Latin and Greek to his auditor. He was called "the learned shoemaker." His learning was probably greatly undigested and ungeneralized, but it was none the less another singular instance of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, as is shown by his published works on mythological astronomy and on "The Age of Mental Emancipation." To this notice of Mackey the writer in the *Leisure Hour* adds an amusing story, which is too good to be [226]
omitted, of a brother of the gentle craft (a cobbler) who, in order to eclipse a rival who lived opposite to him, put over his door on his stall the well-known motto, "*Mens conscia recti*" (a mind conscious of rectitude). But his adversary, determined not to be outdone, showed himself also a cobbler in classics as well as in shoes, by placing over his door the astonishingly comprehensive defiance, "Men's and Women's *conscia recti*."

ANTHONY PURVER, THE SHOEMAKER WHO REVISED THE BIBLE.

Another curious instance of extensive reading and remarkable linguistic talent, somewhat similar to that of Dr. Partridge and the learned shoemaker of Norwich, is that of *Anthony Purver*. He was born at Up Hurstbourne in Hampshire in 1702. His parents were poor, and put their boy apprentice to the art and mystery of making and mending boots and shoes. When his "time was out," he betook himself to the leisurely and healthy employment of keeping sheep, and began to study. His special line in after-life was decided by his meeting with a tract which pointed out some errors of translation in the authorized version of the Bible. This led him to resolve that he would read the Scriptures in the original Hebrew and Greek. Taking lessons from a Jew, Purver soon learned to read Hebrew. After this he took up Greek and Latin, until he could read with ease in either language. "On settling as a schoolmaster at Andover," we are told,[129] "he undertook the extraordinary labor of translating the Bible into English, which work he actually accomplished, and it was printed at the expense of Dr. Fothergill in two vols. folio. This learned shoemaker, shepherd, and schoolmaster deeply felt the need of the great work which has been accomplished in our own day by the united scholarship of England and America. In his own way he completed the Herculean task single-handed; and if his translation was not of any general and practical utility, it none the less deserves mention as a monument of self-acquired learning and honorable industry. Purver died in 1777, at the age of seventy-five.

POETS OF THE COBBLER'S STALL. [227]

In coming to speak of the *poets* of the cobbler's stall, the task of selection is found to be by no means

an easy one. It is hard enough to tell where to begin; it is harder still to know where to leave off. “This brooding fraternity” of shoemakers, it is said, “has produced more rhymers than any other of the handicrafts.”[130]

> “Crispin’s sons
> Have from uncounted time with ale and buns
> Cherish’d the gift of song, which sorrow quells;
> And working single in their low-built cells,
> Oft cheat the tedium of a winter’s night
> With anthems.”[131]

In the days of the revival of learning and the reformation of religion in England, shoemakers had their share in the mental and moral awakening. Many of them turned poets, and essayed to write ballads and songs, of which we have a sample in Deloney’s “Delightful, Princely, and Entertaining History of the Gentle Craft.”[132] Such a spirited songster as Richard Rigby, “a brother of the craft,” who undertook to show in his “Song of Praise to the Gentle Craft” how “royal princes, sons of kings, lords, and great commanders have been shoemakers of old, to the honor of the ancient trade,” also deserves to be mentioned. This song, beginning

> “I sing in praise of shoemakers,
> Whose honor no person can stain,”[133]

is no mean performance; its historic allusions may not be unimpeachable, but its poetic ring is genuine. Scores of pieces of a similar character have issued from the cobbler’s room, and either perished, like many another ballad and song of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or found their way into odd corners of our literature, where they are buried almost beyond hope of resurrection.

Speaking of men who have aspired to be poets and have published their productions, one is fain to begin with a name which, if it could be proved to belong to the gentle craft, would certainly have to stand at the head of the long list of poetical shoemakers—the Elizabethan dramatist *Thomas Dekker*, [228] who wrote “one of the most light-hearted of merry comedies,” *The Shoomaker’s Holyday*. One of the most prominent characters in the play is Sir Simon Eyre, the reputed builder of Leadenhall Market, London, and Lord Mayor of the city.[134] Of this worthy, who lived in the time of Henry VI., Rigby, in his “Song in Praise of the Gentle Craft,” says—

> “Sir Simon, Lord Mayor of fair London,
> He was a shoemaker by trade.”

It is hard to think that the writer of *The Shoomaker’s Holyday*, in which the ways of shoemakers and the details of the craft are described with all the ease and exactitude of familiarity, was not a brother of the craft.[135] When the famous quarrel arose between the quondam friends and coworkers, Ben Jonson and Dekker, Jonson in his *Poetaster* satirized the author of *The Shoomaker’s Holyday* under the name of *Crispinus*. This epithet may be simply an allusion to the subject of Dekker’s well-known comedy; but may it not also be regarded as a veritable “cut at a cobbler?”

JAMES WOODHOUSE, THE FRIEND OF SHENSTONE.

James Woodhouse stands first on our list in point of time, but not in regard to ability. He evidently owed his little brief popularity to the friendship of William Shenstone, author of “The Schoolmistress.” Shenstone lived at Leasowes, seven miles from Birmingham, in a charming country-house surrounded [229] by gardens, artistically laid out and cultivated with the utmost care by the eccentric, fantastic poet. Woodhouse, who was born about 1733, was a village shoemaker and eke a schoolmaster at Rowley, two miles off. Shenstone had been obliged to exclude the public from his gardens and grounds at Leasowes on account of the wanton damage done to flowers and shrubs. Whereupon the village shoemaker addressed the poet in poetical terms asking to be “excluded from the prohibition.” In reply Shenstone admitted him not only to wander through his grounds, but to make a free use of his library. “Shenstone found,” says Southey, “that the poor applicant used to work with a pen and ink at his side while the last was in his lap—the head at one employ, the hands at another; and when he had composed a couplet or a stanza, he wrote it on his knee.” Woodhouse was then about twenty-six years of age. His lot must have been rather hard at that time, for, speaking of his wife’s work and his own, he says in one of his poems—

> “Nor mourn I much my task austere,
> Which endless wants impose;
> But oh! it wounds my soul to hear
> My Daphne’s melting woes!
>
> “For oft she sighs and oft she weeps
> And hangs her pensive head,
> *While blood her farrowed finger steeps*

And stains the passing thread.

"When orient hills the sun behold,
Our labors are begun;
And when he streaks the west with gold,
The task is still undone."

Five years after his introduction to Shenstone, a collection of his poems was published, entitled "Poems on Several Occasions." About forty years afterward he issued another edition with additional pieces, such as "Woodstock, an Elegy," "St. Crispin," etc. In the later years of his life he was living near Norbury Park, and had found a generous patron in Mr. Lock, who superintended the publication of his poetry, and in Lord Lyttleton of Hagley.

JOHN BENNET OF WOODSTOCK, PARISH CLERK AND POET.

The name of Bennet occurs once more in our list, and in this instance, if classed at all, it should be classed with the poets, although it must be confessed that the claim of John Bennet to that honorable [230] title would hardly be allowed in some quarters. This little local celebrity inherited the office of parish clerk from his father, and with it some degree of musical taste, for his father's psalm-singing is said to have charmed the ear of Thomas Warton, Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and sometime curate of Woodstock. John Bennet, junior, succeeded to the clerkship in Warton's time, and thus came under the notice of the kindly clergyman, who was a generous patron of men of this class. When Bennet took to writing poetry and thought of publishing, Warton gave him every assistance in his power. A poor uneducated poet could scarcely have fallen into better hands, for the young curate was geniality itself, if we may judge from the estimate of him formed by Southey, who speaks of his "thorough good nature and the boyish hilarity which he retained through life," and furthermore adds, "The Woodstock shoemaker was chiefly indebted for the patronage which he received to Thomas Warton's good-nature, for my predecessor was the best-natured man that ever wore a great wig."[136] The shoemaker's poetry was "published by subscription" in 1774, and the long list of notable names speaks well for the industry and influence of the patron to whose efforts the splendid array of subscribers must be attributed. Bennet's poetry, which was not of a very high order of merit, consisted chiefly of simple rhymes on rustic themes, in which he does not forget to sing the praises of the *gentleman-like craft* to which he belongs; nor does he hesitate frankly to declare that his reason for publishing his rhymes is "to enable the author to rear an infant offspring, and to drive away all anxious solicitude from the breast of a most amiable wife." Later in life he published another volume, having for its chief piece a poem entitled "Redemption;" and, as a set-off, a kindly preface by Dr. Mavor, Rector of Woodstock. This honest parish clerk of poetical fame died and was buried at Woodstock on the 8th of August, 1803.

RICHARD SAVAGE, THE FRIEND OF POPE.

A far better poet but a far less worthy man than Bennet of Woodstock or Woodhouse of Rowley was *Richard Savage*, the friend of Pope. From beginning to end the story of his life, as told by Dr. Johnson [231] in his "Lives of the Poets," is one of the most romantic and melancholy biographies in existence. It only concerns us here to say that Richard Savage, the reputed[137] son of Earl Rivers and the Countess of Macclesfield, was, on leaving school, apprenticed to a shoemaker, and remained in this humble position "longer than he was willing to confess; nor was it, perhaps, any great advantage to him that an unexpected discovery determined him to quit his occupation." Dr. Johnson thus speaks of this discovery and its immediate results: "About this time his nurse, who had always treated him as her own son, died; and it was natural for him to take care of those effects which, by her death, were, as he imagined, become his own. He therefore went to her house, opened her boxes, and examined her papers, among which he found some letters written to her by the Lady Mason, which informed him of his birth and the reason for which it was concealed. Dissatisfied with his employment, but unable to obtain either pity or help from his mother, to whom he made many tender appeals, he resolved to devote himself to literature. His first attempt in this line was a short poem called 'The Battle of the Pamphlets,' written anent the Bangorian Controversy; and his second a comedy under the title 'Woman's Riddle.' Two years after appeared another comedy, 'Love in a Veil.' In 1723 he wrote a drama, having for its subject certain events in the life of Sir Thomas Overbury. Previous to the publication of a small volume entitled 'A Miscellany of Poems,' Savage wrote the story of his life in a political paper called *The Plain Dealer*. His best poem, 'The Wanderer,' in which are some pathetic passages referring to himself, was published in 1729." For the story of the life of this unhappy man the reader must be referred to Johnson's "Lives." Savage died in the debtors' prison, Bristol, August 1st, 1743.

THOMAS OLIVERS, HYMN-WRITER, FRIEND AND COWORKER WITH JOHN WESLEY.

It is a relief to turn from the thought of Savage to *Thomas Olivers*, one of John Wesley's most intimate friends and zealous coworkers. We have seen already how prominent a part another shoemaker [232] played in the Methodist revival;[138] but Olivers is perhaps better known to the general public than Samuel Bradburn, for the latter has left no mark on our literature, while the former has made a name

among hymn-writers as the author of several excellent hymns, and of one, in particular, which holds a place of first rank in Christian hymnology. Olivers' fame outside Methodism rests chiefly on the fine hymn beginning—

"The God of Abram praise,
Who reigns enthroned above,
Ancient of everlasting days,
And God of love.
Jehovah great, I Am,
By earth and heaven confest;
I bow and bless the sacred name,
Forever blest."

One hymn may seem to be a very narrow basis on which to build a reputation, yet the name of Olivers will as surely be handed down to future generations, on account of this fine sacred lyric, as it would have been if he had written a whole volume of hymns of merely average merit. A dozen instances might be cited in which a single brief poem of rare excellence has won an undying fame for the writer. Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," and Michael Bruce's "Elegy Written in Spring," Wolfe's "Burial of Sir John Moore," and Blanco White's single sonnet, "Night and Death," and, in an inferior degree, poor Herbert Knowles' "Lines Written in the Churchyard of Richmond, Yorkshire," are cases in point.

Thomas Olivers in his autobiography[139] tells us that he was born at Tregonon in Montgomeryshire in 1725. After the death of his father and uncle, Thomas was left in charge of another relative named Tudor, who sent him to school and afterward bound him apprentice to a shoemaker. He was, by his own account, idle, dissolute, and profane—"the worst boy seen in those parts for the last twenty or thirty years." His evil conduct compelled him to fly from the scene of his early dissipation as soon as he could; and, after living a wild life at Shrewsbury and Wrexham, he came to Bristol. This city was his [233] spiritual birthplace; for, under a sermon by George Whitfield, the sinful, reckless young Welshman was converted, and became as noted for piety and earnest Christian work as he had once been for blasphemy and opposition to all religion. Shortly after his conversion he removed to Bradford in Wilts, where he joined the Methodists. On recovering from a terrible attack of small-pox he went back to visit the scenes of his early life. In this expedition he had a double object—to obtain a sum of money left him by his uncle, and then to go round to all his creditors and pay his debts. This most Christian conduct won him golden opinions and formed a capital introduction to the preaching of the Gospel; for Olivers had now begun to exercise his rare gifts in that direction. Returning to Bradford, he was soon appointed by John Wesley as a travelling preacher. After preaching in many parts of England and enduring the usual amount of hardship and risk to life and limb incident to the field-preacher's work in those days, he finally settled in London as John Wesley's *editor*, having charge of the *Arminian Magazine*, and other publications, for which Wesley was responsible. This office he held for twelve years; but he was never quite fit for it, and his chief was reluctantly compelled at last to put a more scholarly man in his place.

In the controversy between Wesley and Toplady on Predestination, etc., a controversy marked by the worst features of the time, the fiery Welshman was put forward to take the leading part on the Arminian side. Nothing could exceed the severity of Toplady's remarks and the fierceness of his attacks, both on the character and teaching of the veteran preacher, John Wesley, whom all the world now agrees to honor as one of the most devout, unselfish, and useful men who have adorned the Christian Church in any age. Right manfully did the "Welsh Cobbler," as Olivers was contemptuously styled, stand up for the doctrine of free grace. In his hands Wesley was quite content to leave the work of reply to Toplady's *Zanchius*, quietly remarking, "I can only make a few strictures, and leave the young man Toplady to be further corrected by one that is fully his match, Thomas Olivers."

Tyerman[140] speaks of Olivers as a man of high intellectual power; but "laments that the fiery Welshman undertook to meet the furious Predestinarian with the not too respectable weapons of his [234] own choosing." What this means may be imagined by the following sample of Toplady's personalities in this strife of tongues. He says, "Mr. Wesley skulks for shelter under a cobbler's apron;" and again, "Has Tom the Cobbler more learning and integrity than John the Priest?" It must be confessed that Cobbler Tom hit hard in reply. But an end has now come to the discreditable and useless strife; and, happily, it is in no danger of revival; while the hymns written by the pious Calvinist[141] and the zealous Arminian are both alike sung with devout emotion wherever the Saviour's name is known and adored.

