



# THE SOUL-WINNER.

A SKETCH OF

FACTS AND INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE  
AND LABORS OF

EDMUND J. YARD,

FOR SIXTY-THREE YEARS A "CLASS-LEADER" AND HOSPITAL-  
VISITOR IN PHILADELPHIA.

BY HIS SISTER,

MRS. MARY D. JAMES.

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'He that winneth souls is wise.' PROV. xi, 30.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY D. P. KIDDER, D.D.

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## P R E F A C E.



**M**ANY friends of Edmund J. Yard have expressed a desire for the publication of a record of his life.

It has seemed to me that the work of preparing such a record should be performed by some one more competent than myself, but those whom I deem judicious advisers insist that the task—pleasing in itself, yet beset with many difficulties—should be undertaken by his only sister.

As a feeble tribute to one of the best of brothers, it is sent forth with the fervent prayer that He who made Edmund J. Yard what he was, may use it for the encouragement and profit of many of His dear children,

and especially that by it some may be incited to earnest effort on the lines of Christian usefulness in which he moved.

The fields for such usefulness are ever open, and the wants of perishing humanity within them are ever pleading for sympathizing workers. Those who are disposed to respond to the calls of the Master for laborers to work in his vineyard, but feel their lack of the skill and perseverance necessary to large success will do well to study the examples of Christian work narrated in the following pages.

## INTRODUCTION.



**M**Y personal acquaintance with the subject of the following memoir commenced in 1843, when I was pastor of the Green-street Church, Trenton, N. J., in which his mother, brother, sister, and other relatives were members. From that time forward to the close of his earthly pilgrimage, I counted him among my dearest Christian friends. I was accustomed to call upon him whenever I could, and always found my interviews with him instructive and refreshing in a religious point of view. He was thoroughly in sympathy with all the duties and enterprises in which, from time to time, I was en-

gaged, whether pastoral, editorial, secretarial, or educational. His experiences, in fact, though in a local sphere, touched upon all these lines of Christian effort, and became to me in my official work an added inspiration. I can therefore testify from personal knowledge to his large-hearted hospitality, his Christian generosity, and his intelligent appreciation of every branch of Church work, as well as to his tireless zeal to win souls for Christ and build them up in Christian character by every means in his power.

For many years I was accustomed to speak of him as the MODEL CLASS-LEADER, and to say that for this characteristic, if for no other, his life ought to be handed down to posterity in a well-written biography. But when to this characteristic were added those of the hospital visitor, the revival worker, the Bible giver, the Christian letter-writer, and the man who had the capacity, the tact, and the faith to win

souls for Christ in all varieties of circumstances, I deemed it of no small importance that memorials of his life and labors should be prepared for publication. I was, therefore, greatly pleased when his sister, Mrs. James, although in feeble health and pressed with other engagements, undertook the task of writing the present volume. How favorable was the result anticipated by others also may be seen from the following resolutions passed respectively by the Philadelphia and New Jersey Conferences at their sessions of 1880.

The session of the Philadelphia Conference for that year was held in the Union Church, of which Mr. Yard had been so long an honored member. It was therefore with exceeding appropriateness that the Rev. Joseph Castle, D.D., who had once been his pastor, and who has since departed this life, offered the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:



*Whereas,* The late Edmund J. Yard was extensively known and greatly beloved in his capacity of class-leader and hospital visitor in the city of Philadelphia ; and

*Whereas,* We have learned with pleasure that a memoir of his life and labors has been nearly completed by his esteemed sister, Mrs. James ; and

*Whereas,* We believe a record of his worthy example as a Christian worker will be greatly calculated to do good, both in the present and in coming generations ; therefore,

*Resolved,* That this Conference heartily commends to our Book Editors and Agents in the New York publication of the proposed memoir in such style and form as will conduce to its wide circulation.

The New Jersey Conference met the same year in the city of Camden. In that body a similar paper was offered by Revs. Charles H. Whitecar and John S. Heisler. It was passed with cordial unanimity in the following terms :

*Whereas,* The late Edmund J. Yard, who was for the long period of sixty-three years, a successful class-leader and hospital visitor in Philadelphia, was well and favor-

ably known to many ministers of this Conference, and to many members of our churches ; and

*Whereas*, We have learned that Mrs. Mary D. James, also well known to us as an able writer, has nearly completed a memoir of the life and labors of her lamented brother, under a most appropriate title, "The Soul Winner;" and

*Whereas*, We cannot doubt that such a work will be extensively popular and useful ; therefore,

*Resolved*, That we respectfully recommend to the Book Agents at New York the prompt publication of the said memoir, pledging ourselves hereby to promote its circulation as extensively as practicable among our people.

Now that the book, as prepared by Mrs. James, is accessible to the public, it may be commended as adapted to general and widespread circulation. Although brief and unpretentious, it will be found worthy to take rank with the best religious biographies, and as such to serve as a means of instruction and edification to all who may peruse its pages.

To many surviving friends it will come as a

joyous and profitable reminiscence of a person only known to be loved and venerated. To those who are inquiring how they may become useful as Christians, it will give the plainest and most satisfactory answers possible in the form of a practical example.

The following characteristics of the book entitle it to a deserved popularity :

1. It is American. Much of the religious biography circulated in this country is of foreign origin, and although excellent in character and influence, is less relevant to the circumstances of American readers than the matter of the present volume.

2. It presents a beautiful example of Christian character and influence from common and secular life. A large proportion of religious biography, both English and American, is clerical and, therefore, limited in the range of its special instructiveness. Here is an example taken from every-day business life, and yet

abounding in admirable traits of character and incidents of extraordinary usefulness. On every page it illustrates the principle so well embodied in a couplet of the hymn entitled, "YOUR MISSION:"

"If you want a field of labor,  
You can find it anywhere."

3. In size, style, and subject it is adapted to interest and instruct the young. Hence it should have a place in every Sunday-school library and in many families, and should be commended to children and youth who desire to make their lives beautiful if not sublime.

4. It is specially adapted to be placed in the hands of Christian converts as a means of teaching them by example how to develop Christian character through acts and habits of usefulness. Hence it should be widely circulated as a tract volume.

5. Added to all this, the book has special

charms for persons advancing in years. It exhibits a rare instance of an old age green and beautiful, notwithstanding the ills and adversities to which humanity is subject. It shows how the palm-tree, planted by the river of God, bears fruit in old age, while its leaf does not wither till transplanted to the paradise above.

D. P. K.

NEW YORK, *Sept.*, 1881.

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THE  
SOUL-WINNER.



CHAPTER I.  
BOYHOOD.

EDMUND JONES YARD was born Trenton, New Jersey, January 19, 17 His parents were Benjamin and Priscilla Ya He was the second of ten children. His ther, though not known to be an experimer Christian, was esteemed as an upright and c scientious man, and was by birthright a me ber of the "Society of Friends," or "Qu ers," his parents having been connected w them.

Edmund's mother had become an earn Christian previous to his birth, and care ly trained her children in the knowled of God.

Edmund was, from early childhood, serious and thoughtful. He daily repeated the Lord's Prayer, with solemnity and reverence, and often thought deeply of eternal things. His outward life, according to his mother's account, was most remarkable. His affectionate treatment of the members of his own family, and his kind and amiable manner toward all, were such as to attract attention and call forth remark.

To his mother, especially, he was a treasure—gladly relieving her of care and helping her in all her household labors. Often when finding her weary from a day's toil, he would insist upon her retiring early, saying, "I will take care of the baby." Then, with his foot upon the cradle-rocker and his hands busily sewing, he would keep the little one from its tired mother, thus affording her hours of refreshing sleep. Sometimes it would be midnight before the baby's waking would be the signal for him to commit it to its mother's arms. Then, retiring to his bed, he felt su-

premely happy in the thought that he could thus share the burdens of one to whom he owed so much. The eight children, younger than himself, afforded him many "privileges," as he called them, of helping his dear mother, and of smoothing her rough pathway.

His mother's own statement was, "Edmund was always good, from his birth, and never needed correction, nor even reproof."

Notwithstanding his pure and admirable life, he had keen convictions of inward depravity. By the illumination of the divine Spirit the native corruption of his heart was revealed, and he knew it must be changed by the power of God or he could not be saved. His inability to live up to his own standard of right deeply pained him, and he would say, "Ah, it is sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting over and over." While others were praising him, his own deep consciousness of guilt in God's sight made him dissatisfied, and often unhappy. The language of Paul, Rom. vii, 24, was scarcely too strong to be applied to him-



self by this young man whose life was so exceptionally beautiful in the eyes of those around him: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

## CHAPTER II.

## WON BY THE WORD.

**I**N the year 1808 Edmund J. Yard commenced reading the word of God with reference to the salvation of his soul. He had read the Bible as a school book, and was familiar with its sacred truths, but at that time his mind was drawn by the Holy Spirit, without any other influence, to read it, that he might learn the way of salvation. By this reading he was made increasingly sensible of his sinfulness before God, and was enabled to see clearly the way of salvation in Christ.

With sincere repentance and great earnestness, he sought pardon and peace, and it was not long before he felt the power of saving grace and was consciously born of God. †

The work was very gradual. There was no distinct period to which he could subsequently refer as the hour or the day when the great

work was effected, for it was as the dawning of the day, so gently breaking upon the darkness of his soul, that he could not tell just when the night had departed. But he knew that the darkness was gone, and felt that his soul was now "light in the Lord;" for "the Sun of righteousness" had arisen upon him "with healing in his wings."

Then began his delight in the worship and service of the Lord. He attended different churches as often as opportunity offered, and became greatly interested in every thing pertaining to the cause of Him whom he now delighted to serve; "loving" all Christians of whatever evangelical sect "with a pure heart fervently."

The most enlarged charity was a distinguishing trait that marked not only his early Christian life, but his whole character. Some of his most cherished friends and associations were among those not of his own denomination. From the hour of his espousals to God communion with saints, next to that with

Him who is "chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely," was the joy of his life.

During the early part of his religious life the society of many devout Christians—ministers and others, who visited the home of his parents—afforded him great spiritual aid, as well as unspeakable delight. From their lips he would catch with eagerness the precious words of gospel experience and teaching.

His mother's heart rejoiced as she found her son evincing so deep an interest in spiritual things, and thinking it would be conducive to his religious advancement, she gave him a room to himself, where he spent much time alone in reading, meditation, and prayer.

The first time he attended a Methodist meeting he felt it his duty to kneel during prayer, but had a severe conflict in his mind, thinking that such a step would at once sever his connection with all his associates. At that time there was not, so far as he knew, one young person in the city of his residence who made a profession of religion, and Methodists

were looked upon with contempt and treated with derision. To kneel in one of their meetings would be to commit himself fully on the Lord's side, and would indicate his coming out from the world. Besides, it would subject him to great scorn and persecution. But after having counted the cost, he resolved to do what God required, though it might involve the loss of every human friend. Kneeling, at once he began to reckon himself among the followers of Jesus.

Anticipating speedy assaults of persecution, he sought to be equipped for the onset, and became "strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man."

The first attack occurred on the following day. One of his friends said:

"So, Edmund, the Methodists have got you, have they?"

He replied, "No, the Methodists haven't got me, but I have resolved to serve God."

The young man ridiculed him, and tried to persuade him to give up his religion. He re-

plied, "You may say and do what you please, but you can't move me. I am determined to be a Christian and go to heaven."

At that time Edmund had commenced learning a trade, and his shopmates tried every possible means and device to allure or drive him from the path of piety. One day a young man said to him,

"I heard a good Methodist lady say that 'Edmund Yard's fiery edge would soon wear off.'"

This affected him seriously, coming from one whom he had regarded as a Christian, and he felt sad.

The young man added, "You wont hold out long, you'll soon give it up."

Edmund, lifting his heart to God, felt strengthened, and replied, "Well, they that live longest will know most," and turned away from his comrade with a smile.

Soon after Edmund had committed himself by kneeling in church, he again attended a Methodist meeting, and heard Rev. Jacob

Hevener, then on Trenton Circuit, preach. After the close of the sermon an invitation was given to join the Church. Edmund at once resolved to unite himself with that people, and, never having seen any one join a Church, he asked an old member who sat beside him what he should do to connect himself with the Church. "Father Kotts" replied, "Why, just go forward and stand at the altar." He did so, and the minister took his name and assigned him to a class.

Although in the ardor of his first love all Christian Churches seemed alike to him, and he continued to love all, yet, when he came to understand the usages and privileges of the Church of his choice, he saw that God's hand had led him there; for the peculiar helps of the Methodist Church, as he frequently said, were just what he specially needed. The class-meetings, the band-meetings, the love-feasts, and prayer-meetings proved so strengthening to his Christian graces that he believed Methodism was just adapted to him and he to

it; so he was always glad he had found a home in a Church that was warm in religious fervor, and which set forth a high standard of experience as the Christian's duty and privilege.

The low estimation in which the Methodist Episcopal Church was at that period held, and the contumely and persecution then endured by its adherents every-where, furnished a severe test to a young man of elevated ideas, great ambition, and native pride of character. Yet, so clear were his convictions that God was pleased with his decision, that he soon rose superior to the frowns and smiles of the world, and exulted in a consciousness that he was among the children of the great King, and an heir to the kingdom which shall endure when earthly distinctions shall be forgotten.

In the midst of his ecstatic joy, at a meeting one evening he observed some young men laughing and making sport of the exercises and the devout worshipers. When an opportunity offered he stepped upon a seat



and repeated this stanza of one of our Wesleyan hymns :

“ On all the mighty kings of earth,  
With pity I look down,  
And claim, in virtue of my birth,  
A never-fading crown !”

He then spoke to them in words so exultant and so impressive, that the game-makers were awed into seriousness, and there was no more trifling that evening. Indeed, some were so moved upon by the Spirit of God that they were soon found among the humble seekers of salvation.

Not long after Edmund had identified himself with “the sect every-where spoken against,” he was told that a lady friend of his mother had made the remark that she pitied Mrs. Yard because her son Edmund had disgraced her and her family by becoming connected with the Methodists. The same lady was informed by one of his shopmates that they had tried their best to make the young Methodist angry, but could not succeed ; nothing they

could say or do would move him. The lady said, "There is a way to make him angry, and if you will try that you will be sure to gain your point." Alluding to a woman called "a sanctified Methodist," she said it was considered by some impossible to make her angry, but a man said he knew how to make her mad. So, one day, when she came to the house where he lived, as she stepped upon the porch he threw the contents of the basin in which he had washed his hands into her face, and she was very angry. "Now," said the lady, "you try that. Wash your hands or feet and then throw the dirty water into Edmund's face, and see if that don't do it." One of the boys concluded to try it, but first told Edmund the story, as related by the lady, adding, "I am going to try it with you ;" but, finding him unmoved by the threat, concluded it was not worth while to make the experiment. The boys, however, did try another plan to tease and disturb him. They undertook to compel him to drink rum, designing

to make him drunk. Two of them held him, and the third attempted to pour it into his mouth, but, raising his foot, he pushed his tormentor away.

“Who shall contend with God? or who can hurt whom God delights to save?”

After many experiments Edmund's associates came to the conclusion that he was beyond their power to move, and they might as well let him alone. They were convinced, also, of his unwavering fidelity and consistency of conduct, and of the reality of the religion he professed. Consequently their confidence in him increased daily, while growing respect caused them to treat him with kindness.

## CHAPTER III.

## FIRST TROPHIES.

THE young soldier was not content with having conquered a truce with his associates. He longed to have them enlisted with him in the service of his new Captain. Some of them were made the subjects of special prayer. Influenced by his evident interest in the evening meetings, one and another would attend those gatherings of humble worshipers. Usually a new-comer would take the back seat. But interest was sure to be awakened, and each evening would find the young man one seat in advance of that previously occupied. Edmund's prayers were unceasing, and he eagerly watched for tokens of answer. About midway up the aisle was a seat which, in his eye, marked the line between ordinary interest and the state of mind which rendered it advisable for a personal appeal to be made. One

who had occupied that seat, as he passed out the door, would find an arm kindly thrown around him, with an invitation to take a walk in a retired street near by.

Then Edmund would take the opportunity to earnestly press his friend to yield to God's claims. Not in a single case was such an effort unsuccessful.

Sometimes the walk and the conversation would be continued till a late hour of the night; but before they would separate the young man would promise to give his heart to Christ. In this way a large number were won for Jesus. It was said, "When Edmund Yard gets his arm around a young man he is sure to come."

One evening he fixed his eyes upon one of the proudest and gayest young men in the city, who was not accustomed to attend Methodist meetings, but had been drawn there by curiosity on that occasion. All the time during service Edmund was praying, "Lord, help me to win that soul for thee!" He observed

a seriousness in the young man's face, and thought the good Spirit was working in his heart. In this case he did not wait for further indications, but, as soon as the meeting had closed, hastened to his young friend, overtook him, and drawing him around to the favorite walk in which so many had found the way of life, began to recommend the service of Christ to him. The young man was fond of the world's pleasures and vanities, and having been previously invited to attend a ball on an evening of the ensuing week, did not feel quite ready to start for heaven. Edmund pleaded with him till his heart yielded, and he promised to attend the prayer-meeting instead of the ball, both being on the same evening. When the time arrived the temptation to participate in the gay entertainment was so strong that he was about to yield, when Edmund entered his room, and renewed his request for him to accompany him to the place of prayer. Had he not gone again in pursuit of him that precious soul, instead of being within reach of saving

power on that evening, would have been on Satan's premises, and might have been led back into captivity. But the faithful Christian victor bore away the trophy won for Jesus, and there was "joy that night in the presence of the angels of God over that sinner who repented" and was born into the kingdom before the meeting had closed.

What a conquest for Christ! That young man—dressed for a scene of worldly amusement and revelry—found in a prayer-meeting, a humble penitent, seeking salvation! In the house of a colored family the proud votary of fashion bowed in contrition at the mercy-seat and found pardoning grace! The young man thus won was James Rogers, who afterward resided in Burlington County, N. J., and filled various positions of honor and trust. He became and remained a pillar in the Church of God during his long and useful life, which he closed in gospel triumph in Trenton, the city of his natural and spiritual birth. Many times has it been the writer's privilege to listen to

his joyous utterances as a class-leader and conductor of social religious meetings. He was a man of sterling piety and true nobility of soul, remarkable for his large benevolence, and greatly respected and beloved in the Church and community where he resided. He was the father of Rev. William R. Rogers, deceased, of the New Jersey Conference, and the excellent Mrs. Dr. Harlow, of Philadelphia, and grandfather of Rev. James Rogers and Rev. William Rogers, both now in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In a few months after Edmund's conversion the band of young men in that Church numbered thirty, all won for Jesus by that young Christian, who had himself started alone in the way of life. As stated before, when he went forward to give his name to the Church, he did not know that there was a young person of like mind in the city, but he had the glad surprise to find two young men standing by his side at the altar, whose hearts had been touched by his example, having been previous-



ly awakened. They followed him as he went forward to be enrolled among the followers of the Lamb. Those young men were John Lansing and Charles Beatty. Another, who was an associate of Edmund, and was moved by his example to become a Christian, and who not long after joined the Church, was Samuel J. Cox, who afterward became a minister and spent his life in doing good. For a number of years he was an acceptable minister of the Philadelphia Conference, and later of the New Jersey Conference. Subsequently he removed to Zanesville, Ohio, and died there a beloved veteran in the service of God. In Mr. Cox Edmund found a congenial friend and helper in the cause of Christ, and as brothers they walked together in the paths of usefulness, sweetly united in strongest bonds.

Richard J. Bond, John C. Bellerjeau, and Charles Sutterly, were all of the number led to Christ by Edmund, and all those young men named became official members of the Church in Trenton. One after another they have all

passed to their heavenly home. One of the last two surviving their spiritual father was Charles Sutterly, who departed to his rest several years ago at eighty-five years of age.

The other, John Downey, lived to be the oldest member of all the seven Methodist Churches which during his life had arisen in the city of Trenton.

When Edmund J. Yard joined the Church, in 1819, one little wooden building, built in Bishop Asbury's early ministry, with boards for seats, was the only Methodist edifice in Trenton. Many years after this was succeeded by a brick house—small in dimensions but neat in structure. The second was named "Bethesda," and though the glory of the latter house was greater than that of the former, the recollections of the first were always cherished by the subject of this sketch with emotions of joy, as a hallowed place, where the divine presence and power were gloriously revealed.