Besides several controversial tracts, Olivers wrote a number of hymns, and is known as the composer of a number of Psalm-tunes.[142] He continued his ministry in London till March, 1799, when he died at the age of seventy-four. He was buried in John Wesley's tomb, in the City Road Chapel Yard, London, as a token of the esteem in which he was held by Wesley and his friends.

THOMAS HOLCROFT, DRAMATIST, NOVELIST, ETC.[143]

Thomas Holcroft was a much more noteworthy man. At the time of the State Trials he had made a considerable name as a writer of political novels. In his "Anna St. Ives" and "Hugh Trevor" he had exposed the follies and vices of society around him, and had set forth his own political views in a manner well calculated to captivate the fancy of young and ardent reformers. When the trial of Hardy

began, Holcroft surrendered himself in court, deeming it base and unmanly to refuse to share the fate of those whose political views he had warmly espoused. Both friends and foes honored him for his chivalrous conduct in the affair. On the acquittal of his friends he was discharged without a trial.

The life of Holcroft is as full of romance as any of those depicted in his novels. He was born in London in 1745. During the first six years of the boy's life, his father was a shoemaker. Giving up this [235] occupation in 1751, Holcroft, senior, "took to the road" as a hawker and peddler, and his poor child led a vagrant, gypsy-like life, and passed through privations which he could never afterward think of without shame and sorrow. And yet he managed to turn this worst period of his life to some account. The first-hand knowledge it afforded him of nature and human affairs gave freshness and power to the comedies and dramas written in later years. During these early years his father taught him to read out of the Bible, and such was his progress, that in a little while the daily task consisted of eleven chapters. These, he tells us, he could often have missed by telling a falsehood, which his conscience never would allow; and, besides this, he had no wish to evade the task, for the stories of the Old Testament were so full of interest to his boyish mind, that he was eager to go on to the end. While his father and mother were engaged as hawkers, young Holcroft was sent out to beg. In this miserable employment he became quite an expert; and, like many another unfortunate beggar, he was led to draw on his imagination for tales to answer his purpose. On returning home he would recount his adventures, and repeat the marvellous stories he had invented, until his father, who at first admired the lad's gift as a romancer, came to be ashamed of allowing him to lead such an idle and mischievous life, and put a stop to his escapades.

After this he was employed as a stable-boy and jockey at Newmarket. The change in his circumstances thus brought about was a very happy one, for he had now good fare, a comfortable bed to sleep on, decent or rather *smart* clothes, of which he was not a little proud; and, added to all this, a certain position in respectable society! His father had a friend at Newmarket who had a taste for reading, and followed the "profession" of feeder and trainer of gamecocks for the pit. This man was struck with Thomas Holcroft's natural ability, and lent him books to read, such as the "Spectator" and "Gulliver's Travels." While at Newmarket he was one day passing a church, and stopped to listen to the music of the choir, then engaged in practice. He ventured to enter the church, and feeling a strong desire to learn to sing, spoke to the leader. Mr. Langham, who, finding the stable-boy had a good voice, admitted him into the choir. He threw himself so heartily into this new and fascinating study, that it was not long before he could read music and sing in good style.

At the age of sixteen, he again went to live with his father, who had once more returned to the [236] shoemaker's stall, and lived in London. Here he learned enough of the trade to earn a livelihood, but he involved himself in premature cares by an imprudent marriage when only twenty years of age.

And now the passion for a roving life got the better of him, and quitting the monotony of a cobbler's room, he betook himself to the stage. For seven years he led the life of a strolling player, "and sounded all the depths and shoals" of misery incident to such a precarious existence.

It was not till after his thirtieth year that he began to acquire settled habits of study, to learn the languages—French, German, and Italian—in which he afterward became a ready translator, and to set about any kind of literary work. The first products of his pen appeared in the *Whitehall Evening Post*. He was in his thirty-fifth year when his first novel, "Alwyn, or the Gentleman Comedian," appeared. The year after this saw the issue of his earliest comedy, *Duplicity*, which was put on the stage at Covent Garden Theatre, and had a good run of success. This was followed by some thirty dramatic pieces of one kind or other, in poetry or prose, comedies and comic operas, dramas and melodramas, which last he had the credit of introducing into England. The *Road to Ruin* is accounted, by some judges of note, the best of his dramas. Holcroft was a man of versatile powers and great industry. His natural gifts were remarkable, and his extensive knowledge was almost entirely self-acquired. As already indicated, he was a very prolific author. Besides the three novels and the plays referred to above, he issued translations from the *French* of Toucher d'Obsonville and Pierre de Long; from the *German*, Goethe's "Herman and Dorothea;" and from the Italian. He spent much of his time in Germany and France, and his interesting work, "Travels into France," is one of his most valued productions. Thomas Holcroft died 23d March, 1809, at the age of sixty-four, having crowded as much work into his eventful life as most of the leading men of his time.

JOSEPH BLACKET, POET, "THE SON OF SORROW."

At the beginning of this century there were two young shoemakers in London who were spending their leisure time in hard reading and attempts at musical composition. One of them, Robert Bloomfield, a [237] [238] sketch of whom has already been given,[144] is known as widely as the English language itself. The [239] other, *Joseph Blacket*, made but little stir in the world, and is now well-nigh forgotten. He took to writing poetry at a much earlier age than Bloomfield, who wrote nothing before his sixteenth year, while Blacket, if we may trust the notes in his "Specimens" and "Remains," began, very characteristically, with "The Sigh," written at *ten* years of age. His unhappy life was brought to a close when he was but twenty-four years old. At this age Bloomfield had written very little poetry, and "The Farmer's Boy" was not begun. But if his genius ripened slowly, it produced fruits far more valuable than those presented to the world by the precocity of poor Blacket. There is nothing of Blacket's to compare with "The Farmer's Boy," or "Richard and Kate," or "The Fakenham Ghost." It is interesting to know that the two poetical sons of Crispin were acquainted, and cherished a high regard for each other. They seem to have met at the house of Mr. Pratt, Blacket's patron and editor, and afterward to have exchanged copies of each other's works, accompanied by friendly letters. What Bloomfield thought of his young friend may be gathered from the following portion of a letter: "The instant I

received your volume I resolved to shake hands with you, by letter at least, and to thank you for a pleasure of no common sort. The ‘Conflagration’ is so truly full of fire that it almost burns one’s fingers to read it. ‘Saragossa’ is a noble poem. Choose your own themes, and let the master-tints of your mind have full play.”

JOSEPH BLACKET

In a letter to his friend Mr. Pratt, Blacket says that he was born in 1786 at Tunstill, five miles from Richmond, in Yorkshire. His father was a day-laborer, who had eight children to provide for at the time Joseph was old enough for school.[145] It was therefore fortunate for him that the village schoolmistress took a fancy for him, and taught him for nothing. He stayed with her until he was [240] seven, and then went to a school taught by a master. At the age of eleven he was removed to London, his brother John having engaged to provide a home for him and teach him his trade during the next seven years. In this respect his position was very similar to that of Bloomfield, whose brother George became the guardian of the shy Suffolk lad when he first went up to London.[146] John Blacket was so anxious that his ward should not forget his little learning that he often kept the lad at home to write on Sunday. There were such books in John’s library as “Josephus,” “Eusebius’ Church History,” “Fox’s Martyrs,” all of which were read through by the time Joseph was fifteen years of age. “At that time,” he says, “the drama was totally unknown to me; a play I had neither seen nor read.” One evening a companion called on him and begged him to go and see Kemble play *Richard the Third* at Drury Lane. His brother John refused consent at first, but yielded at last to the clever strategy of an appeal made in a few impromptu verses, which so greatly pleased and surprised the fond brother, that he at once “gave him leave to go, together with a couple of shillings to defray his expenses.” From this time forth he devoted himself to the study of the poets Milton, Pope, Young, Otway, Rowe, Beattie, Thompson, but especially, and for a time almost exclusively, to Shakespeare. As a young poet it is said of him that “His anxiety to produce something that should be thought worthy of the public in the form of a drama appears to have surpassed all his other cares.... Something of the dramatic kind pervades the whole mass of his papers. I have traced it on bills, receipts, backs of letters, shoe patterns, slips of paper hangings, grocery wrappers, magazine covers, battalion orders for the volunteer corps of St. Pancras, in which he served, and on various other scraps on which his ink could scarcely be made to retain the impression of his thoughts; yet most of them crowded on both sides and much interlined.”[147]

Like most ardent young students in poor circumstances, Blacket was reckless of his health. His hard work by day and loss of nightly sleep sowed the seeds of the disease to which he eventually fell a victim. He married very young, and had the misfortune to lose his wife when he was only twenty-one years of age. A sister who came to nurse her was taken ill of brain fever, and nearly lost her life. [241] “Judge of my situation,” he says to his friend Mr. Pratt, “a dear wife stretched on the bed of death; a sister senseless, whose dissolution I expected every hour; an infant piteously looking round for its mother; creditors clamorous, friends cold or absent. I found, like the melancholy Jaques, that ‘when the deer was stricken the herd would shun him.’” In this wretched position he was obliged to sell everything to pay his debts. No wonder that he became a “son of sorrow,” and that most of the poetry written after this date bears the marks of gloom and distraction of mind. Yet it must be confessed that when the young poet sought to enter on his literary career by the publication of his poems, he had no cause to complain of want of friends. Mr. Marchant, a printer, took kindly to him, and published his first copies of “Specimens” free of expense. It was he who introduced the young aspirant for poetical fame to Mr. Pratt, the editor of the “Remains,” who seems, from the letters published, to have been a man of considerable means, but not of the best judgment in literary affairs. This friend had the most

exalted notions of the "genius" of his *protégé*, showed him the utmost kindness till the day of his death, and took charge of the funds raised by the publication of his "Remains," investing them in behalf of the poet's orphan child. In August, 1809, Blacket removed to Seaham, Durham, to the house of a brother-in-law, gamekeeper to Sir Ralph Milbanke of Castle Eden. The baronet and his family were very kind to him; a horse was lent him; dainty food was sent down for him from the castle; doctors were procured who attended him gratis; Lady Milbanke and Miss Milbanke, afterward Lady Byron, visited him constantly, and interested others in his behalf; among them the Duchess of Leeds, who procured a large number of subscribers to his volume of "Specimens."[148] No effort was spared by either doctors or friends to save his life and to ensure his reputation as a poet; but to no purpose, as it seemed, in either case. He died of consumption on the 23d of September, 1810, at the house of his brother-in-law, and was buried in Seaham churchyard by his friend Mr. Wallis, rector of the parish, who had been a Christian counsellor and comforter to the young poet during his long illness. At his own request, Miss Milbanke selected the spot for his grave, and caused a suitable monument to be [242] placed over it, on which were inscribed the lines, taken from his own poem, "Reflections at Midnight"—

"Shut from the light, 'mid awful gloom,
Let clay-cold honor rest in state;
And, from the decorated tomb,
Receive the tributes of the great.

"Let me, when bade with life to part
And in my narrow mansion sleep,
Receive a tribute from the heart,
Nor bribe one sordid eye to weep."

DAVID SERVICE, AND OTHER SONGSTERS OF THE COBBLER'S STALL.

David Service of Yarmouth represents a pretty numerous class of songsters of the cobbler's stall, worthy men in their way, but writers of inferior merit, of whom much cannot be said. Such writers were *John Foster* of Winteringham, Lincolnshire, who owed the publication of his "Serious Poems," in 1793, to the kindness of the vicar of the parish; *J. Johnstone*, a Scotchman, who published a small volume of poems in 1823; the Rev. *James Nichol* of Traquair, Selkirkshire, who in his shoemaking days "published two or three volumes of poetry."[149] *Gavin Wilson*, of Edinburgh, who, in 1788, published "A Collection of Masonic Songs," of whom Campbell says: "I knew Gavin Wilson; he was an honest, merry fellow, and a good boot, leather-leg, arm, and hand maker, but as sorry a poetaster as ever tried a couplet."[150] *James Devlin*, a man of versatile gifts and most irregular habits, who by turns wrote poetry, corresponded for the *Daily News*, and contributed to the *Spectator*, *Builder*, and *Notes and Queries*, and died about twenty years ago in poverty and obscurity.[151] These men, as regards their literary merit and fame, excepting perhaps the last, are well represented by the herdboy from the banks of the Clyde, who, after serving his time as a *sutor* at Greenock, journeyed south in search of work, and settled at Yarmouth, Norfolk, and there, at the age of twenty-seven, published a "Rural Poem," called "The Caledonian Herdboy," in 1802. Two years after he was encouraged by his friends [243] to issue "The Wild Harp's Murmurs" and "St. Crispin, or the Apprentice Boy," the former being dedicated to that friend of unknown young poets, Capel Lofft, the friend of the Bloomfields and Kirke White. His last adventure in this line bore the romantic title "A Voyage and Travels in the Region of the Brain." This verse occurs in one of his publications—

"'Apollo, why,' a matron cried,
'Are poets all so poor?'
'They write for fame,' Apollo cried,
'And seldom ask for more.'"

But this *poet*, it is to be feared, obtained neither wealth nor fame.

He became an inmate of the Yarmouth Workhouse, and died there on the 13th of March, 1825. And his "memorial," like that of many another local celebrity, has well-nigh perished with him.

JOHN STRUTHERS, POET, EDITOR, ETC.

John Struthers, a Scottish poet, the friend of Sir Walter Scott and Joanna Baillie, followed the trade of a shoemaker for many years after he had begun to gain a literary reputation. He was born at Kilbride in Lanarkshire in 1776, and learned his trade in his own home, for his father was a member of the same craft. Struthers is best known in Scotland as the author of "The Poor Man's Sabbath," a simple, unpretentious poem, which appeared in 1804, and rapidly passed through several editions.[152] His success in this first venture led to the publication of "The Peasant's Death," in 1806; "The Winter's Day," in 1811; "The Plough," in 1816; "The Dechmont," in 1836. He was the editor of a Scottish anthology, called "The Harp of Caledonia," in three volumes, to which his friends Sir Walter Scott and Joanna Baillie "sent voluntary contributions." He wrote a history of Scotland from the Union, 1707 to 1827, by which his reputation was greatly enhanced.

A considerable number of the biographies in Chambers's "Lives of Illustrious Scotchmen" are from his pen. For several years he held the position of press-corrector for Khull, Blackie & Co., of Glasgow. In 1832 he was made librarian in Stirling's Library, which office he held until within a few years of his death in 1853. His poetical works were collected and published by himself in 1850. He is spoken of as an excellent specimen of a shrewd, intelligent, strong-minded Scotchman.[153] [244]

JOHN O'NEILL, THE POET OF TEMPERANCE.

The name of John O'Neill is intimately associated with that of George Cruickshank in the work of temperance reform; for not only did Cruickshank prove himself a friend to the poor shoemaker and poet by illustrating his little poem entitled "The Blessings of Temperance," but it is with good reason declared that these illustrations and the scenes depicted in the poem itself suggested to the artist the leading ideas worked out in his series of plates entitled "The Bottle." Some of these sketches, as, for example, "The Upas Tree" and "The Raving Maniac and the Drivelling Fool," derive their titles from O'Neill's language in the poem itself. So closely, indeed, do the graphic sketches of the artist and the poet correspond, that O'Neill in the later editions of his little work surnamed it "A Companion to Cruickshank's 'Bottle.'"[154] On its first appearance the poem was entitled "The Drunkard," and received favorable notice in the pages of the *Athenæum* and the *Spectator*, besides other journals and papers of less literary merit. "The Drunkard" was not his first work, but it was his best, and the one by which his name became known and honored among teetotallers. As early as 1821 he had published a drama entitled "Alva." "The Sorrows of Memory" and a number of Irish melodies belonging to different periods in his life were issued a little later. His friend the Rev. Isaac Doxsey, in a sketch prefixed to "The Blessings of Temperance," speaks of O'Neill as the author of seven dramatic pieces, a collection of poems, and a novel called "Mary of Avonmore, or the Foundling of the Beach," and of numerous contributions to various periodicals.

John O'Neill was an Irishman, born at Waterford on the 8th of January, 1777. His mother was in wretched circumstances at the time of his birth, having been deserted by a worthless husband, who left her and her little family to the care of fortune. As a boy he was very slow to learn, and gave no indication of the gifts he afterward displayed. He and his brother, much his senior, were apprenticed to a relative who acted as a sort of guardian to the boys. O'Neill's mind was first awakened to a love for poetry by a drama in rhyme entitled "The Battle of Aughrim," by a shoemaker named Ansell, which he committed to memory. On leaving the service of his first master he became an apprentice to his brother, but soon quarrelled and the indentures were thrown into the fire. During the Rebellion of 1798 and 1799, when food was at famine prices, he lived in great poverty at Dublin and Carrick-on-Suir; and in the latter place, notwithstanding the miserable state of his affairs, he found some one with love and courage sufficient to enable her to become his wife. It was at this time also that he began to read in earnest, chiefly poetry, though nothing came amiss, and, as a matter of course, every book was borrowed. The first-fruits of his poetic genius, if the term be permissible, were presented to the world in a little satirical poem written at Carrick, "The Clothier's Looking-Glass." This was designed to expose what was regarded as the cruelty and heartlessness of the master-clothiers in uniting to reduce the wages of the men. O'Neill was induced to contribute to this trade dispute by a man named Stacey, a printer, under whose guidance the shoemaker acquired some knowledge of the art of printing, and set up a press. The press was a capital adjunct to the pen, which the active young shoemaker and amateur printer was now using pretty freely. [245]

At this time he became a strong political partisan, and used both his pen and press in an election contest in favor of General Matthew, brother of the Earl of Llandaff. It was the Earl's promise of patronage that induced O'Neill to leave Ireland and settle in London, some time in 1812 or 1813. This promise was never redeemed, for the Earl about this time became a resident in Naples. Disheartened by his disappointment, the poor shoemaker dropped for a time all reading and literary toil and aspiration, and stuck doggedly and sullenly to his last.

For seven years he seems to have neither read nor written anything. At length a long period of "enforced leisure," occasioned by an accident which made work with the awl impossible, compelled him to betake himself to reading, and thus his mind was roused from its torpor. An English translation of a volume of Spanish novels fell in his way, and its perusal suggested the subject for the drama *Alva*, which, as we have said, he published in 1821. His other works are named above. None of these seem to have brought him much profit, neither were his attempts at "business for himself," once as a master-shoemaker and again as a huckster, at all successful. On several occasions he was assisted by grants from the Literary Fund, and was thankful for the kindly aid afforded him by his friends the teetotalers. [246]

In spite of all his hard work as a shoemaker, and his many little literary adventures (perhaps because of *them*), he was in his old age a very poor man. Mr. Doxsey says in 1851, "John O'Neill and his aged partner dwell in a miserable garret in St. Giles's." In his poor earthly estate he had one comfort, at all events—he did not "suffer as an evil-doer," and he could feel pretty sure that he had done not a little by his graphic pen and rude eloquence to turn many a sinner from a life of misery and shame. His death occurred on the 3d of February, 1858.

JOHN YOUNGER, SHOEMAKER, FLY-FISHER, AND POET.

In 1860 a charming little book on "River Angling for Salmon and Trout"[155] was added to our extensive angling literature by a devout follower of Isaac Walton. The preface showed that it was the

work of a Lowland Scotchman, who was accustomed to divide his time between the two “gentle” occupations of shoemaking and fishing, and that this man, *John Younger*, had an enthusiasm for other things besides making fishing-boots and fishing-rods and lines, and the sport of the river-side. He was a zealous and, we had almost said, a desperate politician. He made corn-law rhymes, which came into the hands and drew forth praise from the pen of Ebenezer Elliott, who sent the best copy of his works as a present to the poetical shoemaker. In 1834 Younger tried the public with a volume of verse under the quaint title, “Thoughts as they Rise.”[156] But the public, like the shy fish of some of his own Scottish rivers, would not “rise” to his bait, for the work fell uncommonly flat. He was much more [247] successful with his “River Angling,” which appeared first in 1840, and again, with a sketch of his life, in 1860. In 1847 John Younger won the second prize for an essay on “The Temporal Advantages of the Sabbath to the Working-Classes,” and it was a proud day for him and his neighbors at St. Boswell’s when he set off to go up to London to receive his reward of £15 at the hands of Lord Shaftesbury in the big meeting at Exeter Hall. Younger, who was all his life a brother of the craft, was born at Longnewton, in the parish of Ancrum, 5th July, 1785. He died and was buried at St. Boswell’s in June, 1860. As we are writing we observe that his autobiography[157] has just been published, concerning which a writer in the *Athenæum* remarks,[158] “John Younger, shoemaker, fly-fisher, and poet, has left a Life which is certainly worth reading;“ and adds, ”There is something more in him than a vein of talent sufficient to earn a local celebrity.” With this opinion agree the remarks of the *Scotsman* and the *Sunderland Times*, which said of him at the time of his death, “One of the most remarkable men of the population of the South of Scotland, whether as a genial writer of prose or verse or a man of high conversational powers and clear common-sense, the shoemaker of St. Boswell’s had few or no rivals in the South;“ and ”Nature made him a poet, a philosopher, and a nobleman; society made him a cobbler of shoes.” He was certainly a most original character, and his originality and genius appear in every chapter of his Autobiography.

CHARLES CROCKER, “THE POOR COBBLER OF CHICHESTER”.

Charles Crocker, who was born in Chichester, 22d June, 1797, was the son of poor parents, who could not afford to send him to school after he was seven years of age, but they were assisted by friends who procured him admission to the Chichester “Greycoat School.” He was sent before the age of twelve to work as a shoemaker’s apprentice. “This arrangement,” he says in the brief sketch of his life which is given in the preface to his poems,[159] “was perhaps rather favorable than otherwise to the [248] improvement of my mind, for the sedentary labor necessary in this kind of employment, while it keeps the hands fully engaged, gives little or no exercise to the mental faculties, consequently the mind of a person so employed may, without any hindrance to his work, find occupation or amusement in intellectual or imaginative pursuits.” His youthful days were spent in hard work and study. Spite of his schooling, grammar presented a great difficulty when he began to apply himself seriously to literary work. He even went so far as to commit an entire book to memory in his efforts to master the art. He mentions a lecture on Milton by Thelwall as having given him much help in trying to understand the structure of English verse. Besides Milton, Cowper, Collins, and Goldsmith became favorites, and he committed large portions of their writings to memory, and so learned to frame a style. The first volume of his poems was published in 1830, and the third in 1841. He also wrote “A Visit to Chichester Cathedral,” which passed through several editions. Crocker died in 1861.[160]

PREACHERS. [249]

GEORGE FOX, FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

The name of George Fox belongs to the list of practical philanthropists; for Fox may be said to have given himself body and soul to the good of his fellow-men, and to have lived the life of a martyr to the cause to which he felt called to consecrate himself. He was born in 1624, the year in which Jacob Boehmen died. We are the more inclined to notice this coincidence because the character and work of George Fox suggest a comparison between the two men. Both men were pietists and mystics; but in this alone are they alike. When we look at their life-work, we are at once reminded of their nationality. The German is speculative, the Englishman is practical; the one turns his dreams and visions into books, and the other into acts.[161]

George Fox’s early life was spent near his native place, Drayton, in Leicestershire, with a man who combined the occupations of shoemaker and dealer in wool and cattle. After eight years’ service with this master, the young shoemaker, then at the age of nineteen, clad in a leathern doublet of his own making, went forth into the world as a preacher and reformer. He was led to adopt this life by what he regarded as a voice from heaven. He had been to a fair, and was grieved by the intemperance of two of his youthful friends whom he saw there. In his “Journal” he speaks of the effect this sight produced upon his mind, and the resolve to which it led him. “I went away,” he says, “and when I had done my business, returned home; but I did not go to bed that night, nor could I sleep, but sometimes walked

up and down, and sometimes prayed and cried to the Lord, who said unto me, 'Thou seest how many young people go together into vanity, and old people into the earth; thou must forsake all, young and old, keep out of all, and be a stranger to all.'" After living the life of a wandering preacher for a few years, he was induced to return home for a short time, but the voice from heaven forbade his resisting, and summoned him again into the Lord's vineyard. In 1648, when only twenty-four years of age, he began to preach in Manchester, and to gather round him a number of adherents. From [250] Manchester he went on a tour through the northern counties of England. Two years after this his followers began to be known by the name of Quakers. This term was first used by Justice Bennet of Derby, before whom Fox was cited for disturbing the peace. In 1655 he was summoned to appear before Cromwell, who dismissed the Leicestershire shoemaker as a harmless enthusiast, whose attempts at moral and religious reform could not do anything but good among the people. In fact, Cromwell, a sturdy Puritan and a religious enthusiast himself, was deeply moved by the spiritual fervor of the simple-hearted preacher; for Fox, who never feared the face of any man, did not fail to speak his mind to Cromwell on religious matters. As the preacher left the room, the Protector said to him, "Come again to my house, for if thou and I were but an hour of a day together, we should be nearer one to the other."

In the reign of Charles II., when the anti-puritan reaction set in, Fox fared far worse than before. Time after time he was thrown into prison for speaking in the "steeple-houses" (churches) and disturbing public worship. It was not at all an uncommon thing for the rough preacher, clad in his leathern doublet, to stand up in church while service was going on, and rebuke the lukewarmness of the minister and the formalism of the worshippers. This he conceived to be part of the mission to which the spirit-voice had called him. Nor did he expect to be allowed to discharge it without bringing down the hand of the civil authorities upon his own head. But he had counted the cost, and was prepared to suffer. A large part of his time was spent in jail, where he underwent terrible hardships from want of food and clothing. Nothing, however, could daunt his ardor, or make him "disobedient unto the heavenly vision." He was no sooner at large than he began again to deliver his message, calling on men to listen to the voice of Christ within, and to reform their lives. Surely nothing could have been more pure, more simple, and more unselfish than the life of this devout and eccentric preacher of the gospel of love, peace, and truth; yet he was hounded from jail to jail by the bigots of his day as if he had been a common vagrant or thief. The sufferings he endured at the hands of furious mobs are often recorded in his journal. These he bore with the utmost meekness, as a firm believer in the doctrine of non-resistance to evil. Once when he had been half killed, and the mob stood round him as he lay upon the floor, he says, "I lay still a little while, and the power of the Lord sprang through me, and eternal [251] refreshings revived me, so that I stood up again in the strengthening power of the eternal God, and stretching out my arms among them, I said, 'Strike again! here are my arms, my head, my cheeks!' Then they began to fall out among themselves." The distinctive principles of the Society of Friends, of which George Fox was the founder, are too well known to need description here. In 1669 Fox married the widow of Judge Fell. After visiting Ireland, America, Holland, Denmark, and Prussia, this apostle of the seventeenth century returned to England, and died in London, January 13th, 1691, at the age of sixty-seven.

Spite of all his so-called *vagaries*, his want of education and culture and grasp of intellect, the Leicestershire shoemaker, by dint of moral earnestness and undaunted courage, succeeded in laying the foundation of a religious society, which in proportion to its numbers has exerted a greater moral influence than any other denomination of Christians. His "Journal," which is one of the most singular records of mental experience and missionary adventure ever written, was first published in 1694. His "Epistles" were printed in 1698, and his "Doctrinal Pieces" in 1706.

THOMAS SHILLITOE, THE SHOEMAKER WHO STOOD BEFORE KINGS.

The term "calling," as applied to the trade or occupation a man follows, is, or rather was, originally supposed to indicate a belief that he is called and appointed of God to follow it. This belief underlies the teaching of the Church Catechism.[162] How far it prevails nowadays it would be hard to tell. The term seems to have survived the belief which gave rise to it; for one does not often meet with instances outside the Christian ministry in which men regard their daily avocation as a veritable "calling." This, however, was the case with *Thomas Shillitoe*, who was evidently as well satisfied of his "call" to be a shoemaker as of his Divine commission to stand before kings and rulers as a witness for the truth of God. This devout man would have had no hesitation, we apprehend, in the simplicity and strength of his conviction about the matter, to speak of himself as "called to be" a shoemaker. He was [252] a member of the Society of Friends, a follower, and indeed a very close follower, in the spirit and method of his life-work, of the apostolic George Fox. Shillitoe's "Journal" will often remind the reader of the records and experiences of the shoemaker of Leicestershire.

Thomas Shillitoe was born in Holborn, London, in 1754. His father, who had been librarian to the Society of Gray's Inn, became the landlord of the "Three Tuns" public house, Islington, when Thomas was about twelve years of age. "Merry Islington" was then a village, and a favorite resort of idlers from the great city. Sundays were the busiest days of the week, and were chiefly spent by the boy in waiting on his father's customers. At the age of sixteen he became an apprentice to a grocer, whose failure very soon compelled Thomas to return home. About this time he began to attend the meetings of the Society of Friends. This led to serious thought and prayer, and the resolve to lead a Christian life and unite himself with these earnest Christian people. "His father, finding he was thus minded, was greatly displeased, and told him he would rather have followed him to the grave than he should have gone among the Quakers, and he was determined he should at once quit his house." But the youth was prepared for such a severe trial as this by that strong faith in Divine Providence which

formed the most marked feature of his character throughout the rest of his life. Nor was his faith unrewarded, for, on the very day on which he bade good-by to his father's roof, a situation was offered him in a banking-house in Lombard Street. Here he remained until he was twenty-four years of age.