Several months after his conversion Edmund

was invited by a local preacher to attend a meeting at Lamberton, a small village adjacent to Trenton. He had not thought of speaking at the meeting, but after the sermon the Holy Spirit so strongly prompted him that he felt, as he afterward said, that he "must do it or die." The cross was so great that it seemed to him impossible to utter a word, but impelled by the mighty influence resting upon him, he tremblingly arose, just as the preacher had taken the hymn book to give out the closing hymn. He spake as the Spirit gave him utterance, addressing the unconverted. He felt that the message came from God, and that he was only the organ through which it was spoken. He believed that the word had gone to some hearts, yet he saw no results at the time. Many years after, when visiting Lamberton to attend a meeting, a lady asked him, "Do you remember speaking at a meeting in this neighborhood thirty-three years ago?"

He replied, "Yes, I recollect it distinctly."

She said, “ My brother and two other young men went to that meeting, resolved that they would break it up, and that there should be no more meetings of that kind in Lamberton. After their return home they were asked, ‘ Did you break up the meeting?’ One of them replied, ‘ No, there was a boy preaching and we couldn’t do any thing.’ ” The arrows of the Almighty did execution that evening, and souls were afterward saved, as the result of the boy’s preaching!

## CHAPTER IV

## LIGHT ON THE PATHWAY.

AMONG the little persecuted flock who formed the first "Society" of Methodists in Trenton there were many precious ones, of whom Edmund often spoke as his friends, faithful and beloved. They counseled and encouraged him in his youth, and, leading him into paths of usefulness, greatly helped him in the Christian life. Among those nursing fathers and mothers were Rev. Gideon Mosely and wife, Daniel M'Curdy and wife, Mrs. Grace Dorey, and Rev. Mr. Dunn and wife. Mrs. Mosely and Mrs. Dorey took special interest in his spiritual welfare.

A severe attack of sickness once brought him very near death, and as he found himself unwilling to die just then, he prayed for "dying grace." Not receiving consciously an answer to his prayer, he felt distressed, and be-

gan to question the safety of his spiritual condition, and so continued to do till after his restoration to health. In this depressed state of mind he visited his good friend, Mrs. Moseley, and stated to her his trouble, saying, "I fear I am not right, for when I was ill and thought myself near death I had not dying grace."

"Well," said his friend, "Edmund, you didn't die, did you?"

He answered, "No, I didn't die."

"Well, then, you didn't need dying grace, because the Lord didn't want you to die at that time. While you live you need living grace, and when your time shall come to die then he will give you dying grace. So don't trouble yourself any more about that; only serve God faithfully, and he will be sure to give you the grace you need for the hour of death when it comes."

These suggestions removed the difficulty, and the young Christian went on his way rejoicing. Often during his long life he alluded

to the quaint remarks and good counsel of Mrs. Mosely and the victory they helped him to gain.

At the age of eighteen, having been a member of the Church one year, he was appointed leader of a class by Rev. Mr. Dunn, who was then a local preacher, in charge of a small society at Morrisville, Pa., across the Delaware River from Trenton. Soon afterward his pastor made him leader of a class in his own Church. This office he held until his removal to Philadelphia, some years later.

In the summer of 1811 he attended a camp-meeting near Allentown, N. J., which had an important influence upon his subsequent life and experience. He went with a company of twenty young men. They were provided with every thing necessary in the way of eatables already cooked, intending, as they said, to "keep bachelor's hall." Edmund was to prepare the meals, etc. He accordingly provided breakfast and supper every day, but in regard to dinner, he told them that each one must go

to the provision chest and help himself, for he could not be interrupted in the middle of the day in his religious engagements. Camp-meetings in those days kept up continuous efforts in the work of salvation, not suspending service at the close of the morning preaching service, as is the present custom, but entering into earnest "altar work," and continuing it till the hour of afternoon public worship. Nearly all the laborers in the noon meetings would take a brief respite for refreshment, each in his turn, but Edmund seldom allowed himself this indulgence. In the intensity of his zeal he would labor on till the afternoon preaching service, and at its close resume his work in the prayer-meeting till evening, forgetting the demands of the body, so absorbed was he in the glorious work of SOUL-WINNING. Such earnest and incessant labors at camp-meetings he continued for many years, until the infirmities of age deprived him of the physical strength needed to support them.

During the camp-meeting alluded to, there



came two young men—Rev. Samuel Snead and Mr. Whitehead—having been directed to the Trenton “young men’s tent.” They were received and made welcome. These visitors proved greatly helpful to the youthful band, for they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Edmund said they seemed like angels, sent to minister to them. Soon after their arrival Mr. Snead asked the young men if they had received the blessing of entire sanctification or perfect love? They replied that they did not know what that meant. They had never heard it preached or set forth distinctly as the believer’s privilege. He then explained it to them and told them it was not only their privilege, but it was a divine requirement explicitly set forth and enforced in the word of God. Several of them became exceedingly interested, and commenced at once an earnest seeking of “the great blessing,” as it was called. Among the most fervent seekers was young Edmund. His heart became all engrossed with the glorious object set before

him in the Gospel of Christ, and all the powers of his being were on full stretch for its possession. The increasing cry of his soul was that the apostle's prayer might be answered in his experience: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." He could not doubt that this great work might be accomplished in his case, because the apostle had added, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. v, 24. It became the theme of his conversation and the burden of all his prayers, as the grand prize to which all the aspirations of his soul and all the energies of his being were directed.

He went home, however, without the full realization of his desire, but continued to seek with unwearying earnestness for the full accomplishment of the divine work in his heart.

On his return to Trenton he hastened to his faithful friends, Mr. and Mrs. Mosely and Mrs. Dorey, to tell them of the new doctrine, and

to inquire what they knew about it, for surely, he thought, they must have experienced it. Greatly to his surprise, they said that they had never experimentally known, though they understood and believed, the doctrine of full salvation, as taught by Mr. Wesley and by the inspired word. They were much interested and moved by Edmund's earnest expressions of desire to be made pure in heart and sanctified wholly, and acknowledged the great importance of entire consecration to God and the full baptism of the Holy Ghost, so that Jesus might be represented in his followers by a life entirely conformed to his will. Mr. Mosely spoke of it as essential to the full success of the Gospel ministry that the Church should be "holy and unblamable," and proposed at once having a meeting for this specific object. An invitation was given to all who believed in the doctrine of full salvation in Christ, and all who would seek for it, to meet for that purpose at his house on "Mill Hill," now Broad Street, Trenton. Half a dozen young

men and a few of the old members attended, and God owned the first meeting by the revelation of his presence in their midst. It was a time of great power and wondrous blessing to the little company assembled, and they were encouraged to continue the meetings.

But soon opposition arose. The faithful band who had set themselves apart for God were regarded by many in the Church as fanatics. In speaking of them some would call them "the holy ones," by way of derision, and say, "We don't belong to the sanctified band, and so we are not wanted at their meetings." But the devoted ones kept on their way, treating with great kindness those who opposed them, and the Lord prospered them greatly; the meetings increased in divine power as well as in numbers. Some who had stood aloof and found fault were overcome by the spirit of meekness and love which was shown them in return, and won over to the little flock that met weekly to help each other in "the way of holiness." In many cases the

inspired words were fulfilled, "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

At each succeeding meeting, as Edmund continued seeking in agonizing prayer the fuller baptism of the Holy Spirit, it seemed to him to be coming upon him, and yet, strange to say, meeting after meeting would come and close without the fulfillment of his longing desire! Was it not that he sought it more by wrestling and struggling than by faith? by works, which never can succeed, instead of just simply taking Jesus at his word, and accepting the proffered gift? All this time he was so sincere, so devout and earnest, willing to make any sacrifice, fasting and praying, doing, doing all the time, but not believing.

## CHAPTER V.

## NEW POWER

I N the following spring Edmund visited Philadelphia, where the Annual Conference was then in session. Having an exalted idea of the spirituality of ministers, he thought that was the place, of all others, to look for the divine presence, and there, among those men of God, he should surely receive the sanctifying power. He was invited to the house of a dear friend, where several ministers and other Christian people were being entertained, and he well might expect that there his hungry soul would be richly fed. But he was sadly disappointed; he received no spiritual benefit or aid there; nor did he find any special advantage from attending the religious services of the Conference. But there was in reserve for him a hallowed feast, for which he was not looking, in the house of one of Christ's

humble followers. A devoted Christian lady, Mrs. Dickinson, kindly invited the young stranger-brother to take tea at her house with Rev. Joseph Lybrand, then a local preacher, only eighteen years of age, but eminently spiritual; also his aunt, Mrs. Carson, Mrs. Price, and Miss Patience Littell—a choice company of precious saints—all “filled with the Spirit.”

After tea the table was set aside, and the group of kindred spirits immediately entered into a prayer-meeting. Joseph Lybrand offered the opening prayer. Such a prayer Edmund had never listened to—a prayer so full of holy unction and divine power. The blessing, rich and full, came down upon the waiting company. The room seemed filled with the glory of God, and every heart with celestial love. The devout soul which for months had been panting after God, “as the hart panteth after the water brooks,” now received a fullness of love and peace never known before; yet he had not the clear witness that the work

of cleansing was fully wrought, and while he exulted in the consciousness that he was all the Lord's, yet he believed there was still a deeper work to be effected, and still he continued looking and praying for

“The clear indubitable seal  
That ascertains the kingdom mine.”

The saintly Lybrand, full of the sweetness of “perfect love,” explained to him the simple way of faith, and greatly strengthened and helped him. His heart—already in the mold of love—received the divine impress, and he rejoiced in God with exceeding joy, yet went home expecting a brighter evidence and a fuller baptism of power.

From that hour his heart was bound to Joseph Lybrand, and they were bosom friends. Their communion was frequent and delightful to both. The ministerial career of Lybrand fully equalled its bright promise so early given, and was marked by wonderful spirituality and success through his entire life.



From the interview above alluded to Edmund went to his own room, and while kneeling at his bedside received the bright, incontestable evidence of heart purity. Now the glorious words of inspiration were fulfilled, "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." His peace was truly "as a river," and often did his heart so overflow with holy joy that he spoke exultantly of the wonderful manifestations of divine love and his triumph in Christ as far exceeding all his former experience. That experience from the time of his conversion had been clear, decided, and steady, with the brief interruption occasioned by the temptation alluded to in reference to a readiness to die during his illness. So unwavering had been his Christian course, so consistent his life, and so devout his spirit that he certainly evinced a thorough conversion to God, and there was no backsliding in his case. Therefore "the great blessing," as he termed it, was, in his estimation, a distinct work from that of justi-

fication: that which is designated by Wesley, Fletcher, Clarke, Watson, Benson, and other Methodist standard writers as "entire sanctification," or "perfect love;" and by President Edwards, Dr. Mahan, Dr. Finney, Rev. James Brainerd Taylor, Dr. W. E. Boardman, and others of different denominations, as "full assurance of faith," or "the higher Christian life."

In after life, though he seldom spoke publicly of it with definiteness as his own experience, he always regarded it as clearly distinct from regeneration or the new birth. His testimonies were marked by great modesty and humility. While he exalted Jesus and the power of his grace to "save unto the uttermost," and spoke of his rest in Christ, his daily communion with him, and the abounding comforts of his love, it was not his habit to speak in terms sometimes used to designate the state of grace alluded to. He did not say, "At such a time I was wholly sanctified," or "made holy," or "For so many years I have lived

without sin." Such expressions he did not use; but when questioned as to his own experience on that subject he answered definitely, and in specific meetings for the promotion of holiness he spoke more explicitly. But on all occasions his testimonies and prayers were full of the sacred unction and hallowed influence which could only come from the closest union with Christ, and an induement of divine power.

"It was not necessary," a minister remarked, "for Edmund Yard to say he was sanctified, for his words, his spirit, and his life attested the fact of his entire consecration to God, that his eye was single, and he was one in whom there was no guile." But it should be understood that, although he believed in a definite experience on this subject, he did not think a special baptism, called "the second blessing," was all that was necessary, as placing its recipient in a position of perfect safety, beyond the power of temptation and sin. He always believed, and carefully taught his class

members, that daily growth in grace was their duty and privilege; that frequent self-examination, constant watchfulness and prayer, with a diligent study of God's word, were essential to the Christian life, and that without strict attention to these duties backsliding would be inevitable; that whatever heights or depths of experience in the divine life had been attained, a continuous application of the all-cleansing blood was needed, and constant communion with the Source of strength divine.

Of his own personal sense of this need he very often spoke, and that he daily lived in communication with the Source of power was very evident. He often repeated the following stanza as experience :

“ Him to know is life and peace,  
And pleasure without end ;  
This is all my happiness,  
On Jesus to depend.”

No one could possess a deeper feeling of entire dependence on God, and this, doubtless,

was the secret of his success in his great life work of soul saving.

The term life-work seems appropriate in reference to his unceasing efforts to bring souls to Christ, for although his work in the Church as a leader of several classes, an exhorter, etc., was important as it was faithfully and successfully performed, yet the predominant passion of his soul and his continual efforts—as will be seen in future pages—were to save sinners.

To this work he devoted himself with untiring effort. For this the “divine anointing” which he had received was his best preparation; not on account of “the blessing” bestowed, so much as because it taught him the secret of power, to abide in Christ, and through faith to receive moment by moment new supplies of life-giving energy from God himself. This secret was the key to the usefulness of the threescore years that followed.

Reader, have you learned this secret?

Mrs. Dickinson, the excellent woman at whose house Edmund had met Rev. Joseph Lybrand, became a warm friend, whose counsels and prayers proved of great value to him in after years.

## CHAPTER VI.

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES.

EDMUND having found a business position with a gentleman in Philadelphia, removed there to reside in the spring of 1813.

Very soon he sought the abode of his devoted Christian friend where he had received the gracious baptism before alluded to. That house seemed a sacred place to him. The hallowed associations of the hour when he was brought into closer union with Jesus had been cherished most fondly in grateful remembrance. Frequent gatherings of choice spirits made it a place of delightful resort, and there the young disciple found the sweetest Christian communion. Renewed strength and cheer in his heavenward course were always the results of his visits to that house, where Jesus met and blessed his devoted followers.

There were four who might be termed "elect

ladies," whose names should be preserved in the Church. Of them it might have been truly said, "They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." They were Mrs. Dickinson, Mrs. Page, Mrs. Martindale, and Miss Patience Littell. Edmund often spoke of them as women "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and of the great spiritual help he had received from them in the early period of his religious life.

He was one evening sent on an errand by his employer, and passing that loved abode, which he called "Bethel," stopped to see his good friend, Mrs. Dickinson. She strongly urged him to stay and attend a meeting to be held there at that time. It was not imperative for him to hasten his return, so he consented to remain, and enjoy at least a portion of the services. He took his seat near the door, so that he might slip out unobserved before the close of the meeting. During the first prayer the divine power fell upon him and prostrated him upon the floor. For several



hours he was unconscious of all below. He said he had a vision of his Redeemer. He felt it to be a glorious reality that he had seen Jesus and had received a new baptism of love and power. Thus he was still more fully prepared for the work that was before him. He sought diligently for opportunities to do good, both to the bodies and the souls of men.

It was during his first visit to Philadelphia, in 1812, that he was introduced into those fields of labor in which he was so successful in subsequent years. One of those devoted women whose names have been mentioned—Mrs. Page—led him into paths of usefulness which he pursued during the whole of his following life of sixty-three years.

Mrs. Page's entire life was devoted to the poor and suffering outcasts, who by others were uncared for. As a ministering angel she visited almshouses, prisons, hospitals, and the slums of iniquity, ever seeking to save poor victims of sorrow and sin. Gladly did Edmund

accept her invitation to accompany her in her walks of usefulness, and although to him this was a new field of labor, it was one that strongly commended itself to his heart, and enlisted all the sympathies of his nature. Here, he thought, is work for a life-time, and he longed for the privilege of engaging in it as a permanent worker. Thus, when two years later, in the providence of God, he became a resident of the city, he said, "Surely God's hand is in this." "He hath set my feet in a large place." Greatly he rejoiced that he had found so wide a field of labor, and devoutly he thanked God for multiplied privileges of working for his blessed cause.

#### A SIGNAL ANSWER TO PRAYER.

Some time after Edmund had removed to Philadelphia, he received the sad tidings that his mother was at the point of death from a malignant disease, and was then in a state of unconsciousness. For many hours, remaining life could only be discerned by a slight moist-

ure upon a mirror placed near the lips of the sufferer.

When the intelligence reached Edmund it was too late for him to procure a conveyance to his home in Trenton that day, and he was compelled to wait till the next morning. Knowing that a prayer-meeting was to be held at Mrs. Dickinson's house on that evening by some devout women, he went there and stated the condition of his mother, saying, "She can't be spared from her family of nine children; wont you help me pray that her life may be saved?" The good women said, "We will," and with great fervor and faith they pleaded that the dear mother might live. After several prayers had been offered, one of the sisters said to Edmund, "Your mother will not die; the assurance is given me that she will recover." Looking at his watch he made a note of the moment when the remark was made.

Early on the following day he went to his sick mother, full of hope that he should find

her better. The joyful announcement met him at the door, "There is a decided improvement."

"When did she begin to revive?" he asked.

"Last evening at half-past eight," was the reply, which exactly corresponded with the time the assurance was given to the sister alluded to. "Just at that minute," continued his informant, "your mother opened her eyes, and soon after spoke and received food. Now she is able to converse, and the disease has evidently left her entirely. It seems miraculous, for her physicians had given her up, saying she could not possibly live, and she was apparently dying all day yesterday."

The mystery was explained by the devoted son. "The prayer of faith" had saved "the sick," and for over thirty years she lived to bless her family and the world. Then, at the age of eighty-one years, in the glorious triumphs of gospel faith, she departed to her heavenly home.

Edmund was one of her greatest comforts

in her declining life. Often visiting and cheering her amid the infirmities of age, and ministering to her comfort in every way that the warmest affection could suggest. He was at her bedside when sickness was hurrying her to the grave, watching her in the last struggle, and witnessing her wonderful exultation when to her spirit-eyes the redeemed host became visible, and angels came to be her convoy to the home of the glorified. "What a great company!" she exclaimed. "The company that John—" Her daughter, observing that she could not finish the sentence, said, "That great company that John saw, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; do you see them, mother?"

"Yes!" she replied. Then, still looking upward, she said, "Mother, Sister Rebecca, I'm coming! yes, I'm coming!" and quickly joined those kindred spirits who had years before departed to the land of the blest.

## CHAPTER VII.

TAUGHT IN THE SCHOOL OF ADVERSITY.

NOT many months after his removal to Philadelphia, Edmund J. Yard was united in marriage to Miss Jane M'Curdy, an estimable young lady, of good family, and a member of his own Church. Happy in their new relation, there seemed every promise of a life of more than ordinary brightness and joy. Indeed, so far as mutual affection could make an earthly paradise, such was his home. Surely there was never a more devoted husband. Yet even over this delightful Christian home clouds and storms ere long began to gather.

A few years after his marriage he was offered an interest in a mercantile establishment which was apparently doing a successful business.

He had been desiring a change of employment, and as it had been his habit to seek

divine direction in regard to all temporal as well as spiritual matters, he had prayed for such an opening as this seemed to be, and believing the arrangement providential, entered into the partnership. Soon he discovered that many of the goods had been purchased during the war of 1812, at high prices. A great reaction followed, the stock rapidly depreciated in value, and the firm became bankrupt, making an assignment for the benefit of the creditors. To one whose conscience was so sensitive as that of the subject of this memoir this was a severe trial, for the stock fell far short of meeting the demands upon the firm, and they could not pay the balances justly, if not legally, due. Though filled with anxiety and grief, Mr. Yard well knew where to look for succor and comfort, and repaired at once to Him who is "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." He was comforted by the assurance that "All things work together for good to them that love God," and trusting that in some

way the Lord would provide, he was enabled to bear up under the heavy pressure, "casting all his care upon Him."

In the time of his extremity, when he found himself without means to get bread for his family, he received a letter from his kind father inviting him to bring his wife and babe to his house in Trenton, offering them a home until he should find business that would offer a support for them. The proffer was gratefully accepted, and thus they were temporarily provided for.

As the weeks passed by the young man made every effort in his power to find employment, but without success. Months elapsed, and to human view the prospect did not brighten in the least. Was it strange that "hope deferred" made "sick" even this brave young heart? When he had been separated from his wife and child six months, and his way still seemed completely hedged up, he went one Sabbath evening to his accustomed place of worship, strongly tempted to discour-



agement and despair. After the opening exercises the pastor spoke of an experience which he never had known before. Having made his usual preparation to preach, but having no manuscript, the text, the subject, and all that he had intended to say had gone from his mind. "But," said he, "another text has come to me, and upon these words I will speak. 'Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.'" Isa. 1, 10.

At the announcement of the text the disconsolate spirit was instantly lifted up. He said in his heart, "This is a message from God to me. 'I will trust and not be afraid.'" The sermon, inspired by the Spirit divine, was full of holy encouragement to the bowed down and afflicted, and was truly a feast of fat things to the faithful one, who left the sacred place full of gladness, in the assurance that the God whose "eyes run to and fro through-

out the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him," would interpose for his speedy deliverance.

The next day, passing along the street, so jubilant in mighty faith that he scarcely realized he was walking among mortals, he was startled by the salutation of a friend:

"Edmund, I have been looking for you. I have found a good position in a business that will just suit you—collector of taxes. I will be your surety, and the position is secured for you."

With unbounded joy and thankfulness he received it as from his loving Father's hand, and in a short time had the comfort of bringing back his family and providing for their sustenance. From that time he prospered in business, soon having properties placed in his care, as real estate agent, in addition to tax collecting.

Although his creditors had no legal claim upon him, he had determined that every dol-

lar due them according to the highest rule of equity should be paid. As soon, therefore, as he could by strictest economy do so, he began to lay aside something every month toward the payment of these claims. Business was increasingly prosperous, and it was not very long before he invited his creditors to dine with him, and as each guest took up his plate he found under it a check for the amount due him on the old account. At first all but one positively refused to accept the money, saying that the failure was through no fault of the debtor, and they had considered the matter settled. He, however, insisted, and they reluctantly accepted his offer, saying, "If you should ever be in need come to us and we will help you."

That trial and the ultimate victory were among the incidents of his life which he always recalled with deepest gratitude to God. Many times he related these circumstances, and the recital was in a number of cases made a special blessing to others in adversity. So,

that storm, though severe, was not of very long duration, and only tended to purify the atmosphere of this Christian home.

For some time in that home all was again bright and joyous. But one day the death-angel came, and bore away a lovely bud of promise, the second child with whom God had blessed them, and whom they cherished as a very precious gift. Never was there a more loving father, and in this bereavement he suffered keenly, but with perfect acquiescence in the divine will, saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Smiling through his tears, he closed the beautiful eyes of his darling boy, and said, "He is a cherub now among the glorified, and we must thank our God that we have a child in heaven."

With tenderest and most loving ministrations he soothed and comforted the sorrowing mother of the ascended babe, exhorting her to join him in devout thanksgiving, that their little Robert was safe for-

ever in the fold of the Good Shepherd above.

Severe as were these trials of his early manhood, it cannot be doubted that their influence was salutary in preparing him for his life-work. It was "in that he," our adorable Lord, "suffered, being tempted," that "he is able to succor them that are tempted," (tried,) and he rarely employs in active service those who have not been taught in the school of adversity. The lessons thus learned were not only refining in their effect upon the subject of this memoir, but rendered him greatly useful to the afflicted, enabling him to "comfort them which" were "in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith" he himself was "comforted of God."

As we shall see, further on in this beautiful life, it was nearly all spent amidst chastening influences, and this doubtless had much to do with its attractiveness and its power over others for good.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SELF-SACRIFICING LABOR.

SOON after Edmund J. Yard went to reside in Philadelphia he found that there was demand for special labor in a settlement of colored people in the north-western part of the city. The typhus fever had broken out among them in the most terribly contagious form, sweeping them away into eternity in large numbers. In attempting to minister to those poor creatures he would imperil his own life; but he felt that God had called him to that field, and he must go. The filth and stench was so intolerable that he was near fainting away every time he entered the infected district. Nevertheless he went day after day, and talked and prayed with the sick and dying, pointing them to the atoning Lamb, and many a redeemed spirit took its upward flight from those hovels of wretched-

ness to the Paradise above. On Sabbath mornings he would go and labor among those poor sufferers, instead of enjoying the privileges of the sanctuary, and in the afternoons he would visit the almshouse, hospital, and prisons, as time would allow. During the week he visited the sick in all parts of the city as he had opportunity.

About the same time he became interested in the case of a man on the West Chester road five miles from the city, dying of consumption, whose sister had requested Mr. Yard to visit him. He went on the next Sabbath, after his arduous labors among the colored people. When he had reached the place he almost fainted from exhaustion. The sick man and his mother both treated him coldly, and he felt that he was an unwelcome visitor. When he introduced the subject of religion the man was offended, and would not listen to affectionate entreaties to give his heart to Christ, and seek a fitness for heaven. He said he was not going to die, he should get well.

In this his mother joined him. At length the weary visitor left the sick man without receiving an invitation to come again. But on the following Sabbath he repeated his visit, persisting in his efforts to open the blinded eyes of the poor invalid to his perilous condition, but only to receive similar treatment. With a sad heart he again left him without any apparent results from his labors. His next walk to that house, a week later, was through a severe snow-storm : breasting the cold north-east wind and snow, he plodded his way, weary from previous labors. When he reached the house he was quite overcome with excessive fatigue. Still no kind word was spoken to cheer his heart, but, as before, only forbidding looks and hateful treatment. To the question, "May I pray for you?" the reply was, in a gruff voice, "You may pray, if you choose." Prayer was offered, and the visitor took his leave, as on former visits, without one word of encouragement. On the fourth Sabbath he wended his way there again, still hoping to



win that soul for Jesus. As he entered the room the sick man's eyes filled with tears, and with extended hand he said, "O, Mr. Yard, how glad I am to see you! I feel very different now from what I did when you were here before. After your last visit I thought a great deal about you and what you said to me, and said to myself, 'What can it be that makes that man walk five miles out here every Sunday to see me? Leaving his own comfortable fireside to breast the cold bleak winds and even storms, to visit one who treats him with scorn and contempt whenever he comes! What can it mean? It must be that he knows there is a reality in the teachings of the Bible, and that my soul is at stake! It is to save my poor soul from eternal ruin that he makes these efforts and sacrifices.' Then my hard heart began to melt, and I began to love you for your great kindness to me; and O how I have longed to see you, that I might ask your pardon, and beg you still to pray for me and not give me up." A melting time it was that day.

The mother, too, was subdued. In unison they prayed that the penitent sinner might be forgiven and saved. The power of the Holy Spirit came down, faith was exercised, the cleansing blood was applied, and the contrite seeker was enabled to say,

“ My sins are washed away  
In the blood of the Lamb.”

“ Was not that a glorious recompense for the toil, the ill treatment, and the sacrifice ? ” asked the faithful one, turning to his sister with a smile, as he finished the recital of this incident. She replied, “ Yes, indeed ! a grand recompense ! ” and thought of the blessed promise, “ He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. ” “ Doubtless ! ” Let no faithful worker for Christ forget that word. No matter how great may be the discouragements, the good seed cannot be sown in vain. Imagine the gladness of heart with which the soul-winner left the happy saved one, as he turned

his feet homeward that day! How lightly did he move as his buoyant spirit mounted up in grateful praise to God for the trophy he had won for Him who "came to seek and to save that which was lost!" Those five miles, which had seemed so long after his former visits, must have seemed as less than one short mile on his return that happy day. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Gal. vi, 9.

Among many signal answers to prayer in connection with the Christian work of this faithful laborer was the case of a young man supposed to be near death from consumption, in whom he became deeply interested. He found him very low, and without hope in Christ. His lungs had been sounded by skillful physicians, and his case pronounced by them utterly hopeless. They said that one lung was entirely gone, and the other nearly gone. He realized his condition, and became deeply concerned for his eternal safety. The instructions and the prayers of his devoted friend, whose visits

were very frequent, were blessed of God to his conversion. One day when supplication was being offered, in which the penitent joined, salvation came, and shouts of "Glory to God, he has saved me!" came from the lips of the newly liberated one. He had many times said that if his life were spared he would devote it all to God, but he did not expect to live, and said, "Now I am ready to live or die." His friend said, "I don't know but God will cure your body as well as your soul. He is able to do it, and if he sees that you will live for him, I think he will heal you." Then an earnest prayer was offered that it might be so, if God would be glorified by his protracted life. The sick man joined in this prayer, although he felt perfectly willing to die if it were God's will. Immediate improvement was manifest in his physical condition; he rapidly recovered, and was soon entirely well. He became a very active worker for Christ, and a most valuable man in the Church and community.

Mr. Yard's daily visits to the sick in all parts

of the city, from the Delaware to the Schuylkill, and from Kensington to the Navy Yard, might well be termed "self-sacrificing labors," for his health—always frail—was often overtaxed by his long and fatiguing walks\* and the great excitement to which he was subjected. After hours of business, requiring all his physical strength, often on his way home or on his arrival there, a summons would meet him to go to some sick-room, and instead of taking his much-needed rest, he would hasten away on the errand of mercy. Even at night, when the hour for retiring had come, he would sometimes go to minister to the sick. But so rich was his compensation when he would see a soul brought from darkness to light that he said it paid him a thousand times over. Such cases were so frequent that he was kept in a state of joyous excitement nearly all the time. It is marvelous that he lived so many years under such a pressure. It would have seemed

\* At that time there were no street cars to relieve the weary pedestrian.

impossible that an organization so fragile could endure such a perpetual strain for so many years.

When visiting at my brother's house I have seen his face irradiated day after day with new cases of prayer answered in the salvation of souls. And when giving me the cheering recital he would often seem overcome with joyous emotion, and would say, "O, sister, it is such a glorious work to bring souls to Jesus, and to see them saved!" While I appreciated the estimate which he placed upon immortal souls, and greatly rejoiced with him in the success of his labors, I sometimes felt that he was doing much more than his physical strength was equal to, and sometimes expressed solicitude in reference to his overworking. But he would smile and say, "Why, you know 'man is immortal till his work is done.'"

## CHAPTER IX.

## IN THE CLASS-ROOM.

THE position of class-leader in the Methodist Episcopal Church is one of great importance. As a subpastor the leader is supposed to understand the spiritual condition and needs of those committed to his care, as the pastor of a large Church could not; especially in the limited time of service which is part of the Methodist system. To so minister to the varied wants of his little flock as to build them up in the faith is no small task. To be a successful class-leader requires special gifts and graces.

It is not strange that while yet a boy Edmund J. Yard was called by the Church to this office. His deep Christian experience and good judgment might well have attracted the attention of those seeking one to fill such a position; and then his warm, sympathetic nat-

ure, in addition to other qualifications, gave him a peculiar adaptation to the work.

He had scarcely become settled in Philadelphia before he was again called to be the leader of a class. As years passed a large number—many of whom were his spiritual children—were by their own choice enrolled in his class. In this way the class became too large for the room and the hour. But none were willing to have another leader, and a part agreed to meet on another evening. So he became, by two such divisions, leader of three large classes in Union Church.

When Bedford Street Mission became successful in saving many of the outcast population of that section of the city, and the rescued ones needed a leader, "Father Yard," as they called him, was prevailed upon to take the mission-class in addition; after which he led four classes till nearly the close of his life.

The testimony of one for many years a member of his class—Mr. David Loudenslager, will be in place here:



I shall never forget my first meeting in Father Yard's class. There were some fifty present, every one of whom testified for God, and he replied to each. The kind and genial manner in which he spoke—his words so well adapted to the varied experiences, rejoicing with the victorious, encouraging the despondent, strengthening the weak, and advising the young convert—gave such a zest to the exercises as made one feel that he was indeed in a heavenly place.

On no subject was this class-leader so earnest and enthusiastic as in speaking of the word of God, and the duty of studying it with diligence. Upon the members of his classes he enforced this duty as a means of growth in grace and efficiency in working for Christ. Passages of Scripture were always upon his tongue, suited to every case, and weary ones were thus cheered each week by "a word in season" from their leader.

How he became so mighty in wielding the sword of the Spirit we may gather from a hint given us by his son, who writes: "Often I have found my father in his room, where he loved to be alone with God, with his Bible, sitting in

his favorite rocking-chair, in hallowed communion, his countenance beaming with heavenly brightness.”

It was his daily habit to spend hours in meditation, reading, and prayer; and so absorbed would he become in heavenly contemplations as to be forgetful of worldly cares, until called to see some one desiring his presence. Is it any wonder that he came from such consultations of the “oracles of truth,” in the immediate presence of their divine Author, with impressive messages to those intrusted to his care? “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.” Isa. 1, 4.

To this habit of looking constantly to the Source of divine truth may chiefly be attributed his success as a “nursing father,” or class-leader in the Church. It was a rare thing for one of his class-members to backslide, and no wonder, for it was his constant effort to inspire them with love for the holy word, and he was

ever urging them to what he called the "all-important duty of searching the Scriptures." And who ever knew one who loved and studied the Bible to become cold-hearted and worldly-minded?

Another feature of his class-leading was unique, and so important as to be worthy of particular mention. With a heart always burdened for individuals, he had a happy faculty of so reporting cases on his mind as to enlist the sympathy and awaken the prayerful interest of the members of the class. It was not a rare thing for him to call upon them to unite with him in prayer for a case of special interest. In other chapters allusions to answered prayer in such cases will be found. On one occasion in visiting a town in New Jersey he found a young man in feeble health, and almost in despair about his soul. He said to the invalid, "To-night my class will meet, and we will pray for you. Get some of your friends to meet you here at the same hour, and we will unite our petitions in your behalf." While the

two praying bands thus sent up in unison their supplications, the cloud was lifted, and the liberated soul rejoiced in the favor of a sin-pardoning God. Soon after his conversion the young man died in peace.

The following case is related by Rev. R. J. Carson as having occurred while he was pastor of Union Church :

A member of one of Father Yard's classes spoke to me about visiting her brother, who was sick, a victim of consumption, and would probably die soon. I expressed my willingness to do so, when the sister told me of a difficulty in the way—the sick man was skeptical, and, she feared, would refuse to see me. I told her I would speak to Father Yard of the case, and we would see what could be done. On doing so he entered heartily into the matter, arranged the time when we should go together, and also agreed to take the case to God in believing prayer. This was done, not only by ourselves, but also at the young men's meeting, when the facts were made known.

When we entered the house on the day appointed, instead of the sick man being in his bed-room, where he could have refused to see us, we found him in the first room we entered. I shall never forget the tact and love manifested by Father Yard in this case. After religious

conversation and prayer, the invalid himself invited us earnestly to come again. Showing also considerable feeling in relation to his spiritual outlook. Our visit was repeated, and I am happy to say that the man was converted and died in the Lord.

Mr. Loudenslager says of this kind of work :

With what joy the leader would report such an answer to prayer ! Then he would almost always have another case to present, saying, "Now I want you to help me pray for such a one," naming some one whose soul's interests were pressing upon his heart. So we were influenced to feel that the class-room was not only a rallying place for a few who might find profit, but a center of spiritual power affecting many who were not present. Each member was made to feel a personal interest in the work of God, wherever the leader might have any thing to do with it, and thus become a helper to him in saving souls.

A case of more than ordinary interest related by Mr. Yard in detail, and recorded by his nephew, may serve to encourage some soul burdened for unsaved friends.

A mother expressed in class-meeting her intense desire for the salvation of her three sons and two daughters. In replying, the

leader quoted a remark from Rev. J. Lybrand, and the scriptural expression which he applied to his own family: "There shall not a hoof be left behind," and said to the weeping mother:

"I believe that every one of your family will be saved." The daughters were soon brought to Christ. The sons for a time became very careless, but one after another was smitten with consumption, and each one at length gave evidence of converting grace. The mother's class-leader was permitted to see and pray with each one in turn, and rejoice in his joyful acceptance of Christ as their Saviour. "So," said the venerable man, in speaking of this case, "not a hoof is left behind;" the three sons are in heaven and the two daughters are on the way.

To form an estimate of this faithful leader, it must be borne in mind that, while he led four classes every week during all those years, he watched over all the members of these classes with tender solicitude, sharing their joys

and sorrows, carrying all their burdens on his heart.

For many years, during the greatest prosperity of Union Church, fully one third of its members were enrolled on his class books. It is estimated that during the sixty-three years of his leadership, at least one thousand persons were members of his classes. This cannot be too high an estimate. In this work he was always faithful, always prompt. Nothing would keep him from the class-room but severe illness. He would go in all kinds of weather, and when his family would say, "Surely there will be none of your members out this stormy night," he would reply, "There may be some, and what if only one or two should come and not find their leader there? I must go, and then I shall have done my duty."

His unvarying habits in regard to punctuality became so well known among his friends, that when he was invited to visit them on a class or prayer-meeting evening they were very particular to have tea early, for Father

Yard would not be late at meeting on any account.

When he had company at home he would always ask to be excused if it were class or prayer-meeting evening, many a time rising from the table before tea was over, lest he should be late. When away from the city he must be sure to return in time to meet his class.

In visiting the homes of his mother and sister his stay was usually so brief that they would sometimes feel grieved, and would urge him to "stay another day;" but he would say, "I must be at my class." "But could not some one take charge to-night in your stead, just for once?" "No, not unless duty called me to stay here. I must be at my post."

But his work for his classes was far from being confined to the class-room. In calling the names of his members each week he would inquire about the absent ones. If there was reason to fear that one was losing interest



in spiritual things he would hasten to see that one, and earnestly and tenderly labor to fan into a flame the dying embers of his Christian love, and bring him back to his classroom.

It was in his visits to the sick that he specially excelled. Though far from being effeminate, there was a gentleness in his voice and manner that won all hearts. So quietly would he enter the sick room, so thoroughly understand, at a glance, the situation, so aptly give the needed word, and with such tenderness and fervor commit the case to the good Physician, that his visits to the afflicted were always signal blessings; and to none more so than to those whose relation to his classes gave them a place in his heart by the side of his own children.

The class in Bedford Street Mission was far from being least in importance. The degradation and misery from which its members had been rescued made them objects of peculiar interest to him. Their glowing testimonies of

the power of grace would thrill his soul! He often came home from those meetings with his heart overflowing; and his recitals of the testimonies of those who were as "brands plucked from the burning" would melt the hearts of those who heard them!

Some of them preceded him in their arrival in the heavenly world, and he had the privilege to witness their triumphant departure from hovels of poverty, to join the company of the redeemed, having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The writer had hoped for fuller accounts of her brother's work as a class-leader from others who were thoroughly conversant with it. In this she has been disappointed. Indeed, not until the records on high shall be unfolded can any just estimate be made of the good accomplished in this one sphere of Christian work. If there have been class-leaders more gifted, or more successful in building up those committed to their care,

it may well be doubted if any one ever attended more class-meetings, enrolled more members in his classes, or toiled more faithfully and zealously for the spiritual welfare of those in his charge.

## CHAPTER X.

## AT THE HOSPITAL.

WHEN, in 1812, that devoted woman, Mrs. Page, introduced her young friend from Trenton, Edmund J. Yard, to the scenes of her labor for the sick and the poor, she little thought of the wave of good influence she was putting in motion. Soon after his settlement in Philadelphia it became his habit to spend Sabbath afternoons at the Pennsylvania Hospital, where his labors were crowned with marked success. He kept no record of the number of souls which he had reason to believe were saved through his instrumentality, but in his sixty-three years of faithful work there it must have been a very large number. In speaking of those saved in that institution, he said, "The majority of cases were those who had previously received no religious instruction or training. Coming there wounded or

sick, their hearts were tender, and their minds susceptible to good impressions, and when 'the Friend above all others' was presented to them as the lover of their souls, and the one 'mighty to save,' they were more ready to believe and receive him as their Saviour than were those differently situated in life, and who had received much religious teaching." The uncultured, the poor, the friendless, and the forlorn, he found were in most cases willing to listen to the gospel truth, and ready recipients of proffered salvation.

From the excellent matron, and some of his fellow-workers in the hospital, have come many such remarks as these: "How the poor sufferers loved to see Mr. Yard's face as he walked up and down the wards! and how eager many of them were to hear from his lips the message of salvation!" Having once heard his kind and loving words, they were anxious for his repeated visits. His manner was so tender and kind that it seemed like soothing balm to them, as he talked so sweetly of the

compassionate Saviour who had loved them and given himself for them. Their faces would light up as they saw him approaching them ; and they would say, after he had gone, "How I love to hear him talk and pray ; it does me so much good."

Many of the thousands of inmates of the hospital during those threescore years, recovered from their injuries and maladies, and returned to their homes ; while a large proportion died on their sick-beds in the triumphs of Christian faith. From a number of those who lived to exemplify the power of gospel grace he received visits, at his own home, and letters, after their removal from the city, affording rich testimonials of the genuineness of the work wrought.