He was at this time very anxious to become a preacher, but dreaded the danger of "running before he was sent," and therefore he waited for the Divine voice bidding him "Go forth." But before he could be made fit for this great work he must learn to humble himself and take up the cross. The banking-house and its surroundings must be forsaken; he must go forth like Moses into the land of Midian, like Paul into Arabia, and be prepared by simpler ways of life for the stern duties of the ministry of God's word. And so it came to pass, he tells us, that one Sunday while in earnest prayer that the Lord would be pleased to direct him, "He in mercy, I believe, heard my cries, and answered my supplications, pointing out to me the business I was to be willing to take to for a future livelihood as intelligibly to [253] my inward ear as ever words were expressed clearly and intelligibly to my outward ear—that I must be willing to humble myself and learn the trade of a shoemaker. This caused me much distress of mind, as my salary had been small, and having been obliged to make a respectable appearance, I had but little means to pay for instruction in a new line of business. Yet believing I was to keep close to my good Guide and He would not fail me, I entered on the work, though for the first twelve months my earnings only provided me at best with bread, cheese, and water, and sometimes only bread, and sitting constantly on the seat made it hard for me, yet both I and my instructor soon became reconciled to it." His diligence and thrift enabled him in a short time to open a shop of his own in Tottenham, and to employ workmen. It was not long after this that he received his first call to go forth from his home and preach. It was no easy matter to obey such a call at this time. His young wife knew nothing of business, and the foreman was not very trustworthy. Still the good man went out on a sort of missionary tour in Norfolk, and returned home to find, as he avers he always did find on returning from such a mission, that the words of Divine promise spoken to his inward ear were verified: "I will be more than bolts and bars to thy outward habitation, more than a master to thy servants, for I can restrain their wandering minds; more than a husband to thy wife, and a parent to thy infant children."

After continuing at the craft as a master-shoemaker for about twenty-seven years, Shillitoe in 1805 found that he had saved enough to put him in a position to relinquish business, and to devote himself more fully to the Christian and philanthropic work to which he believed he had been called of God. He paid several visits to Ireland, visiting the "drinking-houses" in every town to which he went, and endeavoring to reform the shocking abuses he met with in such places. First of all he would speak with the "keepers" of these houses, and plead with them to abolish the evils he saw around him; and then, turning his attention to the company of drinkers, revellers, and dancers, he would speak to them in such tender loving tones, that they were constrained to cease their rioting and listen to the faithful servant of Christ. He and his companion were rarely molested while engaged on these errands of mercy. In some instances crowds followed them to listen to their message, and where the company began by jeering and insulting the visitors, they soon settled down into a quiet and respectful [254] demeanor. When at Clonmel in 1810, Shillitoe writes in his journal: "My companion used often to say it seemed as if the Good Master went into the houses before us to prepare the way." Not content with visiting the "drinking-houses," we read, "it was his practice to visit either the magistrates or the bishops and priests, and sometimes he did not feel clear until he had spoken faithfully to all."[163] To the bishops, Roman Catholic or Protestant, he spoke in the most uncompromising manner about their responsibility for the influence of their teaching and conduct upon the people. Six hundred visits of mercy were paid to the drinking-houses of Dublin alone in the year 1811. The year after this his "Journal" records a remarkable visit which he and a fellow-worker paid to "an organized company of desperate characters, who for nearly fifty years had infested the neighborhood of Kingswood, who lived by plundering, robbing, horse-stealing," and were a terror to the locality. Even these men listened patiently to correction and instruction from the lips of Thomas Shillitoe, and thanked him and his friend for their good counsel.

From the lowest and humblest members of society he sometimes turned his attention to the highest and most influential. He could not think of kings and emperors without remembering their grave responsibility before God for the good government of their people, and feeling that it was his duty to speak to them upon the subject. In 1794 he and a friend named Stacey went to Windsor intent on seeing and speaking with King George III. It was early morning, when the King was in the habit of visiting his stables. Shillitoe was about to follow the King into one of the stables, when he was stopped by an attendant. George III., hearing their remarks, came out; when Stacey said, "This friend of mine has something to communicate to the King." On which his Majesty raised his hat, and his attendants ranging on his left and right, Thomas Shillitoe advanced in front, saying, "Hear, O King," and, in a discourse of about twenty minutes' duration, pressed upon the monarch the importance of true religion in persons of exalted station, and the influence and responsibility attached to power. The King listened with respect and emotion, "tears trickling down his cheeks."[164] It was certainly a more difficult thing to pay such a visit to the Prince Regent; but even this the prophet-like Quaker [255] accomplished at Brighton in 1813, and again at Windsor in 1823, when the gay Prince had become King George IV. The missionary zeal of Shillitoe carried him into Europe and America, where he never flinched from delivering his message to men in any position, high or low.

In Denmark he obtained an audience of the King, and spoke to him some plain words regarding the desecration of the Sabbath, and the evils attendant on Government-licensed lotteries. In Prussia he ventured to speak to the King in the garden of the Palace of Berlin, and was graciously received, the monarch promising to profit by the admonition he received. In Russia he saw the Czar Alexander in 1825, and spoke to him "of the abuses and oppressions that existed under his government." Alexander, who had great respect for the Friends, received his visitor very kindly, and conversed with him for a long time on religious subjects in the most frank and familiar manner.

After fifty years' faithful ministry, of the most singularly pure and disinterested character, this good man died at the age of eighty-two, 12th June, 1836.

JOHN THORP, FOUNDER OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCH AT MASBRO'.

The conversion and ministry of John Thorp, a shoemaker at Masbrough, Yorkshire, may be set down among the most extraordinary incidents connected with the eighteenth century religious revival. Thorp's conversion was an indirect result of the preaching of the Methodists, and occurred in such a singular manner as to make the story worth telling, even if it had led to no other results; but in Thorp's case the results of conversion were very noteworthy. Southey in his "Life of Wesley"[165] gives the following account: "A party of men were amusing themselves one day in an ale-house at Rotherham,[166] by mimicking the Methodists. It was disputed who succeeded best, and this led to a wager. There were four performers, and the rest of the company were to decide after a fair specimen from each. A Bible was produced, and three of the rivals, each in turn, mounted the table and held [256] forth in a style of irreverent buffoonery, wherein the Scriptures were not spared. John Thorp, who was the last exhibitor, got upon the table in high spirits, exclaiming, 'I shall beat you all!' He opened the book for a text, and his eyes rested on these words, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish!' These words at such a moment and in such a place struck him to the heart. He became serious, he preached in earnest, and he afterward affirmed that his own hair stood erect at the feelings which then came upon him, and the awful denunciations which he uttered. His companions heard him with the deepest silence. When he came down not a word was said concerning the wager; he left the room immediately without speaking to any one, went home in a state of great agitation, and resigned himself to the impulse which had thus strangely been produced. In consequence he joined the Methodists, and became an itinerant preacher; but he would often say, when he related this story, that if ever he preached by the assistance of the Spirit of God, it was at that time." In the theological controversies which sprang up in the society at Rotherham, Thorp took the Calvinistic side. This roused the ire of the Arminian Wesley, who sent off the Calvinistic cobbler to labor in a circuit a hundred miles away. But though Wesley had the power to drive Thorp from Rotherham, the autocrat had no power to drive the cobbler away from his Calvinism. Wesley then dismissed Thorp from the Connection, and he returned to the scenes of his conversion and first Christian work, to take charge of a body of people who left the Methodists and formed an Independent Church, 1757-60.[167] This little society rapidly grew in numbers and influence, and is at the present time a large and flourishing church at Masbro'. One of its first members, Mr. Walker, an iron-founder, was a leading patron of the school, which afterward developed into Rotherham College under the presidency of the learned Dr. E. Williams.[168] "Thus to the pious zeal of an obscure shoemaker the Dissenters are indirectly indebted for their valuable academical institution."[169]

Thorp was regularly ordained to the pastorate, and a chapel was built for his ministry, where he [257] preached till his death, at the age of fifty-two, 8th November, 1776. He was a friend of the pious and eccentric John Berridge,[170] Vicar of Everton, who gave his watch to Thorp as a token of esteem. John Thorp's son, William, was a far more famous preacher than his father, and held a conspicuous place at the beginning of this century as pastor of the Castle Green Church, Bristol. Representatives of the family belonging to a *third* and *fourth* generation of preachers still hold an honorable position as Established or Free Church ministers.

WILLIAM HUNTINGDON, S.S., CALVINISTIC METHODIST PREACHER.

One of the most eloquent and famous preachers in London at the close of the last century and the beginning of the present, when eloquent and famous preachers were by no means rare, was *William Huntingdon*, whose portrait may be seen in the National Portrait Gallery, South Kensington, London. Huntingdon's father was a farm laborer in Kent named Hunt. How the name Hunt grew into the more dignified Huntingdon (or Huntington) we cannot tell; probably through some whim of his own, for this eccentric man took liberties with his name, as the reader will see presently. He seems to have combined shoemaking with his other avocations, for one notice speaks of him as by turns hostler, gardener, cobbler, and coal-heaver.[171]

He was not favored with any early education, but by careful self-culture of his first-rate natural gifts acquired the rare art of speaking with an ease and elegance and force that pleased all sorts of hearers. Long after he had begun to attract crowds by his eloquence he worked for his daily bread as a cobbler. Many a sermon was made with his work on his lap and a Bible on the chair beside him. A chapel was built for his ministry in Tichfield Street, London, and when it proved too small, the congregation moved to a larger building erected in Gray's Inn Road.

In his diary, 22d October, 1812, H. C. Robinson[172] says, "Heard W. Huntingdon preach, the man who [258] puts *S.S.* (sinner saved) after his name. He has an admirable exterior; his voice is clear and melodious; his manner singularly easy, and even graceful. There was no violence, no bluster; yet there was no want of earnestness or strength. His language was very figurative, the images being taken from the ordinary business of life, and especially from the army and navy. He is very colloquial, and has a wonderful Biblical memory; indeed, he is said to know the whole Bible by heart. I noticed that though he was frequent in his citations, and always added chapter and verse, he never opened the little book he had in his hand. He is said to resemble Robert Robinson of Cambridge."[173]

In regard to the S.S. which he persisted in writing after his name. Huntingdon says, "M.A. is out of my

reach for want of learning; D.D. I cannot attain for want of cash; but S.S. I adopt, by which I mean '*sinner saved*.'" He married as his second wife the wealthy widow of Alderman Sir J. Saunderson, once Lord Mayor of London. His death occurred in 1813, at Tunbridge Wells.[174] One of his best known works is entitled "The Bank of Faith," an extraordinary record of his own personal experience in illustration of the doctrine of special providence. His sermons, etc., were published in no less than twenty volumes.

REV. ROBERT MORRISON, D.D., CHINESE SCHOLAR AND MISSIONARY.

A maker of wooden clogs and shoe-lasts is hardly a shoemaker, in the commonly understood sense of the term, yet he stands in a very close relation to the gentle craft, and for this reason we may not unfairly claim *Robert Morrison* of Newcastle as a member of the illustrious brotherhood of the sons of St. Crispin. Dr. Morrison was the pioneer of modern missions to China, and did for the people and language of that country what another shoemaker did for the people of Bengal. The youthful Northumbrian had only a plain elementary education, and after he became an apprentice, spent all his [259] spare time in reading religious books. At the age of nineteen he gave up his humble trade and began to study under a minister, who passed him on in two years to the academy at Hoxton, where he made such progress, that in a short time he was sent to London to study Chinese under Sam Tok, a native teacher, with a view to his becoming a missionary to China, in connection with the London Missionary Society. In 1807, he sailed for that country, and his rare gifts as a linguist were shown in the publication of a Chinese version of the Acts of the Apostles, after only three years' labor, in 1810. The Gospel of Luke appeared in 1812, and the entire New Testament in 1814. With the help of William Milne he issued the Old Testament shortly after the last date. His labors were not confined to the translation of the Sacred Scriptures. His greatest work was a "Dictionary of the Chinese Language," published in 1818 by the Hon. East India Company at a cost of £15,000. He also edited a Chinese grammar. The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by the University of Glasgow.

In 1817, Dr. Morrison accompanied Lord Amherst in his embassy to Pekin, and afterward, as the last great work of a noble life, founded an Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca, to whose funds he left the bulk of his property. On his return to England in 1823 for rest and change, his great gifts and labors as a linguist and a missionary were cordially recognized in many quarters. The Royal Society made him a member, and King George IV. honored himself, as well as his distinguished subject, by seeking an interview with him. In 1826 he returned to the field of his missionary labors. On his death at Canton in 1834, England lost her best Chinese scholar, and one of the most devoted, self-sacrificing, and useful missionaries who ever left her shores.

THE REV. JOHN BURNET, PREACHER AND PHILANTHROPIST.

The eloquent and popular minister of Camberwell Green Congregational Church, the *Rev. John Burnet*, who divided his time and energies between preaching and philanthropic labors, is claimed by the craft as one of the most gifted and useful men who have sprung from their ranks.[175] He was of Highland descent, and was born in Perth, 13th April, 1789. His early education at the High School of [260] Perth must have given him great advantage over most youths of the *souter* fraternity. How long he plied the awl we cannot say. Soon after his union with a Christian Church in Perth his friends discovered his gifts as a speaker, and encouraged his adoption of the ministry as a profession. To this end they supplied him with funds, and for a time he studied with much advantage under the Rev. William Orme of Perth. In 1815 Mr. Burnet removed from Perth to Dublin, and soon afterward became an agent of the Irish Evangelical Society. His labors at Cork proving acceptable to the Independent Church there, he was invited to become their pastor, and for fifteen years was well known by all the Protestants of the district as an eloquent and faithful preacher. The growth of his congregation led to the building of a handsome new chapel for his ministry in George Street. But his labors were not confined to these localities (Cork and Mallow). His biographer states that "he continually visited the other towns and places in the South of Ireland, preaching in the court-houses, market-places, and frequently in the halls of the resident nobility and gentry—all the Protestants gladly giving him the requisite facilities. On these journeys he had usually a free pass by the mails and coaches, but he travelled a good deal on horseback."[176]

It would have been an easy matter for Mr. Burnet to enter Parliament, if he could have been persuaded to quit the ministry and devote himself entirely to political life; for he was popular with the Liberals of his day, had rare gifts as a speaker, and was thoroughly acquainted with politics. But the best efforts of his friend Joseph Sturge, and the offer of ample means to maintain the position of a member of Parliament, failed to induce him to accept the flattering offer. He was constantly employed as a platform speaker, and never refused his aid to any cause "affecting the rights of the people or the progress of humanity."

For many years he was on the Committee of the Bible Society, the London Missionary Society, the Irish Evangelical and the British and Foreign Sailors' Societies. Yet with all this public work he never neglected the duties of the pastorate, but occupied his pulpit efficiently from Sunday to Sunday, and held several meetings during the week for the instruction of his people. In 1845 his brethren of the [261] Independent Connection showed their esteem by electing him to fill the chair of the Congregational Union.