One of the many trophies which he won for Jesus, in that interesting field of labor, was a young man from Denmark, who could not speak a word of English. He was extremely ill, and seeing his condition, the thought that he might not be prepared to die, prompted a

fervent prayer, which was offered in silence at his bedside. Had words been spoken he could not have understood, and the servant of the Lord left him with a sad heart. The thought afterward occurred to him that possibly the young man might be able to read, and if so he might be saved by having a Bible. Immediately he purchased one and brought it to him. As he took it from the hand of the visitor a gleam of joy passed over his face, which in a moment gave place to sadness as he opened the volume, and discovered that it was not in his own language. He shook his head, signifying that he could not read it.

A mistake having been made in the selection of a Swedish Bible, instead of a Danish, it was at once exchanged for another in his own tongue. On opening it he made great demonstrations of joy. Portions of the New Testament were designated for him to read first, and as he became convalescent he was able to read much of the time; so that when

his friend came again to see him, he found that he had read a large part of the book.

The invalid was looking eagerly for the kind donor of the precious book to come, and on his arrival seized his hand, warmly pressed it, and pointed to some of the chapters he had been reading; he then pointed to his heart, and looked upward smiling, almost laughing aloud, striving to impart the glad tidings that he had found Jesus, and that the load of sin and sorrow had been removed from his heart.

He remained for several weeks in the hospital, and the frequent visits of his good friend gave him great comfort. When about to leave and embark for his distant home, he manifested deep feeling in parting with him who had so lovingly ministered to his spiritual wants. He had learned a few words of our language, and with the use of these, and by signs made with his hands, he tried to convey expressions of gratitude and love, and promised to write to him after his arrival in Denmark. That promise was fulfilled. He wrote a letter in his own



language, and had it translated and rewritten by an Englishman in Denmark, and sent it to his friend in Philadelphia. It was full of expressions of grateful joy for having found such a friend in a land of strangers, and that by giving him a Bible, he had introduced him to One who was better than all earthly friends, and now he had a glorious hope of living in heaven forever! He had never read a word in the Bible till he received one from the hand of the hospital visitor, and that gift was of more value to him than millions of gold or silver. He was glad he had gone to Philadelphia, and glad he was sick in that city because it had brought him to that beautiful place where he had met his friend and found Jesus. He would serve him as long as he should live, and expected to meet his dear friend in heaven.

A Christian worker, who was associated with him in hospital labors, gives the following:

“One Sabbath as Father Yard was going the round of his usual labors, in the north

ward he found a young man who had been injured on one of the coal wharves, and was in an unconscious condition. His parents were with him, and in great anxiety about his soul, knowing that he was not prepared to die. They were pleading with God to give their son time for repentance and salvation. According to what the doctor said, there was no ground for hope. We all felt that this case lay entirely in the hands of the almighty Physician, and he alone could heal the poor sufferer. Father Yard offered prayer with great earnestness, and afterward went through the other wards and to the chapel service, where he again brought the wounded man to the throne of grace, beseeching God to answer the prayers which had been offered for him. In company with several of his friends he returned after the chapel service to the object of his great solicitude, and again prayed for him with much fervor, pleading for the return of consciousness, the protraction of his life, and, above all, the salvation of his soul. The

assurance was given that the prayer would be answered. The parents and all the praying ones felt confident that the sufferer would live. Such, indeed, proved to be the result. The next day he revived, and consciousness returned, to the great joy of his friends, and the surprise of his physicians. Soon after he was able to return to his home, healed and renewed in both body and soul, a new man indeed, and delighting in the service of his new Master!

“This was spoken of by our dear Father Yard as a special answer to prayer; and such cases were not unfrequent. There seemed to be a wonderful power in his prayers. He did prevail with God in behalf of those cases which he presented with such ardor and importunity as in the above instance, and the answer was sure to come.”

When a prayer is inspired by the Holy Spirit, is it not certain to prevail with God? Thousands of cases attest this truth.

The following is from the pen of Mrs. W. H. Heisler, grand-daughter of Mr. Yard:

One Sabbath afternoon my sister Emeline (who has since passed to her heavenly home) and myself accompanied grandpa to the hospital. After the chapel exercises—consisting of singing, prayer, and a short sermon—grandpa asked us to go with him into one of the wards, where lay a man who had but a short time to live, and who had made no preparation for death. For days previous prayers had been offered at his bedside, and the promises of God's mercy had been read to him from the blessed Bible; but the poor man, who had been an infidel, could not seem to grasp the promises, and he was in a most distressed state of mind. We passed into the ward, and approached his bedside, and O, what an emaciated form met our view! It was clear to our minds that his hours were numbered. By request we sang the hymn, "Arise, my soul, arise," with the chorus

"Jesus paid it all,  
All the debt I owe."

During the singing the dying man's countenance brightened; he seemed to drink in every word; and before we had finished the hymn he repeated with rapture, "Yes, Jesus paid it all!" and that sin-bound soul threw off its shackles, and entered into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

It was an hour of great rejoicing. I turned and looked at grandpa; his face had a serene and heavenly expression, as if his soul's desire had been granted, and like

Simeon he had "seen the salvation of God." That one for whom he had prayed and labored so earnestly was now prepared for the heavenly kingdom, and soon after fell asleep in Jesus.

#### THE SAILOR BOY.

As the hospital visitor was making his weekly round among the sick one Sabbath-day, the matron said, "Mr. Yard, there is a sailor over there who is very ill, he has just been brought in." Hastening to his side he said, "I'm sorry to see you so sick," and began to ask him some questions, when the poor invalid turned from him with a despairing look, saying, "O, I'm only a poor sailor boy, and nobody cares for sailors." Said the man of God, "I care for sailors, and many a sailor have I met in this hospital and pointed to Jesus, who is the Friend of sinners, and cares for sailors as much as for any others in the world." After a few more kind words, which seemed to excite little interest in the listener, the visitor left him, promising to visit him again. Frequent visits, with gifts of fruit and delicacies suited to his needs, after

a time softened his feelings, and won his regard, and the gloom and reckless despair evinced at first, disappeared, and the greetings of the young sailor became more and more cordial.

## AN INCIDENT

in the life of Willie Degrosse, the sailor-boy, will help the reader to understand why he was so unwilling to open his mind to a stranger. Left an orphan at an early age, most of his life had been spent upon the sea, without the kindly influences of home and friends, and in circumstances most unfavorable to right living. Years before his coming to the hospital, while yet quite young, during a brief stay in port, he went to a Methodist class-meeting, invited by a youth who was a Christian. His young heart was touched by the testimonies to which he listened of the power of Christ to save, and to give peace and gladness to the soul, and a glorious hope of heaven, and Willie felt that was just what he needed in this world of sin and sorrow. Poor boy! he had never

known what peace wás. Tossed about on the billows of adversity, his sea-life was but an emblem of what he had passed through. He felt his need of just such a Friend as Jesus, and readily he yielded his young heart to the loving Saviour, and was happily converted that evening before the meeting had closed.

Happy beyond expression in his new-found treasure, he spoke of it the next day to a shipmate, expressing his overflowing joy, and urged him to seek religion, assuring him that he would be a thousand times happier than ever he had been, emphasizing the statement with a profane expression.

“You are a pretty Christian,” said his shipmate. “You needn’t talk to me about your religion!”

Instantly poor Willie realized the inconsistency. The enemy of souls came in like a flood, suggesting that he had been deceived, and it was impossible for him to live a Christian life. Alas for the poor boy! He had no Christian friend at hand to teach him that the profane word was

only the result of bad habits, not of any purpose to do wrong, and to encourage him to go to Jesus for pardon and strength. So he yielded to the tempter, "cast away his confidence," lost his hold on Christ, and afterward became more reckless and wicked than ever. Years had passed, and no one had ever given him a kind or helpful word.

No wonder that he repelled the approach of his new friend, with the words, "I'm only a poor sailor-boy, and nobody cares for sailors." But no heart could long be barred against such kind words and acts as those of the "soul-winner." When Willie left the hospital it was with a firm purpose to serve God, and a humble trust in Jesus. He went to the soldier's home to remain during convalescence—before embarking on another voyage—but was soon brought back by a sudden relapse to the hospital. He longed to see his kind friend, and sent for him to come, but he was absent from the city. On his return, receiving the message, he hastened to the bedside of the sufferer.



Willie said, "I watched all the afternoon last Sabbath, and listened to every footstep, hoping to see you, but you didn't come, and I felt so lonely and so sad! But I opened the little Bible you gave me, and read about Jesus and his love, and I haven't felt lonely since." He had found rest to his poor, weary soul in the arms of Him who is "the helper of the helpless, and a refuge unto them that trust in him."

As soon as he had recovered Willie returned to his ship and served his country so well that, though in a subordinate position in the United States navy, he received honorable mention by name in the report of his commander for conspicuous bravery in a terrible engagement. Better still, his manly piety led the officers and men of his vessel to invite him to perform the service of chaplain on board the ship, as that office was not filled. His conduct of religious exercises was highly acceptable, and the great Captain owned his efforts for the good of his shipmates, some of whom were brought to Christ through his labors.

When, some months later, it became necessary on account of failing health to retire from the exposures of the sea, he was assigned to pleasant duty at the Boston Navy Yard, where he remained some years, and married an excellent Christian lady, whose companionship contributed greatly to his religious advancement and his comfort in every way.

His health continuing to fail, he found it necessary to resign his position and seek a climate less rigorous. He chose Trenton, N. J., as his home. Here his good friend, Father Yard, as he always called him, often visited him, to the very great joy of the invalid; and the sister of his friend—the writer of this—found it a privilege very frequently to visit Willie and converse with and read to him. One day, when seated by his bed, he asked me for a mirror. Taking it in his hand he looked with evident composure at his pale and death-like visage. I asked him, “Don’t it make you feel sad to see your emaciated face, and realize that death is so near?”

“Why, no,” he said emphatically. “There is nothing sad in that! This is the way I view it: yonder is the heavenly city, and death is the gate to let me into that glorious abode; I can’t feel sad to think I am approaching the gate to endless joys.”

So through all his sickness grace triumphed. On one occasion when I was reading the One Hundred and Seventh Psalm, “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men,” he exclaimed, “Why don’t they praise him more! Why don’t Christians praise him all the time!”

He often requested me to sing for him,

“Fade, fade each earthly joy,  
Jesus is mine!”

This hymn was his special favorite. It seemed to thrill his whole being. One day, when I had been singing those sweet words, he said, “O how sweet! Jesus is mine! Yes, Jesus is mine! I want you to sing that for

me when I am dying. Will you, Mrs. James? I want you to sing me into heaven!"

I replied, "I will if it is in my power to be with you at that time."

The day previous to his death I was with him all day. It was a scene of wonderful triumph as the heavenly city was now full in view, and he seemed to hear the music of the celestial choir. It was a rich privilege to listen to his expressions of holy joy as now he stood on the river's brink ready to cross over and join the blood-washed company. Over and over he had me singing, "Jesus is mine," and I thought he would pass over while I was singing, but he lingered till the next morning.

At the early dawn the summons came for me to go and see Willie die. I found him with his eyes set and apparently unconscious. I said to his wife,

"You know he requested me to sing him into heaven, and I promised him I would if I could be with him."

She replied, "He don't know any thing now ; he is almost over."

I said, "I must fulfill my promise," and began to sing, "Jesus is mine." The instant I began the dying man opened his eyes wider, and a gleam of light passed over his face. I sang the whole hymn, and while singing the last stanza—

"Farewell, mortality ;  
 Jesus is mine.  
 Welcome, eternity ;  
 Jesus is mine.  
 Welcome, O loved and blest,  
 Welcome, sweet scenes of rest,  
 Welcome, my Saviour's breast ;  
 Jesus is mine"—

with the last words Willie's happy spirit departed to that bright world of bliss. Its radiance was reflected upon his countenance as the lifeless form lay beautiful in death, and the spirit of the sailor-boy was with Jesus.

The beautiful life and triumphant death of William H. De Grosse, rescued by the faithful

hospital visitor, impressed many in intimate relations with him.

A secular paper of Trenton, contained the following notice :

William H. De Grosse, whose funeral was so largely attended on Sunday last, was an acting ensign in the United States Navy during the war, and in the second attack on Fort Fisher honorable mention is made of the part he took, in the report of the Secretary of the Navy for 1865, (page 170.) He was a member of General Harrison Lodge, I. O. O. F., of Philadelphia, and of Post No. 11, G. A. R. Dept. Mass., the members of which organizations here gave him most honorable burial. The services in the State Street Methodist Episcopal Church were very impressive, commencing with the chant "Cast thy burden on the Lord," with a recital of the Christian life of deceased, by Mr. Yard, of Philadelphia—the comrades of Post No. 8 paying the last honors to his remains at the grave, with their impressive burial ceremonies.

It was a privilege to visit week after week those scenes of suffering in the hospital, and a joy unutterable to hear the praises of newborn souls, and witness the triumphs of redeemed spirits departing. Who can conceive

the bliss of that now sainted one, surrounded by the throng of the glorified spirits whom he had been instrumental in bringing to that glorious world where "there shall be no sorrow, pain, nor death?"

And such bliss awaits every faithful soul-winner.

## CHAPTER XI.

## AT CAMP-MEETINGS.

FOR pleasure-seeking this earnest worker had neither time nor inclination. In all his long life he never left his home merely to enjoy a vacation. Yet, every summer he would leave the city for a week or ten days, to find the refreshing shade of some delightful grove. He loved to commune with nature in her own temple, and it was refreshing to the weary worker to get away from the heat and dust and tumult of the crowded city; but such privileges were not the prime object of his summer trips. He sought association with kindred spirits in the higher fellowship with "Nature's God." This was his joy everywhere, but the privilege of spending a week in constant devotional exercises was to him a feast indeed! and specially where he could have larger opportunities for winning souls.



It was his habit to rally a company of choice spirits, mostly from Union Church, with the pastor, who would go prepared for the good work, and entering into it with full purpose of heart, were always rewarded with rich "showers of blessings."

In former years there was usually a Prayer-meeting tent, and a "Young Men's tent," and near them a number of small tents for the accommodation of families and individuals. Of the circle thus formed Father Yard was the patriarch. One who was privileged to share the enjoyments of the Union company, numbering from a hundred to a hundred and fifty, year after year, writes the following:

With what zest did the venerated father of our company enter into all the exercises of the hallowed place! The early morning prayer-meeting, the preaching, with prayer-meetings following, were never neglected; but it was in the tent work that he was most completely in his element. The quiet, solemn, melting influence of those seasons of exhortation, conversation, and prayer! Was ever any thing more heavenly? His counsels and ap-

peals, and above all his prayers, can never be forgotten. His vocal pleadings at a throne of grace were always inspiring, but there was an influence attending his camp-meeting prayers that was marvelous!

But here, as every-where, his best work was with individuals. The young people of his classes, some of them the objects of solicitude because of heart wanderings detected by their vigilant leader, were sought out by him and helped nearer to God. Often there was some unsaved one in the company, whom he had brought with many prayers, on purpose to be converted. Almost always his keen spiritual discernment discovered some backslidden one, or some dear young man unsaved.

Some of these were strangers to him when the meeting commenced, but he had found them out of the fold; they belonged to the good Shepherd, and must be brought back to him. Hundreds of souls have been saved through his personal efforts at camp-meetings. Vincent Town, Crosswicks, Swedesborough, Titusville, Penn's Grove, Ocean Grove and Danville, in

New Jersey, and Red Lion and Camden, in Delaware, were the places he most frequented as the sites of camp-meetings. How these names, and others, call up scenes where the wonderful power of God was displayed! On many of those occasions the almost transfigured form of the venerable Edmund J. Yard was prominent. How he exulted! Now it seemed as if the frail body must break under the pressure of the overwhelming glory! Often he was heard to say, "There is no place quite so near heaven as the camp-ground. I should like to go up from camp-meeting to my home on high." This wish was not granted him; but at the reunion in some grove "on the banks beyond the river" in the paradise above, thousands will greet him, and thank God that they ever met that man of God in the tented groves of earth.

One of the many interesting cases in which he was instrumental in the salvation of precious souls at camp-meeting is distinctly remembered by the writer of this volume. It

engaged the hearts and prayers of the entire Union company, of which she was favored to be one.

A number of us, including my brother, went down to the camp at Penn's Grove, N. J., on the Saturday previous to the camp-meeting. Many of the tents were being erected on the ground, and among the workmen employed was a young carpenter, who was quite prepossessing in appearance, and very bright and intelligent. His services being secured to assist in putting up the tents for our company, my brother was in frequent conversation with him, and became deeply interested for his salvation. Soon the subject of religion was introduced, but to the words of earnest exhortation and Christian counsel there was no response from a heart evidently hardened by a long course of sinful rebellion. The son of a minister, religiously trained, "gospel-hardened," he seemed incorrigible. Often presenting the cases of inconsistent professors as a plea for his continuance in sin, he resisted every appeal. But

the "soul-winner" was not to be repulsed or wearied. Day after day he followed the young man, and at night he gave him lodging in his tent, for the purpose of more private conversation and prayer with him, persistently trying to influence him to see and yield to the claims of Christ. He treated his faithful friend with marked respect and kindness, but seemed unmoved. As day after day we would meet for prayer, this case would be presented for supplication—"he must be saved!"—and it was touching to see the tears and deep concern of his friend for "that precious soul." Indeed, such anxiety pressed upon his heart that he could not rest till the young man was rescued from the dreadful peril of exposure to eternal ruin.

One day, when the company had assembled in the large tent for prayer-meeting, we saw the young man approaching, encircled with the kind arm which had led so many young men to the mercy-seat. The callous heart at last had yielded to the melting power of the

Holy Spirit and the entreaties of his devoted friend, and he bowed at the penitents' bench, weeping and pleading for the pardon of his sins. Never was there a more contrite and earnest seeker. Day and night he was found at the place of prayer, and all hearts sympathized and offered up devout supplications in his behalf. At each successive meeting every one looked for and expected his conversion. Scores of seekers had found Jesus in those meetings, and all wondered that one who seemed so sincere and so earnest was not blessed. The camp-meeting was drawing to its close, and the solicitude for the sorrowing seeker, in whose behalf so many prayers had been offered, became more and more intense. We could not, must not, let him go away from that sacred place unsaved. Renewed efforts—a special season of prayer—and increased ardor on the part of the penitent, gave a new impetus to our faith; surely he would be blessed that night! Such fervent pleading had seldom been heard. We were all in an agony of supplica-

tion, and the humble mourner was almost convulsed in the dreadful struggle. Must the powers of darkness triumph? No, it must not, could not be that the arch fiend would conquer! The conflict was tremendous.

At length his faithful friend by his side said to him, "I fear you are cherishing something in your heart that is keeping Jesus out. David said, 'If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.' Now, nothing else could prevent you from being accepted of God when you are so contrite, sincere, and earnest. Look into your heart and see if you are indulging any wrong feeling, principle, or desire." A still deeper struggle ensued; then, in the midst of the terrible conflict, the young man suddenly started to his feet and ran out of the tent, causing the wondering company still greater solicitude. But they lingered at the mercy-seat pleading for the object of their deep concern. In about twenty minutes he came running back to the tent and fell upon his knees screaming, "O God, now forgive me as I

forgive!" Instantly salvation came, and the new-born soul exulted in the pardon of his sins, and his adoption into the kingdom of God!

The secret of that protracted struggle he afterward told us. He had been at enmity with a relative, and had entertained feelings of bitterness and hatred. This was the barrier in his way; he was conscious that he had done wrong to that individual, but had been unwilling to humble himself and ask her forgiveness, until that moment when he so suddenly left the tent. She was on the ground, and hastening to her he said with tears, "I have wronged you, and I am very sorry. Will you forgive me?" She replied, "Yes, I freely forgive you." He then kissed her and hastened back to the prayer-meeting, where he was quickly saved.

The joy of that praying band was unbounded as they saw the captive set free and rejoicing in "the glorious liberty of the children of God." As the aged saint and the newly saved



youth embraced each other in the exuberance of their bliss, that exulting company sent up a shout of glad halleluias to the "Mighty to save" for this glorious triumph of his grace. It was a scene never to be forgotten.

## CHAPTER XII.

## O N T H E W I N G .

**M**ANY souls were won by the personal appeals of Mr. Yard when traveling in cars and steamboats. Ever watching for opportunities to do good, the indefatigable worker would in every journey find some one to whom his heart went out with prayerful solicitude, and he would contrive to obtain access to the ear of such a one in a way that would almost in every case insure access to the heart.

And this is not strange. The Christian worker had his mind set upon winning souls, and his heart was thus in perfect sympathy with Him who "came to seek and to save the lost." Would not the Holy Spirit prompt such a willing instrument to speak to the right one, that is, one who would receive the message? Surely this is a reasonable conclusion,

and one sustained by God's word. This accounts for his success.

Frequent visits to Trenton, prompted by his attachment to his mother, and other relatives there, afforded him many opportunities of this kind. On his arrival he would usually have some interesting story to tell about meeting "a dear young man" to whom he spoke on the subject of religion, and how "he seemed to be impressed, and promised to read the little Bible or Testament which he gave him," etc. Acquaintances thus formed in many cases ripened into strong mutual attachments. Of these came some of the most pleasing associations of his life, with the promise that their subjects would become bright stars in his crown of rejoicing. An account of one trip with some of its results may serve as a specimen of hundreds which were of equal interest.

One pleasant summer day, as he passed up the Delaware River on the steamer "Edwin Forrest," the pale visage, emaciated form,

and tottering steps of a fellow passenger attracted his attention. He approached the sick man, tenderly saying, "Good morning, my friend, I am sorry to see you looking so feeble."

The invalid thanked him for his kind expression of interest, and said, "I don't feel very well, but hope a trip to the country will bring me up to my usual health."

He was on his way to visit a friend in the suburbs of Trenton, where he designed to spend several weeks. It was but too evident that the poor man was a victim of consumption, and that his days were numbered. But nothing was said to discourage him, though an affectionate appeal in reference to his spiritual interests brought tears to his eyes, as he acknowledged his past forgetfulness of God and carelessness of his eternal concerns. Yet he said, "I try to do right, and hope all will be well with me even if I should die, but I have no thought that my case is serious.'

The mother of the sick man sat listening to their conversation with tearful eyes; she understood the critical condition of her son and felt very anxious in regard to him.

As the boat touched the wharf the feeble man leaned on the proffered arm of his new friend and walked up into the city to meet a conveyance to his destination. On parting he expressed much gratitude for the interest shown in his behalf, and promised to read attentively the little Bible presented to him. He took the name and address of the donor, giving his own in return.

Several weeks had passed when a note was received saying, "The sick man, Mr. O., whom you met on the steamboat, is failing very fast, and desires to see you. Please come as soon as you can." The invalid had returned to his home, several miles from Philadelphia, and soon his friend was by his side pointing the penitent to the sinner's Friend. He said, "Mr. Yard, I have been praying ever since I saw you that day, but it has seemed so dark to me.

I am such a sinner! O how I have wished for you to talk and pray with me, but I stayed in the country so long, and knowing you had returned to the city, I did not wish to give you the trouble of coming so far to see me, and so I waited to get home before I would send for you. I only returned yesterday, and felt in haste to get you here."

While commending the humble seeker to the compassionate Saviour, the word of peace was spoken, the precious blood that cleanseth from sin was by faith applied, and the man cried out, "I am saved! I am saved!"

His mother and wife, who were neither of them experimental Christians, were awakened and soon after converted. The next time their friend came he found the three rejoicing in Christ. In a few weeks the happy spirit of the sick man passed away to join the redeemed host above.

Thus were three souls won for Jesus. And these were not the only results of that trip to Trenton. Returning to his home on the

same boat the next day after his interview with the consumptive above mentioned, the faithful worker found more to do for his divine Master.

Another sick man, a young soldier, was seated on the deck of the steamer, looking sad and lonely. Some conversation revealed the fact that he was a skeptic, and a hard case to reach. But knowing that there is nothing too hard for Omnipotence, the devout Christian, looking up to God for aid, commenced a siege upon the apparently impregnable heart. He began his task in the most gentle and loving manner, setting forth the wonderful Saviour and his infinite love and mercy and power. To this there was returned a broadside of infidel arguments. But the "sword of the Spirit" was wielded, which, being always "mighty," caused the enemy to fall back a little, though still trying to maintain his ground. The contest lasted till they reached the city, then, taking the hand of the soldier, his friend said, "I commend you to God. I shall pray for you

every day, and shall hope to see you soon.” Then he handed him a copy of the New Testament and Psalms, and asked for his address, which was given.

Not many days passed before the soldier was visited by his new friend, who found him ill from hemorrhage of the lungs. He received his visitor with gentlemanly politeness, thanked him for his interest, and listened respectfully to his entreaties to seek refuge in the Saviour of sinners. The icebound heart began to yield as the “hot shot” from a heart full of Christian love were showered upon it, yet it was not quite ready to capitulate and bid Christ welcome. Consent, however, was given that prayer should be offered in his room, and at parting the soldier said, “Come again.” The visit was soon repeated, and with more encouraging results. The rapid waning of the invalid’s strength, from frequent loss of blood, betokened the near approach of death. At this stage his heart was fully surrendered to God, and when called to die he said, “I am



going to heaven!" He kissed the dear friend who had led him to Jesus, and said, "I shall meet you, Mr. Yard, at the heavenly portals, and hail you with joy as the instrument of my salvation."

Several of the young soldier's friends, some who had watched with him and frequently visited him during his illness, were influenced by him to give their hearts to God, and at that time commenced a religious life.

Thus through the efforts of that Christian worker on those two trips—going to Trenton and returning the next day to Philadelphia—at least five or six souls were converted. What encouragement to sow the good seed "beside all waters!"

One of our excellent ministers remarked, "Edmund J. Yard has accomplished more good in the world than any ten ministers I have ever known. The souls saved through his faithful labors, the building up of Churches, the training of Christians in his classes, the distribution of Bibles, the relief of the poor, the aid

given to missionary enterprises, both at home and abroad, the vast amount of substantial good that he has, by God's help, brought to the world, is beyond computation—beyond conception.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

## WRITING LETTERS FOR JESUS.

**R**ELIGIOUS correspondence has ever been a mighty agency for the accomplishment of good, and few knew how to use it so well as the one of whom we now write. By far the largest portion of those for whose edification he labored were not residents of Philadelphia. To the "boys," as he called the young men who from time to time went forth from Union Church to literary institutions, to enter the Christian ministry, or to engage in business in distant places, he wrote innumerable letters of Christian counsel and instruction. Many of those whom he had met in the hospital, those over whom he had wept and prayed at camp-meetings, and those with whom he became acquainted in many short journeys or visits, were followed with letters. All had a place in his heart, and these and all others in whom he

had become interested, seemed ever after to be objects of his tender solicitude. To all such, at parting, he would give his address, with the earnest request, "Let me hear from you soon." Many of them complied with his request, and never did a letter from one of them remain long unanswered.

To many who shrank from beginning a correspondence he wrote first. And such letters! Not only did they breathe the most ardent affection, but they were filled with just such suggestions and counsels as young men in such circumstances would need. In some cases the correspondence thus commenced was continued through many years. Rarely did the pen of the good man rest till his young friend had become so established that his aid did not seem longer to be specially needed. Then the constant and increasing demands upon his time for this and other kinds of labor might compel him to lengthen the intervals until at last the correspondence would cease. Even then the mention of a name would call forth such words

as proved that his friend had not been forgotten.

Not many months before his death he stated to his sister that he had been compelled for want of room to destroy two thousand letters, but had preserved one thousand. Nearly all these were from such correspondents as have here been alluded to. Was ever pen more busy in this kind of labor? Of the results of his correspondence but little comparatively can be known in this world, but there is most abundant evidence that his letter-writing was a special instrumentality for good.

Of the many letters of his ever-busy pen but few are now accessible to her whose pleasant duty it is to gather up these fragments. The limits of this volume will not allow the insertion of even those at hand in full, but the picture of this warm-hearted Christian worker would not be complete without a few extracts from his epistles to indicate the general style and tenor in which they were written.

The first two which follow were written to

Mr. E. D., of Windsor, formerly Centreville, N. J., who writes, "It was my happy fortune in early manhood, when young in Christian experience, to make the acquaintance of him whom I delighted to call Father Yard, whose affable attentions and wise and godly counsels richly entitled him to that endearing appellation."

LETTERS TO MR. D.

PHILADELPHIA, *January* 18, 1855.

MY DEAR E. :—I reached home in time for my class on Monday evening, and we had a very precious meeting, as we had also on Tuesday evening at my house, and last evening at class. But those dear young men at Centreville are continually before me. I long for them. My visit to your dear home, and the kind attentions there—the privileges of the Sabbath in that beautiful church, and the interesting congregation, the school, the parents, the young people, and especially the young men—will never leave my recollection; and I could find it in my heart to spend many Sabbaths with them if it would do them good. Dear son, try every means to gain them for the Saviour. O may you have many of them as bright stars in your crown! They seemed to me to be almost persuaded to become Christians. Please give my kindest love to them, and say that my heart goes out in

ardent prayer for them, and I should be very happy to see them again.

The second is dated

PHILADELPHIA, *March 24, 1856.*

MY DEAR E.:—I long so much to see you, that I must talk a little to you on paper once more. I sometimes think I have a special message for those dear young men. If I could be with you a week when the walking is good and the weather settled, and we could have meeting every evening, I think we might win some for the Saviour. I long for their salvation! Would to God they might reflect and “turn to the Stronghold,” and “receive double.”

I have much to tell you of precious ones who have turned to the Lord on sick-beds, and died in triumph and gone to heaven.

With this cherished friend he continued to correspond for a number of years.

His love for young men and the tact and persevering energy with which he labored for one whom he had long borne upon his heart may be seen in the following letters

TO A YOUNG MAN.

*June 25, 1858.*

MY VERY DEAR G.:—I must write a little to you; not that I love you little, for I love you more than pen or

tongue can describe. O, G., have you begun the great work of your salvation?

Let me tell you about a dear young man I have recently visited. He was from Lancaster, Pa., boarding with a friend of mine. He is a painter and was thought to be dying with painter's colic. He had made no preparation for death, although he had been awakened a short time previous. On Sunday his mother was telegraphed to come and see him die. On that afternoon his friend asked me if it would be right to speak to him about religion. I said, "Yes, by all means, and if you wish I will go and see him." This friend of the sick man went to see him—a long distance from his home—and asked him about his soul. He seemed concerned, and asked him to pray for him, and said he would like to see me. His friend came for me, and finding I had gone to the young men's prayer-meeting of our Church, came there for me. I asked the prayers of the meeting for him, and after we had offered two prayers I felt a sweet assurance that the Lord would bless him. I asked the friends to continue in prayer for him while I would go and pray with him. I hastened to take the long walk, and found the dear youth. I had never seen him before. I talked with him and then prayed. The Lord answered the united prayers of those in the church and those in the sick-room, and the Lord blessed him so powerfully that his body as well as his soul partook of the benefit. On the following Tuesday he went home with his mother



to Lancaster happy in the Lord. I expect him to return very soon to spend some time with me.

So, you see, my dear G., the list of my dear friends constantly increases. But

“When all the ship’s company meet  
Who’ve sailed with their Saviour beneath,”

what a meeting it will be! O, my dear friend, don’t be missing then! Put the armor on now, and battle for the Lord against every foe, and he will keep you by his mighty power. My dear G., I have never ceased to pray for you and your dear family since we parted. When shall I get a precious letter informing me that you have become an heir of the heavenly kingdom? How I long for that happy intelligence!

May God bless you! I hope to meet you where parting will not be known. Don’t let the world rob you longer of the precious treasure. The Lord is willing and ready to adopt you as soon as you will come to him. God bless you and save you forever his is the prayer of your friend,

EDMUND J. YARD.

Nearly two years later, in a brief note, evidently written in haste, he alludes to the sudden death of a Christian pastor a few days before, and adds, “So we are passing away, dear G. Let your heart be fixed on the Lord, and all will be well.”

Seven years passed, and his friend G. had not yet publicly espoused the cause of Christ. After having visited the place of his residence Mr. Yard writes :

PHILADELPHIA, *July 11, 1867.*

MY VERY DEAR G. :—I feel as if I must write you some advice, although I have seen you so recently. I never had a more interesting visit to C. than my last. I have loved you dearly ever since I first saw you, but never so much as now. Your kind attentions to me almost overcame my feelings, and your tender affection manifested toward your dear wife, all seemed to show you to be just the man I should wish to love, and whose friendship I would cultivate.

And now, my dear friend, the Lord has given you a Christian companion to walk with you through life, and she is all that you could wish on earth ; will you let her enjoy the love of God and you live without it ? Much as you prize her, you cannot know her true value until, like her, you enjoy the real life of God in your soul. Then you will be able fully to appreciate her worth. Then your spirits will so entirely blend together that you will be one in Christ Jesus as well as one in the conjugal relation. Your union in this life must have an end, but if united in Christ you will be one forever. That is your desire, my dear friend, I am sure, to dwell forever with your loved ones and with the Lord. Now don't let the enemy cheat

you any more by procrastination. There is so small a matter remaining for you to do—you really love the Lord, why will you not acknowledge him? and then the work will be done. It is your imperative duty to go with your wife to the Church and both give in your names to live and die in the Lord. Then you will have all the sympathies and helps of the Church. How sweet it would be to sit down together and read the word of life, and then ask the blessing of the Lord upon you morning and evening of each day. O how I long for you to be perfectly happy! and the Lord will make you so if you will do his will. And then your example will tell upon so many around you. I believe all the young men will follow you if you will come. Think, then, you may save a score or more of souls, that may be lost if you neglect your duty. O come, dear G.; do not refuse, and God will bless you and yours all the days of your life here and forever. Write very soon and say it is done.

Yours, as ever,

EDMUND J. YARD.

After three years more of praying and waiting this indefatigable soul-winner writes to a mutual friend of his continued solicitude for his friend G.:

Will you give my love to dear G., and ask him if he will be one of the company whom I love at C. that will meet me in my Father's house in heaven. O how I long

for his salvation ! I intended to have written to him before now, but my many engagements and many infirmities have prevented. Tell him I look right at him every day, while I plead with the Lord to break his heart that he may love the Saviour, and if I die in pleading I will hold on to him.

That consecrated pen is no longer busy with appeals, counsels, and consolations, but there are eyes that fill with tears as they follow its tracings of long ago, and many a heart will be richer forever for its faithful work.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## LABOR VARIED AND ABUNDANT.

IN the work of soul-winning the subject of this history had such a hallowed ingenuity that his methods cannot be fully described. While, therefore, it would not seem proper to devote a chapter to each of his many spheres of labor, yet it may be well to give a view of him as "sowing beside all waters;" grouping together a few facts, throwing light upon several of his modes of Christian effort.

## PUBLIC ADDRESSES.

Edmund J. Yard never received license to preach. It is in harmony with the usages of the Church in which for sixty-five years he was an honored member for laymen to receive license as local preachers. Such authority his brethren would gladly have conferred upon him, but he never was willing to

accept it. His position as class-leader gave him the right to hold religious meetings, and, as will be concluded, from the facts already given, his right and gifts were often used.

For many years, to avoid conflict with Romanists, the officers of the Pennsylvania Hospital did not allow clergymen to officiate within its walls. During all those years the chief and almost only speaker at the Sabbath afternoon services in that institution was Edmund J. Yard. In later years, when he had more helpers, occasionally asking a minister to address the company, it was always his custom to offer prayer and sometimes to make remarks, and he did this even after the appointment of a regular chaplain. Whoever had spoken or was to speak, no words received more attention, or awakened greater interest than those uttered by his familiar voice.

In the six o'clock Sabbath evening meetings at Union Church the report of the hospital work of the day, with incidents of his visits to invalids there or elsewhere during the week,

were a part of the service almost as regularly as the opening prayer or the doxology at the close. These accounts would occupy from ten to twenty minutes, and were always listened to with interest.

He received many invitations from ministers to assist them in revival meetings. His addresses, though never in the form of sermons, were always heard with close attention, and were often effective in winning souls, especially young men.

His nephew, Rev. J. H. James, now a pastor in the New England Southern Conference, thus writes :

“Several times, during my early ministry in New Jersey, my uncle visited me and addressed the people. I recollect especially two watch-night occasions, on each of which he occupied more than an hour in giving a history of his life, holding the closest attention of his audience, and making a deep impression in favor of the religion which had done so much for him. At other times he addressed

Sunday evening congregations, evidently doing great good. We were always delighted when he could visit us. His labors gave a new impulse to the good work."

Occasionally he made similarly acceptable and helpful visits to other ministers. In Trenton, during his frequent visits to his relatives, his labors were specially acceptable. He often spoke of his early struggles and victories in that city. With such interest were his addresses listened to that scarcely any announcement would call out a larger congregation than that Father Yard would speak.

Now what gave this modest layman such power as a public speaker? His voice was never strong. It was with difficulty that he spoke loud enough to be heard, hence, in large rooms especially, it was not easy for the people to catch all his words. No brilliant flashes of genius, no carefully rounded periods won the admiration of those who hung upon his lips; yet his hearers were often moved to tears, and always to renewed interest in the work



of salvation. What was the secret of his power.

Three facts may help us to discover it.

First, He always had something to say. Keenly alive to the events occurring around him, they fixed themselves upon his memory, and he had only to open his mouth and his hearers would see the scenes through which he had been passing. If he had a special talent it was this, a rare power in relating incidents of his own work.

Second. His heart was full of the work in which he was engaged. If it was ever true of any one besides the Divine man, it was true of Edmund J. Yard that it was his "meat and drink to do the will of his Father in heaven."

Third. He spoke not for self, but for Christ. Every one felt this. If in any sense he was the hero of his own narrations it was only as the humble agent whom the Master had been pleased to own and bless. Speaking for Jesus, with a heart all interested and with fresh facts

to give, it is little wonder that people listened with interest. No social meeting would be dry, no public service long neglected, if those who speak on these great themes of religious truth and duty had always a like preparation.

#### AMONG FIREMEN.

No class of men gained a stronger hold upon the ardent nature of this Christian worker than the volunteer firemen of his adopted city. The very fact that they were mostly young men would have been enough to enlist his efforts in their behalf, for with him, as with his Master, to look upon a young man was to "love him," (Mark x, 21,) and, if possible, to do him good. But these young men were heroically devoting themselves to an arduous and dangerous service for their fellow-citizens; and he could but admire their manly courage, and noble self-sacrifice. Besides, they were exposed to peculiar temptations, and with fatherly solicitude he longed to draw them into the only safe shelter for the tempted and

imperiled. This interest in firemen led him to become a member of the Hope Hose Company, of Philadelphia. Of course, he did not engage with the company in active duty at fires, he had not physical vigor for that; but in every enterprise for the good of the company he loved to be active with effort and with purse. He sought to become personally acquainted with each one of the members. Then, as opportunity occurred, he would interest his pastor in the company, and a number of times they were invited to attend Union Church in a body and listen to a sermon prepared with special referencc to their needs.

At one time he gave a pocket Bible to each member of the organization, with the name of its owner and that of the giver written on the fly-leaf. Subsequently, for a number of years, he gave one to every member who joined the company.

But the direction in which his inspired ingenuity was most signally manifested was in his

labors among sick firemen. The following is one of many cases of this kind :

He heard of a young fireman, Mr. J. G., who was dangerously ill, and unprepared to die. He had no personal acquaintance with him, but the friends of the young man had appealed to this fireman's friend in his behalf, knowing that he would gladly do all in his power to save the imperiled soul. He first laid the case before the members of one of his classes, and the band of believers joined their leader in prayer that he might find access to the room and heart of the sick man. Next day he called at the place of business of the young man's father, saying, "I understand you have a son, a fireman, who is sick. I am a fireman, and am in the habit of visiting sick members of fire companies."

An apprentice, who stood by, volunteered to accompany the stranger to the sick room. Entering, the visitor said, "I am a member of the Hope Hose Company. I understand you are a fireman, and I have called to see you."

He was kindly received. His conversation and prayer evidently impressed the mind of the invalid, though previous to that time he had manifested no interest in the subject of religion. The visit was repeated by invitation of the young man. The next Thursday the visitor said, "This evening my class meets, the very class who prayed that I might have access to you. We shall again be engaged in prayer for you. Will you meet us at a throne of grace?"

He replied, "Yes, I will."

The meeting was one of special interest and spiritual power, and faith in behalf of the young man grew stronger. A few days afterward the mother of the young man, when busy with her household duties, was called by her son, exclaiming, "O, mother, help me to praise the Lord for what he has done for me! I feel so happy! so happy!"

From that time he gave evidence of a work of grace in his heart. Among his latest utterances was a message of love and thanks to

those dear people of Union Church for praying for such a sinner.

While the body of the young man lay a corpse, his associates gathered in the room and a prayer-meeting was held, conducted by Mr. Yard.

In such work as this he found his great delight, and in the fruits of such labors he was permitted to rejoice.

His "labor was not in vain in the Lord." Trophies were won for Jesus even among the firemen. During a number of years but few months passed in which he had not one or more cases of this kind of which he would speak in his classes, and the members would join with him in prayer and then in exultation over repentant and converted souls.