In 1825 Mr. Burnet was summoned to give evidence before a committee of the House of Lords on the state of the Catholic population in Ireland. At first he declined to attend, saying that he could not leave

his work, for he had no one to supply his place in his absence. But a second summons made it clear that he was bound to obey orders, and he accordingly went up to London and gave the committee the benefit of his extensive acquaintance with the religious condition of the South of Ireland. His visit to London brought him again into the company of his old friend Mr. Orme, who introduced him to the congregation, of which Mr. Orme was the pastor, at the Mansion House Chapel. On his death in 1830, Mr. Burnet was invited to succeed his friend as the pastor of the church. This pastorate he held for thirty-two years, till the day of his death. In 1852 the new and costly building opposite Camberwell Green was built, the congregation removing thither from the old "Mansion House."

Mr. Burnet was best known for his philanthropic labors, chiefly in connection with the anti-slavery cause. In this work he labored side by side, and on intimate terms of friendship, with Wilberforce, Brougham, Zachary Macaulay, Lord Macaulay, Sir T. F. Buxton, and other advocates of freedom for the slave. "His labors," it is said, "in committee were continuous and valuable, and his good sense and sound judgment were not seldom needed in the conduct of this great movement. He went frequently on deputations to the Government, and was obliged to spend much time at the House of Commons to be near the anti-slavery leaders in all times of difficulty, and by this means became acquainted with the leading public men of the day, who admired his straightforward character, readiness, and humor." He died at the age of seventy-three, June 10th, 1862.

JOHN KITTO, D.D., THE BIBLICAL SCHOLAR.

Very few illustrious men have been so heavily handicapped in the race of life and the pursuit of knowledge as the eminent Biblical scholar, *John Kitto*, who was born at Plymouth, 4th December, [262] 1804.[177] Added to poverty, the want of proper food and clothing, he had to endure in early life the deprivation of natural guardians and friends, terrible cruelty from a master under whose care he was placed, and, worst of all, the entire loss of the sense of hearing, so that from the age of twelve to the day of his death he never could hear a sound of any description. Deeply pathetic is the story of his early life as told by himself in his journal and letters. His father was a working mason at Plymouth, who had lost a good business by intemperate habits. When John was only four years old, his grandmother, who could not endure the sight of his misery at home, engaged to bring him up. This good woman was the guardian angel of Kitto's childhood, and did more, perhaps, than any one else to mould his character. It was a sad day for him when she was compelled by poverty and illness to break up her home and go with her little ward to live with his parents. He had already become fond of reading, and had even tried his hand at writing tales for the amusement of his childish companions and the more serious purpose of earning a few pence to buy books. One day, when working with his father, he fell from the top of a house thirty-five feet high, and was carried home in a state of unconsciousness. After lying in this state for a fortnight, he awoke to discover to his dismay that he was absolutely deaf. He had asked for a book which a neighbor had lent him just before the accident, and when his friends found that he could not hear their reply, one of them took up a slate and *wrote* upon it. "Why do you not speak?" he cried. "Why do you *write* to me? Why not speak? Speak, speak!" "Then," he tells us, "those who stood around the bed exchanged significant looks of concern, and the writer soon displayed upon his slate the awful words, 'YOU ARE DEAF!' Did not this utterly crush me? By no means. In my then weakened condition nothing like this could affect me. Besides, I was a child; and to a child the full extent of such a calamity could not be at once apparent. However, I knew not the future—it was well I did not; and there was nothing to show me that I suffered under more than a temporary deafness, which in a few days might pass away. It was left for time to show me the sad realities of the condition to which I was reduced."

At the age of fifteen he was sent to the workhouse, scarcely understanding what was being done with [263] him. On realizing his true position in this place, "his anguish was indescribable." Yet in Kitto's time this place was hardly like an ordinary modern workhouse. It had long borne the name of *The Hospital of the Poor's Portion*, was founded in 1630 by Gayer, Colmer, and Fowell, and endowed in 1674 by Lanyon with £2000, and in 1708 was converted into a poorhouse by Act of Parliament. It had apartments for boys, who were admitted on Hele's and Lanyon's charities. Young Kitto was kindly treated by the guardians, even being allowed to go out every day, and for a long time to sleep at home. His occupation was the making of *list shoes*, in which he became so proficient that he was sent out as an apprentice to a shoemaker in the town, who treated him so savagely that the humane guardians quashed the agreement and took him again under their care. But even in this wretched situation, where he was often compelled to work sixteen or eighteen hours a day, the poor deaf boy managed to go on with his studies; and in his interesting work called "The Lost Senses," published twenty years afterward, he remarks, "Now that I look back upon this time, the amount of study which I did, under these circumstances, contrive to get through, amazes and confounds me."

About a year after his return to the poorhouse, certain gentlemen in Plymouth, who had come to hear of his superior abilities and passion for reading, drew up a circular asking for funds to enable him to devote his time entirely to study. This appeal was so successful that the poor workhouse boy was placed under the care of a good friend, named Mr. Barnard, to board and lodge, and allowed to go to the public library for the purpose of reading and study. His course as a student was now fairly open. In a few years he published his first book, "Essays and Letters," with a short memoir of the author. In 1825 his friend Mr. Groves of Exeter was the means of sending him to the Church Missionary Institution, London, where for a time he was employed as a printer. For two years he resided at Malta in the service of this Society. After this, an arrangement was made with his friend Mr. Groves which proved of the utmost possible service to the diligent student, whose mind had long been set on travelling as a means of increasing his knowledge. Mr. Groves asked Kitto to accompany him to the East. Five years were spent in a journey through Russia, Persia, and Asiatic Turkey, during which "the [264]

deaf traveller" obtained the vast stores of information of which he made such good use in the various works written on his return to England. In 1833 he was engaged by Mr. Charles Knight, the well-known publisher, to write for the *Penny Magazine*, and wrote for that journal a number of articles entitled "The Deaf Traveller." He contributed many articles also to the *Penny Cyclopædia*. His best known works are "The Pictorial Bible," "The Pictorial Sunday Book," "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature," "The Lost Senses," "Journal of Sacred Literature," and "Daily Bible Illustrations," a work of great value, in eight volumes. In 1844 the University of Giessen conferred on him the diploma of D.D., and in the following year he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. Notwithstanding his immense labors and the great value of his writings, he was, toward the close of his life, considerably embarrassed by pecuniary difficulties, which were alleviated, but not entirely removed, by a Government pension of £100 per year. John Kitto died and was buried at Cannstatt, in Germany, 25th November, 1854, at the age of forty-nine.

SCIENCE.

WILLIAM STURGEON, THE ELECTRICIAN.

The name of *William Sturgeon*, so honorably connected with the science of electricity and magnetism, has a fair claim to be entered on this list. Sturgeon was a Lancashire man, born at Wittington in that county in 1783. All his youth was spent at the shoemaker's stall. On arriving at manhood he abandoned this quiet, peaceful occupation for the life of a soldier. After two years' service in the militia he enlisted in the Royal Artillery. Like William Cobbett, he found it possible to read in the midst of the distractions of the barrack-room. His chief attention was given to the study of electricity and magnetism, which at that time were attracting a great deal of attention on the part of men of science. [178] The first proof Sturgeon gave of special and extensive knowledge on the subject was in the papers which he contributed to the *Philosophical Magazine* in 1823-24. In 1825 he published an account of certain magneto-electric appliances, for which the Society of Arts awarded him their silver [265] medal and a purse containing £30. About this time, that is, soon after leaving the army, he was appointed to the chair of experimental philosophy in the East India Company's Military Academy at Addiscombe. His pamphlet, published in 1830, on "Experimental Researches in Electro-Magnetism and Galvanism," described his own experiments, which issued in an improved method of preparing plates for the galvanic battery; a method still found, in many respects, to be the best. He invented the electro-magnetic-coil machine, now used very frequently by medical men in giving a succession of shocks to the patient, and still preferred by the faculty to other instruments for this purpose. This industrious and original investigator was also the inventor of a method of driving machinery by electro-magnetism; but he little dreamt, it may be, of the extent to which electricity would be employed in these days as a motive power and for lighting purposes. He edited the "Annals of Electricity, Magnetism, and Chemistry," and published his own works in one volume a few years before his death. Like many inventors, he never made a fortune, but died poor. A Government pension of £50 per annum came to relieve him of his cares only the year before his death, which occurred in 1850.

POLITICIANS.

THOMAS HARDY, OF "THE STATE TRIALS."

The "*gentle* craft." has been as prolific of fiery politicians as of peaceful poets. We have to speak now of two men who were connected respectively with the political agitations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the year 1794, when the events of the French Revolution had convulsed the whole of Europe, society in England was stirred to its depths, and grave fears were entertained by the King and his Parliament lest the spirit of revolution should break loose in this country. Such fears were not altogether unfounded. Societies sprang up whose object was reform, by legitimate means if possible, but if not, by violence and bloodshed. One of the strongest of these societies existed in London, and had carried its proceedings to such a pitch that four of its leading members were brought to trial on a [266] charge of treason and sedition. It is a remarkable fact that of these four men—Hardy, Horne-Tooke, Thelwall, and Holcroft—the first and last belonged to the class of shoemakers.[179]

Thomas Hardy was the secretary of the Association, and had to bear the brunt of the trial, in which he was defended by the Honorable Thomas Erskine. Speaking of these famous state trials, Henry Crabb Robinson, who was then living at Colchester, says, "I felt an intense interest in them. During the first trial I was in a state of agitation that rendered me unfit for business. I used to beset the post-office early, and one morning at six I obtained the London paper with NOT GUILTY printed in letters an inch in height, recording the issue of Hardy's trial. I ran about the town knocking at people's doors and screaming out the joyful words. Thomas Hardy, who was a shoemaker, made a sort of circuit, and obtained, of course, many an order in the way of his trade.... Hardy was a good-hearted, simple, and honest man. He had neither the talents nor the vices which might be supposed to belong to an acquitted traitor. He lived to an advanced age and died universally respected."[180] Hardy died in the year 1831, in his eighty-second year, having been born in 1751. At the close of his life he was connected with the Wesleyan Methodists. His monument may still be seen in the Bunhill Fields Burying Ground, opposite the City Road Chapel, London.

GEORGE ODGER, POLITICAL ORATOR.

It has been remarked above, that shoemakers, whether "illustrious" or not, have played a prominent part in connection with religious and political reform. In proof of this we have only to ask the reader to [267] recall what has been said of Henry Michael Buch, Hans Sachs, George Fox, Drs. Carey and Morrison, and John Pounds, among moral and religious reformers; and such men as Hardy, Holcroft, and Thomas Cooper, in the sphere of politics. The name of *George Odger* deserves a place also in this list of reformers and improvers of the world, for although his field of labor was a very humble one, it was sufficient for the display of fine qualities of mind and heart. Odger was one of the best specimens this country has produced of a powerful class in modern society, called "working-men politicians." His influence as a working-man among the working-men of London was unrivalled in his day, and was always of a wholesome and ennobling character. Professor Fawcett said "he was as good and true a man as ever lived," paid a warm tribute to his "rare intelligence and power and eloquence," and added, moreover, that if the poor shoemaker "had been born in circumstances in which he could have had the advantages of education, there would have been for him a career as distinguished as any Englishman had achieved." John Stuart Mill also held similar opinions in regard to Odger's excellent character and remarkable abilities. Other members of Parliament have done honor to Odger's worth, and recognized his unselfishness and patriotism as a leader of the people. He was no vulgar demagogue, pandering to popular passion, and seeking fame and power at any cost. His appeals were always made to the intelligence of his hearers, and his demands for reform were based on what he conscientiously regarded as principles of justice. Throughout the American war, 1861-65, he sought to direct public opinion against the slave-holding interest.

George Odger was born at Rogborough, near Plymouth, in 1813. His father was a Cornish miner, and so poor that he was obliged to send his boy out to earn his living at shoemaking as soon as he was able to work. It goes without saying that under such circumstances he had no advantages of education, and that he was indebted to his own efforts for any measure of culture displayed in later life. In his youthful days he made diligent use of every moment of leisure for the purpose of study, and acquired an amount of general information which was of immense service to him as a public speaker. His first attempts at speaking were made in connection with the Reform movement. He rapidly acquired influence among the working class, and was well known and respected both in London and the [268] provinces as a safe leader and counsellor of the people, so that in the Liverpool and Kendal strikes he was accepted by both masters and men as a mediator. In 1868 he stood for a time as a candidate for the newly made borough of Chelsea, and in the following year he was accepted by a large party as a candidate for Stafford, but in each case he retired from the contest lest his candidature should damage the interests of his party. In 1870 and 1874 he contested Southwark as a working-man's candidate, but was not successful. In the former of these contests he polled only 300 fewer votes than the elected candidate.

George Odger never followed any other trade than that of a shoemaker, and was always in very humble circumstances. Shortly before his death a subscription was raised by the Trade Union Congress at Newcastle to supply the wants of his declining years, and in consequence of the esteem in which he was held, "the result was liberal and prompt."[181] After a long illness he died at his residence, Bloomsbury, London, 3d March, 1877.

The honor done him at his funeral was such as many a nobleman might envy. The *Times'* report of the funeral says: "The remains of Mr. Odger were borne to the grave at Brompton Cemetery with all the honors of a public funeral. The crowd around the house of the deceased was immense." The Shoemakers' Society, to which Odger belonged, held the foremost place in the long procession which accompanied the remains of this illustrious shoemaker to the grave. Members of the House of Commons, and other men of position and influence in the great city, stood side by side with the working-men of Clerkenwell, Southwark, and Bloomsbury, to pay their last tribute of esteem to the memory of this truly estimable man.

J. G. WHITTIER

AMERICA.

NOAH WORCESTER, D.D., “THE APOSTLE OF PEACE.”

America has her share of illustrious shoemakers. The United States can boast of men worthy to stand on a level with the best examples of merit the gentle craft can produce in the Old World. We select four “representative men” from the long list that might be named, to whom we shall chiefly devote our remaining space. These men show in their character and life-work the best features of the New England type of the American citizen. They are men of sterling moral and religious worth, intense haters of tyranny and slavery, and war and intemperance, “sound as gospel“ in their political principles, ”clear as Wenham ice” in their transparency of character.