#### IN PRISON.

Prisons would seem the most unpromising fields for effort to win souls, yet there he found precious ones for whom Christ died, and won many a gem for his Redeemer's crown. In

dreary cells his visits were welcomed, and his kind words and godly instructions were received with marked attention and respect. The most depraved could not listen to the message of salvation from his lips without feeling that it was love for their souls which prompted his visits.

While presenting the compassion and love of Him "who forgiveth iniquity, transgression, and sin," some of the poor desponding victims of the destroyer laid hold of the hope set before them, trusted in him "whose blood can make the foulest clean," were cleansed from their pollution and numbered with the children of God. One case found in prison, of which my brother spoke with deep feeling, I specially remember.

A young man upon whom he had bestowed great care—watching over him as a member of his class whom he had brought to Jesus—after having removed from the city and his Church privileges, became negligent of religious duties, and consequently lost the divine

favor and returned to the world. Associating with the wicked, he was led into an affray which took him to Moyamensing prison. After his incarceration he sent for his good friend, who was painfully surprised to find him in a prison cell. With tears of contrition the poor wanderer confessed his backslidings, and as they together knelt in supplication the penitent found pardon and peace through faith in Christ.

Palliating circumstances in his case, which removed from his conduct the alleged criminality, procured an early release from prison, and through the efforts of his friend he obtained employment, and by his consistent life was reinstated in the Church and in the confidence of the community, and continued a faithful Christian.

His humiliating fall, though divested of the intention of wrong-doing, he could never cease to deprecate, because it was the result of departure from God, and brought reproach upon his cause.



As in many other cases it was thus the joy of the soul-winner to restore an erring one, and that "he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Jas. v, 20.

#### IN THE ALMSHOUSE.

Often were the steps of this good man, who, like his divine Master, "went about doing good," directed to the institutions affording shelter to the poor; and a special privilege he felt it to be permitted to verify the words of Jesus, "To the poor the gospel is preached." Such persons he usually found more receptive of the glad tidings of salvation than those in different circumstances. And while the warm sympathies of his nature went out to them, it was his special delight to cheer their sad hearts with the blessed invitations and consolations of the glorious gospel of the Son of God. With what avidity would those sad ones listen to the story of His love who gave his life for sinners, and how their hearts

were thrilled by the precious message from him “who, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” And as he presented the glorious privileges of the children of God, in being made the recipients of the exceeding riches of his grace, many disconsolate ones came to Jesus and were made heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Never did a more welcome visitor cross the threshold of the abodes of the poor. His appearance among them brought sunshine and gladness to many a sorrowful heart.

Some of the most interesting accounts of his success in winning souls were in connection with his labors among the poor, and it was one of the grandest objects of his life to lift the fallen, to comfort the distressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to help the helpless.

## DISTRIBUTING BIBLES.

His love for the Bible and his realization of its hallowing influence upon his own heart and life prompted him to make extraordinary efforts to place it in the hands of others. He was in the constant practice of giving Bibles and Testaments to young men, not only in his own city, but in other places. Rarely if ever did he go from home without copies of the holy word for this use. Indeed, he gave them by hundreds—to firemen, to students in seminaries, to young converts in revivals, to inmates of almshouses, prisons, hospitals, to soldiers and sailors, and, indeed, to all classes. Thousands of copies were presented by him to as many persons, mostly by his own hand.

The happy results of those precious gifts often cheered his heart. Among the hundreds of letters which he received from the recipients of Bibles there were many such expressions as the following: “The Bible you gave me was the means of bringing me to Jesus.”

Late in life he said, "Nothing gives me so much pleasure to look back upon as the distribution of Bibles. It has been the best investment I ever made, or could possibly have made, of the same amount of money. It has accomplished good beyond all computation."

In presenting the sacred book he would request a careful and attentive perusal of it, and the promise of compliance would generally be given. We cannot suppose that such promises were fulfilled in every case, but that they were in a large number he had the best of evidence.

A gentleman who received a Bible as a member of the Hope Hose Company and afterward became a member of Congress, declared that wherever he went he carried that Bible.

A young man, one of the family of five, converted in answer to the prayers of the class, elsewhere referred to, was about leaving home to spend a winter in Florida. Mr. Yard went to the steamer to see him off. In parting he took from his pocket a Bible, and as he handed it

to the young man he said, "I want you to read this at your leisure on the voyage." He promised, but with improving health the promise was forgotten, and the book was brought back to Philadelphia unopened. Subsequently his friend, while engaged in prayer for him, was impressed that before two weeks Samuel would be converted and would send for him. At or about the time thus indicated the mother of the young man called to ask him to visit her invalid son, who was very anxious to see him. He went and found him sitting with the Bible in his hand. He exclaimed, "O, Mr. Yard, I am so glad to see to you! Here is the Bible you gave me. I promised to read it, but never opened it until recently. Now I want to read it all the time." And it was not long before Samuel was in possession of the "pearl of great price." Some weeks after he passed away in triumph to the celestial world.

Whole companies of soldiers went forth to the war armed with pocket copies of the New Testament and Psalms from his hand. How

many of them found those weapons helpful in the contest with spiritual foes we cannot know, but hundreds of copies of the book received from him are to-day cherished, not only as reminders of the kind friend of long ago, but still more highly as "a lamp to the feet and a light to the path" of their possessor. Of none is this more true than of his many spiritual children in Philadelphia and elsewhere, for it was his uniform habit to give to every such one a copy of the sacred word with the name of the receiver and the donor.

A detailed account of the labors of my brother in these and other fields would fill volumes. These particulars are given simply as suggestive of ways of working. The fact is, his whole life was devoted to such labors. He sought first the kingdom of God. Business, pleasure, every thing was subordinate. Is it any wonder that he was successful in soul-winning? Can any one fail who is thus "always abounding in the work of the Lord?"

1 Cor. xv, 58.

## CHAPTER XV.

## INDIRECT INFLUENCE.

**W**HO can measure the results of an effort to save a soul? To be used by Christ in plucking one brand from the burning, in opening to a human spirit the gate to endless life, must be cause of everlasting joy and gratitude. How exalted, then, the privilege of winning those who in their turn become soul-winners, and of saving those who consecrate their energies to the blessed work of soul-saving. This was pre-eminently the gift of the worker for God whose history we are tracing. Many of those whom he led to Christ seemed to catch his spirit and went forth to put in motion waves of holy influence which shall move on, in circles widening to all eternity. Such are to be found in all the walks of life; not a few in the ministry, who are sending forth their own spiritual children to win successive

generations for Jesus. A single case narrated by Mr. Edmund S. Yard, gives a glimpse of the fruits following the efforts of his father to save one soul.

During a series of meetings held in Union Church in the winter of 1840-41, a young man, in delicate health, was observed in one of the evening meetings. There was something very prepossessing in his appearance. His cheeks were ruddy and fair, but the hectic flush of disease was there, and Death seemed to have marked him as his victim. My father gently approached him, and extending his hand, kindly inquired about the interests of his soul.

The young man seemed pleased with his attentions, and informed him that he was from the town of E., in New Jersey, and of Presbyterian parentage. He occupied the position of book-keeper in one of the large importing houses, on Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, and was suffering from a supposed pulmonary affection. He was closely confined to business during the week, and on the Sabbath was accustomed to seek recreation and fresh air by making trips on the steamboats and other conveyances to the neighboring towns and country.

He could not be prevailed upon to approach the altar of prayer, as a penitent, that evening, but promised to consider the great matter of salvation, and be present on the following evening.



He came, and when the invitation was given to all who felt the need of a change of heart to approach the mercy-seat, my father went to him, and he immediately arose and bowed at the altar of prayer as a seeker of salvation. Subsequently, he was liberated from the burden of sin, and rejoiced in the glorious liberty of the gospel.

Instead of his usual Sunday trips, from that time he went into the Sabbath-school and taught a class of boys. He became one of the most faithful workers in the school, and his class became noted for the attention and good behavior of its members.

The health of the new convert rapidly improved so that he was enabled to attend to his duties in the counting-room with greater satisfaction.

About a year after his conversion, in company with his younger brother, who had also been brought to Christ, he removed to a town in the north-western part of Illinois, for the purpose of engaging in the grain and mercantile business.

On their first Sabbath in the town they were distressed on beholding the stores all open, as on other days. Farming was prosecuted as usual. Farmers carried their grain to the merchants, and there seemed to be no thought of God or remembrance of his command to keep the Sabbath-day holy. Steamboats made regular trips on the Sabbath for the purpose of loading with grain, purchased by merchants, to deliver at the Saint Louis market.

The two brothers secured a store in an advantageous location, and opened it with a superior stock of goods, purchased in Philadelphia. Their trade was good, and attracted the attention of the inhabitants of the town and surrounding country. But on the Sabbath their store was closed, much to the disappointment of farmers and others who had decided upon that day to examine their goods, and also to trade off the grain they had brought into town.

They tried every inducement to persuade the young men to open their place of business, but their plea did not avail; and the citizens and farmers gave them to understand that unless their store was open on the Sabbath, as on other days, they could not succeed. Their answer was always ready, that they could not and would not violate God's holy day by engaging in secular business.

During the week following they determined upon having divine service in a hall used for public meetings, as there was no church or minister of God in the town.

Handbills were circulated through the place, inviting the people to meet in the hall on Sabbath morning, at eleven o'clock. A number attended from curiosity. The younger brother opened the meeting with prayer, after which the elder brother made a few remarks, expressive of their intentions, and then read one of the sermons of Rev. John Wesley.

The people were taken by surprise, but were deeply

interested. On each succeeding Sabbath the congregation increased in numbers until the hall became too small for those who desired to hear the words of divine truth.

In a short time a meeting of prominent citizens was held, and a request made to the young merchants to secure the services of a minister, that worship might be held in the hall until better accommodations could be procured.

The brothers attended the next session of the nearest Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and brought home with them an ambassador of Christ full of zeal and of the Holy Ghost, who labored faithfully, visiting the people from house to house; and soon the power of God was manifest in the awakening and conversion of the people, and large numbers were brought from darkness to light.

From that time the stores of the place were closed on the Sabbath. Public traffic of every kind was discontinued, and many of the people became not only moral, but truly religious.

Soon after the arrival of the minister, by the liberality of the inhabitants, a neat and commodious church was erected, and since that time several fine church edifices have been built and occupied by worshipers. God prospered those young men, and wealth flowed into their possession.

An incident is worth recording which occurred in con-

nection with their business. As before mentioned, steamboats had previously make regular trips to the town on Sabbath-days to load with the grain that had accumulated during the week. Hence the Sabbath was always the most busy day of the week. The young merchants had purchased a large quantity of grain, but refused to ship it on the Lord's day. The people laughed at them for their conscientious scruples, but they were decided and firm, choosing rather to lose it all than to violate the divine command. They continued to purchase all the grain that was offered until their storehouse was overflowing. A steamboat then came up the river during the week—a circumstance that had not before occurred. The Christian young men shipped their grain by that steamer, and on its arrival at Saint Louis the cargo brought a considerable advance over that which had been shipped by their neighbors on the Lord's holy day, a rise having taken place in the market between the times of shipping. Thus was the hand of God seen in favoring his faithful servants."

Verily, "in keeping his commandments there is great reward." What an exemplification here is of the truth of the divine word, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." And how vast the good

resulting from the conversion of those two young men, their unswerving obedience to God, and their efforts in that ungodly place for the salvation of the people. No labor yields results to be compared with those for the salvation of souls.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## HOME LIFE.

IT must not be supposed that the multiplied, varied, and exacting labors which have been described were allowed by this Christian worker to interfere with the duties which every one owes to those beneath his own roof. It was at home that the luster of his saintly character was most brilliant.

Intimations have already been given of affliction in that home. This was the illness, serious and prolonged, of his beloved wife. Nearly all their married life Mrs. Yard was a great sufferer. The training of his boyhood, mentioned in the first chapter, had prepared her husband for the work of caring for her in this protracted affliction. The best medical skill was procured, and every remedy that promised a cure, or even relief, was used with loving and persistent assiduity. No pains nor

expense was spared that could minister to her comfort.

Indeed, to this constant care and effort was due the lengthening of a life held for about thirty years by a most slender thread. Cheerfully did he bear this burden, receiving from his wife the strongest expressions of gratitude for his unremitting attentions and unvarying kindness. None ever knew what he suffered in her affliction from the strong sympathies of his nature, and from the loss of sleep and continuous watching instead of resting at night. Yet never a murmur was heard from his lips; nor did he ever lose sight of the "silver lining" of the dark cloud in the grace bestowed upon both in this trial. But the devotion of this model husband could do no more than keep alive the feeble flame of existence, and palliate sufferings always severe.

At length the mortal strife ceased, and a peaceful death terminated the wife's sufferings in the latter part of the year 1851.

His eldest son, Benjamin F., was now mar-

ried and living in Trenton, N. J. The younger son, Edmund S., had a pleasant home in Philadelphia. After his mother's death he removed his family to his father's house, on Spruce Street, above Second, which for many years had been the homestead.

The kind ministrations of his children and grandchildren brightened the remaining years of the widowed father, and he returned their kindness with the warmest affection.

Mrs. Emeline Carrigan Yard, the amiable and lovely wife of his son, Edmund S. Yard, was most devoted in her attentions to the bereaved father, whose presence in their home was regarded by every member of the family as a benediction.

The following account from the pen of his son Edmund, now the only surviving one, will be read with interest: In allusion to their union with his father in the paternal home he writes:

I shall never forget my father's gratitude for this arrangement. Surrounded by his children and grandchil-



dren, the keenness of his sorrow was mitigated, and his loneliness cheered. He seemed so happy to have the little ones of the household always with him. Even in his hours of business they were welcome visitors in his office. I never knew him to speak a quick or unkind word to either of them ; but on all occasions he showed his interest in their welfare. At times he was as playful with them as if he were of their own age.

From my earliest recollection of my father until the close of his life he always exhibited the same sweet, loving, and gentle spirit. In his home relations he was kindness itself, always entering with interest into any plan for the happiness of those around him. Easy, though dignified, in manner, devoted to his family and friends, every one that approached him felt his warm sympathetic nature.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1862, he went to meet the family at our summer home near the village of Pennington, N. J. When the hour for dinner arrived my only brother and his family, who lived near us, came over and joined us at the table, the first time we had ever all met in such a family reunion. There sat the aged patriarch at the head of the table, his elder grandson of each family on his right and left, the other grandchildren arranged with reference to age. His face gleamed with pleasure, and the kind words which fell from his lips were like pearls.

After dinner was over we knelt in solemn prayer, and those of us who remain can never forget that loving and

fervent appeal to the King of kings for the welfare of each member of the two households. That day was to my father one of the most precious of his earthly pilgrimage.

In the spring of 1864 we were deeply afflicted in the loss of my beloved companion. Her devoted attentions to my dear father, added to her charming disposition, caused him to love her with all the tenderness of a parent. I can never forget the depth of his grief at her death. Yet in the midst of his own heartfelt sorrow he tried to console the mourning ones around him, and pointed them to the haven of rest whither the loved and lovely one had gone. But when we stood around the coffin of our dear departed to take the last fond look of all that remained, the venerable one who had been our comforter seemed overcome, and it was with difficulty that we could remove him from the place.

A younger sister of my deceased wife was left in charge of the family, who in time became the maternal head of the household. It was her pleasure to minister to the comfort of my aged father in every way, as her predecessor had done, and her kindness was fully appreciated and reciprocated with warm affection. His loving manner toward each member of the family greatly endeared him to us all. Whenever he left the house on business, or on missions of mercy and usefulness, he always bade each one a kind good-bye with a kiss. His expressions of fond regard were like those of a most

tender mother, and were noticed by all who visited our home.

As a father, Mr. Yard was most tender and affectionate; ever solicitous for the welfare of his children, affording them every advantage in his power in regard to education, home comforts, and pecuniary means. At the period of their maturity he established them in business, and in every possible way sought to advance their interests both temporal and spiritual, delighting in any sacrifice of his own ease and comfort to promote that of his beloved children.

The death of his eldest son, Benjamin, while yet in the prime of life and the father of a family, was a source of great sorrow. He had parted with him when he entered the army in the war of the Rebellion with serious apprehensions that his health would suffer from toil and exposure, and although his position was not as hazardous as that of some of his fellow-soldiers, yet the onerous duties of hospital steward, involving a heavy draught upon his

sympathies and physical energies, proved too much for his enfeebled health, and after his return home it was evident that the heart affection, of which he had had symptoms for years, had become more serious. After some weeks of gradually failing health, his life was very suddenly terminated—most unexpectedly to his family and friends.

The shock to the devoted father was very severe; but, as in former bereavements, he was graciously sustained and comforted by the assurance that through the atoning merits of the Saviour, whom his son had loved, he was numbered with those who “have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Though no words were spoken at the last assuring them of his preparation for heaven, the hearts of the bereaved ones were cheered by the evidence of a satisfactory Christian experience, especially in the later months of his life. In the diary of the soldier, *memoranda* were found after his death recording seasons of blessed communion with God, ex-

pressing great interest in the spiritual condition of the men under his care in the hospital, and in other ways evincing devotion to God.

So, while the loss of his firstborn deprived the aged father of an arm on which he had hoped to lean in his declining years, the tears he shed were illumined with the joy of faith and hope. His prayers and counsels had not been in vain.

His little Robert "was not," and now the beloved Benjamin was gone, and with the patriarch Jacob he must feel that he was "bereaved of his children," yet he knew, as Jacob in his griefs did not, that their "elder Brother" had removed them, not to earthly, but to heavenly joys. Now one more earth-tie was severed, and one more attraction added to the home where his treasures were awaiting him. With a chastened yet trustful, even exultant, spirit the heaven-bound pilgrim urged his onward steps in the path of Christian activity, saying, "Our Jesus hath done all things well."

## HOSPITALITY.

A beautiful trait of his home-life was his generous hospitality. His extensive acquaintance, both in the ministry and laity of his own and other Churches, brought to his house many who prized his friendship and delighted in his society. A cordial welcome and assiduous attention were always extended to the guests of his pleasant abode. To many a stranger, introduced to Father Yard, has his house proved a delightful home. Of his guests many were young men who had found a warm place in his heart, and whom he always greeted with a kiss of love. A number who had been sufferers in the hospital, and were far from home and friends, received in his residence the kindest attentions during weeks of convalescence, until returning health warranted a journey too fatiguing for persons enfeebled by sickness. His "boys," as he called all young men in whom he was specially interested, could not have found more cordial and hospitable entertainment at a father's table, than they received in

the Spruce Street home at the hands of their warm-hearted host.

During many years the family rarely sat down to the table without some guest, and never was one entertained there who was not made to feel at home. Two incidents from the pen of his son, Edmund S. Yard, will furnish admirable illustrations of his father's hospitality:

During the late war of the Rebellion my venerated father manifested a deep interest in the temporal and spiritual welfare of the "brave boys in blue." As he passed along the streets of our city and met with soldiers, he always stopped and talked with them, and tried to sow some good seed in their hearts. Always having with him copies of the New Testament and Psalms, or small Bibles, he would present to them the sacred book, accompanied with some good advice. In his collection of photographs there were many sent to him by persons to whom he had presented the precious word with a father's blessing. For months we seldom set down to a meal without the company of one or more of this class that he had fallen in with during his walks. God only knows how many of those brave men whom we entertained, and who received from his hands the

“bread of life,” are now safely housed in the mansions above.

During the fall of 1863, after the battle of Gettysburg, there were many sick and wounded soldiers in the wards of the Pennsylvania Hospital. These were regularly visited by my father in his weekly rounds at that institution, and occasionally during each week also. As soon as they became convalescent he obtained the consent of the surgeon to have them take tea with him at our home. A car was secured on a street running near to the hospital, and within a few steps of our house, so that the infirm and wounded would not be much exposed. As I stood with my wife at the door to receive them, a most touching scene met our eyes.

First came my father escorting an officer from one of the Western States who had lost an arm at the shoulder, and had suffered severely from an attack of fever. His wife also was with them, she having attended her husband through his illness. After them came sixteen others; some having lost an arm, others a leg, the latter walking by the aid of crutches, while a portion of them were scarcely more than skeletons from long courses of typhoid fever. It was one of the most afflictive sights I ever beheld.

We soon made them comfortable, and could any one have seen the expression of pleasure in their countenances, and listened to their words of gratitude for the kindness shown them, he would have felt that we were



amply repaid for any amount of trouble and expense the occasion had caused. Tea was prepared, and we all sat down with hearts full of love one to the other, and to the Giver of all our mercies. At the table every one seemed entirely at ease and engaged in pleasant conversation.