We are fain to believe that every intelligent person in the United States knows the name of *Noah Worcester*, the “Apostle of Peace,” as he has been very justly styled. Every intelligent person also on the British side of the Atlantic ought to know something of this good man. He was one of the world’s reformers, and commenced a movement which is destined to deepen and widen in its influence until it becomes universal, and changes for the better the entire condition of mankind. We allude to the establishment of the Peace Society of Massachusetts—the parent of numberless similar societies in America and Europe. “I well recollect,” says Dr. Channing,[182] “the day of its formation in yonder house, then the parsonage of this parish; and if there was a happy man that day on earth it was the founder of this institution. This Society gave birth to all the kindred ones in this country, and its influence was felt abroad. Dr. Worcester assumed the charge of its periodical, and devoted himself for years to this cause, with unabating faith and zeal; and it may be doubted whether any man who ever lived contributed more than he to spread just sentiment on the subject of war, and to hasten the era of universal peace. He began his efforts in the darkest day, when the whole civilized world was shaken by conflict and threatened with military despotism. He lived to see more than twenty years of general peace, and to see through these years the multiplication of national ties, an extension of commercial communications, an establishment of new connections between Christians and learned men throughout the world, and a growing reciprocity of friendly and beneficent influence among different States, all giving aid to the principles of peace, and encouraging hopes which a century ago would have been deemed insane.”

Noah Worcester, born at Hollis, New Hampshire, November 25th, 1758, was the son of a farmer, and until the age of twenty-one worked on the farm. His father’s means were limited, and the education of the family was stinted in consequence. When hostilities commenced between the American Colonies and Great Britain, young Worcester, then only about eighteen years of age, became a soldier and fought at the battle of Bunker’s Hill. It is said that his disgust with the vices of soldier life, and horror at the awful sights of the battle-field, drove him from the army and made him forever afterward a hater of war and an advocate of peace. Returning to farm life, he divided his time between outdoor labor and shoemaking, which occupation he followed when the darkness of night time or the cold of winter prevented his working in the fields. He also betook himself earnestly to the work of self-education. Like many another shoemaker, he made his work-room his study. The materials for the improvement of his mind lay all round his bench—books, pens, ink, paper, etc. An early marriage increased the difficulties of his situation as a poor student, yet he managed by dint of extraordinary application to improve himself and become fit for the ministry before he had reached the age of thirty. His first church was small, and his salary amounted to only two hundred dollars (£45.) Many of the

members were poor, and the conscientious pastor could not allow them to pay their share to his support. On this account he often gave up as much as a quarter of his salary in the year, getting through as best he could by a little farming and a good deal of shoemaking. When times were bad he turned his "study" into a day-school and taught the children of his parishioners for nothing. "His first book was a series of letters to a Baptist minister, and in this he gave promise of the direction the [273] efforts of his life were to assume." Its aim was to promote unity among men of different denominations. Later on he published a remarkable book, which made no small stir in its day, entitled "Bible News Relating to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;" and a second on the same subject, under the title "Letters to Trinitarians." "These works," says Channing, "obtained such favor, that he was solicited to leave the obscure town in which he ministered, and to take charge in this place (Brighton, Mass.) of a periodical at first called the *Christian Disciple*, and now better known as the *Christian Examiner*."[183]

At length he issued, in 1814, the famous pamphlet by which his name became known and honored among Christian men and lovers of peace throughout the world. It bore the title "A Solemn Review of the Custom of War." No more effective tract was ever printed. It was translated into several of the languages of Europe. The impression it produced in America led to the formation of the "Peace Society of Massachusetts." Worcester's views on war were identical with those of the Society of Friends. "He interpreted literally the precept, 'Resist not evil,' and believed that nations as well as individuals would find safety as well as fulfil righteousness in yielding it literal obedience.... He believed that no mightier man ever trod the earth than William Penn when entering the wilderness unarmed, and stretching out to the savage a hand which refused all earthly weapons in token of peace and brotherhood." So absorbed was he in this great theme, that he declared, eight years after his famous pamphlet was issued, that "its subject had not been out of his mind when awake an hour at a time during the whole period." He died at Brighton, Mass., in his eightieth year, 31st October, 1838. It was his wish to have written on his tombstone the words, "He wrote the 'Friend of Peace.'" Dr. Channing's testimony to Dr. Worcester's character is the highest one man can bear to another. He says, "Two views of him particularly impressed me. The first was the unity, the harmony of his character. He had no jarring elements. His whole nature had been blended and melted into one strong, serene love. His mission was to preach peace, and he preached it, not on set occasions or by separate efforts, but in his whole life.... My acquaintance with him gave me clearer comprehension of [274] the spirit of Christ and the dignity of man."

Worcester received his degree of Master of Arts from Dartmouth College, and his diploma of Doctor of Divinity from Harvard.

ROGER SHERMAN,

ONE OF THE SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Another famous American citizen, contemporary during the early part of his life with Noah Worcester, was Roger Sherman, who was born at Newton, Massachusetts, 19th April, 1721. Until the age of twenty-two he was a shoemaker, and from the age of twenty supported his widowed mother and the younger members of the family, and found the means to enable two brothers to enter the ministry. At this time he devoted his leisure to the study of mathematics and astronomy. In 1743 he laid aside the awl, and left his native place to settle at New Milford, Connecticut, where he joined his elder brother in keeping a small store. His accomplishments very soon led to his appointment as surveyor of roads. While holding this office he began the study of law, and made such progress that in 1745, at the age of twenty-four, he was admitted to the bar. In 1748 he began to supply the astronomical calculations for a New York almanac. His life as a legislator commenced with his membership of the Connecticut Assembly, where he held a seat during several sessions. The appointment of Judge of the Court of Common Pleas was given him in 1759, and again in 1765, at New Haven, whither he had removed four years previously. He was made an assistant in 1766, and held the office for nineteen years. The judgeship was not resigned until 1789, part of the time since his appointment having been spent on the bench of the Superior Court.

Roger Sherman's connection with the American Congress was long and highly honorable. He became a Congressman in 1774, and served his country faithfully in that capacity for nearly twenty years till the time of his death, at which time he held a seat in the Senate of the United States. He was appointed also as a member of the Council of Safety. During the last nine years of his life he was Mayor of New Haven. For many years he held the honorable office of treasurer of Yale College.

In the year 1766 Sherman was placed on the Commission appointed to draught the Declaration of [275] Independence, and he was one of those who afterward signed the Declaration. Having been one of those who framed the old "Articles of Confederation," and a very useful member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, his services in obtaining the indorsement or ratification of the Constitution by his own State Convention (*i.e.*, of Connecticut) were of the utmost value.

The foregoing statements will sufficiently show how well the quondam shoemaker of Massachusetts earned the noble name of Patriot. Few men in his day did more solid and lasting public work. Although he was a man of remarkably cool, deliberate judgment, he was none the less an enthusiast in the cause of political freedom and independence. During the War of Independence he urged his compatriots by every means in his power to resist the English claims to impose taxation upon the colonies. He never swerved for a moment from the view he first took on the crucial question of "taxation without representation," but always avowed his firm conviction that "no European Government would ever give its sanction to such unfair legislation." His rectitude and integrity were

unimpeachable, and his “rare good sense” made him a man of mark even among the noteworthy men of the first Federal Congress. Mr. Macon used to say of him, “Roger Sherman had more common-sense than any man I ever knew;” and Thomas Jefferson was wont to declare that Roger Sherman was “a man who never said a foolish thing in his life.” To this opinion of his judgment and mental qualities may be added a valuable estimate of his moral and religious character. Goodrich[184] says that Sherman “having made a public profession of religion in early life, was never ashamed to advocate the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, which are often so unwelcome to men of worldly eminence. His sentiments were derived from the Word of God, and not from his own reason.”

The life of this man of “patriot fame”[185] came to an end July 23d, 1793. His good name is in no danger of being lost to posterity, for in addition to his own personal claim to immortality, he gave “hostages to fortune” in a family of fifteen children, one of whom, his namesake, died in 1856 at the patriarchal age of eighty-eight.

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HENRY WILSON, “THE NATICK COBBLER.”

Among the political leaders of modern times *Henry Wilson* long held a conspicuous place in the United States. His early connection with the gentle craft procured for him the familiar and not unfriendly sobriquet “The Natick Cobbler.” Wilson was born at Farmington, New Hampshire, February 16th, 1812. From his schoolboy days until he entered on political life he seems to have been connected both with shoemaking and farming, but chiefly with the former occupation. Part of his time, viz., from 1832 to 1837, he was a thorough-going son of Crispin, working on the stool from daylight till dusk. From 1837 to 1840 he was still connected with the trade, but in the more ambitious position of a “shoe manufacturer.” In the year 1840 he devoted himself to the life of a politician. The office of President of the Massachusetts Senate was held by him in 1851 and 1852. Three years after this he became a senator as a representative of the same State. This honor he held for seventeen years, that is, till 1872. In 1861 he was made Colonel of the Twenty-second Massachusetts Volunteers. The highest office to which he attained was that of Vice-President of the United States, which post he held from 1872 to 1875, the year of his death. Henry Wilson was held at the time of his death in general and hearty esteem for the valuable services which he had rendered for thirty-five years to his country. Like many another famous son of St. Crispin, *The Natick Cobbler* was a friend of freedom and a sworn foe to all kinds of tyranny. For many years he stood side by side with the best men in the Northern States, fighting the battle of liberation for the slaves, and at last was permitted to rejoice with them in the triumph of the good cause.

One is very much tempted to multiply instances of men like Wilson, who, having begun life as shoemakers, found their way into the Congress of the United States. *Seven* such men at least have sat in Congress during the present century.[186] It may also be mentioned here that Franklin in his [277] Autobiography speaks of a member of the *Junto*, a “William Parsons, bred a shoemaker, but loving reading, who acquired a considerable share of mathematics,“ and ”became surveyor-general;” and that Philip Kirtland, a shoemaker from Sherrington, Buckinghamshire, who settled at Lynn, Mass., in 1635, was the founder of the immense trade in boots and shoes for which that city has obtained an unrivalled name throughout the States.

J. G. WHITTIER, “THE QUAKER POET.”

The last name we have to give in this long, but still incomplete, list of illustrious shoemakers is that of *John Greenleaf Whittier*, who happily is still living to charm and educate the English-speaking people on both sides of the Atlantic with his simple, spirit-stirring poetry. Whittier is frequently spoken of in the States as *the Quaker Poet*. This designation is sufficiently distinctive, for poets are not very numerous in the Society of Friends. Preachers, patriots, philanthropists, orators, and writers of prose are numerous enough, but poets are very hard to find in this intensely earnest and practical religious community.

Like his coreligionists in every generation since the days of George Fox and William Penn, Whittier is “right on all points” relating to social and religious reform. The assistance his vigorous, thrilling lines have given to every philanthropic movement in the United States is beyond calculation. For many [278] years he was the *Hans Sachs* or *Ebenezer Elliott* of the Liberation cause, giving similar help by his songs to the work of emancipation in America to that which the German gave to the cause of Protestantism on the continent of Europe, and the Englishman gave to the labors of the Anti-Corn Law League in Great Britain.

His father was a farmer at Haverhill, Massachusetts, where the poet was born in 1807. He remained on the farm until he was nearly nineteen years of age, and divided his time between field-work and shoemaking. In 1825 he was sent to a college belonging to the Society of Friends. Four years after this he became editor of *The American Manufacturer*, which office he held for only twelve months, and then resigned in order to take the management of the *New England Weekly Review*. In 1832 he went back to the old home, worked on the farm, and edited *The Haverhill Gazette*. Twice he represented Haverhill in the State Legislature. All through life he has been a strong and consistent anti-slavery advocate, and at various times has been made secretary of societies and editor of papers whose aim has been the abolition of slavery. About 1838-39 he became the editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, an ardent anti-slavery paper. It required no small amount of courage to advocate freedom for the slave in those days. On one occasion Whittier’s office was surrounded by a mob, who plundered and set fire to the building. His published works in prose and verse are very numerous, beginning with the

"Legends of New England" in 1831, and coming down to volumes of verse like "The King's Missive, Mabel Martin, and Later Poems," etc.,[187] published within the last few years. Through all his writings there runs a healthy moral tone, and his poetry is no less distinguished for purity of sentiment than for sweetness of numbers and true poetic fire. No man in New England, nor, indeed, in [279] the States, has earned a better title to the thanks and esteem of his fellow-countrymen than the "Quaker Poet," who began the hard work of life by blending the duties of the farm with the occupation of a shoemaker. Whittier College at Salem, Iowa, was established and named in his honor.

Whittier has never forgotten his connection with the gentle craft in early life; nor has he been ashamed to own fellowship with its humble but worthy members. What he thinks of the craft itself, and of the spirit of the men who have followed it, may be learned from his lines addressed to shoemakers in the "Songs of Labor," published in 1850:

TO SHOEMAKERS.

Ho! workers of the old time, styled
The Gentle Craft of Leather!
Young brothers of the ancient guild,
Stand forth once more together!
Call out again your long array,
In the olden merry manner!
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's Day,
Fling out your blazoned banner!

Rap, rap! upon the well-worn stone
How falls the polished hammer!
Rap, rap! the measured sound has grown
A quick and merry clamor.
Now shape the sole! now deftly curl
The glossy vamp around it,
And bless the while the bright-eyed girl
Whose gentle fingers bound it!

For you, along the Spanish main
A hundred keels are ploughing;
For you, the Indian on the plain
His lasso-coil is throwing;
For you, deep glens with hemlock dark
The woodman's fire is lighting;
For you, upon the oak's gray bark
The woodman's axe is smiting. [280]

For you, from Carolina's pine
The rosin-gum is stealing;
For you, the dark-eyed Florentine
Her silken skein is reeling;
For you, the dizzy goatherd roams
His rugged Alpine ledges;
For you, round all her shepherd homes
Bloom England's thorny hedges.

The foremost still, by day or night,
On moated mound or heather,
Where'er the need of trampled right
Brought toiling men together;
Where the free burghers from the wall
Defied the mail-clad master,
Than yours, at Freedom's trumpet-call,
No craftsmen rallied faster.

Let foplings sneer, let fools deride—
Ye heed no idle scorner;
Free hands and hearts are still your pride,
And duty done your honor.
Ye dare to trust, for honest fame,
The jury Time empanels,
And leave to truth each noble name
Which glorifies your annals.

Thy songs, Hans Sachs, are living yet,

In strong and hearty German;
And Bloomfield’s lay, and Gifford’s wit,
And patriot fame of Sherman;
Still from his book, a mystic seer,
The soul of Behmen teaches,
And England’s priestcraft shakes to hear
Of Fox’s leathern breeches.

The foot is yours; where’er it falls,
It treads your well-wrought leather,
On earthen floor, in marble halls,
On carpet, or on heather.
Still there the sweetest charm is found
Of matron grace or vestal’s,
As Hebe’s foot bore nectar round
Among the old celestials!

[281]

Rap, rap! your stout and bluff brogan,
With footsteps slow and weary,
May wander where the sky’s blue span
Shuts down upon the prairie.
On beauty’s foot, your slippers glance
By Saratoga’s fountains,
Or twinkle down the summer dance
Beneath the crystal mountains!

The red brick to the mason’s hand,
The brown earth to the tiller’s,
The shoe in yours shall wealth command,
Like fairy Cinderella’s!
As they who shunned the household maid
Beheld the crown upon her,
So all shall see your toil repaid
With heart and home and honor.