After tea some of our kind neighbors came in, and one of them being a superior performer on the piano, we had some beautiful pieces of music played for the entertainment of the company. Afterward some of the army songs—so popular at that time—were sung, the soldiers joining heartily in the choruses. Before the company left my father offered one of his most fervent prayers in behalf of those present and of those of their comrades who were facing death on the battle-fields.

It was one of the most pleasant evenings I ever spent, and one which time can never efface from my memory. At nine o'clock, the car being in waiting, all were returned in safety to the hospital.

During the fall of 1876, near the close of the centennial exposition, a number of visitors, several of them ministers of various denominations, came to our home. The deep interest taken in each one by my father was remarkable. Every thing that a generous heart could suggest was done for their comfort. How anxious he seemed that they should all reach the exhibition grounds comfortably, meeting them on their return so cordially, inquiring if the time had passed pleasantly, and showing

them the utmost Christian courtesy and polite attentions, striving by every means to make them all feel at home.

A party of twelve ladies and gentlemen from north-eastern New York, all of them members of Christian Churches, came to our house in October of that year. The second evening after their arrival, while sitting together with my family in the parlor, it was requested that we should have prayer. After singing some of the sweet songs of Zion, by special request my father led in prayer, and if man was ever inspired I think he was at that time. I had heard his prayers all my life, and had enjoyed them, and, I trust, profited by them, but the prayer offered on that occasion exceeded all I had ever listened to. All eyes were suffused with tears, and every heart felt deeply those petitions, so full of divine unction and power.

As the company were about to start on their homeward journey they requested that their aged friend would again offer prayer, feeling that it would probably be their last interview with him on earth. With deepest fervor he pleaded for their protection during their journey and their safe return to their homes. In their letters to us they still allude to "the prayers of the venerable saint" who seemed so ripe for heaven—prayers which so moved their hearts, and seemed to bring down upon them the blessing of the Most High—and expressed the earnest desire and hope that they should meet him where parting is unknown, who had so won their hearts by his kind atten-

tions and his exemplification of the beauty of holiness. Friendships were thus formed that will be lasting as eternity. Many of those estimable friends on hearing of the sudden exit of the venerable servant of God have written us letters of true Christian sympathy.

Whatever the circumstances that brought to his dwelling the friend of many years, or the acquaintance of an hour, this servant of God obeyed the injunction, "Use hospitality . . . without grudging." 1 Pet. iv, 9. Hundreds of hearts have been made lighter and better for a sojourn beneath his roof. How glorious the thought of a reunion above! The deepest and most abiding impressions made by this beautiful life, however, was that upon the circle of his immediate kindred. I cannot better close this chapter than with

#### A GRANDDAUGHTER'S TRIBUTE.

BY MRS. W. H. HEISLER.

How sweetly grandpa exemplified the true Christian life of gospel holiness! His home life was beautiful. He spent hours of each day in communion with his God. At family devotion his petitions were offered with child-like trust and confidence. One expression I specially

remember as often used by him, "Choose our changes for us." Thus when changes and reverses came he saw the hand of Him who loved him, and said, "He knows what is best for us."

Amid peculiar business trials and perplexities his faith took hold of One "strong to deliver." It was a rare privilege to live with grandpa, he was so gentle and unvarying in his tenderness, sympathy, and love. He entered into all our plans with interest, and we felt that in him we had a wise counselor, one who had "wisdom from above," and who, like Enoch, "walked with God."

The Sabbath was a blessed day to him. The day was completely filled up with attendance on religious services and his labors at the hospital and in sick rooms. Sometimes he seemed so feeble we would try to persuade him to rest, but he would only smile—such a rare, sweet smile—as if saying, "Dear children, 'I must be about my Father's business.' Resting time will come by and by." A life so fully consecrated to God could not fail to "bring forth much fruit."

Thou art resting now, dear grandpa, but thy memory is like sweet incense, precious and hallowed! Thy children rise up and call thee blessed.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF ADVANCING YEARS.

**D**URING the later years of his life unexpected reverses brought to Edmund J. Yard severe tests of his Christian graces. He said to one of his relatives, "I had expected to have enough to live on in ease and comfort all my days on earth, and to enable me to give many more copies of God's word to the dear young people, as well as in other ways to do good by the use of money; but it is all gone, and in my old age I am to be poor. At first, when this dreadful blow came upon me, it almost overwhelmed me; but I looked up and said, 'The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted.' 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' And then a sweet, heavenly calm came over my spirit, and I have felt unspeakably happy ever since." This perfect trust and the perfect

peace resulting therefrom remained unbroken till his happy spirit winged its upward flight. Through the last ten years of his life—the period of his straitened circumstances—his face “as aforetime” was ever bright with heavenly peace, and never was a murmur heard from his lips. On the contrary, he cherished a perfect acquiescēce in God’s will. “He has permitted it,” he would say, “and certainly he must have done so for some wise purpose.” “What we know not now we shall know hereafter.”

About a year prior to his death he spoke in an experience-meeting of the wonderful goodness of God to him. How he had crowned his life with loving-kindness and tender mercies, and said, “My heart is full of praise all the time.” A brother in the Church asked him one day, “How is it that you never speak of trials? I thought you had passed through some pretty severe ordeals, but I have never once heard you allude to them.” His reply was, “My afflictions are made so light by the presence of Jesus, and the abounding comforts

of the Holy Spirit, I have scarcely realized that I had any thing like trouble." Thus he obeyed the inspired counsel of the Apostle James, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." James i, 2.

To be deprived of the privilege of making generous contributions for the promotion of Christ's kingdom, as he had been accustomed to do, was indeed a trial of no common magnitude. From the time alluded to in an earlier chapter, when he had recovered from his financial embarrassment, he had not only lived in comfort, but had found great delight in giving liberally to the cause of God in its various departments. No call for aid to the needy or any other worthy object had failed to meet a response from him, and no one ever enjoyed more "the luxury of doing good." Especially was it his joy to help young men in securing educational advantages. Many of these have done good service in the Christian ministry. To be denied such privileges was indeed a painful privation, which was the greatest trial

of his last years, and the only one of which he was accustomed to speak with expressions of regret. Yet even in this his chastened spirit bowed with submission, rejoicing when he saw others favored with means to make up his lack in giving.

#### BEREAVEMENTS.

A heart so tender and so affectionate always suffers keenly in the loss of those who are near and dear. While divine grace sustains, and even causes us to triumph in the severing of human ties, it does not make us Stoics, nor render us insensible to the pain of parting with those whom we fondly love. Nor are we forbidden to weep over our dead, for our own adorable Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus.

Many times had this tender heart been stricken by the sundering of fond ties, and now in his advanced years, in September, 1866, a heavy blow fell upon him and his brothers and sister in the death of their valued brother, Charles C. Yard, of Trenton, N. J. The



latter was a brother whose qualities of mind and heart rendered him exceedingly precious to his kindred, to the Church of which he had long been a useful official member, (Green Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Trenton,) and to the community in which his life had been spent. No one of his relatives more highly appreciated him than did his brother Edmund, and no one could more deeply feel the loss of such a brother. Their congeniality of mind and of heart made the bond uniting them of twofold strength.

When called to part with Charles the trial fell heavily upon him, and he felt that he had sustained a loss irreparable in this world. Yet looking forward to the world where we shall find our loved and lost again, he thought of the glorious reunion, and was calm and resigned. How sweetly he talked of the loved ones in heaven, and said, "It will not be long before we shall join them on the other shore."

The wound made by our brother Charles' death was scarcely healed when, in less than

four years, another beloved brother was taken away—John Yard, Jun., of Philadelphia, long an elder in Dr. Chambers' Presbyterian Church, and an active and excellent Christian.

The eldest daughter of this brother, Mrs. Robert M'Curdy, of Philadelphia, who was a favorite niece, died just before her father. Indeed, her decease seemed to be the immediate cause of his sudden death, which occurred within one week of her own. This double bereavement made the sorrow of the family almost insupportable, and deeply did the loving brother Edmund share in that sorrow.

The lovely daughter, in the prime of her beautiful life cut down, and the devoted father following her so soon to the grave, was a bereavement indeed.

To a dear friend he writes of these afflictive events, as follows :

PHILADELPHIA, *April 5, 1870.*

I feel this morning that I must write to you of a dispensation of my heavenly Father. In one week a beloved niece, forty-eight years old, and her father, my own dear brother, in his seventy-third year, have both

been taken from earth to heaven. My niece lay in great suffering for seventeen weeks, and then death came to release her. When told that she had come down to Jordan's brink, she smiled and said, "It's all right," and passed over with a sweet assurance of joining the blood-washed company on the other side.

Her father's system being in a feeble condition, the shock was too great, and within twenty-four hours he became seriously ill, and died in six days. He had expressed a wish to go to heaven with his much-loved daughter, and they were thus quickly reunited in the world above, to join in the everlasting song of glory to the Lamb.

Here I am, almost left alone of my relatives and old friends. But "the Lord liveth," Blessed be his holy name, and "because he lives I shall live also," and be in glory with him forever. "O, what a company I shall meet there; and after a while you will come, and we shall meet to part no more."

In the summer of 1874 he was once more called to mourn. His cherished nephew, Rev. Robert B. Yard, for some twenty years an earnest and highly esteemed minister of the Newark Conference, was stricken down, in the midst of his years and usefulness. From the time of his conversion, his uncle had felt a

father's interest in him, giving him invaluable counsels, and aiding him in securing an education. His entrance upon the gospel ministry thrilled his uncle's heart with joy. For years, few weeks passed without letters between them. Again and again visits from Uncle Edmund cheered the heart of the young pastor, and gave a new impulse to God's work in his parishes. When he became chaplain of the First Regiment of the New Jersey volunteers, the interest of his uncle in the grand and most efficient work of the soldier preacher was as great as he could have felt had he been his own son. In the subsequent years of his manly service as the pastor of large and important Churches, though they could not often meet, the mutual attachment of these hearts, knit together in love and congeniality, was not weakened in the least.

The sad tidings of the beloved nephew's death, after a few days of great suffering, reached his uncle, at Ocean Grove, and though feeble the venerable man went with another

nephew, Rev. Joseph H. James, to Elizabeth, N. J., to attend the funeral. Here was a severe blow to the aged servant of God; but like all that had preceded, it fell upon one bowed in complete submission to the divine will:

#### CHRISTIAN GRACES TESTED.

For many years of his life he had tests of his patience and weakness that were even more severe than the loss of his property in after years, yet never was he known to show anger, impatience, or fretfulness. Those who knew him most intimately, and knew his peculiar trials, said, "He had the patience of Job." The injunction, "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect entire, wanting nothing," came nearer to its fulfillment in him than in any one they had ever known. It was said truly of him that "the hallowed luster of full salvation was never dimmed or obscured by any manifestation of feeling contrary to perfect love."

Let it not be inferred from the facts stated

that he whose history we are now tracing was lacking in strength of character. Though in manner and spirit gentle as any woman, yet he was keenly alive to wrong, and very strong in his convictions. When necessary, he could administer sharp rebuke. In fact he could use the most vigorous language in expressing his views in regard to any matter affecting the country, the Church, or those he loved, where truth, principle, or duty were involved.

While he was ever ready to manifest interest even toward a stranger whom he sought to benefit, and in a way wonderfully winning, he was also the last man to play the coward when truth was attacked, or the interests of righteousness were at stake.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

TRANSLATED.

THE Sabbath preceding his last one on earth, it was observed, as the aged servant of God was passing through the hospital wards, that he seemed more feeble than usual. Afterward he attended the chapel service, and at its close offered prayer, as was his custom. For the first time his friends noticed repetition and incoherency in his language, and the thought was expressed by some of them, "Father Yard is beginning to fail; we shall not have him long with us." But he came once more. On the following Sabbath he visited but one ward. As his friends said to him, "You are not able to do so much as you have heretofore," he yielded and sat down in the chapel. When it was time to offer the closing prayer, the chaplain did not call on him, as usual, thinking he was not able to offer prayer, but he prayed

without being asked. Some persons present said it seemed to them the best prayer they had ever heard from his lips. It was most remarkable for its divine unction and power. It was perfectly correct in expression, without any repetition—a most blessed parting prayer, not to be forgotten by his co-workers, who with unwonted interest listened to the inspired utterances of their venerated and beloved friend then standing upon the borders of the heavenly land.

When about to part with them he said, “Dear friends, I think it very likely this is my last Sabbath with you here. I may go to my home in heaven before I see you again.” Then, with reference to that glorious abode of the pure and the blessed, he spoke of a happy reunion with those who had been his fellow-workers in the hospital, with whom he had been so pleasantly associated in Christian labor and fellowship, and bade them farewell in his usual sweet, affectionate manner.

He seemed to have a premonition of his ap-



proaching death, yet, as he had spoken in a similar manner before, they were not impressed that it would be his last Sabbath on earth. But he came no more. The next Sabbath he spent in the "upper temple." His son relates the following particulars :

On the Sabbath immediately preceding his decease father seemed in a remarkable happy state. It was our sacramental day, and he partook of the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of his divine Redeemer.

His pastor, Rev. W. J. Paxson, asked him, "How is it with you?" He replied, "I am waiting, only waiting. I felt like taking my upward flight while listening to your sermon."

To go and be "forever with the Lord" seemed infinitely desirable, and he loved to speak of his anticipations of heavenly joys, yet he so loved to work for Jesus that he was not impatient to reach his eternal rest.

On the day before his decease—Monday—when going out to attend to some business, he kissed each one of us, and on his return seemed so glad to be again safely housed with the family. He sat with us all the evening, and seemed to take his usual interest in all that occurred. He retired about ten o'clock, and the next morning remarked how comfortably he had slept during the night.

At twelve o'clock of Tuesday, Dec. 5, 1876, he again

went out, bidding us an affectionate farewell, no one supposing it to be the last adieu. He attended the funeral of a son of one of his dearest friends, and afterward visited a member of one of his classes. He then went to the home of his granddaughter, Mrs. W. H. Heisler, where he took tea and spent a short time. Early in the evening, as he returned home he stopped at the corner, near our house, and spoke a few kind words to a police officer of our neighborhood who had often assisted him to alight from the street cars, and to the door of our dwelling. He entered the hall and went up stairs. In the act of reaching for his dressing-gown came the stroke which took his life. We heard him fall, and were with him in a moment. We saw at once that life was rapidly passing away. Medical aid was summoned immediately and restoratives used, but in less than five minutes—without speaking one word—his happy spirit had taken its flight beyond the river.

Thus suddenly he left us, with stricken hearts, to mourn the loss of one of the best of fathers and grandparents that this world has ever known.

The evening of his decease the policeman before referred to as so kindly attentive was called in, and stood looking at the face and form as he lay resting from his labors. Only a few minutes had elapsed since their parting at the door, and now the spirit had gone, and he saw but the casket, without the jeweled soul. He seemed greatly affected at the sudden transition.

When the undertaker arrived he proved to be the one who had conducted the funeral of the afternoon. He had always been particularly attentive to my father at funerals, procuring a seat for him where he could hear the remarks made by the officiating ministers. When he came into the room and beheld the calm, sweet face before him, his first expression was, "Not dead—translated! Like one of old, 'he walked with God, and was not, for God took him.'"

Indeed, it did not seem like the work of the King of Terrors, but rather as a happy release from the infirmities of age. His prayer was answered, "Let me

" 'My labors with my life lay down,  
And cease at once to work and live.' "

Often had he expressed this desire, for he thought to be sick any length of time would give trouble to his family; and living ever in a state of readiness for heaven, it mattered not to him how sudden the removal might be.

This tender solicitude for the beloved ones around him was evinced through his entire life. He could not bear to give trouble or to be waited upon, though assured by every member of his household that it was a pleasure to minister to his comfort and to serve him in any way.

The wife of his son spoke of his death as bringing to them a loss beyond estimate. She said, "Father was the light of our house. Al-

ways bright and cheerful; so kind and loving, so self-sacrificing, so good! It will not seem like home without dear father."

His grandchildren loved him with devoted affection. One of them said, "Dear, sweet grandpa, how can we live without him? He made our home so bright and happy. He always had a smile and kind and loving words for us, and was so interested in every thing that concerned us. O how we shall miss him!"

And surely they do miss his ministries of love, for never was there a father or grandfather more fondly attached to his kindred, or more diligent in promoting the comfort of his family.

The following incident was related by Edmund S. Yard:

A short time before his departure an old and cherished friend, who was brother-in-law of the sainted Lybrand, mentioned in another chapter, called to see my father. It was my privilege to be present and listen to the old pilgrims as they talked of the sorrows and joys, trials and triumphs of their long pilgrimage, and of their cheering prospect of reaching the goodly land ahead. It was

truly one of the "heavenly places in Christ Jesus." To witness the rich communion of those two aged saints was indeed a luxury that I shall always think of with pleasure.

The night previous to my father's death the friend alluded to dreamed that they had started together on a journey to a distant city, and my father reached it first. He saw him enter the gate. The reality, how soon! In less than twenty-four hours the beloved friend with whom he had taken sweet counsel had indeed "entered through the gates into the city," the glorious city of God.

CHAPTER XIX.

TRIBUTES AND REMINISCENCES.

SINCE the death of Edmund J. Yard a number of friends have written to the writer expressing their high appreciation of him and his work. Extracts from some of these letters have been introduced in the different chapters. It seems fitting that others should be inserted here.

Extract from a letter of Bishop Levi Scott, D.D., dated Odessa, Del., Dec. 18, 1877:

I have known your brother since the spring of 1828. I have known him long and intimately, and I regard him as having maintained one of the brightest and most beautiful Christian characters I have ever known. He was of a warm temperament, sensitive, susceptible of high and strong excitement. Yet so fully and constantly did he live under the inspiration and control of the abiding Comforter, that I never detected in him, under the most trying circumstances, the violation of (I do not say Christian morals, that was out of the ques-

tion) the nicest, the finest, and most delicate Christian courtesy.

Thoroughly consecrated, like his divine Master, he literally "went about doing good." The members of his large classes, the aged, the poor, the sick, the dying, all shared his sympathies and kindly attentions. He was particularly drawn out toward the young, and especially toward young men, many of whom will be stars in his crown of rejoicing.

Rev. J. M. Freeman, D.D., of the Newark Conference, and Assistant Secretary of the Sunday-School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who was one in whom Mr. Yard was specially interested, thus writes in a letter to the biographer:

I never met him without deriving benefit from his conversation. Indeed, his very presence was a benediction. He gave me much encouragement and sympathy in the early years of my ministry, and was always one of my best friends. He had at all times a warm side toward ministers, and especially the young preachers. His love and counsels were to me a great help. His memory is treasured by me as of great price, and I doubt not that thousands will rise up in the great day to call him blessed.

From Rev. R. J. Carson, of the Philadelphia Conference :

I shall never forget the kind and loving greeting he gave me when I entered on my work as pastor of Union Church. Not only the warm grasp of the hand and the fervent benediction of the lips and heart, but the holy kiss upon the cheek. All these seem now, as I write, of recent occurrence, so deep and lasting was the impression made upon me.

Time would fail me to write of the many trained by him in his classes to live useful Christian lives. They are to be found to-day in the home circle, the marts of business, and in the pulpit ; while many whose closing hours were soothed and comforted by his loving counsels and fervent prayers were ready to greet him as he entered the city of the great King.

When it seemed that, in the providence of God and by the call of the Church, I might be appointed to a second pastorate in the Union Church, I fondly hoped that Father Yard would be spared to welcome me again, but this was not to be.

I miss him greatly ; he would be a great assistance to me in my work. But our loss is his gain. The holy influence of his devoted spirit lives after him, and " though dead he yet speaketh."

The venerable Rev. Anthony Atwood, once his pastor, writes in a like strain of high



appreciation. Indeed, similar testimony would be borne, no doubt, by all his pastors, for so great was his devotion to the cause of Christ, and so real his attachment to the Methodistic arrangement by which the pastor is changed, but the pastorate continued, that as one after another these men of God entered upon this relation to him, he gave to each a place in his heart of hearts, esteeming "them very highly in love for their work's sake," and became to every one "a true yoke-fellow."

No apology is needed for the insertion of the following without abridgment :

EDMUND J. YARD, THE SYMPATHIZING  
FRIEND.

BY REV. E. H. STOKES, D.D.

Long years ago, under peculiarly impressive circumstances, I came to know the man whose history is traced in these pages, and whose memory is embalmed in the hearts of thousands.