Then let the toast be freely quaffed,
In water cool and brimming—
“All honor to the good old Craft
Its merry men and women!”
Call out again your long array,
In the old time’s pleasant manner:
Once more, on gay St. Crispin’s Day,
Fling out his blazoned banner.

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THE END.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] See Campbell's "Lives," etc., vol. iv. p. 247.

[2] Sir Cloudesley Shovel sat for several years as member of Parliament for the city of Rochester. In the Guildhall of that city there is an interesting portrait, representing the gallant sailor as Rear-Admiral. A tablet states that the hall was painted and decorated by his desire and at his expense, 1695-6. The portrait from which our engraving is taken is by Michael Dahl, and was originally at Hampton Court. It was presented by George IV. in 1824 to Greenwich Hospital. Sir C. Shovel at the time of his death was one of the governors of Greenwich Hospital.

[3] "Bibliomaniacs" will be interested to learn the price of certain books at this date, 1775. Lackington says: "Martyn's 'Dictionary of Natural History' sold for £15 15s., which then stood in my catalogue at £4 15s.; Pilkington's 'Dictionary of Painters,' £7 7s., usually sold at three; Francis's 'Horace,' £2 11s. At Sir George Colebrook's sale the 8vo edition of the 'Tatler' sold for *two guineas and a half*. At a sale a few weeks since, Rapin's History in folio, the two first vols. only, sold for upward of £5."

[4] "History of Booksellers," by H. Curwen, p. 73. Chatto & Windus.

[5] Articles of Peace with the United States were signed Nov. 30th, 1782; and the Peace of Versailles, between France, Spain, and England, was made Jan. 20th, 1783. It is to this, no doubt, that Lackington refers.

[6] "History of Booksellers," see above, p. 74.

[7] "The shoemaker happily abandoned his last." It may be interesting to note that the writer's copy of this curious book once belonged to Henry Thomas Buckle, author of "The History of Civilization." On the fly-leaf are memoranda of Wesleyan and Jonsonian anecdotes which Buckle had evidently made for his own use.

[8] Mrs. Bradburn was the daughter of Samuel Jones, of Wrexham.

[9] This incident will remind readers of the following account given by Bunyan of a similar incident in his early life: "One day, as I was standing at my neighbor's shop-window, and there cursing and swearing, after my wonted manner, there sate within the woman of the house and heard me, who, though she was a loose and ungodly wretch, protested that I cursed and swore at such a rate that she trembled to hear me.... At this reproof I was silenced and put to secret shame, and that too, as I thought, before the God of heaven."

[10] 2 Cor. 5:17.

[11] There was surely a Scriptural reason for this feeling. See Luke 15:7, 10, and Heb. 1:15.

[12] Acts 13:2.

[13] See Benson's "Life of Fletcher."

[14] "Religion in England under Queen Anne and the Georges." By John Stoughton, D.D., vol. ii. pp. 158, 159. Hodder & Stoughton.

[15] Bradburn's mother died during his first year's ministry. In connection with this event he mentions a circumstance which enabled him to be resigned to the bereavement, and which many readers will regard with unusual interest. "God spared her life, nearly *twelve years*, in answer to a prayer which I offered up when she seemed to be dying, in which I begged that

she might live twelve years exactly. I was then very young, and could not bear the thought of losing her, but imagined I should be able to part with her after those years."

[16] Bradburn's lodgings.

[17] "Life of Samuel Bradburn." By T. W. Blanshard. P. 68. Elliot Stock, 1870. A most interesting biography of the famous Wesleyan preacher.

[18] Bradburn's Life, see above, pp. 85, 86.

[19] Bradburn's Life, pp. 177, 178.

[20] Ibid., pp. 183, 184.

[21] Bradburn's Life, pp. 233-235.

[22] Bradburn's Life, pp. 228, 229.

[23] 2 Kings 6:5.

[24] Proverbs 31:21.

[25] The "Della Cruscan school." See below.

[26] The name Cruscan was taken from the Florentine Academy, by Robert Merry, the founder of this school of mawkish and affected poetasters.

[27] "History of Booksellers." H. Curwen. Chatto & Windus. P. 175.

[28] Ibid., pp. 180, 181.

[29] Quoted in "The Lives of Eminent Englishmen." Fullarton *&* Co., Glasgow, 1838. Vol. viii. pp. 317, 318.

[30] Tennyson, "In Memoriam," stanza xxi.

[31] "Lives of Eminent Englishmen." Fullarton & Co., 1838. Vol. viii. p. 245. See also "Views Illustrative of Works of Robert Bloomfield," by E. W. Brayley. London: 1806, p. 17.

[32] See Chapter IV., *William Gifford*.

[33] *Athenæum*, No. 2770, Nov. 27, 1880, p. 719.

[34] Samuel Drew, M.A., the self-taught Cornishman." By his Eldest Son. P. 102. London: Ward & Co.

[35] "Baptist Jubilee Memorial." London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1842, p. 83.

[36] "Memoir of Dr. Carey," by the Rev. Eustace Carey. London: Jackson & Walford, 2d edition, 1837, p. 16.

[37] J. C. Marshman, in "The Story of Carey, Marshman, and Ward;" London, J. Heaton & Sons, 1864, p. 6. See also an account of Carey's life and work in "The Missionary Keepsake and Annual," by Rev. John Dyer; London, Fisher & Co., 1837; and "The Life of Dr. Carey," by the Rev. Eustace Carey; London, 1837.

[38] "The Story of Carey, Marshman, and Ward," p. 4.

[39] It ought to be said that in 1808, about a year after the death of his first wife, Carey married Miss Rhumohr, a Danish lady of good family and education, who proved a most congenial companion and helper in his work. He was three times married: his third wife, who survived him, was an excellent partner for a missionary.

[40] The first Sunday-school was opened in Gloucester in 1780.

[41] Viz., 1789.

[42] The text of this discourse was Isaiah 54:2, 3: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited."

[43] *Quarterly Review*, Feb. 1809, p. 197. This generous article on "The Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society" is known to have been written by Southey. See below. Some idea of Thomas's passionate zeal may be formed from certain expressions in the letters sent home after Carey and he had arrived in India. He says, "Never did men see their native land with more joy than we left it; but this is not of nature, but from above," etc. See p. 223 of same article.

[44] *Quarterly Review*, Feb. 1809, p. 197.

[45] Ibid.

[46] "Carey, Marshman, and Ward," by J. C. Marshman. London: J. Heaton & Son. 1864.

[47] "Carey, Marshman, and Ward," p. 137.

[48] *Quarterly Review*, Feb. 1809, pp. 224, 225.

[49] Viz., *Krishnu*, who was baptized at the same time as Carey's son Felix. The ceremony was performed at the Ghaut, or landing-stairs of the Mahanuddy, in the presence of the Governor and a crowd of Hindoos and Mohammedans.

[50] John Clark Marshman was the son of Dr. Marshman, Carey's colleague at Serampore.

[51] "Anecdotes and Stories," by Rev. Thomas Guthrie, D.D. London: Houlston & Wright, pp. 156, 157.

[52] Gen. 5: 24.

[53] Acts, 10: 1, 2.

[54] "A Memoir of John Pounds." Foord, Stationer, Landport; p. 9. The writer is indebted to this brief memoir for most of the facts stated in this sketch. He is also indebted for information to the courtesy of Rev. T. Timmins, Portsmouth, pastor of the congregation of which John Pounds was a member.

[55] "Memoir of John Pounds," p. 10.

[56] Ibid, p. 10.

[57] Rev. T. Timmins, Portsmouth, in a letter to the writer.

[58] See closing sentences of preface to "Purgatory of Suicides," by Thomas Cooper, early editions.

[59] "The Life of Thomas Cooper, Written by Himself." Hodder & Stoughton, 1872; p. 7.

[60] See above, p. 96.

[61] This seems to be a test of proficiency in the trade. Bloomfield's brother says, "Robert is a *ladies'* shoemaker;" and stories are told of his receiving, after he became famous as a poet, many orders from the nobility for ladies' boots.

[62] Thomas Miller, afterward known as a poet and novelist, and for his charming descriptions of rural scenery, was an intimate friend of Cooper from childhood to old age.

[63] "Life of Thomas Cooper," pp. 60, 61.

[64] "Life of Thomas Cooper," p. 67.

[65] These lines stand first among the minor pieces in "Cooper's Poetical Works." London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1877.

[66] The *Children's Magazine* (next to the *Teacher's Offering* the first magazine for children published in this country), the *Christian Pioneer*, the *Child's Magazine*. He was also editor of the *Baptist Reporter* for many years.

[67] "Life of Thomas Cooper," p. 262, also pp. 356-367.

[68] "Life of Thomas Cooper," p. 316.

[69] Ibid p. 335.

[70] The charges of atheism and atheistic advocacy made against *Thomas* Cooper have often arisen from confounding *Thomas* Cooper the *sceptic* with *Robert* Cooper the *infidel*. See "Life of Thomas Cooper," p. 357.

[71] See letters to Thomas Cooper in "Kingsley's Life and Letters." London: Henry King & Co., 1877, pp. 183 and 221, etc.

[72] Among others, Coleridge observed that shoemakers had given to the world a larger number of eminent men than any handicraft. The philosopher was rather partial to shoemakers, from the time when, as a boy at Christ's Hospital, he wished to be apprenticed to the trade of shoemaking.

[73] It is used by Pliny, who died A.D. 79.

[74] Eccles. Hist., Book ii. cap. xxiv.

[75] Ibid., Book iii. cap. xiv.

[76] Annianus is regarded in some countries as the patron saint of shoemakers. Campion's "Delightful History of ye Gentle Craft." Northampton: Taylor & Son, 2d ed., 1876, p. 25.

[77] Pressense's "Early Years of Christianity." London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1879, vol. ii. p. 355.

[78] Dr. Smith's "Dict. Christian Biog.," art. "Gregory Thaumaturgus." In this article Gregory is called a charcoal-burner. Probably, like many other shoemakers, he followed more than one vocation.

[79] December, 1881.

[80] 4:11.

[81] Acts 5:38, 39.

[82] On the beach at Lidde, near Stonend, "there is yet to be seene," says Weever, in his "Funeral Monuments," "an heap of great stones which the neighbour inhabitants call St. Crispin's and St. Crispinian's tomb, whom they report to have been cast upon this shore by ship-wracke, and from hence called into the glorious company of the saints. Look *Jacobus de Voraigne*, in the legend of their lives, and you may believe perhaps as much as is spoken. They were shoemakers, and suffered martyrdom the tenth of the kalends of November (25th October), which day is kept holy to this day by all our shoemakers in London and elsewhere."—Quoted in "Crispin Anecdotes," Sheffield, 1827, p. 18.

[83] For the legends of these saints, and much curious information respecting the craft and its guilds in early times, the reader may consult Lacroix, "Manners, Customs, and Dress in the Middle Ages;" "Histoire de la Chaussure," etc. That quaint old book, "The Delightful, Princely, and Entertaining History of the Gentle Craft," by T. Deloney, 1678, gives the story of the *princely* and *saintly* brothers in its English dress, and it is one of the strangest tales even in legendary lore. This story, Deloney tells us, accounts for the term "gentle craft" as

applied to shoemaking, and explains the saying “a shoemaker’s son is a prince born.” The *Princes* Crispin and Crispinian becoming shoemakers sufficiently accounts for the former term, for

> “The gentle craft is fittest then
> For poor distressed gentlemen;”

and the marriage of Crispine to Ursula, the daughter of the Emperor Maximinus, and the birth of a son to the Prince, will explain the latter. See the stories and ballads thereanent in Campion’s “Delightful History of the Gentle Craft,” Northampton, Taylor & Son, 2d ed., 1876, pp. 25-35. A most interesting and valuable little book on shoes and shoemakers in ancient and modern times.

[84] Vol. ii. pp. 305, 306. London, Longmans, 1848.

[85] Another memorial of the saints, of a very different character, was the semi-sacred play entitled “The Mystery of St. Crispin and St. Crispinian,” which used to be performed on St. Crispin’s Day by the Guilds or Brotherhoods of Shoemakers in Paris and elsewhere.

[86] “Biographie Universelle.” Paris, 1811.

[87] Ibid.

[88] “Nouveau Dictionnaire Historique,” tom. ii.

[89] “Nouvelle Biographie Generale.” Paris, 1853, tom. iv. p. 786.

[90] Butler’s “Lives of the Primitive Fathers, Martyrs, and Saints,” 1799, p. 532.

[91] This society flourished until the outbreak of the French Revolution, 1789, when it was suppressed.

[92] If this were a history of the craft and trade of shoemaking, attention might be called to the genuinely illustrious *shoemaker*, Nicholas Lestage of Bordeaux. This clever artisan having made a remarkably fine pair of boots, presented them to the king, Louis XIV., on his visit to Bordeaux, shortly before his marriage to the Infanta of Spain. The fortunate son of Crispin was made shoemaker to his Majesty, and rose rapidly to wealth and favor at court. In 1663 he presented to his royal patron the famous boot “without a seam,” which was spoken of as a “miracle of art,” and of which it was declared that “the name of a boot would fill the world.” About a dozen years after Lestage succeeded in making this wonderful seamless boot, a small book of poems was written to commemorate the extraordinary achievement. Among other extravagant things said about “cette admirable chaussure,” it was affirmed that “neither antiquity nor the sun had ever seen its equal,” “that man was not its inventor,” and its structure was truly *divine*!” etc.

[93] Vol. iv. p. 423.

[94] This book once belonged to Henry Crabb Robinson: see H. C. R.’s Diary, etc., vol. i. pp. 400, 401, for the above quotation.

[95] Lanzi’s “History of Painting.” London: Bohn, vol. iii. p. 200; and Bryan’s “Dictionary of Painters.” London: Bohn, p. 138.

[96] Lanzi’s “History of Painting.” London: Bohn, vol. iii. p. 126; Bryan’s “Dictionary of Painters.” London: Bohn, p. 114; and Pilkington’s “Dictionary of Painters,” p. 95 (1770 ed.).

[97] Sons of shoemakers have often become famous. See the list given below, which might be greatly extended.

[98] For this and one or two other examples of noted shoemakers the writer is indebted to a series of most interesting articles entitled “Concerning Shoes and Shoemakers,” in the *Leisure Hour*, 1876.

[99] Born 1676; died 1756. Bennett is placed out of his chronological order because it seems most fitting that he should follow the benevolent Castell.

[100] Selkirkshire, otherwise called Ettrick Forest.

[101] Berwickshire, otherwise, called the Merse.

[102] See “Border Minstrelsy.”

[103] Scott’s “Border Minstrelsy,” foot-note.

[104] Note IV. to Canto IV., “Lay of the Last Minstrel.”