I was a lad in the great city of Philadelphia, and so far as the Methodist Episcopal Church was concerned, a stranger and alone. On a Sabbath evening early in

March, I had followed the crowd that surged down Arch Street to Fourth, and then down Fourth Street to the new and beautiful Union Church. It was in the palmy days of the renowned Charles Pitman, and the large building was crowded in every part. Pitman then just thirty-eight years old, tall, portly, with raven hair, dark eyes, ruddy cheeks, and noble brow, was magisterial in appearance, and as he occupied the pulpit was a power even before a word was uttered. But when his lips were opened, and tides of living truth flowed forth, he was like a mountain torrent, sublime and resistless. The crowds that listened to his eloquence were often oblivious to all around them, and while saints rejoiced, sinners were bowed in penitence at the Master's feet. I was in the north gallery, on a seat running to the western wall, trembling under the power of the truth. The invitation was given for persons who felt their need of salvation to approach the altar. Then the congregation arose and sung, "Come, ye sinners, poor and needy." "Surely," I said, "that means me, for I am very 'poor,' and very 'needy.'"

I looked around me ; I knew no one, and no one knew me. O, how I longed for mercy and for God. Then I looked again ; first at my own situation, then at the altar below, then at the long-seemingly infinite distance between myself and that place where I longed to kneel.

"I must start," I said. "I can but perish if I go."

And then, almost before aware of it, I was on my feet, passing along the great gallery aisles, down the long stairs, through the cold vestibule, then along the north aisle to the front of the church, and so across to the south side of the middle aisle. I reached the altar, and fell on my knees, sad, sorrowful, broken, almost in despair! Away from friends, away from God! Want and distress were personified in my condition. Scarcely had my trembling limbs touched the kneeling-cushion, when I felt upon my head the pressure of soft hands; then a warm cheek throbbing against my own; while a voice, gentle and loving as a mother's, whispered in my ear, "Welcome, my dear young brother; welcome to the Church, to the cross, and to the arms and heart of our dear Redeemer!"

O, how my tempestuous heart was soothed! The effect, in some sense, was like that of the voice of Jesus on the stormy Sea of Galilee. For an hour I wept and prayed, and tried to look to God for help, and for an hour that warm cheek and gentle voice were with me in the deepest and tenderest love. The meeting closed, and though I was not saved, the same kind voice said, "Courage, my young brother; God will surely bless you."

Who was this new and deeply interested friend? I did not know, and was too timid to ask. It was not long, however, before I learned that it was the sweet-spirited, gentle, and saintly Edmund J. Yard.

This little personal narrative reveals the profound depths of his sympathetic nature, which was the leading and absorbing element of his protracted life.

Years before, when himself a young man at the foot of the cross, he had come into contact with the heart of Jesus, and so imbibed the spirit of the divine Man that his soul ever after felt its influence, and, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, was changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The Church and the world failed to fully understand him, and sometimes wondered at the gracious things they saw.

His devotion to the cause of God ran through a long term of years, and so fully absorbed his thoughts and attention, that the entire time of every Sabbath and almost if not quite every evening of the week were taken up with some kind of religious service—his interest in his fellow-men taking hold of every class and condition of society, from the cultivated and refined to the low and abandoned. Such was his solicitude for the welfare of all, and such his self-abnegation, that men said, "This is not usual; this kind of life is above the ordinary plane." And so it was. The high and holy principles contained in the teachings of Jesus were constantly exhibited by him, and their practical development from day to day and from year to year was in the form of human sympathy.

Where and under what circumstances, within his

reach, did ever a sinner bow at the footstool of mercy and not find in him an earnest, intelligent, and sympathizing friend? How he would linger and weep and wait for the promised blessing to come! How he would counsel, exhort, explain, and then, as if in the very act of believing for the doubting ones, would take them by the hand and lead them into the holy presence of God, where, if he could, he would say with his own lips what he knew the divine Father was saying all the while, "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee." "My dear young brother," he would say over and over again, "salvation is of faith; you must believe and be saved, not be saved and then believe. First believe that as a penitent and sincere seeker you are pardoned according to the divine promise, and the joys that flow from pardon will soon follow."

Thus he would go hour after hour, week after week, year after year, teaching, with more than a mother's patience, the blessed way of life; seemingly never weary, though the spiritual perceptions of men were dull, and though they were very slow to accept the blessed Jesus as their refuge and their rest. With him a soul was of more value than all other things; and no time was too long, nor labor too great, to secure its salvation. But when the blessing came, as soon or later under his instructions it was sure to come, it was often difficult to determine which had the greater joy, the newly saved, or he who, under God, was the instrument through whom

the great salvation came. Never, perhaps, did a soul emerge from darkness to light under his instructions that did not feel in that moment a strong attachment springing up for him, which lasted through life, and grew stronger with each succeeding year. With all such he communicated in every possible way, striving in the Lord for their religious improvement with as much interest as he had manifested in their deliverance and pardon.

In young men, perhaps, his interest was greatest. Knowing their peculiar temptations, and the dangers which beset them in a great city, his sympathies for them were deepest, and his solicitude unceasing. In their conversion, for which his labors knew no weariness, he felt that only the initial part of the work of salvation was accomplished. After a soul had been at the foot of the cross, and baptized of the divine Spirit, it was to go forth against a current of worldliness and sin sufficient to bear the strongest down to ruin, and unless helped in every possible way would, after all, be lost. Not that the principles of our holy religion are insufficient, if left to work out their legitimate results, to secure eternal salvation. They are and always will be sufficient; but the oppositions to godliness are so numerous and strong, and the newly saved, all unconscious of their character and influence, are liable in unsuspecting moments to be attacked at some unguarded point, and, before they are aware, led on to dangerous ground, if not to the commission of

some act which brings darkness to the soul. To guard against this was his constant solicitude. He went to their homes and places of business, following them with his counsels and prayers, and watching over them with more than a father's love. He wrote to them, admonished them, wept with them when in trouble, counseled, entreated, and prayed with and for them at all times, and in all places possible. "My dear," he would say as he impressed upon the cheek the tender kiss of love, "I have been so concerned about you! Tell me how you are getting along." And however remiss in duty the young man had been, or however far he had wandered away, the tender solicitude of his faithful friend and his gentle and loving words of entreaty rarely, if ever, failed to bring back the wanderer to rectitude and to God. He sometimes joined institutions and organizations, in which he had no special interest, in order to be brought into closer communion with those whom he wished to reach and benefit.

As has been stated, he was the leader of four classes. In the three classes connected with Union Church it was said he had fully one third of the members of that Church under his teachings, besides the class in Bedford Street Mission. In those classes his sympathies, so largely developed, were taxed and drawn out to the last degree. To the trials, temptations, and afflictions of all the ever-varying phases of Christian life of all those hundreds he listened, week after week, for more than half a century

with such patient interest as nothing but the infinite grace of God could possibly supply; and for every one he had a tender, appropriate, and affectionate word. How those people were blessed under his instructions! Some of them would come to class weak, cast down, discouraged, and yet his gentle words so entered into the deep, dark, and sore places of the soul, that they went out cheered, encouraged, strengthened, and enabled to overcome their spiritual foes, and to triumph over their afflictions. Over and over and over again he led them away from the sand deserts of earth and time into the green pastures of gospel truth, and by the still, sweet, refreshing waters of salvation. Often were they conducted by their faithful leader away from the scorching sun of some heavy trial to the grateful shade of the lofty cedars of Lebanon on the hill-sides, where the fierce rays were broken, and the breezes were soft and sweet. From year to year they sat listening to his words, which fell as refreshing dew or summer rain upon the tender flowers—their open petals drinking in the reviving influence. So those souls, opening to receive the life-giving words, grew strong and bright and valiant for God. Never did their devoted leader become wearied of traveling with them the rough paths or climbing the dangerous passes.

“Away on the mountains, wild and bare,” would he go, if thereby he could bring forth some fleece-torn lamb, foot-sore and weary, to the fold of the Good Shepherd.



Over and over through his patient and self-denying toils,

“ All through the mountains, thunder riven,  
And up from the rocky steep,  
There rose a cry to the gate of heaven,  
‘ Rejoice ! I have found my sheep ! ’  
And the angels echoed around the throne,  
‘ Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own ! ’ ”

And the lost one found had no higher joy “ in the shelter of the fold ” than he, the faithful under-shepherd, who had been the agent in bringing it back to God.

If any of his flock were sick, he seemed to know it by a kind of divine intuition. He knew that something was wrong, and his attention was needed. Immediately, without consulting personal ease or gratification, through summer’s heat and winter’s cold, he was on his way to administer the needed aid. Up rickety stair-ways, leading to cheerless attics, down into cellars dark and damp, or into the abodes of wealth and comfort, he went, without distinction or choice, as an angel of mercy, bearing the glad news of pardon to the guilty, or pouring into the hearts of God’s dear saints the blessed balm of gospel consolation.

These visits were not the result of spasmodic uprisings of the soul, growing out of an appeal to the conscience to be diligent in duty, but the long-established and settled habit of his life. There is now before me a letter written by him, bearing date October 13, 1863, in which

he writes, "On Sunday afternoon I went to the Pennsylvania Hospital, and had a very precious time. I have visited that house for fifty years, and although we have had many Christian physicians practicing there, we never have had one of them in our meetings to take part until now. Perhaps you will be surprised, too, when I tell you we have had two young Quakers among our doctors happily brought to God. One has joined the Church; I cannot say as to the other, but he took the hymn-book, raised the tune of a hymn, and sang the chorus. Is not the Lord good to us? The matron, who is a Quakeress, meets with us regularly, kneels in prayer, and helps along finely. A Catholic girl has also professed conversion lately. So the Lord is favoring us in our labors. Pray for us, that the work may spread and be glorious."

Those blessed visits he continued up to the last Sabbath of his life. There, among the wounded, suffering, and dying, he moved like the presence of God, soft as night dews fall, cheerful as the fresh light of the morning, smoothing the pillow, bathing the brow, and whispering blessed words of immortal hope to the soul. Often he closed the eyes of the dying, comforted their weeping friends, and accompanied them to the grave, bearing words of inspiration upon his lips as from Him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life," and gave the last tribute of affection in silent tears.

But as in the sky are many wonderful changes, so there were in his paths of duty. They were not all sad.

He had learned more effectually than any man I ever knew how to "rejoice with them that rejoice, and to weep with them that weep." To-day he would sorrow over the afflicted or the erring, and to-morrow rejoice with high exultation over one who had just entered upon the Christian life, or one who in full view of eternal glory was about to step out of time to be "forever with the Lord." His soul, exceedingly sensitive to these extremes, felt the touch of either, and vibrated to both. He was at home in either sphere. Joy and sorrow with him were twin brothers, and so much alike that at times we hardly knew which was present—his joy was so tender and his sorrow so hopeful that both were blessed. Which was best we scarcely knew where both were only good.

The writer remembers a scene of unusual interest. It was in the large Union Church tent at a camp-meeting held at Swedesborough, N. J., in 1842. The services were led by Edmund J. Yard. It had been a protracted struggle, which had run far into the night, for the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers. The conflict with the powers of darkness was prolonged and painful. Suddenly one of the company, who had been the subject of a great affliction in the death of his nearest friend, seemed to have a vision of the departed, surrounded by the glory of the blessed world. The joy of his own heart was like a stormy sky, lit up by the dazzling splendors of the noonday sun. That joy was contagious, and flew like lightning. The leader caught the

spirit; the tent was ablaze with the awful glory, and all were overwhelmed with the bliss of heaven! And so his heart was always quick to respond to joy or sorrow in all their appropriate manifestations.

But let us step softly! There is a holy hush in the air! The angels have been down among men, and as they have passed here and there in obedience to divine command, beckoning to this one and that, they to whom the signal was given have followed the angelic lead. Just now they came and fixed their tender and loving gaze upon one so like themselves, and with a gentle wave of the hand whispered, "Come!" and the angelic convoy, with the spirit of the just man made perfect, disappeared from view, and entered through the gates into the eternal city. From that moment EDMUND J. YARD was seen no more among men, but his example and memory as a winner of precious souls will long live among men to guide and encourage faithful workers for Jesus.

OCEAN GROVE, N. J., *January*, 1880.

## CHAPTER XX.

## CLOSING WORDS

AND now having traced the steps of my ascended brother through his long pilgrimage, having sought to portray him in his varied spheres of joyous service for the Master whom he loved and so actively served, and having listened to the remembrances of those who knew and loved him, I will only add a few words of appreciation and of gratitude for what he was to me.

As my brother Edmund was nearly twenty years older than myself, and left home during my childhood, I was unacquainted with his early life, except as I had learned of it from my parents and brothers and himself.

Of his beautiful example of filial devotion, his affectionate disposition, and blameless deportment, I had heard so much during my whole life, that I regarded him with a kind of

reverence. And, moreover, as my father died when I was yet young, I always looked up to my eldest brother as a father. His counsel I regarded as one of my greatest blessings, and his society as a most precious privilege. Through all my life his visits to my home were anticipated with exceeding joy, and his presence valued as a choice benediction.

It was because he bore the image of the heavenly, the gentle, tender, loving spirit of Jesus, that he was so revered and prized by me. His words were so "seasoned with grace," and he shed around an influence so hallowed, that it always drew me nearer to the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

To his Christ-like example, excellent advice, and faithful prayers, I am greatly indebted for my own religious life and advancement in Christian experience.

In my early life his earnest labors for Christ furnished an incentive to me to be "diligent in all good works." When I listened to the recitals of his visits to the sick, and saw his

countenance light up as he would tell of the conversion of precious souls and of the triumphant death of many whom he had led to Jesus, how my heart was thrilled! and how I wished and prayed that I might be as successful as my brother in winning souls!

Nor was this blessed influence confined to my early life. All through the years which followed, the intercourse I was permitted to enjoy with his pure spirit was truly delightful, and had a most cheering and elevating effect upon me. In sickness and sorrow his tender sympathy and kind ministrations afforded me comfort unspeakable, and were valued among my chief earthly blessings.

Never was that influence more marked or more highly prized and enjoyed than in the later years of his life. Our interviews were not unfrequent, though not residing near to each other, and of those sweet seasons of communion I cherish the most vivid remembrance.

The last was when I was an invalid, spend-

ing a few months in Philadelphia, a short time previous to his departure to the heavenly land.

With some difficulty he had ascended the stairs, and as he entered my room seemed nearly out of breath. I had observed in him for some time increasing weakness of the limbs and difficulty of breathing upon any extra exertion he would make, and as he approached me I said to him, "I fear this is too much for you; coming up the stairs has quite overcome you."

Smiling, he replied, "Yes, the old tabernacle is giving way, and soon will be taken down. I realize, sister, that I am an old man, but I shall renew my strength and my youth after awhile."

Then, talking of some of the visits he had just been making to the sick and the bereaved, in which "the dear Saviour was very near," he seemed to exult with exceeding joy, and spoke sweetly of the goodness of God in giving him strength at his advanced age to do a little



work for Him, and then to give him such blessings, such manifestations of his presence, and abounding comforts in serving him. "O, what reason I have for thankfulness," he said; "surely every breath should be praise."

His visit was brief, and I felt unusually sad at parting with him, for I felt that it might be his last visit to me, which indeed it proved. As he rose from his seat to leave he said, "I must go now, sister, for I want to do some more visiting to-day. There are several other sick people I must see before I go home."

How precious were his last words of tender solicitude and affectionate interest as he took my hand and spoke of my sickness, and the trials through which I was passing, closing with the words, "Never mind, sister, it will all be over in a little while, and heaven will recompense for all we suffer here."

I saw him no more, not even in death, for

sickness kept me prostrate, and I was not permitted to attend his funeral.

Our next meeting will be where “the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick.”

Those who looked upon his face, beautiful in death, remarked that no trace of death’s work was visible. Serene, placid, heavenly, he seemed as if in a sweet slumber; not as in the embrace of the King of Terrors, an enemy; but in delightful repose, “asleep in Jesus,” awaiting his call at the dawning of the eternal day, when “them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

The following lines, a sister’s tribute, were written soon after his transit to the land of the blest :

TRANSFERRED TO THE BRIGHTER WORLD—

EDMUND J. YARD.

BY HIS SISTER, MRS. MARY D. JAMES.

As sets the bright sun in the cloudless west,  
 Undimmed by a shadow—so calm, so blest,  
 The sainted one passed away to his rest,  
                   In the paradise above.

And leaving behind him a radiance bright,  
Like the glorious sun when it hides from sight  
'Neath the amber sky, in the sweet twilight  
Of the closing autumn day.

The golden grain waving, so ripe and fair,  
Was standing but yesterday grandly there ;  
The reaper came quickly ! The field is bare !  
The wheat is garnered to-day !

So richly ripe in the fullness of grace,  
So saintly, so meet for the holy place  
Where the pure ones dwell, and behold his **face**,  
The infinite God of love !

As a river flowed his beautiful life,  
Serenely grand, amid conflict and strife !  
With labors and trials each hour so rife ;  
Yet ever peaceful his soul !

Thus fourscore years had his life flowed on,  
And rich were the treasures his labors had won,  
Securely "laid up" till his work was done :  
How vast his possessions there !

He lived for the sick, for the poor, and distressed ;  
He lived that the dying might find heaven's rest ;  
He lived that the suff'ring, in Christ might be blest :  
His life was a mission of love.

As shuts a beautiful flower at night,  
Inclosing its charms till the morning light,  
Then opening again to regale the sight  
    With its smiling loveliness :

So, closing at evening his heaven-lit eyes,  
Till the morning's bright dawn beyond the skies,  
Then opening his vision, with glad surprise,  
    In the realms of endless day !

O, heaven ! sweet heaven ! earth's purest and best  
Are gathered there, in the home of the blest !  
What hallowed communion ! what rapture ! what rest !  
    In the glorious city of God !

In taking leave of my readers I must add a word in regard to the responsibility resting upon those who profess to be followers of Him who hath "left us this example, that we should walk in his steps."

In the life of the one whose Christlike course we have been tracing we have found the secret of power for winning souls to be, not in extraordinary gifts, nor in remarkable natural talents, nor in special culture, but in the divine inspiration and sacred influence resulting from

union with the Source of power, of wisdom, and of love.

Nature, it is true, had endowed him with an affectionate and kind disposition, a bland and gentle manner, a soft and pleasant voice, and an unusual degree of unselfishness which had been always evinced from his early childhood ; but it was the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—the living principle of divine love permeating his whole being—actuating his entire life which made him what he was for God and humanity. And what he was, and what he did, others may be and do if in communication with the same Source of grace and power. For to all God's children, without distinction or exception, is the blessed assurance given, that “God is able to make all grace abound toward you ; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” 2 Cor. ix, 8. It is a momentous truth that God holds every one responsible, not only for what he is and what he does, but for what he might be and do if filled with the Holy Spirit. This priceless gift is as

free as the air we breathe. Under its influence the humblest believer may do work that will astonish the world. Without it life must be a failure. Dear reader, are you living in the fullness of this blessing?

A failure on the part of a child of God to avail himself of all the glorious possibilities of grace, whereby he could be instrumental in bringing souls to Jesus, is an awful failure, involving the eternal interests of immortal souls, and through endless ages must be a loss unspeakable to the delinquent Christian. If, through the infinite merits of the atonement, he should be numbered with the redeemed in heaven, he will be "saved, yet so as by fire;" and the consciousness that golden opportunities for soul-winning had been lost by his own failure to "apprehend that for which he was apprehended of Christ Jesus," must, in the great day of reckoning, cause regrets and self-reproach. And who can doubt that many souls will, from such failure, find a lower position in the kingdom above

than they would have had if they had been faithful in the improvement of their opportunities?

It is a most solemn truth, that upon every child of God is laid the tremendous responsibility of bringing souls to Jesus. Therefore every child of God ought in all circumstances of life to be A SOUL-WINNER.



“He that winneth souls is wise.”

I heard a voice speak from the skies,  
 “The one that winneth souls is wise,”  
 And “as the stars shall shine.”  
 Who from the dreadful ways of sin  
 A soul shall turn, that soul shall win :  
 This joy may now be thine.

Go, search for jewels day by day ;  
 Go, take them from the miry clay  
 To Calvary’s open fount—  
 The blood that cleanseth sin-stained souls,  
 And, ever flowing, onward rolls  
 Down from the sacred mount.

There, in that purifying stream,  
How gloriously those gems will gleam,  
Such precious gems of God !  
Souls, deathless souls, that once were **los**  
But ransomed at the priceless cost  
Of our Redeemer's blood.

Great Saviour, let thy tender love  
Our hearts to earnest effort move  
To rescue sinners lost ;  
Let this most blessed work be **mine** ;  
To gather gems for Christ to shine—  
Souls his own life have cost.

**THE END.**