[105] Risp and rive, creak and tear.

[106] To twitch the thread as shoemakers do in securing the stitches.

[107] “Biographical History of England,” vol. iii.

[108] The author of “Crispin Anecdotes,” p. 127, says, “Praise-God Barebones was a shoemaker, but from all the writer can learn he was a leather-seller; and Bloomfield is reported as saying that Secretary Craggs was a chip of leather. On what authority it is hard to say. His father, the postmaster-general, is more likely to have been in such a position; but *his* trade was that of a country barber.”—Grainger, Noble’s continuation, vol. iii.

[109] Pepys’ Diary, note, January 25th, 1659-60.

[110] Part I. Canto II., 409-430, etc.

[111] Part I. Canto II., 409-430, etc.

[112] Part I. Canto III, 118, 119.

[113] Quoted in Chambers's "Book of Days," August 15th. W. & R. Chambers, Edinburgh.

[114] Evelyn's "Diary" of this date.

[115] Pepys, see above.

[116] Grainger's "Biographical History of England," vol. iii.

[117] "History of England," vol. i. p. 316 (People's Edition).

[118] Grainger's "Biographical History of England," vol. iii. Grainger has an interesting note concerning Myngs, which we cannot forbear copying: "I am credibly informed that when he had taken a Spanish man-of-war and gotten the commander on board his ship, he committed the care of him to a lieutenant, who was directed to observe his behavior. Shortly after word was brought to Myngs that the Spaniard was deploring his captivity and wondering what great captain it could be who had made Don——, with a long and tedious string of names and titles, his prisoner. The lieutenant was ordered to return to his charge, and if the Don persisted in his curiosity, to tell him that 'Kit Minns' had taken him. This diminutive name utterly confounded the *titulado*, threw him into an agony of grief, and gave him more acute pangs than all the rest of his misfortunes."

[119] See the "Descriptive Catalogue of the Portraits of Naval Commanders," etc., in the "Painted Hall, Greenwich Hospital," Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1881, p. 10. The editor of the catalogue states that "this portrait and those numbered 7, 8, 47-49, 102, 105, 107, 110-112 form the series of valuable pictures mentioned in Pepys' 'Diary,' as follows:—'To Mr. Lilly's the painter's, and there saw the heads—some finished and all begun —of the flagg-men in the late great fight with the Duke of York against the Dutch. The Duke of York hath them done to hang in his chamber, and very finely they are done indeed. Here are the Prince's (Rupert), Sir George Askue's, Sir Thomas Teddiman's, Sir Christopher Myngs', Sir Joseph Jordan's, Sir William Berkeley's, Sir Thomas Allen's, and Captain Harman's, as also the Duke of Albemarle's; and will be my Lord Sandwich's, Sir W. Penn's, and Sir Jeremy Smith's.'"

[120] Sutor ultra crepidam feliciter ausus. See Lackington's Life, p. 45.

[121] Elias Ashmole appears to have been given to astrology and alchemy; see his "Way to Bliss," a work on the Philosopher's stone, published 1658.

[122] *The Tatler*, April 11, 1709. Steele and Congreve assisted in the joke. Congreve pretended to take the side of Partridge by defending him against the charge of "sneaking about without paying his funeral expenses!" See Timb's "Anecdote Biog." vol. i. pp. 24 and 154.

[123] In regard to Manoah Sibly, see below.

[124] "Crispin Anecdotes," p. 85. The plates in E. Sibly's works are by Ames, a Bristol name a century ago. His portrait in the 1790 edition is by Roberts.

[125] His birth is set down as occurring 20th November, p.m., 1752.

[126] They were published at *two guineas*.

[127] The Secretary of the Swedenborg Society, Mr. James Speirs, has obligingly supplied the writer with most of the facts given above, which are taken from an obituary of M.S. in the *Intellectual Repository*, a Swedenborg magazine for 1841. Mr. Speirs says that Manoah Sibly was "presumably" born in London, but see above.

[128] The exact correspondence in *title* and *date* between this book and the first edition of E. Sibly's similar work creates a suspicion of error in the name.

[129] "Maunder's Biographical Treasury." London: Longmans.

[130] *Quarterly Review*, January, 1831, p. 76.

[131] Charles Lamb, "Album Verses," 1830, p. 57.

[132] London, 1675 and 1725.

[133] See Campion's "Delightful History," p. 51.

[134] The author of "Crispin Anecdotes" mentions another shoemaker who was made Lord Mayor of London, viz., Sir Thomas Tichbourne, who was Mayor in 1656, during the Protectorate.—"Crispin Anecdotes," p. 127.

[135] One is ready to ask who but a shoemaker could have gone so heartily into the rollicking fun of the shoemaker's room, or asked such a question as the following:—"Have you all your tools; a good rubbing pin, a good stopper, a good dresser, your four sorts of awls, and your two balls of wax, your paring knife, your hand and thumb leathers, and good St. Hugh's bones to smooth your work?" It may be remarked here that St. Hugh is another patron saint of the craft. Hugh, son of the king of Powis, was in love with Winifred, daughter of Donvallo, king of Flintshire. Both were martyrs under Diocletian. St. Hugh's bones were stolen by the shoemakers, and worked up into tools to avoid discovery. Hence the cobbler's phrase, "St. Hugh's bones." See Deloney's "Entertaining History."

[136] See Southey's preface to "Attempts in Verse, by John Jones," London, 1830; and article thereon in *Quarterly Review*, January, 1831, p. 81.

[137] For an able discussion of the question, "Was Richard Savage an Impostor?" to which the writer, Mr. Moy Thomas, says, "Yes," see *Notes and Queries*, 2d Series, vol. vi.

[138] See Life of Samuel Bradburn, President of the Wesleyan Conference.

[139] See a book of unusual interest, “Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers,” ed. by Rev. I. Jackson. Wesleyan Book-Room, London, 3 vols. 1865.

[140] “Life of Wesley,” vol. iii. p. 108. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1870.

[141] Toplady wrote the fine hymn “Rock of Ages,” etc.

[142] “*Helmsley*” has been set down to Olivers; but Mr. Benham says it was composed by Martin Madan, Cowper’s uncle, author of “*Thelyphthora*.” See Cowper’s “Poems,” Globe Ed., Intro., p. 34.

[143] “Memoirs of the late Thomas Holcroft, written by Himself, and Continued to the Time of his Death from his Diary,” by W. Hazlitt. The Traveller’s Library, vol. xvii. 1856.

[144] It may be thought by some readers that Bloomfield’s brothers, George and Nathaniel, ought to have a place in our list of illustrious shoemakers. *George*, in his correspondence with Mr. Capel Lofft, Robert’s patron, showed himself a man of good sense and a fair writer. See preface to Bloomfield’s Poems. But *Nathaniel*, the author of a little volume of poems, edited by Capel Lofft, 1803, entitled, “An Essay on War,“ in blank verse, and ”Honington Green, a Ballad,” was *not* a shoemaker. He was a *tailor*, though not a few writers have made Byron’s mistake of classing him with “ye tuneful cobblers.”

[145] Blacket’s “Remains,” preface, vol. i. pp. 62, 63. London, 1811.

[146] Blacket’s “Remains,” preface, vol. i. pp. 2-7.

[147] Editor of Blacket’s “Remains,” Letters, pp. 9, 10.

[148] That these generous friends labored to some purpose may be judged from the fact that after Blacket’s little legacies and funeral expenses were paid, £97 10s remained over for the benefit of his child. “Remains,” p. 101.

[149] “Crispin Anecdotes,” pp. 87, 88.

[150] Ibid.

[151] “Campion’s Delightful History,” p. 81.

[152] Of “The Sabbath,” a writer in the *Quarterly Review*, January, 1831 (p. 77), says it is “a poem of which unaffected piety is not the only inspiration, and which but for its unfortunate coincidence of subject with the nearly contemporary one of the late amiable James Grahame, would probably have attracted a considerable share of favor, even in these hypercritical days.”

[153] “Imperial Dictionary of Biography.” Glasgow: Blackie & Co.

[154] “The Blessings of Temperance, Illustrated in the Life and Reformation of the Drunkard: a Poem by John O’Neill, etc., forming a Companion to Cruickshank’s ‘Bottle,’ with etchings from his pencil.” London: W. Tweedie. 1851. Fourth edition.

[155] Kelso: Rutherford. Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons.

[156] Glasgow, 1834.

[157] “Autobiography of John Younger, Shoemaker, of St. Boswell’s.” Kelso: J. & J. H. Rutherford, 1881.

[158] 6th May, 1882, p. 564.

[159] “The Vale of Obscurity, and Other Poems,” by Charles Crocker, 3d edition. Chichester: W. H. Mason, 1841.

[160] It is perhaps best, on the whole, not to speak of living men in such a work as this. An exception has, however, been made to such a rule in the rare instances of the famous politician, poet, and preacher Thomas Cooper, and the American poet Whittier. If the writer did not feel the necessity of adhering, in the main, to this rule, it would be easy enough for him to cite many instances in proof of the statement that the literary reputation of shoemakers is being well sustained in the present day by writers in prose and poetry, who either have been or still are working at the stall. Most Scottish *sutors*, one would think, have heard of the author of “Homely Words and Songs” and “Lays and Lectures for Scotia’s Daughters of Industry” (Edinburgh, 1853 and 1856). London craftsmen know and honor the names of J. B. Rowe, a political writer and poet, and John B. Leno, the editor of “St. Crispin,“ and author of the ”Drury Lane Lyrics,“ ”Tracts for Rich and Poor,“ and ”King Labor’s Song-Book” (London, 1867-68; see also “Kimburton, and Other Poems,” London, 1875-76); and the shoemaker of Wellinborough, John Askham, by his “Sonnets of the Months,” “Descriptive Poems,“ and ”Judith” (Northampton: Taylor & Son, 1863, 1866, 1868, and 1875), has made a reputation which is not entirely confined to his own locality, nor to the members of the craft to which he belongs.

[161] All the writings of George Fox were published after his death. See below.

[162] See answer to the question, “What is thy duty toward thy neighbor?”

[163] “Select Miscellanies.” London: Charles Gilpin. 1854, vol. iv. p. 135.

[164] “Journal of Thomas Shillitoe,” vol. i. p. 21.

[165] “Bonn’s Standard Library,” p. 305.

[166] Rotherham and Masbro’ are one town, only separated by the River Rother.

[167] “Masbro’ Chapel Manual” for 1881, whence many of these particulars are taken. See also Miall’s “Congregationalism in Yorkshire.”

[168] Dr. Edward Williams became president in 1795. He edited the works of Jonathan Edwards, and was the author of a once famous controversial treatise on "Divine Equity and Sovereignty."

[169] "Crispin Anecdotes," p. 18.

[170] "Crispin Anecdotes," p. 18.

[171] "Imperial Dictionary of Biography," vol. iv. Edinburgh: Blackie & Son.

[172] Vol. i. p. 402.

[173] The eminent Baptist minister of St. Andrew's Chapel, 1761-1790, predecessor of Robert Hall.

[174] Huntingdon wrote his own epitaph, part of which reads—"Beloved of his God but abhorred by men. The Omniscient Judge at the Great Assize shall ratify and confirm this, to the confusion of many thousands; for England and its metropolis shall know that there hath been a prophet among them."

[175] See Campion's "Delightful History," p. 83.

[176] "Congregational Year-Book" for 1863, pp. 214-216. To the obituary notice given in the Year-Book I owe the facts given in this sketch.

[177] "Memoirs of John Kitto, D.D.," by R. E. Ryland, M.A. Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Sons, 1856.

[178] Magneto-electricity was discovered by Oersted in 1820.

[179] A story is told of Sir Robert Peel which is worth repeating here. A deputation of working-men once waited on Sir Robert to lay the wants of the trades' societies before him. The two speakers selected by the deputation were shoemakers. On learning this interesting fact, the statesman turned to the sons of Crispin and said, half in earnest and half in jest, "How is it that you shoemakers are foremost in every movement? If there is a plot or conspiracy or insurrection or political movement, I always find that there is a shoemaker in the fray!"

It is a singular fact that the shorthand notes of Hardy's trial were taken down by another illustrious shoemaker—Manoah Sibly (see above). There is a printed copy of these notes in the British Museum, published 1795.

[180] H. C. Robinson's Diary, vol. i. pp. 26, 27.

[181] "The Oracle," vol. vi. pp. 154, 237. London: 155 Fleet Street.

[182] Sermon entitled "The Philanthropist, a Tribute to the Memory of the Rev. Noah Worcester, D.D." Channing's Works, People's Edition, vol. ii. p. 251, etc. Belfast: Simms & M'Intyre, 1843.

[183] Written in 1837.

[184] In "American Biographical Dictionary." Boston: J. P. Jewett & Co.

[185] See the allusion to Sherman in Whittier's lines, given below.

[186] These are Roger Sherman and Henry Wilson, already noticed, and Daniel Sheffey, Gideon Lee, William Claflin, John B. Alley, and H. P. Baldwin. In answer to the question, "What shoemaker has risen to political or literary eminence in the United States?" a writer in the Philadelphia *Dispatch*, besides speaking of the four remarkable men we have selected as examples, says, "There are other famous names of graduates from that profession. *Daniel Sheffey* of Virginia learned the trade, and worked at it many years, and from 1809 to 1817 represented his district in the Congress of the United States. His retort to John Randolph of Roanoke, who taunted him on the floor of Congress with his former occupation, was, 'The difference, sir, between my colleague and myself is this, that if his lot had been cast like mine in early life, instead of rising, by industry, enterprise, and study, above his calling, and occupying a seat on this floor, he would at this time be engaged in making shoes on the bench.' ... *Gideon Lee*, a mayor of New York City, and a member of Congress from about 1840 to 1844, was a working shoemaker, and afterward a leather dealer. *William Claflin*, an ex-governor of Massachusetts and a member of Congress, worked at the shoemaker's trade when young, and is now at the head of a very large shoe-manufacturing firm. *John B. Attey*, an ex-member of Congress from Massachusetts, was in the shoe trade, as was also *H. P. Baldwin*, ex-governor of Michigan, and ex-member of Congress from that State."

[187] In a review of this last volume of Whittier's poems (Macmillan & Co.), a writer in the *Athenæum* (February 18th, 1882) gives the following just estimate of Whittier's character and merits as a man and a poet: "The poems in this collection ... show that delicate apprehension of nature, that deep-seated sympathy with suffering mankind, that unwavering love of liberty and all things lovable, that earnest belief in a spirit of beneficence guiding to right issues the affairs of the world, that beautiful tolerance of differences—in a word, all those high qualities which, being fused with imagination, make Mr. Whittier, not indeed an analytical and subtle poet, nor a poet dealing with great passions, but what he is emphatically, the apostle of all that is pure, fair, and morally beautiful.

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